

# Airy Faerie

## Imbolc, 2006



## Publisher's Notes

Welcome to the Denver Faeries' Imbolc issue of the Airy Faerie. The days are slowly getting longer and believe it or not spring is stirring. If you listen carefully you might hear the daffodils and tulips saying: "GOD DAMN! IT IS FREEZING OUT THERE!" Oh well, maybe next month. Chinese New Year is also just around the. On January 29, we will be saying goodbye to the Year of Cock and welcome in the Year of the Dog! People born in the year of the Dog, such as Liza Minnelli, Shirley MacLaine, Dolly Parton, and Jane Asher (to name a few), are said to be honest, faithful to those that they love, clever, sincere, calm in a crisis, but tend to worry too much, and find faults with others. It is kind of funny that dogs remain calm, but worry too much, another great mystery of dogs. So if you have a pet pooch, be extra nice to them this year.

I am going to keep my notes short this time around to allow you more time to enjoy the Imbolc Airy Faerie. But what publisher's note would be complete without the nudity and gay sex warning. So here it is: WARNING! This fae-zine was created for adult gay males who don't mind seeing images or reading about naked men, or gay sexual activities. If you would prefer not to view such things, please close this fae-zine now, and make sure to tell the person who sent it to you to please not do it again. If you enjoy male nudity, and we think you do, or gay sexual activities, again, we think you do, please continue on.

OK, now that that is out of the way, toss you favorite dog a bone, and then both of you can sit back and enjoy a treat.

Naked Hugs,  
DragonSwan

## Publisher's Notes, Too

Imbolc is a celebration of the Goddess *Bride*. Among *Her* gifts to us is the Gift of Inspiration. It is amazing how *She* reveals that gift. Orpheus had been struggling with what he wanted to contribute this issue. I told him that the Quest saga was more than his fair share. He read what Beast wrote for this issue and soon the Goddess Gift filled him and "Frozen River of the Soul" was born. I handed DragonSwan the "nearly finished draft" of this issue. He read the poem and in a flash, the heart graphic on the next page was born. I got home from work, just needing to add this part of the publishers' notes and got his note that said "I know you are almost finished, but is there room for one more piece of art?" (That is a silly question - I will always find a ways to add more of his art - I would include more art if the *God of Email* would allow larger files to go out into cyberspace.)

*Bride* aided Beast in his writing, which lit a fire in Orpheus, who passed that fire to DragonSwan.

This is the same energy that I talk about that later in the issue. This is the energy that connects the flame from *Bride's* Perpetual Flame in Kildare to a candle we can hold in our hand.

We are all connected. A gift from the Gods and Goddesses is a gift to everyone. The Airy Faerie is our way of passing that gift to you. Please share our gift with your friends. If something in our writing inspires you, please share it with us. We love to watch the Fires of Inspiration grow.

If you are called to write something but that little voice inside says "I'm not good enough," don't listen to it. Don't let the nay-sayers freeze that thought. Let the flame of *Bride's* inspiration fill you and let the words flow from you...through you. There is plenty of time later to work on the polish. In this case, it's not how you finish, it's the fact that you started in the first place.

Faerie kisses,  
Falcon

## Airy Faerie



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

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# Frozen River of the Soul

## by Orpheu

The ice is deep that covers your heart.  
It chokes the river that runs through your soul.  
It chills to the bone and numbs all feelings.  
If that was your aim, then you reached your goal.

How did the ice form, and why is it so deep?  
Was it the chilly reception you gave the night he worked late?  
Did you turn to the ice to ease the pain of a bruised pride  
When he announced that he was leaving for somebody new?

Or is the ice a shield to stop you from feeling  
The abuse from a parent, a teacher or priest?  
Or was it the bully from school that called you a faggot?  
They can't touch you when the ice runs deep.

But a river in winter still has fish in its flow.  
They burrow in the muck and mud to stay warm.  
Beneath the ice of your soul is stuck the muck of your life,  
Your feelings are the fish just trying to survive.

Beneath the ice, the feelings are safe, nothing gets in.  
Beneath the ice, the feelings are dying, nothing gets in.  
Nothing gets in and nothing gets out.  
Feelings are trapped in the muck and need air to breathe.

The muck and the mud are the pain you once felt.  
They are stuck in the ice with things you keep safe.  
Let love in to melt the thick ice.  
Let the river flow and wash the muck away.

As the ice melts, feel the lightness it brings.  
You are the river, the muck is your past  
With the river flowing freely, the muck washes away,  
The river is clean and you can see what's there.

Sometimes the muck can turn into stone,  
What river won't have a boulder or two?  
Let the river flow free and in the course of time,  
It will erode away to become a thing of the past.

Gone are the browns and greys of the mud,  
Look at the colors of the feelings that suddenly thrive.  
They flash and they dazzle in the sunshine of friends,  
What had been mere survival, is now a celebration of life.



## Mind Games

### by Cielo

Infringements, frivolous expenditures  
Common annoyances, fleshy contortions  
Congenital defects, changes of heart  
Consummated relations, covert eccentricities  
Hideaway lovers, false facades flaunted  
Commonalties delirious with lust, Etiquette ignored  
Quick toxic caresses meant of lust  
Dilated intentions viewed through brittle souls  
Lazy-eyed glances from unhindered hearts  
Vengeance through the eyes of the beholder  
Cavalier masks appear in hindsight  
Regrets and penitence transverse thoughts

## Untitled

### by Cielo

Purity awash with sin  
Sin abounds with energy  
Spirit alive with hope  
Hope fed by sweet  
    Sweet  
    Sweet  
    Love  
Tears turning to diamonds  
    Caught in warm long fingered hands  
Still warm from when  
    He held me  
    Close.  
    Closer.  
Heat filled vasculature  
Blood filled flesh  
Eyes wide  
    Open.  
    Wet.  
    Telling truths.

# What is Imbolc?

By Beast

Candlemas (or Imbolc, Imbolg or Oimele) honors the goddess Bridget (also known as Brigantia, Bhride, Bride and Brid)—a beloved goddess of the Celtic people. She was called the “Triple Bridget” as one of her aspects ruled poetry, writing, and inspiration; another one ruled healing, herbology and midwifery; and the third aspect ruled the fires of the hearth, and of the smith, and the arts of smithcraft.

Imbolc is a festival of water and of fire: the fire the shapes creation and brings inspiration to the heart, mind and soul. Bridget “creates the fire in the head” and is the muse of bards, poets, and writers. She is a strong and ferocious protector of animals and of the earth. She is a Virgin Goddess in the old sense of the word (having nothing to do with sex) meaning complete within herself. The writer, folklorist, and anthropologist, Margaret Murray, once famously wrote: “The gods of the old religion become the devils of the new.” But Bridget was too loved and too powerful for the Catholic Church to be rid of in this way, so of course they had to make her into a saint. At Bridget’s shrine at Kildare, there was kept a perpetual flame by 19 of her priestesses. Later, after the Christianization of Ireland, when Bridget became Saint Bridget, this same flame was tended by the nuns of the Abbey at Kildare. In 1996, the eternal flame of Bridget was relit both at Kildare, and also here in the United States, and this “fire” has spread around the world.

Brid is also connected with and controls water (especially wells). There are many holy wells in the British Isles, and they are often associated with healing and purification. In Ireland at this time, the river Shannon is beginning to melt, with the water quickening and moving again under a crystal shell of ice. The first stirrings of Spring are felt within the earth. The word “Imbolc,” is Gaelic for “in the belly,” and this is the time when the first Spring lambs were ready to born. In Wiccan belief, the Great Goddess is pregnant with the new God who will be born at Ostara. Milk is the food of love given by mothers to their beloved children. Because of the Sabbat’s association with birth and new life milk offerings of milk and cream may be made to water. Early flowers such as snowdrops and crocus begin to bloom now. The snowdrop is directly associated with this festival, being called “Candlemas Bells,” or “Purification Flowers.” At any other time of the year, it is considered unlucky to have this flower in the house.

