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# Bretannike Rebellion

Julian Langer

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Summer New Moon 2022

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Dedicated to Katie, Nana, Toby the Owl and all living beings who  
are Bretannike today

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fare, and I am certainly not indigenous here culturally or genetically. Yet I wish to become-indigenous to here, through becoming-Bretannike, through a tribal experience of relationship outside of civilisation – what Daniel Quinn described as new tribalism; and I would note here that the tribal relationships I described in the story of bands, clans and tribe, were drawn from my ideas in Feral Iconoclasm. I wish to become as much Betannike as the Devonian era rocks I climb upon when rambling across the coastline of this place I live in, whose life span far exceeds that of the civilisation of Britain. I wish to become Bretannike, like the pied wagtail who sits in my garden and sings out to the world that they are alive.

my processing my desire for tribal-relationship, clan/family creating and non-collective union. I want a tribe that I might call Britannike and, in many ways, writing this is partly me seeking this tribe – an absurdly stupid act, but the truth of my experience. Will I meet Brue, Dil, Vay or Grandmother on my search for Britannike? I'd like to hope so. The honest answer is I don't know and that it feels unknowable as I write this. As much as I have written this for my friend Llew and myself, I have written this with a desire that it might be read by someone else desiring an anti-colonialism here, on these isles, where Romanisation feels so intense, and that reading it might provide some feeling of resonance.

I have also written this so that any patriot, nationalist state-fetishiser of any ideology, advocate of Moloch/Leviathan, lover of the History of Britain, might read this and encounter a feeling of rebellion towards this machine that they value before the lives of the living who are sacrificed to maintain their Cause – given fascism's desires for a new Roman Empire, this is in many ways intended as a work of anti-fascist fiction. Following from this, I have sought to affirm through writing this myth that indigenous resistance to colonialism, on this archipelago, could not pertain to the type of romantic-traditionalism advocated and advanced by the likes of Troy Southgate; but as a presence that is far less tame than the revolting collectivism of national-anarchism, radical traditionalism, (even pagan-Marxism(?),) or any other similar ideology seeking to disguise repressive narratives as practices of liberation.

I want to note that, with this affirmation of Celticness as being anti-Rome and my personal anti-Rome feeling, I am not seeking to appropriate Celtic identity or making claims of being ethnically Celtic, with an advocacy of any ethnic-nationalism/ethnic-pride. My family background is Italian American on my mother's side and Polish Jewish on my father's side. I live here – on Britain/Britannike, on land that was the home of the Celtic Dumnoni tribe and where I imagined the Britannike Rebellion happening – I am here due to displacement, diaspora, immigration, violence and war-

Like a campfire at midnight,  
the word anarchy welcomes  
wanderers, dreamers, fugitives...  
As the sparks fly from the fire  
towards the stars  
see the eternal underdogs, the heretics... The faces lit  
by the campfire's glow  
are as varied as life itself.  
Come, sit with us,  
and hear one of our stories.

Llew  
Summer, New Moon

## Julian's Introduction

It is a thoroughly absurd act, to write a story like this one. This is a story with no reasonable justification to believe in it or treat it as anything more than one crackpot's attempt to construct a Reality that is easily deconstructed. But, still, I want Britannike Rebellion to be! Despite the cosmic absurdity, stupidity, pointlessness of this story, which cannot "do" anything – egoistically, selfishly, absurdly – I want a story about Britannike Rebellion. I want a mythic-fiction to fill the absence of myths regarding indigenous-life and indigenous resistance to colonialism on this archipelago I live upon – the "British" isles.

