

# Airy faerie

Beltane, 2004



I've Got My Spring Drag-on

## Publisher's Notes

Greeting dear faeries, and welcome to the Beltane issue of the Airy Faerie. You know I can't believe that it is already Beltane. The time of year when the garden is waking up, the trees and flower beds are waking up, heck all of Mother Nature is waking up, everyone except me! I wanna hit that snooze button just a few more times. Unfortunately the wheel of time doesn't have a snooze button, or maybe that's a good thing. Anyway, time marches on and I have to drag my sleepy butt out of bed and start this issue. Luckily, it is a very good issue so I enjoy starting it off. I hope you enjoy it as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

OK, here is the standard warning: There are drawings of male genitals, and even one drawing of two naked men with erections, kissing each other! If such graphics offends you, or if you are too young, please just close this publication and slowly walk away. You might also want to let the person who gave you the AF know that you no longer wish to or cannot view such items. If, on the other hand, you like a good cock shot, or the sight of two naked hunks making out, with hard throbbing dicks brings a bit of joy to your day, then please proceed.

I want to send a special thank you out to Sadalia and Tigerling for sharing their story of finding true love. I was honored to be there when they shared it with the Denver Faeries and am very honored that they are allowing us to share it with the wider circle of faeries. OK, that's it. This issue is officially started. So sit back, relax and enjoy the Denver Radical Faeries' Beltane issue of the Airy Faerie. OK, now I am going back to bed. Wake me before the solstice.

Love and Naked Hugs  
DragonSwan

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

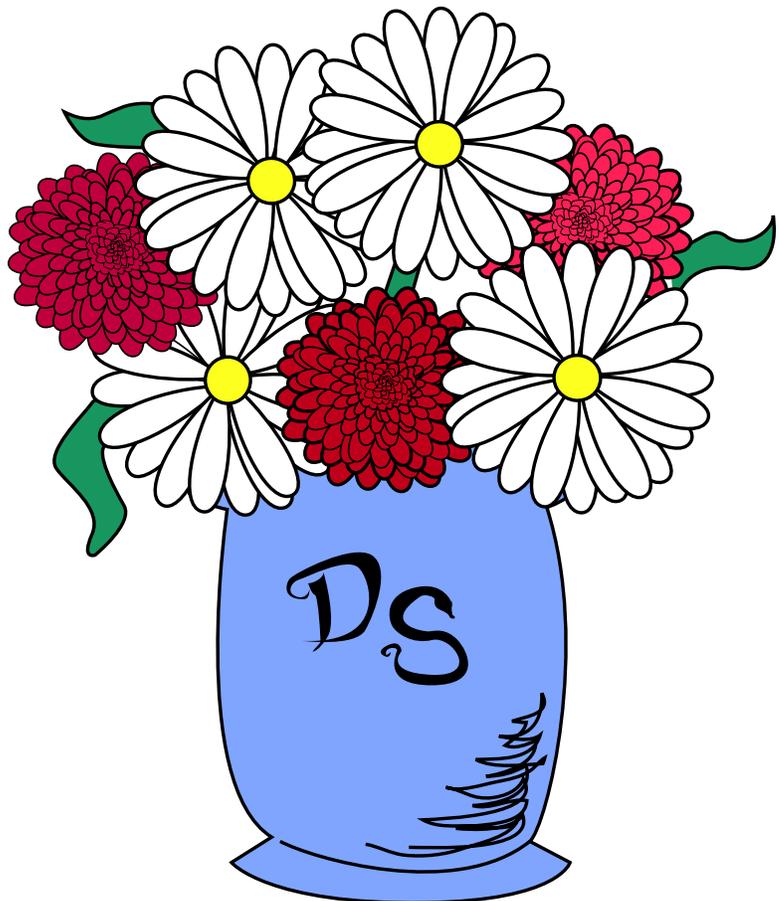
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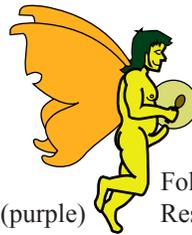
or visit us in person at:  
The Penn St. Perk  
(13th Ave. at Pennsylvania),  
Saturday Mornings  
About 10ish to around noonish



# The Language of flowers - G to E

## (Part Two of a Series)

Compiled by Orpheus



|                         |  |                         |   |
|-------------------------|--|-------------------------|---|
| Cactus                  | Endurance; warmth; grandeur                                      | Columbine               | Folly; frivolity  |
| Calendula               | Joy  | Columbine (purple)      | Resolution  |
| Calycanthus             | Benevolence  | Columbine (red)         | Anxious and trembling                                   |
| Camellia                | Admiration; perfection; good luck gift to a man; loveliness      | Convolvulus             | Repose  |
| Camellia (Japonica)     | Excellence   | Coreopsis               | Always cheerful   |
| Camellia (pink)         | Longing for you  | Coriander               | Lust  |
| Camellia (red)          | You're a flame in my heart                                       | Corn                    | Riches  |
| Camellia (white)        | You're adorable  | Cornflower              | Delicacy; refinement                                    |
| Candytuft               | Indifference   | Cowslip                 | Pensiveness; winning grace                              |
| Canterbury Bell         | Acknowledgement; gratitude; constancy                            | Cowslip (American)      | You are my divinity                                     |
| Cardamine               |  | Coxcomb                 | Foppery   |
| (Cuckoo Flower)         | Paternal error   | Crab Blossom            | Ill-nature  |
| Cardinal Flower         | Distinction  | Cranberry               | Cure for heartache                                      |
| Carnation (pink)        | I'll never forget you  | Cranesbill              | Envy  |
| Carnation (purple)      | Capriciousness; whimsical; changeable                            | Crocus                  | Cheerfulness; abuse not; joy                            |
| Carnation (red)         | My heart aches for you; admiration                               | Crocus (spring)         | Youthful gladness                                       |
| Carnation (solid color) | Yes  | Crown Imperial          | Majesty; power  |
| Carnation (striped)     | No; refusal; sorry I can't be with you; wish I could be with you | Cyclamen                | Resignation and goodbye; diffidence                     |
| Carnation (white)       | Sweet and lovely; innocence; pure love; woman's good luck gift   | Daffodil                | Respect; regard; unrequited love; deceit                |
| Carnation (yellow)      | You have disappointed me; Rejection; disdain                     | Dahlia                  | Good taste  |
| Carnation (general)     | Bonds of affection; health and energy; fascination; woman love   | Daisy                   | Innocence; loyal love; purity; faith; cheer; simplicity |
| Catchfly                | Deceit   | Daisy (garden)          | I share your sentiments                                 |
| Cattail                 | Peace; prosperity  | Daisy (Michaelmas)      | Afterthought  |
| Cedar                   | I live for thee; think of me                                     | Daisy (Ox-eye)          | A token   |
| Celandine               | Joys to come   | Dandelion               | Wishes come true; faithfulness; happiness; foresight    |
| Chamomile               | Patience ; attracts wealth                                       | Daphne Odora            | Painting the lily                                       |
| Cherry Tree             | Education  | Delphinium              | Airy  |
| Cherry Tree (white)     | Deception  | Dew Plant               | A serenade  |
| China Aster             | Variety  | Dittany of Crete        | Birth   |
| China Aster (double)    | I partake your sentiments  | Dittany (white)         | Passion   |
| China Aster (single)    | I will think of it   | Dock                    | Patience  |
| Chrysanthemum (general) | Cheerfulness; You're a wonderful friend                          | Dogwood                 | Durability  |
| Chrysanthemum (red)     | I love   | Eideweiss               | Daring; noble courage                                   |
| Chrysanthemum (white)   | Truth  | Eglantine (Sweet Briar) | Poetry  |
| Chrysanthemum (yellow)  | Slighted love  | Elder                   | Zealousness; compassion                                 |
| Cinnamon                | My fortune is yours  | Eucalyptus              | Protection  |
| Cinquefoil              | Maternal affection   |                         |   |
| Clematis                | Mental beauty  |                         |   |
| Clematis (evergreen)    | Poverty  |                         |   |
| Clover (four leaf)      | Good luck  |                         |   |
| Clover (red)            | Industry   |                         |   |
| Clover (white)          | Think of me  |                         |   |
| Coltsfoot               | Justice shall be done  |                         |   |

A physician was telling a friend about his brand new boat that he had named "The Dittany". He bragged that it was made of the finest Hickory that money could buy. His pride came crashing when his friend asked, "Where is the Hickory Dittany, Doc?"  
*(Sorry - this was the first thing that came to my mind as I typed dittany into the flower list. Orpheus)*

## Two Garden Poems by Monkey

I.

