

HIDDEN IN THE MIST THAT TIME FORGOT™—THE PLACE I KNOW I WANT TO BE™ BY MAJOR D.H. DALE™
A MINIASTORY™ FROM STORIESWEARETELLING™ FOR THE MINIATURELIBRARY™ OF THE SHORTSTORYAFICIONADO™

The SHORT STORY AFICIONADO™ PRESENTS



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Out of the Imagination and Mind's Eye of the Short Story Aficionado™

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Welcome to A STORY I'M TELLING™ from *Far Beyond the Threshold of Imagination!*

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Reader...

Spurred by the crisp coolness of any chosen **Autumn** evening...and before the violet blush of twilight fades to starlit night—hasten to find a comfortable easy chair...one where you may be warmed by the welcoming embers of a glowing hearth. From there, your imagination shall lift you up and whisk you down the narrow drive ahead—through the gateposts and beyond.



Once round the bend, you shall find yourself in a hitherto unseen quarter—and as **Far Beyond the Threshold of Imagination** as you can ever hope to be!

It is there and then that you shall have the opportunity to reach out for one brief moment in time—and grasp the offer of an outstretched hand that is a **Bit of Mys-**

tery, **Romance & Adventure**.

Major **D.H. Dale**™
Hidden in the Mist that Time Forgot™ **Seventh Edition**

A **Miniature Story** from **Stories We Are Telling**
for the **Miniature Library** of the **Short Story Aficionado**™

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Hidden in the Mist that Time Forgot™

Having Evolved into the Quintessential
MINIATURE STORY™
a Bit of MYSTERY, ROMANCE and ADVENTURE™
is Dedicated to

My FAMILY
Then, Now and Always

My DARLING and DEVOTED WIFE
You of Starlit Nights Come and Gone

My LOVING and FAITHFUL DAUGHTER
You're the Best!

My BELOVED WIFE and ALLY
You in the Autumn Blush of All the Afternoons Yet to Come
having been the First to Cross Over the Threshold into the
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Above the Mist™

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Hidden in the Mist that Time Forgot

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Reader...

Join me now for *A Story I'm Telling*™, and discover *aBit of Mystery, Romance and Adventure*™ born of being *Hidden in the Mist that Time Forgot—The Place I Know I Want To Be*™.

Yes, a magically delightful place in a mysterious and hitherto unseen quarter that cannot be reached except *Through the Gateposts and Beyond*™—and only then at the very moment I choose to abandon the main road. 

DHD GTTG SSA™



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THE PLACE I KNOW I WANT TO BE™

HELLO, MR. & MRS. READER™! Join me now for *A Story I'm Telling™*, and discover *aBit of Mystery, Romance and Adventure™* born of being *Hidden in the Mist that Time Forgot™—The Place I Know I Want To Be™*.

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IT'S ON THE TOP SHELF

MORE CAN BE DISCOVERED, Mr. & Mrs. Reader™, when you delve into a certain rare collection of *Miniature Stories™*—one teal colored leather bound volume in particular, it lying high up on an out of the way and until now long forgotten and dusty shelf in the *Miniature Library™* of the *Short Story Aficionado™*.

So, spurred by the crisp coolness of any chosen Autumn evening, and before the violet blush of twilight fades to starlit night—hasten to find a comfortable easy chair, one where you may be warmed by the welcoming embers of a glowing hearth.

From there, your imagination shall lift you up and whisk you *Down the Narrow Drive Ahead™—Through the Gateposts and Beyond™*. Once round the bend, you shall find

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yourself in a hitherto unseen quarter—and as *Far Beyond the Threshold of Imagination™* as you can ever hope to be!

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COLOR is EVERYTHING

THINKING IN COLOR is certain to deter the dreary and near comatose nature of any black, gray & white world.

After all, it is the full kaleidoscope of hues, blushes, shades, tones and tints that warm the heart and spirit—and which keep this old world exciting and turning on its axis.

All the while, this storyteller keeps one eye on the past and one eye on the future. The future of the Sun that is—and of the Earth and its path around it as the seasons pass.

ONE STARLIT NIGHT

AUTUMN AND SPRING are perhaps the most vibrant and pleasant seasons of the year. First there are the falling leaves of red and gold. Then there are the blossoms of every conceivable blush.

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Winter and Summer are not particularly pleasant though. The former is cold and wet, and the latter hot and humid. This, even though they are just as essential to the survival of all manner of flora and fauna.