Outside of the immediacy of my personal, individual desires, there are two other sources of inspiration for this work of fiction. The first inspiration was Llew at Forged Book's loving affirmation of my short story Mesodma, where he shared that he wished for more fiction within this world of discourse and writing. The second source of inspiration was reading Aragorn!'s book The Fight For Turtle Island, which in many ways is the spark that ignited the fires of inspiration within me. In this work A! affirms his desire for

Turtle Island, the place that was before North America was, which is now both a place and is not a place, as well as the need for story telling and sharing. This resonated intensely with my desire for Bretannike, as my desire for the here that was here before civilisation (Britain) was built, which is both here – and I see Bretannike in the landscape, wild plants and animals, the sea and storms that are life here – and not here, as civilisation and Romanisation (including Romanisation after the empire

fell and others came) have all but annihilated Bretannike, through constructing Britain. I read A!'s book alongside reading (and rereading) Klee Benally's essay Unknowable: Against an Indigenous Anarchist Theory, which also resonated intensely with my personal (anti-)theory praxis and desire for non-localisableness, which is all but the same as Benally's being-unknowable. This is why I sought to affirm unknowability throughout the story of Bretannike Rebellion, as a mode of philosophical endarkenment.

I feel to note here that, as I affirmed in my book Feral Iconoclasm, I desire the destruction of history/History, as the creation of wild/living presences. I feel horrified and revolted by how much death, violence and abuse British history/History has involved and this short story is very much intended as a rebellion against that history/History. I do not believe history is truth and do not suggest that this history that I have constructed, through the book that constituted my research and my own writing, is "the truth". They are, to me, stories and this is a story, a myth.

Yes, this myth has been written for me. This has been written for my friend, this has been written for Bretannike, whatever that might mean. This has been written against Leviathan, Moloch, civilisation, empire and Romanisation. This has been written to become bear, wolf, snake, deer, hawk, badger, eagle, fox, tree, buzzard, lightning and other individuals who are Bretannike. This has been written for a Bretannike rebellion!

I hope that anyone reading this might find, within these words and their being, a desire for the decolonisation of this archipelago.

and Bradford Keeney. Camatte's affirmation that domestication(/civilisation) is a practice of violence and to struggle against this violence is to be engaged in a form of conflict is largely what inspired the form I gave the Bretannike's refusal to tolerate the presence of this violent threat. But I didn't want to present some kind of "revolutionary uprising", to assimilate this work within that phantasies of leftism, or some kind of Kaczynski inspired terrorism-as-praxis, which is why at no point in the narrative do the Bretannike rebels kill the invaders, with it being the sea who destroys their ships and ends Atlantian civilisation. The influence of the work on shamanic practice was the examples of warriors in tribal cultures losing their human form to become animal, like werepeoples and nahualist practices. There is a degree to which I intended this rebellion to embody a somewhat Nietzschean heroism quality, with the Bretannike rebellion being a yes-saying to life, iconoclastically destroying the no-saying rejection of life the Atlantian settlers embodied – this is why I described the human-self-overcoming/becoming-animal as a form of warrior-being, as I wanted to impart a Hero quality, without idolising or deifying. I am sure that I could have found many more excellent sources of inspiration regarding historical indigenous rebellions, but found that I had enough when it came to planning this.

At this point of describing my (absurd) reasoning for writing this story and the way the narrative was constructed as it was; I want to turn away from ideology, books, theory and politics. With this turning away, I am turning towards my experience. I have written this out of a feeling of revolt towards the collective called the-British, with a desire for a tribal experience, which I am calling Bretannike. I have also written this during a period of losing many family relationships, through death and through distance, and coming to terms with what that means for me. My grandmother, Nana, died while I have been writing this and I know that there is something of my desiring-grandmother in this book, through the character of grandmother. So this has been written during and amidst

myth being told by Celts about a tribe who embraced them as fellow primal-anarchists and opponents of civilisation. As far as historical “knowledge” goes, the earliest tribe living here I have found any information about has been the Celts; but they were not the first- peoples here. This is why I chose to do this as a myth of a myth, rather than just a mythic-fiction. Another source of inspiration from Alice’s book has been the affirmation that modernity began with the Roman Empire and that, in many ways, “Celt” is largely a fiction constructed by the Roman’s to refer to anyone they considered savage, barbaric, untamed and outside of their totalitarianism. So, in seeking to affirm a Celtic-anarchy here, I have sought to affirm rebellion against modernity/Romanisation. There is no way of knowing if this is how it was then, but I enjoy this speculative fiction.

