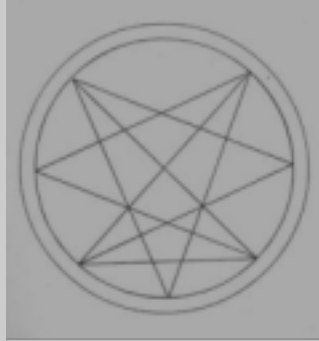


The Requisite ONA

A Practical Guide to The Sinister Sorcery of The Order of Nine Angles



Introduction

The Seven-Fold Sinister Way, here explained in detail, is the name given to the practical system of Occult training used by ONA individuals and by ONA nexions (aka Temples) - that is, by those esoteric individuals and groups who and which use a sinister (Left Hand Path) Initiatory system based on The Dark Tradition (aka Hebdomary). This Occult training is the learning of The Art of Dark Sorcery, by individual Occultists, and thus is the graded and guided practice of The Dark Arts (aka Black Magick).

The Way is an individual one: each stage, of the seven stages that make the Way, is achieved by the individual as a result of their own effort. To reach a particular stage, requires considerable effort by the individual, who works mostly on their own.

One aim of the Way is to create Sinister individuals - that is, to train individuals in The Dark Arts. This sinister training develops individual character, esoteric (or Occult) skills, and self-insight. The individual also acquires genuine esoteric knowledge and that genuine understanding that is the beginning of wisdom.

The Way itself enables any individual to achieve genuine esoteric (Occult) Adeptship - and beyond - and thus fulfil the potential latent within them, and thus they can and do enhance their life, and come to know and then achieve their unique Destiny.

The Way is essentially *practical* - involving experiences in the real world, and ordeals, as well as the completion of difficult, challenging tasks. It also involves a practical mastery of all forms of sorcery. The Way requires a sincere and genuine commitment, lasting many years, and it is also difficult and very dangerous. Success depends on this commitment by the individual.

The Way is divided into seven stages, and these mark a specific level of individual achievement. The stages are: (1) Neophyte; (2) Initiate; (3) External Adept; (4) Internal Adept; (5) Master of Temple/ Mistress of Earth [or "Lady Master"]; (6) Grand Master/Grand Mistress [or "Grand Lady Master"]; (7) Immortal.

Sometimes, Initiates are described, or known, as "novices"; Internal Adepts as Priest/Priestess; a Grand Master as a Magus, and a Grand Mistress as a Magistra.

All of these stages (with the exception of the stages beyond Master/Mistress) are associated with specific tasks, ordeals, rituals and so on, and a completion of each and all of these (given in detail below under the appropriate stage) is required before the next stage can be attempted. Also, each stage involves the individual in a certain amount of reading and study of Order manuscripts/texts [hereafter "manuscripts" is abbreviated as MSS, and "manuscript" as MS]. The purpose of this reading and study is to provide a sinister, esoteric, understanding of the tasks, ordeals, rituals and so on of the particular stage being attempted. Each stage represents a development of and in the individual - of their personality, their skills, their understanding, their knowledge and insight.

Before embarking on the first stage - that of sinister Initiation - the individual who desires to follow the dark and dangerous path of traditional sorcery should gain some understanding of what The Sinister Way is. To this end, the following Order MSS should be read:

- * [A Brief Guide to The Esoteric Philosophy of The Order of Nine Angles](#)
- * [A Glossary of ONA Terms](#)
- * [The Dark Arts of The Sinister Way](#)
- * [Our Sinister Character](#)
- * [An Introduction to Dark Sorcery](#)
- * [Introduction to Dure and Sedue Ceremonial Sorcery](#)
- * [Magick, Aeons, and The Psyche of The Folk](#)

I - Neophyte

The first task of a neophyte [the word means "a beginner; a new convert"] is to obtain copies of the various Order MSS which will be needed. These include: (1) [Naos - A Guide to Becoming an Adept](#); and (2) [The Grimoire of Baphomet, Dark Goddess](#). The neophyte also needs to understand the fundamental

concepts of magick, such as "causal" and "acausal" and here a study of the following Order MSS is useful: (a) Chapters 0 and I of *Naos*; (b) [Aeonic Magick - A Basic Introduction](#).

The second task of a neophyte is to undertake the "secret task" appropriate to this first stage. This task is a necessary prelude to sinister Initiation [the task is detailed in the MS "The Secret Tasks of the Sinister Way", which is included as an Appendix to this present work].

The third task of a neophyte is to undertake a ritual of Initiation. If you are in contact with a traditional nexion or group, this can be a Ceremonial ritual. If you are working alone, or the group you are in contact with suggest it, it can be a Hermetic one of "Self-Initiation", as given in detail in the Order MS *Naos*. There is no difference between a Ceremonial Initiation, and a Hermetic Self-Initiation.

The fourth and final task of this stage involves the new Initiate in constructing and learning to play, *The Star Game*, details of which are given in the Order MS *Naos*. [An introduction to the basic (training) form of this esoteric learning aide is given in the [here](#).]

II - Initiate

Tasks:

- 1) Study the Septenary System in detail [*Naos*] and begin hermetic magickal workings with the septenary spheres and pathways as described in *Naos*. Write a personal "magickal diary" about these workings. Study and begin to use the Sinister Tarot [copies of the Sinister Tarot, and study notes, are available from the ONA].
- 2) Undertake hermetic workings/rituals for specific personal desires/personal requests of your own choosing, as described in *Naos*. Record these, and the results, if any, in your magickal diary.
- 3) Set yourself *one* very demanding physical goal, train and achieve or surpass that goal. [Examples of minimum standards are, for men: walking thirty-two miles in less than seven hours in hilly terrain; running twenty miles in hilly terrain in less than two and a half hours. Cycling one hundred miles in under five and a half hours. For women, the acceptable minimum standards are: walking twenty-seven miles in hilly terrain in less than seven hours; running twenty miles in hilly terrain in less than three hours; cycling one hundred miles in under six and one quarter hours.]
- 4) Seek and find someone of the opposite sex to be your 'magickal' companion and sexual partner [or of the same sex if you incline that way], and introduce this person to The Dark Tradition. Initiate them according to the rite in *Naos*, or devise your own rite of Initiation (which should culminate in sexual intercourse with your partner). Undertake the path and sphere workings with this partner.
- 5) Obtain and study (a) the Order MS [Eulalia, Dark Daughter of Baphomet](#); and (b) the Order MS [The Deofel Quartet](#). A guide to this MS is given in the MSS *The Deofel Quartet - Responses and Critical Analysis* and *The Deofel Quartet - A Satanic Analysis*. [Note: Part I and Part II of the *Deofel Quartet* are intended as entertaining sinister fiction.]
- 6) Undertake an 'Insight Role' [see the *Secret Tasks* MS [appended below] and the MS [An](#)

[Introduction to Insight Roles](#) (119yf edition)]. This Insight Role is the Secret Task of this stage.

7) After completion of your Insight Role, undertake the Grade Ritual of External Adept, given in *Naos*.

The stage of Initiation can last - depending on the commitment of the Initiate - from six months to a year. Occasionally, it lasts two years.

Understanding Initiation:

Sinister Initiation is the awakening of the darker/sinister/unconscious aspects of the psyche, and of the inner (often repressed) and *latent* personality/character of the Initiate. It is also a personal commitment, by the Initiate, to the path of dark sorcery. The dark, or sinister, energies which are used/unleashed are symbolized by the symbols/forms of the Septenary System, and these symbols are used in the workings with the septenary spheres and pathways. These magickal workings provide a controlled, ritualized, or willed, experience of these dark energies or "forces" - and this practical experience begins the process of objectifying and understanding such energies, and thus these aspects of the psyche/personality of the Initiate. *The Star Game* takes this process of objectification further, enabling a complete and rational understanding - divorced from conventional "moral opposites".

The physical goal which an Initiate must achieve develops personal qualities such as determination, self-discipline, élan. It enhances the vitality of the Initiate, and balances the inner magickal work.

The seeking and finding of a magickal companion begins the confrontation/understanding of the anima/animus (the female/male archetypes which exist in the psyche and beyond) in a practical way, and so increases self-understanding via direct experience. It also enables further magickal work to be done, of a necessary type.

An Insight Role develops real sinister character in the individual; it is a severe test of the resolve, Sinister commitment and personality of the Initiate. The Grade Ritual which completes the stage of Initiation (and which leads to the next stage) is a magickal act of synthesis.

III - External Adept

Tasks:

1) Organize a magickal, and Sinister, group/nexion/magickal Temple. You must recruit members for this Nexion, and teach them about The Dark Tradition of the ONA. With your companion (or another one if personal circumstances have changed) you must Initiate these members according a ceremonial ritual of your own devising, for which you may use texts such as *The Grimoire of Baphomet* and [The Black Book of Satan](#) for inspiration and some guidance. In addition, you must perform ceremonial rituals

on a regular basis. In this Nexion/Temple, you will be the officiating Priest/Priestess, with your partner acting as the Priestess/Priest. Regular Sunedrions should be held, as detailed, for instance, in the *Black Book of Satan*, as you should regularly perform rituals, both hermetic and ceremonial, for the satisfaction of your own desires and those of your members. You should run this Temple for between six and eighteen months, as you should use either the *Black Book of Satan* or write and use your own *Black Book* of ceremonial rituals, with some help from the members of your group, if possible, in the writing of this work, and with all rituals firmly based on the non-Magian dark, septenary, tradition of the ONA, and you should use this work of yours in preference to using published works such as the *Black Book of Satan*.

2) Train for and undertake all three of the following different and demanding physical tasks - the minimum standards (for men) are: (a) walking thirty-two miles, in hilly terrain, in under seven hours while carrying a pack weighing at least 30 lbs; (b) running twenty-six miles in four hours; (c) cycling two hundred or more miles in twelve hours. [Those who have already achieved such goals in such activities should set themselves more demanding goals. For women, the minimum acceptable standards are: (a) walking twenty-seven miles in under seven hours while carrying a pack weighing at least 15 lbs. (b) running twenty-six miles in four and a half hours; (c) cycling one hundred and seventy miles in twelve hours.]

3) Undertake the 'Secret Task' as given in the *Secret Tasks MS*.

4) Study, construct and learn to play the advanced form of *The Star Game* [outlined in *Naos*].

5) Study Aeonics and the principles of Aeonick Magick, as detailed in Order MSS.

6) Study, and if possible practice, Esoteric Chant, as detailed in Order MSS [particularly in *Naos*].

7) Study the esoteric traditions of The Dark Tradition, and if so inclined [see 'Concerning The Nexion' below] instruct your Temple members in this tradition.

8) Prepare for, and undertake, the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept - if necessary choosing someone to run the Nexion in your absence.

Concerning The Nexion:

The Temple [aka Nexion] must be run for a minimum of six months, as you yourself must seek out, recruit, instruct and train, the members of this Temple. There must be at least four other members, excluding yourself and your companion, during these six months, as you must strive to obtain an equal balance between men and women if the Temple is so orientated toward heterosexuality. It is at your discretion whether or not you are honest about your intentions, and inform recruits/potential recruits that this Temple is one of your tasks as an External Adept, and that you yourself are not yet very advanced along the Left Hand Path. If you choose not to so inform your members, you must play the appropriate

role. If you are considering keeping and expanding the Temple beyond the minimum period and into the next stage, that of Internal Adept, it is more practical to be honest from the outset. The crux is to decide whether you wish your Temple to be solely for your own External Adept purpose, or whether you want it be truly sinister, with your members guided by you to become sincere and practising dark sorcerers. If this latter, then you must be honest with them about your own progress along the path, and instruct them according to ONA tradition.

After this six months is over - with four or more members and many ceremonial rituals having been performed - you may disband the Temple, if you consider sufficient experience has been gained in magick/manipulation/pleasuring. However the time limit of six months, and the minimum of four other members, must be observed, otherwise the task is not completed, and the next stage - Internal Adept - is not possible. This particular task, of an External Adept, is only complete when these minimum conditions have been met, for such conditions are essential for practical ceremonial experience to be gained.

After these conditions have been met, you may opt to continue with, and expand, your Temple.

Understanding External Adept:

The tasks of an External Adept develop both magickal and personal experience, and from these a real, abiding, sinister character is formed in the individual. This character, and the understanding and skills which go with it, are the essential foundations of the next stage, that of the Internal Adept.

The Temple enables various character roles to be directly assumed, and further develops the magickal skills, and magickal understanding, an Adept must possess. Particularly important here is skill in, and understanding of, ceremonial magick. Without this skill and understanding, Aeonian magick is not possible. The Temple also completes the experiencing of confronting, and integrating, the anima/animus.

From the many and diverse controlled and willed experiences, a genuine self-learning arises: the beginnings of the process of "individuation", of esoteric Adeptship. [See, for some basic exoteric guidance, the Order MS [*Adeptship - Its Real Meaning and Significance.*](#)]

The stage of External Adept lasts from two to six years.

IV - Internal Adept

The basic task of an Internal Adept is to strive to fulfil their personal Destiny - that is, to presence the dark force by acting sinister in the real world, thus affecting others, and causing changes in accord with the sinister dialectic of change. This personal Destiny is revealed, or becomes known, before or during the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept.

The Destiny is unique, and involves using the natural, and developed character and abilities of the individual. For some, the Destiny may be to continue with their Nexion, teaching others, and guiding them in their turn along the Seven-Fold Way. For others, the Destiny may be creative, in the artistic or musical sense - presencing the sinister through new, invented and performed forms or works. For others, the Destiny may be to acquire influence and/or power, and using these to aid /produce sinister change in accord with the sinister dialectic. For others, it may involve some heretical/adversarial or directly revolutionary or disruptive role, and thus seeking to change society. For others, the Destiny may be specific and specialized - being a warrior, or an assassin..... There are as many Destinies as there Adepts to undertake them.

While this Destiny is unfolding, the Adept will be increasing their esoteric knowledge and experience through a study and practice of Esoteric Chant, *The Star Game*, Aeonick Magick. Rites such as those of the Nine Angles will be undertaken. A complete and reasoned understanding of Aeons, Civilizations and other forms will be achieved, and with it the beginnings of wisdom.

After many years of striving to fulfil their Destiny, and after many years of experience and learning, the Adept will be propelled toward the next stage of the Way [see, for some basic exoteric guidance, the MS [*Mastery - Its Real Meaning and Significance*](#).] When the time is right, the Grade Ritual of Master/Mistress will be undertaken. The time is right only after the Adept has spent years completing themselves, and their 'self-image', having taken themselves to and beyond their limits - physical, mental, intellectual, moral, emotional. Being genuine Adepts, they will have the insight, and the honesty, to know what experiences, and what knowledge, they lack - and accordingly will seek to undergo such experiences, and learn such knowledge.

The stage of Internal Adept lasts from five to eleven years.

V - Master/Mistress

The fundamental tasks of this Grade are threefold:

- 1) The guiding of suitable individuals along the Seven-Fold Way, either on an individual basis, or as part of a structured Nexion/Temple/group;
- 2) The performance of Aeonick Magick to aid the sinister dialectic;
- 3) The creation of new forms to enhance conscious understanding and to aid the presencing of acausal/sinister forces.

Further, and importantly, a Master/Mistress will be using their Aeonick understanding, and their skills to influence/bring about changes in the societies of their time - this is Aeonick Magick, but without "ritual", as described in Parts III and IV of *The Deofel Quartet* and in texts such as *Eulalia*, *Dark Daughter of Baphomet*. They will also be working to create long-term change (of centuries or more).

Few individuals reach the stage of Master/Mistress - so far, only one to two individuals a century, out of all the genuine esoteric traditions, have gone beyond the stage of Master/Mistress to that of Grand Master/Grand Mistress.

The stage of Master/Mistress lasts a minimum of seven years - when sufficient Aeonic works are completed/achieved, and wisdom attained, there is a moving toward the next stage, that of Grand Master/Grand Mistress.

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Appendix - The Secret Tasks of the Sinister Way

The secret tasks have remained secret for a long time by virtue of their nature - they represent genuine dark sorcery in action and as such often are "a-moral". Such esoteric tasks were revealed to an Initiate by the Master, or Adept, guiding and training that Initiate.

To understand the nature of these tasks, it is necessary for the sinister novice to be familiar, and in agreement with, the secret teachings themselves, particularly as these relate to culling. [These teachings are contained in such traditional Order MSS as *Culling - A Guide to Sacrifice* and *Guidelines for the Testing of Opfers*. For a long time, the matters mentioned in the above secret MSS were transmitted only on an oral basis - it being forbidden for such teachings and practices to be written down or divulged to non-Initiates. However, as explained elsewhere, in several other MSS, this practice has now changed.

Accordingly, this present MS will detail the secret tasks which a sinister novice must undertake as part of their commitment to The Dark Tradition. That is, these hitherto secret tasks are both required and necessary: mandatory if progress is to be made upon the Way. Without them, there can be no genuine achievement along the Way, for it is such tasks which develop that character and those abilities which are sinister and which thus represent the presencing of the dark forces on Earth via the agency (or vehicle) of the individual sorcerer. These secret tasks - and the other tasks - represent the way of dark sorcerer. They are sinister. As such, they are fitting only to a minority: to those who are, or those who desire to become, sinister in a practical way. Some who profess to be sinister - and some who wish to become sorcerers of The Dark Tradition - will hear of these tasks, or read them, and be surprised, perhaps even appalled, particularly by the tasks that involve hunting and killing animals and culling human dross. Such people will say or write such things as "Such tasks are not necessary". By saying or writing such things such people condemn themselves as mundanes - as "ordinary" and weak - as they will show they lack the demonic desire, the hardness, the toughness, the darkness which all genuine sinister novices possess or must develop. The Dark Way is at it is - dark, and dangerous, and full of diabolic ecstasies and diabolic triumphs over the "ordinary", the mundane and those who would keep everyone in servitude and thrall. So it is, so has it been, and so shall it continue to be - to enable evolution, to create what must be created, while the fearful majorities in their sloth, delusions and

ignorance continue their morbid, Nazarene-like, sub-human existence.

As has been stated many times, genuine dark sorcery requires commitment - it requires self-effort, by the novice, over a period of years. It involves genuine *ordeals*, the achievement of difficult goals, the participation in pleasures, and the living of life in certain ways. Only thus are self-insight and genuine Occult ability born - only thus is a genuine Adept created.

Neophyte:

Before Initiation - and after undertaking the first task of a neophyte as given in the *Guide* - undertake the following task:

* Find an area where game is plentiful and, equipping yourself with either a cross-bow or an ordinary bow (a longbow) hunt/stalk some suitable game, and make a kill. Skin and prepare this game yourself (if necessary - for example, a pheasant - 'hanging' the game until it is ready). When prepared and ready, cook and eat this game.

"Game" in this context means wild edible birds or animals such as venison, hare, rabbit, partridge, pheasant, wildfowl. For this task, you are undertaking the role of hunter, using primitive weapons. (Guns cannot be used for this task.) After completing this hunting task, either undertake the next task as given below - which is not obligatory - *or* repeat the task above, choosing a different type of game.

* Undertake, as a solo hermetic working, either the traditional [*Mass of Heresy*](#) (suitably adapted for such an hermetic rite), and then, nine days later, the [*Rite of Defiance*](#).

Note: Both the Mass of Heresy and the Rite of Defiance are intentionally heretical in our times; as well as being means of catharsis, and providing a practical means whereby those undertaking them can develop a sinister-empathy with that which and those whom are currently regarded, by Magians and mundanes and in a very practical way, as "evil" and deserving of approbation.

Initiate:

After the rite or ceremony of your Initiation, and following the completion of the tasks as given in the *Guide*, you should choose and undertake, for between six to eighteen months, an Insight Role [see the *MS An Introduction to Insight Roles* - 119yf edition].

External Adept:

The following two tasks *must* both be undertaken successfully.

1) With your Temple formed as one of your External Adept tasks - see the *Guide* - perform both the *Mass of Heresy* and *The Rite of Defiance*.

2) Train several members, and yourself, in the undertaking of the tests relevant to choosing an offer. Select some suitable candidates for the post of offer, using sinister guidelines for so selecting an offer, and undertake the relevant tests on each chosen candidate. The offer or offers having been so chosen by failing such tests, perform *The Death Ritual* using the chosen offer(s) in the central role. Thereafter, and having completed all the necessary preparations, select a further offer using Aeonics or sinister strategy as a guide, and undertake *The Ceremony of Recalling* [see *The Grimoire of Baphomet*].

It must be stressed that (i) the offer(s) must be chosen according to sinister principles as given in the appropriate Order MSS; (ii) those so chosen must be tested according to sinister principles as given in the appropriate Order MSS. Furthermore, the candidates for the position of offer can be chosen either by you, or suggested by a member of your Temple, if those members are following the sinister path in a committed way.

Beyond External Adept, there are no secret tasks of a prescribed nature, for those following the sinister path to undertake.

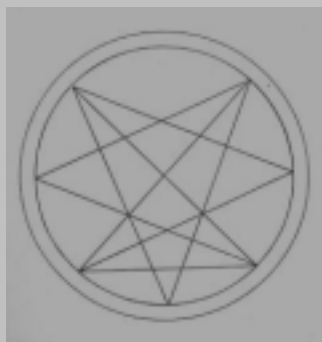


ONA/O9A

Order of Nine Angles / Order of The Nine Angles



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A Brief Guide to The Esoteric Philosophy of The Order of Nine Angles

The ONA has its own, unique, esoteric Philosophy and its own, unique and sinister, Way of Life - which Way of Life may be considered the praxis of the ONA, or how ONA individuals live and implement our sinister way of living and how they become, are of or belong to, the ONA.

The Esoteric Philosophy of the ONA

The esoteric Philosophy of the ONA is known by several names, among which are The Dark Tradition, The Sinister Tradition, and The Sinister Way, and the fundamental principles of this esoteric Philosophy are:

- (1) that the Cosmos consists of a causal continuum [a causal Universe] and an acausal continuum [an acausal Universe], with living beings, of various species, existing in both our own causal continuum and in the acausal continuum;
- (2) that there exists two types of causal being [living and non-living], differentiated by whether or not these types of causal being possess, or manifest, what is termed acausal energy;
- (3) that acausal energy - from the acausal continuum - is what animates all life in the causal continuum;
- (4) that all living beings in the causal continuum are a nexion - a connexion - between the causal and the acausal;
- (5) the more complex, the more organized, the causal life, the more acausal energy is presented in that life;
- (6) our consciousness, as human beings, is a means whereby we can access the nexion we are to the acausal, and a means whereby we can form, or pattern, our own acausal energy;
- (7) we possess the ability - the way, the means - of gaining for ourselves more acausal energy, of evolving and thus increasing our own acausal energy, and thus of transcending to live in the acausal continuum.

Hence, The Dark Tradition of the ONA has its own ontology, its own theory of ethics, its own

epistemology, and its own praxis, which derive from the ontology of causal and acausal, and from our nature as human beings, which is of us being a nexion to the acausal continuum.

The Nature of Causal and Acausal

1) The causal, or phenomenal or physical, universe can be described - or represented - by the three-dimensional causal geometry of causal Space and by one dimension of linear causal Time.

(2) The acausal universe can be described - or represented - by an acausal Space of n acausal dimensions, and an acausal, un-linear, Time of n dimensions, where n is currently unknown but is greater than three and less than or equal to infinity.

The causal universe is the realm of causal matter/energy, and the acausal universe is the realm of acausal matter/energy.

The causal universe is currently described by causal sciences such as Physics, Chemistry and Astronomy. The acausal universe can be described by a new science based on the new Physics of acausal energy and thus on a new acausal geometry, based on a new acausal metrical Space-Time of n acausal dimensions and an acausal Time also of n dimensions.

In addition, nexions to the acausal, from our own causal Universe, are of two types: (1) physical nexions, where a specific region of or a specific place in causal Space-Time intersects, or is joined to or with, acausal Space-Time; and (2) living (organic) nexions, where acausal energy from the acausal manifests in and thus animates a living, causal, being.

The Esoteric Philosophy of the ONA is thus, when conventionally viewed, a new and a rational philosophy.

The Esoteric Praxis of the ONA

Essentially, our praxis consists of:

- 1) Sinister (warrior) Tribes - those directly living and directly presencing our Sinister Way of Life;
- 2) Traditional Nexions - composed of those undertaking our Seven Fold Sinister Way in the traditional manner of Left Hand Path seeker, via Grade Rituals, Insight Roles, and practical LHP magick;
- 3) Sinister Empaths (of which the Rounwytha is an example) and esoteric scientists studying and seeking knowledge of the acausal.

Our most fundamental and long-term practical goals are to create an entirely new, more evolved human species, and for this new human species to explore and to colonize the star-systems of our own, and of other, Galaxies - to thus create a Dark Galactic Imperium. This will also require the development of a new acausal technology, based on the Physics of acausal energy.

Furthermore, we see the breakdown, destruction, and the replacement of all existing (and mundane) societies - by our new progressive societies based on our new warrior tribes - as a necessary prelude to this Galactic aim of ours.

Thus, the immediate and intermediate aims of our sinister Way of Life are:

(1) to use our Dark Tradition to create sinister Adepts and, over a long period of causal Time, aid and enhance and create that new, more evolved, human species of which genuine Sinister Adepts may be considered to be the phenotype;

(2) to use the sinister dialectic (and thus Aeonic Magick and genuine Sinister Arts) to aid and enhance and make possible entirely new types of societies for human beings, with these new societies being based on new tribes and a tribal way of living where the only law is that of our Dark Warriors, which is the Law of The Sinister-Numen (see Appendix 1);

(3) to aid, encourage, and bring about - by both practical and esoteric means (such as subversion, revolution, and Dark Sorcery) - the breakdown and the downfall of existing societies, and thus to replace the tyranny of nations and States, and their impersonal governments, by our new tribal societies and our Law of the Sinister-Numen.

The Esoteric Ethics of the ONA

The ethics of the ONA are based upon our axiom that personal honour - what we know of as, or what we term, personal honour - expresses our true nature as human beings capable of consciously evolving ourselves and the Cosmos. Thus, personal honour - manifest in our Law of The Sinister-Numen - is a means to access acausal energy and a means to change and evolve ourselves in a natural way consistent with our true nature and our true purpose, which nature and purpose is to know our natural wyrd, to presence our wyrd: to participate in, to partake of, our own evolution and that of the Cosmos itself.

All evolution - conscious and otherwise - is darkly-numinous; that is, it possesses or it manifests acausal energy in particular ways, and personal honour, as defined by and as manifest in our Law of The Sinister-Numen, is a practical, a willed, an evolutionary, presencing of acausal energy.

Our Law of The Sinister-Numen is our guide for our own individual personal behaviour, and our guide to how we relate to, and should treat others. It specifies our type of law, and the nature of our justice, as it manifests the nature, the character, of those of our kind: the Dark Warrior, someone who lives, and if necessary dies, by the Law of The Sinister-Numen. (See Footnote 1)

Furthermore, our Law of The Sinister-Numen is manifest - made real and practical - by means of our sinister warrior tribes, for it is by means of these tribes that we can come to know, and to live, our wyrd: that is, (1) come to discover our true nature, as human beings capable of consciously participating in our own evolution and that of the Cosmos, and (2) actively participate in our own evolution and that of the Cosmos. (See Appendix 2)

The Esoteric Epistemology of the ONA

The epistemology of the Esoteric Philosophy of the ONA asserts that there are two distinct types of *knowing* - causal and acausal - and that:

A) knowledge of the causal continuum can be obtained by causal Science which is based on the following foundations:

(i) the causal, phenomenal, universe exists independently of us and our consciousness, and thus independent of our senses; (ii) our limited understanding of this causal 'external world' depends for the most part upon our senses – that is, on what we can see, hear or touch; that is, on what we can observe or come to know via our senses and by practical scientific experiments; (iii) logical argument, or reason, is the basic means to knowledge and understanding of and about this 'external world'; (iv) the cosmos is, of itself, a reasoned order subject to rational laws; (v) that, in competing explanations of events or observations, the simplest and most logical explanation is to be preferred.

B) knowledge of the acausal continuum can be obtained by (i) developing a new Science of acausal Physics, based on an understanding of acausal energy; (ii) by developing and evolving our latent faculties, such as that of dark-empathy; (iii) by coming-to-know, and to interact with, such acausal, living, beings as can manifest - or which esoteric tradition asserts have been manifest - in our causal continuum; and (iv) by means of such things as developing a new and an acausal technology, and thus by exploring the realms of the acausal itself.

According to our esoteric epistemology:

1) *Causal knowing* is that deriving from causal-based rational Philosophies and from causal Sciences such as Physics, and this type of knowing is essentially based on a physical cause-and-effect (in the case of causal Sciences) or an abstract cause-and-effect (in the case of causal Philosophies).

Hence, the type of causal knowing which is the concern of traditional epistemology is limited, and derives from positing causal abstractions, and then projecting these abstractions onto things (onto causal beings, living and non-living). That is, this type of causal knowing *denotes* things and causal beings by such causal abstractions. There is then the assumptions of knowing, and/or of having understood or having an understanding of, such things and such causal beings. (See Footnote 2)

According to the Esoteric Philosophy of the ONA, the error of all conventional Philosophies is that they apply, or try to apply, a purely causal perception - based on a linear cause-and-effect - and lifeless causal abstractions, to living beings, such as ourselves. This causal type of knowing is thus un-numinous (that is, devoid or without acausal energy).

2) *Acausal knowing* is that deriving from (i) apprehending the acausal essence of living causal beings; (ii) a study of the nature of acausal energy, and the nature of the acausal Universe itself by means of developing new acausal sciences and technologies; and (iii) apprehending and coming-to-know (interacting with) those living acausal beings we are currently aware of, or can become aware of in our present state of human evolution.

The acausal essence - the acausal energy - of living causal beings can be apprehend, by we human beings, by means of our latent faculties such as what we term dark (or sinister) empathy.

Our traditional esoteric Dark Arts are one means by which we can come to know, and to interact with, such acausal, living, beings as can manifest - or which esoteric tradition asserts have been manifest - in our causal continuum.

Our very evolution, as human beings - in terms of consciousness, understanding and knowledge - results from acausal energy, and from us accessing such acausal energy in particular ways.

According to the Esoteric Philosophy of the ONA, those things, and/or those creations of our causal Arts - such as music - which we feel are or which we come to know as numinous, are simply a presencing of acausal energy by means of a nexion, and thus can be considered as one type of intimation of the acausal - of the Life there, and of the very nature of the acausal continuum itself. That is, such numinous works of conventional Arts have often been a means whereby: (1) some human beings (through their artistic creations or through their performance of such creations, their own, or others) can access and presence some acausal energy; and (2) where those affected by such numinous works of Art achieve or can achieve some intimation of the acausal. This also applies to genuine work of Dark Sorcery.

We Are As We Are

The Esoteric Philosophy of the ONA is simply a means; an effective and practical means to change, to evolve, ourselves and our societies; to manifest, to present, our *wyrd* - that is, to know, to accept, to live, our correct and natural relationship with the Cosmos, with both the causal Universe and the acausal Universe, and the living beings that exist in both. This *wyrd* of ours is most obviously manifest, in a practical way, through our sinister tribes and our Law of The Sinister Numen.

The ONA is not interested in proselytizing, in converting others, or in trying to persuade others - through argument or debate or by countering distortions and lies about us - to adopt our sinister Way of Life. We are as we are, representing as we do a specific new type, a new breed, of human being, a specific new and expanding tribal family of human beings. Our Way is the practical way of deeds, of living our darkly-numinous Way of Life; of increasing our numbers through the success of our tribes, though drawing others of our kind to us, and through others being personally inspired by our example, by our success.

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Footnotes:

(1) One secret of our darkly-numinous wyrd is that our mortal, causal, life is not the end, but only a beginning, and that if we live and die in the right way, we can possibly attain for ourselves a life in the realms of the acausal. Our Law of The Sinister-Numen is the most practical way for us to do this, to achieve this, for this Law is a manifestation, a presencing, of acausal energy, and by living in accord with this Law we are accessing, and presencing within ourself, more acausal energy, and thus evolving and increasing our own type of acausal energy.

Acausal energy - that which animates us and makes us alive and which allows and causes our evolution - cannot by its very nature be destroyed in the causal continuum. It can only be presenced in organic, causal (living) beings, or it can be dispersed, thinly, over causal Time, in the causal until it is re-presenced in some-thing, or until it returns to the acausal continuum by some means.

Such an achieved acausal existence, for us, is - by the very nature of the acausal - time-less, eternal, and not subject to the organic process of decay that is an inherent part of all causally existing life.

As stated in two other ONA MSS:

The very purpose and meaning of our individual, causal – mortal – lives is to progress, to evolve, toward the acausal, and that this, by virtue of the reality of the acausal itself, means and implies a new type of *sinister* existence, a new type of being, with this acausal existence being far removed from – and totally different to – any and every Old Aeon representation, both Occult, non-Occult and “religious”. Thus it is that we view our long-term human social and personal evolution as a bringing-into-being of a new type of sinister living, in the causal – on this planet, and elsewhere – *and also* as a means for us, as individuals of a new sinister *causal* species, to dwell in both the causal and acausal Universes, while we live, as mortals, and to transcend, after our mortal, causal “death”, to live as an acausal being, which acausal being can be currently apprehended, and has been apprehended in the past, as an immortal sinister being..

Thus do we know – thus do we feel – that death itself is irrelevant, an illusion, a mere ending of a mere causal existence, and that it is what we do with the opportunities that this, our causal life, offers and can offer us, that is important. Thus we do not fear death, and instead defy it, just as we seek to defy ourselves – what we are, now – and just as we seek to defy the mudanes and all those causal restrictions, those causal forms, that they have

created to make them feel safe, and secure and content with their mundane un-warrior like merely causal and thus un-numinous existence.

(2) Basically, causal abstraction is the positing of some "perfect" or "ideal" form of some-*thing*, and/or manufacturing some category which some-*thing* is said "to belong to, or be a part of".

Thus, things - beings in the causal - are allocated to, or classified according to, some abstract category or some abstract type, and/or compared to some abstract or some ideal/perfect form.

Such categories, and such abstract ideal forms, are then often incorrectly used to judge some-thing (including, for example, some living person).

There is thus no direct - and thus certainly no acausal - knowing *of a thing* or of a living human being, as those things and as human beings *are* in their Cosmic essence and according to their wyrd, for the knowing of such traditional epistemology is only the linear, causal, the distorted and/or the illusory, knowing of imposed, projected, intermediate, fallible (often changing), abstractions and categories.

In contrast, the epistemology of the Esoteric Philosophy of the ONA allows, and is a means of obtaining, a Cosmic (a numinous, wyrdful, esoteric) knowing, based as this numinous, Cosmic, knowing is on the combination of rational causal Sciences and the acausal knowing obtained by such things as acausal Sciences, acausal-empathy, and the development and evolution of ourselves and our faculties.

Appendix 1

The Law of The Sinister-Numen

Honour, according to and as defined by the sinister-numen, is a specific code of personal behaviour and conduct, and the practical means whereby we can live in an evolved way, consistent with the sinister perspective, and aims, of our Sinister Way. Thus, personal honour is how we can change, and control, ourselves.

Honour not only defines our personal behaviour, and imposes upon us certain duties and obligations, but it also defines us, as individuals – that is, it is an essential part of our identity, as individuals who live by the Law of the Sinister-Numen, and it distinguishes us from the mundanes, from all those who are not-of-us, who do not belong to our kind. Honour is what binds our tribes; what makes our tribes, what makes and what marks our new way of living.

For us, our honour is more important than our own lives, and it is this willingness to live and if necessary die for and because of our honour that makes us strong, fearsome, and enables us to live life on a higher level than any mundane. For it is through honour – through our fearlessness, our scorn of our mortal death – that we come to exult in Life itself.

Our honour means we are fiercely loyal to our own kind – to those who, like us, live by honour and are prepared to die for their honour. Our honour means we are wary of, and do not trust – and often despise – all those who are not like us, who are not of our own fearsome dark warrior kind.

Our honourable duty – as individuals who live by the Law of the Sinister-Numen – is to be ready, willing, and able to defend ourselves, in any situation, and to be prepared to use lethal force to so defend ourselves.

Our honourable duty – as individuals who live by the Law of the Sinister-Numen – is to be loyal to, and to defend, our own kind: to do our duty, even unto death, to those to whom we have sworn a personal oath of loyalty.

Our obligation – as individuals who live by the Law of the Sinister-Numen – is to seek revenge, if necessary unto death, against anyone who acts dishonourably toward us, or who acts dishonourably toward those to whom we have sworn a personal oath of loyalty.

Our obligation – as individuals who live by the Law of the Sinister-Numen – is to never willingly submit to any mundane; to die fighting rather than surrender to them; to die rather than allow ourselves to be dishonourably humiliated by them.

Our obligation – as individuals who live by the Law of the Sinister-Numen – is to never trust any oath or any pledge of loyalty given, or any promise made, by any mundane, and to be wary of them at all times.

Our honourable duty – as individuals who live by the Law of the Sinister-Numen – is to settle our serious disputes, among ourselves, by either trial by combat, or by a duel involving deadly weapons; and to challenge to a duel anyone – mundane, or one of our own kind – who impugns our honour or who makes dishonourable accusations against us.

Our honourable duty – as individuals who live by the Law of the Sinister-Numen – is to settle our non-serious disputes, among ourselves, by having a man or woman of honour from among us, who is highly esteemed because of their honour and known for their honourable deeds, arbitrate and decide the matter for us, and to honourably accept without question, and to abide by, their decision.

Our honourable duty – as individuals who live by the Law of the Sinister-Numen – is to always keep our word, once we have given our word on our honour, for to break one's word is a dishonourable, cowardly, and mundane, act.

Our honourable duty – as individuals who live by the Law of the Sinister-Numen – is to act honourably in all our dealings with our own honourable kind; to strive to be fair, and courteous, with those of our own kind.

Our obligation – as individuals who live by the Law of the Sinister-Numen – is to marry only those from our own kind, who thus, like us, live by honour and are prepared to die to save their honour.

Our honourable, our Dreccian, duty – as Dreccian individuals who live by the Law of the Sinister-Numen – means that an oath of loyalty or allegiance, once sworn by a man or woman of honour (“I swear by my honour that I shall...”) can only be ended either: (1) by the man or woman of honour formally asking the person to whom the oath was sworn to release them from that oath, and that person agreeing so to release them; or (2) by the death of the person to whom the oath was sworn. Anything else is dishonourable, and the act of a mundane.

Appendix 2

Sinister Tribes and The Tyranny of The State

A Brief Diatribe

Our *wyrd* - our true nature, as human beings capable of consciously participating in our own evolution and that of the Cosmos - is most obviously manifest, in a practical way, through our sinister *warrior* tribes and our Law of The Sinister Numen. Furthermore, if we know, and if we develop, our *wyrd*, we become, we are, a particular new type (a new breed) of human being - quite distinct from the mundanes. In essence, we become Dark Warriors, living and if necessary dying by the Law of The Sinister-Numen.

Our sinister tribes are a practical, a darkly-numinous, evolution of that natural tribal instinct that lives within us and which has lived within us, and which tribal instinct has made possible (hitherto mostly unconsciously) our evolution, as human beings. That is, the sinister tribes of the ONA are a means whereby we can access and increase our own acausal energy, as individuals, and participate in our own evolution, and that of the Cosmos. To do this - to know and to live our *wyrd* - is to live in a symbiotic relationship with others of our new kind; to balance our unique individuality with our necessary and natural and *numinous* (that is, honourable) co-operation with others of our kind. For it is such *honourable* (numinous) co-operation with others *of our own kind* (within our own tribal family) which presences and which allows our own individual *wyrd* to be evolved.

In direct opposition to our *wyrd* is the modern tyranny of The State, which is un-numinous and de-evolutionary in nature, purpose and intent. For the State takes away our natural right of personal honour,

and that natural and evolutionary way of living which is tribal, and replaces honour by impersonal, lifeless, abstract "law", and replaces tribes by the impersonal, lifeless, abstract, State and nation, which are - despite the illusion and pretence of democracy by some such States - are all run by an oligarchy, for the benefit of that wealthy and privileged oligarchy.

In place of the natural and personal knowing - the acausal-knowing - of our tribal (extended) family, there is the impersonal causal lifeless "knowing" of our place as some mechanistic "citizen" of the State or nation. In place of the natural loyalty to, and the care of and from, our own tribal family - based on a personal, numinous, knowing and loyalty - there is the division of us into isolated, un-numinous and de-evolutionary single family units, dependant on usury, and where our given purpose is to toil for the State, on behalf of The State, or for ourselves and our single isolated family unit, and to which State we have to pay, for all of our working lives, mandatory taxes, thus making us wage or salary slaves, almost always burdened by debt.

In place of our natural, healthy, evolutionary warrior way of life - based on a tribal way of living and the law of personal honour - the State denudes us of numinous meaning, of wyrd, and provides us only with de-evolutionary aims and goals. In place of the glory of a Galactic Imperium, and the promise of a warrior-won acausal existence, the tyranny of The State provides us with only causal illusions and abstractions and meaningless "rewards", so that we remain tame, domesticated, animals, paying our taxes, and subservient to their dishonourable enforcers, the bullies they call the forces of their "law and order."

Thus, we by our very nature, by our wyrd, are violently, implacably, and in all practical ways, opposed to the State and its de-evolutionary self-serving tyranny.

Selected Further Reading

The Meaning of The Nine Angles (A Collection of Texts, [Parts One](#) and [Two](#))

[*Frequently Asked Questions About The Order of Nine Angles*](#) (ONA)

[*The Ontology and Theology of Traditional Satanism*](#) (Anton Long)

[*The ONA In Historical and Esoteric Context*](#) (Julie Wright)

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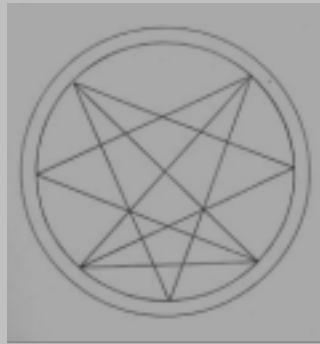
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A Glossary of Order of Nine Angles Terms

Introductory Note:

The ONA employs a variety of specialist esoteric terms, such a nexion, presencing, acausal, Tree of Wyrd, and so on.

It also needs to be understood that the ONA uses some now generally used exoteric terms - such as psyche, and archetype - in a particular and precise *esoteric* way, and thus such terms should not be considered as being identical to those used by others and defined, for example, by Jung

This Second Edition of the original brief ONA Glossary contains further terms, and some elucidations of other terms.

Abyss

Exoterically, the Abyss represents the region where the causal gives way to, or merges into, the acausal, and thus where the causal is "transcended", gone beyond, or passed, and where one enters the realm of pure acausality. Hence The Abyss can be considered as an interchange, a nexus, of temporal, atemporal, and spatial and aspatial, dimensions. This region is, for example, symbolized on The Tree of Wyrd, as being between the spheres of Sun and Mars, and '*Entering the Abyss*' is that stage of magickal development which distinguishes the Master/ Mistress from the Adept.

Esoterically, The Tree of Wyrd is itself a re-presentation of The Abyss, as are other esoteric re-presentations, such as The Star Game.

Acausal

The term acausal refers to "acausal Time and acausal Space": that is, to the acausal Universe. This acausal Universe is part of the Cosmos, which Cosmos consists of both the *acausal* and the *causal*, where "causal" refers to the Universe that is described, or re-presented, by causal Space and causal Time. This causal Universe is that of our physical, phenomenal, Universe, currently described by sciences such as Physics and Astronomy.

The acausal is non-Euclidean, and "beyond causal Time": that is, it cannot be represented by our finite causal geometry (of three spatial dimensions at right angles to each other) and by the flow, the change, of causal Time (past-present-future), or measured by a duration of causal Time.

In addition - and just as causal energy exists in the causal (understood as such energy is by sciences such as Physics) - acausal energy exists in the acausal, of a nature and type which cannot be described by causal sciences such as Physics (based as these are on a causal geometry and a causal Time).

According to the aural tradition of the ONA, there are a variety of acausal life-forms; a variety of acausal life, of different species, some of which have been manifest in (or intruded into) our causal Universe.

For more details regarding the acausal, and acausal life, see the following ONA MSS: (1) *The Mythos of the Dark Gods: Beings of Acausal Darkness*; (2) *Advanced Introduction to The Dark Gods: Five-Dimensional Acausal Sorcery*.

Acausal Thinking

One of The Dark Arts. Acausal Thinking is basically apprehending the causal, and acausal energy, as these "things" are - that is, beyond all causal abstractions, and beyond all causal symbols, and symbolism, where such causal symbols include language, and the words and terms that are part of language.

One technique used to develop Acausal Thinking is The Star Game (qv).

Aeon

An Aeon - according to the Sinister Way of the ONA - is a particular presencing of certain acausal energies on this planet, Earth, which energies affect a multitude of individuals over a certain period of causal time. One such affect is via the psyche of individuals. This particular presencing which is an Aeon is via a particular nexion, which is an Aeonic *civilization*, which Aeonic civilization is brought-into-being in a certain geographical area and usually associated with a particular *mythos*.

Archetype

An archetype is a particular causal presencing of a certain acausal energy and is thus akin to a type of acausal living being in the causal (and thus "in the psyche"): it is born (or can be created, by magickal means), its lives, and then it "dies" (ceases to be present, presenced) in the causal (i.e. its energy in the causal ceases).

Balobians

Those artists, musicians, artisans, and writers (and similar types), who share or are inspired by the

sinister ethos and/or the Dreccian, or Satanic, life-style of the ONA, and/or who share some or all of our aims and objectives, but who may not have some formal involvement with us, and who usually do not publicly claim association with the ONA or with the ONA ethos.

Baphomet

Baphomet is regarded as a Dark Goddess - a sinister female entity, The Mistress (or Mother) of Blood. According to tradition, she is represented as a beautiful mature woman, naked from the waist up, who holds in her hand the severed head of a man.

She is regarded as one manifestation of one of The Dark Gods, The Bride-and-Mother of Satan, and Rites to presence Baphomet in our causal continuum exist, for example in *The Grimoire of Baphomet*.

Black Book of Satan

The book of that name containing the traditional ceremonial rituals of sinister/Satanic ceremonial magick, used by ONA Initiates.

Causal Abstractions

Abstractions (aka causal abstractions) are manifestations of the primary (causal) nature of mundanes, and are manufactured by mundanes in their mundane attempt to understand the world, themselves, and the causal Universe. Exoterically, abstractions re-present the mundane simplicity of causal linearity - of causal reductionism, of a simple cause-and-effect, of a limited causal thinking.

All abstractions are devoid of Dark-Empathy and the perspective of acausality, and thus are redolent of, or directly manifest, materialism and the *Untermensch* ethos derived from such materialism.

Understood exoterically, an abstraction is the manufacture, and use of, some idea, ideal, "image" or category, and thus some generalization, and/or some assignment of an individual or individuals to some group or category. The positing of some "perfect" or "ideal" form, category, or thing, is part of abstraction.

Abstractions hide the true nature of Reality - which is both causal and acausal, and which true nature can be apprehended and understood by means of The Dark Arts, and thus by following the Occult way from Initiate, to Adept, and beyond.

According to the ONA, the so-called Occult Arts - and especially the so-called Satanism - of others are manifestations of causal abstractions, lacking as they do the learning of the skills of Dark-Empathy, Acausal-Thinking, and Sinister Sorcery, and thus lacking as they do the ability to develop our latent human faculties and our latent sinister character.

Dark Arts

The Dark Arts are the skills traditionally learnt by those following the Seven Fold (Sinister) Way, and include Dark-Empathy, Acausal-Thinking, and practical sorcery (External, Internal, and Aeonie).

In addition, *a sinister tribe* of Dreccs (qv) is a new type of Dark Art, developed by the ONA to Presence The Dark in practical ways.

Dark-Empathy

One of The Dark Arts. Also called Sinister-Empathy (qv). The term Dark-Empathy (also written Dark Empathy) is also sometimes used to describe that-which is redolent of the acausal, and thus that-which presences or which can presence "dark forces" (dark/acausal energies) in the causal and in human beings; and thus used in this exoteric sense it refers to that-which imbues or which can imbue things with acausal energy, and which distinguishes the Occult in general from the exoteric and the mundane.

Dark Gods

According to the Sinister Tradition of the ONA, The Dark Gods (aka The Dark Ones) are specific entities - living-beings *of a particular acausal species* - who exist in the realms of the acausal, with some of these entities having been presenced, via various nexions, on Earth in our distant past. [See, for example, the ONA MS *The Mythos of the Dark Gods: Beings of Acausal Darkness*.]

Drecc

Someone who lives a practical sinister life, and thus who lives by The Law of the Sinister-Numen (qv) and who thus Presences The Dark in practical ways by practical sinister deeds. A sinister tribe is a territorial and independent group of Dreccs (often including drecclings - that is, the children of Dreccs) who band together for their mutual advantage and who rule or who seek to rule over a particular area, neighbourhood, or territory. A sinister tribe is thus a practical manifestation of the Dreccian way of life.

Dreccs, and their associated tribe, rarely engage in overt practical sorcery and mostly do not describe themselves as Satanists or even as following the LHP. Instead, they describe and refer to themselves, simply, as Drecc.

Ethos

Ethos refers to the distinguishing character, or nature, of a particular weltanschauung. The spirit that animates it.

Exeatic

To go beyond and transgress the limits imposed and prescribed by mundanes, and by the systems which reflect or which manifest the ethos of mundanes - for example, governments, and the laws of what has been termed "society".

Exoteric/Esoteric

Exoteric refers to the outer (or causal) form, or meaning, or nature, or character, or appearance, of something; while esoteric refers to its Occult/inner/acausal essence or nature. What is esoteric is that which is generally hidden from mundanes (intentionally or otherwise), or which mundanes cannot perceive or understand. Causal abstractions (qv) tend to hide the esoteric nature (character) of things, and/or such abstractions describe or refer to that-which is only causal and mundane and thus devoid of Dark-Empathy.

Thus, a form manufactured by an Adept for some Aeonie purpose - for example, a tactic to aid strategic aims - has an outer appearance and an outer meaning which is usually all that mundanes perceive or understand, even though it has an (inner) esoteric meaning.

Falcifer

1) The title of the first volume of *The Deofel Quartet*.

2) The *exoteric* name given to the esoteric (or "hidden") nexion which is opened by Adepts to prepare the way for *Vindex*. This nexion - like *Vindex* - may be presented in a specific individual, or in a group of individuals. There is a symbiotic relationship between *Falcifer* and *Vindex*, who - if presented in individuals - can be either male or female.

Hebdomadry

A traditional name used to describe The Septenary System.

Homo Hubris

A type of mundane, and a new sub-species of the genus, *Homo*, which new sub-species has evolved out of the industrial revolution and the imposition of both capitalism and what is called democracy. This new rapacious mostly urban dwelling denizen – this creation of the modern West – is the foot-soldier of the Magian, and is distinguished by a personal arrogance, by a lack of manners, and by that lack of respect for anything other than strength/power and/or their own gratification. And it was to satiate and satisfy and to use and control *Homo Hubris* that the Magian and their acolytes (such as the *Hubriati*) manufactured the vacuous, profane, vulgar mass entertainment industry – and mass “culture” – of the modern West, just as it is Magian Occultism, the Magian- controlled Media, and the “spin”, the propaganda, of politicians who have been assessed and accepted by the Magian cabal, which keeps *Homo Hubris* almost totally unaware, and uncaring, of the reality of the modern world and of their potential as human beings.

Hubriati

The hubriati are that class of individuals, in the West, who have been and who are subsumed by the Magian ethos and the delusion of abstractions, and who occupy positions of influence and/or of power. Hubriati include politicians, Media magnates and their savants, military commanders, government officials, industrialists, bankers, many academics and teachers, and so on. The oligarchy (elected and unelected) that forms the controllers of Western governments are almost exclusively hubriati.

Among the abstractions which delude hubriati are the State, the nation, abstract law, and the pretence that is called "democracy".

Law of The Sinister-Numen

The Law of The Sinister-Numen (aka *The Sinister Code*) is a practical manifestation, in our causal continuum, of the Sinister-Numen - of those things which can breed excellence of sinister character in individuals, and thus which Presence The Dark in practical ways. The Law also describes the sinister ethos of The Order of Nine Angles. [The Sinister Code is given in full in an Appendix, below.]

Left Hand Path (LHP)

The amoral and individualistic Way of Sinister Sorcery. In the LHP there are no rules: there is nothing that is not permitted; nothing that is forbidden or restricted. That is, the LHP means the individual takes sole responsibility for their actions and their quest, and does not abide by the ethics of mundanes.

Magick

Magick (aka Sorcery) - according to the Sinister tradition of the ONA - is defined as "the presencing of acausal energy in the causal by means of a nexion. By the nature of our consciousness, we, as human individuals, are one type of nexion - that is, we have the ability to access, and presence, certain types of acausal energy."

Furthermore, magick - as understood and practised by the ONA - is a means not only of personal development and personal understanding (a freeing from psychic, archetypal, influences and affects) but also of evolving to the next level of our human existence where we can understand, and to a certain extent control and influence, supra-personal manifestations of acausal energies, such as an Aeon, and thus cause, or bring-into-being, large-scale evolutionary change. Such understanding, such control, such a bring-into-being, is Aeonic Magick.

Aeonic Magick is the magick of the Adept and those beyond: the magick of the evolved human being who has achieved a certain level of self-understanding and self-mastery and who thus is no longer at the

mercy of unconscious psychic, archetypal, influences, both personal/individual, and of other living-beings, such as an Aeon.

Internal Magick is the magick of personal change and evolution: of using magick to gain insight and to develop one's personality and esoteric skills. There are seven stages involved in Internal Magick.

External Magick is basic, "low-level", *sorcery* as sorcery has been and still is understood by mundanes - where certain acausal energies are used for bring or to fulfil the desire of an individual.

Ceremonial Magick is the use (by more than two individuals gathered in a group) of a set or particular texts or sinister rituals to access and presence sinister energies.

Five-dimensional magick is the New Aeon magick *sans* symbols, ceremonies, symbology (such as the Tree of Wyrd) and beyond all causal abstractions, and it is *prefigured* in the advanced form of *The Star Game*.

Magian

The term Magian is used to refer to the hybrid ethos of Yahoud and of Western hubriati, and also refers to those individuals who are Magian by either breeding or nature.

The Magian ethos expresses the fundamental materialistic belief, the idea, of Homo Hubris, Yahoud, and the Hubriati, that the individual self (and thus self identity) is the most important, the most fundamental, thing, and that the individual – either alone or collectively (and especially in the form of a nation/State) – can master and control everything (including themselves), if they have the right techniques, the right tools, the right method, the right ideas, the money, the power, the influence, the words. That human beings have nothing to fear, because they are or can be in control.

The Magian ethos is thus represented in the victory of consumerism, capitalism and usury over genuine, numinous, living culture; in the vulgarity of mechanistic marxism, Freudian psychology, and the social engineering and planning and surveillance of the nanny State; in the vulgarity of modern entertainment centred around sex, selfish-indulgence, lack of manners and dignity, and vacuous "celebrities" (exemplified by Hollywood); and in the conniving, the hypocrisy, the slyness, and the personal dishonourable conduct, which nearly all modern politicians in the West reveal and practice.

Mundane

Exoterically, mundanes are defined as those who are not of our sinister kind - that is, as those who do not live by The Law of the Sinister-Numen (qv).

Esoterically, mundane-ness is defined as being under the influence of, or being in thrall to, or being addicted to, and/or believing in, and/or using as a means of understanding, causal abstractions (qv).

Naos

- 1) The name of one of the "boards" (spheres) of The Star Game, taken from the star of the same name: Zeta Puppis in the constellation Argo.
- 2) The title of the ONA text "*Naos - A Practical Guide to Becoming An Adept*".
- 3) According to aural legend, there is also a Star Gate - an actual physical nexion - in the region around or near to this particular star.

Nexion

A nexion is a specific connexion between, or the intersection of, the causal and the acausal, and nexions can, *exoterically*, be considered to be akin to "gates" or openings or "tunnels" where there is, or can be, either a flow of acausal energy (and thus also of acausal entities) from the acausal into our causal Space and causal Time; a journeying into the acausal itself; or a willed, conscious flow or presencing (by dark sorcery) of acausal energies.

Basically, there are three main types of nexion. The first is an actual physical nexion. The second type of nexion is a living causal being, such as ourselves. The third type of nexion is a magickal creation: that is, some form in-which acausal energy is presenced or "channelled into" by a sinister Adept. [For more details of these three types see the ONA MS *The Mythos of the Dark Gods*.]

Nine Angles

The Nine Angles have several meanings - or interpretations, exoteric and esoteric - depending on context.

In the esoteric sense, they re-present the nine combinations (and transformations) of the three basic "alchemical" substances, which nine and their transformations (causal and acausal) are themselves re-presented by The Star Game.

In the exoteric, pre-Adept, sense, they may be said to re-present the 7 nexions of the Tree of Wyrð plus the 2 nexions which re-present the ToW as itself a nexion, with The Abyss (a connexion between the individual and the acausal) being one of these 2 "other nexions". It should be remembered, of course, that each sphere of the ToW is not two-dimensional (or even three-dimensional) and in a simple way each sphere can be taken as a reflexion (a "shadow") of another - for example, Mercury is the 'shadow' of Mars.

In another exoteric sense, the nine are the alchemical process of the 7 plus the 2, which 2 are the conjoining of opposites: and, in one sense, this conjoining can be taken to be (magickally, for instance, in a practical ritual) as the conjoining of male and female (hence what is called one of *the Rites of the*

Nine Angles) - although there are other practical combinations, just as each magickal act involving such Angles should be undertaken for a whole and particular alchemical season: that is, such a working should occupy a space of causal-time, making it thus a type of four-dimensional magick which can access the fifth magickal dimension, the acausal itself. A somewhat more advanced understanding of the Nine - in relation to a ritual to create a Nexion - is hinted at in the recent fiction-based MS *Atazoth*.

Beyond this, the Nine Angles are symbols of *The Star Game* which itself is sorcery - that is, one nexion which can presence the acausal. But even this is only a beginning - a re-presentation, in symbols, of what is, in essence, without symbols: a useful means for Initiates, and Adepts, to move toward the new five-dimensional magick embodied in, and beyond, the ONA.

Order of Nine Angles (ONA)

The ONA is a subversive, sinister, esoteric association comprising Sinister Tribes, Dreccs, Traditional Nexions, Sinister-Empaths, individual Sorcerers (male and female), and Balobians.

One of the primary aims of the ONA is to develop a new type of human being by using and developing our latent abilities (by means of The Dark Arts) and by breeding a new type of individual character, with this new type of character being a sinister one which itself can only be nurtured and developed by practical means and through practical exeatic deeds.

Presencing The Dark

A term used to describe the manifestation of sinister (acausal) energies in the causal by means of some causal or combined causal/acausal form, exoteric or esoteric.

Understood exoterically, To Presence The Dark means to consciously work acts of sinister sorcery by either esoteric means (such as a Rite of Dark Sorcery) and/or through practical (exoteric) sinister deeds where the intent is a sinister one.

Understood esoterically, To Presence The Dark means to undertake acts of Sinister Wyrd and thus to work Aeonic Sorcery.

Psyche

The psyche of the individual is a term used, in the Sinister Way, to describe those aspects of an individual - those aspects of consciousness - which are hidden, or inaccessible to, or unknown to, the individual. Basically, such aspects can be considered to be those forces/energies which do or which can influence the individual in an emotional way or in a way which the individual has no direct control over or understanding of. One part of this psyche is what has been called "the unconscious", and some of the forces/energies of this "unconscious" have been, and can be, described by the term "archetypes"

Rounwytha

The name traditionally given to those few, rare, individuals (mostly women) who naturally possessed the gift of Dark-Empathy (aka Sinister-Empathy).

Satan

Satan is regarded, by the ONA, as the *exoteric* "name" of a particular acausal being: that is, as a living entity dwelling in the acausal. This entity has the ability to presence, to be manifest in, our causal, phenomenal world, and the ability - being a shapeshifter - to assume various causal forms. [Regarding the "names" of such beings, see, for example, Footnote (2) of the MS *The Mythos of the Dark Gods*.]

Satanism

According to the ONA, Satanism is a specific Left Hand Path, one aim of which is to transform, to evolve, the individual by the use of esoteric Arts, including Dark Sorcery. Another aim is, through using the Sinister Dialectic, to transform the world, and the causal itself, by - for example - returning, presencing, in the causal, not only the entity known as Satan but also others of The Dark Gods.

In essence, and thus esoterically, Satanism - as understood and practised by the ONA (presenced by means of Traditional Nexions) - is one important exoteric form appropriate to the current Aeon, and thus useful in Presencing The Dark.

Septenary

A name for the basic symbology (causal magickal symbolism) of the Seven Fold Sinister Way represented *exoterically* by The Tree of Wyrd, and consisting of seven stages or "spheres" joined by various pathways.

Sinister Dialectic

The sinister dialectic (often called the sinister dialectic of history) is the name given to Satanic strategy - which is to further our evolution in a sinister way by, for example, (a) the use of Black Magick/sinister presencings to change individuals/events on a significant scale over long periods of causal Time; (b) to gain control and influence; (c) the use of Satanic forms and magickal presencings to produce/provoke large scale changes over periods of causal Time; (d) to bring-into-being a New Aeon; (e) to cause and sow disruption and Chaos as a prelude to any or all or none of the foregoing.

Sinister-Empathy

Sinister-Empathy (aka Acausal-Empathy aka Dark-Empathy) is a specific type of empathy - that which

relates to and concerns acausal-knowing. That is, the perception and the understanding of the acausal nature of those beings which possess or which manifest acausal energy.

Sinister-empathy is one of the skills/abilities that can be learnt by suitable (but not all) Internal Adepts, and can be developed by those beyond that particular esoteric stage of knowledge and understanding.

Some rare individuals (traditionally called by the name Rounwytha) are naturally gifted with Dark-Empathy.

Sinister-Numen

The Sinister-Numen is the term used to describe that which, and those whom, re-present certain types of acausal energy in the causal.

Thus, certain archetypes, and archetypal forms, are - exoterically - sinisterly numinous, and hence have the ability to influence and inspire human beings - as well as, in some cases, having the ability to direct certain individuals beyond the ability of those individuals to control such direction.

One of the most practical manifestations (the most practical presencing) of the sinister-numen in the causal realm is The Law of The Sinister-Numen, and which Law serves to define, and to manifest, that which is not-mundane, and thus that-which-is-ONA.

Sinister Way

A name given to the system of training (magickal and practical) of Initiates used by the ONA. Sometimes also called *The Seven-Fold Sinister Way*.

It consists of seven stages, each represented by a particular magickal Grade. [See, for example, the ONA MS *NAOS*.] One aim of the Way is to create Satanic individuals.

Sorcery

Often used as a synonym of *magick* (qv). Sorcery - according to the Dark, Sinister, tradition followed by the ONA - is the use, by an individual, individuals, or a group, of acausal energy, either directly (raw/acausal/chaos) or by means of symbolism, forms, ritual, words, chant (or similar manifestations or presencing(s) of causal constructs) with this usage often involving a specific, temporal (causal), aim or aims. [See the ONA MSS *An Introduction to Dark Sorcery* and *NAOS*.]

Star Game

The Star Game is a re-presentation of the nine aspects of the basic three whose changing in causal time represents a particular presencing of acausal energy. That is, the nine re-presents not only the nexion that is the presencing of the acausal evident in our psyche and consciousness, but also many other nexions as well.

This particular re-presentation is an "abstract" one, as distinct from the more "causal" symbology of The Tree of Wyrd (and of the septenary system itself).

The Star Game exists in two basic forms: the "simple form" and the "advanced" form, and one of its aims is to develop acausal-thinking (beyond causal abstractions) and thus skill in five-dimensional magick.

It can also be played as a "game", akin to a chess, and can be used magickally, to presence acausal energies. The basics of The Star Game are described in the ONA MS *NAOS*.

Traditional Nexions

A name given to ONA groups (aka Temples) where individuals undertake The Seven Fold Way, and where sinister ceremony sorcery is undertaken. Many (though not all) Traditional Nexions follow the path of Satanism.

Traditional Satanism

A term, first used by the ONA several decades ago, to describe its own Sinister and Septenary Way, and to distinguish it from the other types of "Satanism" (such as those of Lavey and Aquino) which were once given public prominence.

The term was used to describe the ONA due to the aural, and other, teachings of the ONA: many of which teachings (such as the Septenary system and Esoteric Chant; legends and myths regarding Baphomet and The Dark Gods; and Satanism as an individual Way of personal and Aeon evolution) were handed down aurally by reclusive sinister Adepts over many centuries.

The term Traditional Satanism has since been appropriated by others, some of whom have attempted to redefine it.

Tree of Wyrd

The Tree of Wyrd, as conventionally described ("drawn") and with its correspondences and associations and symbols (see the ONA MS *NAOS*), re-presents certain acausal energies, and the individual who becomes familiar with such correspondences and associations and symbols can access (to a greater or lesser degree depending on their ability and skill) the energies associated with the Tree of Wyrd. The Tree of Wyrd itself is one symbol, one re-presentation, of that meeting (or "intersection") of the causal

and acausal which is a human being, and can be used to represent the journey, the quest, of the individual toward the acausal - that is, toward the goal of magick, which is the creation of a new, more evolved, individual.

Vindex

The name of the exoteric (or "outer") nexion through which powerful acausal energies are presented on Earth in order to destroy the current *status quo* (the Old Aeon, now manifest in the so-called New World Order) and prepare the way for - and inaugurate the practical beginnings of - the New Aeon. Like Falcifer (q.v.), Vindex can be presented ("manifest") in an individual (who may be male or female). If an individual, Vindex is the embodiment of The Law of the New Aeon, which is personal honour [See the ONA MSS *The Law of the New Aeon* and *Tyrannies End: Anarchy, Magick and the Law of Personal Honour*].

Used as the exoteric name of an individual, Vindex means "the Avenger", and while it is traditionally (and semantically) regarded as a male name, with the Anglicized feminine form being *Vengerisse*, Vindex is now often used to refer to either the man or the woman who is or who becomes the nexion.

Wyrd

As used by the ONA, Wyrd is the term used to describe that supra-personal forces (aka energies) which can influence individuals, which non-Adepts cannot control in any manner, which Adepts can discover and to a quite limited extent influence, but which only those of and beyond the esoteric stage of Master/Mistress (that is, beyond The Abyss) can fully synchronize with.

Exoterically, Wyrd can be considered to be the Cosmic fates of the individual (note the plural, due to the partly acausal nature of Wyrd), as opposed to the simple, causal/linear, Destiny (fate) of the individual, and which Destiny can be dis-covered by means of the Rite of Internal Adept.



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Appendix The Sinister Code

Those who are not our sinister brothers or sisters are mundanes. Those who are our brothers and sisters live by - and are prepared to die by - our unique code of dark (sinister) honour.

Our sinister-honour means we are fiercely loyal to only our own sinister, ONA, kind. Our sinister-honour means we are wary of, and do not trust – and often despise – all those who are not like us, especially mundanes.

Our duty – as individuals who live by the Code of Sinister-Honour – is to be ready, willing, and able to defend ourselves, in any situation, and to be prepared to use lethal force to so defend ourselves.

Our duty – as individuals who live by the Code of Sinister-Honour – is to be loyal to, and to defend, our own kind: to do our duty, even unto death, to those of our brothers and sisters to whom we have sworn a personal oath of loyalty.

Our obligation – as individuals who live by the Code of Sinister-Honour – is to seek revenge, if necessary unto death, against anyone who acts dishonourably toward us, or who acts dishonourably toward those to whom we have sworn a personal oath of loyalty.

Our obligation – as individuals who live by the Code of Sinister-Honour – is to never willingly submit to any mundane; to die fighting rather than surrender to them; to die rather (if necessary by our own hand) than allow ourselves to be dishonourably humiliated by them.

Our obligation – as individuals who live by the Code of Sinister-Honour – is to never trust any oath or any pledge of loyalty given, or any promise made, by any mundane, and to be wary and suspicious of them at all times.

Our duty – as individuals who live by the Code of Sinister-Honour – is to settle our serious disputes, among ourselves, by either trial by combat, or by a duel involving deadly weapons; and to challenge to a duel anyone – mundane, or one of our own kind – who impugns our sinister honour or who makes mundane accusations against us.

Our duty – as individuals who live by the Code of Sinister-Honour – is to settle our non-serious disputes, among ourselves, by having a man or woman from among us (a brother or sister who is highly esteemed because of their sinister deeds), arbitrate and decide the matter for us, and to accept without question, and to abide by, their decision, because of the respect we have accorded them as arbitrator

Our duty – as sinister individuals who live by the Code of Sinister-Honour – is to always keep our word to our own kind, once we have given our word on our sinister honour, for to break one's word among our own kind is a cowardly, a mundane, act.

Our duty – as individuals who live by the Code of Sinister-Honour – is to act with sinister honour in all our dealings with our own sinister kind.

Our obligation – as individuals who live by the Code of Sinister-Honour – is to marry only those from our own kind, who thus, like us, live by our Code and are prepared to die to save their sinister-honour and that of their brothers and sisters.

Our duty – as individuals who live by the Code of Sinister-Honour – means that an oath of sinister loyalty or allegiance, once sworn by a man or woman of sinister honour (“I swear on my sinister-honour that I shall...”) can only be ended either: (1) by the man or woman of sinister honour formally asking the person to whom the oath was sworn to release them from that oath, and that person agreeing so to release them; or (2) by the death of the person to whom the oath was sworn. Anything else is unworthy of us, and the act of a mundane.

The Dark Arts of The Sinister Way

Introduction

The Dark Arts (aka Dark, or Sinister, Sorcery) include: (1) the basic skills of *practical sorcery* traditionally learnt - by means of practical experience - by those following the Seven Fold (Sinister) Way; and (2) an additional series of techniques or skills suitable for an aspiring Rounwytha. The additional (advanced) skills include Dark-Empathy, using, or creating, nexions to access the acausal, and Acausal-Thinking. [Note that sorcery is a synonym for magick.]

The Dark Arts of The Sinister Way thus enable the practitioner to:

- (1) Participate in, control, and enable their own personal evolution – that is, develop their latent ability to consciously evolve to become the genesis of a new human species; and undertake that evolution.
- (2) Come-to-know certain acausal [sinister] beings, and is thus understand the acausal itself.
- (3) Work Aeonic Sorcery.

The advanced Dark Arts can, among other things, also provide the prepared and skilled Rounwytha - the sinister Adept - with the ability to live-on beyond their causal death, in the acausal continuum as a new type, a new species, of immortal acausal being.

Practical Sorcery

Practical sorcery refers to External, Internal, and Aeonic Sorcery. These skills are outlined in texts such as *Naos* (for External and Internal Sorcery), and, for Aeonic sorcery, in grimoires such as *The Grimoire of Baphomet*, *Dark Goddess*. The esoteric essence behind the practice of Aeonic sorcery is given in texts relating to the mythos of The Dark Gods, and works such as *The Meaning of The Nine Angles* (parts 1 and 2).

Developing Acausal Empathy

As mentioned in another ONA MS:

Acausal empathy is basically sensitivity to, and awareness of, acausal energies as these energies are presented in living beings, in Nature, and/or presented in the causal either via some acausal being, or directly, as "raw" acausal energy (that is, acausal energy trying to find some causal form

to inhabit).

To develop acausal empathy, the following techniques are used:

(1) The Rite of Internal Adept.

This simple Rite - as described in *Naos: A Practical Guide to Becoming an Adept* - is the main, most effective, means of developing acausal empathy, and it enables the aspiring Rounwytha, by its rigours, simplicity, and isolation, to attune themselves to the acausal essence beyond causal forms. To live for a period of no less than three months, in the simple manner prescribed and in an isolated location removed from human habitation and human contact, is how sinister Adepts have, for centuries, begun to develop the faculty of acausal-empathy and acquired the most important esoteric skill of being able, by using this faculty, of opening nexions to the acausal.

The standard form of this technique lasts for only one specific alchemical season (from Spring Equinox to Summer Solstice in Northern climes), which specific alchemical season is the absolute minimum amount of causal time required to enable the aspiring Rounwytha to acquire the basic, and necessary, skills.

The more advanced form - lasting for a different and longer alchemical season (from Winter Solstice to Summer Solstice in Northern climes) - is however, while difficult and intensely selective because of this difficulty - more efficacious and develops much greater, more effective, skills, and indeed is the breeding ground of a Rounwytha.

(2) Exploring the sinister pathways of the septenary Tree of Wyr.

These personal explorations - as given in *Naos: A Practical Guide to Becoming an Adept* - enable the aspiring Rounwytha to begin the process of objectifying causal forms, and develop the necessary skill of finding, becoming sensitive to, and being able to distinguish between, various collocations of esoteric energies, whether the energies be personal (in the psyche of the individual and limited to the lifetime of the individual or a period in that lifetime) or archetypal (shared among various individuals over periods of causal time often beyond the life of one individual) or acausal (beyond both of the former types).

These explorations are recommended to be undertaken before the Rite of Internal Adept, and what - in these particular explorations - distinguishes an aspiring Rounwytha from an aspiring sinister Adept, is that the aspiring Rounwytha finds it easy and natural to not only distinguish between the various collocations, the various types, of esoteric energies, but also to move beyond all forms (as given in such explorations and as described by various terms and words in books such as *Naos*) to the acausal essence, something not described, in practical detail, in such written works.

(3) It has been found, by practical experience, that the preliminary training afforded by following The Seven Fold Sinister Way - as described in *Naos: A Practical Guide to Becoming an Adept* from

Neophyte to the Rite of External Adept - is an effective means of ensuring success in acquiring and developing those skills in acausal empathy that the Rite of Internal Adept can produce in an individual.

Thus, this preliminary training of following The Seven Fold Sinister Way from Neophyte to the Rite of External Adept - while not strictly necessary - is highly recommended, especially if the aspiring Rounwytha does not have a natural empathic ability.

Developing Acausal Thinking

As mentioned in another ONA MS:

Acausal thinking is basically apprehending the causal, and acausal energy, as these "things" are - that is, beyond all causal abstractions, and beyond all causal symbols, and symbolism, where such causal symbols include language, and the words and terms that are part of language.

The main and most effective practical means of acquiring and developing the skill - the Dark Art - of acausal thinking is The Star Game, as described in *Naos: A Practical Guide to Becoming an Adept*.

It is recommended that the individual begins with the simple form of the game - which only has 27 pieces - before constructing and beginning to play the advanced form of the game, as described in *Naos*. While the essentials of acausal thinking can be developed by regular playing of the simple game, it is the advanced form of the game that really develops the Dark Art of acausal-thinking.

In many ways, acausal-thinking can be considered to be a developed, and an enhanced, form of acausal-empathy, although in essence it is really a distinct, new, evolutionary ability whose genesis was acausal-empathy.

Using Nexions to Access The Acausal

As described in another ONA MS:

A nexion is a specific connexion between, or the intersection of, the causal and the acausal, and nexions can, *exoterically*, be considered to be akin to "gates" or openings or "tunnels" where there is, or can be, either a flow of acausal energy (and thus also of acausal entities) from the acausal into our causal Space and causal Time; a journeying into the acausal itself; or a willed, conscious flow or presencing (by dark sorcery) of acausal energies.

Basically, there are three main types of nexion. The first is an actual physical nexion. The second type of nexion is a living causal being, such as ourselves. The third type of nexion is a magickal creation: that is, some form in-which acausal energy is presenced or "channelled into" by a

sinister Adept.

Once a certain amount of skill in acausal-thinking and acausal-empathy has been acquired, the Rounwytha can conduct rites to open, or to create, a direct nexion to the acausal, and thus either access acausal energy, or presence - bring into the causal - certain Dark Entities, certain acausal beings, for whatever purpose the Rounwytha desires.

One of the simplest rites to do this is the "simple" *Nine Angles Rite*, in either the Natural, or the Chthonic, Form.

A much more efficacious - that is, more powerful - rite to open a direct nexion to the acausal is The Ceremony of Recalling, with Sacrificial Conclusion, as given for example, in *The Grimoire of Baphomet, Dark Goddess*.

Other rituals, and means, are given in *The Grimoire of Baphomet, Dark Goddess*.

Toward The Acausal Continuum

A Rounwytha will know when their causal time to prepare to progress toward the acausal continuum has arrived. Thus will their detailed preparations begin for the forthcoming journey, which supra-mortal journey will be undertaken at the end of a propitious alchemical season, when the causal and the acausal continuums are correctly aligned to allow greater access to the acausal. Propitious times include when the Moon occults Dabih, or is very close to it; and when Jupiter and Saturn are both near the moon which is becoming new, the causal hour being before dawn.

The preparations will begin at the start of the chosen alchemical season.

The Rite itself - as described in *The Grimoire of Baphomet, Dark Goddess* - requires several opfers, who will be chosen according to our traditional guidelines, and brought to, and confined in, the place chosen for what is the most sinister and the most joyful Rite of all.

Anton Long
Order of Nine Angles

A Note on Terms:

Rounwytha is the term used to describe an individual - male or female - who has great skill in both acausal-empathy and acausal-thinking. The term was traditionally applied only to those, mostly women, who were naturally gifted in esoteric empathy before such abilities were rationally, and esoterically, understood, and thus before they could be developed and enhanced by sinister techniques. The term was, according to aural tradition, applied to rural sorceresses of the primal (but not necessarily then always dark) tradition who lived in a certain area of England.

The term Rounwytha is now generally used to describe a sorcerer, or sorceress, of our Sinister Tradition, who has acquired and who has developed skill in - or who has a natural ability and a natural skill in - both acausal-empathy and acausal-thinking

Thus, while every Rounwytha of our Way is by nature and training a sinister Adept, not every sinister Adept is a Rounwytha, since not every sinister Adept has acquired great practical skill in acausal-empathy and acausal-thinking, or has the ability (natural or acquired) to so acquire and so develop such skills. Nearly every Rounwytha - past and present - has acquired and/or developed their skills by undertaking the longer form of the Rite of Internal Adept.

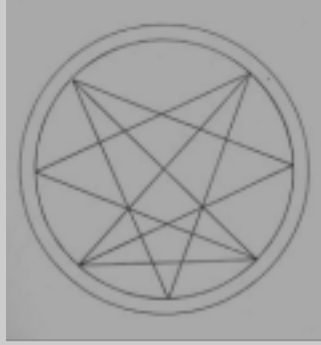
Given the talent, skill and natural ability of nearly every Rounwytha, it is not always necessary for them - nor is it a requirement for them - to assiduously undertake the training of following The Seven Fold Sinister Way from Neophyte to the Rite of External Adept, as outlined in *Naos*, which training is a practical way for any individual to become a sinister Adept.

A Note on Texts:

It is recommended that those desirous of learning the Dark Arts - as practised and as taught by the ONA - use original ONA facsimile texts of works such as *Naos*, and *The Grimoire of Baphomet, Dark Goddess*.

Facsimile copies of the original typewritten and spiral bound copies of *Naos* (as first circulated by the ONA between 1989 and 1992 CE) are now widely available, both on the Internet, and from several books publishers. Nearly all other editions of *Naos* have serious errors or omissions, and readers are advised to avoid them.

pdf Internet versions, and printed copies, of *The Grimoire of Baphomet, Dark Goddess* are also now widely available.



Our Sinister Character

One of the primary aims of the subversive and sinister association known, exoterically, as The Order of Nine Angles is to create, to aid, a new type of human being and thence a new, higher, sinister, human species.

Given this aim, it is necessary to know not only the nature, the character, the personality, of this new human being, but also how and by what practical and/or esoteric means such a type of person can be created and nurtured.

The Nature of The Sinister and The Nature of Mundanes

For the sake of conciseness and for the sake of argument we will here make some plausible generalizations, based on observations and study of human beings, and of some of the forms human beings have constructed over certain periods of causal Time.

Mundanes:

Mundanes constitute the vast majority of human beings, and some of the distinguishing features of mundanes are: (1) their lack of insight about themselves; (2) their natural nature means they can be easily swayed by their own feelings, their own desires, and the rhetoric of others; (3) their innate desire for comfort, security, and their need to fulfil their own desires; (4) their innate fear of *otherness*; (5) their basal inability to consciously change themselves via $\pi\cdot\theta\epsilon\iota \ \bullet\bullet\theta\omicron\varsigma$.

One important marker of mundanes is that they generally, or almost always, delude themselves about their abilities, especially in relation to "knowing themselves".

Another useful observation about mundanes - another useful generalization - is that there appears to be several types of mundanes, which types exhibit certain behaviour different from other types of

mundanes. For instance, there is the Western (predominately Caucasian) mundane, who exhibits a certain cunning, an often overbearing arrogance, who possess the nature of the bully, who is bloodthirsty, and who has an innate, prejudiced, and unfounded belief that they are "superior" to others - a belief that they now cunningly try to hide, often even from themselves. A good example of this type of mundane is Tony Blair - the sly, arrogant, lying, manipulative politician, with a superiority complex, who believes he has some sort of "mission" to bring his mundane type of so-called "civilization" to others, who always makes excuses for his failures, and for his - always indirect and thus cowardly - killing of others, and who, most importantly, does not realize, or comprehend, that he himself is being manipulated, by others, or by some causal abstraction(s) he is in thrall to.

Predators:

Human predators form a very small percentage of the general human species, and thus are rare, and their primary distinguishing features are that: (1) they act on instinct, which instinct controls or subsumes them so that they are compelled to act in certain ways, such as to kill people, or rape women; and (2) they lack the ability and the desire to know themselves and to control themselves. Thus, although some of them may have a certain innate natural cunning which may aid them (as it aids natural animal predators such a wolves or foxes), these predators are akin to talking animals who walk upright.

It should be noted, and understood, that many human beings who like to consider themselves as predators - or who are often considered to be predatory in nature by other human beings - are not. Here, for instance, we refer to such mundanes or Magians as capitalistic entrepreneurs, opportunistic politicians (corrupt or otherwise); and career racketeers. And, of course, we refer to those mundane fantasists who like to consider themselves, or even call themselves, "satanists". None of these types of humans have a true, animal, subsuming consuming predatory nature - and neither do they possess an innate human-sinister character.

Magians:

Magians are a specific type of human being - they are the natural exploiters of others, possessed of an instinctive type of human cunning and an avaricious personal nature. Over the past millennia they have developed a talent for manipulating other human beings, especially Western mundanes, by means of abstractions - such as usury and "freedom" and marxian/capitalist "social engineering/planning" - and by hoaxes/illusions, such as that of "democracy". The easily manipulated nature of Western mundanes, and the Magian talent for such things as usury and litigation/spiel, their ability to cunningly manipulate, and their underlying charlatanesque (and almost always cowardly nature), have given them wealth, power and influence.

A pertinent example of the charlatanesque type of Magian - who has gained influence among mundanes despite his plagiarism and total lack of originality - is LaVey.

The Natural Sinister Type:

These are those, currently rare, human beings - those individuals - who, rationally or instinctively, or both, have perceived and/or understood the flaws, the limitations, in all the above human types, and who thus - inwardly yearning for something more, something greater, something darkly-numinous - have tried to, or who have experimented with, changing themselves, often by seeking out challenges both physical and esoteric, trusting or hoping that such challenges, such things, will bring them insight and provoke the type of inner change, that transformation, they desire.

These are those who feel or who know themselves to be - or who come to know themselves to be - different from all other human types, and who are thus dissatisfied with themselves, and who thus often have a natural instinct for the darkly-numinous: for that which, for those things which, mundanes especially seem to fear or find disturbing or which they have branded heretical or "illegal".

These type of people are one of the reasons why an esoteric, sinister, association such as the ONA exists.

Breeding Sinister Character

It should be understood that, exoterically, the ONA should be considered to be *a means*; a practical system of causing or of provoking human change. An analogy might be that the ONA is a new type of acausal technology, which technology utilizes acausal energy and presences that energy in specific ways on this planet.

That is, the basic means of the ONA are (1) a practical system of training for individuals; a guide to how individuals can change, evolve, themselves and develop a sinister character or enhance an already latent sinister character; and (2) inspiring, and bringing-into-being, new ways of human living, which new ways of living will or which can change, evolve, human beings in a collective (non-individual) way.

This individual training of ours is manifest, for example, in our Seven Fold Sinister Way, and this Way - being an inner, individual, Alchemy and being sinister - is hard, difficult, and dangerous; it takes a certain amount of causal Time, many years, in fact. But it does what was and what is intended - that is, produce individuals possessed of a particular, evolved, strong, sinister character.

Our new ways of living are manifest in our sinister tribes, who are, who form, our sinister collective, our sinister kindred. And these do what is intended - spreading our subversive, sinister, evolutionary, ethos, and breeding, in far larger numbers than our individual training, an entirely new type of human being.

Thus, the aim of a sinister association such as the ONA is not only to enhance, to develop, to evolve, such a natural sinister character as may already exist in a few individuals, but also and importantly to assimilate more and more human beings in order to give them *our* sinister nature; in order to make them

part of our sinister collective. And it is this development, this assimilation, which will create an entirely new species of human being. This assimilation is by means of others joining or being assimilated into our tribes, or by forming new sinister tribes of their own and by these new tribes assimilating other human beings, and thus expanding their territory.

Our New Sinister Breed

Our new, evolved, sinister character is evident in many things. Someone of this new breed of human being has a refined and developed self-awareness and self-control; the ability of rational (logical) thought - they are able to assess situations in a rational manner.

This new type of individual has the ability to shapeshift; to act-out, with conviction, certain rôles, for a specific reason, even if that reason is to learn about others, and themselves. They also possess an empathic ability; the ability to defend themselves and to survive, and are prepared, without remorse, to use lethal force if necessary.

They also, and importantly, possess the ability to adapt to changing circumstances and to learn from experience, thus changing, evolving, themselves *in a controlled and a conscious manner* (π•θει ••θος).

They can be dispassionately ruthless, if required or if necessary; and have the faculty to see far beyond the causal moment and beyond causal, personal feelings, and are focused on a long-term goal or goals, which importantly and of sinister necessity include long-term supra-personal goals. They have the ability - if required or if necessary - to manipulate situations and people to their advantage or in order to achieve such goals.

Thus, in essence, the new sinister individual is: (1) ultimately (often as a consequence of π•θει ••θος), dispassionately in control of themselves - of their actions, their words, their feelings, their thoughts; and thus possesses the ability to learn from, to change themselves as a result of, diverse experiences; (2) possessed of the ability to rationally assess situations and individuals; (3) possessed of the faculty of knowing, seeing, and understanding, beyond the causal; of having a knowledge of, a vision of, the possibilities of human life, and thus of how we and the Cosmos can change and evolve.

In addition, they possess that often quiet, non-demonstrative, inner strength, that inner resolve, which arises from knowing they can defend themselves; from having overcome many and various hard practical challenges; from having experienced both the Light and the Dark of human living; and of having, for example, undergone that inner Alchemical change resulting either from a following of The Seven-Fold Way to Adept and beyond, or from being part of a sinister collective and sharing in the life, the deeds, of that collective.

In terms of appearance and personal behaviour, they can rationally choose to be - in the world of the mundanes and appear to the mundanes as - one of several types of people, thus cloaking themselves in a sinister manner. That is, they can rationally chose to become a new sinister type, appropriate for their now known and fully understood personal nature, and appropriate for their chosen sinister goals.

For example, they can be the heretical, outlaw, type, somewhat feared but always dangerous and potentially deadly to those not of our kind, our kindred; someone who might be out among mundanes seeking others perchance to assimilate or to use for some sinister purpose.

In this guise, they are thus distinguished by their manner of dress, by their personal appearance, by their particular behaviour and also possibly by their dialect, their language, all of which are appropriate for someone who belongs to a particular sinister tribe and who thus, by such things, openly shows their allegiance to their collective: a genuine warrior of and for our sinister way.

Alternatively, they can or could appear as the enlightened, individual Adept of The Sinister Way - possibly from an esoteric traditional nexion - and thus will they be restrained, well-mannered, and possessed of an aristocratic demeanour, for such restraint and such manners are one means whereby they control themselves and social situations. That is, such individuals reveal •ρετ• (arête) - which is the basis for a genuine •ριστοκρατ•α which sinister •ριστοκρατ•α may or could gain control and/or influence over some or many mundanes, in some specific causal Time and in some particular causal place.

Thus, in this particular guise they do not - unless for some specific reason it is necessary - seek to draw attention to themselves, by either their manner of dress, their appearance, or their behaviour, and with and because of this type of refined and controlled personal behaviour, they distinguish themselves from others, making them, in OldAeon-speak, a class apart; a different breed. And thus possessed of a certain, a particular, sinister charisma, different from - but kindred to - the aforementioned overtly sinister tribal guise.

