



Publisher's Notes

Greetings dear readers, and welcome once again to the Denver Faeries' Airy Faerie. As we started to plan our Litha issue, Phoenix pointed out an interesting fact. We have created 21 issues together, on the computer, instead of the old cut, paste and run to Kinkos. Since most states wait until a person is 21 to call them a true adult, and since we are all about celebrating any milestone we can, we thought we would honor this moment in time. Our little baby is now all grown up. As you can see with our cover, we brought back a few of the old cover models, and Queer, from the Shy Faerie to help celebrate.

We, of course, will always honor our past and remember how it all began, as a labor of love at the hand of CorBeau. We just wanted to take a moment and see how our little baby has grown, since joining the computer age. Of course we do not plan on stopping anytime soon. If we have anything to say about it, the Airy Faerie will gracefully grow old and grey.

There is some frontal male nudity, and even some gay sexual activities. This means, that if you are under aged or offended by such material, please do not go any farther.

With that said I offer to you the Litha issue of the Airy Faerie. As I type this up, I realize that we will unfortunately not be able to get the issue out by the June 21 holiday. Getting ready for Pride and vacation took up more time then we realized. So please forgive us for being a little tardy in getting this issue out to you.

Although, if you are reading this, that means that you can now enjoy our Litha issue. So pour yourself a nice refreshing drink, kick back and enjoy official start of summer and the Airy Faerie.

Naked Hugs,
DragonSwan

Publisher's Notes, Too

Since DS kept his note simple, it looks like I get to fill in the gap of what has happened in our lives since last issue. Of course, the biggest news is that we got handfasted at Beltane. Yes, we announced that last issue, but it is now a reality. The ritual was beautiful and we had many friends with us. Some we have known in circle for a long time. Some we hadn't seen in circle in about that same long time. Others were there for their first ritual—some were there because it was a faerie event, but we also had a friend from our square dance club that asked if he could be there even if he wasn't a faerie. You know that you have a special friend when they go out of their way to ask to join you in ritual space, even if they don't share that same belief. The answer was an unqualified yes.

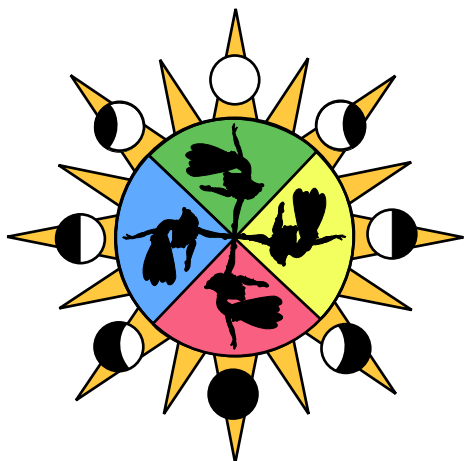
One of those new faerie faces was a young man, who has adopted the name AstralBrat. He had met another of our newer members and grew curious about this thing called "Radical Faeries." After getting his initial email, DragonSwan and I ventured out to meet him in person figuring that would be one of the easier ways to try to answer questions. Since he regularly did his computing at the GLBT community center, which is only a block from DS's apartment, it was very convient for us to connect with him.

AstralBrat is a poet and lyricist. We have spent a couple of evenings with him at one of Denver's venues for open-mic poetry. It is amazing the variety of poets that have been present when we have gone. Some very humorous. Some very thought provoking. Some political or sexual. We have a couple of examples of AstralBrat's work scattered in this issue. You will find a URL elsewhere in the issue to his website where you can find more of his work.

Sad to say, that people come and go quickly in Faeriedom. No sooner had we gotten to know AstralBrat then his lover got a transfer to Seattle and is now up there beginning to connect with the faeries up there. Good luck to you on your new adventure. Don't forget to write!

Naked hugs and faerie blessings,
Phoenix

Airy Faerie



Litha, 2006

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Summer Showers

by Okapi

The sun feels good on your naked flesh.
How you have waited for the day you could be outside again.
The long Winter is over.
The cool days of Spring are past.
Now is the time to revel in the warmth of Summer.

So off go the clothes at every chance.
You let your body soak in the sunshine.
You let the gentle breeze caress you.
Your dick even gets hard at the touch of both
And you want the feeling to last
So you don't join them in the caress.

You wish there were someone here to share in the moment.
When two hands touch your shoulder.
You know your wish was granted, so you don't startle in surprise.
You slowly turn to kiss the waiting mouth of the Sun God.
He too is naked, enjoying his own day in the sun.
Another pair of arms embraces you from behind.
You know that if you turn you would see the Wind God's face.

Even lost in their embrace, you notice the change.
The air grows still.
The silence fills the air.

Soon it's going to rain.
You can feel it in your bones.
Time to head to shelter.
But they won't let you.

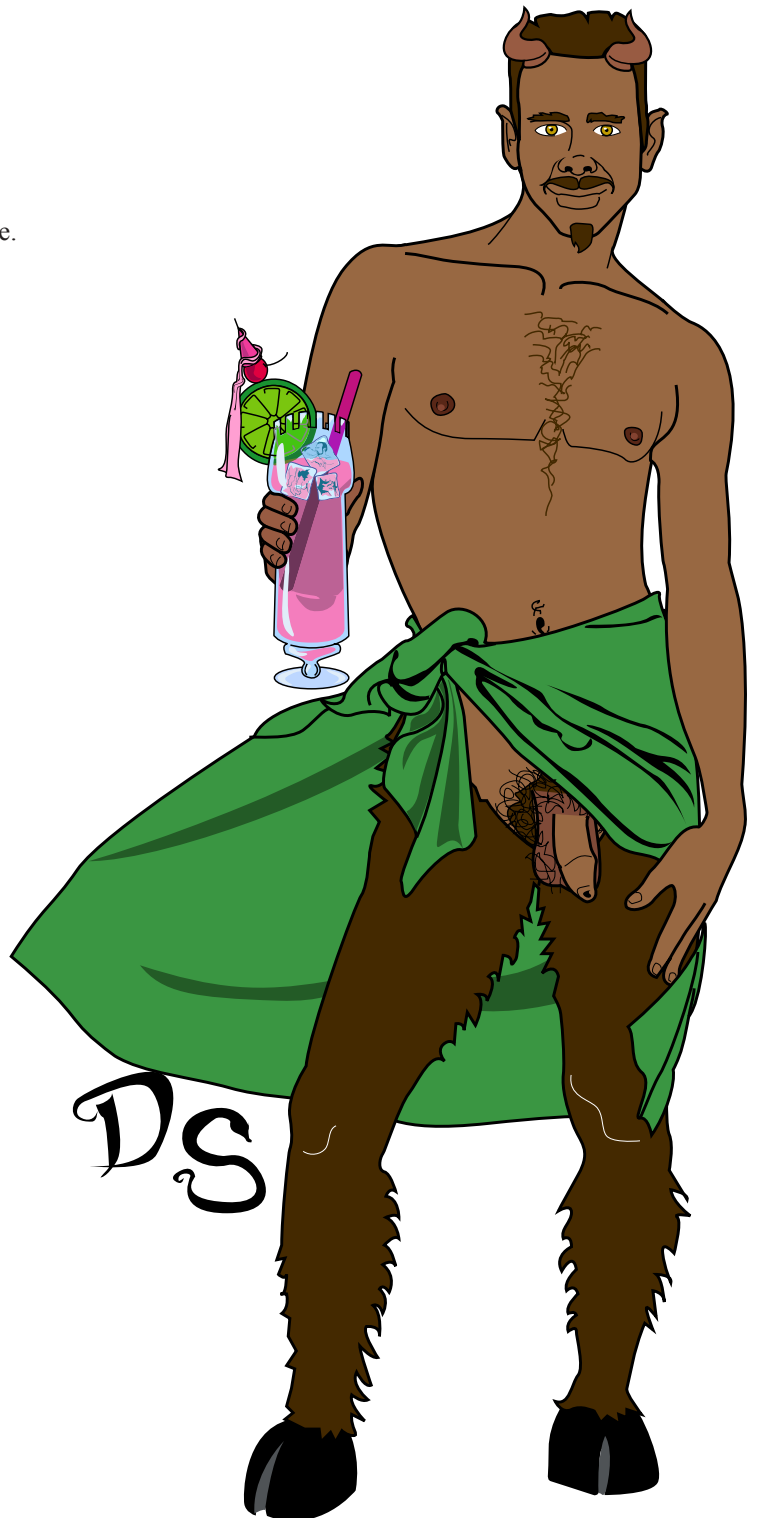
"You have felt the Earth under your bare feet
and under your body as we made love."
"You have shared your body with both Sun and Wind.
Why should you run when the Rain God wishes to join you?"