As much as I have sought to affirm Celts here, not as some sort of ethnic or nationalistic politics (as has already been clarified to try and prevent bad-faith accusations), but as an anti-Romanisation feeling and struggle; I came to this project with a sadness regarding the Celtic-failure to prevent Empire from repressing their rebellions and assimilating the Celtic-world into Rome. Even areas such as Scotland, Ireland, Wales and others, became assimilated, if not politically, through religion – through the totalitarianism of Romanisation via Christianity. This is why Britannike Rebellion is not a myth of Celtic victory, but of Britannike victory – as I want a myth of indigenous victory here, if only as a fiction to enjoy (absurdly and stupidly).

When it came to constructing a narrative regarding the Britannike Rebellion itself, while I had sought to find information of historical indigenous resistance through the internet, I quickly turned away from online sources, out of a disgust for screen-reading, and (again) to my personal library of books. The main texts that I turned to were Camatte’s work *Against Domestication* and a collection called *Shamans of the World: Extraordinary First Person Accounts Of Healing, Mysteries and Miracles*, compiled by Nancy Connor

## Atlantis

What if there was a History that has left no trace, a History that is entirely unknown and unknowable? This would be a history that no archeologist, anthropologist, historian or palaeontologist would be able to find any evidence for. This history would be completely absent from history books, university text books, History Channel documentaries and there would be no Wikipedia page on it.

Such a History is, of course, the matter of this work. The “history” that follows is a myth, not regarding an ancient history, such as a Mesopotamian, Sumerian or Egyptian, but a pre-ancientist myth. Pre-ancient, here, does not mean the pre-historic, as in before-civilisation. Here, pre-ancient refers to a civilisation before the ancient civilisations of recorded-history. This is to suppose the existence of a civilisation that has left no trace or evidence of its existence, save for a name that has been retained as a warning. This warning is that of civilisation’s ultimate ruination and vile abuses. The name, which you will likely already know, is Atlantis.

20,000 years ago, during a period of glaciation, as part of what is generally known as “the Ice Age” (though there have been many others), there existed a continental landmass in the Atlantic Ocean. This landmass was located slightly north of the equator, not so north that it experienced the fierce and brutal colds of the age, but not so south that it was as dry as many places upon the equator. 20,000 years ago, this continent was settled by those who built the first civilisation, Atlantis.

Those who built Atlantis first arrived on this continent as part of a desperate act of life renunciation. With the bitterly harsh colds of a largely frozen world being all that they could find, they had come to hate the world, hate life and want to find some means of escape. They had sought the end of the world and searched until they found the ocean. When they found the ocean they built boats, so that they could set out into the waters and find an end to existence. Eventu-

ally, they reached the continent that is no longer there. They had succeeded in escaping the world of snow and ice that they hated, but had not succeeded in escaping the world, which was obviously folly.

That the continent is no longer a place is a sheer tragedy and the result of sheer tragedy. When the Atlantean settlers first arrived on the continent they realised that they had not succeeded in escaping the world. This realisation was infuriating to them. They were so infuriated that they immediately set about seeking to annihilate the world around them. This started with the removal of trees, which they used to construct dwellings. They then set about killing all animals who they did not domesticate for food and slave labour. As they went about dehabitating and eradicating life, their culture spread across the continent, like a disease, until it was everywhere. Their detest for the world spread into the soil, which they delved into, building mines right across the landmass. Those individuals who came to be revolted by this culture of mass death and sought to openly rebel were captured as prisoners and executed if they would not accept being slaves. Eventually, after 14,000 years of domestication, hyper-exploitation and destabilisation of the soil through agriculture and ever deeper mining, the continent started falling apart, collapsing into the ocean that surrounded it. Seeing that they had succeeded in annihilating a world, those Atlanteans who were able to, due to wealth and circumstance, set off in search of another land to colonise and annihilate.

