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For John Schaefer and the search for "Dark Matter"

[1](#)

The woman in my bed woke up screaming. Hysterically.

Legions of demons with pitchforks were Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) chasing her, I thought with some lack of sympathy. And herself believing that there were only good angels.

Strong, resourceful spear-carrier that I am, I struggled out of the depths of sleep and put my arm around her. She was as stiff as a redwood tree.

“Tis only a dream,” I said bravely.

She continued to wail.

“They’re all around us!”

“Tis only a dream,” I insisted. “I’ll Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) turn on the lights.”

“Don’t!” she begged. “I don’t want to see them.”

“Who don’t you want to see?”

Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels)

“Whom,” she sobbed and collapsed into my arms.

I felt the soaking-wet cotton of her Notre Dame sleep tee shirt with the word “Irish!” scrawled above her breasts in gold—a redundant label if there ever were one.

“Whom?” I corrected myself.

“The spies, you friggin’ eejit!”

That was a new one. I didn’t like it. Often her nightmares were a warning that we were about to embark on one of our mystery tours. There are costs in being married to a fey woman from the Gaeltacht.

“They’re part of your nightmare. They’re not real.”

“They are too real!” She clung to me in desperation. “They’re all around us.”

Two other presences stumbled into the room, one large and canine, the other small and human.

“Are you all right, Ma?” Nelliecoyne, our seven-year-old daughter, asked.

A very large muzzle nudged around my Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) arms—Fiona, our senior citizen wolfhound. Like the woman in my bed they were both fey. Three of the dark ones in my house—wife, older daughter, and hound.

She eased out of my Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) arms so as to embrace the little girl and pat the big canine on her massive head.

“Tis only a nightmare, dear,” she said to Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) the little girl.

“Aren’t they the terrible things altogether, Ma!”

Since she was speaking English with a brogue, Nelliecoyne pronounced the “th” words as though they began with a “d” as in “dey da terrible dings.” She talks brogue only with her ma, and with me sometimes, when I’m around. Otherwise, she talks either Chicago Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) English (with its flat “A”) or Irish. Trilingual, like I say, just like her ma.

“Did I wake herself up?” The woman put aside her hysterical mask and became an anxious mother.

“Sure, Ma, don’t you know that lightning could strike in the backyard and that one would sleep right through it?”

“That one” was her little sister, Socra Marie, a reformed two-year-old terrorist, doing her best to act like a three-year-old “big girl” and losing sometimes to her exuberance.

“I’m fine now, dear. You and Fiona can go back to sleep. Doesn’t your da always take care of me when I have these nightmares?”

“Da says that creative people have them all the Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) time.”

“And isn’t Da always right?” She sighed.

“And doesn’t he always take good care of you?” Nellie replied with her own sigh.

“Always.”

They both sighed together. These were West of Ireland sighs that sound Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) like the advent of a serious attack of asthma.

As spear-carriers go, Da isn’t the worst of them.

After hugs and kisses the dawn patrol departed. The woman reclaimed the protection of my arms. She was still trembling.

“Can I turn on the lights now, just to be sure?”

She huddled against me.

“All right,” she said dubiously.

YOU JUST WANT TO SCREW HER.

She’s my wife.

YOU’RE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF HER FRIGHT.

I turned on the lamp at the bedside. Cautiously the woman turned away from my chest and glanced around our bedroom.

“Well, they were here when I woke up.”

Her long hair was in disarray. Her face red from tears. She was still shivering. Her sleep shirt was Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) askew. Her eyes darted around, looking for monsters. She was nonetheless gorgeous.

As in all matters, the woman’s collection of sleepwear was variable—from outrageously erotic to dull. Moreover, her choice in night garments was not an indicator of her interest in sex. So the blue-and-gold shirt was hardly a hint—not that I needed much of a hint to want her.

I am going to make love to her. She’s in her shy West of Ireland mode. Can’t beat that.

ONLY IF SHE ASKS YOU. DON’T BE A HORNY NOTRE DOMER ALL YOUR LIFE.

“It was just a dream, Nuala Anne.”

“Sometimes dreams are true.”

She disengaged from me and lay back on her pillow, still trembling.

“They’re just reviews of the day, aided by Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) that last drop of the creature you had at dinner.”

“A Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) lot you Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) know.”

“Cindasue talked about spies at dinner last Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) night ...”

“They’re all around us, Dermot Michael. Won’t we have to fight them!”

I didn’t like that one bit.

“Well, we’d better get back to sleep.”

She reached for a tissue on the nightstand and wiped away the tears. Almost nine years of Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) marriage and a little gesture like that still destroyed me altogether, as she would have said.

“I’m sorry I woke you up,” she said.

“No problem.”

“I don’t suppose, Dermot, you’d ever want a little ride now, would you?”

“I could be talked into it.”

The result was marital sex—a gentle, tender, healing journey down a familiar path which was always new towards a sweetly explosive finale somewhere in a field of flowers. Perhaps, I thought as she slipped back into sleep, this is why God or evolution or someone created marriage.

I have been working, if that’s what poets do, on a cycle of poems about marital love. I suspect that the reason God and the evolution Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) process made men and women so much alike and yet so Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) different was to provide surprises in the marriage union. If herself ever stops surprising me, I’ll know that our marriage is in trouble.

Reversing the stereotypical expectations, I remained awake, wondering and worrying. Nuala Anne, my Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) glorious and treasured wife, was in one of her labile moods, something that happens to your dark ones intermittently. The problem was that she wanted another child, a second son for the Mick (Micheal Dermot, our son and so far our middle child) to fight with, though there was no sign that our self-possessed five-year-old was looking for a fight with anyone. “Four is a nice number, isn’t it now? A nice round number?”

Her first three pregnancies caused Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) serious problems. Nelliecoyne proved difficult to carry and difficult to bring into the world. After the arrival of the Mick, my wife went into postpartum stress. Socra Marie showed up after twenty-five weeks, weighing eight hundred grams. I was uneasy about what might happen next, but I have enough sense not to argue. Then, despite considerable, and admittedly pleasant efforts, she did not conceive.

“Maybe someone is sending us a message,” I had suggested very Irish Crystal: A Nuala Anne McGrail Novel (Nuala Anne McGrail Novels) tentatively.

“Maybe,” she admitted.

Earlier in the week we had our problems with the dogs—our large and amiable snow-white wolfhounds, Fiona and Maeve. On nice days, as Nuala determined them, they would accompany her and the kids across the street to the local Catholic school, where they perform for the entertainment of all parents and children present.

So on Monday evening I had received a call from the pastor of the parish, a humorless little man who considered our family one of the many burdens he must patiently bear.

“Mr. Coyne?”

“Yes, Father.”

“I’m calling about your dogs.”

Irish Crystal A Nuala Anne Mc Grail Novel Nuala Anne Mc Grail Novels

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