With that they disappeared,
Both promising to return.
You stand alone in the garden.
The clouds came and you wait for the first drop of rain.

Then he joined you.
It was unlike anything you had known before.
It was like hundreds of hands caressing your body.
With each drop of rain, you can feel the love it contains.
You know that as the moisture slips off your body,
That same love will flow into the earth.

As he finished making love to you,
The Sun and Wind Gods rejoined you;
Drying your body with their touch.
After a quick embrace, the three depart into the sky.

In their wake, there is a brilliant rainbow
Streaking through the sky.
You know it is there to remind the world of their love.
You know it is there to remind you that you are loved too.



What is Litha?

by Beast

The festivals that can be measured by astronomical events, such as Litha/Midsummer's Eve, are often the most ancient and universally celebrated. Like the other equinoxes and solstices, Litha (the Summer Solstice) is a turning point. It is the day when the Sun is at his height, his greatest heat, his brightest majesty. As with the other pagan sabbats, it begins on the previous eve—on Midsummer's Eve. In the higher latitudes and in the Scandinavian countries of Sweden and Finland—where Christianity came comparatively late—it is considered one of the greatest festivals of the year.

At this time we feel the greatest power of the Light. Plants are growing swiftly and strongly during the long, hot days. At midsummer, plants are imbued with the greatest healing energies of the Sun, and it was traditional to pick magikal herbs at this time. One herb particularly associated with this sabbat is St. John's Wort, known now for its efficacy as a treatment for depression. It is regarded as a sacred, protective herb and is so-called because it was associated with the feast of St. John the Baptist (June 24) but its use by the Celts precedes this practice.

Culpeper describes the nature of St John's Wort as "under the celestial sign Leo, and the dominion of the Sun" The flower of this herb is bright yellow, with yellow stamens radiating out from the center of the flower like the rays of a miniature sun. So powerful was this image that in mediaeval times the plant acquired the name Sol Terrestris (literally, 'Terrestrial Sun').

I said that this day is a turning point; this is the time when the Oak King—at the height of his powers—is vanquished by the Holly King. This marks the fact that, even though the sun is at his greatest power at this, the longest day of the year, it is also the time when the balance of power must begin its slow shift from the Light to the Dark. Two powerful symbols of this time are the spear and the cauldron. The spear represents the God at the zenith of his strength and power, and the cauldron symbolizes the Goddess at the height of her fertility and fecundity.

So this is a time of fire, and of great magick. A time to be outside in the sun, enjoying the light, and breathing in the breath of growing things. A time to be mindful that even the longest day must give way to night, and that there is a time for each thing in the world.

Because this day marks the shift from the time of Greatest Light into the time of Growing Darkness, bonfires were lit in ancient times to protect against the fell spirits that were believed to roam the earth on this night. The walls between this world and other, magikal worlds (like Faerie) were believed to be especially thin at this time, and thus the conflict between men and fairies in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Fairies are afoot this night, and you might hear them sing:

*Where the bee sucks. there suck I:
In a cowslip's bell I lie;
There I couch when owls do cry.
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
—Ariel's song from The Tempest*



Raspberries

By Beast

In the light sun
The bees work the flowers
The fruit being like
Rough rubies—so ripe they
Slip from stems, and stain my shoes

Bending inward, reaching toward
The center, where the stems arch and
Leaves meet, and raspberries unpicked
Hide, still cool as the dawn

The scent of them is in me
The brambles draw me gently in
Like cat's paw
I will stay here all day
Eating
The juice running off my chin

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No More Wasting Time

By AstralBrat

Wake up, and smell the coffee.
Life is throwing a curve.
Follow that curve, or pretend there's nothing to know.
Well, I don't play that way.
I live for the day.
Adventure is all around.
I'll never again face down to the ground.
No More Wasting Time.
No more wasting away precious moments to be lived.
No More Wasting Time.
No More Wasting Time.
Not anymore.

My closet's getting cleaner.
Life seems to be getting sweeter.
Happiness is no longer a reflection in a never ending sorrow.
I wanna lose control.
I wanna have a never ending high.
It's my time to fly.
No More Wasting Time.
No more wasting away breathing room.
No More Wasting Time.
No More Wasting Time.
Not Anymore.
Hey!

Bleeding so freely and crying tears of pain are yesterday's news.
It's going to be different and I am going to make sure.
Gonna blow a fuse.
Gonna clean away what's impure.
Life won't be that bad.
No more can I be driven utterly mad.
No More Wasting Time.
No more wasting away the need to an ideal life.
No More Wasting Time.
No More Wasting Time.
Not Anymore! No! Not Anymore!

Let peace bring about a personal revival,
Cause I am not wasting time.
Not Anymore! Not Anymore!
Hey!

04.07.2004

You can find more of AstralBrat's poetry and songs at:
<http://confusedzone.tripod.com/Atouchofthedeepmind>

A Short Bit on Pride

By PandaBear

It's my own, or something of yours, or
a big ole
Pride
in the sky:

I want to shred it
and mold it
as something new.

Those who came before
and shaped the world
in which we now
walk and love
are not bigger than us,
because we can be as big as them.

The work is not completed.



Stories From the Tribe: My Beautiful Life

Out of the Ashes by Phoenix

The story of how I grew into the Phoenix name starts when the Falcon was born. Like many movies, the story starts at one of those dark moments of life. As the film begins I am seen sitting in a hospital room watching my lover, Rich, take his last breath. The next weeks are a blur of activity in planning his memorial. As the blur starts to come into focus, we are now sitting in a church, the music of three gay choruses, a women's accapella quartet and a handbell choir fill the sanctuary with sound. Standing in the aisle of the church, a slim, trim gentleman walks up and hands me a card saying, "If you need a friend to talk to, just give me call." It takes a moment for me to recognize the person. Then I realize it is because I've never seen him with his clothes on. Flashback to scenes of hot steamy sex at the Swim Club. Memories rolled forward as I realized that he was always there when I really needed that human touch. If I just needed the hot tub and steam, he wasn't there. And now he is handing me a card listing himself as both shaman and counselor, saying he was my friend and again being there when I needed him.