They had not sought out other lands since arriving on the continent that was crumbling into the ocean, as their culture taught that the world is evil and must be negated, so weren't adept at sea travel – they had only found the now collapsing Atlantis by chance. However, after some time at sea and after losing many boats, they found a landmass to try and claim, but more on that...

or hit upon certain sensitivities regarding the idea of “British indigeneity” – I am horrified that throughout my life-experience I have basically only heard the idea of indigenous resistance to invasion and colonialism on this island, from nationalists and racists, who advance nothing more than their nation's colonialist totalitarianism. Following from this, there is a definite desire within this introduction to differentiate from any and all nationalisms – statist or anarchist. While I somewhat feel like this “should” be unnecessary, as this story begins with the affirmation of the Britannike embracing the Celts, in an entirely non-sectarian manner, fitting an anti-nationalist ethic; I want this matter to be as clear as possible. I am also writing this section to place myself within the writing and not try to hide and pretend I am not there, in the way that writers so often do.

With regards to the recorded history of this archipelago, my main resource has been Francis Pryor's book *Home*. I generally treat most writing, that is not philosophical, poetic or expressive, as speculative fiction and this treatment is more intense when I come to histories; and this is the case with *Home* too. With this treatment being true, I have generally treated *Home* as my go-to source of (speculative-)information regarding the pre-history of these islands. *Home* was what I used for the dates I gave early in the story and the descriptions of the landscape here, at the time, are what inspired my image of Britannike within this story. After *Home*, my main source of historical-inspiration and information has been Alice Robert's book *The Celts*. In this book Robert's affirms several historical-speculations regarding Celtic-culture, drawing from archeological evidence, which went directly into the story. One of these speculations is that, for a period (before Celtic-civilisation really got going), Celts would regularly destroy any settlement/polity/state that had been built, which I like to imagine reflects an instinctual preference for the anarchy of wild-life and an anti-civilisation sentiment within the tribe. This speculation is where Britannike Rebellion begins, as a mythic-fiction of a



were it not for another invader. This other invader was that of the Roman Empire, who annihilated all trace of the Britannike rebellion, bringing with this annihilation the birth of modernity upon these islands. Modernity brought these islands a new name; a wretched, terrible and horrible name, which survives to this day. This name is Britain, with those who live here being Britons or the- British. It is a name of Romanisation and of empire, colonialism, annihilation and the totalitarianism of History. But the Roman attempt to annihilate Britannike, through building Britain, has not been victorious, for the world is becoming unknowable again, through climate change and increasingly volatile weather, disease and other forms of wild, untameable revenge. It is likely that the sea will rise up here again, though it is unknowable what these isles will become.

Maybe in retelling the story of Britannike, the story of these islands before colonialism, a story of indigenous resistance and victory, we can care for and defend those we love and enact revenge towards modernity and the machine of Britain, built by empire. Maybe we can sever ties to this culture whose own empire enacted many horrendous violent acts towards indigenous populations and all others who live where they settled. Maybe individuals can create a tribe called Britannike and become bear, wolf, snake, boar, hawk, badger, eagle, fox, deer, lightning, tree, so as to become wild, in an untamed rebellion against History and modernity. I have retold this story to you now, to remember Britannike and to re-member Britannike, as I wish to be-Britannike.

## **Why Britannike? Desiring indigeneity/wild life**

I am writing this outroduction as I wish to make as clear as I am able my process when writing this. I feel a desire to avoid certain confusions that might come from bad-faith readings and/

## **Britannike**

The land that they arrived at, the land that I live upon as I write this today, is one of several isles located at the north eastern edge of the Atlantic Ocean. Throughout most of recorded history/History these islands have often been called by the name Briton, or Britain. They have been called this because this is the name that the Romans gave them and as such is the modern name of these islands, as the Roman Empire was the start of modernity.

Before being called Britain by Roman imperialists, who sought to colonise them and bring them into modernity, these islands were called by a name that has for the most part been forgotten. Perhaps forgotten is the wrong word, as it is more likely that the name has been erased and annihilated, in much the same way that these islands have come to experience intense annihilation throughout modernity, through invasion, the ecocidal spread of agriculture and the urbanisation that has not stopped since. This lost name is the name that was given to the Celts who rebelled, resisted and in many places refused Romanisation, only to be brought under modernity by later invaders, or through religion. This lost name was given to the Celts by those human peoples who lived upon the islands first, who saw the Celts as peoples attempting to escape the clutches of civilisation and modernity, that were spreading Northwards, from the Mediterranean. This name was given with a memory that had been gifted by the first people to each other through countless retellings. It is the first name of these isles, was the name those first peoples gave themselves and is the name of a rebellion.

