



THE GREEN HOST



*Where the water whispers mid the shadowy rowan-trees
I have heard the Hidden People like the hum of swarming bees:
And when the moon has risen and the brown burn glisters grey
I have seen the Green Host marching in laughing disarray.*

Fiona McLeod



One of the most important things we can do for the Earth and all creation, including ourselves as individuals, is to reconnect with the Green Host – the Beings and Intelligences of Nature. Not long ago, in rural parts of the British Isles and Ireland – and indeed, in most undeveloped countries of the world – people were quite aware that they shared the Earth with beings of the spirit world. From accounts of the early Celts, we know that they were fully conscious of the spirits of mountains, lakes, rivers and trees, and lived their lives in harmony and cooperation with them, learning many valuable secrets that helped them in their human endeavors. In later centuries, even under Christianity, which dismissed all spirits as demons from Hell, quite ordinary people lived side by side with “the Faeries” in quite a matter-of-fact way. Each farmhouse had its household faery, known as a hob or brownie, who was given a saucer of cream at nights in thanks for its services to the family, such as sweeping up when all were fast asleep. In the forest, people were aware of the living spirits of trees, each of which communicated its own form of wisdom and, often, healing. They knew the “thin” places and times of the day and year when the Host was likely to be abroad, riding on the waves of the new cosmic tides as they rushed into the world. Special individuals became Faery Doctors, having learned the skills of healing from the faeries; others heard faery music and became great musicians.



A Mountain Deva

As recently as one hundred years ago, in rural parts of Scotland and Ireland, it was not uncommon for people to be able to see faeries. But in the last two thousand years, the combined influence of the Church and, later, scientific

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materialism, have conspired to narrow down human perceptions to the degree that very few people of the civilized western world believe in the existence of the spirit world altogether and most people cannot see or even sense the presence of the Hidden People. The modern perception that the Earth is merely an inanimate “resource” for us to plunder and loot for our own profit has had disastrous consequences for the health and well-being of our planet home, which, of course, includes the health and well-being of the human race. Working with the faery kingdom is a way of reconnecting with our allies of the invisible worlds, particular those concerned with the Earth, in order to reweave the old alliance between the two races. As one author puts it:

*Faeryland represents the original blueprint for planet Earth. The ego is the builder, but it has skimped on materials, cut corners, and ignored safety regulations. The result is the world we see around us with all its imperfections and justices. By going back to the original plans, we can begin slowly to rebuild our shattered world. Until fairly recently our world and the world of faerie were in much closer communion. The shining figures of the Sídhe were seen on mountains and near lakes, on lonely paths and even occasionally in our villages and towns. The process that began with the industrial revolution effectively sundered the worlds. Now we who wish to do something for the planet have no more effective tools than those provided by the Faerie Way. By weaving the Faerie mandala about the planet, we weave the worlds back into primal harmony.*¹

The Continuum of Creation



To understand the world of faeries, it helps to look at their place in the continuum of creation. This might be seen as beginning with the primordial Source of All, the First Impulse of creation that emanates from the Void, or the Undifferentiated Unity, and which has been described by different mystical philosophies throughout the world as the first Light, Thought, Sound or Breath. As a result of this first outpouring, the One becomes the Many. The primary wave of the creative impulse is stepped down into progressively lower frequencies, ending with manifestation in the physical world. These lower frequencies are expressed as a hierarchy of Beings, which in the West have come to be called Archangels, Angels, Devas, Nature Spirits and Elementals. The forms of the physical plane vibrate at the lowest frequency of all. This progression should not be seen as a static hierarchy, but rather, a flowing continuum of *unfoldment*, like the notes on a musical scale. Nor is it a one-way progression, because those at the lower end of the

A Mountain Deva

¹ Mynne, Hugh. *The Faerie Way The Faery Way* by Hugh Mynne. St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1996.





scale are continually involved in a process of evolution, whereby they may evolve into higher frequencies of Being. There is at all times a dynamic, flowing stream of creative energy that flows out from the One, becomes the many, and eventually returns to the One, in a continual cycle of Involution and Evolution. In terms of human time, it may take eons to complete just one round.