Forgive me brother tree  
If ever I do speak  
An unkind word against thee

Your strong shade is cast  
To cool the soft grass  
And enlighten the presence of me

A symbol of life  
'Midst the storms and dry strife  
You stand there in majesty

So forgive me brother tree  
If ever I do speak  
An unkind word against thee

II.

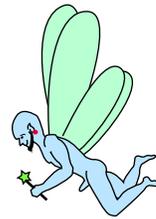
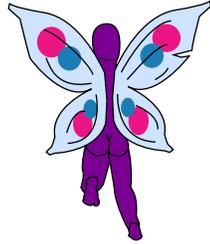
There they grow, my children  
The lily and the vine  
They grace my garden beautifully  
And guide me in my time

I'll never know the pangs of birth  
But through them I can wait  
With anticipation and with patience  
To blush my grand estate

It's to them I bend as they, themselves  
Reach outward toward the sun  
And glisten in their dewy bliss  
My hectic life, I run

These children still I speak and name  
They bring such blossoms fine  
And if I care and tend them well  
By them I'll see the divine

Wednesday, April 28, 2004



## Conscientious Objector by Edna St. Vincent Millay, 1934

I shall die, but  
that is all that I shall do for Death.  
I hear him leading his horse out of the stall;  
I hear the clatter on the barn-floor.  
He is in haste; he has business in Cuba,  
business in the Balkans, many calls to make this morning.  
But I will not hold the bridle  
while he clinches the girth.  
And he may mount by himself:  
I will not give him a leg up.

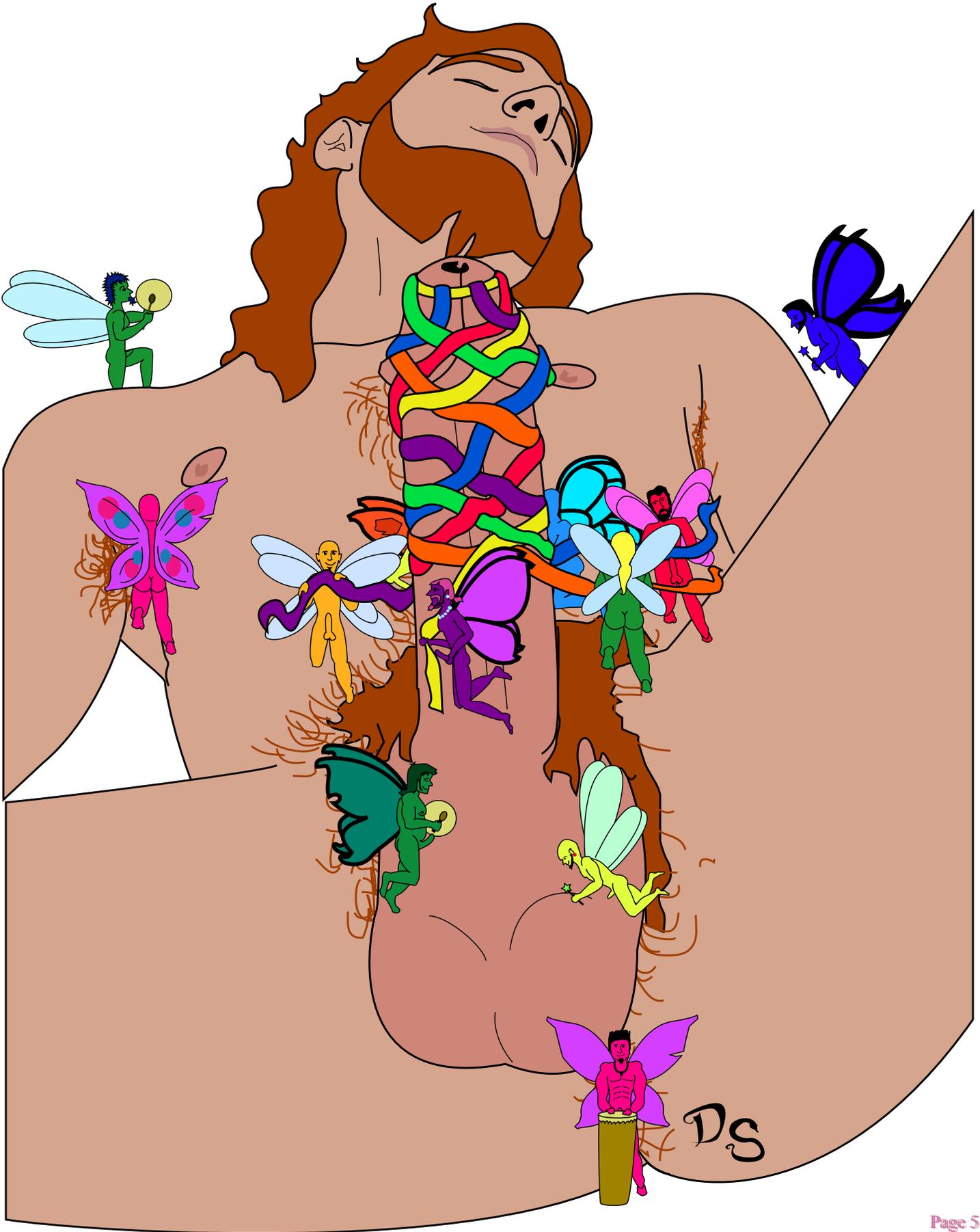
Though he flick my shoulders with his whip,  
I will not tell him which way the fox ran.  
With his hoof on my breast, I will not tell him where  
the black boy hides in the swamp.  
I shall die, but that is all that I shall do for Death;  
I am not on his pay-roll.

I will not tell him the whereabouts of my friends  
nor of my enemies either.  
Though he promise me much,  
I will not map him the route to any man's door.  
Am I a spy in the land of the living,  
that I should deliver men to Death?  
Brother, the password and the plans of our city  
are safe with me; never through me Shall you be overcome.

## A Song of Peace (from Finlandia) Music by Jean Sibelius Lyrics by Lloyd Stone

This is my song, Oh God of all the nations  
A song of peace for lands afar and mine  
This is my home the country where my heart is  
Here are my hopes my dreams my holy shrine  
But other hearts in other lands are beating  
With hopes and dreams as true and high as mine

My country's skies are bluer than the ocean  
And sunlight beams on clover leaf and pine  
But other lands have sunshine too, and clover  
And skies are everywhere as blue as mine  
O hear my song thou God of all the nations  
A song of peace for their land and for mine.



# My Beautiful Life: Stories from Our Tribe

## Night Lightning on Snow by Tigerling and sadalia

This is the story of two men finding love. Finding love late in life. Finding love after a life time of decisions and actions that would seem to have made such a finding improbable at best.

The story is being told publicly for the second time (i make my Soul Mate, Tigerling, tell it to me often). We first told it at a brief commitment ceremony held in Sacred Faery Space. After the ceremony Falcon and DragonSwan, for whom we have the greatest respect, suggested that we put our story before a larger audience. i was somewhat reluctant because it was not immediately evident to me why anyone who didn't know us would be even remotely interested. However, after putting some thought and prayer into it, we did come to see how our story may have some value outside of our local Circle.

