

The Vanishing Stone

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New Mystery Near Tinkinswood Cairn

Due to unprecedented floods and mudslides Thursday night, strange skeletons seem to have been torn out of the hills near the megaliths, being carried past shocked bystanders this morning. Onlookers had been pointing at the wreckage of homes floating downstream when metallic skeletons were noticed. Policewoman Clement pulled a total of three of the armatures ashore.

They appear to be human-like metal chassis, no more than three feet tall, obviously artificially made.

The metal components were sent directly to the Celtic Research Centre at University in Aberystwyth.

The disturbing discoveries were, of course, the only talk of the local pubs and kitchen tables – giving residents a much-needed break from the sorrow over the recent fire in Cardiff Square which destroyed four turn-of-the-last century row-houses.

Saint Lythans, Wales 1378 A.D.

Miriam rushed up the path towards the monolith she knew was nestled at the top of Colby's Knob. Holding her sister's newborn close, she peaked into its blankets and saw the baby was sleeping peacefully.

"You'll be better off anywheres but here, my little love." Her gray-green skirt brushed along the dirt path as she grabbed onto the trunk of a small tree, pulling herself forward. "When I was a wee child, I saw my brother put a twig on the stone and watched it be gone away." She was talking to herself more than the baby she carried, but the girl cooed in her sleep anyway. "The Connells just can't feed one more mouth. If only you had been born a boy – we could have leased you out for farm-work."

Miriam stopped suddenly as she reached the crown of the hill. In the cloud-covered moonlight, she could see a dozen men circling the Vanishing Stone. The megaliths that supported the horizontal stone shot twelve feet into the air. The Vanishing Stone itself weighed in at 40 tons. She could hear the men chanting.

"That is not dead which can eternal lie
And with strange Aeons even death may die.

Goat of a thousand young, come to us, we worship you.”

Miriam drew a deep breath, holding it, hoping these devotees would not see her hiding in the midnight mist. She began to back down the path, forcing herself to find her footing. Suddenly the moon shot out from behind a cloud and the baby began to wake. Now she and the men stood face-to-face. By the time she had turned to run, the worshipers were upon her, pulling the baby from her arms and dragging the pair towards the flat hut-like stones, which were snuggled into a manmade hillside.

The small, crying bundle was tossed from man to man until it reached the arms of a town official. He held it over his head as though offering the baby to the stars.

“Behold! We call upon the messenger of doom to slash with grim delight this victim you hath chosen. May your great black shape rise from the brackish pits and vomit forth pestilence upon our enemies and good fortune upon thine faithful.”

The official climbed a herringbone stone embankment, placing the baby near the center of the crowning stone. All eyes watched as the ground beneath it began to illuminate and hum. The three standing stones were flashing now in synchronicity, faster and faster until the monolith was ablaze with continual light.

Suddenly the bundle was gone as well as the light. The darkness and the sound of crickets were all that remained. Then came brief shouts of victory from the men, and the quiet sobs of agony from the woman. The small band of men slowly left the site, leaving the monolith with its secrets.

But Miriam stayed behind a moment longer, her knees still too weak to hold up her body. And there, in the late night moonlight she saw what seemed to be three small children join hands by the stones and begin to dance with wild abandon. No, no, as she looked again, it became obvious were not children at all, but rather some species of fairy without wings. They danced, circling round and round, till they came to a huge boulder where a doorway suddenly appeared and they disappeared into the base of the mountain.

What appeared to be a small star exploded in the distance.

The End