



CRYSTAL
LEGENDS

MOYRA CALDECOTT

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*The question is whether
awareness should itself
be made the object
of the search,
or instead gratefully
received as the fruit of
another quest altogether*

Stratford Caldecott, *In Search of the Miraculous*
(COMMUNIO, Summer 1989)

Introduction

There is a West African legend about a Box of Stories in the possession of the Sky God and the efforts of Anansi, the Spider, to buy it from him. The price he was set was to bring certain beings to the Lord of the Sky: Onini, the python; Osebo, the leopard; Moboro, the hornet; and Mmoatia, “the fairy that none can see”.

Full of determination but not knowing which way to turn to fulfil these impossible tasks, he turned to his wife. When he mentioned the python she said he should use a piece of vine. “Say no more,” he cried, and rushed off into the jungle to cut a long piece of vine. Onini, the python, lying somnolently on a huge branch, overheard him saying “It is larger than he is. No, it is shorter. No, it is longer...” Within minutes he had uncoiled from the tree and was asking Anansi what he was doing. The Spider claimed that he was trying to settle an argument with his wife as to whether this piece of vine was longer or shorter than Onini, the python, and persuaded Onini to lie down on the riverbank to be measured. As soon as he did so, of course, the vine was wound tightly around him and he was taken to the Lord of the Sky.

With similar guile, and each time at the suggestion of his wife, Anansi captured the other three creatures.

Osebo, the leopard, fell into a deep hole dug by Anansi and was “rescued” by tying himself to the end of a vine which Anansi then used to haul him up before the Lord of the Sky. The hornet was persuaded it was raining and that the only way to keep dry was to climb into Anansi’s hollow calabash. As soon as he was inside, of course, Anansi slammed shut the lid. The fairy was more difficult, but even she was tricked by a doll who sat in the forest with a lap full of yams. Thinking the yams were an offering for her the fairy reached out for them and instantly stuck fast on the thick honey Anansi had taken care to spread over them.

At last Anansi had earned the price of the Box of Stories. Excitedly he returned home and set it down in the middle of his village. He called everyone to gather round and told them the story of how he had come by this beautiful carved box. They listened to every word, sighing with relief as each being was captured and Anansi was nearer and nearer to obtaining the precious box.

It was now time to open the box. Everyone leaned forward. All eyes were on it. Anansi opened it carefully, slowly... but no sooner was the lid prized off than the stories sprang out and began flying everywhere. Anansi and his friends rushed and jumped and caught as many as they could – but many escaped and flew far away into the world to be caught by others.

I have been reaching out and trying to catch some of the stories about crystals in the world, and this book is the result.

A story needs the latent power of the python, the capacity to coil and uncoil and always stay alert and watchful; the strength and swiftness of the leopard to leap to the point after the slow coiling and uncoiling of the plot; the capacity to sting like a hornet no matter how small and short. But without the “fairy” it will not become one of the great stories of the world. It will not be one of the ones that escaped from the sacred box bought from the King of the Sky. It must have the qualities of a fairy – otherworldly qualities – meanings that creep up on you unseen to affect your whole perception of life. To catch a fairy with the honey of a story suggests very well how the story captures better than any other form of human expression – the inexpressible.

The crystals and precious stones that occur in the stories I have chosen are potent symbols. “Mysticism lives by symbols, the only mental representation by which the Absolute can enter our relative experience,” writes F. Récéjac, and again: “Symbolical signs have the same effect as direct perceptions; as soon as they have been ‘seen’ within, their psychic action takes hold of the feeling and fills the consciousness with a crowd of images and emotions which are attracted by the force of analogy.”

I hope I have not killed the stories I have summarized here by trying to comment on what they might mean. Stories should be told or read and enjoyed, their magic working deep in the subconscious or high in the supraconscious, with our ordinary consciousness, as it

were, in temporary suspension. I do not intend my commentaries to be analysis, but rather personal musings which I trust will set the reader off on a journey of exploration of his or her own.

Anansi worked hard to win the Box of Stories and that was only fair – because stories are not the valueless trifles some people think. They are among the greatest treasures of the world.

Through the ages certain stories have evolved that are so universal in their appeal and so exactly fit human experience at the deepest level that they help us to cope with what would otherwise be the chaotic and terrifying impact of the outside world.

