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The Ice Bird

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The Ice Bird

TALIESSIN REMEMBERETH THE PAST
Sonnet CVI

It was not the heathen pirates that annoyed us.
 Our own propensity to play the fool,
 Our inability to resist, destroyed us,
 Caught in a self-willed trap of dire misrule.
Then Arthur came and took the stone-kept sword
 And wielded it with such nobility
 The flower of knighthood took him as their lord,
 And with their help he taught us chivalry.
We couldn't keep the lesson, and it closed,
 That door through which we'd briefly glimpsed the Good.
 So Pelles bleeds through lack of a question posed,
 The realm through lack of an answer understood.
A greater King must bring the time when we
 May learn in bowing truly to be free.

THE ICE BIRD

by

Lala Heine-Koehn

Between two mountains larger than forever,
an icebird lived inside a black crevice.
Though the sun shunned him for some mysterious
reason and he has never
seen the light, his eyes could pierce
the darkest of dark.

Asleep one time, with his eyes open,
(his eyelids were frozen, never came down)
his breath shook an avalanche, collapsed
into the crevice a man and a woman
much in love, who were trying to climb
to the summit. Both of them were dead.

The icebird woke, fluttered first to the woman,
then the man, sat upon their chests.
For the first time, his feet grew warm.

He felt comforted. After a while, his feet became
chilled again. He left the man
and the woman and went on with his cold living.

He had a dream one time. He saw a white bird.
(Though he had never seen anything but black,
he knew the bird was white.) It was pecking
its way into the bowels of one of the mountains.
And suddenly everything became sunny
and bright. He could even hear the mountain
sing. This made him very sad. What of the other
mountain, silent and dark? He began to cry.

I cannot tell you any more. Only that I did
hear the icebird crying when I was little.
I do not hear him anymore.