



The Dreaming of Emer

BY JOY M. COLLINS

BEAUTIFUL was the dawn, bright the noon and ablaze with a million stars the night for Cúchulain, when he walked with Emer by his side. The fluting cry of birds at mating time, nor the great champion-cry of warriors at battle had ever stirred him as the soft murmur of her voice, when they spoke together in the poetry-language of lovers. As the rushing torrent was stilled in the cool, calm depth of the sea so the great yearnings of his heart were lost in the deep love shining from her eyes.

"Come with me now, Emer," he whispered, and her hair was silken-soft in his face.

"It is not now we would find happiness, Cúchulain, but in a little while. A year is not a long time to wait."

"Have I not waited all the days of my life, Emer? What was it drove me to Emhain Macha to learn the deeds of war that make of the boy a man? What was it made me learn of Amairgin the Ollav the beauty of

words, and of Cathba the Druid the great tales of the gods? And when the founts of knowledge had run dry for me at Emhain, why did I seek out the Warrior Women, Donnell and Schathach, and at last, even travel afar that I might learn of Aife, champion of champions? But I tell you, heart of me, that there was no peace in all this, only a great crying out for something I did not know until I saw you."

"I would not take credit for the deeds that made me once speak your name in awe and wonder, Cúchulain. 'Tis a stranger thing to me that the Hound of Ulster should speak words of love to me, than to hear of the killing of the three sons of Necht on the very day of his taking of arms, or of Schathach's mighty prophesies of his greatness. Stay, do not speak. I would not have you were you not Cúchulain the brave and the mighty as well as the gentle and kind. I would not have you turn back from the field of battle because I called your name. It is given to the men of

Ireland to fight; and to her women to grieve only in the secret places of their hearts when they see the shadow of the wings of Tethra's great Black Crow, or hear the Voice of Morrigan calling for their loved ones. But there is a time of waiting which is right and proper to set the seal of proof upon our love. It is a little thing I ask of you, Cúchulain."

"Twelve moons must I watch wax, wane and die and by each waxing the flame I carry in my heart for you shall be renewed a thousand-fold. How should I not be consumed by its fire, but that the waning of each moon shall carry away the sorrows of another time of waiting. It is a great thing you ask, Emer, and a little thing — a little thing a year to give, that I might wear the brightest jewel of the world in my heart for ever."



AT THE WANING of the third moon, Emer dreamed a strange dream. She saw the men of Emhain fall beneath the dreaded spell of slumber and her heart quickened to see Cúchulain alone stumble from the enchanted halls. But through the hills towards the north a mighty host came marching into Ulster. In the timeless world of dreaming, Emer lived through the long days of waiting and each fearful night of terror, when one man harassed an army and brought a swift and silent death to a hundred of those who dared to believe that a guard might be set against the invincible.

At the end of her dreaming, the face of Cúchulain strained towards her from the darkness, and she saw the deep lines of tiredness about his eyes and felt the bitter sorrow of his great aloneness.

At the waning of the sixth moon, Emer dreamed again.

In a gentle valley she beheld Lugh, god of light and divine father of Cúchulain. His head was bent above the figure of a sleeping warrior. While three days and three nights of enchanted sleep healed the wounds and restored the strength of her beloved, Emer watched the Boy Troop of Emhain engage the host of Connaught. On the third day, the field of battle ran red with their blood and not one of the young aspirants would ever stand in the ranks of the Red Branch Knights of Ulster.

Before the wrath of the awakened Cúchulain, Emer cried out in her sleep, but she dreamed on of his mighty vengeance. She saw him drive his scythed chariot seven times around the camp of the Connaughtmen and the speed of its traveling built a rampart of earth to imprison the host. Then up and down the ranks, the terrible chariot sped, and before the face of the Contorted One, men hid their eyes in the very moment of death.

When his rage was appeased, Cúchulain turned the heads of Liath Macha and Sainglenn and the two great horses cleared the top of the rampart in one mighty leap.

At the end of her dreaming, the face of Cúchulain strained towards her from the darkness and she saw the deep lines of tiredness about his eyes and felt the bitter sorrow of his great aloneness.



AT THE WANING of the ninth moon, Emer dreamed again. She saw Ferdiadh stride down to the Ford where Cúchulain awaited his coming. Friends and blood brothers by ancient Celtic rite these two, whose hearts must quicken at the meeting, but each knew that the Voice of Morrigan echoed over the valley and one must die for the glory of Connaught or another for the saving of Ulster.

In one night of dreaming, Emer saw the dawning of four morns and the setting of three suns. She heard the clash of steel and the ringing cry of champions at war and when at last Cúchulain sent the dreaded weapon of Bolg Mac Buain upon its course, she heard the death sigh of Ferdiadh and the beating of the wings of Tethra's great Black Crow.

At the end of her dreaming, the face of Cúchulain strained towards her from the darkness and she saw the deep lines of tiredness about his eyes and felt the bitter sorrow of his

great aloneness, as in dreams before.

At the waning of the twelfth moon, Emer put on the dress of a bride and the hoofbeats of Liath Macha and Sainglenn made soft music to her journeying forever into the heart of him whose arm was about her then. There was but one dream left to sadden the nights of the waning moon. The dream wherein an older voice of Cúchulain said, "True heart, thou wouldst not have me falter now," and again, "Well I know I come not this road tomorrow." The dream wherein the spear of Lugaidh found its mark and Cúchulain passed his sword belt about a stone pillar, that he might stand firm in the sight of his enemies in death as in life.

At the end of her dreaming, the face of Cúchulain strained towards her from the darkness and she saw the deep lines of tiredness about his eyes and felt the bitter sorrow of her own aloneness.



The fields about the Ford of Ferdiadh are quiet now. They shall be quiet forever. No more shall the sounds of battle break the stillness of the morning air nor the great champion-cry of warriors ring across the valley at eventide.



» They were upon their great theme: "When I get to be a man!" Being human, though boys, they considered their present state too commonplace to be dwelt upon. So, when the old men gather, they say: "When I was a boy!" It really is the land of nowadays that we never discover. — *Booth Tarkington* (PENROD)

MALMEDY and McCARTHY



By
FREDA UTLEY

WELL-INFORMED anti-Communists know how right McCarthy was when he denounced and exposed Owen Lattimore and the rest of the gang responsible for the Communist conquest of China. But even the Senator's best friends usually keep silent when he is accused of having "defended Nazi murderers" because, back in 1949, he dared to question the validity of confessions obtained under duress from the German prisoners of war accused of the Malmedy Massacre; and further insisted that even defeated enemies should not be denied a fair trial by due process.

Since few of McCarthy's supporters have been as courageous as he in defying the "liberal" smearbund, which has vilified anyone who demanded justice for Germans, they have let his enemies get away with murder, literally as well as figuratively. Figuratively because they have played upon both ignorance and moral cowardice to assassinate McCarthy's character. Literally be-



cause it was the "professional liberals" who inspired the war crimes trials which condemned German prisoners of war to death on evidence which no court in the United States would have considered valid.

Now that an ignorant old man from Vermont has smeared McCarthy on the Senate floor with the same false accusation as Drew Pearson, Elmer Davis and other Pharisees, it is more than ever necessary to publish the facts. But it is unlikely that either the *New York Times*, or other newspapers less guilty of suppressing all the news which does not fit, will ever perform this public service. Nor can I, in a short article, hope to do more than