Interestingly enough, in the Catholic Church, this festival is called Candlemas, or more properly, “The Purification of the Blessed Virgin,” to mark the time that the Virgin Mary visited the temple for her own ritual purification after giving birth to Christ (since, according to the Mosaic law a mother who had given birth to a man-child was considered unclean). This day was called “Candlemas” since it was also the time that the special beeswax candles used by the Church were blessed. So even for the Christians, this is time of ritual fire and purification.

As Brid is the goddess of the Sacred Flame, the Sacred Well, and of Smithcraft, one image I have of this time is of metal being heated in the smithfire, pounded into shape, and quenched or tempered in cold water. This makes the metal strong and usable. In the same way, Bridget invites us to bring the fire and the water in

our beings together—creativity and emotion, will and love—and to find unity within the seeming conflicting opposites within us.

This time on the Great Wheel of the Year is a time for meditation and purification. It is a time to put away all greenery that was put up at Yuletide. There is a chant that goes with this activity of cleaning and putting away:

Thus we banish Winter  
Thus we welcome Spring  
Say farewell to what is dead  
And greet each living thing  
Thus we banish Winter  
Thus we welcome Spring.

*From Eight Sabbats for Witches*

Works consulted:

*Eight Sabbats for Witches* by the Farrars

The following websites:

<http://www.ladybridget.com/>  
[www.twistedtree.org.uk/candlemas.htm](http://www.twistedtree.org.uk/candlemas.htm)  
[www.newadvent.org/cathen/03245b.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03245b.htm)

## Stories From Our Tribe

### Imbolc and the Denver Radical Faeries by Falcon

Bridget’s fire lives on through the Denver Radical Faeries. Each of our ritual candles has been lit by candles that have been a connection to the perpetual fires. When a candle is lit from Bridget’s fire, that candle is charged with Her energy. With the flame extinguished, the charged candle can be brought home and shared with others. Like the frozen earth, the energy lies dormant waiting for a new flame to reawaken it. Once lit, other candles may be lit and charged with Bridget’s energy. Thus, the fire may be shared and spread throughout the world.

In our Fae-gan 101 series, we recently discussed ritual basics. The sharing of Bridget’s flame is one of the symbols that underlie what the ritual portion of a ritual is about. In the lighting of a candle from a candle that has been lit by a candle...that has been lit by the perpetual flame, we are connecting with that flame. We connect with each person that held one of those candles. We connect with our history. When we take that candle home with us, we know that at some point we will re-light that candle. We give our future selves a connection to the past.

If you are traveling to Denver, feel free to bring a candle. It doesn’t matter what size, a small birthday cake candle can be charged as easily as a 3x9-inch pillar candle. You can light your candle from one of ours and take that energy home with you for your own rituals.

## Imbolc's Purification Incense by Beast and Cleo

Lavender	Peace/Restfulness. Lavender mixed with sandalwood helps attract helpful spirits.
White Sage	Cleansing/Purification.
Copal	White/Yellow Copal - cleansing. Protection and the drawing of Sun energies.
Birch	One of Nine (not a Borg tree) of the Wiccan Rede. <u>Protects</u> the home from lightning.
Juniper	Cleansing and to relieve stress.
Rosemary	Used traditionally to cleanse a ritual site. Opens the heart to love and clears the mind.
<b>White or Red Sandalwood</b>	Base. Relaxes the conscious mind.
<b>Orris Root</b>	Base (scent stabilizer). Love/Increase intimate connections.

The elements listed above were chosen with three things in mind; **1)** What does Imbolc mean? **2)** What does Imbolc mean to me? and **3)** What elements, when brought together, will work together?

We did not provide a recipe for this season's incense because we have not formulated the incense before this edition's publication. Plus, those of us with some incense experience are helping stimulate others' magikal imagination.

As you hold these fresh singular elements in your fingers breathe in their scent deeply (be careful not to inhale the actual substance). Close your eyes. Now imagine or simply breathe in other elements. Which parts seem to fit together for you? Each of us, if left alone, will come up with our own recipe – our own powerfully charged combination of elements. There is freedom in this magik.

The Sandalwood, even though listed as a base, can be added in such amounts as to be an "active" element (in other words an obvious scent) in the incense. Sandalwood has traditionally been used as a base because it adds bulk to incense without changing the intended scent. Orris root has a sweet scent that is not overpowering, adds bulk, and helps keep the scent of the incense as it is burned or stored. When these elements are used as a base they should never be added in a quantity larger than the smallest quantity of an intended scent element.

Enjoy Creating Magik,  
Many Blessings,  
Beast and Cielo

## Imbolc Thoughts by P'chE

Imbolc - as described in a couple of references as being halfway between Yule and Ostara, or spring equinox, generally observed Feb. 1, 2, or 3. It is also compared to Candlemas and the ceremony of lighting all the lamps in the house for a brief period.

I can certainly understand that. It is January! The coldest and darkest of the months. One of my sisters would probably describe it more aptly as when one buys ones favorite alcoholic beverage in cases — cases of *gallons*!

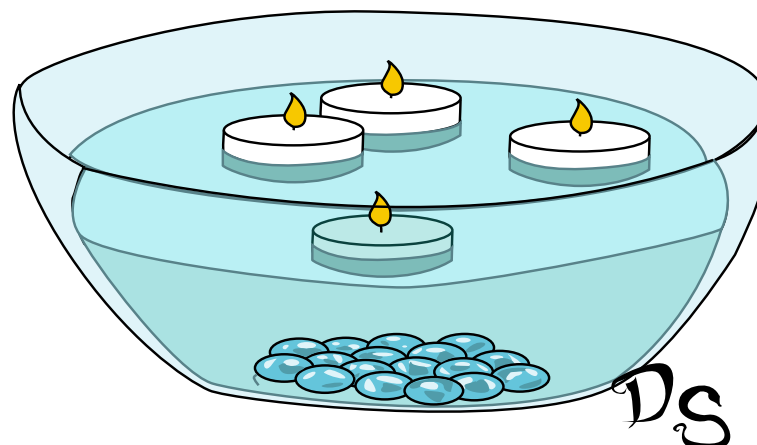
The television talk shows and info-tainment programs give all kinds of advice on losing weight and trimming down that body fat which if they really paid any attention to the calendar at all, they would understand that in the Northern Hemisphere, it is the dead of winter and we need that extra bit of fat to keep us warm! There's still plenty of time come March and April to lose the insulation and work on that svelte, trim or Ruebenesque stature for which we can all thank our parents and grandparents and our genes (not to be confused with jeans as in what we may wear to show off or hide that biological facet of our personality) But I digress.

On top of all this, as this piece is being written, it is almost the full moon! Now it seems to be prevalent that the full moon brings out all interesting facets of our various hidden characteristics, many of which it seems should remain hidden! For me, it begins about half-way into the moon's fullness! I really prefer to curl up in bed, hide under layers and layers of comforters and let it all pass until January is gone, February is well on it's way and March brings forth the challenges of new spring growth except here in the central Rocky Mountain High Plains desert, the wonderful seasonal heavy snows and warm days only add mass confusion as to is it really spring or are we still doing winter?!

Is it time to dig out from under those comforters and clean off the garden or continue to ignore the snow shovel gathering dust in the corner awaiting the next inundation, hopefully not wet and heavy and tree and bush devastation.

Rather, it is Imbolc, a time to anticipate the lengthening days of light, the coming warming of the sun, absorbing all that heat and glow from the candles used to observe the sabbat. Or to put it more simply (and perhaps quite curmudgeonly) it is SO obvious we should NEVER have put hibernation on the bargaining table! ! !

And now, like the groundhog so abused and objected to being roused from his winter's rest, I return to my warm, cozy nest of down comforters and warm bodies and . . . ! ! !