And so we offer you our story. We offer it because we now see that in our experience lays a seed of hope. Especially for those who, having been alone on the road for a long time, maybe hearing the barking of the Dogs of Disillusionment or Despair. As we put pen to paper, our prayer is that we can communicate a single, simple message... "Keep your heart alive; it is never too late for Love".

Tigerling will tell you how we met. He does it well, cutting to the essence rather than getting lost in what some would consider the more gritty details. But before he begins, i want to tell you how i came to be where he found and saved me. i will not spare the details because in this case they demonstrate that regardless of what the external situation may look like, Love is never far away.

Before he found me, i had no aspiration of being in a healthy, loving relationship and was absolutely unwilling to be in a sick one just for the sake of companionship. The password to my computer was "solo" because that was how i figured the rest of my life would be lived. The best i was hoping for was to be able to keep the amusement level high enough.

Done with bars, close to being burned out on ads, my sex life consisted of a few guys who would stop over and do me occasionally and spending an increasing amount of time working the glory holes at a bathhouse. There, i would sit for hours giving head to any and all for as long as they would let me. Occasionally, i would allow someone to do me, but until the night Tigerling found me, i had always insisted on condoms.

The night everything changed found me again sitting in a dark cubicle, poppers in hand, waiting for a penis to be presented, hard and feeling good. It was beginning to look like a passable night; a passable night indistinguishable from many before it. And then a new, scary idea sprang to life. It occurred to me that i should go back to the orgy room, assume the position, and let whoever would have me take me as they would. "Madness," i thought, but the idea grew. Clear images shown in my head. i resisted. A list of real good reasons not to do that was written on the blackboard of my mind. The idea and the desire grew brighter, washing out the list.

i walked out of the cubicle, taking my poppers and leaving my towel. Lust on high. Penis on hard. Mind shutting down. The hallway leading inextricably into darkness.

Here is Tigerling's description of the events of that night:

*In the corner darkness of a basement room sat a slender man on a wide padded bench. Like myself, he was among other male patrons resting or moving subtly about this warm black space. Each was seeking late night satisfaction from anonymous sexual encounters. It was risky business in this energy charged atmosphere. A man's judgment was easily impaired as multiple partners were sought and the use of a condom was seldom considered. In most instances, a few minutes in a small rented room at the spa meant only the physical gratification of oral or anal sex, or mutual masturbation. That partner was usually never seen again. It was, to say the least, an eerie, desperate place where the exchange of a few words, phone numbers or a parting utterance of "I'd like to see you again", almost never led to any meaningful relationship.*

*Tonight, a shaft of light angled sharply downward from a nearby hallway and across an open white ceiling, silhouetting the waiting face of my future companion. Sensing his calm, serene manner and seeing the upward tilt of his head - something stirred inside me. There was a longing in his gaze that I instantly recognized. It was the missing link in both of our lives that had gone unfulfilled for so very long. It was the emotional connection with another man. It was as if we had been playing a waiting game all our lives until the right moment. I remember thinking that "if only this man could love me, I could be happy the rest of my life".*

*Looking back on it now, my experience with Sadalia that night was as if two blurry images as viewed through optical lenses had suddenly come into sharp focus. It was all so clear - as if the two of us had somehow been brought to this particular place and time to start our new lives together. Indeed, all the twists and turn of our past lives, with all the decisions and choices we had made, had how brought us to this fateful meeting in time. Although each of us was presently involved with another person, I knew that if I did not seize this opportunity it would be lost forever.*

*And so I began to loosen my grip with my partner and indicated to him a change in plans. Instead, I took a tentative step towards my real partner in life, touched his shoulder, and whispered in his ear, "I would like it if you would follow me." Standing closer now, the reflected light seemed to illuminate our bodies like a white silk garment, and a kind of aura enveloped both of us. I intuitively felt an openness in his heart. He also, began to extricate himself from his partner and held out his arm. I gently took his hand and led him to a nearby room for some privacy.*

*As soon as I closed the door, our arms encircled each other and a kind of dance of pure love and affection began. We moved fluidly about the small space. Our mouths kissed softly and then*

As we put pen to paper, our prayer is that we can communicate a single, simple message... "Keep your heart alive; it is never too late for Love".

with more passion. Our naked bodies touched and swayed with heightened anticipation. Our souls seemed to sing. I pressed his body to the walls and around again in absolute delight. Could this guy really be the 'ONE'? It was the one time in my life that I felt at one with the Universe. A faint but recognizable voice from above said to me, "Now here is your partner, so go and live the rest of your life in happiness". That white light still seemed to shine on us from above. Then we ended up on the cool tiled floor with only a bath towel for a cushion. We were in ecstasy as I thrust inside his warm anus. I asked Sadalia to follow me home and he did.

As Sadalia later told me later, "It has pretty much been an easy ride from that moment". We have since returned to the spa as monogamous partners, and gone to both rooms reverently. Again we felt the energy and power at this unlikely spot, knowing that some portal opened and we went through it together.

The next morning, I was to learn how much we had in common. We both were 55, had been married and divorced - each with daughter(s). We had worked hard at various jobs to support self and family. He was born in Petersburg, Virginia and moved frequently in a military family. I was born in Boulder, Colorado and moved often with my family whose father was a surveyor. Each of us had felt "different" than other kids and did not take part in the usual trappings of social functions.

But the one thing that would be unique to our relationship would be that we began at our most innermost "core" and then had to learn the small nuisances that made up our personalities, rather than the other way around as most couples do during the dating rituals. I think it has worked out best this way.

Over the course of the next few months we would call, see each other on weekends, and spend time at each other's places. We also spent time with the Radical Faeries in Denver. We met at coffee shops or at member's houses. It still remains special to have these friends who help complete our lives on many levels, and to help mark the milestones and changes in our lives. We enjoy acknowledging the changing seasons through rituals. Our faerie names of Sadalia and Tigerling were chosen while in this group.

The first summer we were together, we decided to head south for Santa Fe, New Mexico. We had previously been thinking about this trip as a chance to make a personal commitment towards our relationship...and so I arranged for some rings to be made. I located a Native American Indian to have them specially done for us. The pattern was inspired from a spring snow storm in March 2003.

The rain had turned to snow. Then lightening illuminated the landscape. Outside my house was surreal with thunderous bolts striking nearby. Sadalia pulled me towards a large window and said, "Lets watch." The brilliance of the flashes of lightening electrified our senses. The black/white space we stood in seemed similar to that which we had experienced at the spa. I felt a magical presence and was spell bound and powerless. It was quite an experience of our new love and the night lightening on snow.

After a few days in Santa Fe, we drove to Bandolier National Park where we could do some hiking, and I had plans to ask Sadalia to marry me.

Now Sadalia will step back and tell you how the Canyon experience unfolded for him.

We started down the canyon toward the waterfall. After less than a mile, i sensed that Tigerling wasn't pleased with how the adventure was unfolding. There were a lot of people, the path was narrow and the terrain on either side was steep and un-inviting. Suddenly he stopped, told me that this definitely wasn't what he was looking for, and turned back. Normally, i would have been impatient and suspected that he was just being overly picky, but that day i had a strong sense that it would be best if i were cheerful and supportive of my man. Intuition (God's whispering) had often served me well, but this day it lead to the greatest gift i have ever received. i followed him.

As we walked up the canyon, the path became wider, the trees bigger, and the whole feeling of the land changed. It was more welcoming, more quiet. The canyon seemed to be inviting us in. We soon came to a bridge over the creek that was carving this ancient canyon. Here dappled sunlight danced through the trees and sparkled on the water. Here Tigerling left the trail and led me back into the woods until we came to a clearing . On one side, the canyon wall loomed. On the other, the creek ran and had carved a deep indentation into a huge boulder. The rock arched ten feet over the creek, sheltering a small strip of sand on the far side. i was drawn to that spot. Something way back inside me seemed to recognize it, not as it was now, but as it had been when the creek was higher and the erosion of the boulder was just beginning.