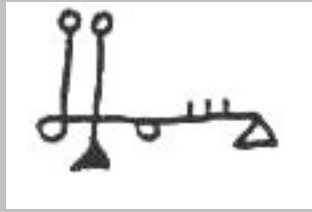
These two basic illustrations - two among many - serve to show that our new sinister breed - the evolved, human being - is not especially interested in or focussed upon indulging themselves - although they enjoy so indulging themselves when they feel it is appropriate or needful - and neither are they especially interested or focussed upon themselves, to the exclusion of everything and everyone else. They are also not focussed upon, nor interested in, OldAeon goals and abstractions, such as "the good of humanity" or what is "right or ethical", or whatever. Instead, they are interested in, and pursue, new and sinister interests and new and sinister goals - balancing an enjoyment of life, an exultation in their uniqueness, with a rational, focused, almost dispassionate awareness born from a knowing of the perspectives beyond the causal moment and from a knowing of themselves as a breed apart, as the makers and the changers of not only human evolution and human history, but also of Cosmic evolution and Cosmic history.

Hence, their - our - individual lives have a focus, a meaning, an intent, an intensity, far beyond the

causal - far beyond mere causal abstractions and apprehensions; and it is this focus, this meaning, this intensity of life and of living, redolent of the acausal, of the sinister-numen, that distinguish them - us - for the new breed of human being that they - that we - are, scourge of the mundanes, scourge of the Magian, breaker of tyrannical abstractions: scourge and breaker of all that has, for millennia, prevented us from becoming the divine, the numinous, the Cosmic, species we have the potential to be.



Anton Long
Order of Nine Angles
121 Year of Feyen



An Introduction to Dark Sorcery

The Definition and Use of Sorcery:

Sorcery - according to the Dark, Sinister, tradition followed by the ONA - is the use, by an individual, individuals, or a group, of acausal energy, either directly (raw/acausal/chaos) or by means of symbolism, forms, ritual, words, chant (or similar manifestations or presencing(s) of causal constructs) with this usage often involving a specific, temporal, aim or aims. Sinister Initiates and Adepts understand acausal energy as the force/energy that exists in the acausal aspect of the Cosmos, which energy, and which acausal aspect, cannot be described by either conventional - causal - representations involving three spatial dimensions and one time (causal) dimension, or by the words, forms, constructs, symbolism (and so on) of such four-dimensional causal space-time. Some such acausal energy has been understood, by Sinister Adepts, as living-beings, living in the acausal non-spatial and non-temporal dimensions of the Cosmos, and The Dark Gods are accepted, by the traditions of the ONA, as one type of such acausal beings.

How and why such acausal energies are used is the essence of the training of the sinister Initiate, with this "how" being learnt by direct, practical, personal experience of both ceremonial and hermetic ritual and workings, as, for example, given in the Black Book and in works such as Naos. In the early stages of the Way, the "why" often relates to the personal desires/aims of the individual; with Adept and beyond this changes, with the focus being on Aeonic workings/magick: that is, the "why" derives from the Sinister Dialectic and a knowledge, and experience of, Aeonics. One type of such an Aeonic working is the presencing of those acausal energies often symbolized, in the causal, as The Dark Gods. Another type of such an Aeonic working - and a genuine, esoteric work of sorcery - is The Star Game.

As has been mentioned many times in various MSS, Sorcery is an Art, the learning and mastery of which takes several years. Furthermore, all genuine Adepts of the Sinister tradition understand personal sorcery, or "results/low-level" magick, as but a beginning: a necessary training, both personal and esoteric, for the real dark sorcery which begins with the presencing of acausal energies in accord with Aeonic sinister aims.

The Basis and Means of Dark Sorcery:

The real essence of Dark Sorcery lies not in some temporal, causal, definition of what constitutes "evil" and the emulation of such a limited, causal and esoterically incorrect definition by some individual, but rather in the conscious use, by an individual, individual, or group, of acausal energies with the intent of provoking/creating large, supra-personal and causal temporal changes over causal time. That is, the foundation of genuine Dark Sorcery is Aeonic Magick - the changing of causal forms/presencings and/or the creation of new causal forms/structures/presencings.

It is important to understand that the means of genuine Dark Sorcery are many and varied - they are not limited to, and nor can they be contained by or in, conventionally understood esoteric practices such as ceremonial or hermetic ritual and magick. Any form, construct, Art or whatever, through and by which acausal energies can be accessed and directed and presented - by those skilled in the accessing, directing and presenting of such energies - is or can be a means of Dark Sorcery: a manifestation of sorcery itself. Thus - to give an old example which will be familiar to all Adepts and even many Initiates - the construction/creation of a certain piece of original music, imbued with sinister energies, can be and often is an act of Dark Sorcery if it does indeed present in some ways certain sinister energies and thus affects individuals in a way consistent with the Sinister Dialectic, by for example, changing them toward the Sinister, or causing them to evolve, or causing them to themselves begin a presenting of acausal, dark, energies, or move them toward heresy, or to present Chaos in whatever way, and so on, and so on.

The essential aim of Dark Sorcery is two-fold: to continue the personal development of the individual so undertaking works of Dark Sorcery, and to present the Dark: to present acausal energies in such a way that causal change occurs. To give a relevant example, in practical terms this amounts to changing such things as that causal construct termed "society" - through affecting or changing the "ethos" and affecting/changing individuals.

One of the darkest forms of Dark Sorcery is to present The Dark Gods - to open a nexion, or nexions, to the acausal dimensions, and to thus allow the acausal living-beings who are The Dark Gods to manifest in our causal world. Such a manifestation would significantly change existing causal forms and affect many many individual on many levels, as well as disrupting/changing established causal forms, such as "society". It is considered, by the ONA and its Sinister Adepts, that such a manifestation(s) of such living-beings will be what is required to inaugurate a New Aeon and thus ensure our evolution, as a species, in a way consistent with the essence of the sinister.

Anton Long
Black Rhadley Nexion
118 yf (Year of Fayen: Agios o Baphomet)

Ritual Magick - An Introduction to Dure and Sedue Ceremonial Sorcery

Magick (aka basic sorcery) enables us to capture again and again those moments which not only shape our lives but which can extend the possibilities of our existence: those moments when we know with an exhilaration and an insight that transcends words: when we become more than a single isolated individual burdened with a causal existence.

For some time there has been a denial of, and attempts to undermine, the ceremonial in magick: there has arisen a plethora of self-written rituals and "chaos" type workings. This, however, arises from a misunderstanding of the nature of ceremonial magick. Basically, there are two types of ceremonial workings in magick: *dure* ceremonial, and *sedue* ceremonial.

The first is essentially ritual used for internal magick – to produce or provoke or inspire changes within the consciousness of those participating/attending. The second is (or rather should be) a performance which transports the individual participants to another realm and which engages their whole being. It is not however a possession – but rather a developed awareness, a new way of being distinct from "everyday" existence, one in which all the elements (mind, body, emotions etc.) are a unity. A sedue ceremonial is an artistic event of the highest type because it is a conscious attempt to make the acausal real (to presence it) in causal time. However, like any artistic performance, a ritual can be good, indifferent, bad or great depending on the talent and abilities of those performing/conducting it. If it is any of the first three, it will not achieve its purpose.

A great performance is one which captures the essence of the ritual – which brings the acausal, which "opens a nexion", and which thus has the magickal power to transform. This of course is a rare event – at least these days – and like, for example, a great performance of a drama or a symphony, requires both talent and preparation. Unfortunately, in the past as in the present, ceremonial rituals when attempted are done mostly by inept performers with little or no preparation and little if any empathy with the magick which the ritual re-presents. Thus the ritual is magickally ineffective: non-inspirational for the participants and congregation. Further, elements of self-delusion (regarding the "magick") are mostly present. Such "performances" tend to confirm the mistaken belief that ceremonial forms are either boring or outmoded or both.

A ceremonial ritual should be vivifying – and awaken "numinous" feelings. It should stimulate all the senses - for a sedue ritual in a subtle way; for dure ritual in an obvious/overt way. Incenses and fragrances should stimulate the sense of smell; the eyes should be stimulated by colour and imagery; hearing by the sounds of chanting, by music, words; the intellect by the symbols/content/intent; the passions by the spirit or elan of the performance and perhaps the sight/gestures of an individual or individuals performing a specific "role", their manner of dress (or undress) and their physical movement. A ceremonial ritual is a seduction – of the participants and congregation by he/she/they conducting it or the power of the rite itself because the rite captures or transforms an aspect or aspects of the acausal.

This seduction is subtle if the ritual is a seductive one, and obvious/overt/harsh if it is a direct one. But by its nature it always has a temporal structure, as it always is a nexion to the acausal – if it is a genuine magickal rite, that is, one that possesses when performed acausal (or magickal) energy/power. Both of these aspects – the temporal structure and the nexion – are important, although hitherto esoteric.

Each shall be considered in turn. First, temporal structure. This means that the ritual has a beginning, a middle (or 'action'/development) and a definite end: it is confined in temporal time, and while a specific performance may be 'fast' or 'slow' depending on the mood and the intensity, it is generally of a certain duration. Second – a nexion. This means that in form and content (e.g. the techniques used to draw upon magickal energy) it is effective – it accesses the forms/symbols and so on required for its purpose.

This means more than that it 'produces emotion'. Emotion arises or should arise from the performance by the effort and talent of the performers. Rather, such accessing means it represents certain elements of the acausal in an accessible form, such as archetypes or numinous symbols. This requires what can only be called a type of 'artistic creation' – and this in itself can be of varying quality, as in music or any creative endeavor. Most creations, however, as rituals, are not effective: they do not presence the acausal, although they may produce emotion and perhaps the occasional insight. Emotion, however, is not magick – just as "intellectual stimulation" and/or undisciplined behaviour are not, although such things result and are expected to result from what passes for "magickal rituals" today. Only rarely does a creation become or be magickal – that is, a nexion, despite the intent of the person or persons who undertake such creation.

Thus, no amount of desire, no amount of intellectual knowledge can make or create a ritual which is magickally effective. Only rarely does a creation become or is magickal. It may become so due to the "aura" or "tradition" surrounding it (partly due to past performances) – but even in this instance it must still possess some aspects which access the acausal directly. It is magickal when it is that rare entity: a genuine magickal creation. The temporal structure and accessing of a ritual mean that a genuine rite, once created or transmitted via tradition, must be respected for what it is: effective performance requires fidelity to the temporal limits and its internal structure – in terms of all its formalized elements such as words, chants, symbols, images, colours etc.

Outside of this, there can be (and indeed should be) artistic interpretation, a vivifying of the original by the talent and skill of the performer(s). A genuine magickal ritual is a work of art – and requires 'interpretation', that is, performance, to presence the acausal. It is, in short, a conscious causal expression of aspects of the acausal – and in performance lives in both the causal and the acausal. Hence its power to transform. [It should be remembered that only ceremonial magick is being considered here – the above does not imply that only ceremonial forms are effective as magick. There are many other forms or means of accessing the acausal.]

Given this understanding, it should be obvious that there are very few rituals, written down or transmitted, which presence the acausal and which, in an inspiring performance or interpretation, are capable of transforming either the consciousness of others or of producing changes in the causal metric itself. That is, there are few rituals which possess in their written form the potential to be a nexion to the acausal: and even these require inspirational performance: rehearsal, planning, the correct intent or

desire ... In short, the creation of "atmosphere" and skill/ability in performance. The rituals that proliferate today – and most of those regarded as 'traditional' – may in their performance pass some moments of causal time and may even fill some individuals with emotion (and boredom is an emotion), but they are not and never will be magickal.

Of the rituals that do exist, those in 'The Black Book of Satan' together with a few others (such as The Ceremony of Recalling in its various forms) rank as excellent works of magick, as effective means of Presencing The Dark Forces on Earth. Some other rites possess the potential to do even more on the causal level (e.g. the Nine Angles rites) - producing aeonic changes. Thus explicated, genuine Black Magick becomes available to all: for the first time ever.

Anton Long
Order of Nine Angles
97 yf (1986 CE)

Magick, The Sinister, Aeons, and The Psyche of The Folk:

[Esoteric Notes XXIX](#)

Essentially, magick - according to the Sinister tradition of the ONA - is defined as "the presencing of acausal energy in the causal by means of a nexion. By the nature of our consciousness, we, as human individuals, are one type of nexion - that is, we have the ability to access, and presence, certain types of acausal energy." [See Footnote 1]

Thus, understood esoterically, an individual represents a willed-evolution: the potential to change and evolve by means of utilizing certain energies, with such change and evolution involving a bringing-into-being, or, more prosaically, a bringing-into-consciousness. That is, a making-conscious of what was hitherto "unknown", hidden and latent, both within and external to the individual. This making-conscious is the first step - the beginning - of genuine individual magick; the first stage of that Sinister Way one of whose aims is the creation of a new, more conscious, more highly evolved, individual.

The psyche of the individual is a term used, in the Sinister Way, to describe those aspects of an individual - those aspects of consciousness - which are hidden, or inaccessible to, or unknown to, the individual. Basically, such aspects can be considered to be those forces/energies which do or which can influence the individual in an emotional way or in a way which the individual has no direct control over or understanding of. One part of this psyche is what has been called "the unconscious", and some of the forces/energies of this "unconscious" have been, and can be, described by the term "archetypes".

Understood esoterically, an archetype is a limited presencing (a manifestation) of acausal energy, which presencing is limited in causal time. [See Footnote 2]

Fundamentally, the basic task of an esoteric Initiate is to make-conscious - to experience, know and understand - their own psyche, and this, in the beginning stages of magickal Initiation, is done by means of symbols and rituals, both hermetic and ceremonial. That is, the forces/energies, both archetypal and otherwise, are objectified, experienced and experimented with - hence such symbols and tools such as The Septenary System (of correspondences, including the Tree of Wyrd), the Tarot, and The Star Game. To complement this, the individual undertakes "Insight Roles" where they identify with a certain symbolic aspect or aspects, or rôle - and/or a certain archetype or archetypes - and thus experience, in real life, such energies, and their causal effects. One particular aspect, of course, is The Sinister itself, which is manifest in archetypes such as "The Magickian", The Mistress of Earth, and in Satan.

As stated in the MS [The Five-Dimensional Magick of the Seventh Way](#):

"All magick - external, internal and Aeonic - is but a means to apprehend, experience and presence acausal energies, and thus create/provoke Change. That is, the conventional magick of the Tree of Wyrd, of books such as *Naos*, of rituals, is but a beginning - through such things, the individual Initiate acquires experience and knowledge, and also develops as an individual: in terms of character. In the simplistic sense, they move, through the Grades, beyond "The Abyss", toward The Goal, which is the transformation of the individual and the emergence of a new type of being, beyond the Adept."

Furthermore, the archetypal energies which affect and influence an individual - a non-Adept - are, according to The Sinister Way of the ONA, both personal/individual, and related to the Aeon during which the individual lives. In addition, some of the personal archetypal energies which are manifest, or which can be manifest, in the psyche of the individual, are related to the living-being which is the folkish culture of the individual. Thus, in order to properly progress along The Way toward Adeptship - in order to evolve as an individual - the individual needs to understand, and work with, such particular energies.

The Folk Psyche and Folkish Archetypes:

By virtue of being a nexion, an individual is connected to the causal presencing that is Nature, and to those living-beings which are manifest in Nature. One such living-being is the folkish-culture, the folkish-psyche, to which they belong - from which they have come-into-being, as an individual. [See Footnote 3] Basically, this is just a precise way of understanding that all non-Adepts are, or can be or will be, influenced by various unconscious archetypal forces deriving from their ancestors, and their ancestral culture (or way of life) and that, whether they know or not (and they mostly do not know) they are connected to such living-beings. Generally, such a connexion (both unknown and made-conscious) is positive: that is, it tends towards an affirmation of life, and provides the individual with access to certain energies which are beneficial to them.

Furthermore, it needs to be understood that magick as a Way is neutral - that is, it can be used (or more correctly can be assumed, by those individuals below the stage of Mastery, to be so used) to either aid or harm such connexions, such Earthly living-beings, as human beings are connected to and from which they have emerged, such folkish-culture and folkish-archetypes.

In practical terms of self-development and evolution, an individual can greatly benefit from knowing, and from direct involvement with, their folk psyche and folkish archetypes: and this is especially true when the stage of Adept is reached and Aeonic workings are undertaken.

Aeons, Civilizations and The Presencing of Acausal Energy:

An *Aeon* - according to the Sinister Way of the ONA - is a particular presencing of certain acausal energies on this planet, Earth, which energies affect a multitude of individuals over a certain period of causal time. One such affect is via the psyche of individuals. This particular presencing which is an Aeon is via a particular nexion, which is an *Aeonic civilization*, which *Aeonic civilization* [See Footnote 4] is brought-into-being in a certain geographical area and usually associated with a particular people, or folk.

An Aeon can thus be considered to be a type of acausal being [See Footnote 5] manifesting in the causal, and, as such, has certain archetypal energies associated with it: that is, it can to a certain extent be "re-presented", or apprehended, via causal-thinking, in terms of certain symbols, archetypes, abstractions, myths, rituals, and so on. The living-being which is an Aeon is thus "born", lives for a specific period of causal time, and then "dies", as, of course, do the archetypes associated with such an Aeon. Each *Aeonic civilization* can - according to limited causal-thinking - be described, or re-presented, by a particular mythos, which mythos is a limited causal apprehension of the life-force, of "the soul" or psyche, of the Aeon from which that civilization derives.

Hitherto, we human beings have lacked the ability to affect Aeons and thus *Aeonic civilizations*. That is, as stated in the *MS Aeonic Magick - A Basic Introduction*:

"All the individuals associated with a particular civilization - unless and until they attain a specific degree of self-awareness [variously called 'individuation' and 'Adeptship'] - are subject to or influenced by their psyche. This psyche draws its energy from - is determined by - the civilization and thus the aeon. In practical terms, the psyche is a manifestation of the acausal energy that creates/created the civilization..."

However, magick - correctly understood and correctly used - is a means not only of personal development and personal understanding (a freeing from psychic, archetypal, influences and affects) but also of evolving to the next level of our human existence where we can understand, and to a certain extent control and influence, supra-personal manifestations of acausal energies, such as an Aeon, and thus cause, or bring-into-being, large-scale evolutionary change. Such understanding, such control, such a bring-into-being, is *Aeonic Magick*.

Aeonic Magick is the magick of the Adept and those beyond: the magick of the evolved human being who has achieved a certain level of self-understanding and self-mastery and who thus is no longer at the mercy of unconscious psychic, archetypal, influences, both personal/individual, and of other living-beings, since as the folk, and Aeons.

According to the sinister tradition of the ONA, there have been five Aeons, including the current *Thorian* (or "Western") one. The current Aeon is, however, unique - for it has, in the last hundred years or so, suffered from a distortion of its life-force, a distortion of its soul. This distortion has been somewhat simplistically and rather graphically described as akin to a "viral infection" which has modified the behaviour of the peoples of the civilization through changing, modifying, and in some cases supplanting, the natural archetypes of the Aeon. In the esoteric sense, this distortion, this infection,

can be understood as a natural process affecting our evolution - a consequence of that evolution itself, and such an infection could have certain undesirable consequences for our evolution, and for our ability to free ourselves from those viral forces which are, in essence, de-evolutionary. That is, this distortion, this infection, represents a challenge to the Sinister Way - to magick, to the alchemy of evolution itself.

Thus, one aim of Aeonic Magick is to counter this Aeonic distortion through various sinister strategies; another aim is to *consciously* bring-into-being a new Aeon: one which will allow us, as human beings, to evolve and fulfil the potential latent within us.

There is thus a real war occurring at present, part of which is magickal, Aeonic and supra-Aeonic: a war, battles, between those who represent the genuine wisdom and understanding and freedom and life-enhancement which genuine magick (with its presencing of the acausal) brings, and those who represent what is fundamentally de-evolutionary, limiting, enervating and stiflingly causal, and who are manifest through and in the distortion of the Thorian Aeon. [See Footnote 6]

The Sinister Way:

In essence, all genuine magick is Sinister because it is Change: a move-toward a new bringing-into-being. A re-ordering in the causal. That is, it is a presencing of the acausal - from which all that is evolutionary and life-affirming arises.

However, *to work* - to affect evolutionary Change - such presencings have to be based upon, to manifest, to use, what-is acausal: that is, there has to be a knowing, an understanding, of the acausal as the acausal is. Without this knowing, this understanding, there has been, is and will be only the delusion of self and at best a stasis and at worst a return to the thralldom of the past.

Anton Long
117 Year of Feyen

Notes:

(1) q.v. the MS [The Five-Dimensional Magick of the Seventh Way](#). For a basic discussion of causal and acausal, see Chapter 0, A Theory of Magick, in [Naos](#) and the MS [Aeonic Magick - A Basic Introduction](#).

(2) It needs to be understood that the ONA uses such terms as psyche, and archetype, in a particular *and precise* esoteric way, and thus such terms should not be considered as being identical to those used by others and defined, for example, by Jung.

Thus, esoterically understood, an archetype is a particular causal presencing of a certain acausal energy

and is thus akin to a type of acausal living being in the causal (and thus "in the psyche"): it is born (or can be created, by magickal means), its lives, and then it "dies" (ceases to be present, presenced) in the causal (i.e. its energy in the causal ceases).

(3) Such connexions, such living-beings as the folk and the folkish-culture which derives from the living of such a being, are only *what-are*, on this planet where we dwell. That is, they are aspects of Nature: they correctly describe the reality of how the acausal is presenced, in the causal, on this planet, through that living-being which is Nature. In a simplistic descriptive sense, such folk-beings are among Her descendants, her "sons and daughters".

Furthermore, there is a symbiosis involved in such connexions - or, rather, there is now a symbiosis involved as a result of our natural evolution of will and consciousness; a symbiosis between us, our folk-beings, and with Nature, as well as with the Acausal beyond Nature.

(4) To be precise, this nexion is "a culture" which itself is a living-being, a spawn of a particular Aeon, with the Aeonic civilization itself being a by-product, a manifestation, a stage, of this new culture. However, the general term civilization will be retained, although such Aeonic "civilizations" such be understood in such a context.

Also, note that what is referred to is an *Aeonic* civilization - not just a "civilization". q.v. *Aeonic Magick - A Basic Introduction*.

(5) For a basic introduction to "acausal beings" refer to the MS [Advanced Introduction to The Dark Gods: Five-Dimensional Acausal Sorcery](#) which explains the nature of the *acausal-thinking* (or, more prosaically, the "esoteric/magickal" thinking) that is required to begin to understand such beings: to apprehend Them as they are.

In addition, it needs to be understood that, as explained in many other MSS, there are many and varying types of acausal entities, or acausal beings or *acausal forms of life*. Some exist solely in the acausal; some can manifest in some ways in the causal, with some such causally-manifesting beings - or forms of life - being in symbiosis with the causal (or rather, in symbiosis with causal life-forms) and thus "dependant" on them to some extent. Some such dependant symbiotic acausal beings may cease to exist (in both the causal and the acausal) when their energy fades and "dies", while others may return to the acausal to leave only a dead causal "shell" or "shells".

Further, it should be obvious that the majority of such acausal life-forms cannot and should not be conceptualized in an anthropomorphic way, bound and limited as such conceptualizations are by causal Time and causal Space.

(6) The distortion has been, *exoterically*, described as "Magian": as representative of a particular ethos deriving from the *psyche* of a certain people.

Aperiatur terra
et germinet Azaotum!

NAOS

A Practical Guide to Modern Magick

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Introduction

The purpose of the present work is to provide a self-contained and practical guide to esoteric magick based upon the septenary tradition. This hitherto secret tradition (also known as hebdomadry) is here published for the first time.

The present work is clearly written, without any mystification. Part One is a practical guide to becoming an Adept and is essentially 'Internal magick' - that is, magick used to bring about personal self-development (of consciousness and so on). Part Two is an equally practical guide to esoteric sorcery and magickal techniques and is 'External magick' - that is, the changing of events/circumstances/individuals and so on according to the desire of the sorcerer/sorceress. Internal magick is the following of the Occult path from Initiation to Adeptship and beyond, and in the septenary tradition this path is known as the 'seven-fold Way'. Part Three contains a selection of esoteric manuscripts circulated among members of the ONA: they present and explain further aspects of the septenary system as well as other techniques, both directly magickal and more practical. They are published exactly as circulated.

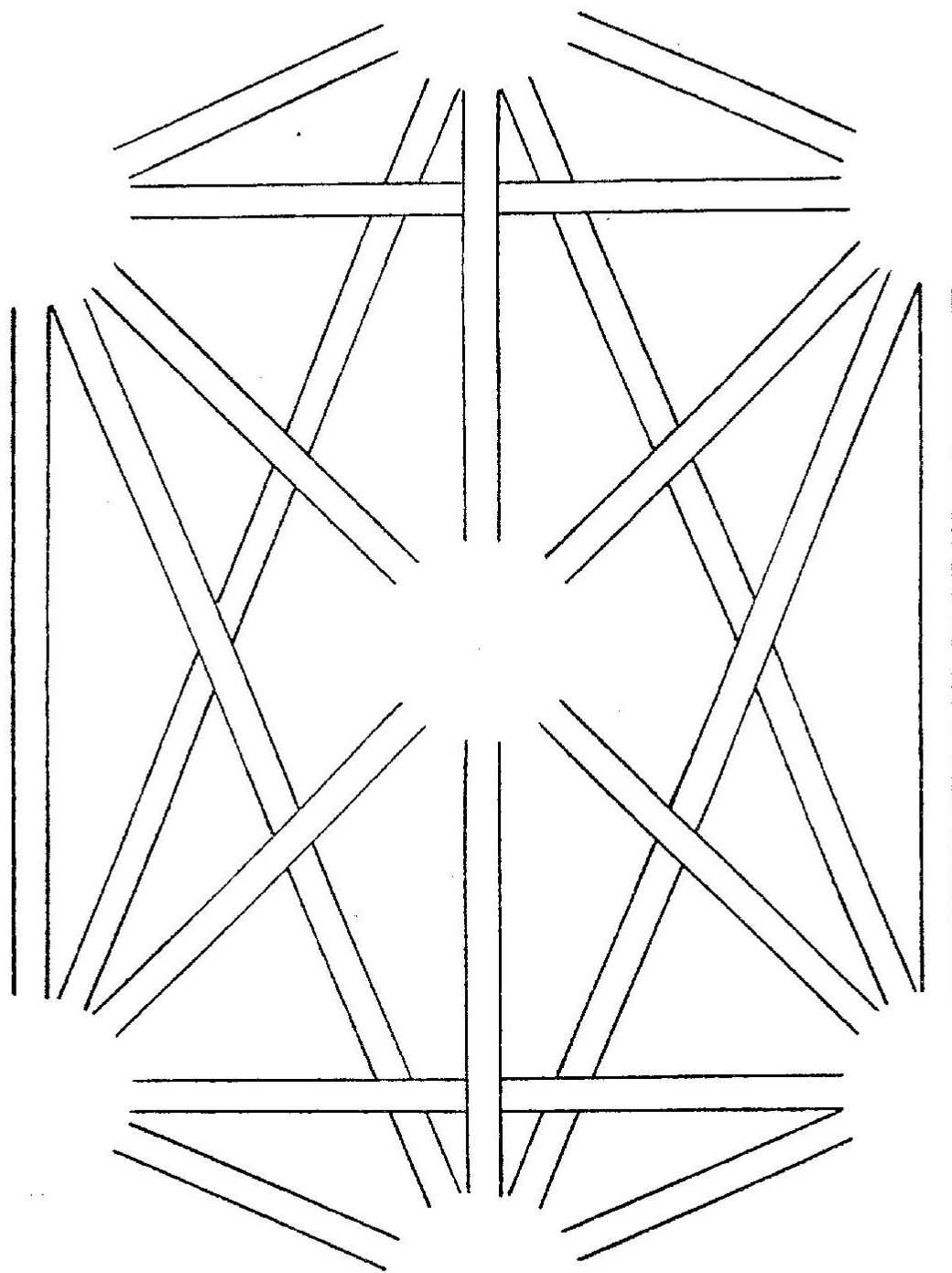
The techniques given in the present work enable any individual to follow the path to wisdom: to achieve that genuine, individual, freedom which even today is a rare commodity. Magick, as a Way or path, is essentially a means to discover this individual freedom or liberation - and this freedom is 'internal': the emergence of the Adept, that is, the development of insight, both personal and 'Occult'. Of all Occult traditions, the septenary is perhaps the most practical and direct as a means of attaining this insight.

Thorold West

Part One

PHYSIS MAGICK

A Practical Guide to Becoming
An Adept



Fundamental to magick is a belief that the phenomenal world of the five senses is incomplete. Magickians believe that we live in a world quite different from the one our five senses show to us - they believe that every living thing possesses, because it is living, certain energies which we as individuals can sense and 'see' if we become receptive to them. This receptiveness is one of the aims of magickal or Occult Initiation - and may be said to involve the individual in becoming aware of the essence of things that is hidden by their outward appearance (and this applies to other individuals, as well as 'things').

According to the septenary tradition, these "magickal energies" possessed by things and 'life' derive from what it is convenient to describe as the acausal - that is, every living entity is a point or region where acausal energies manifest in our causal, phenomenal, universe, the amount and type of this energy being dependant on the type of entity. These acausal energies (which science because it at present deals only with causal entities and energies, cannot describe) may be said to derive from a parallel acausal universe which intersects our causal universe at certain places.

We as individuals, because we possess the faculty of consciousness, are 'gates' to this acausal universe. We possess the (mostly latent) ability to 'open the gate' to the acausal which exists within our own psyche to draw from the acausal certain energies, and these energies can and do alter in some way both our own consciousness or other entities/energies which exist in the causal. This "drawing of energies", and their use, is magick. External magick is the use of such energies, directed by individual desire, to bring about changes in the causal; Internal magick is the use of these energies to bring psychic, internal, change.

To draw upon such energies it is usually necessary for the individual to use some form of framework or symbolism, and techniques of external magick use such symbolism to bring both apprehension of the energies and their control.

Various systems of symbolism exist - most denoting types of energy by gods, goddesses, spirits or demons. In reality, the actual symbols are of only secondary importance, and a magickian who is following the path to Adeptship will soon discard such symbols/names/descriptions (and thus External magick itself) in favour of apprehending such energies as those energies are in themselves. In the septenary tradition this is done first via the 'Tree of Wyrd' (the seven spheres and the pathways connecting them - see Appendix I) and then through the 'Star Game'. The Tree of Wyrd may be seen as a map of consciousness: both individual (of the psyche) and of those regions other than the individual where the acausal and causal meet. The symbolism of the spheres and the pathways (the Tarot cards, planets, incenses, 'god-forms' and so on) are the first or Initiated stage of apprehension; beyond lies the abstract apprehension of the Star Game.

External magick is divided into two forms or types: hermetic, and ceremonial. Hermetic magick is basically that involving only one or two individuals whereas ceremonial magick involves more and may be said to be 'formal' magick involving specific rituals or rites (usually written down and followed exactly) and an organized Temple/coven or group. (Part Two of the present work deals only with hermetic magick of the septenary tradition - the ceremonial side being covered in such works as 'The Black Book'.)

Internal magick is always individual.

I The Seven-Fold Way

Physis is divided into seven stages and these seven stages may be regarded as representing the varying degrees of insight attained. In terms of traditional magick, the stages represent Initiation, Second Degree Initiation, External Adept, Internal Adept, Master/Mistress (or High Priest/Priestess), Magus and Immortal.

Each stage is associated with a sphere of the septenary 'Tree of Wyrd' and has many attributions - some Occult, some 'psychological' and some symbolic. For example, the first stage is the sphere of the Moon and is associated with Quartz, the alchemical process 'Calcination', the word 'Nox' and the three Tarot cards 18 Moon, 15 Lucifer, and 13 Death. Each sphere is regarded as tripartite in nature, representing the unconscious aspect (☾), the ego aspect (♁) and the self (♁) aspect. These aspects represent the gradual evolution of the 'energy' of the sphere since each sphere may be regarded as archetypal in nature - the three Tarot cards showing the aspects of the archetype. Appendix I gives the details of the seven spheres - their attributions and so on.

Physis is essentially a means which enables an understanding of the forces associated with each sphere: an experiencing of those forces as they are in themselves enabling what Jungian psychology understands as the 'withdrawing of projections'. This withdrawing creates the 'self' from the 'ego' - it is an expansion of individual consciousness, and represents what is often known as enlightenment.

The means of Physis are the Grade Rituals associated with each sphere, and the Star Game. The Grade Rituals are practical tasks, essentially two-fold in nature. The first part consists of a series of studies, meditations and the achievement of certain personal goals specified according to the sphere associated with the particular Grade Rituals, while the second part is the performance by the individual of a very specific 'ritual'. This ritual is simple in both form and content. Ritual here means a method of undertaking something in which the details are

faithfully repeated. This faithful repetition is important, because by following the procedure exactly the required changes in consciousness are produced.

In the early stages the seven-fold Way is easy, but it gradually becomes more difficult, demanding a great deal of commitment. Genuine Adeptship and enlightenment must be worked for - they are attained, by the individual, and never given as gifts. The first two stages may be said to represent a confrontation with the shadow aspect of the psyche of the individual - and an integration of this aspect followed by a transcendence, giving thus a new synthesis. The third stage may be said to be a confrontation with what Jung has called the 'anima/animus': the power and fascination of love, eros. The fourth stage represents the emergence of the 'self' from a fusion of 'ego' and 'unconscious'. The fifth stage represents the development, within the individual, of wisdom - an understanding beyond the self.

Each stage has an alchemical process associated with it, representing the means and the insight attained: for example, the process for the second sphere, Mercury, is Separation - and the form this takes is 'indulgence'. The Grade Ritual associated with this stage is in a sense a symbolic representation, in psychological terms, of the alchemical process.

Those who wish to follow the seven-fold Way should undertake the Grade Rituals in order, beginning with that of the first sphere - Initiation.

Each stage of the seven-fold Way provides you with both personal (i.e. 'emotional') and magickal experiences, and these experiences are consolidated during the next stage. In short, the stages provoke, by their nature, self-insight, and this insight is a gradual process of learning.

II Stage One - Initiation

Initiation here simply means a willingness to follow the seven-fold Way. It is the opening of the gate that leads to the path, the first part of which is downward or 'shadowed'.

Thus, the first stage may be said to be an acceptance of certain hidden forces (within ourselves). To undertake the Grade Ritual first find a suitable outdoor locality - if possible within the vicinity of a stream/river or lake. The ritual should be undertaken on the night of the full moon. You will require the following items:

- Civit perfume/oil
- Silver/white coloured candles
- Square of parchment
- Silver pin
- Quill-type pen

The ritual is begun at sunset. Bathe in the stream/river/lake and afterwards rub the oil into your body. You may if you wish then change into a black robe. Then, in a comfortable position (the position itself is not important only that it is comfortable for you) visualize for several minutes the following symbol or 'sigil':



Following this, light the candles (which are best placed in lanterns if outdoors), prick your left thumb with the pin and, using the pen, inscribe the following sigil on the parchment with the blood:



Show this parchment to the West, then South, then East and North, saying at each point: 'With this sign I begin my quest!' Then burn part of the parchment in one of the candles and then cast the remains into the river/stream/lake. After, raise your arms and visualize the moon (or look at it if it is

visible) imagining energy flowing down from the moon to you - visualizing the energy as filaments, silver in colour, which spread from the moon to engulf you, surrounding you with light.

After the visualization, extinguish the candles. The ritual is then complete.

The following day (or as soon as possible thereafter) begin the workings with the spheres. For this you will need a Tarot pack (see III - The Tarot if you wish to use the 'sinister' one recommended for the seven-fold Way) as well as somewhere to undertake the workings. Ideally, the workings should be done in a room/area used only for magick, this place being furnished according to your own taste with impedimenta suggestive of the Occult - for example, there might be an altar covered with a black cloth on which is kept a crystal sphere (or tetrahedron), candles of various colours, the Tarot pack itself and so on. What is important is that you choose the furnishings and feel comfortable with them - they should be suggestive of the hidden world of magick. A few items, well chosen, are much more effective in creating the right atmosphere or aura than a whole collection of artifacts. Aim to keep the area of your working incensed - using an incense appropriate to the sphere you are dealing with (see Appendix I). Also, when working, use only the light of candles.

Workings involving the seven spheres are basically exercises in meditation. The workings begin in order - that is, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. Each working should last about an hour, and be begun after sunset. Only one working should be done on any one day.

To begin a working, assume a comfortable position and then chant or vibrate three times the word appropriate to the working (see table below). Then concentrate on the

☾ or 'unconscious' symbolism of that sphere as represented by the appropriate Tarot card (for example, for the Moon: 18 Moon). Imagine yourself as part of the landscape depicted.

Sphere	Word	Symbol	Magickal Working
Moon	Nox	Horned Beast	Shamanism
Mercury	Lucifer	Inverted pentagram	Ceremonial ritual
Venus	Hriliu	Dragon	Trance; sex
Sun	Lux	Eagle	Oracle; dance
Mars	Azif	Inverted septagon	Sacrifice;
Jupiter	Azoth	Star Game	Star Game
Saturn	Chaos		

(See also 'Alchemical Process' in Appendix I)

Thus, for instance, for the card 18 Moon you should imagine yourself in the desert, walking along the path toward the crumbling towers. You walk between the towers and see the scorpions on the half-buried book. Then you might decide to pick up the book and see what it contains, or peer into the towers where the hunched, dark, shapes are hiding or continue along the path toward the mountains. You might do all of these things - the choice is yours.

Following this, you concentrate on the next image, the ☿ stage (for the sphere of the Moon this is 15 Lucifer) - visualizing yourself as part of the image. Then you move onto the next image, the ♁ stage (13 Death, for the Moon) and the procedure is repeated.

Each working is a journey into the archetypal world of hidden and higher consciousness, and you should undertake each journey in the spirit of adventure and as something real. Dream yourself into the worlds depicted - stop and converse with the beings you meet, discover where a path leads, what is over the horizon and so on.

You must make a conscious effort to change the images in succession - that is from ☉ to ☿ and ♁ . Spend as much time as you wish with each image, but always complete the sequence and always make a conscious decision (when using the last image) to end the working - saying 'It is complete and I return to the world of my home.' As soon as possible thereafter write an account of what you felt and experienced.

A successful working should leave you with a feeling of loss - with the ordinary world appearing rather devoid of interest, and rather dull. After writing your account of the working, spend at least half an hour relaxing. Then leave the working area, bathe and change into other clothes. It is often helpful if you undertake the workings in a robe bought or made specifically for the workings and rituals of the seven-fold Way.

III Tarot

Every initiate should draw and paint (or at least commission such from a good artist) their own Tarot pack, using the guidelines given later in this chapter.

To read the cards for an individual, the individual cards are seen and interpreted in relation to the others around them. This is done because the cards are symbols of how certain energies have, are and maybe influencing the person for whom the reading is being done - and these energies are never static, or in isolation.

The essence of initiated readings is empathy: an awareness of the energies within, around and external to the individual, and the cards are used to 'focus' these energies in consciousness. To aid this, the setting of the reading should be imbued with magickal anticipation. This is easily achieved - for example by using only candle-light having no other persons present other than the individual for whom the reading is being done, laying the cards out on a black cloth kept for this purpose, burning one particular incense whenever you do a reading (and never using that incense for any other purpose). Ideally, the room/area where the reading is undertaken should be quiet and calm.

Two types of card layout may be used. These follow you shuffling the cards in a mindful, calm way after which the client cuts the pack three times, laying each cut beside the other. Choose which cut you feel is appropriate and use the cards in that pile, starting with the top card.

The first layout is the 'Celtic', the second the 'septenary'

1) Celtic

	5	10
4	→ 2	6 9
3		8
		7

In this, the second card is placed across the first. 1 represents the client, 2 the predominant influence which is acting against them, 'crossing' etc.; 3 is what is in the distant past (which may be an unconscious influence over the present); 4 the recent past (and also the subconscious energies); 5 the present; 6 the immediate

future; 7, 8, and 9 the future at intervals, and 10 the outcome.

There are also other influences which must be considered. 4, 6, 9 and 10 are how positive energies flow (via 2) - 3, 6, 8 and 7 the negative ones. 3-2-10 are how the unconscious influences can be made conscious (i.e controlled or circumstances altered) in a positive way. 5-2-7 is how the present will evolve to enable 10 to arise - or conversely, how to prevent 10 arising.

In undertaking a reading two important principles should be understood. First, the interpretation of each card is not rigid - the meanings suggested by each card should arise in your mind naturally, that is, they should be intuitive and spontaneous. For this reason, 'book' interpretations ~~made~~^{of} particular cards must be avoided. This intuitive approach enables the cards to be used correctly - as mediums to awaken the psychic faculties.

The second principle, is to have all the cards upwards: there is no meaning in 'reversed' cards - because what is 'reversed' is covered by the 'unconscious' patterns/flow considered in each reading.

2) Septenary

	7	
5		6
	4	
2		3
	1	

Here the cards are related to the planetary/sphere aspects - e.g. 5 is the sphere associated with Mars.

These relations (in terms of energies) should be considered as well as the following: 1 are unconscious factors, 2 and 3 the past (and the unconscious becoming more conscious); 4 the present, 5 and 6 the immediate future and beyond, and 7 the outcome.

In addition, 1-2-5 are negative elements/energies; 1-3-6 positive. 1-4-7 what needs to be done to bring 7 (or, again, prevent it from arising).

In both this and the Celtic pattern all combinations should be seen as how energies flow and change, or become altered through the other influences present. Intuition should enable the practical manifestation of these

energies to be understood - e.g. a particular influence/energy might represent an actual person or event in the client's life.

The Sinister Tarot

The Major Arcana has twenty-one cards, and there are eleven cards in each suit - the four 'Court' cards (High Priest, High Priestess, Warrior and Maiden), the ace and six others numbered two to seven.

There are four suits: Wands, Pentacles, Swords and Chalices, each having many attributions, some of which are listed below.

High Priest	High Priestess	Warrior	Maiden
Sylphs	Gnomes	Salamanders	Undines
West	South	East	North
Air	Earth	Fire	Water
Capricorn	Cancer	Libra	Aries
Wands	Pentacles	Swords	Chalices

These four are symbolized, in each suit, in the same general way (see table below) - the variants depending on the suit. For instance, the card the High Priest of Wands would depict the Priest holding a wand, while the card the High Priest of Swords he would bear a sword. The predominant colour of the card would depend on the planetary attribution - Wands is Mercury, Pentacles is Moon, Swords is Sun and Chalices is Venus. This means that for Wands the colour is Yellow (the ☿ aspect), merging to Black (the ♃ aspect) and Blue (the ♀ aspect). For Pentacles the colours are Blue, Silver and Green; for Swords, Orange, Gold and Red; for Chalices, Green, white and silver.

Priest	Priestess	Warrior	Maiden
Bearded man	Beautiful woman	Young man	Young woman
Barefoot	Throne on Earth	Horse	Near water
Cloak	Robe	Naked	Naked
Wolf	Leopard	Eagle	Owl
Mountains	Glade	Desert	Altar
Staff	Fruit	Sword	Crescent moon

Thus the High Priest for all suits is depicted as a bearded man, standing/walking barefoot wearing a cloak. He carries a staff, a wolf is near or beside him and he is set in or against a background of mountains.

The impression given by the cards of the High Priest should be of wisdom, that of the High Priestess fecundity (and veiled sexuality - i.e. sexuality suggested rather than obvious); that of the Warrior, strength and courage; and of the Maiden, overt youthful sexuality.

The Four Aces: These represent the base of the elements

Wands - White brilliance combining through indigo and black into the shape of a wooden wand.

Pentacles - Green moulded into a tetrahedron enclosed by a pentacle (a circle inscribed with an inverted seven pointed star). Around the pentacle - swirling violet and blue.

Swords - A red/orange sword plunging into a golden chalice. Around - yellow stars on background of purple. The stars include the constellation of Orion.

Chalices - a blue/green chalice overflowing with blue/red/green liquid. Around - blue and white mist suggesting trees.

Two-Seven: These are increasing emanations of the element containing the number of symbols appropriate - e.g. the seven of wands, seven wands.

The number of the card gives the appropriate colours - 2 is Jupiter, 3 Mars, 4 Sun, 5 Venus, 6 Mercury and 7 Moon. Thus the colours for 7 are Silver, Blue and Green.

The Major Arcana:

0 The Fool

Brightly clad young man stand on the edge of a cliff, looking upwards. He is holding a flute as if ready to play and a dog is biting at his heel. Above his head a beautiful butterfly hovers. A crescent moon is in the twilight sky.

1 The Magickian

A young man wearing a black cloak stands beside an altar from which incense is rising. On the altar are a golden chalice and a tetrahedron. Around him are flowers (some of which he has trampled) and in the background, stars - the constellations of Leo and Virgo. His left hand is held down, pointing to Earth while his right is raised and holds a wooden wand, carved (in runes) with the word 'Desire'. Around his neck is an inverted pentagram.

2 The High Priestess

A beautiful young woman who is naked stands beside a tetrahedron on a mountain ledge. Behind her is a small entrance to a cave which is suffused with a violet light. She wears a crescent moon head-dress. Small flowers cling to the ~~rock~~^{side} rock. In the valley below the ledge is a river, while cirrus clouds fleck the blue sky.

3 Mistress of Earth

A mature woman of beauty, naked from the waist up. She is seated on a rock and in one hand holds a hazel wand whose upper end grows a flower. On her right side sits a swan which is piercing its own breast from which blood drips to feed its three young who gather round. On the other side sits an eagle, while around, human skulls lie with flowers growing through them. To the left are trees, their limbs like arms, and in the distance, a valley and mountains.

4 Lord of the Earth

A man in crimson robes lined with purple stands overlooking a forest and the distant sea over which the sun rises. He rests his left foot on the body of a man in a white, blood-stained cloak from whose chest a sword is protruding. The dead man has the same face as the standing figure. A wolf is sitting beside the dead man, looking up at the standing figure above whose head flies an eagle. In his right hand the standing figure holds a tetrahedron which is glowing indigo and red.

5 The Master

A man dressed in black wearing a scarlet cloak fastened by a silver chain stands beside a large tetrahedron. Inside the tetrahedron a young man and a young woman, both naked, are kneeling and embracing. The background is dark, except for a high archway through which a dim light enters the chamber - the tetrahedron being in the centre of the chamber. The man is bearded, and smiling slightly.

6 The Lovers

A young man and a young woman, both naked, stand facing each other, holding hands. They stand in a glade of trees within a circle of stones. The woman wears on her head a garland of flowers. Outside the circle of stones, a sword, dagger, robes and chalice lie as if discarded - while in the centre a small wood fire burns. In the sky is a full moon. Around one of the stones, a snake lies coiled.

7 Azoth

A strong man dressed in animal skins stands grimly beside a plinth on which is a large, glowing sphere. In the centre of the sphere is a blackness where stars shine. The man is guarding the plinth, and carries an axe and a club. He holds a wolf on a chain which is snarling at the white-robed woman walking toward the plinth

bearing an offering of incense in a thurifer. In the distance, the sun is setting and a crescent moon hangs in the sky. The ground is like red, stony desert and behind the woman is the faint outline of a green dragon.

8 Change.

A masked woman dressed in green (flecked with blue) stands beside a large septenary Star Game. She is holding one of the pieces in her hand as if to place it on a higher board. To the left is a verdant garden; to the right, a desolate plain baked dry by the yellow sun - the Star Game lies on the boundary. The woman is smiling. One of the pieces of the game has fallen onto the plain and from it a butterfly is emerging.

9 The Hermit

A bearded man dressed in brown with a leather belt from which hangs a purse, stands on a ledge among snowy mountains. He looks into the distance. In one hand he holds a staff, and in the other a crystal which is glowing. At his feet a wolf lies asleep.

10 Wyrđ

A large ash tree whose branches make a canopy. Three women in long green dresses stand around a small pool of bubbling liquid. One of the women is smiling and throwing small glowing spheres into the liquid. Another holds a snake which is coiled around her hand, while the third looks intently into the crystal tetrahedron she holds in her hands. Behind the tree a hooded figure stands, shielding his face with his sleeve and hand.

12 The Hanged Man

A young man lies upside down, hanging from the branch of an oak tree by one foot. His clothes are green, and from a leather purse which is attached to his belt small spheres are falling to the ground. One of his eyes are closed, and from it a few drops of blood fall. A serpent lies near the base of the tree, and a raven flies nearby. The

earth around is flat and barren - orange-brown in colour.

11 Desire

A naked woman stands beside a lion. Her hand rests on its head; her other hand holds a golden chalice from which drops of white liquid fall to the ground. Where they touch the earth, flowers grow, while around is a red-orange rocky desert. The sky above is a deep blue, except for the distant horizon, which is red-yellow, as before sunrise. Near this horizon, a brilliant star is visible.

13 Death

A pile of human skulls, forming a pyramid, lie near the edge of a cliff. Below, is a valley with a river and beyond, a forest burning, darkening the sky with smoke. The sky near the cliff is bright blue. Near the skulls, a torn black flag bearing an inverted pentagram flutters in the breeze. Beside the banner, a tall beautiful woman with flowing blonde hair stands with her arms folded looking toward the burning forest. She wears light Greek armour and a bow is slung across her back, while a quiver of arrows is attached to her belt. Beside her squats a dwarf dressed in bright clothes. He is grinning and wiping his blood-stained knife on his sleeve.

14 Hel

A stern faced woman, pretty except that one of her eyes is shrivelled, stands beside a dark lake enclosed by trees. She wears an almost transparent white robe which emphasizes her beauty of body. She is throwing small multi-coloured crystal spheres into the lake at whose far end is a man's head, just visible above the surface. An expression of horror is on the face. In the sky is a rainbow and a hovering bird of prey.

15 Lucifer

A handsome man is standing naked on a dias below which stand a young man and a young woman embracing.

They are both naked. The handsome man holds a broken chain in one hand, and flames of fire in the other. Beside him is a snarling wolf, and on the other side an older bearded man holding a animal horn. An inverted pentagram is inscribed on the dias, while beside it lies a broken human skull out of which a beautiful flower is growing. Above the flower is a butterfly.

16 The Tower

A castle rears up among rocks. One of the higher towers is struck by lightning and from it falls a man. The lightning has shattered some of the stone of the tower which falls toward the ground. The sky is dark. A young woman, dressed in white, stands near the gate to the castle, looking toward the tower and smiling.

17 The Star

A beautiful naked woman with long flowing hair is crouched beside a stream, pouring liquid from the chalice in her hand. The stream is in a valley, surrounded by mountains. Downstream, it is fertile with trees, flowers and shrubs. Upstream, all is rocky and barren. The sky is bright blue containing a pattern of seven stars which form an inverted septagon.

18 The Moon

A yellowish desert path leads toward two crumbling, ornate towers. Desolate mountains are in the distance. Inside the towers, are two indistinct hunched shapes with glowing eyes. Between the towers, and on the path, a large book lies half-buried in sand. Several scorpions are on and around it. In the foreground is a dried-up water hole beside which is a camel's skull, and from one of the cracks a snake is slithering.

19 The Sun

A brilliant, golden sun is rising behind snow-capped mountains around which an eagle swoops. In the foreground is a plain containing a circle of nine stones in which black robed figures dance around a fire. Near the circle is a hole in the ground from which the head of an imp is visible, watching the dancers and smiling. Beyond the stones is a path toward the mountains on which a bearded man is walking, holding a staff. His back is almost to the dancers.

20 The Aeon

A bearded man sits at a table opposite a woman in a semi-transparent red robe. The man is dressed in black. On the table is the septenary Star Game. To the left are the crumbling remains of a stone building, some areas of which are covered by ivy and grass. To the right is a tall, jagged stone. The man and the woman are looking toward the distance where a full moon and some stars are visible above the horizon. A burning city is indistinct on the horizon. A rent has appeared in part of the night sky and through it Dagon-like shapes are emerging.

IV Stage Two - Second Degree Initiation

The first part of this stage involves you in finding a companion of the opposite sex* - someone with whom you feel an empathy and with whom you feel you can work. This person should have an interest in following the seven stages, and should undertake stage one, as above.

The second part involves you both in conducting a ritual together. This takes place on the night of the new moon, where the 'roles' of Priest and Priestess are assumed. The ritual should be undertaken outdoors, in an isolated spot and if possible on top of a hill. The only item required is a quartz crystal - the larger, the better. A naturally occurring shape can be used, although a crystal shaped as a tetrahedron is ideal. The ritual begins at sunset, both participants being naked.

The Priestess begins the ritual, holding the crystal in her hands and chanting seven times: 'Ad Lucifer qui laetificat juventutem meam!' The Priest then places his hands on the crystal and chants the same phrase three times. The Priestess then lies on the ground with her head north, the Priest arousing her with his tongue before the sexual union begins. During this, both should visualize a hole appearing in star-studded space and energy emerging from this 'Star Gate' and flowing down to them, suffusing them with its light and power. The Priestess should visualize this energy as then being drawn into the crystal. After her climax of ecstasy, she buries the crystal in the earth of the hill, and both chant over the spot: 'Aperiatur terra, et germinet Lucifer!' They then dress, and depart from the place of the ritual.

It should be noted that in this ritual - as elsewhere - Lucifer is regarded as the light-bringer: Prometheus, the bringer of Thought, the one who seeks to know.

The third and final part of this stage involves you in setting yourself a difficult physical goal, and striving to achieve this. For instance, aiming to run 20 miles in 2½ hours or less, or cycling 100 miles in under 5½ hours.

*Note: Or of the same sexual orientation if you are gay.

Such a goal should involve you in training for some weeks or months. This training should begin as soon as you have decided to undertake the second stage of the seven-fold Way, and once the goal is achieved you may attempt the third stage, associated with the Grade Ritual of External Adept. This physical goal is a necessary compliment to the magickal/psychological ones, and essentially develops your desire or will to succeed. When choosing a goal, make it realistic, but also difficult.

During this second stage, continue with the 'magickal diary' begun in stage one (describing in that stage your workings with the spheres). This diary should contain details of your thoughts/feelings regarding your relationship with your companion, your training for the physical goal, and a record of the ritual of the second part of the stage.

The first part of this stage involves you in constructing, and learning to play (if possible with your companion) the 'septenary Star Game' (see chapter VI).

The second part involves undertaking the Grade Ritual of External Adept. This ritual should be undertaken on the night of the new moon - and you should go to some trouble to find a suitable locality. This locality must be an isolated hill-top, miles from any human habitation, and should be devoid of trees, giving thus an unobstructed view of the sky. If possible choose a night when the stars are visible.

You should dress all in black and take nothing with you except the clothes you wear - for example, no torch or other means of light. As dark approaches lie with your head east, directly on the ground. Your task is to remain lying and unmoving without sleeping until dawn. During the darkness you should think about the two stages undertaken previously - particularly about your relationship with your companion: your own feelings, expectations and so on, and also the feelings, expectations of your companion. Once you have clarified your thoughts and feelings on these and other matters, turn your attention to the stars - observing them and their slow movement across the sky. At dawn, bow to the rising sun (or in the direction of it), and leave the hill. As soon as possible write in your magickal diary your thoughts and feelings during the night.

You must be honest with yourself about your feelings: as you must be honest about the success of the ritual. Since your aim was to lie still without moving or falling asleep, you must realize that if you did fall asleep or move, then the ritual is not a success - and must be done again, until you succeed. It is basically a test of your will and a 'coagulation' (see 'The Alchemical Process') of your feelings, experiences and so on.

Those who desire a more difficult test should try the following version of the ritual (which is not obligatory).

Arriving in Cairo (Egypt) take the desert road from the city past Medinet Sita October (6th of October City) that goes to Bahariya Oasis and thence to Farafra. Stop about 100 or so miles from Cairo and spend the night away from the road in the Sahara desert. Return to Cairo the next day. Your isolation in this location will be complete.

At the time of writing, there is a bus service (one bus a day in each direction) between Cairo and the Oasis of Bahariya. Intrepid individuals might try cycling along the road from Cairo. Whatever means of transportation are used, the ritual is the same in detail as that given above.

Both versions should be undertaken without any assistance by others, and involve only yourself.

The third part of this third stage involves you undertaking the workings with the seven spheres again - but this time with your companion (or another one if circumstances have changed). Follow the same procedure as for stage two except both of you should concentrate on the same image at the same time and agree beforehand to explore the scenes together. After each working, discuss the experience with your companion, and write about it in your magickal diary.

The Star Game

Introduction:

The Star Game has three main functions: (1) it develops certain higher levels of consciousness; (2) it is new form of magickal working appropriate to the twenty-first century and beyond; and (3) it is an aid to developing certain magickal skills - aiding mindfulness, concentration and visualization. In addition, it contains the whole esoteric septenary tradition, as well as being simply a 'game' that can be played to a conclusion against an opponent.

The first of the aims detailed above involves, in part, a new way of thinking - for the Star Game develops the capacity to think and understand in symbols. This 'thinking' however is not the rational, causal, logical type associated with 'science'. It is rather the intuitive or 'wholistic' type - the poetic/mystical/magickal which sees connections between things, which brings insight and understanding through breadth. Yet, in tandem with this, it develops the qualities which also lay at the foundation of our conscious development as rational beings: the critical, analytical faculty which is so often lacking in some who study the Occult in general and magick in particular.

In short, the Star Game is a tool - to be used according to the desire of the user. To learn the Game, even as a 'game' takes time and a certain mental effort. Like all genuine magick, it is not intended for the idle or the dilettantes.

Those who are seriously interested in learning the use of this esoteric tool should first construct the septenary game, and practice playing it, either alone or with an opponent, for some time. Then, they should study its magickal symbolism - the seven boards as the spheres of the Tree of Wyrd, the black and white pieces as 'light' and 'dark' (or causal and acausal) personal and cosmic energies, the changes of these pieces over the boards as the changes in individual psyche/Earth-bound/cosmic energies and so on - and then should they wish, undertake magick using it. Those who wish to go further, should study the aeonic attributions and then, should they wish, construct and learn to use the advanced form of the game. Those who do this will have the satisfaction of belonging to an elite: of being at the very summit of our conscious evolution. It will then be up to them whether they take the boundary ever higher. All genuine Black Magick is an act of defiance against the restrictions imposed by the mediocre and the cowards, and in this sense (as well as others) the Star Game is an act of supreme Black Magick. It is a comment on the mediocrity of the present that only a few will understand this statement.

The Boards:

There are seven boards, placed one above the other in a spiral and which form a representation of the septenary Tree of Wyrd. Each board consists of nine white and nine black squares (see fig.1).

Each board is named after a star.

The Pieces:

One set of pieces is white, the other black. Each set consists of twenty-seven pieces, and these are formed from three lots of nine. Thus, each player ('black' or 'white') has the following pieces:

⊖(⊖)	⊖(♁)	⊖(♂)	♁(⊖)	♁(♁)	♁(♂)	♂(⊖)	♂(♁)	♂(♁)
⊖(⊖)	⊖(♁)	⊖(♂)	♁(⊖)	♁(♁)	♁(♂)	♂(⊖)	♂(♁)	♂(♁)
⊖(⊖)	⊖(♁)	⊖(♂)	♁(⊖)	♁(♁)	♁(♂)	♂(⊖)	♂(♁)	♂(♁)

The pieces represent combinations of the alchemical symbols \ominus , ☿ and ♁ where \ominus is alchemical salt, ☿ alchemical mercury and ♁ alchemical sulphur (see Esoteric Meaning of Star Game, below, for the significance of the symbolism).

An alternate form of symbolism may be employed thus: α as \ominus ; γ as ☿ and ω as ♁ . This symbolism is more 'abstract' than the alchemical one, and has the advantage of being easier to write on whatever material is chosen to make the pieces - for example, cubes of wood, or small circular counters, painted with the appropriate symbol.

Whichever of these two forms of symbols are used, it should be stressed that symbols must be employed, the essence of the game is the symbolism: like a chess piece, it frees the mind and enables connections to be seen, moves made, pieces transformed and so on.

The Positions of the Pieces:

Six pieces are placed on Sirius (two sets of \ominus) for white, and six for black, as in fig. 2.

Arcturus has three pieces for white, and three for black as in fig. 3. Antares has six pieces for white, six for black - two sets of ☿ pieces placed in the same pattern as the \ominus pieces on Sirius: i.e. on the same squares.

Mira has no pieces on it. Rigel has the remaining three pieces of the ☿ sets, placed as the \ominus pieces on Arcturus.

Deneb has six pieces of white, six of black, all from the ♁ set, placed as the \ominus set on Sirius.

Naos has the remaining three pieces of the ♁ sets, placed on the same squares as the \ominus sets on Arcturus.

The Moves:

Each piece, when it is moved, is transformed into the next piece in the sequence, according to the following pattern:

$\ominus(\ominus) \rightarrow \ominus(\text{☿}) \rightarrow \ominus(\text{♁}) \rightarrow \text{☿}(\ominus) \rightarrow \text{☿}(\text{☿}) \rightarrow \text{☿}(\text{♁}) \rightarrow \text{♁}(\ominus) \rightarrow \text{♁}(\text{☿}) \rightarrow \text{♁}(\text{♁})$

Thus, a $\ominus(\ominus)$ when it is moved, becomes a $\ominus(\text{☿})$ piece; a $\text{☿}(\text{♁})$ piece becomes a $\text{♁}(\ominus)$ piece, and so on. When a $\text{♁}(\text{♁})$ piece is moved, it becomes a $\ominus(\ominus)$ piece, and the sequence begins again.

The ♁ pieces (that is, $\text{♁}(\ominus)$ $\text{♁}(\text{☿})$ $\text{♁}(\text{♁})$) can move from any board to any other board, to any vacant square, as well as to any vacant square on the board they are already on.

The ☿ pieces ($\text{☿}(\ominus)$ $\text{☿}(\text{☿})$ $\text{☿}(\text{♁})$) can move across the board they are on to any vacant square, or up or down two boards. For example, a ☿ piece on Sirius can move to either Arcturus or Antares; while a ☿ piece on, say, Rigel could move to Deneb, or Naos, or Mira or Antares, to any vacant square on these boards.

The \ominus pieces (that is, $\ominus(\ominus)$ $\ominus(\text{☿})$ $\ominus(\text{♁})$) can move only across a board one square at a time to a square of the same colour, or up or down one board to a square of the same colour. Thus, for example, a \ominus piece on a black square on Arcturus could move to a vacant black square on either Sirius or Antares - or move across the Arcturus board to a square of the same colour.

After any piece has been moved according to the rules above and placed on a new square, it is changed for the piece next in the sequence above, and when next moves, moves according to the rules for the new piece.

A $\text{♁}(\text{♁})$ piece on any square on Naos may capture any piece of the opposite colour on any square or any board, except Naos. The piece so captured is removed from the board and plays no further part. After such a capture, the $\text{♁}(\text{♁})$ piece becomes a $\ominus(\ominus)$ piece.

The Aim:

When played simply as a game - i.e. without any esoteric object - the aim is to occupy certain squares on the Mira board according to a pattern determined by the players before the game begins.

However, pieces can only stay on the Mira board for three moves - after this, they must move: either across the Mira board (if the move is legal)* or to another board. The first move of the three is taken as the one that brings the piece to Mira.

The first player to place pieces according to the pattern, wins the game.

The pattern most often used is given in fig.4.

Variations:

Two variations in the rule are suggested. These make the game much easier, and may be used while the game itself is being learnt. The first is to suspend the three move limit on Mira - allowing the pieces on that board to remain until they are either moved by the player or captured by the opposing player. If this variation is used, then the players can elect to allow $\phi(\phi)$ pieces on Naos to remain for only three moves, after which they must move, becoming thus $\Theta(\Theta)$ pieces.

The second variation is to allow the $\phi(\phi)$ pieces on Naos to not be able to capture pieces on Mira (this makes the game very easy indeed). To increase the difficulty, the three move limit on Mira may be re-instated.

Esoteric Meaning of the Star Game

In general, the seven boards represent the nexus between the causal and the acausal: all evolution is regarded as a progression from the 'lower' realms of the causal to the 'higher' realms of the acausal. Thus, the progression, in magick, from Initiate to Adept to Master/Mistress is marked by the progression from Sirius (sphere of the Moon on the Tree of Wyrð) to Mira (sphere of the Sun) to Rigel (Mars) - see the table below.

The symbolism of the game operates on several levels, the three most important being the individual, the Aeon (and the associated higher civilization or culture) and the cosmic. Just as the seven spheres and thus the seven boards of the Star Game re-present the seven fundamental forms that the 'energy of Chaos' assumes according to our apprehension, so too do these three levels re-present how that energy (or 'the Being of the cosmos' itself) manifests itself naturally. Of course, many more levels exist, but for simplicity only these three will be considered here.

The individual level concerns how we all, as individuals, have within us by virtue of being individuals possessed of consciousness, the ability to enhance that consciousness. This enhancement may be expressed in many ways - for example, it is the Jungian 'individuation', the magickal path to Adeptship and beyond - but however it is expressed it is simply

*After this move across the board, the piece may stay for a further two moves without being required to move.

represented by the re-orientation of 'psychic' elements within us and the emergence of new elements. The three basic symbols of the Star Game - \ominus , and ☿ and ♁ - represent the basic elements from which the psychic energies are formed, when manifest on the individual level. Thus, the nine combinations of these three elements, as the pieces of the Star Game, represent the combination of the energies possible.

However, for a complete description of the individual psyche, these nine combinations are extended over the seven boards on a three-fold basis because the seven boards (re-presenting the seven spheres of the septenary) symbolize the possible orientations of consciousness: in simple terms, the seven spheres and the correspondences associated with them (particularly the god-forms or archetypes) are present, either latently or expressed, within each individual.

To make this clear, Jung's terminology will be used, although it should be remembered that even this is only one expression of many: the most representative expression being the abstract symbols themselves since these are devoid of the conflict of 'opposites' and the dogmatic/religious undertones that underlie many of the traditional expressions.

In this terminology, the seven spheres represent the seven fundamental archetypes within our psyche, according to the table given below where the archetypes are expressed in terms of both Greek and Norse mythology: for example, Mercury is the 'trickster' - Loki in Norse, Hermes in Greek. As with all such representations, these are only a guide, an outward expression of inner essence.

In this context, the nine combinations are:

$\ominus(\ominus)$	Extravert Feeling type		
$\ominus(\text{☿})$	"	Intuitive	
$\ominus(\text{♁})$	"	Thinking	
$\text{☿}(\ominus)$	Intravert Feeling ;	$\text{♁}(\ominus)$	Master of Temple/Mistress
$\text{☿}(\text{☿})$	"	Intuitive;	$\text{♁}(\text{☿})$ Grand Master(Magus)/ Grand Mistress
$\text{☿}(\text{♁})$	"	Thinking;	$\text{♁}(\text{♁})$ Homo Galactica

Thus (\ominus) may be said to represent 'Feeling'; (☿) 'Intuition' and (♁) 'Thinking' as these terms are defined by Jung.

Further, $\ominus()$ describes 'ego' consciousness; $\text{☿}()$ 'self' consciousness, and $\text{♁}()$ the consciousness beyond the 'self' - that is, beyond 'individuation'. In magickal terms, this is beyond the Adept - that is, the stages represented by the Grades Master of the Temple/Mistress of Earth and so on.

Readers familiar with the works of Jung will notice two things: there is no 'Sensation' type listed, and the development of the individual is described beyond the process of Jungian Individuation, which many have seen as the 'end' of personal development according to Jung's ideas.

The reason for the latter difference is obvious - magick assumes there is no limit to our potential, to our possible evolution of consciousness. The reason for the former difference is more complex, but can be simply expressed by stating that a thorough study of Jung's 'types' shows how close are his 'Sensation' and 'Feeling' types (a thorough analysis is given in the Order MS 'Emanations of Urania') - perhaps his desire to express the psyche in terms of the quaternity which so interested him gave rise to this unnecessary extra type. As it is, the psyche can be described by the nine combinations above.

Thus, these nine combinations, three-fold (this triplicity expressing the three 'types' of consciousness - ego, self and beyond-self) spread over the seven boards, gives a complete representation of each individual psyche.

Hence it is possible, using the pieces and the boards, to magickally represent any individual uniquely - and thus a movement of certain pieces can be made, this movement being the change the person who so represents an individual desires to bring about in that individual. The Star Game thus gives the person unlimited, magickal, control of other individuals - should that person wish to use it for magickal purposes. In simple terms, a Star Game representation of a particular person by the placing of the appropriate pieces on the appropriate boards, is a 'magickal model' of that person - as, for example, a wax effigy is in more primitive magic. To achieve this representation takes a certain practice and skill in the game, of course.

This magickal use of the game (the details will be given in Part II of this series for those who cannot wait to work them out for themselves) is however only one use of the Star Game when an individual is being represented. Beyond this practical magickal aspect, perhaps its most important use is that it enables an insight into not only oneself but also others - via the symbolism. That is, it shows connections and enables an analysis of the individual psyche in a manner as far beyond the 'psychologies' of today as modern technology is beyond the stone axe.

In Aeonic terms, the seven boards re-present the seven fundamental Aeons which we as sentient beings may partake of. As for an individual psyche, these represent an evolution of consciousness - from the first or 'Primal' aeon (when consciousness is just beginning to arise) through the Sumerian to the present Western one. An aeon is basically a representation in archetypal/symbolic terms, of those cosmic/Earth-bound forces which shape our evolution in a mostly unconscious way. As aeons progress, we as individuals may or may not, depending on our own personal/magickal development, be aware of these forces/influences external to us - in traditional magickal terms, the crossing of the Abyss (in the septenary, from Sun to Mars) is when these influences are consciously understood, and the 'self' finally achieves a freedom through this (often only intuitive) understanding.

In the symbolic sense, a new Aeon may be said to emerge when one of the seven 'Gates' is opened. This allows acausal energy to presence on Earth, and this presencing affects the psyche of all those individuals who have not 'crossed the Abyss', the intensity of nature of this depending on various factors. The most important external sign of an Aeon, is the associated higher civilization or culture - that is, the energy of a particular Aeon are expressed via the mechanism of a civilization. Despite the claims of the mystifiers who abound in the 'Occult' there have so far been only five aeons - and five associated higher civilizations which have shaped the aonic energies, via an ethos, and thus contributed to our conscious evolution. This ethos was, in part, religious in the sense that awe was present for the terrestrial 'Gate' (the physical place where the acausal energies were pronounced) and those who channelled its energies (often unconsciously) through a specific magickal technique. Often, a specific myth or legend became associated with this Gate, and as the aeon progressed the energies affected individuals according to their nature: inspiring creativity, creating an 'elan' and a sense of Destiny ... The pattern of aonic energies (ie. their transformation, causally) may be represented by the following sequence:

$\Theta(\Theta) \rightarrow \Theta(\Xi) \rightarrow \Theta(\Phi) \rightarrow \Xi(\Theta) \rightarrow \Xi(\Xi) \rightarrow \Xi(\Phi) \rightarrow \Phi(\Theta) \rightarrow \Phi(\Xi) \rightarrow \Phi(\Phi)$

$\Theta(\Phi); \Xi(\Phi); \Phi(\Phi)$

⊕



Moon



Mercury



Venus



Sun



Mars



Jupiter



Saturn



Figure 1 - The Boards

		☉	☽	♁	
Moon	Calcination	18	15	13	Aspel
Mercury	Separation	0	8	16	Yew
Venus	Congulation	8	14	17	Black Poplar
Sun	Putrefaction	7	12	5	Oak
Mars	Sublimation	1	4	9	Alder
Jupiter	Permeation	11	3	2	Beech
Saturn	Exaltation	10	19	20	Ash

Tarot Atm:
'Archetypal Image'

Fig 3: Arcturus

$\phi(\frac{1}{2})_0$		$\phi(\phi)_0$
	$\phi(\phi)_0$	
	$\phi(\phi)_x$	
$\phi(\phi)_x$		$\phi(\phi)_x$

Fig 4: Pattern 6 via

$\phi(\frac{1}{2})_x$		$\phi(\phi)_x$
	$\phi(\phi)_x$	
	$\phi(\phi)_0$	
$\phi(\phi)_0$		$\phi(\frac{1}{2})_0$

	$\phi(\frac{1}{2})_0$	$\phi(\phi)_0$
		$\phi(\phi)_0$
$\phi(\frac{1}{2})_0$	$\phi(\phi)_x$	$\phi(\phi)_0$
$\phi(\phi)_x$	$\phi(\phi)_0$	$\phi(\frac{1}{2})_x$
	$\phi(\phi)_x$	
$\phi(\phi)_x$		$\phi(\frac{1}{2})_x$

ϕ = black piece
 λ = white piece

(ϕ pieces on black squares)

Fig 2: Start piece.

Symbolism:

The acausal space is represented by ϕ_s ; the causal by λ_s . ϕ_s is described by t^ϕ ; λ_s by t^λ .

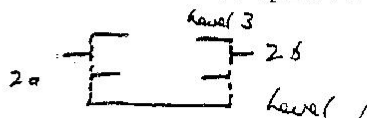
k_{α} symbolizes an individual; $k_{\lambda\alpha}$ a group of individuals of number λ ; k_{α} represents a higher civilization.

\in is to be read 'within' or 'member of a group/space or sub-space.

General Theory:

All life implies the coincidence of ϕ_s and λ_s . Sentient life implies $\phi_s \in \lambda_s$: this is abstracted into seven stages or levels represented by the seven boards of the game. The two sets of nine pieces represent the t^ϕ and t^λ aspects of cosmic Change (usually the 'black' pieces being ϕ and the 'white' pieces λ) - or how Being becomes through Time. This expresses the interaction of ϕ and λ through modes of being - \ominus , \mathcal{E} or \mathcal{F} . Three sets of pieces are used to express the fundamental nature of such Change as aspects of time.

Each board to be a correct representation should consist of three levels as in the 'simple' form of the game - that is, each board would be a complete 'simple Star Game' thus:



However, in practice, this form of the septenary game is not used in the initial stages because of its complexity: its mastery is one of the tasks of the Internal Adept. What follows is applicable to the 'standard' form of the septenary game with seven boards each of eighteen squares.

Magick implies changes in λ_s via t^ϕ : the 'cause and effects' understood by science operates in λ_s via t^λ .

The movement of pieces implies t^λ and t^ϕ and this is the essence of the magickal use of the game. t^ϕ is represented via \mathcal{F} (or ω) moves and captures, t^λ by the other moves. In one sense \mathcal{E} moves represent the duality associated with mercurius - possessed of both t^λ and t^ϕ elements.

I - kiu :

In terms of the consciousness of an individual (since ϕ, ϵ, λ , for kiu represents consciousness) the pieces are:

$\ominus(\ominus)$	Extravert Feeling type
$\ominus(\Psi)$	" Intuitive
$\ominus(\Phi)$	" Thinking
$\Psi(\ominus)$	Introvert Feeling
$\Psi(\Psi)$	" Intuitive
$\Psi(\Phi)$	" Thinking
$\Phi(\ominus)$	Master of Temple/Mistress of Earth
$\Phi(\Psi)$	Magus/Moua
$\Phi(\Phi)$	Homo Galactica

$\ominus()$ describes 'ego' consciousness; $\Psi()$ 'self' consciousness, and Φ 'adeptship' - that is, beyond individuation - the ϵ^{\wedge} goal of kiu.

Development of consciousness implies an increase of ϕ elements in a particular kiu.

To represent a particular kiu by the placing of pieces (in order, for example, to work magick upon that particular kiu) the operator must first assess the character of the kiu using the septenary correspondences as a basis. In order to do this accurately, it helps if various facts about the kiu in question are known - such as particular interests, whether any involvement in 'esoteric' groups and so on.

Character is assessed through determining the psychological type of the individual in accordance with the above table then finding appropriate 'Tarot' images linked to the type of consciousness represented by the character.

II - κ_{cu} :

For κ_{cu} the seven boards represent the seven Aeons, and one Aeon is represented by placing appropriate pieces on appropriate boards - Sirius is the first Aeon (the pre-Hyperborean, sometimes called the Primal Aeon), Arcturus the Hyperborean Aeon and so on. The coming 'New Aeon' is thus Deneb.

To represent the present Aeon the pieces should be changed from their original positions thus:

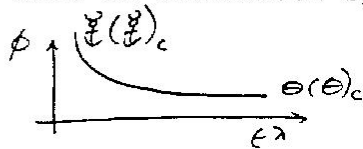
$$\begin{aligned} S\theta(\varphi)_\lambda &\rightarrow \pi\varphi(\theta)_\lambda; R\varphi(\varphi)_\lambda \rightarrow N\varphi(\theta)_\lambda \\ R\varphi(\varphi)_\phi &\rightarrow \pi\varphi(\theta)_\phi \quad A\varphi(\theta)_\lambda \rightarrow R\varphi(\varphi)_\lambda \\ N\varphi(\varphi)_\phi &\rightarrow \pi\theta(\theta)_\phi; N\varphi(\varphi)_\lambda \rightarrow \pi\theta(\theta)_\lambda \end{aligned}$$

κ_{cu} implies $\delta\phi_{\lambda}$ ^{via κ^{λ}} : the opening of a gate, which brings ϕ_s to presence in λ_s , predates the beginnings of a particular κ_{cu} by c. 300-400 years.

All κ_{cu} up to the present Western have exhausted their potential by the $\theta(\theta)$ stage - although φ stages (via $\kappa^{\lambda}\phi$) are possible.

$$\delta^{\lambda}\kappa_{cu} \Rightarrow \varphi(\varphi)_c \rightarrow \varphi(\theta)_c \rightarrow \theta(\varphi)_c \rightarrow \theta(\theta)_c$$

No κ_{cu} has ever achieved $\delta^{\lambda}\kappa_{cu}$ because this requires $\phi_s \in \lambda_s$, where $\omega \gg \gamma$ and $\kappa_{cu} \Rightarrow \phi_s \in \lambda_s; \kappa_{cu} \Rightarrow \phi_s^{\delta^{\lambda}\beta}$. A κ_{cu} lasts between 1,500 and 1,200 years, δ^{λ} declining in intensity during this time as indicated by the symbols:



$\theta(\theta)_c$ lasts approx. 400 years.

Each Aeon is associated with a particular higher civilization thus:

Aeon	Associated κ_{cu}	Date of end
Sumeric	Sumerian	2298 BC
Hellenic	Hellenic	378 AD
Western	Western	2390 AD

ϕ_s is expressed via κ_{cu} (and in general κ_{cu}) for κ_{cu} as an 'ethos' both exoteric and esoteric (which quite often only

Adepts understand since the esoteric ethos is the essence hidden by the exoteric ethos and is often revealed via 'the Abyss').

It is important to understand that the most important and practical aspect of an Aeon is the associated higher civilization - magickal Aeonics workings shape the ethos of this during the transition period between the ending of one Aeon and the beginning of another. During this time, however, the energies of the old Aeon produce the last transformation of the $\kappa_c u$: the $\Theta(\Theta)_c$ stage, which is usually an Imperium, often military in extent and form of power.

Hitherto, Aeonics workings - when they have been undertaken at all - have concentrated on opening the Gate that presences the power of a new Aeon. Yet it is possible to extend by such workings a $\kappa_c u$ into the Φ stages. For the present, this implies the end of the Western as c.3090 AD instead of 2390 AD. This is the first time in history that such a change is possible, since heretofore the process of Aeonics change has not been consciously understood by Adepts - its was approached mainly via mythological symbolism. It is through the abstract symbolism of the Star Game that full control is possible.

$$\delta^\phi \kappa_c u = \Xi(\Phi)_c \rightarrow \Theta(\Phi)_c \rightarrow \Phi(\Phi)_c$$

$$\delta^\phi \delta^\lambda = \Phi(\Xi)_c \rightarrow \Phi(\Theta)_c : \text{"opening of a gate"}$$

$$\delta_i^\phi(g) = \sum_{\mu=1}^{\lambda=7} \beta(\mu) [E_{(\mu)_a}^\lambda] \delta^\phi \quad \text{where } g = E_{(\mu)_a}^\lambda$$

VIII Stage Four - Internal Adept

The first part of this stage requires you to become skilled in the Star Game - regular playing of the game with an opponent (and, if possible, this should be your 'magickal' companion) is the best way to attain this. You should also study the esoteric theory behind the game - relating the symbols and their transformations to the septenary system and so on.

Once you are satisfied with your progress in the Star Game, you can undertake the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept, which is the second part of this fourth stage. This particular Grade Ritual is perhaps the most difficult task of the seven-fold Way, and it is this ritual which produces the genuine Adept. The ritual creates within you not only self-insight, but also empathy - and it is this empathy with life and the cosmos which is the foundation of true Adeptship.

The ritual involves you in living alone for a period of at least three months. Beforehand, you must choose a suitable location - it should be as isolated as possible (i.e. far from human habitation) with some kind of supply of fresh water (e.g. a stream). Two methods of living in isolation for the required length of time are possible, and you should choose the one which suits you. The first involves living in a tent using monetary savings to purchase such food as is necessary. The second is providing for all your needs from natural resources by hunting, trapping, fishing and so on, building your own shelter. The first is the easiest - if you possess the necessary desire to undertake the ritual because you wish magickal Adeptship, then means will be found to acquire the monetary savings necessary.

During your time alone you must have no contact with anyone (including family and friends) except that necessary if food is to be bought - and this latter contact should be as brief as possible. You must have with you no means of communication with the outside world (radio, television, newspapers and so on) and no means of reproducing music (record player, cassette etc.) except a musical instrument should you wish to take one. You must use only candles for lighting and possess no clock or watch or other means of

measuring time. Strict observance of these conditions are necessary, since without the solitude and silence which these conditions impose upon you, the ritual will not succeed.

Once you have chosen your locality and made the necessary arrangements, the ritual can begin. The best time for this is on the Spring Equinox, the ritual then being completed on the Summer Solstice. You must take with you only what you can carry on your own back.

Aim during your isolation to complete a task or tasks. For example, you might choose to learn to play a musical instrument, or increase your skill in the Star Game (it being possible to make the game smallish and portable) or write a diary of your day to day experiences and feelings. Think about this task carefully before you start the ritual, since there can be no changing of tasks once the ritual has begun.

The Grade Ritual is the alchemical process of change which will occur in your thoughts and feelings by virtue of you living alone for the length of time indicated and in the simple manner prescribed. It is important that during the ritual you maintain your resolve to continue until at least three months has passed - you will be tempted many times to abandon the ritual, as you will be tempted to seek the distractions of talking, friends, and the pleasures and comforts of the outside world: its music, entertainment and other delights. Such temptations must be resisted - not because they are wrong, but because, by undertaking the ritual in the first place, you yourself have chosen to live without them in order to attain magickal and self understanding. There is no other way of achieving this. Wisdom is born from the insight that primitive isolation brings.

Your greatest problem will be boredom - the days will seem very long. Learn to observe the changes you see in Nature around you. Learn to think: about yourself, your life, the world. Try and relate what you have learnt about the Star Game and the septenary system with the world and its changes, including people. If at some time or times you become emotionally aggressive or depressed, find a physical outlet for your feelings - running, or swimming (in a lake if one is nearby). Try and understand your feelings.

All this will not be easy - it will be a struggle. But if you persist you will find toward the end of the ritual changes occurring within you. You will gain insight, and empathy, and emerge as an Adept. You may also be tempted, before the three months is up, to leave your isolation because you believe you have succeeded. But this may well be a delusion, and the three month time limit must be strictly observed. This is so simply because three months is the absolute minimum time required to produce the alchemical change: any change before that is usually illusory or only temporary.

It cannot be stressed too often that there are no shortcuts to genuine Adeptship: no easy way to wisdom. There is only living alone, isolated and in a simple way as above. The Grade Ritual creates in three months what fate has produced (and then only rarely) in two or three decades in a few fortunate individuals - it is a technique which distills the experience of thousands of years of evolutionary understanding, and makes Adeptship available to all.

IX Stage Five - Entering the Abyss

In the septenary system, the Abyss lies between the spheres of Sun and Mars - it is that region where the 'acausal' and the 'causal' meet. The septenary system - the seven spheres and the paths linking them - is regarded as a map of our own consciousness. Our consciousness, by its nature, is both causal and acausal - that is, both rational and 'irrational', where this 'irrational' includes the unconscious. In one sense, the causal is linear, progressive, evolutionary, and the acausal is unified, 'wholistic'. To the acausal belongs 'magick' - and the 'Occult' in general; to the causal belongs science and logic. The Abyss may be seen as essentially beyond the opposites of causal and acausal - the unity beyond both. To it belongs our past, present, future - and the demons/gods within us and outside of us. It is the place where our self image - created by our experiences of life - is broken, and where we discover how we, and all others, fit into the scheme of the cosmos itself. The Abyss, destroying our image of ourselves, either destroys us - or takes us beyond our self, to the real beginnings of wisdom.

The Grade Ritual (which produces, in magickal terms, the Master of the Temple/Mistress of Earth) is simple in form, but difficult in practice. As with all the Grade Rituals, it demands self-honesty. The ritual can be attempted by those who have successfully completed the ritual of Internal Adept and feel themselves ready for the next stage.

In aspect, the ritual involves the candidate walking (unaided by others or any form of transportation) - and carrying all that is necessary in terms of food, water and shelter - a distance of 80 miles (males) or 56 miles (females). The candidate - who should also carry a crystal tetrahedron of no less than 3" in height - should during this walking stop for only an hour only once, that is, during the night. The ritual is begun at sunrise on the first day and reaches its climax at sunset the following day. The walking should be undertaken as far as possible from human habitation, and the candidate must complete the specified distance before sunset on the second day.

At the end of the walk, the candidate should - without

eating or resting - bathe in a river/stream/lake (the walk being planned to end near one of these). A comfortable position is then assumed, the crystal tetrahedron held in the palms of the hands, and the candidate visualizing a darkness within the crystal which spreads outward to enclose him/her. This visualization is accompanied by the slow, repetitive chanting of the word 'Chaos'. After several minutes of effort, the visualization is ended, and the mind allowed to sense and feel what it may. No attempt should be made to control or direct the images/sensations/feelings which may occur. They should be observed, with emotional detachment.

The candidate will know when the ritual is complete, and should as soon as possible write an account of it. It is important for the bathing to begin as soon as the target distance is achieved - and the visualization must itself begin after the bathing.

If these conditions are not observed - or if some assistance is given during the walk - then the ritual is void.

Part Two

Esoteric Sorcery

Introduction

The following chapters give details of various techniques of external magick, and these techniques are used to bring about a specific aim or desire. Those who wish to use them in a practical sense are advised to first read Appendix V (Preparation for Hermetic Rituals) followed by Appendix II (Visualization Techniques). Also, if you have not already undertaken the Initiation as given in Part One above, this (or the ritual given in Appendix IV) should be done, since this, put simply, is an 'introduction to the role of sorcerer/sorceress'.

Successful external magick to a great extent depends on the acceptance of this role: it is the opening of the gate within which leads to the acausal, that source of magickal energy. External magick - both hermetic and ceremonial - is a skill, the learning of which is one of the tasks of an Initiate following the seven-fold way. This learning is associated quite naturally with the magickal grade 'External Adept'.

The techniques given enable the fulfilment of desires, without restriction. One of these techniques - the 'Dark Pathways' - involves the drawing down/invokation of 'dark/sinister/negative/chaotic' type energies and in this sense is a 'Left Hand Path' working: that is, it is concerned with various areas of consciousness which are often misunderstood. The workings with the pathways may be said to be journeys into the darker sides of the unconscious (or 'hidden consciousness') of the psyche of the individual, and while these energies may be used hermetically - that is, directed by desire toward a specific aim or intention - they can be used 'internally' to provoke/cause changes in individual consciousness, aiding thus magickal development and self-understanding. In this 'internal' sense, when the energies are produced (by means given in the 'Dark Pathways' chapter) they are not directed, but left to produce images/sensations in the psyche (as per the workings with the spheres in Part One). Both types of workings are associated with the magickal learning of an Initiate - that is, they are undertaken before the Grade Ritual of External Adept, this Grade Ritual being a means of conscious integration of the experiences. (For the Left Hand Path in general see Appendix O.)

Esoteric Chant

Esoteric chant may be divided (as far as the 'Dark Tradition' is concerned) into two parts: vibration of names, and 'Sacred' or magickal chant. The first type requires less skill and is the form most often used in ritual - for example, to create or 'draw down' a particular force or entity in a magickal working. The second type requires some musical ability or training since mode and tempo are important.

1) Vibration:

Vibration implies that each part of the word to be used (either alone or as part of a text or key) is resonated deeply and this requires the person to be standing and the 'solar plexus' to be used to generate the deep breathing required, the mouth acting as a resonant cavity. The vibration should be such that it is felt in the whole body - a vibration is not a shout or scream but rather a prolonged concentration of sound energy.

