

**Glimpses of CELTELLINA**  
**—and the Wonder Hill Orb—**

There are secrets and mysteries imbedded in these tales, that the wise hearted with alert minds just might decipher.

**BOOK 7**

**VACATION ON OCEAN EMERALD ISLAND**

The boats were ready to take each of the families to the most delightful vacation spot imagined—Ocean Emerald Island. There were five families ready to go, along with those skilled in water transportation to get them to their destination. It was the time of year when the least storms out on the sea occurred, yet it was still a rare and special event to get to go to this rather hidden away location.

It took half a day on this sunny, calm day for the small ships to arrive and all passengers to set food on the island—most of them for the first time.

Celtellina and Shane, with their youngest children were on one boat, along with Bernardo's brother and his wife and son. There was Uncle Roden and Emilda and their full family, which included grandmother Shaulic, on another. Tommy and Emanuel along with their wives and children, shared the next boat with great uncle Bernard and aunty Lully and their children. This was the biggest vessel and led the way.

The families would sleep in the rooms provided on these small ships, as well as cook the meals there too. Being on the island provided them with lots of time outdoors exploring, or picnicking, or resting under the trees.

Pleasant fresh water swimming holes were discovered and enjoyed, as well as new types of fish seen in the shallows along the shore. Sand play and making the biggest sand castles was something the men and young sons had a great time doing. Campfires to sit around when the stars came out to play was another daily favourite. And the day, the one day that it did rain, these exploring families made lovely shelters of huge palm fronds, and explored the shallow caves along the rock cliff side of the island. Games were played in the boats when the day was over, as a way to settle the young ones down to a gently swaying bedroom.

The week the children of these families spent on Ocean Emerald Island was so memorable, they would most likely still be telling tales of that time to their grandchildren and great-grandchildren in the years to come.

It was a joyful time for the parents and grandparent to get to see all the gifts of the children, children of their relatives or friends that they weren't often with. Yet, here, without the daily needs of living life, there were more opportunities for gifts to be seen, noticed, and appreciated.

Some of the gifts the children of these related families were granted included:

\*The gift of knowing something right before it occurred—such as when a new type of bird was about to fly right overhead, or where in the sky a shooting start might be seen, so those there could look in the direction to see these things and not miss it.

\*The gift of patience. Never tiring of another's mistakes or sometimes unpleasant ways of being. Not ever getting impatience with other's slowness to learn something that they had learned quickly. When someone on the team felt the ill feeling that lack of patience brings, they learned to look at this child to see how they behaved, and then be the same. It made for many more pleasant memories and times spent together.

\*The gift of breathing underwater and being able to stay immersed for long periods of time without any ill side effects. Many fascinating discoveries were made by this older child.

\*The gift of enjoying whatever was happening, no matter how trying or uncomfortable. Soon he too was looked to, whenever something unpleasant was occurring—such as the time when the whole pot of nicely cooked stew overturned in the fire, losing both the food and fire. Others learned to hold their breath and their tongue and see how joyfully this young one acted no matter what. This added more laughter to the vacation than otherwise might have been heard.

One the day before departure, great Uncle Bernardo came back on the shore from a rest he'd had in his boat with a most surprising announcement.

"I found a leek in the boat! I think there is at least one on all three vessels!!"

The comments began to fly.

"What will we do?"

"How can we get back home?"

"Will we need to stay here for another year, until the boats are fixed and the weather is pleasant enough for us to go?"

"I'm fine to stay! In fact I am having such a great time I was hoping this would happen."

"Oh dear, but what about our crops, we'll need to tend to them."

"Maybe we can make something—like a board with a little sail—that can get some of us home, if we leave our belongings here."

Great Uncle Bernardo then broke into a smile and pulled out from his deep pocket a leek! A leek that is used in cooking soup, to flavour it, and said.

"I don't know what you all are talking about. It's not a problem to have some leeks on ships, in fact it's rather delightful. Which reminds me, that I'm getting hungry!"

Everyone had a great laugh. It did help to relax the tension that was building in some of the younger ones, as they were not looking forward to leaving this lovely place. It helped them be glad that they could go and wouldn't be stuck here, and yet those who wished to stay on and on got to have a brief moment of imagining that it might just be possible—and maybe sometime in the future it just might be, if they prepared well for it.

"Okay, so we are all going to leave tomorrow, but I hope this won't be the last time. And by the looks of our growing families and grandfamilies, I imagine the next time there will be a few more passengers aboard!" great uncle Bernardo said.

"So for our last night here," Celtellina said aloud for all to hear, knowing that food was on most people's minds, "we have a special meal prepared. We'll eat it around the beach campfire, and end our vacation in true island style."

The men cheered. The children said, "yea!" The women said, "Let's get to work."

The men played beach and exploring games with the children, like "Find the Hidden Emeralds"—and ensured that each child had found something they were very happy with.

The women didn't have much to do, really, as they had long thought this evening out in advance, and indeed had pickled jars of foods for this meal and stashed them on the boats. And as soon as they had arrived at the island there was one other thing they did that no one knew about.

Some island fruits and berries were growing around, and there was plenty of fresh water to drink. So, like skilled cooks, they were able to make a fresh and sweet naturally fermented drink to serve on this last night of celebration to conclude their island stay.

Hot breads were roasted over the fire, and songs were sung while waiting. Children played running games in the bright moonlight, and all had a lovely end to their stay. The morning would start early and ships would leave as soon as the crew was fed and ready to do so. During this week, the sailing assistants travelled to another part of the island to have a vacation of their own. There was a cave they stayed in and roasted what foods they brought or could find around. But the day they were to leave, they would hike back in the wee hours of the morning to the shore where the small ships were anchored, then have a hearty breakfast and be off sailing on the waves.

“Mommy, do you know what I liked best about our vacation,” Tendroch, Bernardo and Lully’s son began to say, “I liked when daddy joked that we’d have to stay!”

“You do like it here, don’t you?” his mother replied.

Rorral his brother joined in, “Yes. I especially liked seeing the stars each night; and I liked the new fruits we ate; and I liked sleeping in the boat each night. It kind of rocked me to sleep.”

Their father came over to hear his sons talking about the vacation as they sailed along.