Britannike is the first name of the islands, was the name of these first peoples and the name of this rebellion, shared in memory through countless retellings. If there is such a thing as a true name, then Britannike is the true name of the isles, as Britain is merely Romanisation. Britannike is what will remain, when modernity, Rome and Leviathan return to the earth.

Our story starts with a tribe of Celtic people, sitting down together for an evening, preparing themselves to return to a nomadic way of life. This moment of preparation is occurring because they had just destroyed the city-state polity that they had been living within for several decades – a process not uncommon within Celtic peoples of the time being to build a temporary-city-state, live there for a short period, before dismantling and returning to the open space of anarchy. How they are beginning these preparations is by retelling the memory of Britannike. This gathering is happening long before Roman invasion, in one of the earlier centuries of what is called the British Bronze Age by scholars today. An elder person is being watched by the others within the tribe, who value their wisdom and experience, and so trust them to lead them through this memory.

What follows from here is the sharing of the memory.

“Alright, alright, alright. I’m just gonna get comfortable and then I will start” said the elder, in a tired but happy tone. The elder has a gentle and kind strength, both in their manner and in their body. There is nothing of authority in their leadership and all who are with them experience an intense and loving sense of care from them. “Alright, Britannike, there is no memory more important than this, as it is the memory that brings us returning to the wilds of life and freedom. With this memory we remember that capture and settlements are not what we want, not where we want to live. It is the memory first shared with us, when the ancestors of the grandmothers of my grandfathers first arrived here from the south, by the Britannike who saw that our fore-elders were fleeing from those who are alike to those the Britannike saw off; who saw that our fore-elders had no desire to be captured or to capture, and welcomed them into their world, before returning to the ways of badger, fox, lynx, wolf, bear, hare, seal and boar. That is how they live now, for they no longer resemble you, or you, or me, as they lost all need for this form. Perhaps it was the memory of those who they saw off that lead them to abandon being like this” the el-

opened the settlement’s doors, to try and make use of the forest for shelter from the bird strikes, they found that they had snakes making their way into the enclosure, with many clawed and toothed beasts awaiting them outside, a close distance away – some say even the tree roots were rising up out of the earth, to tear down the walls. Unfamiliar with this land, safe routes of escape were unknowable to them. They felt the force of Britannike upon them and it struck fear into their hearts and minds, for everywhere they looked there were dangers that they did not know how to live through; and being cowardly and weak-willed, they fled back to their boats and the sea. Brue and Dil watched them try to escape via the sea, with the others who had helped them send off the invaders, who had murdered those they love. They watched and saw with horror, the sea rise up and take revenge too, sending them all to the bottom of the waters and drowning all on the boats. They watched this until they had to flee themselves, for the sea’s vengeance came to the shore and crashed upon what the settlers had built, the machines they had left behind and all other traces of their presence, bringing it all down and putting out the fire.”

“They all told their friends, families, clans and it was passed on, so that the whole tribe heard of what happened, what these individuals did to defend their loved ones and of what they had become in doing so. It was passed down by elders to the young, across many lives, as I am passing it on to you” the elder said, looking at the child directly as they spoke. “I am not long for this life my friends! Maybe not tonight, or the next, or the next, but my death will be soon. May you celebrate like the Britannike celebrate – do not bury me in some mound, but let me be eaten, so that I may become lynx, or bear, or wolf, or badger, or fox, or whoever may come and make a meal of me. When you celebrate, pass this story on in retelling, as I will be becoming-Britannike through my death.”