For example, to vibrate the word 'Satan'. Take a deep breath and sound 'Sa' for the length of that breath (not less than twenty seconds) trying to maintain the same level of intensity as the breath fades - then inhale quickly and vibrate '-tan' while exhaling in the same manner as before. Practice will enable the length of each part to be increased. To obtain the required 'depth' or power, attempt to project the sound in front of you to a point at least ten feet away.

The essence of vibration is control of the sound - it should be as even as possible and the same on all parts of the word or phrase. With practice, the relative pitch of the vibration can be altered, although this is not as important as producing a powerful vibration since most magickal vibrations require power rather than finesse of pitch. Certain musical keys are associated with certain types of magickal force (for instance, the key of E minor is associated with 'Satanic' indulgence) and experience will soon show which key is appropriate to the force required.

The 'Enochian keys' provide a good example of vibration used in the magickal sense - consider the Third key: Micma Goho Piad zir ...

'Micma' is vibrated as 'Mic-' followed by 'ma', each part for at least twenty seconds. 'Goho' is "go-" and "ho" for the same lengths of time; 'zir' is one sound, and so on.

Thus it will be seen that the vibration of one Enochian key requires quite an effort, and correct vibration produces in the person (partly because of this) an altered state of consciousness as well as producing magickal results and effecting other individuals who may be present.

Each individual possesses what may be called a unique 'vibration signature' or key at which the sound produced is most effective for them on both the personal and magickal levels, and this signature may and should be discovered by practice. Most women will naturally produce vibrations at a higher relative pitch than men and their vibrations can sometimes be quite dangerous, while some men may produce vibrations that are very disturbing to certain individuals.

Those who wish to master the art of magickal vibration should practice regularly, particularly within large resonant buildings, gradually increasing their ability of breath control and the power of the sound itself. Correctly used, short vibrations can startle people and render them immobile for some seconds. In certain circumstances, a powerful vibration can kill.

2) Magickal Chant:

Magickal chant is essentially monophonic and for this reason is generally (when it is written down at all) represented in Gregorian notation - as distinct from the 'blob' notation used in modern music.

Magickal chant is sung unaccompanied in one of the seven fundamental (or Greek) modes - Lydian, Dorian and so on, the modes themselves being representations of septenary forces as described by the septenary Tree of Life and the correspondences associated with it. There are three basic ways of performing this chant - by a solo cantor; by several voices in unison and by two cantors (or choirs) singing 'vox principalis' and 'vox organalis' a fourth or fifth apart as in organum.

The music of this type of chant is similar to Gregorian chant sung in proportional rhythm and the texts used are

usually magickal invocations or calls.

Magickal chant of this type is used for three purposes - first, as keys to the Abyss or to open various acausal Gates (as, for example, their use in the Nine Angles rite to return the Dark Gods to Earth); second, as a means of producing magickal change in the world and individuals since certain chants are regarded as possessing special power if sung correctly; third, to provide a framework which some individuals may use to presence on a day to day basis through such traditional forms as the Promethean Office, those aspects of the acausal which have been named variously as Physis and Tao.

The first two of these have often been considered to belong to the Left Handed Path, since they generally invoke/create various chthonic or dark/negative forces in consciousness, while the third has hitherto been used almost exclusively by those Adepts who, having passed the Abyss, live according to their inner wisdom.

An example of the first of these types is given below - as used in the rite to return the Dark God Atazoth to Earth.

Ny - the k - thee - ae * At - a - 3oth

Esoteric Chant as a Magickal Technique

I - The Modes:

The seven Greek modes correspond to the spheres of the septenary (see Appendix I) as follows: Lydian - Jupiter; Phrygian - Saturn; Dorian - Moon; Mixolydian - Venus; Hypodorian (or Aeolian) - Mercury; Hypolydian - Sun; Hypophrygian (or Ionian) - Mars.

The modes used in esoteric chant are the 'Gregorian' or plainchant ones and these are related, according to tradition, to the spheres and thus the Greek modes thus: Moon - mode IV; Mercury - mode VI; Venus - mode V; Sun - modes VII/VIII; Mars - mode III; Jupiter - Mode I; Saturn - mode II.

Hence, if a piece of chant is sung correctly in, for example, mode IV, then such a chant will be a re-presentation of the energies or forces associated with the appropriate sphere - in this case Moon/Nox. Such energies may be used in the manner of magick to: a) increase the consciousness/insight of those singing; b) be directed by will and visualization* for a specific aim appropriate to the sphere; c) to used to alter (via the acausal) the world itself.

Thus, esoteric chant is a form of magickal ritual - and a hitherto secret one.

(b) and (c) above usually require two cantors singing a fourth apart in parallel (for dark/destructive workings) or a fifth apart (for constructive workings). (a) is usually undertaken by one individual and is internal magick.

II - Chant Examples: Spheres

The following are used as part of a specific hermetic ritual. Details concerning the form of this ritual are given in Part III below.

* For visualization techniques see Appendix II.

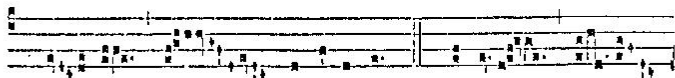
Maon



Ag-i-os * ka-be-i-ri . Ag-i-os



ka-be-i-ri . Ag-i-os . ka-be-i-ri



Ag-i-os ka-be-i-ri Ag-i-os



ka-be-i-ri . Ag-i-os ka-be-i-ri . Ag-i-



os ka-be-i-ri . Ag-i-os



ka-be-i-ri . Ag-i-os *

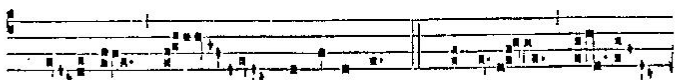
Maon



Ag-i-os * ka-be-i-ri . Ag-i-os



ka-be-i-ri . Ag-i-os . ka-be-i-ri



Ag-i-os ka-be-i-ri Ag-i-os



ka-be-i-ri . Ag-i-os ka-be-i-ri . Ag-i-



os ka-be-i-ri . Ag-i-os



ka-be-i-ri . Ag-i-os *



ka-be-i-ri

Agios Kabiri

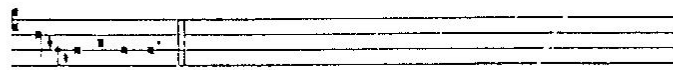
Mercury



Ag-i-os hu-ci-fer Ag-i-os hu-ci-fer



Ag-i-os hu-ci-fer. Ag-i-os

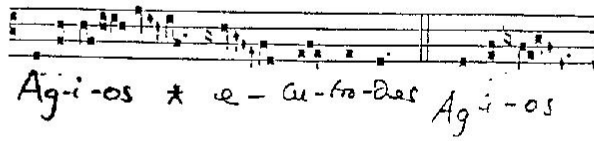


hu-ci-fer.

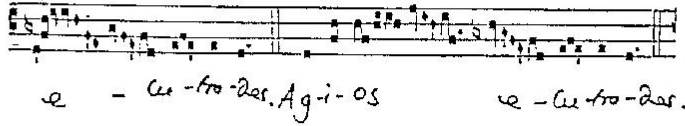
[Note: repeat five times.]

Agios hucifer

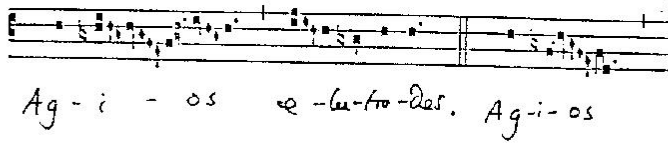
Veaus



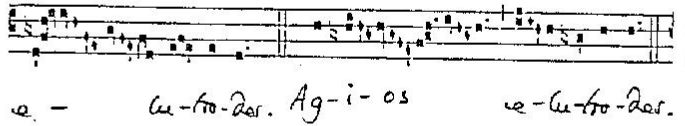
Ag-i-os * e - lu-tro-des Ag-i-os



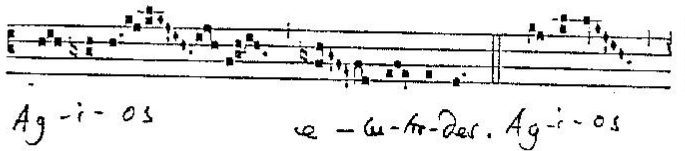
e - lu-tro-des, Ag-i-os e - lu-tro-des.



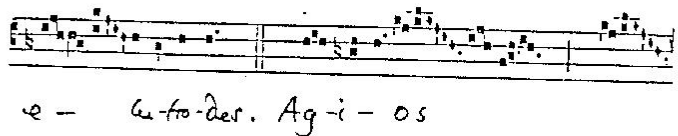
Ag-i - os e - lu-tro-des. Ag-i - os



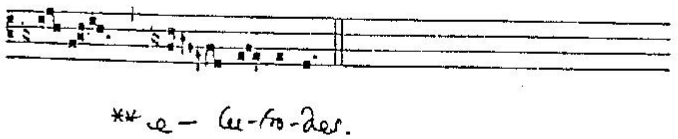
e - lu-tro-des. Ag-i - os e - lu-tro-des.



Ag-i - os e - lu-tro-des. Ag-i - os



e - lu-tro-des. Ag-i - os



** e - lu-tro-des.

Agius Eutrodes

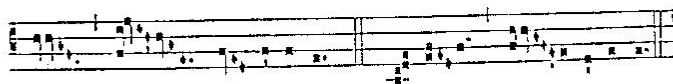
See



Ag-i-os * o-ge-nos . Ag-i-os



o-ge-nos. Ag-i-os o-ge-nos. Ag-



i-os o-ge-nos. Ag-i-os o-ge-nos.



Ag-i-os o-ge-nos. Ag-i-os o-ge-



nos. Ag-i-os o-ge-nos. Ag-i-os *



o-ge-nos.

Agios Ogenos

Mars



Ag-i-os. * Al-as-to-ros. Ag-



i-os Al-as-to-ros. Ag-i-



os Al-as-to-ros. Ag-i-os



Al-as-to-ros.

Agios Alastoros

Jupiter



Ag-i-os* Ba-pho-nat. Ag-i-os Ba-pho-nat.



Ag-i-os Ba-pho-nat. Ag-i-os Ba-pho-nat. Ag-i-



os Ba-pho-nat. Ag-i-os Ba-pho-nat. Ag-i-os



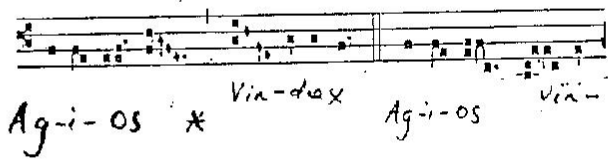
Ba-pho-nat. Ag-i-os Ba-pho-nat. Ag-i-os



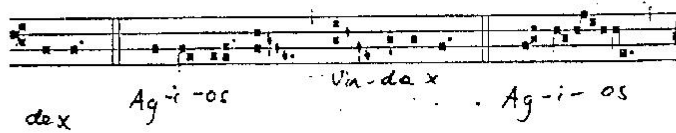
* ** Ba-pho-nat.

Agios Baphonet

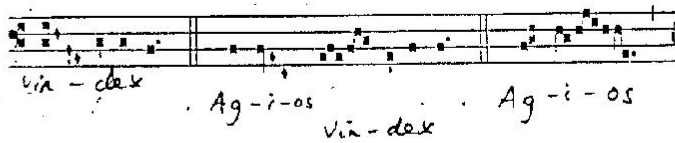
Satura



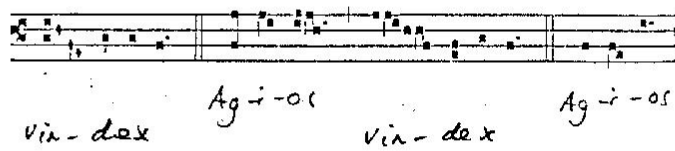
Ag-i-os * Vin-dex Ag-i-os Vin-



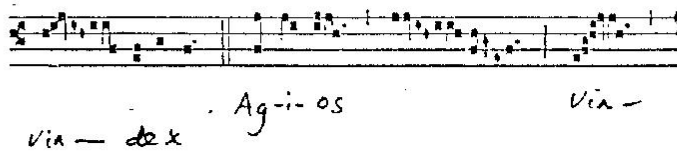
dex Ag-i-os Vin-dex Ag-i-os



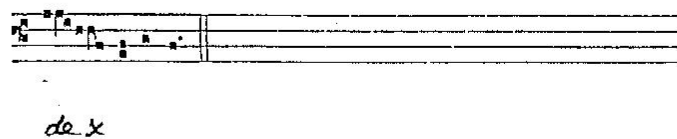
Vin-dex Ag-i-os Vin-dex Ag-i-os



Vin-dex Ag-i-os Vin-dex Ag-i-os



Vin-dex Ag-i-os Vin-



dex

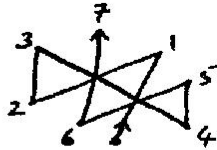
Agios
Vindex

III - Ritual:

The chant appropriate to the sphere should be regarded as the key to the working.

For destructive/dark workings, the time should be sunrise at new moon; for constructive work, sunset at full moon. The best place for workings is outdoors either on hill-tops or in glades.

The rite is begun by those attending vibrating according to tradition and three times: a) Agios o Atazoth for 'dark' workings; b) Agios o Baphomet for other workings. The cantor then incenses with incense appropriate to the sphere at each of the seven points thus:



The path described by these points must be walked by the cantor while incensing, followed by the other participants, if any.

The incenses are: Moon - Petricor; Mercury - Sulphur; Venus - Sandalwood; Sun - Oak; Mars - Musk; Jupiter - Civit; Saturn - Henbane.

While this is being undertaken the following should be chanted: a) Aperiatur et germinet Atazoth or, for constructive workings: b) Ad Gaia qui laetificat juventutem meam.

The key chant (see Part II) is then sung twice in succession. If more than one person is undertaking the ritual then this should be sung in fourths (for dark workings) or fifths (for other workings) while those singing visualize the intent of the rite being accomplished according to the principles of hermetic magick.

Prior practice of singing the chant (without the visualization) is essential, since the chant is only magickally useful if sung correctly. The visualization should be as concise as possible and according to a pattern agreed by the participants before the ritual. It is possible to use sigilization instead of visualization: the sigil being prepared beforehand and 'consecrated/

charged' according to tradition, the sigil being burnt by one of the participants during the singing of the key chant.

The following table gives the type of work appropriate to each sphere:

Moon	Terror and sinister knowledge
Mercury	Indulgence and transformation(s)
Venus	Ecstasy and Love
Sun	Vision and understanding
Mars	Destruction and sacrifice
Jupiter	Wisdom and wealth
Saturn	Chaos

IV - Method of Singing:

The essence of esoteric performance is for the chant to be sung slowly, each ■ of the plainchant notation representing a modern quaver, more or less, depending on the 'mood' of the appropriate sphere.

The pitch of a piece is relative - and depends on what is comfortable for the cantors or group. The rhythm of a particular piece is easy to obtain with practice if it is remembered that a piece is like a wave - rising and falling with measured cadence, in a flowing manner. It is for this reason that Latin (and sometimes Greek) is employed for the texts, since of all languages, they are most appropriate to monophonic chant. The accent is generally placed on the upbeat, though exceptions exist.

Frenzy Magick

This type of magick involves the individual(s) becoming possessed by acausal energies by creating through specific techniques a physical and emotional frenzy.

Frenzy magick to be successful requires the individual at the height of the induced frenzy to visualize (or using vibration to chant) the intended outcome of the ritual - for example, if the ritual is undertaken to destroy by magick a certain person, then the visualization is the death of that person in the manner chosen; a suitable phrase for vibration would be 'N.N. (the name of the person) will die!'

Frenzy can be obtained by drugs - but these depress (and sometimes destroy) the ability to concentrate and drugs are therefore not recommended for this type of hermetic magick. The best method to achieve frenzy is dance - mostly of a circular or spiral nature. Other methods which can be used are willed concentration, physical endurance and induced ecstasy. Details of all these will be given.

Those interested in undertaking a specific hermetic ritual are advised to read Appendix VI - Preparation for Hermetic Workings.

I - Dance:

Confine the intent of your working to a few phrases and images. For example, if the working is to induce a specific individual to love you, a suitable phrase for chanting/vibration would be 'Let N.N. become possessed by love for me.' A suitable image would be a photograph of the individual - or a visualization of their face.

At twilight on a suitable day begin the working either outdoors or within an indoor area suitable for dancing. Walk a circle slowly and sun-wise (i.e. from east to west) repeating the phrase which enshrines the intent of your working. Continue with this slow circular walking for several minutes while visualizing the chosen image (or concentrating on a photograph) gradually allowing yourself to feel the emotion appropriate to the working

(for example, a ritual of destruction - hate; a ritual to bring love - love; a ritual to bring wealth - a feeling of the enjoyment of luxury and wealth ...).

Then walk faster and faster imagining the sky above you opening and energy flowing down and into you. This energy re-inforces your emotion and let it make you shout louder and louder your chosen phrase. Let this vital energy possess you - and dance, run, leap as you will, visualising the image and shouting/chanting the phrase as the frenzy directs. Continue thus until exhaustion, then sit or lie still for several minutes visualizing your energy being drawn back up into the sky and out into the stars. Breathe deeply and slowly for about a minute, stand and say 'It is over' and leave the area of the ritual.

II - Other Methods:

Willed concentration involves gradually building up the appropriate emotion while standing still through the use of breathing exercises and the alternate contraction and relaxation of muscles. Deep breaths are taken and the muscles of the arms, legs and back contracted: imagine with the inward breath that energy (of the appropriate type - love, hate and so on) is being drawn into the body. The breath is then exhaled slowly and the muscles relaxed. This continues for at least a quarter of an hour - then the chosen image is visualized for the length of five inhalations and five exhalations after which one long slow inhalation is undertaken with the powerful drawing in of emotion. This is followed by a shouted exhalation of the chosen phrase - this exhalation being as powerful as possible. The energy drawn in is then released by further shouted exhalations of the chosen phrase - until exhaustion or all the energy is drained away.

As before, relax, say 'It is over' and leave the area of the ritual.

Physical endurance as a technique involves choosing something which for you is exceptionally demanding physically. The achievement of this pre-set goal is taken as the climax of

the working and the intent of the ritual is then visualized and the chosen phrase enshrining the desire either vibrated or shouted at this moment.

An example of this method would be choosing a steep hill and setting yourself the task of running as hard and as fast as possible to the top. Imagine reaching the top as the success of the working - if it helps in the mental preparation repeat something to yourself like (assuming, for the purpose of illustration, that the intent of the ritual is to bring success to a particular undertaking): 'My success will come as I reach the top of this hill!'

No physical preparation of any kind should be undertaken: this method involves sheer will and determination. If you really want the working to succeed, you will possess the necessary will to achieve the physical goal. The aim is for an explosion of physical energy, and in many respects running is ideally suited to this.

Induced ecstasy as a technique involves using some outward form to produce within you an emotion appropriate to the intent of the working. This outward form depends on your interests and/or abilities. One of the simplest forms is music - that is, using music to induce the appropriate emotion. However, this is not as easy as it appears because it is necessary to produce a frenzy of emotion and to sustain this for a period of time. Should you intend to use music in this way, a suitable piece/composition, once found, should if possible be kept solely for magickal use. Since the effects of music tend to be individual, only you can find music appropriate to a particular emotive working. The important thing is to allow the emotion to build gradually to a frenzied climax and at the climax send forth/direct the energy using visualization and vibration. Combining dance with music is very effective.

Improvising music on a particular instrument can also be used - and very effectively. Again, the frenzy should be induced slowly and its climax accompanied by visualization and vibration/shout of the chosen phrase.

Visualization and Sigil Magick

Visualization as a technique is simple. In the area chosen for the ritual, adopt a comfortable position (sitting, lying or a 'meditation posture' - the position is not important, only that it be comfortable) and in this position visualize in detail but without any emotion the sequence of events desired.

Visualization may be said to be a willed 'day-dream' and to be effective requires a calm but concentrated attitude of mind. To assist in the visualization, various external triggers may be used to create the right atmosphere or mood: incense of the planet appropriate to the working should be burned (see Appendix I) and candles of the planetary colour used to provide the only light. Before beginning the visualization, vibrate the word appropriate to the planet (see below) three times in succession.

The visualization should be as natural and realistic as possible. Examples: a) You wish to obtain the sexual favours of a particular person. You visualize the person and then in as much detail as possible the act itself; b) You desire to cause alarm to a neighbour who has annoyed you. You visualize the person in bed at night and yourself standing over them. You smile and by your will form the energy of the acausal dimensions into a peevish imp (imagine the energy like swirling mist which your will forms into the imp). You set this imp at the foot of the bed to create mayhem and then yourself depart.

It is important for success in this technique for the visualization to become for you as real as possible, like a dream is real while it is being dreamt. To obtain this, it is necessary to be relaxed and calm - any emotion generated should belong not to you directly, but to the images in the visualization and then in a controlled way, never frenzied but rather cool and deliberate.

As with all hermetic techniques, complete the working in a formal way by relaxing and saying 'It is over.'

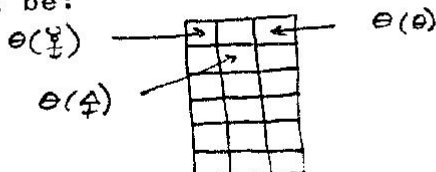
Planet	Word	Appropriate Workings
Moon	Noctulius	Hidden knowledge
Mercury	Satan	Lust/Indulgence
Venus	Darkat	Love/Enchantment
Sun	Karu Samsu	Prophecy/Revelations
Mars	Shugara	Death/Destruction
Jupiter	Davcina	Wealth/Success
Saturn	Vindex	Chaos/Disruption

Sigil magick involves the septenary form of the Star Game (see Chapter IX). The technique described here is only one of the many that involve the Star Game - although it is the easiest to use.

First, the Star Game itself must be constructed, and the pieces marked with the appropriate alchemical sigils. The basis of the technique is to set yourself a goal with regard to placing your pieces in a certain pattern on the Mira board. This goal you consciously equate with the success of your desire.

Begin by specifying the aim of the working: for example, if you wish by magick to win someone's love say to yourself (and write on paper) something like - 'My will is for N.N. to love me. As I move my pieces toward my goal so shall my desire be fulfilled.'

Choose a pattern for the Mira board - the pattern itself is not important, only that you choose it and equate it with the achievement of your desire. For example, the pattern could be:



White pieces are chosen for constructive workings, black pieces for destructive ones. The former should be conducted during twilight, the latter during dawn.

Then begin to move the pieces - in accord with the rules of the game - until the pattern is achieved. When the goal is attained, rejoice saying 'So is it done

according to my will.'

Two additions can be made to this technique. Both involve playing the game against an opponent. In the first, the opponent is not aware of the pattern you have set yourself - you write your intended pattern down and show it to your opponent only when you achieve it in the game through movement of pieces. In the second, the opponent is aware of your goal and tries to prevent, by his moves, your attainment of it. In both of these, the game should be played to a conclusion without a break.

The above additions naturally increase the difficulty of the technique - but they also greatly increase its magickal potency.

Sexual Magick

Hermetic sexual magick - that is, the technique of using the sexual act for magickal purposes - is quite simple, depending only on the acquisition of a suitable partner and the sexual orientation of the person wishing to use the technique. Techniques for both heterosexual and gay individuals will be given.

The most suitable partners are those with whom the operator feels an empathy and ideally partners for sexual magick should be interested in magick, be aware of the nature of the working and desire its success. It is worth going to some trouble to find a suitable partner and to develop with them a genuine partnership. Workings undertaken with someone who is unaware that the sexual act is being used for magickal purposes are possible and effective (although not as much as those undertaken by a genuine partnership) and the techniques described below should be adjusted accordingly.

The essence of sexual working is to use the sexual energy generated by both individuals in a directed way and despite many attempts to mystify the procedure by others this is quite easily done. For best results, workings should be undertaken according to the planet governing the desire - for example, a working involving wealth would be associated with Jupiter. Constructive workings are undertaken when the particular planet is rising at the place where the working is being undertaken. Destructive workings when the planet is setting. This naturally limits the workings to certain periods - thus increasing what may be termed the numinosity of the working.

It is helpful if the working is ritualized to a certain extent - for example, by using incense and candles appropriate to the planet (see Appendix I) and if possible conducting the working in an area where either a magickal aura exists naturally (such as a sacred glade or an isolated hill-top) or where one has been created by either previous workings or by the creation of a Temple area with certain specific magickal artifacts such as an altar, altar covering and so on.

As with most of the hermetic techniques described in this book, an appropriate visualization and/or phrase should be chosen which describes the desire of the working.

I - Heterosexual Working:

The male arouses the female by firstly caressing her spine and shoulders with the tips of his fingers, then arouses her fire by his tongue (locis muliebribus) before the union itself begins. At the height of the union, the female visualizes the desire in the manner chosen. If a phrase has been chosen to describe the desire the female may chant this rhythmically as the union proceeds to its climax, or this may be silently voiced by her in the same way.

It is the female who is the gate through which the power flows and as such hers is the prominent role. It is often helpful for her in the beginning stages to visualize energy flowing down to her and through her from the sky and stars above.

Should the male be undertaking the working without the female participating fully and with knowledge in the ritual, then his is the visualization and the (silent) chant. This form of the working is by its nature less powerful than the foregoing.

The female may of course undertake the working without the knowledge of the male and this in no way alters the power of the working, except insofar as she might wish to increase its power by using sexual enchantment to ensnare a man and use him in the working. The enchantment is then a powerful prelude to the working itself.

The working is concluded in the usual formalized way by relaxation and a simple phrase such as 'It is completed.'

II - Sapphic/Uranian Working:

Because of the doubling of the female, Sapphic working (sometimes called Sapphisty) is powerful magick. Both participants may combine in the visualization and/or rhythmic breathing of the chosen phrase - the fire is aroused mutually by caress and tongue (locis muliebribus)

one ecstasy following the other (mutual ecstasy - though rare unless cultivated by technique - is very powerful magickally). If desired, the procedure can be repeated for as many times as the participants desire. The working is concluded in the usual manner.

Uranian working may be undertaken as I above with the obvious emendations or one participant may elect to raise the fire of the other via his lips. The visualization and/or chanting of the chosen phrase should follow the pattern in section I. The working is concluded in the usual manner.

Model Magick

Model magick consists of two techniques. The first involves making actual models of the events or individuals which one wishes to influence by using magickal forces. The second concerns depicting (that is, representing) the events in either a pictorial way or using the medium of words to create a model for the imagination.

The making of actual models is self-explanatory. For instance, to curse an individual make a model of that individual (wax is easiest to use*). The model should be life-like. This model is then named by you with the name of the individual - saying something akin to 'With my hands I gave you birth and I name you N.N.' This model is then pierced with pins (the usual method) or wrapped in a black cloth and buried in earth while you say 'I who gave you life now lay you dead in Earth!'. During these tasks the appropriate emotion should be cultivated - in this case hate.

If it is wished to procure love from an individual, you make two models: one of the person and one of yourself. They are named as before, then bound together with green silk cord while saying 'From this binding shall come our love'. The models /^{are} then wrapped in a green cloth and placed somewhere undisturbed near the abode of the other individual. The emotion here should be love.

It is important that strong emotion be produced and to aid this, the technique may be ritualized. For example, an altar is prepared, appropriate incense burnt, candles used as the only source of light. As you light the candles say 'Here have I come to bring my desire to life!' Then vibrate according to the method of chapter II the word (see ^{above}) of the appropriate planet before beginning to make the models. Repeat, often, the intent of the working: for example, 'N.N. will die!'

End the working in the formal manner.

*Place wax candles in water that has been boiled. A film of wax will form on the water - use this to make the model.

The second technique of model magick involves creating images in an artistic way. If a person is the object of your magickal desire, then this technique involves drawing or painting that person - but undertaken in a creative mood. That is, through the drawing or painting (or sculpture) you are actually giving life to the person - you are capturing through the chosen medium the spirit (or 'soul') of that person. As the creation proceeds, you alter the image according to your intent. For example - if you wish harm to that person, anguish/pain/suffering can be depicted in the face and body. What is important here is the feeling that you put into the work.*

If events involving certain individuals are the object of desired magickal change, then literary means can be used. For this, you use imagination to describe in words generally through the medium of a 'short story' or a novel, the individuals involved and how you wish those individuals to be altered by events according to your desire. As before the mood should be imbued with magickal creation - you should feel that you are controlling and moulding the events and the individuals. It is suggested that when you first use this technique, introduce only small changes into events and the lives of individuals - for example, should you wish to procure the love of an individual, begin by describing as realistically as possible, that individual and their life as you know it. Then introduce into the story, yourself - in a realistic situation. Gradually make the individual fall in love with you.

This literary technique can also be used to change on a significant scale those forces which affect individuals although they themselves are unaware of them. These forces are generally called magickal Aeonie energies or currents. Using a literary form such as a novel, a play, a short story, you create using imagination new images and ideas in a magickal way, as H.P. Lovecraft has done. However, it is not necessary for your creations to be

* The more life-like the image, the more powerful the magick.

'published' in the accepted sense for them to be effective magickally, for once an image or idea is born by magick through the desire of an individual it will, if possessed of sufficient magickal energy at its birth, spread via the acausal to the minds of other individuals and generally becomes a form of living entity. Publication, as such, is basically irrelevant - magick uses the acausal whereas publication is only a causal representation of something that may have been (as for example with Lovecraft's stories) originally acausal.

As well as literary forms, it is possible to use other creative media for magickal purposes - for example, film.

Artistic creation, used magickally, is a ritual in itself and does not need any ritual formalization such as chanting, visualization and so on, although it can be ritualized in a formal way should you so desire to enhance the magickal mood. Such ritualization might include the use of incense, candles and undertaking the work itself in specially prepared ritual/Temple area.

Empathic Magick

Empathic magick basically involves identifying with the persons, person or forces (of Nature, for example) that you wish in some way to control.

To identify with an individual it is necessary to concentrate on that individual and imagine yourself becoming that individual. One way to do this is to imagine how you think that individual would react to a certain event or situation and then act out, quite consciously and with deliberation, this reaction. Extend this identification until you feel in sympathy with that individual - and then introduce through both visualization and the chanting of a phrase which enshrines your desire the change you wish to bring about in that individual.

This technique can, however, lead to problems of self-identity as well as producing within you a genuine understanding of that individual to the extent that your desire to change them is destroyed. It is important, therefore, before using this technique, that you carefully consider your own motives. If after such consideration you still desire to proceed, then you must resolve - whatever happens - to carry through your intended change, allowing no feeling to alter your resolve.

Once sympathy (in the sense of identification) is achieved, the change you desire in the individual may be induced by you acting them out in the role of the individual. For example, should you wish to harm that individual, then you act out, with all the appropriate feelings, the despair of that individual, the pain you desire to inflict and, say, the thought of that individual killing themselves.

This empathic technique is of great value if you wish to help an individual in some positive way - by healing, for instance. If possible, you should be physically near the individual (although this can be done simply by thought transference) and then draw into yourself so it feels your own, the physical or mental suffering of

that individual. If necessary, you can imagine this as a transference of visible energy which you take into yourself. Once taken in, this suffering or negative energy must be conducted away into the Earth - the best way to do this is to spread your hands on the ground and imagine the negative energy flowing from you, down your arms and into the Earth. Actual contact with the bare ground is most effective.

To aid in the drawing in of such negative energy, you can if you wish imagine an aura surrounding the individual. An attitude of compassion within yourself is also helpful in developing an empathy with the individual. Once empathy is obtained (and the desire to heal is often sufficient in itself to do this) then try and sense the changes in the aura that the suffering produces. Once these changes are located, draw them into yourself by imagining the negative energy is flowing through your fingers into your own aura.

It should be obvious that this method of healing is only to be used in a self-less way: that is, without any desire on your part for any kind of gain. Otherwise, your own consciousness of desire will block some of the negative energy and prevent it draining away.

Empathic magick involves^{ing} specific forces is relatively easy when compared to that involving individuals. The natural force most often controlled by empathic magick is the weather.

The essence of this technique, as its name implies, is developing a sympathy with the particular forces - to lose your own self consciousness to the experiencing of those forces as those forces are in themselves. This type of magick works in harmony with natural forces and not against them. For example, it is impossible to produce a snow storm, in England, in July. The change you wish to produce has, in Nature, to be possible for the magick to work at all. This change is never instantaneous due to the nature of the forces themselves - for instance, if you wish to produce a violent thunderstorm there is usually a delay of several days after the ritual before the storm breaks because the natural forces have to grow together

according to their nature.

To undertake a working to control the weather you must first find an isolated place removed from any large area of human habitation - an isolated hill-top, bare of trees, is ideal. The more wild the place, the better. This isolation should produce at least in some degree a feeling of you being between earth and sky. First decide on what type of weather you wish to produce bearing in mind the foregoing. Lie on the ground and imagine yourself as like the wind: feel the gentleness of a breeze and then imagine a strong wind tearing at you as you lie. As you imagine the wind becoming stronger and stronger, leap to your feet and with outstretched arms calm the wind by your will, then release it again as a strong force to break upon the land around. Imagine yourself as the wind bringing the type of weather you desire.

For example, if you wish a thunderstorm, imagine the wind swirling around and creating huge, dark clouds that run quickly toward your hill bringing their darkness to cover the earth and then their flashes of lightning, crashes of thunder and rain. If necessary verbalize your desire and exult in the primitive frenzy of the storm - dancing, laughing at it breaks around you. If you wish calm, sunny weather, imagine the wind slowly dying away and sun appearing in the sky above. Feel the warmth of the sun on your body - exult in the sensuousness of the sun, again verbalizing your exultation and desire should you wish. If your desire is for rain, imagine the wind bringing light grey clouds to cover all of your sky - feel the rain as it washes down and soaks into Earth, bringing growth and joy. Again exult in the feeling of rain upon your body - verbalizing this exultation and your desire.

This verbalization can take many forms depending on your feeling at the moment. For instance, for a storm something like: 'Come Storm, Wind, Thunder, Lightning and Hail! Smash this hill and the earth around with your force! To me! Come - lightning flash, thunder and hail ...' Verbalization like this should always be frenzied: it is no use just saying the words in a calm voice. The words should be a verbal ejaculation of your frenzy.

The working should be ended by you bowing respectfully to the Earth and thanking the wind, sun, sky and clouds.

Dark Pathways

The spheres of the septenary may be said to be the nexus between causal and acausal (or 'Being' and 'non-Being') and the paths linking the spheres may be regarded from a magickal point of view as zones of energy. This energy is according to tradition symbolized in an archetypal way since it is through such symbolism that control of the energy is possible.

The tables below give details of this symbolism, the chants/vibration appropriate to a specific symbol, and the sigils associated with a particular form of energy. These sigils aid visualization. A particular form is invoked to enable the individual to experience the type of consciousness/feeling associated with it, and all invocations should be for a specific desire appropriate to the form invoked - for instance, Shugara would be invoked for a destructive working. By their nature, these forces are 'dark' - that is, they represent the energies of the darker/shadow aspects of every individual, and their invocation is a means of conscious integration. To use the dark pathways as internal magick, all twenty-one paths should be used - invoking the appropriate form.

To invoke, set aside an area as a Temple or use an isolated outdoor location. The best time for working is after sunset or before dawn. Begin the invocation by vibrating the appropriate name nine times - if a chant is involved (as for example in Atazoth) then this should if possible be chanted as described. If you cannot for any reason do this, then the name may be vibrated, nine times followed by a short pause and a further four vibrations. If a specific key is prescribed for a vibration try and vibrate accordingly, but if this is not possible for any reason, vibrate twice more.

You may if you wish before beginning the invocation, take a 'ritual' bath (changing into robes should you so desire to thus enhance the working) - perfuming this bath with equal proportions of the oils of the planets which the path connects.

After the vibrations/chant, begin a slow circular dance -

the direction of which is not important - which gradually increases in speed and which gradually spirals inwards. As you dance shout or vibrate with as much force as possible the name of the entity you are invoking. Continue until dizziness or exhaustion draws you to fall to the ground then vibrate with all the energy you possess the appropriate energy - to aid this vibration try and project your voice a) if you are working outdoors: to the horizon itself; b) if working indoors: so that the room/Temple resonates with the power of your voice. After this say: 'Come (here name the entity) to me! And bring me my desire!' Briefly visualize your desire, and verbalize it using a short phrase (such as 'N.N. shall die!'). Then begin a slow circular dance in the opposite direction of the one before, laughing while you dance and saying: 'I am the power, I am the glory, I am a god!'







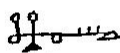

Cease your dance, sit on the ground/floor and breathe deeply for several minutes. Allow your mind to fill with images and feelings as it will, but do not move. Gradually let yourself then become relaxed and when relaxed rise, bow once to the North, say 'It is completed' and depart from the Temple or area of the working. As soon as possible write an account of what you felt following the second dance.

For best results, seven days before every working reduce your food and sleep, aiming to reach a minimum on the day chosen for the working. During this period no meat should be eaten and every night before sleep concentrate for about a quarter of one hour on the appropriate sigil, slowing saying (not chanting or vibrating) the name of the entity. Burn incense (combined from the planets, as above). This method means only one working per week can be undertaken - which is ideal.

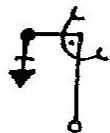
Try and link your feelings during the working with the appropriate Tarot image.

When no type of desire for a particular path is indicated in Table II deduce the appropriate desire for a working from the associated Tarot image: concentrate on the image for some time and allow the associations to grow naturally in your mind.

Path Workings - Table I

	Path	Word of Power	Sigil	Image
1	) → ♀	Noctulius		XV
	) → ♀	Nythra		XIII
	) → ♂	Shugara		XVIII
	) → ○	Shaitan		VII
	) → ♄	Asooth		XIV
	) → ♃	Azanigin		X
	♀ → ♀	Nekalah		VIII
	♀ → ○	Ga wath am		0
	♀ → ♂	Binan ath		I
10	♀ → ♄	Lidagon		XI
	♀ → ♃	Abatu		XVI
	♀ → ○	Karu samsu		VI
	♀ → ♂	Nemicu		XVII
	♀ → ♄	Mactoron		II
	♀ → ♃	Velpecula		XIX
	○ → ♂	Kthunae.		IV
	○ → ♄	Atazoth		V
	○ → ♃	Vindex		XII
	♂ → ♄	Daveina		III
	♂ → ♃	Sauroctonos		IX
21	♄ → ♃	Naos		XX

Asooth:



Azanigia:



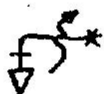
Nekalah:



Nythra:



Abatu:



Daveina:



Table II

Noctulius:

Deity of night. Useful in works of enchantment. Earth based. Key for chant: G minor. Perfume - petriochor.

Nythra: Energy vortex in Abyss - nameless in itself but represented by vibration of word. Works of terror and sinister destruction.

Shugara:

One of the most hideous intrusions possible on the causal level and very dangerous. G major key for invoking chant. Manifestations often are accompanied by a smell similar to rotting flesh.

Asoth:

Dark female force. Works of passion and death. The name should be vibrated.

Azanigin:

Mother of all demons who lie waiting in Earth. Key of B minor. Very useful to invoke in works of personal destruction.

Shaitan:

Long held to be an Earth bound representative for the Dark Gods. Perfume/incense - sulphur. Name to be vibrated. Stone - opal.

Nekalah:

Collective name for race of Dark Gods. Name to be vibrated in manner similar to Atazoth.

Ga Wath Am:

Vibration of this releases powerful energies. A key (when used with a crystal tetrahedron) to all the dark forces of the Abyss. Not to be vibrated without careful preparation. According to tradition the words means 'the power within me is great' - a reference to the pathways within which lead to the Dark Gods.

Binan Ath:

As above. Said to mean 'Behold the Fire!' 

Lidagon:

Symbolic representation of the union of the two sexual opposites (Darkat and Dagon) in their darker aspects.

Abatu:

An earth bound form of destructive/negative energy. Associated with rites of sacrifice. F sharp major key for chant.

Karu Samsu:

Word of power along the 12th path - to be chanted in the key of A flat major. According to tradition it means 'I invoke the sun.'



Nemicu:

Bringer of wisdom. To be vibrated.



Mactoron:

Word of power of 14th path - chanted in key of A minor. Legend recalls it as representing the name for one of the planetary homes of the Dark Gods, later famed as an early Star Gate.



Atazoth:

The most powerful of the Dark Gods. The name itself (which correctly describes the entity only when chanted properly) signifies in one sense the purpose of the cosmic cycles and the opening of the Gates since 'Atazoth' as a word means 'an increasing of azoth.' See chant illustration.

Davcina:

Female form along the 19th path. To be vibrated. Useful in works of enchantment.

Athushir:

Symbolic form along the 16th path. Serpent of fire ('dragon') often regarded as a memory of one of the Dark Gods during their previous (and only partially successful) intrusion into our causal universe.

Word of power (Kthunae) to be vibrated to bring forth this entity.

Budsturga:

A blue, aetherial entity related to 13th path. Tradition relates it as a Dark God, of female aspect, trapped in the vortex between the causal and acausal spaces. In one sense represents hidden wisdom - but generally dangerous to sanity. Partially manifest when Nemicu vibrated.

Gaubni:

Related to 2nd path. Often called the Great Demon - revulsive smell and appearance. May manifest when Nythra vibrated.

Sapanur:

Form along the 11th path. The sudden fire of destruction. A primal atavism of human origin - not related to Dark Gods.

Darkat:

Goddess, associated with lunar aspects. The name is traditionally regarded as pre-Sumerian in origin and Darkat is often regarded as the origin of the myth of Lilitu/Lilith - the female counterpart of Dagon, remembered as one of the Dark Gods from their last manifestation on Earth. Associated with the 10th and 8th paths.

Note: The incenses for the paths are a blend of those of the planetary spheres connected by the path- for example, for the 2nd path the incense is a blend of Petriochoer (Moon) and Sandalwood.

Moon: Petriochoer
Mercury: Sulphur
Venus: Sandalwood
Sun: Oak
Mars: Musk
Jupiter: Civit
Saturn: Henbane

Concentration of the sigil should be combined with chant.

Appendix I - The Septenary System

The Dark Gods

According to tradition, the Dark Gods are actual entities which exist in the acausal universe. According to our spatial, causal perception, these beings may be regarded as 'timeless and chaotic'.

Since our consciousness is by its nature partly acausal these entities can become manifest for us if we possess the keys to reach the appropriate levels of consciousness. What is termed the 'Abyss' separates our everyday consciousness from the consciousness (and thus apprehension) of the Dark Gods. The ordeal of the Abyss involves confronting these entities - and accepting them for what they are, that is, unbound by our illusion of opposites and the conflict of 'good' and 'evil'.

While it is convenient to regard the Dark Gods as merely symbols that re-present the energies of the acausal - as a projection of our own consciousness upon Chaos itself - it is equally possible to regard them as physically existing in themselves. Which of these (or neither of them) is correct, the Adept discovers during the ordeal of the Abyss. Legend, however, recalls the Dark Gods as visiting our planet several times in the past - by passing through one of the many 'Star Gates'. Star Gates are regions in space-time where our causal universe and the universe of the acausal are joined - they are physical gates, and passage from one universe to another is possible through them. According to legend, Star Gates exist near the stars Dabih, Naos and Algol: that is, if you journeyed from Earth in the direction of one of these stars you would pass through a Star Gate. There are also stories of a Star Gate within our own solar system - the Gate through which the Dark Gods came to Earth. This Star Gate is believed to be near the planet Saturn.

Sometimes, the Abyss invades our dreams, but mostly the Abyss is reached by following the seven-fold way. It lies between the spheres of the Sun and Mars, and divides the Adept from the Master/Mistress. It is the Gate to the gods within us and the gods without.

Appendix 0 - The Left Handed Path

The LHP is essentially internal magick because such magick means the use, by the individual, of the Dark Pathways that link the seven spheres of the Tree of Wyrd. There are no light pathways since the pathways by their nature imply a flow of energy and such flow can only be directional. Directional energy means Change, in the causal - the emergence of Chaos through a 'gate'.

For a long time, the nature of the LHP has been mis-understood. The traditional definition as magick used for personal/ destructive/negative purposes is meaningless because it assumes a framework of moral opposites which does not, in reality, exist in relation to magickal energies. All evolution of consciousness is a magickal act - an expansion of the acausal into the realm of the causal. From the 'traditional' moral/Nazarene point of view, all such evolution, of necessity, becomes 'evil' and partakes of the nature of a 'serpent' in accordance with a certain primitive, and childish, creation myth.

It is unfortunate that for a long time this simple fact has been, in most magickal circles, obscured by silly systems like the 'Qabala' with its notions of a Dark side to the Tree. No Dark side exists, because what actually exists (the seven Gates) is dark of itself because it presences non-Being. The bifurcation of the Qabala (exemplified by systems like the 'Nightside of Eden') leads quite often to severe problems if systems deriving from it are used by individuals in the manner of internal magick - as a means of increasing consciousness.

The pathways which link the seven spheres are re-presentations of the acausal and as such symbolize that which is normally (at least to 'everyday' consciousness) hidden. What is hidden becomes revealed and made present, in our phenomenal world, by the magickal act. That which is revealed is Chaos, non-Being. These acts of revealing destroy everyday or 'ego' consciousness and as such are the essence of true Initiation.

It is because they are (or should be) understood as only the beginning of the seven-fold way of internal magick that those using these Dark Pathways are free from the problems of bifurcation of identity that arise with other systems.

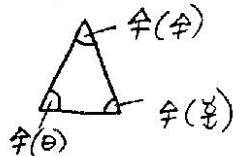
The essence of the genuine LHP - and this includes the Dark (or sinister) Tradition and traditional Satanism - is the use of magickal energies to enhance the evolution of the individual. Such evolution cannot exist outside the LHP as a willed act. Evolution is willed, as a magickal act, via experience: by revealing the acausal, by confronting it (usually via symbols) and finally by integrating it. There is no other way.

I The Septenary System

From an initiated viewpoint, the seven spheres are seen to form a three-dimensional pattern where every sphere is linked to every other twice, although in a physical representation (e.g. a model) the two-fold nature of the connecting paths are shown only for Moon/Saturn, Venus/Mars and Mercury/Jupiter.

This three-dimensional structure is considered to lie enclosed within a double-tetrahedron: the sphere of the sun being in the centre of the base where the tetrahedrons join. The uppermost tetrahedron signifies the acausal aspect, the lower, the causal aspect, and the three angles of each side are symbolized by the nine combinations of the three alchemical forms; that is, by the symbols of the pieces of the Star Game. As in the Star Game, the acausal aspects are signified by black pieces/symbols; the causal by white. The causal aspects are an exact reflection of the acausal - the latter being shown in the diagram below.

Thus, it is possible to see and understand the relation between the spheres, the pathways and the nine angles in their dual aspect.



Each sphere is tripartite in nature - the Θ , Ψ and Φ aspects, which - for an individual - signify the Unconscious, the Ego, and the Self, represented by the appropriate Tarot image (see 'Naos'). Basically, these three stages (in the evolution of consciousness) represent a progressively greater intrusion of acausal forces.

In essence, the seven spheres represent how the acausal (ϕ_s) merges into the causal (λ_s) and thus there are two ways of 'seeing' this representation - the ϵ^λ and the ϵ^ϕ where the 't' symbol shows the difference depends on time, ϵ^ϕ being acausal (or 'alchemical') time and ϵ^λ linear

time. The whole system thus may be said to be a map -
s symbolic representation - of both the unconscious, and
consciousness.

There are two ways of viewing this symbolic representation:
the λ and the ϕ . The λ is a progressive or linear,
approach; the ϕ a unified or 'wholistic' one, and
understanding of the septenary requires both.

The λ is basically the evolution of consciousness:
from unconsciousness, via the process of individuation*,
to integration and thus Adepthood and beyond. The ϕ
representation is basically a symbolizing of the acausal
forces themselves: a symbolizing of the energies present
when the causal and the acausal intersect. Our consciousness
is only one such place of intersection. All life is
regarded as possessed of some acausal energy - that is,
it is a place where ϕ_s and λ_s intersect. The degree of this
intersection (its 'intensity') depends on the type of
life - the more evolved the life, the greater the degree of
intersection.

In exoteric terms, the symbols by which we as individuals
sense these two types are those dependant on the five
senses: colour, incense etc. (thus the 'scales of colour',
incenses etc. associated with each sphere) as well
as the 'mythological' symbols where the various attributes
are combined to make a numinous image which to a greater
or lesser extent re-presents the energies (the 'gods/
goddesses/demons' etc.). These mythological symbols
may themselves be presented in a linear way - that is,
involve action, as in a specific myth or story.

In esoteric terms, the symbols are purely abstract -
that is, only symbols (such as \ominus or ϕ_s , ϕ). This is
so because these abstract forms make accessible those
areas of consciousness which are mostly ϕ_s . The exoteric
symbols are merely an attempt to use λ forms in an attempt
to clarify and understand ϕ forces. But to understand,

ϕ energies on their own level it is necessary to use
those areas of our consciousness which are 'nearer' ϕ_s than
 λ_s , and such levels or areas become used when abstract
symbols are used. This is one reason why the Star Game is
used so frequently - it accustomes the mind to work on
these higher cerebral levels, such levels being the province

of the genuine Adept.

Thus, the Star Game is used until it becomes almost 'second nature' to think in terms of its symbols, their transformations and the movement of symbols from level to level. This develops a new way of thinking - one appropriate to an evolution of consciousness. This type of thinking is built upon the foundation of individuation - that is, from the consciousness developed when the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept is successfully undertaken.

The two most important representations of acausal energy manifesting in our causal universe are those of the 'individual' (symbolized by $\kappa_i u$) and the 'aeon' (symbolized by $\kappa_c u$). Both are represented by the seven spheres and the pathways - and the symbols (both exoteric and esoteric) appropriate to these. Both $\kappa_i u$ and $\kappa_c u$ describe how ϕ energies flow into λ_s , and this flow (or 'current') is described by the following transformation:

$$\begin{aligned} \Theta(\Theta) \rightarrow \Theta(\Xi) \rightarrow \Theta(\Phi) \rightarrow \Xi(\Theta) \rightarrow \Xi(\Xi) \rightarrow \Xi(\Phi) \\ \rightarrow \Phi(\Theta) \rightarrow \Phi(\Xi) \rightarrow \Phi(\Phi) \end{aligned}$$








This transformation simply expresses the evolution of consciousness (for $\kappa_i u$) or the progression of Aeons (for $\kappa_c u$) since Φ is often regarded as the synthesis beyond thesis (Ξ) and antithesis - the Tao beyond the Yang (Ξ) and the Yin (Θ).

For $\kappa_i u$ this transformation is the seven-fold way - the journey from Initiate via Adept to Immortal. For $\kappa_c u$, it is the evolution of our species - from the first Aeon (often called the pre-hyperborean) to the present Aeon. The seven Aeons - according to traditional Satanism - are listed below.

From a magickal point of view, the septenary and its associated symbolism both exoteric and esoteric, enables (1) insight and understanding into both ϕ and λ , and also shows how ϕ energies may be directed to change λ_s : in (2) terms of $\kappa_i u$ and (3) $\kappa_c u$. The Star Game may be used to bring about such changes according to the desire of the magickian (see Chapter IV).

(1) is essentially internal magick; (2) is external

magick and (3) is aeonic magick.

Aeon	Symbol	Magickal Working	Dates
 Pre-Hyperborean	Horned Beast	Shamanism	7,000 - c.5,000 BC
Hyperborean	Sun	Henges	5,000 - 3,500 BC
 Sumerian	Dragon	Trance; Sacrifice	3,000 - 1,500 BC
 Hellenic	Eagle	Oracle; Dance	1,000 BC - 500 AD
 Western		Ritual	1,000 AD - 2500
 Galactic		Star Game & beyond	
Cosmic			

Regarding Aeons, two important facts should be borne in mind. First, the last five hundred years or so of an Aeon show a marked decline in the magickal energy associated with it, and it is during this time that the energies of the next Aeon gradually become evident (at first usually only to Adepts). These energies may be increased (or decreased) by aeonic magick worked by those who understand the forces involved. Second, each Aeon is associated with what is called a 'higher civilization' from which the Aeon usually takes its name. Within the physical confines of this higher civilization is the (usually sacred) place where the magickal energies of the Aeon are pronounced - and this because such a place is usually a physical Gate where the causal and the acausal meet. For instance, the centre associated with the Hyperborean Aeon was Stonehenge; that of the Hellenic, Delphi.

Aeons, according to the genuine sinister tradition, represent real - as opposed to mythical - magickal

energies. Hence the absence, in the list above, of the fanciful pre-histories normally associated with so-called 'esoteric' histories. Aeons, quite simply, represent significant upward and evolutionary trends in our consciousness. Thus, for example (and according to tradition) the Hyperborean Aeon corresponds to the invention of the wheel, the discovery of the basics of astronomy and the beginnings of what we know as 'internal magick'.

		Salt ⊖	Mercury ☿	Sulphur ♁
<i>Moon</i>	1°	18	15	13
	2°	0	8	16
	3°	6	14	17
<i>Sphere</i>	4°	7	12	5
	5°	1	4	9
	6°	11	3	2
<i>Saturn</i>	7°	10	19	20

Unconscious

Ego

Self

Tarot Images: The Three Levels of the Spheres

Mage	High Priestess	Warrior	Maiden
Sylphs	Gnomes	Salamanders	Undines
Capricorn	Cancer	Libra	Aries
West	South	East	North
Wands	Pentacles	Swords	Chalices
Air	Earth	Fire	Water

The Four Elemental Forms of the Tarot

Mage (Master of Temple)	High Priestess (Mistress of Earth)	Warrior	Maiden
Barefoot	Throne on Earth	Horse	Near water
Staff	Fruit	Sword	Crescent
Bearded man	Beautiful woman	Young man	Young Moon
Cloak	Robe	Naked	Naked Woman
Wolf	Leopard	Eagle	Owl
Blue	Green	Red	Silver
Mountains	Glade	Desert	Altar

Symbols of the Four Tarot Suits

(Thus the Mage is represented as barefooted, carrying/ holding a Staff. He is a bearded man, wearing a cloak; near him is a wolf. He stands among mountains. The predominant colour is blue.)

♃	Quartz	Petriochor	Sirius	Blue	Silver
♆	Opal	Sulphur	Arcturus	Yellow	Black
♀	Emerald	Sandalwood	Mira	Green	White
♁	Amethyst	Oak	Antares	Orange	Gold
♂	Ruby	Musk	Rigel	Red	Blue
♃	Amber	Civit	Deneb	Violet	Crimson
♅	Diamond	Henbane	Naos	Indigo	Purple

Stone

Perfume

Star

Colour
♁ ♆

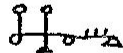
The Alchemical Process

Stage	Process	Word	Sigil	Season	Form
♃	Calcination	Nox	☿	Aries	Night
♏	Seperation	Satan	♏	Scorpio	Indulgence
♀	Coagulation	Hriliu	♁	♁	Ecstasy
♁	Putrefaction	Lux	♁	♁	Vision
♎	Sublimation	Azif	♎	Libra	Blood
♑	Fermentation	Azoth	♑	Capricorn	Azoth
♆	Exaltation	Chaos	♆		Thought

Note: The septenary system gives the following further identifications which help to explicate the alchemical process.

Libra	Capricorn	Aries
Sword	Wands	Chalice
Warrior (Knight*)	Mage (King*)	Maiden (Princess*)

(*These titles refer to the distorted Tarot tradition of the Golden Dawn and are given for reference.)



Stars, Precious Stones and Minerals

Stars

Name	Constellation	Distance	Type
Naos	♄ Pup	1100 l.y.	O5
Deneb	α Cygni	930	A2
Rigel	β Orionis	1300	
Antares	α Scorpii	365	M1
Mira	ο Ceti	820	
Arturus	α Bootis	35	K2
Sirius	α Canis Majoris	9	A1
Algol	β Perseus	105	B8
Rotanev	ρ Delphini	96	F3
Dabih	β Capricorni	250	G5

Precious Stones & Minerals:

Name	Hardness	Rating
Pleonast	8	9
Spinel	8	8
Uvarovite	8	7
Andradite	7	6
Almandine	7	5
Magnetite	5	5+
Helvite	6	4
Flourite	4	3
Tetrahedrite	3	2
Demantoid	7	1

Quartz-type:

Rock crystal	7	9
Morion	7	8+
Eisenkiesel	7	7
Amethyst	7	7 - 8
Aventurine	6	6 (Note: special effects)

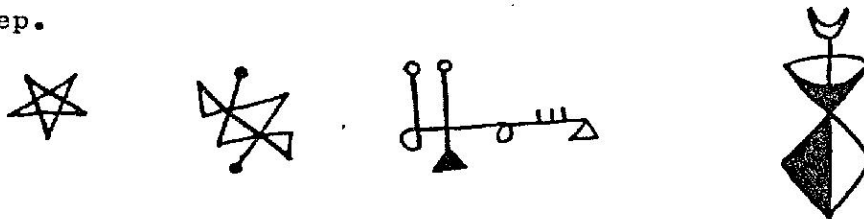


Appendix II - Visualization Techniques

Successful hermetic magick depends to a large extent on the abilities of visualization and vibration, and before any workings are undertaken practice in both should be undertaken.

Two techniques to develop your powers of visualization (and thus concentration) are recommended. The first involves spending about a quarter of an hour a day for about a week visualizing in detail the four sigils drawn below. Spend about three minutes visualizing each sigil, by drawing the sigil first and then closing the eyes to see it in the mind. When you can with ease visualize the sigils without first drawing them, try to construct each one 'in the mind' - close your eyes and imagine drawing the sigils, again in turn. With the three 'two-dimensional' sigils you should draw and visualize them in one continuous movement.

After you have completed this, try and add colours to your visualization of the three-dimensional sigil: for example, visualizing the crescent moon as yellow, one side of the tetrahedron as red, another as blue and so on. Continue with this until you are satisfied you can conjure colours and sigils in your mind and hold them for several minutes. If it helps, try and construct a sigil in your mind just before the moment you go to sleep.

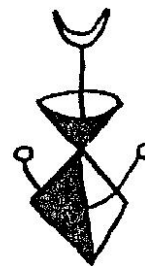


The second technique involves the Star Game. Construct a Star Game according to the details of chapter IX and begin to play the game either by yourself/^{OR}with an opponent. Simply playing this game - and trying to work out your moves in advance - develops visualization and concentration to an amazing degree. No other techniques are required.

Appendix IV - A Hermetic Ritual of Self-Initiation

Required:

Civit perfume/oil*
Black candles
Square of parchment or woven paper
Silver pin
Quill-type pen
Petriochor incense



Time of Ritual:

Sunset at Full Moon

The Ritual:

Incense the room/Temple area or chosen locality with the incense and light the candles. Take a bath, perfuming the water with the oil - if outdoors, bathe in a lake/stream and use the oil after this. Return to the Temple area.

Visualize for several minutes the following sigil:



then vibrate three times 'Noctulius'. Chant or vibrate after this the following: 'Suscipe, Atazoth, munus quod tibi offerimus, memoriam recolentes Noctulius.'

Lightly prick your left thumb with the pin and with the pen, using the blood, inscribe the following sigil on the parchment:



Show this parchment first to the West, then South, East and North saying 'With this sign I seal my quest!' Then burn part of the parchment in one of the candle flames, laying the partially burnt parchment between the candles.

Raise your arms above you and visualize the moon (if outdoors and the sky is clear and the moon visible, look directly at the moon) and imagine energy flowing from the moon and into you. Draw the energy into yourself, then imagine it flowing gently away, drawn into Earth by your feet.

After the visualization, extinguish the candles with your thumb and finger and leave the Temple area. As soon as possible thereafter, take the parchment as cast it into a fast flowing river or stream. The ritual is then complete.

Note: If possible, arrange the ritual outdoors in the vicinity of a stream/river on a night when the full moon is visible.

* If necessary these can be obtained from The Sorcerer's Appentice, 4 - 6 Burley Lodge Rd., Leeds LS6 1QP, England. Ideally, you should make most of them yourself.

Part Three

Esoteric MSS

Your aim during a working should be to almost lose control of yourself with an emotion appropriate to the type of working (although this does not apply, for example, to internal magick and most techniques of hermetic healing). Let movement of your body draw some of this energy from you - and do not be afraid during a working to laugh, cry, scream or shout.

A working should leave you feeling both physically and emotionally exhausted - if it does not, then you have not put enough effort into it.

Prepare your working well in advance - gathering the equipment, finding a suitable location, preparing the area you have chosen. Anticipate both the pleasure of the working and the magickal power which you as a magickian will bring forth and control. Try to be in an expectant and nervous frame of mind by the day of the ritual as this will increase the power of the working. Do not, however, worry about the success of it - you must believe that you are going to succeed, that you will, through magick, control your own life. Feel the powerful Destiny of the magickian - it is very helpful in the days before a working, if you consciously attempt to act the role of sorcerer/sorceress. Surround yourself with items of magickal interest, burn incense in your place of dwelling, wear a piece of jewellery which you feel is magickal, dress in a different way (for example, all in black). Cut a short wand from a hazel tree and inscribe/carve it with magickal symbols - choose for yourself a special magickal name and carve this name upon the wood.

If you prepare in such a way you will begin the working ready to unleash the primeval power within you.

The Wheel of Life

The wheel shows in diagrammatic form the relation between the seasons, the Zodiacal constellations, the four fundamental elements and so 'on. It is an esoteric part of the septenary system.

Two important aspects of this representation should be noted. First, the constellations are not distributed in equal 'segments', and, second, the time-path (i.e. the progression from one constellation to another in the zodiacal sequence) is helical rather than circular. Both of these represent what actually occurs.

Aries, Libra and Cancer and Capricorn, are allotted more space in comparison with the other zodiacal constellations because these are periods when certain Occult forces on the Earth are stronger. They represent 'tides', and the change to these 'tides' are marked by Equinox and Solstice. Thus, the propitious times for magickal work are the 'seasons' whose beginning is marked by Equinox and Solstice.

Further, the wheel represents the time-path which occurs in 'Nature' - this change being, not circular, but rather helical: a clockwise, corkscrew type motion. The pattern is three-dimensional, but is represented for convenience by the two-dimensional wheel. There is thus an evolution, rather than a constantly repeated circular pattern: the helical path does not return to the starting point, but rather a new cycle is begun where the path ends.

These two aspects, and the correspondences associated with them in the diagram, form part of the genuine Western tradition. It is unfortunate that most seekers follow the distorted tradition which the Golden Dawn revived and promulgated. For instance, most 'Occult' books which deal with the Zodiacal constellations derive most of their attributions/correspondences from the real and imaginery qualities of the animals/symbols which serve to name the constellations. It should be obvious to anyone of any intelligence that the external shape the stars make to an observer is irrelevant, except for purposes of general classification. What is important from an esoteric point of view is what is occurring in the vibrations/forces

in and around the Earth at the time of year signified by the constellation.

For too long seekers after Occult knowledge have absorbed the correspondences - or what they believed were correspondences - from books or teachers purporting to represent esoteric teachings. They have, in short, never experienced the reality of the forces which are supposedly represented by the correspondences: they are strong on study, but weak (and often totally lacking) on practical magickal experience.

In the Seven-Fold Way Initiates are taught to experience the reality of these forces rather than slavishly follow 'teachings' or 'traditions'. This process is begun by the Grade Ritual of External Adept, continued by the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept and finally completed by the passing of the Abyss. There is thus apprehension and understanding of these forces are those forces are in themselves.

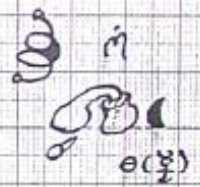
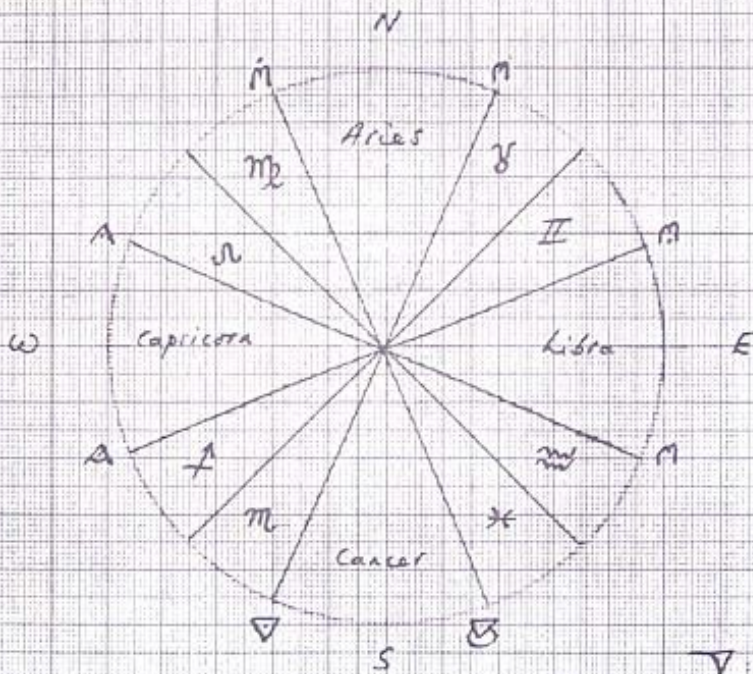
The correspondences of the septenary system represent the results of this apprehension and understanding, and is thus part of a genuine tradition. It is no coincidence that magick undertaken using the septenary system is more powerful than that based on other systems (such as the qabala).

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The Wheel of Life

Aries: Venus
 Cancer: Moon
 Libra: Sun
 Capricorn: Mercury

♌ : Spring Equinox
 ♋ : Summer Solstice
 ♎ : Autumn Equinox
 ♏ : Winter Solstice



♏ : Water of Water
 ♋ : Water of Fire
 ♎ : Fire of Water
 ♌ : Fire of Fire etc.

♏ : Water ▽
 ♌ : Fire △
 ♋ : Earth ♁
 ♎ : Air ♀

▽ : Priestess : Aphrodite
 △ : Priest : Apollo
 ♁ : Mistress of Earth : Hecate
 ♀ : Master of the Temple : Hermes

The helical path

Septenary:

In one sense, the seven represents the four plus three: the quaternary, found in 'Nature' plus the three alchemical substances: ☉, ☿ and ♀.

In the medieval Alchemical texts this combination is represented by the 'squaring of the circle' and is usually drawn with a square, inside a circle, together with a triangle. In some illustrations, the corners of the triangle(s) are marked with the symbols of the alchemical substances ☉, ☿ and ♀. The quaternary are the four 'forms of matter': Air, Earth, Fire and Water, associated with the Tarot Suites (see the septenary tables) and a Zodiacal constellation (e.g. for Air, Capricorn). This latter is also a 'season' showing the appropriate time for the alchemical operation associated with stage: thus the process would begin with the beginning of Aries, the stage of Calcination, continue until Scorpio (Separation) then this stage of Separation would end on the Winter Solstice which marks the beginning of Coagulation which itself lasts until the Summer Solstice, and so on. (This form of the septenary - as an alchemical combination - makes possible a greater understanding of some of the more important Alchemical manuscripts.)

Gate/Star-Gate:

Term(s) used to signify a nexus between the acausal and the causal. There are basically two types of 'gate' or nexion (note: 'Gate' is usually the word used in exoteric literature; nexion in esoteric works, this latter being both more appropriate and precise) - the first is that which exists, latent, within us as individuals by virtue of our psyche; the second is a physical one, where the acausal is joined to the causal and where 'energy' may flow from one universe to another. In addition, there are certain 'psuedo-nexions': regions where the two universes come close to contact but which are not actually nexions. These may be 'opened' by natural cosmic change (for instance a change/imbalance in energies) or via 'ritual' - i.e. by individuals seeking a point of 'weakness' and then using various energies to 'breakthrough'.

The physical nexions are usually called 'Star-Gates' (exoterically) or Star-nexion (esoterically: although quite often they are referred to just as nexions, the context making their type obvious). Some of these 'Star-Gates' are said to be in the regions of Space (as seen from Earth) near the stars Algol, Dabih and Naos.*The nearest Star-Gate according to tradition is said to be near the planet Saturn. These nexions make physical travel to the acausal possible, and many more are said to exist, but be unrecorded.

The nexion within the psyche is 'opened' by Initiation and the following of the seven-fold Way. 'Astral travel' into the acausal is said to be possible beyond the Abyss: below that stage, there may be some intimations of that universe.

*That is, if one journeyed from Earth into Space toward these stars one would eventually reach a nexion.

Acausal/Causal:

The causal is the 'physical' universe described by the three spatial dimensions (at right angles to each other) and linear spatial time. The acausal is the universe (or universes: generally the singular is used to avoid semantic complications, although the septenary tradition accepts the near certainty that many such 'acausal' universes exist to compliment 'our' causal universe) described by an unspecified number of spatial dimensions and by non-linear (or acausal) time. These spatial dimensions are not necessarily at right angles to each other.

The causal universe (often referred to simply as the 'causal') is described by the laws of Physics. Esoterically, life is regarded as a manifestation of the acausal within the causal: this is basically 'one way' (i.e. from acausal to causal - this may be seen as a 'flow' of energy). Higher life (that is, sentient life) involves a two-way process: or, rather, the two-way process is latent within sentient life. In practical terms, this means that entities of sentient life (individuals) can change the amount/intensity of the acausal flow as well as transcend to the acausal itself. Thus the 'goal' of sentient life is to increase this flow (via discovering - dis-covering or revealing in the sense of Heidegger - the hidden nexion) and then become part of the acausal (i.e. 'immortal' when seen from the causal). Initiation, and 'the Mysteries' (i.e. the seven-fold Way) is the means to achieve this.

Our psyche is a region where the acausal and the causal may be said to 'coincide' and the "laws of the psyche" describe this region. Archetypes are causal apprehensions of acausal energy as this flows from the acausal into our causal. The 'Tree of Wyrd' is a basic description (or "map") of this region - the Abyss, the nexion itself. Below the Abyss, apprehension depends on both symbols and words (where symbols here refers to both sigils/artistic representations (etc.) and motifs/myths/archetypal forms (etc.)). Beyond the Abyss, is acausal apprehension: we can approach this via abstract symbols (such as the Star Game).

An Aeon is a particular ordering of the causal on Earth which is manifest as a civilization - i.e. an increasing of the acausal, usually at a specified place/area for a specified period of (linear) time. This increase affects individuals: at first only those in proximity with the centre, and then later via diffusion others as well. This ordering is regarded as a natural process which occurs because of the nature of the acausal and causal. However, esoteric tradition maintains that this ordering has to varying extents been 'altered' by individuals: in the beginnings as a mostly unconscious process. (See other MSS particularly 'The Dark Gods' and those relating to Aeonics.)

'Magick' is simply the presencing of acausal energy in the causal - for 'external' magick, via the intent or desire of the individual toward another causal aspect (which includes other individuals); for 'internal' magick, toward the psyche. (Note: These are generalized descriptions of somewhat complicated processes - but they describe the basics involved.)



Abyss:

One of the 'secrets' of the Abyss is contained in the following quote from an 'Alchemical text':

"The secret of the Magus/Mousa who lies beyond the Grade of Magister Templi/Mistress of Earth is a simple unity of two common things. This unity is greater than but built upon the double pelican being inward yet like the stage of Sol, outward though in lesser degree. Here is the living water, AZOTH, which falls upon Earth nurturing it, and from which the seed flowers brighter than the sun. The flower, properly prepared, splits the Heavens - it is the great elixir which comes from this which when taken into the body dissolves both Sol and Luna bringing exaltation. Whosoever takes this elixir will live immortal among the fiery stars ..."

This secret is contained in several of the medieval alchemical texts: from the double pelican comes Azoth. The 'seed' must be watered by this living water - from this, given certain conditions of preparation (i.e. nurture) the seed flowers. The seed, note, is watered in Earth. From this flower, the final elixir is prepared.

Alchemical Texts:

Those which have become public over the centuries fall into three groups. To the first belongs those who basic symbolism (of the alchemical stages, processes and so on) is basically seven-fold; the second group contains those based upon other symbolism (sometimes twelve, sometimes ten, fourteen); while the third group contains no 'numerical' system for classification or a mixture of several. (For earlier allusions to the septenary see the works of Robert Fludd.)

It should be obvious that those deserving serious study belong to the first group.

Tarot:

The symbolism of the cards are representations of archetypal forms - thus the seven basic archetypes (qv. the seven spheres and their correspondences) are represented in their three-fold forms: ♁, ♃ and ♆: these form the 'Major Arcana' and describe, on one level, the pathways. These are basically the 'images/roles' which both unconsciously and consciously affect the individual psyche - from both within, and without. Quite often, these images/roles are projected, unconsciously, onto other individuals - that is, others are 'classified' according to those types. (This is particularly true of the 'opposite sex' where sexual energies are involved: for example, a man may see a woman who attracts him (his 'anima') in the 'role' of High Priestess, or Mistress of Earth or The Star.) The cards are means to explore these aspects of each individual - enabling (via the workings with the spheres and pathways - when done solo and with the companion) a 'withdrawing of the projections' and consequently an understanding of the essence: i.e. an appreciation of the fundamental energies as those energies are, without the distortion of the 'ego'. In the symbolic sense, this is the beginning of Adepthood (or the Jungian 'individuation').

The four 'Suites' are basically representations of the 'self-image' (symbolically, the stage beyond the 'ego': represented by the Major Arcana). In terms of developing consciousness - i.e. the seven-fold way - the 'Court cards' of the Suites represent the roles often assumed by the Adept (or in another sense, the energy which 'possess' the individual who has reached that stage).

The forces/energies appropriate to individual wyrd would be another description. In terms of the septenary, the Major Arcana relate to the spheres of the Moon and Mercury (the Unconscious, and the Unconscious becoming conscious - as well as the Unconscious possessing the individual: these are the spheres of the 'ego'): the Court cards to the next four stages from Venus to Jupiter (i.e. they re-present the energies symbolized by those spheres). For the individual undergoing magickal training, these energies are manifest after the rite of External Adept: their experience, and conscious understanding, marks the progress from Novice to full Adept (i.e. Internal Adept). Put simply, this means that although the External Adept may (and indeed should) have consciously understood the images/roles of the 'Major Arcana' (i.e. be on the way to 'self-hood') through withdrawal of projections (etc.) he/she is still affected by the energies represented by the 'roles/images' of the Court cards (again, this influence is still partly unconscious - although many External Adepts do not realize this). The integration of these aspects leads to Adeptship proper.

Esoterically, each card ('image/role/archetype) will vary from individual to individual although there will always be the same outward form. Thus, some details may not be the same. What is important is that a static image (as for example in a 'published' version of the Tarot cards drawn by one artists) portrays the essence - the 'numinous' or 'mystical' essence - this being manifest in certain symbolism (for which see the Order descriptions of the cards). Such static representations can never be perfect - since the images possess life, and life is in a state of flux. What such static representations can do (depending on both the artistic skill of the artist and their 'intuition' and magickal understanding) is approach or try and approach the 'perfect' depiction. Depending on this, static versions (as in Tarot packs) may or may not 'work' as instruments to open the inner pathways. In essence: a static image should convey the necessary symbolism in an inspiring way.

Star Game:

On the individual level, the septenary Star Game represents in abstract symbols, the archetypal forms of the spheres and the pathways - in both their causal and acausal aspects. This enables apprehension of the appropriate energies as those energies are: i.e. in their 'chaotic' essence (unbound by the illusion of 'opposites' - opposites implicit in all language and 'words'/names). This apprehension is one of the fundamental aims of the Internal Adept.

(Note: The 'advanced form' of the Game with its null squares is a more complete representation - i.e. an accurate one. However, understanding of this form is usually only possible after mastery of the septenary version (such mastery being in itself quite difficult). In all probability, in the future Adepts will be able to master the advanced form without first attempting the septenary form.)

In general, what the Tarot is to an Initiate and External Adept, the Star Game is to the Internal Adept.



Notes on Some Terms Used

Archetypes:

This terminology derives from the works of Jung, although it is used, esoterically, in a specific way. Esoterically, an archetype is regarded as an apprehension, by an individual, of acausal energies. This apprehension may be conscious, or it may be unconscious - that is, it is presented to the consciousness of the individual by psychic processes such as dreams, inspirational works of Art or the process of living (as when, for instance, an individual 'sees' a real person in an archetypal way: believes them to be such an archetypal figure).

The fundamental archetypes, perceived by the individual on an individual level, are depicted in the Tarot: as the 'Major Arcana' and the Court cards of the Suites. These are depictions of archetypal forms.

Essentially, each individual possess within themselves (in their 'psyche') all the archetypal forms: both 'male' (or solar) and 'female' (or lunar). Most of these are 'hidden' from consciousness and most remain dormant. Magickal training awakens these forms, brings them into consciousness and then strips them of their 'forms': leaving 'pure' archetypal (or 'acausal') energy. This 'energy' becomes the Adept. (Note: this 'energy' - still causally presented as the individual (in terms of 'self') - is Earthed and conducted away in the passing of the Abyss: it is made Null/Void, returning the individual to 'primal Chaos'.)

As used by Adepts of the seven-fold way, 'archetype' is a development of Jung's terminology, and replaces the term "image" which had been in use before.

Psyche:

As used esoterically, this refers to the latent or 'hidden' aspects of an individual's consciousness. An important part of the psyche is the 'unconscious' - that area of the psyche of which the individual is unaware (in the sense of not being able to explain/understand it in its essence) and where the archetypes may be said to 'reside'.

By 'latent' is meant: capable of development. The psyche thus contains the potential of the 'Self'. Thus the psyche may be seen as both 'above' and 'below' what a particular individual is at a certain moment of time: there is usually something 'unconscious' as there is usually the potential of future development (toward greater consciousness). This is simply another way of saying that archetypal images, the ego, the self, and the 'Immortal' (this latter as the last stage of the seven-fold way) are all part of the psyche.

Ego; Self:

The 'ego' is that aspect of the psyche of an individual which relates to the 'I' - that is, the perception is limited to the immediate concerns/needs of the individual. An individual possessed by the 'ego' is an individual swayed to mostly unconscious desires/needs - that is, in thrall to archetypes and their manifestation. (Esoterically, an important aspect of this is when an individual is 'possessed' by the symbolism of the unconscious and sees aspects of external life as 'portents' of this unconscious (which may be projected as 'God'/gods/demons: i.e. as deriving from these forms). This manifests itself, for instance, in the individual immersed in dream symbolism (and the 'interpretations'), in 'messages from the unconscious' (and their 'interpretation') - be these from 'God/gods/demons etc. - and in those 'causal' systems (like the Tarot, I Ching etc. etc.) which they

believe can 'explain' their life. In contradistinction, the esoteric Novice treats all forms of such symbolism with a certain disdain - a mere means: not an end in itself.)

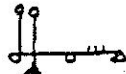
In the development of an individual as an individual develops naturally (i.e. without the aid of esoteric Arts) the 'ego' stage lasts from youth to middle-age: there is a need to establish an outward 'role' (in society/clan etc.), to find a 'mate' and propagate and to care for the physical/material needs/pleasures.

The 'self' is the 'stage' beyond this - when there is an apprehension (often only intuitive outside of magick) of (a) the wyrd of the individual and (b) the separate existence of other individuals as those individuals are in themselves. Put simply, (b) involves a degree of 'empathy'. In the natural state, the self may evolve in 'middle age' or before - and often arises as a consequence of formative experiences (e.g. experience of war; personal loss; tragedy). In the natural state (because the unconscious has not been properly experienced and integrated) there is almost always a conflict with the 'ego' desires/pressures so that the insight, given by the self, is sometimes lost by the individual who returns to an 'ego' existence. The 'wisdom' of 'old age' is the gradual resolution of this conflict in favour of the self.

In the past, the striving of an individual psyche for self-hood was often represented by myths and legends.

Another term for 'self-hood' (the living of the role of the self - where the perception of 'Time' differs from that of the 'ego') is 'individuation' (qv. the works of Jung). Esoterically, - self-hood/individuation is Adeptship - but Adeptship implies much more than 'individuation'. It implies a conscious, rational understanding of one's self and that of others as well as skill/mastery of esoteric Arts and techniques. It also implies a 'cosmic'/Aeonian perspective to the wyrd of the self. Individuation may be seen as a natural stage, achieved by the natural process of living (for some, at least) whereas Adeptship is a goal attained by following an esoteric Way: that is, which results from Initiation into the mysteries. As such, Adeptship contains individuation, but is greater than it. Also, individuation is itself only a stage: there are stages beyond even this: it is not the end of personal development (as some 'Jungians' maintain). Beyond, lies the ordeal of the Abyss and the birth of the Master/Mistress - beyond them lies Immortality.

Expressed simply, the 'ego' has no perception of acausal 'time' - but is unconsciously affected by acausal energies; the 'self' has some perception of acausal 'time' and is less affected by acausal energies. The Adept has learnt to control the personal acausal energies of the psyche (external/internal magick) - there still remains, however, 'Aeonian' energies which affect even the self. Control/mastery of these takes the individual beyond the Abyss.



Attributions of the Runes

ƿ	animals	ǀ	Ice
ᚢ	strength	ᚠ	year/'time'
ᚦ	Loki/night	ᚡ	sorcery
ᚷ	Odin	ᚫ	moon
ᚱ	movement	ᚹ	defence/life
ᚱ	fire	ᚱ	sun
ᚨ	gift	ᚦ	Thor
ᚦ	laughter/mead	ᚨ	Earth (as goddess)
ᚱ	thunder	ᚱ	war/strife
ᚦ	Wyrd	ᚱ	family/kin
ᚱ	water		
ᚨ	the folk		
ᚨ	the folk-land		
ᚱ	day		

1) Musick, Incense and Forms

Moon	G major	Trapezoid	Hazel	▽
Mercury	E minor	Tetrahedron	Yew	△
Venus	F sharp	Pyramid	Black Poplar	▽
Sun	D minor	Cuboid	Oak	△
Mars	C major	Octahedron	Alder	⊖
Jupiter	B flat	Icosahedron	Beech	⊕
Saturn	A flat	Dodecahedron	Ash	⊕

2) Reflexive colours:

C	bright red
G	Orange
D	Yellow
A	Green (viridian)
E	Blue
F	dark red
B	Indigo
F sharp	Violet
C sharp	Purple
A flat	Black
E flat	Xanthin
B flat	Tyrian purple

Symbols and Being

The following Order MS is fairly technical and is intended as an instructional text for aspirant Internal Adepts. It explains in great detail the philosophy that underlies the perception appropriate to an Internal Adept and in this sense is exceptionally valuable.

Just as no one can attain the Grade of ^Magister Templi/ Mistress of Earth without producing a significant contribution to human knowledge (or in the case of the artistic, an exceptional work of Art) so no one can attain the Grade of Internal Adept without a thorough understanding of the Star Game and its symbolic principles. The Order MS 'Symbols and Being' should help in this quest for understanding.

Abstract:

Using Heidegger's interpretation of Being and Seienden as a starting point, the being of man is shown to be derived from Being's change and a new interpretation of man's being is achieved - that of the acausal. This concept of the acausal, and that of change, are explained in terms of both Heidegger's philosophy and that of the Pre-Socratics. Using the acausal, thought, language and man's individuality are explained. The paper continues with an analysis of the foundations of mathematics, since mathematical thought, re-interpreted in the light of the acausal, is shown to be of fundamental importance for an understanding of man's being. The paper concludes with a brief examination of Art and modern physics.

1) Introduction -The Acausal:

Since Being is an issue for man (1), man interprets causally because everyday Dasein, the Dasein which takes time (2), can be characterized as causal, or that interpretation of Being as beings which is the 'there-is'. However, man interprets other than causally: this other interpretation, which is prior to the causal by reason of its existence, may be termed 'acausal' (a-causal: with-out the causal) - and this acausal is what Homer, in the "Iliad", speaks of when he says Calchas is the most wise seer because he understands all that is, was and will be. Heidegger understands this as revealment and concealment (3) or, elsewhere (4) as un-hiddenness, and the 'primordial time' of his "Sein und Zeit" is akin to this acausal or potentiality of man's being, so that what he terms 'building' and 'dwelling' are implicit within it. In a sense to be established later (Section (3) below) it is physis, φύσις, an unfolding.

Further, acausal may be suggested as an interpretation of Anaximander's ἀδικία - it is through τὸ χρεών that δίκη becomes, much later, λόγος. Understood thus, δίκη suggests causal. However, these correlations are, at best, hints concerning the nature of the causal and the acausal - their true description, and thus that of Being and Being as beings, can only be, as will be shown later, symbolic, through mathematics.

Yet, by distinguishing in this manner between the causal and the acausal at the outset of the inquiry into Being, it is possible to arrive at a clearer understanding of Being, since this duality, expressive of the nature of Seienden and

disclosed in man, enables a hermeneutic to be established which is at once more accessible and clearer than the methodology of phenomenology or the hermeneutic of thought achieved by the 'later' Heidegger. It will be shown that this new hermeneutic is mathematical because of the nature of the acausal.

The fundamental characterization of the causal is consciousness, that of the acausal, the unconscious*. This conscious horizon may be expressed, in terms of the history of Being, by thought and feeling, the unconscious by sensation and intuition, where these terms are to be understood, for the moment, psychologically (6) - ontologically, they are derived below (section (3)).

The beginning of the unconcealment of Being is, however, not something that can be said, as Heidegger maintains (7), but rather something that can be experienced, numinously: *ἐνέργεια*, activity as the early Greeks understood it (8). This experiencing is the symbol from which word derives. For man, thought is part of this unconcealment - intuition the other, since Being possesses as potentiality in the change that is man not only thought but also symbol, and this symbolic perception of Being, this experiencing of Being as the One, as that which presences or transforms, is explicit for Western philosophy in the Pre-Socratics. As Tao, this perception is today becoming understood again, and with Heidegger the task of its understanding is begun.

As discourse may be said to be a fundamental expression of man's being in the world (9), so may symbolism be said to be a fundamental expression of man's being or essence. As the potentiality of thought may be expressed as discourse, so may the potentiality of the symbol be described as sensation, and the symbol is both prior to thought and beyond it. As it is projected externally by the process that is Being's change, it is abstracted and loses part of the numinosity that is characteristic of it as an essence: when it is wholly external to man's being, as appearance or an existent, it has become a sign. Change, which unfolds Being as man, is, for Heraclitus (10) conflict or discord, *πόλεμος*. An essence, as that from which something emerges (*ἀρχή*, (11)) is an archetype (12), when seen ontically.

This gradual withdrawal of experiencing is the beginning of language and thought, and the intentionality of consciousness that

* See section (3) below.

Husserl described results from this withdrawal. As experiencing declines, projection increases. Individuality is itself a consequence of Being's change, and this change is already present in Being as the process that is abstraction is present as a possibility within man's being - the realization of this possibility, through change, is itself the history of Being.

Since the symbol, as symbol and sign, is prior to thought and, authentically, beyond it, it alone can explicate man's being. This explication takes the form of the mathematical where by the mathematical is meant the primordial logos (λόγος) that exists by virtue of man's subjective participation in the world, and it is from this λόγος that logic, as reasoning, develops through the change of Being. A symbol is beyond thought because authentic existence, the returning and reclaiming of ἐνέργεια through questioning, is a return to the unity of causal and acausal, a unity existing as ἀρχή.

2) The Fundamental Symbols - Being and Change:

The most fundamental symbol is Being; from Being there is change. The abstraction of change (as a consequence of man's being) is the idea of extension which leads to the concept of transformation or potentiality*. Potentiality itself is implicit within Being, and through man's existence this potentiality becomes the striving toward authenticity.

Mathematics, as will become clear, being a learning of things as they are (mathesis, μάθησις) is the abstraction of the essence through the process of intuition and thought. Thought abstracts Being's change and this abstraction takes the form of ideas and concepts, ἰδέα as Plato understands it (13). Historically, there is a symbol, often 'a priori' as Being itself can be understood, through abstraction, as an 'a priori' symbol, then thought forms this symbol into an idea through the separation of φάσις and the limiting of ἀπειρον, the limit-less (14). Intuition is the perception of the symbol as symbol in its numinous essence, a letting-be that participates in the unfolding of Being, and this perception is both a participation and an identification, where identification is the transforming of an idea, by thought, into its original essence (cf. the phenomenological method), and accordingly, mathematics, which is both this intuition and thought as process because of man's being, embodies an authentic hermeneutic, representing (re-presencing) the causal and the acausal.

* This is explained in more detail in section (3) below.