The next scenes are simple ones of friends getting together for dinner and talking. Then one evening, I notice his pentagram and we start talking about his spiritual beliefs. One day he invited me to join him for something called an Open Full Moon. (For those not in Denver – there is a coven in town that hosts a public ritual for the full moons. This is their way of providing something for the solitaires and seekers to find community.) Eventually he introduced me to his coven, the Circle of Lavender Fire. It was not long afterwards that they asked what "Craft Name" I was going to use. I thought about it and said that my nickname was "Bud" and that represented a flower that was about to open. That seemed like a fitting name to use until I learned more about what that flower might be.

The next scene is played back at the bathhouse. Only now, things have shifted. I seem to be there when he needs me and the sex part is nearly history. We would sit on the side of the hot tub and chat and then his eye would spot the next target and off he went. After a while, he would come back and we would chat some more. During one of those chats, the name thing came up. As we talked, I said that I had always been attracted to the birds of prey and must have been a falconer in a former life. He looked at me and said, "That's your name. Falcon." He started introducing me using that name and it was amazing how quickly I accepted hearing "Falcon" and knew they were talking to me. It really did seem like that was a name I was meant to have.

It was not long after that night that my friend announced he was moving out of state. That's when the darkness set in. I was alone and staring into the Abyss; too scared to jump in. Once in a while I would get into the Abyss and was more frightened of not being about to get out again and made a hasty retreat. One evening, while sitting at a chorus concert, the part of me that I associated with the Falcon energy took flight and zoomed through the Abyss to be with Rich during the concert. They sat together and listened to the music and remembered their love. It took the Falcon energy several months to find its way home. During that absence, the physical body and mental state were trying to figure out how to join the others on the other side of the Abyss. I knew that it would not be good for me to ever do that again.



The world started to brighten after that. After a couple of less than grand relationships, a friend from the square dance club, Turtle, told me about his plans to go to something at Camp Gaea. I had just come home for attending a Bear's gathering at that same place so we had much to talk about that night. He eventually introduced me to the Radical Faeries. At my first ritual, I met a shy young man. I had an extra ticket for a performance of "Disney's Beauty and the Beast" and asked him out on a date. After the show, we didn't part company and I stayed the night...and the next...and we have been together ever since (Smooches, DragonSwan).

It was at a Samhain retreat a couple of years later when the Falcon once again flew into the Abyss to be with his spirit lover. This time, he didn't want to come back. This time the mental state was strong enough to resist the temptation but the body found a way to try to facilitate things and came up with a plan of its own. I can remember the sharp stabbing pain in my belly the night of the Samhain ritual. Four months later, I was in the hospital for surgery due to perforations in my colon. With DragonSwan's loving help, the Falcon finally came home. But DragonSwan did more than that. His love gave wing to something new. His quiet fire sparked hope that had not been there before. The Falcon knew his energy would soon not be needed and he could fly into the Abyss to be with his lover forever without fear of doing harm to the physical body. He nurtured that spark and helped it grow. It first manifested itself in the creation of the "Quest for the Crystal Phoenix" story. In January, 2006, it manifested in the creation of the Phoenix Quilt. I knew that the days of being Falcon had drawn to a close and it was time to stop holding him back and let him fly unfettered into the Abyss. The fires of Imbolc were the final catalyst in the transformation and a Phoenix arose from what had been there.

It is my name. It is my life. I know that I had to undertake the Falcon's journey of pain and sorrow. But it had been a long journey of eleven years and it was time to make changes. The Phoenix rose from that pain and knew what had to be done to say "thank you" to the person who made it possible. The Falcon had flown to be with his lover and it was time for DragonSwan to have a lover that was with him in the here and now. While I still miss Rich, it is no longer my driving emotion, that belongs to DragonSwan now. That is why I asked him to be my handfasted lover as announced last issue.

What is the next scene for the story? I haven't a clue. I do know that it is not where I go flying quietly into the sunset.

Faerie 101: Faerie Names or A Rose By Any Other Name

By Phoenix

Names are power. We quest from an early age to learn all of the names of things around us. We are given the power to name the new puppy or kitten that came into our lives as a birthday present. As adults we learn that to name our fears is gain power over them and is the first step in overcoming them. Even in love and friendship, we give a special name to those around us (Honey, Sweetheart, Snookems, Pookey). Sometimes we bestow a name on someone because of something they do or have earned (think Skipper or Professor). In all cases, we are defining our world and our relationship with the people and everything else within that world.

The one thing we struggle with is our own name. It is something that is given to us by our parents. They are the ones that defined that for us. Some people fiercely hold onto that identity. Think of the Susans and Jameses that you know who are adamant in not letting people call them Sue or Jim. They want control of their name.

Here is the core secret of faerie names. Now come in closely because I don't want to give the secret away to too many people. I don't want to give up the control of my world to just anyone. Do you have your cone of silence lowered so no one can hear us? A faerie name is where you get to take control of your life and name yourself.



Gods... what have I done? I just gave up control of something and gave it to you. Feels good from this side, how does it feel from yours? Truth be told, no one can give you a faerie name. Others may help you find that name, but you are the one with ultimate power in deciding on whether or not to embrace the name that they offer.

One of the joys of a faerie name is that it doesn't have to be permanent. It is a reflection of who you are now and you are not stuck with forever being who you were ten years ago. For some, a faerie name is like a costume or mask that you can put on that enables you to become something different than you may otherwise be in mundane life. Sometimes you have to try on a lot of costumes to find the one that fits, so too are faerie names. For others, the faerie name is that moment when you take off the costume and show the true self underneath. Either way, you eventually, you find a name that sticks. That's when you know you have found your real faerie name.

A faerie name comes to you in the same way a writer will pick names for characters in a book, only in this case, you are both writer and character. The source of that inspiration is as limited as your imagination. It can come from a flower or animal that you love and want to associate that energy to yourself (Azalea, Rabbit, Falcon). It can come from a favorite character in a book or movie (Puck, Joxer, Data). It can come from a place, real or imagined (River, Ocean, Atlantis – ok, so I didn't include an imaginary one, I'll leave that to your imagination). It can come from something you want to bring into your life (Hope, Love, Joy and Freedom). It can be something that came to you in a dream or while you were in an altered mindstate. Maybe it is a name that was used by a bully and you want to claim it as your own so that you can show that the other can't hurt you. (Where do you think the faerie part of Radical Faeries came from? So how about Nellie, Sissy or Swish as a faerie name?) Maybe your grandmother had it right when she called you "her little wiggle." Maybe it is some combination of all those energies that is uniquely yours.

But if you struggle with finding the right name, then maybe your parents were closer to knowing your true name then you realize. If you were named after a saint, god(dess) or other holy figure or healer and you have striven to live up to that heritage, you have already embraced it as yours.

Even when you find your name, your creative license doesn't stop there. You even have the power to decide how you want to spell your name. Maybe you want to be Azalea and you love the Dragonriders of Pern books, so combine them and you might get A'lea or Az'lea. Maybe your parents were right but just didn't have the spelling right. Maybe instead of Harry you were supposed to be Hairy, or Drugh instead of Drew.

It doesn't matter how you come to a faerie name. The choice to claim a faerie name is yours. The choice to say that the name you have already is the name you want is also yours. The power in a faerie name is that you named yourself.

Quest for the Crystal Phoenix

Chapter 14: A Dark Cloud

by Orpheus

“Time to rise and shine.”

