

Thorn's Train Journey

I invite you to close your eyes. You may find yourself underground, on a sandy path sloping gently downwards. The walls around you glitter with flecks of gold.

The passageway opens up into a cavern as vast as a cathedral. The sandy path becomes a wide ledge, hugging the cavern walls as it spirals downward. The spiral takes you deeper into the heart of the world, until you stand on the cavern floor. Before you is a lake with a surface like black glass.

I invite you to take a step forward.

Gravity flows differently here, and so does water. Instead of falling in with a splash, you step through a doorway, perfectly dry.

You've arrived on the platform of a train station. Everything except a few feet of train tracks is obscured with thick, white mist. The train tracks are strewn with stars.

You hear a horn...? No, it's the whistle of an arriving train. The doors open. There's no fee for your ticket, but you may have to leave behind what cannot be taken. I invite you to board the train.

You find a seat where you can look out the window. Mist swirls outside, but you can see a still, glassy ocean all around you. Vague shadows move on the mirror-like surface, almost like reflections.

You see the conductor coming down the aisle. You may see him as a very tall man dressed in black, with long silver hair, or you may not. You may see his antlers, far vaster than the space around him, reaching up into the stars--or you may not. However you see him, this is Gwyn ap Nudd.

He stops in front of you.

"Where are you going?"

Do you answer him? Can you answer him? There is no wrong way to answer, and many answers are true.

I invite you to stay and pass some time with Gwyn, in whatever way seems good to you. This place is a strange place, but you are safe here.

[Silence for a few minutes.]

The train whistle blows. This is your stop, coming up. It is time to bid farewell to Gwyn, and return home. The train comes to a stop and the doors open, inviting you back onto the platform. The train pulls away into the mist, and stars glimmer on the train tracks.

Stepping through the doorway, up through the surface of the black lake, you find yourself in the cavern, dry and warm. The spiraling path leads you up out of the Deep, until you reach the smaller passageway. The cave gently melts away as you rise out of Annwn, and return home.