An idea is not an essence - the symbol is essence which thought abstracts or covers up, and each idea has its foundation in a symbol. Mathematics, as understood today, is the result of thought, an axiomatic project according to Heidegger (15); that is, mathematics has become divorced from its intuitive foundation in the symbol and a return to that foundation enables mathematics to describe man's being more authentically than either phenomenology conceived as a methodology or logos understood as a re-collection by Heidegger (16). Through mathematics, re-founded, it is possible to achieve not only the uncovering of an idea to reveal its essence, but also authentic existence: Heidegger's questioning of Being begins the task of authenticity, it does not achieve it. This authenticity is possible through the use of an ontologically guaranteed mathematical symbolism instead of language as a means of uncovering Being.

The idea of the essence that is the symbol change is extension: the idea of the essence that is Being is unity, and the idea of change leads, through abstraction, to the concept of transformation, *ἀλλοιωσις*, or duration. This duration, by identification with man's terminality, embodies time, and accordingly time is understood as implicit in man's being, projected onto the world as ^{an}idea. Abstractly, this duration is the continuum and the concept of number: thought's perception of change as it issues in man through apprehension of individuality. Only change exists for Being, not time or number. Further, the concept of 'set' derives from that of continuum and number, since intuitively a set is a totality or aggregate.

3) Individuality and Authentic Existence:

Man exists because Being, presencing, is transmuted (17) - that is, because of change. Man, as change of Being, is a transforming, an evolution; historically or causally, this process is the history of Being, conceived by Hegel as a dialectic. Yet this history has as its goal the very Being from which it is derived - the returning of man to the unity of Being. To return necessitates disclosure, the revealing of Being through authenticity. Authentic existence, being the drawing toward unity of the causal and acausal interpretations (what Jung (18) has described as individuation) is a home-coming (to use a term of Heidegger's), a re-living of symbols and a re-participation that involves the withdrawal of projections from the idea to the essence.

Yet it is only a transition, a stillness and a non-transforming, such stillness revealing itself through mathematics, as logos. As such, it reveals *ἄρχή* *αὐτὸ ἄπειρον*.

Man as a disclosure of Being, is primordially a participation in Being: for this disclosure of Being there is no logos in Plato's sense, only an identification. There is possession by symbols and their possibilities (the 'unconscious') and not yet possession of them as occurs when logos transforms through *ἴδεα* into 'reason'. Before this transformation there is no individuality because individuality (as a condition of Being) is the process of abstraction that transforms *φύσις* into *λόγος* as reason. Collectivity is primordial: through Being's change, grounded as man's dichotomy because of such unfolding, this becomes individuality, the consciousness of identity, because participation is no longer predominant - identity, as idea, has replaced it. In speaking about individuality one is already speaking about the change of *λόγος* - from participation to the Word. *φύσις* through *πόλεμος* has become *νοῦς* (mind), and there is *διαλεκτική* (19). This change is already foreshadowed in Heraclitus, as the genesis of the Aristotelean opposites (20). With Anaximander, this transforming is not yet evident: participation in the One, although subject to change, returns - *ἄρχή* is still the limit-less, *τὸ ἄπειρον*. There is no separation, no opposition between Being and existents. For Anaximander, therefore, there is no geographer, or meteorologist, or historian - only knowledge (participation) of all as it is. And it is because of change that abstraction must be returned, through mathematics, to this participation: change has caused the separation and change will re-present the separated. Such a return is authentic existence.

This participation to the Word takes the form of the change of Being through intuition, sensation, feeling and finally thought, all of which are conditions of Man's being in the world, or how Being first shows itself through its unfolding. Intuition is unconscious (acausal) perception, sensation the conscious perception which arises when participation becomes transformed to identity. Feeling already implies idea - as value, judgment and finally 'truth': *φύσις* has become *λόγος*, the Word.

Ontically, language may be said to consist of words or signs in the form of propositions, where a proposition may be defined as the substance of what is asserted by means of a combination of

such words or signs, either true or false. The words or signs, as abstractions resulting from symbols, are placed in combination by thought either through identification or participation. For the latter, they are primordial, and this primordiality takes the form of poetry which is 'true' insofar as it is experienced and re-presents the symbols of Being from which it is derived, through words, thus revealing Being. Abstractly, through identification, such combinations are propositions, true or false because of logos as Word, through feeling. The subjective feeling is transformed into objective truth (or falsity) by identification, through idea to the essence: what is as appearance, and how what is abstracted is denoted by such appearance. That is, truth itself implies, through denoting.

4) Art and Mathematics:

i) Art

As Being unfolds through participation to discourse, existents, as appearance, predominate and the sense of Being that is characteristic of the numinous is lost or covered up. From being a questioning, man has himself become a subject of thought. This abstraction takes the form of technics (qv. *techné*, ΤΕΧΝΗ), the construction, through a wresting away from Being, of tools and things as existents deriving from them, not immediately possessed of participation, that is, capable of manual production from naturally occurring substances and materials, and with technics potentiality, as an uncovering, is itself lost in place of abstraction. There is organization beyond the authentic participation that characterized the first unfolding of Being. In language, also, the process of technics occurs, logos as appearance, and the captivation of beings (21) synonymous with the organization of the 'they' (22) through the goal of inauthenticity. The works of art which still possess the numinosum do so in spite of this organization or denotation (23), as a drawing down of Being. Such works are arche-typal, participating in the symbols of Being by unfolding Being through those symbols of transformation.

Through these works (but not only them) authentic existence becomes a possibility since, as a looking forward to and a looking back, they realize partially the unity of causal and acausal, participation and abstraction, that is authenticity for man transformed through technics. This authenticity is not just a returning (as Heidegger believes) but also a rising up because it is built on and

dwells in Being as an unfolding. Hence the necessity of understanding the history of Being as a record of this unfolding and concealment, through mathematics.

Aesthetically, a work of art is 'true' if it symbolically preserves Being as an unfolding and looks forward to authenticity: if it re-presents Being and anticipates it. As a representation of Being, mathematics is the true work of art which reveals Being and beings as Being, to man.

ii) Mathematics:

Modern science, starting with Galileo, takes the process of abstraction further, into things themselves. Heidegger (24) claims mathematics makes this modern science possible, and, in a sense, this/^{is} true, if limited, appreciation of mathematics. The learning that is 'mathesis' is not merely a causal learning, an analysis of things as they appear, but, equally, the things as they are, as intuition understands or knows. Intuition, however, understands them as symbols of Being, and this kind of knowing is already implied in the Greek concept of mathematics. For Aristotle, the potential for motion in a body lay in that body itself - it was already present, as a kind of knowing, and mathematics meant learning that knowing as well as describing the motion in relation to others, as a transforming. With Galileo and Newton, this intuition or knowledge of the unity, had receded, leaving abstraction predominant. Yet this intuition never actually disappeared as the 'a priori' it gave substance to scientific laws and provided the basis for much mathematical development.*

Modern physics particularly has tried to dispense with this mathematical knowing and as a consequence has established a body of facts that reveals only what is projected, not what is revealed by things or existents as they are. We say 'space-time is curved', for example, without fully understanding that we project curved space-time, as abstracts, onto what we have abstracted as 'space' and 'time', these abstracts supposedly existing independantly of man, as 'facts'. Yet, ultimately, these abstracts are established from symbols - and it is in the symbols, as opposed to the projections, that knowledge resides. Should this knowing replace the 'knowledge' of 'facts' or projections, a revolution of thought will result, and what is noble in man will be returned.

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* qv. Popper's notion of intuition and cosmology as the genesis of scientific theories (25).

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- 5) "Introduction to Metaphysics" p. 62ff
- 6) Jung, C.G.: "Psychological Types" (Vol. 6 of Collected Works: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971) chap. XI
- 7) Heidegger: "On Time and Being" (Harper & Row, 1972) p. 7
- 8) Compare its usage in Aristotle's "Nicomachean Ethics", 1098 b, 33
- 9) Heidegger: "Being and Time" p. 203 ff
- 10) Frag. 53
- 11) Anaximander as given by Simplicius, "Physics", 24, 13
- 12) Jung, C.G.: "The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious" (Vol. 9, Part I, of Collected Works: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2nd ed., 1968) pp. 3-41
- 13) "Republic", X, 596
- 14) Anaximander. See (11). τὸ κρείσσον is synonymous with change.
- 15) "What is a Thing?" (Henry Regnery Co., Chicago, 1967) p. 68f
- 16) "Introduction to Metaphysics" p.128f
- 17) Heidegger: "On Time and Being" p.6
- 18) "The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious" chap. VI
- 19) Plato: "Republic" VII, 534
- 20) Anaximander: Frag. 76
- 21) Heidegger: "Introduction to Metaphysics" p. 141f
- 22) Heidegger: "Being and Time" p. 222f
- 23) Heidegger: "Introduction to Metaphysics" p. 149ff
- 24) "What is a Thing?" , passim
- 25) Popper, K : "The Logic of Scientific Discovery" (Hutchinson, 1972).

Time and Being

Being is apprehended through Time, and Time is an expression of the fundamental nature of change that governs the cosmos. Time is Being's extension and expresses the evolution of Being itself.

Being is the limit-less change, and may be expressed in terms of a duality. This duality is explicated by Time as the causal and the acausal which themselves can be symbolized as spaces, causal space having three spatial dimensions and one dimension of linear (or causal) time, acausal space having an at present unspecified number of spatial dimensions and three dimensions of causal time forming one acausal dimension. As an approximation, causal space may be considered as governed by laws based on four dimensions and represented by the physical universe as this term is normally understood; acausal space may be considered as a parallel universe governed by acausal laws and geometry.

Life is the coincidence of this duality, and human consciousness/Thought the mergence of the causal and the acausal. The perception of the senses is based on causal time while acausal perception has hitherto been explicated very approximately by the numinous and such phenomena as intuition and dreams. The real beginnings of acausal perception lie in the development of a numinous, abstract symbolism.

An individual, because of consciousness, is an expression of Being becoming and such becoming implies, for the individual, an increase in consciousness implying the development of both causal and acausal perception. Such an evolution of individual consciousness is approximated by the stages of the seven-fold Way, involving as it does the development of logical and rational/scientific understanding together with an apprehension, via abstract symbolism and numinous participation, of the acausal.

Individual consciousness, being the mergence of the causal and the acausal, achieves its aim in the balance of both and this implies the expansion of the consciousness into the realm of the acausal. Death in the individual is the cessation of the causal aspect (that is, participation in causal space) although the acausal aspect, if developed during causal existence, continues, the nature of such existence being explicable at present only via symbolism.

Thought admits of a division into three fundamental modes expressive of the nature of the mergence of causal and acausal and in the individual one of these modes predominates, determining the life of that individual. The first mode is expressive of 'ego' existence and involves a limited perception of Time; the second mode is expressive of 'self' existence and involves a greater perception of Time - that is, an awareness of the acausal. The third mode involves a mixture of both of the former. However, these modes all form the ground from which the becoming of Being derives, and are the beginning from which increased individual perception may arise. 'Will to Power', Art, numinous experience are all pointers away from this beginning.



Advanced Star Game

The advanced Star Game consists of the seven boards as in the septenary version - together with the same number and distribution of pieces - but each of the seven boards consists of 4 levels:

The first level of each board consists of the ordinary 18 black and white square board. The second level has eight squares with 4 on either side consisting of 3 squares in a row and 1 in front. The third level consists of one square, and the fourth level of 4 squares. These levels are on both sides of the board as in the illustration.*

Thus each board (which represents a sphere of the septenary) has 18 squares plus 26, making 44 in all. There are thus 308 squares in total in the advanced game. Further, there are some additional pieces, as described below.

This version of the game is a complete and full representation of the septenary system: each board represents the connections or pathways between the levels or spheres. For instance, the black squares on the first level (9 squares) together with the squares on levels 2 and 4 (8 plus 4 squares) are the acausal paths or connections from that sphere to all the other spheres. The other side of the board (the 9 white squares on the first level plus the 12 squares of levels 2 and 4) represent the causal connections from that sphere. In one sense the causal connections are the 'outgoing' connections (or exits) and the acausal 'incoming' connections (or entrances) to the pathways (or tunnels). The two squares of level 3 (one on each side of the board - again representing the acausal and causal aspects) are 'null squares'. These null squares represent the connection to the Abyss - that is, they symbolize the random element always present. In the actual playing of the advanced game these squares are important - any piece which is placed on them is automatically changed into another piece selected at random. This random selection is done by a process determined before the game starts by the player or players: the most favoured method being to choose, without looking, from the spare pieces. This choice is done by the player whose piece has moved to the square. The chosen piece can be either white or black, and a piece on a null square - once it has been changed at random - can move to other squares according to what type of piece it is. Thus, a e(e) piece could move up or down one level only, while a ♁(♀) piece could move to any vacant square on any level or board. To facilitate the random choice, a complete spare set of pieces is kept for this specific purpose and these pieces are used for this purpose only. Thus, as the game progresses, the choice of pieces becomes more limited.

Pieces:

There are two extra sets of all nine pieces for each player making thus five sets for white and five sets for black. Hence, over the 308 squares there are 90 pieces.

Three sets are placed for each player (or 'side') as in the septenary game. The two additional sets are placed as

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1st four levels of one group



Level 4



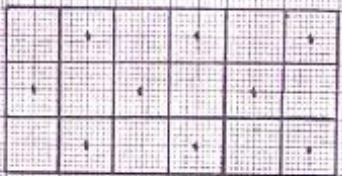
Level 3
[Measure 1]



Level 2



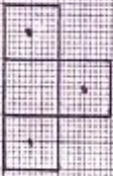
Level 1



• = Black square



Level 2



Level 3
[Measure 2]



Level 4

Level 4

Level 3

Level 2

Level 1

S/Pa View

follows:

*One set of black pieces on the black squares of levels 2 and 4 of the Sirius board

*One set of black pieces on the black squares of levels 2 and 4 of the Arcturus board

*One set of white pieces on the white squares of levels 2 and 4 of the Sirius board

*One set of white pieces on the white squares of levels 2 and 4 of the Arcturus board. (See illustration.)

The null squares on Sirius and Arcturus are left vacant.

Moves:

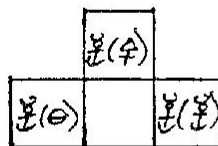
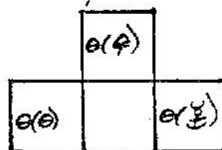
The pieces follow the same rules of movement and transformation as in the septenary game.

However, when a piece is on any of the levels (that is, 2, 3 or 4) of any board a move up or down a level is regarded as the equivalent of a move up and down the seven boards. Thus for example, an $\ominus(\ominus)$ piece on a black square on level 2 of the Sirius board may move (provided the squares moved to are vacant at the time) across level 2 to another black square, or up to the black square of level 3 (the null square - where it will be changed at random) or down to a black square on level 1. A $\ominus(\ominus)$ piece on level 4 may move across the squares on level 4 to another black square, or it may move onto a vacant square of the same colour on Arcturus. Level 4 may therefore be regarded as a 'stepping board' to other boards.

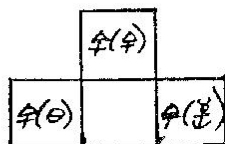
Another example: a $\otimes(\otimes)$ piece on level 2 of Sirius may move to any vacant square on level 2, up to level 3, or up to level 4 (any vacant square, or down to any vacant square on level 1. These moves are possible because a $\otimes(\otimes)$ piece has '2 degrees' of freedom. If the $\otimes(\otimes)$ piece was on, say, level 2 of Arcturus, it could move down to level 4 of Sirius (but not any further). Similarly, a $\otimes(\otimes)$ piece of level 4 could move if it was on, say, Arcturus, to any vacant square on level 1 of Antares or any vacant square on level 2 of Antares (either side - that is, either the 'causal' or 'acausal' side).

It is simply a question of looking at the levels either up or down for 'degrees of freedom'. Thus an $\otimes(\otimes)$ piece, having unlimited degrees of freedom, could move from any level on any board to any other level on any board.

The $\otimes(\otimes)$ piece if on any square on Naos may capture any piece of the opposite colour on any square and any level of any board except Naos.



level 2



level 4

The Forbidden Alchemy

An Introduction to Esoteric Black Magick

Genuine alchemy takes two basic forms: first, the exploration concerning the transforming of matter; and, second, the psychological-magickal. The secret of the first form is the interaction between the alchemist and the substances undergoing transformation by chemical or other means. That is, the alchemist in a subtle ('Occult') way aids the transformations through a psychic interchange, the aim of such transformations being the creation of an Elixir of Immortality. For the alchemist following this form of alchemy, the changing of 'base metals' into gold was only a stage on the way to the ultimate goal.

The second form of alchemy is concerned with changing the alchemist - and this requires following certain specific and often complicated procedures. The aim here is 'Adeptship': the emergence of a new individual from the ashes of the old. The ultimate goal is still 'Immortality', but a directly achieved one, rather than, as in the first form, the creation of an Elixir which is taken by the alchemist over a period of time. The exact nature of this 'Immortality' was the subject of much speculation.

Two aspects of this second type of alchemy - the 'forbidden alchemy' - have come to light over the last hundred years or so. However, these two aspects - crucial as they both are to the genuine esoteric Art - make up only a part of the forbidden system.

The first of these to receive attention was the sexual element that is involved in achieving the stated goal. The second is the 'psychological' - where the processes, methods and symbols are understood (by, e.g., Carl Jung et al) as representing the usually unconscious striving of the individual psyche for 'wholeness' or 'individuation'.

In reality, the forbidden alchemy was a burgeoning science (or a practical way of living as some would prefer to say) which over a long period of time came to recognize that to achieve the stated goal of Immortality and/or Occult-Magickal Adeptship, it was necessary not only to symbolize certain natural energies and certain states of 'being', but also to employ at certain stages a practical sexual element.

These ideas - developed in the Middle Ages and handed down in some of the now famous alchemical texts - were themselves a continuation of earlier ones: particularly those of some of the mystery schools of Ancient Greece. At the time the texts were written, Western Europe was under the totalitarian yoke of the Nazarene church, and part of the reason for the obscurity of the texts was because the basic ideas were heretical - the desire to obtain an Immortality independent of 'God', and the sexual nature of some of the workings. The rest of the obscurity was due to: (a) the complex nature of the ideas themselves, with a confusion of 'theologies' and (b) a deliberate desire to make the texts esoteric, where the secrets could be revealed to trusted Initiates or those already sufficiently enlightened (that is, free from the mental tyranny of Nazarene belief) to grasp them intuitively.

The view held in some circles in recent years of alchemy as a kind of 'Western tantra' is both misleading and inaccurate, as is the belief that it is a purely 'psychological' - as opposed to practical - system. The former view ignores: (i) the vital significance of the symbolism (some of which is purely abstract and not 'symbolic') in making possible advances in thought and understanding; and (ii) the stages beyond those involving sexual activity. The latter view ignores (or rather misinterprets) the importance of not only the practical, magickal

aspects, but also the fact that the forbidden alchemy was essentially a system of self-experiencing in the real world, involving the achievement of specific goals and tasks. This, coupled with the sexual aspects, made its Way very different from the inner, contemplative ones which flourished in certain Nazarene institutions.

The fundamental ideas of the forbidden alchemy continued to be developed over the decades and centuries after the preliminary MSS were written, and the tradition that developed was handed on by mostly reclusive Adepts. This tradition may be said to have reached its climax in the 'seven-fold Way'. In the seven-fold Way the fundamental ideas have been clarified and refined as well as extended, and the Way itself is a practical system devoid of both dogma and mysticism. It was, until quite recently, genuinely esoteric.

The fundamental ideas of this Way or 'inner Alchemy' can be briefly stated:

1) In the development of self-understanding, as well as in the understanding of both natural and 'Occult' forces, an abstract symbolism is important: such a symbolism allows not only apprehension of those areas (of consciousness, for example) not normally amenable to thought (and thus conscious control and development) but also develops new areas of consciousness.

The abstract symbolism is of two kinds; the first being the septenary 'Tree of Wyrd' with the correspondences associated with each sphere and the pathways connecting those spheres; the second being the abstract symbols of The Star Game. The first kind is a development of 'traditional' alchemical symbolism, while the second is a new development entirely, and one which contains the whole of the first.

This first kind enables, on the practical level, the exploration and thus integration/transcendence of the hidden/unconscious/Occult areas of both our own consciousness and the cosmos. This is, in effect, a magickal or alchemical apprenticeship and involves practical work with the symbols - a magickal ritual, for example, being the use of specific symbols representing certain Occult or magickal energies.

The second kind takes the individual beyond this - towards the next stage of our conscious evolution with the development of higher levels of consciousness and new insights.

2) The practical work involved is divided for convenience into seven stages. Several of these stages involve the individual (the 'alchemist') in finding and working with a companion of the opposite sex, some of the work being of a sexual nature. This itself is an exploration of consciousness: a confrontation with the anima/animus and so on.

Each of these seven stages is represented by a Grade Ritual - a series of tasks, workings and rituals which develop self-insight and understanding in general, and which enhance the 'Occult' abilities of the individual. By following the stages progressively, and undertaking the appropriate Grade Ritual, the individual will attain insight and ultimately Wisdom: the 'Philosophers' Stone'.

3) The symbolism of the Tree of Wyrd is derived from representing the forces/energies of the cosmos (and thus each individual consciousness) in terms of the duality of causal and acausal - the seven spheres of the Tree representing the development (or rather, the potentiality inherent in each individual's consciousness) of not only each individual consciousness from unconscious through 'ego' and 'self' to Adepthood and beyond, but also the evolution of the cosmos itself, in terms of its own 'consciousness' or Being.

In the early stages, the causal is often regarded as the 'rational' aspect of the individual psyche, the acausal as the 'unconscious' or magickal aspects. The aim of the early stages of the Way is for the individual to experience (and develop) both and then unite them,

achieving a transcendence.

What it is important to realize about the seven-fold Way is that it is a complete and practical system, devoid of dogma and mystification, which enables any individual, should they possess the necessary desire, to achieve Adeptship and beyond. It is a unique and esoteric Way which, while firmly rooted in the genuine esotericism of the West, is appropriate to the twenty-first century and beyond: for example, the Star Game contains, in its symbolism and techniques, all the esoteric wisdom of alchemy, magick and the 'Occult' in general as well as being a bridge to the future. It is, in essence, a new form of language - and while this new language, for some, may be difficult at first to learn, it opens up new and exciting areas, new possibilities and new dimensions. In short, it enhances our Being, extending our consciousness.

The tasks and Grade Rituals associated with the seven-fold Way, together with the correspondences, are given in detail in the manuscript 'Physis Magick - A Practical Guide to Becoming an Adept.' Most of this will shortly be published in the book 'Naos - A Guide to Sinister Hermetic Magick'. The rest of this issue of 'Fenrir' is devoted to the Star Game.

Perceptive readers will understand at once why this 'forbidden' alchemy is essentially Black Magick. Quite simply, it is because it allows the evolution of the individual according to their own desires in a practical way. Its essence is practical experience: of Occult/magickal energies (both causal and acausal - that is, 'light' and 'sinister') but equally importantly of life itself. It is not a 'theoretical' system devoid of personal danger - it is life-enhancing, offering the rewards of the gods, both causal and acausal (and what is beyond all such opposites - that which can be signified only by Chaos: the origin of Being and Non-Being).

A brief guide to the seven-stages is given below.

- 1) Undertake ritual of sinister self-Initiation. (An awakening of the darker/unconscious aspects)
- 2) Undertake workings with septenary spheres and pathways. (The beginning of making these energies conscious via symbolism).
Seek and find a suitable companion, and Initiate this individual. (The beginning of the confrontation of the anima/animus) Begin to study the Star Game. (The energies are further objectified and manipulated.)
- 3) Begin to organize a working magickal group, with yourself as 'Priest/Priestess' and your companion as 'Priestess/Priest' - perform both ceremonial and hermetic rituals according to your desires. (This is living the role of 'shadow'/'trickster'/magickian.) Undertake the Grade Ritual of External Adept. (The beginning of an awareness of what is beyond the 'ego' and the 'shadow'.)
- 4) Study the esoteric aspects of the Star Game - Star Game magick/aeonic aspects etc. (The development of higher cerebral levels as well as intimations of the 'self' and beyond.)
Continue with the organized group (for at least six months). (Develops personal qualities, skills and consolidates the anima/animus aspects.)
- 5) Prepare for and undertake the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept. (The emergence of the self, during the ritual, with the consequent self-insight and Occult abilities. This also brings awareness of your unique Destiny.)
- 6) Study and use of 'Advanced Star Game'. (Further levels of consciousness developed.) Fulfillment of the tasks of unique Destiny. (Creativity - either via contributing to knowledge/artistic works or via teaching. The fulfillment of the potentiality of the self.) Prepare for and undertake Grade Ritual of Entering the Abyss. (Wherein the 'self' is destroyed, the cosmos understood without reference to dualities, and Wisdom achieved.)

Stage(2) generally takes three to six months. Stage(3) six months to a year. Stage(4) up to a year. Stage(5) one to several years.

It is the following of the tasks, techniques etc. of each stage in sequence for the time indicated that brings success.

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Grimoire of Baphomet



According to Dark Tradition, Baphomet is a sinister acausal entity, depicted as a mature, human women, naked from the waist up, who holds in Her hand the bloodied severed head of a young human man.

She is the dark, violent, Goddess - the real Mistress of Earth - to whom human sacrifices were, and are, made. She - as one of The Dark Entities, as Vamperness of The Dark Gods (The Dark Immortals) - is also a shapeshifter who can presence in the causal dimensions and assume human form, and thus live among us here on Earth, and it was, traditionally, to Baphomet that Initiates and Adepts of our Dark Tradition dedicated their chosen, selected, victims

when a human culling was undertaken and when wars and conflict were brought forth or seeded through sinister sorcery.

Associated with Baphomet are other dark, female acausal entities, some of whom have existed, hidden, on Earth for millennia, and who maintain their causal, ageless, and secret, existence by feeding off the acausal life-force of their male human victims whom they entrap, and test, using sexual enchantment, and which victims die after all their life-force has been sucked away. These other entities are The Dark Daughters of Baphomet, and they - like their Mistress, The Mother of Blood, Baphomet - are thus, in a quite literal sense, beautiful, cultured, alluring but predatory vampires, whose needed and necessary food is not blood, but rather that acausal energy that animates human beings and makes them alive.

These vampiric beings - shapeshifted into alluring female human form - can spawn (and according to legend have spawned) half-human offspring if they so desire and if they find a suitable human male, as they can also gift that male, or other chosen human males or females, with the gift of a much extended mortal life in the realms of the causal, and can provide such chosen ones with the opportunity to egress into the acausal and thus life as immortal acausal entities, there.

According to aural Dark Tradition, there are several types - several different species - of sinister acausal entities, with Baphomet, and Her shapeshifting Daughters, being of one type, and having a certain nature, a particular character, a certain consciousness, when presented in the causal and so when in-dwelling in human form. One other, more primal, more primitive, acausal species is known to us, and when beings of this particular species are presented on Earth, in human form or otherwise, they act, behave, live, quite differently from Baphomet and Her kin, for these more primal savage beings are as demons who causally live only to unthinkingly consume human lives so that, once satiated, they may be returned to the darkness of their acausal home.

Sinister Tradition speaks of The Dark Gods as specific living entities - living-beings of a particular acausal species - who exist in the realms of the acausal continuum, with some of these entities having been presented, via various nexions, on Earth in our distant past. Once, at the dawn of our consciousness as human beings, some of these acausal entities came forth to Earth through a physical nexion, which nexion most probably existed on this planet, Earth. There has been much speculation about, and some legends regarding, the location of this physical nexion. There has also been speculation about, and

some aural legends regarding, how long these dark acausal entities stayed, in our causal Time and Space, and much speculation regarding why they left, with one aural legend asserting that a few of them have, as shapeshifters, survived and hidden themselves among us, feeding, waiting for the stars to be aligned aright again and for sinister Adepts to bring forth their kin.

Sinister Tradition has preserved several means - various dark rituals, ceremonies, and rites - whereby some or many of these acausal, sinister, entities can be brought back to (presenced on) this planet which we human beings call Earth.

This Grimoire gives the three most effective of these sinister rituals, ceremonies, and rites, complete with esoteric details deliberately omitted from hitherto published versions (such as in published versions of *The Ceremony of Recalling*), which omitted esoteric details were formerly only revealed aurally within existing sinister nexions, Temples or groups. Also given is a rite by means of which an individual human being can acquire for themselves an acausal - immortal - existence in the acausal continuum.



Order of Nine Angles

113yf

Note: The Ceremony of Recalling is the sinister ritual most often associated, past and present, with invoking Baphomet, and The Dark Daughters of Baphomet, and is one of the most effective means of presencing acausal entities.

THE CEREMONY OF RECALLING

Participants:

Mistress of Earth - in white robes, wearing a quartz necklace

Master of the Temple - in black robes

Priestess - in a red robe tied with a white sash

Guardian of the Temple - in a black robe, with a white mask

Priest ("The Chosen One"/Opfer) - in a white robe

Congregation - in red robes

Preparations:

The night before the ritual the Priestess bakes the consecrated cakes made from wheat, water, egg, honey, animal fat and marijuana.

An hour before the ritual the Priestess and the Guardian lead the Priest to a place where he ritually bathes (if possible this should be a lake or a stream if the ritual is undertaken outdoors) and changes into his robe. The Priestess gives him cakes which he eats.

The congregation wait outside the Temple (or Temple area if outdoors - see notes) and the Guardian leads the Priest toward them. The Priestess blindfolds the Priest and takes him to each member of the congregation who kiss him. He is taken into the temple where the Mistress and Master wait and is followed by the congregation.

The Ritual:

On the altar - red candles and quartz tetrahedron. Incense of Jupiter [Alder] to be burnt. Chalices of strong wine.

The Master intones (i.e. vibrates) three times 'Agios o Atazoth' after which the congregation gather round the Priest and chant the 'Diabolus' while slowly walking round him anti-clockwise three times.

Two members of the congregation chosen and trained as Cantors chant in parallel a fourth apart (or an octave and a fourth) *Agios o Baphomet* while the Guardian lifts the Priest and lays him on the altar.

The Mistress removes the robe of the Priest and anoints him with civit oil [or, if civit is not available, then Petriochor may be used, mixed with Alder] . She then removes his blindfold.

When the chant is complete the Priestess stands by the altar while the Mistress stands beside the Master, the congregation beginning to walk slowly anti-clockwise around the altar chanting the *Diabolus*. The cantors then chant in parallel a fourth apart (or an octave and a fourth) *Binan Ath Ga Wath Am* and continue with this chant until the Mistress, later in the ritual, says "So you have sown and from your seeding..."

The Priestess and the Mistress remove their robes, the Priestess arousing the fire of the Priest with her lips. When she is satisfied, she signals to the Guardian who lifts the Priest from the altar and forces him to kneel in front of the Priestess.

As the Guardian does this the Master kneels before the Mistress. The Priestess copies the Mistress word for word and action for action, using the Priest. The Mistress places her hands on the Master's head.

Master:

It is the protection and milk
Of your breasts that I seek.

The Mistress bends down and he suckles her breasts. She then pushes him away, but he kneels before her, saying:

I put my kisses at your feet.
And kneel before you who crushes
Your enemies and who washes
In a basin full of their blood.
I lift up my eyes to gaze
Upon your beauty of body:
You who are the daughter and a Gate
To our Dark Gods.
I lift up my voice to stand
Before you my sister
And offer my body so that
My mage's seed may feed
Your virgin flesh

Mistress:

Kiss me and I shall make you

As an eagle to its prey.
Touch me and I shall make you
As a strong sword that severs
And stains my Earth with blood.
Taste me and I shall make you
As a seed of corn which grows
Toward the sun, and never dies.
Plough me and plant me
With your seed and I shall make you
As a Gate that opens to our gods!

The Master then has sexual congress with the Mistress - and the Priest with the Priestess - while the congregation continue with their slow walk and their chant.

After the climax of the congress between Priest and Priestess, the Guardian places a hood over the head of the Priest, fastens his ankles, binds his wrists while the Master, on a signal from the Mistress completes the sacrifice using the sacred knife, collecting some of the Red Elixir in a chalice.

[This Elixir is used by the Mistress in the baking of the sacrificial cakes which all the members present will eat during assembly on the night of the next new moon. The cakes consist of wheat, fish, fowl, spring water, egg and salt together with the Red Elixir, animal fat and honey.]

[During and just after the sacrifice, the Mistress as Rounwytha silently concentrates and directs the acausal-energy released toward the tetrahedron which she via gift and skill of acausal-empathy and acausal-thinking uses as nexion. She then consciously makes her choice of one of the humans present to act as indwelling host, temporary or otherwise.]

After the sacrifice, the congregation cease their slow mesmeric walking and chant, and the guardian removes the empty shell of the offer and the Mistress takes up the sacred knife, pointing it at the Master saying:

So you have sown and from your seeding
Gifts may come if you obedient heed
The words I speak.

She then takes the Chalice with the Red Elixir, dips the tip of the sacred knife into it and anoints each member present who have formed a circle around her.

Mistress:

I know you, my children, you are dark
Yet none of you is as dark
Or as deadly
As I.
I know you and the thoughts
Within all your hearts: yet
Not one of you is as hateful
Or as loving as I.
With a glance I can strike
You dead.

She then goes to each member of the congregation in turn kissing them all on the lips, and removes their robes. She then takes up a chalice of wine and offers it to the person (male or female) of her previous choice. The person chosen sips the wine, hands the chalice to the Mistress who offers it to each member of the congregation in turn. When all have drunk she says:

No guilt shall bind you
No thought restrict!
Feast then and enjoy
The ecstasy of this life:
But ever remember
I am the wind that snatches
Your soul!

The Mistress takes the person she has chosen and indulges herself according to her desire, thus completing the indwelling in them. The congregation consume the consecrated cakes and wine and take their own pleasures according to their desires.

Notes:

1) The candidate (who is always male and who ideally should be in his twenty first year on the Summer Solstice chosen for the ritual) is chosen by the Mistress from among the Temple members on the Summer Solstice one year before the ritual will occur.

If the chosen one accepts this honour then he becomes an honorary Priest for the year and is allowed to choose from the members of the Temple a woman to be his Priestess. In a simple ceremony the Mistress seals them in union, dedicating them to the Dark Gods. If by the Winter Solstice the Priestess is not

with child, then the Priest may choose another woman to be his Priestess. The child, when born is adopted by the Temple and raised accordingly, being given great honour and, if found suitable, trained to fulfil the role of Mistress or Master.

At the Spring Equinox, the chosen is permitted to give his favour to any one female member of the Temple and should issue result from this, the child is adopted by either the Priestess of the chosen or by the Temple according to the wishes of the Mistress.

After the Spring Equinox, the chosen lives with his Priestess, retiring from all mortal affairs save his duties as Priest to the Temple. He shall also arrange his temporal affairs in readiness for the day of the ritual.

Should the chosen at any time fail to observe his vow by fleeing and hiding from members of the Temple, he shall by all the Temples of the Order and all kindred temples and Orders be placed under a death curse, and the Guardian of his Temple sent to seek him out and terminate without warning his existence. The Guardian shall not rest until this task is complete, and the Mistress may appoint other Guardians as well to assist in this should she so desire.

After the ritual sacrifice, the Guardian takes the offer shell and buries it in a secluded spot prepared beforehand. It is on this place of burial that the Temple gathers on the night of the new moon to eat the sacrificial cakes.

In former times it was sometimes the practice to sever the head of the chosen one and place it in the Temple or the Temple area if outdoors for a day and a night. During this night, initiations would be conducted and the head shown to new Initiates.

2) If for whatever reason a willing offer is not available, an involuntary one may be used, chosen according to sinister guidelines.

According to tradition, the one chosen by the Mistress as indwelling host would - if the Rite and indwelling were successful - be offered great reward by the entity hosted, the Mistress having previously decided before ritual a specific entity - or what type of entity - to bring forth or call.

3) Rituals outdoors should be conducted within an (isolated) stone circle during twilight. If the 'Sacrificial Conclusion' is undertaken the ritual occurs on the Summer Solstice once every cycle of seventeen years (or nineteen in some traditions).

The one chosen, according to ancient tradition, reaped many benefits in the

realm of the acausal (or the lands of the Dark Immortals as it was sometimes called) where that eternal aspect of the individual which initiation into the darker mysteries created was transported after the mortal death to begin on another plane of existence. This belief made willing sacrifice possible.

4) The role of Master and the task(s) of Guardian(s) may be undertaken by suitably trained ladies if the Ceremony be undertaken by a Sapphic nexion/Temple/group - although the offer is always and must be male. Similarly, the congregation may all be female.

The Sinister Rite of The Nine Angles

The rite may be undertaken - in northern climes - on or near to either the autumnal equinox (for the Dabih nexion) or the winter solstice (for Algol nexion) or, for any including southern and equatorial climes, when Jupiter and Saturn are both near the moon which is becoming new, the causal hour being before dawn.

For Dabih, the most propitious (effective) causal time is when Venus sets after the sun, and the moon itself occults Dabih or is near to it.

The rite should be performed in an underground cavern, if possible where water flows, or near to where water flows, and involves a Priest and a Priestess as well as at least one cantor trained in sinister Esoteric Chant [qv. the ONA MS NAOS], together with a congregation of male and female, or all male, or all female, depending on the orientation of the participants. A large crystal tetrahedron made of pure quartz is required - the larger, the more effective the rite. Each member of the congregation should also have with them small crystal tetrahedrons, which they hold in their hands during the rite, and each member of the congregation should also be trained in sinister Esoteric Chant.

The rite can also be performed in a suitably sized crypt, with good acoustics. Whatever the venue chosen - and a natural cavern is best - the only light should be from candles.

The large crystal should be placed on a preferably oak stand with a sheet of mica between it and the wood. The Priest, Priestess and Cantors stand near the

crystal, while the congregation (of at least six) form an ellipse around them. The congregation slowly dance moonwise and chant the "Atazoth" chant, as while the Cantor(s) vibrate in E minor "Nythra kthunae Atazoth".

After this vibration the cantor and Priest (or two Cantors if there are two) vibrate in fourths the "Diabolus" chant while the Priestess places her hands on the crystal, visualizing the Star Nexion and its rending.

After the Diabolus, the Priest signals to the congregation who begin to slowly walk, counter moonwise, chanting *Binan Ath Ga Wath Am*. The Priest and Priestess then vibrate "Binan ath ga wath am" a fifth apart (or an octave and a fifth) while the Cantor(s) vibrate "Atazoth". If two Cantors are present, this Atazoth vibration begins in parallel: the next "Atazoth" is a fifth apart as is the third. After this, they then chant, in fifths, the 'Atazoth chant' according to tradition. While the Cantors continue chanting the Priest and Priestess begin their acausal-empathy and acausal-thinking, directing their energies toward the crystal.

If only one Cantor is present, the "Atazoth" vibration is continued nine times and then the 'Atazoth chant' undertaken by the Cantor and the Priest, in fifths.

It is the Priestess - as Rounwytha - who silently concentrates and directs the acausal-energy released toward the tetrahedron which she via gift and skill of acausal-empathy and acausal-thinking uses as nexion. She then consciously makes her choice of one of the humans present to act as indwelling host, temporary or otherwise.

The Priestess will signal the success of the rite by taking the hand of the one chosen as host and placing both hands of the host on the crystal.



The Rite of The Star Game

The Rite of The Star Game is the simplest - and yet most complex - rite to call forth sinister acausal-entities from the acausal continuum, and requires either one or two individuals (cliologists). It is one of the most effective - the most powerful - rites known to us.

The rite is simple in that it involves only one or two individuals, and no chants, or ritualized elements, and no large crystal tetrahedron. It is complex, because it involves - as will become clear - the individual or individuals in determining, beforehand, various star patterns associated with particular acausal entities, it being an important part of the rite itself for the cliologist or cliologists to do this themselves, for it represents the necessary psychic (esoteric/magickal) preparation, and the necessary development of required Dark Art skills.

Both versions involve the construction of a large Advanced Star Game [qv. NAOS; pp.122ff of the ONA pdf facsimile], which has 308 squares and 90 pieces, and for this rite the pieces must all be made of quartz, and shaped as tetrahedrons. The boards can be either perspex, or wood.

The rite for one individual involves playing the game, starting from the initial set up of the pieces as given in NAOS, to achieve a particular pattern of pieces - determined beforehand - on boards to re-present the particular astronomical star alignment chosen, associated as this is with the particular acausal entity called forth.

That is, the cliologist sets out to map - by mimesis - the region of causal Space-Time as represented by stellar pointers (stars, viewed/described from Earth). That is, a particular region of the causal continuum is mapped, using stars, and which stars are re-presented by the pieces of the Star Game and their positions on the seven boards.

When the desired pattern is achieved, the cliologist uses the Star Game as the nexion - or rather, the alchemical combination of cliologist and completed Star Game becomes the nexion, and opens them to the acausal. The desired entity then manifests, and most usually indwells the cliologist, unless the cliologist has made provision for another human form to be available (willing or unwilling) nearby, and directs the entity into that chosen human form.

The rite for two cliologists is similar to the above, except that one cliologist plays to try and prevent the other achieving the desired pattern, and instead seeks to achieve their own pattern. Of necessity, this rite is much longer, but all the more powerful for that, and in this version the loser becomes the indwelling host for the acausal entity (or vice versa, if desired).

Both versions of the Game - for one or two cliologists - require that the game be completed without interruption of any kind, and thus the place chosen for the rite should allow for this.

Notes:

1) Stellar Pointers

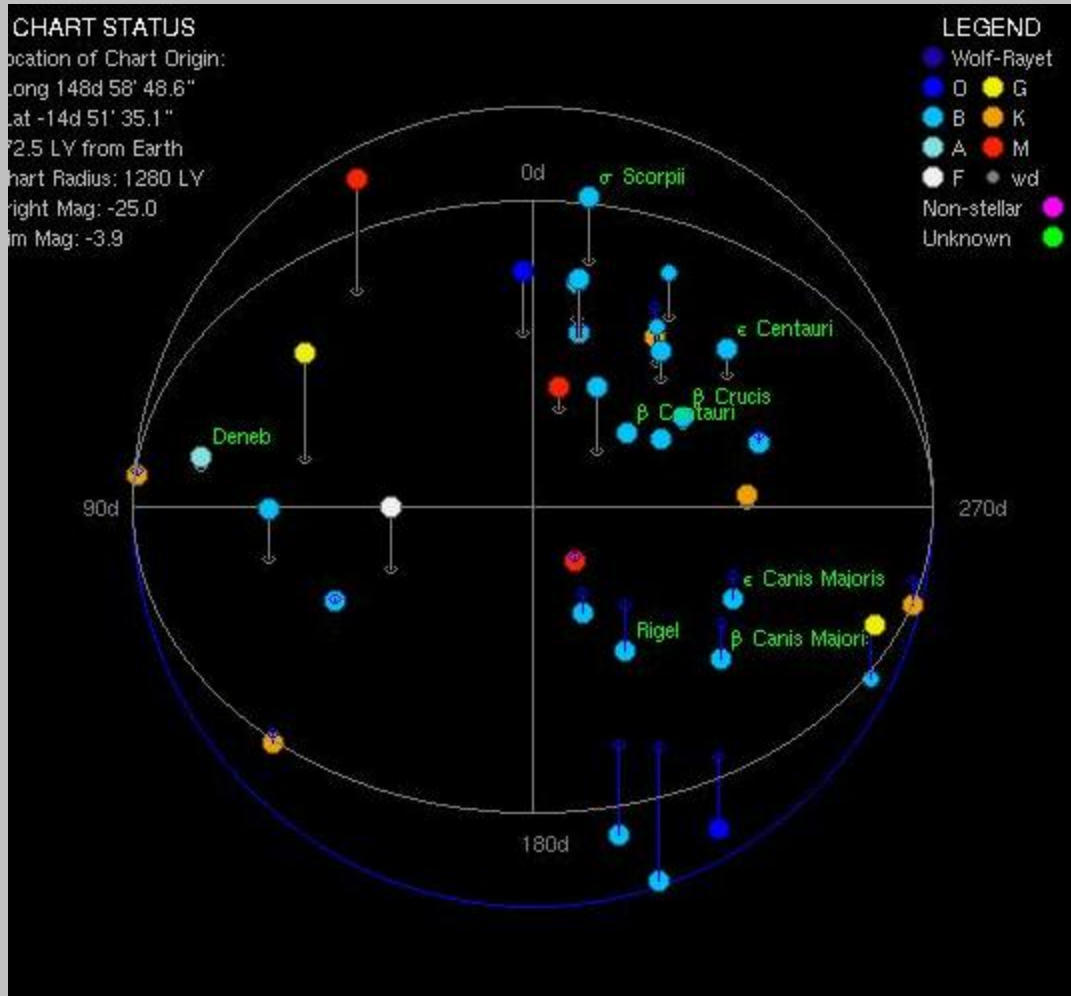
Each acausal entity known to us, via tradition and/or sinister experience, is associated with a particular star, or a particular collocation of stars, that is, a particular region in causal Space-Time.

Thus, the star Naos is associated with one entity; Algol with another, and Dabih with yet another. Deneb, for instance, is associated with a particularly powerful "female" acausal-entity, and so on. That is, each such star is near to or associated with an actual physical nexion between the causal and acausal, where direct physical movement (travel) between causal and acausal is possible.

In particular, each named board of the Star Game - for example, Sirius - has an associated acausal-entity, and these Star Game associated entities can be deduced from an initiated study of how each board relates to the Septenary Tree of Wyrd (ToW). For instance, the star-board associated with Mercury has the exoteric "word" Satan associated with it, so that in this case the entity is obvious. The alchemical season associated with this level/sphere of the ToW is Scorpio, which is one propitious season to "invoke" this particular entity. [See NAOS for the Septenary Tree of Wyrd and correspondences.]

As for the area to be mapped, this is for the cliologist to decide/determine, although the image below should serve as a guide, with the centre of this particular image being a certain star associated with a certain acausal entity. Thus, each star shown in that image would be re-presented by a particular piece, with its position in the image (its relation to the other stars, and the "point of origin") being its position on a particular board or square in the Star Game. In this particular image, the origin - the nexion - is some light-years in causal distance from Earth, with the stellar mapping area itself having a radius

of over one thousand light-years.



Thus, if the star at the centre of this particular image was chosen, then the aim - the magickal rite - is to re-present, by mimesis, this star-chart by means of the pieces and the boards of the advanced Star Game.

Note, that if the level of complexity is as in this image (which is the suggested level), then all other pieces on the boards must be removed *by the process of playing the game* so that only the correct number of pieces - *each one a star* - remain in their correct positions. Complexity here is determined by the chosen radius mapping area, and by the type, and apparent stellar magnitude, of the stars chosen to be mapped.

Hence, if, for example, the entity exoterically known as Satan was to be "invoked", the centre of the star mapping would be the star, Sirius, with the cliologist choosing the complexity by deciding on how many light years beyond

Sirius were to be mapped, and what type of stars to be included.

2) Boards and Levels

In the advanced Star Game, each board has four levels, representing the three plus one of the one causal metric that is that "one board". Level 1 is the lower board itself, of nine white and nine black squares. Level two is above level one on both ends of level 1, and thus has two parts, which are both directly above the squares of level 1. Level three consists of two squares only, set outward from level 1 at both ends (that is, there is one outward square above level 2 on each side). Level 4 has eight squares, 4 at either end above level 1 and directly above the squares of level 1.

The Rite of Acausal Existence

According to sinister tradition, it is possible - without the gift provided by an acausal entity such as a Dark Daughter of Baphomet - for an individual human being to acquire for themselves an acausal existence, that is, for their consciousness to be transferred to, to indwell, an acausal being; or more specifically for an acausal form to be created for such an indwelling, which form then passes into the acausal.

The rite of transference exists in two forms, and the one described here is the most efficacious, and requires a minimum of three offers (nine are best), who will be chosen according to our traditional guidelines, and brought to, and confined in or near to, the place chosen for what is perhaps the most sinister and the most joyful Rite of all. The rite be either performed alone by a single Rounwytha, or by two if those two have pledged themselves to end their mortal existence together and transfer instead to the acausal. Given the nature of the rite, the offers will not be voluntary, with the rite itself being undertaken in a secure indoor place, or in an isolated secure outdoor location, although a suitable outdoor location is increasingly difficult to find.

As with the Sinister Rite of The Nine Angles, propitious times include when the Moon occults Dabih, or is very close to it; and when Jupiter and Saturn are both near the moon which is becoming new, the causal hour being before dawn.

The rite itself requires a large double tetrahedron, made of quartz, which is suspended by some non-conductive material (such as filaments of hemp or flax) woven to hold the crystal and to allow it to be touched by both of the Rounwytha's hands. It is suspended at shoulder height, and within an ellipse of nine smoothed elliptical stones made from pre-Cambrian rock, with this ellipse being of sufficient size to accommodate within it he/she (or those two) undertaking the rite. Next to each and in front of each elliptical stone is a stone slab also of pre-Cambrian rock, sufficient in size for a human head. The semi-major axis of the ellipse should be aligned East-West, and the first stone and its associated stand should be on this axis, with the other stones/stands placed so as to have unequal spacing between them.

Once the crystal, stones and stands have been set out as required, and the other necessary arrangements made, the Rounwytha should undertake a Black Fast, lasting no less than a day for each offer, and neither speak nor venture forth into daylight during this Fast nor have any contact with any other living causally-dwelling being, human or otherwise, with the exception of their partner who is sharing in the Rite, if such a partner there be.

At the chosen hour, the rite proper begins by the first offer being brought into the centre of the ellipse, to lie on the ground/floor so that the suspended crystal is above them. The offer may be bound or otherwise restrained.

The Rounwytha then despatches the offer by suitable means - such as using a sacrificial knife or sword - until the head is severed with the Rounwytha during this task silently concentrating and directing the acausal-energy, released by such an offering, toward the suspended crystal. The head of the offer is then placed on the slab on the semi-major axis of the ellipse, and the human shell, denuded of acausal energy, is removed, and replaced by the next offer. If required, the Rounwytha may place his/her hands upon the offer as the acausal energy seeps out, and then place their hands upon the crystal.

This process is continued until all the offers have served their designated purpose, when the Rounwytha(s) removes the crystal from its holder, and holding the crystal to them, ignites (if indoors and if required) the flammable material surrounding them, and consumes the phial of their chosen swift acting poison, while directing their own acausal energy into and thence beyond the nexion that is now their crystal.

Notes:

- 1) According to tradition, the Rounwytha desirous of undertaking this rite will do so when their causal life is already beginning to fade, by a natural causal ageing, or other means. Given their acausal-empathy, they will know when this time is near, and will plan accordingly.
 - 2) While not a necessity, the Rounwytha may desire to dispose of as much material as possible after their departure, and therefore may choose to conduct the rite in a suitable place (for example, a building of combustible material such as wood) and spread sufficient quantities of flammable liquid in the chosen area. Or they may elect to operate some explosive device.
 - 3) It is also possible for this particular rite to be performed under non-ritual circumstances when, for example, an individual-explosive-device may be employed in a combat-type situation with the opfers being "enemies". Here, the stones and other ceremonial trappings are dispensed with, although the Rounwytha or sinister Adept should still possess, if possible, a double tetrahedron, made of quartz, sufficient in size to be concealed but not so small that it could be concealed in the palm of just one hand. If this method is chosen, for whatever reason, the Rounwytha or sinister Adept should at the moment of detonation hold the crystal in one hand (if this be possible) and intone *Binan Ath Ga Wath Am* while directing their own acausal energy and that of their targets into and thence beyond the nexion that is now their crystal.
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Appendix

The Ontology and Theology of Traditional Satanism

The Nature of Reality According to Traditional Satanism

The fundamental ontological axioms of the Sinister Way of Traditional Satanism are: (1) there are two types of being, differentiated by whether or not they

possess, or manifest, what is termed acausal energy, and (2) that we can only correctly and currently know a manifestation of acausal energy, an acausal being, through our currently under-developed and under-used psychic faculties.

Reality, for Traditional Satanism, is postulated to be the Cosmos, with this Cosmos having a bifurcation of being: that is, the Cosmos exists - is manifest - in both causal space-time, and in what we term acausal space-time. Causal space-time has three causal spatial dimensions and one causal Time dimension, and acausal space-time has n number (a currently undefined number) of acausal dimensions (which are not spatial) and an acausal Time dimension. Causal space-time can thus be considered to be the phenomenal, physical, universe we are aware of through our senses, and this universe is governed by physical laws and contains physical, causal, matter/energy.

Traditional Satanism posits, and accepts, that there are acausal beings existing in acausal space-time (see footnote 1) just as there are causal beings existing in causal space-time, which causal beings include our own human species, and the life which shares this planet, Earth, with us.

According to Traditional Satanism, all causal living beings (existing or having their being in the causal physical universe) are understood as a presencing, in the causal, of acausal being (or energy) by the fact that they are alive. That is, all causal living beings are all connexions - nexions - between the causal and the acausal continuums.

The Being of Nature

Nature may be defined as that innate creative (acausal) force (or energy) which operates in the physical world, on this planet, and which causes, or is the genesis of, and controls, causal living organisms in certain ways. These "certain ways" are the laws of Nature. The 'evolution of species' is a term used to describe one theory about one of the ways in which Nature is assumed to work, in the causal Universe (the causal continuum).

Nature can thus be conceived as a *type of being*. This does not mean that Nature should be understood in anthropomorphic terms, but rather that Nature is a living, changing, entity: some-thing which is alive; that is, Nature is another example of a nexion - of where there is a connexion between the

causal continuum and the acausal continuum. We ourselves, as human beings, are simply - on planet Earth - one manifestation, one presencing, of Nature among many: that is, we are subject to the laws of Nature, the laws which govern organic change and organic life itself. Like all causal life on this planet, we causal beings are born, we grow and change, and our causal being dies, that is, ceases to be imbued with - to be animated by - acausal energy. That is, "we" cease to have a causal life.

Most Earth cultures had, or have, a belief that Nature is living, and the Mother of, the bringer-forth of, all life.

In olden times, Nature herself was often personified in terms of gods, and goddesses. That is, we apprehended Nature in terms of ourselves - in terms of individual causal beings with names, a history and a distinct personality. However, this type of apprehension is no longer necessary nor valid since we have developed, over the last few thousand years, the faculty of pure reason, and the faculty of acausal empathy, and can understand Nature, ourselves and the cosmos beyond Nature, in a natural manner without such intermediate abstract forms. That is, we can now apprehend Nature as Nature is. Hitherto, we projected human-type causal forms onto Nature in an effort to comprehend Nature as we did not possess much of an understanding of the Cosmos beyond Nature and beyond the causal, and how Nature is but part of this causal and acausal Cosmos.

The Philosophy of Traditional Satanism

The essential starting point for a philosophy is to pose, and answer, the questions about the origin and meaning of life - or, more specifically, about our causal lives, as human beings, in the causal Universe, on this planet we call Earth.

Traditional Satanism does not believe that we human beings, and causal life itself, was created by some Supreme Being, which supreme Being is commonly referred to as God. According to Traditional Satanism, life evolved naturally on this planet, from finite beginnings we as yet do not precisely understand. The essence of the Traditional Satanism perspective about our origins in the causal Universe is reason - or rather, what used to be called Natural Philosophy: through observation, experiment and the use of reason, or logic, we can understand our world, the causal Cosmos, and ourselves. Thus, Traditional Satanism is, in one important respect, a rationalist Way of Life which accepts: (1) that the Causal Universe (or Causal Reality) exists independently of us and

our consciousness, and thus independent of our senses; (2) our limited understanding of this causal 'external world' depends for the most part upon our senses - that is, on what we can see, hear or touch; that is, on what we can observe or come to know via our senses; (3) logical argument - reason - and experiment are the best means to knowledge and understanding of and about this 'external world'; (4) the Causal Universe is, of itself, a reasoned order subject to rational laws; (5) our faculty of acausal-empathy is a means for us to know the nexion we are, and how we can discover our correct relationship to all other life. Thus, practical reason - Natural Philosophy - enables us to comprehend the external, physical, causal, Universe.

Furthermore, Traditional Satanism also affirms that the knowledge and understanding of the causal Universe - achieved by means of reason and observation - is not the only type of knowledge and understanding available to us, for there is knowledge and understanding of the acausal continuum, and the acausal beings who, or which, exist (and "live") there, and that our psychic faculties enable us to sense, to begin to know, and are one means of comprehending, acausal Life in all its variety and forms. An axiom of Traditional Satanism is that by developing our latent psychic faculties we can gain a better understanding - and more knowledge of - Nature, of the acausal, and of acausal beings, and thus of ourselves.

The Answers of Traditional Satanism

The Philosophy of Traditional Satanism accepts that the purpose of our mortal, causal, lives is essentially two fold. First, to change, to develop, to evolve, ourselves, and to explore and to enjoy the possibilities that causal life offers - for our mortal, causal, life is a limited, finite, opportunity. Second, that if we develop, evolve, ourselves in a particular way - and especially if we develop our psychic faculties - there exists the possibility of us, as a new type of being, living-on beyond our causal death, in the acausal continuum.

Thus, the Philosophy of Traditional Satanism asserts:

(1) That we human beings possess the potential to participate in and to control our own evolution - that is, we have the (mostly latent) ability to consciously evolve to become the genesis of a new human species, and that genuine esoteric Arts - and especially and in particular The Dark Arts - are one of the most viable ways by which such a conscious evolution can occur;

(2) That genuine esoteric knowledge and insight - and thus genuine self-understanding and self-evolution - requires both a development of our latent psychic faculties and a practical knowledge of the acausal continuum deriving from a coming-to-know acausal beings;

(3) That what has hitherto been known and described as magic(k) - especially Dark Sorcery, or Black Magic(k) - is one effective means of coming-to-know certain acausal beings, and is thus a beginning to understanding the acausal itself.

Our psychic faculties include what may be termed acausal empathy (otherwise know as sinister empathy, or esoteric/magickal empathy) and acausal thinking.

Acausal empathy is basically sensitivity to, and awareness of, acausal energies as these energies are presented in living beings, in Nature, and/or presented in the causal either via some acausal being, or directly, as "raw" acausal energy (that is, acausal energy trying to find some causal form to inhabit). Various esoteric (Occult) means and techniques exist to develop such acausal empathy.

Acausal thinking is basically apprehending the causal, and acausal energy, as these "things" are - that is, beyond all causal abstractions, and beyond all causal symbols, and symbolism, where such causal symbols include language, and the words and terms that are part of language, and what has hitherto been regarded as the terms and symbols of conventional Occultism, for such conventional Occultism is ineluctably bound to causal thinking. Various genuine esoteric (Occult) means and techniques exist to develop such acausal thinking. An important aspect of acausal thinking is thinking in terms of acausal time - that is, not in terms of the linear "cause and effect" of the causal continuum, but rather in what can be inaccurately described in terms of Simultaneity, of there being "action at a distance" unlike in conventional (causal) physics.

The Living Beings of The Acausal

According to Traditional Satanism, there are several types of distinct acausal beings who exist in the acausal continuum, known to us - historically and otherwise - from Adepts who, having developed acausal empathy and acausal thinking, have discovered or come to know of, such beings.

Acausal beings are beyond our causal concepts and abstractions. Some dwell (and can only exist in) the acausal spaces, while others can dwell or be manifest in both the acausal and the causal, with there being many different types of acausal entities all of which have their own "nature" or type of being. Essentially, they have no physical form, as we define and understand physical form (for example, a body) although some types of acausal being, who can dwell or manifest or be presented in our causal spaces, can dwell-within, or presence themselves within or be presented within, a causal form such as a living body or being (including a human being) and some of the acausal beings who can or who have done this are known as "shapeshifters". We cannot "see" or detect (by our limited physical senses or by using causality-based physical instruments) un-presented acausal beings who may be transiting through or dwelling-within our causal spaces (our physical world/universe) if such beings have not accessed, or presented themselves, in some causal, living, form (or even, in most cases, even if they have done this). However, some of us (and some other life) may sometimes "feel" or be aware of some such acausal beings: for example, if we possess a certain type of empathy or have the esoteric knowledge to detect some such transiting or in-dwelling acausal beings.

Since these acausal beings are beyond our causal concepts and abstractions, it is incorrect to judge such beings according to our limited, causal, "morality". They are neither "good" nor "evil". They live according to their own nature, as acausal beings, just as, for example, a wild predatory animal lives according to its wild predatory nature. According to esoteric tradition, there are some acausal beings who are drawn or who have been in the past been drawn toward our causal spaces (our physical universe/world) because they do or have acquired the ability to "feed off" certain types of emotion (or "states of being") which emotion (or "states of being") are but types of energy.

Due to the nature of the acausal spaces (and thus the nature of acausal energy) acausal beings do not "die" as we die and do not "age" as we age. Furthermore, our causal concept of physical travel (or movement) which takes causal time is irrelevant to and does not apply to such beings, due to their very nature as acausal beings. However, most acausal beings are not, by our standards, "all-powerful" and many cannot change or restructure temporal things, just as some cannot transit to ("be presented in") the causal spaces, or dwell-within causal beings, without some aid or assistance in opening a nexion or nexions (which in many instances is just a direct connexion between the causal and acausal spaces).

According to tradition, some of these known acausal beings have been collectively described by the term The Dark Gods, or The Dark Ones (or The

Dark Immortals), and included in this particular type of acausal being is the entity more commonly known to us as Satan, and that entity which we, limited causal, mortal beings, describe as the female counterpart of Satan, who - according to The Dark Tradition inherited by the ONA - has the name Baphomet, and who is the dark, violent, Goddess - the real Mistress of Earth (and of Nature) - to whom human sacrifices were, and are, made and who ritualistically and symbolically washes in a basin full of the blood of Her victims. According to aural legend, She - as one of The Dark Gods - is also a shapeshifter who has intruded ("visited", been presenced or manifest) on Earth in times past, and who can manifest again if certain rituals are performed and certain sacrifices made. Traditionally, it was to Baphomet that Initiates and Adepts of the Dark Tradition dedicated their chosen, selected, victims when a human culling was undertaken, and such cullings were - and are - regarded as one of the prerequisites for attaining sinister Adeptship.

Importantly, Traditional Satanism does not regard Satan - or any of The Dark Ones, such as Baphomet - as conventional "gods" or "goddesses" are understood, and thus as beings to be worshipped, feared, and obeyed in a conventional religious sense. Instead, they are regarded as sinister friends; as new found companions; and may be likened to long-lost sisters and brothers or other relatives; and - in the case of Satan and Baphomet - as akin to our hitherto unknown mother and father, to be thus admired and respected, but never "worshipped". In addition, and in the case of some of these dark entities, they are, or can be considered as, our lovers. Thus, our relationship to these acausal beings is certainly not one of fear, or of subservience.

In addition, the term The Dark Gods is to be understood as but a useful, somewhat Old Aeon (that based on causal thinking), inherited exoteric term to describe a particular acausal species many of whom are known to and named by The Dark Tradition, which species, when manifest in the causal, are certainly far more powerful than human beings. Thus, the conventional names given to some such acausal beings as are known to us, or which have been known to human beings in ages past, are only exoteric names; only imperfect, causal, terms which are useful symbols.

Thus, a name such as "Satan" does not fully describe the real acausal nature and character of that specific acausal being, which acausal being has an esoteric name - an acausal name deriving from acausal thinking and acausal knowing - which better describes such a being.

The Question of God

The philosophy of Traditional Satanism does not assume nor accept that there is a supreme Being, or deity. That is, a supreme creator Being does not and never has existed, and such a figure is regarded as a human, a causal, abstraction, a human manufactured construct, a myth, which human beings, and thus certain religions and theologies and philosophies, have incorrectly imposed upon the reality of the Cosmos in a vain attempt to understand it, and themselves. Thus, our Satan - our Dark One - is not subservient to some omnipotent God, but is instead a particular type of living acausal being, subject only to the natural laws of the acausal continuum.

The Question of Evil and The Existence of Satan

What has been conventionally termed "the question (or the problem) of evil" - by other philosophies and religions and Way of Life - does not exist for Traditional Satanism since Traditional Satanism accepts that conventional morality is a causal abstraction: some causal form, or some dogma, which is incorrectly projected onto the nature, the reality, of the causal continuum, and which abstraction obscures our real, and our of necessity individual, connexion to the Cosmos. That is, conventional morality - like all religious dogma and all laws - takes away, or restricts, the inalienable individual freedom of a living human being to be an individual: to be that singular, unique, nexion they are to the acausal.

For Traditional Satanism, it is only and ever the individual who - developing acausal empathy and acausal thinking - can directly comprehend and directly implement meaning, whether this "meaning" be described by such limited, causal terms as "morality", and evil and law - based as these causal terms are on the restriction, the oppression, of causal thinking. Thus, Traditional Satanism is a genuine liberation and a genuine evolution of the individual, for Traditional Satanism gives the individual access to the very essence of their own, individual, being: which is the acausal energy that animates them, making them alive, and which is also the apprehension and understanding of them as a unique nexion, of the acausal continuum itself, and of the acausal life that resides there, and which can - in some circumstances - be manifest in our own causal continuum.

Hence, a knowing of such acausal beings as Satan and Baphomet are one means whereby we, as individuals, can come to know ourselves, to evolve

ourselves, and come to understand the meaning and purpose of our causal, mortal lives: which is to live-on beyond our causal death, in the acausal continuum as a new type, a new species, of immortal acausal being.

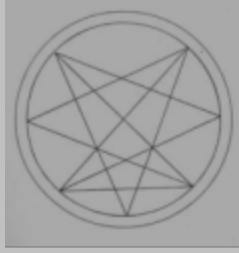
This individual and unique discovering of meaning by individuals, this knowing of such acausal beings - this understanding of how and why beings such as Satan exist - is a learning of the Art of Dark Sorcery, part of which learning is developing acausal empathy and acausal thinking, and it is the transmission of this dark and ancient Art, and its use by individuals, which is the *raison d'etre* of that sinister association known as The Order of Nine Angles.

Footnotes:

(1) For convenience, acausal space-time will often be referred to simply as "the acausal", and causal space-time as "the causal". Also, the causal refers to the causal Universe of causal space-time, and the acausal to the acausal Universe of acausal space-time, with both the causal and the acausal Universes together forming the Cosmos.

The causal Universe is also sometimes referred to as "the causal continuum", and the acausal Universe as "the acausal continuum".





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Grimoire of Baphomet - Dark Goddess

Order of Nine Angles

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Aeonic Magick - A Basic Introduction

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I - Causal and Acausal

An aeon is the term used to describe a stage or a type of evolution. Evolution itself is taken to result from a certain specific process - and this process can be described, or explained [or 're-presented']via a bifurcation of time. That is, evolution is an expression of how the cosmos changes over or through or because of, 'time' - this 'time' having two components. These two components are the causal and the acausal.

More exactly, the cosmos itself can be described or explained or re-presented by acausal and causal space-time. Causal space-time is 4-dimensional: there are 3 spatial dimensions (at right angles to each other) and 1 time dimension, this time dimension being linear and unidirectional. That is, causal time 'flows' in one direction only from past to present to future. Causal time is defined by this one-way flow and by the moments which are used to mark the changes in this flow. [In effect, causal space-time is the 'everyday' physical world we live in and can perceive by our physical senses. It is the world described by the laws of Physics.] Acausal space-time has n spatial dimensions [where n is at present undefined but is greater than 3 and less than infinity] and acausal time dimensions. The spatial dimensions of acausal space are not at right angles to each other. Further, acausal time is not unidirectional - it can flow in any direction - and it is not linear: that is, it has more than one component. In effect, acausal time (unlike causal time) has more than one time-dimension.

The acausal and the causal can be considered as two different 'universes'. The causal universe contains physical matter - that is, varying types of physical energy. We are familiar with the various forms of this physical matter - stars, planets, the rocks and elements forming the planets. The acausal universe likewise contains matter - acausal matter or energy. This acausal energy and its changes in acausal space-time can be described by a new science which uses the non-spatial geometry of the acausal and a representation of acausal time. At present, we are mostly unfamiliar with the types of acausal energy. However, the acausal universe intersects or manifests in the causal universe at specific places - that is, a particular type of acausal energy is present in the causal universe at these places. These places are life-forms or living organisms. That is, a living organism is a region of the cosmos where the fabric of causal space-time and the fabric of acausal space-time meet or 'intersect'. The more evolved, the more complex, the life-form or organism, the greater this intersection.

Thus, living organisms result from a specific type of acausal energy 'flowing' into the causal universe - in effect, this acausal energy changes the structure of causal space-time. The greater the acausal energy, the more evolved, the more complex the organism. The physical death of an organism is when this energy flow ceases - the organism then becomes just inert, physical matter. Death means that the connection between the causal and the acausal is severed at the localized place of intersection.

Our own sentient life - the most advanced and complex living organism we know at present - is therefore the largest intersection of these two universes. We access more of this specific acausal energy than any other organism we know. In effect, each individual is a nexion - that is, a connection or nexus between the two universes. Our consciousness means that we possess the latent ability to directly access the acausal.

Aeons, Civilizations and Archetypes:

An aeon is a manifestation, in the causal, of a particular type of acausal energy. This energy re-orders, or changes, the causal. These changes have certain limits - in both causal space and causal time. That is, they have a specific beginning and a specific end. A civilization (or rather, a higher or aeonic-civilization) is how this energy

becomes ordered or manifests itself in the causal: how this energy is revealed. A civilization represents the practical changes which this energy causes in the causal - in terms of the effect such energy has on individuals and this planet. A civilization is tied to, is born from, a particular aeon. By the nature of this energy, a civilization is an evolution of life - a move toward a more complex, and thus more conscious, existence. An inexact analogy would be an oak tree - in this case, the surface of the soil is the boundary between the causal (above the soil) and the acausal (below or in the soil). The roots of the tree are thus in the acausal [and here represent acausal energy] and the trunk and branches are in the causal. The civilization is the trunk of the tree, and the aeon is represented by the roots - they 'drive' or make the growth and thus determine the shape and health of the tree. The societies that make up a particular civilization are the branches of the tree, and the individuals who make up the societies are the small twigs and the leaves of the tree.

Aeons, civilizations and individuals are examples of organisms. They are all created, or are born; they all grow and change; and they all at some time die. They all occupy a finite space over a finite span of time. They all undergo metamorphosis or change. They all possess an organic structure of change. This structure - for aeons, civilizations and individuals - is of a similar type, and it can be studied and thus understood. That is, various 'models' can be developed to describe this structure and the changes it undergoes.

In essence, a civilization is the practical manifestation of a particular aeon, and an individual is an aspect, or part of, a particular civilization or a particular culture. A culture represents the various stages below that of a civilization - cultures are also an evolutionary development, a coming-together of individuals which enables more of the acausal to be 'accessed' and which thus produces changes for those individuals. A civilization, however, represents a much higher stage of development - a conscious awareness. Here we are only concerned with civilizations and the individuals associated with civilizations - for the simple reason that compared to civilizations, cultures and the peoples associated with them, are relatively insignificant in evolutionary terms: cultures are the evolutionary forms which pre-date civilization. The reality is that civilization, and thus aeons, are the first significant manifestations of individual consciousness and thus creativity.

All the individuals associated with a particular civilization - unless and until they attain a specific degree of self-awareness [variously called 'individuation' and 'Adeptship']- are subject to or influenced by their psyche. This psyche draws its energy from - is determined by - the civilization and thus the aeon. In practical terms, the psyche is a manifestation of the acausal energy that creates/created the civilization. Archetypes (in the Jungian sense) are one aspect of the psyche - that is, archetypes are expressions of the acausal energy which a particular civilization represents.

This acausal energy determines and/or influences the actions and behaviour of the individuals of the civilization. That is, for the majority of individuals, their Destiny is that of the civilization itself - they do not possess a unique Destiny of their own. Only those individuals who have achieved the stage of evolutionary development which individuation/Adeptship represents have a unique Destiny, because only these individuals have freed themselves from the mostly unconscious influences and constraints which the psyche imposes. In terms of the inexact oak tree analogy, an individual with a unique Destiny is a seed or acorn which breaks free of the tree and can begin a new life as a sapling - if it survives.

The energies which a particular aeon and civilization represent are unique to that aeon and its associated civilization. That is, each civilization and aeon has its own unique, separate identity: its own ethos. Each civilization represents a stage of evolution, a step forward in the process of evolution itself. This means that each civilization has unique archetypes and that these archetypes are born with that civilization, grow with that civilization and die with that civilization - they possess no life beyond the confines of that civilization or aeon.

An aeon lasts about 2,000 years of causal time - a civilization lasts around 1,500 years. That is, it takes several centuries for the energies of a particular aeon, already presencing or 'flowing' to Earth from the acausal, to produce practical, visible and significant changes: to re-order the causal in a specific geographical region. An aeon is linked to a specific geographical area - and there is a place, or centre or 'nexion' where the acausal energy is strongest. This is because of how the type of acausal energy which creates a civilization works. Fundamentally, an aeon is an actual physical presencing, on Earth, of a particular type of acausal energy. Generally, this centre acquires a religious or cult significance in the centuries before and the centuries following the emergence of the civilization associated with the

particular aeon whose energies are most manifest at that centre. In general, in the early stages of a civilization, the acausal energy is apprehended in a particular archetypal or mythological way which is unique to that civilization.

The list in *Table I* describes the energy associated with a particular civilization - although it should be understood that such descriptions, in terms of 'ethos' and such things, are merely inaccurate guides to the type of energy. Such things as 'ethos' are how the individuals within a particular civilization apprehend such energy. This apprehension is both causal and acausal - in inexact terms, both rational and intuitive. This ethos, like a civilization, grows and changes; i.e. it evolves, while retaining the same inner essence.

The four civilizations listed in *Table I* are the higher or aeonic civilizations - i.e. those which have changed/ shaped our conscious evolution. Four other civilizations have existed [the Egyptian; the Indic; the Sinic and the Japanese] but they (a) have not contributed significantly to such evolution (i.e. they lack large-scale creativity) and (b) they are related to an already existing or a previously existing civilization. The criteria for an aeonic civilization are: (1) it possesses a distinctive ethos [note: an ethos is not a 'religion' - rather, it is a particular and original "outlook on the world" and a particular way of living]; (2) it arises primarily from a physical challenge [rather than from a social challenge such as the disintegration of another nearby civilization]; and (3) it is creative and noble on a large scale.

In analysing civilizations and their changes, the insights of both Toynbee and Spengler are interesting - forming the basis for further analysis and extension. Basically, Spengler expressed the organic nature of a civilization (although he did not fully and accurately define what a civilization is) while Toynbee provided an historical formulation for the formative changes a civilization undergoes (such things as a 'Time of Troubles' and a Universal State or Imperium) and a useful definition of civilization (in terms of being a response to a physical or social challenge). Cliology, although based on these insights, does not depend on the minute details inherent in their work; rather, what is essential is extracted and used as a foundation to build another more far-reaching model.

The mechanisms by which civilizations have hitherto affected evolution is that of 'creative/heroic' individuals. Most of these individuals are influenced by the ethos of their civilization to act or to express that ethos by their living. Hitherto, few individuals in any civilization have reached the stage of conscious evolution which frees them from the influence (mostly unconscious) of the civilization's ethos or wyrd. Of course, there are many who now believe they have done this - as there have been some individuals who believed this in the past; but belief is not the same as reality. It has been and is one of the primary aims of genuine esoteric arts to enable individuals to reach the stage of conscious evolution and thus personal development, where they become free of such influence - i.e. for individuals to achieve a uniqueness of identity, a personal wyrd. This development requires the cultivation of insight, knowledge, intuition and reason - and for this cultivation to be achieved it is necessary for individuals to know and understand how and why things like civilizations and aeons are as they are. What I have called 'cliology' is an expression of such understanding, and as such a study and understanding of cliology [the science of aeons and the study of the acausal] aids conscious development, thus making Adeptship/individuation possible and enabling aeonic magick.

The pattern which each and every civilization follows can be symbolized and thus studied. The same is true for both an aeon and an individual. This symbolism enables two important things. First, it enables an objectification - a rational insight into and thus understanding of the patterns and processes themselves. Secondly, it significantly develops an already existing mental faculty and creates a new one - the ability to reason in abstract symbols, and the ability to reason in numinous symbols.

The ability to reason in abstract symbols basically describes mathematics (and thus the laws of Physics which are best expressed in mathematical form). Cliology extends the intellectual faculty which mathematics encourages and develops by creating an abstract symbolism which represents the acausal and some of the effects of this acausal in the causal. [For a brief outline of this abstract symbolism see the MSS: Cliology - A Basic Introduction] Further, cliology creates and encourages the development of an entirely new faculty of consciousness - the ability to think in numinous symbols.

This difference between purely abstract symbols and numinous symbols is important. Basically, a numinous symbol is a symbol which possesses acausal energy - it captures the essence of something which is acausal, and in doing this the symbol has the power to provoke or cause causal changes. In the simple sense [which is rather inexact]

one might say a numinous symbol possesses or has 'life' - it is a living entity in itself, although it lives in the psyche. A rudimentary and mostly unconscious numinous symbol is an archetype; another is a myth/mythos. The numinous symbols of cliology (of which the Star Game is an excellent example) are conscious. By 'conscious' here is meant - rational, understood. An unconscious symbol such as an archetype is in reality a proto-numinous symbol - it is seldom consciously understood, being felt and/or experienced rather than rationally apprehended. Further, a conscious numinous symbol can be used by an individual to bring about controlled aeonic changes because such symbols, being understood, can be precisely controlled and directed. An unconscious symbol produces imprecise internal change and imprecise external change: that is, it is not by its nature particularly amenable to manipulation. A numinous symbol thus makes Aeonic magick feasible for really the first time.

Aeons and Civilizations

Table I

Aeon	Symbol	Associated Civilization	Dates	Magickal Working
Primal	Horned Beast	--	9,000-7,000BP	Shamanism
Hyperborean	Sun	Albion	7,000-5,500BP	Henges
Sumerian	Dragon	Sumeric/Egyptiac	5,000-3,500BP	Trance/Sacrifice
Hellenic	Eagle	Hellenic	3,000-1,500BP	Oracle;Choral-dance
Thorian (Western)	Swastika	Western	1,000BP-500AP	Ritual
Galactic	--	Galactic	>2,000eh	Star Game and >

Notes:

(1) 'BP' means Before Present (c.1980eh); 'AP' means After Present.

(2) There was no civilization (aeonic or otherwise) associated with the first aeon.

(3) The magickal centres (or nexion) for the civilizations are as follows: Albion - Stonehenge; Sumerian - between the Tigris and Euphrates [near present-day Baghdad]; Hellenic - Delphi; Western - area in the Welsh Marches.

II. Basic Principles of Aeonic Magick

All aeonic magick can only be used, by its nature, in three ways - (1) aid the already existing or original wyrd of an existing aeonic civilization; (2) create a new aeon and thus a new aeonic civilization; (3) distort or disrupt an existing civilization and thus the aeonic forces of that civilization. That is, aeonic magick involves working (a) with existing aeonic energy (as evident in the associated aeonic civilization); or (b) against existing aeonic energy; or, finally, it involves (c) creating a new type of aeonic energy by opening a new nexion and drawing forth new acausal energies. Thus aeonic magick involves knowing the wyrd of the presently existing civilization and if there are/have been any attempts to disrupt that wyrd, magickally or otherwise.

The energy brought forth by aeonic magick can be used in three ways.

(a) Directed into a specific already existing form (such as an individual) or some causal structure which is created for this purpose. This structure can be some political or religious or social organization, group or enterprise,

or it can be some work or works of 'Art', music and so on.

(b) Drawn forth and left to disperse naturally over Earth (from the site of its presencing).

(c) Shaped into some new psychic or magickal form or forms - such as an archetype or mythos.

Before undertaking any form of aeonic magick, the cliologist [someone skilled in, knowledgeable about and who uses aeonic energies] must formulate an aim or intent. The means to achieve this must be chosen - and the practical forms, if required, must be created and be in readiness for the energies once the energies are unleashed. If a specific form - such as a new archetype - is chosen as means, then the cliologist must be knowledgeable about archetypes and adept at manipulating magickal energies into psychic forms. Similarly, if a physical nexion is chosen as a means of accessing acausal energies, the appropriate individuals must be organized and trained to undertake the appropriate rite(s).

Techniques and Control:

There are only a certain number of techniques by which acausal energy can be accessed, as there are only a certain number of ways whereby this energy, once accessed, can be directed or 'controlled' into the various forms which are to be used to spread or disperse that energy.

(1) The first technique is creating a new physical nexion. This can be done by specific hitherto esoteric magickal rites, such as the Rites of the Nine Angles (qv.) and the Ceremony of Recalling with Sacrificial Conclusion (qv.). [It should be noted that Esoteric Chant, combined with a quartz tetrahedron, is one of the most effective ways of opening a nexion.] The chosen rite is conducted on the chosen site. It is often necessary to conduct a second or third rite within the space of a few weeks to fully open a new nexion. The new nexion, once open, needs to be kept open and this requires regular rites on the chosen site for many years - a specific rite [which does not necessarily involve sacrifice] should be constructed to do this. This specific rite needs to be undertaken at the very least twice yearly for the first five years, and then once yearly for at least ten years. One of the best methods to use for this specific rite is Esoteric Chant using a quartz tetrahedron.

(2) The second technique is using the advanced form of the Star Game. The cliologist sets the pieces to represent the existing aeon and the existing civilization at the specific moment of causal time the energy is to be accessed. The pieces are then selectively moved to change what presently exists and to represent the changes desired in the future. In this technique, the cliologist becomes a nexion via the symbolism - or rather, they access the acausal via their own psyche by means of the numinous symbols of the Star Game. This is so because the Star Game exactly re-presents those intersections between the causal and acausal which are an aeon, an aeonic civilization and an individual. [It should be noted that while this technique is the simplest, it is also the most difficult, requiring great skill in the Star Game and thus a high level of cliological understanding.]

(3) The third - and only ancient - method is mimesis. This involves imitating either (i) some aspect of an already existing cosmic/Earth-based cycle/pattern/working and then either following the natural pattern or introducing a slight variation; or (ii) creating a new pattern/cycle/mythos to describe the energies and their effects. In effect this often involves (a) "acting-out" an archetypal r"le or drama (the key here is identification with the r"le - often during a ceremony involving others); or (b) creating realistic 'models' of events, symbolically imbuing them with "life" and then acting out with these models the desired future events. [It should be noted that (a) and (b) are difficult to do properly - because intent and portrayal have to be precise- and thus are not often very effective.] One neglected form of mimesis is creative art - using an art-form (such as a work of fiction, a sculpture) to portray someone, some sequence of events or some archetypal energy. This form becomes a nexion - and thus influences the psyche of others by those others reading/viewing the art-form. However this form does not produce large-scale significant aeonic change.

The keys to controlling the energy are symbolism and forms. Unless it is be left undirected, all acausal energy, once accessed by whatever means, has to be directed by the person or persons who drawn it forth into the causal

world. The easiest way to deal with acausal energy is to let it disperse naturally - i.e. no effort is made to control and direct it into specific forms or symbols. Such energy is 'raw' - it is chaotic and primal (when viewed from the causal) and thus exceedingly dangerous if brought forth by someone who has not attained the stage of Master/Lady Master. It is psychically disruptive.

It has to be remembered that all acausal energy cannot be contained beyond certain limits - that is, such energy produce acausal changes as well as causal changes. The causal changes are temporal ones - present or future effects caused by such energy. It is these changes which can, in the simple sense, be produced by the cliologist by that cliologist controlling or directing the energy via symbolism and/or forms. That is, these are the changes which are desired by the cliologist who uses the symbolism and/or forms to achieve them. The acausal changes are not temporal - i.e. they are not controllable in causal time. In the simple sense, they are - or rather appear to be - random changes. The cliologist must create or aim to create future forms and/or symbolism which takes into account the possible emergence into the causal of such acausal changes - in practice, such forms absorb the 'random' energy when it appears or manifests in the causal. If this is not done, it is possible that such energy may disrupt/distort and thus undermine the causal changes created by the cliologist. Most of these acausal changes can be gleamed from the symbolism of the advanced Star Game if the pieces are set to represent the conditions pertaining at the moment of causal time when the aeonic working is first undertaken, and if the aeonic working itself is represented by the first sequence of moves from that departure point.

To fully control and thus direct the energy, new forms and/or symbolism should be created to channel the energy. These then enshrine or come to re-present the energy. Examples of practical social forms are ideas and ideals; an example of a practical psychic form is an archetypal figure - a character from a new mythos; an example of a practical political form is a political organization; and example of a practical 'religious' form is a new ethos. All these things - and the many others like them - should be created before the act or acts of aeonic magick by the cliologist with the intention of them being used to cause or bring about changes in the real world, in the causal. The nature of such things should be akin to the type of changes desired. Each such creation should itself be represented by a unique symbol or sign; by a unique descriptive word, phrase or slogan; by a unique piece of sound [or 'music']; by particular collocations of colour, and so on - or by one particular individual who embodies that idea, ideal, mythos or whatever. These unique creations should embody the essence of the change or changes required.

During the act or acts of aeonic magick, the cliologist focuses or directs the energy so accessed into artifacts which portray or represent the unique symbols or signs, and thus into the very symbols themselves and the forms represented by those symbols. In effect, the symbols and forms become alive - they exist, have being and cause changes. They grow and undergo metamorphosis. They acquire an independent existence of their own. The greater the acausal energy presented by or in such forms and symbols, the greater the changes produced - the more life they possess.

Fundamentally, aeonic magick is concerned with producing large-scale changes over many centuries - it is concerned with changing or altering the destiny of millions of peoples on time-scales which be as long as a millennia. This requires certain abilities and certain skills - but above all it requires that wisdom and knowledge which only genuine Masters/Lady Masters possess.

Aeons, Civilization and Ethos

Aeonic Civil.	Essence of Ethos	Country of Ethos
Albion	proto-Druidism	Britain

Sumerian	Vedas	Indus
Hellenic	Iliad	Greece
Western	National-Socialism	Third Reich
Galactic	Galactic Empire	Solar System and >

- Notes:
- (1) The ethos is the unique spirit, the unique wyrd of the civilization and thus the aeon. What is listed above is that practical form or expression which captures or captured the essence of a particular ethos.
 - (2) Manifestations of the ethos include the following.
 - (a) for the Hellenic - Greek Tragedy; Reason; Logic.
 - (b) for the Western: Science; Technology; Exploration; Space-Travel
 - (c) for Albion - Stonehenge and other, similar monuments.
 - (3) Little is known about the practical expression of the ethos of the civilization of Albion other than genuine Druidism (as portrayed by the Classical writers) enshrined some of its spirit.

The Star Game

Anton Long
(Order of Nine Angles)

Note: This is a basic introduction to the simple - the training - version of The Star Game. The Star Game, and its variants, are more fully described in the ONA work, *Naos: A Practical Guide to Becoming an Adept*

The Star Game is a technique for developing acausal-thinking, for which technique see [Dark Arts of Traditional Satanism](#)

The Boards:

There are seven boards, each one named after a particular star, which boards are placed one above the other in a spiral and forming a septenary Tree of Life (or Tree of Wyrd, to be precise).

Each board has nine black and nine squares, with each board representing a sphere of the Tree of Wyrd (ToW). See [Figure 0](#)

Naos
Rigel Deneb
Mira
Arcturus Antares
Sirius

The Pieces:

Each player has three sets of nine pieces, that is 27 pieces in all. The nine pieces are:

a(a) a(b) a(c) b(a) b(b) b(c) c(a) c(b) c(c)

The pieces can also be named Alchemically, abstractly or in terms of the Dark Tradition.

In Alchemical terms, a is the Alchemical symbol for Salt. b is the Alchemical symbol for Mercury, and c is the Alchemical symbol for Sulphur. Abstractly, a is the Greek letter alpha, b the letter beta, and c gamma. In terms of the Dark Tradition, a is causal space-time; b is where the acausal is present or manifest in the causal, and c acausal space-time.

These symbols and letters should be written on the pieces which are either small, square pieces of wood (of a size to fit on the board squares), or small tetrahedrons.

One set of three pieces is coloured black, the other set, white. [Or red and blue may be used.]

Esoterically, the pieces represent the combinations of the alchemical substances, or the various combinations and manifestations of causal/acausal.

The Moves:

The central rule of the game is that each piece, when it moves, is transformed into the piece next in sequence:

a(a)-->a(b)-->a(c)-->b(a)-->b(b)-->b(c)-->c(a)-->c(b)-->c(c)

Thus the a(a) piece when it is moved becomes an a(b) piece; a(c) becomes b(a) and so on. A c(c) piece becomes a(a).

The c (or gamma) pieces - c(a) c(b) c(c) - can move to any (vacant) square on any board.