All in all, *The Designers*™ must surely be *tuned in perfectly* to all there was, is and ever shall be. As for me, I became *truly conscious* of them in a quiet and breathtaking moment one evening. This, when I happened to look up at the *starlit heavens* and began pondering *their endless nature*.

ABANDONING the MAIN ROAD

THERE IS NO SIGNPOST UP AHEAD—or so my intuition tells me anyway. Under the circumstances then, common sense says that I should slow down and keep my eyes peeled for nothing more noticeable than an unremarkable and narrow dirt drive.

Evening is nigh, and so my headlights bathe the paved highway and right shoulder in front of me. None too soon too, because I've finally stumbled across what I've been looking for. It's right here on my left!

Wait though! I've got to ensure that I don't draw attention to myself as I leave the paved highway—that is, I must assure that the direction I'm headed doesn't become common knowledge. So, I carefully check for any traffic ahead or behind me before tapping the brake.

It is with great anticipation and not the slightest hesitation that I now turn off and abandon the main road.

Once I see the gateposts and the left bend in the drive—I know that I'm approaching that which I seek!

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That UNSEEN QUARTER and MORE

HAVING PASSED through the gateposts, the unseen quarter is certain to be next according to my reckoning.

Interestingly, I find myself passing through a series of forested landscapes, any one of which I would be perfectly happy to settle down in and call my home.

The first is an area populated by adolescent deciduous trees, through which a yellow and orange sun peeks in my direction as it sets in the west. The forest floor is carpeted with fallen brown leaves, while many more of red and gold still cling to the myriad of branches above.

As the narrow dirt drive swings off to the south, it enters a stand of evergreen trees—the setting sun sending long oblique shafts of light into the ground in front of me.

Now I'm curving back west through even more trees swathed in red and gold.

I should have guessed that I would sooner than later encounter a watercourse. Therefore, I'm not surprised when I come to a covered wooden bridge spanning a tree lined waterless streambed littered with half buried boulders and carpeted in dry brown leaves. Before I cross, I idle the car and step out. That's when I spot something sitting on one of the boulders. Of all things, it is an old rusty key that I decide to pick up and put in my pocket.

I return to the car and put it in gear. Amazingly, the sun is all but blotted out as I exit the end of the bridge and almost immediately enter something quite out of place, if not in a sense magical.

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It is a deep green copse of mature deciduous and evergreen trees—where the dirt drive winds across a forest floor carpeted in mysterious emerald green grass.

I don't stop to interrupt my journey again though, but rather press on. Thus continuing, I come to yet a second covered bridge—this time over a shallow rocky brook. As the water itself rushes by, so does the gurgling sound that flows with it.

Not long after I exit that bridge, I abruptly and unexpectedly find everything around me residing below a white mist that reminds me of a low cloud that I might find floating near the summit of a tall hill. My right foot instinctively touches the brake—this, as the automatic wipers clear the front windshield. That's when I see that I am nearing a deadend of sorts.

As I finally come to what I believe to be the end of the narrow winding drive, my attention is immediately drawn to a truly mighty evergreen tree of *Crimson Jade™*—it not being completely visible until I'm very near to it.

It seems that I have little choice but to exit my car at this point. So I turn off the wipers, headlamps and motor, open the door, swivel to the left and step out into the cool, damp evening air.

Although a mere educated guess, I'm willing to wager that the impressive trunk's diameter and circumference are at least fifteen feet wide and fifty feet around.

At the base of this grand old tree, I can just make out an oak door with a small light emanating therefrom. As I walk toward the heavy door, I'm surprised to see it swing inward of its own accord!



Now inside, the door automatically closes behind me.

That's when I find myself facing a spiral staircase of some five feet in diameter—which for some unknown reason, I feel compelled to climb. The stairs are hewn from rough timber, so there is little chance of losing my footing.

I estimate that there are quite a few of them though. So I take my time in my winding ascent—this because I'm not sure how far up the top of the staircase resides.

Lanterns affixed at intervals to the inside of the tree trunk guide me as I take each step in stride.

VIOLET BLUSH of TWILIGHT

HAVING REACHED THE TOP NOW, I'm a bit out of breath. So, I momentarily pause before stepping out onto a roughly fifteen-foot long railed wooden landing supported by large tree limbs.

As I emerge, I am exposed to the pleasantness of twilight and its ever so violet blush!

