

Airy Faerie

Winter, 2003



Now Presenting...Faeries on Ice

Publisher's Notes

WOOSH! OH MY GODDESS! LOOK OUT! Oh my! That deadline just about hit me in the head. I hate it when deadlines go whooshing by. Well as you can see the Winter Airy Faerie didn't make the December 21 2003 deadline, but that's OK 'cuz it is still winter, so we are still good to go!

I don't know what it is about this time of year that has me busier than a bee, but I just have not been able to properly manage my time. I'll blame the holidays.

ANYWAY... Welcome to the Winter issue of the Airy Faerie, and what an issue it is! In this issue the Denver Faeries share their Earthy thoughts with us. Some of them didn't even know they were sharing their thoughts. (Won't they be surprised to read their thoughts in black and white?) Some faeries have blessed us with words of wit, wisdom and beauty. Also this issue begins the adventures of a young prince, in a short story, that will be told one chapter at a time.

Thanks go to Tor for the meditation article on page 14. He contacted the Children of the Law of One for permission prior to submitting this to us.

Special thanks go to Monkey. He sends us such wonderful poetry on his own. Then, as we are working on putting an issue together we find that we need that something extra to fill in some of the layout holes, and Monkey has the gift of filling in our holes (in our dreams, sigh). This issue was no exception, we sent him a note one morning and the *Deep Earth Prayer* on page 15 was in our in-box that evening.

Once again the pages will be decked with some pretty sexy artwork, if I do say so myself. So if your upset by images of naked males, or naked males having sex, go no further. However, if you enjoy that kind of thing (and I am guessing you do), and your old enough to do so legally do so, please proceed.

I hope you enjoy this issue, please remember feedback is welcomed. If the weather allows, find a cozy piece of earth to plant yourself, sit back, and enjoy the earthy winter issue of the Airy Faerie.

XOXO
DS

Airy Faerie Winter 2003



The Airy Faerie is a publication of the Denver Radical Faerie Tribe.

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The Penn St. Perk
(13th Ave. at Pennsylvania),
Satyrday Mornings
About 10ish to around noonish

Some Earthy Fun!

Just for some giggles and grins, place the Earthy quote with the faerie who you think might have said it.

We sent our nosy, off the beat AF reporter to get some quotes on what the Denver Faeries thought about the element earth. Here are the quotes that he came back with.

- 1 *"The Earth? Well, it's kind of earthy."*
- 2 *"The earth is our bodies, and our bodies are temples...well in your case it's the temple of doom!"*

3 *"I like the Earth, it's much better than Mars, but not as nice as Uranus."*

4 *"The Earth is the element most often associated with direction of North, and sometimes with the color of green or black. Earth is our body, our home, and our life. It is the grounding energy that keeps us connected to the Goddess and God. Even though the earth is where all life comes from it is commonly connected to the cold, barren winter. While others connect it to the warm womb of the Goddess."*

5 *"What? You want my thoughts on the earth? Oh, OK. Well the earth is...Oh my gawd look at the yummy bubble butt on that stud! WOOF! I would love to munch on that hot ass! I'm sorry what were you saying?"*

6 *"Yeah I like the Earth. So what about it?"*

7 *"Do you know you have something in your teeth?"*

8 *"Well let's see, the earth is an element that blah blah blah and the God blah blah blah...OK I have said way too much. You have enough for an earth novel blah blah blah..."*

Now pick the Faerie from the Denver Radical Faerie Tribe that you think would be mostly likely to say one of the above quotes.

- A Hank, Beast, McCoy Ph.D
- B Syn R. G.
- C Turtle
- D Tigerling
- E Sadalia
- F Lon
- G Glenn
- H Tor

Answers: This is just a bit of fun, none of these earthy thoughts were submitted or reported as being said by any of the Denver Faeries. This was just for fun! It's a joke son, you can laugh now.

A Monkey Contemplates Earth

by Monkey

I sit on the Earth and ask Her for inspiration.

I ask Mother Earth, "How should I dress today?"
She answers, "How do you walk in silence with your Kylee?"

I ask Mother Earth, "What should I have for lunch today?"
She answers, "Have you heard about what is going on in Africa?"

I ask of Mother Earth, "Please help me get home in time to enjoy myself."
She replies, "How much is a gallon of my friends-gone-past these days?"

I don't know much about Earth as in my mind I live my life far above Her grounding energy.
Gemini-Monkey-Fucked-Up-Bouncy-Uncontrolled mind.
I know that in my life, those who are connected to Her by birth sign have surrounded me.

There is Peace when I stand still and feel the movement of Her presence.
There is Peace when I realize that I can never know the immensity of Her moving.

The Horned One stands in marvel of the creation that His Seed has spent.

Mother and Father surround me and the immensity of it all makes me bow my head in honor.

What is an Enlightened Monkey in the realization of Mother Earth? What is the purpose of my whining pleas when faced with the grandeur of life abundant against the struggle of my very own actions?

Earth, she is my Mother.
Earth, she is Genesis.
Earth, she moves and replenishes independent of my worry.
Earth, she longs for peace in the world.
Earth, she longs for peace in my pace.
(Slow down, you move too fast. You gotta make the moment last now.)

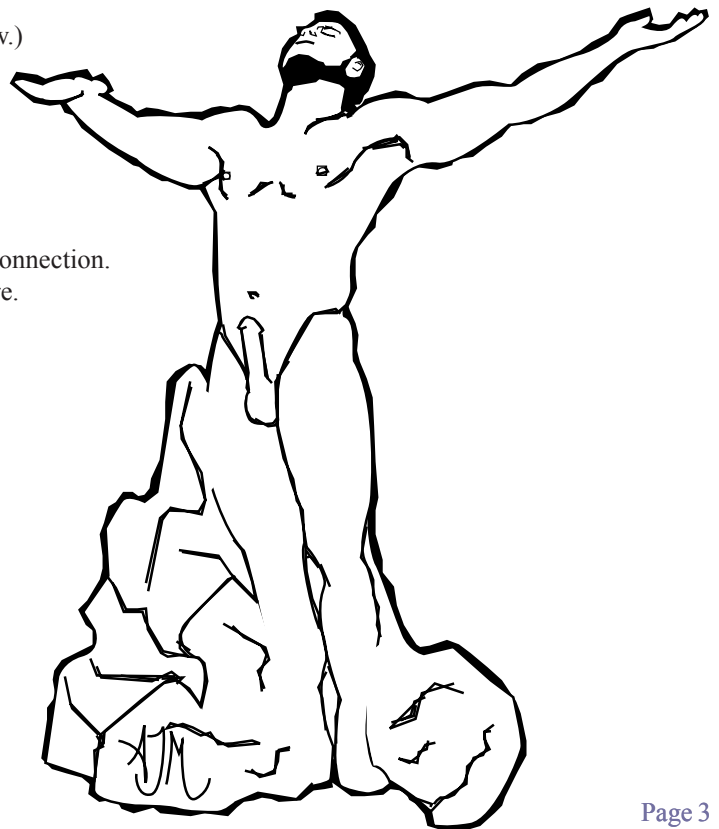
Earth.
She is The Eternal.
She is The Independent.
She is The Inspiration of Impetus.

In longing, the Great Cock of the Horned One sent out His urge for connection.
The Mother accepted the plea for generation and, long after, I am here.

I am here.

I stand upon Her.
She asks not of my income. She asks not of my appearance.
She asks not of my accomplishments.
She merely asks me to walk softly upon Her
and to live in peace with Her Children.

"Am I a product of evolution and science?
Am I possibly more than those around me are?" I ask.
"Did you see the beauty of the light of the
Full Moon on My Mountains just the other morning?" She replies.





The Three Graces

In This Season

by Monkey

Blustery, wintry day

Up and down the streets
Wild winds do blow
Bringing sheets upon sheets
Of ice and worry

Delay finds me content
To take my time and find
The path of safety in a
Dangerous world

Distracted by who knows what
I pace and stare and
Miss the marvel of what is around me
For the keeping of gold

Upon return I find a new (not new) scent
At my threshold
And curse my own failings
Knowing all the while that Habit awaits me at night

But there!

What is that?

Can it be?

The Great Spirit has given me a gift.