When scientific and rational knowledge broke away from intuitive and instinctive knowledge these stories – these myths and legends – were dismissed as nonsense and relegated to children. In the households of very rational people, even children were denied their aid. Lately, having discovered that the route these scientists and rationalists insisted we take has led us into a horrifying impasse, and following such great thinkers as Jung, we are trying to reinstate the ancient myths, the healing stories, to their rightful place complementing and illuminating the other types of knowledge available to us.

Story is a natural need, and if we deny ourselves its benefits we may well suffer all kinds of maladies. We all know how our hearts beat faster when we think we hear a burglar in our house, whether there is one there or not. We hear an unfamiliar sound, and we tell ourselves

a story of being robbed and murdered. Our body instantly reacts in all kinds of unpleasant and very physical ways. By the same token, faced by the frightening and immense forces of the universe we can calm ourselves, comfort and encourage ourselves, with a well-chosen myth.

Story can both kill and heal, as any witch doctor, faith healer, or psychologist knows.

The depth psychologist James Hillman once said in an article for *Parabola*, the American journal dedicated to Myth and the Quest for Meaning: "From my perspective I see that those who have a connection with story are in better shape and have a better prognosis than those to whom story must be introduced... To have 'story-awareness' is *per se* psychologically therapeutic. It is good for the soul." He also said: "The main body of Biblical and Classical tales directs fantasy into organized, deeply life-giving psychological patterns; these stories present the archetypal modes of experiencing."

There is no doubt in my mind that a well tried story, a myth, a legend, rich in inner meaning, teaches and heals. The two processes work together to make the recipient "whole". It is often the fragmentation of consciousness – the warring of different parts of the consciousness – that makes for ill health. One's "heart" tells one that existence has meaning and purpose. One's "brain" denies it. The story builds a bridge between the two contraries, enabling each to come to terms with the other – each to see the truth in the other.

“Woe to the sinners who look upon the Torah as simply tales pertaining to things of the world, seeing thus only the outer garments,” says the *Zohar*. “But the righteous whose gaze penetrates to the very Torah, happy are they. Just as wine must be in a jar to keep, so the Torah must be contained in an outer garment. That garment is made up of the tales and stories; but we, we are bound to penetrate beyond.”

In this book I’m trying to penetrate beyond. I know I haven’t arrived, but I hope at least I’ve suggested a few paths to take. As Deena Metzger said in his article “Circle of Stories”: “Stories go in circles. They don’t go in straight lines. So it helps if you listen in circles because there are stories inside stories and stories between stories and finding your way through them is as easy and as hard as finding your way home. And part of finding is getting lost. If you’re lost, you really start to look around and listen.” Later he says: “Stories have many feet and travel several roads at once to the wisdom of the heart...”

* * * *

This is a book about the stories, the myths and legends, that use crystals and precious and semi-precious stones as potent and powerful symbols.

Crystals and gemstones have fascinated human beings since Neolithic times, and no doubt will continue to do so until the end. They endure when the bones of those whom they adorned have turned to dust, and it is usually they and only they that give us knowledge of the

people who lived in ancient times. They speak a universal language capable of being interpreted by any people, any age. Scythians, Egyptians, Iranians, Indians, Celts, Romans – all wore them in life and tried to take them with them in death. Even Christians, who don't believe the dead person will need the accoutrements of this life in the next, hesitate to part a woman from her wedding or engagement ring when she is laid in the earth – though everything else is stripped away.

We return to dust, but the gem on our finger still quietly gleams through the buried centuries and emerges at last, turned up by the plough or the probing trowel of the archaeologist to be displayed in a museum where people in their thousands gaze at it and thrill to the sense of continuity, of ancient, rooted mystery. The real value of the gem cannot be measured in currency, but in the sense it gives us of wonder that the earth can produce such extraordinary and secret beauty... that hidden from us, but capable of being discovered, is something more than the mundane dirt and rubble of our lives... that such orderly and precious form might indicate conscious design. In our moments of terror in a world that appears to release random and wanton horrors on us from time to time, such an indication brings hope and comfort.

Crystals have fascinated me all my life and I have been collecting them for more than half a century. Most of that time I had no idea why I did so except that they were beautiful and they made me feel happy, and comforted me in moments of despair. If I had tried to

explain why I turned to them in this way, I would have said that it was because they reminded me that I was on a magnificent planet hurtling through space, conceived in Mystery and born into splendour. I would stand on the tarmac of a big city with the traffic roaring by, or in an underground train squashed against my fellow human beings, half suffocated, mind assaulted by the anxious jabbering thoughts of those around me, and touch the crystal in my pocket, instantly experiencing relief. What I could see around me was not, after all, all there was to life on earth. It was as though the secret energy contained in that harmonious and beautiful natural form helped to reorientate all the tangled threads of my disordered mind, so that they lay calmly, in a neat but vibrant pattern.