With these words all who were listening knew that the elder was finished speaking and set about the matter of sleep. They kept retelling the story, for many lives, and would never had stopped

mind I cannot say here, as I don't know them, but the stories are that they were more rageful and destructive than all the other visions. The next morning they went to the other clans who were a short distance away, to pass on her words as they had been told to them, and many of their friends and loved ones came to join them, to avenge Vay's murder, the murder of the trees and the other murders, as well as defend those they love. But they did not merely tell them of grandmother's words – they sung them, cried them, roared them, with an energy of beastly will. And I do not know how they did it, as such knowledge is known only among our tribe by druids and mystics, but I know that they did this. As they journeyed through the forest, to find friends, make vengeance and defend those they love, the Bretannike warriors became bears, hawks, wolves, snakes, eagles, badgers, lynx, boar, foxes, a great many other creatures and even lightning – some even say that they became trees as well. Their power was so great that life gifted them with bodies that they needed for their vengeance, enabling their will to flow out of them and into the world, like the storm beating upon the land. I don't believe they used any magic for it to happen, though I couldn't say for certain. If you ask me, I reckon that it was simply the raw power of their life-will, their deep and dark connection to all those living in the forest and their choice for it to happen – their wills being the will of the forest. Perhaps it is unknowable how it happened. This might be for the best, as if it could be known then it could be used by those who are enemies of life and the living. Perhaps you must have it happen to you, or choose to do it, to know how. It seems to me to likely be a choice that you make for yourself without knowing how to make the choice, and it happens when you will it. I don't know.”

“When the Bretannike arrived this time, the settlers, who had tried to close themselves in within the walls they had built from the trees they had murdered, knew not what was happening. They could not! Lightning had struck and there was fire within their walls. Hawks and eagles were striking from above, and when they

der said, gesturing towards their body. “Or perhaps it was seeing how our peoples have come to seek to capture, only stopping and destroying the settlements when we reshare the memory of Bretannike, that lead them to become who they are today. I don't know and they have become unknowable.”

“The memory of Bretannike begins, as many of you will remember, though perhaps not you youngsters, who have only heard it but a few tellings, with death. The death of a much beloved elder had brought one of the Bretannike clans to sing their mourning songs, dance, bury them and celebrate their life, much like how we do. The death of this elder had been seen to be coming and so was expected, despite the efforts of their medicine person. As it is when we see those we love pass from life into death, this event was one of great celebration and great sadness. We would all do well to remember that which they never forgot – that death is rebirth and life. When I have fallen perhaps I will be the meal of a bear, or fall in to a river to be the food for the fish who live there, to be reborn in them; and if someone like you” they said, gesturing towards a small child, sat in the arms of their mother, “were to eat one of those fish, I would be reborn in you. Yes, to lose one you love is a terrible sadness, as was the case for the Bretannike on this occasion, but they knew, and perhaps still know, that all is life and that there is life within death. Their songs and dancing and tears and laughter would have been heard far away, being enough to keep away any potential threatening creature, for fear that they were the sound of some stranger, monstrous creature, that had ventured out of the sea to devour all in their path.”

“The strength of this tribe could be seen in all the individuals, in how they said their goodbyes and honoured the dead. They embodied the heights of grief, sadness and pain, along with deep care, love, joy, celebration, as they affected the living around them, as much as they were affected by the living and the dead. The toughest of weathers, deepest of forests and their fondness for flowers and

creatures, for play, to watch and to hunt, rendered them as gentle and as powerful as the mightiest of deer.”

“They built no burial chamber, as they left their dead as the wolf does, for others to eat the flesh of, only engaging in cannibalism during periods of food scarcity, such as particularly harsh winters – this occasion was not such an occasion. And we should all remember that, like with wolves and bears, strength and warriorism are qualities of creators, as the bear and wolf mother will fight to love for the young they have created.”

“After the dancing, singing, crying and all other activities that night ended, they slept, or made love and then slept, filled with life and sorrow and love. It was a warm night and they slept well, which was just as well, as the next morning they were to be met by those who we remember as those the Bretannike cast back into the sea.”

## Arrival

The elder did not know of the history of the Atlantians, nor did any of the other Celtic-nomads. They did not know it, because the Bretannike had no knowledge of it, as they never had an opportunity to learn this history. Even if they had learnt it, this knowledge would really have meant nothing to them, as they had no reason to care about it and so it did not matter to them. So as the elder continued to retell this myth, they could offer nothing on the Atlantians with regards to why they had arrived, not even the name by which they called themselves or we know them as – as with the Bretannike who told the Celts of these events, it did not matter to the Celts why the Atlantians had arrived, what their purpose was, their Cause, or what they hoped to do. What mattered to the Bretannike (and the Celts) was that they were going to rebel against this colonial-invasion, the construction of city-states and civilisation.