# Quest for the Crystal Phoenix

## Chapter 11: Of Sningles and Snickles

by Orpheus

The past couple of weeks in the Valley of the Kings had a welcome surprise for Apollo. The entire year, he had been looking forward to getting out of the castle and back into nature. Summer in the valley meant being alone with a father that couldn't be pulled away at a moment's notice to attend to something that had to be done "right now." Unlike last summer, Apollo was not really alone with his father. They had been joined by some of his father's childhood companions, who had been his teachers and even friends this past year. Johnny JumpUp and Cetee had left them on the first day after being summoned to attend family matters in their villages north of the valley. While Apollo had known that Johnny was a faerie from the first day they met, he had only discovered that his teacher of Ancient History and Magical Creatures was really a centaur when they got to the valley. He had a million questions to ask that had to wait until his return.

That left one other companion, Rondar, his former weapons teacher. Apollo sat on the hillside overlooking the lake watching his father play in the water with the man that had been his lover before Apollo was born. The prince could see that the two men were in love; the real kind that was more than the sugary show that many people in court like display when they pretend to be in love.

Apollo was sort of glad the Johnny had left for a while. The faerie had a way of twisting things in a highly sexually charged manner. Without that extra little kick of energy, the prince found that he enjoyed just sitting in the sun being naked and not having a hard on all day long. He realized that now that he had seen Rondar naked, most of the fantasy was gone. He still thought that Rondar was one of the handsomest men in court and most of his friends would be envious to watch him frolicking in his skin. And yet, here he was more intrigued by Rondar's Godmark of a shield with the Adbalm Royal Crest than he was the fact that his chest was without body hair despite his hairy arms. He remember how hard he got when he found out that he was going to get to see Rondar's penis, but now it was just part of the experience of being naked. Apollo let out a heavy sigh.

"Why such a heavy sigh, son?" asked Adam. He sat down next to his son.

"I must be getting old," Apollo said.

Adam laughed at the thought of a thirteen year old saying that he was old. "Why do you say that, old Ancient One?" Adam gave a mock bow toward his son.

"In all the time we've been here, I've barely gotten a hard on. Back in the castle, I usually have to jerk off a couple of times a day. Every day, after weapons class, when our group would take a shower, several of the older guys would say mean things about Rondar; saying that the reason he never took a shower with his classes was

because his penis was smaller than the smallest one in the shower. And when we did group jerk offs, I would always shoot first. I would picture Rondar coming in and proving that he had a real man-sized cock and showed us how to do it right." The prince paused a moment when he realized that he just told his father that he had fantasies about his father's lover. "I'm not shocking you, am I?" he asked.

"No. I'm not shocked. I just never could have said the same thing to my father. But what makes you say that you are getting old?"

"Johnny said that when humans get old, they stop getting hard ons so I needed to make each one count before I ran out of my quota. I figure I must have run out."

Adam laughed. "You are not old, and despite his misguided

anatomy lesson, we mere mortals don't have a set quota of hard ons. It takes a certain amount of sexual energy to stimulate the penis to get erect. Our friend, Johnny, likes to mix up being naked with being sexual. For him, as soon as the pants go down, his dick goes up. Here in the valley, without that sexual tension, our dicks are as relaxed as our minds. For us, a naked hug is just a hug between people who happen to be naked. It isn't an automatic prelude to something else."

"Can I join you or is this a private father-son chat?" said Rondar as he walked up the hill.

Adam looked at his son to see how he would respond. "Sure,"

said Apollo.

"Thanks. When I got close I could hear something about a hard ons and dicks going up and I thought you might be having 'the birds and the bees' talk," said Rondar.

"It seems that our friendly faerie has already helped him with those classes," said Adam. He went on to explain Johnny's current *Hard On Quota Theory*.

"When I first met Johnny," said Rondar, "he told me that he was allergic to morning dew, and the only thing he could drink was fresh semen. And that he had to drink two cups of fluid a day in order to survive. After cumming four times that day, I had less than a half a cup and I was worried that he was going to die. Then I noticed that Viola was trying to hide a laugh, so I knew something was going on."

"What did you do?" asked Apollo.

"Should I be telling your son all this, Adam?"

"Why not? I doubt you can shock him. He's been with Johnny for nearly a year. There can't be too much that he hasn't already heard."



"I told him that I had more ready to serve and wondered if he wanted to drink it fresh from the tap."

"You mean right from the penis? Do people actually do that?"

"He hasn't taught you that yet?" asked Rondar. "As I recall that was part of lesson number ten or twelve."

"He said he had to skip a couple of lessons because of the rules of interaction between an Efgee and a child. So you mean he got down to drink your cum like a dog drinks water out of a leaky faucet?"

"That is one way to describe it," said Adam, "but I wouldn't tell that to Johnny."

Rondar snickered at the image, and then continued, "Anyway, he got in place and I gave him everything inside, just not the fluid he was expecting. You see, I had drunk a gallon of water trying to get enough fluid in me to make the semen, so..."

"You pissed on him?!"

"Guilty. I would not do it that way again. I found out that he likes it. And in part, that is where he got his name."

"I thought it was because he jumped when you touched his side."

"Take a look at the floral Johnny JumpUps when they bloom next year and then ask him the story about how they got yellow over their pretty faces."

Rondar excused himself. He said he wanted to check on the horses before he started to fix dinner. As he walked away, Apollo said, "I'm kind of glad, he's left for a moment. I need to ask you something."

"What is it?"

Apollo took a deep breath, "Do you think that I'm going to be like you when I grow up?"

"What do you mean?"

"I guess, I mean gay. I told you about the guys in the shower and I like jerking off with them. I think Rondar is better looking than the ladies in court. And Johnny makes me feel real good when we get naked together."

"Before I answer that, I want you to be honest in answering something first. What do you think of the girls your age at the castle?"

"They're gross and give you sningles. Johnny says that if I don't masturbate properly, I run the risk of breaking my dick off and turning into one of them." Apollo paused for a moment. "Oh my god. That's why Amaranth gave me the slipper. I'm going to break my dick off and turn into a girl!"

"If it were that easy, Viola would have done that a long time ago."

"Oh. Right."

"I see we are going to have to spend some time un-learning some of the things that faerie has been teaching you. Back to your question. No, I don't think you will be just like me in that way, but you will have to decide that for yourself when the time comes. For boys your age, it is pretty common to think that girls are gross, we'll see what you think about them in a couple of years."

"Johnny has a way of making everyone feel good. Masturbation is fun, but it is even better when you have someone to share it with. With the guys in the shower, it is part of the bonding that

happens and is something that every guy goes through. Who has the biggest dick? Who can shoot the fastest? Who can shoot the farthest? But I can bet that you all sit far apart, never touching. Right?"

Apollo nodded, so Adam continued. "And with Johnny, you are touching, and that intensifies the feeling. And if you care for the person, it is even better. So for all the things that you have said, do I think you are gay? You are young and just discovering sex. In a world filled with clothes, the only people you are likely to see naked are your friends in the shower and it is natural to want to compare and even show off. Ask me again when you have a chance to find out for yourself if girls really give you sningles."

"Thanks, Father." Apollo got up and gave his hug. "Some of the guards say its bad for two guys to touch and that the Gods will cast you into the darkest places. But when I see you with Rondar, I only see love and I couldn't figure it out on my own."

"There will always be those who will never understand. But you know how at least one God feels about guys touching. If it good enough for the other Apollo, it certainly is good enough for you."

"I hadn't thought about it that way." The prince raced off to go swim in the lake before supper. Adam felt Rondar's arms reach around him from behind; his head coming to rest on the king's shoulder. The two stood there for a few minutes watching Apollo splash around in the water.

"That sounded pretty heavy. But I think you handled it well."

The king relaxed into his lover's embrace. "He's growing up too fast."

"For all that he is only thirteen, yes. He is more adult about things than most people I know. But I haven't known you for all these years to not detect some sorry in that fatherly pride."