As i tried to make some sense out of my feelings, Tigerling set up a small tent which would serve us as tents had served the ancient tribe that had once lived here, providing shelter and privacy. That done, he asked me to go in and take off my clothes. i did, and after giving me a gentle kiss, he blindfolded me and instructed me to sit still and wait.

Warm in the tent. A fly humming around. A bird calls. And under it all, i began to feel The Playful Presence. Magic was here.

Tigerling stood outside and his words follow:

*In the pack I carried that day were two hand-made Indian ceremonial neck adornments. I made them from brown leather strips, with braids of colored beads and feathers hanging down to cover the chest area. There were silver medallions of a bird and animal skull on each representing life and death, and a Kokopelli figure on an arrowhead. (In case you have not heard about this figure - he was a mythological man who went about different towns in the southwest dispensing gifts, wisdom and song.) The inspiration for making these items had come from a dream I had about two men on a desert death walk. This is important because the spiritual nature of our Indian heritage was to become apparent this day.*

*I glanced inside the tent and could see the face of my love waiting patiently. Any nervousness or hesitations I may have had disappeared now as I knew the seriousness of my purpose. I removed my clothes, stepped in the tent, zipped closed the fabric door, and told Sadalia that I would be putting on some Indian adornments which I had specially made for this day. I put on a*

*-continued on page 8*

## My Beautiful Life, continued

headband with beaded circular emblem, the leather neck piece, and then helped him into some brown suede shorts with leather ties up the front. I put on similar items, and then sat cross legged with my legs around him and his around me. Then I ask him to not to speak but to listen to the story of my dream.

In my dream, I begin by walking out across a large expanse of a rocky barren ground. I have left all comforts of civilization behind. The huge blue sky is broken by only a few wispy white clouds and some mountain ranges in the far distance. Here and there are scattered the remnants of a buffalo skull which reminders of the harshness of the land and the timelessness of this place. I breathe in deeply as the wind swirls about me softly. All this open space is a treasure for me who has lived most of my life in cities. But my feelings are deep and reflective as I know the time of death is close.

It is hot and I keep walking until I come to a lone pine tree, twisted and kept short from strong winter winds. I pause, grateful for some shade, and lay down. All my life there has been an importance to moving air (or the wind). It is not only soothing but several times it has been particularly impressive as it has suddenly opened doors after the death of two beloved pet animals some 30 years apart. Others have witnessed this and responded in amazement at this occurrence.

I sleep now, and when I awake it is night. I look upward to the brilliance of a million stars sweeping in a majestic arc overhead. I feel surrounded by a powerful, eternal presence and my feelings are of solace and peace. My spirit takes leave of my body and I can feel my soul soaring as a great bird, perhaps a hawk. And I am up there riding the air currents when I hear the sound of another great bird approaching. As I look, I am aware that this hawk is there for the same reason, and I am happy for the companionship. So we dance and circle high in the night sky.

But then a distant voice says softly, "I have brought you together so that you might not die, but live in together in harmony for many more years to come. So, go now your separate ways, but be watchful for each other". And I was happy but troubled and asked quickly, "how will I be able to recognize my future mate?" The voice from up above said softly, "You will recognize him by an open heart and an outstretched hand".

Both of us were crying now and it was difficult to continue....but I summoned my inner strength and went on telling my dream.

So the two birds parted and the souls returned to their bodies and they slept some more. When I awoke I was grateful to still be alive and had renewed hope. I got up and looked around. It was then that I noticed that one branch of the tree had been transformed into a beautiful flute. So I took it and began to play a simple, joyful tune. From the end of the flute a faint but colorful rainbow emerged and enlarged to fill the air, dispersing over the purplish colored mountains. I walked slowly back across the landscape.

Sitting in the tent, both of us opened our eyes. Still in our warm embrace, I asked Sadalia to marry me. He said yes. I took out the rings that I had commissioned for us. Sadalia loved them. They were black and silver with a gold lightening bolt that went half-way around the band. It was a vivid reminder of the snow



storm lightening show we had shared. The rest was a unique pattern that only reveals itself when the two rings are put together. We put them on each other's fingers and then I asked for the flute that Sadalia had brought along. We both played beautiful notes of joy and celebration.

So at last, here was the exact moment in time and space that we needed to promise our lives would always be together. It was quiet, the giant Oak, Pinion and Ponderosa Pine trees kept silent vigil. I felt loved, grounded, centered and with a certain future ahead. We emerged from the tent and walked to the stream that flowed clear and cool near a high cliff a few feet away. Sadalia dipped his hand in the water, touched my forehead, and said that in ten thousand years we would be back again at this very spot to renew our vows of love. It felt as if we had always had our roots here and it was home.

Here is Sadalia's recollection of that time:

He began to dress me. Finished, he kissed me and removed the blindfold. We both wore a headband, necklace, and tan suede briefs. Each piece decorated with symbols of significance that demonstrated how much love he had put into making them. i began to cry. Sweet words were said, promises made, and then he put the ring on my finger. i felt a joy beyond anything i had ever felt before. Trembling, i slipped his ring onto his finger. Tears, joy, disbelief... i, who had stopped believing that i would ever experience love, was flooded with It. If i could describe it, i would be a poet or author of great renown. i cannot.

After a bit, we left the tent. My senses were on super sharp. Colors, sounds, smells all vivid to the point of almost being frightening. Images, the creek, the rock, the cliffs, grabbed my attention in rapidly shifting order, showing themselves like giant snapshots, momentary still lifes shimmering between dimensions. i couldn't be still, hopping with joy one second, turning in circles trying to take in every detail the next. i was beyond intellect, beyond mere emotion. i was transported and transformed by love.

Tigerling began to take down the tent and i asked him if it was all right for me to go apart for a few minutes to let what had just transpired settle in. i went down to the creek under the overhanging rock and sat on the little strip of sand to meditate and center myself. Now, i am not a stranger to meditation and have experienced many effects while practicing...some instructional, some amusing, some disturbing. This time, however, i was immersed in a new experience. It was as though a different consciousness was stirring to life in me, new but somehow familiar, unrelated to the "me" i was used to but a part of it at the same time. And i knew that rock, knew it from the time the water

had just begun it's work, when it was still buried deep in the soil of the canyon with only it's top exposed.

The whole canyon was humming, vibrating at a frequency just south of normal perception. As i sat under the rock, I could feel myself being enfolded by the hum, my physical body synchronizing with the vibration of the land.

Heart Chakra opening.

Third Eye opening.

Tent packed and ceremonial dress put away, we left the clearing and headed further up the canyon toward the thousand year old Keva situated in a bowl far up the near vertical canyon wall. i was ecstatic. In love, yes. Feeling united with my man, yes. Filled with hope for a joyful future, certainly. But weaving through these feelings that i understood even as they carried me away, was in inexplicably deep knowing that i was coming home. Coming home after a very long time.

And then we were at the foot of the canyon wall. A ladder, bolted securely to the rock, lead to the Keva above. This side of the canyon was now in full sun, hot on our backs as we climbed. Then, with no apparent precursor, this thought came to me, "This climb was a lot more risky last time." As we paused at a wide spot to let some folks down, i turned that thought over in my mind, examining it, trying to tie it to something, to make it fit into some familiar framework. But the only thing it clicked with was the strange feeling of homecoming that this place Tigerling had lead me to was creating in me.

Suddenly, i experienced that shift between dimensions/worlds/time. Again the world looked different, somehow moved from the ordinary to the extraordinary. Some colors were almost too bright (even with my sunglasses on), some colors fading to tans and grays, lines crisper, proportions and perspective somehow a little off, just enough to cause a sense of vertigo and mild nausea.

We reached the top and as we paused to look back down into the canyon and then, for just a moment, the thick growth of trees that grew up almost to the base of the cliff blinked out of existence. i saw instead, gardens of low growing plants, neatly laid out and watered from the creek that was now much closer to the canyon wall than it had been a moment before. i believe that i said to Tigerling, "The trees weren't here before", although i may have just thought it. Later it occurred to me that when the Anasazi occupied these cliff dwellings, security would have required keeping the forest cut back.

