



*Cettellina*



## Imaginary Story

# *Cettellina*

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## **Main Characters:**

**Celtellina**

**Roden** (Celtellina's brother)

**Emilda** (Celtellina's friend)

**Quauf family** (childhood friends of Emilda)

**Shaulic** (Emilda's mom)

**Shane** (Roden's friend)

**Lully** (Lulluby, Celtellina's Aunt)

**Bernardo** (Lully's Fiancé)

**Father Baufin** (Bernardo's Grandfather)

**Joyvelle** (youngest daughter of Celtellina)

**Hesternach** (husband of Joyvelle)

**Gladdie** (son of Hesternach and Joyvelle)

# 1. Children of the wind

The wind was swirling and flowing around Celtellina , as she stood leaning against the tallest tree in the forest. It was her favorite place to hide. Her brother, Roden would find her soon enough.

After counting for what had seemed like an eternity, the hunt had begun. He couldn't just look till he saw her, for she was nearly invisible.

The gift she was born with was being able to blend in with and camouflage herself with her surroundings. Each of the Children of the Wind that had been born at this side of Wonder Hill, had something special about them.

Roden's gift was different. He could hear the wind speaking in different tones and "voices" or so it seemed. If he was real quiet there was much to be heard. He always knew when a storm was on its way, or where a lost colt had taken off to.

In this way also he had an edge on simple hide-and-seek games with his siblings, for the sound of the wind seemed to lead him to the right places.

Sometimes the howl and whistle of the wind left him with an unsettled feeling about what was to come. But things always had a way of working out in the end.

There was Emilda, and she had the gift or know-how to discern thoughts and ideas that were unspoken. She wasn't one you could easily pull surprises on. Before you finished thinking something through, she was on to it.

She had a tender and spontaneous way to surprise others, knowing just what would make them really happy, and would wait till the right moment to spring it on them.

Shane had the ability to change his appearance for a time, to become what was needed--or completely disappear at times, should it be for the best. He could become taller, smaller, older, younger, appear as a little child and so forth, to suit the needs.

He was always handy for stage performances, for he could fill many roles, or blend in with the audience, without them catching on. He was a great travel companion.

These are just a few of the gifts given to the Children of the Wind; each unique in their manner, and each given to help them fulfill some



aspect of their destiny. For they were born to work together to complete the assignment that was passed on to them from their parents, the original explorers and settlers. Their parents—many of whom were from a clan of fairies—came from The Enchanted Dome.

Celtellina looked up at the deep green shades in the majestic tree above. She fully enjoyed the way the sun shone through the small gaps in the foliage.

Her long red hair was blown back with the wind, and wrapped around the trunk. It now looked the color of the bark. Her sparkling emerald colored dress, that hung lightly and flowingly on her, also took on the shades and textured appearance of the tree it was pressed against, as she faced the wind. As soon as she moved away, she would regain her normal appearance.

“Aha! I’ve found you!” Roden surprised her with his speed, and the chase was on to make it back to Mountain’s Crest, the designated “base” for this game.

These were no ordinary children, for they had the ability to fly. As they ran, a set of fairy wings were seen as they took flight in their race, till their feet touched the ground again.

Though young, these “Children of Wind” or “Flow-ers” as they were called, as they could flow with the wind, had much to do to make the secrets of the Enchanted Dome, known to those on Wonder Hill.

Time off to play and frolic was a great “get-away” and provided ample recreation while living in the rather limited surroundings, compared to the options and opportunities available in the Dome, where they and their parents were originally from.

Shane had just put the finishing touches on a large plaque he was constructing, to commemorate the fairly recent birth of a new “Flowette”—a new little child, born to a family that was particularly gifted in art.

They had many children, and this little one—whose gift was yet to be discovered—was their newest addition. The green eyes and jester-like smile this baby held brought a spark of joy to any who were around.

The plaque read: “The Giving of a smile, though it costs nothing, heaps great rewards.”

There were speculations that his “gift” was along the lines of having the ability to transform any situation, even the most dismal and drear, to

one of laughter, praise, and cheer; that nothing would be able to dampen his spirit, as long as he radiated with the light of his radiant smile.

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As she looked over her diary, Emilda realized she hadn't done something about the needs of the Quauf family.

She knew they were planning to go to another part of Wonder Hill. She'd heard their thoughts a few weeks back, and took note of them one night as she wrote in her diary book of "secrets and thoughts".

Their children had been great friends of hers, and loved to go on hikes through the enchanted and sometimes mysterious woodland.

They would always bring their musical instruments, and play them in harmony when they reached a place of rest as they hiked. And the stories Emilda would tell them—long and detailed—captivated their attention.

This family would be missed. But what to do? Things never were always the same. People came and left—new arrivals from the Dome, and some departees back there as well. There would be new friends.

But knowing that the Quauf family would be moving on some day gave her a deeper appreciation to cherish her times with them even more, and enjoy their company to the full.

Shaulic, her mother, had a real knack for making people feel welcome and at home in their house. No one ever passed by without being invited to stay and enjoy a meal or a rest for a while, or even just to have someone to listen to their tales, with rapt interest.

A lot was found out about happenings in other parts, this way. She liked to know who was doing what, and in what ways she could be of assistance.

Often Shaulic and her daughter Emilda would make packages of goodies to send with visitors who would be traveling to farther places, thus spreading a bit of the warmth and love from their humble home to places they never went.

## 2. Celtellina's Secrets

Her jar of treasures was something Celtellina began when she was very young. In it were some jewels she'd found in the hillside. Some things in it her mother had given her.

There was one special item. It was a carved piece of wood, given to her by a friend. Well, he wasn't just a friend, but someone Celtellina had fallen in love with. But he no longer lived there. She missed her special friend, as well as her parents, whom the King had asked to help Him in the Enchanted Dome, until it would be her time to join them sometime later on.

As she picked up this wooden treasure it seemed to give off a warmth or aura. In this land of wonder that was inhabited by some of the children of the wind, special things could happen. Not only could a gift be given to another that reminded them of something the giver wanted to pass on, but the very air of love and kindness could be embedded into something, if it was given with a pure heart.

Whenever someone looked at what was given to them, or held it in their hands, the love that radiated out could be noticed.

Celtellina was glad that the King of the realm had enabled this to be the case, as she thrived on love itself. Love's energy and power is what enabled her to move about with effortless ease and cast aside, as an old garment, the feelings of mistrust or weariness. Love gave her wings, in a sense, to soar above everything.

When she felt the love of the King through the deeds and care of others, she felt twice as capable to channel it again to those who were in need of loving care and thoughtfulness.

Celtellina also had a secret friend, one that others could not see, for the gift given to her friend was that they were to remain totally and completely invisible in the realm that she was now living. She wasn't the only one who had such a friend, but her friend was focused on her care. This invisible friend knew all about her, and it was as if this friend had been assigned to her care.

She could at times nearly feel their presence, but most of the time the words they would speak to encourage her heart would be words that they two alone shared, in the dimension of her heart and mind.

Just thinking of her dear celestial invisible friend, gave her heart a renewed courage and stability. Even though those she held dear were not around just now, still she was never alone.

Celtellina put away her treasure box and locked it with the unique diamond tipped key, then she returned the key to the golden locket that she wore on her neck.

The fields and the wind, the sun and the heather were beckoning her to come outside and join them. Her dress that blended with the emerald-coloured grass blew in the wind, while she ran bare foot through the fields, soaking up the sun's rays that beamed down on her long red tresses.

When she arrived at her favourite spot, among the blooming heather, she lay down on a pillow of her bunched up scarf, and looked dreamily into the ever changing blue- and white-painted sky.

A lady bug found a resting place on her nose just for a second before taking flight again to land on the bowing grasses beside her.

A butterfly welcomed her presence while lighting on her bent knees, that may have appeared somewhat like a miniature green hill.

Celtellina was glad that only lovely little creatures graced her with their visit. It was a picture of what Wonder Hill was like—light-filled, beautiful, and allowed each one of the Children of the Wind to display their true and well-created personalities and gifts.

No one was compelled to be just like another, for each quality added a welcome and needed side to this growing and thriving community.

Each one was given space and allowance for their special times of quiet, and no one would think of disturbing those who seemed even at play. For that was a needed element of life. To retain the radiance that each one emitted, all needed their times to themselves, alone with nature, where they could also commune in heart and mind with the King Himself. —For the King of the realm knew where each one was, and in His mysterious and inaudible, invisible way could communicate with anyone who wished for it.

When someone was at work or at play, sharing with others, or sitting alone, each one would use their inner sense to detect what was most needed in order to help them best thrive. Harsh words or pressure would bring a creeping



blanket of darkness on the light-hearted and cheery souls that lived joyfully here. Each one realized the value of what each one must do to keep their joy—their inner light—glowing.

This was one such a time when Celtellina felt the call of the wind, the sun, and even the whisper of the King for her to come to her special spot. She knew she would not be disturbed. Breathing in the warmth and the refreshing, Celtellina then closed her eyes and knew that any questions on her heart would one day be answered completely to her satisfaction. And anyone that she missed the company of, she would eventually be one day rejoined with, and they would be all the better for the time apart—hearts growing fonder in love.

Celtellina rolled over and examined the soil and the ever so tiny flowers that were growing so close to the ground that they would not have been noticed had she not been lying very closely to them. Each one so small, yet so perfect in shape, and growing just as beautifully as the larger ones in a garden.

Then a new wonder occurred—for in Wonder Hill one never knew just when something pleasant yet completely out of the ordinary would happen. Just as Celtellina looked

admiringly at the tiny beauty, the small yet perfect creation, it seemed to grow bigger, or she was getting a rather magnified look at the little flower.

Well, that is what it first appeared to be. However, in actuality she, herself, was getting smaller, so very much smaller, and zooming in to land on the tiny face of the smallest flower she'd seen yet.

"I hope I don't encounter a ladybug now," Celtellina chuckled, realizing just what had happened, as she stood, steadying herself on the little swaying beauty. Then added, "Or maybe that would be fun, as I could catch a ride!"

Just as the thought struck her, that very miniature friend, the ladybug, who had been instructed by its creator to assist her, showed up. Celtellina then spread her wings and took flight a short distance, landing on the red and black spotted bug.

She was tiny enough that she could nestle towards the front of the friendly bug, allowing full movement of its wings. "Up and off we go!" Celtellina called, instructing her borrowed flying coach for the moment.

She had to hold on very tightly as the ladybug spread its wings and flew a ways away, with a speed that made her nearly feel dizzy—for a person as small as she was at this time. They landed on the thick and rugged bark of a tree, and could see several other—what seemed larger-than-life versions of the bug type creatures, crawling here and there on the tree.

“Thank you,” Celtellina said, as she patted her transporter friend, who then took to the air to land somewhere else on the tree.

Just then, Celtellina began to realize the tree was a special one to her as the tree seemed to greet her. As she was gaining her usual size once again, while flying up to sit on one of the large out-spreading branches she mentally responded “Hello to you,” to the welcoming air and sensed greeting of this wonder of nature, filled with majesty and splendor.

Celtellina now her usual form and size, however, true to form blending in with the colouring of the branch that she now sat on, looked in wonder at the display above. Each leaf so beautifully formed; each designed to absorb light, and utilize it for its growth and wellbeing.

Celtellina felt a prayer welling up in her soul. Without verbalizing a structured prayer in perfect words, her heart rang out to the King of all, that just as her dress resembled the green of so many beautiful things in nature, so did she, just like the leaves, wish to absorb, and draw into herself, the pure Celestial light.

She wanted to be as a magnet for light, if such a thing were possible. She knew this was the way to thrive, just like this lovely tree, so strong and big and filled with countless leaves, shining in the sun and waving in the breeze.

She then pondered all the things she'd seen during that brief time of being very, very tiny. All the unknown secrets missed by most of the people around—just how things looked so close up. “Our King, our Creator, made things oh so amazing, but many things we just are unaware of. We just can't see them from our perspective.”

A sense of wonder filled her realizing just how clever and intricate each part of nature is the more zoomed in you look at it. There is always more to see and learn and find out the more close an inspection you give to the things divinely made.

“Celtellina,” a wistful voice seemed to blow through the wind. Being sensitive to the feelings and needs of others, she could sense this call, more than she could actually hear it with her ears.

“It must be time to go. I’ve had such a lovely time,” she smiled, and jumped down from the branch, landing as light as a feather with a gentle bounce on the ground.