At that point, I look out over the railing. I guess that I'm perhaps as much as sixty or seventy feet above the forest floor. I can't really be sure though because of the intervening mist. "No wonder I'm winded," I think to myself.

On top of everything, there is yet another more or less five-foot diameter spiral staircase beckoning me—and which like the earlier one, I feel compelled to ascend.

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Quickly reaching the top, I step onto a veranda almost identical to the one below.

Looking upward from there, I am stunned to find a two-story wooden structure sitting right in front of me—and apparently supported by the tree's massive limbs!

The structure has a number of windows emitting a warm and inviting light that illuminates me and the portico upon which I'm standing.

Like the ground level tree trunk entrance, there is a second heavy oak door that now beckons me. I am by now not the least bit surprised to see it open without any effort on my part.

Before I enter however, I once again take a few moments to survey my surroundings. I can see that I'm in the middle of a large stand of trees, and that in the distance are even more such mighty trees.

As the air around me grows more chill, I notice that the door is still open. It's almost as if it is demanding that I enter! As I step from the veranda, I briefly glance through the lighted windows. Yes, just a quick look, as I don't want to seem overly inquisitive.

Now I finally get a surprise! I'm in a foyer that requires exiting through yet another door. However, the door doesn't move an inch! That's when I remember the rusty key that I found sitting on the boulder in the dry streambed. I reach in my pocket to retrieve it.

Inserting the old key in its apparently intended keyhole, the door still doesn't open though. That's when I notice a high up bolt. Although almost out of reach, I stretch my right arm up and am able to slide it to the right.



WARM and INVITING

SEE NO ONE, but that doesn't deter me from entering what is a quite welcoming front room. As the heavy oak door closes behind me, I step in even further.

In a heartbeat, my mind is flooded with *innumerable well ordered facts and data* which I never in my life suspected were ever there. I pause for a moment to absorb this sudden stroke of *mind altering good fortune!*



ANCIENT CITY of OCHRE

Image of an original watercolor by Anke Eissmann — 2016
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The room is relatively large and well appointed with dark red cherry wood tables and comfortable plush

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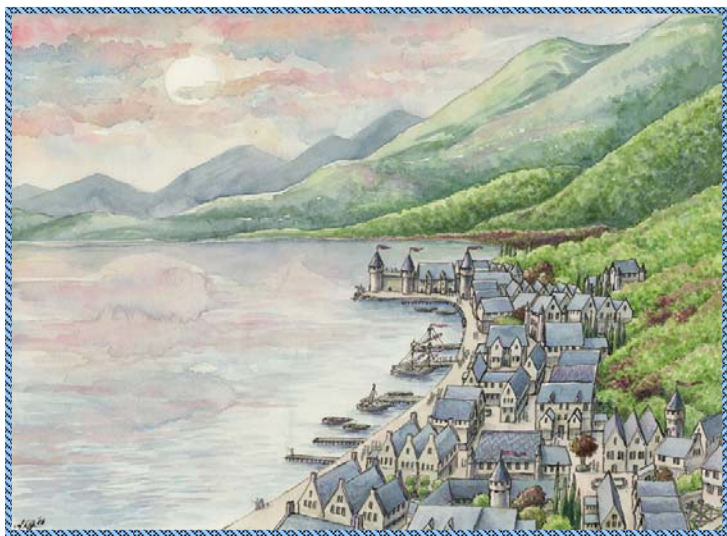


easy chairs that my *newfound knowledge* tells me were imported from somewhere *In the Land of Granger's Birth™*.

There are several lamps with colorful silk shades brought by ship and then overland from the *Ancient City of Ochre™*—all of them mysteriously glowing this evening, perhaps even lit by flirtatious faeries.

Scattered about the tongue-and-groove oak floor in various widths and lengths are thick, soft, woven, wool rugs handmade on a broadloom by some *Hadasan™* artisan.

The walls and ceiling are smooth varnished oak wood paneling imported from the *Ancient City of the Amethyst™*.



ANCIENT CITY of the AMETHYST™

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I sit down on a nearby wing chair, and slip off my shoes. Then, I choose and don a pair of thoughtfully provided silk slippers. There are many such pairs in several colors, all neatly stored on a shelf very near to the door.

Shifting my weight forward and regaining my footing, I casually walk across the room while being careful not to slip on the polished floor. Still, I don't see anyone. Nor do I hear any voices.

