

O lago da pedra de Sir Owain

*Tradução de Cybele Alle
oliverally@hotmail.com*

Perto do vilarejo de Gorslas, em Carmarthen, tem um lago que se chama Llyn Llech Owain (Lago da Pedra de Sir Owain). E esta é a história de como ele surgiu.

Há muitos anos, mais ou menos na mesma época em que Alarico¹ fritava Honório em pouca banha, havia uma nascente de água ali que, alegavam, era mantida pelas fadas, que, por sua vez, asseguravam que a água se conservaria sempre pura, limpa e fresca. As pessoas viajavam milhas em busca do suposto poder de cura daquelas águas. Uma pedra grande bloqueava a vazão da nascente de onde a água brotava, e era regra que quem dela bebesse colocasse a pedra de volta depois de saciar a sua sede.

Em um dia quente e abafado de verão, Sir Owain, um dos Cavaleiros da famosa Távola Redonda, voltava para casa depois de um longo período nas terras fronteiriças. Cortar as cabeças dos saxões era um trabalho que deixava qualquer um com sede, e Sir Owain se lembrou das conversas sobre a nascente mágica existente naquela região, onde ele e seu cavalo poderiam se refrescar e recarregar as energias para continuar sua jornada rumo ao oeste.

– Já é logo ali no próximo vale, Pompom – disse o cavaleiro ao seu imponente e destemido cavalo negro, que o acompanhava nas batalhas. – Mais alguns minutos e já chegaremos lá! – Sir Owain afirmou animadamente.

Três dias e dezessete léguas se passaram e Sir Owain e Pompom, já quase mortos de sede, finalmente chegaram ao vale da nascente mágica. Uma placa, que apontava para uma trilha na montanha, indicava o caminho. Depois de vinte minutos caminhando por essa trilha, o cavaleiro se deparou com uma

¹ N.T: Alarico, rei dos Visigodos e primeiro líder germânico a tomar a cidade de Roma no famoso saque de 410 contra o imperador Honório.

barreira que bloqueava a passagem; uma grande placa de madeira afixada nela, que dizia:

PEDIMOS DESCULPAS PELO INCÔMODO.
A NASCENTE MÁGICA ENCONTRA-SE
FECHADA PARA MANUTENÇÃO E EXECU-
ÇÃO DE MELHORIAS. TRABALHO REALI-
ZADO PELO DEPTO. DE ÁGUA E ESGOTO
DE GORSLAS, COM A PARTICIPAÇÃO E
APOIO DA COMUNIDADE DAS FADAS DA
NASCENTE MÁGICA.

Ao lado da placa havia um cano de metal, saliente cerca de trinta polegadas do chão, com uma torneira rosqueada em sua ponta. Um pequeno bilhete escrito à mão pairava sobre o cano, com os dizeres: – “Nesse ínterim, beba daqui; a água é boa, mas, lamentamos, não curará a sua lepra.” Sem se intimidar, Sir Owain abriu a torneira e se deitou com a boca aberta debaixo da corrente fraca de água marrom de cheiro suspeito que escorria da torneira. Estava tão cansado que logo recostou a cabeça e dormiu. Seu imponente cavalo saiu sem rumo e encontrou uma poça de água fresca formada pela chuva.

Sir Owain acordou com uma dor tremenda na parte de cima da cabeça. Toda a sua armadura borbulhava, cheia de água; sentia alguma coisa desconfortável em suas coxas, algo viscoso ou pegajoso, ou ambos, que se contorcia em suas regiões inferiores. Ainda deitado de costas, o cavaleiro percebeu que deslizava lentamente em uma lama densa. Pensando que aquele lugar era um tipo de “Outro Mundo”², Sir Owain soltou um grito de terror, e Pompom imediatamente parou de arrastá-lo, soltando o seu cabelo. Depois de muito esforço para sentar-se e retirar a enguia de dentro do calção, Sir Owain notou que todo o vale estava coberto pelas águas.

O cavaleiro ouviu vozes e se virou a tempo de olhar para toda a população do vilarejo, que marchava ao longo do caminho da montanha para verificar o que acontecera. Os oito homens, duas mulheres e um cachorro pararam bruscamente ao se depararem com o lago. Um cidadão, bastante observador, gritou – Olhem! Um lago enorme! E quem é aquele que está ao lado do lago senão Sir Owain, o cavaleiro destemido?

Sir Owain, todo constrangido, começou a se desculpar quando o líder da comunidade o interrompeu, dizendo – Não tema, Sir Owain, nós já não temos mais a nascente mágica, mas sim um lago mágico! Vamos inventar uma história sobre como o senhor se esqueceu de colocar a pedra de volta na nascente e chamaremos o lago de “O Lago da Pedra de Sir Owain”. Construiremos um

² N.T.: Outro Mundo: na mitologia galesa, a terra das almas que partiram deste mundo, chamada de “Annwn” ou “Welsh Hades”.

hotel cinco estrelas no local e abriremos um centro para esportes aquáticos. Logo isso atrairá mais investidores, e teremos mais hotéis, cassinos, restaurantes, bares e casas noturnas.

Sir Owain afastou-se discretamente, conduzindo Pompom pelas rédeas.



The lake of Owain's stone

Near the town of Gorslas in Carmarthen there is a lake, known as Llyn Llech Owain, the Lake of Owain's Stone, this is the story of how it came to be.