"I think back on all the time we've wasted apart, and back to when we first realized that there was more between us than the simple shower room playfulness. I wonder what it would have been like to have had that conversation with my own father. Would we have been able to come up with a way that I would not have had to choose between love and duty, and hurt you in the process?"

"I think King Andrew was of the same school of thought as Queen Rose. I don't think that conversation would have done any good. In fact, I think that would have gotten me sent away as soon as he found out. You probably would have been married to Iris before you began your Walk and we would never have had the little time together that we did have."

"True, but still, I wish I could have been honest with myself and him to admit the truth." Adam sighed.

They heard the sound of chimes, and Johnny appeared in front of them. "I heard an 'I wish' in there and that sounds like the perfect entrance cue."

Johnny hugged Adam. Since Rondar was still holding him from behind, Adam found himself the middle layer of a man sandwich. Between the memories of youthful play in the showers, the feel of his lover's cock pressing against his butt and Johnny's passionate welcome kiss, Adam's cock began to grow hard.

*-continued on page 8*

## Quest/Crystal Phoenix continued

"Now that's the way I like to be greeted," said the faerie. "In case you're wondering, Cetee said that he almost felt sorry for me for having to spend time with my mother, so he is down at the lake filling Apollo with tales about life with the centaurs."

"Giving us time to greet you properly?"

"Let me go take a quick dip in the lake first to wash off the dirt from the road."

"I have something better in mind," said Rondar getting a big grin on his face. He grabbed Johnny and Adam by their hard cocks and led them toward the forest. "We had just been talking about the first time we met you and I think a shower of a different nature is in order."

"I'm not sure if we should be rewarding him for all that he has been teaching my son," said Adam, "or punishing him for all the misinformation that he's been teaching him."

"Oh, punish me! I promise to be good."

"I thought you might feel that way."

Johnny got on his knees between the lovers and began fondling their balls. He was rewarded with a stream of warm man water. "Oh, thank you. I can't get many others to do that. They all think I'm weird."

"You are weird," said Adam. "But we love you and want to make sure you are happy."

His mouth was too busy sucking on the two cocks to respond. The lovers kissed and it wasn't long before Johnny found himself covered in cum.

"Oh, thank you, thank you," said the faerie. "After spending a couple of weeks with my mother, I really needed that. But now, I think I need that dip in the lake that you distracted me from earlier."

"Distracted you, did we?" said Rondar.

"Ronnie, next time we are tempted to welcome him in the manner which he would like to be accustomed, please remind me that he thinks it is a distraction." The king gave the faerie a swat on his butt. "Get going before we decide to distract you again."

As Johnny shrunk down so that he could fly down to the lake he said, "First one in gets to schnickle the rest."

The two looked at each other and said, "What's schnickle?"

"I don't know yet, but it sounded good. I'll figure it out later."

With that the faerie flew off. The lovers walked down to the lake holding hands. As they got near the beach, Adam pulled Rondar in front of him and gave him a kiss. "I love you," he said. "I have always known that I missed your company, but until this time together, I hadn't realized how empty my life has been without you. Thank you for being here."

Rondar kissed Adam back and said, "You are most welcome. I love you too. Thank you for letting me back in."

The sound of laughter from the lake broke the solemn moment between the lovers. The joined hands and ran down to the beach. Upon arriving, they found that Johnny had decided that schnickling involved swimming underwater trying to sneak up on someone in order to tickle them. Rondar held up his finger to his mouth. He gestured to Adam to continue to join the others, while he went around the lake a little bit so that he could sneak up behind Johnny. Adam joined his son and the faerie in the water. A few minutes later, Johnny shot up ten feet into the air as Rondar surfaced in the space that the

faerie just vacated.

With a big grin on his face, Rondar said, "I win!"

"No fair," protested the faerie. "I was supposed to schnickle you."

"We changed the rules on the way down here. After all these years, I would think that you know that I'm not very schnicklish. Besides, when was the last time you could sneak up on me?"

"Is that a challenge?"

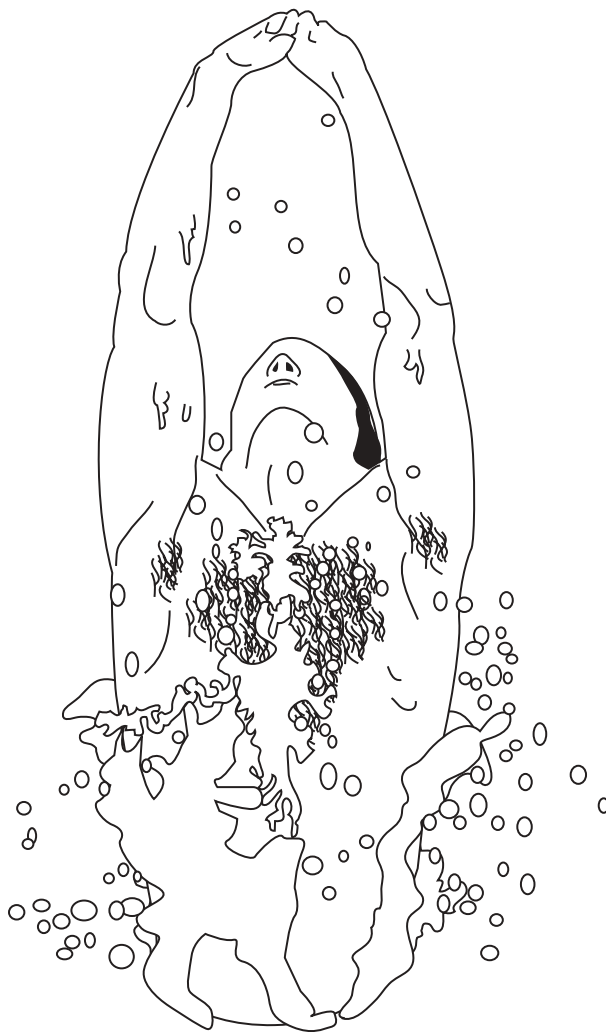
"You can try"

While still airborne, Johnny grew back to full size. The result was much like a diver doing a cannonball, splashing everyone. After a bit more playtime in the lake, Adam and Rondar excused themselves to get dinner started.

Dinner was the first time that Adam had a chance to ask the faerie about his thoughts regarding King William's wish. The group figured that he was anticipating that Johnny would be required to be some type of bodyguard for the prince, much like Hilda Harbell and her sisters had been for Amaranth.

"Why would I need a bodyguard?" asked Apollo. "We aren't at war. In fact, while I enjoy weapon's class, I've never understood why it is so important to have a large royal guard and army."

Adam responded to his son. "Until recently, we all thought we were at war with each other. A village in northern Adbalm would be



destroyed and it looked like it had been done by the Riangler army. Something would happen in Rysbal and they blamed us. Things would be quiet for a while and then start up again. It was during one of the periods of attacks that my parents decided to marry me to the Princess of Riangler. By uniting the kingdoms, they hoped to end the attacks."

"Why isn't this in the history books?" asked the prince.

Cetee spoke up, "Father says it is a residual effect of the spell Amaranth cast after the gods split Wobnair into the three kingdoms. Amaranth wanted people to forget the animosity toward the other kingdoms, so the spell included something to encourage people to forget acts of aggression from another of the brothers' kingdoms. As descendants of the House of Charming, you fall into the group that can remember these kinds of encounters."

"As it is," said Adam, "when Father started to talk to William, both realized that neither side was responsible for the attacks. They came to the conclusion that someone wants us to fight. For what purpose, they couldn't figure out."

"Did they ever come up with ideas on who was behind the attacks?"

"I think Father did," said Adam. "The last time I saw him, he said he had something very important to discuss with King William. He and Mother got in the carriage that night and headed north to Riangler. When they didn't arrive on time, William sent out a search party. It was after a week of searching that their coach was found at the bottom of a cliff on Mount Phlare."