As a matter of fact, all that are within earshot and view, respectively, are the subdued calls of a wide variety of richly colored exotic birds perched outside the structure's sapphire blue leaded stained glass windows—and elsewhere in the surrounding limbs of the mighty tree. I suspect that their purpose is not solely to brighten the landscape, but also to control the insect population.

Interestingly, the assemblage of large trees that I find myself amidst contains no other structures such as the one I'm now inside of. In other words, I seem to be quite alone.

SOFT and MELODIC

MOVING FREELY about the room, it seems to me that I should look for some way to get to the upper floor that I spied from the outside. That's when I spot the carpeted stairs in the rear corner.

I make a beeline for them, while wending my way around the furniture. It is then that something certainly unexpected occurs. I hear a soft and melodic voice call out to me from seemingly nowhere! As a matter of fact, I hear

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several similar voices—perhaps as many as a half a dozen in all.

What is even more fascinating is the sound of fluttering wings, which I at first take to be those of humming birds.

Then, thinking back to my conjecture concerning faeries—I actually see one! No, five! Yes, five faeries are hovering right here in front of me!

Three of them have butterfly wings, and two have wings identical to those of the dragonfly.

They all look at me with eyes the color of lavender—but their hair ranges from redhead to brunette to blonde.

Three faeries are dressed in pants, and the other two in skirts—and all are bare footed.

Interestingly, the five faeries don't look exactly alike. This, even though their bone structure and other facial features are quite similar.

Additionally, each of their voices is quite distinctive.

I also observe that none of the five is are distressed in any way at all. Rather, each is buoyant and quite cheerful.

The most interesting thing is that although I find them strangely fascinating—they seem to not only have been expecting me, but also to be very familiar with my species of humankind! So, I take a chance. "What are your names, little faeries?" At this though, they suddenly seem to grow bashful. I notice that they look around at one another—before finally cheerfully responding!

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LAVENDER WAVE of EVENING™

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“*Mariana*™” responds one, her eyelids lowered—
and then “*Stellata*™”, also without looking at me directly.

The third looks me directly in the eyes though, and
responds, “*Pumila*™”.

The remaining two glance at each other one more
time, and then finally reveal their names. Taking their cue
from the third faerie, they look deeply into my eyes and
answer one after the other. “*Persica*™!” “*Balsamea*™!”

Having no problem with leadership apparently—
all of them seem to acquiesce to *Pumila*™ being their
chronicler. I realize this by what she says next.

In a lilting rhythmic voice, *Pumila*™ relates how the
five of them were long ago descended from ancient and
long evolved genres of sweet smelling butterfly and drag-
onfly bouquets. Simply and matter-of-factly, *Pumila*™ states
that she and the others are quite immortal!

She then goes on to relate that they spring daily
from the everlastingly delicate wisps of each *Lavender Wave
of Evening*™—and that they are the ever present, vigilant,
protective and magical guardians of the mighty *Crimson
Jade*™ forests that surround us.

More than that though *Pumila*™ continues, absent
any coyness whatsoever—and without missing a single
beat of her historical account. “We just happen to be the
delightfully unrivaled coterie of enchanting woodland
nymphs who are never far off from the *Dark Champion of
the Amethyst*™ himself—that is, *Wayfarer, Lord Granger*™!”

Surprisingly and even hauntingly, *Pumila*™ speaks
of this great lord in the present tense. “Yes,” she tells me,
“the great lord lives. Likewise, *Wayfarer*™ has neither aged



nor lost his physical and mental edge—even after the passing of more than a century!”

Going on from that amazing pronouncement, *Pumila*™ speaks loyally if not lovingly of their great *Lord Granger*™—in her words, the courageous and determined nomad who is too much experienced in the art of brutal warfare to really fully preserve the overall well-being of the most extraordinary citizen *In the Land of Granger's Birth*™.

Pumila™ is just naturally speaking of the great lord himself, whom the five faeries spend their lives watching over. *Wayfarer*™ is in fact the once upon a time far too unforgiving and nearly merciless *Jaguarasquar*™.

Pumila™ goes on with her narration.

“An ill-fated and unsavory state of affairs once exposed the great wanderer to the harshest elements of the unforgiving *Battle Plain of Uvus Nuur*™. It was then that he had to rely on an aura of magical reality for deliverance and personal redemption.

Said crown of enchantment was the catalyst that guided *Wayfarer*™, and which finally resulted in his emergence at the edge of the deep glade of *Crimson Jade*™. It was at the fateful base of the sheer and potentially fatal *Falls of Uvus Nuur*™ that he found himself within a mere stone's throw of the *Caverns of the Rose*™ and its *Lavender Ice*™.