In one unseen moment in time
Art and beauty
So frail and surreal
Peels my eye in a moment of respite

And in this season
I am still able to find
A miracle to share
With the one that I love

12/15/2003

Hard as a Rock

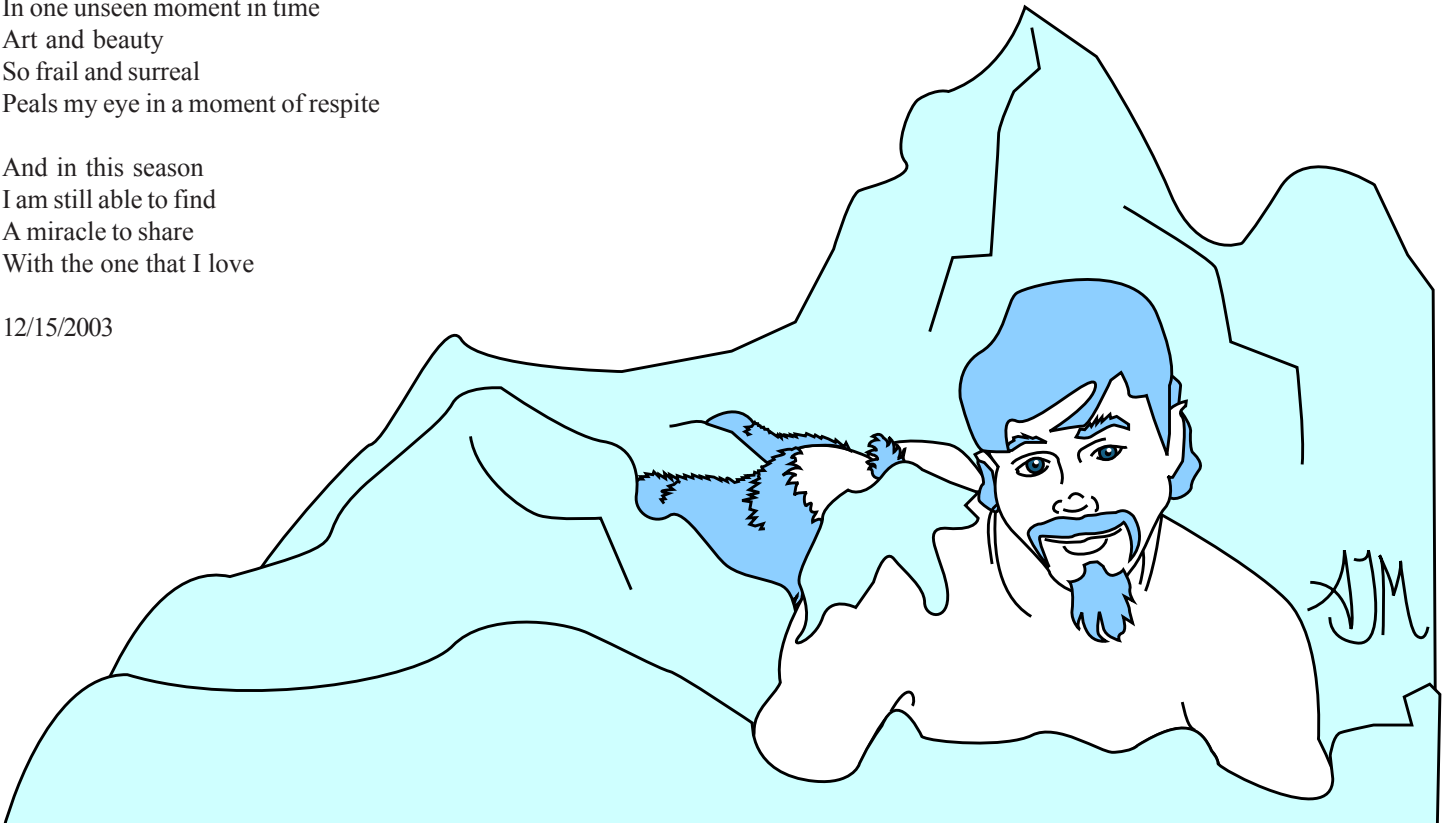
By Orpheus

A body sculpted, as fine as any work of art,
Muscles toned with perfection.
With each repetition of each little move,
A human body can be shaped to look like a God.

With the patience of an artist, the body is refined.
To find perfect symmetry and balance of form
The world stops to worship what you have created,
A body to rival the finest Greek statue.

But I say give me the statue of stone,
For with the block of marble, the artist softened the edges,
And with each repetition of each little move.
The stone can be shaped to look like a man.

To give the stone life, the artist fills it with love,
And those who see it, we expect it to breathe.
But, you with the body of a God,
The human softness is gone, for you are as hard as a rock.



Earth Memories

by Darlene Fey

Warm winter hugs to all you earthy faeries out there. This quarter we pause to ponder the earth. My thoughts are quickly drawn to the dirt. I feel so close to the earth when my feet are touching dirt. Walking barefoot in a grassy meadow, on the sandy beach, or in mud puddles after a rainstorm. Who doesn't like the feeling of mud squishing between their toes?

Of course there are mud baths so you can get the whole body into the act! Now for some of us more "earthy" types, we require a larger mud puddle than some. It is bizarre to find out that you are really cleaning yourself when you roll around in the mud. I believe it has something to do with the mud drawing out the crude that is in your pores and what not. Do you know that some people in France pay lots of money to be soaking in a mud bath? And to think I use to take mud bath for free about once a week down at my Uncle's farm.

I remember the time I took my first mud bath, I was just 18. It was a warm spring evening after a rainstorm. I had gone out after the rain had stopped to enjoy the fresh air. It all started innocently enough. I took off just my rubbers, shoes and socks to allow the cool mud to squish between my toes. Oh how wonderful that felt. Well, then out behind the barn I came upon my older cousin sitting naked in a deep pool of mud. I was surprised to see his tall, firm corn-fed body all covered in mud, naked as the day he was born. Well except for the mud, I don't think he was covered in mud the day he was born, ANYWAY! He didn't seem to mind the fact that I was watching him enjoying the mud; in fact he invited me to join him. When I protested, he shooed my worries aside like flies at the dinner table, and well, I never could say no to those deep baby blue eyes so I took off my frock, and slid in next to Hunk... I mean Hank!

We had such a wonderful time that we started running out during a rainstorm, just to play in the mud. A few times we even pulled out a long hose and made our own mud! Ok, that is enough of me babbling on about mud baths with my cousin Hank! In closing let me just say; the Earth is an element that we should enjoy, so go on out and let it squish between your toes or whatever you wish!

Earth Thoughts

by DragonSwan

Before I began to write my DOWN thoughts about the earth I took a moment to ground myself, so that my thoughts would be more focused. Although I don't think any amount of grounding could help my scattered thoughts. When I think about the earth, my visions are of a thriving garden, where the soil is so rich and full of life you can feel the vibration of the earth's heartbeat; the towering mountains, that offer challenges, and rewards; the dry desert, which often looks like a ocean without the water; the lush forest, full of life, mysteries and magic. The earth to me is the loving Goddess and Mother. She is the one who gives life, and heals the wounds of the world. I use the earth for grounding, healing or anything dealing with the physical. I am going to share a earth body meditation so I think this will do it for me for now.

M

by Monkey

may my garments be ones of mystery
may my allure come from the fruit of my own imagination

there is a state of bliss
a stasis of the soul that is beyond beauty and possession

may I find the place of peace in Love
may my Love be the blossom of illumination

Namaste





Night Seduction

Meditation on the Sacred Sanctuary. *by DragonSwan*

Take a moment to make yourself comfortable. Breathe deep, hold it for a second then breathe out. Continue to breath deeply as you allow your body to relax. Imagine yourself connected to the earth, feel yourself becoming one with the earth. Feel the rich life giving soil feeding you the very essence of life. Imagine the forces of life pulsating through the soil and into you. Allow the energy of the earth to fill you, and then pass through you, connecting you to all of the creatures that share the magic of life.

Picture in your mind a holy sanctuary. A place that is very sacred, and the presents of the God and Goddess are so strong, you can feel their love, and their power just standing outside the structure. Explore the sanctuary. What are the walls made out of? Are there a lot of windows? Do they open to the inside? How many doors does it have? What are they made of? Walk into the sanctuary; is there an aroma in the air? Venture into the sanctuary and look around. Enjoy the beauty, and sacredness of the building and all the items inside. You are alone in this building, but you can feel the presence of the God and Goddess around you. As you reach the altar, the heart of the sanctuary, the God and Goddess

appear to you. They tell you that you are to be the keeper of this sanctuary. You are to maintain and keep the temple clean and in good repair. The Goddess smiles softly, and touches your cheek. "Do you not realize that this building is nothing more then your body? There is nothing more sacred then the flesh and bone that creates you. You are the holy temple where the God and Goddess dwell. And you must tend this sacred space, as you would any home. Be good to yourself, and be well."

With this the Goddess and God give you a kiss, and they wrap you in their powers. Feel the energies swirl around you and then enter your body. Let the energies of the God and Goddess fill your being. Know that you are whole, you are perfect, that you are a divine child of the God and Goddess, and that they are forever with you. In you, they have created a beautiful and wonderful treasure.

Come back to reality and ask yourself: What is the current state of the sacred sanctuary that they have given you? How do you maintain this holy temple?

Many Blessing,
Blessed Be.

Quest for the Crystal Phoenix - Chapter 1: Of Gardens and Valleys

by Orpheus

It was a cold December when the prince was born. The prince's golden locks shone brightly in the gray morning light. When King Adam Solari saw his son, he proclaimed, "Just as the Sun King was born on this Solstice night, so too is my son born. His name shall be Apollo in honor of the Gods of our Ancestors. May his light shine forth in times of darkness."

After the birth of her son, Queen Iris never regained her youthful health. Each day she would consult with the herbalists of the land to see what alternatives could be found to ease her pain. Each day a new potion would be tried. Some provided a momentary relief, but in the end none could prevent the final tragedy. Early in the autumn, as the harvests came in, the Queen ordered a basket of apples to be brought to the nursery. Later, when the Queen's maid went to help her prepare for supper, she was found dead, having choked on one of the apples that had been said were good to keep the doctor away.