There is today a growing movement of people seeking out the ancient crystal lore. Crystal-wisdom workshops and healing centres have proliferated. Shops selling crystals are everywhere, and where before only the fey and unworldly would wear a crystal against their hearts, now the hard-headed businessman goes into board meetings believing that the crystal in his pocket or hidden under his shirt will help him clinch a deal.

As always with the human race some people go too far. They take up an idea and run with it so enthusiastically that they have long passed the finishing line before they realize that the race is over and the other contestants are going home. Some people claim too much for crystals, and I'm afraid that, because they do so, the general public will turn against this ancient and

honourable wisdom, throwing, once again, “the baby out with the bathwater”. Crystals do have a certain power and a very real energy. A part of it may be the physical response of the vibratory rate of our own bodies to the vibratory rate of the crystal, but more than that I believe it is the expectation we have of the crystal, an expectation built up over centuries, even millennia, now deep in our collective subconscious and ready to be used.

Just to take quartz crystal for a moment: in ancient pre-Celtic Britain white quartz crystal was not only of prime importance in the choosing of the tall stones for the sacred circles, but was used extensively in the burials and initiations. Important burial mounds and initiation chambers (for example New Grange in Ireland) were often covered entirely with quartz, and many skeletons in barrow burials have been found with a quartz crystal beside them or clutched in their bony hands.

The tall stones in the prehistoric stone circles and single standing stones around the world have predominantly a very high quartz content, most of them specifically chosen not only for the crystalline nature of the rock itself, but for the prominent intrusions of quartz veining in them. At Duloe in Cornwall, England, near Looe, there is a circle in a farmer’s field constructed entirely of pure white quartz. Every stone (some of them ten feet tall) is of pure white quartz! Imagine it in its full glory in the ancient days (before pollution) with a full moon shining down upon it.

The universality of the use of quartz for magical or esoteric purposes was brought home to me one Christmas when my son and daughter-in-law, then living in Sarawak (North Borneo), gave me a present of a quartz crystal attached to a thong that had been worn by one of the local Penan people, the hunter-gatherers of the rain forest. I put it beside the quartz crystal I was already wearing around my neck, bought at a “New Age” festival in Britain. Crystals as talismans have been with us since cave-dwelling times and no doubt will be with us when we are living on Mars.

In his excellent book on shamanism, Mircea Eliade explains how shamans use crystals. The people of the Semang tribe on the Malay Peninsula believe that at the initiation of their shaman or medicine man, he is given quartz crystals by the celestial spirits – which he subsequently uses for healing. The spirits abide in the crystals and with their help the medicine man “sees in the crystals the disease that afflicts the patient and the means of curing it”.

The shaman of the Sea Dyaks or Iban of East Malaysia (Sarawak) has a box containing a collection of magical objects, the most important being quartz crystals, “the stones of light”. With the help of these he discovers the patient’s soul. “For here too, illness is a flight of the soul and the purpose of the seance is to discover it and restore it to its place in the body.”

Druid crystal eggs were thought to be so charged with magic that someone facing a lawsuit was put to

death if he was found to have one on him, on the grounds that he had an unfair advantage.

In Australia and in South America tribes believe that the shaman is taken during his initiation to some sacred cave, or mountain, or into the sky, where he is symbolically cut open and given a new set of internal organs. The new set is of quartz crystal, which gives him his power as shaman. One becomes a fully initiated shaman when “one is stuffed with ‘solidified light’, that is, with quartz crystals”.

In Mircea Eliade’s *Shamanism* there is an account of how the aboriginal candidate and his initiatory masters enter a rock. Once inside, the blindfold is removed from the eyes of the candidate and he “finds himself in a place of light with rock crystals glittering from the walls. He is given several of these crystals and told how to use them.” Whoever has seen a geode, or is lucky enough to have one in their possession, will respond to this with a special tingle of recognition. Whoever has read Mary Stewart’s novel about Merlin, *The Crystal Cave*, will know that she is using a universal and very potent archetype.

Is the modern American myth in which Superman seeks his knowledge and his strength among the magnificent collection of crystals brought from his home planet, based on the ancient American myth mentioned by Eliade, in which “a young man climbing a shining mountain, becomes covered with rock crystals and immediately begins to fly”?

