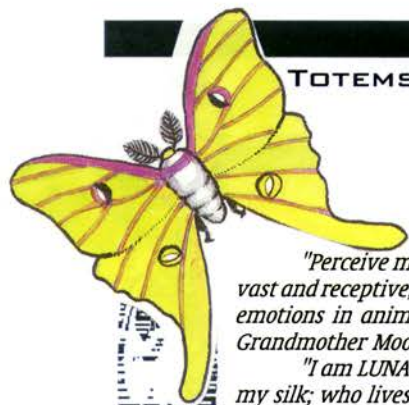


TOTEMS: A COLUMN WHICH WILL FEATURE A DIFFERENT ANIMAL,
OR OTHER TOTEM EACH MONTH

LUNA MOTH

by Cie Simurro (aka Thunderbird Starwoman)



"Perceive my real nature. How delicate the structure of my body. How tensile. How strong and fine, my silk. How vast and receptive, my dedication to the stellar Mother, the luminous Orb. She dances and moves the tides, earth's waters, emotions in animals, including human. From the yearning of the plant world to the fine spun diamonds of light, Grandmother Moon creates beauty.

"I am LUNA MOTH - an emissary of the Moon and the Queen of the Faeries - who dresses in garments made from my silk; who lives half a world removed from ours in a continuum of ageless feeling, pooled every once in a while to catch her interest, and perhaps interact with the human drama that co-exists in a parallel reality. She notices the unusual act of courage; the inspired act of creation.

"Human: I am an example of the power of creativity and beauty that you may create. Why wait any longer? Why wait for perfect circumstances? Create something as beautiful as I am. Create it now. Linger not in residues of old feelings of pain, of loneliness and remorse. You may never get to the bottom of that heap. Instead, choose to bring into your experience that which is beautiful for you; that which gives you pleasure. Let go of all guilt. This is how you save the world. This is how we become a planet and beings of creation. The Goddess accepts all acts of pleasure as pure; creation as prayers. Be happy."

It was a season of lunar magic. The nights were all silvery-green reflecting tree and plant growth as Spring tipped into Summer. The daylight kept lengthening until no matter how early one awoke, the delicate light had arisen first.

It began when I saved an adolescent Luna Moth bent on suicide. The Siren's call, a spotlight on a tall pole at the general store, had made this young moth crazy with the desire to unite with the megawatt light in the night sky. Perhaps it thought the light to be its namesake, the Moon, though bright as the Sun itself. Senses fully aroused, it could no longer discern in what light to immolate itself. When the young clerk at the register pleaded for help, the magical moth was slamming itself repeatedly into the storefront window attempting to get to the light inside. Its wings are made of whispers and faery dust that would stain your fingers. Luna Moths are not meant for touching; only for awed admiration. I gathered it gently. It settled softly in one hand while I sent healing with the other. One cannot do this without becoming part of its world. Shudders of cobwebbed lace trek up and down the spine. All burdens recede as the Spirit rises to what is really important and right about life. When the healing was complete, I let the moth fly into the free night air. It did not return to the deadly light that night.

A few days later, a realtor showed me an uninhabited house. As I made my way to the house, I became transfixed in the long grass. There were five Luna Moths and a few cocoons on the screen door, and another five in the grass nearby. Whereas in my whole lifetime I had seen less than a handful of these magical creatures, here I was swirling in an abundance of them. Their beauty and mystery captivated me. Luna Moths, of the family Saturniidae, are also known as Giant Silk Moths (*Actias Luna*). With their spectacularly colored broad wings, and narrow, draped wing tails, they are the most magical looking beings in the insect family. They are as pale green as the foamy surf in tropical waters. The "eyes" on their wings, a ruse to scare off predators, are usually darkly outlined light spots. When I lived deep in the woods, they would fasten themselves to the screens and whirl loudly. When Luna Moths are about, senses are on alert for the mystical.

True to its nature, the silk moth forecasts change. I made a road trip with one of my students. It was a medicine trip. First we planned to visit Grandfather Limping Snow Wolf in western Pennsylvania. We were trying to coordinate our arrival to participate in his Stone People's Lodge. We left on a bright June day, undaunted by the prospect of some rain over the next several days. We intended to reach western

Pennsylvania by nightfall. The four thunderstorms we ran into were like legends from my youth, when storms were storms and no year was complete without a few hurricanes and a blizzard or two! One day lengthened into two as we had to pull over to the side of the highway when the driving rain removed visibility. At about the same time, the car began to die for no discernible reason. We stayed overnight in a motel while a mechanic found nothing wrong with the car. The next day brought more thunderclaps from Zeus. A bit south of us was the famed Johnstown flood area. My mother, who had grown up nearby, had told me the story of the flood.