Still in the shifted-world, feeling like i had taken a goodly dose of mescaline, i pretty much just followed Tigerling as we explored the Keva and surrounding ruins. Now, in addition to the visual anomalies, i again sensed that just-beyond-hearing humming. It felt like the fillings in my teeth were about to start vibrating. i longed to cling to my man, put my head on his shoulder and have him stroke my bottom, but refrained because i didn't want to upset the tourists, who, for some reason i didn't understand then, i saw as guests.

Together, we moved back to the edge of the bowl and as we looked around, my attention was drawn up and to my left toward a

## A Union Pledge

submitted by Okapi

I recently attended a Union reception at the home of one of my dear friends, Crystal, and her beau, BoomBoom. The happy couple had gotten their licence the previous month and did a private ceremony in the mountains. They invited family and friends to what would have traditionally been the reception at their home. During the evening, they shared the tale of how they met, courted and eventually decided to do the formal commitment to each other.

At the conclusion of their tale, they asked everyone to raise their right hand and say a common pledge to support them. This was such a wonderful way for the happy couple to bring their friends' energy into the vows that they had made to each other.

If you like this idea, feel free to adapt this text to fit the situation. Just remember the love that created these words and the love that passes with them to you; and then fill them with your own love to pass on to the next. (and if you think your friends will properly fill in their own names when you say "Repeat after me, 'I, state your name...'" you have got to be kidding yourself.)

*I, state your name, joyously promise to love, honor and support two of the many amazing beings in this home—specifically Crystal and BoomBoom. We vow to recognize this relationship as a sacred unity; to offer words of wisdom or a listening ear in good times or bad; to attend as many Dynasty reunion parties and Drag Queen Bingos as possible regardless of weather conditions; and above all to celebrate with Crystal and BoomBoom their happiness, joy and love in their union.*

rock promontory above us. Then i saw him. Tigerling, strong and alert, standing watch. i had no sense of myself as being male or female, but i had a very strong feeling knowing that it was my man up there watching out for me and our tribe. i took his arm and told him that i saw him up there a thousand years ago and now we were back, perhaps in a different form, but never-the-less our love was here. i don't think he believed me.

i believe that the visions I had that day were accurate memories. Tigerling and i are Soul Mates and our love stretches across the illusion of time. Perhaps it always has been; i know it always will be.

On the way back down the canyon, as we crossed the creek once again, we promised to meet here again in another thousand years. That sounds like a long time but it isn't. For one other truth i came to know that day is that the moment i recognized Tigerling as my Soul Mate, the years between our incarnated meetings became like the moment between dark and light when a lamp is switched on.

# Quest for the Crystal Phoenix

## Chapter 3: Of Lovers and Faeries

by Orpheus

King Adam stood in the shadows of the gymnasium watching Sir Rondar going through his exercises. The long, lean body moved gracefully in the tumbling runs, the muscles showing the power contained within as they held his nude body aloft on the parallel bars. When Rondar finished and bowed to a non-existent audience, Adam clapped along with the appreciative fans.

"Who's there?" said the weapons instructor into the darkness.

"Just your number one fan," said Adam stepping into the moonlit part of the chamber. "You are looking better than I remember. I was standing there watching you and remembered the first time I saw you. We were in the gymnasium back home and you were just learning to work with the rings."

"How could I forget that day?" replied Rondar. "I fell right on my head and knocked myself out. When I opened my eyes, the first thing I saw was a pair of beautiful blue eyes and a halo of golden hair looking down at me. I was so embarrassed by the fall that I said the first thing that came to my mind, 'If this is my reward for falling, I should do it more often.'"

Taking up his part of the tale, Adam said, "And I said, 'Fall as often as you like. I will be here to catch you.'"

"And that's when I realized who was staring at me. If I had been embarrassed by the fall, I was horrified to find I was flirting with the Prince. 'Forgive me, I must be suffering from the blow to my head.'"

"And I replied that if one needed forgiving it was I for not being there sooner. Here I am again needing your forgiveness."

"For what, my Lord?"

"That in itself speaks volumes, Ronnie. You have long ago earned the right to call me by any name you desire and yet here in privacy you call my by my title. Can we be as we were and speak as friends?"

"That would be nice, my Lord," said Rondar. "But the very robes you wear are a reminder that we are not equals. I dare not relax in my manner in private or I shall forget when we are in public."

"If the robes are what serves as a barrier between us, that can be easily corrected. Would it help if I stripped?"

"Oh how I have wished for that, but it would not be right of me to ask that of you."

"If it is not be your right, then it is my gift to you. Besides, this room is warm and these court costumes that Queen Rose insists on everyone wearing are worse than any suit of armor. I would love to be free of them for a short while and join you in a workout. Can you help with these back lacings? I swear that these things were designed for keeping six servants employed just to dress and undress people."

"I would love too," answered Rondar. "But first, tell me why you are here?"

"I came to find out why you are quitting as Apollo's teacher. Your announcement came as quite a surprise today."

"Why should it matter? Good weapons teachers can be found in every village in both countries. So why are you really here?"

Adam took a deep breath. "It's because my son wants to see me smile and you were the only one who gave me reasons to smile without asking for favors in return. And..." This is it, thought Adam, taking an even deeper breath. "And because I still love you."

"Damn it, Adie. I have never stopped loving you. To answer your question, I'm leaving because Apollo is looking like more you every day. Don't you realize how much that hurts? It was bad enough that you sent me away from the palace so that you didn't have to look at me again. Now, I'm being tortured by seeing your son looking like you did when we first met."

"Oh, Ronnie, if that is what you have been thinking all these years, then I need even more forgiveness. When I found out that William's court needed a new weapons master, I suggested you for the position because you are the best. I knew that my marriage caused you pain. I thought that if you stayed at the palace you would constantly be reminded that we couldn't be together. I even thought that if you were somewhere else, you would eventually find a better lover that didn't have royal duties that would keep you apart."

"That would never be possible. There is none better for me. I heard that a wise man once said something like, 'How can I think of think of settling for less than perfection? To settle for less than the standard you set would be to dishonor the memory.' And that was what you were - perfection. How could there be better than that?"

Adam grimaced. "God's how I hate when my words come back and haunt me. First Apollo and now you. Does everyone know about that?"

"Actually, yes. Queen Rose was quite beside herself with your evasive answers to her questions. So why are you here? Certainly in all these years, you have had the pick of lovers to choose from."

"Others may have momentarily satisfied the flesh but there have been no other lovers. What I said of Iris, I can say of you as well. Now that I confessed, will you help me with these hot robes? I would like to show you just how much I've missed you." Adam pulled Rondar into his arms and kissed him with passion that had been saved for seventeen years, eight months, six days, five hours and forty four minutes (*but who's counting?*)

When the lovers stopped for a breath, Rondar helped Adam with the lacings of the robes of state. Just as Adam was about to remove the third undertunic, Rondar had a thought. "How did you



get in here? I always lock the door when I'm working out at night. It would be most embarrassing to have one of the ladies of the court stroll in when I'm naked. It would be worse if someone came in to find the King of Adbalm in an equally naked state."

"Well, if they did, then we simply tell them that you designed a special wardrobe for me; made out of the finest magical threads that only the smartest people can see."

"Somehow, I can image you saying something like that. Knowing how you love to be naked, I can even picture you trying to get away with it at some stuffy court function."

"I actually did once. It created quite a 'fashion craze' for a while. The tailors in town actually were able to make more money one week making invisible clothes than they did for a full year doing real sewing. I had to put a stop to it when *Her Royal Majesty, Queen Rose* was coming for an annual visit. *She* would not have been *Amused*. Still, it was fun while it lasted. I have managed to sneak it in once in a while by celebrating 'National Birthday Suit Day.' Rose heard about it and is convinced that everyone goes out and buys a new outfit each year for their birthday and then wears them on the same day so that we can see all the new suits that were purchased during the year." Rondar laughed at that. He said he could image some of the hideous things that would be worn if Queen Rose tried to copy the idea not understanding the joke herself.

