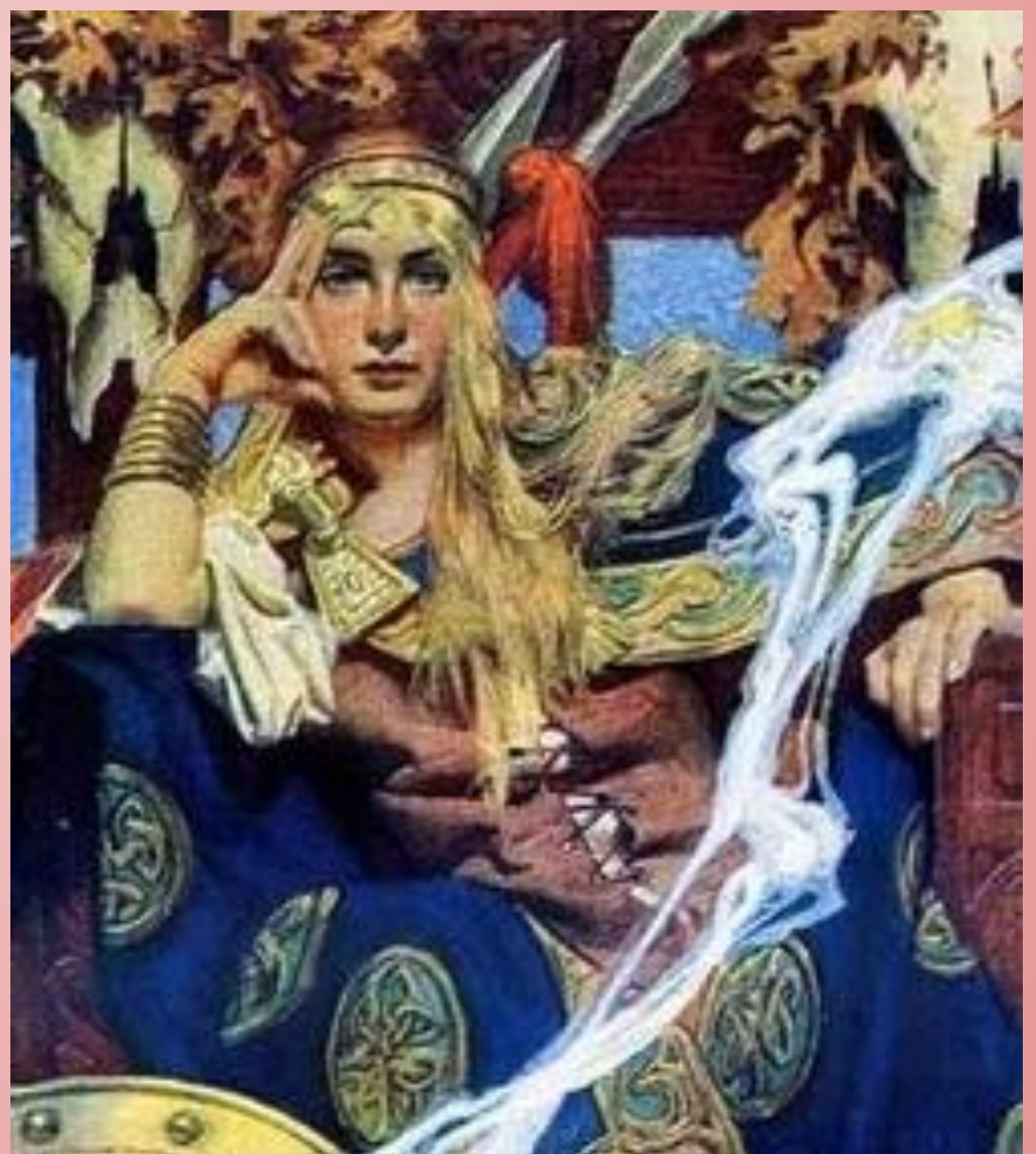


# Sexuality in Irish Folktales



While childbirth may not be explicitly sexual, there is still a connection between childbirth and one's sexuality. When Macha is forced to race a horse in front of the king's men, resulting in her birthing her twins on the finish line, the shame she feels at experiencing this in front of the men causes her to curse them.

Queen Medb is an inherently sexual character. She proves multiple times throughout the Táin that she is both sexually powerful, and available. She has been described as “sexually aggressive,” because of her actions, and because she has the ability to sentence a man to “sexual death” by shame, if she so chooses. Again, this draws a connection between sexuality and shame.



Even though the story of Niamh and Oisín isn't one specifically about sexuality, it still features an otherworldly woman who charms a mortal man into being her lover.