Apollo opened his eyes and saw his father standing in his tent. He had to rub his eyes because he thought he was dreaming. His father was dressed, which was extremely unusual in the Valley of the Kings.

“Before you come out, get dressed. Cetee will be arriving soon and he should have already transformed back to human form, so we can’t be naked when he gets here,” reminded Adam.

“But we just got back last night. I thought we would have a day or two before he got here, especially with Queen Holly giving us that shortcut.”

The king said that he had hoped so too, but something inside him was telling him that he needed to get back to Alphatown as soon as possible. When pressed for details, Adam said he wasn’t really sure the reason. All he could really tell was that there was a problem developing and he had to be back home to stop it. As soon as he got the feeling, he had come into the tent and woke Johnny and had him go to Cetee to have him leave as quickly as possible. If he left soon after getting the message from Johnny, then he should be here in a couple of hours.

As the king spoke, he started folding up the camp beds and taking things outside. When Apollo stepped outside, he noticed that all the main tents had already been struck. His was the only tent still standing. With his father’s assistance, that too soon was added to the stack of camping gear.

Rondar shouted that breakfast was ready. It was a cold breakfast as Rondar had not stoked the fire since they would soon be leaving. They had barely settled down to eat when they heard the sound of approaching hooves and looked up to see Cetee and Johnny riding up.

“I didn’t expect to see you quite so soon,” said Adam.

“Ordinarily, you would be correct,” he replied, “but when I got to Leaf’s tree farm, his wife handed me a note from Princess Myrtle telling me that she foresaw the need of haste and had arranged housing for me at the Cock’s Inn, where I was to meet with Johnny and Apollo. When I got there, the innkeeper had a note from Queen Holly explaining the change in their plans, but stressed the need for haste. I grabbed a few hours sleep and headed out at False Dawn.”

“Let me tell you, this guy is fast,” praised Johnny. “After I traced him to Cock’s Inn and found that he had already left and started to look for him on the road, he had already crossed the northern border of the valley.”

They finished breakfast in silence. Each of them was lost in their own thoughts about what might be happening that had caused such a sense of urgency. With the dishes washed and packed away, they got their horses ready. When Apollo asked if they should start

loading the pack horses, Adam explained that they were going to ride fast and light. He planned to have a couple of the guards that were waiting in Valley Gate come get the equipment and travel to Alphatown at a more leisurely pace. Mounted and ready to go, Adam raced ahead down the path that led out of the valley.

As Apollo followed his father, he thought back to last summer’s departure. It had been an idyllic time and he hadn’t wanted to leave. This summer, the valley was as beautiful as it had been before, but so much has changed. He learned that someone has been killing his family, and that someone might try to kill him. He faced his first battle and failed. No matter what the others said, he knew he should have been able to do something for himself. Now, there is some danger that calls them out of the valley. He let out a sigh.

“Even in the wind, I could hear that,” shouted Johnny. He looped his reins on the saddle, counting on the horse’s training to continue to follow the others, and shrunk down to faerie size and flew to Apollo’s shoulder.

“A centari for your thoughts.”

“I don’t know, but something is different. The valley was a beautiful as I remembered, but at the same time, it’s not the same. Even though the sun is shining, it feels like a dark cloud is surrounding it, threatening to block the sun forever.”

“The valley is the same. It’s you that has changed. The valley is a magical place and what you see as the dark cloud is your growing awareness of the things that are out in the other world. Last summer, it was just your father and yourself and you probably didn’t talk much about danger and life threatening events. This year, you have spent a lot of time talking about events outside of the valley, bringing in some of that ‘dark cloud’ with you.”

“So, are you saying that to get rid of the cloud, we should not talk about the outside world when we are in the valley?”

“No,” replied the faerie. “Your father once told me that would be nearly impossible. As he put it, the valley is a retreat from the burdens of leadership, not a withdrawal. It is a place where he can separate himself from being in the middle of the problems and be able to look at them from the outside. If you are seeing the outside world as a cloud, then when you are at the castle you would be in the middle of the cloud and everything might seem foggy. In the valley, you have some perspective to the situation and can give it shape and understand what it is.”

“But why didn’t I feel that way last year?”

“It probably has to do with your vows that you took last winter. You are not the same innocent child you were last year. You now have responsibilities. By the time you are king, you will not only see the cloud, you will know if it is going to rain so you can be



prepared for the floods it may bring.”

Johnny yanked on Apollo’s earlobe. “Time enough for this heavy philosophy stuff later. Let’s talk about something pleasant.”

“Ok,” said Apollo. “Why don’t you tell me about your sister?”

“I said ‘pleasant’ not tell you a horror story.”

The prince wouldn’t be talked into changing the subject matter, so Johnny gave in and told him some stories about Lily. Of course, he tried to find the ones that cast her as the villain such as the time she tried to rip the tiara off of Viola’s head after she had been named Miss Faerie Islands for the twentieth time running.

“So then, is that why she said Viola was a freak even before her transformation?” asked the prince.

“Pretty much. She said that only a freak of nature could possibly maintain that status without the aid of magic. When Viola was changed, Lily said that she knew that Viola was now revealing her true nature since she had always known that no true woman could be prettier than herself.”

They soon arrived at the guard station in Valley Gate. Adam made quick work of dispatching a couple of the guards to collect the camp gear. He selected the four fastest riders to join him in the immediate run to Alphatown. The others were instructed to pack for the rest and wait for the collection team to return. Adam told everyone that he planned to get to Phlaretown before the gates closed at sunset. It was then that Apollo realized the pace his father was setting. Last year, they left Valley Gate after breakfast and arrived in Phlaretown at sunset. Today, they were leaving several hours later and his father planned to still make the same progress. The guards quickly left to make arrangements for the ride ahead.

After they left, Adam turned to his son, “This is going to be a hard ride; one that you are not used to. I don’t know what is giving me this feeling, but I know that I have to move quickly. You don’t have to push yourself. If you want to travel with the rest of the guards, I would not fault you for the decision.”

“I will travel with you, Father. I, too, feel something, maybe not with the same urgency as you, but it is there nonetheless. I think there is something for me to do in all of this and if I take the easy route, I will never know that I can push myself. If this is to be my first hard ride, I would rather it be at your side so that we can face this together.”

“Spoken like a true king.”

One of the guards announced that the messenger birds had been dispatched with instructions to send news of the capital to the guards at Phlaretown. With everyone ready, Adam signaled for everyone to mount and after only an hour, they were on the road.

If it wasn’t for the urgency of the matter, Apollo would have loved the extended exhilaration of riding at full gallop. The bursts of speed during a race were nothing compared to going full speed without having a finish line in sight. Adam and his guards were wise in the pacing of the run. At the start they would run for a half hour and then let the horses walk and catch their breath. Each time the run part got longer as the horses warmed up to the task ahead. Apollo was so focused on the rhythm of the ride, trying to make himself as light a burden as possible, that he didn’t have time to enjoy the

scenery they passed. Apollo was barely aware that they were nearing Phlaretown. It was at the sound of the horn blown by one of the guards that signaled their approach that alerted him to the fact that they had arrived.

After caring for the horses, Adam inquired if the local guard had any response from Alphatown from the messenger birds. “Not yet, Your Majesty,” said Captain Pike. “We did not get our morning report from the palace this morning and were about to send our daily messenger birds when we got the one from Valley Gate. We added your planned arrival to our report and asked for an immediate response. We have yet to receive the normal report and would not expect a reply from ours until about moonrise at the earliest. I will inform you as soon as either bird arrives.”