The transparency, the hint of inner light, the quality of being solid and yet almost invisible – all these things must surely make the crystal a natural symbol for spiritual matters in legends and myths.

The symbol is chosen because the qualities of the crystal lend themselves to the analogy, but it gains in power over the centuries as it is used time and again in the stories that form the thinking patterns of the human race.

It is my belief that the power of crystals to heal, to help in the development of our psychic faculties, to be used for divination and meditation, is due as much to the legends and myths the race has been brought up with, as to the inherent energy of the crystal itself.

I started this introduction by talking about the importance of Story because I am very anxious not to be misunderstood here. I don't mean that the crystal has no power of its own and that we only think it has because we have been told about it in legends. Both the story and the crystal have a power, an energy, that cannot accurately be measured in a laboratory (though some scientists are now beginning to try!), and that power, that energy, is subtly bound up with the power, the energy of the human spirit – another thing the scientists cannot measure.

When the bicycle tones up the muscles of the body, it is not the well-being of the bicycle that we are primarily concerned with, but the well-being of the body. The crystal and the story (and more specifically for the purposes of this book – the crystal in the story)

tones up the faculties of the spirit. The crystal does help the businessman to make his deal and does heal the sufferer of an illness, because it puts him or her in a state of mind in which, in the one case, clear thinking and decisiveness is enhanced, and, in the other, calmness and relaxation. I believe the gentle subliminal action of the physical vibrations of the crystal would have very little effect if it wasn't augmented by a deep belief in its efficacy. And I hold that belief has strengthened in us because of the myths and legends that are so importantly woven into our subconscious race memory.

I have mentioned the crystal as a potent symbol in myth and legend triggering reactions in the various levels of the consciousness, but I haven't so far mentioned that most significant and most misunderstood and undervalued faculty of the human mind – the imagination. “It's only your imagination” is a phrase we all know, and have heard innumerable times. “Don't let your imagination run away with you...” “You are imagining it...” In each case the implication is that imagination is something silly and should be discouraged. I believe that without the imagination the human race would still be “in the trees”. I believe the imagination is the thrusting edge of the human soul as it reaches up towards the Higher Realms, searching for its lost union with its Deity. It gives us wings, and lifts us from the clay. It gives us eyes and we see the invisible. If we do not have imagination we might as well resign ourselves to the dust, for there is nothing more we will be able to experience but the dust. Without imagination

we kill our fellow man because we cannot imagine what it would be like to be him. Without imagination the scientist will measure and weigh and count, but will never bring us the great discovery, the Nobel-prize-winning breakthrough.

Myths and legends are produced by the imagination when it is functioning at its most serious and profound level. The body is a finely tuned, immensely complex and efficient instrument capable of experiencing much more than we commonly give it credit for – and one of its functions is at once to house the “growing point” of the soul, and to protect it from the damage it might suffer if it were exposed to too much transcendent experience too soon. The imagination tests out the ground beyond ourselves and allows us to explore the way ahead in imaginal symbolic form before we have to encounter it in reality. The imagination gives us myths and legends – those marvellous, subtle, complex vehicles of esoteric teaching to prepare us for our future. In seeking their meaning we are meant to find the meaning of ourselves.

Life is, as you well know, inexplicable. All the religions in the world, all the myths and legends in the world, all the scientific theories and mathematical formulae, laid end to end, cannot give us a totally satisfactory explanation. But the story teller can give us a glimpse, a fleeting flash, of something that makes us feel we understand so that we can live out our lives with direction and purpose instead of floundering blindly in the dust and wasting our potential.

Everyone finds his or her own story to help him or her go forward in hope. Over the years I have been building up a picture of how I see life drawn from what I consider to be the basic teachings of all the great religions (“the Perennial Philosophy” as Aldous Huxley called it) before they were set at each other’s throats by misunderstandings and misrepresentations. How I see the mystery of life obviously influences my interpretation of the myths and legends in this book. You might have a very different world-view, and consequently interpret the stories very differently. This is all right. The very ambiguity of myth is its strength. Myth is a kind of mirror – we see what we are capable of seeing, what we want to see, and what we need to see. We see ourselves, but in greater depth than we would in an ordinary mirror.

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You will find the stories in this volume in many different forms and in many different places. I have quoted only the sources I have specifically and recently consulted for the writing of this book.

