

## Alan Earley's trilogy continues: ARTHUR QUINN AND THE FENRIS WOLF

*Bláithín Gallagher*

ALAN EARLEY, former *Leitrim Guardian Literary Award* winner, son of Luke and Ann Earley, Mohill, has released the 2nd book in his trilogy "*The Father of Lies Chronicles*". The book entitled *Arthur Quinn and the Fenris Wolf*, published by Mercier Press, is available from all good bookstores. It continues the adventures of Arthur Quinn.

Life is finally back to normal for Arthur Quinn...Three months ago, he and his friends almost died stopping the Trickster God Loki from destroying the world. But just when Arthur is starting to relax again, the dreams start once more; dreams of gods, dreams of war, dreams of wolves. It can mean only one thing. Loki is back.

Who is the Fenris Wolf of Arthur's visions? Can he trust his two odd new classmates? And what's in the National Museum that Loki is so desperate to get at? Mysteries and questions arise as, once again, it's down to Arthur Quinn, his friends and a dead Viking to save the world.

But what they don't know is that this time, Loki has help...

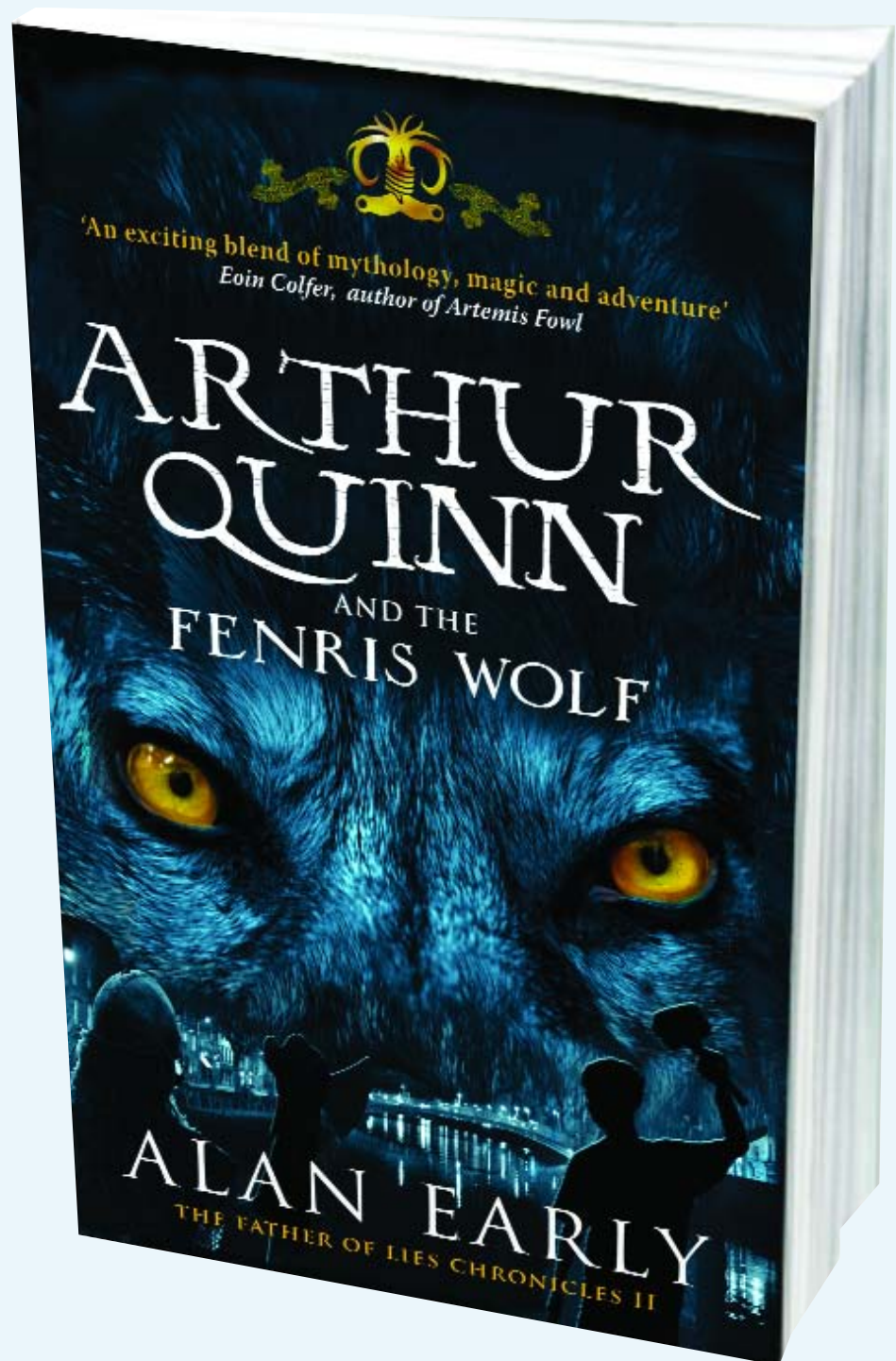
Alan has kindly forwarded the *Leitrim Guardian* an excerpt from the book.