The King laid his wife in a glass coffin and sent word to her royal parents in the northern kingdom of Rianglet. As was the custom of the time, the Queen was to return to her homeland to be cremated. Her ashes were to be scattered with those of her foremothers in the Garden of the Queens. A special pink iris had been cultivated to honor her birth, a white one to honor her marriage, a yellow one to honor the birth of her son, and a black dwarf iris would be grown to mark her death after a short life. Each of these special iris would be placed in the garden with her remains. Through the flowers, those who visit the garden will know the story of her life as well as the stories of the other Queens who went before her.

Much was discussed about what to do with the young prince. Both King Adam and King William wanted a hand in raising the child as he was the sole heir of both kingdoms. In the end, it was Queen Rose's arguments that won out. She insisted that the child needed a mother's care. As it would be incorrect on many levels for King Adam to remarry so soon after the death of his Queen and she, on the other hand, was a mother without a child to care for, it only made sense for her to step in and raise the child.

Each summer, Queen Rose and the young prince traveled south to stay with King Adam. While father and son were honing some of the finer skills of life, such as skipping stones on the pond and toasting marshmallows to golden perfection, the Queen would spend time trying to ferret out the dark secret of her daughter's death. She knew that the marriage had been one of royal duty for both Adam and Iris. She also knew that hers was a long line of women blessed in childbirth and the fact that Iris was sick after the birth of Apollo was highly strange. With the heir born, King Adam would have no need to keep the wife he didn't love and could take up with his mistress (or mistresses) once again. The queen spent her time chatting with the ladies of the court and even the maids and serving girls trying to find out who dared win Adam's affection over her daughter. She watched the ladies flirt with the king, but never did she hear gossip of who warmed the king's bed late at night.

As Apollo grew, the summer visits grew longer. The King and Prince would spend time riding around the countryside. Still not satisfied, the Queen questioned the royal physicians. Each confirmed what the others said. Iris had refused their services saying that she did not trust their chemical medicines. She was a child of the earth and only wanted potions made of things she herself grew or gathered from the forest.

At the end of the seventh summer, the Queen, being frustrated in her search, finally asked Lady Jedra, mother of one of the prettiest maidens in the court, if she thought the King was sleeping with her daughter. She was quite bewildered by the question and said, "Your Majesty, I don't know how things are done in your country, but we here in Adbalm learned long ago that our Kings and Queens, for all their royalty, are still people. So much of their lives are on display that the one piece of humanity that we can give them is privacy. We have seen our neighbors embroiled in scandal over innuendos and rumors and decided that the best way to maintain harmony is to not engage in gossip. If the monarch chooses to make public those whom they share physical companionship, that is something that is discussed by the couple. Otherwise, all parties keep silent and no one knows for certain who is 'most favored' by keeping score of who gets how many royal visits. Sorry, but if you want the answer to your question, you will have to ask King Adam directly."

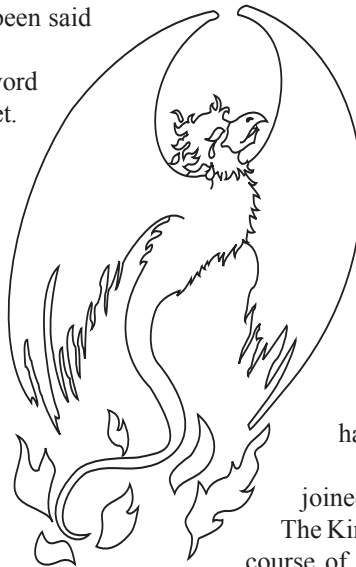
That summer, and each one thereafter, the King joined Rose and Apollo on the return trip to Rianglet. The Kings would sit with Apollo's teachers to plan out his course of studies for the following year. It was on one of these northward journeys that Queen Rose finally asked her son-in-law if he was ever going to remarry and give his son a mother. To this he replied, "My Lady, how can I think of think of settling for less than perfection? Iris was the fairest of the land. To settle for less than the standard she set would be to dishonor her memory."

"Surely, Adam, there is a new 'fairest of the land' that could sit by your side."

"Aye, there is one that rivals Iris's beauty. But alas, King William is still alive and his widow is not yet available for marriage."

With that, the Queen blushed and was diverted onto other subjects. She knew it would be folly to ask again. For if she did, the answer would be the same. In her heart, she knew that something was not being said about her daughter's death. What she wasn't certain of was who was the person who wasn't speaking? She would let the matter rest for a while. Maybe a son searching for answers could find out more than a mother. She would use the next few years to teach Apollo to ask the right questions.

The young prince was an eager student. History was his favorite academic class, which was a good thing. As heir to two thrones he had to learn the tales of both countries. Apollo had always loved the adventures of knights going off on fantastic quests. Now he loved them all the more as he learned about the real lives of the heroes that became the legends he heard as bedtime stories. For



all the fancy embellishments of the bards, they were real live people and if he was lucky, one day he might get to hold something that belonged to one of them.

Geography was another of subjects that fascinated him. With the yearly travel to Adbalm, the Prince often asked his grandmother where did that road go or what was over that hill. She quickly learned that giving him a map of their route would quiet most of his questions. In class he was amazed that for all the distance between his two homes, there was that much more to the world than he could have imaged. He dreamed of the day when he could travel to some of the more exotic lands such as Timlirados and Simbacucu.

Weapons work was a mixed blessing for young Apollo. He had a steady eye and arm for the bow and arrow. Once he learned the art of aiming it was rare that he missed this target. Alas, his sword work had much room for improvement. One day after an extremely frustrating session Sir Rondar, his weapons teacher, threw up his hands and said, "Class, please take note of this and burn it in your memory. One day, Prince Apollo will be King and may need to lead you into battle. If the fight comes to a point where he is forced to draw his sword, keep your eyes firmly on your opponent. For as certain as the sun will come up in the morning, when he draws his sword, he will slice his belt in two and his pants will fall around his

knees. At that point, the enemy will be laughing so hard that it will be easy for you to win the battle."

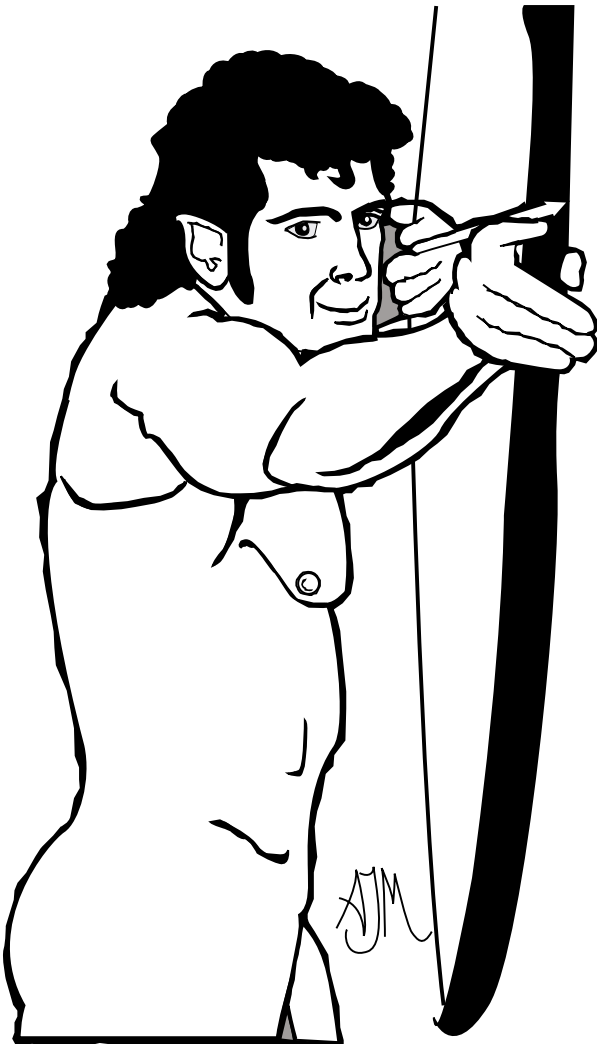
One class was a challenge for Apollo. It wasn't that he couldn't memorize all his lessons. It was that he could never understand why it was important. Add to that the fact that the teacher for the class was Queen Rose herself. Each morning they would meet in the throne room for an hour of "Royal Etiquette." The Queen would go over all the details of the proper behavior of royalty, all the little things one needed to remember when greeting guests. One slip of protocol could mean the start of a war. And then there were the sessions before the great banquets each month...which fork was used for which course. While the Prince loved the pageantry, he never quite understood the need to spend fifteen minutes introducing each guest at dinner when they all had sat down for lunch together that same afternoon. If they would simply announce the names like they did in his Father's court, they could finish the meal in the time it takes to herald in the first four guests. Apollo knew better than to ask his grandmother about this. When she was in her royal finery and holding court, she was at her best. None would doubt that she was the most regal Queen in all the lands and Apollo knew that he was fortunate to have her expertise to learn from...if only it didn't seem so boring. He decided that maybe that understanding would come when he actually had to preside over a function.