The king thanked the captain and asked to be led to their quarters. When the captain tried to turn over his private quarters for the king’s use, Adam refused. He said that he had no intention of turning someone out of their own bed due to his haste. He said that the Transition Barracks would suit their needs perfectly. As they walked toward the barracks, Rondar explained to Apollo that each guard post maintained a set of quarters for guards that are in transition between assignments. The guards quickly rearranged the bunks to make semi-private areas for the king and his son. Rondar was pleased at what he saw in their training as they moved the other beds in such a way as there would be no direct path between the door and the king. Anyone coming into the barracks would have to go around beds occupied by the guards. Rondar moved his bed to block direct access to the king’s bed area.

Once settled, Adam and Rondar left to talk to the captain and see the previous days’ dispatches. Cetee excused himself to make arrangements for their supper. Apollo had just stretched out on his bed, ready to enjoy the sensation of not moving, when Tobias, the oldest of the guards discovered that there was a sauna in the bathing area. “Young Prince,” he said, “if your muscles are hurting anywhere close to what ours are feeling, please make use of the sauna before you get too comfortable. We can wait a while until you are finished.”

“Is there room enough for all of us?” asked Apollo. Tobias nodded, so the prince continued, “Then it doesn’t seem right that I should put my own comfort ahead of yours. If you don’t mind my company, then let’s make best use of our time and go in together.”

That was all the guards needed to hear. It was only a matter of moments before they had their clothes off and were standing in the showers, washing the worst of the road dust off their bodies. While they were showering, Johnny used some faerie magic to get the heat built up faster than it would have on its own. When Tobias opened the door, a huge blast of heat came through the opening. This was Apollo’s first experience in a sauna. He was impressed with the warmth of the benches, and as promised, the heat was helping ease some of the worst of his aches. He wanted to ask Johnny about how the sauna worked, but he noticed that the faerie was busy talking to one of the guards.

—continued on page 10

Tobias sat down next to him holding a jar. "Why don't you stretch out and I'll give you a rub down. My pa was a healer and showed me the best way relax muscles now so they don't cramp up when you get back on the saddle tomorrow."

"Hey, Toby," shouted the guard talking to Johnny, "I didn't know you were into young boys!"

"I'm not, which is exactly why I figured I would beat the rest of you to this before one of you trolls tried something." Apollo stiffened at the mention of the word troll. Turning his attention back to the prince, "I'm not going to hurt you and neither will the others. I figure that your faerie friend would turn us into a real troll if we tried something that we oughtn't. You just relax and let your mind wander."

Apollo stretched out face down where Tobias indicated. He felt Tobias' hands press into his shoulders and the smell of eucalyptus filled his nostrils. He closed his eyes and kept seeing the road racing in front of him. He finally got his mental horse to slow down when he heard Tobias tell him to flip over. He started to roll over when he realized that he had a hard on. "Don't think about it," he heard Tobias whisper. "It's a natural reaction." Apollo rolled over on his back and Tobias put a towel over the prince's groin. "I may not be into boys, but even I get hard when I get massaged."

Apollo looked around and noticed that Johnny and the other guards had paired off and were doing similar massages. When Tobias announced that he was finished, Apollo asked if he could return the favor. He said he didn't know how to do it properly, but he would try. Tobias said to save the offer for the next night. The tradition for their division was to alternate evenings between giving and receiving. Tobias told him to sit up slowly. As he sat up, he realized that his dick was still hard. Tobias sat next to him and started to stroke his own cock. He was watching the pair of guards that were together. "I may not be into boys, but I sure do enjoy watching the show the men put on."

At the sound of Tobias' voice, the others sat up and started stroking themselves. Patrick, the one that Johnny had partnered with told Apollo that if he was going to jerk off with them, then he had to abide by the rules. Apollo said that seemed fair enough if they told him the rules. Patrick said that it was simple enough, the order that they came was the order that they would stand watch. Since there were six of them, they would pair up to stand three watches during the evening. That seemed like an interesting twist to the "who shoots first" game, so Apollo agreed.

When the jerking started in earnest, Tobias was the first to shoot. He claimed that he could have held on longer but the heat was getting to him. Apollo was surprised that he was next to shoot and realized that he too needed to get out of the heat. As he stepped out, Tobias handed him a fresh towel. "Let's take a quick shower to cool down and then see what Cetee found for supper. I suspect it will be a while before the others join us."

Apollo and Tobias had finished their shower, gotten dressed and were just about to head out the door when the others finally exited out of the sauna. They learned that Lance and Stane earned the second watch, leaving Patrick and Johnny the last watch. When Apollo pointed out to Johnny that meant he would have to get up before the sun. Johnny said he realized that, but that was a small

price to pay for having gotten the nectar that his body required. The guards quickly showered and got dressed but Johnny stretched out on his bed and promptly fell asleep with a smile on his face.

The group made a show of tiptoeing out of the barracks. They headed over to the Mess Hall. Cetee had a table set up with bread and meat for them to make sandwiches. Apollo took the offered beverage and found it was very metallic tasting. When he commented on it, Tobias said that it was a local drink that picked up a lot of the minerals that seeped up from the ground around Mt. Phlare. While it had a funny taste, the minerals replenished the stuff that they sweated out in the sauna. Adam and Rondar joined them and announced that there was nothing in the reports from the previous week that indicated any sort of problem that would prevent that day's report from being sent. Tobias reported to the king that they had already drawn up the watch duty for the evening. Adam added himself to the first watch since he was going to wait to see if the messenger bird would arrive by moonrise as expected. Cetee said he would join the third watch and get the horses saddled and ready to go as soon as the gates opened.

"Since I'll be taking second watch," said Rondar, "I better head back to the barracks and get some rest." He excused himself and Lance and Stane joined him. Cetee left with them saying that he wanted to check on the horses before heading to bed.

Tobias started to gather the dirty plates. Apollo stopped him saying that it was the least he could do in the way of thanks for the massage. When the prince went into the kitchen with his armload of plates, Tobias said, "You have one fine son, Sire."

"I think so, but what makes you say that?" replied Adam.

The guard told him about how the prince didn't claim rank and privilege by trying to make the sauna his personal territory. Then, when presented with price of male bonding, he again didn't try to back out of his responsibility.

"What do you mean 'the price of male bonding?'" asked the king nervously. "You didn't try to force yourselves on him, did you?"

"Nothing like that, Sire. If you had picked Jonson or Greggor to join your escort, then you might have cause to be worried. As it was, it was just a case of the guys needing that extra little bit of stress relief that can only be provided by Rosie Palm and her friends. Now, from the way the others were looking at the faerie, well, I suspect that the bonding needed more than a little cum to cement the relationship. I think a couple of good screws were needed. But they waited until the prince left the sauna before things got that far."

Patrick chimed in, "Just as he said, Your Majesty. Besides, Toby there has a kid about your son's age. He would've broken people's arms if they tried something funny." The conversation drifted into a recounting of tale of the closeness Patrick felt with the guards that joined in the jerk off sessions. "There is something about having your dick in your hand, feeling things churning and knowing your neighbor is experiencing the same thing. There is no secret between the two of you as you learn that deep down you are both the same and have the same needs. The guy that walks out, well him, I don't trust."