One last glance up to the lovely tree, then she was moving swiftly, yet gracefully towards where she felt the call had come from.

It remained no mystery, however, where the whisper came from, for she remembered the class she had arranged to teach the small children of the town—a class on the beauty and value of flowers.

She smiled, as she now had an even greater understanding of the well-designed beauty, from her close inspection. The children would love to hear about it. And off she skipped, stopping every now and then to pick an eager flower, to join her and the little children.

### 3. Emeralds in the Ocean

Celtellina woke with a start and then laughed.

“Look where I’ve fallen asleep!” she said, picking herself up from the rug in front of a large window that gave gazers a view of the vast and verdant landscape that seemed to reach on and on in all directions.

“Aunty Lully,” she called out, “Are you around?”

A spunky and beautiful lady bounded in with a smile. Lully was the youngest sister of Celtellina’s mother, and lived some distance away from where Celtellina and her brother Roden stayed. They didn’t see her that often, but for now, Celtellina was here for an extended visit, while her older brother was travelling.

“I see you have had a lovely rest! You look ready to continue this pleasant day,” Lully cooed, with her smooth melodic voice.

Lullaby, as was Lully’s full first name, had the gift of song. And sing she did. It seemed she wrote a new song each day—songs about nature, songs about friends, songs to sing a child

to sleep, songs to awaken the weary to engage in joyful frolicking.

Celtellina didn't intend to sleep, but rather to gaze out at the vast expanse that could be seen from the window in this comfortable country house. There was much she wanted to ponder over and contemplate.

Knowing her Aunt's musical ability she asked Lully to sing a few of her newly written songs. They were part of a set she was preparing for a children's sleep-time song collection. Sure enough they did just that, and before too long Celtellina was fast asleep on the rug.

Lully smiled, rather surprised herself, and had quietly slipped away to another room, leaving Celtellina to enjoy the peaceful moment of blissful slumber.

Using her harp, while waiting for her friend to rise, she sang several songs; then sang a song that told of a mysterious and delightful place, she hoped to one day see.

As I leave the bank of the old world behind  
I know not what I'll find  
But lo, as I gaze at the vast lying sea  
A new beckoning mystery

Tell ho, tell hi, sing to me from the sky  
Lead me where I am to go  
Unfold that which I am to know  
Then to go will I, and draw nigh,  
Beneath the sea mist  
Beyond the waves' crest  
A place made of emerald and gold  
With diamond sparkles to hold...

Celtellina had called then to her when she had awakened, and Lully went to see her friend.

“One day...” Lully whispered as she left her room. “One day I know I'll discover and explore that beckoning place,” though she knew not how or when it could become a dream come true.



One look into Celtellina's eyes told that she too had been dreaming of mysteries yet to be discovered and enjoyed.

A bark from Sandy, the gold-coloured dog, announced a visitor.

Quickly Lully went to greet the unexpected guest, while Celtellina peered out the small veiled side window. A tall and handsome gentleman, holding some freshly picked roses, was talking with Lully. Lully's fiancé, Bernardo, had come to invite her this afternoon on a picnic. It was a pleasant surprise.

It was to be more than a walk in the park, however, for he, being the son of a sailor (and flying horse trainer, as well), was to bring the invited to an island that he and his family alone knew of. It wasn't always easy to navigate to it, for the weather and fog often prevented any from venturing on the ocean in that part of the coastline.

However, today as Bernardo woke, he heard the whisper of the sea saying, "Come sail on me". And so he had prepared the family's small sailboat, and stocked it with picnic supplies. When all was ready he headed off to extend this offer to his beloved, to come on this pleasant surprise adventure.

Celtellina thought she remained unnoticed, but when Bernardo turned to meet her gaze, he motioned and said, “Why don’t you both come? I’m sure you’ll enjoy yourself.”

They wouldn’t be alone on the sailboat, for it would take a team to work together. Bernardo’s two older brothers, a sister-in-law, and a friend ever since childhood, were all aboard, waiting for him to return with Lully—if she was game to go.

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Lully went to talk it over with Celtellina, and they both smiled excitedly, agreeing. It almost seemed they had been prepared for this very thing—with the song, and with the yet untold dream that Celtellina had while slumbering on the soft rug, moments before. They knew in their hearts it was right, though adventurous indeed.

Into the carriage they went with Bernardo bringing only some bottles of drinking water and an extra wrap to keep themselves warm in the sea breeze.

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The air was brisk, but the sky was clear and the view across the ocean could clearly be seen for miles in all directions. Lully and Celtellina

stood up and took in deeply of the air and the view. Lully looked over at Bernardo with a smile, who was waiting for just that—a look of her approval, to know that she was indeed glad she had ventured on this surprise outing.

Bernardo drew her into an embrace and said, “Welcome aboard, mate”. It was a fond thought indeed, to imagine the day when they would truly be mates and wed. Lully blushed somewhat and nestled her head on his chest, while the waves bounced the vessel rhythmically up and down.

Celtellina had found herself a friend who seemed to enjoy her company—and mostly the food morsels she was throwing its way. A seagull had landed near to her and called out.

“Been fishing, I’m sure,” she said to the friendly bird, who was glad to have yet more to eat, or at least an easy meal.

Just then her attention—and the attention of all—were drawn to an island beginning to be seen on the horizon. It was rare that the day was so clear and it could be seen easily. It didn’t look very big at first, but as they briskly sailed near it, they saw its size and beauty.

“Is this where you are planning to have our picnic?” Lully asked Bernardo.

Bernardo smiled and nodded, while going to fetch a good pair of binoculars. After looking through them, he handed them to Lully to get a look, while motioning to Celtellina to come over and take a look too. Lully was amazed at how luscious it appeared. It was indeed a beautiful place.

“Do you have a name for this island that your family has discovered?” Lully asked.

Bernardo, placed his arm around his fiancé. He took a deep breath, gazing at the island as they neared it, and said, “I like to call it ‘Ocean Emerald’. It’s so beautiful and green; and look at the sparkles on the water as the sunlight dances on it. It’s a gold and diamond pathway to the Emerald Palace.”

Celtellina and Lully both drew back a breath and looked at each other. They each had something to say, and started at the same time.

“I was just singing a song...” blurted out Lully.

“I had this dream today...” began Celtellina.

“Sounds like we’ll have something interesting to discuss over our lunch on the island,” interjected Bernardo. “I must now help with the vessel, as we anchor it in a safe place and begin disembarking, taking smaller boats to the shore. We’ll talk as we sit under the verdant canopy of natural beauty.”

Lully and Celtellina went to gather their few belongings. Within minutes they would be walking on, touching, seeing, exploring, something their hearts had heard existed, and were eager to know.

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Once everyone had safely arrived on “Ocean Emerald Island” the ladies began to spread out the picnic on a blanket for all to enjoy. It was a luscious feast. Bernardo’s mother was a good cook and knew what hungry men who had been sailing wished to enjoy; yet being a lady she also knew what to include so as to whet the appetite and bring enjoyment to the ladies joining in.

“So, tell me, my dear,” started Lully. “It is most curious. What did you dream of, while I was in the other room singing of something so similar?”

Taking the cue and knowing the time to share was right, Celtellina began to describe.

“I was—in my dream that is—on a vessel much like the one we sailed on today. Then I saw in the ocean an enormous and gorgeous emerald, as if it were an iceberg sticking out of the water. It was green and radiant. But rather than it being dangerous to sail toward it—such as an iceberg might be—there was an atmosphere of peace and joy.

“When we neared to it—that is in my dream—I could reach right out and touch it. And as I did I felt something ripple through me, a kind of energy—a very pleasant feeling.

“At that moment all weariness or sorrow seemed to dissipate. I felt renewed and invigorated. Oddly, I do feel somewhat similar while here now, in this living “emerald” of gorgeous natural beauty.”

Celtellina ended what she wished to say.

“It’s funny, but I’ve often found myself feeling something similar when my family has come here as well,” Bernardo expressed.

Celtellina and Bernardo then looked at Lully, giving her a chance to speak.

“I was singing a song, while Celtellina was resting. It was a song my grandmother sang when I was young. I always wondered what it meant. Perhaps it was a song written by others who had also discovered this amazing, wonderful place. Who knows? It was kind of mysterious, yet beckoning me, awaking within me a desire to go to it. Perhaps now I am here.”

“Very curious,” Bernardo said, and Celtellina asked Lully, “Will you please sing it for us?” And so she did.

This time Celtellina does not fall asleep, but feels enraptured in the splendor of this unspoiled and tranquil place. As she leans back on her arms and looks up through the tree branches, her hand feels something.

Looking down, expecting a beach pebble or shell, she is amazed to find what it is. Picking it up and radiating a smile, she shows her find to Bernardo.

“Why! That is the prettiest emerald I’ve ever seen! Go ahead and take it home. Let it remind you of the joy you can have, when you leave the shores of the old, and rest in the secret places the King Himself prepares for us.”

As they sailed away to return home in the dusk of the evening, Lully sang for all aboard some special songs her heart seemed to compose just then. It had been a very special day.



## 4. Tales and Treats

“Roden!” Celtellina said with joy, “How nice to see you here! How was your trip with Emilda and her mother?”

Roden, Celtellina’s brother, was always one ready for adventure. If there was a journey to be had, he was eager to find some way to make himself useful, and quickly would become a rather indispensable member of the team.

He wasn’t picky about what work or assistance he would offer to give. Whatever was needed, he would do it as best as he could, gaining skill quickly, and working patiently. It was clear that he wasn’t just hanging around for the fun and the adventure of travel. He made any team welcome his presence with his trustworthy character.

In this way he was able to learn much about the country, and its people all around. When people wanted to find out what distant places might be like, they often came to Roden.

He seemed full of news and knowledge from his journeys, whenever he found a team who wished for him to come along.

Emilda, and Saulic her mother, decided to take some supplies that were not currently being used in their town, to a place a few weeks' journey away.

News had come through the wind to them that the Quauf family, who had moved away some time ago, was now in need. Leaving as soon as they could, and faster than expected due to Roden's assistance on the trip, help and supplies were given as quickly as was possible to those in need.

With Bernardo's assistance, Aunty Lully had seen that Celtellina was home again in time for her brother's arrival. Roden gave his sister a big brotherly hug and sat with her to find out all that had gone on in his absence.

"How's Aunty Lully doing? Did you have a nice time staying with her?" Roden started out asking.

After Celtellina told him in her excited and animated way about the trip to "Ocean Emerald Island", he commented, "Sounds like you've been doing some exploring too, while I was gone! I wish I'd been there!"

Special things had happened for the both of them—though Celtellina's trip to the secret Island

had almost sounded like a dream. But she had something to prove it indeed had happened.

“Wait here!” Celtellina said, with a twinkle in her eye. “I’ve got something to show you!” and off she nearly flew to get it.

Within a moment she was placing her diamond-tipped key into the lock of her treasure box, and opening it. There, nestled with the other treasures, was the emerald that Bernardo—her soon-to-be uncle, had given her.

Returning slowly now to her waiting brother, she carried in her hand this beautiful gem and along with it the lovely memories of her time to that special island.

“Look!” she said, and opened her hand.

“Wow!” Roden said, and picked it up to get a closer look. “So you really did go there! This is lovely! Maybe one day we’ll all go there together... since Bernardo is nearly a relative of ours.”

Then it was Roden’s turn to tell of his trip, and some of the things he’d seen and learned and done.

“Tell me what it was like... where exactly did you go?” Celtellina prodded her brother.

She could tell by the twinkle in his eye that there were some good tales about to be told—and perhaps even a treat or two that he was able to bring back.

After hesitating for a moment, to let his sister enjoy the suspense, he then began to give a detailed and elaborate account of all that occurred on his latest country adventure and exploration.

“The trees in that part of the realm aren’t like any of the trees here. They are enormous! And their branches spread so far out, the roads seem to be under an umbrella wherever you walk. Rain is no trouble when you walk under them—and is in fact the reason for the size of the vegetation.”

Celtellina sat, giving full attention, as the natural beauty was described. Finally, she paused and realized she had yet to offer him some refreshments. Going momentarily to the kitchen, she returned with something for them to eat and drink, while they continued chatting.

“Do fruits grow on those trees?” Celtellina asked, guiding the conversation back to finish the topic they were on.

“I didn’t notice any, but perhaps it just wasn’t the right season of year for it. But there was something much more interesting in the branches,” Roden replied, with a bit of a chuckle.