"I can see why grandfather would want Johnny to be able to be any size. He could help lift a carriage. But why do you think I would need a bodyguard?" asked Apollo. "That would imply some form of direct attack on me."

"Adam, now you can see why he is such a good student," said Cetee. "He can't be distracted from questions. I will answer that part for you as Father and I were the ones that found them. Their carriage had not simply fallen off the cliff. Each animal and person had been shot. We found red arrows with purple feathers imbedded in each one of them."

"I never heard that," said Rondar.

"And you won't ever hear it again," said Cetee. "Only the people in the highest position in the courts of Adbalm or Riangler knew."

Adam spoke up, "It was going to be hard enough for people to accept the King and Queen's deaths, but to learn that it was murder? They would have started a war right then and there, which is what the unknown enemy is trying to do. We kept it secret."

"Father," said Apollo, "If Grandfather Andrew was murdered, do you think that Mother's death was caused by the same person?"

"I would be naïve to think otherwise, but we have no evidence that would link the two. Iris died in her sleep at the castle. It seems mysterious to us, but we have nothing to prove that it was foul play."

Cetee cleared his throat. "I think my father can shed some light on this. In fact, this is one of the reasons why he asked me to bring Apollo to him. He has been doing some research in the ancient histories and thinks he knows how Iris died. This spring he asked me if I had heard of the papel sodoipen tree."

"That's what Queen Susan said was in one of mother's letters," said Apollo.

"Exactly what I told him. That's when he asked me to bring you to him."

"If this has something to do with my wife's death, then I should come along," said Adam.

Cetee held up his hand to stop the king from getting up. "Father thought you would say that. He says to tell you that as he gets evidence, he will bring it to you. This portion of the journey will be for the son to follow. He said that ever has been the pattern in the family for parents to grieve over their children and spouses. Now is the time for a child to stand up to the past and make way for the future. The information will be given to Apollo and he can, and should, seek council from Susan, William and yourself as he starts to unravel an ancient mystery."

"I don't suppose I could come along anyway and tell him you forgot to pass on that part?" asked Adam.

"You know my father, and you know that he can be as stubborn as a mule." The centaur snickered for a moment. "No comment from you, Johnny."

"Who me?" asked the faerie. "Just because he is a mule, why would I say anything?"

"Well, if he is a mule, then you are a jackass." Cetee sighed. "Why do I let him do this to me every time? Anyway, Father said to assure you that this will probably be mostly a history lesson, but if you insist, you can come if you can answer the question you missed on your final exam. 'Where is the first King of Adbalm buried?'"

"I have yet to find his grave or any reference to it in the Royal History Books. I can only guess that he was buried at sea with his wife."

"That would be a good guess, but wrong. Failing the test, he says to tell you to enjoy some time alone with Rondar. When you return to Alphatown, Apollo will be allowed to give you the answer to that question."

Cetee got up. "Time for us to get to sleep. If we can get moving at sunrise, we can get to Chtōkcōrrāl by nightfall." The centaur looked directly at the faerie and added, "Of course, if you want to sleep in, I am sure that Her Majesty, Princess Myrtle Thornwood would love to offer us the hospitality of her summer retreat for an evening."

"That's cold," exclaimed Johnny. "Wake up before the sun or visit my mother? Either way I can't win!"

Johnny and Apollo headed off toward their tent. All the way there, Johnny grumbled about the sacrifices he has to make for his friends. When they got in the tent, Apollo gave Johnny a hug and felt his dick grow hard.

"Now what lesson were we up to?" asked the faerie.

"I forgot," responded the prince. "I guess we will have to start over at number one."

"As smart as you are, I doubt you forgot."

"Nope, but number one is my favorite. Besides, I figure that if we start over you might be ready to teach me some of the lessons we skipped."

"Oh, little one, when you are old enough and finished up your wishes, trust me covering those lessons will jump to the top of the

*—continued on page 10*

lesson plans. Until then, back to the basics and sex magic lesson number one."

The two kissed and began stroking their cocks. After weeks of having no one to play with, Apollo hoped to make this last a while, but the excitement of having Johnny there yielded quick explosive results. The two collapsed in a heap on Apollo's sleeping bag. The prince snuggled into the faerie's embrace. He said, "I've missed you."

"And I have missed you. I would rather have had two weeks of time with you than with my mother," he replied.

"Is she that awful?"

"To anyone else, probably not. Most people think she is gracious and charming. But she has a way of knowing exactly what to say to set me off. I think it is one of those 'mother' things. You know how mothers can get."

"No, I don't. Remember?"

Johnny realized what he had said. "I'm sorry. See what I mean? She's not even here and can still make me do stupid things." He felt Apollo shiver in his arms and felt some moisture on his shoulder. "Hey, what's wrong?"

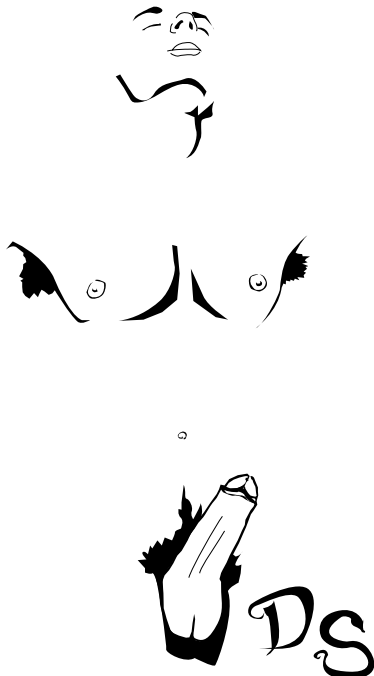
"I'm sorry. I guess I'm scared. Do you think someone is going to try to kill me too?"

"I don't know, but they will have to get through me first."

The two talked for a while about what they thought Cetee's father wanted to tell them. Johnny felt Apollo start to drift to sleep.

"I love you, Johnny. Good night," he muttered as his breathing settled into the steady rhythm of sleep.

"I love you, too," whispered the faerie, and he felt a tear form in his eye. "Even when you've forgotten childhood dreams and faeries, I will love you until the end of time." He leaned over and kissed the sleeping prince on his forehead. "Always and forever."



*Meditations on  
the male form*

## I Like It Rough

by Okapi

Image that you are holding a diamond in your hand. Not a diamond that you bought in the store. This is a diamond fresh from the ground just as Nature made it. You look at it with a jeweler's eye and imagine its possibilities. What will it look like when you have finished cutting and polishing it? What shape will it be? How large? How many facets? You take out your tools and begin your craft. You remove the flaws, the imperfections, polish it up and finally it shines like the gem that you knew was trapped in the raw crystal.

Look closely at that finished diamond. What do you see?

Perfection.

Nothing more than that. It is all that it will ever be. We can look at the gem and admire its beauty and the skill that went into its crafting, but what we see is exactly what we see. We don't think of the possibilities of what it might be. For all of the flaws, I think I liked it better when it was a "diamond in the rough." It had its own personality before it was shaped to one person's perception of what a perfect diamond should be.

How about something different. Think about the stick you picked up on a hike that you wanted to carve. You look at it and think of its possibilities. Is it an angel with a harp, an eagle in flight, or maybe a flamingo. You take a picture of it so you can have a before and after picture and start to carve. When you are finished, your stick has become a bear on a tree.

Look closely at the bear. What do you see?

A bear, nothing more than that. You look back at the picture and all you see is bear. How did you ever see those other things. Like the diamond, we can admire the artistry of the carving, but a part of me liked it rough, full of possibility.

What about the "Dear John" letter you wrote? You wrote page after page, each filled with the anger and hurt that you could never express to their face. When you were done, you started to edit and cleaned up the grammar, cleaned up the words so they said exactly what you meant without any question. When they came home, this is what they found:

"Dear John, It's not you, it's me. I hope we can be friends."