Having been without food or water for quite some time, *Lord Granger*™ was then fortunate enough to encounter and acquire for all time, a relationship noted for its life-saving loyalty and enduring companionship—the nearly immortal nature of which remains manifested even today in the great *Hadasan Stallion*™ that *Wayfarer*™ calls *Savior*™.”

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WAYFARER™ and SAVIOR™ the HADASAN™ STALLION
on the **BATTLE PLAIN OF UVUS NUUR™**

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WAYFARER™ and CASSANDRA™

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On the verge of continuing, *Pumila*™ is interrupted by the other faeries who are wide-eyed with excitement! *Persica*™ and *Balsamea*™ whisper “*Cassandra, Lady Viamar*™”. *Mariana*™ and *Stellata*™ also chime in by whispering “*Tender Warriress*™”.

Getting in the spirit of the moment, I join in. “Who is she?” I politely ask. “Who is *Cassandra*™?”

“Oh yes,” all five interject. “We must tell you about *Indigo*™ as well!”

Pumila™ then motions for *Stellata*™ to take up the narrative. Giddily beside herself at that point however, *Stellata*™ reaches out with her tiny arm and hand, motioning to *Balsamea*™.

Balsamea™ then begins by saying, “*Cassandra, Lady Viamar*™ is the loyal and likewise loving and tender archeress of old—and of today as well!”

Stellata’s™ stand-in goes on to say, “Quite of necessity, *Cassandra*™ is well versed in the skills and perils of the military arts—while her femininity softens the otherwise rough and sometimes jagged edges of the *Dark Champion*’s™ persona. It is she and she alone, who fights side-by-side with *Wayfarer*™, as they encounter and overcome their mutual antagonists.

Lady Viamar™ bears and manages her own brand of courage—this, while benefitting from the lamp of enchantment that hangs over an enchanted land.

Like the *Dark Champion*™, the *Tender Warriress*™ benefits from lifelong sustainment and protection provided by another great horse of the otherwise unknown *Hadasan*™ south—*Indigo*™. Yes, *Indigo*™—a great gift from one warrior respectful and admiring of another.

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Like *Savior™*, *Indigo™* is a battle horse who finds in her mistress a mutual loyalty and affection that serve each of them well.”

The OLD LIBRARY

HAVING THOROUGHLY ENJOYED the origins of the five faeries, *Wayfarer™*, *Cassandra™*, *Savior™* and *Indigo™*—my curiosity concerning the second floor is about to get the best of me.

I almost expect the *Dark Champion™* and *Tender Warriress™* to appear together at the head of the carpeted staircase, and motion for me to join them there.

By this time, *Persica™* has had her turn to speak—and to reveal that the upstairs is a library inspired by the *Short Story Aficionado™*.

That’s very pleasing to me, of course—and *The Place I Know I Want To Be™* as a matter of fact.

So, on my own I walk toward the stairs with the five faeries following. I know they are behind me because I can hear the fluttering of their wings. All at once in one swift whoosh however, they fly over my head and take the lead!

Surprisingly, the library is much more impressive than I imagined!

I see *Mariana™* perched on the back of a chair and resting her butterfly wings. She calls out in a soft voice for me to join her, and what follows is her captivating narrative.

Before she starts, she politely asks my name. I respond, “Jack”.

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“Well, Sir Jack,” she says with a demure yet clever smile—and then begins.

“From here behind the fittingly book laden and well worn old oak desk of the *Short Story Aficionado*™, some—but not all—who come knocking are bid a personal welcome to the softly lit corridors and volume packed mahogany shelves of this, the *Miniature Library*™. So, take pleasure in knowing that you just happen to among the very select few—and the only one at this very moment.

Now that you are about to enter the library Sir Jack, you may find that the sapphire-blue glow of a reading lamp suits your tastes to a tee—as it burns brightly atop the reading table within one of several private nooks.

You can be assured that this is the appropriate place for seeking out and discovering *Miniature Stories*™—tales by tellers that appeal to your imagination.

Naturally, I’m referring to short stories that lend a hand up in the quiet quest for *A Bit of Mystery, Romance and Adventure*™—your quest it is presumed, Sir Jack.”

MORE FAERIE THOUGHTS

AS MARIANA™ FINISHES, PUMILA™ has some additional thoughts that she wants to convey to me. Displaying a demure smile similar to that of *Mariana*™, and as in the beginning, *Pumila*™ looks directly at me and deeply into my eyes.

