

On a boy and girl who emerged from the earth

by Ralph of Coggeshall in *Chronicon Anglicanum*

Another marvelous thing, not unlike the previous one, also happened in Suffolk at Saint Mary's of Woolpit. A boy was found with his sister by the denizens of that place, near the edge of a pit which borders the town. They had a similar form to other people in the shape of their bodies, but in the color of their skin they were different from all the mortals of our world - for the entire surface of their skin was colored green. No one was able to understand their speech; they were therefore brought before an astonished crowd to the house of Lord Richard de Calne, a knight, at Wikes, where they cried inconsolably.

Bread and other food was placed before them, but they refused eat any of the dishes which they were given, even though they were being tortured constantly by the greatest hunger pangs. The girl later confessed that this was because they believed that all of this sort of food was inedible.

At last, when beans with their stalks, newly harvested, were transported into the house, the children pointed at them with the greatest eagerness so that some of the beans might be given to them. When these had been brought before them they opened up the beanstalks, not the beanpods, thinking that there would be beans contained within the hollow of the stalks. But when they found no beans therein, they began to cry again. When those standing nearby noticed this, they opened the pods and showed the children the exposed beans, and with great joy they were fed by the beans that were shown to them, touching no other food under any circumstances for a long time.

The boy, in truth, was always overwhelmed as if by fatigue, and he died after a short time. The girl, enjoying her continued health and growing accustomed to whatever food she liked, lost her leek-green color entirely and little by little recovered the flesh-colored appearance in her whole body. After she was reborn in the bath of the sacred baptism, she lingered for many years in the service of the aforementioned knight (just as I have repeatedly heard from that same man and his family) and stood out as an excessively cheeky and impudent slut.

Often asked about the people of her homeland, she used to assert that everything and everyone there was tinged with a green color, and that they could see no sun, but they still enjoyed a kind of brightness as happens just after a sunset. When she was asked, moreover, how she came to this land with her aforementioned brother, she responded that it was because of a cavern the two of them found when they were following the herds. Approaching it they heard the delightful noise of some bells and, captivated by the sweetness of their sound, they advanced through the cave by wandering for quite some time until they came to its exit.

There they emerged, shocked and terrified by the excessive brightness of the sun and the unfamiliar temperature of the air, and for a long time they laid there beyond the mouth of the cave. And although they were terrified by the discomfort of their arrival, they were willing to split up to search for the entrance to the cave. But they were unable to find it again in the least, up until they were apprehended by the townsfolk.