Her mind was quickly imagining some type of large bird, or bushy squirrels. She didn’t guess what he was about to say.

“Many people make the trees their living quarters! It was not uncommon to find tree-houses high up in the branches. Perhaps it keeps them dry up there, from the frequent puddles or flowing of water from the rainfall. They are clever in their tree-house building skills,” Roden expressed.

Celtellina could only imagine it. And while she was doing so, she remembered her time up in the tree, while her brother was gone. It was odd that sometimes, though they were apart, they ended up being in similar circumstances.

Perhaps her brother had gone visiting or helping out in someone’s high-up living quarters, at the same time she had fluttered up and sat on the large tree branch while out in the meadow.

She smiled, and then related her interesting experience of also becoming very, very small,

in order to fully appreciate the intricate and lovely design of a single, tiny flower in the grass.

Back and forth the brother and sister went, each telling of events that the other's account had reminded them of. Quickly an hour or more had passed, while stories had been shared.

"How is Emilda?" Celtellina inquired. "I did miss her. She is so kind and intuitive; always knowing the right thing to say, it seems."

"Let's take a walk and continue our talking in the garden; we've been sitting here for a while," Roden suggested, mostly because he wanted a moment to think just how he was going to communicate the next thing he felt nudged to say.

A bird fluttered up from the birdbath as they opened the back door. "No need to fly away!" Celtellina cooed to the timid winged creature, and held out her finger. The bird flew back and landed on her extended finger, as if it was a branch on a tree. It sang a lovely short song, and then off it alighted to join its friends in the cherry tree.

As brother and sister walked for a bit, they wended their way past the lovely flower beds, around the fountain, between the hedges, under

the spreading fruit trees, over the small bridge going across the stream, and walked up the gentle hill behind the house. Roden was quiet, yet a hint of a smile was on his lips.

“Tell me what you are thinking?” Celtellina invited. She knew he had something to tell.

“I don’t know if this is good news to you or not...” Roden hesitated, but it was clear he was nearly bursting to express something that seemed joyfully good to him, and so longed for his sister to share in his joy—and for it to be a thing of delight for her as well. But he was unsure of her reaction.

“You know how I love to travel... and I was going on this trip for that reason, and that reason only. But then...” he took another breath.

“Yes?” Celtellina tugged his arm and fairly begged with her eyes for him to say all that was on his heart.

“You know how I have been wishing to find the right lady for me...”

“Let me guess... You’ve fallen in love with someone... you met the right one... and you are to move to this distant place... and I am to go or stay here...?” Celtellina tried to suggest all at

once what Roden might be wishing to say.

“Ha!” he laughed. “Let me answer one thing at a time; or rather continue on with what I wanted to say.”

She nodded for him to continue, as they stopped to sit under a fruit tree. Celtellina plucked a ripe piece of fruit and began to eat. This kept her mouth quiet and gave her patience to hear, in this slow way, whatever her brother wanted to say.

“I’ve fallen in love, yes. But please realize that this does not take away any of the love and duty I feel to you, my dear and only sister. However, to make our family complete, I think this will benefit you, too.

“If I were to get married, you would have someone to stay with you when I travel—and she would have someone to be with her and the children too, when I must be apart or working.

“I’ve put lots of thought into it, as my first priority is to see that you, my sister, receive the best care.

“I have noticed also that you are very skilled with teaching and caring for young children. I think it would bring more joy and less loneliness to you, if children were to be part of our life



here, do you not think so?" Roden said, in nearly one breath, with one line quickly following the other.

When put this way, Celtellina could imagine it a very good thing. She would be included in activities and outings, meals, and trips to the lakeshore, and so forth. She was not to be alone, as at first she might have feared, but life would be filled with more goodness than before. She smiled, and Roden let out a sigh of relief. Of course who it was, had not yet been hinted at.

Suddenly, Celtellina said, with a confidence, "It's Emilda, isn't it?"

Roden turned away and blushed, trying to stifle a grin.

It was amazing to him too. Emilda was a girl they had virtually grown up together with, and knew each other well. All the children at this side of Wonder Hill often played together. Now they were getting older, and beginning their young adult years.

Roden had often wondered who he would find fit to get married to—for it would have to be someone whom his sister likewise would enjoy the company of.

However, on this trip he began to see the deeper, mature side of Emilda. She was now a young lady. Roden noticed her caring heart, and willingness to go to whatever distance was needed to help others. He saw she was very loyal to the King of the realm, and would do all that she could to make this part of the land be pleasing to Him.

Day-by-day, as the weeks went by, the love in Roden's heart grew for Emilda, and he knew she was the right one for him. Besides the fact that his sister enjoyed her caring friendship as well.

Emilda's mother had been secretly wondering for some time now, years in fact, if Roden would turn out to be a dependable young man, one she could trust to care for her daughter, and herself too, in her aging years later on.

This trip proved to be just the answer to her question. Roden was every bit the perfect gentleman, caring about the comforts and needs of the ladies while disregarding his own.

Though she said nothing to either Emilda or Roden, Mother Shaulic said a prayer that if it would bring good into both of their lives, and in

the lives of those they lived around, that they would unite as a team.

Roden blurted out: “I have not told her a thing, however, sister, as I wanted to first of all get your permission.”

It was Celtellina’s turn to blush. “MY permission! Dear brother you are free to choose whomever you wish to marry. My thoughts matter not. It is with her that you will share your life and your all.”

“Not all, but yes, a good part indeed. For I will always take care of you, as I promised our parents I would do, as they left this land... until such a one may be found that is suitable for you to join with in marriage, when the time is right and you are of age,” Roden expressed, and stated once again, “Yes, I wanted to ask for your permission or at least be assured of your agreement.”

Turning away for a moment of silence—and painfully so for Roden whose heart waited to hear what would either cause it to soar with joy, or sink down with shattered hopes.

“I give you my permission,” Celtellina said, in a very important way. “I will accept Emilda as my sister-in-law; as long as...”

A smile broke out, and a deep gratitude flashed in Roden's eyes as he looked into Celtellina's; then it turned to a look of question... "As long as what?" he asked.

Suddenly she burst into tears, the brave face melting, Celtellina added, "as long as you don't ignore me. You are all I have of our family," Celtellina sobbed.

Roden rolled her into his embrace, and wiping the tears away, said, "No one, even the best wife I could find, could ever take the place of who you are to me. There's no one I love in just the way I love you. Even if I start building a life with someone, only you and I have shared our childhood memories together. You will always be my special Celtellina!"

That was enough. Her heart was secure, and she was ready to allow another person to be part of their somewhat lonely life—perhaps about as lonely as Emilda had also been. If they were all together, perhaps they could fill in some of the missing pieces in each other's lives.

As the two walked back to the house Celtellina asked, "So when will you tell her of your love and invitation to live a life with you?"

Before Roden could answer, they looked up to see a visitor had just arrived—and it was none other than Emilda herself. When unpacking from their trip she had found a small bag that belonged to Roden, and had come to return it. But, since having the gift that Emilda had—that of knowing the thoughts of others, one look into her eyes, Roden knew there was little left to say.

She politely said nothing with her lips, but the look she gave to each of them, showed a love and deep gratitude for their love, and a willingness to be a friend and share a life with them—share the work and the joys.

In a moment she was gone, but both Celtellina and her brother were left with the tingling excitement that a new life and change for the better was in the nearby future.

The bag that had just been returned was a special one indeed, and it would have been missed at that very moment.

“Are you ready for your gift?” Roden said, as he held the bag containing something he had collected on his trip to bring all the way back for his sister.

She wasn’t expecting this, but was eager to see.

“Seeds!” Roden said, as he opened it to show Celtellina. “All kinds of new seeds—flowers, new foods, and even a few I won’t tell you what they are, as that’s a surprise for you to find out when you plant them!”

Celtellina was thrilled, and grabbed the small bag with one hand, and gave her brother a hug of gratitude with the other. She knew what she was going to be doing first thing tomorrow—gardening!

“I wonder what those mysterious seeds do...” she pondered as she went to put the bag away.

Just then, a thought came to her:

*Planting good ideas in people’s minds, and love in people’s hearts, is the best kind of gardening one can do—and anyone can do it, no matter where they are.*

## 5. Sky's Blue Eyes

The magnificent underwater castle, with sea flora gardens was decorated with special flare today. The day of the underwater parade had come. Every child who knew how to swim had been invited to assist “Mother Shaulic” as they called her, in setting up the place.

A deep and crystal-clear lake had been the chosen location for artistic and useful construction. The castle had been in preparation for a few years now. Today the young adept swimmers, clothed in shiny swimwear, were allowed into the secret zone, to put on the finishing touches to the underwater castle decorations.

Ribbons and coral were attached here and there; bells and lights were positioned in all the planned locations. Children laughed as they splashed and played, and joyfully helped to set things up.

This castle had a special entrance way. Visitors would be invited to swim through the clear waters and through the sea garden, along with colorful and beautiful fish. Then, when they arrived at the castle, there was an opening,

a special type of door they could go through. This would lead them to an air-filled, dry interior of the castle. One could walk or float through it. Water was only on the outside; inside it was set like a royal elaborate palace.

It seemed there were countless rooms to the children who had fun exploring each corner of this castle with Mother Shaulic. Some rooms had gorgeous furniture for sitting on, or for displaying amazing artistic designs, or furniture for sleeping on.

Some of the beds with elaborately carved woodwork and shiny bed covers, were so big that several children could fit on it all at once. There were even hammocks hung up high near the ceiling in some rooms, for playful children to fly up with fairy wings and rest in.

The view out the windows, rather than showing grass, mountains, gardens, trees or meadows, showed instead a view of tropical fish, sea plants and creatures, and perhaps a diver or two swimming past might say hello. The light from the sky would shine down into the water and make dazzling displays of light.

About mid-day, the children changed from their water garments into their welcoming parade costumes.



Flowing dresses and wreathes of flowers were on the girls; vests and shirts with matching pants and boots, and tasseled felt hats were donned by the boys.

The boys and girls were to lead the way for everyone to follow. The girls would hold baskets of rose petals and sprinkle them in the air, singing and dancing as they went. The boys would play on musical instruments—drums, flutes, trumpets, and such, as they walked to lead the way.

The large bell in the town was rung, and all knew that the parade and celebration was beginning. People of all ages were seen to trail out of the houses, or come in from the fields, or leave their workshop to come and join in the merriment.

Before too long all had reached the water's edge, and sounds of joy were heard, as they got to see for the first time, the full view of the underwater castle, and the beautiful water garden.

A welcoming speech was made, and all who wished to enter the castle were invited to dive in and swim. The children (who had, indeed, another dry set of shiny swimming clothes under

their costumes) were quickly changed and ready to lead the way. Mother Shaulic had helped to prepare a closet full of new, fancy, dry clothes for them to put on when they re-entered the castle, if they wished.

Splash! Splash! Splash! Children and town's folks were diving in and the parade continued—this time under the water. Music was played in a way that those underwater could hear it. With graceful swimming, and in awe, the visitors made their way to the entrance of the underwater castle.

The castle was far bigger than it looked to those peering into the water from the banks. The water was very deep, in actuality, but being that it was so very clear it was hard to tell the depth. The rocks on the bottom could be easily seen by those looking in.

Down under the water all those who chose to enter, swam, as their clothes waved in the refreshing water. The children led the way. In Wonder Hill swimming and water travel was blithely easy.

People could move with ease, and without the need for air for a long while. The parade through the sea gardens on the way to the castle

must have lasted at least fifteen minutes, but it was time that went by quickly. One-by-one each participant entered through the castle door, and were soon on their feet again, breathing and talking, and walking up the steps. The steps led to the main large hall in the center of the castle.

The air in the castle was such that everyone's clothing dried very quickly, and no one felt the least bit cold.

The ambiance of the main room embraced each one with a warm welcome. Chandeliers were hanging and shedding cheery and warm light. An orchestra was playing heavenly melodies as the visitors entered.

There were snacks and food displays on tables lining the grand room. People were invited to mill about, nibble and chat with each other—ensuring that all felt included in this friendly time of celebration.

Tours through the vast castle were led by the children who had quickly learned their way around, while setting things up earlier in the day. And all who wished to stay overnight, were welcome. There were enough rooms and sleep accommodations for any and all who chose to linger on in this lovely place of splendor.