ARTHUR QUINN AND THE FENRIS WOLF by Alan Earley  
**Prologue**

The last wolf in Ireland was slaughtered over two hundred years ago. In times before that, they freely roamed the Irish countryside. They slept and hid

during the day and prowled the land at night, feeding on livestock and men too weak or stupid to escape them. But man fought back. And by the late

1700s, all wolves were eradicated from Irish soil. So if someone had wandered through a certain Irish forest in the early twenty-first century, they might have



been surprised to find a wild wolf lapping at water from a stream.

The glow of the near-full moon hanging over the forest highlighted the tall, bare trees. Fresh frost glistened on the hard and mossy ground, while sheer ice formed at the stream's edge. The wolf was covered in grey fur, matted around the legs with caked mud. He was a young wolf, no larger than an average Labrador, but with lean muscles in his shoulders bobbing up and down as he drank up the cool water.

He had been on his own for three nights now, heading north, heading home. Nothing felt better than leaving the rest of the pack for a few days once a year, for time by himself, time to think, time to run, time to hunt. But food was scarce in this part of the country. He'd devoured a hedgehog on the first night but had found nothing since. His stomach rumbled, paining him. He wasn't drinking the water out of thirst but rather to fill his stomach.

He was so grateful for the water that he didn't hear or smell the wolf on the opposite side of the stream.

The second wolf was unquestionably larger and broader than the first. It didn't have the same malnourished look as the grey one, but appeared sturdy and well fed. Its fur was golden blond—lustrous and thick—with a black stripe running down its back. It stood on a rock by the stream, not drinking, barely breathing, merely watching the grey wolf.

The water felt good on the grey wolf's tongue, though it was so cold it stung the nerves of his teeth. If the weather continued as cold as it had been, the stream would be frozen over in another night or two. The ice at the edge

was sure to spread. As he slurped up the water, he studied it for the first time, noticing thin icicles dipping along on the stream. No doubt these had broken off from the branches of trees further upriver. It was while watching one of these icicles that he spotted the golden wolf's reflection.

Without even chancing a look at the wolf on the other side of the stream, the grey wolf bolted in the opposite direction. He'd just reached the cover of the undergrowth when he heard the golden wolf follow, splashing in and out of the stream in one fluid motion.

The grey wolf knew it would do no good to hide. If the other wolf could smell him as well as he could now smell it, then his only option was to outrun it. He raced through the undergrowth, diving headfirst into the darkness with briars and branches swatting him in the face and tearing at his coat. And all the while, the golden wolf pursued.

As he plunged deeper into the forest, the grey wolf recognised some landmarks: a certain mossy stone, a gnarled branch, a tree that had been split by lightning. He'd come this way only minutes beforehand, when he was searching for the stream. He quickly formed a plan. If he turned off course fast enough, then he might trick the golden wolf into following the scent he'd left on the track earlier, and this would give him enough time to escape.

He took a deep breath and broke off to the left as swiftly as he could. He was moving so fast now he couldn't hear if he'd shaken the other wolf. The muscles in his legs were burning by the time he came upon a felled tree stump. The stump was lying on its side. It was hollow and large enough for him to

crouch down inside. He crawled in on his belly, held his breath and listened to the woods around him.

Silence. Not so much as a breeze rustled the dead leaves on the ground. Total silence.

The wolf stayed there and watched the moon until it had moved what he judged to be a good distance across the sky. Then he cautiously emerged.

Suddenly something was on him, turning him around and pinning him down on his back. He looked up to see the golden wolf there, fangs bared and growling.

The grey wolf started to struggle, but it was no use. A green light unexpectedly flowed out of his captor's eyes. The radiance covered him entirely, obscuring the other animal. It was momentarily so bright that the grey wolf was forced to close his eyes, then suddenly it faded away. The golden wolf was gone now. There was a man in its place, his hand locked on the wolf's throat. His hair was platinum blond and his nose was long and stately. His facial hair had been shaved into a neat, modern beard. He wore a three-piece suit underneath a black coat that reached down to his shins.

Terrified, the grey wolf yapped and whined. The man just smiled. The grin went from ear to ear, exposing two rows of sparkling white teeth.

'Who am I?' the man said, as if in response to the wolf's whimpering. 'I am the Trickster Lord, the God of Mischief, the Father of Lies. I am Loki.' He leaned forward, tightening his grip on the wolf. 'Now it's your turn to answer me. Where are the others?'

*You can find out more at:*

[www.arthurquinn.ie](http://www.arthurquinn.ie)