

The First Santa



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Grosvenor House
Publishing Limited

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This book is published by
Grosvenor House Publishing Ltd
28-30 High Street, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 3EL.
www.grosvenorhousepublishing.co.uk

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A CIP record for this book
is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-78148-549-1

This Book is dedicated to
My greatest teacher -
The Land.
To the ancestors of
Scotland, Ireland, England, and Wales,
For leaving traces of the story in the footprints of this world.
And to the Shining Ones, the Fae, the Dragons,
And all of the Unseen,
For helping me to dance between the worlds.



Through the Tangled Woods

“Remember the story, for within the tale, within the land, are threads which will help us all understand our own life’s journey.” This was the passionate cry of my dad.

I grew up within a magical world where myth seeps into the mundane to lead one through the betwixt and between. My dad offered me a wealth of stories growing up, to make of life what I would. He left enough breadcrumbs for me to find my way through the darkest forests, to the most magical pools of light. He encouraged me to drink deeply from the well of wisdom, to feast from the cauldron of plenty and to retain the innocence of a child, with the insight and knowledge of one who has grown.

I remember my childhood as if it was yesterday. The sense of wonder and play that my dad encouraged, allowed me the freedom to creatively paint outside of the lines of convention. I bathed in the milk of poetry, went on midnight moonlit walks, covered my body from head to toe in mud, and danced the colours of the rainbow in my mind.

I am thankful for the journey, for I carry the many gifts of youth into the adventures of my adulthood. And even when the darkest clouds gathered, a speck of light would reveal a gem, a nugget of wisdom to carry me into a new dawn, a visionary way to expand my horizon.

As Dad would often say, “Is there a horizon beyond the horizon?”



The next moment we were off. It was exhilarating, the freedom of galloping through forest, through glen, until we were flying across the beach. We then found ourselves in the sea and the horse and waves were one. His mane was the frothy white foam and we rode the crest of them, from sea to shore.

Then we were under the waves. Here I was on the back of a horse, which seemed to shape shift into a seal, yet was still most definitely a horse. And I was breathing underwater! My two greatest fears in life, horses and water, were meeting each other. I had nearly drowned when I was six, and I would not put my head under water for love nor money. Yet here I was surrendering to the depths of the sea, until I felt as if I were the very waves themselves.

I saw myself in the whales, in the dolphins, I felt myself wash upon the tiny grains of sand, and then I grew out of the water. I was taking human form. I was birthing as first man, as first woman.

I danced on the land and I looked up at a volcano whose fire smouldered within. I felt the heat of the bright dazzling sun. Then I was at a hearth, a council fire, and the horse was there and all beings were dancing as one. I was free. A primal yelp was singing in my heart. I was ecstatic! I could have stayed there forever.

The drumbeat changed calling me home and it was time to leave. I was hugging the horse, thanking my friend for guiding me in this underworld. Then I was climbing up the roots of the old oak, heading to the solid earth above me. As the call back of the drum ended, I was once again in the living room of our house.

THE FIRST SANTA



At dawn that morning, as I stood by the warmth of the fire drumming up the sun, my mind conjured up images of the ancestors crouched together in anticipation.

The sky bloomed in pinks and purples, the golden ball of fire, that heralded a new year of lengthening days, rose in full splendour. I thought of the ancient ones cheering in glee as the first shaman presented the gift.

In the shining light of day, I saw that the jolly old elf had sprinkled magic on the land. There, perched by the silver birch tree, wrapped in red and white cotton, was another gift. It was the same circular shape as the sun. My heart pounded as my dad nodded for me to investigate the offering.

I grasped the present with trembling hands. I slipped off the covering to reveal a gift of power. A hand drum with a beautiful white horse painted upon it. It looked just like the shining horse that I had met in the underworld, my power animal.

I picked up the sturdy frame and marveled at the taught skin stretched upon it. Dad had shared with me it was a cow skin, a sacred animal that represents abundance to the people of the British Isles.

I gently stroked the painted mane of my shining white stallion. This is the drum that carries me. Her song is rich. I hear the hoof beats of the horse in the heartbeat of the Earth Mother and I smile.

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