Adam stripped off his hose and pulled his lover into his naked embrace "By the way, you did lock the door. Have you forgotten the oaths I took when I took office? 'When truth is needed, let no windows be barred nor doors locked.'"

"You mean that wasn't just ceremonial words?"

"No, they're not. It doesn't mean that all doors automatically unlock at my touch. It's that truth part that seems to be the determining factor. I needed to be here to clear the air between us."

"So, are you certain that it is locked now?"

"Even if it wasn't, there is the other half of that same oath, the part that protects me against a snooping mother-in-law, 'When secrets are needed, let them be kept until the Crown makes them known.' Adam then made sure that Rondar couldn't say anything else for a while.

The next morning it was time for King Adam to return to Adbalm. Adam asked Rondar and Cetee, his two oldest friends, to join him for breakfast. Afterwards, they proceeded to the throne room for Adam to say his farewells to the King and Queen. As they entered the chamber, all three paused, for the Queen sat alone in her throne, dressed in black.

"Has something happened to King William? Why was I not informed?"

"Nay, I am fine," said William, coming up behind them. "It's just that the Queen felt that she should honor the discovery of the ancient relic by matching its color."

"And why shouldn't I?" demanded the Queen. "People are starting to say that it is lovelier than I. They say its simple black and silver beauty outshines the fanciest ball gowns that I have ever worn. How boorish! If the people think a black rose is fairer to

look upon than a living Rose, then I shall give them a living Black Rose to offer a fair comparison."

"I keep telling her that it is just a passing fascination with something new, but she won't listen to me," said King William with a sigh.

"Fair Queen," said Sir Rondar bowing low, "no flower of any color could be compared to Your great beauty. You should not change to match one of them for they are jealous of You and wish to emulate You. The world would be the poorer if You lowered the standard by imitating something that is less fair than Yourself. The flowers would not have the same inspiration to strive to be ever more beautiful."

"I couldn't have said that better, Sir Rondar" said Adam. He told the King, Queen and his son that Sir Rondar had agreed to stay one more year, giving them more time to find a suitable replacement. By way of apology for his abrupt resignation, Rondar spun a tale about how, upon seeing his King again, he realized how much he missed the fields and forests of his childhood.

"Good Sir," said King William, "you will be missed when you depart. Your service to my people has been much appreciated. We are thankful that you will stay for another year and hope that you will be kind enough to help us find and train your successor." Turning to King Adam, he then said, "We seem to have gotten all the schooling arranged except for the matter of a teacher of magic."

"Humph," said Rose.

"That was the final thing I wanted to mention to you. I have talked to Sir John and Lady Viola and they have agreed to undertake the task. They have asked me to pass to you that they are mindful of Queen Rose's sensibilities regarding the subject. They will hold classes when and where it will not cause Her Majesty any further discomfort."

"When do we get to meet these teachers? asked William.

"They have one other request. Due to the mysterious nature of magic, they have given me Apollo's first assignment; which is to discover who they are on his own. They said that if he is to understand the difference between fake and real magic, there are a few lessons that he needs to learn from Lord Cetee first. Once those lessons are started, then, and only then will be able to begin to appreciate what they have to teach."

"If I may add my words of recommendation to dispel any doubts, Your Majesties," said Cetee. "I have known Sir John and Lady Viola for most of my life. They were some of my own teachers when I was Apollo's age."

"If both of you vouch for them, then we will let them run their class in their manner. Which is probably a good thing since I have no notion of what it is that they will be teaching," said William. "Well, Adam, that should conclude our business for the season. Safe journey home and we shall see you at the Solstice for the Prancing Ceremony."

Apollo walked with his father to the stables. "If I may be so bold, Father, I have not seen you smile so openly before. I know that you and grandmother don't get along, but I have never seen

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you so joyous in your leave-taking.”

“It is not leaving that gives me joy, my son. In fact, a part of me wishes that I didn’t have to leave. No, the joy comes from knowing that someone will be waiting when I return. So while I’m sad I’m leaving, I know that the welcoming return will be all the more joyful for the time apart.”

Seeing the puzzled look on his son’s face, Adam added, “You will understand in good time. In the meantime, know that your first wish has been granted. I feel that a great weight has been lifted. You will see this smile more often as time goes on.” He gave his son a hug and mounted his horse. “Be well my son. Please watch your grandmother. I mistrust this obsession over the rose.”

“As do I, Father. I plan to ask Lord Cetee for more details about its history so that I can understand my own misgivings. I am glad it isn’t just my own childish musings.”

King Adam departed and life settled into a normal routine for the Prince. His mornings were spent in his history classes with Sir Archibald and Lord Cetee. Afternoons were for weapons’ work. Sir Rondar even had some praise for the Prince for something other than his archery skills. Apollo actually managed to disarm his partner during sword practice. Sir Rondar said, “There is hope still that you may survive a fight. Since it is obvious to me that your Father had a hand in this development, let me show you a couple of tricks you can pull on him that he never could figure out in class. It would be worth every penny I earn to see his face when you disarm him.”

So it went the next few weeks until the last day of Summer. Queen Rose had not been feeling well for a few days, so Apollo ventured into the Garden of the Queens to spend some time alone with his thoughts. He wanted to try some of the meditations that his father taught him and just decided on the perfect spot when he heard a strange noise that sounded like little chimes. He looked up and didn’t see anyone else in the garden. He listened closely and started to track the source of the sounds—they were coming from the oldest part of the garden, back where Queen Belle had been honored. The sounds were coming from the coral bells. Deeper tones came from the Canterbury bells. A dulcet voice filled the space between chimes with a haunting melody. He had never heard anything so entrancing. The voice stopped and suddenly everything went silent.

“Beautiful, aren’t they?” said the voice.

“Yes, they are,” responded Apollo. “I hear you, but I don’t see you.”

“Lesson number one - if at first you don’t see something where you are looking, then look someplace else,” chided the voice.

A second, slightly deeper, voice spoke up, “In other words, we’re down here.” Apollo looked down and saw two miniature people no bigger than his hand; each with tiny wings. One was a gentleman with a shaved head, a neat goatee and wearing a black jerkin and black leather trousers. His companion was...well, once the

Prince got over the shock of seeing colors and patterns that he would never thought of seeing together in one dress, he noticed that the other had long curly hair and an equally long full beard.

“I don’t believe I have seen you here before,” said the Prince. “Since you mentioned a lesson, is it safe to assume that you are Sir John and Lady Viola?”

The bearded one said, “Lesson number two—never assume for it only makes an ass out of you and me. The proper word in that sentence should be presume.”

“Don’t mind her. Viola, darling, it is time for us to grow up.”

The two joined hands and started to swell. As the bodies grew, the wings didn’t. By the time they had grown to Apollo’s height you could hardly see the wings. The larger size did nothing to make Viola’s dress any more soothing on his eyes. While Apollo had seen many men in court, there was something intriguing about seeing this simple black garb. The fabric was taut against the chest and he found himself wishing a lace would snap so he could see if the chest had hair or not.



“While you may have used the improper word according to Miss Behavior here, you were correct in the assessment. I am Little Johnny JumpUp and my companion is...”

Holding her(?) thumb and finger a smidgen apart, looking at Johnny she said, “The operative word is ‘little’ and it doesn’t jump up enough for my tastes.”

“In an outfit like that, you think anyone believes that you have tastes?” he retorted.

Viola turned to the Prince and gave him a full court curtsy, taking her time rising. “Yummy, so young and tender. What’s cooking for dinner? Anyone want chicken?”

“Viola,” snapped Johnny. “Mind your manners or I’ll pull rank and send you home. I can handle this assignment without you.”

“Over my dead body.”

“That can be arranged too, you know.”