There were special underwater vehicles that could help mothers and fathers transport the smaller children and babies who didn't know yet how to swim. The very young ones could be transported in such a way that they didn't even get wet.

Everything one would need if choosing to stay for the night would be well supplied. Mother Shaulic who helped to set things up had a caring and practical mind, and could foresee what a family, children, mothers, fathers, or adults of all ages might have need of. Bit by bit over the past few months she had overseen that the last elements of the interior set up were completed.

Some folks had to leave and could not stay the night, due to the animals on their property that were in their care, or other needs that compelled them to do so.

The majority of the visitors, however, welcomed this surprise and chose to stay for as long as possible. For those that needed to leave over night, they were invited, if they desired, to return in the morning for the grand breakfast buffet that would be served.

That night Emilda and Celtellina settled into a cozy room together. They sat by a glowing fire and had much to talk about.

Meanwhile, Roden and Shane shared a neighbouring room. Shane, though relatively new to this side of Wonder Hill, had been there long enough to become fast friends with Roden.

They both shared the same joy of travel and adventure. After all, that is what brought Shane to this part of the land. He wanted to explore the area, and ended up never wishing to leave—at least not permanently.

The air in Wonder Hill was clean, and the people friendly. There was nothing that compelled him to go on. Though his family lived many miles away, he was grown up enough now and wished for change and discovery.

Father Baufin, a wise old man who had lived, it seemed, at least a century, had allowed Shane to stay with him on his large estate.

Father Baufin was Bernardo's Grandfather, and had turned over the running of the flying horse training camp to his son and in time his grandson would also take charge of it. He liked now living closer to where most people had settled, in Wonder Hill.

Shane, who now stayed with him, made himself a welcome guest by offering to help the aged man with work that needed to be done on his property.

Roden and Shane sometimes would plan theater shows for the town, during times of special celebration. It would keep the children entertained, while giving the parents and older folks time to sit and chat.

Since Shane had the gift of being able to appear in any form of a man or boy, for a short time, he could play many roles in the shows—much to the children’s delight.

Tonight as these two young men sat in the living room of their large, two-room suite, they were planning a show to be performed next month. They chose to call it, “The Sky’s Blue Eyes”. Some ideas they discussed were jotted down, for detailed planning later on.

It was a show about nature—and how all colours blended together and complimented each other to make a beautiful world for us to enjoy.

If everything were all and only yellow, or pink, green or purple, brown or maroon, the splendor of nature’s hues could not be seen.

Much in the same way, the variety in the colour of people's eyes, and the shade of skin and choices of clothing, add variety and an artistic touch to the world.

If the sky were always and only blue, what beauty would that hold? The changes in colours of the clouds, made it a breathtaking canvas of heavenly art to be seen; and the dark night sky allowed Earth's inhabitants to see the sparkling stars.

Roden thought of the variety in appearance sported by him and his closest friends and relatives. He had dark brown, charming and warm eyes, with shoulder-length straight brown hair. His sister, Celtellina, had long wavy red hair, and green eyes. His friend Shane had curly blond hair, with pale blue eyes.

Then there was Emilda, who had copper-colored skin, frizzy black hair, and dark colored eyes that seemed to match. Then he smiled, though, as Shane could for a time be anything really, when the occasion was right—anything from a hairless baby, to a graying old man. He was fun to have around when doing plays on stage. They paused their discussion about the coming performance.

Roden knocked on the semi-open door to the room his sister shared with his, now, fiancé, and was invited in. He saw Emilda using the golden brush that had been set on the dresser, to gently brush Celtellina's long locks. The fire in the hearth flickered and shed golden light, making his sweetheart standing there look more lovely than ever.

"I just wanted to see if you both have all that you need. You know there is a bowl of fruit and a jug of water in the hallway ..." Roden said softly, eyes twinkling. He was glad for a lovely family, and friends.

The ladies thanked him and confirmed they were fine. As they each got into their huge and soft beds, they enjoyed the view outside the picture window that was lit with underwater lamps. It looked so relaxing. Into dreamland they soon drifted—and so did all the other visitors in this amazing underwater castle.

Perhaps the night was the shortest for Mother Shaulic, as she had chosen to be the one to prepare and spread the feast for breakfast. Although it wasn't to be served too early in the morning, giving time for those who wanted to join them in the morning from the town to get there in time, still there was much to be done.



Emilda and Celtelina promised to help her as soon as they could.

“Not before you have some time of quiet, communing with the King of the Realm...” insisted Mother Shaulic, with a wink. She knew the young ladies would rather have a special time of peace in this lovely setting, than feeling the need to start work too soon the next morning.

And so, the following morning they did just that. After their time of tranquility and listening to the whispers the King was able to transmit to their hearts and minds, there still remained plenty of time to calmly get all the delicious foods prepared and set out on the table.

Perhaps that is the reason why it all worked out well, for they took a time of peaceful meditation and communication with the King first thing, before work began. Everything seemed to fall into place then.

By late morning all the guests from the rooms of the castle, as well as those who returned from the town, met once again in the grand hall, to eat and enjoy the company of each other.

Before they began eating, an aged and wise man they all knew well and loved, with a smile

on his lips and a twinkle in his eyes stood up. “It’s Father Baufin...he’s come... listen he wants to say something,” whispers were heard around, and soon a hush came on all.

“I propose a toast to all that are present here,” Father Baufin held up his glass of water, and all others followed suit, with whatever manner of glass, or mug, or cup they were holding.

“Let us toast to love—love in all its beautiful forms!”

“Cheers to love!” everyone called out enthusiastically.

Father Baufin continued, “And to each of the rose buds beginning to open, and each of the new gardens of love beginning to flourish,” he said, as he seemed to look over at Roden who was standing near to Emilda, then moved his gaze to a few other engaged couples around—such as Lully and Bernardo, his adult grandson, who had come to town for this event, “I wish you the best in every way!”

Father Baufin continued, as he seemed to scan the faces of each one there and rest his gaze, looking kindly into Celtellina’s eyes, “And for those of you who still merely hold the seeds

of love to be yet sown, and grown in the future, and are waiting for the right season and situation, keep heart. The sun will shine into your lives, and before too long the roses of love will bloom for you, too.”

Celtellina felt a warm tear trickle down her face. These words were just the encouragement she needed. She quickly turned away to face the table of food that was behind her. While wiping her cheek with her one hand she grabbed a nibble with the other.

She thought she'd gone unnoticed, but Father Baufin gave her a wink when she turned back again. A ray of hope shone in her heart. He was wise; he knew things would work out well, as each one chose the ways of love.

## **6. Daisies, Daffodils, and Dew Drops**

Melon, Susana, Edwina, and Torque, had come to spend the afternoon at the Doflynn's Lodge. This was now the residence of Roden Doflynn, his wife Emilda Doflynn, their little baby Bundle, and Sister Celtellina as she was most often called.

In Wonder Hill, when a couple was to be married, all able hands in the community worked together to either build a home on available land for the new family to dwell; or they were invited to stay in either of their parent's homes. It was decided on amiably and according to what was most practical and desirable for the young couple.

When a young man was married, it was then that he took on a family name, a name he wished to be called by. He often discussed it with his wife-to-be until they agreed upon something they each found pleasing.

When the wedding occurred, which indeed was a rather sober occasion with solemn promises given and many prayers offered for the couple, it was at this time that the man, or Roden in this case, announced his family name.

Or if they wanted more time to discuss or decide, it would be announce later on, with the celebration that was held a week or two after the wedding ceremony.

When Roden and Emilda were married, the name “Doflynn” was chosen, as it was the name of a ship that had taken many of his great ancestors to this land. These pioneers had been peaceful and hard working folks, and much of the town’s good traits were owed to the good sample laid down by them.

The house they now lived in had been built just as Roden had imagined it should. It had only taken three months to complete. Their former house and home, though now the property of Celtellina, was made available by her for travelers to stay at, when passing through this side of Wonder Hill.

She called this former home, “Traveler’s Peace”. She did well setting it up, and seeing to it that all who needed a place to stay for the night, were welcome and comfortable.

Sometimes it was used for friendly gatherings or celebrations. For any good purpose that Celtellina desired, it was to be used by her, as the sole owner and remaining

unmarried family member. She chose to reside, however, together with her brother and his family in their new house.

Little baby Bundle's grandmother, Mother Shaulic, was welcome anytime at Doflynn's Lodge. Though she would often spend her days ministering to any and all who needed her caring hands in the surrounding land.

If a baby was to be born, she often accepted the offer to stay with the family, sometimes for a couple months, to lend a helping hand. This enabled the mother of the new little one to be free to give all the cuddles and love that were important for a wee little one.

If there were crops to be harvested, and the men were all out working, Mother Shaulic might be seen taking food and drinks to them, to save them time, and the work was done faster with more joy.

Sometimes she offered her help to Celtellina at "Traveler's Peace" when a particularly large group of travelers were passing through and needed accommodation. Together they would make up the beds, cook a nice meal, and then do the washing and cleaning.

Two years had passed since they had moved into Doflynn's Lodge, and no time was lost in setting up the garden. Celtellina had used some of her special seeds given to her by Roden, to make the grounds the most attractive that it could be. A vegetable garden was also flourishing, along with a water garden and pond where fish swam. A gentle waterfall kept it fresh.

There were other things done each day. The mornings were spent in housework, cooking, and helping with little baby Bundle, the newest addition to their beginning, yet growing family.

In the afternoons, Celtellina would have various children of the surrounding area, come and visit to help her in the garden and to sit under the shade of a tree to read a story. Through this she was learning to relate to many types of personalities, learning to communicate in patient ways, and learning how to teach.

The children all looked forward to their time at Doflynn's Lodge. Whenever they would see Roden, they would run up to him—often having to run, as he would let them have to chase him first. Then when they would catch up he would swing them in the air, letting them fly and flutter down to the ground using their childish wings, while he gave the next child a lift.

They were usually laughing and joyous whenever Roden came around.

Then there were the times they were allowed to sit very still and quietly, while Mama Emilda brought little baby Bundle to visit. If they were calm and gentle they could each take a turn to hold him in their arms.

Mama Emilda would remind them how special each one of them were as well. Each of them used to be small, just like he was now, and had also been held so lovingly in the arms of their mother and family and friends.

Today as Melon, Susana, Edwina, and Torque visited Doflynn's Lodge, they too got to give a cuddle to little baby Bundle.

"All the love that has been given to you," Mama Emilda said, "Is bundled up like a gift in your heart. And one day, when it's your turn to care for some new little one, that love is going to burst out and you too will pour love on your new little ones. And it's very important, you know, because they too need to have lots of love bundled up in their heart, for them to use when they are grown and have a family to raise also.

"Love gets passed down from one generation to the other, starting when new wee little ones



are first born. Of course we give love all through our life, to many others—but it's especially important when a person is just new to Wonder Hill. They need extra caring—just like each of you got, and are still getting!”

When Mama Emilda left, Celtellina announced: “Today we'll get to plant the bulbs for a new flower bed of daffodils! Who would like to help?”

All the children chimed in and went bounding off to help do some planting. While on their way, Edwina saw a patch of wild daisies growing and picked a few. She placed one in each of the girls' hair.

Susan's hair was braided over the top of her head, like a headband, and Edwina placed the yellow faced cheery daisy in it. Melon, the youngest, had her hair hanging down freely, so Edwina took a lock of hair on one side of her face and formed a little braid with the longest stemmed daisy.

Melon smiled and went to see her reflection in the pond, while gently touching her decoration. For Celtellina, Edwina asked her to sit down on a rock at the pond's edge, so she could reach her hair better.

Celtellina had part of her hair up in a bun, while the rest flowed down. Edwina wrapped the stem of the flower around the bun and wove the end of it into the bun to secure it.

“And what about you?” Celtellina asked. Edwina had given to others, and now it was her turn to be given to. All at once, the girls looked around and found an array of wild flowers in the grass, of many different colours.

They each picked a few and put them together to make a bouquet. It was presented to Edwina, while each one in turn placed a kiss on her cheek. She was wearing a lace bonnet, and so flowers wouldn't be seen if they had been placed in her hair. She smiled and held it fondly as they continued walking on to the place where the daffodils were to be planted.

There was an animal pen nearby with some farm animals, and Torque, the little man of the team, took an immediate liking to the lamb grazing on the lush grass there.

“Would you like to go in there, Torque, to pet and help feed the animals?” Celtellina asked.

Torque nodded eagerly, and was let in. Roden had just come by then, with little baby Bundle on his back in a baby carrying pack.