He put his arms around his boys.

“See, that is part of growing up. You enjoy something, and then you are able to, cheerfully, move on to something that seems a bit less exciting. But once you get back into your home life, you’ll find just as many interesting things to keep you busy for a long time. –Things you’d never get to do if you had to stay here for the rest of your life!”

“Yes,” mother Lully added. “Just think, next week is the horse-riding parade, where all the horses are going to do a massive show all over the sky right above where we live. And you’ll get to ride on one for part of the time as well. I don’t think any of us would want to miss out on that!”

The boys eyes lit up. It’s true. There would be different joys in a different place, but always something joyful to see or to partake of. And if not, then why not? Perhaps it would be time then to make something fun occur, and not just wait for it to take place.

\*\*\*

### **THE TUNNELS LINKING THE REALMS**

While some families were on a trip to Ocean Emerald Island, over in the Alpantine Village a completely different type of vacation was taking place. Manly-Lane who had decided to stay a single man—since he had exploring in his bones—was taking some of his brothers and sisters and a few older children on an expedition through some of the cave tunnels that had been discovered.

They’d already seen the gorge some years back, like Mr. Mackallen had rediscovered and pioneered. But there were so many hidden caves and tunnels leading to who knows where. Of course, as Emilda and her mother found out, there was a secret passage that led right into the Enchanted Dome

Manly-Lane wasn’t planning on taking this team that far for their vacation. But you never knew just where a tunnel system might lead when you were in the Alpantine area.

The first trek they took was up a pass called, “Enchanted Zone”, meaning it was close to the place that did lead away and out of sight from the regular realm of Wonder Hill, and had some mysterious happenings occur there. Some people walking in that Enchanted Zone there would just completely disappear from view, and then suddenly be in another location. Another happening that was reported was that if food or water ran out, it didn’t seem to matter, as no one felt the need for these for quite some time.

When Manly-Lane and his team entered this area they discovered another phenomenon. One of his brave nieces had chosen to come on this exciting adventure. She had cut herself on a sharp rock earlier in the day, and it was bothering her a bit. Yet, when in the “Enchanted Zone” she was heard to exclaim, “My cut, it’s gone. It’s healed. There’s not even a mark where it used to be.”

She shone her lantern on it for others to see.

That gave them all the idea to check their own bodies for signs of supernatural and sudden healing.

“You’re right! Something mysterious has happened. My sore back is totally fine now when I try to move it this way and that way. I’m more limber and pain-free.”

“My blister is healed. I can walk more quickly now without discomfort.”

These were some of the things declared. It was a place of wonder in deed. Perhaps they wouldn't yet get to enjoy all the benefits that those in the Enchanted Dome would, but it was mighty special getting a touch of them, at least while in this zone.

There were jewels of all sorts embedded all along the cave tunnel wall. The older children played an "eye-spy" game, seeing who could spot this or that treasure along the way, using their lanterns to see them in the dark. There were hunks of gold, pearls, diamonds, jewels of all colours and shades. It was a marvellous place to be, when the light shone and the beautiful things were looked at.

Then they came to a landing, an open area, with a surface large enough for them all to have plenty of elbow room. They could have slept there comfortably; it was so big. And the natural pool of clear water also there made it a perfect place to rest and eat together.

"I didn't know this was here!" Manly-Lane said. "I didn't see it last time. It's almost as if it just was formed for us at this time when we needed a place to rest."

Perhaps he was right. It might have been a newly opened up area to explorers, just that day as they travelled. You never really knew what to expect when on an expedition in the Enchanted Zone.

The ceiling was rounded, almost like a dome, and covered with bits of gold or something that shone like it when their lanterns were shining up on to it.

"Beautiful!" is what they said, for that was the most fitting description.

The children quickly found their way to the fresh pond and began drinking.

"Mmmm, this is so refreshing. It's good! Much better than the old stale water left in the bottom of my bottle," one child said.

That got the grown-ups coming over to try it too.

Manly-Lane exclaimed, "You are right. I don't think I've tasted water this fresh before. It makes me really appreciate it knowing that this special place of rest might not have been available before—and maybe it won't be in the future. It's now that we can enjoy it. Drink up!"

And so they all did, with pleasure.

However, something wonderful began to be noticed—and all the more by those who had drunk the most of this fresh water.

"I can see better now than before! It doesn't seem as dark. I can see up there, far up. I couldn't do that before!" one young one said.

"It's true, my eyesight is improving too!" another said.

Manly-Lane went for thirds on this refreshing water, and with every swig his sight was improving.

"Let's fill out empty bottles with this amazing water," he suggested to everyone, and they eagerly agreed. Every container possible was filled to the full. They wanted to bring as much as they could.

"I want to share this water with my blind neighbour," the girl whose scratch had been healed said.

That was a wonderful idea, for it certainly was going to help. No longer would they be blind, from that time onward. Even if they could only see a small amount it was far better than stumbling in darkness as they had been for so long.

Eventually it was time to move on and go back to their homes and the rest of their family teams. But their time of exploring was a memory that would last the rest of their days. Yet, there was one more wonder to be revealed as they made their way through the tunnels to bring the fresh water back to their village.

As Manly-Lane passed the doorway that led to the Enchanted Dome he heard a voice. He stopped suddenly and turned to see a man, looking very radiant and strong.

“Hi, I’m Errand,” he said to Manly-Lane.

“Mr. Errand Mackallen?”

“The very one,” he responded, then delivered his message, yet not with words but as a picture or show playing out in Manly-Lane’s thoughts.

It told that one day, some years from now, Mother Shaulic—who was his wife, and their grown daughter Emilda along with her husband Roden, and all their children, would choose to move to the Alpantine Village.

When they did, Manly-Lane was to see that they had all they needed. And further more, in time, Roden and Emilda, and Mother Shaulic were to come to this very entrance where he stood. Manly-Lane was to show them the way. There Errand was to greet them and take them through to their well-prepared place in the Enchanted Dome.

With that, the message and picture ended. Errand said good-bye, and “Until then”, and was gone before anyone else had a chance to see him—for Manly-Lane was well in the lead.