“As I was about to say before I got distracted, I am Marquessa Violaceae Saxatilis de Kamp, but you can call me Sweetheart.” She held out her hand for him to kiss.

“Lady Sweetheart. Sir John. It is my pleasure to meet you. If it would not be impertinent for me to ask, are you two Pansies?”

Johnny pointed at Viola, “I told you that you should never have put that spell on the guard.” In a whiny, high pitched voice, he continued, “Remember, it was the Marquessa Violaceae Saxatilis, that has cursed you.” Back in a normal voice, “All he could remember the next day was that your name was something like a pansy.”

“We are not pansies,” he said. “We, my good Prince, are Faeries and are at your service.” With a broad, sweeping gesture, Johnny bowed low before the Prince, and took an equally long time rising. “There is only one thing to say when meeting a handsome young Prince. Woof! Which in the Faerie tongue translates to something like ‘What are you doing after class?’”

Viola pouted and stomped her foot, “I have never been so insulted; being called a common pansy. I need a hug.” Apollo begged for her forgiveness and gave her the requested hug.

“Hey, you insulted me too!” insisted Johnny. “Where’s my hug? Only, since I’m doubly insulted by getting seconds, I want a proper hug-the Naked Kind!”

“Johnny,” said the Marquessa, “do you think it’s proper? After all, he is just a boy and you, well, you are not a spring chicken anymore. I’d say you were aged beef, but that would give you entirely too much credit.”

“I have no problem with a naked hug. I have already been initiated into that practice by the One I was named after. Father told me that most people secretly wish that they could run around naked. As much as I would like to be naked in the garden, do you think this is the proper place for this?”

“It is good to know that he remembers something of his lessons in days gone by. That brings us to lesson number three,” said Viola, “no one can see a Faerie unless they choose to be seen.”

“My Lady, that may be fine for the two of you, but what about me. I am not a Faerie.”

“Not exactly true, Prince Apollo,” said Johnny. “As I am sure Sir Horse Butt will eventually tell you, the blood of the Faeries runs in your veins. While you don’t have the wings, you do have the ability to command some of the Faerie magics. So on to lesson

number four-your first demonstration of true magic.” With a wave of his hand, both his and the Prince’s clothes disappeared and Johnny got his promised hug.

“What about me? Don’t I get a naked hug, too?”

“Viola, you had your chance and blew it. You got into that outfit by yourself, certainly you can reverse the process on your own. And now you know why I outrank you...I always score.”

“Apollo, we should warn you that the magic of being invisible works best outdoors in spaces with shadows such as this garden. While it does work indoors, there is a high chance someone would bump into you. If they touch you, the spell is broken and there you are, naked in the middle of a crowd. You will still cast a shadow, so walking down the middle of the road at high noon may not be such a great idea either.”

The three of them spent the next hour dancing around the garden. Johnny and Viola gave him lessons on how to actively be invisible. All too soon, the tower bells started to chime the dinner call. Sadly, Johnny made the clothes reappear.

“This has been so much fun,” said Apollo. “Why didn’t we meet sooner?”

“That is a sad tale for another day. The short version is that Queen Rose said something to offend the Faerie Queen. After that, no Faerie is allowed to do anything to aid her until she asks for forgiveness of our Queen.”

The Prince let out a sigh, “Knowing my grandmother, that would be like Hades freezing over. So how is it that you can come here now?”

“Don’t forget, your father also has Faerie blood. As such, he has the right to ask favors of our Queen. One more hug and we will let you head to dinner.”

The two faeries joined hands and shrunk back to the diminished state and mounted a toad-steed that jumped from the lily pond to join them. Before they departed, Johnny said, “If you want to practice your magic, work with Cthdêhässésbü. He understands how it works and can tell you if you truly are invisible or not.”

The next day in class with Lord Cetee, Apollo told him about his encounter with the two faeries. Having learned that his teacher appreciated honesty above all else, the Prince included details about his emotional responses to the two. “Lady Viola, I couldn’t quite figure out. One moment she would have the same high manner that Queen Rose has and the next she was more like the women the guards talk about visiting on payday.”

“If she ever gets too high and mighty, I will give you a little secret that will take some wind out of her bluster. Cetee leaned over and whispered something in his ear just in case someone walked into the room at that moment. Backing away, he then asked, “And what about Sir John?”

Apollo confessed that he was even more confused regarding the roguish charm that Sir John exuded. He said that he knew that he could have refused the naked hug game, something inside actually wanted to encourage it. “Queen Rose would tell me about the dangerous germs one could catch while hugging, and two men hugging? That would be unheard of; men are strong and should never display tenderness such as hugging. I don’t even want to

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think about how long she would lecture me on the evils of two naked men hugging.”

“Johnny does have that effect on people. He is reputed to be able to charm the pants off anyone he sets his sights on. There are many tales about men who have been less than gentlemanly with womenfolk finding themselves in the town square giving him a naked embrace. After that, they never approach a woman with anything less than total respect.

“While I personally think that you are a bit young to be, um, exposed to that particular rogue, he is the best teacher of magic that the Faeries have. If his advances get a little too much for you to handle and you wish to, um, deflate his ego so to speak,” pointing to a couple of spots on Apollo’s body, “just touch him here or here and apply a little pressure like this. Unlike Viola’s twisted comment, you will find out why he is known as Johnny JumpUp.

“And, if you would do me the favor of forgetting that you heard either of those secrets from me. If they pressure you to tell them, just say that you got it straight from the horse’s mouth. They will start laughing so hard that they will forget that they had asked you something.”

Since Johnny mentioned that he had Faerie blood, Apollo asked his teacher how that could be. Cetee told him that Faeries have the ability to be any size they want up to a certain point. “You saw how their wings didn’t change size. If a Faerie grows larger than sixty-nine inches tall, the wings burn off from the effort of containing the magic. Once that happens, the Faerie is stuck and can never rejoin the Faerie fellowship.”

The teacher told him that sometimes a Faerie falls in love with a mortal, and the growth is deliberate. Sometimes, they get caught up in the moment and forget their limitations. He said that no matter what, the results are always the same. The burnt wings leave a little scorch mark where they use to be. He concluded the day’s class saying, “Many times the Faerie will get butterfly tattoos on their back to hide the burns. In the case of your family, there have been many times when one of the Faerie Princes or Princesses have given up their immortality to marry one of your ancestors. The fact that you are a child of multiple royal lines means you have one of the highest concentrations of Faerie blood imaginable. If you were to marry a Faerie yourself, it might even be possible for your children to have enough Faerie blood to have wings and could join the tribe.”

So it went for Prince Apollo that fall. There was so much to learn and it was all so fascinating. Sometimes Sir Archibald and Lord Cetee taught the history lesson together. One such day, the teachers and Prince Apollo were joined by King William. Cetee started the class with asking, “We have talked about the first King and Queen of Riangle. Can anyone tell me about the time before the founding?” He was met with blank stares as he had expected. In the normal history classes, nothing is ever said and no one ever seems to ask. Fortunately, Cetee was not a normal history teacher.

He took them back to the time fifty years before the founding when the island kingdom of Wobnair was ruled by the Royal House of Charming. At this time the Heir was Prince Willhelm Brogrim. He and his bride, Princess Angelica, had three sons, Myron Irving, Kenneth Bartholomew, and Oliver Benedictus. Prince

Will B. was fifty when his father died and was crowned King. The eldest of his sons was twenty-five and began his quest to find a suitable maiden to become his bride. Over the course of the next few years each of the princes had found the maiden that each thought was the “Fairest of All.” The Princes took it to the people to see who was the fairest. Many street battles were fought as the choices polarized the people. Brothers fought brothers, sisters would have clumps of hair missing after their catfights. Just as the populace fought, so too, the House of Charming fought amongst itself. When a practical joke nearly killed Princess Ashleigh, the aged King prayed to the Gods that with his dying breath he could hope to see the end of fighting..