Chapter 1

The Championship of Ireland and the Crystal Bird

(Western Europe: Celtic)

Everyone knew that Bricriu was a troublemaker, and no one wanted to have anything to do with him. Nevertheless he managed to persuade the three greatest heroes of Ireland and all their friends, relatives, and companions to come together at his house for a feast by dint of promising them worse trouble if they refused. His unwilling guests finally agreed to come on condition that he himself was not present. He agreed – but built himself a chamber above the hall where he could observe all that went on.

Before the guests entered the hall, however, Bricriu, as host and provider of the meat and mead, greeted them. While doing so he managed to have a private word with each of the three greatest heroes, Cuchulain, Conall Cernach, and Laegaire Buadach, mentioning to each that when it was time to serve the meat he was to

claim the champion's portion because he, and none other, was the greatest hero of Ireland. He further compounded the mischief by telling each of the three heroes' wives privately that she, wife of the greatest hero of Ireland, should enter the feast hall ahead of all the other women. He then retired to his private room to watch the fun.

The strife he caused between the three heroes and the three wives spilled over well beyond the feast and occupied the Irish for quite a while thereafter. Rather than have the three heroes destroy each other and all around them over the matter, they were persuaded to submit to tests of strength and courage set by neutral arbitrators.

Watched over and egged on by their excited supporters, the three performed prodigious feats. In every one Cuchulain outdid the others. They fought giants and magical Druid cats; they fought fearsome spectres and armies of fierce warriors; but no matter how clear it was that Cuchulain outstripped the others, Conall and Laegaire would not admit that he was champion. They claimed something was wrong with the test and that Cuchulain had won unfairly.

At one point the whole crowd arrived at Cruachan, the stronghold of Ailell and Maeve, king and queen of Connaught. They demanded that King Ailell name the greatest hero once and for all.

Ailell was worried and spoke to his wife, complaining that he was in a very difficult position, for if he named one hero over the others, the other two and all

their rowdy companions would go berserk and destroy everything in sight.

Queen Maeve suggested a clever solution that would at least save their own property.

One by one she called the three heroes to a private audience. She told Laegaire Buadach that he should have the hero's portion at the great feast of Conchubar, the High King. All he had to do was to produce a token she would give him that would leave no doubt as to who she thought the champion was. She gave him a bronze chalice with a bird of silver at the bottom. To Conall she gave the same speech and a chalice of silver with a bird of red gold at the bottom. Lastly she called Cuchulain to her side and presented him with a chalice of red gold with a bird of precious crystal in the bottom.

All three and their entourage of supporters then set off for the stronghold of Conchubar, the High King. On the way the contention continued and many a dangerous and skilful feat was performed to try to prove which one was the greatest hero of them all.

At last, at the court of Conchubar, the welcome feast was set.

Laegaire produced his chalice of bronze and proudly showed the bird of white silver at the bottom, saying that it had been given by Ailell and Maeve as token that he was the greatest champion of Ireland.

Conall laughed and stood up brandishing his chalice of silver, with the bird of red gold in the bottom.

“This was given me by Ailell and Maeve,” he cried, “Judge for yourselves how much more they valued me than Laegaire Buadach.”

Then Cuchulain strode across the room and slapped his chalice down in front of Conchubar.

Smiling, the king raised it above his head so that all could see the glowing vessel of red gold and, inside, the bird of precious crystal.

“Cheat!” Conall and Laegaire shouted. “He bribed them for the better cup.”

Conchubar raised his strong right arm to prevent the fight that was about to break out and declared there would be one last and convincing test that would prove which one had the greatest courage and was therefore worthy to eat the champion’s portion.

While they were waiting for the test to be devised an ugly, brutish man entered the hall and jeered at the heroes of Ireland, declaring that none of them would dare to meet his challenge.

“What challenge is that, you oaf?” Conall said, scarcely bothering to stop drinking long enough to say the words.

“To chop off my head,” the man replied.

“That I will gladly do!” shouted Conall, laughing. “Just hand me your axe.”

“The full challenge is that you cut off my head to-day, but I cut off your head tomorrow.”

There was much shouting and jollity at this absurdity, and Conall took the axe from the man, swung it, and chopped off his head. He soon sobered up, however,

when the man picked up his head and replaced it on his body, reclaimed his axe, and walked out of the hall.

The next day when he returned for the completion of the challenge Conall was nowhere to be found. Laegaire was accosted by the oaf and, against his better judgement, shamed into accepting the challenge to prove that he was a greater hero than Conall.