He had a mission to do now, when he got back. Besides caring for his siblings needs, and the needs of his parents, they all were to help prepare a place for the Doflynn family, who had cared so much for them. It would be their way of giving back to this kind mother and daughter team, who, though lacking a father and husband still gave what they could to anyone in need—and did it joyfully, too.

In time, in deed this is what played out in their lives, some years later. Manly-Lane, when instructed by a dream, would know it was the time to lead Roden, Emilda and Mother Shaulic to the special opening in the tunnel linking the realms. At last they would be reunited with Errand, and could begin the next part of their journey all together, on the “Other side of the hill” as they put it.

The Doflynn’s grown children and grandchildren then grew up in a more established and better off Alpantine Village, now that the Quauf family had been there and made it so. And they were great friends, and had a great book to referred to as they continued to set things up. Bundle Doflynn, Roden and Emilda’s eldest son, still had and passed on the information from the special book: *“How to Start a City So it Will Last a Millennium.”*

\*\*\*

### **THE ROCKSWORTH FAMILY**

Many years have passed since Celtellina had been offered the hand of Shane, Roden’s best friend, and they two were wed. He was the one who had met her on the secret pathway, on the long walk. With both sharing a passion for the Treasures of the King, they made a good pair. They continued to persue secret journeys together, or individually.

In time, Shane and Celtellina had moved out from Doflynn’s Lodge, as their families grew, and lived in a place given to them by Father Baufin. Besides this place, they also had, as a family worked to fix up and set up “The Castle” that they so enjoyed. With this place available, friends could visit and continue to share in each other’s lives.

Shane’s chosen family name, Rocksworth, seemed even more appropriate then, with a rock fortress nearby. Of course, he chose the name to declare that he wanted to be a strong help and support to his new family; and perhaps a reminder of the most worthy rocks of all—the jewels their journey led them to find.

The seven lovely children they raised had, in turn, grown and married and moved to nearby villages, doing the best they could to make Wonder Hill the best it could be.

The story now finds us with Elder Grandfather Shane Rocksworth traveling around, as he so liked to do, spending time in the homes of each of his children, getting to know and love his grandchildren. Celtellina, being the more fragile one, stayed home while the families of their children took turns visiting her.

\*\*\*

## TRINKETS OR TREASURES

Celtellina sat looking through old photos and trinkets that reminded her of days gone by. It was something she sometimes did in her quiet moments. It was hard to leave the past behind. There were good days, really good times, and there were those times she'd rather like to forget. Both types of memories had a way of popping up into her thoughts and taking her away, in mind, back to the time or situation she was reminded of.

Sometimes she laughed, other times she cried. It was hard not to be with Shane, in the way they used to be. They had chosen, for the time being, that it was best for their children and grandchildren, that they live more separate lives.—Otherwise they'd miss being there for their other family members in the ways needed.

It was decided some months back that Shane would spend most of his time traveling and visiting and helping out. Celtellina would spend most of her time at the home, ready at all times for family and friends and those who might need her there. And she would look after the house and garden and animals. There were neighbours who depended on her. There were gardens to tend to that produced the food she and others needed. She couldn't just up and leave and live a free life style at this point.

It was hard in some ways for Shane, as he missed having Celtellina with him each day, to talk with her, to hold her at night. But the joy he got seeing the smiles of his grown children and his young grandchildren made up for it. They needed his help, and his answers to their questions. They needed someone to help look after the young ones at times, giving his adult children and their spouses time to tend to other needs, or just to visit a new place for a while.

It was a life of giving. Yet, it always had been in one way or another. But this was a mature giving that cost them a fair bit of comfort. However, over the years, as they continued to have their "Wonder-Fill" time, and quietly thought about solutions to making things better for their family, a courage had built up in them, to go or be or do anything that was needed. And this was one of the ideas that they had both received in their times of quiet pondering.

They knew it was right, and the results proved so. A happy thriving family, growing and joyful, is what they were after. And their determination to do whatever it took to achieve that end goal is what helped them stick with their commitment to a more separate life in order to fill more needs and help as many others as they could.

On this day, when Celtellina was feeling the loss of what she used to have—her children and husband with her and around her—she remembered some of the journeys she took before she and Shane were wed.

It was the right thing to use her quiet moments for, rather than musing on what did happen, what could have happened, what should have, or what she'd like to have occur now. Instead, a step into a completely different realm would cheer her, and would strengthen her in special ways. Also, it would prepare her for the soon coming entrance into the Enchanted Dome, that she somehow knew would not be long now.

Celtellina stood up and walked over to the window. It wasn't that she wanted to see what was outside, for it was mostly just a dirt patch. The food had been harvested, and nothing in particular was to be seen. But beside the window was the chair she had often sat in for her secret journeys. By leaving the trinkets and walking over there to sit down, she was making a conscience effort to look past the world of the seen, and desiring something far beyond where the true treasures lasted forever.

Celtellina closed her eyes and breathed deeply. Her first thought was one of gratitude.

"I'm glad for the quietness now, for I can at last make new and more headway on my secret journeys."

That is at last what she realised. She had been too distracted with what she was missing out on, or what was no longer a part of her life to realise the gift of quietness and time afforded her special moments in the unseen realm.

She then felt regret, but just for a moment. Regret that she had given place to the sorrow of heart at the loss of close family members, rather than realising the treasure of time she was being given. For temporal joys, she was given in stead the chance to engage in lasting ones—if she dared to look away and past what she didn't have now and grasp on to something of greater value than some feeling or a fleeting laugh here and there.

\*\*\*

It was some hours before Celtellina rose from her seat again and opened her eyes. What she had just experienced was better than anything she could have found satisfaction doing puttering around the house or garden.

*"I must write this. I want my family to find out the joys, the treasures, the incredible beauty that waits for us to enjoy it, just beyond what we can see and feel and touch and taste right here. If only they knew what I have been given the privilege to see right now, it would make their own lives more weightless. I shall have to write it down now."*

And so saying, she did just that. Yet, not just writing about the experience she had just then, but she let her thoughts recall many others, and wrote about those too. Daily she wrote something. Soon a book was filled, as she added to it day-by-day. These she added to the notes of the journeys she had taken earlier, when younger as well, before life seemed to get especially busy for while, too busy to spend much time writing it down.