He was here to check for eggs from the chickens, and give grain and fresh water to all the animals. Torque was a willing young helper.

He helped to carry the basket and point out where he saw eggs. He threw grain to the chickens, as well as to some little ducklings who were waddling around near their mother. He gave a handful of fresh grass for the adorable lamb to eat right from his hand.

As they left the large pen area a hand washing pond was there, and young Torque happily splashed his hands and washed them.

“Would you like to help me carry the egg basket back to the house?” Roden offered him, to which he quickly agreed. Torque looked over at Celtellina who nodded and approved. He didn’t want her to wonder where he had suddenly gone. She knew he was for now under the care of her kind big brother, Roden, while she and the girls continued to plant daffodils.

“Will you need to water these flowers a lot?” Melon asked.

“Well,” responded Celtellina, “There’s something special about this garden. At one point in the night a mist covers the whole garden, and the ground and the plants all get a lovely

delicious drink of water. Everything gets very wet. When I come out in the morning, there are sparkling drops of dew on every plant, even every blade of grass. Sometimes it takes until midday before everything is dry and the sun warms them up.

“Also, the water in the garden is done in such a way that it pours out to different parts of the garden. The plants get all they need in this way—besides the rainfall, usually a couple times a week.”

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When the day had ended, and the darling children were back with their families, Celtellina sat on a garden chair in the setting sun. She thought about the happy moments of the day, and pondered what she could learn from the various happenings.

For her garden to be a beautiful garden, and bring joy, it needed work put into it, it needed drops of dew, it needed to display beautiful plants, and it needed people to share it with.

She wanted the garden of her life to flourish too. She would put work into making a nice life for those in Wonder Hill, she would realize that

drops of dew or tears were part of keeping things growing fresh—tears of caring about others, and tears when calling for the King to help her through something difficult in her life.

She also needed to choose the good and lovely things, the beautiful and pleasant things to be a part of her life. She then needed to be willing to share the good that she had in her life with others, and do it freely and unselfishly, spreading joy around.

After sitting peacefully for quite some time, in the setting sun, just then she noticed something new in the garden, that wasn't there even an hour ago. It was in the part of the garden that she had planted those "mysterious seeds" that her brother gave her. Nothing had appeared to grow, for a very long time. She almost had forgotten about it. But now, most unexpectedly, growth was seen.

Celtellina walked over and knelt down, and saw before her very eyes the stems of flowers growing, up and up, at a rather rapid pace. When they reached the height of a young child the growth stopped and a bud quickly formed at the top. The bud then sprung open, revealing its lovely gentle white flowers.

Then to her utter amazement, the flower center began to light up, shine and glow. These were Light Flowers!

What a lovely surprise! They were as evening garden lamps, shedding a soft and beautiful light. Of course in Wonder Hill amazing and sudden things would happen, but the fact that one never knew just when something extraordinary would occur, kept life interesting and its dwellers tingling with excitement, day by day.

Eventually as the moonlight grew brighter, the glowing flowers' light faded, and their petals folded for their rest that night. Celtellina felt ready to do the same. She would be eager to show her brother the Light Flowers the following evening.

“Celtellina, are you coming to bed soon, dear?” she heard Mama Emilda say.

“Oh, I lost track of the time... the flowers, the special ones, have grown suddenly...” she began to say as she stood up and made her way to the house.

She wasn't expecting anything else unusual to happen, but to her surprise, when she entered her bedroom, her bed was covered in rose

petals, and a delicious fruit snack was set decoratively there for her to enjoy. It seemed hearts of light were floating through the room, and sparkles were seen whenever they landed on or touched something or someone.

“Oh, what is this?” she exclaimed, in joyful surprise.

Roden and Emilda both came in and gave her a good night hug, then sat to chat with her a bit while she ate the snack she thought they had set out for her.

With a twinkle in their eyes—knowing just who it was that had done this—they both said, “We didn’t do it, but we do love you too. Maybe one day you’ll find out!”

With that mystery, and feeling like a blanket of love had surrounded her, she went peacefully to sleep.

## 7. Fragrance and Friends

A strong smell of fresh flower perfume filled the air, as Celtellina awoke from a most engaging dream. She looked at the surrounding room and saw that it wasn't the room she had gone to sleep in. What could this be? Or perhaps she was still dreaming? Whatever it was, it was interesting and pleasant.

She was about to find out who had filled her room back at home with rose petals and love—and who was responsible for this intriguing moment in her life. Once again, it was life in Wonder Hill, when amazing, unexpected and pleasantly surprising things would happen, at unexpected times. Such as now!

An angelic voice cooed, “Are you awake now, darling?” and in walked three tall and majestic figures, aglow with light, and radiant smiles on their faces.

“We’ve come to escort you today. You may not remember us, but we used to spend time together, before you came to live here in Wonder Hill. We are from the Enchanted Dome—the place you will return to, when your time of living here is finished.”



Celtellina had a vague memory of these friends and teachers, but couldn't remember much. However, she felt completely relaxed and comfortable in the presence of these ones, as if she had known them for centuries. Perhaps she had.

When Celtellina sat up she found a silver tray placed in her lap. On it was a scroll and a golden key. With a puzzled expression on her face, she looked up for her friendly visitors to explain more.

“Here is a map, showing you the secret way to the King's Treasure Cave. And this key here will allow you to open the secret chest that you will find on your journey,” one of the beings simply explained.

“I'm going on a journey... today? Or when, and with whom?” There were many questions on her mind, but for now the answers were simple.

“Keep these until the time is right, and we will assist you then. You won't have to travel alone. Even though you seldom see us, we keep watch over you and will know just when the time is right. Put these in a safe place, and keep your heart ready to go. We'll wait for word from the King of the Realm who knows when the time is right.”

With that, the angelic beings vanished. Yet, in their place was a glorious light that seemed to get brighter until it filled the room. Celtellina's mind was awlirl, wondering what was going on. Then she let out a gasp.

“Oh my, G...”,

“Yes, exactly...” a new visitor said in a deep and comforting voice. This visitor was different. He looked every bit like, and in deed was, a King—the King of the Realm himself.

Though Celtellina's mind told her she should be bowing down respectfully to Him, or feeling very small, instead the Royal Visitor beckoned to her to fly into His arms, and she felt she wanted to do nothing else but to be held in His powerful, yet gentle embrace.

“My darling Celtellina,” was all He seemed to say for quite some time. She, too, was speechless. It was not a common thing for the King Himself to appear in this form.

Everyone knew His usual form was so large and so grand, only vast infinity would contain Him in all His glory and proper size. The common person couldn't even see all of Him—much like one can't see the whole universe when looking outside.

But for rare and special times, the King could appear in ways that the humble small Wonder Hill dwellers could see Him.

It was understandable to those in Wonder Hill that one could transform in appearance, in order to be of assistance and help to others—such as Shane, Roden’s friend, could do for a short while, though with limitations.

The King of the Realm, had no limitations of course, and all He did was out of love and kindness and to be of assistance to those living in Wonder Hill.

Then with words that seemed to come from His heart to hers, more than from lips and voice, the King said, “You’ve given love to the children of the area, each day, and I wanted to say thank you.”

Celtellina felt a wave of emotions surging through her being, but the message was still being transmitted to her heart.

“The way to have a lovely village, town, family, or home, always starts with the way the children are taught and instructed, what is shared with them, what is withheld, and the things that are allowed into their lives. Like planting seeds in a garden, this is what causes

them to grow up and make the community what it is. If you, darling, could see all the good that has taken place in Wonder Hill, due to your good choices and the ways you care for the children, you would be amazed.

“One day I’ll show you. But for now, I wanted to encourage you that you are doing a good job, and I am pleased to call you a citizen of the Enchanted Dome, though for now you are to live in Wonder Hill.”

Celtellina looked up into the most loving eyes and charming smile she’d ever seen. It was hard to believe this was actually happening. Or was it? It didn’t matter what history would record, for her it was as real as any other part of her life.

As fast as her mind could think a question, it seemed the King of the Realm knew just what she wondered, and had answers to impart to her.

Then the thought came to her:

The reason the place she lived in was called “Wonder Hill” was indeed because of the many questions people had, and the mysteries that were often part of life. But the way to know the answers was to communicate in a special way with the King of the Realm.

Perhaps He even allowed there to be many unknown or unexplained things, so that those who lived in Wonder Hill would seek to talk with the King. In this way they would become wiser and happier; and the King would feel glad to be included in the private thoughts and in the lives of those He watched over, chose to serve, and indeed ruled.

This thought came from the King, and was true. He added then, in picture form into her mind one further thought. A picture of the Treasure Cave, and the secret chest was seen with her mind's eye.

What one would discover there would further enhance one's understanding, answer more questions, and solve mysteries. The King wanted the loyal citizens of the Enchanted Dome, who for the time being dwelt in Wonder Hill, to have access to His secrets and treasures. Those who kept safe the golden key and followed the ancient map, would find things they always longed for.

“When am I to go on this journey, and where will it lead me?” questioned Celtellina, after this vision reminded her of what the angelic visitors had told her.

The King answered:

“This journey is a different one than you imagine. You will still reside in your home, in your town, and still be available to help teach and inspire the young ones who come to you. Yet, there will be a secret passage way, a secret threshold to a path will open up to you.

“When you step through and begin to walk, it will be as if you are on a parallel life to the outward one you now live. When you have your times of quiet, you can close your eyes and suddenly you will be transported to the secret path, and be just at the place where you last were.

“Every time you slip away to continue your journey to the Treasure Cave and to discover the secret chest, you will go a bit farther. At last, through daily visits and travel up the secret path you will arrive at the destination.

“You will not regret your effort to get there, for joy will fill your heart, and answers to so many of your heart’s questions will also be given. The jewels and gems and all that you will find will thrill you. Though you live a simple life now in Wonder Hill, having given up for the time the glories you once knew while in the Enchanted

Dome, when you gain access to the treasures I have placed in the cave and in the chest for people like you, you will feel you are very rich indeed.”

Celtellina pondered on this amazing message, and sat back on her bed to examine once again the map and the golden key. In that moment, the vision of the King vanished, though she could hardly tell, as she smelled the same lovely aroma, and felt the thick air of love still surrounding her like a warm blanket. It seemed the words He spoke were imbedded in her heart. She would remember them always.

After giving her time to reflect, her three angelic friends and guides re-entered the room. One was carrying a tray with a delicious breakfast displayed; another, a small stringed instrument and was singing a lovely song; the last one held a new set of clothes for Celtellina to don.

She smiled seeing all these gifts coming to her, and when the gift of the song was through, one angelic friend said, “We’ll start today, and journey with you, as far as you are willing to travel. Would you like that?”

Since savoring a mouth full of food, Celtellina just nodded.

“We’ll see you later then, when you have eaten and are dressed. We’ll know when to come.”

“Okay...” was all she could say before they too vanished.

After eating slowly, for she had much to think about, at last Celtellina put on the new set of clothes. They were a perfect fit, and just right for the journey she was about to begin.

The moment she was dressed, a knock was heard at the door.

“Ready to go?” the three welcome friends chorused together. Indeed she was, and off they went. The map was securely gripped in Celtellina’s hand, but she had looked at it and studied it for long moments already, so she already knew what the first place to go was. Her guides encouraged her as they saw she was heading in the right path.

The golden key she placed in an inner pocket of her clothes right near her heart, a pocket that seemed to be made to hold this key perfectly.



Under the twirling and swaying vines that clung to the trees they ducked. Through marshy wetland they trudged, sometimes up to her knees in mud. Over rushing streams with slippery rocks acting as a bridge they crossed.

Though the map indicated the way, it seemed far more difficult to walk on than Celtellina thought it would be. But every time she wondered if it was the right path, even though the map seemed to say it was correct, she would look up and see the smiling reassurance from one of her angelic guides. This gave her the courage to carry on.

Every so often she would stop to commune with the King of the Realm. His words to her heart and mind gave her the specific guidance she needed to make it safely. When she fell and got hurt, felt weary, or started to go off on a false pathway, or was tangled in some low lying vine plants, the King would instruct her on what to do to be free, or tell her to rest to recover, or give her a warning and advice.

Though the false paths usually looked more inviting and easy, perhaps more used, the King's warnings to her that she would not reach the Treasures if she went on those paths, kept her pressing onward.