Lord Cetee told them that true to all prayers, the answer given is not always what the petitioner expects. The Gods decided that none of the sons and daughters of the House of Charming were totally blameless in the violence, as such, none were truly worthy to rule the entire kingdom. The Gods divided the kingdom into three parts and set each Prince as ruler of one of the new countries. Using the King’s dying energies, the God’s cast a spell so that the people would forget that there had ever been a country called Wobnair. Each new Queen would be fairest of her own country. Not to simply reward the three couples with having a country to rule, the brothers and their brides were exempted from the spell so that they would remember what they lost in their bickering. “Young Apollo,” concluded Cetee, “when you become King, you will unite two of the three parts of the original kingdom. If you were to marry a daughter of the Queen of Rysbal, you could be the first person to rule the entire of the ancient kingdom in nearly five hundred years.”

Apollo thought a moment and said, “Wait a minute. Something isn’t right here. If everyone forgot, then how do you know about this tale?” Cetee gave the Prince that all too familiar look of “Father won’t tell me until I’m old enough.” Apollo sighed. “I should know better than asking that when I already know the answer.”



“The Faeres have confirmed most of Father’s teaching,” said Cetee. “They were not included in the spell as they were not really part of the people. There are details in his tales that sound too much like someone who saw things from the inside of the court. I’m hoping that as the kingdoms come together he will be more open about the secrets of the past.”

All too soon the last leaves had fallen and the first snows of winter were on the horizon. Apollo was engrossed in one of his text books when a knock on the door broke his concentration. Lord Cetee and Sir Archibald entered the room at his bidding. “Prince Apollo, we have come here at the request of King Adam to give you a present for your thirteen birthday.”

“But that isn’t until tomorrow,” said the Prince.

“You will want this gift when you begin the Prancing Ceremony this evening. As it is not custom for the King and Prince to see each other prior to the ritual, we are here at your father’s request to help you ready yourself for the things to come.”

“Prancing Ceremony? What’s that? Queen Rose hasn’t been preparing me for any great public event,” said the Prince with a puzzled look.

Cetee told him that Queen Rose know very little about a Prancing or even a Princessing Ceremony as she was the second born child. The Ceremony takes place when the Heir turns thirteen as this is a safe age to believe that the child will live to become an adult. The ceremony is when the reigning monarch sets forth the first test for the Heir to prove to all that they are worthy of becoming the next monarch. “That is all I’m allowed to say. The rest is for you to discover tonight. Now, open your gift.”

Apollo opened the box and found a white tunic, embroidered in gold and silver. Suns, moons and stars were stitched throughout the fabric. A matching cape and trousers were also in the box. “These are beautiful. Between the white and the gold, I’m not sure if I would feel more like a bridegroom on his wedding day or the sun on a snowy winter’s morning,” exclaimed Apollo.

“I believe King Adam said the same thing when King Andrew asked me give them to your father. As did King Anthony before that,” said Cetee. “You will be the ninth Prince of Adbalm to wear this same outfit at your Prancing Ceremony.”

Sir Archibald added, “I seem to recall a certain young man who hoped to hold something that had belonged to the great heroes of the past. Do you think this counts?”

Apollo was too lost in the moment to make a comment.

“My Prince, it is time to get ready.”

To be continued...

The staff of Airy Faerie offers a hearty

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## Sure Signs of Spring by Darlene Fey

Hi ya all. I was gonna save this story for next year, seeing how it’s a spring story and all. But since there are now eight Airy Faeries a year, well that just makes it all OK. So here is my story.

I was driving around downtown, I forget where I was going, but I guess that makes no never mind as what really matters is that it was on the first of spring. That much I remember because as I was driving down 6<sup>th</sup> avenue towards Cheesy Man Park. It was there that I saw that ever glorious sight, the first signs of spring. A sign that always fills my heart with such joy. The sign said, “GARAGE SALE”. Well I tell you, I stopped that car so fast I nearly gave myself whiplash. I parked and rushed out of my car to enjoy the treasure trove of second hand goodies. Now of course, the prices were all marked way too high, but I knew I would be able to talk them down.

Let me tell you, there ain’t no one who can out bargain me. I am so good at haggling the price that most people just end up giving me the item for free and walking away all upset. I guess being out bargained is just too much for some folks. My father use to say I could pinch a nickel so tight I could make the buffalo poop. Of course nowadays there aint no buffalo on the nickel. So I guess now I am making ole’ Mr. Jefferson poop.

Of course my x-lover, Zekie, he use to get all excited when I pinched his nipples. Heck the harder I pinched the more he liked it. He always said if his tits ain’t sore the next day then the sex wasn’t any good. Well, that tramp, Trish the bitch, is tweaking ole’ Zekie’s nipples now. Enough about that, I am not here to speak badly about no one, I truly hope they are happy tweaking each other’s nipples while they rot in hell. Opps, I am sorry, that just slipped out? Well now, I will end this story here and now before any thing else just slips on out. All I wanted to do was to rejoice over the wonderful signs that spring has truly returned to our humble little town, “Garage Sale”!

Happy Spring Shopping!

# Things Come in Threes by Professor Percival "Perry" Grinn

We all know about the old saying about how good things (and bad) come in threes. Mythology is no stranger to this and there are many examples of wonderful (and terrible) trios such as The Fates and the Sirens.

Have you ever been so identified as part of a group that your name gets lost? Did you know that each of the three Graces had her own name? Or that when we use Gorgon and Medusa interchangeably, that she actually had two sisters?

Challenge number one is to match of the eighteen individuals with her group. Extra faerie points to you if you can go the extra step and can match the lady with the applicable title/nickname. Extra, extra points if you know which Gorgon was the mortal one of the trio (hint: only one of them got her head cut off, that should say something right there.) (Answers are at the bottom of the page if you haven't already peeked.)

Challenge number two is to find the eighteen individuals and the six group names in the grid below. Standard rules apply—words will be forward or backward, vertical, horizontal or diagonally but always in a direct line.

- |                     |                      |                               |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| _____ 1. Aglaia     | _____ 10. Medusa     | A Fate (Cuts the Thread)      | J Grace              |
| _____ 2. Alecto     | _____ 11. Megaera    | B Fate (Spins the Thread)     | K Grace              |
| _____ 3. Atropos    | _____ 12. Parthenope | C Fate (Weaves the Thread)    | L Grace              |
| _____ 4. Clotho     | _____ 13. Skuld      | D Fury (The Avenger)          | M Norn (The Future)  |
| _____ 5. Euphrosyne | _____ 14. Stheno     | E Fury (The Jealous)          | N Norn (The Past)    |
| _____ 6. Euryale    | _____ 15. Thalia     | F Fury (The Unresting)        | O Norn (The Present) |
| _____ 7. Lachesis   | _____ 16. Tisiphone  | G Gorgon (The Cunning One)    | P Siren              |
| _____ 8. Leucosia   | _____ 17. Urd        | H Gorgon (The Mighty)         | Q Siren              |
| _____ 9. Ligeia     | _____ 18. Verdandi   | I Gorgon (The Wide-Wandering) | R Siren              |

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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| J | I | D | X | S | O | P | O | R | T | A | A | O | C |
| P | I | L | O | I | O | Z | P | N | I | C | H | N | J |
| A | P | U | A | P | I | P | X | E | E | T | S | A | T |
| R | S | K | R | H | T | C | G | F | O | H | V | T | J |
| T | R | S | E | O | T | I | A | L | E | C | T | O | J |
| H | P | I | A | N | L | T | C | Q | W | O | K | S | O |
| E | L | S | G | E | E | J | M | E | D | U | S | A | V |
| N | X | E | E | U | P | H | R | O | S | Y | N | E | X |
| O | J | H | M | L | E | U | C | O | S | I | A | A | R |
| P | W | C | W | K | Y | G | X | G | O | N | R | K | B |
| E | L | A | Y | R | U | E | H | K | W | Z | G | E | K |
| A | G | L | A | I | A | F | D | Y | R | U | F | M | N |

