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Starkad And Bale

Unknown writer

Starkad, the hero of the legends, the bravest warrior in the army of the North, had fallen into disgrace with the king because of a certain princess, so he wandered up into Norland, and settled down at Rude in Tuna, where he was known as the Thrall of the Alders or the Red Fellow.

In Balbo, nine miles from Rude, dwelt another hero, Bale, a good friend and companion-at-arms of Starkad.

One morning Starkad climbed the Klefberg in Tuna, and called over to Bale: "Bale in Balbo, are you awake?"

"Red Fellow!" answered Bale, nine miles away, "the sun and I wake together! But how goes it with you?"

"None too well. I eat salmon morning, noon and night. Come over with a bit of meat!"

"I'll come!" Bale called back, and in a few hours time he was down in Tuna with an elk under each arm.

The following morning Bale in Balbo stood on a hill in Borgsjo and called: "Red Fellow! Are you awake?"

"The sun and I wake together!" answered Starkad. "And how goes it with you?"

"Alas, I have nothing to eat but meat! Elk in the morning, elk at noon and elk at night. Come over and bring a fish-tail along with you!"

"I'm coming!" called out Starkad, and in a short time he had joined his friend with a barrel of salmon under each arm.

In this fashion the two friends provided themselves with all the game to be found in the woods and in the water, and spread terror and destruction throughout the countryside. But one evening, when they were just returning to the sea from an excursion, a black cloud came up, and a tempest broke. They hurried along as fast as they could; but got no further than Vattjom, where a flash of lightning struck Starkad and flung him to the ground. His friend and companion-at-arms



buried him beneath a stone cairn, about which he set five rocks: two at his feet, two at his shoulders, and one at his head; and that grave, measuring twenty ells in length, may still be seen near the river.

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