Perhaps the path to the Treasures was called secret, because so few were traveling it, and at times it was over-grown. Celtellina determined in her heart that once she found her own way through, she would be sure to tell others and help make it easier for them.

After a while it seemed to Celtellina she had been travelling for weeks; though it happened in small steps for she was also, simultaneously, living a regular life back at home.

Soon after she took her first steps with her angelic friends on the secret pathway, she woke in her regular room, back at Doflynn's Lodge. She enjoyed a regular day and helped in all the ways she could. But eager to carry on with her journey, the soonest chance she got, she glanced at the map and saw where she was to go next, closed her eyes and whispered for help. In an instant she felt her feet back on the secret path, and continued on with the next steps.

Going bit by bit like this means many days would pass, yet perhaps only a few hours of time would be spent on her secret journey. By the time weeks had passed of her journey, many months or a year had gone by in regular life in Wonder Hill.

## 8. Part of Art

“Look, look!” some children shouted as they gazed up into the sky. “It’s a sign! I wonder what it will say?”

Forming in the clouds was a sign being made of a combination of butterflies, fairies and flower petals. The different colour groups were taking their places to form a welcome sign. But just for whom, the people of the village didn’t know. Perhaps it was to be kept a surprise.

Sometimes the wind up there started to blow the sky sign out of place a bit, but then they would get readjusted again and the words continued to take shape.

“Welcome to Wonder Hill...” it said.

Those who could see the sky were calling friends and neighbours and everyone to take a look. Everyone was abuzz with excitement.

They hadn’t heard of anyone new or important coming to visit, travelers came through regularly, but that was just part of life. Was something new happening—or were regular parts of life just being expressed in new ways, like with sky art?

Questions were going around, but no one seemed to know, that is except the ones taking part in the artistic display.

Distracted with what was happening above, it at first passed being noticed, that the rolling hill over by the lake was also coming into colour. With colourfully dressed children, large flowers, branches, and huge pumpkins, words were forming there too, so that a sign could be read from quite a distance.

The words on the hill said: A Happy Day!

This was sudden and mysterious. All worked stopped, and the town folks were soon laughing and chatting out in the court yards, and in the meadows, and at the park with the children.

Indeed, it was true that no one quite knew what was going on, for the Celebration of Nature's Colours and Artistic Displays was being put on by a traveling team of artists.

Soon after Roden and Shane had chosen the theme of the next performance they were to put on—celebrating the variety of the colours in the world, expressed in nature and in people—they heard of this artist team.

They took a trip to their village to meet with them and plan something surprising and

spectacular. And this was part of it. To make it as fun and unexpected as possible, Roden and Shane had kept it a secret that the artistic team would be visiting their town, and display colours and designs in lovely and meaningful ways.

The sign in the sky changed to represent the shapes of familiar animals, or things of nature. The sign on the hill remained as it was, but there were more and more things popping up around town. Dancers dressed in colourful clothing, and of all shades of skin colour and hair types, began prancing through the walking streets spreading flower petals and twirling streamers. Autumn coloured leaves began to flutter down and swirl around, as if dancing to the tune of the wind through the trees.

Tables filled with fresh foods were displayed in such a way that all shades of the colours of the rainbow were represented, in striped fashion.

At last it was announced, and the news spread fast, that there was to be a stage play that afternoon, in the town square—hosted by Roden and Shane and their helpers.

This team had been planning and practicing for some time now, and today was the opening

day. It would be put on for several days, so all who wanted to would have a chance to see it.

The colourful signs had faded away, the participants been dismissed, as the town readied itself for the show. People moved toward the seats provided. A team of musicians marched around the streets, as a way to let people know the time for the show had come. Those who wished to attend could simply fall in line and walk with them to the town square.

At last all were seated, and the show began.

It opened with a white backdrop, nothing at all but white; and sitting on the stage was a figure dressed in a drab black coat. Beside him was a black dog, a black cat, and on his arm sat a large black bird. The figure was Shane, who had great control and a way with animals. The stage he sat on was of grey stones.

Roden trotted out from behind the stage, sporting his grand horse and buggy. The horse was covered in a grey coat, the buggy was painted all and only grey, and Roden had on his grey suit and grey hat. Sitting next to him was a lovely lady (played by his sister Celtellina). She was wearing a puffy grey dress, holding her delicate grey parasol.

“Good day to you,” Roden tipped his hat to Shane, “A grey-t” day it is.

“And to you too,” came the reply. “Glad to have you black, I mean back.”

Both seemed to have puzzled looks on their faces.

“I dare say,” said Roden from his buggy to the audience, “Something seems to be amiss, doesn’t it?”

Celtellina nodded, and so did everyone watching.

Shane jumped up from the stage and ran close to the front row.

“Any guesses? You, you there, what do you think is missing on this lovely day?”

“The colour is all gone! Where is the green or yellow?” the person responded and asked.

“Ah! The colour!” Shane responded, while the horse and buggy continued on to go behind the stage, the actors preparing for the next act.

“So you think this lovely world here on stage is lacking green and yellow? Well, we’ll have to change that, won’t we!” And off he zipped, leaving the audience wondering what would happen next.

A lovely lady—played again by Celtellina—in a lovely yellow dress walked out with her yellow parasol in one hand and a huge bouquet of yellow daffodils fresh from her garden.

A man in green overalls wearing a green shirt, and a green hat spread out some green artificial grass over the grey stones, and some green trees were placed in pots on the sides of the stage.

“Come my dear,” Shane, invited the yellow-dressed lady. “Let us have a picnic on the grass. I have just the things you most like,” he said, while opening a large yellow basket.

“Here are some green apples and pears; a bowl of freshly picked peas. A cluster of green grapes, some green lettuce and celery, and of course a jar of pickles.”

“Why, thank you very much,” the lady said, then with a puzzled look, turned to the audience.

“It just seems something is missing... I just can’t imagine what it is. It’s the perfect day for a picnic, with the yellow sun shining, and there’s lush green grass to sit on, and a full basket of good foods to eat...”

Some called out, “There’s no red, no brown or orange, or purple!”



The gentleman looked surprised into the picnic basket and scratched his head.

“Say, say! I say you are absolutely correct!” Shane said. (His appearance for this scene had changed of course, from the man he played wearing only black.)

“I’m so sorry, my dear. I do think I have forgotten a few things. Give me a moment and I shall be back. Enjoy gazing at the... ah... greenery of nature while you wait.” Shane was off the stage, taking the basket with him.

Walking around, looking first at one tree and then the other, the lady soon tired and began to stroll farther away, looking for something interesting and more colorful to see.

In walked Mr. Red. He was selling all sorts of goodies fit for a picnic. “Going on a picnic? I’ve got just the treats for you...!” Roden called out, dressed, of course, in red from head to toe.

In his cart he was pushing there was a vast array of foods: tomatoes, strawberries, red peppers, red apples, pieces of water melon, radishes, cherries and so forth. “I’ve got all you need, take and enjoy your time outdoors!”

Shane and Celtellina both found themselves meeting up with this cart salesman to choose some foods. Soon a red bag was filled with a bit of everything, and off they walked to enjoy their picnic again. A basket with red and green did make it somewhat more interesting.

After they settled on the grass, one by one new people, items and animals came on to the stage, each adding new colour. Things entered or were brought, such as a bright coloured parrot and a spotted dog.

A peacock strutted out, and some white lambs were led to the stage. The black animals from the first scene found a spot, as well as the grey mare.

A huge bowl of fruit and veggies that showed a wide array of colours, flower pots and plant pots of all kinds of colours and shapes were set out to be seen. Even some grey and brown large rocks and boulders were rolled out to take their place.

A large blue sheet was spread like a tent above the stage, displaying a sewn on cloth rainbow. Before too long it looked more like proper nature—flowers and leaves of varying colours; animals and birds of different colours.

Then other couples and families came out to picnic as well, with different shades of skin and types of clothing.

The show ended with all the players standing up to sing and do a choreographed dance to a newly written song that Emilda her mother Shaulic had written. They also chose the dance steps to this performed song.

When it ended, the crowd all cheered! It was clear that the world and its people were all part of a great big work of art, and each colour and shade was needed to add variety and contrast, and complement one another. Too much of one thing, and it would cease to be appreciated. Not enough of another, and it would be missed, and something would seem lacking.

Everyone in Wonder Hill, no matter what their eye, skin, or hair colour, added to the beauty of the land, and contrasted well with the colours of nature surrounding.

## 9. Dancing and Delights

Lully looked one more time in the mirror, as she prepared herself for the dance party. This was to be the celebration that followed her marriage over a week ago. This was the official start of their three month time of fun.

The newlywed husband was to do no work, and the newlywed wife was to focus on making their first few months together the best she could. All her husband's favourite meals were cooked, long walks and hikes were enjoyed. Whatever he found most pleasing, if it was good, she was to do her best to satisfy his wishes.

He likewise would give his full attention to listening to what his new wife wanted to say, letting her sleep late without disturbing, drawing water to warm and fill a bath for her to soak in, and so forth.

After this time, there would be work aplenty for the two of them, and it was important that they spend this time getting to know one another well, and reassure each other of their love.

Though their marriage commitment, or ceremony was a solemn occasion, the time for a

good party had found its time and place, and occurred for Bernardo and Lully after ten days of their wedding.

Bernardo was below deck putting on his best suit—for after all, the party and dance was to be held on a ship. In the morning they would set sail, and enjoy their first three months out at sea.

The ship was fully stocked with ample supplies, and there were several islands they would dock at for exploration and enjoyment. This was Bernardo's wish, and Lully wished to indulge him in it, as her gift of love.

Of course, Bernardo insured that the ship had every bit of luxury that his new wife could want. Their bed was made with the finest white linen. The kitchen was supplied with all the things she would need for cooking the delicious foods they wished to enjoy. A large bath was installed, with a fireplace nearby to keep Lully warm when she wished to bathe.

They were all set, dressed and ready to party—and so were the many guests, friends and relations that were aboard. This was the time for gift giving, if one wished to do so.

Knowing what the couple wished to do with their first three months gave the guests an

indication of what gifts would be appropriate. Those wishing to give gifts usually counseled with the parents of a newly married couple, so as to see that all needs would be met, and they could relax during their first three months time.

Sometimes a gift that was offered was the gift of one's time and effort to help build the house that would be needed—if one was, indeed requested by the couple.

Each couple was supported in all the ways possible, so as to start them off with a stable and love-filled marriage, completely free of care and burden.

Grandmothers in the community often knitted quilts and bonnets, or booties for the babies that were sure to follow and join the couple before too long. Sometimes children gave gifts of toys they no longer used and had outgrown, to be used by the new little one they hoped to have join Wonder Hill.

Every new little one brought something special, their personal special gift, and it was always a surprise what gift each newborn child brought to Wonder Hill.

There were lights strung all around the deck, and live music was being played. Celtellina

made sure there were plenty of flowers all over, decorating every corner. She went below deck then to find her Aunty and see if she needed anything.

Dressed in a sparkling, pale pink dress, and well-done hair, Lully was ready to be the life of the party. Lully gave her niece a hug and thanked her warmly for everything she had done—which was a long list indeed—to help both the party go well, and the trip they were to take immediately afterwards.

“And guess what?” Lully whispered to Celtellina, “Bernardo has offered to take several of us again, to his special Ocean Emerald island—you and your brother, his wife and good friend Shane. That’s something to look forward to when we get back!”

Celtellina smiled excitedly and hugged her Aunt again.

“Okay, well, the music is playing, I guess we better go!” Lully said, while they both headed upstairs.

When both the bride and the groom were standing together on the deck, that was the signal to begin the party officially. The master of ceremonies announced, “The first song is

dedicated to this lovely new couple here. Let's hear a cheer for them!"

"Cheers!" rang out from every voice.

"Please Sir, would you tell us your chosen family name, so we can cheer to the future of your family!"

This was the time that they decided to announce their chosen family name.

"Seashire"

"So to Bernardo Seashire and Lulluby Seashire, we dedicate this first song. Get your dancing feet ready, and let's all join in the fun!"

With that the music began and so did the dancing—sometimes to the beat of the waves rocking or swaying the ship gently. All kinds of music was played, and all types of dances were enjoyed. There was something for everyone.

Several hours of that, while breathing in the fresh sea air was enough to give everyone a very solid sleep that night.

When the party was over, and everyone but the couple, were safely back on the shore and on their way home, Lully and Bernardo settled into their bed aboard the ship—the home that was to be theirs for the next three months.



