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Voices From the Mountains

Faerie Sanctuary Needed in Vermont

by Endora

"O Great Goddess! What have I gotten myself into?" I squealed as my station wagon careened up the icy slope that was the driveway to Destiny Lodge in Northfield, Vermont. That was three years ago, and I was moving my big ol' butt up from NYC to live in the beginnings of a Radical Faerie commune which Agnes de Garron and Gabriel Q had started. Later, Yolanda and Constance Craving would end up there, as well as several others who shall remain nameless because you probably don't know them anyway.

Why the name Destiny? Isn't that colonialist? No, chill out — it's kismet. The real estate agent who showed us the house had car plates that read "Destiny," and the name stuck. The house became Destiny Lodge, and we had gatherings of up to sixty people during the two years we lived there, creating an alternative reality. We incorporated as Faerie Camp Destiny, and then the land (we were renters) was sold. We scattered, and by the waters of Sodom, we sat and wept, remembering.

Well, weep no more! says Endora. Faerie Camp Destiny, the dream of creating of Radical Faerie Sanctuary in Vermont, is alive and is looking at some property in southern Vermont.

"What in Her womb is a Radical Faerie Sanctuary?" you might ask. How apt that you chose womb as an image, because in many ways, a Sanctuary is a womb, a place of rebirth and nurturing, a place where queers of all genders can go and recreate themselves in their own image.

We need a retreat in Vermont that is solely ours: Queer Land, Sanctuary, a place where we can get away from the constant onslaught of heterocentric imagery that slowly gets under our skins and reshapes our faces into masks of spiritless respectability. We need a place to remember who we were before we traded in our uniqueness, our sissiness, our butchness, our openness, our otherness in exchange for a piece of the pie and a place at the table. We forget the pie is made of our ground-up noses, cut off to spite out faces, despite our culture and identity. Why are we so grateful for the crumbs of its crust? We forget that the seat at the table is only offered to us when we behave ourselves, when we assimilate and act like everyone else. Sanctuary and the gatherings that happen there give us a glimpse of another way of being, a way of celebrating who we are instead of toning it down.

There are Radical Faerie Sanctuary lands all over the United States. They are remote, secluded, rustic places where we can remember our relationship to the Earth and to each other. Sanctuary is a place where Faeries gather in numbers from fifteen to three hundred, have heart circles, have rituals to the Goddess and the God, dance naked around bonfires as the moon rises to the drums, recycle



Endora (dressed here as U.S.S. Voyeur Captain Jane Gangway) has also been a frequent guest on the Cherie and Yolanda television show

polyester into garish works of drag art. We put on plays, puppet shows, and no-talent shows; we grieve and remember our dead, take care of our elders and our sick. We take naked mud baths, build snow temples, gossip a lot, and, oh yes, have sex. We're bullish on sex. And yes, all this could be yours if we manage to raise the funds to buy this property.

To that end, we are throwing a drag cabaret on December 21st at 8 p.m. at Cafe NoNo in Burlington. Endora's "Unholy Night Cabaret and Holiday Sacrilege" will feature the same old local drag talents such as spokesmodel and omnigenerous Cherie Tartt, the bubble-wrapped-and-buttled Yolanda, Sister of Perpetual Indulgence Agnes de Garron and her consort Sticky, puppet mage Gabriel Q, as well as performers from New York, and of course yours truly. This is a Constance Craving production, the same girl who brought you the "Winter is a Drag" Ball.

Tickets for the "Unholy Night Cabaret" are from \$7 to \$13 depending on how grinchy you are, and all proceeds go to the Faerie Camp Destiny Land Fund. Tickets will be available at the Peace and Justice Store, at the door, or by phone at 453-5760 or 863-2307.

As Radical Faeries, we believe that being gay is not only orientation, not only the uncanny knack for gender-bending drag, not only the titillating yet dangerous ability to terrify straight people. We believe it is a gift and a spirit, and Sanctuary is a place where we blossom. Is your bud waiting to open?

WARNING: Endora's "Unholy Night Cabaret and Holiday Sacrilege" contains adult subject matter and is not recommended for people with poor or uptight senses of humor. It will parody the holidays and the mythologies behind them, and may in fact border on bad taste. It will be a scream, but may not be a safe space for the religiously sensitive.

If you would like to know more about the Radical Faeries or about Faerie Camp Destiny, just look for us on the Resource Directory (back page). ▼

Task Force Premieres "Freedom to Marry" Video

MIDDLEBURY -- Last month the Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force released a new educational video entitled "The Freedom to Marry: A Green Mountain View."

The seventeen-minute long video was taped entirely in Vermont and features 22 Vermonters talking about the issue of same gender marriage.

Although the piece stands on its own, it was designed for use with the Task Force's speakers' bureau and would add to the voice of the presenters by showing an array of couples who are affected daily by the marriage issue.

According to Production Team Leader Joseph Watson, it was important to the group to have a locally produced piece. "I think people genuinely care about their neighbors, and when they hear how this issue affects the folks who live next door to

them, they're more likely to listen than when we talk about stuff going on in Hawaii."

The video premiered at the Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights Annual Meeting and Conference in Brattleboro. "It was very well received," says Beth Robinson, Co-Coordinator of the Task Force. "Though it was written with the non-gay community in mind, our communities seemed to really enjoy it and get a lot out of it."

The Task Force went into debt to produce the piece, and is hoping to recover the expense by selling the video for \$15.00. To order a copy of "The Freedom to Marry: A Green Mountain View," send a check to The Vermont Freedom To Marry Task Force, P.O. Box 1312, Middlebury, VT 05753. For more information about the video or the Task Force, call Beth Robinson at 388-6356 during the day. ▼