“Well, Sir Jack,” she says in a soft voice, and then continues.

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“It is our belief that all of us, each and every one, need a *Wayfarer*™ and a *Cassandra*™—as well as the strength of character residing deep within ourselves—to put things right from time to time.

We are also of the view that you, Sir Jack, shall find yourself nodding in agreement on this very point as you enter our world.

In the end though, if you can’t seem to find reflected within this forested place your own personal outlook and temperament—or even a bit of your own intellectual curiosity—then perhaps you can take simple pleasure in the entertainment and enlightenment that it offers.

The foregoing, because after all—this place spells out what *Mariana*™ mentioned earlier.

That is, *aBit of Mystery, Romance and Adventure*™—such that the just mentioned essential characteristics are quite personally appealing within the context and setting that you now find yourself. That context embraces an ensemble that is straight, stouthearted and true—its members all doing what they do so very well, Sir Jack.

So, regardless of outlook, temperament and curiosity—we encourage you to leave your cares and troubles for just a temporary while. You can do this by simply hitching your imagination to the end of the blazing trail of a shooting star—the one that this forested and kaleidoscopic wonderland creates.

Thereafter, you can experience the singularly incredible ride that takes you far, far out and back—and finally to a high up, hushed shelf amongst the gilt-edged leaves of this *Miniature Library*™.

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From this point on then, Sir Jack—and should you choose to embark on this remarkable journey—you can engage in the surefire formula that will get you there from here.

The first step is to just for a brief moment hold your breath. Then simply spread your arms, float upward and glide away on the occasional blustery, but also at times gentle zephyrs blowing close to the golden edges and lavender fringes of the collective and individual summits standing astride the breathless path of the *Turta Mountains™*.

As you soar along, Sir Jack, you shall pass—and surely ensure that your imagination takes careful note of all the clearly marked signposts, pathways and events leading to the end of your journey at a place on the edge of *Cassandra, Lady Viamar's Blue Sapphire Forest™*. This, at the sheer brink of *Lavender Falls™*—better described as the legendary ancestral home of *Wayfarer, Lord Granger™* that is known simply yet optimistically as *Hope's Amethyst™*!"

STAY TUNED!

STAY TUNED! There is more yet to come, *Mr. & Mrs. Reader™*.

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ARRIVEDERCI!

A RRIVEDERCI! This storyteller¹ now closes with an invitation to return for *aBit of Mystery, Romance and Adventure*™—and yet another fiction and true-to-life kaleidoscope of hues, blushes, shades, tones and tints flowing from my shallow inkstone into a *Miniature Story*™ from *Stories We Are Telling*™ for the *Miniature Library*™ of the *Short Story Aficionado*™.

I'll be waiting right here in this small slice of paradise called the rural *Pacific Northwest*!🌲

Gift me a 🌲

¹The freewheeling imagination and evocative storytelling of MAJOR D.H. DALE™ crown otherwise commonplace themes with *aBit of Mystery, Romance and Adventure*™—a bejeweled and magical coronet not shackled by convention. Herein lies the work of a self-styled painter of the written word—the full kaleidoscope of hues, blushes, shades, tones and tints flowing from the storyteller's inkwell to parchment. It is upon these leaves of paper so unselfishly bestowed by some mighty tree—that the teller has penned this *Miniature Story*™ titled *HIDDEN IN THE MIST THAT TIME FORGOT*™—*THE PLACE I KNOW I WANT TO BE*™. The storyteller's thread of events, like all praiseworthy accounts, is a manifestation of the routine yet exceptional practice of observing, analyzing and drawing compelling as well as heartfelt conclusions. Inevitably, the finalities reflected in such reasoned judgments can be said to draw themselves up out of a shallow inkstone. After all, that vessel is the lone crucible in which the dry ink of deliberation is measured and mixed with just the right amount of imagination from the well of reflection—thereby maintaining the fragile flow of creativity that the pen can never completely manage on its own. 🌲 ©1997-2019 by GTTransGlobal™

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Your Storyteller in Miniature™

Major D.H. Dale™

Hidden in the Mist that Time Forgot™

Seventh Edition

DHD GTTG SSA™



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FAR BEYOND the THRESHOLD of IMAGINATION™
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Image of an original watercolor by Anke Eissmann — 2009
Out of the Imagination and Mind's Eye of the Short Story Aficionado™

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