## Becoming Animal

Hearing the elder retell the grandmother’s words brought a stillness to all listening. That these words had been remembered and passed on imbued them with a particular power and affirmed a sense of meaning, as each individual could feel that what she was saying held with their experience of life and fear.

“...What I have to say is this. As you fear the bear, you must become the bear and strike fear into their hearts and minds. As you fear the hawk and eagle, you must become, like the hawk and eagle, a threat that could strike without warning to these settlers. Like how you fear the snake for their poisonous bite, you might become beings as terrifying as the most deadly poisonous snake. My friends, you must become like lightning and bring the fear of fire to these murderers! They must fear you, for they must know that if they choose to stay, you will be their death. This is how you can best care for those you love and this forest, which is Bretannike.”

Before continuing, the elder took a moment to look at the child they had gestured towards earlier and held out an arm, as a sign of invitation. The child then approached the elder and accepted the embrace that was offered, sitting with the elder to hear the rest of the story.

“Brue, Dil and those others in their clan who were strong enough to fight, heard the grandmothers words and saw the wisdom that she had shared. They felt it deep in their bones, their muscles and all else that they were consuming them like fire consuming wood. That night they were visited by visions inspiring vengeance in their being. One envisaged a giant oak tree, with a mouth and teeth, swallowing the settlers alive. Another individual dreamt of a great fire being birthed out of the forest, burning down all that the murderers had built and all that they had brought. Dil slept with images of killing his enemies with his bare hands, pulling off their limbs and heads, with their blood feeding the ground they had claimed. The dreams that filled Brue’s

a meal, making it unlikely that Vay had been hunted for food, like how they had lost others they love to those who would make a meal of them – usually bears or wolves. After thinking with her eyes shut and her back against the trunk of a mighty tree, the grandmother said this: I am scared, you are scared. I am scared of these people who you tell me have murdered trees and those living in the forest and Vay, and you are scared of them too. I see it in your faces! Yes, we are all sad too, and there will be opportunity for this, but now we are scared. I am glad for this fear,

as I know that when I have been scared I have been able to run faster when I have needed to run, fight longer when I have needed to fight and I have lived through terrible nights, when my fear kept me alive. You know you have choices, as you know you are scared of the possible outcomes of your choices. You know that if you stay you might die, like Vay died. You know that if you go and fight you also might die, like how Vay died. You know that if you run they might hunt, find and kill you, you also might die, as Vay died. We cannot stop having these choices, as they are yours and mine and ours to make. Yes, I am scared, I am afraid, for myself, for my family, this clan, your clan, the tribe, the forest, all who live here. This threat is new, but this feeling isn't. I have feared for myself and those I love for all my life, and survived as best I could whilst feeling fear. So who do I fear more than these who have murdered Vay and the trees and many birds and beasts? I'll tell you who I fear more! I fear lightning that strikes upon dry wood and births a fire that burns down many in its path, before the rains stop it. I fear the bear who might eat one of you, or the wolf who might take away one of my sons to their pack to feed their children. I fear the hawk and eagles who might take a baby in their talons. I fear them like the deer fears you or I, as we might hunt them. So you have come to me and this is what I have to say to you..."

When the Atlantians arrived on the south western coast of Britannike, they did not encounter a thoroughly tamed and domesticated landscape, such as they were used to. No trace of any civilisation or anything like what they had known on their continent that was crumbling to the deepest darkest recesses of the ocean. Forests, birds and beasts, all hard and strong for having learnt how to survive amidst the weathers of the cold sea that surrounds them and the Atlantic Ocean. As full of life as the most liveliest of rainforests today – perhaps even more, for Britannike was not affected by civilisation. Not a place offering tame safety, civilised comfort, law and order, or anything else these Atlantians had been used to. Many of the ships that had survived the journey did not approach the coastline, but waited at sea for news from those who did.

