

Rachel Petty, Age 14

Roosevelt Middle School

Untitled

The man was very strange. Not scary-strange, or out-of-this-world-strange, like many other vendors at this festival. He was just different-strange. He wore black knee-high boots, a black skirt with heavy chains dangling from all of the belt loops, no shirt, and a large, black top-hat, which had to be uncomfortable in the ninety-degree heat. A dash of red stubble outlined his chin.

This man was under a low tent and selling the most interesting merchandise. Next to him was a large bowl of clay charms.

“Aren’t these runes from *The Lord of the Rings*?” I boldly asked.

“Oh,” he replied, “they’re Anglo-Saxon, but Tolkien was an expert on ‘em. He incorporated ‘em into his books.”

I examined them curiously.

“Why don’t’cha reach in and grab one at random?” Ah. He was trying to sell. I dug my hand in real deep and pulled out an ‘R’.

“Ah,” he said. “That there’s ‘Reh.’ The Anglos would wear that rune around their necks because they believed tha’ it’d guide them safely home after a long quest, and bestow good luck.” He pulled a piece of hemp from his pocket and strung it through my charm.

“It also happens to be my initial,” I informed him.

“Well then, that makes it doubly lucky,” he smiled as he knotted it around my neck.

Thanking the strange man, I payed him and continued on my way. There were many things to look for at the Faery Worlds Festival. Staffs, clothes, tiny houses, elf ears, jewelry, masks, food; the tents were endless! I wished that I had at least ten more eyes.

I never ended up buying anything else, but I left fingering my necklace, which I wore every day for the next week and the week after.

It hung around my next on important occasions, too, like the day of my four-page history test, or for a concert, or at an audition.

To this day, ‘Reh’ has always brought me good luck.