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Emer's Farewell

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O might a maid confess her secret longing
To one who dearly loves but may not speak!
Alas! I had not hidden to thy wronging
A bleeding heart beneath a smiling cheek;
I had not stemmed my bitter tears from starting,
And thou hadst learned my bosom's dear distress,
And half the pain, the cruel pain of parting,
Had passed, Cuchullain, in thy fond caress.

But go! Connacta's hostile trumpets call thee,
Thy chariot mount and ride the ridge of war,
And prove whatever feat of arms befall thee,
The hope and pride of Emer of Lismore;
Ah, then return, my hero, girt with glory,
To knit my virgin heart so near to thine,
That all who seek thy name in Erin's story
Shall find its loving letters linked with mine.

Tune: "Londonderry Air" (Danny Boy)

From "Songs of Old Ireland" the words by
Alfred Perceval Graves the music arranged by C Villiers
Stanford (Boosey & Co, London and New York, 1882)

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