All was not hard work in the tedious training of a Prince for Apollo and his grandmother. They often spent long afternoons in the Garden of the Queens. They would trim the dead blossoms and save the seeds to be given to all who wished them for their own gardens. While at their tasks, Rose shared each of the stories of the past Queens and taught the Prince the secret language of the flowers. She told him how this white flower with a blood red spot represented a Queen who died while giving birth. These shimmering white flowers were the symbols of true, pure love and it is said that those who knew the this particular Queen said she glowed when she was with her love. If Queen Rose took extra care to foster Apollo's interest in the herb garden, no one noticed.

When he was twelve, King Adam took his son on a camping trip to the mountains. Apollo loved these trips for it was just the two of them. This was a time for father and son to be alone without all the hubbub of the court. The guards would follow them to a base camp but then Adam would lead his son to a second camp several miles away from the guards so they could be alone. This year's excursion was special, for they were going on a month long trip to the "Valley of the Kings." Unlike the Queens' garden in Riangle, this valley was for the living. Ashes weren't scattered to honor the dead. The valley was a pristine retreat where the King could sit in solitude and allow the fresh air to cleanse the mind. When Apollo saw the waterfall cascading into the crystal clear lake, he gasped and said, "Father, this is so beautiful. Why haven't we come here before?"

To that King Adam said, "It has been the tradition of our family for generations on end to introduce our sons to the valley on the last summer of their childhood. You are now far enough into your studies to be able to appreciate coming to a place that is filled with quiet. As you get older and start to take up your duties as Prince,

-continued on next page



Quest for the Crystal Phoenix continued

this valley will be one of the few places where we can totally forget for a moment that we are King and Prince and we can simply be a father and son.”

They stored their supplies in the small shelter nestled in a grove and headed to the lake. When they got to the shore, the King noticed his son’s reluctance to strip and jump into the water with his usual enthusiasm. He asked his son about his sudden shyness.

“My Father, Queen Rose has told me that it is unseemly for one to be naked in the outdoors. It might be tolerated in the babes who don’t know better. As a Royal, it would be scandalous for someone to come upon me and find that I am romping around as a child. As you said, this is the last summer of childhood, and I thought should start to act as befitting my station. Besides, I didn’t think to bring proper bathing clothes.”

With a heavy sigh, the King realized that he had not been paying close enough attention to what his mother-in-law had been telling his son. “Apollo, your grandmother and I disagree on many things and this is but one example. Let us look at what you have said in a logical manner.

“First, yes, you are royal, but never let that make you forget that you are human. While the people would be upset if you acted like a child having a temper tantrum when a toy broke, none would think twice to find you splashing around having fun. If one of them were to stumble upon us, they would apologize for interrupting our reverie.

“Second, you are growing into manhood. Don’t ever forget that you were once a child. Yes, the child doesn’t know better about being naked, for it is innocent. Think about it a moment...if they, who are innocent want to be naked, what is it that we as adults should be guilty of that we need to remain clothed at all times? The child’s naked romps are not merely ‘tolerated.’ Most adults look at them with secret longings, wishing we too could have that child-spirit and recapture the days when we too stripped and ran around naked.

“Last, on many levels, it is good to be rid of clothes. We are born into this world naked and we honor the Gods when we can step into the world in our skin. We are here in this most natural environment. The creatures of the forest are clothed only in their skin and shouldn’t that be good enough for us? We do not wear clothes when we bathe so why should we be required to wear something when immerse ourselves in the pool of the Forest Gods?

“And besides all that, it’s fun!” With that, the King had finished stripping, and pushed his son into the water, clothes and all. After much splashing about and wrestling around, Apollo shed his clothes and left them on a branch to dry. Later, as the two stretched out on the grass to take an afternoon nap, Apollo said, “Father, I have to admit it feels good to be naked. The sun feels so good on my

skin. I could wish that I never had to put clothes on again.”

The King said, “I can’t give you forever, but I decree that until we go home, no clothes will be allowed in the campsite.”

Over the next few days, they had many long talks and Adam would quiz his son on some of the fun historical trivia about his ancestors. Sometimes they would practice with swords. With his father’s patient guidance, Apollo began to lose some of his awkwardness with the blade. Sometimes they would just sit and watch the sunset, imaging the pictures that the Gods were painting with the clouds. Looking at one spectacular sunset, Adam said, “Son, we don’t always have the luxury of being able to leave the castle and come to this place to clear our minds. Sometimes we need

to bring the valley to the castle.” Adam spent time that evening teaching his son some of the meditations he had learned that allow him to sit in the castle and recapture the stillness of the place.

One evening, Adam saw his son staring at the evening star and asked him if he was wishing for something. “Not really,” was his reply. “I was wondering something, but I don’t know if I have the right to ask.”

“Son, you can always ask. I may not always be able to answer, but you can always ask.”

“I see the other children doing things with their parents and I often wonder what it would be like to have a mother. Why haven’t you ever remarried? Is it true that you are waiting for Grandfather to die so you can marry Queen Rose?”

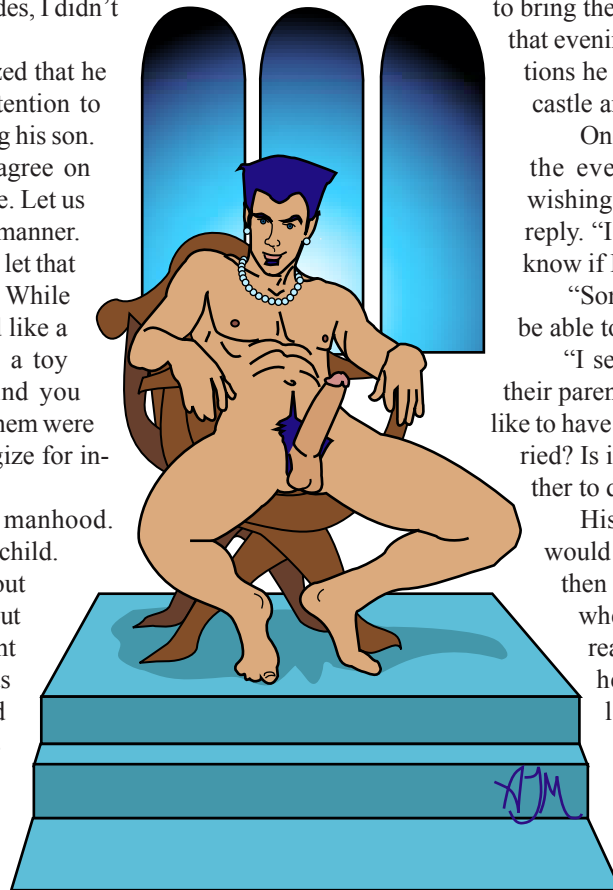
His father laughed and said, “I knew that would come back and haunt me one day.” He then explained how he had distracted Rose when she had asked a similar question. “I really should remember to not joke with her. She always seems to take things literally. The answer is a little more complicated than that.

“Long before I met your mother, there was another that I loved dearly. Unfortunately, for reasons I can’t explain without their permission, they were unable to provide me the one thing I needed most...an heir. I was

twenty-five and hadn’t made a suitable marriage yet so my parents took matters in hand and contracted with King William for me to marry Princess Iris. I know I hurt the other deeply when I turned my back on them and married your mother. The few times I’ve seen them in the years since the marriage we have barely talked. ‘Nice weather’ and chit chat about how you are growing kind of conversations. Never have I seen them with the love in their eyes that tells me that I could ask them to forgive me. My biggest regret in life is that I couldn’t have found a way to be true to my duty as Prince and not hurt another. Until I can figure that out, I decided that I would remain alone.”

“What was my mother like?”

“You have seen the paintings, and she was even more beautiful



than the most skilled artist could capture. She was the perfect Queen, gracious, poised and all who met her loved her. As a King, she was everything that I could ask for from a Queen. As a husband, well, I think her mother was too perfect in her education of her daughter. For all the time that we were together, I don't know if I ever met 'Iris the Woman.' I think I only got to know 'Queen Iris.' I often wondered if she too had some great tragic love that was denied when her parents ordered her to marry. She never said and I couldn't ask."

Father and son got quiet as they each thought about what was said. After a while, Apollo broke the silence, "Do you love me?"

"Of course I do," said Adam. "Why would you wonder about that?"

"You said that the only reason you married Mother was to produce an heir. I thought, well maybe you might not love me because I represent what you lost."

"Life is so complicated. You might not be the son of the person that I loved the most but that doesn't mean that I love you any less for it. I did love your mother in my own quiet way. I wish that she hadn't died so young so that she could watch you grow into manhood."

"How did she die? I know that she choked on an apple, but Grandmother seems to believe that there was more to her death than a mere accident."

Adam paused a moment and then said, "As I said earlier, there are many things that Rose and I don't agree on, but this isn't one of them. All the years prior to your birth, Iris was in the best of health. One day while she was pregnant with you, a courier arrived with a special letter for her. After that day, her spirit seemed drained and she went about her duties with little enthusiasm. After you were born, she received another letter and an ornately carved box. When she read the letter, all color drained from her face. Her health got progressively worse after that and she was like a person already dead."