I liked the rough draft. It was honest. Yes, the words may have hurt and may not have been exactly true, but they said what you felt. A little polish can be nice to make things clear, but removing all the "flaws" might remove the whole message.

How about a young lover? He is new to his sexuality and doesn't have "all the right moves" yet. There was no roadmap to sex, nothing is planned. He hasn't learned that first you do this and then you touch that. He is rough and unpolished, it is fresh and its new. Give him some time, you think, and soon he will be "Don Juan."

How about the new lover? He knows what he likes, but nothing about you. It is fresh as you both explore each other's bodies. You chisel away at their "flaws", those habits they've learned from others that "do nothing for you." In time, whether we are talking about the young or the new, they become the perfect lovers. They know exactly how to please you. You settle into a well practiced routine, first a kiss in just the right place, a touch like this and a climax is guaranteed. It is perfect. It is routine and soon you start looking for more.

A little polish is nice, it helps us to shine. But after a month or a year, keep it fresh and new. Remember, with love, I like it rough.



# The Cubby Diaries: A Night at The Cave

by Cubby

It all started when Dan moved. He was a founding member of the Bare-all Bears. Last summer Dan got a hefty promotion at work that required him to move to California. A week before he moved, he hosted a "Naked House Cooling Party." It was really a working party for him to get help packing everything in order to be ready for the movers. Dan invited everyone he could think of and many of the old-timers that I had not seen at recent events came to say farewell to their friend. That's where I met Rudy.

Peter and I were in the kitchen as part of the assembly line of folks wrapping glassware and plates. We were the "rip the newspaper to the correct size" people and would hand our efforts to the "wrap the object person" who got the glass or plate from the "pull it from the shelf person" and would then wrap it and hand it to the "stick it in the box person". We were making quick work of it until an unfamiliar face came through the door. Tommy, the "pull it from the shelf" guy, let out a squeal and jumped from the stepstool and right into the strangers arms. He was in his mid-fifties and his hair, both chest and head, were getting to that "more salt than pepper" stage.

Peter introduced me to Rudy, who gave what had become a familiar response when I met Peter's friends. "Oh, now I can see why I haven't seen you around for a while." Peter explained that Rudy had been the manager of Chaps, the bar where Peter worked as a bartender when he was in school. As their conversation continued, I learned that Rudy was now the owner of The Cave, the bar that many of the BABs hang out at on weekends. Rudy said that the bar was hosting a fundraiser the following weekend. Money from the event was going to help pay for the medical expenses of a gay teen that had been fag-bashed during a recent shooting at a local college. Everyone knew about the shooting, how couldn't we? I hadn't heard about this particular detail. Apparently, the kids were bashing Bryan when a couple of people tried to stop them and that's when things started to get ugly. Worse yet, Bryan's parents were heartless people and said that their child deserved what he got as punishment for turning his back on the Lord. When juxtaposed with the parents wondering why their child had to die, no wonder why the media downplayed that part of the story. Everyone volunteered to help in anyway possible. Rudy said that he thought he had everything covered, but he knew he could count on the BABs to pitch in if he needed some extra hands.

When we got to The Cave, the place was packed. We gladly paid the \$10 cover fee since all proceeds went to help Bryan's cause. Inside the door, someone asked us if we wanted to participate in the Cave Bear of the Month raffle. Apparently at The Cave, they had discontinued the popularity contest style for choosing their man of the month club members and opted for a raffle style event that encouraged a wider representation of people. It was a typical 50-50

event and the winner got to keep half of the proceeds and the remainder went to the charity of the month. I bought \$20 worth of tickets. Peter declined stating that he was ineligible since he had already been a winner. He handed me a \$20 and told me to "do the family proud." So with \$40 of raffle tickets in my pocket, we headed into the crowd.

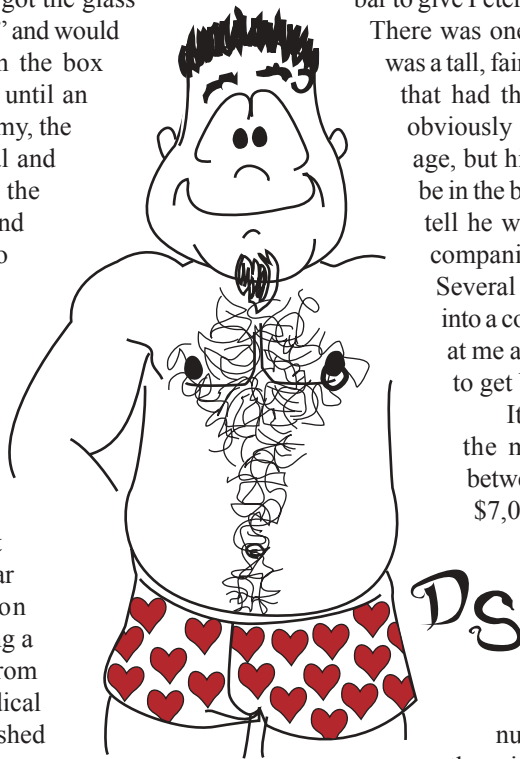
It wasn't long before Rudy found us and asked Peter to help bartend for while. I wandered the crowd and decided to take pity on barbacks. They were so busy helping behind the bar that they couldn't keep up with picking up the empty beer bottles and glasses. As I talked to people, I would grab up the empties and head to the bar to give Peter a kiss and would head back into the crowd.

There was one man that really caught my attention. He was a tall, fairly slim gentleman who was wearing clothes that had that freshly starched looked. His hair had obviously been colored so it was hard to judge his age, but his companion looked barely old enough to be in the bar. As I wandered through the crowd I could tell he was watching me. I could also tell that the companion was very unhappy about being there. Several times the gentleman would try to pull me into a conversation but his companion would glower at me and I would excuse myself saying that I had to get back to "work".

It was around midnight when Rudy stopped the music for announcements. He said that between the door fee and bartender tips, that over \$7,000 had been already been raised, but that this was the time for the real fundraiser to start. He announced that the pot for the Cave Bear of the Month was \$4,400 dollars, so the winner would get \$2,200 in cash. He made a show of churning the barrel with the tickets and drew out a number. No one quickly jumped up to claim the prize. It took a moment before I remembered that I had tickets and sure enough, one of the one's that

I had purchased matched. I let out a yell and people pushed me toward the dance floor. When I got there, Rudy validated the number and then told me the part that Peter had neglected to mention to me when we got the tickets.

The first thing Rudy told me was that as the winner, I would be given a bucket to move through to crowd to solicit donations. The monthly winner that collected the most money would be named Cave Bear of the Year. I said that sounded easy enough to do. That's when he told me part two. If I would take off my shirt while working the crowd, the bar would give an additional \$200 to my prize money. If I would strip and walk around bare-assed naked then the bar would give an additional \$1,000 to both the charity and me. Was there really a decision to be made? I had already to start to take my shirt off with the mention of the extra \$200 and Rudy had barely finished saying what the additional prize money would be when the shoes came off and pants were dropping to the floor. I handed Rudy my clothes and put my prize money into the bucket and said, "Who is



going to add to this?" Peter was standing on the edge of the floor giving me a thumb's up.

The next couple of hours were a fantasy come true. Rudy told me that I could allow people to do whatever I was comfortable with allowing and that if someone didn't respect my limits a bar staff member would be at my side to enforce things. I started to walk through the crowd. It didn't take long for the crowd to reach consensus that a quick feel of my cock would cost a \$1 donation and to kiss it would be a \$5 donation. The can quickly filled and Rudy or Peter would take it from me and hand me a fresh one. After a while my mysterious gentleman approached with a snarling companion in tow. He told me that he would donate \$500 if I would fuck his companion. Before I could respond, the companion exploded saying that there was not enough money in the world that would make him let a "Fur Freak" to even touch him and he stormed off. The gentleman put something in my can and said, "Thank you. He's fucked alright" and disappeared into the crowd. A little while later he stood in the line that had formed to play with my cock. When he got to me, he announced that I was too prime a specimen to be sold so cheaply. He announced that he was willing to pay \$10 for a touch and \$20 for a kiss. He put two bills into the can and claimed his touch and kiss. The crowd cheered the announcement and the line didn't die down.