"Why do you say that?" asked Adam, feeling his groin stir with the conversation and wishing he could be with Rondar to do something about it.

“Well, you know that he has those same feeling inside. We all did it when we were kids. But that guy, he’s setting himself apart as different than the rest. Like Toby was saying earlier, your son is going to be a fine king.”

“If I may speak frankly, Sire,” said Tobias hesitantly. After Adam gave his nod to continue, he said, “You probably could use some good sauna time of your own. The guards all have theories on who would replace Queen Iris in your bed, but there have never been any tales of someone slipping into your chambers at night. So either you have secret passages into your bedroom or I figure that you and Rosie have been real friendly since then. That or Queen Iris put a curse on you that you could not have sex with another person, but I would like to believe it is one of the others. I have a wife at home to take care of my basic needs, but there is something about being in a roomful of guys beating off together that she will never be able to understand.”

“Just remember the old saying,” added Patrick, “‘What cums in the sauna, stays in the sauna.’ Being with your son tonight was special. It was like he was one of us. I got to see a side of him that the public won’t. There are the Birthday Suit Parties where we get to see everyone’s dicks, but that isn’t the same as connecting with the guys in the sauna at that deep personal level.”

“Thank you,” said Adam. “I had forgotten that feeling from my days when I was still training with my classmates. I can say from the other side, it was as nice for me to be able to step away from people’s perception that nobility means that I need to be treated differently. In those hours in the sauna after a hard practice, I was just one of the guys and it felt good. The burdens of the Crown never seem to allow for some of the more basic niceties of life. I will have to see what I can do to get back into a routine of spending time working out with the guard, which would give me a good excuse to wander into the locker room with everyone else.”

The wheels in Adam’s head had started to spin. He was thankful of the conversation. With Rondar’s return to the palace, he hadn’t quite figured out how they would be able to have sexual time together without causing a major court scandal. While this wasn’t the same as being able to fall asleep in his lover’s arms, this would be a good compromise for a start. He made a mental note to talk to Rondar when they had a chance to have a private conversation.

The conversation wandered back to what one would have expected between the king and his guards. They started planning the next day’s ride to see how far they could serious expect to go before having to give the horse’s a rest. Apollo finished cleaning up

—continued on page 12



Quest/Crystal Phoenix continued

the kitchen and joined them.

"Do you want to tell him Toby, or should I?" asked Patrick.

"You're the one who started it, so you should get to clean up your mess."

"You're right," he replied. "Apollo, it wasn't fair of me to hold you to the rules back in the sauna. I didn't tell you one of the critical rules about doing night watch. The law is that no person under the age of eighteen can stand a night watch unless it is time of emergency. And at that, only an edict by the king can suspend the law during the emergency."

Apollo deflated a little. He had looked forward to doing something adult like. With a heavy sigh, he said, "I understand." He sat down, "Father, does this count as an emergency?"

"No. If we were camping close to enemy territory, maybe. But since we are in a friendly town, in a friendly guard post, people would think I was abusing my power to change things to suit my family's desires."

"But I agreed to the rule and I don't want to back out of the deal simply because I'm not old enough. I was old enough to participate in decisioning process, I should be able to follow through on my commitment to the others when I agreed to the rules. It's a stupid law."

"If I may offer a compromise," said Tobias softly. "While we can't require him to stand watch, is there anything in the rules that would prevent him from talking to his father while his father was standing watch?"

Adam agreed that seem like a reasonable compromise. Tobias and Patrick excused themselves to find out from the Night Watch if there were any special post regulations they needed to follow while standing guard over the king's quarters. Adam and Apollo left with them and headed back to the barracks, where they settled on the bench outside the entrance.

"Father, I keep trying to figure out what might be going on at home. When I think about the palace, well, it sort of 'feels' like Sir Evan's grave."

"What do you mean?"

"Johnny said that all of Sir Evan's feelings of remorse were like poison to everything around it. When I was there, it didn't feel healthy, which is why I felt I had to do something. If I think about the palace, it has that same, festering sore kind of feel. I don't know what it is, but I know something is wrong."

"I wish I could tell you what this feeling is, son," said Adam. "You seem to be more in tune to that kind of earth energy. It is probably something you inherited from your mother since she was so closely related to the faeries." He held his son close to his side. "I can tell you that I don't think you are far off in your feelings. When I listen in the wind, all I can hear is someone crying, nothing else. Normally, I can hear multiple people doing different things and I have to focus on one sound. But now, it seems like all of that other sound is being carried away from me. I guess we will have to wait and see."

Tobias and Patrick returned with Captain Pike accompanying them. "Your Majesty," he said, "the messenger bird we sent out this morning has returned. But..." he hesitated, as if he couldn't believe what he was about to tell the king.

"But?"

"The bird returned with our original notes attached; still sealed. It does not appear as if anyone was there to receive the messages, so she came home as she has been trained."

"What?"

"In light of this puzzlement, I am going to use my authority as Captain of the Phlaretown Post to order your attending guards to stand down from Night Watch. I want all of your men, and yourself, as rested as possible for your ride tomorrow." Captain Pike stared Adam directly in his eyes, as if daring the king to challenge his orders.

"Thank you for thinking of that," was his reply. Gesturing toward Tobias and Patrick, "These men, and those inside, will need that extra sleep. When they woke up this morning, little did they know their leisurely assignment in Valley Gate waiting for my annual holiday to end was going to end a week sooner than expected. They have had little chance to get mentally prepared."

"Begging your pardon, sire," said Tobias. "We are always prepared. It is just that this time we were asked to follow through on the preparations."

"I stand corrected," he replied. "I expect the best from the guards, and I shouldn't be surprised when they give it me. Now let's go wake up the others and tell them that they can go back to sleep."

Captain Pike saluted the king and took his leave of them. He promised to have supplies prepared and ready for when the gates opened at sunrise.

"Is there any chance we could get the gates opened before then?" asked Adam.

"It is absolutely not possible, Your Majesty."

"What if I ordered it?"

"Again, absolutely not possible. It is against both the city laws and post regulations. We made the exception once, and both city and post doubled the penalties as a result."

"Why? What happened to cause that reaction?" asked Apollo.

"Your grandfather was found dead, not an hour's ride from the gates. Which means he was dead before sunrise."

"Oh."

"You can't blame yourselves for my father's decision," said Adam.

"We know that. But we can also make sure it doesn't happen again. The old law was there for a reason and we are not ones to tempt the Fates a second time." Captain Pike bowed to the king. "Now, off to bed with you."

The four went inside. Adam went to wake Rondar, but found that he was sitting up in bed. "I heard most of that," he said quietly.

"I should have known that you would not be sleeping."

"Not when my..." he paused a second, "king's life may be in danger." It was then that Rondar really realized how difficult it might be to maintain his public detachment from his lover.

"I hear that there's a sauna in here. Do you know if it's still hot?"

Rondar said he looked at it when he got to the barracks and it was. He had been sitting there contemplating whether or not the steam would help him relax enough to get enough sleep before his shift on Night Watch.

All Men Are Created Equal

By AstralBrat

"I, for one, could use it after that ride. Since the others have already made use of it, care to join me?" Adam had been stripping off his clothes while he spoke and headed to the sauna. He didn't look back to see if Rondar was following him.

"You need it too, lad, said Tobias, coming over to the king's corner of the barracks. "Here, catch." Apollo saw that he had tossed Rondar one of the small bottles of oil that they had used in the sauna earlier. He gave Rondar a wink as he added, "With all that easy kingly living, you never know what muscles might need a rub down after a – hard – ride, if you catch my drift."