He swung his axe. The man picked up his head and left the hall. The next day when he returned Laegaire was also missing.

The man then turned his attention to Cuchulain – and for honour's sake Cuchulain had to take up the challenge.

The next day when the man returned Cuchulain was waiting for him. He did not flinch once, though the man swung the axe three times, each time hitting his neck with the blunt edge of the weapon.

Then was the matter settled. The oaf revealed himself a master of Druid magic sent to test the three heroes.

To Cuchulain at last was given the champion's portion, and he quaffed his wine from the chalice of the crystal bird.

Comment

Bricriu the troublemaker represents that part of ourselves which, no matter how noble we are, tempts us to mischief, tests our credentials, shows up any flaws in our personalities. When I first began to read Celtic legends I was sometimes impatient with their unques-

tioning belief that the man who can kill the most people was accepted as the greatest hero. It was only when I began to put the lists of killings into the background as one does with something that is monotonous and boring that I began to notice other, more interesting things in the legends. True, the hero in the Irish heroic tales is still the man who can fight and kill more than anyone else, but in this story he is teased and mocked. He may have brawn, but has he got brain? How easily Bricriu stirs up the strife between them; how quickly they fall for his tricks. Violent and argumentative, they swagger around Ireland, each refusing to accept the result of any of the tests, wreaking havoc wherever they go, egged on by their supporters.

The fact that there are three of them is interesting. Among the Celts three is the most potent and significant of numbers. There are three aspects of the Goddess; there are three crystal trees at the entrance to the Otherworld; there are three brothers or three sisters in almost every “fairy” story... It is said that the Irish took so readily to Christianity when the first missionaries came to them because they understood the concept of the Trinity so easily.

Here there are three heroes and it seems as though the problem of which one is the greatest will never be resolved. There is no doubt they are each capable of fighting and killing as well as the others, but the final test comes and only one of them can face *being* killed with unflinching courage. That is being killed not in the heat of battle but as a deliberate and sober fulfilment of

a promise. The mysterious god who challenges the hero to cut off his head one day and then submit himself to having his own head severed the next, is a key concept in Celtic myth. In the Arthurian legends we have Gawain and the Green Knight. In this story a wild man enters the court of Conchubar, the High King. A “wild man”? Is he the nature god, the Green Knight, the earth itself? Is he asking for a blood sacrifice for the good of the earth? In ancient Celtic times the noblest of the heroes would offer himself as a sacrifice that the earth would burgeon in the spring. What we may be witnessing here is the choosing of the sacrifice – not an idle argument among the heroes as to which one is the greatest. Two of them back out at the last moment. Only Cuchulain is prepared to go the whole way, and bends his head in noble submission. Three times the ceremonial axe touches the back of his neck. He is given three chances to withdraw. He does not.

In a sense we already know which one is chosen when Cuchulain is given the chalice with the crystal bird. He has drawn “the long straw”. The others have been honoured with silver and gold. They are heroic figures of the material world. But the third chalice, the one that becomes the possession of the real and ultimate hero, carries the symbol of the spiritual world. In Celtic legend birds are almost always associated with the Otherworld. We have Rhiannon’s magic birds in the Welsh legends; the two birds that swoop over the lake and entice Cuchulain away to Fand’s beautiful spirit-

world; the swans that so frequently prove to be spirit-beings...

The silver bird and the gold bird received by Conall and Laegaire in the cup of plenty, the chalice of life-giving liquid, are messengers too, but the crystal bird – the transparent one, the one that suggests the invisible and numinous realms of the Otherworld more readily – is the one that is given to Cuchulain.

Cuchulain is the god's choice and Cuchulain honours his calling with a good grace, all boasting and buffoonery past.

Sources

Early Irish Myths and Sagas, translated by Jeffrey Gantz (Penguin Classics, 1981).

Cuchulain of Muirthemne by Lady Gregory (Colin Smythe, Gerrards Cross, 1970).

**That's the end of the sampler. We hope you enjoyed it.
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About Moyra Caldecott

Moyra Caldecott was born in Pretoria, South Africa in 1927, and moved to London in 1951. She married Oliver Caldecott and raised three children. She has degrees in English and Philosophy and an M.A. in English Literature.

Moyra Caldecott has earned a reputation as a writer who writes as vividly about the adventures and experiences to be encountered in the inner realms of the human consciousness as she does about those in the outer physical world. To Moyra, reality is multidimensional.

Please see www.moyracaldecott.co.uk for more information on Moyra and her work.