It had been a special week and a half, and they were sure there would be plenty of adventure in the following months. Lully had promised Celtellina that she would keep a journal of the most outstanding events of their ship journey, and tell her all about it when they returned.

A house was being built for the Seashire couple much closer to where Celtellina and her brother lived; but on the lake shore of course.

Some of the events recorded in Lully's journal included:

*Woke with the sound of thunder; the waves were so fierce we dare not travel. We played games and chatted and laughed through the storm. By the next morning, thankfully the storm had cleared and we could be once again on our way.*

*I liked the fruits of an island called "calm"; the water indeed was, all around it. Huge fruits hung from vines that clung to trees. One could climb or fly up to pick them.*

*If one asks me what they tasted like, I'd have to say I wasn't sure, as the fruits taste different to each person, according to what they most enjoy.*

*You'll have to find out for yourself one day I guess. Bernardo has the map and knows how to get there.*

*I read for hours last night, as I just couldn't sleep. Must be the excitement of the journey. But the ship's library that Father Baufin (now my grandfather-in-law) helped to set up, was a delicious treat for the heart and mind. He knows the best kinds of books. I learned things I've never known before.*

*I was able to can and preserve some of the foods that the natives of one island gave us. They had a plentiful crop, and wished to give much to us. We can then enjoy those rare and unique fruits and roots while we continue on our journey.*

*A very large seabird landed on deck and flew off with a fish I had just caught! Bernardo has taught me how to fish, and some evenings we have a deck party of broiled fish, while we watch the stars appear, and try to remember our favourite songs. Would be nice if a musical band traveled with us. But I guess that's what being alone with just the two of us is for, getting to know each other—what we each know and where we are lacking knowledge, so we can help each other better.*

*A leak in the ship was discovered when we were, thankfully, not far from land. But it meant we stayed put for a couple weeks until all was fixed. However, mercifully there was a fresh water stream near the beach, and we had what we needed. Bernardo was eager to get going, as he had many islands that he wished to see, but this delay would shorten the time we had available for travel. That is part of being together, helping each other through the ups and downs, and times things don't work out just as planned. I tried to make the best of it, and learned how to make all sorts of things from the coconuts that were abundant there.*

*Four of the islands we reached seemed uninhabited, but perhaps it was just because they are shy or are living where we didn't see them. We didn't stay long, but enjoyed exploring for a day or so, finding all kinds of vegetation. Some of the plants we were familiar with, but the large or very small size of them in this place was unique.*

*Anchored back where we started our journey from. I'm sitting here now as the ship is docked. A long and yet pleasant journey we had. Much more than I could have the time to write about in this short journal. We'll have time to talk and I can tell you the rest, before too long.*

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It wasn't yet a week from the time they arrived back from their sea adventure and had settled into their new home, when a house-celebrating party was held. Close friends and relations were invited, and house warming parties like these lasted some days.

New houses were built with several rooms to house family, friends, or visitors. Later on, a large and growing family might fill up the rooms, but for now with just a new couple living there, there was plenty of room for others to stay on and make it a happy time of starting their new life in a new house.

During these days Celtellina was able to have a good long chat with Lully—there was so much to talk about, questions to ask and stories to share. The young men too had things they talked over. One evening a question came up about Bernardo's family's special island.

“Ah, you've heard about it, have you?”  
Bernardo said to Roden.

“Let's take a trip there in about a month, when we've had time to settle in a bit here. Perhaps, if you are someone as keen as I am to explore across the water, we could plan for

regular adventures. I could take you and your family and a few others who wish, to some of the islands that Lully and I have checked out. Some islands you may like more than others, but either way, a bit of adventure is always good for a man's heart!"

"Indeed!" affirmed Roden.

Plans and living out those plans then followed as the months and years passed. It was a family and group of friends that liked travel and discovery. They all got along wonderfully.

## 10. Sensations of Flying

“On your marks! Get set! Go!” Bernardo’s loud and booming voice was heard. The thundering sounds of a multitude of galloping horses followed. This was no ordinary team of horses, and they were not competing in race. They were in training.

Bernardo’s family came from a long line of those who knew the skill of horse flying. Nearly all young men in this side of Wonder Hill, when they reached teenage, asked to take part in this training course.

The horses were raised and bred and trained in a part of the land quite far removed from settlements. But when Bernardo wasn’t sailing or fixing a ship, or studying navigating and map making, part of the year Bernardo and his brothers were holding professional training courses for those who wished to learn to fly across the sky on the Wonder Horses. They were a special breed, and received careful training.

Just as the children of the wind in Wonder Hill could suddenly be seen with fairy wings and ascend up or float down from high places, so could these horses also, though with much larger wings of course.

Wonder Horses had to be trained to use them skillfully and to stay airborne. They had to learn how to descend with grace and land gently, so as to make the ride pleasant and safe for the rider.

Since this was a learning sport that maturing young men nearly all wanted to take part in, Bernardo's great-grandfather, who began this training place, thought it the perfect opportunity to set it up fully, for a full learning course for growing young men.

Not only were they trained to ride and fly-ride on horses, but there were carpentry workshops with skilled carpenters to instruct them. Indeed, much of the houses that were built for newly married couples were done by those who had gone through this very carpentry and building course. There were workshops for teaching metal work, clay work, art, and other creative useful skills.

On the weekends the growing young men that wished to go, were taken on long hikes and treks. Sometimes the hike even went on for days or weeks at a time, to learn how to survive, cook for themselves, find food in the wild, and prepare preserved food that would last them on such a journey.

They learned to make cloth, string and rope, how to sew clothes, and make shoes. They learned how to teach and communicate with others, and how to get along and help each other.

Good hearty meals were served, that they helped to prepare. Places for bathing and washing their clothes were available for use. They were taught gentlemanly manners, and how to be with the lady they would yet find to marry.—How to be the man she would learn to trust and depend on.

Lessons of truthfulness, and honesty were shared, mainly through stories told by older, wiser and well-experienced men, who had learned the hard way what worked and didn't work.

If any of the young men who were granted the privilege of being at that special camp, were found out to be untrustworthy, couldn't choose their words carefully, were thinking more about themselves than others, who acted ungentlemanly even after kind instruction, they were told they needed more time to grow up and learn instruction from their parents—and would be sent home to continue their childhood training under parental instruction.



If young men wished to stay for the duration of the training period, they had to be truthful, kind, serious minded, and courteous.

If parents wished for their growing young man to get the esteemed privilege of entering such a training place, they would have to do their part to instruct and train them well, for years in advance, so they would be suitable for learning in such a place.

It wasn't a place to do whatever one thought up, but a place to prepare for real life, where words, attitudes, and actions could affect everyone else, and one needed to be wise in what they said and did.

Bernardo would tell the growing young men, "Just as the horses need training to be able to ride across the sky, and give you a thrilling ride, so do all men here need training to have the ride of their life take them to the best places. Improper training won't get you off the ground. So pay close attention, don't waste time, always be truthful, honest, and care more about the others than you care about your own wants and needs. Then you'll fly high, in so many ways!"

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Some years passed, and Bernardo and Lully were blessed with their first two children—a set of twin boys. Lully missed her husband when he was taking his turn helping at the training camp, but she knew it was very needed to ensure a great community of citizens dwelling in Wonder Hill. Indeed it would even help her young boys one day.

Sometimes the children would go with her to visit their daddy there, when he was gone for a month or more at a time; other times he came back for short weekend visits. Though most of the time he resided at their new home. Since they lived closer to Celtellina and others, they had plenty of help in the meantime.

One time, when Bernardo was due to return, Lully and the children had set up the house in a special way, with fresh bouquets of flowers in vases around. Everything was clean and tidy, and her husband's favourite meal was prepared.

Lully was looking down the dusty road, on the lookout for Bernardo's galloping horse bringing him home again. But when she saw nothing, she wondered if he had been delayed for another day or so.

It was getting late in the day and she didn't know what to expect. All of a sudden a thunderous sound was heard in the sky above. Her first reaction was to see if there was laundry on the line, as a cloudburst might be upon them.

However, when to the rumbling noise was added the sound of neighing and the loud whistle of a trainer and horse team leader sounding out, she knew it wasn't thunder at all.

"Come quick!" she called to the young ones who were just inside the door. "I think I see daddy!"

The twin boys came running out, and when Mama Lully pointed up they laughed and clapped their hands, then yelled "Daddy!"

Bernardo, looking very handsome, led this team of horses in a complete circle in the sky above, all around their property, spiraling down, to then land on the ground in the pasture nearby.

He motioned to Lully to bring the boys over. Excitedly she held their hands and ran over to where Bernardo sat on his large white horse, whose wings were still extended.

"Would you like to go for a ride?" he called out to his family. He loved them so much, and had missed them just as much as they had missed

him. This was his way of reuniting and thanking them for the great gift they had given the community and so many other families, by allowing him to help assist in the training camp.

After the horse's wings had folded in and vanished, Lully lifted one boy up to sit in front of his daddy on the horse, then the other boy to sit behind him.

One of the other riders helping to lead the team of horses came over to offer his help. He kept the children steady, while Bernardo slipped off to give his wife a tender greeting hug and kiss. Then he helped to lift her up onto the back of the horse, behind the other boy, and then he also got on.

This flying Wonder Horse was big enough for a family to ride, and so ride together they did. A call was yelled and a whistle blown. The horses knew the call well.

First the team of horses trotted, then began to gain speed, then at just the right moment they spread their wings to catch the wind, and up and up they went.

The boys, Rorral and Tendroch, were having the thrill of their lives. Squealing with delight and could hardly catch their breath as these

children of the wind galloped through the paths of wind high above their house.

After doing circling in the air above their property a couple of times, Bernardo gave the particular whistle for the team to begin to descend, and gently land. With galloping speed the large white steed landed and eventually slowed to a halt. The boys were very excited!

When their father helped them off they thanked him repeatedly, while walking in to the house to then offer their gift of kindness to their daddy—and Lully to her husband.

“I am hungry!” Bernardo said, when smelling and seeing the specially prepared food set out for them all to share.

“Let me just instruct the other riders where to take the horses for the night. Perhaps we can have one more fly tomorrow, would you like that?” Rorral and Tendorch cheered! It was worth it after all, to share their daddy with others sometimes. With these kinds of rewards, it more than made up for it.

“Well, after all, you will be in training to one day lead the team of horses too!” Bernardo said to his pleased boys.

“It’s family tradition!... But maybe you’d rather not...” he said with a twinkle.

Rorral and Tendroch looked at each other, like “He’s got to be joking!” and they yelled loudly their agreement to one day be trained to take over the job of the horse fly-riding, as well as the camp.

There was a thrilling life up ahead for these young boys—soon to be growing young men.

## 11. The Long Walk

One day, Celtellina choose to start off on her secret journey very early in the morning, so early the rooster had not yet crowed, and not a ray of light had yet peered over the horizon. It was a day that her brother and his wife and their children had chosen to spend at the lakeside.

Of course, Celtellina was invited to go along, if she wished, but instead she chose to travel in a different realm. She was intent on finding the Treasure Cave and the secret Chest of the King.

“Perhaps today is the day I’ll find it!” she thought. “If I am able to journey far today, and make sure to stay only on the King’s secret path, perhaps I will find the treasures.”

Though it looked to others like she was just resting in bed, or walking in the garden, or looking at a map, she was in fact on her journey.

After struggling up a steep incline, and pushing through thorny brush, Celtellina sat down to rest. A trickling brook was a welcome sight, providing fresh cool water to drink and something to use to wash her scratches that she’d gotten from the thorns.

A voice not melodious in the least, but rather sounding like the smooth, slimy moving of mud down a rock face, began to speak with her.

With a sneer the voice said, "What's wrong with you? Can't you tell you are on the wrong path? So much trouble for nothing, I say. You're not going to find any treasure at the end for all your struggle. Nothing but a big empty pit you'll trip into..."

Celtellina was rather surprised, as she hadn't had an encounter like this before. Sometimes she had seriously wondered if the way was right, and if the reward and treasure would be worth it. This someone seemed to be looking over her shoulder at the map she held. Her first reaction was always to check the map, if it said it was right, then no matter how hard the climb, or thick the mud, or rough the way, she didn't hesitate.