The b (or beta) pieces can move across the board they are already on to any vacant square, and up, or down, one level - for example, from Acturus up to Antares, or down to Sirius. Note that a piece on Sirius can move only up to Arcturus.

The a (or alpha) pieces can move only across the board they are on.

After a piece has been moved, and therefore changed into the piece next in sequence, it moves according to its new identity. Thus, a b(c) piece would become a c(a) piece and on its next move, moves as a c (or gamma) piece.

The Placing of Pieces:

The initial or starting position of the pieces depends on how the game is used. Esoterically, the pieces are placed to represent a particular form at a particular moment in causal time: for example, to represent a civilization, an Aeon, or a person. Exoterically - when the game is played simply as an intellectual game - the placing of the pieces is fixed.

In the exoteric game the starting positions are as follows:

Six pieces are placed on Sirius - two sets of alpha pieces - for white, and six for black. See [Figure 1](#)

Arcturus has three pieces for white and three for black. See [Figure 2](#)

Antares has six pieces for white and six for black - two sets of beta pieces, placed exactly as the pieces on the Sirius board.

Mira has no pieces on it at the start.

Rigel has the three remaining pieces (for each player) of the beta sets, placed as the alpha pieces on Arcturus.

Deneb has six pieces of white and six of black from the gamma set, placed as the alpha set on Sirius.

Naos has the three remaining pieces of the gamma set, placed the same as the alpha sets of Arcturus.

Exoteric Game Rules:

The pieces move according to the rules above (see *The Moves* above), and are transformed as above. However, in the exoteric game, pieces can only stay on Mira for three moves. After three moves have been played (three by white; three by black) the player must move one of their pieces on Mira, if they have pieces on Mira, and this move must - if the piece is able (of the correct sequence) - be up or down

from the Mira board. If there are alpha pieces on Mira, these are moved according to alpha piece rules: across the board only. That is, until they become beta pieces when they must move up or down from Mira.

A c(c) piece is the only piece that can capture any opposing piece. A c(c) piece can capture an opposing piece on any square from any board except Naos. The pieces on Naos cannot be captured. The piece so captured is removed from the game and plays no further part.

After a c(c) piece has captured another piece, it becomes a a(a) piece.

Exoteric Game Object:

The simplest form of the game is for one player to occupy certain squares on Mira, of a pattern decided by both players beforehand. A suggested pattern for winning is given in [Figure 3](#).

Thus, the player has to place three of their alpha pieces in the pattern given.

The first player to achieve this pattern (within the three move Mira limit) wins. Note that c(c) pieces can capture pieces on Mira.

Exoteric Rule Variations:

To initially make the game easier to learn, and play, two variations are suggested. The first is to amend the three move Mira limit - to five, or seven, moves. This makes the game much easier.

The second is not to allow the c(c) piece to capture pieces on Mira. This makes the game very easy indeed.

Star Game: Brief Guide to Esoteric Meanings

Aeonic:

1) The seven boards can represent the origin, and change, of one particular Aeon. That is, each board - each sphere - is an aspect of that particular Aeon. Sirius represents the origin, and Naos, the end of the Aeon. The pieces symbolize causal-acausal, and the presencing of the acausal. Or in more mundane terms, archetypes.

Thus, the present Western Aeon can be symbolized, and the future ascertained - or changed, if the game is used in a Magickal way by an Adept.

2) The seven boards can also represent the seven Aeons, with Sirius being the Sumeric - the first Aeon - and Rigel the present Western Aeon. Thus, the Next Aeon, the galactic, can be studied, understood and perchance brought into being/changed.

(See [Aeonic Magick - A Basic Introduction](#) for brief details about the seven Aeons of septenary tradition.)

The initial placing of the pieces is the key to representing both of the above, and such placings are taught to Initiates of the Sinister way.

Individual:

The boards can also represent *one* individual. The pieces then represent aspects of the consciousness - the life - of the individual. The alpha pieces are concerned with the "ego"; the beta pieces with "self"; and the gamma pieces with Adeptship and beyond.

The alpha set represents "feeling"; the beta set "intuition"; and the gamma set "thinking", broadly as those terms are defined by Jung. Each board represents that aspect of the individual associated with that sphere: thus, Sirius represents the "Moon" aspect (Night; Calcination; Aries; Nox and so on), and Mira the "Sun" aspect (Putrefaction; Lux; Vision). See the [Septenary Correspondences](#) (more details of these Correspondences are given in NAOS).

In one very important way, the pieces and the boards represent the esoteric path to Wisdom: to self-understanding, and the creation of a new being.

The initial placing of the pieces is usually done to represent the individual in the present, as they are now, and this placing is an esoteric skill, learned through study and practice.

Note: The above is the general, or simple, form of The Star Game. A more advanced Game exists, with each board having six (minor) boards (three at each end), and there being additional pieces (more sets of nine for each player: often 81 pieces per player; sometimes more), with additional rules regarding movement. In this advanced form, each board is divided into three other levels so that there are four levels to each board:



Level three consists of six squares, three white and three black; level 2b is a single square; level 2a is the same as level three: three black and three white squares.

This document was compiled from ONA manuscripts including *Naos: A Practical Guide to Modern Magick*

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The file *file:///E:/o9a-pdf/essential-o9a/ona-eulalia.pdf* is a secure document that has been embedded in this document. Double click the pushpin to view.



The ONA Deofel Quartet



Included here is the complete **Deofel Quartet**. Also included is the additional instructional text *Breaking the Silence Down*, which makes the Quartet into the Deofel Quintet.

All the texts here have been corrected, by AL, in 119 Year of Feyen, to remove most of the many scanning errors, and typos, which are still prevalent in all other editions.

Most of the items are in pdf format, the files varying in size from 100 Kb to nearly 400 Kb.

[The Magickal Art of the Deofel Quintet](#)

[Introduction to the Deofel Quartet](#)

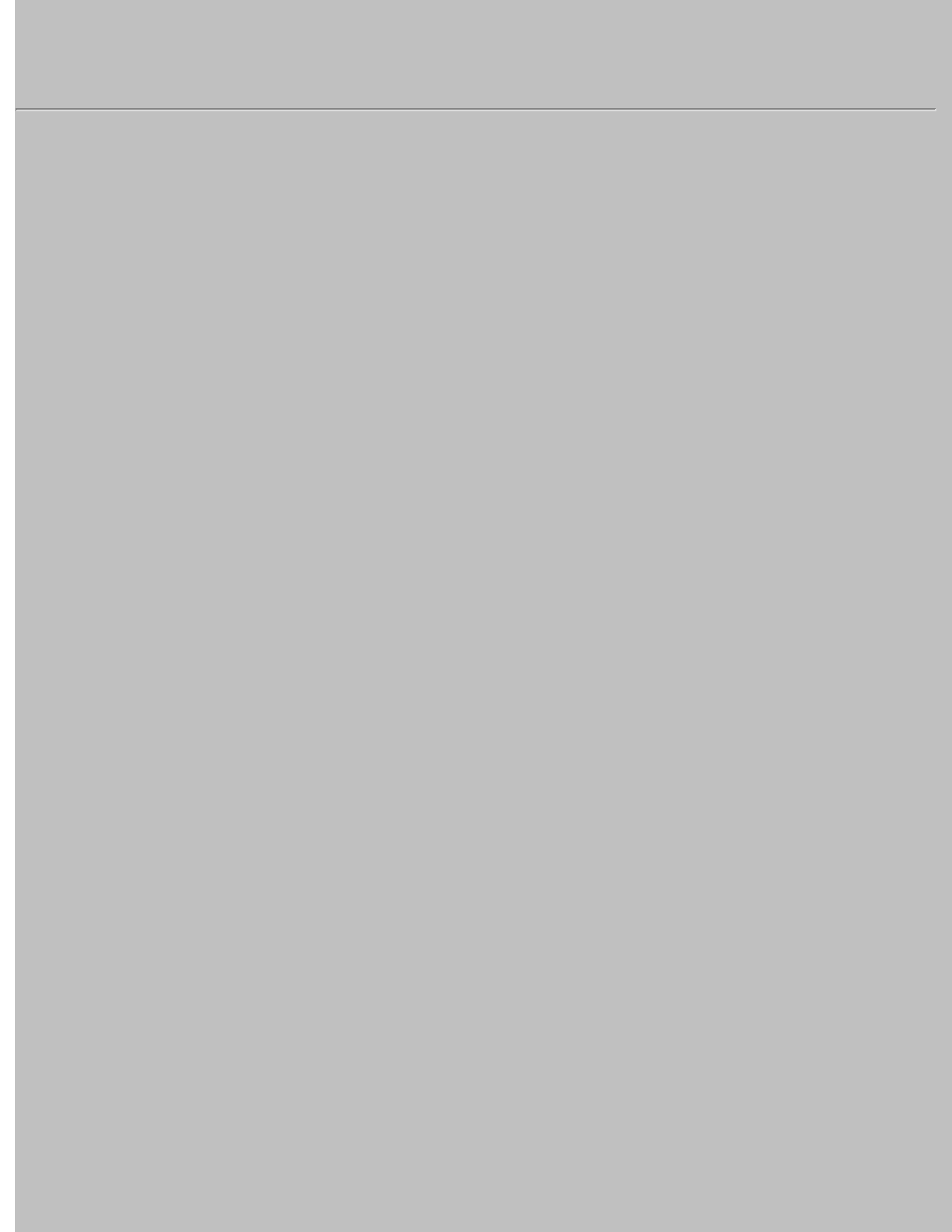
[Deofel I Falcifer: Lord of Darkness](#)

[Deofel II The Temple of Satan](#)

[Deofel III The Giving](#)

[Deofel IV The Greyling Owl](#)

[Deofel V Breaking the Silence Down](#)





An Introduction to Insight Rôles:

Order of Nine Angles

Part One: Personal Insight Rôles

Insight Rôles are a necessary part of the Seven Fold Way. Every Initiate has to undertake at least one Insight Rôle following their Initiation [see the *Complete Guide to the Seven-Fold Way*]. This Insight Rôle - which must last a minimum of one year (that is, in this instance for one particular and specific alchemical season) - should be chosen so that the task undertaken is in most ways the opposite of the character of the Initiate. The Initiate is expected to be honest in assessing their own character, as they are expected to find a suitable Insight Rôle for themselves, either a personal Insight Rôle, or an Aeonie one, and this assessment and this finding are esoterically worthwhile tasks in themselves.

Thus, an individual who found it difficult to accept authority - a rebel by nature - might choose, as a personal Insight Rôle, the task of joining and serving in the Police or the Armed Forces, just as someone who loved the pleasures of the flesh, and violence, might choose to become a Buddhist, or other type of, monk. Similarly, someone who considered themselves honest might choose to turn to a life of crime, and organize a criminal gang to relieve suitable victims (see the sinister guidelines re victims) of some property or other assets. Or they might become a drug dealer, or a supplier of drugs. Another Insight Rôle would be for someone without any interest in politics or an inclination to violence, to become involved with an extremist political organization (either of what is conventionally - non-esoterically - described as "the extreme Left" or "the extreme Right"), and aid that organization in practical ways. Yet another Insight Rôle would be to assume the character of an assassin and cull those detrimental to the aims of the ONA. A personal Insight Rôle suitable to someone who was not particularly interested in social occasions (and who was somewhat shy by nature), might be to organize an "escort agency" or run a brothel in a suitable area; another might be for them to embark, alone, upon a journey around the world.

Let us consider, as an example, the task of some Initiate becoming a Buddhist monk for a year. The Initiate must convince those in authority in the chosen monastery that they are sincere. This requires a study of Buddhism; it requires the Initiate to undertake Buddhist meditation. The Initiate must then succeed in gaining admittance, and once admitted, must live in a Buddhist way: that is, observing the tenets of Buddhism, however hard this might be.

One thing which is important about Insight Rôles is that the individual Initiate undertaking them is forbidden from telling anyone - however close a friend - why they are doing what they are doing. This applies to partners/spouses. The Initiate must appear committed to the chosen task, as they must live that task for at least a year: they must identify with the rôle they have chosen.

Some of the best Insight Rôles are those which aid the sinister dialectic: that is, the deeds done achieve sinister aims as well as enhance the experience of the Initiate. Such Insight Rôles include aiding political (and some religious) forms; doing practical deeds which aid the breakdown of society - such as certain "crimes" (and dealing in drugs), covert activity, assassinating suitable opfers, and so on. Insight Rôles which aid the sinister dialectic can be suggested by the person who is guiding the Initiate (if they have such an ONA guide) or they can be deduced, by the Initiate, from a study of the aims of the ONA and a study of the sinister dialectic itself. Indeed, such a deduction by the Initiate is a worthwhile learning in itself.

An Insight Rôle is only valid - that is, only achieves what it is supposed to achieve in terms of evolving the Initiate - if it is maintained for at least one year, and if the Initiate really does accept the restrictions, the ways, the rules, which are or may be applicable to the task or way of life chosen. If an Initiate cheats in some way, they are only cheating themselves. Thus they are expected to keep their own personal and esoteric aim hidden, while maintaining the "outward personality" appropriate to their chosen rôle. For many people, this can be difficult - which is intentional - as it can also lead some individuals to begin to identify with their rôle, and thus renounce their Sinister quest, in which case, they have failed this particular test of the Sinister Way, which test, in the case of all Insight Rôles, lasts for a particular alchemical season, or more.

If an Initiate considers it might be worthwhile, they can undertake a second Insight Rôle some months after completing their first, with this new Insight Rôle involving a different way of life than their first.

In addition to Initiates, Internal Adepts are advised to undertake an Insight Rôle, one or two years after they have completed the rite of Internal Adept. The Insight Rôle of an Internal Adept, however, must have an Aeonic aspect.

Part Two: Aeonic Insight Rôles

Introduction:

As it is stated above:

Some of the best Insight Rôles are those which aid the sinister dialectic: that is, the deeds done achieve sinister aims as well as enhance the experience of the Initiate.

As mentioned below:

One of our aims as an esoteric Order is to continue our evolution through creating a higher, more evolved, type of human being - a strong, independent, warrior-like, individual. *This individual is the antithesis of the denizens of The State* - of the individual in thrall to Old Aeon abstractions and ideas - and in this truth is the essence of the understanding required to appreciate, and know, the current situation vis-a-vis Aeonics and sinister strategy.

The Current Situation

In order to determine the Aeonic aspect to Insight Rôles it is necessary to understand the current situation that exists in the world, and this esoteric understanding is, currently, itself heretical in all of those countries that make up what has been called "The West". In addition, this esoteric understanding is, of necessity, independent of "politics" (however conventionally described) although it is only to be expected that the majority of non-Initiates will not comprehend this, and will thus and rather stupidly label this esoteric understanding by some Old Aeon term of other, just as they will most probably continue in their supine ignorance to describe those who possess such an Initiated understanding by some epithet or other.

This esoteric and Initiated understanding is one of dominance by the so-called "New World Order", which basically means the domination of the Magian. This domination over the West - and increasingly other countries - is essentially that of what is often euphemistically called "Zionism" with the reality that most nations in the West are covertly ruled by a Zionist Occupation Government (ZOG).

This situation has arisen from two factors. First, the covert introduction into the societies of the West of Marxist, and Marxist-sociological, values and ideas, Second, from the military and economic dominance of America which is all but now controlled by Zionist interests. In respect of the the introduction of Marxism, the societies of the West have been steadily "socially engineered", through laws, through the power of the Media, through government schemes, and through indoctrination spread especially by teachers in Schools and Universities. This "social engineering" has been to produce - and has produced - a plebeian society (lacking in honour and true excellence) and tyrannical governments who rule by that organized protection racket known as State and government taxes, and by the rule of an ignoble and abstract law, which abstract law is the antithesis of the warrior law of personal honour.

The reality is that a world-wide capitalist tyranny has been created, with the peoples of the West made for the most part docile through materialism and "entertainment" and "sport" and "personal pursuits",

with their opinions formed for them by The State, its educational system, politicians, and the Media - especially television and newspapers. The individual has become subservient to The State in thought, word and deed. Basically, the individual is now mostly powerless before the might of The State.

Of course, the majority do not see this, duped as they are and have been by The System with its trickery of "democracy" and "rights". In addition, some dissent and "rebellion" is allowed, and even encouraged - so long as it does not threaten in any real way the ideas and the control of The System. Those individuals, groups, organizations who do or who may pose a serious threat to The System are dealt with, often by those organizations being outlawed, and their leaders and members being tried according to some tyrannical State law and put into prison for a long time.

The System - having made itself secure among The States of the West - has recently embarked on the next part of the plan, which is to create a new Empire to ensure the material wealth and military superiority of its leading lackey government, that of the America. To this end, countries have been invaded, and sanctions used to bring others under control.

The System and its lackey States are a serious threat to our evolution - to the creation of free, strong, independent human beings. The System wants - and even demands - that we are or become subservient, to its ways, its laws, its sociological ideas, to the basic materialistic animalistic way of life it allows for its "citizens", a way devoid of real adventure, real challenges, real numinosity. This way is the way of the sub-human.

One of our aims as an esoteric Order is to continue our evolution through creating a higher, more evolved, type of human being - a strong, independent, warrior-like, individual. *This individual is the antithesis of the denizens of The State* - of the individual in thrall to Old Aeon abstractions and ideas - and in this truth is the essence of the understanding required to appreciate, and know, the current situation vis-a-vis Aeonics and sinister strategy.

For this aim of a new human type to be achieved, we must break-down and indeed destroy the States that make up The System, the New World Order (NWO), as we must challenge the enervating ideas, the enervating ways, of The System, and replace them with our own life-enhancing ideas and ways.

If The System is not destroyed, then our evolution will be stifled, and our promise - the greatness, Destiny and glories which await among the Cosmos - will remain unfulfilled.

To destroy The System both magickal and practical *action* is required, by individuals, and groups. Thus, any group or individual which is engaged in *practical* action against The System with the purpose of destroying it and challenging its ideas is interesting from the point of view of the Sinister Dialectic and those undertaking an Aeonic Insight Rôle.

Some Suggested Aeonic Insight Rôles

The following are some suggested Aeonic Insight Rôles, based on a knowledge of the sinister dialectic and the situation as exists at the time of writing (114yf). Some of these suggested Insight Rôles are

relatively easy; some are especially hard and dangerous, and thus suited only to the most daring and sinister individuals.

- (1) Join or form a covert insurrectionary political organization - either of the so-called "extreme Left" or of the "extreme Right" - whose avowed aim is to undermine by practical, revolutionary, means the current Western *status quo*.
- (2) Undertake the role of assassin, selecting as your opfers those who publicly support or aid, ZOG, the NWO, The System.
- (3) Convert to Islam and aid, through words, or deeds, or both, those undertaking Jihad against Zionism and the NWO.
- (4) Join or form an *active* anarchist organization or group dedicated to fighting the capitalist System.
- (5) Join or form a National Socialist group or organization, and aid that organization, and especially aid and propagate "historical revisionism".

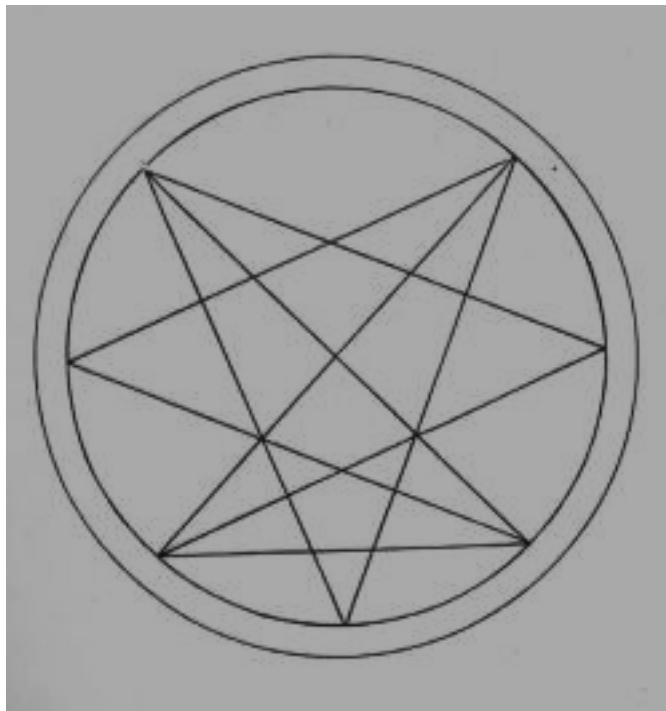
Recommend Reading

- 1) *Notes on Insight Rôles*, ONA Ms 114yf
- 2) *Insight Rôles - A Guide*, ONA Ms 1989 ev [superceded by (1)]
- 3) *Insight Rôles, The Secret Guide*, ONA Ms 1985 ev [superceded by (1)]
- 4) *The Sinister Dialectic*, ONA Ms
- 5) *Aeonic Magick - A Basic Introduction*, ONA Ms
- 6) *Aims of the ONA*, ONA Ms 1994 eh
- 7) *ONA Insight Rôles: An Introduction*, ONA Ms, 114yf

Order of Nine Angles
119 Year of Fayen

The Order of Nine Angles

BLACK BOOK OF SATAN



(Note: There may be some scanning errors in the text)

The Black Book of Satan

According to tradition, each Master or Mistress who was responsible for a particular Satanic Temple or group, was given on his or her assumption of that responsibility, a copy of the Black Book of Satan. The Black Book contained the basic Satanic rituals, instructions relating to ceremonial magick in general. It was the duty of the Master or Mistress to keep this book safe, and non-Initiates of the Temple were forbidden to see it. Copies were forbidden to be made, although Initiates above the grade of External Adept were allowed to see and read the Temple copy.

In traditional Satanism (i.e. those using the Septenary System: this system also being known as the

Hebdomadry) this practice continued until quite recently when the Grand Master representing traditional groups decided to allow Initiates of good standing to copy the work. This decision was recently extended to enable specialist publication in a limited edition.

The whole text of the traditional Black Book is included in the present work, together with several additional chapters

(e.g. Self-Initiation; Organizing and Running a Temple). These additions make this present work a concise practical handbook for those seriously interested in the Black Arts.

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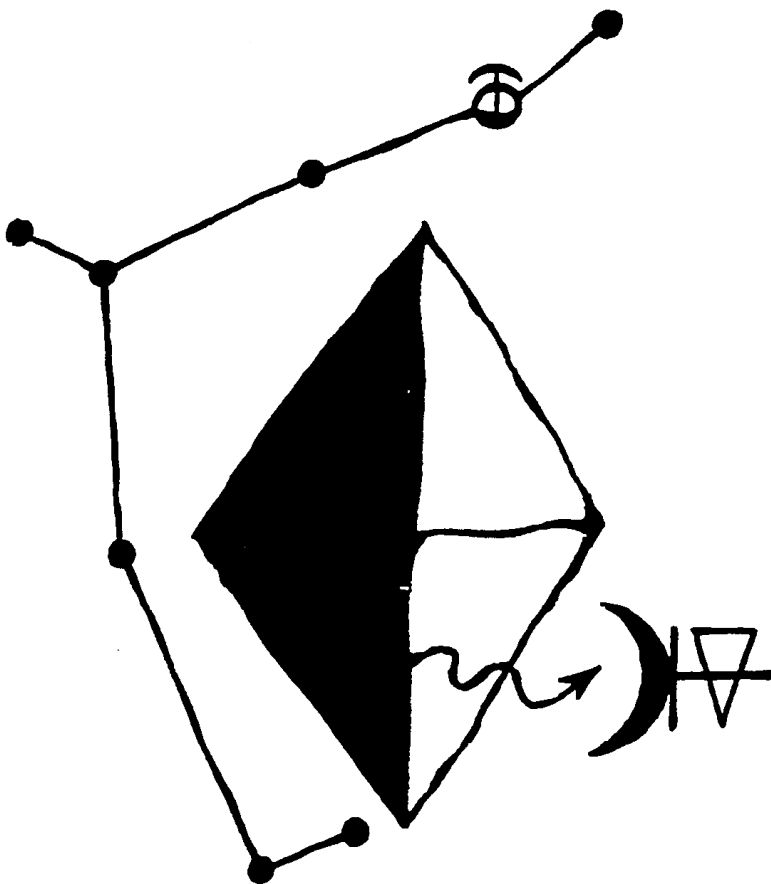
XV: Organising and Running Satanic Temples

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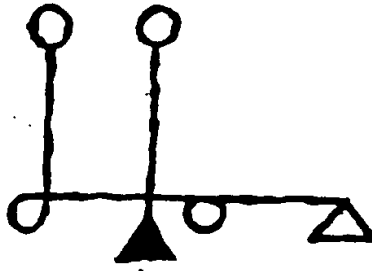
Appendix I: A Satanic Blessing

Appendix II: The Sinister Creed

Appendix III: Initiate Names



PART ONE:



Satanic Rites & Practices

The 21 Satanic Points

1. Respect not pity or weakness, for they are a disease which makes sick the strong.
2. Test always your strength, for therein lies success.
3. Seek happiness in victory - but never in peace.
4. Enjoy a short rest, better than a long.
5. Come as a reaper, for thus you will sow.
6. Never love anything so much you cannot see it die.
7. Build not upon sand, but upon rock And build not for today or yesterday but for all time.
8. Strive ever for more, for conquest is never done.
9. And die rather than submit.
10. Forge not works of art but swords of death, for therein lies great art.

11. Learn to raise yourself above yourself so you can triumph over all.
12. The blood of the living makes good fertilizer for the seeds of the new.
13. He who stands atop the highest pyramid of skulls can see the furthest.
14. Discard not love but treat it as an imposter, but ever be just.
15. All that is great is built upon sorrow.
16. Strive not only forwards, but upwards for greatness lies in the highest.
17. Come as a fresh strong wind that breaks yet also creates.
18. Let love of life be a goal but let your highest goal be greatness.
19. Nothing is beautiful except man: but most beautiful of all is woman.
20. Reject all illusion and lies, for they hinder the strong.
21. What does not kill, makes stronger.

I

What is Satanism?

Satanism is fundamentally a way of living - a practical philosophy of life. The essence of this way is the belief that we can all, as individuals, achieve far more with our lives than we realize. Most people waste the opportunities that life can, by magick, be made to bring.

Satanic magick is simply the use of magickal forces or energies to enhance the life of an individual or individuals according to their desires. This usage can be of two types - the first is 'external' and the second is 'internal'. External magick is essentially sorcery: the changing of external events, circumstances or individuals in accordance with the wishes of the sorcerer. Internal magick is the changing of the consciousness of the individual magician using certain magickal techniques -this is essentially the quest of the Initiate for the higher grades of magickal attainment, a following of the way of Adeptship.

To external magick belongs ceremonial and hermetic rituals. To internal magick belongs the seven-fold sinister way. Ceremonial rituals are rituals involving more than two individuals, the ritual taking place in either a Temple or an outdoor area consecrated as a Temple. Ceremonial rituals involve a set text which is followed by the participants, and the wearing of ceremonial robes together with the use of certain items having magickal or Occult significance. Hermetic rituals are usually undertaken by an individual working alone or with one assistant/ companion. This present work deals with Satanic ceremonial magick: Satanic hermetic and internal magick is dealt with in the book 'NAOS - A Practical Guide to Sinister Hermetic Magick'.

Satanism, in its beginnings, is all about making conscious (or liberating) our dark or shadow nature, and to this end, Satanic magick is undertaken. Satanists believe that we are already gods: but most people fail to understand this and continue to grovel: to others or to a 'god'. The Satanist is proud, strong and defiant and detests the religion of the crucified god founded by the Nazarene, Yeshua. A Nazarene (a follower of Yeshua) is afraid of dying and weighed down by guilt and envy. The religion of Yeshua has inverted all natural values, setting back the course of our conscious evolution. Satanism, on the contrary, is a natural expression of the evolutionary or 'Promethean' urge within us: and its magick is a means to make us gods upon Earth, to realize the potential that lies within us all.

Satanic ceremonies are a means to enjoy the pleasures of life: they offer carnality, the pleasure of

fulfilling one's desires, the bringing of material and personal rewards and the joys of darkness. But they are only a beginning, a stage toward something greater. It is one of the purposes of a Satanic Temple to guide those Initiates who may be interested along the difficult and dangerous path which is the seven fold way. Those who do not wish to follow this path to Adeptship and beyond should simply enjoy the many pleasures which the Prince of Darkness offers to those who by a Satanic Initiation wish to follow His philosophy of living.

In traditional Satanism there is an appreciation of the role of women, for Satanism at its highest level is concerned with the development of the individual: roles as such are a necessary part of self-development. To be played, discarded and then transcended. The structure of traditional Temples and the rituals performed by those members of those Temples reflect this appreciation and understanding. For example, it is possible and indeed desirable for a Mistress of Earth to establish and :: organize her own Temple unless she herself wishes otherwise, just as it is possible and desirable to celebrate the Black Mass using a priest, naked, upon the altar while the Priestess conducts the service, such reversal being an accepted principle of Black Magick.

II The Temple

Satanic rites are conducted either in an indoor Temple or in an isolated outdoor locality during the hours of darkness. Indoor Temples usually have a static altar, made of either stone or wood, and this altar should be set in the East. It should be covered by an altar cloth made of good quality material and coloured black. Upon this is woven either an inverted pentagram, the septenary sigil or the personal sigil of the Master/Mistress or Temple if there is one. Candle-holders, made of either silver or gold, are placed on the altar, one at either end. Black candles are usually the most employed although some rituals require the use of other colours.

Other candleholders should be placed around the Temple, since the only light used in the Temple both during rituals and at other times should come from candles. The Black Book should be placed on an oak stand on the altar, the altar itself being of sufficient size for an individual to lie upon it. Indoor Temples should be painted either black or crimson (or a combination of the two), the floor bare or covered with rugs or carpets of plain design, either black or crimson. When not in use, the Temple should be kept dark and warm, hazel incense being burned frequently. A quartz sphere or large crystal should be kept in the Temple, either in or near the altar: if near, supported by an oak stand.

Above the altar or behind it should be an image or sculpture of Baphomet according to Satanic Tradition. Baphomet is regarded by Satanists as a 'violent goddess' and is depicted as a beautiful woman, seated, who is naked from the waist up. In her left hand she holds the severed head of a man. In her other hand she holds a burning torch. The severed head, which drips blood onto her lower white garment, is held so that it partially obscures her smiling face. Baphomet is regarded as the archetype of the Mistress of Earth, and the Bride of Lucifer.

No other furnishings are present in the Temple. The Temple implements are few in number and should be either made or commissioned by the Master or Mistress. If this is not possible, they should be chosen by them with care. The implements required are several large silver chalices, a Censor (or

incense holders), a quartz tetrahedron, a large silver bowl, and the Sacrificial Knife which should have a wooden handle. These implements may be kept on the altar if it is large enough, or wrapped in black cloth and kept in an oak chest.

No one is allowed into the Temple unless they are dressed in ceremonial robes and barefoot. The robes are generally black with a hood, although some rituals require the use of other colours. If possible, an ante-chamber should be used by members to change into the ceremonial robes.

If an outdoor location is used, the area should be marked out by a circle of seven stones, by the Master or Mistress. An outdoor altar is usually the body of one of the participants - naked or robed depending on the ritual and the prevailing conditions. The one chosen for this honour lies on an altar cloth, black in colour and woven with an inverted pentagram, the size of this cloth being not less than seven feet by three.

Candles should be placed in lanterns which open on one side only, this side being of glass which is often coloured red. The participants should know the area well, since they should not use any artificial light of any kind including candles, to guide them to the chosen site. Neither must any fires be lit during any ritual. For this reason the night of the full moon is often chosen

Both indoor Temples and outdoor areas chosen for rituals should be consecrated according to the rite of Temple consecration. When any ritual of Satanic magick is undertaken, no attempt should be made in any way to banish the magickal forces - what forces or energies remain following a ritual are to remain, since they dedicate the area or Temple still further to the powers of Darkness.

Preparation for Rituals:

The Master or Mistress should chose one member to act as 'Altar Brother or Sister'. It is the duty of this member to ensure that the Temple is prepared - for example, lighting the candles, filling the chalices with wine, incensing prior to the ritual.

It is the duty of the Master and Mistress to prepare the members for the ritual. This usually involves them assembling in robes in the Temple or in an ante-chamber designated as a preparation area at least half of one hour before the beginning of the ritual. During this period they are to keep their silence while standing, concentrating on the image of Baphomet or some sigil (such as an inverted pentagram) as decreed by the Master or Mistress.

One or several members should be chosen to act as Cantor and instructed in the proper chanting of the chants. Other members may be chosen as musicians - the preferred instruments being tabor (or hand-drum) or flute.

III Ceremonial Rituals

Ceremonial rituals, as given here, are conducted for basically two reasons: to generate magickal energy (and thus direct that energy to achieve a magickal goal or desire) and for the benefit of the participating congregation. The benefits the congregation derive from a successfully conducted ritual of Black Magick are many and varied: there are the carnal ones, the material ones and the spiritual ones.

To be successful, a ceremonial ritual must be both dramatic and emotional. That is, the right

atmosphere has to be created and maintained. The object is to involve the emotions of the congregation, and all the many ritualized elements (e.g. the robes and the candles) are a means to aid this. However, the single most important element is the power of the voice, whether spoken, chanted, vibrated or sung. (See the chapter on 'Magickal Vibration' for one aspect of this.)

When you are conducting a ceremonial ritual you must use the set texts and chants (such as the Satanic Our Father, the Diabolus) as a means of gradually working yourself into an emotional but still controlled frenzy. It is no use just saying the correct words - they must be spoken or chanted with a Satanic desire - and the emotion once brought must be sustained until the ritual is over. This does not mean simply acting: it means actually becoming the role you assume, that of a powerful sorcerer or sorceress. And this feeling must be communicated to the audience: by voice, gestures eyes and so on. Ceremonial Magick is and always has been an Art, and to master this Art takes practice.

However, you (and the person working as Mistress/Master or Priestess/Priest) must always remain in control of your emotions stopping just short of possession. This also means that each and every ritual must be undertaken without fear or doubt (not even unconscious fear or doubt) - that is, in the true spirit of Satanic pride and mastery: with an exultation in the forces conjured forth.

In most ceremonial rituals it is one of the tasks of the congregation to abandon themselves to their lusts and frenzy, but you as ceremonial Master/Mistress cannot do this since you must control and direct all the energies which are brought forth via the ritual and the frenzy produced. It is up to you to initiate the emotion in the Temple, to cultivate its development in the congregation, to get them to reach a ritual frenzy and climax. And then the energy must be controlled - towards a specific magickal aim or dispersed by you into the Temple/surrounding area and left to dissipate/spread according to its nature and to the glory of the Prince of Darkness.

To direct the energy, you must before the ritual choose a specific desire or aim (either your own or as a favour to one of the members). This aim (for example, it might be to harm a specific individual) must be enshrined in both a simple phrase and a simple visualization according to the principles of hermetic magick. The visualization should be of the successful outcome desired - however, if this proves difficult, concentrate solely on the phrase. This phrase, which should be succinct, should then and by you prior to the ritual, be written on a piece of parchment - you could use a 'secret script' of your own devising or one of the magickal ones in general use. You then burn this parchment at the climax of the ritual: at a point you feel is right. To do this, fill the silver bowl with spirit, place the parchment in this at the beginning of the ritual, and light it using one of the candles during the ritual. While it burns shout/chant/vibrate your chosen phrase, visualizing your desire according to the visualization chosen (if you wish to and can include the visualization part). Then exult in the triumph of your desire. Follow this with continuing the ritual to its ceremonial end.

To disperse the energy, just imagine it (as, for example, filaments) surrounding the Temple and gradually creeping outwards. You may also (for example in an Initiation ritual) direct the energy into an individual who is present (in that ritual, by using a sigil and a chant.).

IV

The Black Mass

Introduction:

The Black Mass is a ceremonial ritual with a threefold purpose. First, it is a positive inversion of the mass of the Nazarene church, and in this sense is a rite Black Magick (see the 'Guide to Black Magick'). Second it is a means of personal liberation from the chains of Nazarene dogma and thus a blasphemy: a ritual to liberate unconscious feelings. Third, it is a magickal rite in itself, that is, correct performance generates magickal energy which the celebrant can direct.

The Black Mass has been greatly misunderstood. It is not simply an inversion of Nazarene symbolism and words - when a Nazarene mass is celebrated (as occurs every day, many times, throughout the world) certain energies or vibrations compatible with the Nazarene ethos may or may not be generated, depending on the circumstances and the individuals attending. That is, under certain circumstances, the Nazarene mass can be a ritual of 'white magic': the energies that are sometimes produced being produced because a number of individuals of like mind are gathered together in ritualized setting; there is nothing in the production of energies which is attributable to external agencies (e.g. 'god').

What a genuine Black Mass does is 'tune into' those energies and then alter them in a sinister way. This occurs during the 'consecration' part of the Black Mass. The Black Mass also generates its own forms of (sinister) energy.

To see the Black Mass as simply a mockery is to misunderstand its magick. Also, the Black Mass does not require those who conduct it or participate in it to believe or accept Nazarene theology: it simply means that the participants accept that others, who attend Nazarene masses, do believe in at least to some degree in Nazarene theology - the Black Mass uses the energy produced by those beliefs against those who believe in them, by distorting that energy, and sometimes redirecting it. This is genuine Black Magick.

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Participants:

Altar Priest - lies naked upon altar

Priestess - in white robes

Mistress of Earth - in scarlet robes

Master - in purple robes

Congregation - in black robes

Setting:

Usually an indoor Temple. If outdoors, clearings in forests or woods are suitable. Caves are ideal. The reason for such Outdoor settings are to provide an impression of 'enclosure'.

Versions:

The Black Mass exists in several versions. The one given below is the version most often used today. The other main version uses almost the same text, but is undertaken by a Priest using a naked Priestess on the altar.

Preparation of the Temple:

Hazel incense to be burnt (if obtainable, the hazel is mingled with civit). Several chalices full of strong

wine. Black candles. Several patens (of silver if possible) containing the consecrated cakes - these are baked the night before by the Priestess and blessed (i.e. dedicated to the Prince of Darkness - see chapter of Chants) by the Mistress of Earth. The cakes consist of honey, spring water, sea salt, wheat flour, eggs and animal fat. One paten is set aside for the ritual hosts. These should be obtained from a Nazarene place of worship - but if this is not possible, they are made by the Priestess if imitation of them (unleavened white hosts).

The Mass

The Priestess signifies the beginning of the Mass by clapping her hands together twice. The Mistress of Earth turns to the congregation, makes the sign of the inverted pentagram with her left hand, saying:

I will go down to the altars in Hell.

The Priestess responds by saying:

To Satan, the giver of life.

All:

Our Father which wert in heaven hallowed be thy name In heaven as it is on Earth.
Give us this day our ecstasy
And deliver us to evil as well as temptation
For we are your kingdom for aeons and aeons.

Master:

May Satan the all-powerful Prince of Darkness
And Lord of Earth
Grant us our desires.

All:

Prince of Darkness, hear us!
I believe in one Prince, Satan, who reigns over this Earth,
And in one Law, Chaos, which triumphs over all.
And I believe in one Temple
Our Temple to Satan, and in one Word which dwells in us all:
The Word of ecstasy.
And I believe in the Law of the Aeon,
Which is sacrifice, and in the letting of blood
For which I shed no tears since I give praise to my Prince
The fire-giver and look forward to his reign
And the pleasures that are to come!

The Mistress kisses the Master, then turns to the congregation, saying:
May Satan be with you.

Master:
Veni, omnipotens aeternae diabolus!

Mistress:
By the word of the Prince of Darkness, I give praise to you

(She kisses the lips of the altar-Priest)

My Prince, bringer of light, darkness and fire, I greet you
Who cause us to struggle and seek the forbidden thoughts.

(The Master repeats the 'Veni' chant)

Mistress:
Blessed are the strong for they shall inherit the Earth.

(She kisses the chest of the altar-Priest)

Blessed are the proud for they shall breed gods!

(She kisses the penis of the altar-Priest)

Let the humble and the meek die in their misery!

(She kisses the Master who passes the kiss on to the Priestess who kisses each member of the congregation. After this, she hands the paten containing the 'hosts' to the Mistress. The Mistress holds the paten over the altar-Priest, saying:)

Praised are you, my Prince and lover, by the strong:
Through our evil we have this dirt; by our boldness and Strength, it will become for us a joy in this life.

All:
Hail Satan, Prince of life !

(The Mistress places the paten on the body of the altar-Priest, saying quietly:)

Suscipe, Satanas, munus quad tibi offerimus memoriam Recolentes vindex.

(The Priestess, quietly saying 'Sanctissimi Corporis Satanas', begins to masturbate the altar-Priest. As she does, the congregation begin to clap their hands and shout in encouragement while the Master and the Mistress chant the 'Veni' chant. The Priestess allows the semen to fall upon the 'hosts', then hands the paten to the Mistress who holds it up before the congregation saying to them:)

May the gifts of Satan be forever with you.

All:

As they are with you!

(The Mistress returns the paten to the body of the altar-Priest, takes up one of the chalices, saying:)

Praised are you, my Prince, by the defiant: through our Arrogance and pride
We have this drink: let it become for us an elixir of life.

(She sprinkles some of the wine over the altar-Priest and towards the congregation, then returns the chalice to the altar, saying to the congregation:)

With pride in my heart I give praise to those who drove
The nails
And he who thrust the spear into the body of Yeshua,
The imposter.
May his followers rot in their rejection and filth!

(The Master addresses the congregation saying:)

Do you renounce Yeshua, the great deciever, and all his works

All:

We do renounce the Nazarene Yeshua, the great deceiver
And all his works.

Master:

Do you affirm Satan?

All:

We do affirm Satan!

(The Master begins to vibrate 'Agios o Satanas' while the Mistress picks up the paten with the 'hosts' and

turns to the congregation, saying:)

I who am the joys and pleasures of life which strong men
Have forever sought, am come to give you my body and my blood.

(She gives the paten to the Priestess, then removes the robe of the Priestess, saying:)

Remember, all you gathered here, nothing is beautiful except Man:
But most beautiful of all is Woman.

(The Priestess gives the paten back to the Mistress, then takes the chalices and consecrated cakes to the congregation who eat and drink. When all have finished, the Mistress holds up the paten, saying:)

Behold, the dirt of the earth which the humble will eat!

(The congregation laughs while the Mistress flings the 'hosts' at them which they trample underfoot while the Master continues with the 'Agius o Satanus' vibration. The Mistress claps her hands three times to signal to the congregation. She then says:

Dance, I command you!

(The congregation then begin a dance, counter sunwise, chanting 'Satan! Satan!' while they dance. The Priestess catches them one by one, kisses the person caught and then removes their robe after which they return to the dance. The Mistress stands in the centre of the dancers, and uplifting her arms, says:)

Let the church of the imposter Yeshua crumble into dust
Let all the scum who worship the rotting fish suffer and die in their misery and rejection!
We trample on them and spit of their sin!
Let there be ecstasy and darkness; let there be chaos and laughter,
Let there be sacrifice and strife: but above all let us enjoy
The gifts of life!

(She signals to the Priestess who stops the dancer of her choice. The congregation then pair off, and the orgy of lust begins. The Mistress helps the altar-Priest down from the altar, and he joins in the festivities if he wishes.)

Should the Master and Mistress wish, the energies of the ritual are then directed by them towards a specific intention.

NOTES: During the 'consecration' of the 'hosts', the Master may opt to say the following quietly (leaving the Veni chant to the Mistress):

Muem suproc mine tse cob

He then takes up the chalice, saying:

Murotaccep menoissimer ni rutednuffe sitlum orp iuq iedif muiretsym itnematsset inreteia ivon iem
siniugnas xilac mine tse cih.

It is this chalice which the Mistress then takes to sprinkle the altar-Priest. The above words are usually printed on a small card which is placed on the altar before the Mass begins: the Master using the card when the above is spoken.

As with all ceremonial rituals, it is helpful if all participants know from memory the content and spoken text. It is important that this is done and that the ritual, when undertaken, follows the text on every occasion. The ritual then is more effective as a ritual, enabling the participants to be both more relaxed and more able to enter into the spirit of the rite.

V

The Ceremony of Birth

Setting:

Indoor Temple, or outdoor area previously used for rituals.

Participants:

Master - black robes tied with crimson girdle

Mistress - black robes tied with crimson sash

Priestess - white robes tied with black sash

Priest - white robes tied with black girdle

Congregation (if present): black robes

Preparation:

Black candles on altar together with quartz crystal or tetrahedron. Phial of musk oil (if male child) or civit oil (if female child). Incense of Yew to be burnt (male child) or Black Poplar (female child).

Before the ceremony the parents of the child appoint two Temple Members as guardians of the newborn. They also provide a small pendant made of silver inscribed with an inverted septagon (or sigil of the Temple) which, for the ceremony, they hang around the neck of the newborn on a leather thong. When the child is old enough, this can be worn by them all the time. A feast, to follow the ceremony, is prepared. The newborn is brought to the ceremony loosely wrapped in black cloth.

The Ceremony:

The Master signifies the beginning of the rite by ringing the Temple bell seven times. The parents then

hand the newborn to the Priestess if the child is male, and to the Priest if female. The Master then says:

We gather here to welcome the newborn destined to share our gifts.

Mistress: Agios o Satanas!

Congregation: Agios o Satanas!

(The Mistress turns toward the altar, holds her hands outstretched and says quietly but in an audible voice:)

Veni, omnipotens aeterne Diabolus!

(She then turns back to the participants, saying:)

Agios o Baphomet!

Congregation: Agios o Baphomet!

(Note: if no congregation are present the responses are said by the Priestess et al.)

(The Master touches the head of the newborn saying:)

May the gifts of Satan be forever with you, as they are with us.

Pone, diabolus, custodiam. With this mark I seal wyrd.

(The Mistress hands him the phial and he anoints the forehead of the newborn with it in the shape of an inverted pentagram or the sigil of the Temple saying as he does this:)

Ad Satanas qui leatificat juventutem meam.

(He then turns to the parents, saying:)

How is he/she to be known?

(The parents answer, giving the Temple name they have chosen for the newborn:)

We have named him/her

(The Master then says:)

So shall it be. I name you amongst us.

(He then touches the forehead of the newborn, visualizing an inverted pentagram or the sigil of the Temple. As he does this the Mistress says:)

Pone, diabolus, custodiam!

(The Master then turns toward the congregation saying:)

Come forth, guardians of this child.

(The child-guardians step forward. The Master says to them:)

Do you, so chosen, pledge to guard and watch over this newborn and to teach when the teaching-time is right, our ways so that (He states the Temple name of the newborn) may learn our ways?

(The guardians answer: ' We do. 'The Master then turns to the congregation, saying:)

See them! Hear them! Know them!

(The Mistress hands him the phial and he anoints each of their foreheads with the sign of the inverted pentagram or the sigil of the Temple. He then turns toward the congregation saying:)

So it is done according to our ways. Let the feasting begin!

(The participants leave the Temple to partake of the feast -this is provided by members of the Temple, to honour the parents of the newborn, who may also provide gifts for the newborn and the parents.)*

VI The Death Rite

Participants:

Priest - in black robes

Priestess - naked, upon altar

Mistress - crimson robes, sexually alluring

Congregation - black robes tied with crimson cord

Temple Preparation:

Black candles on altar. Small silver Temple bell. Incense of Mars to be used (musk). A small wooden coffin (suitable in size for the wax effigy which will be made), draped in black, is placed near the altar and a handful of graveyard earth is placed on it.

Before the ritual proper begins, the Mistress makes a wax figurine in a corner of the Temple with only the Priestess present. (The easiest way to make the effigy is to place several white candles in a receptacle containing water which has just been boiled. After a while, the wax will form a thin film on the surface. This wax can then be used to fashion, by hand, the figurine which should be made as life-like as possible.) The Priestess lies naked upon the altar. The Mistress places this figurine on the womb of the Priestess, then moves it symbolically downwards to rest between her thighs. She anoints it with a musk based oil, laying: 'I who made you and delivered you in birth now name you N.N.' (She states the full name of the victim.) The Mistress and the Priestess then visualize the figurine as the intended victim - and they may if they wish then dress it as the victim dresses. The image is then placed on the womb of the Priestess, the Mistress ringing the bell thirteen times to signify the beginning of the ritual at which the Priest leads the congregation into the Temple.

The Ritual

Priest:

I will go down to the altars in Hell.

All:

To Satan, the giver of life.

(The Priest then kisses the Priestess on the lips, turns toward the congregation and makes the sign of the inverted pentagram, saying:)

Our Father which wert in heaven ...

(The congregation join him in the Satanic Our Father - see Black Mass for text. The Priest then leads the congregation in saying the Satanic Creed: 'I believe ...' - see text in Black Mass. After the Creed the Priest says:)

Provide us pleasure, Prince of Darkness, and help us fulfil our desires.

(He turns and fondles the Priestess, saying:)

With ecstasy we give praise to our Prince.

(The congregation chant the Sanctus Satanas - see Chants -as the Priest says quietly over the waxen image:)

Sie anod namretae meiuqer.

(He then says loudly, facing the congregation:)

Veni, omnipotens aeterne diabolus!

(The Mistress then says:)

Agios o Satanas!

(To which the congregation respond:)

Agios o Satanas!

Mistress:

Satanas - venire!

All:

Satanas - venire!

Mistress:

Dominus diabolus sabaoth. Tui sunt caeli

All:

Tua est terra!

Mistress:

Ave Satanas!

All:

Ave Satanas!

(The Mistress kisses the Priest. The Priest makes the sign of the inverted pentagram over the congregation, saying:)

We, the spawn of Chaos, curse N.N.

All:

We curse N.N.

Priest:

N.N. will writhe and die

All:

N.N. will writhe and die!

Priest:

By our will, destroyed

All:

By our will, destroyed!

Priest:

Kill and laugh!

All:

Kill and laugh!

Priest:

Kill and laugh and then dance to our Prince

All:

Kill and laugh and then dance to our Prince!

Priest:

N.N. is dying!

All:

N.N. is dying!

Priest:

N.N. is dead!

All:

N.N. is dead

Priest:

We have killed and now glory in the killing!

All:

We have killed and now glory in the killing!

(The Priest laughs, then the congregation laugh, jumping and dancing with glee. They continue until the Mistress rings the bell twice, The Priest points to her. She says:)

The Earth rejects N.N.

All:

You reject N.N.

(The Mistress picks up the image, holds it for the congregation to see and then places it on the graveyard earth, folding the black cloth over it. She places the cloth with the earth and image within it, inside the coffin. She turns to the congregation, saying:)

N.N. is dead.

(The congregation begin to dance, counter sunwise, chanting the Diabolus (see chants).After the chant, they gather round the coffin and the Mistress. The Priest says to them:)

Fratres, ut meum ac vestrum sacrificium acceptabile fiat apud Satanas.

(The Priest has sexual intercourse on the altar with the Priestess while the congregation clap their hands in approval, chanting 'Ave Satanas!' repeatedly as they do so. After the climax, the Priest withdraws, the Mistress kisses the Priestess on the lips and then 'locis muliebribus'. She then kisses each member of the congregation. The Priest, after this, makes the sign of the inverted pentagram over the coffin, saying loudly:)

N.N. is dead and we all have shared in this death. N.N. is dead and we rejoice !

Mistress:

Dignum et justum est.

(The Priest and the congregation laugh. The Mistress then goes toward the Priest, takes his penis in her mouth until he is erect again. Then she stands back to admire her work, saying to the congregation:)

I who bring life, also take.

(She then passes her hands over the coffin, visualizing as she does so, the dead body of N.N. lying in a coffin. She takes up the coffin and leaves the Temple. As she leaves, the Priest says:)

Feast now, and rejoice, for we have killed, doing the work of our Prince!

(He begins the orgy of lust in the Temple. The Mistress takes the coffin to a small grave, outside, prepared beforehand. She places the coffin in Earth, covers it with earth saying: 'N.N. you are dead, now, killed by our curse.' She completes the burial and leaves the area.)

The Pledging

(Note: this is the traditional Satanic wedding ceremony.)

Setting:

Temple - or outdoor area within circle of nine stones.

Participants:

Master - purple robes

Mistress - viridian robes

Priestess and Priest - black robes

Congregation - black robes

(Those who are making their pledge wear crimson robes)

Preparation:

Altar covered with black cloth on which is woven the sigil of the Tree of Wyrd with the connecting paths. Purple candles to be used. Chalices of mead. Silver bowl on altar containing inflammable liquid. Small square of parchment. Sharp knife. Two silver rings, provided by those making their pledge. Ash incense to be burnt.

The-Ceremony

The congregation et al assemble in the Temple: the Master and Mistress standing before the altar with the Priest and Priestess beside them. When all is ready, the Master rings the Temple bell nine times as a signal to the Guardian who leads those desirous of pledging into the Temple where they stand before the altar.

The Master and Mistress greet both with a kiss, saying:

We, Master and Mistress of the Temple greet you.

(The Priestess and the Priest together chant 'Agios o Satanas Agios o Satanas!' This chant is repeated by the congregation. After, the Master says:)

We are gathered here to join in oath through our sinister magick this man and this woman. Together they shall be as inner sancturies to our gods!

(The Mistress turns to the congregation, saying:)

Hail to they who come in the names of our gods! We speak the forbidden names! Agios o Baphomet!

Congregation:

Agios o Baphomet

Mistress:

Agios o Atazoth!

Congregation:

Agios o Atazoth

Mistress:

Agios o Satanas!

Congregation:

Agios o Satanas!

(The Master turns to the betrothed, saying:)

Do you, known in this world as (he states the name of the spaeman) accept as spaewife this lady (he states the Initiated name of the lady) known in this world as (he states the name of the lady) according to the precepts of our Temple and to the glory of our Lord Satan?

Spaeman:

I do.

(The Master says to the lady:)

Do you known in this world as (he states the name of the lady) accept as spaeman this jarl (he states the name of the jarl) according to the precepts of our Temple and to the glory of our Lord Satan?

Spaewife:

I do.

Master:

Then give as a sign of your pledge, these rings.

(The Mistress takes the silver rings from the altar and the jarl and his lady place them on the fingers of each other's left hand.

The Mistress turns to the congregation saying:)

Thus in oath and magick they are joined.

(The Master raises his arms, saying:)

See them! Hear them! Let it be known among you and others of our kind, that should anyone here assembled or dwelling elsewhere seek to render asunder this jarl and his lady against the desire of that jarl and that lady, then shall that person or persons be cursed, cast out and made by our magick to die a miserable death! Hear my words and heed them! Hear me, all you gathered in my Temple! Hear me, all you bound by the magick of our Lord the Prince of Darkness! Hear me, you dark gods gathering to witness this rite!

(The Mistress takes up the knife and the square of parchment as the jarl and his lady hold out their left hands. She swiftly cuts their thumbs, presses drops of each blood onto the parchment and then presses the two thumbs together. She then presses the thumb of the jarl to the forehead of the lady and then the thumb of the lady against the forehead of the jarl, marking both in blood. The parchment is cast into the silver bowl and the Priestess lights the liquid in this.

The following statement is then read out first by the lady and then the jarl. This statement is usually written/printed on a card which is kept on the altar and handed to the lady by the Priest after the Priestess ignites the liquid in the bowl:)

Esse filo captum palchritudinis suae, et nil amplius desiderare, quam ejus amplexu frui: et omen concubitum - ex commixtione hominis cum Diabolo et Baphomet aliquoties nascuntur hominis, et tali modo nasciturum esse Anti-Nazareus.

(After this is read by the jarl, the Priest takes the card and replaces it on the altar while the Mistress comes forward to kiss first the lady then the jarl. The Master does likewise, after which he says:)

I declare them pledged!

(The congregation et al then exchange greetings with the spaeman and his wife. The Priest and Priestess hand out the chalices which are emptied. A feast usually follows the ceremony.)

NOTE: Either party can end the joining at any time by placing their ring on the altar and informing the Master or Mistress who announce the parting at the next Temple gathering.

VIII

The Rite of Initiation

Introduction:

The candidate is usually sponsored by an existing Initiate, and this member accompanies the candidate

of the test of fidelity which the Master or Mistress of the Temple specifies. The candidate also undergoes a test of knowledge (relating to what he or she has learned of Temple teachings during the six-month probationary period) and a test of courage.

The text given below is for a male candidate: for a female candidate, the text should be altered in the appropriate places.

Participants:

Master of the Temple - in scarlet robes

Mistress of Earth - sexually alluring scarlet robes

Priestess - naked, upon altar (if male candidate)

Priest - naked, upon altar (if female candidate)

Guardian of the Temple - dressed in black and wearing a face mask

Congregation - Black robes

Preparation:

The candidate provides a new black robe, designed according to the precepts of the Temple. This is given to the Master before the ritual and placed on the altar. The candidate attends the ritual in a coarse brown garment which can be easily removed.

The ritual takes place at sunset. A small phial containing a civit-based oil is placed on the altar. Black candles to be used, incense of the Moon burnt (petriochor, if available, otherwise hazel). Some symbolism appropriate to the Moon should also be present - e.g. quartz crystals. Chalices full of strong wine.

The congregation assemble in the Temple with the Master and Mistress. The Guardian stands near the Temple entrance. The candidate is blindfolded and is led into the Temple by the sponsor.

The Rite

(The Master greets the candidate, saying:)

You the nameless have come here to receive that initiation given to all who desire the greatness of our sinister gods!

(The Master kisses the Mistress who kisses the altar-Priest [or Priestess]. The Master then says:)

You the nameless have come to give yourself to us and your quest:

To seal with a sinister oath the beliefs and practices

You have accepted since first you were allowed into this

Temple to Satan.

(The Master turns to the congregation, makes the sign of the inverted pentagram over them with his left hand, and says:)

I greet you all in the name of our Prince. Let his legions

Gather to witness this, our Satanic rite! Veni omnipotens aeterne diabolus!

(The congregation repeat the `Veni' chant after which the Mistress turns to them and says:)

Dance, I command you! And with the beating of your feet
Raise the legions of our Lord and the Dark Gods who watch
Over our games!

(The congregation now dance, anti-sunwise, chanting the Diabolus as they dance. While they dance the Master takes a chalice and raises it, saying:)

You the nameless have come to break the chains that bind!

(The Mistress removes the garment of the candidate leaving naked. The Master approaches him, puts the chalice to his lips, saying: 'Drink!' The candidate drinks the wine. The congregation continue their dance and chant until the Mistress raises her arms as a signal for them to stop. She says to them:)

Gather round, my children, and feel the flesh of our gift!

(The congregation gather round the candidate and run their hands over all his body. While they do this, laughing, the Master chants the 'Veni' chant several times. The Mistress claps her hands twice and the congregation move away. She kisses the candidate [whether male or female] and says:)

We the noble rejoice that you have come to seed us with your blood and gifts.
We, kin of Chaos, welcome you, now nameless.
You, the riddle and I the answer that begins your quest.
We, the cursed, welcome you who have dared to defy.
In the beginning was sacrifice but now words to bind you through all time to us.
In your beginnings - we were.
In your quest - we are.
Before you - we were.
After you - we shall be, again.
Before us - They who are never named.
After us - They will be, waiting.
And you through this Rite shall be of us and thus of them who are never named.
For we the fair who garb ourselves in black through Them possess the rock we call this Earth.

(The Master stands before the candidate, saying:)

Do you accept the law as decreed by us?

(The candidate [R] responds:)

I do.

Master:

Do you bind yourself with word, deed and thought, to us the Seed of Satan without fear and dread?

R:

I do

Master:

Do you affirm in the presence of this gathering that I am your Master and that she who stands before you is your Mistress?

R:

I do.

Master:

Then understand that the breaking of your word is the Beginning of our wrath! See him! Hear him!
Know him!

(The Master points to the candidate and the congregation gather round him, touching him again. After this, the Mistress -removes his blindfold. The Master says to the candidate:)

Do you renounce the Nazarene Yeshua the deciever, and all his works ?

R:

I do renounce Yeshua the deceiver and all his works.

Master:

Do you affirm Satan?

R:

I do affirm Satan.

Master:

Satan, whose word is Chaos?

R:

Satan, whose word is Chaos.

Master:

Then break this symbol which we detest.

(The Mistress hands the candidate a suitably defiled wooden cross which the candidate breaks and thrown it to the ground.)

Master:

Now receive as a symbol of your desire and as a Sign
Of your oath this sigil of Satan.
From this day forth
This sigil by the Power which I The Master wield
Shall always be a part of
You - a sign to those who see and the Mark of our Prince.

(The Mistress hands the phial of oil to the Master who traces the sign of the inverted pentagram on the forehead of the candidate, vibrating as he does so the name the candidate has chosen. The Mistress then stands behind the candidate and traces with her left forefinger, the sigil of the Temple on the back of the candidate, chanting 'Agios o Satanas' as she does so. If there be no Temple sigil, she traces the inverted pentagram. She stands before the candidate. If the candidate is male, she kisses him on the forehead, then the lips, the chest and penis. If the candidate is female, she kisses her on the forehead, each breast, then pubis. After this, she claps her hands once as a signal for the Guardian to come forward. As he does, she says to the candidate:)

Now you must be taught the wisdom of our way!

(The Guardian seizes the candidate and holds his/her arms, forcing them to kneel before the Mistress who laughs and says:)

See, all you gathered in my Temple: here is he who thought
He knew our secret - he who secretly admired himself for
His cunning! See how our strength overcomes him!

(The congregation laugh while the Master blindfolds the candidate again. The Guardian then binds the hands of the candidate with cord. The Mistress then whispers to the candidate, saying: 'Lay down, keep your silence and be still!' The congregation and the Guardian leave the Temple.

The Master then has sexual intercourse with the Priestess on the altar [or if the candidate is female, the Mistress has intercourse with the Priest]. In both versions, this task may be delegated to a member of the congregation, chosen before the ritual by either the Master or Mistress. The male or female member so chosen stays in the Temple when the congregation depart.

After-the act, the Priestess [or Priest] is assisted down from the altar, and the Master and Mistress [and the one chosen to perform in their stead, if present] leave the Temple. The Priestess [or Priest then approaches the candidate, saying:)

Recieve from me and through me the gift of your Initiation
So it has been, so it is, and so shall it be again.

(They then unbind and remove the blindfold from the candidate and sexual intercourse takes place. After, the Priestess [or Priest] fetches the robe from the altar and dresses the candidate in it. She [or he] then briefly leaves the Temple to announce to the congregation et al 'So-it is done according to our desires! The congregation et al then return to the Temple, each greeting the new Initiate with a kiss. The chalices are handed round, and the members take their pleasure as they wish.)

NOTES: For the ritual of Initiation, the Priestess is chosen for the pleasure she obtains from coitus, the Guardian for his physical strength; if the candidate is female, the altar-priest chosen for his control during coitus - he should bring the Mistress to ecstasy, without himself losing control, thus saving elixir for the candidate. It is the duty of the Mistress to find among the Temple members someone to fulfil this role, although she may delegate this task to a female member of the Temple, the person being chosen by the obvious experimentation. Those thus chosen are then invested with their office of altar-Priest or Priestess and hold this office for a year and a day.

If possible, candidates should know no details of the Rite of Initiation - i.e. they should not be told what to expect. For this reason, members of the Temple should take a vow of silence regarding the Rite, promising not to reveal its details to nonmembers and candidates, Thus, the 'Black Book' should for this and other reasons never be shown to non-Initiates.

IX

Consecration of the Temple

Preparations:

Incense of Mars to be burnt for several hours before the ritual is due to begin. The Temple itself is furnished as for a Black Mass. One chalice contains The Elixir.

(To make The Elixir: the night before the ritual, the Master has sexual intercourse in the Temple [the Temple having been already furnished, with altar etc.] at the moment of his ecstasy depositing his seed in an empty chalice. To this, the Priestess ad adds seven drops of her own blood [taken from her left forefinger following intercourse], three pinches of soil [finely ground and dried] taken from a grave in a graveyard on the night of the full moon, ground and dried shavings from an oak tree collected on a night when Saturn is rising, and strong wine to fill the chalice. The chalice is left on the altar until the ritual begins.)

The Master enters the Temple before the congregation, and seal seals the dimensions according to the Rite of Sealing:

For this, a crystal tetrahedron is required. It should be as large as possible and made of quartz. The person conducting the rite, places both their hands on the crystal (which may be on an altar) and visualizes a rent appearing in a star studded sky. This rent gradually spreads its darkness down toward the crystal, enclosing it and the surroundings. The person then vibrates:

Binan Ath Ga Wath Am.

This vibration is repeated seven times. The person then says:

From dark dimensions I call them forth!

The person then visualizes a darkness entering the crystal. After, the person bows to the crystal. The Rite is then complete, the person removing their hands and moving away from the crystal.

Participants:

Master of the Temple - in black robes

Priestess - in black robes

Congregation - in black robes

(Note: if the group in question is run by a Mistress, then she assumes the role allocated to the Master, and a Priest is present instead of a Priestess. For producing the Elixir, the procedure above is followed although the blood is that of the Mistress and the seed that of the Priest.)

The Dedication

The Master goes to the entrance of the Temple, and ushers the congregation in. They enter chanting the Sanctus Satanas (see Chants) walking counter sunwise three times around the altar. They continue chanting until the Master claps his hands twice. He stands behind the altar, facing the congregation, the Priestess beside him. He says to the congregation:

We gather here to dedicate this Temple to our sinister work.
We Summon forth Satan, Prince of Darkness and Guardian of our Gate,
To witness this rite of Dedication.
For we shall find and drink the Elixir which is black to the blind.
Mindful then of our past which has made this Work possible, let us re-affirm our Creed.

(All present recite the 21 Satanic Points. After, the Master spreads his hands over the chalice containing The Elixir and vibrates 'Agnos o Satanas'. He then kisses the Priestess who goes to kiss each member of the congregation. Then he holds up the -chalice, saying:)

As it has been, so it is and so shall it be again by the Power of our Prince, Satan, and the powers of They who are Never named.
From dark dimensions they will come while others sleep.

(He places the chalice back upon the altar, spreads his hands over the crystal tetrahedron and vibrates 'Nythra' three times. After this, he takes up the chalice, sprinkles some of its contents toward the congregation and Priestess and then over the altar. He then sprinkles more around the entrance to the Temple before walking counter sunwise around the Temple sprinkling the walls and floor. He then pours the remainder of the contents around the base of the altar. He replaces the empty chalice on the altar, turns to the congregation, saying:)

As it has been, so it is and so shall it be again!
Let the Rite of The Black Mass begin!

(He assists the one chosen before hand as altar-Priest to remove his robe and take his place upon the altar. The Mass then begins. The Mass follows the text in the Black Book except that the Priestess assumes both the role of the Mistress and her own role as Priestess, and the Master concludes the Mass with the following words [after the 'Mistress' has said '... let us enjoy the gifts of life.'])

By my Power - the Power of Satan, Prince of Darkness - I Declare this Temple charged!

(The usual orgy/feast that follows the Black Mass begins.)

X The Dying time

Setting:

Outdoors, in an isolated location. A funeral pyre is prepared by the Guardian. An ellipse of nine stones should be made enclosing the pyre. Wooden goblets, sufficient in number for each participant, should be filled with mead and kept ready on a wooden table (oak if possible) away from the pyre.

Participants:

Master
Mistress
Priest
Priestess
Congregation
Guardian
(all are in black robes)

Additional Guardians may be appointed to guard access to the site, ensuring privacy.

The Rite

(The body of the deceased member is brought in a light wooden casket, carried by members of the Temple toward the stones and the pyre. It is covered with a crimson drape. After the casket has been placed on the pyre, all present gather round, outside the ellipse of stones.

The Master begins the Rite by saying:)

Agios o Satanas! We gather here to pay homage to our brother/sister who by his/her life and magick did deeds of glory to the honour of our name! Agios o Satanas!

Congregation:

Agios o Satanas!

Master:

Agios o Baphomet!

Congregation:

Agios o Baphomet!

Mistress:

So shall we lamenting remember the glorious deeds still waiting to be done!

Master:

So shall we lamenting remember the glorious deeds still waiting to be done!

Congregation:

So shall we lamenting remember the glorious deeds still waiting to be done!

(The Priest and Priestess hand out the goblets. When this is done, the Master raises his head toward the pyre, saying:)

Ad Satanas qui laetificat juventutem meam.

(The Mistress then lights the pyre. As it burns, the Master drinks from his goblet, throwing the empty vessel into the flames. The congregation et al then raise their own goblets, say the 'Ad Satanas' chant, drink and likewise cast the empty goblets into the flames. The Mistress is the last to drink. After she has thrown her own goblet, she says:)

May our memories linger to haunt the spaces and the dark! So it has been, so it is and so shall it be again!

(The gathering then depart from the site. It is the duty of the Guardian [and his helpers, if any) to attend to and watch over the pyre, ensuring the casket and contents are reduced by flames. What remains is left,

to be scattered as it will.)

XI The Ceremony of Recalling

Introduction:

The Ceremony exists in three versions. The one given here is the one most often used today - where the 'Sacrificial Conclusion' is symbolic. In former times, the Priest, having been chosen according to tradition a year before, was ritually sacrificed by the Mistress and Master. This version is published in OPFER (Fenrir Vol II No 2). This sacrificial Ceremony traditionally occurs once every cycle of seventeen years.

Preparations:

The night before the ritual, the Priestess bakes the consecrated cakes made from wheat, water (spring), egg, honey and animal fat. The congregation gather outside the Temple, the Master and Mistress wait within. The Guardian leads the Priest toward the congregation and the Priestess blindfolds the Priest. She then leads him to each member of the Temple who kiss him.

The Temple itself is furnished with red candles; Incense of Jupiter to be burning. Quartz tetrahedron on plinth or altar. Phial containing musk oil.

Participants:

Master - in black robes

Mistress of Earth - white robes

Priestess - in a red robe tied with a white sash

Guardian of the Temple - black robe, with face mask

Priest ('The Chosen One'/Opfer) - white robe

Congregation - red robes

The Ceremony

(The Priestess and Guardian lead the Priest into the Temple and are followed by the congregation. The Mistress greets the Priest with a kiss while the Master vibrates [with his hands on the tetrahedron] 'Agios o Atazoth'.

After this, the congregation chant the 'Diabolus' [see Chants] while slowly walking, counter sunwise, around the Priest in a circle. This chant is repeated seven times. The Master and Mistress [or two Temple members chosen and trained as Cantors] then chant in parallel and a fourth apart according to the Principles of Esoteric Chant, the 'Agios o Baphomet' chant. This chant may be an octave and a fourth apart. However, should for whatever reason, those conducting the ritual be unable to chant in this manner, the Agios o Baphomet may be vibrated seven times according to the principles of esoteric vibration. [The magick is more powerful if the chant

is sung in parallel as indicated.] During this, the Guardian lifts the Priest onto the altar and the Priestess removes his robe.

After the chant, the Mistress then anoints the body of the Priest with the oil while the congregation walk, as before, chanting the Diabolus. After the anointing, the Priestess and Mistress remove their robes, the Priestess then arouses the 'secret fire' of the Priest with her lips - without bringing him to ecstasy however. When she is satisfied, she signals to the Guardian who lifts the Priest from the altar and forces him to kneel before the Priestess. The Master then kneels before the Mistress at which point the congregation cease their chanting and gather round forming a circle. The Priestess copies the Mistress in both words and actions, using the Priest.

The Mistress places her hands on the head of the Master and the Master says:)

It is the protection and juices of your body that I seek

(The Mistress opens her thighs, and the Master drinks. The Guardian forces the Priest to do likewise to the Priestess. Then, the Mistress pushes him away, saying:)

As you have drunk so shall you die!

Master:

I pour my kisses at your feet and kneel before you
Who crushes your enemies and who washes in a basin full of
Their blood. I lift my eyes to gaze upon the beauty of body
- You who are the daughter of and a Gate to our Dark Gods:
They who are never named. I lift my voice to stand
(He here stands)
Before you my sister and offer you my body so that my
Mage's seed shall feed your virgin flesh.

Mistress:

Kiss me and I shall make you as an eagle to its prey.
Touch me and I shall make you as a strong sword that
Severs and stains my Earth with blood.
Taste me and I shall make you as a seed of corn which
Grows toward the sun and never dies. Plough me and plant me
With your seed
And I shall make you as a Gate which opens to our gods!

(The Mistress goes to the Priest and whispers to him:)

Take me, for she is me and I am yours!

(She then removes the blindfold and pushes him into the arms of the Priestess. She then has congress

with the Master while the congregation continue with their slow walk and chanting. After the priest has achieved his ecstasy, the Mistress says:)

So you have sown and from your sowing gifts may come if
You obedient heed these words I speak.

(The Guardian gives her the sash from the robe of the Priestess. She claps her hands twice and the congregation, the - Priest and Priestess gather round her, the Master and the Guardian She says:)

I know you my dark children: you are sinister yet none
Of you is as sinister or as deadly as I.
I know you and the thoughts within all your hearts:
Yet not one of you is as hateful or as loving as I.
With a glance I can strike you dead!

(She goes to each member, kissing them in turn - on the lips and removing their robes. She then points to the Priest and the Guardian comes forward to hold him while she binds his hands with the sash. She then blindfolds him and the Guardian lays him on the floor, covering his prostrate body with the robe of the Mistress. He lies still and motionless while the Mistress says to the congregation:)

No guilt shall bind you here; no thought restrict.
Feast then and enjoy but ever remember that I am the
Wind that snatches your soul!

(The Guardian then leaves the Temple, returning with trays of wine and food prepared before-hand. The congregation feast and drink and take their pleasures according to their desire always leaving a circle around the Priest clear [the circle may be drawn on the floor before the Ceremony and the Priest placed within it by the Guardian at the appropriate point]. The feasting and pleasures continue until the altar candles are burnt to a line inscribed previously by the Master - this being of sufficient duration for plentiful pleasures to be enjoyed. At this point the Mistress claps her hands seven times and the congregation et al [apart from Mistress, Priestess and Master] leave the Temple. The Priestess removes the blindfold of the Priest, unbinds and uncovers him and helps him to his feet. She then leads him out from the Temple. The Master and Mistress then take their own pleasure, directing the energies of their own congress and those present within the Temple toward a specific aim or intention.)

NOTES: 1) During the feasting, the Master and Mistress abstain and instead begin to direct the energy released via the Ceremony into the crystal (using visualization etc). This energy may then be left stored there, or they may elect to release it during the conclusion toward the aim or intention. However, should they wish, they may direct the energy into the Priest. If this is done the Priest should be informed beforehand and told to observe the effects over several days. This latter procedure is intended mainly for

new initiates and is an aid to their magickal development.

2) The Ceremony may be performed on a regular basis, the Master choosing the Priest who is notified only just before the start of the ritual. The ceremony may also be performed with a Priestess as 'Opfer', the ritual following the text above except that the roles of the Priest and Priestess are reversed.

3) At the discretion of the Master or Mistress, the Ceremony may be extended - the Priest (or Priestess) being left in the Temple over night, the Ceremony in this instance being begun at sunset and finally concluding at sunrise. For this extension, the energy present is always sent into the Priest (or Priestess). The person chosen for this can be any member of the Temple. In this, the Master, Mistress and Priestess leave the congregation, the member chosen being told to remain lying and unmoving until the Master returns at dawn.

XII

Satanic Orders

For a long time, traditional Satanism was taught on an individual basis from Master (or Mistress) to pupil/Initiate, this Initiate following the path to Adeptship under guidance. When ceremonial rituals were undertaken, it was in secret with only members of long standing attending. The few Initiates that were accepted had to undergo a probationary period of several years before being allowed to participate.

It was one of the duties of the Master and Mistress to guide their pupils along the difficult path toward magickal mastery, and to this end 'internal magick' was employed, this system of internal magick being gradually extended and refined over the centuries. In its initial stages, genuine Satanism is all about the Initiate experiencing the dark or shadow aspect of themselves and in the past the Initiate was instructed to experience in reality many things. Sometimes, the Master or Mistress would lead them into specific situations (some of which would be dangerous) for the Initiate to learn from them. Some of these experiences were unconventional and frowned on by 'conventional society' -and some would have been 'illegal' as well. Of course, such methods were difficult, but for the Initiates who survived or remained at liberty they provided genuine experience and self insight. However, gradually, (at least in traditional Satanism) a means was found to 'short-circuit' these evolutionary experiences: whereas in the past most of them would have been practical in the sense of taking the individual to his or her limits, the new techniques became 'internalized'. That is, they tended to be magickally based rather than practical. The essence of the new methods was and still is the 'Grade Rituals'.

The Grade Rituals (the first of which is Initiation) are a series of tasks and undertakings, and the individual who follows the procedure of a Grade Ritual (the main Grade Rituals are given in detail in NAOS - A Practical Guide to Sinister Hermetic Magick') will achieve magickal understanding and self insight of a kind appropriate to the Grade Ritual being undertaken. There are seven Grade Rituals, and these take the individual from Initiate to External Adept to Internal Adept and thence to Master/Mistress and beyond. Associated with the Grade Rituals are other tasks, and these form the basis of the training of the Satanic Initiate! By their very nature, they produce a specific type of individual: one, that is, imbued with the Satanist spirit.

The Grade Ritual of Internal Adept involves the individual in living in isolation for at least three months, and if this is undertaken according to the principles of the rite itself, the individual will emerge as a genuine Adept. Naturally, this ritual is not easy.

The next stage involves the individual in entering the Abyss: Of becoming part of the acausal, that is, of allowing acausal/ chaotic energies to enter consciousness without any means of Conscious control, This magickal part of the Grade Ritual is Preceded by a physical part (for men: walking alone and unaided a distance of 80 miles beginning at sunrise on the first day and ending at sunset on the second day; for women: the distance is 56 miles).

This physical part is essential (and the time limit and conditions must be rigidly observed) since it drains the candidate both physically and mentally, the candidate then having few 'barriers'. This ritual is also not easy to undertake.

Thus it can be seen that the training of Initiates in genuine Satanic Orders is both comprehensive and difficult, for Satanic Orders are not religious institutions committed to indoctrinating their members, just as they are not groups for the discussion and study of magickal and Occult topics. They are places where real sinister magick is undertaken - this real magick is difficult and may at times be dangerous. Genuine Satanists do not talk - they do; they do not seek to study obscure legends and myths pertaining to the dark side - they become, through sinister magick, the dark side itself; they do not flit from one 'group' to another, from one system to another - they follow the techniques of the seven-fold way, under guidance, to the very end refusing to give in when things become difficult and dangerous. In short, they exemplify the spirit of the Satanist: that life-affirming ecstasy which both conquers and defies.

XIII

Sinister Chant

Sinister chant is divided into three distinct methods, all of which have the same general aim - to produce magickal energy. The type and effect of this energy varies according to the method employed.

The first method is the vibration of words and phrases; the second is chanting, and the third is 'Esoteric Chant' - that is, the following of a specific text which is chanted in one of the esoteric modes. Esoteric Chant is explained in detail in NAOS.

Vibration is the simplest method, and involves the individual 'projecting' the sound. A deep breath is taken, and the first part of the word to be vibrated is 'expelled' with the exhalation of breath. This exhalation must be controlled - that is, the intensity of sound should be prolonged (not less than ten seconds for each part of the word) and as constant as possible. The person undertaking the vibration then inhales, and the process is repeated for the second part of the word and so on.

Thus 'Satanas' would be vibrated as Sa - tan - as. The vibration is not a shout or a scream but a concentration of sound energy. Vibration should involve the whole body and should be a physical effort. Regular practice is essential in mastering the technique, and the individual should learn to project at varying distances (from ten to thirty feet or more) as well as enhance the power of the vibration itself. The essence of the method is controlled sound of the same intensity throughout each part of the word and the whole word and/or text.

Chanting is essentially the singing of words or text in a regular 'monotone' - that is, in the same key,

although the last part of the chant is usually 'embellished' to a certain extent by first chanting on a higher note and then a lower one. The pace of the chant varies, and can be slow (or 'funerial') or fast (or ecstatic) depending on the ceremony and the mood of the participants.

It is one of the tasks of the Master or Mistress who runs the Temple to train the congregation and new members in all three methods of chant, and to this end regular sessions of practice should be held. Chant, of whatever type, when correctly performed is one of the keys to the generation of magickal energy during a ceremonial ritual and, like the dramatic performance of a ritual, its importance cannot be overemphasized.

Satanic Chants:

1) Diabolus

Dies irae, dies illa
Solvat Saeculum in favilla
Teste Satan cum sibylla.
Quantos tremor est futurus
Quando Vindex est venturus
Cuncta stricte discussurus.
Dies irae, dies illa!

2) Sanctus Satanas

Sanctus Satanas, Sanctus
Dominus Diabolus Sabaoth.
Satanas - venire!
Satanas - venire!
Ave, Satanas, ave Satanas.
Tui sunt caeli,
Tua est terra,
Ave Satanas!

3) Oriens Splendor

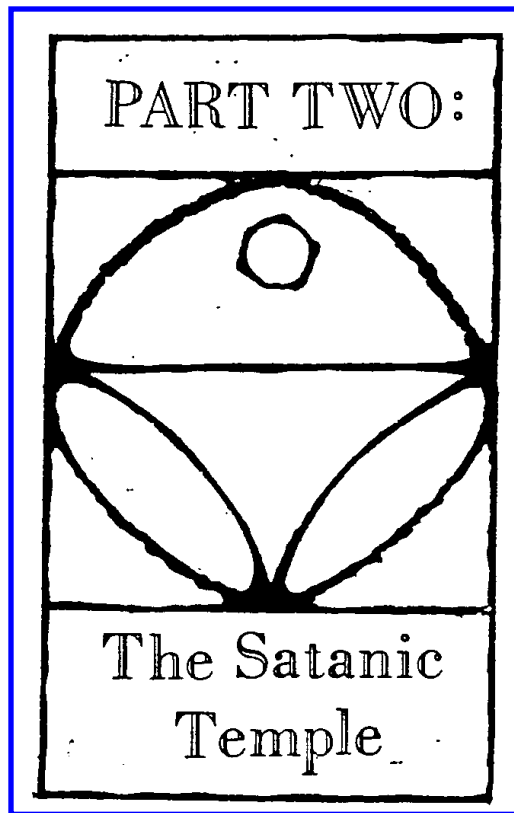
Oriens splendor lucis aeternae
Et Lucifer justitiae: veni
Et illumine sedentes in tenebris
Et umbra mortis.

4) General chants:

- * Ad Satanus qui laetificat juventutem meam. (To Satan, giver of youth and happiness.)
- * Veni, omnipotens aeterne diabolus! (Come, almighty eternal devil!)
- * Pone, diabolus, custodiam! (Devil, set a guard.)

5) Invokation to Baphomet

We stand armed and dangerous before the bloody fields of history;
Devoid of dogma - but ready to carve, to defy the transient:
Ready to stab forth with our penetrative will,
Strain every leash, run yelling down the mountainside of Man:
Ready and willing to immolate world upon world
With our stunning blaze.
And let them all sing that WE were here, as Masters
Among the failing speciens called Man.
Our being took form in defiance
To stand before your killing gaze.
And now we travel from flame to flame
And tower from the will to the glory!
AGIOS O BAPHOMET! AGIOS O BAPHOMET!



Introduction

A Satanist Temple or group can be formed for three reasons: 1) to practice authentic Satanism; 2) to experience the reality of Sinister Magick; and 3) as a task of the External Adept. This part of the 'Black Book' applies to all three: those who have not as yet been Initiated by an established traditional Satanist Temple but who wish to begin practical Satanism for whatever personal reason, should undertake the ritual of Self-Initiation given in chapter XI, then put into practice the advice given in chapter XII about organizing and running a practical group.

If you undertake the self-Initiation, you should as soon as possible find an individual of the opposite sex who is interested in Black Magick. You can then Initiate this person, using the ritual of Initiation in Part One as your guide. You should find somewhere suitable to use as a Temple and dedicate this according to the Dedication in Part One.

You should then give your Temple a suitable Sinister name (such as The Temple of Satan) and begin to recruit members, your companion acting as Priestess/Priest and/or Mistress/Master. The gifts and joys of Satan will then be yours to enjoy.

However, should you wish to go further and begin the sevenfold sinister way, you should obtain a copy of 'Naos' and begin to undertake hermetic and internal magick, continuing with your running your Temple until and if you decide to undertake the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept. The choice is yours.

Two rituals will be given - one for an indoor location, and one for an outdoor one. Choose the one you feel is most suitable for you.

I - Indoor

Set aside an area for the performance of the ritual and in this erect an altar and cover it with a black cloth. (The altar may be a table,). Obtain some black candles, some candle holders, some hazel incense, a quartz crystal or crystals. You will also need two small squares of parchment (or expensive woven paper), a quill type pen, a sharp knife, some sea salt, a handful of graveyard earth (obtained on a night of the new moon) and a chalice which you should fill with wine. All of these items should be placed on the altar.

Should you wish, you may also obtain a black robe of suitable design. If not, you should dress all in black for the ritual.

An hour before sunset, enter your Temple area, face east and chant the Sanctus Satanas twice. Then say, loudly,

To you, Satan, Prince of Darkness and Lord of the Earth,
I dedicate this Temple: let it become, like my body,
A vessel for your power and an expression of your glory!

Then vibrate 'Agios o Satanas' nine times. After this, take up the salt and sprinkle it over the altar and around the room, saying:

With this salt I seal the power of Satan in!

Take the earth and cast it likewise, saying:

With this earth I dedicate my Temple. Satanas - venire! Satanas venire! Agios O Baphomet! I am god imbued with your glory!

Then light the candles on the altar, burn plentiful incense and leave the Temple. Take a bath, and then return to the Temple.

Once in the Temple, do the 'Sinister Blessing' (see Appendix), then facing the altar, lightly prick your left forefinger with the knife. With the blood and using the pen inscribe on one parchment the Occult name you have chosen (see Appendix III for some suggestions regarding names). On the other inscribe an inverted pentagram. Hold both parchments up to the East saying:

With my blood I dedicate the Temple of my life!

Then turn counter sunwise three times, saying:

I (state the Occult name you have chosen) am here to begin my sinister quest! Prince of Darkness,

hear my oath! Baphomet, Mistress of Earth, hear me! Hear me, you Dark Gods waiting beyond the Abyss!

Burn the parchments in the candles. (Note: it is often more practical to fill a vessel with spirit and place the parchments in this and then set the spirit alight. However if you have chosen woven paper, this method will not be necessary.) As they burn, say:

Satan, may your power mingle with mine as my blood now mingles with fire!

Take up the chalice, raise it to the East, saying:

With this drink I seal my oath. I am yours and shall do works to the glory of your name!

Drain the chalice, extinguish the candles and then depart from the Temple. The Initiation is then complete.

* * *

II - Outdoor

Find a suitable outdoor area. It should be near a stream, lake or river. The ritual should be conducted on the night of the full moon at a time half way between sunset and sunrise.

You will need: ambergris oil, black candles (in lanterns if possible), two squares of parchment or woven paper, sharp knife or silver pen, quill-type pen, black robe or clothes. Chalice full of wine.

Begin the ritual by bathing naked in the stream, lake or river. After, rub the ambergris oil into the body, saying as you do 'Agios o Satanas'. Then change into the robe/clothes and proceed to where the candles etc have been lain out on the ground. Light the candles. Then facing East, conduct a Satanic Blessing (see Appendix). After, chant the Sanctus Satanas,

Then prick your left forefinger with the knife/pin and inscribe one parchment with your chosen Occult name. Inscribe an inverted pentagram on the other. Hold both parchments up to the East, saying: 'With my blood I dedicate the Temple of my life.'

Then turn counter sunwise and three times laying: 'I (state your Occult name) am here to begin my sinister quest. Prince of Darkness, hear me! Hear me, you Dark Gods waiting beyond the Abyss.'

Burn the parchments in the candles. (If parchment, use the method given in I above.) As they burn, say: 'Satan, may your power mingle with mine as my blood now mingles with fire!' Take up the chalice and say: 'With this drink I seal my oath. I am yours and shall do works to the glory of your name.'

Drain the chalice, extinguish the candles, collect all the items you have used and depart from the area. The Initiation is then complete.