We can also look at it this way: From the mind of the Divine Architect comes the Primordial Idea of creation. The Archangels, (“chief angels”) or “Lords of Flame,” who are made of pure cosmic Fire, mediate the First Impulse into the lower realms where it will be developed. We could compare them to engineers who work with the universal Archetypes, templates of cosmic order, best imagined by us as patterns of number and harmonious proportion. These are then transmitted to the hosts of angels below them. The angels, like scores of creative artists, transform these archetypes down to the next level of creation as ideal shapes and images of everything that will eventually manifest in the world of Nature. Below the angels are the nature spirits and elementals, the building crew who work with the ideals on the etheric level, the subtle realm of pre-matter. This is the realm of what is variously called the “life-force,” “chi,” “qi,” or “prana,” the energy which animates the physical plane. It is the **Force** that animates the **Form** of all life. The original creative impulse of the One is now able to flow into the myriad physical forms of the material world.



Ocean Deva

To give an example: Out of the Divine Mind that is the source of all existence comes forth the idea of “Rose.” The Archangels take this Idea and design the perfect template of a rose. Using the template, the hosts of angels then create multitudinous images of all different species of roses; these astral forms are then passed on to the Elementals of earth, water, air and fire, who animate them with the life force on the etheric plane, the Nature Spirits who tend them, and finally, we enjoy the miracle of roses blooming in our gardens.

The Clan of the Green World

In this and following lessons, we are going to be exploring the realm of Nature Intelligences. We will begin by looking at three different kinds of Beings: Elementals, Nature Spirits and Devas.





Elementals: These are beings who are involved with the building-blocks of the physical world. In Western esotericism, they are known as Gnomes, Undines, Salamanders, and Sylphs, which correspond to the elements of Earth, Water, Fire and Air. We will be studying and working with these Beings in Lessons 4 through 8.

Nature Spirits: These Beings are involved with individual species of plants, trees, and other growing things of the Green World. Their task is to translate the original blueprint of the genus of flower, shrub or tree into its local manifestation in a particular place, helping it to grow and develop to its best possible being. They are the spirits most familiar to us in the West through childhood stories and pictures of flower faeries and their kin. We may also have come across them in Greek mythology, which recounts tales of Dryads, (Tree Spirits), and Naiads, (the spirits of pools and springs and rivers). They have come to be known as Faeries, although they are only one particular type of Faery. (There are many different types of spirits who go under the name of Faerie, and we will be studying some of these later.)

Devas: The word *Deva* comes from a Sanskrit term meaning *Shining One*. These often appear as tall, radiant, Beings who overlight, (act as spiritual guardians of) the natural world. As such, they are more evolved in consciousness and individuality than their smaller kin, the Faeries or Nature Spirits. They may be concerned with the growth and development of a whole species of plant or tree, rather than one in particular. A small copse of trees or a vast forest might come under their charge. There are immeasurably huge Devas of mountains, lakes, oceans and entire landscapes and ecosystems.



The World Mother

The Planetary Being: This is another name for the Earth Goddess, Great Mother or Mother Nature. Our planet is a conscious, living organism, and has a feminine spirit. Throughout the world she has been called Gaia, Ertha, Ceres, Isis and many other names that denote the Lady of Form. The earliest peoples of Ireland saw their country as the body of this great goddess, whom they named Eriú, which gives us her Irish name, “Eire.” Even today, in the landscape of this ancient country, we can view hills that are seen as her breasts, and rivers named after her many sisters. We can walk over grassy meadows that were seen as her green cloak, visit sacred springs dedicated to her, and enter her body through caves and earth-chambers that represent her womb. She has two primary aspects: the Giver and the Taker, for she grants her children in the world of Time the gifts of both life and death.





In her life-giving aspect, she is the fertile, bright goddess who appears as the young maiden, Brigid in early Spring, who becomes the sensuous May Queen and mates with the male principle of the Green World, the Green Man. The fruit of their union is poured forth in lavish gifts of grain, fruit and nuts at harvest time, but as the Sun turns its face away from her, she shrivels and grows old, appearing in her death aspect as the Cailleach, the old Hag of Winter. Yet she is not only Mistress of the dance between Earth and Sun, of the ever-changing tides in Space and Time, but the living heartbeat of the planet that pulses within its fiery core and animates the mineral kingdom. And she is the overarching sky that swathes the globe in the swirling layers of her protective mantle. In Avalon, she appears in her triple aspect of Morgen-Modron-Mórrígan, who is studied in the first course of the Avalon Magic series.



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