She had time now, and would help her family in this way, by making records and notes of what she had experienced in her secret journeys.

Here below is what she wrote, after her long and precious time by the window that day.

\*\*\*

### DIAMOND-TIPPED KEY

*An entry in Celtellina's "Secret Book of Lasting Treasures":*

I was in a dark cave of sorts. I had to feel my way along the side of the cave wall, and very carefully place my feet here and there so as not to trip. Sometimes there were holes in the floor of the cave that would have taken my leg full into them and I would have seriously fallen. I had to be sure that each step was solid, and not walk on as if blindly, stumbling in the dark.

I called out at last, "I need a light". I was sure there were others on this trek with me, though I did not or could not see them. I knew they were there, both in front of me, to the side of me, and walking behind me, because of the soft whispers I was hearing.

I began to realise that I might be the only one who saw things in this very darkened way; that somehow my eyes were not accustomed to the lighting or lack of lighting in the cave. Yet from the whispers and sounds of movement—and the confidence in the voices, it seemed to me that the others could see a fair bit better than I could. That is why I called out. They must have some visionary ability or device that I had not.

As soon as I spoke those words, asking for a light, I felt a hand grasp on to mine and place something in it.

"What's this?" I said and felt it. It was a key, a very small but strong key. How this would light the pathway I didn't know. I was afraid, also, of dropping it.

"This diamond tipped key will give you all the lighting that you need," the voice said.

"Oh," I thought. Grateful I was, yet I knew there was far more to know about it and its use. I waited in quietness for the giver to explain more. At first there was silence as I continued to feel my way through.

That is when the voice whispered, "You need to use it. It's not a decoration to simply hold. You need to use it if you want to safely and more easily make your way through this difficult and dark time."

At last I asked aloud, my own voice echoing—reminding me how alone I did feel. I said, "How do I use it? Where is the lock? What is the lock? Tell me. Please show me."

Taking my hands in his, this guide it seemed he was—a guide to the blind—helped me feel the key. He used my fingers to touch it all around.

"This key has a diamond tip," he said, helping me to touch the tip, so I would know what he was talking about.

"Here at the base is a ring. Can you feel it?" Again, he guided my hand to feel the ring.

“This is the shaft of the key, and is made of gold. It is strong and smooth and round.” Again I fingered what he called the shaft.

“So now you know how to hold it and how to position it for proper use. Take it in your hands like this, and turn it this way.” The guide instructed me on how to take hold, and what to do with my hands and fingers to make it work.

I learned quickly as I was rather desperate for light, and if this key with the diamond tip was linked to light, then I wanted to be a quick learner.

“Good, now you’ve got it. Now what you need to do is place the key into the proper keyhole,” the guide continued to instruct me.

But since I couldn’t see where he was telling me to place it, I just had to reach out and try to do it anyway. I couldn’t see but I could do my best to follow instructions, anyway. So far he seemed to know what he was talking about, and so I trusted his words, and did as I was told.

“Here, right here is where you must turn the key,” he said, showing my hands where he was talking about, along the wall.

There was a strip, a long strip of metal of some sort that followed the cave wall all along, but higher up than I had been touching when merely feeling my way through. I had to reach up higher to find where I could access the light I so sorely needed.

“Ah, there it is!” I said with delight. The feel of the long strip of metal was the first sign that what he was saying in the dark was really true. I felt it and it was just as he had said.

“Now, all long this strip are keyholes. Anytime you have a need for light, just take the diamond tipped key and place it into one of the holes. You are going to have to trust they are there. The one for this particular key is the most common keyhole, for light is the biggest need. But there are others. Yet you have asked for light, and so it is what has been given. Go ahead and try. Find the hole, and hold the key and turn it just as I have said to. You will be delighted at what happens when you, trusting that these instructions are correct, follow through.”

I, Celtellina, wasn’t one to linger in the dark if there was light available. And so reaching up high I felt for the strip of metal and found the first hole. I took the key, in what seemed to me a rather fumbling way and tried to get it in. It was somewhat awkward at the start, as my hands had to reach up as high as they could go. But at last the key was inserted and I turned it.

And oh I was indeed ever so delighted at what happened next. It was as if a light switch had been turned on. Light was now all along the cave pathway. This metal strip was indeed made of gold, as my fingers had suggested to me, and shining along it, as if coming from inside of it, was light. A line of white gold light was all along the cave wall, as far as I could see—that is until there was a curve or turn in the pathway. I’d need to get there before I saw where else this long, thin line of light led.

The guide gave his next instruction.

“The light is rather on a timer, that is so that it is only used by those who hold the diamond tipped keys. It will dim after a while. But don’t let it get dark, as that is when you might fall, and in your stumble you might drop the key. Keep using it as you go along and more light is needed. It will reactivate the light and make it bright again.

“And try to make good and fast speed through this tunnel system while the light shines, for there is also a timer on when the light will cease to shine at all, for a time. You must make your way through quickly. This is to speed you on, so no time is wasted.

“But should you ever be completely fully in the dark again—such as if you have carelessly forgotten to reactivate the light again, or you are still in the cave when the lights are turned off for maintenance in the caves, remember you still have the key, if you whisper this secret word, the key itself will light up and aide you in your journey. So, whatever you do, do not drop the key!”



I held the key more tightly then. It was the key to my getting through and out of this dark cave tunnel in a safe and speedy way.

I will add, that I never did see my guide, that is with my eyes, but somehow when he spoke it was like I could feel his presence. I knew he was in some other reality that could somehow connect with mine. I wouldn't be alone, completely, though it seemed to eyes and ears, touch and feel, that I was mostly just that—alone. Yet with the diamond tipped key I would get out safely to the bright light.

I had the instinctive feeling that once I got through, I would see the guides in full light and vision.

\*\*\*

And thus ended the written account of the next secret journey Celtellina went on. What came after the cave, and where it led to was something she would have to find out the next time she took to have her special "Wonder-Fill" time. She was looking forward to it.

\*\*\*

### **SECRET BOOK OF LASTING TREASURES**

A thought came to her as she was cleaning the windows and hanging out the laundry she'd washed for her elderly and infirmed neighbour.