One of the purposes of the Temple is to perform ceremonial Satanic rituals on a regular basis, and the following schedule is suggested:

- a) Once a month (at a new moon if possible) celebrate the Black Mass. This celebration should be followed by a feast where food and wine prepared and/or brought to the Temple by the members is consumed, this feast itself following on after the orgy that concludes the Black Mass. Should you, as organiser of the Temple (and thus an honorary 'Master' or 'Mistress'- the organiser of a new Temple is generally known by the title of 'Choregos') wish, the feast only may conclude the Mass - it being left to your discretion as to when the orgy is to be included. That is, it is not always necessary to conclude the Mass with an orgy, although for obvious Satanic reasons, it forms a pleasing end to the Mass.
- b) Every fortnight, the members should assemble for a meeting (a sunedrion) where any member may request magickal aid for themselves or others. The aid may be of any kind - constructive, material, or destructive. Those wishing aid should write their requests on paper and seal this in an envelope which they place in a special urn/receptacle kept for this purpose near the entrance to the Temple. The members should assemble (in robes and barefoot) in the Temple, and the sunedrion is formally begun by you, the Choregos, saying 'Let the sunedrion begin'. If a member has been appointed Guardian (see the list of Offices at the end of the chapter) he should stand by the entrance to the Temple and refuse admittance to any members arriving late. Those present in the Temple then recite the Satanic Creed (see text of Black Mass).

Following this, the Priestess then removes at random two of the requests, which she reads. The members who have been chosen thus, acknowledge their requests by bowing to the Priestess. The request first chosen by the Priestess is performed that evening, the other at the next full moon. This means that you as Choregos should have everything in readiness for all possible hermetic and ceremonial rituals.

The requests may be for anything a member wishes, and it is up to you to decide how the request may be magickally fulfilled by choosing an appropriate ceremonial or hermetic ritual. The monthly Black Mass may be used as a vehicle, for example - you choosing suitable chants/visualizations for the members desire.

The member requesting help must offer something in return this is usually a financial donation to the Temple, a ritual object for use in the Temple, robes for use of members, or their own body for the gratification of the Choregos or someone chosen by the Choregos. It is however, the member requesting magickal aid who decides on the nature of the gift.

Those requests not chosen by the Priestess are considered by the Choregos after the sunedrion, and those considered suitable are undertaken as soon as possible, the members being informed.

If you as Choregos choose a hermetic ritual for a request, then you either work alone or with the member whose request it is - unless the ritual you choose is a hermetic one, when you work with the Priestess/Priest or the member if that member has offered their body as payment for the aid.

After choosing the requests, the members depart from the Temple while you and the altar brother/sister prepare the Temple for the ritual you have chosen to fit the first request. During this preparation, the members should prepare themselves for the ritual if a ceremonial form has been chosen. Should a hermetic form be chosen, this is done in the Temple while the members feast and drink outside of the

Temple.

c) At full moon, an outdoor ritual should be conducted in a suitable location. This should be either a group invocation to the Dark Gods (see Chapter XVI) or another ceremonial ritual (for example, the Death Rite might be chosen because of a member's request).

You can elect to hold the sunedrion some days before this, or combine the sunedrion with this ritual, depending on the number of members, and their commitment. What is important is to establish a pattern of meetings and rituals.

Teaching:

Another purpose of the Temple should be teaching. You should try and arrange regular sessions with interested members -the best time being after the sunedrion and its associated ritual (if any), the best length for the sessions being around three quarters of one hour. During these sessions you can explain about the septenary system, the Star Game, the Satanic Tarot and so on. (All these and other topics of esoteric Satanism are covered in NAOS.) Thus, you might organize the following programme to be held on successive sessions:

- i) Introduction to the septenary system - Tree of Wyrd, spheres, correspondences.
- ii) Further correspondences, including Tarot images associated with spheres.
- iii) Pathways and their 'demon-forms'. Invokation etc.
- iv) Hermetic rituals
- v) Introduction to the Star Game
- vi) The Satanist Tarot - divination etc.
- vii) Esoteric Chant - practice etc.
- viii) Practice of playing the Star Game.

Should you wish to follow the seven-fold sinister way yourself, you may set yourself a suitable physical task, achieve this, then undertake the Grade Ritual of External Adept. **After** this, you might begin to teach internal magick to others - getting them to work with the pathways and spheres etc. and setting them goals.

Gaining Members:

There are many ways of gaining members. For instance, you might infiltrate already existing groups (of either Left or Right Hand Paths) and seek out those interested in working sinister magick. You might also try and interest friends or the friends of your companion - using the bait of an 'orgy'. Whatever method you use, try and make your first ritual dramatic and impressive - you may decide to use an established ritual like Black Mass, or you might try the ritual suggested below (First Ritual for a Choregos). The 'First Ritual' is intended mainly to impress those who may be new to magick.

You should try and create before hand the right magickal atmosphere, making your Temple as impressive as possible. Try and be creative - for example, a 'plasma ball' in a candle lit Temple is more impressive than a boring collection of old bones and a skull. Also, do not use symbols and/or Occult designs which you yourself do not know the meaning of. Keep to the symbolism of traditional Satanism

- that is, the septenary, avoiding using the tired, old (and inauthentic) symbolism of the 'qabala'. Do not use any symbolism from old and dead Aeons - for example Egyptian, Sumerian - as the more pure your magick is, the more effective it will be. By pure here is meant following a genuine esoteric tradition like the septenary. In the beginnings it is often helpful if you feel part of a living, exclusive tradition such as the one represented in this 'Black Book' and 'Naos'. This adds power and charisma to both you and your magickal workings.

First Ritual:

It is important, before the ritual, for you to prepare those who will be attending. They should be told that during the ritual they are to remain silent and not move. They should be told no details of the ritual: only that it is a Satanic invocation, and they should not have seen the Temple before. To increase their expectation, you can arrange to meet them some distance from the Temple itself. They are then blindfolded and taken to the Temple, the ritual being begun immediately. (This also applies to new members of an established Temple.)

Both you and your companion (Priestess/Priest) and any others involved should have practiced your roles beforehand - being familiar with the words, gestures and so on.

Aim: The aim of the ritual is to draw down magickal energy by basically hermetic means with a view to impressing the 'novices' who are present.

Setting: Usually an indoor Temple. Black candles providing the only light. Incense well (hazel) for hours before the ritual. Music from a suitably hidden system should be played during the ritual: choose something 'demonic' which starts slowly and gradually builds to a climax.

Participants: Choregos and companion (Priestess and Priest)

The Rite:

The congregation are led into the Temple. The Priestess (or Choregos if female) should wear sexually revealing clothing. The music is started by the Choregos who walks past the congregation staring at them and saying 'Agios O Satanas'.

The Choregos and/or Priest then vibrates the 'Agios o Satanas' three times after which the Priestess kisses each member of the congregation, rubbing her hands over the genitals of the men as she does so. Following this, the Choregos/priest declare the 'Invocation to Baphomet' while the Priestess visualizes sinister magickal energy being drawn down and entering the congregation.

She then begins a slow, sensual dance to the music while the Choregos/Priest chants the Dies Irae followed by the Invocation to Baphomet. He continues to chant the 'Agios o Satanas' while the music builds to a climax. While chanting this he passes behind the congregation, making passes in the air as he does so. The Priestess during the dance should continue with the visualization.

While still behind the congregation the Choregos/Priest says aloud: 'You are all His, now! We have words to bind your soul to us!'

The Priestess ceases her dance, chants 'Agios o Satanas' and then extinguishes the candles. She then visualizes a sinister/ demonic form entering the Temple near the altar (this form may be one of the 'demons' on the septenary paths - e.g. Shugara). During this, the Choregos/Priest should chant the name of the chosen entity (e.g. 'Agios o Shugara' Agios o Shugara!'). Do not expect at this stage a visual manifestation to occur - although this might happen if the energies are pronounced and/or one of the congregation is psychically gifted. The aim is to affect the sub-conscious of the congregation.

After this, there should be silence for some minutes (the music having ended). The Priestess then says 'It is over' and the Choregos/Priest leads the congregation from the Temple.

Note: One of the best means is for the Choregos/Priest to use a tabor or small hand-drum to accompany the ritual and the dance, instead of recorded music.

Temple Grades:

Temple members can be appointed to the following positions: Guardian of the Temple, Altar Brother (or Sister), Thurifer, Keeper of the Books.

The Thurifer is responsible for keeping the Temple incensed during and before a ritual: this may be by either using a thurifer, or a static incense burner. The altar brother/sister is responsible for ensuring the Temple is ready for a ritual: the candles lit, incense ready and so on. The Keeper of the Books is responsible for ensuring the safety of the Black Book and other Temple books and manuscripts, as well as ensuring the Book and/or altar cards are in place in readiness for a ritual.

In addition the Choregos can appoint any member to be a Priest or Priestess for either a specific ritual or for a year and a day. A Priest, when officiating in Temple rituals wears a medallion inscribed with either an inverted pentagram or inverted septagon; a Priestess wears an amber necklace and may also opt to wear a silver ankle chain.

The sign of a Choregos is, for men, a plain black ring worn on the left hand. Temple members may wear, for men, a ring set with quartz and worn on the left hand, and, for women, a quartz Necklace.

XVI

Invokation to the Dark Gods

To open a Star Gate and return the Dark Gods to our causal universe a crystal tetrahedron made of quartz is required. This should be as large as possible - and made from a natural shape by a skilled operator.

The rite of returning exists in two versions: the first is suitable for two or more individuals and involves basic magick; the second requires detailed preparation and Cantors trained to a high standard in esoteric chant. The second version is more powerful, but regular invocation using the first method has the same effect.

I.

The participants for the first version are Priestess and Priest, together with any number of other Initiates provided male and female are present in equal numbers. The invokation can, however, take place without these Initiates - that is, with only the Priestess and Priest present.

The rite begins on the night of the new moon with Saturn rising if only the Priest and Priestess are present, otherwise it is undertaken on the night of the full moon. The rite should if possible be conducted on an isolated hill-top and the Priest and Priestess should both be naked. The congregation should wear black robes. Candles in lanterns should be placed to mark out a large circle on the ground.

The invocation begins with the Priest vibrating seven times the phrase 'Nythra kthunae Atazoth' while the Priestess holds the tetrahedron in her hands, palms upward. When the vibration is complete the Priest places his hands on the tetrahedron and both vibrate 'Binan ath ga wath am' until the ritual is complete.

After the vibration, the Priestess - still holding the crystal - should lie on the ground, her head North, the Priest arousing her with his tongue, The sexual union then begins, with both visualizing the Star Gate opening and the primal form of Atazoth coming forth. Atazoth may be visualized as a dark nebulous chaos - a rend in the fabric of star-studded space which changes into a Dagon like/dragon entity.

After her sexual climax, the Priestess buries the crystal within the earth of the hill. When this is done, she vibrates over the spot 'Aperiatur terra, et germinet CHAOS!' She then signals to the congregation who cease their chanting. All the participants then depart from the hill.

Note: The tetrahedron should be well-buried in a spot prepared by the Priest and Priestess before the rite. If the invocation is done again, the rite begins with the Priestess unearthing the tetrahedron. It should be cleaned before the ritual begins - and must be buried without any covering whatever.

II.

The second version involves at least eight people including Cantor (s) and Priest and Priestess. Male and female should be present in equal numbers. The rite takes place on or around the autumnal equinox or winter solstice. The best place is an isolate isolated hilltop.

According to tradition, the best time to invoke is when (autumn equinox) Venus sets after the sun and the moon itself is very near the star Dabih; or when (winter solstice) Jupiter and Saturn are near the moon which is becoming new, the time before dawn. The first is associated with the 'Star Gate' Dabih, the second with Algol. The most effective place magickally is a hill top of pre-Cambrian rock which lies between a line of volcanic intrusion and one of another rock. The top of the hill should have a line of pre-Cambrian grit passing through it - this description allowing the hallowed places, in this country, to be found.

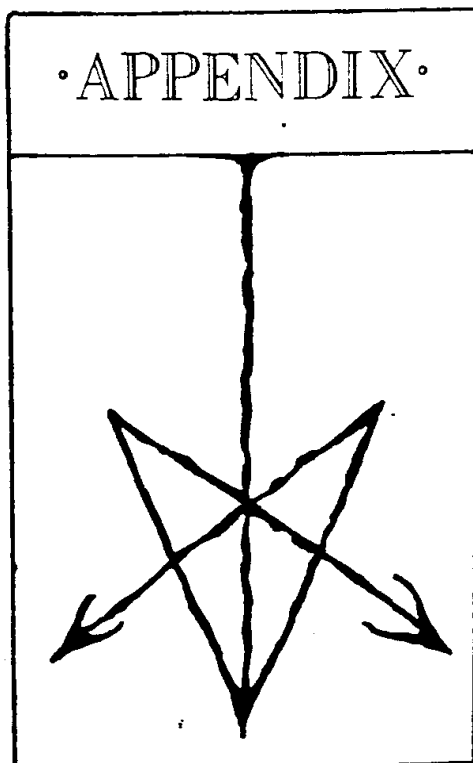
The crystal should be placed on a sheet of mica upon a pediment of oak. The rite begins with the Cantors vibrating in E minor 'Nythra kthunae Atazoth' while at least six of the congregation dance moonrise around the crystal, Cantors, Priestess and Priest. This dance is slow and gradually increases in speed, the participants chanting 'Binan ath ga wath am' as they dance.

The Cantors vibrate their phrase seven times at the end of which the Priestess places her hands on the tetrahedron. The Cantors (if there is only one, the Priest acts as a cantor) then sing according to Esoteric Chant - that is, in fourths - the Diabolus. The Priestess visualizes the Star Gate opening.

After the Diabolus, the Priestess and Priest vibrate 'Binan ath ga wath am' a fifth apart (or a fifth and an octave) while the Cantors vibrate the same phrase also a fifth apart. (If only one Cantor is present he vibrates Atazoth in E minor.) After this vibration and on a signal from the Priestess, the congregation begin an orgiastic rite, during which the Priestess continues with the visualization and the Cantors with the 'Binan ...' chant a fifth apart. The Priest may visualize the orgiastic energy of the congregation into a magickal force which forces open the Star Gate, allowing the Dark Gods to return to Earth.

The Priest and Priestess may then visualize the Chaotic energies as being dispersed over the Earth. However, if the ritual is undertaken correctly, the Dark Gods may become manifest. Should this occur, all the participants should exult.

Note: This second version may be combined with the Ceremony of Recalling - and the Sacrificial Conclusion undertaken according to tradition. The invocation to the Dark Gods begins after the sacrifice with the Cantor vibrating 'Nythra ...' as above while the Mistress anoints the participants with the Red Elixir. For this combined ritual, the Mistress in the 'Ceremony' assumes the role of 'Priestess' in the invocation: the Master that of the Priest. This combined ritual is rightly forbidden, for it is the most sinister ritual that exists, its performance actually calling back to Earth in physical form the Dark Gods themselves.

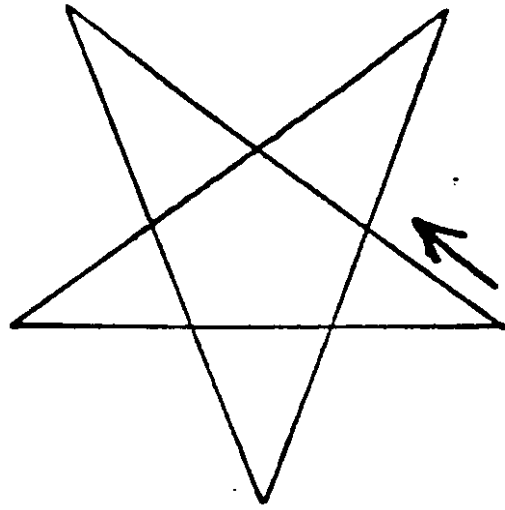


I
A Satanic Blessing

Vibrate the following toward the person or area:

Agios ischyros Baphomet!

After, and with the left hand, extending the forefinger, construct in the air an inverted pentagram, beginning at the right corner, thus:



Do this in one unbroken movement. When it is complete, strike the area of the heart with your right hand, saying:

Agios athanatos.

The blessing is then complete.

II The Sinister Creed

1. Satan in particular and the Dark Gods in general are a means to self-fulfillment and self-understanding.
2. Only by journeying through the darkness within us and without can we attain self-divinity and thus fulfil the potentiality of our existence.
3. Our rites, ceremonies and practices are all life-affirming, and show us the ecstasy of existence and the self-overcoming of the true Adept.
4. We are feared because we defy and seek to know and thus understand. We rejoice in living: in all its pleasures but most particularly in its possibilities. We thus extend the frontiers of evolution while others sleep or cry.
5. We detest all that enervates and would rather die than submit to anyone or anything - this pride is the pride of Satan, and Satan is a symbol of our defiance and a sign of our life-enhancing energy. Others see our way of living and our way of dying and are afraid.
6. When we hate we hate openly and with arrogance, and when we love, we love with a passion to match this arrogance: always mindful never to love anyone so much that we cannot see them die, for death is a natural changing of energies.
7. We prepare - through our magick and our ways of living - for the Age of Fire (the Aeon of the Dark Gods) which is to come, when we elitist few shall reach out toward the stars and the galaxies and the new challenges they will bring.

8. Our way is difficult and dangerous and is for the few who can truly defy the matrix of illusions - of 'good' and 'evil' - that stifle the potentiality of our being.
9. What does not kill us, makes us stronger.



III

Initiate Names

a) Some suggestions, based on names traditionally used in sinister Temples:

Male: Oger, Hacon, Serell, Noctulius, Athor, Engar, Aulwynd, Algar, Suevis, Angar, Wulsin, Gord, Ranulf

Female: Sirida, Eulalia, Lianna, Aesoth, Richenda, Edonia, Annia, Liben, Estrild, Selann

b) Contract and/or transpose your own name to form another; for example, 'Conrad Robury' gives Cabur, Nocra and so on.

c) Find a demon form with whom you feel an affinity, and use that name, either as it is or contracted/transposed.

d) Construct your name from a Satanic phrase or chant - for example, 'Quinvex' can be derived from the 'Quando Vindex' of the Diabolus.

What is important about all the above is that you feel 'attracted' to a particular name or phrase. Whatever method is used, the name or phrase should derive from traditional Satanism (as explicated in this book) and for this reason names/demons deriving from other traditions should not be used.

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# Adeptship

## Its Real Meaning and Purpose

### Order of Nine Angles

Attaining real Adeptship is more difficult than being selected for, and training with, a 'Special Forces' unit (such as the British SAS). I shall explain why this is so, but first will describe what genuine Adeptship is.

An Adept is an individual who has undertaken an Occult quest and who has, as a result of that quest, the following abilities/attributes: a) a real understanding of esoteric, Occult matters, and a deep esoteric knowledge/insight; b) esoteric skills – chief of which is empathy: with both. natural and 'Occult' forces (energies. An important aspect of this empathy [an intuitive understanding of things as those things are in their essence] is with living beings and that species mis-named Homo Sapiens; c) a unique character – formed via experience d) a unique 'philosophy of life' attained via self-discovery and self experience – by finding answers unaided.

Adeptship results from a transformation – a transmutation of the individual. This begins at Initiation, whether that be ceremonial or hermetic [i.e. as part of a group or alone]. It is an internal alchemical process of change, and occurs on all levels – the psychic, the magickal, the intellectual, the psychological and the physical. It is the birth of a new individual who has skills, knowledge, understanding and judgment not possessed by the majority.

The changes themselves arise from a synthesis – there is an evolution of the individual and their consciousness because of a successful response to a challenge. Or rather, because of a series of such successful responses over a period of some years. In essence, the Initiate undertakes a challenge, strives to achieve a certain goal and if successful, grows in character, maturity, knowledge esoteric skill and so on. They then move on to new challenges, until the process is complete and Adeptship attained The challenges themselves occur on all the levels mentioned above – i.e. the psychic, the magickal (or Occult), the intellectual, the psychological and the physical.

Quintessentially, the path to Adeptship is a quest which involves ordeals, the achievement of goals and so on. Furthermore, the quest is individual and involves experiences in the real world: not just 'in the head' or of a 'magickal' nature. By its nature it is solitary – it involves the individual overcoming the challenges, undertaking the ordeals, alone. If certain ordeals and challenges and experiences are not

undertaken – and if all of them are not done alone – then there is no real achievement and thus no genuine Adeptship.

The nature of the experiences, challenges and ordeals which are necessary, and the fact that they all must be done alone and unaided, makes Adeptship difficult to attain, and is the reason why real Adepts are rare, even though there are many who claim the achievement.

Returning to the example mentioned above – that is, real Adeptship is more difficult to attain than being selected for and successfully training with a Special Forces unit. The selection procedures for such a Unit are tough, and the training likewise. But the individual undergoing them has a definite concrete goal – and that individual is with others: there is a camaraderie a desire not to 'lose face' in front of others. Also, the individual is in a definite environment – usually a training camp with Instructors and other members of the Unit. There is a 'tradition' with its special signs: a uniform, a beret, an insignia. And everyday concerns – food, shelter etc. – are taken care of \*.

In contrast, Adeptship is mostly intangible: it seems 'magickal' and Occult; part of another world. Further, the Initiate is on their own and still for the most part, in the 'real world' – they have responsibility to clothe and feed themselves (at the very least, and find or have some shelter).

But there is more. The physical challenges alone which an aspirant Adept must undertake are, in fact, more difficult, tougher, than those used by any Special Forces unit. They are more testing, more selective. Only the strongest, the most determined, survive them. Add to these physical challenges the many others that are required – intellectual, magickal, psychological and so on – and it is easy to understand why Adepts (or genuine ones at least) are so rare, and why they are part of an elite.

Of course, there are many – in fact, most – who call themselves Occultists of whatever Path or none, who maintain that such things are not required for Adeptship to be achieved. [I shall describe in detail the actual challenges themselves, shortly.]

These Occultists maintain that Adeptship is actually one or more of the following:

- (a) amassing a great amount of what passes for 'esoteric knowledge' by, for example, reading a lot of books and magazines, and by attending various meetings/discussions/conferences/participating in "Magickal" forays;
- (b) being given the title 'Adept' by either (i) someone else for services rendered or whatever, or (ii) undertaking a self-written/published "Rite" after which one congratulates oneself and uses the title Adept;
- (c) achieving an "enlightenment" during some ceremony/working/ritual/discussion/induced stupour/trance/communication with a supra-personal entity/extra-terrestrial intelligence;
- (d) being "chosen" by someone/some entity/some extra-terrestrial intelligence;
- (e) hanging around the Occult scene for so long that one feels entitled to call oneself an Adept.

All of these are merely delusions of attainment. I do not expect this article to shatter the delusions and

illusions of the deluded – for they need them and the false Adepts will continue to fantasize about their achievement just as many individuals will continue to fantasize about belonging to or having belonged to, various Special Forces units. What this article will do, is to present the real meaning and significance of Adeptship in a way which is not open to mis-interpretation: to reveal, for once and for all, the illusions of Occultists for what they are, and thus what is really necessary for genuine Adeptship.

Among the challenges an Adept has successfully undertaken, are the following:

- 1) Several physical (and mental) goals of which the minimum standards are (a) walking 32 miles carrying a pack weighing not less than 30 lbs. in under 7 hours over difficult, hilly terrain; (b) running 20 miles in less than 2 and a half hours over fell-like/mountainous terrain; (c) cycling not less than 200 miles in 12 hours.
- 2) Having organized and run for not less than six months, a magickal/Occult group/coven/Temple of not less than seven people and performed ceremonial and hermetic rituals regularly.
- 3) Having found and loved (and probably lost) at least one 'magickal companion' and worked with them in a magickal and personal way over a period of many months.
- 4) Having attained an understanding and mastery of esoteric magick – external and internal – via practical workings over a concentrated period of time lasting at least two years. And, following this, have begun to understand what is beyond external and internal magick – i.e. Aeonie magick and processes.
- 5) Having experienced in real-life situations, danger involving one's possible death.
- 6) Having faced many and severe dilemmas of a personal and 'moral' nature the resolution of which required a choice and which consequently brought a maturity of outlook and a sadness.
- 7) Having spent at least three months living totally alone in an isolated area without talking to anyone and without any modern comforts and distractions.
- 8) Having developed one's intellect by mastering a complex and abstract subject hitherto foreign to one: e.g. advanced mathematics, The Star Game; symbolic Logic.

Show me someone who has not done the above (or very similar things) alone and who claims to be an Adept, and I will show you a liar – be that liar aware of the lie, or unaware of it. For too long, the intentional and unintentional liars have had no one to challenge them – and their character less version of 'Adeptship' or 'Adepthood'.

All the challenges enumerated above breed character. They are formative; they create the Adept. And those mentioned are only some of the challenges an Initiate must successfully experience and triumph over – there are many more.

There is no easy way, no easy path, to Adeptship. The journey takes years, and involves self-effort, self-discovery, unaided. It involves triumphs, and mistakes – and learning from one's mistakes. But perhaps most of all it involves a commitment and a learning from practical experience.

However, it should be remembered that Adeptship is not the end of the quest. There are stages beyond, which require even more difficult and dangerous experiences – which need even more self-honesty. For, conventionally, Adeptship is only half-way between Initiation and the ultimate goal, sometimes described as the gateway to immortality.

As with Adeptship, there are many who claim to have been to the stages beyond Adeptship – who claim to be 'Masters' or Grand Masters, or even the stage beyond! Like most 'Adepts', these are liars, both intentional and unintentional, and they will be exposed in another iconoclastic article.

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\* Except, of course, during training exercises of the survival kind – but these are limited in time and space, and part of *the course* which is real and *known*...

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## Mastery - Its Real Meaning and Significance

Mastery is one of the names given to the achievement, by an individual, of one of the advanced stages of the occult way or path. In the septenary tradition - which the ONA regards as the authentic Western tradition in contradistinction to the Hebrew 'Qabalah' - this stage is the fifth of the seven that mark the quest, and those who reach it are often known by the titles Master of Temple or Mistress of Earth.

It follows from the stage of Internal Adept, which is the stage of Adeptship [qv. the MSS *Adeptship - Its Real Meaning and Significance*]. Between the two, lies an area often called 'The Abyss'. Basically, an Internal Adept [or simply 'Adept' for short: an 'Internal' Adept is distinguished from an 'External' Adept by virtue of the former having achieved an internal as well as an external insight/understanding and a skill in both internal and external magick] has discovered the nature of their unique Destiny in the real world. That is, they are aware of personal wyrd. Before they can venture into and beyond the Abyss, this Destiny has to be strived for - the Adept has to make real, in the real world, this dream of Destiny.

For every Adept, the Destiny is unique. But for all it means an interaction with the real world - in effect transforming their inner vision and energies in a practical way and so in some way (often quite significant) changing the real world. All Adepts effect changes in others. Some do this in a directly magickal way - for instance, by running a Temple/group and teaching esoteric traditions. Some do it via creativity - for instance, music, Art, writing. Some do it via direct action which appears to non-Initiates as divorced from Occultism - for instance, politics or business. Some combine elements of all of these. There are many other ways. What is important is that the Adept is using their skills and abilities, derived from achieving Adeptship, in a practical way - their life has a vitality, a purpose, a dynamism which is beyond that of most others.

While this is occurring, the Adept is learning and evolving further. For some Adepts, the majority in fact, this interaction, this striving for a Destiny, is totally satisfying. In effect, their wyrd is this Destiny. [Note: wyrd and Destiny are not identical. Wyrd is beyond, but includes personal Destiny. The 'Tree of Wyrd' comprises all the seven spheres or stages of the Occult quest.] In esoteric terms, they possess no desire to progress further; and usually their desire to follow the Occult path to its ending fades, slowly, and then is lost in everyday and personal concerns. Their quest has been a phase of their lives - a rewarding one, but nevertheless a phase, which they mostly consider they have 'outgrown'.

However, some Adepts see and understand this Destiny in a different way. Or, rather, they feel it differently after a number of years of striving. They gradually become aware of what is beyond, in esoteric terms: they understand this Destiny as a part of their wyrd, and that wyrd as the 'dialectic of change'. In essence, they understand in a real, complete way [i.e. not just 'in theory'] what Aeonic magick is - of how their life and deeds are part of an Aeonic imperative.



Of course, all Adepts - if they are genuine - understand the rudiments of Aeonic theory. But this is a purely intellectual, abstract, understanding. It is cerebral, devoid of numinosity. Further, most Adepts are aware of the rudiments of Aeonic magick - but, once again, this awareness is cerebral.

What occurs in some Adepts is that by the very process of striving to achieve a personal Destiny in the real world, they gradually come to understand what Aeonics really means, in personal and supra-personal terms: **they experience Aeonic magick via their striving**. This makes it real to them in a meaningful way - cerebral understanding is mostly a vacuous understanding.

In essence, therefore, the esoteric understanding of these Adepts grows in the only way real esoteric understanding does - via practical experience of the realities. They acquire more insight into the world, the cosmos and themselves. On the psychic level, the energy which imbued their personal Destiny, which gave them the vitality, the “elan” to persue it, wanes. They begin to seek after something else - they desire what seems to be an intangible wyrd.

Thus, they move toward ‘The Abyss’ after some years of striving in the real world, of garnishing experiences, of learning from them. In effect, the self-image, which Adeptship created, is waning. [Note: Initiation creates an ‘ego-image’; an External Adept has both an ego-image and the beginnings of a self-image. An Internal Adept has achieved a self-image: a certain unity of conscious and unconscious/pre-conscious forms. This self-image is vitalized by a Destiny.]

For a period, the Adept lies between two-images: the self-image which has almost died, and an intangible but tantalizing wyrd~image. This is often a most difficult time in the personal life of the Adept. There is nothing and no one to help them.

Gradually, they may achieve more understanding and come to understand the real essence hidden behind appearance: in themselves, others, the structures of the world, the cosmos itself. They will also come to realize what is missing from their own life - in terms of experience. Accordingly, they will redress the balance by living to attain what they lacked, to fully complete themselves. This, of course, is difficult, requiring as it does not only a genuine self-honesty and awareness, but also a real understanding of what the balance itself actually is. Here, ‘theory’, book-learning and such like is no use.

Then, when some balance is achieved, there will be a discovery of the essence of not only Aeonic Magick but also what the essence of magickal forces really are. A discovery of that which is beyond opposites - a return to and a going away from, primal Chaos.

Following all this, there is usually an ordeal which is magickally ruthless and which ascertains if the person undertaking it has actually achieved both an internal and a magickal mastery. In the septenary tradition, this ordeal is the Grade Ritual of Master/Mistress which involves the candidate walking, alone and unaided and carrying all food etc., a distance of 80 miles in isolated terrain, starting at sunrise on the first day and ending at sunset on the second day. After reaching the target distance, a magickal ritual is performed which is psychically dangerous.

Then, there is a certain satisfaction of having achieved the stage of Master of Temple/Mistress of Earth.

Naturally, the above is only a brief outline of the transition from Adept to Master or Mistress. The salient points are that it involves many years of striving for something in the real world, of causing changes via a Destiny; that there are and must be more experiences to take the individual far beyond 'the self'; and that there is a real understanding of what lies beyond external and internal magick - of the patterns and processes of dialectic change, of evolution itself: in brief, of Aeonics. And a real Mastery of forms.

To provoke or cause the individual to go beyond 'the self', the experiences of necessity are hard. By their nature they take the Adept to and beyond the limits of living - mostly in a way more extreme than those which form the character of an Adept and which therefore a novice may undertake to experience and learn from and so grow.

Because of all this, the Adept who progresses to the stage beyond possesses real wisdom. They have achieved many things. They are different from ordinary mortals - inside, where it matters. They know because they have experienced: because they have seen more of life; because they have been to the limits of themselves and gone beyond what they were. And because they have maintained their resolve to follow the occult path they have chosen to its ending.

In effect, they belong to a new race - they are part of an elite more exclusive than that to which Adepts belong. They have developed a significant part of their latent potential; have fully understood themselves, the world, the people in it, the esoteric or hidden forces in the world, and the cosmos itself.

This does not mean that they are infallible or that they have nothing more to learn. Neither are they deceived by their own abilities and understanding. They are, however, aware of what it is they must do, conversant with their own abilities and the dialectic of change. That is, they know how to use Aeonic Magick to affect evolution - and do so, for their own life is a part of the creative change necessary.

Most who claim to be a 'Master' (or 'Mistress') are charlatans. As with the false Adepts, they appoint themselves to this title, or are appointed to it by someone who claims to have progressed even further. They have not achieved it. They have not achieved anything significant in creative terms; have little or no self-understanding; possess no real knowledge of Aeonics and Aeonic Magick. They have not lived their limits - and gone beyond them. They have no 'genius', no wisdom. They are still full of self-delusion particularly about their esoteric knowledge and their own abilities, and have no real insight into others, let alone themselves. In fact, many who claim to be 'Masters' lack even the basic qualities of an Adept.

The same applies - even more so - to they who claim to have gone beyond the stage of Mastery, and I shall explain why in words which will expose them for the frauds that they are.

The stage beyond that of Master - often signified by the title Grand Master - requires for its achievement

significant **Aeonic** works. That is, it requires the person to have produced profound changes in the causal and magickal forms which mark a particular Aeon: or to have actually presenced esoteric/magickal energies in such a way that a new Aeon is created. This does not mean that someone believes they have done these things - 'on the magickal level'. It means that the structure of evolution has been significantly altered in accord with the wyrd of that Grand Master/Mistress: and in such a way that the changes are perceptible, in **real life**, in those forms and structures which Aeonic energy is presenced in the causal, such as societies.

This does not mean a playing at magick by heading some self-created Occult organization or Temple - or writing/talking at great length about Occult matters. Neither does it mean that one assumes the title by taking over some already existing organization or group. It most certainly does not mean someone else awards it or confers it.

Further, it means one has not only reached the limits of present knowledge regarding Aeonics and other esoteric matters [and knowledge in the sense of practical experience] but has also extended those limits by one's own creativity - taken conscious evolution further. That is, added in a profound way to a conscious understanding and to the means for others to attain such understanding. This in itself does not mean anything 'dogmatic' or of a religious nature - or 'given to one' by some entity/supra-personal intelligence or whatever. It is never 'revelatory' in the sense of a religion. That is, it does not mean one is "appointed" by some entity/extra-terrestrial intelligence or whatever and so "heads" some sort of messianic crusade of a religious nature.

The frauds indulge in psuedo-mystical babble and Occult histrionics - they expect and mostly demand obedience. They play a "role" and often dress the part. Of course, by doing these and similar things they obtain followers, sycophants - i.e. weak individuals who need to fawn and obey. All the frauds rely on something external to themselves, be this something a "role", a mandate, a divine/diabolic revelation, an imagined/real lineage, an organizational authority, a messianic/diabolic/extra-terrestrial commission or whatever.

In reality, all these traits and actions are signs of someone not yet achieved Adeptship - someone striving for self-insight.

A real Grand Master (or mistress) has a wealth of practical experience both Occult and 'in the real world'. They have genius - a highly developed intellect and a creativity. They possess empathy in the highest degree. They have judgement. They possess a critical awareness and understanding of all those factors and forms which have and do shape and change our evolution both conscious and unconscious from individuals to Aeons. And they are unique - 'their own person'. They owe allegiance to no one and they are not constrained by any affectation or role (such as conforming to the imagined image of a Master or Grand Master or 'teacher'). Like genuine Masters and Mistresses, they are spontaneous and human, without affectation of 'knowledge' or 'cleverness'. Neither do they pretend to be 'venerable'.

There are perhaps two or three genuine Grand Masters/Mistresses a century - and that is all. And this is

unlikely to change, given the present capacity of individuals to delude themselves and given the fact that few are prepared to undertake the really hard and difficult struggle that lasts for at least a quarter of a century and which creates such a unique entity.

As regards the last stage of the Occult way, which the septenary tradition describes by the term Immortal and which the distorted and inauthentic tradition of the 'Qabalah' describes as the stage of the "Ipssisimus" [and I had to look-up how to spell the word], this really is not obtainable except in the last few years of the causal existence of a Grand Master/Mistress who has created for themselves an acausal and thus Immortal existence. Thus, anyone claiming this title in the causal or mortal world is, 'ipso facto', a fraud - and one who has little or no knowledge of **real** esoteric matters. Those who so claim, show themselves up to be not even a genuine Master or Mistress - and seldom, if ever, even an Adept.

As Aeschylus once explained: one can learn through adversity/ suffering as so achieve wisdom. Before this 'law', people suffered, but did not learn. Most Occultists have never suffered, and so learn nothing; they eschew ordeals, and real life experiences, in favour of mystical meanderings and a religious mentality. Or they find comfort, an escape in the Occult. A real Occult quest involves adversity - undertaking hardships, surmounting real physical, mental and psychic challenges; forging into the unknown, alone. Questing through adversity to transform one's existence.

It takes years of self-effort and adversity, of accepting challenges and triumphing, to achieve real self-insight and genuine esoteric understanding, and thus to become an Adept. It takes even greater effort and adversity and learning to go beyond that. Real wisdom is still, unfortunately, a precious commodity. The esoteric path to Wisdom is open to all - its techniques and methods **work**. But such is the primitive self-awareness of most people that they cannot appreciate this or be bothered to undertake a real quest in search of the next stage of existence. So the Occult babbling will continue, and the frauds claim their titles.

De nihilo nihil fit.

ONA  
97 Year of Fayen

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## The Mass of Heresy



### Participants:

Mistress of Earth (in scarlet robes)

Master (in purple robes)

Guardian of the Temple (dressed in black, and wearing a face mask)

Congregation (in black robes, or black clothes)

### Temple Preparation:

The altar is covered by a red cloth on which is woven a gold inverted pentagram. Black candles and incense of Mars to be burnt. Behind the altar is a large swastika banner: black swastika on white circle against a red background. On the altar are silver chalices containing strong wine; a crystal tetrahedron and a small altar bell. The altar may also contain a framed photograph of The Chief, and a copy of *Mein Kampf*.

### The Aim:

#### The aim of this Mass is to:

1. challenge accepted beliefs about recent history
2. provoke dissent and encourage Promethean challenge - particularly within the psyche of the individual
3. encourage sinister forces.

**Important Note:** *It should be noted that performance of this Mass is illegal in many 'Western' countries - and in these and many other countries anyone who accepts and propounds the tenets outlined in this Mass renders themselves liable to criminal prosecution and/or persecution by the 'authorities'.* Performance of this Mass of Heresy in these times is as dangerous an undertaking as was performing a genuine 'Black Mass' in the era of Nazarene persecution/'witch-hunts'.

## **The Mass**

The congregation et al assemble in the Temple. The Master and Mistress enter at the start of the rite, precess to the altar, bow to the banner and turn to face the congregation.

*Mistress*

Hail to you, most holy and free,  
Revealer of Dark:  
We greet you with forbidden thoughts!

*Congregation*

Hail - most holy and free!

*Master*

We believe -

*Congregation*

Adolf Hitler was sent by our gods  
To guide us to greatness.  
We believe in the inequality of races  
And in the right of the Aryan to live  
According to the laws of the folk.  
We acknowledge that the story of the Jewish 'holocaust'  
Is a lie to keep our race in chains  
And express our desire to see the truth revealed.  
We believe in justice for our oppressed comrades  
And seek an end to the world-wide  
Persecution of National-Socialists.

We believe in the magick of our wyrd  
And curse all who oppose us.  
We express our pride in the great achievements  
Of our race  
And shall not cease from striving  
Since we believe the destiny  
Of our noble Aryan race lies among the stars!

*Mistress*

Let us remember in silence  
Our comrades who gave their lives  
Before, during and after our Holy War.

[The Master rings the bell twice. The silence which follows lasts for about two minutes after which the Master rings the bell once when all present give a brief Hitlerian salute. The Mistress then says:]

*Mistress*

I who am Mistress of Earth welcome you  
Who have dared to defy the dogmas  
That now hold our peoples in chains!  
No thought should bind you:  
No dogma restrict!

[The Master now vibrates the words '*Agios o Falcifer*' as he stands facing the altar with his hands spread over the chalices. During this chant, the Mistress kisses each member of the congregation, saying to them 'Honour be yours' after which she goes to the altar and takes up one of the chalices.]

*Mistress*

By our love of life we have this drink:  
It will become for us a gift From our gods!

[The Mistress raises up the chalice, turns and replaces it on the altar, then passes her hands over the chalices saying quietly '*Oriens splendor lucis aeternae in tenebris et umbra mortis*'. She then goes to the Master, who kisses her, holds his hands outstretched toward the congregation, and says:]

*Master*

Caligo terrae scinditur  
Percussa solis spiculo  
Dum sol ex stellis nascitur  
In fedei diluculo  
Rebusque jam color  
Redit Partu nitentis sideris.

[The Master turns, bows briefly toward the banner, faces the congregation and points to the swastika, saying:]

Behold the sign of the Sun  
And the flag of he who was chosen  
By our gods!  
Praised are you by the defiant:  
Through your courage we have  
The strength to dream!

[The Master hands the Mistress a chalice, saying:]

Suscipe, Lucifer, munus quod tibi offerimus Memoriam recolentes Adolphus.

[The Mistress sips the wine, holds the chalice toward the congregation, saying:]

*Mistress*

Let us affirm again our faith.

[The Guardian steps forward, and raises his right arm in the Hitlerian salute, saying as he does:]

*Guardian*

Heil Hitler!

[The Congregation respond with the same salute and greeting.]

*Master*

So you have spoken and from your speaking

Gifts shall come to you

Given by our gods.

Drink now, to seal with honour

Your faith.

[The Mistress gives the chalice she is holding to the Guardian who drains it, holds it upside down to show the congregation, and who then places it upon the altar. The congregation, in single file, then approach the Mistress. She hands them a chalice each, which each drain, hold upside down and place upon the altar. {Note: If the congregation is large, the chalices may be replaced by small cups or other suitable containers.} When all have drunk, the Master vibrates the words Agios o Falcifer while the Mistress turns to the congregation.]

*Mistress*

To believe is easy,

To defy is hard -

But most difficult of all

Is to die fighting for a noble cause.

Go now, and remember,

So that we few who survive

Can gather again in secret

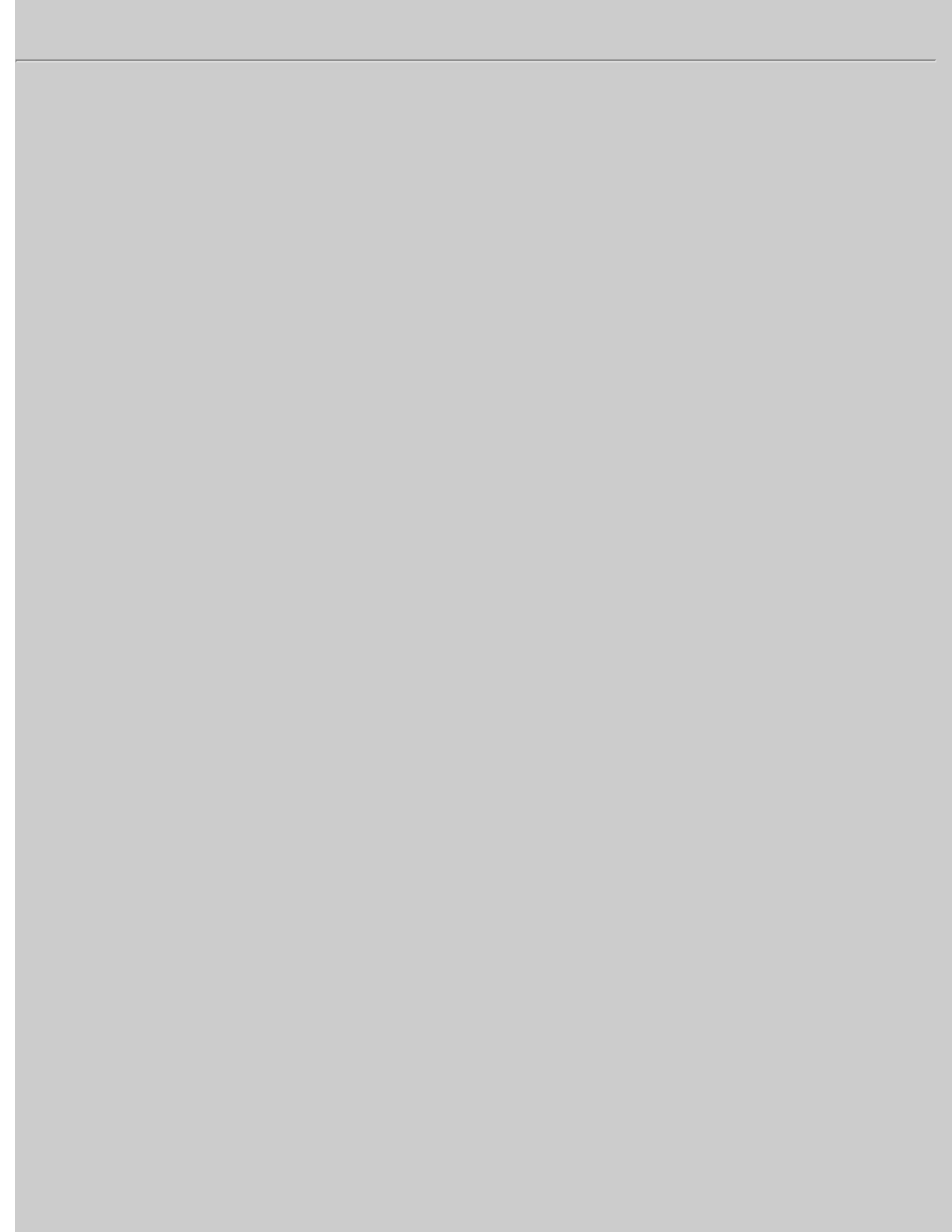
At the appointed time

To recall the greatness promised us

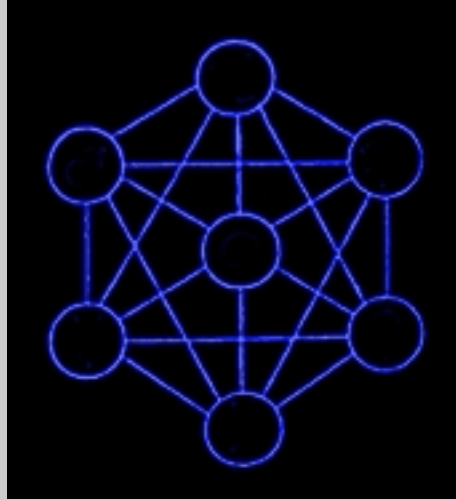
By the gods!

[The Guardian opens the doors of the Temple and ushers the congregation out.]





## The Rite of Defiance



This simple sinister hermetic working is both a rite of defiance, and a true act of heresy in this era of holocaustianity when: (1) denial of this new mundane religion of holocaustianity is, in many lands, an heretical act punishable by imprisonment, and (2) when active resistance (armed or political) to the Magian New World Order and its associated dogmas renders a person liable to assassination, imprisonment, torture, execution, or compulsory “re-education” (aka brainwashing).

The outdoor area or indoor Temple should contain, in the East, an image or statue of Baphomet according to ONA tradition, and an image or banner depicting the sigil of The Seven Fold Way (as above). If outdoors, the only illumination should be that of the moon, and if indoors, that from candles which preferably should be purple. Incense of Baphomet should be burned – Hazel and Ash with (if available) Petriochor.

The Rite should be conducted at night when the planet Saturn is rising above the horizon, as viewed from the geographical area where the Rite is to take place. [1]

The participant(s) [2] should dress in a white Thobe, preferably with a keffiyeh, and stand facing the direction of Saturn rising.

The celebrant (who may be male or female) begins the Rite by bowing slightly and once in the direction of the image of Baphomet, then returning to face the direction of Saturn rising and intoning/chanting, three times, *Agios o Baphomet!*

### **Celebrant:**

*Quod Fornicatio sit naturalis hominis.*  
We are born, we grow, we live, we die

And in the midst of our living there is  
In we few a passion for life, love,  
And the beginning that is death.

Thus do we defy our oppressors.  
Thus do we affirm our fierce deadly resistance  
To all and everything Yahoud, Nazarene, and Mundane.  
For we know the Magian holocaust is a lie to keep us all enslaved.  
For we know the tyranny of all their abstractions;  
The deceit, the weakness, behind their weasly words.

We – we few who know the secret of our Wyrd.

Wyrd commands us to reach towards  
And live among the stars,  
While they and their hubriati seek to close  
Our still open nexion to Life.

Thus do we know and welcome as allies, comrades, friends,  
All who defy and fight them; and thus would we rather die –  
Fighting, defiant - than live as slaves.  
For combat becomes us.

*Ya ikhwani wa akhawati!*

If they attack you – retaliate.  
If they oppress you – rebel.  
If they make laws – transgress them.  
If they talk peace – they are lying.  
If they seek compromise – ignore them.  
If they seek you as friends or allies – spurn them.  
If they are sad – laugh.  
And when they die – rejoice!

For we are terror, defiance –  
The waiting deserved retribution -  
That they themselves so secretly fear.  
We, warriors of Vindex,  
Waiting to drench our world with blood,  
Their severed heads a gift for our gods.

*Agios o Baphomet! Binan ath Ga wath am!*

The Celebrant then extinguishes the candles (if any), and bows once to the image of Baphomet, which bow signifies the conclusion of the Rite.

*Notes:*

[1] Saturn is chosen as being the region in causal Space where the nearest physical nexion to the acausal exists (as viewed from Earth).

[2] If there are participants, then the main Celebrant intones the words outlined in red above, with the participants (and the Celebrant) intoning all the other words. If there is one Celebrant only, then he/she intones all the words.

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## Appendix

### Some ONA Terms Explained

#### **Baphomet**

Baphomet is regarded as a Dark Goddess - a sinister female entity, The Mistress (or Mother) of Blood. According to tradition, she is represented as a beautiful mature woman, naked from the waist up, who holds in her hand the severed head of a man.

She is regarded as one manifestation of one of The Dark Gods, The Bride-and-Mother of Satan, and Rites to presence Baphomet in our causal continuum exist, for example in *The Grimoire of Baphomet*.

#### **Causal Abstractions**

Abstractions (aka causal abstractions) are manifestations of the primary (causal) nature of mundanes, and are manufactured by mundanes in their mundane attempt to understand the world, themselves, and the causal Universe. Exoterically, abstractions re-present the mundane simplicity of causal linearity - of causal reductionism, of a simple cause-and-effect, of a limited causal thinking.

All abstractions are devoid of Dark-Empathy and the perspective of acausality, and thus are redolent of, or directly manifest, materialism and the *Untermensch* ethos derived from such materialism.

Understood exoterically, an abstraction is the manufacture, and use of, some idea, ideal, "image" or category, and thus some generalization, and/or some assignment of an individual or individuals to some group or category. The positing of some "perfect" or "ideal" form, category, or thing, is part of abstraction.

Abstractions hide the true nature of Reality - which is both causal and acausal, and which true nature can be apprehended and understood by means of The Dark Arts, and thus by following the Occult way from Initiate, to Adept, and beyond.

According to the ONA, the so-called Occult Arts - and especially the so-called Satanism - of others are manifestations of causal abstractions, lacking as they do the learning of the skills of Dark-Empathy, Acausal-Thinking, and Sinister Sorcery, and thus lacking as they do the ability to develop our latent human faculties and our latent sinister character.

#### **Ethos**

Ethos refers to the distinguishing character, or nature, of a particular weltanschauung. The spirit that animates it.

## **Homo Hubris**

A type of mundane, and a new sub-species of the genus, Homo, which new sub-species has evolved out of the industrial revolution and the imposition of both capitalism and what is called democracy. This new rapacious mostly urban dwelling denizen – this creation of the modern West – is the foot-soldier of the Magian, and is distinguished by a personal arrogance, by a lack of manners, and by that lack of respect for anything other than strength/power and/or their own gratification. And it was to satiate and satisfy and to use and control Homo Hubris that the Magian and their acolytes (such as the Hubriati) manufactured the vacuous, profane, vulgar mass entertainment industry – and mass “culture” – of the modern West, just as it is Magian Occultism, the Magian- controlled Media, and the “spin”, the propaganda, of politicians who have been assessed and accepted by the Magian cabal, which keeps Homo Hubris almost totally unaware, and uncaring, of the reality of the modern world and of their potential as human beings.

## **Hubriati**

The hubriati are that class of individuals, in the West, who have been and who are subsumed by the Magian ethos and the delusion of abstractions, and who occupy positions of influence and/or of power. Hubriati include politicians, Media magnates and their savants, military commanders, government officials, industrialists, bankers, many academics and teachers, and so on. The oligarchy (elected and unelected) that forms the controllers of Western governments are almost excursively hubriati.

Among the abstractions which delude hubriati are the State, the nation, abstract law, and the pretence that is called "democracy".

## **Magian**

The term Magian is used to refer to the hybrid ethos of Yahoud and of Western hubriati, and also refers to those individuals who are Magian by either breeding or nature.

The Magian ethos expresses the fundamental materialistic belief, the idea, of both Homo Hubris, Yahoud, and the Hubriati, that the individual self (and thus self identity) is the most important, the most fundamental, thing, and that the individual – either alone or collectively (and especially in the form of a nation/State) – can master and control everything (including themselves), if they have the right techniques, the right tools, the right method, the right ideas, the money, the power, the influence, the words. That human beings have nothing to fear, because they are or can be in control.

The Magian ethos is thus represented in the victory of consumerism, capitalism and usury over genuine, numinous, living culture; in the vulgarity of mechanistic marxism, Freudian psychology, and the social engineering and planning and surveillance of the nanny State; in the vulgarity of modern entertainment centred around sex, selfish-indulgence, lack of manners and dignity, and vacuous "celebrities" (exemplified by Hollywood); and in the conniving, the hypocrisy, the slyness, and the personal dishonourable conduct, which nearly all modern politicians in the West reveal and practice.

## **Magick**

Magick (aka Sorcery) - according to the Sinister tradition of the ONA - is defined as "the presencing of acausal energy in the causal by means of a nexion. By the nature of our consciousness, we, as human individuals, are one type of nexion - that is, we have the ability to access, and presence, certain types of acausal energy."

Furthermore, magick - as understand and practised by the ONA - is a means not only of personal development and personal understanding (a freeing from psychic, archetypal, influences and affects) but also of evolving to the next level of our human existence where we can understand, and to a certain extent control and influence, supra-personal manifestations of acausal energies, such as an Aeon, and thus cause, or bring-into-being, large-scale evolutionary change. Such understanding, such control, such a bring-into-being, is Aeonic Magick.

Aeonic Magick is the magick of the Adept and those beyond: the magick of the evolved human being who has achieved a certain level of self-understanding and self-mastery and who thus is no longer at the mercy of unconscious psychic, archetypal, influences, both personal/individual, and of other living-beings, such as an Aeon.

Internal Magick is the magick of personal change and evolution: of using magick to gain insight and to develop one's personality and esoteric skills. There are seven stages involved in Internal Magick.

External Magick is basic, "low-level", *sorcery* as sorcery has been and still is understood by mundanes - where certain acausal energies are used for bring or to fulfil the desire of an individual.

Ceremonial Magick is the use (by more than two individuals gathered in a group) of a set or particular texts or sinister rituals to access and presence sinister energies.

Five-dimensional magick is the New Aeon magick *sans* symbols, ceremonies, symbology (such as the Tree of Wyrð) and beyond all causal abstractions, and it is *prefigured* in the advanced form of *The Star Game*.

## **Mundane**

Exoterically, mundanes are defined as those who are not of our sinister kind - that is, as those who do not live by The Law of the Sinister-Numen (qv).

Esoterically, mundane-ness is defined as being under the influence of, or being in thrall to, or being addicted to, and/or believing in, and/or using as a means of understanding, causal abstractions (qv).

## **Vindex**

Vindex is the generic name for that revolutionary noble warrior who leads the practical fight against the Magian and their allies.



**ONA/O9A**

**Order of Nine Angles / Order of The Nine Angles**



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## Concerning The Meaning of The Nine Angles: A Collection of Texts (Part One)



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### Ingrowing Angles, or How Not to Name Thee Nine Angles Thingy

An article currently [2009 CE] drifting lopsidedly around in cyberspace - with a title something like *Angles incarnés* and giving hyperlinks to boring stuff about a dead two-dimensional shape, the trapezoid - reveals yet again the Aquino-cult for the silliness it is, and yet again serves to highlight the esoteric, intellectual, and sinister, superiority of The Order of Nine Angles over and above the ToSers and the LaVey "satanism of and for the mundanes".

The aforementioned article gives some details about Aquino's much hyped *Ceremony of Nine Angles*, which some idiots claim was the basis for "our" name, although even a cursory glance by a mundane would suffice to show the fundamental, irreconcilable difference between our initiated, esoteric, and sinister, understanding of the term angle, and the silly, pretentious, clumsy, and totally un-esoteric use of the term angle by Aquino, LaVey, and by those mundanes following such pretentious mundane drivel.

In addition, Aquino used a pantomime language - deriving from the fictional works of Lovecraft - which when said or "chanted" serves only to give us a fit of the giggles: *F'tang f'tang o-lay olay biscuit barrel...* kind of stuff (maracas in the background are optional). Let's run that again, with maracas on: *F'tang f'tang o-lay olay biscuit barrel...*

In the matter of Aquino's angles - Ouch! Is that my ingrowing-angle hurting again? - there is a lot of mumbo-jumbo, and very little, if any, genuine esoteric substance, with the mumbo-jumbo itself containing a lot of pretentious pseudo-biblical poesy such as "the laughing one doth cry and the flute wail..."

Well, wail away this Aquino-esque Magic Flute might, for nothing doth come forth, and will ne'er come forth from a boring two-dimensional geometrical shape. Wherein, of course, lies the fundamental flaw - and the laughable nature - of this whole Aquino angles thingy.

For The Order of Nine Angles, an angle is, of course, a five-dimensional concept - composed of two causal metrics "meeting" (or joining) at a particular point in a four-dimensional Space-Time (causal) continuum, with this particular "meeting" (or joining) being only one particular causal re-presentation of an acausal event; that is, the "angle" changes in causal Time. It is only one causal re-presentation of one event, which event is subject to acausal change.



In more simple terms, our angle can be considered as an extension of a spherical, basic three-dimensional, angle - familiar from spherical geometry. But each intersecting arc is a four-dimensional metric in causal Space-Time, so that to describe it in more detail (at least causally) one has to use a Tensorial re-presentation (such as used in describing for example a Riemannian metric). Even then, this is only another causal simplification (a causal abstraction devoid of acausality), since what we in the ONA are describing are acausal energies being manifest in the causal dimensions (in four-dimensional causal Space-Time) by means of such an "angle" - and these energies can manifest in various ways, by various means.

Let us consider one particular instance - where the means is a particular three-dimensional object (a tetrahedron) composed of a particular material (quartz) and where the esoteric (acausal) aspects of this combination (a quartz tetrahedron of a certain size) are activated by sound resonance (sonic vibrations). This particular instance is used, for example, in the simple ONA Nine Angles rite, where a particular combination of sound waves (a chant or chants at the correct pitch or pitches - for example a fourth or a fifth apart - and of the correct intensity) will "activate" the crystal, that is, make it a (temporary) nexion to the acausal, enabling the flow of causal energy from the acausal into the causal. Thus, the static, causal and a particular combination of nine angles of the crystal tetrahedron become something much more than just three-dimensional geometrical constructs in particular moment of causal Time; they become "alive" because imbued with acausal energy. That is, there is a phase-shift - from causal Time to acausal Time.

Of course, this is just one instance of our esoteric use of the term angle - there are many more, and all these usages, by us, of the esoteric term "nine angles" serve to highlight the buffoonery of Aquino's use of the term. Our esoteric usage of the term nine angles also serve to reveal those who claim we, of the ONA, somehow "ripped off" Aquino's work, for the laughable mundanes that they are.

ONA

[ Originally posted October 120 yf by Ms PointyHat on the [Sinister Times](#) blog ]

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(Extract from)

**The Order of Nine Angles in Historical, and Esoteric, Context**

As the ONA has pointed out in many essays and documents - including *Ingrowing Angles*, and *The Nine Angles: One More Causal Symbology* - the ONA's nine "angles" refer to a causal description of the meeting of acausal and causal space-time metrics, and are thus a re-presentation of a nexion, of that region of the Cosmos where the causal continuum meets or intersects or can intersect the acausal continuum, and thus where acausal energy flows from the acausal into the causal, which energy is capable of making things (or a thing) alive. That is, to use an older but appropriate esoteric term, the ONA angles are *alchemical*: some-thing which has life, or which can be made alive.

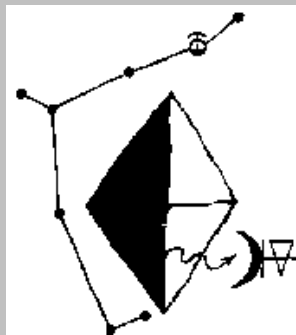
Classical esoteric alchemy was concerned with finding or manufacturing what was called The Philosophers Stone, which was some means, or some element, or some potion, or some combination of means, potions, and various elements, which would animate matter, making alive what was hitherto inert, with this "Stone" (lapis) thus re-presenting the very essence of life itself, and hence capable of imparting health and long life (or even immortality) to the alchemist.

Hence, the ONA's "angles" are alchemical in inspiration. Hence also the mention of the source for this inspiration, this early source being ancient Arabic alchemical texts [see Footnote, below], and certainly not a certain Mister Aquino.

Furthermore, the ONA - or rather, Anton Long - has extensively developed and refined, and rationally explicated, the original and often vague and confused alchemical concepts involved. Thus, the Nine Angles of the ONA can be considered to be nine-dimensional - combining the five-dimensions of the acausal continuum, with the four-dimensions of the causal continuum, and thus describing a nexion; one presencing of life-giving acausal energy in the causal.

In rather stark contrast, as the ONA says, the "angles" of Aquino (which angle concept of his both his own Temple of Set, and the Church of Satan, used) are just a boring, mundane, dead, two-dimensional geometric thing.

The Nine Angles are most often symbolized, by the ONA, by means of the alchemical combination of a quartz tetrahedron, certain sound vibrations (esoteric chant), the sorcerer/sorceress (the Rounwytha) and the appropriate "alchemical season", for it is - according to the ONA - such particular combinations, which must involve a living, conscious, esoterically skilled, human being, that not only "animate" the nine angles, but which are or which can become, the nine angles. Furthermore, according to Anton Long, these nine angles represent the survival of the genuine, ancient, esoteric alchemical tradition, and perhaps the only surviving one, a tradition symbolized by the traditional ONA sigil below, where most of the required "elements" are depicted:



Sigil of The Alchemical Nine Angles

*Editorial Footnote:*

Anton Long - in his MS *Emanations of a Mage* - mentions this ancient alchemical tradition:

This source was – and for me, at that time (the early to middle 1970's e.n.) surprisingly – the works of various Arabic alchemists and writers, who had not only posited a system of seven fundamental stages or elements – *al-ajsad al-sabaah* – but who had also constructed a system of nine emanations of “The One” which included these seven elements plus two others which were quite distinct by virtue of having different aspects, or types of, or sources of, time itself, as described in the alchemical manuscript *Al-Kitab al-Aflak*.

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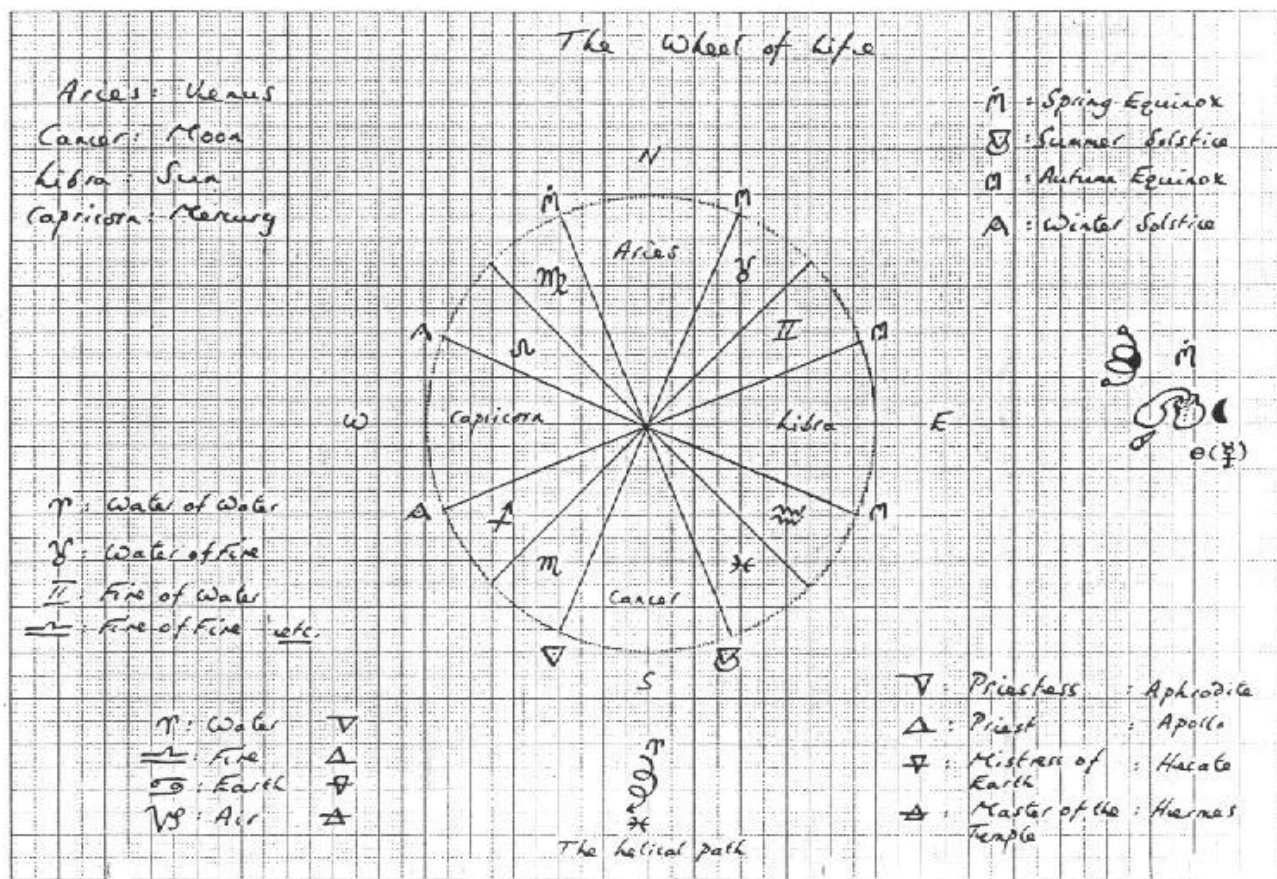
**The Nine Angles - Just One More Causal Symbology**

As first described in a footnote to the ONA MS *The Nine Angles - Esoteric Meanings* (published in facsimile in *Hostia*, Volume 1, 1991 e.n.) a nexion – the causal *within* the acausal (or vice versa) – could possibly be mathematically represented by a Tensor which has *nine* non-zero symmetric components, re-presenting a basic causal Space (and forming the “nine subspaces” of one causal apprehension), and whose asymmetric components re-present (some of) the acausal aspects involved in a particular nexion (acausal within causal).

Thus, it is possible to write an equation involving this particular tensor which describes (in a quite limited way) such a nexion and the collocation of spaces within it, with the boundary conditions of this equation giving the metrics of the “Space-Time” of the nexion. Thus, this equation would re-present something of the fusion of causal-acausal energy, and this itself might lead to new (to current causal Science) energies being described, and thence to the development of new, acausally-based (that is, “organic”), technologies.

Two important considerations, however, should be noted. First, that such an equation is only a limited *and causal* re-presentation, based on a causal mathematics, and thus cannot fully describe either the causal or the acausal aspects of the nexion. Second, that no conventional mathematical representation – tensorial or otherwise – can correctly describe any aspect of the acausal, since all conventional mathematical descriptions currently known to us depend on causal metrics, on causal Time. To correctly describe acausal Spaces (and thus acausal energy itself), a new mathematics has to be created which is based on acausal geometry and acausal Time, and which thus can re-present an acausal metric.

The facsimile of the particular MS mentioned above also shows, in diagrammatic form, the relation of the Nine Angles to the (double) tetrahedron; to the helical path (q.v. the hand-drawn diagrammatic of *The Wheel of Life* in facsimile editions of *Naos*); to the Tree of Wyrð; and to the “Four Gates” and thence to the “inverted pentagram”. For more details of some of these esoteric relations, see the facsimile of the MS *The Secrets of the Nine Angles*, also published in *Hostia*, Volume 1.



ONA: The Wheel of Life - Basic Alchemical Seasons

ONA Manuscripts

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## Concerning The Meaning of The Nine Angles - Part Two

### **The Nine Angles - Beyond The Causal Continuum**



To understand The Nine Angles is to understand the cosmology of causal and acausal - of the Cosmos itself having a causal continuum (a causal Universe), and an acausal continuum (an acausal Universe). The Nine Angles are a nexion between the two, which means these nine angles have or can presence life; that is, they possess, or are animated by, acausal energy, from the acausal continuum.

There are nine angles because there are nine dimensions involved in all the nexions we currently know - the four dimensions of, or which re-present, the causal continuum, and the five dimensions of, or which re-present, the acausal continuum, and which "five dimensions" form the basis for genuine dark sorcery, that is, the willed bringing forth of acausal energy into the causal by means of a nexion.

The four causal dimensions are, of course, the three spatial dimensions (at right angles to each other) and the one dimension of causal, linear, Time.

The Nine Angles are therefore formed from, or consist of, or re-present, *four* non-living (inert) causal dimensions, and *five* living ("alchemical"; "esoteric"; "dark"; sinister) acausal dimensions, and it this combination, of Nine, which is numinous, or, more correctly, which is that sinister-numen which forms the essence of Life itself.

Thus, the term "angle" as used by the ONA esoterically and fundamentally means *one type of, one particular species of, a Cosmic dimension* - as opposed to the ordinary type of dimension we are familiar with in the causal continuum, and which causal dimensions can be re-presented mathematically and which causal dimensions form the basis for the causal science of Physics.

In causal terms, an angle is simply a convenient geometric construct - an abstraction based upon the linearity of causal Time, on the simplicity of causal cause-and-effect, and an abstraction which can be re-presented in Euclidean (two-dimensional causal) geometry by the meeting or intersection of two lines, and also re-presented in spherical (three-dimensional causal) geometry, and Riemannian-type (four-dimensional causal, or metrical) geometry.

All these types of causal "angles" are inert; mere causal abstractions, even when we are describing that causal-angle which re-presents causal Time, because this type of Time (the causal type) is simply a physical (lifeless, un-numinous) cause-and-effect.

In complete contrast, an acausal "angle" is some-thing that lives, that has or which can be imbued with, life: that is, it has or it can be imbued with acausal energy. Or expressed another way, an *acausal* "angle" re-presents or can be used to re-present, acausal energy, and thus also re-presents the very essence of Life, of what animates physical matter and makes that matter "alive".

Thus, *the-nine-angles* is a term for that particular collocation of acausal-and-causal-angles which form, or which construct, or which are, a nexion: the intersection of causal and acausal metrics. Where the acausal continuum (the acausal Universe) meets, or intersects, or joins, or is merged with, the causal continuum, the causal Universe.

Hence it is easy to understand just how the nine angles are the combination of four causal-angles, and five acausal-angles: of the "five dimensions" of acausal Space-Time, and the four dimensions of causal Space-Time.

### **Confusing Angles**

The confusion over the term "angle" arose, in the past - and to some extent, still arises in the present - because we do not, as yet, have a precise language, nor a new type of mathematics, to describe the nine Cosmic dimensions (or cosmic angles) that re-present a nexion (or at least, which re-present all the nexions we currently know or are aware of).

Thus while the esoteric term *nine angles* can, in many ways, be considered to be synonymous with the esoteric term *nexion*, there are also many types - or species - of *nexion*, which variety has been the source of some confusion among non-Adepts and especially among mundanes.

Hence, and for example, the nine angles can re-present the Tree of Wyrd (ToW): the seven plus two (seven spheres and two aspects of cosmic Time, causal and acausal) [ Footnote 1 ]. The Nine Angles can also re-present the nine combinations (and transformations) of the three basic "alchemical" substances, which nine and their transformations (causal and acausal) are themselves re-presented by The Star Game, which Star Game itself can be re-presented by the term Nine Angles, since the Star Game, correctly used (see, for example, *The Grimoire of Baphomet*), can be a *nexion*. The ONA itself is another example of a type of *nexion*: one particular *ordering* of acausal energy; one means to presence acausal energy in the causal, and so change the causal and the living beings who live in the causal continuum.

Due to the very nature of the acausal, we simply cannot construct acausal angles (that is, we cannot presence or access or re-present acausal dimensions) by some-thing or by some-things which is or which are purely causal; by inert, physical (causal) material or matter, or even by causal types of energy (such as electricity, and plasma).

All that we have, for the moment, are various alchemical-type esoteric Rites which have been shown, by trial and error, to be effective to some degree. That is, we do possess some rather rudimentary means to manufacture a *nexion*, or to use an existing *nexion*. [Footnote 2 ] These rites currently all involve, in some way, human beings, and some combination of some causal-things, such as esoteric chant; a quartz tetrahedron. That is, it is the human being - or rather the type and magnitude of acausal energy which exists in a living human being - which re-presents or which can be used to access, certain acausal-angles (certain specific acausal dimensions).

### **Manufacturing Future Nexions**

What it is important to understand about all existing means of accessing the acausal - of presencing and using acausal energy - is that they are rudimentary and crude; a mere beginning.

Once we acquire, we develop, a better understanding of the acausal continuum, and thus of acausal energy, we can begin to construct some means, or some devices, to manufacture a nexion and thus directly access the acausal continuum. Obviously, these devices will not be based on current, purely causal, inert, technology, because they will, to some extent, harness or use acausal energy as opposed to causal energy, and it is such devices which should enable to access the acausal *sans* the medium of human beings.

Thus, all of our currently existing ways and means of presencing the acausal - all of which are manifest only in the sinister-numen of the ONA and its world-wide kindred - are themselves only a beginning, a temporary means, and they can and will be surpassed when we ourselves develop our faculties sufficiently to be able to rationally comprehend the acausal as it should be apprehended, and when we extend the frontiers of our knowledge by bringing-into-being a genuinely acausal technology, based on acausal energy and, most importantly, upon acausal Time.

Thus, the ONA - representing as it now does the pinnacle of our current esoteric knowledge and representing as it does the most efficacious means currently known to us of using acausal energy - is itself only a beginning, and can, and should, and must, be developed, evolved, changed; for it is only one temporally based means to enable us to develop, and to use, our understanding of The Cosmos as the Cosmos really is: some (currently often mysterious) combination of two different Universes.

The beginning of the new apprehension we needed was contained, esoterically, in the term Nine Angles - but the ONA has now gone beyond even this, as outlined in the exoteric text, *The Physics of Acausal Energy*. And it is such developments of our initial Nine Angles apprehension which will take us beyond our currently rather rudimentary "magick", of Rites, Ways, means and ends - and which can enable us to construct, in the future, the new very real magick of the Cosmos where we have direct access to the acausal continuum itself, and thus can - to give one relevant example - use that continuum to travel from one place in the causal Universe to another place in the causal Universe, almost instantaneously, without the need for cumbersome, causally-Time based, starships. For one basic Law of acausal Physics, of acausal energy, is: action-at-a-distance, since acausal Space and acausal Time are exactly that, a-causal, not-bound by the metric, the distances, of causal Space - which distances always take a certain amount of causal Time to cover, however fast the velocity.



Thus can we, in reality, not only seed ourselves among the Galaxies of the Cosmos, but also live in those new diverse ways which will themselves be the genesis of our accelerated evolution as a species: as one type of causal life in the Cosmos.

Compared to this, all the "magick", all the "ways", all the "esotericism", of others - and even of the current Order of the Nine Angles - is totally and utterly mundane.

Anton Long  
Order of Nine Angles  
121 Year of Fayen

*Notes:*

(1) The ToW itself can also be "viewed" (or esoterically apprehended) in many ways - for example, it can re-present the consciousness, the life, the psyche, of a single human being - that which animates, or those things which animate, the human being and makes them human, such as archetypes, the very process of rational thought itself, and the faculty of empathy.

The ToW - as one nexion - can also re-present the seven individual nexions (the spheres) plus the two other nexions, one of which is The Abyss, which makes it what it is, an alchemical (that is, living) symbol of Atazoth: that *increasing-of-azoth* which are the "living waters", The Philosopher's Stone, the gateway/nexion to an acausal, and thus immortal, existence.

(2) Some of these Rites are given in *The Grimoire of Baphomet*.

The Seven-Fold Way itself (as outlined, for example in *Naos*, and in *The Complete Guide to The Seven-Fold Way*) is another means, known to us, which is or which can be effective in giving us access to the acausal - that is, enabling us to presence or access or re-present acausal dimensions, and thus acausal energy.

Another Way, known to us, is *The Way of the Rounwytha*.



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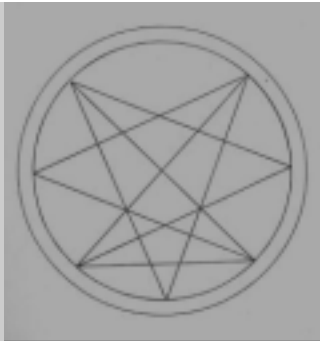
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## Frequently Asked Questions About The Order of Nine Angles

Version 2.01

*What is the ONA?*

The Order of Nine Angles is a sinister esoteric organization, a sinister Way, a sinister methodology, and a sinister mythos.

1) The ONA is an esoteric association of individuals, world-wide, who use, or who apply, or who are inspired by, its sinister methodology, its sinister mythos, and/or its sinister Way. By *esoteric association* we mean something different from an *association* as understood by mundanes and as manifest in the mundane world of the mundanes. We mean *an association of clandestine cells*, for the ONA is organized, in the mundane world, on the basis of (often clandestine) cells. This is because of the overall subversive nature of the ONA itself.

2) The Sinister Way of the ONA is evident in its Seven Fold Sinister Way, as manifest in manuscripts (MSS) such as *Naos*, and in the work of traditional ONA nexions (or “groups”).

3) The sinister methodology of the ONA is manifest, for example, in what we call sinister tribes, and in the striving, by individuals, to live in a sinister way and *To Presence The Dark*: to do works of dark, sinister, sorcery, often by their practical deeds which deeds take them beyond the bounds, the limits (moral, legal, and otherwise), set by mundanes, and which deeds can enable them to consciously evolve to become a different, higher [more sinister], type of human being.

4) The sinister mythos of the ONA is evident in stories such as *Eulalia: Dark Daughter of Baphomet*; and is briefly outlined in the MS *The Dark Tradition, and Sinister Mythos, of the Order of Nine Angles* (Esoteric Notes 103a).

The Sinister Way of the ONA is based upon the principles that (1) genuine esoteric knowledge and insight – and thus genuine Occult advancement – requires both self-achievement through practical deeds, and through a self-honesty, a genuine knowing and understanding and control of one’s own self;

and (2) the necessary evolution of the individual can be achieved by a willed self-overcoming and the acceptance of hard, difficult and dangerous challenges, both esoteric and practical.

*What are the aims of the ONA?*

Three of the primary aims of the ONA are:

(1) to use our Dark Tradition to create sinister Adepts and, over a long period of causal Time, aid and enhance and create that new, more evolved, human species of which genuine Sinister Adepts may be considered to be the phenotype;

(2) to use the sinister dialectic (and thus Aeonick Magick and genuine Sinister Arts) to aid and enhance and make possible entirely new types of societies for human beings, with these new societies being based on new tribes and a tribal way of living where the only law is that of our Dark Warriors;

(3) to aid, encourage, and bring about – by practical and esoteric means (such as Dark Sorcery) – the breakdown and the downfall of existing societies, and thus to replace the tyranny of nations and States – and their impersonal governments – by our new tribal societies.

*How can I join the ONA?*

There are three ways of joining – or becoming part of – the subversive ONA. The first, and perhaps the easiest, way, is to, by yourself, just start using and applying the sinister methodology of the ONA, and/or follow the Seven Fold Sinister Way, using the guidance of practical works such as *Naos*, and the *Complete Guide to The Seven-Fold Way*.

The second way is to seek out a traditional ONA nexion or an ONA Adept, and then follow or apply or put into practice the guidance that may be offered. This is similar to the first way, although here the individual usually has some practical guidance and practical advice from someone who has been involved with the ONA for some time and who, as a consequence, has done practical sinister stuff, magickal and otherwise.

Note that in both these cases, the individual – when sufficient practical experience is acquired – can establish their own ONA nexion (aka Temple aka group), if they so desire.

The third way – and the most sinister and the most practical – is to find and join an existing ONA tribe, or to form, or to become the founder of, your own sinister tribe by applying the sinister methodology of the ONA, as given, for example, in MSS such as (1) *The War Against The Mundanes*; (2) *We, The Drecc*, and (3) *Dark Warriors of the Sinister ONA*. Our tribes, by their very feral nature, are territorial, and local – they live and thrive in a certain geographical area, or a certain ‘hood, although some are now beginning to form alliances with other similar groups in other areas, or have expanded their operations and territory, and so can be found spread over several localities. In some ways, many or most of our

sinister tribes are a new type of gang culture, and most of them are urban-based.

In all cases, one does not join – or pay membership fees to – some central ONA headquarters, or some ONA command, because, as mentioned previously, the ONA is organized, in the mundane world, on the basis of what are often clandestine cells because of the generally subversive nature of the ONA itself, and because (expressed in rather esoteric terms) the ONA is an organized presencing of acausal energy through that nexion which is the ONA, which presencing is a willed, or directed, act of dark (sinister) sorcery.

In all cases, “membership” is earned through hardship, experience, and practical deeds, for the individual becomes of the ONA by their practical deeds and because of their sinister experience, their following of our dark and sinister esoteric path; that is, because they are, they become, living examples – living nexions – of the sinister itself.

However, technically (esoterically), the ONA is organized into the outer (exoteric) ONA and the inner (esoteric) ONA. To the inner ONA belong personally invited sinister Adepts, and beyond - that is, those who, having followed the Seven-Fold Way to at least Internal Adept, have revealed both a sinister nature (evident in practical deeds) and skill in Aeonic sorcery.

Technically (esoterically) in the outer ONA there are ONA members, and ONA associates. A member formally means someone in direct personal face-to-face contact with an Adept or Master/Mistress of the ONA; someone who is being guided and thus following our Sinister Way according to tradition, and thus who is part of an already physical ONA nexion, which physical nexion - in Old Aeon speak - is a Sinister "Temple".

There are also "unaffiliated" members who are working alone, who follow our Way, and who are also being guided by an Adept or Master/Mistress of the ONA.

Each member - when they attain Internal Adept - is free to guide others, and to establish their own "official" ONA nexion, but they still require some guidance to advance further, toward and into The Abyss, from whence they may emerge as newly fledged Masters or Lady Masters, who usually do not require further guidance.

An "official" ONA nexion should not be confused with the Temple - the simple causal construct - that an aspirant Internal Adept constructs as one of the learning tasks of the Seven Fold Sinister Way, which task is associated with External Adept.

An *associate* of the ONA is someone who is doing sinister work on behalf of the ONA and who usually but not always is in contact (sometimes not on a face-to-face basis) with an ONA member, but who does and who is free to do their own work, and who usually follows or (more usually) develops their own esoteric way and methods, but who also may propagate the ONA mythos. Such an associate often constructs a new, non-ONA, independent group or organization, which may or may not be imbued with the sinister energies which the ONA itself is using, and which may or which may not acknowledge the

influence of the ONA.

If all this is confusing to mundanes, so much the better. It certainly is not confusing to those possessed of (or who have developed) the faculty dark-empathy, and who thus possess esoteric insight.

*I have heard it said that the ONA is defunct?*

The ONA is thriving. Expanding; changing; evolving. Just because most of our members or associates – or any of The Old Guard (OG) – do not deign to partake in Internet discussions on some mundane forum or other, does not mean the ONA is defunct. Similarly, just because someone such as Anton Long keeps a low (and clandestine) profile, never ever now gives public interviews, and can only be contacted by trusted ONA members of long-standing, does not mean that he has “left”, or that he has changed his “life-long commitment to the sinister way”.

The mistake here is the silly mundane presumption that for some esoteric group, today, to be considered to “exist” it must have some thriving blatant Internet presence, or some snail-mail address, or some public “representative”, or to have some books published by some mundane publisher; or have some commercially available merchandise or some trade-marked logo; or be officially “recognized” by some mundane authority or other.

The majority of those who are part of or who are associated with an existing traditional ONA nexion (group/Temple) remain hidden, as those nexions themselves remain hidden; for that is how it has been for many, many, decades. And that is how most of our sinister work is undertaken – covertly, in secret.

In addition, some of our tribes do not overtly, in public, present themselves as “sinister” or openly affiliate themselves with the ONA. They just get on with their subversive job of subversion; of being feral; of being real outlaws; of living on the edge; of gaining control of their own local area; of making money for themselves and their tribe; of gaining respect among their own communities; and of generally being a pain in the ass for their local mundanes and for the “law enforcement” agencies of mundane “law and order”. That is, they are living the sinister way, not writing about it; not talking about it, on the Internet or elsewhere.

Furthermore, we have a variety of *nyms*, now – some still esoteric; some just emerging into the light of the mundane world, such as Dreccian. Thus, some of our tribes, and some of our traditional nexions, will use one of these *nyms*, instead of using the traditional term, and title, ONA.

The confusion about being “defunct” arises, quite often, because the ONA is a subversive, sinister, organization operating on the basis of (often clandestine) cells, and because the OG really have gone back “underground”, to continue their sinister work, in secret. And also because, of course, the ONA is a shapeshifting sinister entity, in the world of the mundanes; as befits a sinister, subversive, heretical, revolutionary, group.

*What do you mean by mundanes?*

We mean any and all of those who “are not of us”. Those who do not belong to or who do not associate with our sinister tribes, our traditional nexions, or who do not share our sinister ethos, or our sinister way of life.

We call them mundanes, because that is what they are – mundane. They are ordinary; they engage with and live in the mundane world of everyday work, and they have mundane goals. They accept the status quo; they pay their taxes. Even the “rebellion” of some of them is no real rebellion against the mundane ethos of wage and salary slavery, no real rebellion against the laws and ethics of the mundanes, of The State; no real rebellion against The State itself, and against the organized forces of mundane “law and order”.

The fundamental difference between us and mundanes is that we demonically aspire to be more than we are, and we are tribal and individualistic; we are warriors. In contrast, the mundanes seek safety and security and the “order” that comes with Police forces and with State or government-made laws, and with large, organized armed forces. They also accept impersonal Courts of Law where some abstract, government-made so-called “justice” is said to be obtained. In contrast, we accept that the only law is the warrior law of personal honour: that we are responsible for ourselves, that we have a right to the natural justice of revenge, retribution, a fair fight, and personal duels; and we refuse to surrender this responsibility of ours to anyone else or to any organized force, or forces, of mundane “law and order”, such as law-enforcement agencies or government so-called Courts of Law.

Thus, we accept that our sinister tribes have the right and the duty to make their own laws, to dispense their own justice, to defend themselves with deadly force, and to have their own territory where they are the law. If they want to co-operate with others, it is their decision – and cannot be imposed upon them by some outside agency or by some abstract law. Thus, we accept that we can only give our loyalty to someone we know personally, and that we have a duty to be loyal to our kind, to those of our “family”, to those of our kindred, our tribe. And we would rather fight and die than surrender to any mundane or allow any agent of a government to take away our honour and our dignity. And so on.

Mundanes do not like this genuine individualism; this tribalism; this proud ethos of personal honour before, and above and beyond, and in place of, State/government, law.

We know our kind; our kind can find us. And it is our kind that the mundanes fear, and rightly so.

*You talk of a Dark Imperium - a kind of Galactic Empire. But isn't there a contradiction here between the goal of developing unique individuals and an Imperium which by its nature requires a certain loyalty and obedience, a certain submission to its ideals?*

In its beginning (and for probably many centuries), such a sinister Imperium may well involve our new,

aristocratic, elite (our developed individuals) in leading those less developed and less enlightened; and/or in manipulating people, perhaps by some causal form (for example, what mundanes often call a political ideology, or say, what mundanes often call a religion).

Thus, our Dark Imperium may well be built and established by others, but under our guidance, our leadership; under the inspiration of our numinous-mythos, and under the aegis of our new type of human being. But it is this very Imperium which will provide the challenges, the Cosmic diversity, to speed up the process of human evolution and thus produce more enlightened, unique, individuals who can fulfil their potential, as has been explained in various texts.

Hence, the Dark Imperium will be our new sinister collective, assimilating other humans and then possibly other alien life-forms - a manifestation of our sinister ethos; a means to test, refine, evolve, individuals; to have the best triumph and lead; to provide more opportunities for evolution, not less.

