

Gifts of Winter

*A one-act play written by Jenn Biehn
for Winter Solstice - December 21, 2004*

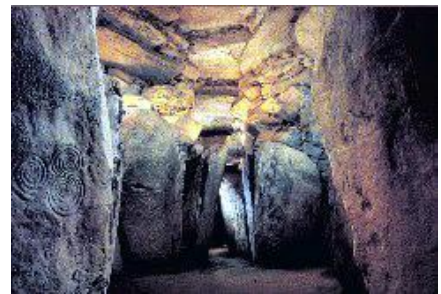
Narrator: Come with me to a time long ago – 3000 BC, before Stonehenge was created, before the pyramids were built. Come with me to Ireland, to Brug na Boine, to New Grange. We are crouched at the heart of a large mound, in a chamber surrounded by stone and earth. It is before sunrise on a cold winter day.



Person crouched at the heart of the mound:

It is so dark. Every day the sun sets earlier and rises later. It seems like the sun's light is slowly being banished forever. It is so cold. The earth is frozen. The seeds are still. The foxes and rabbits are asleep.

Young child: Mommy, mommy, it is so dark! I am scared. I am scared. Will the goblins and evil spirits come and get us?



The Great Mother: My child, there is nothing to fear. You spent the first ninth months of your life in darkness, nurtured in my womb. Darkness is our friend. Without it, we would not survive.

Young Child: Is the sun dying, will it come back, will it come back?

The Great Mother: Yes, wait, you'll see.

Narrator: Slowly a tiny sliver of sunlight strikes the stone slab at the back of the chamber and enters the dark womb of the earth. The light widens and climbs upward, shines on circles and spirals, zigzags carved on the sides of the great earth cave.



The Great Mother: See my child, the sun returns.

Young Child: But it is still so cold, so cold.

The Great Mother: Yes, my child, the sun returns slowly, ever so slowly, so that we can be nourished by the starry nights and brisk days of winter. The sun returns slowly so we can rest and the animals can sleep and the seeds can lie still in the ground.

Come, let us be nurtured and fed by the quiet, the darkness, the cold ... knowing that the returning light brings the promise of warmth and life to come. Blessed Be.