*"One day I will leave Wonder Hill and be embraced by the light within the Dome. I know I can't take anything from this world I live in here, not even a shred of cloth. But if I could take something, I certainly would enjoy taking the books, those ones I have spent so much time writing that tell of the beauties of the realm beyond.*

*"I wish to leave them with my loved ones here, of course, but I'd love to still have them as well, or a copy of them, to refer to in my next place of dwelling. I'd so love to let my parents read them, who have long, long ago found their resting place in the Enchanted Dome. I guess I'll just have to see what happens.*

*"The journeys were something given to me by those in another realm, and perhaps there is a way those in that unseeable realm can keep special records from this life here. Surely they, themselves, must enjoy hearing about life in a place they have given much help to, though unnoticeably for the most part."*

With these thoughts, Celtellina had to be content and carry on the best she could, all the while keeping touch with the unseeable realm and documenting all she could for the information of her growing family of all ages.

\*\*\*

### **BLISSFUL LIFE BEYOND THE HILL**

"Mother, mother! Oh, mother I have missed you so much," Celtellina embraced her mother Grenda after running through a meadow of flowers to greet each other.

"You came, darling—well for a little visit, how nice of you," Grenda said to her daughter, as she then walked hand in hand over towards a simple cottage on the side of the meadow at the foot of a hill.

The walk took some time and they had much to talk about. Grenda asked all about how life in Wonder Hill was, and how her darling grandchildren and great-grandchildren were doing—as well as how Roden her brother was getting on, and her sister Lully and her family.

There was much for these ladies to catch up on. They strolled slowly while the gentle breeze danced the flowers this way and that way.

"I'm depending on you darling, to show the care and kindness to these ones that I would so love to be giving to. And you are doing this well through letting Shane do it, also. It's not my time to be there anymore, you know that. And you have been so brave. But it won't be all that much longer. So do the best you can, will you? For me, sweetheart?"

Mother told Celtellina this as they neared the cottage. Celtellina nodded. She needed to hear this. Sometimes it was tiring living on Wonder Hill, always so many people to help who needed her. And though she loved helping, sometimes she did long for the rolling hills of the Enchanted Dome, that one never tired when walking up, nor stumbled when walking down. She longed for the light that never caused weariness, burn, nor left altogether at the close of the day. There was much she wanted to learn about that only was in the secret realm.

“One day,” she would often tell herself, “one day I will be there for a very long time. I must both enjoy and endure what I must, while here in Wonder Hill, for it won’t be forever.”

Now, at a time when she was ill and very weary, and had to reside in her bed for quite some days, she was having a little peek into a part of the Enchanted Dome. A visit with her mother was a pleasant way to relax in mind, while recovering in body.

Was it a dream or a moving picture film in her mind? Was she asleep or awake? Celtellina wasn’t too sure. But she knew that while in the place her mother was, she felt more alive and energetic than she ever had before, or at least since she was a very young girl.

“I know you need to go now, darling, for your friend is about to come to your door to aid you in your healing. You will wake from the sleep you are in, and this will seem like a dream when you open your eyes. But I assure you it is very real. We can talk more later in the future.”

Just as her mother spoke this, as the two of them were sitting in the cottage, a knock sounded at the door. Celtellina looked over to the door, and then to her mother. She wondered why her mother was not getting up to answer it.

“It’s not for me, darling. The door knock is on your house door. Goodbye. You must answer it now.”

“Goodbye mother. Until next time,” Celtellina said, and after embracing her mother, rose to walk to the door. Yet as she was part of the way there, her eyes opened and she found she was actually still in her bed back in Wonder Hill.

“That was a ‘Wonder-Fill’ time for sure,” she thought. And somehow it gave her a bit of strength to rise now and hear the knock for the second time.

“I’m coming,” she called out, and went as swiftly as was possible in her condition.

Opening the door she found a woman with a bouquet of flowers and a bag of goods.

“I was walking through this lovely meadow today, near the Hill of Self-Forgetfulness, and picked this. And then upon arriving home the thoughts were coming to me to do something kind for you. I couldn’t keep the flowers from that place in my own home, for they always will remind those holding them to do something kind for another.

“In addition to the flowers I have brought the makings of some nourishing soup. Will you let me come in and cook it for you, and see if there is anything else you need?” the smiling, kind hearted visitor asked.

Celtellina took the flowers and with tears in her eyes placed them in a vase. They did look quite similar to the ones growing in the meadow by the hill where she just met with her mother. Whether her mother lived there, or if it was simply a special place to visit she didn’t know. But it would remind her now, in a real way, of her beautiful dream and visit.

“Thank you,” she said, inviting the young lady to come in and sit down, much like she had just been invited to do with her mother. In some ways Celtellina was like a mother to this lady, who was much younger than she was.

After chatting for a while, just being a friend, the visitor then got up to cook the offered soup. Celtellina returned to rest and await for it to be brought. With a smile she nestled under her covers, closed her eyes and relived the dream she’d had, as her memory recalled it.

It wasn’t many days later when Celtellina felt back to her normal strength--for every day this kind woman came to see how she faired and to serve her the best food she could prepare. It was much like Celtellina had done for so many others, and for her own family as well, for years. It was a time to be given back to.

## THE KEY OF QUICK TRANSPORTATION

One day, some months later, Celtellina was sitting in her sun room—the place where she wrote of her special journeys. It had been a while since anything really outstanding had taken place. A little thought here and there, but most of the time during her Wonder-Fill time she had quietness. It filled her with strength and joy, yes, but she was hoping for something of the more spectacular nature, such as when she had visited the cave and received the diamond-tipped key, or such as the dream visit with her mother.

Then a thought dawned on her. “The Key! If only I had that key. I would see things better—in my mind that is. The sun is shining, but I wish to see more things that lie beyond the seeable realm.”

She then closed her eyes and imagined that she still held the key, and in the darkness was reaching up to turn it so the light would turn on.

Just as she thought of this, wishing for it greatly in her heart, a vision started. It was the rest of the vision or journey of walking through that cave.

“I did want to know what happened next and where that cave tunnel led to,” she thought, and sat back with eyes closed as the pictures formed in her mind.