Moths reign at night as do butterflies, the day. Like butterflies, moths herald a time of metamorphosis, especially of one's shadow or dark side. The purpose of transmuting our shadow qualities is so that once the moth is out of the cocoon, new waves of success and fulfillment can flood into one's life. Flood it did. Franklin, PA is at the bottom of a large mountain. We got almost to the top, less than five miles from our destination, before we again heard the well-recognized rumbling. We pulled up to the door of the gas station convenience store. We were old pros by now. We could smell it. It was almost upon us, and my 80 pound dog, Thunder, was in my lap. My travelling companion went inside while I watched the sheets of rain. How normal a sight it had become. I watched a swath of muddy brown water cross over in front of the car. Wait a minute! That wasn't normal. Instantly, my reflexes mobilized. At the same moment, my companion and driver splashed into the rapidly rising water. I yelled over the din, "Reverse! Reverse! Back up to the side of the store!" Immediately, she did, seconds before a wall of water swept through the gas station and out again, carrying a light pole and a section of asphalt road with it. We were protected by the trees behind us that absorbed water the pavement could not, and by the store which now sat in three feet of water. The store's electricity flickered and died. Emergency vehicles attempted to climb the mountain without getting swept down by the strong brown torrent.

We could have asked why. We didn't. Instead, we were acutely aware that we had narrowly escaped an "act of God" moment. We were deeply grateful and relieved. So relieved that, although both of us had stopped smoking years before, we opened one of the packs of American Spirits that I was bringing as a gift to Grandfather Snow Wolf, lit up and gave thanks for our lives and safety! Yes, the silkworm cocoon is filled with insulating silk - sometimes thousands of feet - entirely unbroken. We had been





*Cie with Grandfather Limping Snow Wolf
and Luna*

protected. Thank you, *Essence of All That Is*.

One more time that night, we pulled over until the waters receded. Two bedraggled two-leggeds and one trembling four-legged pulled into Grandfather's at about 1:00am. All the lights were on and a house full of people awaited us. We had been sure that we had missed the lodge, but learned that it had been postponed. The next night after the fire had burned for hours heating the stones who were to give their lives for our healing, and that of Mama Earth, we hugged the heat before entering the lodge. As I stood at the rim of the circle, a Kamikaze Luna Moth flew into the base of the fire.

I think it was because of my earlier experiences with them that I reacted so quickly. Certainly, I was attuned to them. This was the 12th Luna Moth, a number of cosmic order, corresponding to the 12 constellations of the Zodiac, the 12 tribes of Israel, 12 Knights of the Round Table, 12 Jewels of Aaron's breastplate, and the 12 Apostles. There was no chance that I would just let this moth burn without trying to help. Breathing with relief, I inspected his unsinged wings, and gave a healing in the minutes before going into the lodge. Reluctantly, I left it on the roof of the sweat lodge. The lodge brought in some powerful new things, as well as tremendous release. Four hours later, the Luna Moth was still there, barely hanging on. I cupped him to my heart hoping my compassion, along with the time-released healing of my energy would give him strength to live. He was a medium-sized male Luna Moth. Male antennae are more feathery than females because they have an extremely sensitive sense of smell in order to find females in heat. Throughout the trip, especially during the storms, my sense of smell had been extra-sensory, spilling over into my other senses. The male Luna made small moves getting comfortable, then settled in earnest on my sweater, right over my heart, which is where he remained for the next 28 hours.

The next day we left for Ohio to visit my friend, Blue Heron Woman of the Leni-Lenape, whose village was having a pow-wow. It was wonderful to meet her people. As I was introduced to each one, they politely glanced at my

blouse and then looked away. Except for the young ones. "No way, man," they exclaimed, "that can't be real!" "Hey," I laughed, "You're the ones who invented animal medicine!"

That Saturday night, as we moved on to visit Grandmother Mechi, the only open place we could find to eat was a Friendly's mobbed by teenagers. I hesitated about going in with a Luna Moth on my breast, but then I remembered what my father had taught me about poise. "Just walk in like you own the place," he'd said. It is interesting to watch how people react when their consciousness

can't comprehend something. Most people didn't let their eyes see the Luna; the others thought it was a piece of jewelry. No one said anything to me, not even the waitress who came to the table. I needn't have been concerned.

As we pulled across the state line into West Virginia, we slept in our car for a few hours at the visitor's center. I awoke to intense fluttering and then my Luna rider was flying and knocking into the windows. "Hold on", I laughed, "I'll let you out in a moment." The hillside behind the center was alive with trees, bushes, tall grass and flowers. I thanked this beautiful being for assisting me in the powerful transformation of our time together. I felt renewed vitality, even though the trip had been tiring. I left my magical friend in a good spot and moved on.

The Luna Moth only lives a short time. During his life span he doesn't eat. What the Luna does is emit joy in every molecule of its being. Its dance is the dance of life. I realized a strong truth. Even in the midst of difficult times, I can affirm my life, the fertility of my creativity, hope and abundance. The Luna Moth carries all of these medicines. I learned to bring in the energy of success, artistry, fulfilled dreams - even before they manifested. Because flowing in this energy is the thing that draws more of it to me. Our dreams are often pushed to the back of our consciousness because we have learned disappointment and disillusionment. Make a decision my friends, to persist through struggle into emergence. Spend your energies in that which you enjoy and do want in your life. You will attract more of it. We are happy when life is flowing through us. The union with Life Force gives us hope. That is happiness.

Cie Simurro, a.k.a. Thunderbird Starwoman, fondly known as Lady of the Beasts, is an Animal Whisperer. All her life she has had a powerful connection with animals and other totems. For those of you who are ready to pursue training, Cie is offering Keys to Spiritual Development, Level 1 training in Shamanic, Light and Sound and Earth Stewardship practice. For more information call 413-625-0385