The voice then said,

*"You're trusting that old thing? Ha! That's a fake, I can assure you. An imitation created to lead poor simple folks like you off the beaten trail and trap you in your own folly. I don't know why you didn't come to me long ago. I have treasures more than you can dream of! If the King actually wished for you to have treasures, why didn't He*



*just put them into your hands, without making you do this whole obstacle course... He doesn't care..."* the evil voice would have gone on, but didn't get a chance.

Reaching her hand into her pocket where the golden key rested, she felt comfort and reassurance that the words of the King to her were the truth, and the voice spouting off now was the usurper and hinderer, spouting off one lie after the other.

She suddenly remembered that the King had warned her of this danger. He'd said, *"If any voice contradicts what I am telling you, and if anyone mocks the accuracy of the map, their words are like poison and will bring ruin to you and your quest. They wish you harm. Don't hesitate for an instant, but call out for My assistance. Do not give the slightest heed to what they say."*

So now, when faced with this very situation, Celtellina, did just that. As she held the pulsating golden key she called for assistance with a whisper of her heart. Faster than a heartbeat the King summoned strong guardians of the Secrets of the King to escort this unwanted stranger off.

Although she never cared to so much as look the way of the hindering one, she did hear something that sounded like a mix of a gasp, a yell of terror, and a fading pitiful whimper, a sickening weak voice trailing off, as whoever or whatever it was, was being taken further away. She could tell the lying creature was now in great discomfort, with a plan foiled.

When Celtellina stood up, somewhat shaken, there was the comforting arms of her angelic friends and helpers to embrace her. They whispered to her words of cheer, and were so pleased she'd made the call for help. Her plan of making great progress on her journey this day was not disappointed. And on the trek went.

While passing in a forest with many leaves on the ground, a particularly large pile of leaves caught her eye. Before making any sudden moves, she always paused to make sure it was right. You never knew when something unexpected and unpleasant would surprise the travelers on this secret pathway.

She received approval both from her angelic helpers as well as the King of the Realm before approaching the heap and finding out more about it.

She brushed aside what she discovered was just a thin layer of leaves covering a chest!

Celtellina's heart began to pound, and the voice of the King in her heart and mind came loud and clear. "You have passed the test, and chosen to believe My words, and disregarded all else that opposed. This is for you!"

Yes, yes! Could it really be? Yes, indeed it was the secret chest! Now with the leaves brushed aside, the chest began to glow. At first Celtellina started to impatiently tug at the lid to get it open, but seeing it was locked made that approach impossible. She felt dismayed, as in the excitement of the moment had forgotten that she already held the key to unlock it, within her warm bosom.

She looked over to her angelic guides and they nodded, smiling encouragingly as if to say, "Go ahead! Try the key in the lock. Don't fear. You won't be disappointed."

She hesitated. She paused. This was an event that would either prove that the King and His instructions were right, and that He hadn't fooled her, and great joy would be hers; or it would show that everything she had endured to reach this secret chest was pointless.

Would the key work? She almost didn't want to try, for fear of being utterly disappointed.

She stood up and walked a bit back down the path she had come. She needed time to think.

“Why have I lost my confidence? What has come over me? I think I just need to catch my breath. Perhaps the excitement caught me by surprise.”

Her angelic friends huddled together to make plans. All was not lost if she did not open the secret chest. She could still carry on with the journey and revel in the many gems and jewels of the Treasure Cave yet to be discovered. But she would miss out on so much that she would certainly regret if she didn't take the bold step to give it a try.

The day was nearly spent, and the last rays of the sun would linger but for a short while before darkness would fall and sleep would follow. She was feeling tired, hungry and thirsty, but wasn't willing to give up yet.

The angelic helpers seemed to be quietly communing with the King and asking for something to be done.

Just then, while Celtellina sat on the ground, pondering what to do, the sound of footsteps were heard shuffling through the dry leaves on the pathway. She looked up to see a traveler, dressed much in the same colours and cloth type as she.

“Hello, fellow traveler,” he said to her in a friendly voice. “Can I help you find your way? Are you lost?”

Surprised that anyone else would be here, and be speaking with her, she stuttered a hello, but didn’t quite know what to say. A glance over to the chest indicated to this man what she was thinking about.

“Gotta key?” he asked.

She nodded.

“Did you use it?”

Somewhat embarrassed, she shook her head.

“Well, I’ve just come back from the Treasure Cave, take a look at these!” he said, showing an array of jewels that had been stuffed in his pocket.

“I think I know what you are feeling. I understand your hesitation to give it a go. You’ve gone through so much to get here, and now you

so much want it to be true, that you are afraid to try, just in case you have been mistaken. Is that right?”

The traveler reached out his hand to take hers, and drew her to walk with him over to the chest. The glow and warmth from it were clearly seen.

“Perhaps you know it is true and good things are in it, but you wonder if you are worthy to open it. You think perhaps your lack of perfection will make the key the King gave you not work; that it has something to do with your goodness or lack of it.”

Celtellina listened to this wise man. He seemed to speak what she felt was on her heart.

“How does he know?” she wondered.

“How do I know this?” he verbalized, again, seeming to know her thoughts. “I’m on the same pathway as you, and some time back I too came to this very place. I think I felt much like you do now. But then I thought, ‘I have more to lose by NOT trying it, than what I fear might happen if I do.’”

“So what happened?!” Celtellina looked up and asked anxiously.

Drawing out the suspense just a wee bit more, the traveling man said, slowly, “Well... I took the key in my hands and examined it. It looked genuine, it felt genuine. Being somewhat mechanical I even looked into the keyhole and back at the shape of the key, and it seemed to be a correct match.”

“Yes...and then what?” Celtellina urged him on.

“Well, I tried it...!” he exclaimed, not giving away the end result.

“And...” she said with pleading eyes.

“And it WORKED!” he looked right into her eyes with jovial expression.

The light from his eyes seemed to enter hers, and new courage was felt.

“So, what are you going to do about it?” he pressed.

Feeling silly to just be standing there any longer, when there awaited for her something special—just what she wasn’t sure—but incredibly eager to find out, she pulled out her key and took the brave step over and rested her hands on the chest.

Looking up once more to the traveler, who met her eyes with a, “Go ahead, what are you waiting for?” look of confidence, she took the plunge.

In the key slipped, or rather was practically drawn, into the keyhole, as soon as Celtellina positioned it and chose to give it a try. A click was heard as she turned the key, and with a spring the large chest lid opened up.

The light from within it burst forth, and a cheer was heard from her three angelic companions. At last! The moment they’d been waiting for.

At first it was almost too bright to see what was actually within the chest, as Celtellina peered in, eventually her eyes became adjusted.

“What?” It wasn’t at all what she expected, but really, it couldn’t be any better.

Whatever she had needed at that moment was in the secret chest—it was hers for the taking. Other travelers when they arrived would find in it too whatever was needed, and would be for them. It seemed very magical.

Celtellina asked the traveler what he had found in the chest earlier on his journey, as his needs would have been different. Each of these



two travelers had found exactly what was needed, placed there by the King. She laughed at her own folly at hesitating for so long to make use of what the King had placed there for her, due to her lack of faith to try the Key He had clearly given to her for that moment.

“Dig in deeper,” one of her angelic guides urged her. And when she did she was surprised.

The chest was filled with keys of all sizes, shapes and colours! They were made of precious stones and other shiny material she didn’t even know what.

“What are these?” she asked, hoping the traveler would have an answer.

“I wondered that too at first, but then as I examined them closely I saw a word inscribed on each key. See if you can get to the bottom of the chest...” the traveler challenged.

Celtellina dug down with her hands to reach what would seem to be the bottom of the chest, yet it seemed to be bottomless. The store of secret treasure keys just went on and on.

The traveler smiled. “There is more in here to supply our needs and wishes while on our journey—far more than we’ll even have the time and the need to use. Life on Wonder Hill will be

through before we even can make use of all our King has provided for us who walk on His secret pathway. Each key has the inscription on it of what it will do for you.

“Take as many keys as you think you will need. Dig and take all the ones you think will be useful for you. Fill your pockets with them if you wish. Then the game has only just begun.”

“Game?” Celtellina wondered.

“Well, sort of, I guess it’s the treasure hunt game. And as you go on your journey to reach the Treasure Cave, whenever you face a difficult spot, or have a need, or feel too weary to go on, take out the key that has the inscription relating to your need.

“Then as you hold it and whisper a request to the King, because they are the Keys that He has placed there for you, He will honor your request, and almost by magic will supply or aid you in whatever way you have need.

“The chests that these keys open are for the most part invisible, just like our King usually is, but as you hold it, the supplies from the secret chest will be given to you—or whatever it is that you have need of.”

Celtellina was amazed, and wished someone could show her just a bit more what it meant and how to make full use of this gift from the King.

“I’ll walk with you a bit, if you like,” the traveler said. “We can practice together this art of using the King’s Keys. The next time you come back to carry on your journey, I’ll be right here to help you, if you’d like, as I’ve been sent here to do so. Unless you feel ready to continue on right now with me for a bit.”

“Thank you! I would very much like that,” she responded, then turned to refresh herself with all that the chest held that was placed there for her. There was a coat for warmth, a torch for light, a powerful nutritional snack, a jug of water, and a bottle of sweet nectar for energy. Even a new pair of shoes to keep her feet protected on the next part of the way.

She looked at her worn shoes, and thought how glad she was to have accessed all that the King wanted her to have.

The traveler indicated that the way from there was even tougher in some respects, however it also was going to be much easier for her now, due to the help from the King that she would now be able to ask for.

Normally, she would have had to stop her journey there for the day, but with the supplies from the chest she was able to keep on going. She had light and warmth, and her feet were protected. Besides that, she had a purse full of the Kings Keys—anything else she would need would be hers for the asking.

The traveler walked on and talked with her and kept her company for a while longer. She was glad to have the companionship of someone who had been on that path before. Up the winding narrow mountain pathway they went, while the air seemed to gradually get thinner as well. At one point Celtellina felt nearly ready to faint, and thought she'd have to stop. The risk of falling over the cliff was troubling her.

“There’s no risk, nor weariness—remember, use the King’s Keys. You have a need, ask for it!” the traveler urged her. Now was the perfect time to see what they would do.

The traveler held the torch and shone it for Celtellina while she looked through the keys she had chosen, trying to find the right one to use. At last she spotted one that said “safe and easy travel”. That sounded just perfect.

As she held it she whispered to the King that she had a need for a safe and easy travel.

In an instant the request was granted. Two large guardians of the secret pathway were on either side of her, holding each of her arms.

There was no fear of falling now, and it seemed they lifted her slightly off the ground so that she was gliding over the pathway, until she reached a wider part of the pathway. New strength had likewise been imparted to her, and she felt able to continue on.

When she reached a mountain meadow, she felt it time now to pause on the secret journey for a while.

A cry of a little one—Mama Emilda’s newest little one—was heard. Celtellina realized that it was past midnight in Wonder Hill, and perhaps some assistance was needed. She rose to offer her help to Mama Emilda.

“I’ll hold him for a bit, while you get what he needs ready,” she offered to a thankful and tired mother of a little one.

“Come, let’s go look at the stars! See how they twinkle?” she said in her soothing way while walking out on the porch with her tiny nephew. She tucked his favourite soft cuddly toy in his arms, and then sang a song while rocking him in her arms.

It was good to be needed, and lovely to have a family to be a part of, in her own simple way. Though she couldn't wait to carry on the journey to the Treasure Cave, there was a time and place for everything. Sharing the treasure of her love and care with an infant was what was right for now.

In time she would carry on with her secret journey—and reach the Treasure Cave. One step at a time she would get there; and be sure to help others find the way.

One thought just kept coming to her, however, that traveler... he reminds me of someone in Wonder Hill... just his appearance was different than I recognize...

Indeed it was true, someone, a special someone was on his own journey to and from the Treasure Cave. He assisted her, in this mysterious way, on the secret pathway; and in a couple years more, he was to assist her and join with her on their trek through life in Wonder Hill.

## 12. Treasure Cave and Secret pathways

Now, many years have passed, and Celtellina had eventually 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. With both sharing a passion for the Treasures of the King, they made a good pair.

Shane and Celtellina had a house built nearby Doflynn's Lodge, so friends could continue to share in each other's lives.

Shane had chosen the family name: Rocksworth, for 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.

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

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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. This week their youngest daughter, Joyvelle and her husband Hesternach, were visiting. 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 fairing?”

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 boys 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 a dream 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 over head, 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 saw 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 daylight 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 favorite book, together with Hesternach.

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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!"

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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, and 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 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.