She was in the lit-up cave and walking through it, only this time in her mind she could see the invisible guides gently leading her. They’d speak of this and that, giving instruction and counsel, and would chat in a friendly manner to her as well. Or at times they would point out dangers for her to be aware of, such as a low overhanging rock she’d need to bend down to miss hitting her head on, or a hole in the cave floor to step over and not fall into. Just because there was light didn’t mean she could abandon all caution or expect to make it safely and unharmed. She still need to walk carefully and to listen to, and take action on warnings.

Having the light made her even more responsible to walk the right way. She couldn’t assume that just because she could see, that she would automatically take all the right steps and moves. She needed to focus and use caution to ensure she made forward progress in the best way—not simply to look around and laugh through the journey, only.

As Celtellina kept watching, the pictures appearing in her mind’s eye, she at last came to the bend in the pathway. It led through a much smaller tunnel. She had to crouch down to squeeze through it, but it wasn’t all that uncomfortable, as at the end of this small, and getting smaller pathway tunnel was a brilliant light. She just looked forward and ahead to the brilliant light and that gave her the desire to keep moving forward.

The walls, however, became closer on either side of her, until they were brushing up against her body, and it seemed the tunnel was narrowing by the step. The headroom then lowered so much that she eventually had to crawl. Sometimes her clothes were stuck on the rough rocky surface and she had to go back a bit to get them loose and try again.

“How am I ever going to make it?” she thought, one weary moment. “I can barely move as it is. I can hardly inch forward, and it only seems it’s going to get yet tighter.”

Just then a voice called, “It’s time for the key of quick transportation.”

“Oh, that would be a great help!” Celtellina whispered, not wanting to speak much for fear it would use up the small amount of oxygen. Listening was what was preferred at this point in the interesting journey.

As soon as she breathed her desire for such a key to be activated, there in the air, floating in front of her was a key of an unusual size. She didn’t actually see how it would be a help to her, but desperate for help, and knowing how much the last key gift helped her, she reached out and grabbed it. She did this quickly before her mind would tell her things like “Now how do you expect to make any progress at all, having to hold this big bulky key? You can’t crawl with only one hand available!”

Those thoughts would have stopped her from reaching out to take it. But she took quick action and held it as if for dear life.

She didn't need to be able to crawl along after all, for the key pulsed power through her that made her hover, ever so slightly above the ground, and as she held to it, the key pulled and tugged her along. It was as if the key was attached to a pulley or rope or chain that was being pulled from the outside of the tunnel. On it pulled her and quickly she did go, with little or no effort for the remainder of the tunnel journey. Yet, it wasn't pain-free. There was scratching and roughness from the confining walls that nearly were her grave. But free she was to be, because she held to that key.

*Boom! Burst!* Out she popped, almost feeling like a new birth had taken place for her. She was out of the long and dark confining place she had to travel through, and out in to the light and open space she came.

A bit of blood was on her skin, and torn garments somewhat covered her. She splashed first into a pool of clear and warm water, somewhat like a coming out of the tunnel of a waterslide and landing in the waiting pool. However, it wasn't just water that held and embraced her, but hands, very large hands that caught her and lifted her up and out of the cleansing pool.

A cloth was wrapped around her and she was held like a baby, soft and comfortingly, by a being so large she was the size of a wee little baby.

"Sleep now, darling one, for a time, for rest is needed. When you are ready, you can wake up and see all that there is that surrounds you."

And with these words, and with the warm and comforting feeling of being in the arms of love itself, she did just that, rested, so, so comfortably.

When she opened her eyes it was only to get the shortest glimpse of the view, the radiant view of the scene around her, for that is when in reality, her eyes opened to see the sun shining on her face in her sun room.

It had been a special vision, and she sat up to write it in her "Secret book of lasting treasures".

She thought: "I can hardly wait to see that view again, but something tells me that the time I see it is when I shall be there, at last, living with the beings of light, of all sizes and brightnesses, in that blessed life beyond this hill, in the place called the Enchanted Dome."

\*\*\*

### **TREASURE CAVE AND SECRET PATHWAYS—Part 1**

One week Celtellina and Shane's youngest daughter, Joyvelle and her husband Hesternach, came to visit with "Grandma Celtellina". A couple years earlier they had their first son, and called him Gladdie, and he was the joy of his parents' and grandparents' hearts—just as the other grandchildren were too.

Celtellina sat rocking on her chair on the back porch. Her now grey hair was braided like a crown on her head, with wild flowers woven in. She looked up to see with heartwarming surprise, a glorious rainbow painted across the sky, big and bold, in radiant light. She'd never seen one so lovely. A squeal of laughter came through the open window of the house. Her youngest daughter and her grandson were playing a hide-and-seek game.

Celtellina smiled. Seemed the gift of laughter and joy was what the King of the Realm had granted to her grandson. He was a joy to have around, on any day. Soon the door opened to the porch, and Joyvelle spoke softly, "Mother, can I get you anything? We were having so much fun indoors I forgot to check and see how you are faring?"

Celtellina looked up at the gentle face; a face that rather resembled her own when she was young, so long ago.

"Thank you darling, but I'm fine. He's a joy, that boy, isn't he? That darling Gladdie."

Just then Gladdie, the boy mentioned burst out of the door and flew into his grandmother's arms. "I love you this much!" he said, giving her a tight squeeze, as much as his small young arms could give.

"And I love you this much!" Celtellina gave back a big warm hug and then stood to lift him up and into the air; after which he spread his fairy-like wings and fluttered down.

"Grandma look!" he then said, as soon as he landed, suddenly noticing the gorgeous rainbow.

“I bet one day you’ll be able to run up one side and slide down the other!” Celtellina said with a giggle.

Gladdie grinned and nodded.

“And will you be there to catch me when I land? Like you do on a slide?” he asked.

“That is if I get there first! Then I will for sure be there to catch you!” Celtellina replied, her eyes took on a faraway look, just for a moment. She was thinking of the Enchanted Dome. Some had said that the rainbow was the entrance to the Enchanted Dome, for those who were meant to live within it, when the time was right.

As if he’d read her thoughts, Gladdie asked, “Grandma, will you get to live in the Enchanted Dome soon?”