"Do you know what was in the box?"

"I don't know. I asked, but she wouldn't tell me and it would have been rude to ask again. When she died I could find neither of the letters nor the box. The only thing I found was this key that I wear around my neck. I'm hoping that it belongs to the box and that someday I might find what it contains."

"Thank you for telling me about Mother. Maybe she sent something to the castle in Riangle and I will find it there for you. All this talk has given me much to think about and there is something that I would like to give you as payment." With an impish gleam in his eye, he pushed his father into the lake.

After much frolic and splashing about, the two pulled themselves out of the water to settle down for the evening. "Thank you, son. I needed that. After all those memories, I needed the laughter."

All too soon they came to their final evening in the valley. "Father, thank you for sharing this place with me. It is all the more special to me for the fact that it is just ours to share. But something is bothering me. Even though it is just the two of us, I have often felt that there is someone watching us."

"I was wondering if you would notice. Actually there are many who have watched us these past weeks but they have stayed away because we haven't invited them to join us. There is one here now

that we can't deny."

"If you know who they are, then by all means let us invite them to join us. Does this mean I have to get dressed now?"

His father replied, "You just did the first and it's too late for the second. Turn around."

With that, he saw his father drop to his knee and bow his head. Apollo turned around and saw the most handsome man standing next to a golden steed. He didn't know why, but he knew it was right to pay homage to this man and dropped to his knee as well.

"Adam, you silly fool. You know better than that. I may be a God, but while we are here we are just two old friends. Just as you like to come here to forget about being a King, so too I like to forget once in a while and remember what it feels like to be human and to be with friends."

Apollo looked up to see the visitor pull his father up from the ground and give him a big bear hug. It was only after they pulled apart that Apollo noticed that the God was as naked as the two of them. Apollo cast his eyes down for he felt embarrassed. The God's body was perfect in every way that a young adolescent could wish for that they didn't have themselves. Tall with broad shoulders and deep chest with every muscle rippling with energy. He had seen the guards without their shirts but other than his father, he had never seen a nude male. It didn't seem right to stare at a God. Even more embarrassing was that his father was smiling in a way that he hadn't seen before and some of the sorrow of the past seemed to have melted away.

"Adam, don't you think it's time you introduce me to my namesake?"

"Son, I want you to meet His Most Excellent Holiness, Keeper of the Solar Chariot..."

"Adam, cut the bull. Do that again and I'll do something to embarrass your son even more than simply giving you a hug. Hello Apollo, I'm Apollo. See how simple that is."

With the appearance of the God, the other spirits of the valley came out of hiding. The Prince met his first fauns, elves and centaurs. It all seemed too wonderful to him and he wanted to stay up all night until it was time to leave in the morning. The excitement proved too much and all too soon he found himself drifting to sleep. As he crawled into his bedroll, he saw his father and the God stand and embrace once again and head towards the forest.

When the Prince awoke in the morning, the sun was high in the sky. His father was sitting by the fire looking out to the lake. "Good morning, sleepyhead. I trust you had a good rest."

"Father, I had the strangest dream last night where a God came to visit us, and elves and all sorts of magical creatures. It seemed so real that I could even feel their touch."

No sooner had the words left his lips when he saw the golden steed. "No, young Apollo. It was no dream." He felt a pair of powerful hands on his shoulders. "Come with me. You too, Adam." The God put his arm around each of their waists and he led them to the top of one of the hilltops that overlooked the valley.

"Thank you for sharing this time with me. It is not often that I get to relax in such company. You have been so successful in the task that I nearly forgot to tell you the things I came here to say.

—continued on next page

Quest for the Crystal Phoenix continued

"Adam Solari, you once could light up a room with your smile. The clouds of pain have dimmed it in recent years. It has been good to see you smile and hear you laugh, if only for a short while. There is one that longs to see that smile again. Once, you were forced to make a choice and had to make a decision knowing that one day you would be King. While you have said that you wish that the other would come back into your life, in your heart you know that it is you that needs to take that first step and go to them. They have been waiting for you all these years. What are you waiting for? You are the King and it time for you to act like one."

"I know," said Adam. "But there is still that little boy inside that worries that they won't want me after all these years."

"When you see them next, look into their eyes and you will know that your fears are groundless. You are filled with so much love. Let your light shine once again and give your people a reason to celebrate."

He turned to face the Prince and squatted down so that he could look directly into the Prince's eyes. "Young man, you are in every way your father's son and I am proud to share a name with you. I was worried that you would become dependent on what Queen Rose said and not learn to think for yourself. I am glad that I was wrong. For you, I have two gifts. One for now and one that you can use in the future."

"My Lord, seeing my father smile is all the gift I need. Being with you this past day is all the gift I need. There is nothing more that I could want from you."

The God laughed. "Adam, I said that he is your son in every way. He certainly has gotten your gift of flattery. I stand corrected then, four gifts I give you. The first is your father's smile if he follows my advise. The second is a promise of many more visits and we can gift each other with gay company in the years to come.

"Third, you have a fire inside of you that no matter how people will try to bring you down and put it out, you will find a way to burst into flames and rise above it all. For this, I give you your second name." The god reached over and traced a design on Apollo's upper arm. The God's finger felt warm on his flesh. When he looked down at his arm there was bird shape etched into the skin. "Henceforth, you shall be known as Apollo Phoenix. Let my mark be a symbol to all that you have my blessing in all that you do.

"And the last gift is for some hope in the future. The Fates have seen that you, like your father, will have to make a choice between Love and Duty. They have seen many possible paths for you. When things look darkest, if you look for the Crystal Phoenix you will find a way to be true to both."

With much to think about, the three descended the hillside in silence and began the sad task of packing up camp and putting on clothes.

To be continued...

A Special Date

by Mr. Cell O'Bane

Have I been waiting long?

No, just got here myself.

Isn't it amazing that this restaurant hasn't changed in twenty years?

Remember back in those first years

We would go out on our monthiversary.

We'd come here and then go dancing.

Each month it was our special date,

If someone asked us to dance, we'd say

"Sorry, not tonight. We are on a special date."

The years flew by and we stopped dancing,

But still, each year we came here for our special date.

We held hands across the table

And said I love yous so all could hear.

So here today, after twenty years

I say to you, "I love you still"

And then you hang up your phone,

"Oh, Happy Anniversary, dear. What were you saying?"

The phone rings again,

"Hi, how are you?"

And you are lost in another conversation.

Happy Anniversary to you too, dear.

How I miss those special dates.



The Fur Closet

by Cubby

Every year on January 12, I celebrate the anniversary of my coming out of the closet. I have been so proud to be part of the Gay Community for all these years. They have been so supportive and do everything to help people accept who they are. We have made many strides to get to the point where it is becoming acceptable to be openly gay in mixed company. Being part of this community, I've learned that I am still a good person regardless of whom I love. It is in the loving that we become special. And least I forget, there is always that big Pride Party every June as the Community holds its own annual celebration of coming out of the collective closet. Oh, so many gorgeous men...and wherever do they go the rest of the year?

Every year on July 24, I celebrate the anniversary of my coming out of the "Clothes Closet" and accepted the fact that I am a nudist. The Naked Community is wonderful. They accept people for who they are. Without clothes, there are far fewer games of "I'm better than you because I can afford to have \$500 suits." Who cares about the cost of the clothes? It's what's inside that matters.

Every year on September 13, I celebrate the anniversary of my coming out of the "Broom Closet" and stepped into my first Full Moon Circle. That first time was a Friday, naturally, and every Friday the Thirteenth I have a mini celebration as well. The Pagan Community is enlightened and gone are the fears that I'm a bad person because of my sexuality or my desire to be naked. I am closer to the Divine (by whatever name you choose to call it) than I've ever been before.

May 10, is also special. That's the day I earned my Faerie wings. And then, August 3, the day I got my first kilt. I never realized that being almost naked in public can be one of those naughty pleasures that is almost more fun than being naked. When someone asks if I'm wearing anything under the kilt, my standard reply is, "Look if you want to. I've got nothing to hide."

There is one day that I wish I could celebrate...my coming out of the "Fur Closet." I am so tired of hearing my friends air their disgust at anyone who shows the slightest amount of body hair. Worse yet is their opinion of those with hair on their backs. When I'm out at parties, I just want to hide in the corner when they start talking. To me, it sounds just like a meeting of the Klu Klux Klan. They aren't planning to tar and feather an ethnic person. No, they want to find a Bear and get out tweezers to pluck each hair out by its roots. What happened to "be who you are?" When did it become "We only love our smooth chested friends?"

I want to scream at the television when one of the college girls tells her friends about how great the evening was until her beau took off his shirt and he had hair on his back. "Oh, gross!" she'd

say. Well, girlfriends, how would you feel if society started saying that anyone bigger than an "A-cup" was way too big and they should seriously think about getting a breast reduction? Would you still feel as proud of your tits? If that seems a bit extreme to you, then why should men be made to feel diminished because they have something that makes them masculine. And you guys out dancing without your shirts, showing off your smooth skin, I've got news for you—I've got the fur to prove I'm an adult male. When you reach puberty, then we can talk.