When Rudy announced "last call", he had an additional surprise. Anthony J. McDoogan, winner of last year's Powerball jackpot, had agreed to match everything raised for the evening and then he shocked everyone with the announcement of what that meant. In my cans, I had collected nearly \$10,000 not counting the money I turned back in from the raffle. (I never knew my dick was worth that much – ok, I know that most of that was an excuse for people to justify their donation, but Peter told me that he had seen some people in my dick line more times than in the drink lines). Overall that night, with the matching donation, the we raised over \$50,000. Rudy announced that due to the extraordinary nature of this event, I had been eliminated from the Cave Bear of the Year competition. That was met with a loud boo from the crowd. He raised his hand and continued. It had been a unanimous decision by all former winners that I shot past that level and my name was being added to one of the stars in the drawing of the constellation of Ursa Major that was over the main bar. I leaned over to Peter and asked what I had to do to maintain that status. He said there were no extra requirements, it just meant that I got to participate in any of the after hours that the bar hosted.

The crowd quickly thinned out and Rudy escorted me to the patio bar while they officially closed the club. The patio had a couple of dozed guys who were quickly disrobing. There was one gentleman sitting on the side that looked out of place in his freshly starched shirt. I hadn't really had time to ask who the mysterious gentleman was when the crowd had been packed around me. I watched him for a few moments and he looked rather uncomfortable being the only one dressed in a group of naked guys. Quite a contrast to the events earlier when it was me and things were the other way around.

After a few minutes, he approached me with far less confidence in his demeanor than he had previously displayed. He introduced

himself as Jim and asked if I knew Ray Zor. Hearing the old Bears Anonymous phrase in this place sent a shiver down my spine. I said that I hadn't seen him in nearly a year and that he was no longer welcome in my home. Jim said he wished he say the same, but all of his friends had him convinced that he had to be smooth to be one of the beautiful people in the world. I asked him if he thought that being beautiful meant having to be something that he wasn't. He thought about it for a moment and said that he used to until he came into the bar that night. That's when he saw all the beautiful hairy men. His companion, Charles, had been bitching all night and saying that there was not enough money in the world to pay him to go to bed with a hairy guy. Jim had told him that while that may be true, they could go find out how much a furry man would have to be paid to go to bed with him. Charles said that he was bluffing and would never do something like and soon discovered that he hadn't been. After the scene in front of me and watching everyone having fun, he realized that being a beautiful person had less to do with the packaging and more to do with what's inside.

As we talked, I asked him if he wouldn't be more comfortable joining us in a naked state. He said he felt too ashamed at being shaved to want to strip in that environment. I shouted out to the group that I had a reformed member of Bears Anonymous with us that had just kicked Ray Zor out the door and was feeling inadequate that he had no hair on his chest. Several shouted out "Been There, Done That, Hated It." Another offered to lay on top of him so that he could have hair on his chest any time he wanted. James got the message and took off his clothes. My dick started to get hard as I imagined what his pretty chest would look like in a few months when the hair grew back in.

We chatted for quite a while. I asked him why he came out to the bear bar since none of the "beautiful" people would be there. He said that Charles had been asking him that question all night. He said that for all the charities that wanted his money something inside told him that this one deserved his immediate attention. He was in a position to help and wanted to send a message to the boy's parents that Bryan had the love and support of his community. It was about then that Peter and Rudy had finished up inside and came out to join us. Rudy said that I was a miracle worker, to which I said no, because it really was the spectacular nature of the crime that made people so willing to donate that night. Rudy said that wasn't what he was talking about. He said that he had been wishing to see Anthony out of his clothes for years and within hours of meeting Anthony, I had managed to grant him his wish. I asked him who he was talking about and he pointed at Jim, who was blushing at the attention. Sometimes I can be slow to pick up on things and the lights suddenly flashed on. The man I had been chatting with was the Powerball winner that Rudy had been talking about earlier. The four of us talked about the successful fundraiser. Rudy left us after a few minutes to go circulate with the rest of his after hours guests.

Jim told Peter that he was a lucky man to have me for a partner (I think it is the other way around, but it was sweet of him to say so). He told Peter about the incident with Charles and how he had offered money if I would fuck his companion. He had secretly hoped

*—continued on page 14*

## Cubby Diaries continued

that I would take him up on that offer so that he could get in bed with me himself. He knew that had been rude on his part, especially when he could tell that Peter and I were very much in love. Peter never ceases to amaze me. He has often told me of the things that some of his rich clients think that they can buy with money and how he hates how they think they rule the world because of that money. I expected to see some of that fire in his eyes when he gets on that subject. Instead, he pulled the three of us into an embrace so that our dicks were touching and that's when I noticed that both Jim's and Peter's dicks were rock hard already. Peter asked that since Charles wasn't around, if Jim thought he would get his money's worth if he got to watch the two of us play together instead. I kissed both of them and said I had no intention of just letting anyone watch. If someone wanted to pay me for fucking then they had to be willing to bend over first to see what they were paying for. Jim asked how much the sample was going to cost him. I said that samples are free. Peter added that we don't charge until we know that people are completely satisfied and based on his estimation of Jim's needs, he thought that it might take years to reach that state. Jim said that we should adjourn and go find a place to go play. Peter reached over to the bowl of condoms that Rudy keeps on all of his bars and said, "Why wait?"

We made love that night, bathed in the light of the full moon.

Jim has been a frequent visitor to the house for more play time and even to a couple of BABs functions. His fur has grown back. He has a thick pelt on his upper chest and just the cutest line of fur down his stomach. We were at the bar last week and he won the Cave Bear of the Month raffle. When it came time for the question of whether he would strip to earn the extra money, he said no. He told Rudy that he didn't want to be the only one with that privilege. He said that he would not be there if it hadn't been for the special guys known as the Cave Bear's Ursa Majors. He would only strip if all of them got to strip as well. Rudy called for all Ursa Majors to come to the floor. Peter and I were the only members of that elite group and I suspected that a third name was about to be added to the constellation. Rudy asked the crowd if they were willing to change the rules. The wolf howls that followed left no doubt what the crowd wanted. I started to take off my shirt and Jim stopped me. He said that it was his honor to serve and made a big show of playing the valet helping his master out of his clothes. By the time the three of us were naked, Rudy already emptied the buckets four times. We played in front of everyone and not once did someone try to interrupt our love making, they were all happy to stand back and watch.

When the time came to close the bar, we moved out to the patio. The three of us kissed and settled into a relaxed puddle of flesh and fur. Jim thanked us for sharing the spotlight and let him

show everyone how much he loved us. He reached under the bench and pulled out two boxes and handed them to us. As we opened them, he told us that he had sold his gilded cage-like mansion that required twenty staff-members to maintain. He wanted to remember what it was like to be a real person and hoped that we might be willing to let him stay with us for a while. When I finished opening my box, I found a diamond studded, golden human-sized dog collar. Peter's box contained a golden leash. Jim said that he had felt lost until he had met us and hoped that he could follow us home.

I looked at Peter and said, "He's so cute. Can I keep him?"

Peter said, "Since he has been house-broken, I guess so."

When we got dressed to go home, we put the collar on him and hooked the leash. As we headed to the car, Peter got a pained look on his face. When I asked what was wrong, he said that we were going to be in trouble because Hamlet was going to be jealous of Jim's collar. Jim told him to not worry about it as he had already thought of that and already had a matching one made for him.



# Stories From Our Tribe: Ritual 101

by P'chE

After attending the recent Fae 101 on ritual, I was trying to figure how to write about what was discussed and to share the various points with those who were unable to attend this session. It finally hit me that one of the points brought up was that ritual, because of unfamiliarity, can be a frightening aspect to some.