Celtellina sat back down and looked into the boy’s eyes. “What made you says that?”

“Oh, I just think you will be happy there; and then when I slide down the rainbow, you’ll be there to catch me.”

Gladdie said casually, and then bounded off to hide again.

Joyvelle gave her mother a pat on the shoulder, before she announced, “Here I come!” to find her fast hiding young lad.

That night as the diamond stars shone brightly on the velvety sky, Celtellina came to sit out again in the calm evening air.

Suddenly a golden flash was in the dark night sky, and then it shot across like a large shooting star, as if pointing the way to a treasure. She knew her time to go to the Enchanted Dome had come—the most beautiful place she knew ever existed.

Feeling a thrill and energy like she hadn’t felt in years, she rose to collect the items needed for her trek to the source of all treasures. Quietly, so as not to stir the sleeping family—her daughter, her son-in-law, and young Gladdie.

The golden light in the sky showed her the way to go. But as she took her first step off the porch, to head in the way the King was leading her, Joyvelle was up to say good-bye. Joyvelle had the gift of dreams and premonitions. Before most important events in her life occurred, she dreamed of them, or had a distinct feeling about what would happen.

Though Joyvelle had been sleeping soundly, snuggled in the arms of her husband, Hesternach, the dream she had, made her wake with a start. It was of her mother taking her first step into a new and beautiful world; a place of joy, colour, laughter, and peace. When Joyvelle suddenly woke, she knew now was the time. Her mother would enter that land very shortly, and so quickly arose and opened the backdoor.

“We’ll catch up with you later,” Joyvelle said, giving her mother a hug. They both knew what was meant.

There were no forever “good bye’s” just “until later’s”. Suddenly, Joyvelle found herself staring only at the dimly-lit garden, with starlight shining overhead, as her mother had vanished in an instant. Yet something caught her eye. On the ground where Celtellina had been standing only a moment before, was a small brown pouch. It seemed to glow and emit warmth. Opening it, she found a note, and as she read it, it was as if her heart felt the whisper of her mother saying the words penned on the paper.

“My dear ones, I must leave now for the Enchanted Dome. I will be there to catch you, Gladdie, when you come one day, and slide down the rainbow to join me. To pass the time, until I see you all again, I have prepared a special treasure hunt for you. It will help you find the secret pathway that leads to the Treasure Cave. When you find it too, you will be very, very glad. The treasures you will discover will be much like these ones I am passing onto you now in this pouch.

“Long ago I went on a special journey, a journey of joyful discovery. Your father and I have been there many times, and it’s never ceased to amaze us at all we discovered there. These are some of the jewels I was able to bring back. I have kept them safely, never losing them. But there are so many more to be discovered. Maybe you will find ones I never even saw! I’ve included a map that gives a clue where to find the next clue, and the next, until you reach the secret pathway. When you get to it, follow it without stopping. There might be other paths leading off from it, but these are placed there merely as a distraction from the sly one who wishes to stop you from reaching your destination. If you can keep on the right path, not turning off, you will be richly rewarded as you reach the Treasure Cave.

*“When I see you again, you will be able to tell me all about your journey. And though it won’t always seem easy, I hope you will be brave and stay true to what the King of the Realm whispers to you. He loves you and is preparing a special place for you also, in the Enchanted Dome.*

*“I must go now to my place there, where at last I will see those who I have missed being with—just as you might miss me now for a while also. But time will pass quickly as you keep busy in worthwhile activities, and keep your eyes open to see the unexpected surprises that will keep your life sparkling in Wonder Hill.*

*“I can hardly wait to speak with you again. By then you will have much to tell me! We’ll have a great big party when you come—better than any that ever happened in the underwater castle or anywhere else that we so enjoyed in Wonder Hill. Until then, with love always, Grandma—and mother, Celtellina.”*

Joyvelle held the note to her heart, and looked up. A warm breeze blew across her face and through her auburn curls. She took a deep breath. A flash in the sky seemed to be one last sign to say her mother had made it safely home, and was enjoying a welcome party.

Inside the pouch, along with the mentioned gems, was a well-worn book, read oft by her mother. There were notes in it, and slipped in between the pages was the map that the letter had talked of. Joyvelle sat on the rocking chair and lit a lantern so that she might read a bit and study over these special items her mother left her.

Hesternach, stirred from sleep and seeing a light was on, on the back porch. Putting on a coat and sensing something special had just happened, he went out with a blanket to join his wife. Hesternach wrapped his arm around Joyvelle as they sat in quietness. He waited until she was ready to speak.

“I guess she’s happier now than ever...” Joyvelle started out. Hesternach held her in both arms and placed a kiss on her head. “She sure is...” he replied.

Then noticing the pouch radiating light, asked, “What’s that?” He took it in his hands to examine the contents, and read over the letter.

“Well, sounds like we’ve got a fun day with our son, when light dawn breaks and he greets us with his smile. Let’s go treasure hunting!” Hesternach said resiliently.

Joyvelle nodded, wiped a tear and faced her husband with a brave smile. “I think I’m going to make some of mother’s famous love-cakes, as she called them, for our breakfast.”

Then she settled back down to read random selections of her mother’s favourite book, together with Hesternach.

\*\*\*

## **TREASURE CAVE AND SECRET PATHWAYS—Part 2**

When the morning rays shown through the windows, the smell of love-cakes wafted through the small house. Gladdie nearly jumped for joy and leapt into his father’s arms. “Yea! It’s a new day! I wonder what we’ll discover and do today!” he said with enthusiasm.

“There’s lots of fun in store for us, that’s for sure. Just look at this!” his father said, leading him over to peer into the pouch that grandma had left.

“Ooh, a treasure hunt, oh goodie!” he said with joy.

Knowing that his mother might be missing his grandmother, he went quickly over to give her a warm hug.

“We’ll all miss her a bit... or maybe quite a bit?” he prodded gently. “But let’s get busy having so much fun, so we’ll have loads of stories to tell grandma when we see her again!”

Joyvelle gave Gladdie a tight hug and added, “And we’ll start by having grandma’s favourite love-cakes. See, we can join in the celebrations too, just a bit. I know she’s getting all kinds of fun, and she wouldn’t want us to miss out on all of it, would she? Come, let’s wash up and get feasting!”