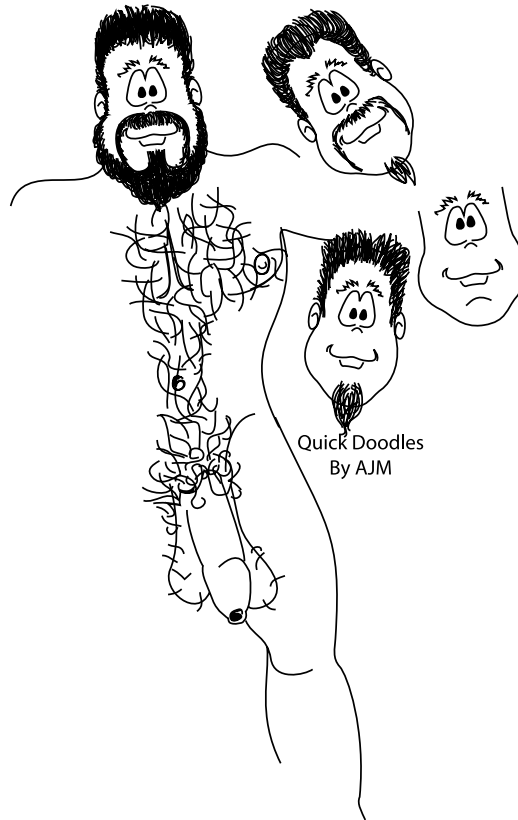
Now that I'm finished with my soapbox, I will let you know that I have found a solution to my anger. I discovered an alternative to all the loathing that allows me to move about society freely and without fear. I have found Bears Anonymous. Each member gets the phone number of two other closeted Bears. You never know their names, just the phone number. Any time a member is feeling fuzzy and needs a shave or they have to go to a dreaded pool party where one is expected to be shirtless, you call your buddies and they help shave the hard to reach spots. I found the group purely by accident. I was at the bar one evening and a gentleman came over and said, "I know you. Aren't you a friend of Ray Zor?" Ever since that night, I have had regular maintenance sessions with my buddies.

You know what? Once upon a time I was proud of my furry chest. It felt smooth to my touch and not so stubbly all the time. I miss the days of furry men gracing the pages of my favorite porn magazines that I hid from my parents before I came out. I can tell you it is really weird sitting on your bed with your

Mother after she finds the magazines and you start comparing notes. I will say, she had impeccable taste in men. Weirder yet was sitting with Father later that night and he agreed with our choices. He pointed to Mother's and my favorite, Steven S. Long, and said that was him before he met Mother. Gads, what a difference a beard makes—well, that and about 40 pounds of Mother's good cooking. I guess even parents have a few skeletons in their closets that need to be aired out once in a while.

Fuzzy Wuzzy was a Bear. Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair. Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't fuzzy, was he? Seems kind of childish, don't you think? The Divine gave Bears fur coats. We do the Divine dishonor by leaving them in the closet.

If anyone is organizing the Stonewall of the Bear world, let me know. And please give me a couple of months notice so I can let the fur grow back. When the day comes, I want to be able to stand on the Capitol steps without my shirt on and shout, "I'm one of the people with hair on my back and I'm damn proud of it." Meanwhile, it seems to be open season on Bears, so I'll go back into the Fur Closet and wait for my buddy to show up.



Meditation - The Ultimate Preparedness for Future Changes

-as relayed by Tor from the works of Jon Peniel

If you “sense” that big changes are coming, you’re right. And consider this: You can physically prepare until you’re blue in the face, but you can lose it all in an instant. Social, political, or natural forces could disrupt or wipe out your preparations. Even the most powerful governments can’t withstand the forces of nature and the “Universal Energy” that sustains us. We aren’t saying to ignore physical preparedness by any means. But everything can be taken from you, or destroyed, EXCEPT your consciousness, what you have made of yourself within, and what might be called your soul or spirit. So THAT should be our first priority when it comes to preparedness.

Consider this: We will all die someday anyway, disasters or not, and again, spiritual preparations will be all that matters then. Furthermore, we’re also not just talking about preparing yourself for some kind of possible “doomsday scenario” - we have our day to day lives to deal with right now. What kind of world do you want to live in now, in the future, an “afterlife,” or when reincarnated? If you want to live in a kind, caring, loving, creative world, then you must have made yourself into that kind of person in order to belong in it. We aren’t talking about religion, we’re talking about spirituality. Things like - what kind of person you are - what you think you are - what you are aware of - what your personal “reality” is. True preparedness should cover all possibilities and improve our life even if nothing ever happens. Realizing the “real” you is not just a body, personality, or accumulation of memories and programming, is the first step. Becoming a spiritual being (who just happens to be inhabiting a physical body right now), is the next step. Just follow the Golden Rule of unselfishly loving others, and become an unselfishly loving, fearless, harmless person - THAT is the purchase price of your ticket to a better world. It’s a “win/win” situation, regardless of what happens in the future, or when your “time is up”.

If that all sounds like what you want in life, one of the best ways to get started is through meditation. Three forms will be presented here with the first being very Zen and what you’d think of in a Buddhist or Yoga tradition and the other two, maybe not thought of as meditation so much and #2 is like your own private “Vision Quest.”

As you practice meditation, remember not to get frustrated if your mind “chatters” with thoughts. That is a common occurrence when learning meditation. The mind will interfere with your meditation, and if you let it bother you, it will hamper your training. If you notice a lapse in attention or concentration, simply acknowledge

the “chatter” by consciously, softly, saying the word, “THINKING?”, in sort of a questioning way of the chatter, then bring your mind back immediately to your meditation practice, slipping between thoughts, with no self admonishment, frustration or anger.

1) Counting Breath Meditation

Concentration is a prerequisite to true meditation techniques/ meditation exercise and an invaluable aid in anything you do. The development of concentration is a primary purpose of the counting breath meditation, it has integrative effects on the entire being.

This breathing meditation technique can be done with passive or active breathing - you can either just let your body breathe normally, or take conscious control of your breathing. Do it both ways for a while, and you’ll discover which is best for you.

Sit with your spine straight. As you inhale, count to yourself silently, “one”; as you exhale, again count “one”.

As you inhale again, count “two”; exhale, count “two”. Continue like this until you get to “ten”, then start the cycle over again

with one. Your objective is to be able to do five sets

of one through ten without your mind wandering.

When you can do that, your concentration is well developed. Don’t expect to be able to do it right away, it takes time, it takes practice, but like everything else, the more you practice the better you get. Remember, when you find that you have drifted off

somewhere, acknowledge where you went by softly or silently saying the word, “THINKING?”, and

immediately go back to counting your breath without wasting concentration. If you will

just be persevering/consistent with your meditation exercise, you

will get results, but be patient. Waiting IS!

2) Mirror Exercise Meditation-Chanting

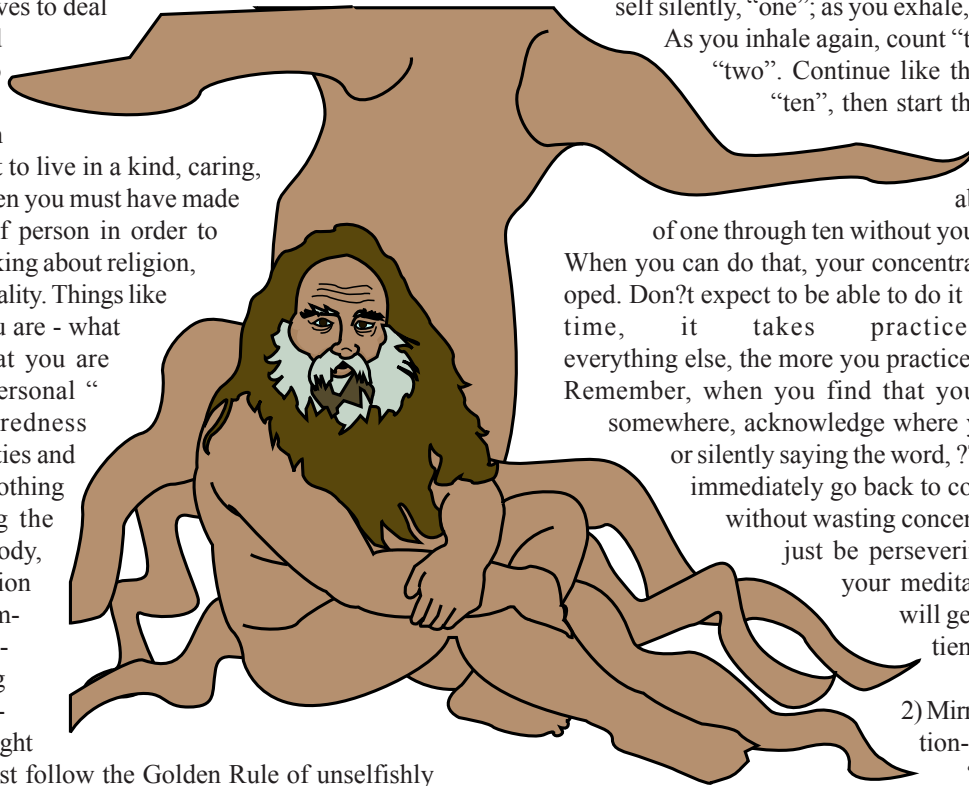
“Modern” science

has only recently discovered that the body has bio-electric and energy fields, and even the brain gives off electricity in the form of brain waves.

