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## *The Gods of the Dana*

[*The Tuatha dé Danann, the Race of the Gods of Dana, are the elder gods of Erin, known also as the Shée.*]

The gods of the Dana are lords of one small green island,  
They are tall, they have yellow hair, their brows are wide,  
They have magical golden harps swung from their shoulders,  
Their eyes are gray and look not to either side.

They go forth at dusk on fiery faëry horses  
Through flowering thorn and over the peaty streams,  
Kings of the ruined raths and the gull-loud places,  
Of the fisherman's song and the lonely herd-girl's dream:

Mider the Green, bearing the spiralling alder,  
And sun-gold Lugh in a nimbus of feathered light,  
Brighter the Horned scattering pale moon-fire  
And Angus the Young circled with birds of white.

They are gods of this island only, narrow their kingdom  
Bounded on every side by the screaming seas.  
No one prays to them now in the windy mornings —  
To Him on the Rood the wild Gael bend their knees.

Yet they ride from the hills at dusk, the gods of the Dana!  
They guard the gates of the island east and west.  
From the foe without and within they shield her beauty,  
Against their terrible hearts her head is pressed.

For they have no other love, the gods of the Dana,  
And they gave her long ago the gifts of the Shée:  
The eyes of youth, and the tongue of a linnet singing,  
And the hunger and pride and grief of the restless sea.

LEAH BODINE DRAKE