"I shall take that under consideration."

"Lad," he said pointed at Rondar's groin, "the way your cock is swelling, you have already done all the considering you need to."

Rondar blushed. "I..."

"You don't need to say a word. I explained the rules to him after you left with the others. 'What cums in the sauna...'"

"...stays in the sauna," completed Rondar.

"Now go in there and forget that he's your king, someone you are sworn to protect, and remember that he's just a man with needs like yours. From what I heard in his voice earlier, he's in as much need of some stress relief as you."

Let's forget about gas prices.
Let's forget about blood shed over seas.
Today we're gonna talk about national freedom.
Today we're gonna talk about human rights.

Mine as a human being are being threatened.
I am a man, and I love men.
Many say it's an abomination.
Many say in the face of God it's a sin.

But, I don't follow that God.
I am a gay man and have been for ten years now.
So I shall remain for many years to come.
A problem has yet again loomed.

A fascist government has declared war on my community.

Whatever happened to all men are created equal?
Why is there someone trying to make the constitution into a contradiction?
Why does someone want to make an American document into a joke?
There are way too many issues that just need to up and croak.

But, still on papers and TV screens we hear the same thing.
Over and over, it seems that it never ends.
How much farther do we as a community need to bend?
What makes us any different from a man and woman?

It seems to me and this is just my opinion.
But, us alternative couples seem to make better parents.
Not only is marriage an issue, but same sex adoption as well.
The right wing sees it as family value corruption.

Where oh where do they come up with such thoughts?
We pay their taxes. We pay their paychecks.
So why should we be treated as second rate?
I shall not stand by and let them determine my fate.

Taking a stand now.
My guard will stay fully up.
I am gay and am a part of a large community.
We are not spawns of Satan we just ask for mere equality.

That's not asking for much to spare.
Hear my voice. It's time to play fair.
Stop telling people how to love.
It's our God given right.

Stop continuously giving us a cause in which we must fight.

5.28.2006
Poem 17



Airy Faerie Tarot Update

by Phoenix

The Brotherhood card, shown on the right, was the next card that DragonSwan designed for his tarot deck. As you can tell, the original concept was already starting to think outside of the traditional twenty-two Major Arcana cards. As we have started to examine what we want in our new deck, one of the first things I did was to think about the number of cards. On the Major Arcana side, I have always wondered about the number twenty two. That is not a number we normally associate with Magick. Three, five, seven and multiples of those, yes, but twenty two? It just never made sense. So the first thing we decided was that there will be twenty seven of the "Major" cards (3x3x3, or three-filled).

I say "Major" in quotes because I think all of the cards in the deck will be important. All of them have their place in the scheme of life. The vision of the deck is that the "Minor" cards will be more reflective of core energies, simple concepts and fairly straight forward archetype. Some of the art will be good old fashion artist-sketch book type drawing. As the deck moves into the "Court" and "Major" cards, the art will get fuller, more energized. Each layer in the deck will have more depth to explore. The "Major" cards will be more concept and situation orientated. The "Minor" cards are more likely to be someone you meet or who you are where the "Major" cards are more likely to be situations that you might be the participant or you could be the observer.

The graphic below, "Caught in the Act", is the foundation of one of our cards of discovery that are in the "Majors". This particular card serves in place of the traditional Fool. The original concept was going to be related to "coming out of the closet" but this graphic seems to have a fun aspect about it that goes beyond someone peeking out from behind a door. This man has been doing something in his own home. He has gotten so comfortable in that existence that he didn't even think about changing that situation before he stepped out the door. He thought it would be a quick out and back and no one would know his "secret". He was wrong. Now what will he do?



Brotherhood

by DragonSwan

Brotherhood, that strong sacred bond that all faeries share. The image for brotherhood was inspired by my first experience with faeries. During a pagan gathering called Dragonfest, two faeries, Beast and Jason Rainbow, invited me to join them on a hike. After a hike, the three of us cooled off in a waterfall. The time I spent with them touched me so deeply, that not only did I join the Denver Faeries, but I have also attempted to capture the magic in drawings and paintings.

For the tarot card, I kept the number of men at three; like the Three Graces. They circle under the waterfall creating a sacred space, and a sacred bond. A bond that is loving, supportive and honest.

Caught in the Act

By Phoenix

Steve has been sleeping nude for years. In college he gave up wearing pajamas and started sleeping in his boxers. When he started having sleep-over dates it seemed silly and put something on to go to sleep. Steve grew to love the feeling of being naked under sheets but felt uncomfortable walking to the bathroom naked, so he always kept a robe handy. One day, he said to himself, "This is stupid. This is my home and no one can see me in my bedroom or bathroom, so who cares?" Thus began his naked time.

The bedroom became his clothes free zone. He knew that he had to put on clothes when he went to the kitchen or livingroom. What if the neighbors could see in?

Over the years, his naked comfort level grew in proportion to the growth of the bushes in front of his front windows. He was doing his housework one day and realized that someone would have to be actively trying to look in his window to see anything of his body below his waist. True to his suspicions, a person would have to get through the bushes to stand next to the window to be able to see anything. And he thought, if they are trying that hard then they deserve to see the show. Thus his naked sanctuary grew to the size of his house.

Steve got comfortable with being naked as often as he could. He planned ahead and did his errands such as grocery shopping on his way home from work. If he had to work in the front yard, when he got home, he would quickly change and do those chores. With that careful planning, he could often enjoy an entire weekend without clothes, with the notable exception of getting the newspaper and one day he thought, "It will only be just a second. No one will see me."

This is moment of the Tarot Card. In a reading, are you Steve or are you the person walking up to the door? Is the situation tense and you are forced to put on clothes? Is the situation a growing closer moment and now that the secret is out, you have a naked friend? During a reading, this isn't necessarily about being naked. It is about having a secret and through your own doing, someone finds out. The question of the card is then "What do you do now that the secret is out?"

And it doesn't even have to be a secret. What if instead of another person, Steve sees something else in his yard that he wants. The newspaper is close, but to get the other he will have to venture outside of his comfort zone. Will he? Will you?

Airy Faerie



The Parent Protection Plan

by Professor Percival “Perry” Grinn

It started one late night when I was watching one of my favorite movies on television. I couldn't go to sleep, so I turned on the television and started flipping channels. I figured an infomercial would be sufficiently boring enough to drone me to sleep. However, before I got that far, there was St. Joan in all her splendor in *The Women*, and I was hooked. At the end of the movie, there was the oddest advertisement.

“Are you afraid of telling your friends that you just watched this movie? Are you afraid that when they learn of this that their next words will be something to the effect of ‘Speaking of that movie, how is your son?’ If you are, then the Parent Protection Plan can help you.”

It went on with more details about the organization. I was so shocked by this announcement that I couldn't move; not even to write down the information. I stayed up the next couple of nights with pen in hand hoping to see that ad again. Alas, nothing for several nights. Then, at the end of *Sincerely Yours* with Liberace, there it was again.

“Are you afraid of being who you really are? Are you afraid that if you go public about your gayness that your picture will be in the newspaper? And while your parents love and support you, their friends don't know. But now they will, so in order to spare your parents' feelings, you deny your own? Call the Parent Protection Plan and we can help you.”