We have always known that people are always transmitting various energies, and always receptive to various energies.

This meditation develops: Concentration; Self-discipline; Your abilities to “read” higher frequency vibrations/“auras”; Your visual communication abilities; Your abilities to influence others via energies transmitted through the eyes; Your abilities to defend against others influencing you through the eyes; Awareness of previous incarnations of yourself and others; Your circumvent force (the area of vibrational influence that surrounds you like a giant aura).

This meditation technique should be done in a darkened room, using a candle or two in front of the mirror you’re using. The mirror needs to be large enough to see your entire face. The mirror should



Deep Earth Prayer

by Monkey

be placed one to two feet from your face.

If you can, burn a little pure (resin, sap, or powdered resin) incense before starting the meditation technique.

You may either sit on the floor or in a chair, whichever is most comfortable for you; the important thing is to keep your spine straight & erect.

To begin the exercise, look into the eye of your reflection that is on your right side (this would actually be your right eye) and start chanting a mantra. Refrain from blinking if you can, especially when you are seeing phenomenon or other faces (it can jolt you out of the altered state that is allowing you to see these things). Continue doing the meditation exercise for at least ten minutes. A half-hour will generally yield more results.

Selecting a Mantra

Select a mantra (word or words used for chanting) that you feel drawn to. "Om" and "Yod-He-Vau-He" are both excellent mantras. A mantra helps develop concentration, and can effect you in many ways through the vibration of sounding the words. Ancient Persian and Indian Sanskrit words also make good mantras or make-up a phrase that causes a vibration above your throat and behind your eyes. It can stimulate upper chakras, stimulate your attunement to the "sound current" of the Universe and thus Universal Consciousness, and invoke the energy of all the chanting that has been done throughout time, by those who have used that same chant. But it is also important that you understand the meaning of the mantra you choose, and it is best if it represents a profound idea or ideal. The meaning of Yod-He-Vau-He can be found in the book, "The Children of the Law of One & the Lost Teachings of Atlantis," which I have a copy of and can loan out (or buy one from ?CLO? on the internet).

You may experience a great deal of phenomenon doing this exercise, i.e., seeing all kinds of faces from past lives, "auras" etc. Whatever you experience, stay focused on what you are doing, don't allow anything to lure your attention away. You may come to experience what some call "The Dweller on the Threshold", a "hideous demon" that is nothing but your own selfish separate self, your fears, desires, etc., (discussed in the chapter on the death experience in the above book). If you do, let me remind you that the Dweller is also "The ?Spirit? guarding the Gates of ?Paradise?", and the only way you can pass, is through love, Unselfish Love. Look that beast right in the eye and love it. In this way you can transcend self and return to Paradise, the Oneness with the Universal Spirit.

3) Kind for a Day

This simple little exercise also develops Unselfish Love, by directly accessing it through one of its attributes - kindness. Every morning, choose one person in your life, who you will put out an extra effort to be thoughtful of, humble with, and kind towards. All through the day, stop and consider their feelings, their needs, what it's like to walk in their shoes. And treat them special. Maybe get them some tea, or give them a massage, or make them a special meal, or a gift from your heart. The next morning, choose a different person.

Have you been maimed Our Mother? Let me heal You.
Have you been shamed Our Mother? Let me praise You.
Have I been vain to walk upon You
and feel that I should be admired?

Here, in a moment of reverence, I ask that You cast but a pebble in my path to steer me in the direction of peace upon You.

I ask that I be reminded to view every person I meet as a beautiful extension of an infinite miracle.

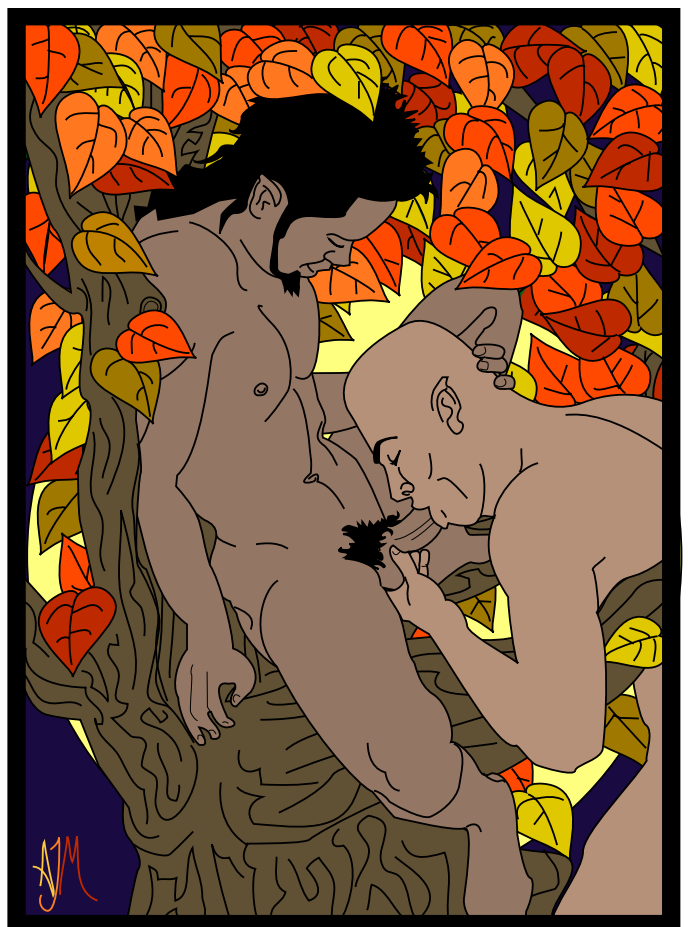
I ask to remember always that every ounce of the essence of life existing on this planet should be revered with quiet respect.

Forgive me of my neglect, Our Mother.
Forgive me for my lack of respect, Our Mother.

May the path of peace that is upon you for me,
be apparent in your graceful turning.

So that the wonder of it all not be lost on me,
I ask these things of You, Our Mother.

So that it may harm none in my conversations with you,
I ask these things to be.



Falcon's Journey - Lessons From the Silence

by Falcon

Silence...

Silence Equals...

Silence Equals Death...

Silence Equals Death...Silence Equals Death...

Silence Equals Death...Silence Equals Death...

Silence Equals Death...Silence Equals Death...

Silence.

The room was strangely quiet after the past few days. Gone here the cries of pain that filled the room. Gone was the labored breathing, the sound of the marathon runner at the end of the race. Gone was the hustle and bustle of the day shift. Filling the room was the solitude of the night.

We lay there in that silence, he in the hospital bed and I in the chair with my head in his hand. Two hearts still beating as one. We were both breathing, not in sleep, but in anticipation; rapid, shallow breathing, but silent. Just the two of us, together, as we always knew it would be. The silence was filled with memories of the dreams we had, the good times and bad. And the love. Thoughts rippled back and forth along our bond. How I wished I could do more to help, but I knew that my being there was enough for him.

Then, like in some old movie, a voice shattered the silence. It came from nowhere...everywhere...somewhere other than here. It was a voice that I felt more than heard, yet it sounded familiar. "I am here," it said.

I sat up and saw that the room was filled with a soft mist. On the headboard was a giant owl, staring at me as only an owl can do. The voice spoke again, "Are you ready to go?" I knew that in many cultures the owl was an omen of death, so I started to say my final good-bye to my love.

"There will be time enough for that later," the voice said. "It is not time yet. Someone wished to speak to you." The owl then spread his wings and launched from the bed. He circled the room and brushed my face with a wing; then off we flew into the night. The Owl and the Falcon, together.

As we flew through the mist-shrouded night, twisting and turning, there was always the same bright star in front of us. "My friend, what star are we following?" I asked. "That star is you. Never lose sight of that star, for with its light you will always be able to find yourself, even when things are darkest."

After some time...eternity...minutes...hours—who knows time in timeless space?—we came to an island rising above the mists. "We are here," the owl said. The island was the most glorious, colorful garden I had ever seen. "You will find Her among the roses. I will wait for you here." As we landed, I found myself once again in my own form standing on a sunlit garden path. "Just follow the path and you will find Her."

There was a Presence around me as I walked the path that opened up before me. There was a hushed silence, the silence of awe and wonderment. I never realized that there were so many forms of silence. It was a silence of peace, of love, of serenity and all that is good. I walked into a garden filled with every shade of rose imaginable, and there She was, sitting on a bench, working on some embroidery. She was the grandmother I never knew. Her eyes had



the look of having seen all of life, yet they still sparkled. She beckoned me to sit beside her and we sat in silence while She finished the spot She was sewing.

When She finally spoke, it was with a voice filled with love and compassion. "My child, I asked you to come so that I can help you help someone else. We know his time is near, but he loves you so deeply that he never wants to hurt you. I want to set your mind at ease and share with you the peace that will come after the pain has passed, so that you may be able to say the words that will set him free."