\*\*\*

The treasure hunt was such that it went on and on for quite some time, perhaps months, perhaps years. Time seemed to slip past so quickly. But at last Gladdie, along with his parents, made it safely and determinedly down the secret path. Gladdie earnestly made sure they were sticking to the right one. He didn't want to get side tracked. He wanted to get to the treasures Grandma had told him about, as soon as possible.

At last they made it! As the family sat in the cave, with treasures of every shape and colour, sparkling all around them, they just laughed! It was better than they thought it would be. Gladdie wanted to explore every nook and cranny, find every type of gem that was there. But it seemed the more he looked, the more he found. There never seemed to be an end of the treasures available in that cave.

"Now that we know our way here, we can keep coming back for more, anytime we want," Hesternach said with satisfaction. Gladdie was happy for that thought, and smiled while Joyvelle helped him to tuck as many gems and jewels in his pockets as they could fit.

After spending a long time there, they walked out to the waiting sunshine. Suddenly a thought struck them, as they saw the sign engraved on the edge of the cave, "Those who have found the treasure cave will be granted a special place in the Enchanted Dome. With love, the King."

"Why don't we make more copies of the map!" Gladdie was the first to put their thoughts into words.

"Yes!" Joyvelle added. Now that we know the way, we can help guide others to find it. There's more than enough treasures for all!"

"We could help them know what path is right, and what side paths would just lead them in circles or lead off to the cliff edge, or get them lost," Hesternach contributed.

"If we show them some of the jewels, then they'll know it's a wonderful place!" Gladdie exclaimed, eager to let his friends and others know the way. He knew that one day, just like Grandma Celtellina, he also would enter the Enchanted Dome. He wanted to be sure his friends would be there too, one day.

\*\*\*

### **A SECRET MISSION TO THE CAVE MINES**

Granny Leighlea (of the Quauf family) had done something similar, as Celtellina had, when it was her time to leave Wonder Hill and return to the Enchanted Dome. She had written of a secret mission that she had taken—or was taken on—and passed it on to her son and his family—all the Quauf family.

Her time to leave came before they moved to the Alpantine Village. It came as somewhat of a shock not to have his mother around anymore, but Mr. Quauf was brave, just as he had been when it was time for his father to go, some time before that.

There were joys and there were tears, but most of all there was a lot of wonder, and as they kept in mind that living in Wonder Hill was only part of the journey of their life, this helped them do their best, and not miss those whose journey in Wonder Hill ended first.

The letter telling the mysterious story was placed on the couch in the main sitting room. When the family awoke, rather than their Granny Leighlea still being in their home, a letter was sitting there waiting for them instead—for she usually sat in that very spot, early each morning

Granny Leighlea liked having plenty of "Wonder-Fill" time, and had many thoughts and experiences that could have filled many books worth. Yet, she seldom took time to write of her special journeys and the thoughts that came to her. She preferred to tell them to her family in person, if they were interested, and to use her hands to help do mending or cooking, or cuddling the little ones.

Yet, she took the time on her last night in Wonder Hill to write, as best as her elderly and well-worked hands could write, to tell her family a secret she had kept for a long time. The letter sparked plenty of discussion, and as we know from the turns this family took in their life, there's quite a chance that what it spoke of had a big affect on their decisions and goals.

The letter said:

“I was taking a walk, when I was somewhat younger, trying to get some exercise after recovering from a fall. It was hard getting my bones and body to work right again, and to be free of pain. But this walk took on a completely unexpected turn.

“I looked over to the side of the road, looking at the fruit trees in blossom. Then all of a sudden it was as if I was no longer on that road. I was deep inside the ground where mines are. It was a gold mine. However, I was not only transported to another place, but another time. It must have been in the future, as to my knowledge, we do not have a big gold mining operation going.

“I saw many young people down under the ground working hard. They did not look happy at all. That is until they found what they were mining for. But that smile only lasted a few moments, for whatever they found, whatever gold they found, was taken from them by whoever was making them to work. It was awful and I wanted to leave and to cry.

“For a moment it was as if I saw each of you down there in the foul-smelling place with little light and air, slaving away for this thing called gold. I shivered at the thought that you all would be forced into such a pitiful life style.

“I tell it to you now as nothing of the sort has yet been in existence here, at least not to that horrible degree. But should the love of gold become a pressing focus in Wonder Hill, that will be its downfall for sure. The downfall of joy and peace, and good health for all. Once that illness called gold-love has caught hold it is rather contagious and spreads like a plague, and it certainly brings much death. I warn you.

“Yet, I end my letter with one more thought. Before that experience ended, I saw a being more radiant than I ever have before. He said, *‘There is a mine, with far greater riches than any gold or gem mine. Implore those who you tell of his secret mission into the sorry future of Wonder Hill, to seek out the right mine. For it is in the unseen realm, and thus can never be exploited, but will enhance the lives of whoever finds treasures therein.’*

“When the being ended speaking to me, all of a sudden I found myself back on the road I was walking on, still looking over at the trees. I could hardly walk then, as I was so troubled. I had to sit down on a rock by the road side for some time until I felt well enough to walk back home. I wanted time to think it over, and watch how things were going in this place we live, and thus I never shared it yet.

“And so, my dear son and family, I leave you with this commission, will you seek out the hidden treasures that can’t be seen with the natural eyes? If you find the way there, you will be filled with great wonder, and life will be all the more beautiful and worthwhile.

--Granny Leighlea

\*\*\*

Perhaps that was one of the reasons her son and his family initially wished to make the move to the Alpantine Village. Besides helping out there, the caves and tunnels that were found there beckoned to be explored, for they led to places in both in the seeable and the unseeable realm.

Perhaps also they wished to keep an eye on things, to help ensure that, at least in their life time, gold mining did not become a focus. They wished for the people of the gorge to enjoy their peaceful life without being exploited, now that more cave tunnels leading into the gorge had been reopened, or discovered. (For in that gorge there was much wealth in deed.) As long as it was neither a focus nor a thing of envy—the treasures of the touchable type—were no threat to the peace and joy of a living area.