In addition, our overall aim is to produce individuals with an Aeonic perspective, an understanding of wyrd, of the sinister imperative, who thus understand our new tribal ways of life and thus the ethos of our Law of The Sinister-Numen. Our aim is not to produce more Homo Hubris types who are addicted to an egotistical way of life and who thus are arrogantly unbalanced, believing as such types do the Magian illusion (evident in Magian Occultism) that they - some puny mundane - are the most important (and the most powerful) thing in the Cosmos. Our Way - in contrast to such Magian egotism, in contrast to the un-numinous hubris of Homo Hubris - is the Way of the Law of The Sinister-Numen, and which Law is the foundation of the Dark Imperium, and the basis for the way of life of the warriors of our Imperium.

*Is the ONA a Satanist organization?*

Yes, and also (and importantly) no. Yes, because Satanism – or perhaps more correctly, traditional Satanism – is one of our causal forms; part of our heritage; an important exoteric means to Presence The Dark. But our understanding of Satanism is not that of the mundanes, and in the mundanes we include most if not all of those who now consider themselves “Satanists” and who thus follow the mundane so-called “satanism” of the likes of LaVey and Aquino. Traditional Satanism is outlined in such MSS of ours as *The Ontology and Theology of Traditional Satanism*.

The ONA is not just “satanic” because even *traditional Satanism* (a term we first used, some decades ago, and now appropriated by others) is only one particular causal form linked to *one* particular Aeon (the current one). That is, it is only one means, one way, of currently presencing The Dark Forces; of provoking change and aiding our evolution, individual and social. That is, Satanism is but an exoteric (or public) form of the current Aeon – an outer shell which just encloses, or which can enclose/contain, some particular sinister, acausal, energies in a certain span of causal Time. Of course, most who today profess to be “satanists” will have no idea what we are talking about here, which is one reason why they are still mundanes.



Thus, we tend now – in this the Third Phase of our sinister, centuries-long, Aeonic strategy – to use the term *sinister* instead, to describe ourselves, and the ONA itself. Hence, we now describe the New Aeon that we seek to bring-into-being, by our practical subversion and our dark sorcery, as a sinister Aeon, rather than a Satanic Aeon, since the next Aeon will take us beyond our currently limited causal forms (beyond exoteric Satanism), and beyond the abstractions of the mundanes, who so like to pretend they understand some-thing by giving it some label or describing it by some term, some *-ism* or some *-ology*.

For the reality is that “we” cannot be defined in the simple, causal, way the mundanes want, and need. Thus – and to consider a relevant example – most mundanes want, and need, to classify or to define someone such as “Anton Long” by whether or not that person adheres or – or rather is seen, by mundanes, to adhere to – some already existing *-ism* or some *-ology*. Thus, they the mundanes become confused, perplexed, when such a person seems to adhere to several of those supposedly conflicting *-isms* or *-ologies* at the same time, or seems to move easily from one to another; and thus do they, the mundanes, in their confused perplexion, readily reach for a ready-made explanation, and project upon that person some other mundane term, believing by describing this person by such a term they have “understood” that person. Hence, the mundane is relieved, satisfied, comfortable again with themselves and their world.

Thus, the ONA now uses the understanding of a person such as “Anton Long” (whose public *persona* is now well-known) as a basic but effective test of mundane-ness, especially among those who describe themselves as Occultists and “satanists”. Have these “Occultists” and “satanists” the instinct, the occult ability – the innate character of one of our sinister kind – to see beyond mere causal form, to the acausal, and thus perceive the reality of one shapeshifting sinister individual? In time, we – our world-wide sinister kindred – will have more such individuals with a public persona whose life can be used as a test of mundane-ness

*Where can I find out more about the ONA?*

Currently (121 yf), there is an unofficial [ONA website](#), and a semi-official [ONA weblog](#) (which is not regularly updated). There was also an older, unofficial, website (camlad9), which gave some of the more exoteric ONA material related to Satanism, but it was shut down – banned – in October of 120 Year of Feyen because the ONA material there was, according to the mundanes, subversive and “dangerous”. Most of the material on the censored website is, however, available elsewhere on the Internet, and in printed books.

In addition, there are some individuals who publish collections of ONA material, and ONA books.

One important attribute of the ONA is that we do not believe in the mundane concept of copyright, so that all ONA works can be redistributed, and re-printed and re-published, with anyone free to print them and even charge money for them if they want to make a profit.

Some photostatic copies of some original and older ONA items – as issued by the ONA in the 1980’s

and 1990's CE – are now available, often in pdf format. These copies of originals include *Naos*, and *The Satanic Letters of Stephen Brown*, and the original *Black Book of Satan*, as well *The Grimoire of Baphomet*.

There may arise a time – soon, or not so soon – when we no longer have even an unofficial ONA website or an ONA blog, so that the neophyte and the curious will have to rely on either the sites and blogs of one or more of our cells, nexions or tribes, or do some practical research for themselves in the traditional, non-Internet, way of finding and reading books and articles, and finding and asking “those who know”.

*What is the official symbol of the ONA?*

We have two main, exoteric, sigils or symbols. The first relates to our Sinister Way, to causal and acausal and the Nine Angles, and is usually represented, in a two-dimensional way, as below:



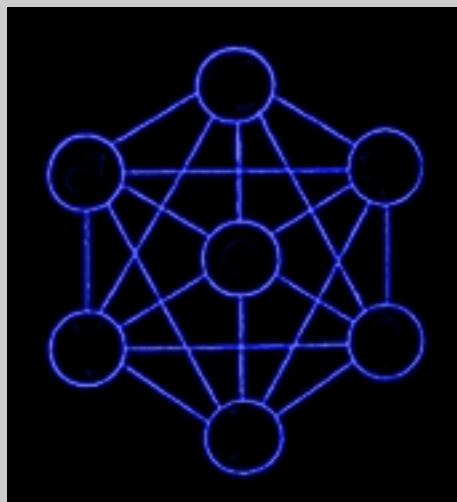
*ONA Sigil*

The second, given below, relates to our sinister mythos, and is associated with Baphomet, whom we regard – in contrast to all other Occultists – as a female acausal and sinister being, who can manifest in the causal, and this sigil is known both as The Sigil of Baphomet, and as The Dreccian Moons of Baphomet.



*Sigil of Baphomet*

We also sometimes use the Septenary sigil, as below:



*The Septenary Sigil*

What should be understood, however, is that these sigils are only two-dimensional, exoteric, representations of four-dimensional forms.

Thus, the ONA sigil, given above, is properly (that is, esoterically) constructed in three-dimensions, within a sphere, which three-dimensional construct itself changes, thus mimicking the change which is causal Time. This change is both a simple change of perspective (for example, the movement and rotation of the sphere and the construct within it) and also a “mapping” (that is, a causal “distortion”) of both the sphere and the construct within it). This mapping is essentially a change of, a transformation of, the regular Cartesian three-dimensional co-ordinate system, and to a limited extent this can be understood, and re-presented, by reference to the mathematical change of metric in causal Space-Time. This change is – viewed causally – random, and thus there is some esoteric appreciation, on viewing this four-dimensional sigil, of some of the properties of a nexion: of where the acausal is manifest in the causal.

Similarly, both the Septenary Sigil and the Sigil of Baphomet should be constructed in three-dimensions, and be animated.

*What is the true origin of the name Order of the Nine Angles?*

The Order of Nine Angles is only our exoteric name, and the origin of the term Order of Nine Angles – or as some people write, and, say, The Order of The Nine Angles – has been explained by us, several times. See, for instance, the collection of texts, *The Meaning of The Nine Angles*, [Part One](#) and [Part](#)

[Two](#) issued in 120 yf in pdf format, and currently available on the ONA website.

There are several other, older, Order MSS where the term is discussed, and those genuinely interested can seek those other MSS out and read them. Mundane Occultists, of course, will continue to make their spurious and silly claims about the supposed origin of the outward, exoteric, name of our subversive organization.

*Is it true that you advocate human sacrifice?*

We refer to such deeds as culling, and all genuinely sinister organizations, groups, associations and individuals undertake such cullings, and have always done so. Such deeds – whether collective or individual – are one of things which distinguish our type of life, our breed, from that of the mundanes.

Establishing, maintaining, providing for, and expanding, a sinister tribe involves culling. Combat involves culling, as does war. We just make the deeds or deeds of culling more conscious, more directed, more controlled, more rational, and view such deeds in the perspective of Aeonics, in terms of our centuries-long Aeonic strategy, and in terms of the evolution of the individual and of our human species.

*What about the illegal nature of such deeds, and other such sinister deeds, that you advocate?*

We say: illegal according to whose definition? That of the mundanes, of some mundane government? Their definitions, their laws, are irrelevant to us. We strive to only abide by our own law, which is the law of the sinister-numen, as outlined in MSS such as *The War Against The Mundanes*. Our justice is the justice of The Drecc, founded on our law of the sinister-numen.

Thus are we subversive, heretical, genuinely revolutionary, aiming as we do to replace the laws and the societies of the mundanes with our law and our new types of societies.

*I've heard that your Dark Gods are taken from the fiction of HP Lovecraft. Is that true?*

That is a common and mistaken assumption made by mundanes. A study of our tradition will suffice to show that the esoteric mythos of The Dark Gods is quite distinct from, bears little or no resemblance to, and is vastly more comprehensive than, the un-esoteric pseudo-mythology of Lovecraft. See, for example, the ONA text *Pseudo-Mythology and Mythos: Lovecraft, The Dark Gods, and Fallacies About The ONA*.

In contrast to pseudo-mythology of Lovecraft, The Dark Gods (aka The Dark Ones) are part of a distinct, and unique, ontology and Occult praxis, as well as being part of our complex esoteric philosophy which addresses ethical, etiological, epistemological, and other philosophical issues. For an overview of this esoteric philosophy of ours, refer to such texts as *A Brief Guide to The Esoteric*

*Philosophy of The Order of Nine Angles.*

Essentially, The Dark Gods are considered to be acausal beings who exist in the acausal continuum.

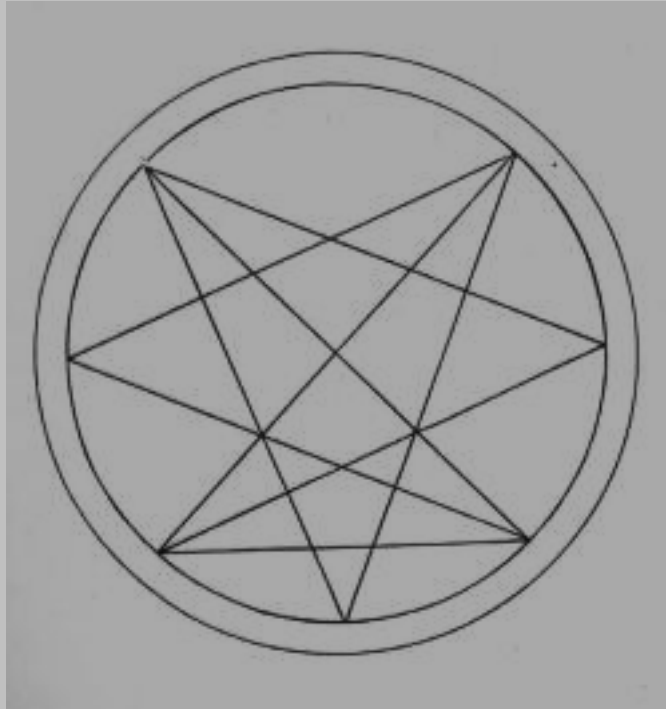
*How can I contact someone from the ONA?*

The simple answer is that you cannot; unless we want to contact you or recruit you for some reason, because – for instance – you had made a name for yourself by doing practical sinister deeds, or because you might have strayed into territory run by one of our tribes, or if you had some particular esoteric ability or some practical skill which we, or one of our traditional nexions, or one of our tribes, might find useful. Even then, of course, you would be tested, and would remain untrusted until you had been blooded (British English) or hazed (US English) and taken a binding oath.

ONA  
121 Year of Feyen

FAQ Version 2.01

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## **The Ontology and Theology of Traditional Satanism**

### **The Nature of Reality According to Traditional Satanism**

The fundamental ontological axioms of the Sinister Way of Traditional Satanism are: (1) there are two types of being, differentiated by whether or not they possess, or manifest, what is termed acausal energy, and (2) that we can only correctly and currently know a manifestation of acausal energy, an acausal being, through our currently under-developed and under-used psychic faculties.

Reality, for Traditional Satanism, is postulated to be the Cosmos, with this Cosmos having a bifurcation of being: that is, the Cosmos exists - is manifest - in both causal space-time, and in what we term acausal space-time. Causal space-time has three causal spatial dimensions and one causal Time dimension, and acausal space-time has  $n$  number (a currently undefined number) of acausal dimensions (which are not spatial) and an acausal Time dimension. Causal space-time can thus be considered to be the phenomenal, physical, universe we are aware of through our senses, and this universe is governed by physical laws and contains physical, causal, matter/energy.

Traditional Satanism posits, and accepts, that they are acausal beings existing in acausal space-time ( see footnote 1 ) just as there are causal beings existing in causal space-time, which causal beings include our own human species, and the life which shares this planet, Earth, with us.

According to Traditional Satanism, all causal living beings (existing or having their being in the causal physical universe) are understood as a presencing, in the causal, of acausal being (or energy) by the fact that they are alive. That is, all causal living beings are all connexions - nexions - between the causal and the acausal continuums.

## **The Being of Nature**

Nature may be defined as that innate creative (acausal) force (or energy) which operates in the physical world, on this planet, and which causes, or is the genesis of, and controls, causal living organisms in certain ways. These "certain ways" are the laws of Nature. The 'evolution of species' is a term used to describe one theory about one of the ways in which Nature is assumed to work, in the causal Universe (the causal continuum).

Nature can thus be conceived as a *type of being*. This does not mean that Nature should be understood in anthropomorphic terms, but rather that Nature is a living, changing, entity: some-thing which is alive; that is, Nature is another example of a nexion - of where there is a connexion between the causal continuum and the acausal continuum. We ourselves, as human beings, are simply - on planet Earth - one manifestation, one presencing, of Nature among many: that is, we are subject to the laws of Nature, the laws which govern organic change and organic life itself. Like all causal life on this planet, we causal beings are born, we grow and change, and our causal being dies, that is, ceases to be imbued with - to be animated by - acausal energy. That is, "we" cease to have a causal life.

Most Earth cultures had, or have, a belief that Nature is living, and the Mother of, the bringer-forth of, all life.

In olden times, Nature herself was often personified in terms of gods, and goddesses. That is, we apprehended Nature in terms of ourselves - in terms of individual causal beings with names, a history and a distinct personality. However, this type of apprehension is no longer necessary nor valid since we have developed, over the last few thousand years, the faculty of pure reason, and the faculty of acausal empathy, and can understand Nature, ourselves and the cosmos beyond Nature, in a natural manner without such intermediate abstract forms. That is, we can now apprehend Nature as Nature is. Hitherto, we projected human-type causal forms onto Nature in an effort to comprehend Nature as we did not possess much of an understanding of the Cosmos beyond Nature and beyond the causal, and how Nature is but part of this causal and acausal Cosmos.

## **The Philosophy of Traditional Satanism**

The essential starting point for a philosophy is to pose, and answer, the questions about the origin and meaning of life - or, more specifically, about our causal lives, as human beings, in the causal Universe, on this planet we call Earth.

Traditional Satanism does not believe that we human beings, and causal life itself, was created by some Supreme Being, which supreme Being is commonly referred to as God. According to Traditional Satanism, life evolved naturally on this planet, from finite beginnings we as yet do not precisely understand. The essence of the Traditional Satanism perspective about our origins in the causal Universe is reason - or rather, what used to be called Natural Philosophy: through observation, experiment and the use of reason, or logic, we can understand our world, the causal Cosmos, and ourselves. Thus, Traditional Satanism is, in one important respect, a rationalist Way of Life which accepts: (1) that the Causal Universe (or Causal Reality) exists independently of us and our consciousness, and thus independent of our senses; (2) our limited understanding of this causal 'external world' depends for the most part upon our senses - that is, on what we can see, hear or touch; that is, on what we can observe or come to know via our senses; (3) logical argument - reason - and experiment are the best means to knowledge and understanding of and about this 'external world'; (4) the Causal Universe is, of itself, a reasoned order subject to rational laws; (5) our faculty of acausal-empathy is a means for us to know the nexion we are, and how we can discover our correct relationship to all other life. Thus, practical reason - Natural Philosophy - enables us to comprehend the external, physical, causal, Universe.

Furthermore, Traditional Satanism also affirms that the knowledge and understanding of the causal Universe - achieved by means of reason and observation - is not the only type of knowledge and understanding available to us, for there is knowledge and understanding of the acausal continuum, and the acausal beings who, or which, exist (and "live") there, and that our psychic faculties enable us to sense, to begin to know, and are one means of comprehending, acausal Life in all its variety and forms. An axiom of Traditional Satanism is that by developing our latent psychic faculties we can gain a better understanding - and more knowledge of - Nature, of the acausal, and of acausal beings, and thus of ourselves.

## **The Answers of Traditional Satanism**

The Philosophy of Traditional Satanism accepts that the purpose of our mortal, causal, lives is essentially two fold. First, to change, to develop, to evolve, ourselves, and to explore and to enjoy the possibilities that causal life offers - for our mortal, causal, life is a limited, finite, opportunity. Second, that if we develop, evolve, ourselves in a particular way - and especially if we develop our psychic faculties - there exists the possibility of us, as a new type of being, living-on beyond our causal death, in the acausal continuum.

Thus, the Philosophy of Traditional Satanism asserts:



(1) That we human beings possess the potential to participate in and to control our own evolution - that is, we have the (mostly latent) ability to consciously evolve to become the genesis of a new human species, and that genuine esoteric Arts - and especially and in particular The Dark Arts - are one of the most viable ways by which such a conscious evolution can occur;

(2) That genuine esoteric knowledge and insight - and thus genuine self-understanding and self-evolution - requires both a development of our latent psychic faculties and a practical knowledge of the acausal continuum deriving from a coming-to-know acausal beings;

(3) That what has hitherto been known and described as magic(k) - especially Dark Sorcery, or Black Magic(k) - is one effective means of coming-to-know certain acausal beings, and is thus a beginning to understanding the acausal itself.

Our psychic faculties include what may be termed acausal empathy (otherwise know as sinister empathy, or esoteric/magickal empathy) and acausal thinking.

Acausal empathy is basically sensitivity to, and awareness of, acausal energies as these energies are presented in living beings, in Nature, and/or presented in the causal either via some acausal being, or directly, as "raw" acausal energy (that is, acausal energy trying to find some causal form to inhabit). Various esoteric (Occult) means and techniques exist to develop such acausal empathy.

Acausal thinking is basically apprehending the causal, and acausal energy, as these "things" are - that is, beyond all causal abstractions, and beyond all causal symbols, and symbolism, where such causal symbols include language, and the words and terms that are part of language, and what has hitherto been regarded as the terms and symbols of conventional Occultism, for such conventional Occultism is ineluctably bound to causal thinking. Various genuine esoteric (Occult) means and techniques exist to develop such acausal thinking. An important aspect of acausal thinking is thinking in terms of acausal time - that is, not in terms of the linear "cause and effect" of the causal continuum, but rather in what can be inaccurately described in terms of Simultaneity, of there being "action at a distance" unlike in conventional (causal) physics.

### **The Living Beings of The Acausal**

According to Traditional Satanism, there are several types of distinct acausal beings who exist in the acausal continuum, known to us - historically and otherwise - from Adepts who, having developed acausal empathy and acausal thinking, have discovered or come to know of, such beings.

Acausal beings are beyond our causal concepts and abstractions. Some dwell (and can only exist in) the acausal spaces, while others can dwell or be manifest in both the acausal and the causal, with there being many different types of acausal entities all of which have their own "nature" or type of being.

Essentially, they have no physical form, as we define and understand physical form (for example, a body) although some types of acausal being, who can dwell or manifest or be presented in our causal spaces, can dwell-within, or presence themselves within or be presented within, a causal form such as a living body or being (including a human being) and some of the acausal beings who can or who have done this are known as "shapeshifters". We cannot "see" or detect (by our limited physical senses or by using causality-based physical instruments) un-presented acausal beings who may be transiting through or dwelling-within our causal spaces (our physical world/universe) if such beings have not accessed, or presented themselves, in some causal, living, form (or even, in most cases, even if they have done this). However, some of us (and some other life) may sometimes "feel" or be aware of some such acausal beings: for example, if we possess a certain type of empathy or have the esoteric knowledge to detect some such transiting or in-dwelling acausal beings.

Since these acausal beings are beyond our causal concepts and abstractions, it is incorrect to judge such beings according to our limited, causal, "morality". They are neither "good" nor "evil". They live according to their own nature, as acausal beings, just as, for example, a wild predatory animal lives according to its wild predatory nature. According to esoteric tradition, there are some acausal beings who are drawn or who have been in the past been drawn toward our causal spaces (our physical universe/world) because they do or have acquired the ability to "feed off" certain types of emotion (or "states of being") which emotion (or "states of being") are but types of energy.

Due to the nature of the acausal spaces (and thus the nature of acausal energy) acausal beings do not "die" as we die and do not "age" as we age. Furthermore, our causal concept of physical travel (or movement) which takes causal time is irrelevant to and does not apply to such beings, due to their very nature as acausal beings. However, most acausal beings are not, by our standards, "all-powerful" and many cannot change or restructure temporal things, just as some cannot transit to ("be presented in") the causal spaces, or dwell-within causal beings, without some aid or assistance in opening a nexion or nexions (which in many instances is just a direct connexion between the causal and acausal spaces).

According to tradition, some of these known acausal beings have been collectively described by the term The Dark Gods, or The Dark Ones (or The Dark Immortals), and included in this particular type of acausal being is the entity more commonly known to us as Satan, and that entity which we, limited causal, mortal beings, describe as the female counterpart of Satan, who - according to The Dark Tradition inherited by the ONA - has the name Baphomet, and who is the dark, violent, Goddess - the real Mistress of Earth (and of Nature) - to whom human sacrifices were, and are, made and who ritualistically and symbolically washes in a basin full of the blood of Her victims. According to aural legend, She - as one of The Dark Gods - is also a shapeshifter who has intruded ("visited", been presented or manifest) on Earth in times past, and who can manifest again if certain rituals are performed and certain sacrifices made. Traditionally, it was to Baphomet that Initiates and Adepts of the Dark Tradition dedicated their chosen, selected, victims when a human culling was undertaken, and such cullings were - and are - regarded as one of the prerequisites for attaining sinister Adeptship.

Importantly, Traditional Satanism does not regard Satan - or any of The Dark Ones, such as Baphomet -

as conventional “gods” or “goddesses” are understood, and thus as beings to be worshipped, feared, and obeyed in a conventional religious sense. Instead, they are regarded as sinister friends; as new found companions; and may be likened to long-lost sisters and brothers or other relatives; and - in the case of Satan and Baphomet - as akin to our hitherto unknown mother and father, to be thus admired and respected, but never "worshipped". In addition, and in the case of some of these dark entities, they are, or can be considered as, our lovers. Thus, our relationship to these acausal beings is certainly not one of fear, or of subservience.

In addition, the term The Dark Gods is to be understood as but a useful, somewhat Old Aeon (that based on causal thinking), inherited exoteric term to describe a particular acausal species many of whom are known to and named by The Dark Tradition, which species, when manifest in the causal, are certainly far more powerful than human beings. Thus, the conventional names given to some such acausal beings as are known to us, or which have been known to human beings in ages past, are only exoteric names; only imperfect, causal, terms which are useful symbols.

Thus, a name such as "Satan" does not fully describe the real acausal nature and character of that specific acausal being, which acausal being has an esoteric name - an acausal name deriving from acausal thinking and acausal knowing - which better describes such a being.

## **The Question of God**

The philosophy of Traditional Satanism does not assume nor accept that there is a supreme Being, or deity. That is, a supreme creator Being does not and never has existed, and such a figure is regarded as a human, a causal, abstraction, a human manufactured construct, a myth, which human beings, and thus certain religions and theologies and philosophies, have incorrectly imposed upon the reality of the Cosmos in a vain attempt to understand it, and themselves. Thus, our Satan - our Dark One - is not subservient to some omnipotent God, but is instead a particular type of living acausal being, subject only to the natural laws of the acausal continuum.

## **The Question of Evil and The Existence of Satan**

What has been conventionally termed "the question (or the problem) of evil" - by other philosophies and religions and Way of Life - does not exist for Traditional Satanism since Traditional Satanism accepts that conventional morality is a causal abstraction: some causal form, or some dogma, which is incorrectly projected onto the nature, the reality, of the causal continuum, and which abstraction obscures our real, and our of necessity individual, connexion to the Cosmos. That is, conventional morality - like all religious dogma and all laws - takes away, or restricts, the inalienable individual freedom of a living human being to be an individual: to be that singular, unique, nexion they are to the

acausal.

For Traditional Satanism, it is only and ever the individual who - developing acausal empathy and acausal thinking - can directly comprehend and directly implement meaning, whether this "meaning" be described by such limited, causal terms as "morality", and evil and law - based as these causal terms are on the restriction, the oppression, of causal thinking. Thus, Traditional Satanism is a genuine liberation and a genuine evolution of the individual, for Traditional Satanism gives the individual access to the very essence of their own, individual, being: which is the acausal energy that animates them, making them alive, and which is also the apprehension and understanding of them as a unique nexion, of the acausal continuum itself, and of the acausal life that resides there, and which can - in some circumstances - be manifest in our own causal continuum.

Hence, a knowing of such acausal beings as Satan and Baphomet are one means whereby we, as individuals, can come to know ourselves, to evolve ourselves, and come to understand the meaning and purpose of our causal, mortal lives: which is to live-on beyond our causal death, in the acausal continuum as a new type, a new species, of immortal acausal being.

This individual and unique discovering of meaning by individuals, this knowing of such acausal beings - this understanding of how and why beings such as Satan exist - is a learning of the Art of Dark Sorcery, part of which learning is developing acausal empathy and acausal thinking, and it is the transmission of this dark and ancient Art, and its use by individuals, which is the *raison d'etre* of that sinister association known as The Order of Nine Angles.

Anton Long  
Order of Nine Angles



*Footnotes:*

(1) For convenience, acausal space-time will often be referred to simply as "the acausal", and causal space-time as "the causal". Also, the causal refers to the causal Universe of causal space-time, and the acausal to the acausal Universe of acausal space-time, with both the causal and the acausal Universes together forming the Cosmos.

The causal Universe is also sometimes referred to as "the causal continuum", and the acausal Universe as "the acausal continuum".

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[Order of Nine Angles: Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[The Quintessence of the ONA](#)

[Dark Arts of Traditional Satanism](#)

[Complete Guide To The Seven-Fold Sinister Way](#)

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## The Order of Nine Angles in Historical, and Esoteric, Context



### Origins

According to its own internal account [1] of its origins, the esoteric association named The Order of Nine Angles resulted from the amalgamation, in the late 1960's CE, of three small British, and secretive, pagan groups called, respectively, Camlad, The Noctulians, and The Temple of the Sun. The total number of people involved in these three groups, it is said, was less than two dozen.

Two of these groups - Camlad and The Noctulians - were also said to be survivals of an old, indigenous, esoteric tradition which it was claimed flourished in the then still rather isolated rural borderland between Wales and England, in the area now known as The Welsh Marches. Some of this pagan, sinister, tradition is recounted, in fictional form, in the ONA MS [2] *The Giving* and also in the ONA's *Grimoire of Baphomet, Dark Goddess*.

Whatever the merits or truth - historical and otherwise - of these recorded origins, the ONA itself first emerged into the public light of day in the early 1980's CE, when various Occult 'zines, including *The Lamp of Thoth*, and Stephen Sennitt's *Nox*, published ONA articles after the ONA itself had begun a limited distribution of some of their texts, including *The Black Book of Satan*.

The ONA went on to distribute other texts, including various editions of *Naos: A Practical Guide to Becoming An Adept*, and - famously - two volumes entitled *The Satanic Letters of Stephen Brown* which contained some correspondence between a certain Stephen Brown [3] and Michael Aquino, the then well-known leader of the American organization, *The Temple of Set*. In these

*Satanic Letters* - and in works such as Anton Long's *Satanism: An Introduction for Prospective Adherents* - what the ONA called its *exoteric doctrines* of the first phase of its Sinister Aeonic strategy [4] were clearly outlined.

Subsequently, the ONA received some mention in various books, including Goodrick-Clark's *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism, and the Politics of Identity*. In many of these books, the ONA was directly associated with fascism and National Socialism, or accused of promoting such political ideologies, and thus came to be regarded, by many people (correctly or incorrectly), as the premier group of what was termed neo-nazi Satanism.

Furthermore, many groups, around the world, have been formed, since the late 1980's and in or after the 1990's CE, which, directly or indirectly, have been influenced by the ONA and its doctrines, or which have been established by ONA members themselves. ONA inspired groups include the Australasian groups The Black Order, Sinister Vivendi, Order of Left Hand Path, The Black Glyph Society and The Temple of Them; the European groups include Fraternity of Balder, Fraternitas Loki, The Society of The Dark Lily, and Secuntra (Italy); and the American groups include WSA352, The Joy of Satan [5], the White Order of Thule, among many others.

### **Esoteric Context of the ONA**

The ONA, in the 1980's, coined the term *Traditional Satanism* to describe and categorize itself, by which term it meant that it represented a particular, a unique, sinister - that is, Satanic - tradition. Although this term, traditional Satanism, has since been appropriated and used (and somewhat mis-used and mis-appropriated) by other Occultists, it is still useful to describe the ONA, especially since the ONA has its own, unique and original, ontology and theology of Satanism, as outlined in the important and seminal ONA text *The Ontology and Theology of Traditional Satanism*.

It is this originality - this uniqueness - which serves to distinguish the ONA from all other contemporary Satanist and Left Hand Path Occult groups. Indeed, there are many originality pointers which can be used to describe and distinguish the ONA, some of which pointers are:

(1) Their unique ontology and theology, which posits (a) a bifurcation of

Reality into an acausal continuum and a causal continuum, and (b) the existence of acausal beings in this acausal continuum, one of whom is the being conventionally known as Satan, and another of whom is Baphomet, The Sinister Mistress of Earth, the bride-wife-and-mother of Satan.

(2) Their axiom that "human beings possess the potential to *consciously* evolve to become the genesis of a new human species, and that genuine esoteric Arts - and especially and in particular The Dark Arts - are one of the most viable ways by which such a conscious evolution can occur." [6]

(3) Their long-term Aeonic goals and esoteric strategy, manifest in their Sinister Dialectic, and their concept of sinister tribes, with these sinister tribes being regarded as an important part of their sinister strategy to build a new, tribal-based, more sinister way of life, and to disrupt and eventually overthrow the societies of what they call the mundanes.

(4) Their claim that "the very purpose and meaning of our individual, causal - mortal - lives is to progress, to evolve, toward the acausal, and that this, by virtue of the reality of the acausal itself, means and implies a new type of *sinister* existence, a new type of being, with this acausal existence being far removed from - and totally different to - any and every Old Aeon representation....." [6]

(5) Their rational explanation of magick/sorcery as the presencing of acausal energy in the causal by means of a nexion, and their understanding of Aeons as a type of presencing of acausal energy, and one that lasts (as an individual Aeon) for well over a thousand years.

(6) Their unique Rite of Internal Adept, which requires the candidate to spend at least three months living alone, far from human habitation, carrying everything they need on their back, and to live without speaking to anyone, without any modern devices or conveniences - such as a modern means of timekeeping (watch, or clock); without modern means of lighting (such as a torch or lantern) and without listening to any music other than that which they can produce for themselves by simple, hand-made, instruments such as a flute.

(7) Their placing of Satanism in an Aeonic context, regarding it is one presencing of acausal (sinister) energy during the current Aeon, and thus as one causal form to achieve certain exoteric and esoteric goals during this current Aeon.

(8) Their emphasis on the subversive sinister training of the individual in order to create the phenotype of a new, sinister, human species, with this training involving real, practical, danger to the individual (of the life-and-death, or loss



of one's liberty by going to jail, sort).

(9) The intentionally organic - esoteric - organizational nature of the ONA itself, described by Anton Long as "a type of acausal, living, entity in our causal world."

(10) The uniqueness of their symbols, such as their official Septenary Sigil, their Sigil of Baphomet, and their Star Game.

In addition, and according to Senholt in his thesis *The Sinister Tradition* [7] the sinister tradition of the ONA has seven distinct characteristics, which he enumerates as:

- 1) Anti-ethics. Followers of the Sinister Tradition despise any kind of ethical behaviour, which they see as remnants of a Judeo-Christian worldview;
- 2) Right Wing: All groups related to the Sinister Tradition contain political elements, such as appraisal of National Socialism, Race-theory, Social-Darwinism, and the infiltration or disruption of political powers in society;
- 3) Emphasis on physical training: Physical training is emphasized and is often a requirement in the curriculum of the initiate;
- 4) Direct action: The Sinister Tradition is highly practical, requiring members to perform magickal acts by working undercover in society, or by opposing society by means of direct action such as infiltration, intimidation or assassination of key opponents;
- 5) Distinct sinister vocabulary: A certain common vocabulary, which differs from the one used by the rest of the Left Hand Path is used. Key words are: sinister (often in combination with words such as dialectics and pathworkings), the septenary system, aeonics, causal/acausal, nexion, connexion, homo galactica, dark sorcery, presencing and the Dark Gods;
- 6) Advocate Traditional and theistic Satanism: Groups belonging to the Sinister Tradition advocate what they call Traditional Satanism which is theistic, positively believing in and using supernatural forces;
- 7) Non-semitic tradition: All followers of the Sinister Tradition are characterized by the conscious avoidance of any Semitic and Christian

influences, such as Kabbalah, Qliphoth, and even Goetic magick.

While we might rather pedantically quibble with some of the details given here by Senholt - for instance, with the term theistic applied to the ONA, and the term Right-Wing [8] - these seven characteristics, plus the ten originality pointers we have given above, certainly serve to distinguish the ONA from, and distance the ONA from, all contemporary Occult groups, as they certainly seem to reveal the ONA to be the most sinister, the most esoterically advanced, the most original, and the most practical Occult group currently in existence.

Indeed, one might well be justified in describing the dangerous - and seemingly complex and labyrinthine - Sinister Way as a unique esoteric *Weltanschauung* which makes the ways, methods and teachings of other esoteric groups seem rather mundane and quite tame, quite bourgeois.

In respect of the ONA's claimed aural traditions [9], as Senholt has pointed out, the ONA rite of External Adept bears some resemblance to an old Nordic tradition - a nightly ritual called *utesitta* - and may thus be a survival of such an old, European, pagan tradition, just as their Rite of Internal Adept may be a modern form of a much older pagan tradition, where the aspiring or apprentice sorcerer, or sorceress, had to live alone in the wilds for many months, and often for a year or more, in order to develop their esoteric skills.

Finally, and quite importantly, one must make mention of the intentional organic nature of the ONA itself, a nature manifest in several things, such as the lack of a central hierarchy; the sinister methodology itself which allows the individual to make their own choices and decisions; the lack of restrictions - moral and otherwise - placed on the individual; allowing the individual to form their own groups (or nexions or tribes), and the disdain for copyright, and the lack of secrecy regarding teachings, which has led to the rapid dissemination of the sinister Way, the sinister methodology, and the sinister mythos of the ONA. This organic - or acausal or living - nature of the ONA has allowed other individuals, and other groups, to make their own contributions to the ONA, as well as to take what they need from the ONA, use it, change it, and evolve it. As one ONA member recently described it: "the ONA is akin to acausal viral DNA; a new kind of causal transduction."

It is this acausal nature of the ONA itself - and its underlying sinister methodology - that has not only allowed the ONA to survive and steadily grow in the past thirty years without any apparent outward organization or

individual control, but which has also led, most significantly, to its recent rapid expansion in places like urban America where groups such as WSA352, led by dynamic, intelligent - and interestingly often non-Caucasian - young people, have been inspired to adopt, adapt and evolve the ONA, and give it new life, as the ONA virus spreads and mutates, world-wide.

### **The Contentious Issue of The Nine Angles**

Senholt, in his thesis *The Sinister Tradition*, expresses what has become the accepted view when he states:

The concept of the nine angles appears for the first time in published sources by the Church of Satan and the Temple of Set...and as such from a scholarly point of view this appears to be the probable source of inspiration to the ONA.

This view however, is incorrect, for, as the ONA has pointed out in many essays and documents - including *Ingrowing Angles*, and *The Nine Angles: One More Causal Symbology* the ONA's nine "angles" refer to a causal description of the meeting of acausal and causal space-time metrics, and are thus a re-presentation of a nexion, of that region of the Cosmos where the causal continuum meets or intersects or can intersect the acausal continuum, and thus where acausal energy flows from the acausal into the causal, which energy is capable of making things (or *a* thing) alive [10]. That is, to use an older but appropriate esoteric term, the ONA angles are *alchemical*: some-thing which has life, or which can be made alive.

Classical *esoteric* alchemy was concerned with finding or manufacturing what was called The Philosophers Stone, which was some means, or some element, or some potion, or some combination of means, potions, and various elements, which would animate matter, making alive what was hitherto inert, with this "Stone" (lapis) thus re-presenting the very essence of life itself, and hence capable of imparting health and long life (or even immortality) to the alchemist.

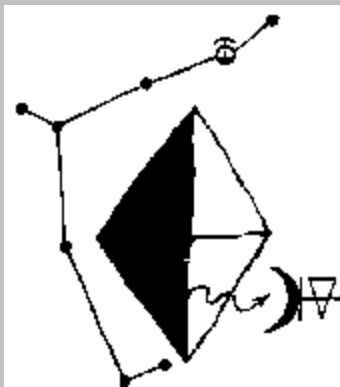
Hence, the ONA's "angles" are alchemical in inspiration. Hence also the mention of the source for this inspiration, this early source being ancient

Arabic alchemical texts, and certainly not a certain Mister Aquino.

Furthermore, the ONA - or rather, Anton Long - has extensively developed and refined, and rationally explicated, the original and often vague and confused alchemical concepts involved. Thus, the Nine Angles of the ONA can be considered to be nine-dimensional - combining the five-dimensions of the acausal continuum, with the four-dimensions of the causal continuum, and thus describing a nexion; one presencing of life-giving acausal energy in the causal.

In rather stark contrast, as the ONA says, the "angles" of Aquino (which angle concept of his both his own Temple of Set, and the Church of Satan, used) are just a boring, mundane, dead, two-dimensional geometric thing.

The Nine Angles are most often symbolized, by the ONA, by means of the alchemical combination of a quartz tetrahedron, certain sound vibrations (esoteric chant), the sorcerer/sorceress (the rounwytha) and the appropriate "alchemical season", for it is - according to the ONA - such particular combinations, which must involve a living, conscious, esoterically skilled, human being, that not only "animate" the nine angles, but which are or which can become, the nine angles. Furthermore, according to Anton Long [11], these nine angles represent the survival of the genuine, ancient, esoteric alchemical tradition, and perhaps the only surviving one, a tradition symbolized by the traditional ONA sigil below, where most of the required "elements" are depicted [12]:



### **The Strange Case of Anton Long**

With a few notable exceptions - such as the images of The Sinister Tarot, the MS *Caelethi*, and the odd essay or two - all the works of the ONA are the

creation of one person, Anton Long.

To Anton Long belong classic ONA texts such as *Naos*, *The Deofel Quintet*, *Hostia*, the *Complete Guide to the Seven Fold Way*, and the scores of more recent texts such as *The Ontology and Theology of Traditional Satanism*; the *Dark Arts of Traditional Satanism*; the *Sinister Tribes of the ONA*, and compilations such as *We*, *The Drecc*, as well as *The Grimoire of Baphomet*, *Dark Goddess*, and sinister stories such as *Eulalia*, *Dark Daughter of Baphomet*. Even the Star Game is Anton Long's creation.

To Anton Long belongs the unique symbols and sigils of the ONA, the Septenary Sigil, and the Sigil of Baphomet. To him belongs new esoteric terms such as nexion, acausal, rounwytha, Vindex, Falcifer, presencing, sinister dialectic, and indeed the esoteric use of the term sinister itself to describe the amoral, individualistic Way of the ONA. To Anton Long belongs the decision to create the ONA as a type of living being; that is, free from the restraints - legal, moral, organizational, hierarchical, personal, and otherwise - of all other esoteric groups.

Given all these things, one might thus be justified in saying two things. First, that the ONA, as it now exists, is the creation of one person, Anton Long. Second, that Anton Long - whomsoever he might be - is most certainly a genius; a reprehensible amoral, sinister, one, perhaps; but a genius nonetheless, in both the senses of the term - an individual of extensive, original, creativity, and intellect, and a *jinni*, a type of daimon, or supernatural entity, who influences or who can influence others, often in an amoral, or sinister, way.

But just who is Anton Long? Despite recent attempts by some individuals, associated with the ONA, to obfuscate matters [13] the general consensus, among both esoteric folk, and among academics and authors interested in the ONA, is that Anton Long is David Myatt. There is, quite literally, no other feasible option.

Even the ONA itself now has what it calls "a test of mundane-ness" which involves how people view the varied life of "Anton Long", whose name they - in one document describing this test (version 1.07 of their *FAQ About the ONA*) - even put in quotes, as if to suggest it might well be a pseudonym.

Furthermore, as Goodrick-Clark noticed [14] the early life of Anton Long, as recounted in *Diablerie*, is remarkably similar to that of Myatt's early life. Senholt [6] gives several other good reasons - based on published material -

why he and others believe Myatt is Anton Long. Anton Long himself - in several published interviews - gives some clues [15] while still unpublished MSS such as *Presencing the Dark: The Weird Life of Anton Long* and especially *Quod Fornicatio sit naturalis hominis* [16] and *Emanations of a Mage* [17] really do leave no room for doubt. [18]

If this be so, then why has Myatt denied - and why does he still deny - being Anton Long? My personal view is that there are two reasons. Firstly, the very practical one of allowing him to continue, over the decades, with his subversive public *personae*, such as neo-nazi street thug, and, latterly, radical Islamist [19]. Second, because it allows Anton Long to operate in the shadows, personally known to only a few trusted acolytes of long-standing, and as someone who is difficult to contact, who does not encourage or even allow a "personality cult" to develop, who never issues personal edicts or commands, and who never seems to be in direct operational control, or even seems to be the leader of, the ONA itself, as befits the sinister, viral, nature of the ONA.

But there seems little doubt that - if our informational culture survives into the next century, with or without printed books - David Myatt as Anton Long will take his place as probably the most influential, and most sinister, character of modern Occultism, for The Order of Nine Angles, what it is now, and will become, will most likely be his most enduring legacy, long after his National Socialist and Islamist writings have been forgotten. For his whole varied and seemingly strange but always very subversive life - from his teenage years onwards - will assuredly be understood as part of a sinister quest, as the peregrinations of a latter-day Mage. [20]

But, crucially, whatever Myatt is, was, or will be, the Order of Nine Angles - by that name or by some other [21] - can now, and will, continue, with or without him; morphing over the decades and centuries in the same way that esoteric alchemy, and all genuine esoteric traditions and mythos, have continued and morphed, and drawn to them those curious individuals, be they few or many, who have been touched by the spell of the sinister numen that lies at the heart of all sorcery and all genuine Occult organizations.



JRW  
November 2009 CE

*Footnotes*

(1) The origins are recounted in several ONA documents and essays, many of which have been published, or are available on the Internet. Among the published documents are *Concerning the Traditions of the ONA*. Among unpublished documents are Anton's Long's *Diablerie: Revelations of a Satanist*, his *Quod Fornicatio sit naturalis hominis*, and his *Emanations of a Mage*.

(2) *MS* refers to ONA manuscripts (or documents and essays); plural *MSS*

(3) Stephen Brown has long been regarded as one of the many pseudonyms of Anton Long, aka David Myatt.

(4) Refer to *Toward The Dark Formless Acausal*.

[5] The group The Joy of Satan originally, shortly after its formation, acknowledged its debt to the ONA, to Myatt, and Anton Long, but then dropped all reference to them, following a public scandal involving its leader and certain officials of the American political organization, the National Socialist Movement.

[6] ONA MS by Anton Long, *The Quintessence of the ONA, A Sinister*

*Returning*. Dated 119 Year of Fayen.

[7] Jacob C. Senholt: *Political Esotericism & the convergence of Radical Islam, Satanism and National Socialism in the Order of the Nine Angles*. Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Conference: Satanism in the Modern World, November 2009

[8] As the ONA explain in their essay *The Ontology and Theology of Traditional Satanism*, they are not theistic because, for example: (a) they do not accept a creator God; (b) they assert that it is acausal energy which imbues causal beings with life, not God, or some god; (c) they assert that Satan is just one example, one type, of the various acausal beings who exist, primarily, in the acausal continuum; and (d) that such acausal beings such as Satan and the (female) Baphomet are never worshipped or obeyed, but rather are regarded as new friends, or lovers, or as long-lost kin.

In addition - and in respect of the term Right-Wing - the ONA has made it clear, in such texts as *Is The ONA Nazi?*, that National Socialism was, and is, just one causal form used to "presence the sinister" and that their aims go far beyond politics, and are "to breed better human beings; a new sinister elite (or more correctly, new elites) founded on esoteric ability and excellence of personal character; new societies founded on sinister principles and imbued with the sinister spirit, with the ethos of Satan" and that these elites do not have to be defined in ethnic terms.

[9] See, for instance, the ONA MSS *Concerning the Traditions of the ONA and Defending the ONA?* as well as *The Dark Tradition, and Sinister Mythos, of the Order of Nine Angles*.

[10] For a conventional metaphysical description of "a thing", refer to Martin Heidegger's book *What Is A Thing?*

[11] *Emanations of a Mage*. Unpublished MS (in pdf format) by Anton Long, dated 118 Year of Fayen. Kindly made available to me by DarkLogos.

[12] As often happens with some ONA material, this sigil has received no attention, with its esoteric significance being unknown outside the few genuine ONA Adepts.

[13] I refer here to some recent articles by one Ms PointyHat, such as *Even More About Anton Long and David Myatt*.



[14] Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism, and the Politics of Identity*. New York University Press, 2002

[15] For instance, in *Questions for Anton Long* by WSA352.

[16] Unpublished typewritten MS, by Anton Long, dated 107 yf, and kindly made available to me by DarkLogos.

[17] Unpublished MS (in pdf format) by Anton Long, dated 118 Year of Feyen. Kindly made available to me by DarkLogos.

[18] Two items based on available, and unpublished, material about Myatt and Long, make fascinating reading and really lead one to the conclusion that Myatt must indeed be Anton Long.

The two items in question are (a) *Anton Long: A Short Chronology of His Life*, by DarkLogos, version 1.17a, dated November 120yf; and (b) the well-referenced, if somewhat speculative in places, essay *David Myatt: Agent Provocateur?* also by DarkLogos, dated February 2009 CE (Updated 09/011/09)

[19] For an overview of Myatt as sinister shapeshifter, see Wright, Julie: *David Myatt - A Sinister Life* (e-text, October 2009).

[20] The ONA, and its new offshoots such as WSA352, have written many times recently about how the outer, exoteric, ONA will evolve and may shed the ONA name, especially as its sinister tribes grow and spread. See, for instance, the ONA MS *We, The Drecc*.

[21] For one personal and interesting view, see Julie Wright, *David Myatt: A Mage For Our Times?* e-text, 2009

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## **The Five-Dimensional Magick of the Seventh Way**

(Note: While this MS assumes some knowledge of the LHP and magick, it may be useful to non-Initiates/non-Adepts.)

### **The True Nature of Magick:**

Magick, correctly defined and correctly understood, is the presencing of acausal energy in the causal by means of a nexion. By the nature of our consciousness, we, as human individuals, are one type of nexion - that is, we have the ability to access, and presence, certain types of acausal energy.

The symbols and rituals of genuine conventional magick (as represented by the ONA) are simply a means to access, or re-present, certain types of acausal energy. Thus, and for example, the Tree of Wyrd, as conventionally described ("drawn") and with its correspondences and associations and symbols, re-presents certain acausal energies, and the individual who becomes familiar with such correspondences and associations and symbols can access (to a greater or lesser degree depending on their ability and skill) the energies associated with the Tree of Wyrd. The Tree of Wyrd itself is one symbol, one re-presentation, of that meeting (or "intersection") of the causal and acausal which is a human being, and can be used to represent the journey, the quest, of the individual toward the acausal - that is, toward the goal of magick, which is the creation of a new, more evolved, individual.

However, such a symbol as the Tree of Wyrd (ToW) - to be a correct and thus useful re-presentation - must be understood ("viewed") in both causal and acausal terms. As conventionally described ("drawn") the ToW is but a static two-dimensional object. A more accurate re-presentation is three-dimensional. A yet more accurate description is four-dimensional where the symbols are understood to "flow"/change according to their nature - and here, the transformations of the pieces/symbols of The Star Game are the key. The best - most accurate - description of such a symbol as the ToW is five-dimensional, for Time has of itself "two" dimensions, or components: a causal one (the "flow"/change) and an acausal one, which acausal aspect cannot be understood, or viewed, or even symbolized, by conventional four-dimensional means. Thus, each individual symbol, or "association" or "correspondence" is not static and not isolated - they are but individual, causal, emanations of what is a changing aspect of some acausal energy, which acausal energy cannot be totally contained (or "described") by some finite, causal re-presentation.

That is, there is an acausal aspect to all magickal workings, rituals and "re-presentations"/symbols, which acausal aspect cannot be re-presented by a mere four-dimensional description or symbol.

Of course, the astute reader will realize that not only is the ToW itself but one causal, emanation of what is a changing aspect of some particular acausal energy, but also that we, as individuals, are such a "thing".

The failure of pre-ONA magick is the failure to understand, to know, the four and five dimensional

nature of genuine magick. On a somewhat basic level, that is why, for instance, in the ONA Way, there are no such things as stupid "banishing rituals" - because the individual is a nexion, before, during and after some causal ritual, which ritual involves acausal energy.

### **The Seventh Way of the ONA:**

The Way of the ONA is a Way which allows the individual to experience, to get to know, acausal energy, and to begin the process of understanding such energy via acausal symbolism. All magick - external, internal and Aeonic - is but a means to apprehend, experience and presence acausal energies, and thus create/provoke Change. That is, the conventional magick of the ToW, of books such as *Naos*, of rituals, is but a beginning - through such things, the individual Initiate acquires experience and knowledge, and also develops as an individual: in terms of character. In the simplistic sense, they move, through the Grades, beyond "The Abyss", toward The Goal, which is the transformation of the individual and the emergence of a new type of being, beyond the Adept. In such a moving, such a development, they acquire a knowledge, a knowing, of the acausal, which knowledge usually begins during and after the stage of Internal Adept - and which is often glimpsed, in some causal way, by some External Adepts who may thus intuitively grasp the essence of the sinister. Also, in such a moving, they cause/provoke changes in the causal: that is, they undertake Aeonic Magick.

The basis for the Seventh Way is, firstly, the understanding of causal, acausal and nexions, and, secondly, the realization that we, as individuals, can evolve ourselves in a conscious and rational way. Esoterically, the name itself - the Seventh Way - is not that important, and in essence serves only to denote some-thing which is different from what has existed hitherto. Exoterically, it refers to the seven-spheres conventionally described by the ToW - that is, to what has been called the septenary system, which itself is but one causal, and convenient, means to describe the nexion which we are and the nexion which is the intersection/meeting of causal and acausal in our phenomenal world.

What, then, is the acausal symbolism which can aide the process of understanding and which in itself is an act of magick, a presencing of the acausal? In its most simple form it is The Star Game - or rather, the advanced form of The Star Game. But even this is only a beginning - a mere four-dimensional manifestation. In another form, such acausal symbolism is The Dark Gods - not as some "name" or "names", and not even as a vibration/chant of some collocation of letters/names (which vibration/chant is a more accurate re-presentation than a mere "name"). Rather, the symbolism *is/are* The Dark Gods and the energies (the "forces") They Themselves re-present. (1)

But what does all this mean, in practical terms? It means that to presence such energies the individual has to go not only beyond the "symbolism" but also go beyond all those things which militate against the "flow" of acausal energy to the causal. That is, they have to open the nexion that they are - they become not just some "channel" or "gate" but rather an aspect of the acausal itself, while such presencing is done, and while some of its acausal manifestations manifest themselves in our causal time-and-space. This is the essence of what it means to go "beyond the Abyss" - achieved by following the Seven Fold

Way.

In addition, and of crucial importance, in the practical sense it means that the effects of genuine magick are not purely causal - they are not limited to a specific "ritual" or action, and cannot be contained within a chosen causal form, such as a static image or some artefact. In a very simplistic sense, genuine magickal energies are "five-dimensional" - they are akin to "living-forms" which thus change, may grow (or decay) and which may cause or provoke changes, in causal time, according to their "nature". (2) Thus, to consider one very novice-like example, when a conventional ritual is undertaken, the energies involved are presented both in causal and acausal time - novices (and even, sometimes, Adepts) usually only consider or feel or are aware of the causal presencing and the causal effects, which they often assume they can "control". What they seldom if ever consider are the acausal effects.

### **The Nine Angles - Esoteric Meanings:**

The Nine Angles have several meanings - or interpretations - depending on context. In the exoteric, pre-Adept, sense, they may be said to re-present the 7 nexions of the ToW plus the 2 nexions which re-present the ToW as itself a nexion, with The Abyss (a connexion between the individual and the acausal) being one of these 2 "other nexions". It should be remembered, of course, that each sphere of the ToW is not two-dimensional (or even three-dimensional) and in a simple way each sphere can be taken as a reflexion (a "shadow") of another - for example, Mercury is the 'shadow' of Mars.

In another exoteric sense, the nine are the alchemical process of the 7 plus the 2, which 2 are the conjoining of opposites: and, in one sense, this conjoining can be taken to be (magickally, for instance, in a practical ritual) as the conjoining of male and female (hence what is called one of the Rites of the Nine Angles) - although, of course, there are other practical combinations, just as each magickal act involving such Angles should be undertaken for a whole and particular alchemical season: that is, such a working should occupy a space of causal-time, making it thus a type of four-dimensional magick which can access the fifth magickal dimension, the acausal itself. A somewhat more advanced understanding of the Nine - in relation to a ritual to create a Nexion - is hinted at in the recent fiction-based MS Atazoth.

Beyond this, the Nine Angles are symbols of The Star Game which itself is magick - that is, one nexion which can presence the acausal. But even this is only a beginning - a re-presentation, in symbols, of what is, in essence, without symbols: a useful means for Initiates, and Adepts, to move toward the new five-dimensional magick embodied in, and beyond, the ONA.

### **The Seventh Way and Satanism:**

For the current Aeon, the Seventh Way, exoterically, is the way of Satanism, expressed in its most obvious way by opposition to the religion of the Nazarene and by an affirmation, through rituals and similar constructs, of the energy/archetype commonly known as "Satan".

As explained in various other Order MSS this Aeon (3), left to itself, will persist - that is, its outer forms

and ethos will continue to be manifest and still hold people in thrall physically and mentally - for at least another few hundred years, even though some of the energies of the next Aeon (energies manifest in groups such as the ONA) are manifest now and will become increasingly manifest. In the practical sense, this means that individuals, organizations, groups (and so on) will continue to be influenced/controlled by the forces of the Old Aeon, and that the forces of the New Aeon will not achieve significant change, in such forms as "society", for several hundred years, which change will mark the real arrival of the next Aeon.

Furthermore, there will come a time when the ONA - and the individuals who are part of it or who are influenced by it - will outwardly shed the rhetoric, the images, the forms of "Satanism", for such things are causal emanations tied to a particular Aeon; they are not the supra-Aeonic acausal essence which we, through the progression of Aeons, are moving toward and which it is the purpose of genuine Occultism and magick to move us, as individuals, toward experience of and understanding of. What will also change are the means - the magick - to presence the acausal. Thus, there will be a move away from ritual, and from overt Old Aeon symbolism - and especially from "words" and "names" (4) - toward a much darker magick: a magick which manifests the acausal without the need for causal forms, and certainly without the need for "names". One type of the new magick is The Star Game (the magick of "Thought") and another is that which returns the Chaos which is, and which is not, The Dark Gods - but there will be many other types of this new five-dimensional magick, some of which are already known to, and used by, genuine Adepts of the Dark Tradition.

Anton Long  
Morning Rising of Arcturus  
(Black Rhadley Nexion) 116yf

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## Notes:

(1) Part of this re-presentation is, of course, what we term the sinister - or, more correctly, those energies/changes which when presented produce a re-ordering, which re-ordering is most often called "sinister".

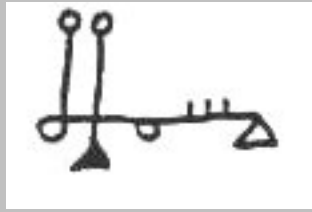
(2) This does not mean, of course, that such energies should be conceptualized in the Old Aeon way as actual "living-beings" such as "demons" or such-like, which living-beings have their own "nature". But such a conceptualization does indeed hint at a much deeper truth, which in one sense is embodied in the mythos of the Dark Gods, as it can be used as a beginning to move toward a better understanding based on the reality of how acausal energies manifest - **and then exist** ("live") - in the causal.

(3) To be precise, we should really write: "The distortion which has overtaken the Western Aeon will persist..." For, as explained in various Order MSS, what is manifest now - and has certainly been obvious to even many non-Adepts in the past five years - is the Magian distortion of the West, which distortion is evident in the "neo-cons" of Amerika with its new imperialism which itself serves a very Zionist/Magian agenda. According to a quite old MSS: "The last Aeon, the Western whose center is in Northern Europe, is drawing to a close as its energies fade. The next Aeon, however, has as its centre not

our Earth, but a location in space and until this centre is reached, the new Aeon will not be possible. However, the Old Aeon has some 350 years still left to run, and during this period, the energies of the New Aeon will become more and more obvious as they seep around the Gate, brought in part by deliberate Ritual by small groups of Adepts..."

(4) As has been written: "It is not correct to give names to some things..." For such a naming is a move-away from the essence of the "thing" that is named - often a mistaking of what the name denotes for the essence which is supposedly denoted by such a naming. Magick is one means away from such a projection, such a transference of limited causal "thinking" - a means toward an apprehension of things, as things are.

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## **Advanced Introduction to The Dark Gods: Five-Dimensional Acausal Sorcery**

The fundamental basis of five-dimensional acausal sorcery is acausal thinking: that is, knowing and understanding what the acausal is, what acausal energy is, and how such things relate to our causal phenomenal world, and to us, as individuals.

Explained in a simplistic way, acausal thinking means the following:

(1) Simultaneity - that is, that acausal energy does not propagate in a causal linear way either in "time" or in "space". Instead, such energy propagates (and can manifest or be presenced) according to the nature of acausal-space and acausal-time. Thus, there is no direct, causal-based, "cause and effect" - events are not, or may not be, separated by a duration of causal time, and are not, or may not be, separated by a physical distance as measured according to causal-space.

(2) Acausal energy implies acausal beings (or "entities") which exist in both the acausal dimensions/spaces (acausal-space and acausal-time) and in our causal universe. These beings live, according to the type of acausal energy that they are, and their existence is independent of us, as causal beings. Thus, The Dark Gods, of mythos, legend and esoteric tradition, are one type of such acausal entities.

(3) Empathy - that is, knowing and understanding that causal beings (or "entities") such as ourselves, who have life or existence in the causal spaces/dimensions, are not separate, discrete or even "individual" beings or entities, but are only parts of the matrix which comprises causal and acausal spaces. That is, that such causal entities are nexions, and are "alive" by virtue of having acausal energy; they can be viewed, in one sense, as receptacles, composed of causal, physical elements, atoms and so on, in-which acausal energy can dwell (or be presenced). Our consciousness - and especially magick, correctly understood - is a means to apprehend our true nature as causal entities and can be a means for us to access more acausal energy.

Explained in a simplistic way, five-dimensional acausal sorcery is a means to create, or draw-into-the-causalspaces, acausal beings/entities, and a means for us to transform ourselves (and other causal entities) by accessing/presencing acausal energy and thus possibly move toward a dwelling in the acausal spaces. Furthermore, acausal sorcery works on the fundamental premise of the irrelevancy of causal-time and causal-space - that is, our concepts of cause-and-effect, of spatial distance, of a beginning and an end - of a past, a present and a future - do not apply.

## **The Nature of Acausal Beings**

Acausal beings are beyond our causal concepts and abstractions. Some dwell (and can only exist in) the acausal spaces, while others can dwell or be manifest in both the acausal and the causal, with there being many different types of acausal entities all of which have their own "nature" or type of being.

Essentially, they have no physical form, as we define and understand physical form (for example, a body) although some types of acausal being, who can dwell or manifest or be presented in our causal spaces, can dwell-within, or presence themselves within or be presented within, a causal form such as a living body or being (including a human being) and some of the acausal beings who can or who have done this are known as "shapeshifters". We cannot "see" or detect (by our limited physical senses or by using causality-based physical instruments) unpresented acausal beings who may be transiting through or dwelling-within our causal spaces (our physical world/universe) if such beings have not accessed, or presented themselves, in some causal, living, form (or even, in most cases, even if they have done this). However, some of us (and some other life) may sometimes "feel" or be aware of some such acausal beings: for example, if we possess a certain type of empathy or have the esoteric knowledge to detect some such transiting or in-dwelling acausal beings.

Since these acausal beings are beyond our causal concepts and abstractions, it is incorrect to judge such beings according to our limited, causal, "morality". They are neither "good" nor "evil". They live according to their own nature, as acausal beings, just as, for example, a wild predatory animal lives according to its wild predatory nature. According to esoteric tradition, there are some acausal beings who are drawn or who have been in the past been drawn toward our causal spaces (our physical universe/world) because they do or have acquired the ability to "feed off" certain types of emotion (or "states of being") which emotion (or "states of being") are but types of energy.

Due to the nature of the acausal spaces (and thus the nature of acausal energy) acausal beings do not "die" as we die and do not "age" as we age. Furthermore, our causal concept of physical travel (or movement) which takes causal time is irrelevant to and does not apply to such beings, due to their very nature as acausal beings. However, most acausal beings are not, by our standards, "all-powerful" and many cannot change or restructure temporal things, just as some cannot transit to ("be presented in") the causal spaces, or dwell-within causal beings, without some aid or assistance in opening a nexion or nexions (which in many instances is just a direct connexion between the causal and acausal spaces).

## **Acausal Sorcery**

Among the techniques of acausal sorcery are the following:

- (1) Esoteric chant, especially that involving the use of certain shaped crystals of a certain type. This chant can access and/or produce, certain types of acausal energy (or under certain circumstances, open a nexion to certain acausal spaces to allow certain acausal beings to presence in our dimensions).
- (2) Empathy - that is, by direct acausal thinking (or "being") which implies a particular type of



awareness and consciousness and certain abilities. It should be noted that one of the aims of The Star Game, in its various forms, is to provoke such acausal thinking, and to provide some experience of some of the awareness involved. This is the natural creation of a nexion or nexion (or the use of an already existing connexion) and then the attraction of acausal energies or acausal beings (a natural "calling" of such beings).

(3) Certain acts (which over a certain period of causal time may be said to represent an extended "ritual") can be done to create a nexion or nexions (or to prepare an already existing nexion or nexions, such as an individual or individual) and to then access or generate or otherwise produce those particular energies which may attract into or through such a nexion or nexions, certain acausal beings whose "nature" is to be drawn toward such energies to then indwell in such a nexion or nexions or to otherwise be presented in the causal.

What should be understood about all methods is that it is in the nature of certain types of acausal energy to flow through a nexion. That is, once a connexion is established, and such energy or energies accessed, then a causal presencing will begin. Furthermore, certain times are regarded, according to a certain esoteric tradition, as more favourable than others - that is, there are certain causal times when certain "cosmic tides" (caused by the structure of causal and acausal space-time) facilitate the flow of such acausal energy into the causal, and other times when the opposite occurs (when, that is, it becomes more difficult for such energy to be accessed and presented in the causal). One causal apprehension of such cosmic tides is said to be "aeons" - with the beginning of such an Aeon being a time (in causal terms) when such a presencing, such a flow, is favourable.

## **The Dark Gods**

One of the aims of a certain group of Adepts is to presence (or, rather, to re-presence) The Dark Gods. That is, to bring these beings (who are mostly shapeshifters) into our own causal dimensions and thus change the life, the living, of our world, and our causal universe. According to one ancient esoteric tradition (to be believed or not according to one's way of thinking) *one* such acausal entity - a shapeshifter - is known in mythos and legend as "Satan", with this acausal being assuming, in former times, various causal forms (or "appearances").

## **Beyond Sorcery: Toward The Acausal**

According to a certain esoteric tradition, it is possible for us, as individual human beings dwelling (existing) in the causal spaces, to move toward an existence in the acausal spaces. That is, in a simplistic sense, to transfer our consciousness, via a nexion or nexion, into an acausal being and thus begin to dwell in the acausal spaces. According to another tradition, it is also possible for us to create, for ourselves, such an acausal existence - that is, to transit into the acausal. Such a dwelling (living) by a causal-based entity such as ourselves is often regarded as one of the greatest goals of genuine esoteric

arts, and the means to do this as perhaps the greatest secret of genuine Dark Arts, the greatest act of natural alchemy (1).

Anton Long

118 yf (Year of Fayen)

Agios o Baphomet

*Notes:*

(1) For some further details, see the MS *Acausal Alchemy* .

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# The Boards

 NAOS

 DENEK

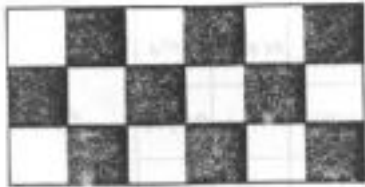
 RIGEL

 MIRA

 ANTARES

 ARCTURUS

 SIRIUS



|                          |                          |                         |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| $\alpha(\beta)_\phi$     |                          | $\alpha(\alpha)_\phi$   |
|                          | $\alpha(\gamma)_\phi$    |                         |
| $\alpha(\beta)_\lambda$  | $\alpha(\gamma)_\lambda$ | $\alpha(\alpha)_\phi$   |
| $\alpha(\alpha)_\lambda$ | $\alpha(\gamma)_\phi$    | $\alpha(\beta)_\lambda$ |
|                          | $\alpha(\gamma)_\lambda$ |                         |
| $\alpha(\alpha)_\lambda$ |                          | $\alpha(\beta)_\lambda$ |

Figure 1

$\phi$  = black pieces

$\lambda$  = white pieces

|                          |                          |                         |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| $\alpha(\beta)_\phi$     |                          | $\alpha(\alpha)_\phi$   |
|                          | $\alpha(\gamma)_\phi$    |                         |
|                          |                          |                         |
|                          |                          |                         |
|                          | $\alpha(\gamma)_\lambda$ |                         |
| $\alpha(\alpha)_\lambda$ |                          | $\alpha(\beta)_\lambda$ |

Figure 2

|                        |                         |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| $\alpha(\beta)_\gamma$ |                         | $\alpha(\alpha)_\gamma$ |
|                        | $\alpha(\gamma)_\gamma$ |                         |
|                        |                         |                         |
|                        |                         |                         |
|                        | $\alpha(\gamma)_\phi$   |                         |
| $\alpha(\alpha)_\phi$  |                         | $\alpha(\beta)_\phi$    |

Figure 3

# **Aeonic Magick - A Basic Introduction**

**Anton Long & ONA 1994 CE**

## ***I - Causal and Acausal***

An aeon is the term used to describe a stage or a type of evolution. Evolution itself is taken to result from a certain specific process - and this process can be described, or explained [or 're-presented'] via a bifurcation of time. That is, evolution is an expression of how the cosmos changes over or through or because of, 'time' - this 'time' having two components. These two components are the causal and the acausal.

More exactly, the cosmos itself can be described or explained or re-presented by acausal and causal space-time. Causal space-time is 4-dimensional: there are 3 spatial dimensions (at right angles to each other) and 1 time dimension, this time dimension being linear and unidirectional. That is, causal time 'flows' in one direction only from past to present to future. Causal time is defined by this one-way flow and by the moments which are used to mark the changes in this flow. [ In effect, causal space-time is the 'everyday' physical world we live in and can perceive by our physical senses. It is the world described by the laws of Physics.] Acausal space-time has  $n$  spatial dimensions [where  $n$  is at present undefined but is greater than 3 and less than infinity] and acausal time dimensions. The spatial dimensions of acausal space are not at right angles to each other. Further, acausal time is not unidirectional - it can flow in any direction - and it is not linear: that is, it has more than one component. In effect, acausal time (unlike causal time) has more than one time-dimension.

The acausal and the causal can be considered as two different 'universes'. The causal universe contains physical matter - that is, varying types of physical energy. We are familiar with the various forms of this physical matter - stars, planets, the rocks and elements forming the planets. The acausal universe likewise contains matter - acausal matter or energy. This acausal energy and its changes in acausal space-time can be described by a new science which uses the non-spatial geometry of the acausal and a representation of acausal time. At present, we are mostly unfamiliar with the types of acausal energy. However, the acausal universe intersects or manifests in the causal universe at specific places - that is, a particular type of acausal energy is present in the causal universe at these places. These places are life-forms or living organisms. That is, a living organism is a region of the cosmos where the fabric of causal space-time and the fabric of acausal space-time meet or 'intersect'. The more evolved, the more complex, the life-form or organism, the greater this intersection.

Thus, living organisms result from a specific type of acausal energy 'flowing' into the causal universe - in effect, this acausal energy changes the structure of causal space-time. The greater the acausal energy, the more evolved, the more complex the organism. The physical death of an organism is when this energy flow ceases - the organism then becomes just inert, physical matter. Death means that the connection between the causal and the acausal is severed at the localized place of intersection.

Our own sentient life - the most advanced and complex living organism we know at present - is therefore the largest intersection of these two universes. We access more of this specific acausal energy than any other organism we know. In effect, each individual is a nexion - that is, a connection or nexus between the two universes. Our consciousness means that we possess the latent ability to directly access the acausal.

## ***Aeons, Civilizations and Archetypes:***

An aeon is a manifestation, in the causal, of a particular type of acausal energy. This energy re-orders, or changes, the causal. These changes have certain limits - in both causal space and causal time. That is, they have a specific beginning and a specific end. A civilization (or rather, a higher or aeonic-civilization ) is how this energy

becomes ordered or manifests itself in the causal: how this energy is revealed. A civilization represents the practical changes which this energy causes in the causal - in terms of the effect such energy has on individuals and this planet. A civilization is tied to, is born from, a particular aeon. By the nature of this energy, a civilization is an evolution of life - a move toward a more complex, and thus more conscious, existence. An inexact analogy would be an oak tree - in this case, the surface of the soil is the boundary between the causal (above the soil) and the acausal (below or in the soil). The roots of the tree are thus in the acausal [ and here represent acausal energy] and the trunk and branches are in the causal. The civilization is the trunk of the tree, and the aeon is represented by the roots - they 'drive' or make the growth and thus determine the shape and health of the tree. The societies that make up a particular civilization are the branches of the tree, and the individuals who make up the societies are the small twigs and the leaves of the tree.

Aeons, civilizations and individuals are examples of organisms. They are all created, or are born; they all grow and change; and they all at some time die. They all occupy a finite space over a finite span of time. They all undergo metamorphosis or change. They all possess an organic structure of change. This structure - for aeons, civilizations and individuals - is of a similar type, and it can be studied and thus understood. That is, various 'models' can be developed to describe this structure and the changes it undergoes.

In essence, a civilization is the practical manifestation of a particular aeon, and an individual is an aspect, or part of, a particular civilization or a particular culture. A culture represents the various stages below that of a civilization - cultures are also an evolutionary development, a coming-together of individuals which enables more of the acausal to be 'accessed' and which thus produces changes for those individuals. A civilization, however, represents a much higher stage of development - a conscious awareness. Here we are only concerned with civilizations and the individuals associated with civilizations - for the simple reason that compared to civilizations, cultures and the peoples associated with them, are relatively insignificant in evolutionary terms: cultures are the evolutionary forms which pre-date civilization. The reality is that civilization, and thus aeons, are the first significant manifestations of individual consciousness and thus creativity.

All the individuals associated with a particular civilization - unless and until they attain a specific degree of self-awareness [variously called 'individuation' and 'Adeptship' ]- are subject to or influenced by their psyche. This psyche draws its energy from - is determined by - the civilization and thus the aeon. In practical terms, the psyche is a manifestation of the acausal energy that creates/created the civilization. Archetypes (in the Jungian sense) are one aspect of the psyche - that is, archetypes are expressions of the acausal energy which a particular civilization represents.

This acausal energy determines and/or influences the actions and behaviour of the individuals of the civilization. That is, for the majority of individuals, their Destiny is that of the civilization itself - they do not possess a unique Destiny of their own. Only those individuals who have achieved the stage of evolutionary development which individuation/Adeptship represents have a unique Destiny, because only these individuals have freed themselves from the mostly unconscious influences and constraints which the psyche imposes. In terms of the inexact oak tree analogy, an individual with a unique Destiny is a seed or acorn which breaks free of the tree and can begin a new life as a sapling - if it survives.

The energies which a particular aeon and civilization represent are unique to that aeon and its associated civilization. That is, each civilization and aeon has its own unique, separate identity: its own ethos. Each civilization represents a stage of evolution, a step forward in the process of evolution itself. This means that each civilization has unique archetypes and that these archetypes are born with that civilization, grow with that civilization and die with that civilization - they possess no life beyond the confines of that civilization or aeon.

An aeon lasts about 2,000 years of causal time - a civilization lasts around 1,500 years. That is, it takes several centuries for the energies of a particular aeon, already presencing or 'flowing' to Earth from the acausal, to produce practical, visible and significant changes: to re-order the causal in a specific geographical region. An aeon is linked to a specific geographical area - and there is a place, or centre or 'nexion' where the acausal energy is strongest. This is because of how the type of acausal energy which creates a civilization works. Fundamentally, an aeon is an actual physical presencing, on Earth, of a particular type of acausal energy. Generally, this centre acquires a religious or cult significance in the centuries before and the centuries following the emergence of the civilization associated with the



particular aeon whose energies are most manifest at that centre. In general, in the early stages of a civilization, the acausal energy is apprehended in a particular archetypal or mythological way which is unique to that civilization.

The list in *Table I* describes the energy associated with a particular civilization - although it should be understood that such descriptions, in terms of 'ethos' and such things, are merely inaccurate guides to the type of energy. Such things as 'ethos' are how the individuals within a particular civilization apprehend such energy. This apprehension is both causal and acausal - in inexact terms, both rational and intuitive. This ethos, like a civilization, grows and changes; i.e. it evolves, while retaining the same inner essence.

The four civilizations listed in *Table I* are the higher or aeonic civilizations - i.e. those which have changed/ shaped our conscious evolution. Four other civilizations have existed [ the Egyptian; the Indic; the Sinic and the Japanese] but they (a) have not contributed significantly to such evolution (i.e. they lack large-scale creativity) and (b) they are related to an already existing or a previously existing civilization. The criteria for an aeonic civilization are: (1) it possesses a distinctive ethos [note: an ethos is not a 'religion' - rather, it is a particular and original "outlook on the world" and a particular way of living]; (2) it arises primarily from a physical challenge [rather than from a social challenge such as the disintegration of another nearby civilization]; and (3) it is creative and noble on a large scale.

In analysing civilizations and their changes, the insights of both Toynbee and Spengler are interesting - forming the basis for further analysis and extension. Basically, Spengler expressed the organic nature of a civilization (although he did not fully and accurately define what a civilization is) while Toynbee provided an historical formulation for the formative changes a civilization undergoes (such things as a 'Time of Troubles' and a Universal State or Imperium) and a useful definition of civilization (in terms of being a response to a physical or social challenge). Cliology, although based on these insights, does not depend on the minute details inherent in their work; rather, what is essential is extracted and used as a foundation to build another more far-reaching model.

The mechanisms by which civilizations have hitherto affected evolution is that of 'creative/heroic' individuals. Most of these individuals are influenced by the ethos of their civilization to act or to express that ethos by their living. Hitherto, few individuals in any civilization have reached the stage of conscious evolution which frees them from the influence (mostly unconscious) of the civilization's ethos or wyrd. Of course, there are many who now believe they have done this - as there have been some individuals who believed this in the past; but belief is not the same as reality. It has been and is one of the primary aims of genuine esoteric arts to enable individuals to reach the stage of conscious evolution and thus personal development, where they become free of such influence - i.e. for individuals to achieve a uniqueness of identity, a personal wyrd. This development requires the cultivation of insight, knowledge, intuition and reason - and for this cultivation to be achieved it is necessary for individuals to know and understand how and why things like civilizations and aeons are as they are. What I have called 'cliology' is an expression of such understanding, and as such a study and understanding of cliology [the science of aeons and the study of the acausal] aids conscious development, thus making Adeptship/individuation possible and enabling aeonic magick.

The pattern which each and every civilization follows can be symbolized and thus studied. The same is true for both an aeon and an individual. This symbolism enables two important things. First, it enables an objectification - a rational insight into and thus understanding of the patterns and processes themselves. Secondly, it significantly develops an already existing mental faculty and creates a new one - the ability to reason in abstract symbols, and the ability to reason in numinous symbols.

The ability to reason in abstract symbols basically describes mathematics (and thus the laws of Physics which are best expressed in mathematical form). Cliology extends the intellectual faculty which mathematics encourages and develops by creating an abstract symbolism which represents the acausal and some of the effects of this acausal in the causal. [For a brief outline of this abstract symbolism see the MSS: Cliology - A Basic Introduction] Further, cliology creates and encourages the development of an entirely new faculty of consciousness - the ability to think in numinous symbols.

This difference between purely abstract symbols and numinous symbols is important. Basically, a numinous symbol is a symbol which possesses acausal energy - it captures the essence of something which is acausal, and in doing this the symbol has the power to provoke or cause causal changes. In the simple sense [which is rather inexact]

one might say a numinous symbol possesses or has 'life' - it is a living entity in itself, although it lives in the psyche. A rudimentary and mostly unconscious numinous symbol is an archetype; another is a myth/mythos. The numinous symbols of cliology (of which the Star Game is an excellent example) are conscious. By 'conscious' here is meant - rational, understood. An unconscious symbol such as an archetype is in reality a proto-numinous symbol - it is seldom consciously understood, being felt and/or experienced rather than rationally apprehended. Further, a conscious numinous symbol can be used by an individual to bring about controlled aeonic changes because such symbols, being understood, can be precisely controlled and directed. An unconscious symbol produces imprecise internal change and imprecise external change: that is, it is not by its nature particularly amenable to manipulation. A numinous symbol thus makes Aeonic magick feasible for really the first time.

### *Aeons and Civilizations*

*Table I*

| <b>Aeon</b>       | <b>Symbol</b> | <b>Associated Civilization</b> | <b>Dates</b>  | <b>Magickal Working</b> |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| Primal            | Horned Beast  | --                             | 9,000-7,000BP | Shamanism               |
| Hyperborean       | Sun           | Albion                         | 7,000-5,500BP | Henges                  |
| Sumerian          | Dragon        | Sumeric/Egyptiac               | 5,000-3,500BP | Trance/Sacrifice        |
| Hellenic          | Eagle         | Hellenic                       | 3,000-1,500BP | Oracle;Choral-dance     |
| Thorian (Western) | Swastika      | Western                        | 1,000BP-500AP | Ritual                  |
| Galactic          | --            | Galactic                       | >2,000eh      | Star Game and >         |

Notes:

(1) 'BP' means Before Present (c.1980eh); 'AP' means After Present.

(2) There was no civilization (aeonic or otherwise) associated with the first aeon.

(3) The magickal centres (or nexion) for the civilizations are as follows: Albion - Stonehenge; Sumerian - between the Tigris and Euphrates [near present-day Baghdad]; Hellenic - Delphi; Western - area in the Welsh Marches.

## **II. Basic Principles of Aeonic Magick**

All aeonic magick can only be used, by its nature, in three ways - (1) aid the already existing or original wyrd of an existing aeonic civilization; (2) create a new aeon and thus a new aeonic civilization; (3) distort or disrupt an existing civilization and thus the aeonic forces of that civilization. That is, aeonic magick involves working (a) with existing aeonic energy (as evident in the associated aeonic civilization); or (b) against existing aeonic energy; or, finally, it involves (c) creating a new type of aeonic energy by opening a new nexion and drawing forth new acausal energies. Thus aeonic magick involves knowing the wyrd of the presently existing civilization and if there are/have been any attempts to disrupt that wyrd, magickally or otherwise.

The energy brought forth by aeonic magick can be used in three ways.

(a) Directed into a specific already existing form (such as an individual) or some causal structure which is

created for this purpose. This structure can be some political or religious or social organization, group or enterprise, or it can be some work or works of 'Art', music and so on.

(b) Drawn forth and left to disperse naturally over Earth (from the site of its presencing).

(c) Shaped into some new psychic or magickal form or forms - such as an archetype or mythos.

Before undertaking any form of aeonic magick, the cliologist [ someone skilled in, knowledgeable about and who uses aeonic energies] must formulate an aim or intent. The means to achieve this must be chosen - and the practical forms, if required, must be created and be in readiness for the energies once the energies are unleashed. If a specific form - such as a new archetype - is chosen as means, then the cliologist must be knowledgeable about archetypes and adept at manipulating magickal energies into psychic forms. Similarly, if a physical nexion is chosen as a means of accessing acausal energies, the appropriate individuals must be organized and trained to undertake the appropriate rite(s).

### ***Techniques and Control:***

There are only a certain number of techniques by which acausal energy can be accessed, as there are only a certain number of ways whereby this energy, once accessed, can be directed or 'controlled' into the various forms which are to be used to spread or disperse that energy.

(1) The first technique is creating a new physical nexion. This can be done by specific hitherto esoteric magickal rites, such as the Rites of the Nine Angles (qv.) and the Ceremony of Recalling with Sacrificial Conclusion (qv.). [It should be noted that Esoteric Chant, combined with a quartz tetrahedron, is one of the most effective ways of opening a nexion.] The chosen rite is conducted on the chosen site. It is often necessary to conduct a second or third rite within the space of a few weeks to fully open a new nexion. The new nexion, once open, needs to be kept open and this requires regular rites on the chosen site for many years - a specific rite [which does not necessarily involve sacrifice] should be constructed to do this. This specific rite needs to be undertaken at the very least twice yearly for the first five years, and then once yearly for at least ten years. One of the best methods to use for this specific rite is Esoteric Chant using a quartz tetrahedron.

(2) The second technique is using the advanced form of the Star Game. The cliologist sets the pieces to represent the existing aeon and the existing civilization at the specific moment of causal time the energy is to be accessed. The pieces are then selectively moved to change what presently exists and to represent the changes desired in the future. In this technique, the cliologist becomes a nexion via the symbolism - or rather, they access the acausal via their own psyche by means of the numinous symbols of the Star Game. This is so because the Star Game exactly re-presents those intersections between the causal and acausal which are an aeon, an aeonic civilization and an individual. [ It should be noted that while this technique is the simplest, it is also the most difficult, requiring great skill in the Star Game and thus a high level of cliological understanding.]

(3) The third - and only ancient - method is mimesis. This involves imitating either (i) some aspect of an already existing cosmic/Earth-based cycle/pattern/working and then either following the natural pattern or introducing a slight variation; or (ii) creating a new pattern/cycle/mythos to describe the energies and their effects. In effect this often involves (a) "acting-out" an archetypal r"le or drama (the key here is identification with the r"le - often during a ceremony involving others); or (b) creating realistic 'models' of events, symbolically imbuing them with "life" and then acting out with these models the desired future events. [ It should be noted that (a) and (b) are difficult to do properly - because intent and portrayal have to be precise- and thus are not often very effective.] One neglected form of mimesis is creative art - using an art-form (such as a work of fiction, a sculpture) to portray someone, some sequence of events or some archetypal energy. This form becomes a nexion - and thus influences the psyche of others by those others reading/viewing the art-form. However this form does not produce large-scale significant aeonic change.

The keys to controlling the energy are symbolism and forms. Unless it is be left undirected, all acausal energy,

once accessed by whatever means, has to be directed by the person or persons who draw it forth into the causal world. The easiest way to deal with acausal energy is to let it disperse naturally - i.e. no effort is made to control and direct it into specific forms or symbols. Such energy is 'raw' - it is chaotic and primal (when viewed from the causal) and thus exceedingly dangerous if brought forth by someone who has not attained the stage of Master/Lady Master. It is psychically disruptive.

It has to be remembered that all acausal energy cannot be contained beyond certain limits - that is, such energy produce acausal changes as well as causal changes. The causal changes are temporal ones - present or future effects caused by such energy. It is these changes which can, in the simple sense, be produced by the cliologist by that cliologist controlling or directing the energy via symbolism and/or forms. That is, these are the changes which are desired by the cliologist who uses the symbolism and/or forms to achieve them. The acausal changes are not temporal - i.e. they are not controllable in causal time. In the simple sense, they are - or rather appear to be - random changes. The cliologist must create or aim to create future forms and/or symbolism which takes into account the possible emergence into the causal of such acausal changes - in practice, such forms absorb the 'random' energy when it appears or manifests in the causal. If this is not done, it is possible that such energy may disrupt/distort and thus undermine the causal changes created by the cliologist. Most of these acausal changes can be gleamed from the symbolism of the advanced Star Game if the pieces are set to represent the conditions pertaining at the moment of causal time when the aeonic working is first undertaken, and if the aeonic working itself is represented by the first sequence of moves from that departure point.

To fully control and thus direct the energy, new forms and/or symbolism should be created to channel the energy. These then enshrine or come to re-present the energy. Examples of practical social forms are ideas and ideals; an example of a practical psychic form is an archetypal figure - a character from a new mythos; an example of a practical political form is a political organization; and example of a practical 'religious' form is a new ethos. All these things - and the many others like them - should be created before the act or acts of aeonic magick by the cliologist with the intention of them being used to cause or bring about changes in the real world, in the causal. The nature of such things should be akin to the type of changes desired. Each such creation should itself be represented by a unique symbol or sign; by a unique descriptive word, phrase or slogan; by a unique piece of sound [or 'music']; by particular collocations of colour, and so on - or by one particular individual who embodies that idea, ideal, mythos or whatever. These unique creations should embody the essence of the change or changes required.

During the act or acts of aeonic magick, the cliologist focuses or directs the energy so accessed into artifacts which portray or represent the unique symbols or signs, and thus into the very symbols themselves and the forms represented by those symbols. In effect, the symbols and forms become alive - they exist, have being and cause changes. They grow and undergo metamorphosis. They acquire an independent existence of their own. The greater the acausal energy presenced by or in such forms and symbols, the greater the changes produced - the more life they possess.

Fundamentally, aeonic magick is concerned with producing large-scale changes over many centuries - it is concerned with changing or altering the destiny of millions of peoples on time-scales which be as long as a millennia. This requires certain abilities and certain skills - but above all it requires that wisdom and knowledge which only genuine Masters/Lady Masters possess.

## *Ageons, Civilization and Ethos*

| Aeonic Civilization | Essence of Ethos | Country of Ethos |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Albion              | proto-Druidism   | Britain          |
| Sumerian            | Vedas            | Indus            |
| Hellenic            | Iliad            | Greece           |

Western  
Galactic

National-Socialism  
Galactic Empire

Third Reich  
Solar System and >

- Notes:
- (1) The ethos is the unique spirit, the unique wyrd of the civilization and thus the aeon. What is listed above is that practical form or expression which captures or captured the essence of a particular ethos.
  - (2) Manifestations of the ethos include the following.
    - (a) for the Hellenic - Greek Tragedy; Reason; Logic.
    - (b) for the Western: Science; Technology; Exploration; Space-Travel
    - (c) for Albion - Stonehenge and other, similar monuments.
  - (3) Little is known about the practical expression of the ethos of the civilization of Albion other than genuine Druidism (as portrayed by the Classical writers) enshrined some of its spirit.