We sat and talked—well, I talked and She listened for the longest time. Then She spoke and told me of my future, showed me faces of people I would meet and even the face of my next love. "You will not remember much of this," She said, "until it is time to put the past to rest. Only then will you see the future. On your way here you saw your star. Always keep that star in front of you and never look back. If you turn your back on your star, it is so very hard to find it again. Each star in the darkness is a life, past and present. Always look to the stars to remember that even in the darkness you are not alone."

I looked up at the sky above me and it was no longer mist-shrouded. It was filled with more stars than I have ever seen in my life. As before, no matter which way I turned and looked, there was my star, directly ahead. "My child, when next you gaze at the night sky, you will see a sign of his eternal love for you. It is my gift to you so that you will always know, and will never need to look back.

"When you return, you will once again be in that silent place. It will be up to you to end the silence. He needs to hear the words that will release him," she embraced me and sent me on my way. As I left

Pieces of We

by Okapi

We is such a simple word. It is made up of only two parts—**you** and **me**. When it comes to making a **we**, **I** am **me** and **you**, well, **you** are the **you**. It doesn't get any simpler than that. Even better than that, there is always only one **me** and **we** can add as many **yous** as **we** want and **we** will still only have one **we**. Truly amazing.

But sometimes, **I** notice something strange about **you**—when **you** are speaking, **you** are **me** and **I** become **you**. How can that be? Is it possible that no matter what is being said there is always a **we**? No matter what happens, **I** am part of a **we**.

Then what happens when **we** becomes **us**? Somewhere out there is a **they**. **We** are **us** and **they** are **them**. But something is still wrong, for when **they** are speaking **they** are **us** and **we** are **them**. So, while **we** and **they** are together, **we** are still part of a much bigger **we**.

I admit it, this sounds fairly silly, but I am never alone in my actions and neither are you. Whatever I do will impact **us**. The **you** of the statement could be a human, or maybe a monkey in the tree. When an **I** chops down the tree, the **you** loses out **We** don't even have to see each other to still be a **we**.

How many of our world conflicts started because **they** did something to **us**? Wouldn't it be nice if they stopped to think that **they** are part of **us** and thus, **they** are doing something to themselves as well? Does it really matter who started something? No, because in the end, **we** have to take responsibility to end the conflict. There are those that would have **us** believe that the only real way to find peace is to make all of **them** go away. That will never really solve things for as soon as **they** are gone, **we** will break apart until there is a new **we** and **they** to enter into conflict. If this happens enough times, **we** would be back to just **you** and **I**, and one of **us** would have to go to make final, lasting peace.

Lesson From the Silence continued

the garden, Her words we fading, the faces She showed me turning into shadowed memories. As the owl and I returned to the room, I saw myself still sitting in the chair with my head in his hand. Effortlessly, I flew back into myself, realizing what I must do.

"My love, it is time," I whispered. One...two...three breaths...then silence. As I watched him take his final breath, I saw the owl sitting on his chest. "Always look to the stars, and remember that you are my star." As I watched him fly into the darkness, I noticed something. There was my star as always, but it was now joined by a second star. No matter where I looked, I saw two bright stars shining together.

When people say "silence equals death," they are only half right; I know they are talking about other people's silence. But silence really is a kind of death, but not in the negative sense. Silence is potential, waiting for a transformation into something else, just as a seed is the last of the old plant, waiting for the right time to spring forth again. Silence is not eternal; it is not static and unchangeable. Neither is death; it is but a transformation into something else

(Note from Falcon to AF Readers - The art accompanying this story is by a friend of mine, NightFeather. He created the art for when this story was run in another publication several years ago and he gifted me with the original art to use in future publications such as this one.)

Sounds pretty gloomy, huh? It doesn't have to be. If **we** always remember that **they** are really part of **us**, then **we** will find a way to survive.

I have to wonder about the concept called Democracy. Is it really worth fighting for? No matter who wins the fight, there will be a loser and **they** will wait for a moment when **they** can reclaim what **they** lost. The moment may be in the weeks after the war, or it may come generations later, but it will come because **they** didn't agree with what **we** did.

It seems to me that Democracy perpetuates the **we-they** mentality. No matter who wins, there will always be someone who stands up to say, "Don't blame me. I voted for the other guy." **They** think **they** can wash their hands of what **we** decided. Even as **we** fight for Democracy in distant lands, **we** don't have it here in this country. If **we** did, the other guy would be President right now.

When I first learned of the Faerie tradition of consensus, I thought that was a burdensome way to conduct business. Now, I think **we** need to abandon the "Fight for Democracy" and take up the "Fight for Consensus." Think about it, in a consensus based world, the Germans couldn't have put the Jews in the concentrations camps without both sides agreeing that is what needed to happen. Rape would be eliminated since both parties would need to agree, which would then mean that consent happened and therefore it wasn't rape. Likewise with murder.

Democracy is mostly about **them**. **They** are bad and **we** need to do something about it. Consensus is about **we**. **We** have a problem and **we** work on finding a solution that maintains the **we**. This part of **we** likes the later much better. How about **your** part of **we**? Is this something **we** can live with?



Earth Recipes *submitted by Patsan Panz*

Dirt Pies

I have found several versions of the potluck favorite on the internet. They all have a similar base with their own twists. I am going to combine them and let you pick which options you want to include.

For the most fun when using this recipe, you will need a clean flower pot or two. First choice would be one that you haven't used for plants already. If you have one of those beautiful ceramic ones that are just "too pretty to use" this is a good use for them. Substitute vanilla wafers for the Oreos and a light colored pudding like banana or lemon for the chocolate, get a child's plastic sand bucket and you get the same effect for a summer pool party. This recipe lets you be creative.

Basic Ingredients:

- 1 lb bag Oreo Cookies (regular)
- 1 box instant chocolate pudding mix
- 1 cup cold milk

Ingredients Option 1

- 8 oz Cool Whip (thawed)

Ingredients Option 2

- 3-4 oz of soft cream cheese
- 1/4 stick softened butter

(internet recipe called for 12 oz and 3/4 respectively, but then they also were using 4 packages of pudding - what army were they feeding?)

Additives Number 1

"Rocks" - such as granola chunks, chocolate chips, peanut butter chips, or peanuts

Additives Number 2

- Gummy Worms

Additives Number 3

- Silk flowers or edible flowers/foilage

Grind or smash Oreos into small crumbs. This is your "dirt" so the smaller the particles, the better the effect.

Make the pudding mix according to the package. At this point you can add the ingredients from Option 1 and/or Option 2 depending on how rich you want to make this. You can also add some of the "rocks" if you want.

Line your flower pot with wax paper. Pour your pudding mix into the pot, about 3/4 full. Fill the remained of the pot with the cookie crumbs, burying additional rocks and worms as you feel inspired. Silk flowers, or sprigs of mint or nasturtiums (or any other edible decorative plant) can be added for effect.

It's easy and lends itself to creativity. Have fun.

Mud Pies

I think there are two basic types of mud pies: the ones you get away with and the ones you don't. Within each category, there are three main variations: free form, in a pan without a crust, and in a pan without a crust. I will take a quick moment to describe these three variations, and then we will look at how to make more of the pies you get away with than the ones you don't.

A free form mud pie is the simplest. You simply take some mud and make pie shapes and let them dry. A thicker, slightly drier mud is better for this variation. Most often, these mud pies more resemble mud cookies but the name sticks to them no matter the shape.

The pan pies are made in some form of container. If you go with the crust version, you take pebbles or grass clippings and line the pan before adding your mud. If you want the crust, a slightly wetter, sloppier mud is easier to work with in order to get a smooth top

The first rule for eliminating mud pies that you don't get away with - don't use your mom's favorite pie dish. It is bound to be discovered missing and it is usually a one-way trip for the dish. You will never see your mother using it for your favorite pie again. You may never see your favorite pie again for that matter.

The second rule is that mud pies are best served al fresco - meaning outside. Mother's seem to have this thing about dirt coming inside the house. No matter how beautiful your creation is, you are likely going to hear, "Get that mess out of my kitchen." So why invite trouble. Enjoy your pie in the great outdoors.

The last rule is simple, don't call attention to yourself. Keep as clean as possible. That commercial with people splashing flour in their face to make people think they slaved in the kitchen to make the food would not be a good idea when working with mud pies at home. One look at your face and they will never see your creation.

I'm not sure what it is about adults and mud pies. I don't know if it has something to do with puberty, or if it is that moment when they become parents. Whichever it is, why is that parents feel the need to discipline a child for doing what they themselves did when they were that age? Now if your house is on top of a Super Fund site, well, I can understand their concerns. But then, Glow-in-the-dark is a fairly valid kind of mud pie.

I don't know if the world is better off for the mud pie shortage I see today. Maybe parents should spend time with their children showing them how they did it "back in the old days." Maybe the parents could learn a little more about that child spirit inside that once knew that one of the funest pleasures on earth was playing in the dirt and making mud pies that no one really expected to eat. (oh - and before you grammar queens get you knickers all twisted - I mean funest - if you are full of pride, you are proud, and then its prouder and the person with the most pride is the proudest. Since this activity is the most fun it must be the funest.)