Think about it. Ritual. It is quite often connected with very important ceremonial events. Inaugural ritual. Wedding ritual. Initiation ritual. But let's think about it in another way. Let's think about ritual as things we do daily or perhaps less frequently but again more often than some ceremonial event, things like shaving, brushing teeth, washing hair, bathing, very simple things but still, events that have basic similarities in how they are performed.

Now, has anything changed about how 'ceremonial' ritual is performed or how it is viewed? Is it still somewhat of a mystery and something for which some might view in awe?

As was discussed, ritual can be very informal or a very formal, stylized event, depending upon the occasion and the individual(s) planning the ritual. In general, beginning a ritual contains a grounding or a time to clear the hustle and bustle of previous events and have a time of calm. It is a time to focus on common energies combining those of all who are present and perhaps invoking those unrepresented but meaningful spiritual aspects.

It is a time of creating a space that can be described as sacred. It is a time for elements that recall memories deep within of other experiences perhaps that speak individually of a greater humanitarian value.

Sometimes, ritual may include calling quarters, directions, deities or various elements. This can be a very formal solemn occasion or as was expressed, it can be done with humor or ways

that might be considered totally ludicrous, depending upon those initiating the ritual. Something that was stressed included that perhaps some may not have the knowledge or experience of doing this particular phase and be reluctant of actively participating for fear of showing one's ignorance and making a fool of oneself.

In response to how one may open a ritual, sometimes the old rule of KISS might be followed. Keep it simple, stupid! When the circle is being formed, it sets the mood of the event. It provides a sacred, safe space for expression. The comfort level is such that invites participation in the event. It is a time for understanding others' place or knowledge or lack thereof who are participants.

What is the intention of the particular event for which the ritual is being performed? As in many other aspects of our lives, it is helpful to look at what is hoped to be accomplished, familiarity with the occasion and how the physical aspects of the location are being included into the occasion. In the faerie realm, there are a plethora of choices and influences on which to call and base an event, all of which one would need to become familiar. Some thought and time spent on how this will be incorporated can make the event even more meaningful.

As the various ideas, thoughts and feelings were expressed about ritual, and how this might be shared with the larger tribe, it became apparent that something celebrated in many of the various denominations is communion, generally considered a very solemn 'ritual'. How many times have the faeries gathered over food to share our thoughts, ideas, hopes, plans or simply for fellowship?

That, for me, is a very simple, yet very precise definition of ritual.

## Imbolc Puzzle by Professor Percival "Perry" Grinn

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

You should know the drill by now... words can be found forward or backward, vertical, horizontal or diagonally. Happy hunting.

BHRIDE  
BRIDE  
BRIDGET  
BRIGANTIA  
CANDLEMAS  
FIRE  
HEALING  
HEARTH  
HERBOLOGY  
IMBOLC  
IMBOLG  
INSPIRATION  
MEDITATION  
MIDWIFERY  
OIMELC  
POETRY  
PURIFICATION  
SMITHCRAFT  
WATER  
WRITING

## Imbolc Food

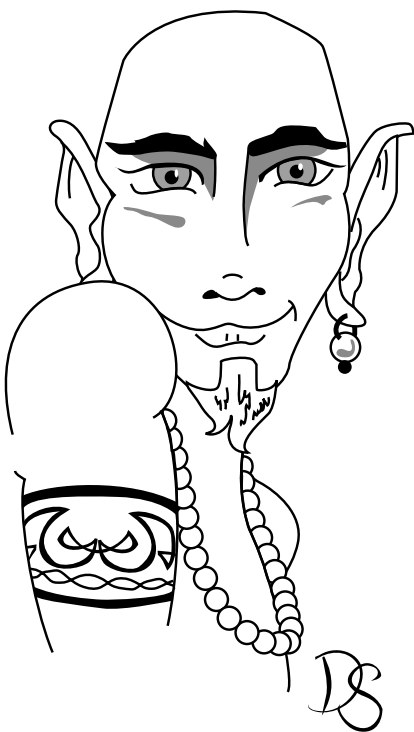
### by Potsan Panz

No celebration is complete without food, and Imbolc is no exception. What should you prepare when you plan your event? The traditions we think about for Imbolc are largely based on the northern cultures, the Celts and Nordic countries. It is from those cultures we should look for suggestions for the food to be served.

Imbolc comes at the midpoint between the start of Winter and the start of Spring. It is in the heart of the winter and the ancients were living off of the food that had been stored after last year's harvest. There would have been fresh milk and eggs from the families livestock. So think of that backdrop when looking at recipes. You want something that is mostly dried goods that might be on your shelves, maybe canned goods instead of fresh for your apples or pears, limited meat, and your "farm fresh" dairy products.

Add to that backdrop, the layer of what the celebration is about. It is moment when we can sense that winter is coming to an end and spring is coming. We celebrate the renewed energy of the sun. We celebrate the life in the seeds that lay in the ground, waiting for the warmth to come so they can sprout. We celebrate the first signs of the crocus and newborn lambs that let us know that the waiting is nearly over. Food that honors those energies would certainly be appropriate to include. Sun-dried foods such as tomatoes or raisins would fit as being both sun energied as well as something that might be in your winter pantry. Seeds would be another good choice to base your food selection - poppy seed, caraway seed and coriander are probably on your spice rack.

Here are a couple of recipes to give you some ideas. I know that some folks are not great cooks or have limited time, but you can still use these ideas to plan your shopping trip. So, they don't have poppy seed bread on the shelf...how about a couple of poppy seed bagels or muffins? How about doing something with the jar of Aunt Martha's Peach Preserves that you have been saving for a special occasion? The ideas are limitless.



## Returning Sun Spice Bread

1 1/4 cup flour  
1/8 cup poppyseeds  
2 tsp. baking powder  
3/4 cup raisins, plain or golden  
1/2 tsp. baking soda  
1/2 cup butter/margarine  
1/2 tsp. ground ginger  
3/4 cup Karo golden corn syrup  
1/2 cup light brown sugar  
4 tbs. milk  
1 large egg, beaten  
1 tsp. mixed spices (Equal parts of cinnamon, nutmeg, and allspice.)

Sift the flour, soda, and baking powder into a non-metal bowl. Add the mixed spice and ginger. Next add the brown sugar and raisins. Mix. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture. In a small sauce pan, melt the butter and the syrup over a low heat, then pour liquid into the well in the middle of the flour mixture. Add the beaten egg and the milk, and mix very well. Pour into a well greased 2-lb loaf pan and bake in a preheated oven at 325 degrees for 40-50 minutes. This bread can be made the night before as it improves with age. Makes 8-10 servings.

## Honey Cakes

1/2 cup Riesling wine  
1 Egg  
2/3 cup flour  
1 cup honey  
2 tbs sugar  
1/8 tsp cinnamon  
1/8 tsp nutmeg  
Dash of salt

Beat the egg together with the wine. In another mixing bowl, sift together the flour, cinnamon, sugar and salt. Add the flour mixture to the egg mixture. Stir until thoroughly blended. Let sit for 30 minutes. In another small bowl, mix the honey and nutmeg. In a skillet, heat up about a 1/2 inch of oil. Drop a tablespoon of batter into the oil and fry until golden brown. Drain off the oil and dip the cake into the honey mixture.

## Baked Custard

3 eggs, beaten  
1/4 cup sugar  
1/8 tsp salt  
1 tsp vanilla  
2 1/2 cups whole milk (not skim)

Preheat oven to 350°. In large bowl, mix together eggs, sugar, salt and vanilla until well blended. Add milk and mix with a wire whisk until smooth. Pour into six 6-oz custard cups.

Place cups in 13x9" pan and place in oven. Fill pan around the cups with about 1" of water, being careful to not splash any water into the custard cups. Bake for 45-55 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Serve warm or cold. Store leftovers in refrigerator.