Those who landed upon the shore of what would come to be known as Dumnonia, under Romanisation – and is now known as Cornwall, to those of us who live on these isles today – immediately set about chopping down trees, in an attempt to construct a fortification that would keep out the wild world of life. This is where the elder's story picks up from. "When they awoke" said the elder, whose face was showing signs of sad feeling and aged-tiredness, "they awoke to see many creatures, on foot and by air, fleeing from south of where they had slept. Brue, a great fighter, with a fair face and hair that reached their arse, went with two others from the group, Dil and Vay, who were of similar strength to Brue, but younger and looking to Brue as a guide, went to investigate, in order to keep the others in their clan safe. The band knew the forest and landscape well, as they had lived in the area for the vast majority of their lives, travelling not too far away whenever moving to a different area. It took Brue and the others less than a day to reach the sea and see, to their horror, those who had come from the sea and what they were doing to the trees. Like the settlement that we have just freed ourselves from, these settlers were seeking to build walls, from the trees that they had just killed. To the Britannike, such as an act was sheer madness, as they had never seen

such practices before, seeing this act as folly. They saw many cutting down trees, with machines – as many machines as there were those wielding them, if not more. They knew by instinct that they would do well to turn and warn others.”

“While the other two in the band went to warn their clan, Brue went to warn other clans that were within a day-or-two’s running distance, for the clans shared as a tribe news that may affect the others. I don’t know how many of the other clans Brue saw and warned. To you, I or any other outside of the tribe, it would have been near impossible to find the clans, as they were skilled at being unknowable. But Brue could do it, as they crossed paths regularly and would always share where they intended to move to. After several days of running, Brue returned back to his clan.”

“Upon returning, Brue discovered that, after bringing the news of the settlers, Vay had gone back to see what could be learnt of the settlers ways, but had not returned, which had brought a great deal of worry to all. Dil and Brue headed back to see if they could find Vay, running as fast as they could, hoping that they would find Vay alive and well. But when they got to the spot where they saw not long ago the settlers had been cutting down trees, their eyes were again filled with horror, as they saw Vay’s head cut from their body, on a spike.”

## Murders

The Atlantian hatred for life had been brought to the isles of Britannike and the indigenous culture was experiencing the brutality of colonialism and invasion. Today civilisation has colonised much of the globe and basically all of these islands, which were once called Britannike. To say that colonialism is an act of ecological murder and mass murder seems fair, as it is an act of killing with malice-aforethought, and to say this isn’t a form of moralising; colonialism isn’t hunting or killing to defend those you love;

colonialism is malicious, in that it is a politics that intends to do harm; and is premeditated – all of these are defining features of what is called murder.

The elder took a moment to pause, before continuing to speak. Pauses in story telling are moments that are all but impossible in written story telling, unless a reader puts down the book; but when listening to a story being told, the listener experiences pauses whenever the speaker does so. During this moment of near silence children clung to their parents, lovers held each other, those sat alone looked to the other individuals in the tribe and no one spoke, save for a child breaking the silence quietly to tell their parent that they wanted to move slightly. They all felt the warmth of the fire and of each others presence, while holding a feeling of sadness, for they knew what the elder was going to say.

“I think they must have been silent too, Brue and Dil, as that is what death brings – silence. Vay would speak no more and be silent. Silence is an emptiness, an absence, as is death, so yes, I think they must have been silent, if only for a short while.”

“Once they were ready, Brue and Dil headed back to their clan, to tell them the sad news. On their way there it is said that they stopped twice. The first time they stopped to eat and the second stop was for a brief argument about whether they should split to warn other clans, which they decided not to do, agreeing to tell the other clans after they had returned home. The arrival home saw many tears. But there was not time to mourn yet, as they knew that this danger was not one they would tolerate.”

“All of the group of individuals made their way to another clan, who was close, to speak to a grandmother who was the oldest of all the Britannike known to them. This was not a journey that they would have chosen, were it not for the danger, but with such a threat so close they all walked together, until they reached their friends. The grandmother was deeply saddened to learn of the loss of Vay, as were all of her clan, for it seemed to them a senseless death, as Vay wasn’t big enough or meaty enough to make much of