

# READING EXTRACT

## Magic Ireland

### The Wave

Early one morning, when Ciabhán was out hunting, he found a boat on the strand with a copper prow. The rising sun made it glow like fire, and he walked around it, touched it. The wind played in his curly hair. He looked ravishing. It was no secret that he was desired by every woman, envied by every man.

“Do you want to leave us?”, people asked, when they saw him examining the boat.

Ciabhán paused for a moment, then he nodded. The wind grew stronger.

They watched him getting into the boat, pushing off into the sea, before they took shelter from the upcoming storm.

Massive waves arched up before Ciabhán, each as high as a mountain, and the salmon leaped in them. The curls of his hair clung to his handsome face. Eventually, he saw a rider on a horse with a golden bridle. For nine waves the rider stayed underwater; from the tenth he emerged without a drop on him.

“What will you give to the one who saves you?” the rider asked.

“What can I give him?” Ciabhán asked.

“You can serve him.”

Ciabhán nodded and the rider reached out to him. He brought Ciabhán to the island under the water, which is called the Land of Youth or sometimes the Land of Women. There, as it happened, a great feast was just prepared. Harpists and artists gathered, acrobats and aerialists performed the most wonderful feats, but Ciabhán exceeded them all. Clíodhna, who had never loved anyone, watch him, and gave him her heart.

Of course, they couldn't stay on the island, it wasn't meant for men like Ciabhán as handsome as he might be. So, they fled in the boat with the copper prow, returning to the shore where Ciabhán had come from. There they moored in a bay and the setting sun made the copper prow glow. Ciabhán found a shelter for them. Early the next morning, he went into the forest to hunt.

Not long after he was gone, Manannán mac Lir, the son of the sea, came with forty ships to bring Clíodhna back. Ichnu, the flautist, lulled her to sleep and the sea swept her away. It is not known what became of Ciabhán and the boat with the copper prow, but since that day every tenth wave in this bay near Glandore in County Cork carries Clíodhna's name.