As I was writing down the information, something was nagging at the back of my brain. Why was this group's ad on during these two films but not the others? I watched a few more nights and the pattern emerged. The films with these ads were all on the required films studies list that every student at Faerie University must watch before graduation. Now I knew I had to take action and find out more about this organization.

It took a while, but I finally got connected to MG, the founder of the Parent Protection Plan. She agreed to this interview as long as we did not use her full name in our story.

AF: Thank you for taking time to speak to us.

MG: Oh, it's my pleasure, young man. When I realized that it was you who were calling, I was overjoyed at the chance to say thank you.

AF: Thank me? For what?

MG: Creating that wonderful list of “Must Watch Gay/Lesbian Films.” It has been an invaluable tool to help ferret out closeted gay/lesbian families and give us the opportunity to help them.

AF: Help them what? Not be gays and lesbians? As in trying to cure them?

MG: Oh no. We, at the PPP, want to help both child and parent find happiness. All too often, we hear how parents love their gay or lesbian child but shuttered at the thoughts of their friends finding out their family secret. All too often, we hear about their horrors of seeing their child on the news speaking at a Gay Pride Rally. And we equally hear from the child who fears being true to themselves for pretty much the same reasons.

AF: So what is the PPP?

MG: Think of it in the same manner as the government's Witness Protection Plan. Depending on the level of service

requested, we help the parents and child build a life apart from each other. In the extreme cases we go through belonging to remove all family photos that show that they never knew each other. They are relocated and documents are created to show that the parents never had a child. We go through a similar process for the child. Once their identities are established, they can figure out a way to “meet by chance,” most frequently at some kind of church function. Then, the parents can befriend a gay youth without any stigma attaching to themselves.

AF: That does sound a bit extreme. What would a less extreme case be?

MG: If the circumstances allow, we can create documents showing that the child really belonged to a deceased sister or bother. Then the two sides can still be together and family photos are spared the shredder.

AF: But how would that spare the parents if the child did appear on television or in the newspapers?

MG: That should be obvious to a man of your learned nature. If one of the parent's friends ask, they can always claim that the gay gene must have come from the sister's husband's family.

AF: That almost makes sense when you say it that way. What made you found the PPP? Were you ashamed of the gayness of someone in your own family?

MG: It wasn't their gayness that got me started on this mission. It was all of her gay friends that treated her like some princess. It was the fact that “Her Majesty” was so caught up in the royal treatment that my sister never could get work out of her farm hands.

Let me back up a moment. It all began when Dorothy was caught in a twister. My sister's farm house was destroyed and all EG could cry was “Where's Dorothy?” Her farmhands tried to help find her and went into town. Since they had not been in town in a long time they would ask people, “Do you know Dorothy?” If they did, they would ask if they had seen her.

One day she comes walzing up to the ruins of the farm, her hair is all nicely permed, her dress is freshly pressed and she has these sparkly red shoes and nails to match. She has a fantastic tale about some magic land where she was named a princess of the land, but she knew she had to come back to Kansas to spread the news of this land. After that, the three farmhands were like her heralds. Each of the boys brought more fellows to hear her tale. They set up a special room where she could hold court. It wasn't long before throngs of people were making pilgrimage to meet her. The guys convinced EG and her husband to stop farming and start selling rainbow souvenirs to the visitors. They went like hotcakes. But it hurt me to watch my sister be a work slave to my...to her niece and I knew I needed to do something. I knew we needed an intervention when I heard tale of the fellows talking about the fact that the princess was supposed to be the Grand Marshall at a parade in San Francisco.

AF: You know Princess Dorothy? May I touch you? Are you saying that you are related to Princess Dorothy? Wait a minute—my god, now I know where I've seen your picture! In her biography, *Three Clicks to Home*, you are the one that was stealing her dog.

MG: All a misfortunately understanding. If that dog hadn't

jumped out of my basket, and Dorothy hadn't gotten caught in that storm, she would have found her dog waiting at my house with a new collar and all of her friends waiting for a surprise birthday party. EG and I had staged the whole scene and once Dorothy got over the shock, my sister was to tell her to go to my house to see if she could get me to change my mind.

AF: Why would you be throwing a party for Dorothy? In her book, she uses very unkind words to describe you. In fact she calls you a...

MG: I am not a witch! I was just trying to be the best mother I could be under the circumstances.

AF: What?!

MG: Oops. Now that my secret is out, I might as well explain. Back in those days, I was the school teacher. We had to be stern in order to mold those young minds. Between church and school, I never really had time for menfolk. Then one day, my sister convinced me to go to the carnival with her. A sweet talking man told me I had the prettiest green eyes; that they were like emeralds. No one had ever said something like that to me. He swept me in his arms and against my better judgement, we made love in his wagon. He told me he loved me and that as soon as the tour was over, he would return for me.

I watched the wagons pull out of town, but he never returned. I got a letter from the Carnival Master that my man had been lost in a balloon accident. I was hurt that he had to come up with such a thin story and couldn't be honest that he had found another woman.

My hurt couldn't last long. My other sister, LG, needed my help. She had a couple of miscarriages and was now expecting another child. I went to help her. Once again, she miscarried, but during that time, we discovered that I was pregnant. You have to remember, back in those days it wasn't good to be an unwed mother, so we pretended that LG carried her baby to term and I gave her my daughter when she was born. LG raised her as her own, but a few years later, both LG and her husband were killed. The family decided that EG should raise the child since she had a husband and a child needed both a mother and father to care for them.

AF: I never knew. But if you are her mother, why did you need to create the Parent Protection Plan for your sister?

MG: My sister and her husband got tired of the game. They were hounded by the press. Reporters all wanted to know what Dorothy had for breakfast; the colors of her panties: which of the three farmhands she was sleeping with? You know, the usual questions. EG got tired of it all and one day told me that she wished she never knew Dorothy and wished she could go back to being just Mrs. G. It was then I knew that I had to do something.

AF: Out of curiosity, just which farmhand did she prefer?

MG: She told me that it was none of them since all of the fellows that came to the farm were gay. And I told her I would believe that when a scarecrow could sing and dance. I have learned since then that both can be true.

AF: Thank you for this interview. Is there anything you want to add before you go?

MG: Just that Dorothy, we miss you. If you are out there and see this story, please click your heels and come home for a visit. And you can bring your little dog too.



The Cubby Diaries: The Painter by Cubby

My apologies for not having a full story for you this issue, but things have been busy at the house recently.

Jim and I were working out in the backyard when we noticed how much the paint on the house was peeling. As I thought about it, I realized that I hadn't painted the house since Grams and Phil died and it really was overdue. We talked about it at dinner that night, and Aeric said that one of his clients was getting their house painted. Aeric talked to the painter the next day and invited Bryan to come over that evening to give us an estimate. While we were showing him around, Jim whispered to me that no matter the price, he estimated that Bryan would be suitable to do the work. He got the job.

Unfortunately, Bryan has a girlfriend. That didn't stop him from joining us in the hot tub one evening after he had overstretched while painting the eaves of the upper roof. It also didn't stop him from accepting our "thanks" for a job well done.

Jack and Gil have invited us to join them on their summer excursion to a gathering called "Bears in the Woods." I have never been to a gathering before so I'm sure I will have something to report when we get home. I think the first thing I want to discover is why Gil keeps calling it "Woodies in the Woods." That seems to be redundant. He just smiles and says I will figure it out on my own when we get there.



Faeries seldom travel light.