Many years ago, round about the same time as Alaric was roasting Honorius' bottom over live coals, there was a spring here, said to be maintained by the fairly folk, who ensured the waters were forever fresh, clear and cold, people came from miles around for the supposed healing qualities of the water. A great stone protected the mouth of the spring from where the water ensued and it was a rule that whoever drank from the spring replace the stone after imbibing.

One hot stuffy summer's day, Sir Owain, one of Arthur's Knights of the famous round table, was returning to his home after a long period on the border lands. Separating *saesson* heads from their bodies was mighty thirsty work and Sir Owain remembered talk of the magic spring in this region, where he and his horse could be refreshed and given new energy to continue their journey west.

"It's just in the next valley, Fluffy", the good knight said to his great fierce black war horse, "Just a few minutes more, we'll soon be there!", he said cheerfully.

Three days and seventeen leagues later, Sir Owain and Fluffy, almost dead from thirst, arrived at the valley of the magic spring, a sign pointing the way up a mountain trail showed the way. After twenty minutes on this path the knight was surprised by a barrier blocking the way and large wooden sign nailed up which read:

WE APOLOGISE FOR THE INCONVENIENCE,
THE MAGIC SPRING IS CLOSED FOR REPAIRS
AND IMPROVEMENTS. WORK BEING CARRIED OUT BY:
GORSLAS MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND
SEWAGE WITH PARTICIPATION AND SUPPORT OF THE
VALLEY OF THE MAGIC SPRING FAIRY COMMUNITY

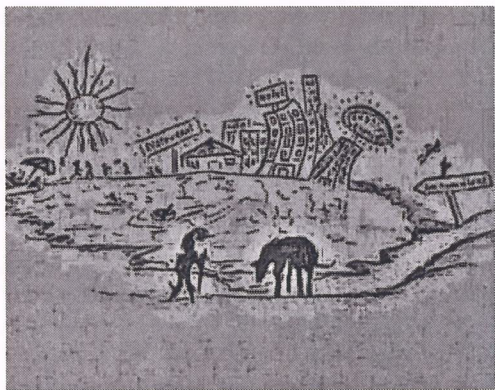
Beside this was a metallic pipe protruding about thirty inches from the ground with a tap attached to the end, a small hand written sign hung over it which said, "Meanwhile, drink this, it's good but it won't cure yer leprosy, sorry". Not to be discouraged, Sir Owain turned on the tap and lay down with his mouth open under a weak flow of brown suspiciously smelling water. He was so tired that he soon turned his head and was asleep. The great horse wandered off and found a pool of fresh rain water.

Sir Owain awoke with a tremendous pain on the top of his head and all his armour gurgling with water, there was an uncomfortable feeling in his tights of something slimy or sticky or both, squirming around his nether regions. Still on his back the knight found himself sliding slowly backward through thick mud. Thinking this may be some kind of Welsh Hades Sir Owain gave out a scream of terror and Fluffy immediately stopped dragging him and let go of his hair. After a great effort to sit up and remove the eel from his underclothing, Sir Owain saw that the entire valley was filled with water.

He heard voices and turned to see the entire population of the town, marching along a mountain path to see what had happened. The eight men, two women and the dog came to an abrupt stop when they saw the lake. One particularly observant citizen yelled, "Look! There's an enormous lake! And who is that beside the lake but Sir Owain the brave knight!"

The very embarrassed Sir Owain began to apologise when the leading member of the community interrupted and said, "Fear not good Sir Owain, we no longer have a magic spring but we have a magic lake! We'll make up some story about you forgetting to replace the stone and we'll call it 'The Lake of Owain's Stone', then we'll build a five star hotel on the site, open a water sports centre, soon that will attract more investors and we'll have more hotels, casinos, restaurants, bars, night clubs..."

Sir Owain walked quietly away leading Fluffy by the reins.



Prince Llewelyn's hunting dog

One of the greatest princes of Wales of all times was Llewelyn ab Iorwerth ab Owain, or Llewelyn Fawr, which means Llewelyn the Great; few monarchs have earned this appellation, Llewelyn shares it with Alexander of Macedonia, Charlemagne of the Franks and his own ancestor, Rhodri Mawr. Llewelyn was prince in the time when Princes of Wales were *Welsh*, and not English as they are today.

Our prince lived in a huge stone castle in the heart of The Land of Song, the army led by John Lackland of England had tried and failed several times to bring down the walls of Llewelyn's castle and the prince and his men had pursued the English all the way back to Offa's Dyke with their tails between their legs.

Llewelyn Fawr's wife was the beautiful lady Joanna, the daughter of aforementioned John, how she came about to be the Welsh prince's wife is a story that is told elsewhere, suffice to say that she denounced her nationality and turned her back on her nasty father, who was also known as Softsword, an allusion to his lack of prowess in battle (or perhaps the ladies named him that for other reasons we needn't go into here). Their first son, a baby of 3 months, was named Dafydd, the future prince.

In times of peace, when he wasn't chasing the English around the hills, Llewelyn liked very much to hunt. When he could, he and his men hunted wolves and dragons, but there wasn't much meat on a wolf in the winter and dragons were tough and sinewy and getting rarer and rarer each year; so they were content most of the time with rabbits and deer. Always accompanying the prince on his hunts were his hounds, Don, Juno, Seren, Morwen, Dylan and his favourite, Gelert. Gelert was an enormous hound of Irish breed, trained especially to hunt the largest beasts of the forest, he wasn't much content with rabbits and deer. Gelert, friendly and faithful, had saved the prince when the hunting party was