

# *The Dwarf-sword Tirfing*

Folk-Lore And Legends: Scandinavia

Scandinavian

---

*Intermediate*  
*5 min read*

Suaforlami, the second in descent from Odin, was king over Gardarike (Russia). One day he rode a-hunting, and sought long after a hart, but could not find one the whole day. When the sun was setting, he found himself plunged so deep in the forest that he knew not where he was. On his right hand he saw a hill, and before it he saw two dwarfs. He drew his sword against them, and cut off their retreat by getting between them and the rock. They offered him ransom for their lives, and he asked them their names, and they said that one of them was called Dyren and the other Dualin. Then he knew that they were the most ingenious and the most expert of all the dwarfs, and he therefore demanded that they should make for him a sword, the best that they could form. Its hilt was to be of gold, and its belt of the same metal. He moreover commanded that the sword should never miss a blow, should never rust, that it should cut through iron and stone as through a garment, and that it should always be victorious in war and in single combat. On these conditions he granted the dwarfs their lives.

At the time appointed he came, and the dwarfs appearing, they gave him the sword. When Dualin stood at the door, he said—

“This sword shall be the bane of a man every time it is drawn, and with it shall be perpetrated three of the greatest atrocities, and it will also prove thy bane.”

Suaforlami, when he heard that, struck at the dwarf, so that the blade of the sword penetrated the solid rock. Thus Suaforlami became possessed of this sword, and he called it Tirfing. He bore it in war and in single

combat, and with it he slew the giant Thiasse, whose daughter Fridur he took.

Suaforlami was soon after slain by the Berserker Andgrim, who then became master of the sword. When the twelve sons of Andgrim were to fight with Hialmar and Oddur for Ingaborg, the beautiful daughter of King Inges, Angantyr bore the dangerous Tirfing, but all the brethren were slain in the combat, and were buried with their arms.

Angantyr left an only daughter, Hervor, who, when she grew up, dressed herself in man's attire, and took the name of Hervardar, and joined a party of Vikinger, or pirates. Knowing that Tirfing lay buried with her father, she determined to awaken the dead, and obtain the charmed blade. She landed alone, in the evening, on the Island of Sams, where her father and uncles lay in their sepulchral mounds, and ascending by night to their tombs, that were enveloped in flame, she, by the force of entreaty, obtained from the reluctant Angantyr the formidable Tirfing.

Hervor proceeded to the court of King Gudmund, and there one day, as she was playing at tables with the king, one of the servants chanced to take up and draw Tirfing, which shone like a sunbeam. But Tirfing was never to see the light but for the bane of men, and Hervor, by a sudden impulse, sprang from her seat, snatched the sword, and struck off the head of the unfortunate man.

After this she returned to the house of her grandfather, Jarl Biartmar, where she resumed her female attire, and was married to Haufud, the son of King Gudmund. She bore him two sons, Angantyr and Heidreker; the former of a mild and gentle disposition, the latter violent and fierce. Haufud would not permit Heidreker to remain at his court, and as he was departing, his mother, among other gifts, presented him with Tirfing.

His brother accompanied him out of the castle. Before they parted, Heidreker drew out his sword to look at and admire it, but scarcely did the rays of light fall on the magic blade, when the Berserker rage came on its owner, and he slew his gentle brother.

After this he joined a body of Vikinger, and became so distinguished that King Harold, for the aid he lent him, gave him his daughter Helga in marriage. But it was the destiny of Tirfing to commit crime, and Harold fell by the sword of his son-in-law. Heidreker was afterwards in Russia, and the son of the king was his foster-son. One day as they were out hunting, Heidreker and his foster-son happened to be separated from the rest of the

party, when a wild boar appeared before them.

Heidreker ran at him with his spear, but the beast caught it in his mouth and broke it across. Then he alighted and drew Tiring, and killed the boar. On looking round him, he saw no one but his foster-son, and Tiring could only be appeased with warm human blood, so Heidreker slew the poor youth.

In the end Heidreker was murdered in his bed by his Scottish slaves, who carried off Tiring. His son Angantyr, who succeeded him, discovered the thieves and put them to death, and recovered the magic blade. He made great slaughter in battle against the Huns, but among the slain was discovered his own brother, Landur.

So ends the history of the Dwarf-Sword Tiring.

Read more fairy tales on [Fairytalez.com](http://Fairytalez.com)