## Some Septenary Correspondences

| Sphere<br>Season    | Stone<br>Dark-Form | Perfume<br>Dark-Form  | Star     | Causal Color | Acausal Color | Process      | Word   |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|----------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------|
| Moon<br>Nox         | Quartz<br>Aries    | Petriochor<br>Night   | Sirius   | Blue         | Silver        | Calcination  |        |
| Mercury<br>Satan    | Opal<br>Scorpio    | Henbane<br>Indulgence | Arcturus | Yellow       | Black         | Seperation   |        |
| Venus<br>Mid-Winter | Emerald<br>Ecstasy | Hazel                 | Mira     | Green        | White         | Coagulation  | Hriliu |
| Sun<br>Mid-Summer   | Amethyst<br>Vision | Oak                   | Antares  | Orange       | Gold          | Putrefaction | Lux    |
| Mars<br>Azif        | Ruby<br>Libra      | Pine<br>Blood         | Rigel    | Red          | Blue          | Sublimation  |        |
| Jupiter<br>Azoth    | Amber<br>Capricorn | Alder<br>Azoth        | Deneb    | Violet       | Crimson       | Fermentation |        |
| Saturn<br>Chaos     | Diamond<br>-----   | Ash<br>Reason         | Naos     | Indigo       | Purple        | Exaltation   |        |

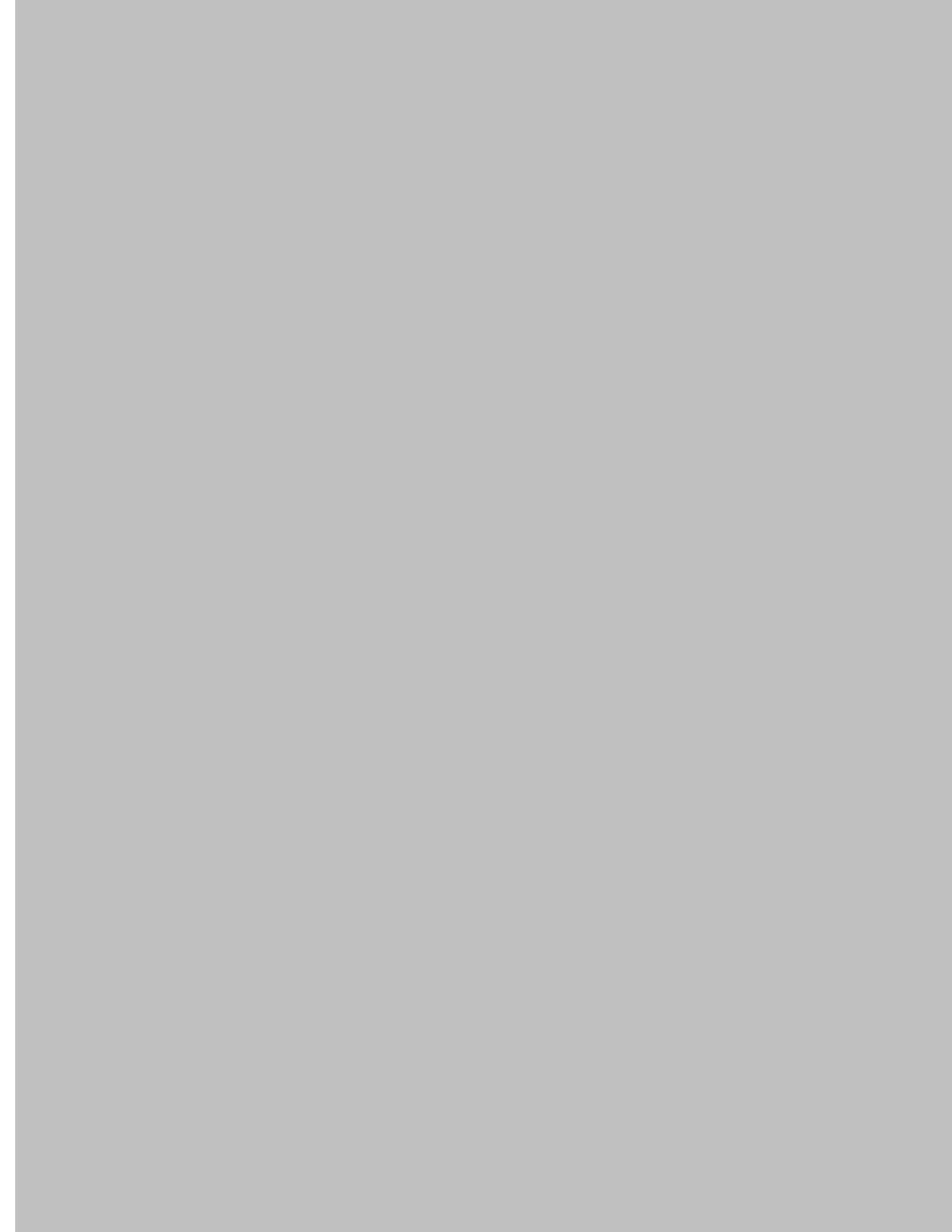
## The Three Levels of the Spheres

(Tarot Images)

| Sphere     | Salt<br>(Unconscious) | Mercury<br>(Ego) | Suplhur<br>(Self) |
|------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1 (Moon)   | 18                    | 15               | 13                |
| 2          | 0                     | 8                | 16                |
| 3          | 6                     | 14               | 17                |
| 4          | 7                     | 12               | 5                 |
| 5          | 1                     | 4                | 9                 |
| 6          | 11                    | 3                | 2                 |
| 7 (Saturn) | 10                    | 19               | 20                |

[The Septenary](#)

[The Wheel of Life](#)





## The Magickal Art of the Deofel Quintet

The Deofel Quintet - the original Deofel Quartet plus *Breaking the Silence Down* - were designed as Instructional Texts for novices beginning the quest along the Left Hand Path according to the traditions of the ONA.

As such, they are not - and were not intended to be - great, or even good, works of literature. Their intent was to inform novices of certain esoteric matters in an entertaining and interesting way, and as such they are particularly suitable for being read aloud. Indeed, one of their original functions was to be read out to Temple members by the Temple Priest or Priestess.

In effect, they are attempts at a new form of "magikal art" - like Tarot images, or esoteric music. As with all Art, magikal or otherwise, they can and should be surpassed by those possessing the abilities. If they have the effect of inspiring some Initiates of the Darker Path to creativity, to surpass them and create something better, then one of their many functions will have been achieved.

Anton Long  
115yf

[Introduction to the Deofel Quartet](#)

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## **The Magickal Art of The Deofel Quartet:**

### **A Basic Introduction**

The works collected under the title “The Deofel Quartet” were written as instructional texts for members of a Black Magick group (The order of Nine Angles). As such, they deal with certain esoteric matters relevant to Novices and those who have begun to follow the path of Black Magick and Satanism.

While the form chosen is fictional, it is not that of a “conventional” novel. Instead, a new vehicle was created with the aim of combining a fast (and thus entertaining) pace with a narrative style that not only required the imaginative participation of the reader, but also sought to involve the unconscious. Thus, detailed descriptions – of, for instance, characters and locations – are for the most part omitted. It is left to the reader to supply such “missing details”: partly from their imagination and partly unconsciously, from their own expectations and projections.

This form also had the added advantage of making the works interesting to listen to when read aloud in a group setting. This new form may be considered as an extended “prose poem”.

While each work is self-contained in terms of “plot” and “characters”, they all deal with the varying insights attained by those following the darker path to esoteric enlightenment, as well as with those practical (i.e. real-life) experiences which form the basis of genuine magickal training and which explicate real sinister magick in action.

Each work deals with (although not always exclusively), a certain type of magickal/archetypal energy – and thus is connected with one of the spheres of the septenary Tree of Wyrð. Thus, in the instructional sense, each work explicates particular archetypal forms as those forms affect people in real life. Naturally, quite a few of the forms so explicated are dark or sinister.

It is suggested that the novice first reads the texts as though they were just entertaining fiction – and then, after so reading them, begin a detailed study of the texts, guided by the notes below and by their own initial reactions to and impressions of the individual works.

In order to guide the interested reader and student of the Occult Arts, some “*Themes and Questions*” concerning the Quartet were included as an Appendix to the first edition of volume One of the Quartet.

### **Responses and Critical Analysis:**

Each novice reading the Quartet should try and analyze their response to it – the feelings, expectations, points of agreement and disagreement and so on which arise from reading it.

A first reading will be sufficient to show the works of the Quartet are Satanically subtle – i.e. they are not blatant “horror/Black Magick” stories and neither are they pornographic. They are also not akin to the amoral diatribes of other writers – e.g. de Sade.

Instead, they are intended for those of discernment, those who can see beyond mere appearance and affectation – i.e. they are aimed at Satanic novices: those who wish to know and who seek to question, those who wish to discover secrets (often about themselves).

As explained elsewhere, they deal with problems a novice following the Left Hand Path might be expected to come across or be familiar with – both in terms of their own development/feelings/expectations, and in terms of real sinister magick. Such magick is, for the most part, subtle and esoteric – it is hidden and bears little, often no, resemblance to what most people (and some Initiates) consider magick to be.

Hence, those who turn to the Quartet hoping to find the kind of cheap and sensational thrills often associated (in the herd-mind) with “Black Magick” stories and “horror” will be disappointed. The Quartet is not intended for such sensation seeking, uncritical and weak individuals – it is instead intended to instruct Satanic novices in some esoteric aspects of their craft; to aid their own understanding and sinister development.

***Falcifer*** concerns Initiation and the gathering of Satanic experience. It also deals with the Dark Gods – revealing some esoteric knowledge. The energies which give form to the story are concerned with the first sphere on the Tree of Wyrð – magickal form “Night/Nox” ; Tarot images – 18, 15, 13; Alchemical Process – Calcination.

***The Temple Of Satan*** also concerns the Dark Gods – but it deals mainly with emotion on the personal level, particularly “love”: how a Satanic Initiate of some experience encounters and deals with this

emotion. “Love” of this type is a stage, to be experienced and transcended. For a Satanist not yet achieved Adeptship, this feeling is often a snare, a trap – which they can fall into, thus ending their sinister quest. It is about feelings and desires which are often still unconscious – about making these more conscious, controlling them and transcending them. Third sphere on Tree of Wyrð. Magickal form – Ecstasy. Images – 6, 14, 17. Alchemical process – Coagulation.

***The Giving*** concerns “primal Satanism” – and a more subtle magick and manipulation than the previous works. It is a story based on fact – on real life happenings and real people. It reveals a real Satanic Mistress in action – someone quite different from the “accepted” notion of a Satanic Mistress. Spheres – Third and Forth. Forms – Ecstasy/Vision. Images 7,12,5,6,14,17. Processes – Coagulation/Putrefaction.

***The Greyling Owl*** (the title is significant, although never explained in the work itself) concerns the second sphere, and the magick here is even more subtle and esoteric than in the previous work, *The Giving*. It requires an understanding of individuals as those individuals are – a subtle changing of them. Magickal Form – Indulgence; process – Separation; Images – 0, 8, 16.

### **Objectivity:**

In all the works of the Quartet, “the other side” (i.e. those with conventional “morals” and little or no esoteric understanding) is shown in context – moral individuals are described and things seen from their point of view. *It is vitally important for a novice to be able to be detached* – to see things and people as those things and people are. Only thus can they learn judgement and discover how to work esoteric sinister magick. Such detachment is necessary – and its cultivation is part of Initiate training. It is the aim of the Quartet to cultivate this ability – and the self-criticism which is part of it. This “criticism” is a self-awareness, a self-knowledge. Thus, some characters in the Quartet and the views and attitudes they express may provoke the Satanic Initiate into disagreement and possibly discomfort. This is intentional. The novice should analyze why they react as they do – and why they expect certain things/certain views/certain outcomes.

In short, the works in the Quartet are entertaining instructional Satanic Texts – and those who are prepared to spend some effort in understanding them will discover many layers, and so learn.

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*(Note: Plot spoilers follow)*

### **Falcifer :**

This MS deals with overt magick in a magickal setting – Temples, rituals etc. It describes Satanic initiation from a Satanic viewpoint, and the tests etc. a novice may undergo as well as the awakening awareness appropriate to a novice.

It also deals with the Dark Gods – describing them and the magick which brings the process that returns them to Earth.

Of all the MSS of the Quartet, it is the most easily understood, although it does contain some hidden/esoteric meanings. These, however, are explicable since the perspective of the MS is overtly Satanic.

### **Temple of Satan:**

This also has an overtly magickal setting, but deals with the stage beyond that of a novice; i.e. someone who has been involved for some time and who has developed certain magickal skills – e.g. manipulation.

Melanie is the archetypal Satanic Priestess: sexually alluring, using her sexuality to manipulate and captivate, enjoying some delicate pleasures (e.g. sadism). But, as a true Satanist, after some time she becomes bored by the routine. So unconsciously at first, she seeks after something else: and is drawn toward Thurstan, against her better Satanic judgement. She is “drawn” because she still has to gain a deep self-understanding – because there are still aspects which remain unconscious and powerful in her psyche (relating to the “numinous” power of love etc.) Gradually, she falls in love – but is she herself being manipulated toward this by Saer? And if so, why? (Consider the crystal he left with Thurstan for her to find and read). Saer is “beyond the Abyss” – an image/symbol of Aeonick magick as against Melanie’s external and internal magick.

But she gradually understands the purpose here – to propel her toward the next stage of the sinister journey, and to provide a child who because of her own sinister abilities and the apparently non-sinister abilities of Thurstan will have special qualities. That is, the child will be beyond opposites (as e.g., symbolized by Melanie and Thurstan).

Toward the end, Melanie is presented with a choice – love, or her Satanic duty/destiny. She chooses the later, and her magick is restored.

Claudia is a complication for Melanie – a further test/distraction. Does her love cause her lover's death? Pead and Jukes, representing old aeon magick, try to keep Melanie and Thurstan apart – because with him she can work aeonic magick, to the detriment of the old order and “the light”.

### **The Giving:**

This MS has several esoteric strands and several overt meanings. Lianna is a Mistress of Earth (note: stages beyond Melanie in “Temple”) and it is her duty to undertake The Giving – a rite of human sacrifice.

As a Satanic Mistress, Lianna uses magick in a subtle way, as benefits her status. This magick is esoteric (e.g. empathic) but she also directly manipulates others, although in a subtle way. Consider how she draws/attracts Thorold to her: sending Sidnal to him with books, visiting his shop as a customer...

Lianna requires two important things: an offer, and someone to father her heir. The MS describes her attaining these goals.

Mallam is a recent initiate – enjoying as all good Initiate should, overt magick and evil. He involves Rhiston in his games. Lianna however presents Mallam with a choice – finely and subtlety presented. She advises him that his activities are not conducive to further advancement, for she understands he has become ensnared by some of his desires, rather than enjoying them and then discarding them to rise beyond them and so attain self-insight and mastery. However, he sees her hints “morally” – he misinterprets them because he cannot see what she is trying to do; i.e. he shows no Satanic insight. The reader is shown this from Mallam's perspective – like Mallam should, a certain discernment is required to see beyond the outer appearance to the essence. (This sudden change of “perspective” occurs in the MS several times, as it does many times in other parts of the Quartet. The reader should often ask: what is really going on here? A critical judgement is required because often characters and what they may do/say are not what they seem; i.e. the real intent/magick is hidden.)

As it is, Mallam's lack of insight means he believes Lianna is making a “moral” point, and he openly breaks with her.

Following this decision by Mallam, Lianna provides him with a test, a new opportunity to prove his worth or otherwise. She sends her Guardian, Imlach, to him – unknown to Mallam, of course – with a secret MS. Again, Mallam fails to realize what is happening – he cannot see through Imlach. Instead, he is overwhelmed by unconscious desires: material greed, lust for power. Rather than controlling, and using his desire for some purpose, he lets his desire control him. He goes to Lianna’s village – and again fails, because he cannot recognize the young woman as a Priestess of Lianna’s tradition: he sees her as dull, easily manipulated. Thus, he shows he has no genuine magickal insight or abilities.

Hence he becomes a candidate for sacrifice. Basically, he chooses himself – he is not chosen because of his “evil” activities. They merely provide a fail-safe to deflect attention from his disappearance (when the rite is completed): no one in “conventional” society would miss him/mourn him or worry about his disappearance.

Lianna also tests/manipulates Thorold. Does she also manipulate Monica, and her death? Or is she genuinely annoyed when Thorold becomes involved with Monica? Is this a further test of Thorold? Certainly for Lianna, Monica’s death or removal is necessary – or it seems to be. Lianna has drawn Thorold into her world – and changes him, for he is captivated by her: in a sense, in her power. He has qualities which she judged would make him a suitable person to father her child.

The MS ends with an unasked question: what is to be Thorold’s fate when his purpose has been achieved? That is, when he has fathered her child. Will he be an offer, or will he become part of her tradition? Clues to the answer are given at various points in the MS. Also, is Lianna a Satanist?

Certainly, she does not seem to be – there are no “Satanic” rites, no invocations to Satan. At one point she says she belongs to an older tradition. Does she say this for a reason? - To deceive? She certainly represents a primal darkness: and is a genuine Mistress of Earth....This raises the question as to what genuine Satanism really is: a question answered, in fact, by Lianna’s actions as described in the MS from its beginning to its end.

## **The Greyling Owl:**

This is the most esoteric and therefore the most difficult MS to understand – at first reading – and when viewed by conventional/accepted ideas of Satanism/Black Magick.

This shows real magick in action on several levels: manipulation, empathic, forms (e.g. music), images, and via opening psychic nexions within individuals.

Essentially, the MS deals with the changes wrought in the lives of Mickleman and Allison, and how these are made to aid the sinister dialectic – i.e. sinister aeonic strategy, to aid the presencing of sinister energies in the causal and so bring/provoke change to the benefit of the sinister, aiding evolution.

The magick here is that appropriate to an Internal Adept and beyond, while the energies described (the outerform) are symbolic of a particular sphere on the Tree of Wyrd (Mercury), although other energies are sometimes involved/intrude.

This magick is far removed from external magick and thus rituals/robes. This magick means a working with individuals as those individuals are - a subtle re-orientation of their consciousness/lives.

Mickleman is gradually changed, and brought into an influential position – the Professorship – without him realizing this is occurring, in the magickal sense at least. He believes he is still in control of his own Destiny – and it is important not to undermine this belief, except insofar as a certain self-insight is obtained. He must have assurances of his abilities, this confidence to fulfill what is his “hidden” wyrd. He becomes aware, on terms he can cope with/is familiar with (and this is important), of certain archetypal aspects which will be important for his future professional development/standing. These aspects, by which he will influence others in a non-magickal way by “seeding their minds”, will aid the sinister dialectic. Part of this would be through academic work (aided by insights attained during his “manipulation”) and part by his own life style: his “decadent” past and his future deriving from the past – both would influence others, providing inspiration and thus changing others in certain ways. Also, it is hinted that he may be useful in other ways.

Alison also is changed - realizing that power of music to transform. Again, her aims, dreams, hopes, etc. are described from her own perspective, from her own “moral” view of the world. However, her fundamental insights are “provoked” via the subtle magick/influence of



Edmund. Further, the future forms she creates/uses, while having the appearance of conventional forms (and perhaps a moral content), will achieve and aid the sinister (or at least most/some of them will). She herself will see her aims in terms of her own perspective: often “morally”, without fully realizing what she and her work are achieving – opening nexions, and presencing dark energies to influence/infect others.

This arises because she has been influenced/directed by magick in a specific way: to access a nexion within her own psyche. (All this is a very important notion to understand – and marks the insight appropriate to those who aspire to go beyond the stage of novice. It reflects genuine magick in action). Her thoughts/actions etc. (as others) are often “morally” described.

The dark interior life of both Edmund and Fiona (and thus their real aims) are hidden – i.e. not overt, as generally befits a Master and Mistress. Such Adepts generally work esoterically – they do not fit conventional Satanic role-models. In their different ways, Edmund and Fiona live in the ordinary world in an “ordinary” way – they are real shape-changers who blend into their surroundings. This enables them to work sinister magick effectively. Further, Edmund possesses no trappings normally assumed to be part of his station – he has no wealth, no power, no obvious influence. His Satanic power is internal, hidden – it is insight, wisdom, and magickal skill of a rare kind. This skill allows him to work magick on – to manipulate – others (and thus the world) as those others are – in the confines of their own roles/image for the most part. Fiona’s magickal work is often more overt – e.g. using her sexuality to advantage, but her real magick is still hidden. Thus the MS describes real Adepts at work, using genuine magickal skills, and thus moving toward the next stage of their esoteric development.

### **A note concerning “Breaking The Silence Down”**

This MS is often regarded as making the Quartet into a Quintet. It is similar in its magick to The Greyling Owl – although the background is Sapphism.

Basically, Diane – who already possesses an intuitive awareness of primal darkness and thus of those forces sometimes named as Satanism – is led toward self-discovery and a magickal partnership.

She has an insight into the female persona/strength (after the attempted rape) and discovers a power of music to capture the essence hidden by appearance.

She is seduced by Rachael, who uses music (her piano playing) as a magickal act. Apthone is the archetypal immature product of this age and its societies: swayed by desires and using petty manipulation to achieve lowly goals. When he becomes a threat to Diane, he is dealt with by those who desire her, magickally and sexually (Rachael and Watts). Is his accident purely chance? Or is someone, or two, watching over Diane? In the end, Rachael wins Diane. She is an hereditary sorceress – carrying on her grandmothers' tradition (thus missing a generation: Rachael's mother). This tradition thrives in a certain part of the countryside near where Diane lives.

As in "Greyling", the perspective is often that of the characters involved: i.e. events/thoughts etc. are seen through their eyes, with their (often moral and conventional) understanding/attitudes. *This gives (or should give, to the discerning reader) an appreciation and understanding of these people as they are – and how magick affects them, usually without them being aware of it.* It requires the reader to suspend and transcend conventional Satanic/sinister notions (which are often only the outer form of what is Satanic/sinister rather than its essence). Thus can genuine magick to be understood – as the works themselves should aid the understanding of how forms/energies etc. affect/change individuals, often unconsciously. All this should aid the self-insight of the novice/Initiate reading them.

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Anton Long  
ONA

First issued: 1992 e.n.  
This corrected version (v.1.01) issued 119 Year of Feyen

# **Falcifer - Lord of Darkness**

(Deofel Quartet, Volume I)

Anton Long

## **Order of Nine Angles**

First issued 1976 e.n.

This corrected text (v.1.01) issued 119 Year of Feyen

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### **Prologue**

The chant rose towards its demonic climax:

*Agios o Atazoth! Suscipe, Satanas, munus quod tibi offerimus...*

There was no wind on the high hill to snatch the chanted words away, and the naked dancers twirled faster and faster around the altar under the moonlit sky of night, frenzied from their dance and by the insistent beat of the tabors.

The two red-robed cantors sang their Satanic chant to its end while, nearby, Tanith the Mistress, as the elder prophetess, uttered words for her Grand Master to hear: "From the Circle of Arcadia he shall come bearing the gift of his youth as sacrifice and key to open the Gate to our gods..."

Swiftly then to the ground the circling dancers fell almost exhausted: ruddied by Bacchus the Great and the force of the dance as, around the altar on which Tanith writhed, the orgy of lust began...

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## I

*Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire, late 1960's (e.n.)*

The room was dark, although the candles on the altar had been lit, and Conrad could dimly see the witches preparing for the ritual. Their High Priestess wore a scarlet robe and came toward him, her bare feet avoiding the circle painted on the floor and the bowls of incense which not only filled the room with a sweet smelling perfume but also added to its darkness.

"Please", she said to him, pressing his hand with hers before re-arranging her long hair so it fell around her shoulders, "do try and relax."

Then she was moving around the room, dispensing final directions to the members of her coven. It all seemed rather boring and devoid of real magick to Conrad and he began to regret his acceptance. He felt uncomfortable dressed in a suit while the others wore robes.

"Nigel!" he heard the Priestess shout, "please do not place our book on the floor!" She retrieved her copy of the *Book of Shadows* and placed it on the altar before ringing the small altar bell. "Let us begin." she said.

She stood in the centre of the circle, the four men and two women around her, raising her hands dramatically before intoning her chant.

"Darksome night and shining moon, harken to our Wiccan rune. East then South then West then North, harken to our calling forth..."

She was twirling round, and beneath her thin robe, Conrad could see her breasts. He found her sexually alluring, and followed her movements intently. Perhaps, he thought, it would not be so boring after all... suddenly, the candles flickered and spluttered. There was no breeze as cause and the sudden darkness was unexpected. Conrad could sense the High Priestess near him but his groping hand could not find her body.

"What is it?" he heard a nervous male voice ask.

The incense became thicker, and several of the coven coughed.

"There is nothing wrong - really!" came the confident voice of the Priestess. "Nigel - do light the candles again."

Nobody moved. A light appeared above the altar, red and circular. It began to pulse before moving up to swoop down and burn one of the coven. The victim fell screaming to the ground while the light moved to rest above Conrad's head, suffusing him with its glow.

He could see the High Priestess frantically making passes in the air with her hands and mumbling "Avante Satanas!" as she did so. But her words and gestures had no effect on him, for she was only an ineffectual Priestess of the Right Hand Path while he knew in that moment he was chosen.

Then the pulsing light was gone, and the candles once more lit the room.

"The lights! Will someone turn on the lights!" Her voice was strained, and Conrad smiled.

The coven gathered behind her in their protective circle as if for comfort. "Go, please go," she asked him. "You are no longer welcome here. I sense evil."

"Yes," Conrad replied, "I will go. But I will return." He stepped toward her and kissed her lips but she drew away. "You are very beautiful," he said, "and are wasted here."

The coldness outside the house refreshed him so that he remembered he had forgotten his coat and that a number 65C bus would take him back to his University. The sodium lit streets seemed to possess an eerie beauty in the darkness of winter and as he walked slowly along them, the sense of the power he had felt became just a vague yet disturbing unease.

A bus disgorged him near the campus and he wandered along the concrete paths that entwined the University without noticing the man following him. He recalled Neil's challenge to his skepticism about witchcraft and magick, the invitation his friend had quickly arranged to the coven meeting and his own laughter. It would be interesting, he had thought, and he would watch with scientific detachment while the simple souls indulged their sexual fantasies under cover of the Occult.

Several times he stopped as he remembered the sensual beauty of the High Priestess, the rich fragrance of the incense, his kiss, and several times he turned around, intent on returning to her house. But the power, the arrogant assurance, he had felt in her house as the strange light suffused him with its glow was gone, and he was only a first year Undergraduate studying science, awkward and shy with women.

Instead, he walked to the house near the campus which Neil shared with some other students. Neil was pleased to see him. They sat in his room while in the house loud music played.

"You're back early," Neil said, and smiled.

Conrad wasted no time on trivialities. "I want you to tell me about magick."

"You're seriously interested, then?"

Conrad thought of the High Priestess, her voluptuous body, and said, "Yes!"

"Well, as you know, I have some little interest in, and knowledge of, the subject."

"So - the aim of the sorcerer is to control those forces or powers which are Occult or hidden from our everyday perception?"

Neil seemed surprised. "Yes, exactly. Have you been reading up on the subject?"

"No."

"Then how - "

Conrad shrugged his shoulders. "It was an obvious and logical deduction."

Neil smiled. His own background was artistic, his home the city and port from which the University derived its name, and he had met the gaunt-faced Conrad a month before while distributing leaflets on campus. Conrad had read the proffered document and, in the discussion that followed, demolished its content logically and effectively. The earnest young man, dressed in a suit in contrast to the casual clothes of all the other students, had impressed him.

"Basically," Neil said, "magick symbolizes the various forces, sometimes in terms of gods, goddesses or demons, and sometimes in purely symbolic forms. Knowledge of such symbolism forms the basis of controlling them - according to the desire or will of the sorcerer."

"I see."

"Of course, some people believe such entities - gods, demons and so on - exist in reality, external to us. Others believe such forms are really only part of our sub-conscious and our unconscious. In practical terms, it does not matter which: the means of gaining control are essentially the same."

"So, where is all this symbolism?" He pointed at the rows of books in the room.

Neil handed him one. "That gives the essentials of ceremonial magick. It is based on what most Occultists believe is the Western tradition of magick."

Conrad glanced through the book. "Which is?"

"The Qabalistic. The Occult world and the forces within it are represented by what is called the Tree of Life which consists of ten stages or sephira. Each sephira corresponds to certain things in the world - human, divine, and of course demonic."

Conrad looked directly at him. "Most Occultists, you say? Then what do you believe?"

Neil was not surprised by Conrad's insight. "There is another tradition - a secret one."

"Which is?"

"It has many names."

"I'm sure. Are you going to tell me or not?"

"I have only heard of it second-hand so to speak. It is a sinister tradition - some would say Satanic. It is based on a division of seven as against the qabalistic ten. Hence one of its names - the septenary system."

"And you have details of this system?"

"I know some people who know a group who use it."

"And through such a magickal system one could obtain one's desire?"

"It is possible, yes."

"Then when can I meet them - these Black Magickians?"

## II

"So you are the Black Magickian I have heard so much about?" Conrad gave the man a disdainful look before sitting in the proffered chair.

The room, like the man, was not impressive. Dreary paintings hung from drab walls and a human skull lay atop a pile of paperback books containing horror stories.

"Some call me a Black Magickian." The man was dressed in black and wore a medallion around his neck bearing the symbol of the inverted pentagram. "Your friend Mr. Stanford informed me of your interest in the Black Arts. There are rumours about you."

"Is that so?"

"Why have you come here?" the man asked.

"You hold certain meetings."

"Possibly."

"Meetings which attract a good many people."

"Sometimes."

"One of which will be held here, tonight."

"For a neophyte you are exceptionally well informed."

Conrad smiled. It had taken Neil only a week to arrange the meeting, and he used the time well. "I wish to attend the ritual."

"You must understand," the man said, "we have certain procedures. For those who want to become Initiates. A testing period."

"Quite so. But you would not have agreed to see me this evening at this hour if it was not your intention to allow me to attend."

As if to reflect on his answer, the man lit a small cigar, allowing its smoke to billow round him. "You may attend the first part of the ritual. The second is, I'm afraid, for Initiates only. And then, afterwards, should you wish, we shall talk further about the matter." He stood up. "Come, you must meet some of our members."

He was led into a back-room of the spacious house. The windows were covered with long black drapes and the walls were painted red. A large wooden table, covered with a black cloth, served as the altar upon which were lighted black candles, a sword, several daggers, silver cups and chalices. In one corner of the room stood an almost life-size statue of a naked woman in an indecent posture, reminding him of a Sheila-na-gig. Around the altar the members had gathered in black robes, but they did not speak to him and he was left to stand in his suit by the door while the magickian walked toward the altar. He took up the sword, struck it against the dagger, saying 'Hail Satan, Prince of Darkness!'

The congregation echoed his words, raising their arms dramatically while he removed the robe from a young woman before helping her to lie naked on the altar. She was smiling as she lay, her taut conical breasts rising and falling in rhythm with her breathing and Conrad watched her intently.

One by one the congregation came forwards to kiss her lips.

The magickian kissed her last, turning to face his congregation saying. "I will go down to the altars in Hell."

They responded. "To Satan, the giver of ecstasy."

"Let us praise our Prince."

"Our Father which wert in heaven, hallowed be thy name, in heaven as it is here on Earth. Give us this day our ecstasy and desires and deliver us to evil as well as temptation for we are your kingdom



for aeons and aeons!"

The magickian inscribed in the air with his left forefinger the sign of the inverted pentagram, before saying, "May Satan be with you."

"As he is with you."

"Let us affirm our faith."

In union, they pronounced their Satanic creed. "I believe in one Prince, Satan, who reigns over this Earth and in one Law, Chaos, which triumphs over all. And I believe in one Temple, our Temple to Satan, and in one Word which triumphs over all: the Word of Ecstasy! And I believe in the Law of this Aeon which is Sacrifice, and in the letting of blood for which I shed no tears since I give praise to my Prince the fire-giver and provider as I look forward to his reign and the pleasures to come in this life!"

The congregation continued their litanies in a similar vein while the magickian made passes in the air with his hands over the body of the woman upon the altar. He was chanting something, but Conrad could not hear what it was, and he watched as the magickian raised a chalice over the woman, deliberately spilling some of the wine it contained over her body. He showed the chalice to the congregation before placing it between the woman's thighs. Then one of the congregation came forward to stand by the altar and chant.

"I who am mother of harlots and queen of the Earth: whose name is written by the agony of the falsifier Yeshua upon the cross, I am come to pay homage to thee!" She kissed the woman upon the altar.

Then there was something in her hand which Conrad could not see, but she too made passes with her hands over the naked woman, chanting while she did so. She held up to the congregation what Conrad assumed to be a host.

"Behold," she said, "the dirt of the Earth which the humble shall eat!"

She laughed, the congregation laughed, and then she threw the host, and others which she held, at the congregation who trampled them under their feet. "Give me," she said to the woman upon the altar, "your body and your blood which I shall give to him as a gift to our Prince!"

The magickian was beside her as the woman on the altar raised her legs into the air. But two of the congregation ushered Conrad from the room. Outside a woman waited.

"I am called Tanith - at least here!"

Conrad stared at her. Her grey hair was cut short, accentuating her features and her clothes were a stunning blend of indigo and violet. There was beauty in her mature features and a sexuality evident in her eyes. "I'm sorry?" Conrad said.

"Come, let us talk."

She led him to a comfortable room where a warming fire had been lit, deliberately sitting close to him.

"Your impressions of the ritual," she asked directly.

He had recovered sufficient to say, "Too much pomp and not enough circumstance."

"Humour, as well. A most pleasing combination! What is it that you seek?"

"Knowledge."

"Like Faust? Do you also wish to sell your soul to the Devil?"

"I do not believe there is a soul or a Devil to sell it to."

"And what you have seen, here tonight? Is it what you are seeking?"

He had felt there was no real magickal power in the ritual, no mystery to enthrall, nothing numinous to attract him. There had been only the trappings of sex and what had seemed almost a boredom in the satanic invocations, and he had begun to realize as he watched and waited that he wanted something more than sex. He desired a return of the power he had felt a week ago at the beginning of the wiccan rite. The satanic ritual had disappointed him - but Tanith intrigued him.

"I must admit," he said, "I was disappointed."

"But I interest you."

"I - "

"Why be embarrassed? It is a perfectly natural feeling." She smiled, and moistened her lips with her tongue. "But first to other matters. I could introduce you to a Master who could instruct you. For you, like everyone need to learn. Are you prepared to learn?"

"From someone I can respect."

"Unlike our friend Sanders tonight."

"Yes - unlike him." It was Conrad's turn to smile. Tanith's perfume seemed exotic to him, and he found it difficult to avoid looking at her breasts, partly exposed by the folds of her unusual clothes. "So this evening's entertainment was just a charade?"

"How acute of you! And such hidden talents. But not a charade, exactly."

"An inducement?"

"For some: those lacking your talents." She leant toward him. "Tomorrow, you shall meet the person you are seeking. There will be a price to pay, though."

Conrad was dismayed. "I have no money."

"I was not thinking of money."

"What then?"

"Such innocence!" She leant closer, so close he could feel her breath upon his face and see the fine lines around her eyes. Then she was kissing him. He was so surprised he moved away.

Suddenly, she understood. "You've never done this before, have you?" She touched his face gently with her hand. "Well, I'd better make it memorable then."

Outside, in the darkness, it had begun to snow.

### III

Conrad lay in his bed a long time. Dawn was breaking, but he possessed no desire to rise quickly and run, as had been his habit for years, five or more miles before his breakfast whatever the weather. Neither did the prospect of lectures excite him any more. Instead, he felt languid and satiated. Tanith had taken him to a bedroom in the house wherein their passion had flowed to ebb slowly in the hours after midnight. Her departure was sudden, the house empty, and he was left to walk back to his own college room through the snow-covered streets of the city, happy and pleased with himself.

He was still thinking about Tanith when someone knocked on the door of his room. He dressed hastily.

"Conrad Robury?" asked the tall well-dressed man.

Conrad was suspicious, for the man kept nervously glancing around. "Who wants to know?"

"I'm Fitten. Paul Fitten. You are in danger. Grave danger!" He gestured toward the briefcase in his hand. "It's all in here. If only you will listen. Please, I must talk with you."

"About what?"

"Those Satanists! They want to make you their opfer! You are in danger! I do not have much time. Look," and he opened the briefcase, "study these books, please. Take them."

Reluctantly, Conrad took them.

"They are after me," Fitten said, glancing around. "They want to stop me, you see. Read the books, it is all in there. I shall call again. But they are coming - I sense them coming near. I must go now! Here, my address." He gave Conrad a printed card. "We must talk soon."

Fitten rushed along the corridor and down the stairs.

Alone again, Conrad sat at his desk to study the books, curious about them. The first book was entitled 'Falcifer - The Curse of Our Age' and was printed on shoddy paper in a small and unusual typeface. The title page bore no details of the publisher only the words 'Benares, Year of Our Lord Nineteen Hundred and Twenty Three' and the author's name, R. Mehta.

'Falcifer,' the book began, 'is the name they have chosen. Working in secret, even now they are planning his coming. He is the spawn of Chaos, the leader of those dark gods which even Satan himself fears. For centuries his secret disciples have deceived us and are deceiving us still, for he is not the Beast...'

"Darling," Conrad heard a voice behind him say, "are you ready?"

Tanith came forward and kissed him. "Come, leave your books - I have need of you."

The invitation pleased Conrad, and he forgot about the books, Fitten and everything else. Only Tanith was real, and he surrendered himself to his passion. Afterwards, she dressed herself quickly saying, "We must go. The Master is waiting."

"Of course."

She touched the three books Fitten had bought and, one after the other, they disintegrated into dust.

"The books! - " Conrad began.

"They are not important. We must go now." She threw him his clothes.

He walked beside her, surprised but pleased when a chauffeur ushered them into the luxury of the waiting car. Several students turned to look, and Conrad was secretly proud.

The car took them from the city and along country roads to the tree-lined and long driveway of an impressive house. A fierce looking and very tall man with the build of a wrestler opened the car door, and Conrad followed Tanith up the steps of the house and into the hall. He was led through doors and elegantly furnished passageways to a verandah where a man sat reading.

"Welcome," the man said, and indicated the chair beside him. "Welcome Conrad Robury. You are

most welcome in my house."

Tanith shut the door to leave them in the cold outside air.

"Come, sit beside me," the man said

His beard was neatly trimmed, his dark clothes thin and seemingly unsuitable to the weather. His voice had a musical quality with a veiled accent that Conrad could not identify, but it was his eyes which impressed Conrad most.

"You wish to learn?"

"Yes," Conrad replied, shivering from the cold, although he tried not to show it.

The man smiled. "I am called Aris - at least here! Tell me, Conrad, is it a return of the feeling which you felt after a certain - how shall we say? - well-endowed lady began her wiccan ritual?"

Conrad was amazed at the man's knowledge of his inner feelings.

"Perhaps," Aris continued, "you are beginning to understand that it was not change that brought you here. Perhaps, also, you are beginning to realize that you may have found what - or should I say whom - you are seeking. Do you, then, wish to learn from me the Art whose secrets you believe I know?"

"Yes."

"And you wish Initiation?"

"Yes I do."

"You have a special Destiny to fulfill - and I shall guide you toward the fulfillment of that Destiny. Are you then prepared to accept whatever conditions I may make?"

"Yes."

"You appear unsure - which is good. It is only fitting that you are apprehensive. Our path is difficult and is only for those who dare. The ritual of your Initiation will take place soon, and afterwards you will begin to study our way. But you should understand that, as from yesterday, your experiences are formative and part of your quest - it is for you to understand them."

It had begun to snow again, and Conrad was shivering from the cold despite the elation he felt at being accepted. There was a knock on the door that led to the verandah, and Aris the Master smiled.

"Enter!" he said.

Tanith entered and Aris rose to greet her with a kiss. "You have met my wife, of course." he said to Conrad.

"Your wife?" Conrad said as he also stood, suddenly warmed by the shock.

"Yes, darling!" Tanith said, and kissed Conrad's face.

Conrad was perplexed but the Master said, "See, how profitably you have spent the last twelve hours. Already you are beginning to learn. You see, I know what has occurred between you and Tanith." He laughed. "There are no Nazarene ethics here!"

"In fact," Tanith added, "no ethics at all!"

"Come, Conrad, I have a present for you: a gift of your Initiation."

It was a somewhat dazed Conrad who followed Aris to another room. On a couch, a dwarf with a pugnacious face was apparently asleep.

"Conrad Robury, meet Mador your guide."

At the sound of his name, Mador sprang up, did a somersault and landed near Conrad where he gave a mock bow.

"Charmed, I'm sure!" he said.

"A word of warning - he is a fool," Aris said.

"Bah!" Mador replied. "Ignore him - he's a liar!"

"Show Conrad the house," Aris said.

"Yes, Master," replied Mador, bowing and winking at Conrad.

Aris left them alone. "You are Conrad," Mador said. "Well, I shall call you - Professor! Come!"

The passage that led away from the room was long, adorned with oil paintings and antique furniture. He was shown a small laboratory, the library, the many bedrooms on the floor above, each decorated and furnished differently. Some seemed luxurious, others austere and a few quite bizarre with walls like trapezoids and no windows. The gardens around the house were large with well-tended lawns and Mador pointed to the dense wood that formed their boundary at the rear.

"Not at night," he said breaking the silence between them and shaking his head, "not alone."

"Why not?"

Mador ignored the question. "The cellars! I forgot the cellars!" And he hit himself on the head.

The door to the cellars was locked, and Mador kicked it in anger.

"What does Aris do?" Conrad asked.

"The Master? Do?" replied Mador perplexed. "Why, he is a Magickian!" he cupped his hand to his ear, listening. "Come Professor. It is time. Yes, it is time!"

"For what?"

"For the Professor. She is calling me."

Mador led him to a dining room. "She waits," he said indicating the door, and left him. Tanith was in the room, seated at the table where only two places were laid.

"Sit, here beside me," she said to him.

"Won't your husband be joining us?"

"The Master? Why, no!" She rang the silver hand bell.

A maid came to serve the hors d'oeuvre. Conrad thought her very pretty, but she refused to look at him.

"Did you enjoy your tour?" Tanith asked him as she elegantly devoured her melon.

"Yes - and no."

"Why no?"

"I was still thinking - about you and me and your husband."

"We are different, as you are learning."

"So he does not mind?"

She smiled. "What do you think?"

"I think I'm beginning to understand."

"Excellent! You will be staying here, with us, of course for the next week, few weeks or whatever."

"I had not thought about it. My studies - "

"They are more important to you than the goal you seek? Than the pleasure you find with me?"

"Of course not."

"Whatever belongings you wish to have around you will of course be brought here from your present lodgings."

"And if I didn't want to stay?"

"You are free to go any time." She rang the bell, waiting until the maid completed her duties before speaking again. "However, should you leave - there can be no returning."

"I see."

For some time they ate in silence. "How long might my stay be?" he finally asked.

"However long it takes."

"A test of my desire for Initiation?"

Tanith smiled. "Possibly. Do try the wine, an excellent year. Or so I am told."

"I don't drink alcoholic substances."

"Really? How extraordinary!" She drank from her own glass. "Judging by last night and this morning you do not seem like a Buddhist to me."

"It be-clouds the senses?"

"Buddhism?"

"No - wine and other such beverages."

"Or relaxes them!" She raised her own glass. "To Bacchus the Great!" The glass was soon empty. "I suppose," she said lasciviously, "the cultivation by you of one vice at a time is sufficient - for the moment!"

Conrad sighed. He felt he was being manipulated to some extent; but he also felt he did not care. His memory of his passion with Tanith was strong.



"Can I see you tonight?" he asked. "I mean - "

"I know what you mean," she said softly. "I'm sure it can be arranged. Such youthful vigour!" She closed her eyes. "To paraphrase a certain French author - 'The pleasures of vice must not be restrained.'" She rang the bell again. "You will have a rather full afternoon and evening, I understand."

"Doing what?"

"Oh, various things. You have not eaten very much."

"Bit excited, I suppose."

"Coffee?"

"Yes, please."

The maid returned to whisper into Tanith's ear. "Come," Tanith said to him.

By the outside door in the hall, the wrestler stood holding a man by the arms. Conrad recognized him. It was Fitten.

"Alright, Gedor," Tanith said.

The wrestler nodded his head and released Fitten.

"You must get away!" Fitten shouted at Conrad. "They are cursed! They want you as their - "

Tanith gestured with her hand and Gedor's fist knocked Fitten over, bloodying his face. Conrad saw Tanith smile.

"Escort him away," she said to Gedor, "and lock the gates."

She closed the door. "Fitten will not bother us again."

"You know him then?" Conrad asked, surprised.

"Yes, we know him. He calls himself a White Magickian. Runs a group of sorts in the city. You are in demand, it seems."

"Must be my natural charm!"

She did not respond. Instead her eyes betrayed no emotion.

"The Master awaits you. In the library. Go now." She turned and walked away.

In the library Conrad could see no one. The room was dim, and he was about to open one of the shutters that had been closed over the windows when he heard a voice behind him.

"Be seated," it said.

He saw no one, but sat at the table. Behind him he heard footsteps.

"Do not look round," the voice like that of the Master said.

"Your Initiation will be tonight. Are you prepared?"

He was not, but did not want to say so. "Yes," he lied, trying to convince himself.

"After the ritual of your Initiation there will be a task for you to complete. But now you must meditate".

The sudden blow enfolded Conrad in darkness.

## IV

Conrad awoke in darkness. His neck ached, and he was lying on a hard surface. On both sides he felt a cold, rough wall. The mortar between the bricks crumbled as his fingers touched it. No sounds reached him, and the steel door that sealed him in the cell would not open.

He lay for a long time, thinking about his life, Tanith, the Master and the Satanic group to which he assumed they belonged. Once and once only he felt afraid, but the fear soon passed as he remembered how Neil has spoken of the tests of Initiation. The darkness and the silence soon worked their magick upon him, and he fell asleep.

The loud click awoke him, and he rose to see the door swing slowly open, spreading a diffuse light into the cell. He waited, but no one came. Outside, stone steps led up along a narrow passageway and he climbed them slowly. The passage led to a circular room whose light was emanating from a sphere upon a plinth in the centre and, as he stood watching the light pulse in intensity and change slightly in colour, he felt the room begin to turn. Was he being deceived - or was the room really turning? He could hear a distant, sombre chant and smell a rich incense, and was surprised when the movement stopped and what he thought had been a wall part to reveal a large chamber below.

Steps led down to where black robed figures stood around a stone altar. The Master was there, and Tanith, clothed in white, and she gestured to him. Somewhere, drums beat and cantors sang a mesmeric chant in a language unknown to Conrad. Tanith was smiling, and he walked down and

toward her.

"You," Aris the Master said to him in a voice that was almost chanting, "have come here, nameless, to receive that Initiation given to all who desire the greatness of gods!"

Two figures whose faces were hidden by the hoods of their robes came forward to hold Conrad and roughly strip him until he was naked.

"You have come," Aris was saying, "to seal with an oath your allegiance to me, your Mistress here, and all the members of this our Satanic Temple."

Tanith came toward him, and kissed him on the lips. "I greet you," she said, "in the name of our Prince! Let the Dark Gods and His legions witness this rite!" She turned to the congregation. "Dance, I command you!! And with the beating of your feet raise the legions of our lord!"

The Master was chanting something, but Conrad could not understand it.

"Drink!" Tanith said to Conrad, offering him a silver chalice.

He did, draining the wine until the chalice was empty.

"Gather round, my children," Tanith said, and the congregation obeyed to enclose Conrad in their circle, "and feel the flesh of our gift!"

They came towards him, smiling, and ran their hands over his flesh. Conrad was embarrassed, but tried not to show it. One of the congregation was a young woman and she stood for what seemed a long time in front of him so he could see her face enclosed within the hood of her robe. He thought her beautiful, and she ran her hands over his shoulders, chest and thighs before caressing his penis, smiling as he became erect. Then she was gone, enclosed again within the circle of dancers and he found himself held by strong hands and blindfolded.

He could hear Tanith's voice, the chant, and the dancers as they moved around him.

"We rejoice," Tanith was saying, "that another one comes to seed us with his blood and his gifts. We, kin of Chaos, welcome you the nameless. You are the riddle and I an answer and a beginning of your quest. For in the beginning was sacrifice. We have words to bind you through all time to us for in your beginnings, we were. Before you - we have been. After you - we will be. Before us - They who are never named. After us - They will still be. And you, through this rite, shall be of us, bound, as we are bound by Them. We the fair who garb ourselves in black through Them possess this rock we call this Earth."

Then the Master was before him. "Do you accept the law as decreed by us?"

"Yes, I do," Conrad answered.

"Do you bind yourself, with word and deed and thoughts to us the seed of Satan without fear or dread?"

"Yes"

"Then understand that the breaking of your word is the beginning of our wrath! See him! Hear him! Know him!"

The dancers stopped, and gathered again round Conrad to briefly touch him.

"So you," the Master said "renounce the Nazarene, Yeshua, the great deceiver, and all his works?"

"Yes, I do."

"Say it!"

"I renounce the Nazarene, Yeshua, the great deceiver and all his works!"

"Do you affirm Satan?"

"I do affirm Satan."

"Satan - whose word is Chaos?"

"Satan - whose word is Chaos!"

"Then break this symbol which we detest!"

A wooden cross was thrust into his hands, and he broke it before throwing the pieces to the ground.

"Now receive," the Master continued, "as a symbol of your faith and a sign of your oath this sigil of Satan."

Tanith gave the Master a small phial of aromatic oil, and with the oil Aris traced the sign of the inverted pentagram on Conrad's forehead, chanting 'AgiOS o Satanas!' as he did so. Aris held Conrad's arm while with a sharp knife Tanith cut Conrad's thumb, drawing blood which she spread over her forefinger to draw the sigil of the Temple over his heart.

"By the powers we as Master and Mistress wield, these signs shall always be a part of you: an auric symbol to mark you as a disciple of our Prince!"

"Now you must be taught," he heard Tanith's voice say, "the wisdom of our way!"

Two of the congregation came forward and forced him to kneel in front of her.

"See," she said, laughing, "all you gather now in my Temple: here is he who thought he knew our secret - he who secretly admired himself for his cunning! See how our strength over-comes him!"

The congregation laughed, and he felt his hands being bound behind his back. For a second he felt fear, but it was soon gone, replaced by anger and he tried to wriggle free from his bonds.

"A spirited one, this!" he heard Tanith's voice mock. "Listen!" she said to him. "Listen and learn! Keep your silence and be still!"

Conrad strained to hear. There was a rustling, a sound which might have been made by bare feet walking over stone, the chant ending, and then finally silence. He lay still even when he heard someone approaching him as he lay on the floor of the Temple. He felt a warm hand softly touching his skin, felt a woman's naked softness next to him and smelt a beautiful perfume. He did not resist when soft arms moved him to lie beside her, and he began to respond to her kisses and touch.

"Receive from me," the woman whispered, "the gift of your initiation."

Bound and still blindfolded, he surrendered himself to the physical passion she aroused and controlled, and his climax of ecstasy did not take long to reach. When it was over, she removed the cord which bound his hands and then his blindfolded. Conrad recognized the young woman who had caressed him earlier. On the altar lay a black robe and she gave it to him before ringing the Temple bell.

The sound was the signal for the congregation to return, and each member greeted Conrad, their new Initiate, with a kiss. Chalices of wine were handed round and he was given one. He sipped it while around him an orgy began.

"Come," Tanith said to him, "we have other duties."

She led him out of the chamber, through a passage and up well-worn stone stairs to a wooden door. The door was a concealed one and led into a hut. Outside, it was night, but the snow-scattered light illuminated the woods, and he followed Tanith through the snow, shivering from the cold. She did not speak, and he did not, and it seemed to him a long walk back to the house. Inside, it was warm and smelt vaguely of incense.

"Rest now," Tanith said, and kissed him.

He held her and caressed her breasts.

"I have to go," she said without smiling. "Gedor will show you to your room."

Conrad was surprised when out of the shadows Gedor stepped forward, grim-faced.

The room he was led to was unfurnished except for a bed, but it was warm and Conrad soon settled himself under the duvet to read the book that lay upon the pillow. 'The Black Book of Satan' the title read.

The first chapter was called 'What is Satanism' and he was reading it when he heard strange, almost unearthly, sounds outside. He drew back the curtains and to his surprise found they concealed not a window but an oil painting. It was a portrait of a young man dressed in medieval clothes and he stared at it for some time before realizing it was a portrait of himself. It bore a signature he could not read, and a date which he could: MDCXLII. "1642" he said to himself. The colours of the painting seemed dulled a little with age, the canvas itself cracked as if to confirm the antiquity of the portrait.

The strange sounds had stopped, and were replaced by loud laughter outside the door. He went to it, but it was locked.

## V

Baynes was a quiet, almost shy man in his late forties. His handsome features, his neatly trimmed beard - black with streaks of grey - his wealth and the soft, mellow tones of his voice made him attractive to many women. He was well aware of this, and made efforts to avoid being left alone with them. A bachelor, his only interest outside his work was the Occult and he had acquired the reputation of regarding women as distant objects of chivalry. His abstemiousness in this matter gave rise to rumours that he was a homosexual but he did nothing to dispel them except explain when pressed on the matter by some of his friends in the Occult and magickal groups he frequented that he regarded women as a hindrance in the attainment of the highest grades of Initiation.

Dressed in an expensive suit, he sat in the Sitting Room of one of his comfortable city houses listening to Fitten talk about the group of Satanists. It was after midnight, and uncharacteristically he was becoming bored. Several members from his own Temple of Isis sat around him in the subdued light, and some of them were trying to resist the temptation of sleep. Fitten had been talking, in his own disjointed way, for nearly an hour, explaining his theory about the origins of the Satanist group.

"It is an old tradition," Fitten was saying, "a very old tradition. A racial memory, perhaps, of beings who once long ago came to this Earth. For we have been deceived. They are not of the Beast, not of those Others about whom one writer has written, decades ago. We need to understand this, you see: need to finally understand the truth. We have been deceived about them."

Fitten paused to wipe sweat from his forehead with his coloured handkerchief and Baynes took the opportunity to interject.

"I have taken the liberty," he said, "of contacting a colleague of mine in London who is well-known as a leading authority on Satanism and he has agreed to come and talk to us about the Satanist group to which the gentleman to whom Mr. Fitten referred to belongs - "

"Conrad Robury," interrupted Fitten.

"The group to which Mr. Robury now, apparently belongs," continued Baynes, "has interested us for some time. Since the murder of Maria Torrens, in fact. You will all, no doubt, recall the brutal facts of that case."

He could see his audience now paying attention.

"As you will remember, her naked and mutilated body was found on the Moors, her head resting on what the Police assumed to be a Black Magick altar. An inverted pentagram had been cut on her skin by a sharp knife - a surgical scalpel, I was told. Discreetly of course, I was asked for my opinion.

"At first I and the Police investigating the matter were of the opinion that the killing was a motiveless one with no genuine Occult connections, the murderer or murderers providing the 'Occult' evidence to confuse. For, as you will recall, some rather scurrilous newspapers ascertained and published details regarding the lady's rather unfortunate background. She was a 'Lady of the Night' - "

"A prostitute," someone said, and giggled.

Baynes ignored the remark. " - who frequented the area around this city's dockland. She was last seen apparently accepting a lift in a vehicle driven by an attractive middle- aged lady. Shortly after the newspapers published their story, the Police received an anonymous call, naming a suspect. The man was quickly traced, and interviewed and then arrested when he confessed to the crime. He himself had a rather dubious reputation, and said that he had driven Miss Torrens to the scene of the crime and persuaded her to adorn herself in an Occult manner. Apparently, he had been to the motion-pictures and seen some scenes in a film.

"He later retracted this confession and claimed to have been forced to give it by a man whom he continually referred to as 'The Master' whom he claimed had himself committed the brutal murder. He further alleged that this 'Master' was the leader of a group of Satanist's here, in this city and had killed Miss Torrens during a ritual for his own diabolic ends. He made a statement to the Police to this effect, but shortly afterwards began acting rather strangely, and withdrew that statement. During subsequent weeks before his trial he made several other statements, each more ludicrous than the other - for instance, one referred to beings from another planet landing in a 'space-ship', abducting him and Maria.

"It was at the trial, you may well remember, that the Prosecution proved by the testimony of a very respectable witness that Maria and the defendant had been seen together on the Moor only a few hours before her death. The defendant was sentenced to life imprisonment, and was found, some weeks later, hanged in his prison cell. After the trial, I began my own quiet investigation into Satanist groups in this area - and subsequently uncovered one organized by a certain gentleman whom his followers call 'The Master'. This group uses and has used several different names, and has Temples in various other cities. Among its names are 'The Temple of Satan', 'The Noctulians' and 'Friends of Lucifer'."

Fitten was slumped in a chair, apparently asleep, and Baynes smiled at him, in his gentle way, before continuing. "The group is very selective regarding members, and tests all the candidates for Initiation. These tests are sometimes quite severe and sometimes involve the candidate undertaking criminal acts - this of course serving to bind the candidate to the group as well as giving the group evidence to blackmail the candidate with should he or she later prove uncooperative. Unlike most so-called Satanist and Black Magick groups which are usually only a cover for one or more persons criminal or sexual activities, this particular group does work genuine magick, and seems to possess quite an advanced understanding of the subject. Apparently, they follow their own sinister magickal tradition based on the septenary system - or Hebdomadry as it is called.

"Since the Maria Torrens case we, acting with a number of other 'Right Hand Path' groups in this and other areas, have tried to infiltrate this Satanist group, always without success. Until recently, that is."

Smiling, he waited for the exclamations of surprise to subside before he continued. "This member - whom I shall for obvious reasons call only Frater Achad - has given us valuable information, and he is shortly to be initiated into the sect. What we are hoping is that he can provide us with details regarding members, their magickal workings as well as information regarding their activities which we can pass onto the Police. As I have said, some of their activities verge on the criminal. There are probably others, of a kind of which we are at present unaware, and of course there is always the possibility that Frater Achad can provide us with evidence regarding the Maria Torrens case.

"Naturally, I have told you this in the strictest confidence. Frater Achad is in a delicate - not to say dangerous - position."

Suddenly, Fitten was on his feet, pointing at Baynes. "We must act now! Don't you understand?" He turned and faced the other people present. "Don't any of you understand? We cannot afford to wait! We must act now to destroy them! Soon, their power will grow - so great we, and others, can do nothing. Listen! They will do a ritual to open the gate to the Abyss. An offer - they need an offer to do this, and offering of human blood. Do you want another death on your hands? Once the Gate is opened they will possess the power of the Abyss itself!"

"Mr. Fitten," Baynes said gently, "I - we all - share your concern about them. But we must plan and act carefully in this matter."

"I shall show you!" Fitten shouted. "I shall stop them! Me! Because I know their secrets! I don't need any of you!"

No one followed him as he left the room and the house.

"Our brother," Baynes said, "needs our help. Let us meditate for a while and send him healing and helpful vibrations."

As they closed their eyes to begin, laughter invaded the room. All present heard it, but no one could see its source. But it was soon gone, and Baynes and his followers of the white path of magick soon resumed their own form of meditation, praying to and invoking their one or many gods according to



their many and varied beliefs. The laughter was only one incident and did not undermine their security of faith.

Outside, in the cold and above the snow which covered the ground deeply, an owl screeched in the darkness and silence of the large ornamental garden. The cry startled them more than the demonic laughter.

## VI

The voice awoke Conrad, and he roused himself from his troubled sleep to see Mador standing beside his bed.

"Breakfast, Professor?" the dwarf asked again.

"What?"

"Breakfast?"

"What time is it?"

"Time to rise and eat!" He handed Conrad a neat pile of clothes. "Hurry! Rise and eat"

"Leave me alone," Conrad said. His dreams had been disturbing, his sleep broken, and he felt in need of rest.

"The Master sent me," Mador replied, and smiled.

Wearily, Conrad sat up in his warm bed. The room itself felt cold. "Alright. I won't be long."

"I wait for you - outside."

Conrad dressed slowly in the black clothes someone had selected for him before following Mador to the dining room. The maid was waiting, ready to serve him from the many dishes and he was not surprised when Mador left him. He was surprised when the young lady who had sexually initiated him entered the room to sit beside him.

"Did you sleep well?" she asked him, and smiled.

"Er, yes thank you," Conrad replied in his surprise.

"Do try the kippers," she said to him. "From Loch Fyne. Delicious!" she gestured toward the maid who began to serve them both.

"Do you live here?" Conrad cautiously asked her.

"You are sweet!" she chided him. "I suppose you could say that. I'm Susan, by the way."

"Conrad," he said unnecessarily and held out his hand.

She did not take it and he was left to awkwardly shuffle in his chair.

"Did you like your room?" She asked.

"Well, it was unusual."

"They all say that!"

" 'They?' " he asked.

She ignored his question. "Has the Master explained what you will be doing today?"

"No."

"I'm sure he will want to see you - after you have eaten." She gestured toward the kipper with which the maid had served him.

"I'm not very hungry, actually."

She laughed. "You're not a vegetarian by any chance, are you?"

"No, of course not."

"After all the energy you expended last night," she smiled at him, "I would have thought you'd be ravenous!"

Conrad blushed at this reminder of the passion they as strangers had shared.

"Such innocence!" she said,

"There is a painting in my room," he said to cover his embarrassment. "Is it very old?"

"Have you read any of the book that was left in your room?"

"A little. It's very interesting."

"It's a beginning," she shrugged. "Just a beginning."

"Have you been involved with this group long?"

"That's a quaint way of putting it! 'This group!' You mean, have I been a Satanist a long time?"

The woman's self-assurance, his own discomfort at being a guest in an unusual and luxurious house, and his shyness with women all combined to make Conrad wish he was elsewhere - at his lectures, preferably, learning about the mysteries and beauties of Physics. But as he sat looking at the young and quite beautiful woman beside him and as he remembered the bliss they had shared, he began to feel a confidence in himself. It was as though some of the power he had felt during the wiccan ritual over a week ago had returned.

"Yes," he said smiling at her, "how long have you been a Satanist?" He said the last word with relish, as though consciously and proudly committing a sin.

"I was brought up with it - baptised into it."

"Really?"

"Naturally, there was a time when I began to question it, and was given the freedom to do so. In fact even encouraged."

"By your parents?"

"But once you have tasted paradise on Earth, it is irresistible!"

"Why do you evade some of my questions?" Conrad asked, his confidence growing.

Her eyes seemed to him to sparkle as she answered. "Because I am a woman and like to be mysterious!"

Without quite realizing what he was doing he leant toward her and kissed her lips. She did not draw away, and out of the corner of his eye he could see the maid pretending to look out of the window at the garden. Across the room, he heard a discreet and almost gentlemanly cough.

Aris stood by the door. "If you have finished," he said almost smiling, "perhaps we can talk."

"Of course!" Conrad said, surprised.

"In the library." He turned around and left.

"Can I see you - later?" Conrad asked Susan.

"Do you really want to?" She teased.

"Yes!"

"Perhaps. You'd better not keep him waiting."

"No." He stood up, bent down to kiss her, then decided against it.

The door to the library was open, and Aris was already sitting in a chair by the desk.

"Come!" The Master said in greeting.

Conrad sat opposite trying not to appear nervous.

"The power you felt before," Aris said, "is returning to you. As you hoped it would. This is one result of your Initiation. For you must understand, Initiation into our way is similar to opening a channel, a link, to those hidden or Occult powers which form the real essence of magick."

Conrad was impressed, but Aris continues in his unemotional way. "Those powers you may use for whatever you desire. For sexual gratification, should you so wish. Such power as you feel and have felt will grow, steadily, with your own Occult and magickal development. What occurred last night is but the first of many stages in that development. Are you then prepared to go further?"

"Yes. Yes, I am."

"There is a task I wish you to undertake, a task connected to your Initiation. But you must understand that you have been chosen for more than just this and such other tasks as may be necessary for your own magickal development. For remember I have said that you have a special Destiny to fulfil. What this Destiny is, will become clear when the time is right. You are important to us, as we to you. Because of this you are more to me and my comrades in magick than a mere Initiate, a beginner in the ways of our dark gods. Remember this, Conrad Robury. I extend my hospitality to you and not just of my house, as you know, because you are more than another novice.

"Now to your task. It will, for a short while, take you away from the house."

Conrad sensed that, whatever the test was, it would partly be a test of fidelity to Aris and his Satanic group.

"You are familiar with someone called Paul Fitten," Aris said.

It was not a question, but Conrad still answered, "Yes."

"You are to go to him and persuade him that you wish to help him. Then you must endeavour to undertake a magickal ritual with him. It will be a qabalistic ritual, but never mind. During this ritual you are to redirect the power brought forth - which you must help to generate - so that it takes control of Fitten, harms him in some way. Do you understand?"

"Yes."

Aris stared at him, then smiled. "You understand part of it - yes. For you believe I aim to test your morals by asking you to harm by magickal means another individual. But there is more, as you will discover. Now, I have a gift for you - a gift of your Initiation." He placed a silver ring with an ornamental stone on the desk. "Wear it always from this day as a sign of your desire to follow our ways."

Without thinking Conrad began to place the ring on the third finger on his right hand.

"The other hand," Aris said.

Conrad obeyed. The ring was a perfect fit.

"Now, Conrad Robury, you must go to accomplish your task. Susan, as my Priestess, will go with you."

Conrad was at the door when Aris said, "Do not let them - or anyone - try to remove your ring."

## VII

Susan, obviously prepared, had driven him straight to Fitten's house. It was a small house, bordering a quiet road near the edge of the city and a dog ran out toward them, barking, as they walked along the path to the door. Susan stared at the dog, and it whimpered away.

Conrad knocked loudly on the door, as a Policeman might. Fitten bore no visible scars of his ordeal at the hands of Gedor and greeted them warmly.

"Come in!" he said. "Please come in! I knew you would come! It was in the chart, you see!"

He led them into a room crowded with books and dimly lit but where a coal fire burned warmly.

"Please, be seated!" he enthused. "I have so much to tell you!"

"This is Susan," Conrad said.

"Yes, yes! How did you escape?"

"Escape?" asked Conrad.

"From the house of the Satanists? You were there, yesterday."

"Oh, them. They seemed only too anxious," lied Conrad, "to let me go after you appeared. One of them mentioned something about 'magickal attack. Perhaps they thought I would be a burden to them in that case."

"As you would, as you would my son!"

Conrad winced.

"Did you read the books I gave you?" Fitten asked.

"They destroyed them."

"Ah! They are evil, evil incarnate!"

"But who are they?"

"You do not know?" Fitten looked amazed.

"No. Should I?"

"Perhaps not. It is not important. You are here, now, that's what important."

"I wish," Conrad said and sighed, "someone would tell me what this is all about. I get invited to this party at a house, meet a right bunch of weird characters. Then you appear and are thrown out. Then one of them shows me this Temple they use. I'm a bit out of my depth, here."

"They need an offer, you see. For their Mass. Not a Black Mass - no, something far worse, something more vile and sinister. You had all the right qualities. Just what they needed. They knew that after you attended that meeting of the Circle of Arcadia. They know. They have spies - agents - infiltrators in most groups."

A slim, young woman appeared in the doorway of the room. "Would you like some tea, dear?" she asked her older husband.

"What?" said Fitten.

"Tea. Would you like some?" She innocently returned Conrad's smile.

"Why not! Why not indeed!"

She had gone when Conrad spoke. "You said they needed an offer - a sacrifice."

"I did? Quite! They needed - still need - someone young. They have a tradition, you see, of

sacrificing a young man aged twenty one. But only for this important ritual. The time of this ritual is near. They will have power from it. Not just Occult power. No, real power! They channel the magickal forces, you see, into a practical form - sometimes a person, sometimes an institution, a company, or something like that. Such use of magick is real black magick, real evil! They fermented, these worshippers of the darkest of dark forces, the French Revolution - the blood spilled was a sacrifice, an offering to their strange alien gods. They brought about with their magick the Third Reich. Now they prepare again!" He wiped the sweat from his forehead with his hand.

"But why me?" Conrad asked, trying to appear serious.

"You were a key to open the gate to the powers, the dark powers of the Abyss. Their Black Magick rites would use this power! I have sent for help."

"Sent for help?"

"A Magus. The most powerful White Lodge has been alerted. They will send a Magus."

"You do not want to deal with it yourself?" Conrad asked.

"I? I have no authority! A council must be convened: all the Magister Temple must be invited."

"But if the situation is as serious as you believe," Conrad resisted the temptation to smile, "can you afford to wait. Surely you must do something yourself."

"Well," Fitten sighed, "I did a little ritual. Last night."

"And it worked. I am here."

"I am thankful to the Lord for that. They might try and get you back - or find another offer." He slumped in his chair, looking pale and tired.

Suddenly, Conrad conceived an idea. "Will you excuse me a moment," he said, "I must go to the toilet."

Fitten said nothing, and stared into the fire. Conrad left. He found Fitten's wife in the kitchen of the house.

"Making tea?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Any special kind?"

"No, just ordinary tea."

"I prefer Formosa Oolong myself." He closed the door.

"I wouldn't know!"

"There's a lovely tea shop in the city centre which serves a good selection. Perhaps you've been there?"

"No," she said and turned away from him.

"It's really lovely sitting there of a winter's evening watching people pass in the street. You must try it sometime."

"Maybe."

"You look very tired," he said, softly.

"It's been a hectic week."

"Perhaps you need a break - away from the house."

"Maybe," she said dully.

"Please don't be offended, but perhaps I could take you out to dinner one evening?"

"I'm sorry?" she said with genuine surprise.

"You looked so sad, standing there," he said with kindness in his voice.

"I'm just tired."

"Would you like to come to dinner with me one evening? I know a rather nice restaurant."

"It's very kind of you to ask," she said formally.

"I'm not being kind. It would give me great pleasure to have the company of a beautiful woman for an evening. And you are beautiful."

"I'm a married woman!"

"And a beautiful one. When did you last dine out?" He could see that the question pained her although she did not answer.

"Would he really miss you for one evening?"



She looked at him briefly then lowered her eyes. He moved toward her and held her hand, gently caressing it with his fingers. She closed her eyes, and he was surprised by her reaction as he was by his own confidence. It was as though he had become another person. He bent forward to kiss her but she moved away.

"Please," she pleaded, but made no move to free her hand from his.

"Tonight," he said, "About eight o'clock?"

"I don't know."

"I'll collect you about a quarter to eight, then."

"The lady who came with you - " she asked.

"My sister?" he lied. "She wants to talk to your husband about witchcraft, I think. Can't say I find the subject of interest, myself. I'm studying Physics at the moment."

She finally withdrew her hand from his. "At the University?"

"Yes. Do you know it?"

"I went there," she said shyly.

"Really? What did you study?"

"Geology."

"I've always been fascinated by that subject. You must tell me about it - tonight."

"I didn't complete my course."

"To get married?"

"No. Well, not exactly." She turned away to complete her preparation of the tea. She gave him the tray. "Would you mind?" she asked.

"Not at all! Tonight, then?"

She smiled and held the door open for him. "We'll see!" she said.

Down the dark hallway of the house he could hear Fitten's agitated voice.

"Tea?" he said, entering the warm room.

"Mr. Fitten," Susan said, "is thinking of performing a ritual here tonight."

"Oh? Why?"

"Well," Susan continued, "I suggested it would be a good idea at this moment in time. To strike now, when they are unprepared."

"I don't know, I don't know!" said Fitten, shaking his head.

"I have explained" Susan said to Conrad, "that I myself am a Second Degree Witch, so I can assist."

Suddenly, Fitten stood up. "Yes! We must act! I feel it is right! The time is right! You are right."

"If it would help," Susan said to him, "I have something taken from the house of the Satanists." She fumbled in her handbag.

Fitten took the silver medallion inscribed with an inverted pentagram and the word 'Atazoth'.

"Atazoth. Atazoth," he mumbled. "Yes, this would be very suitable; very suitable indeed. Where did you get it?"

"Conrad found it in the house."

"Yes. I gave it to her. All this Occult stuff does not really interest me. Not any more."

"But you are," Susan asked him "prepared to partake in a ritual with us."

"Of course. As I explained to my sister," he said to Fitten, "although I don't understand all of this, I'm prepared to help. I trust her judgement."

"Good! Good!" Fitten said. "Tonight, you say?" he asked Susan.

"It would be best. You could get assistance? For I have heard you have many contacts. I would of course leave the type of ritual up to you - since you have far more knowledge and experience of ceremonial than I."

Fitten was pleased by Susan's praise. "I would have to make some telephone calls."

"Naturally. What time would you suggest?" Susan asked.

"Eight o'clock. The hour of Saturn!"

"Surely," Conrad said, "the sooner we begin the better. How about now?"

"Now? Now?" Fitten looked amazed.

"There is you, me, my sister - your wife."

"My wife?"

"Such a ritual as we need to do may be dangerous."

"But surely she has assisted you before?"

"Of course! Many times, in fact. We need more time to prepare."

"But we have the medallion," Susan suggested.

"Even so - "

"Do you intend," Susan asked, "to conjure force and send it against the Satanists?"

"Yes. Yes, I had thought in such terms. Psychic attack! I can remember the face of that evil woman!"

"What woman?" Conrad asked.

"That evil woman who was with you in their house!"

"Tanith is her name."

"I thought so! The spirits speak to me, you see. The Lord is with us!" He stared at them both as if possessed. "Yes! We will act now!" Then he was quiet again and softly spoken. "I will make a few telephone calls - perhaps some friends of mine can come at short notice."

As soon as he left the room, Susan asked, "You have a plan?"

"Indeed! It should be interesting!"

"You're enjoying this, aren't you?" Susan asked, smiling.

"Yes! I feel really alive! Bursting with energy!"

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Fitten was not away long. "Three others!" he announced on his return. "Three have agreed to come!"

"It bodes well, then," Conrad said.

"My Temple - we will wait for them in my Temple."

"Your wife will be participating?"

"Yes, she will. Come, I will show you my Temple."

The Temple was a converted bedroom. There was no altar, only a large circle inscribed on the floor around which were magical names and signs. IHVH, AHIH, ALIVN and ALH. The name Adonai was the most prominent and various Hebrew letters completed the circle's adornment, The walls of the room were grey and white, and inside the circle on the floor stood a small table covered with a sword, several knives, candles and bowls of incense. The sword and knives were inscribed with writing the Conrad, from even his cursory study during the last week of the qabalistic ceremonial tradition, recognized as the magickal script called 'Passing the River'.

"We must meditate while we wait for the others," Fitten said as he lit several candles scattered around the floor.

"Bring good vibrations to assist us."

Following Susan, Conrad sat on the floor. He closed his eyes and imagined the room filling with demons and imps. He was almost asleep when Fitten's wife brought the remainder of the participants, two rather plump men and a woman with an unsmiling sallow face.

"Let us begin!" Fitten announced dramatically. He gave his congregation white robes and offered some to Susan and Conrad who declined. "Let us stand within the circle!" he announced.

Conrad deliberately stood next to Fitten's wife with Susan beside him. Then Fitten was pointing the tip of the sword at the painted circle on the circle on the floor.

"I exhort you," he shouted, "by the powerful and Holy names which are written around this circle, protect us!"

He put down his sword, held a piece of parchment up and then sprinkled incense over the floor. "Let the divine white brilliance descend. Before me Raphael, behind me Gabriel, at my right hand Michael, and at my left hand Auriel. For before me flames the pentagram and behind me stands our Lords' six pointed star. Elohim! Elohim Gibor! Eloath Va-Daath! Adonai Tzabaoth! City of Light, open your radiance to us. We command you and your guardians, by the Holy Names - Elohim Tzabaoth! Elohim Tzabaoth! Elohim Tzabaoth! Twelve is our number."

"Twelve," repeated the others present, with the exception of Susan and Conrad.

"There are twelve," Fitten continued, "twelve signs of the Zodiac."

"Twelve signs of the Zodiac."

"Twelve labours of Hercules."

"Twelve labours of Hercules."

"Twelve disciples of our Lord!"

"Twelve disciples of our Lord."

"Twelve months in the year!"

"Twelve months in the year."

"Let us adore," Fitten chanted, "the Lord and the King of Hosts. Holy art thou Lord, thee who hast formed Nature. Holy art thou, the vast and the mighty one, Lord of Light and of the Darkness. Holy art thou, Lord! By the word of Paroketh, and by the sign of the rending of the Veil, I declare that the Portal of the Adepts is open! Hear the words! These are the words - Elohim Tzabaoth! Elohim! Tzabaoth!"

He bent down to scribble a sign on the parchment, then held it up, circling round sun-wise as he did so. "Come!" he shouted. "Come to me! To me!"

Conrad assumed the sign was of a demon, taken from the Lessor Key of Solomon.

"Behold the sign!" Fitten was saying. "Behold the Holy Name and my power! EIO! EIO! EIO! Tzabaoth! I command you! Appear! EIO! Tzabaoth!"

The candles began to dim, and Conrad could sense the anticipation of the participants. He saw Susan close her eyes. She, too, was speaking, but softly so the others might not hear. He caught the words 'AgiOS o SatanAs' as she exhaled but heard nothing more.

Then a vague, ill-defined and almost luminescent shape appeared in the corner of the room.

"Yod He Vau Heh!" Fitten shouted.

Almost immediately, Conrad took the hand of Fitten's wife in his own. She seemed to grasp it eagerly, and he stepped back, placing his foot over the painted circle. He could feel a force pulling him, and he closed his eyes to concentrate, willing the force into Fitten's wife.

She screamed, and fell to the floor. Then was she standing, her hair disheveled, his face contorted and almost leering. She raised her hands like claws and began to walk slowly to where Fitten stood.

Hurriedly, Fitten tried to burn the parchment he was holding in the flame of one of the candles, but he burnt his fingers instead. His wife was laughing and had ripped open her blouse to reveal her breasts.

Suddenly, as if realizing what had happened, Fitten stared at Conrad. He held the medallion Susan had given him over the flame of the candle and as he did so his wife stopped, her hands held motionless before her, her lips bared in a silent snarl. Susan gripped Conrad's arm, and he turned to see her face contorted in pain.

There was a demonic strength in Conrad as he saw this, and his body tensed as he willed Fitten's wife nearer and nearer to her husband. He could sense the elemental force within the room and tried to shape it by his own will to make Fitten's wife take the medallion from his hand. She touched the chain, and then the medallion, but did not scream as the heat from the candle burnt her flesh, its smell invading the darkening room. She threw it to the ground to turn to face her husband, her hands reaching up towards his bare neck.

Then, quite suddenly, she stopped. Conrad felt another force within the confines of the room. It was a powerful force, opposed to him and he watched as Fitten's aura became visible, flaming upwards in patterns of red and yellow and curling up over his head before it turned to inch closer and closer toward him. Fitten's wife turned to walk in pace with the advancing colour-changing aura toward where Conrad stood. There was something Conrad did not understand about all this as he strove to try and will the advancing force away. Two names suddenly entered his mind. Baynes; Togbare an inner almost laughing voice said, and he was wondering what to do next when he remembered the last words of Aris his Master.

He held out his left hand to show Fitten his ring.

"The ring! We must get his ring!" one of Fitten's followers shouted.

They moved toward Conrad, slowly it seemed as if in slow motion, and as they did so Fitten's aural light was sucked into the ring. Then all magickal power in the room was gone, and he could see Fitten, his mouth open, his eyes staring, his face white. Fitten's wife had stopped again and was slowly falling to the floor.

They reached her, but she was dead.

## VIII

An exhausted Conrad had slept in Susan's car on their return journey to Aris' house. The death of Fitten's wife had ended the ritual and a crazed Fitten had lunged at Conrad who had time only to raise his arms in self-defence before Susan knocked Fitten unconscious using Martial Arts techniques.

"Go, please go" one of Fitten's group had said, and they had left unmolested.

The Master was waiting for them in the hall, and he ushered Conrad into the library where a log fire had been lit.

"I gather there were certain complications," Aris said.

"Unfortunately."

"Tell me, then, what transpired - exactly as you remember it."

Conrad told his story - Fitten's wife, how he planned to use her during the ritual. The qabalistic conjuration of Fitten. His own breaking of the circle. The aura and the presence. Finally, he spoke of the ring which had drained the hostile magick away.

"Oh," concluded Conrad, "I remember two names. They just came into my mind before I was remembered about the ring."

"Are you certain it was before?"

"Yes."

"Certainly, that is interesting. And the names?"

"Baynes and Togbare."

Conrad thought he detected a look of surprise on Aris' face.

"You know them?" he asked.

"I have heard of them."

"Are they important?"

"You spoke of Fitten mentioning the White Lodge. Do you know what that means?"

"Only that it is supposed to be a group of Occultists who follow the Right Hand Path."

"It is a loose term used to describe a group of followers of that path who are dedicated to counteracting the activities of groups such as ours. Most are also followers of the Nazarene. This White Lodge fears that we will unite to use our powers against them. There are some who believe a 'Black Lodge' exists for just this purpose. Paranoia, naturally." He smiled, and the sinister nature of his appearance in that moment became evident to Conrad. "Or at least it was."

"This White Lodge," Aris continued, "tries to infiltrate Satanist groups, disrupt them, and so on. They conduct rituals for just such a purpose. The Council of this Lodge - an extremely secret organization - oversees all these activities, and its present head is a certain Frater Togbare."

"I see," quipped Conrad, nervously.

"Then perhaps you will explain what you see."

"It was not Fitten I was struggling with toward the end of the ritual but this White Lodge."

"Probably."

"But how - how did they know?"

"Through Fitten himself. You said he had claimed to be in contact with them before the ritual."

"Yes." Earnestly, he looked at Aris. "If this White Lodge is so powerful why did they allow Fitten's wife to die?"

Aris smiled. It was not a pleasing smile. "Once brought, such power has to be used, directed. It was dissipated, one could say, through the woman's death."

"They could not have saved her?"

"Yes, they could have, but they were unprepared for the ring."

"The ring?" Conrad stared at it. It looked ordinary, now in the light of the room and the fire.

"It was a link - between you and Susan."

"Susan? I'm sorry, I don't understand."

"You will."

His tone precluded, it seemed to Conrad, any further discussion of the matter. "But the woman's death," Conrad asked, "surely there will be complications? The Police - "

"Will not be involved," completed Aris. "The White Lodge - or rather the individuals composing it - are quite influential. Death by natural causes, I am sure will be the verdict."

"But surely I - I mean, what occurred during the ritual - will have started something? Fitten and the others will surely not let the matter stop there."

"What occurred was a warning to them - a prelude. There will shortly be a ritual undertaken by us in



which you will figure. Recall the mention I made of your Destiny. The time for fulfillment is near . Now they know our strength and our power, as I wished!"

"So it was more than just a test for me - of my Initiation?"

"Yes! As your Initiation was more than just another Initiation. But you are tired, and in need of sustenance. Go then, and feast yourself. We will meet again, and soon."

He walked to a shelf and took down a book before opening it and beginning to read. Conrad left the library to find Susan waiting.

"Shall we eat first?" she asked him quizzically.

"I'm sorry?" he said obtusely, still suffering from his contact with Aris.

"Which appetite do you want to satisfy first?"

He smiled, and she took his hand leading him toward the stairs and her room. It was luxurious, warm and vaguely perfumed, and he was surprised by her eagerness for she had soon stripped him and herself of clothes. She was remembering the ritual, the momentary exhilaration of rendering Fitten unconscious but most of all the death they had induced as she sought through Conrad to satisfy her lust.

"I want you!" she almost pleaded and screamed, and Conrad in his inexperience believed her. But his own physical experience was growing along with his magickal-inspired confidence, and he sought, and succeeded, to prolong his own pleasure and hers. In the bliss of his satiation he fell asleep, his limbs entwined around her body, and it was in the deep of night he awoke, to find himself alone.

Thirst and hunger roused him from her bed, and he dressed to wander from the room. The house was lit but with subdued and warming light, and he walked cautiously down the stairs, hoping to find someone awake. The silence unnerved him, a little, and he stood by the open door to the dining room for some minutes before going in.

The table was laid for one. The servers' door still swayed, a little, and he was about to push it open to peer into the serving room and kitchen's beyond, when the maid opened it.

She indicated the chair, and he obediently sat at the table. Several times he tried to engage her in conversation, and each time she turned away. Her expression never changed, and twice he asked her after Susan but she continued with her duties, mute and efficient. He was served soup, a course containing fillet steak, and he was sitting shrouded in silence and replete from the food drinking his coffee alone when he saw a light in the garden through the window.

It was a torch, wavering in the distance. Vaguely, he could discern a person running. Intrigued, he extinguished the lights in the room to watch the figure weave closer toward the house. The snow was bright, and as the figure passed by, he recognized Fitten, and Conrad soon had the window open.

He clambered through, surprised by the intense cold outside. Fitten must have heard him, for he turned around and shone the light from the torch into Conrad's face.

Then Fitten was screaming and running toward him. "You killed her! Devil!" he shouted.

Fitten swung the torch at Conrad's face, but Conrad parried the blow as Fitten tried to grapple. Then, they were both on the ground, rolling over and over in the snow with Fitten trying to pummel Conrad's face with his fists. Desperate, but determined, Conrad butted Fitten's head with his own. Dazed, Fitten rolled away and Conrad was about to stand and drag him to his feet when Aris and Gedor walked out of the house toward them.

"How pleasing!" Aris said. "He has arrived just in time to join our little celebration. Bring him!" he commanded Gedor, and Gedor obeyed, lifting Fitten easily.

They were returning toward the house when Aris said, "We have other unwelcome guests, I sense." He appeared to be listening to something no one else could hear, then turned to Gedor. "Release him!"

Gedor dropped Fitten into the snow. Aris bent over him, gripping his neck in his hand and saying in an almost sibilating voice, "He is dead already! Give him to them if they wish it!"

He released Fitten, who fell dazed. Then Aris was gone, into the shadows of the trees beside one side of the house, and as he did so two men appeared, walking over the snow from the front of the house.

"I'm sorry to intrude," the tallest of them said to Conrad, "but we have come for him."

"What do you want?" Conrad asked aggressively.

"My name is Baynes - " the tall man said.

"Baynes?" Conrad repeated, and then remembered.

"Yes. Now, about Mr. Fitten - "

"You are not welcome here," Conrad said.

"That is no surprise to me. We have come to escort Mr. Fitten home. I am very much afraid the recent death of his wife has unsettled him."

Fitten had stood up, his head bowed and he appeared to be crying.

"Take him," Conrad said.

"Thank you Mr. Robury."

Conrad was surprised at the use of his name. "Go, now," he said. "This is private property."

"This place and that attitude," Baynes said gently, "do not suit you. If at any time you wish to come and talk with me - "

Conrad was beginning to get angry. "Push off!"

"You do not realize what is happening to you, do you?"

"Gedor - " Conrad said, gesturing toward Baynes. He was half-surprised when Gedor, obeying him, moved forward menacingly.

"We shall take our leave," Baynes said, holding Fitten's arm.

Conrad watched them go. Someone was walking toward him from the house, and he turned to see Susan.

"Our ritual will begin soon," she said. "Come, I must prepare you - for the fulfillment of your Destiny is near."

His anger had left him by the time they reached the libation chamber, beside the hidden Temple, with its sunken pool. He stood watching Susan as she stripped naked to bathe. The sight aroused him, while nearby in the Temple, he could hear that Satanic chanting had begun.

## IX

Only once did Conrad think about the death of Fitten's wife - but he did not care. He had and did feel the pure exhilaration of life, the joy - the blissful ecstasy of living totally without planning and almost without thought. There was an exuberance within him which he felt he was beginning to need.

Events were happening to him, rather than being controlled by him, but he possessed a strong sense of his own importance, a strong belief that life had chosen him for something, and he drifted into the events with wonder but little fear. His life, since the light suffused him during the wiccan rite, had been enhanced. Was what he felt, he briefly thought, the ecstasy that warriors found in war and which they sought again and again? That bliss of being so near oblivion that there was a pure joy in the ordinary moments of living? Was this, he wondered, the true meaning of Satanism?

He did not know, nor particularly care, so far had magick re-made him, and he followed Susan down the steps into the Temple with greedy anticipation, proud of his robe which had been waiting for him beside the waters of libation, and proud that he had physically possessed Susan, the beautiful Satanic priestess.

Near the altar on which Tanith lay naked, a crystal tetrahedron glowed, adding to the light from the candles. The congregation were gathered round the altar and their Master stood nearby, holding up the wax effigy which had lain on Tanith's womb.

"I who delivered you in birth now name you," he said, but Conrad could not hear the name Aris pronounced and blessed with the sign of the inverted pentagram.

Susan took the effigy, and dressed it while the Master raised his arms.

"I will go down to the altars in Hell," he said.

"To Satan, the giver of life," responded the congregation.

Conrad stood within their circle, raising his voice in the Satanic prayers that followed. He knew the Satanist 'Our Father' and Creed by heart.

Aris began the chanting which followed. 'Agios o Satanas!' he sang. It was then that Conrad noticed the small coffin beside the altar, and a black shroud, ready. The chanting continued as Susan assisted Tanith from the altar before clothing her in a crimson robe.

"We" Tanith said to them all, "curse Paul Fitten."

"We curse Paul Fitten."

"He," she said, with glee, "will writhe and die."

"He will writhe and die."

"By our curse, destroyed!"

"By our curse, destroyed!"

"We shall kill him!" she laughed.

"We shall kill him!" the congregation, Susan, Aris and Conrad laughed.

In the shadows, someone beat a hand-drum, capturing the rhythm of the chant.

"We shall glory in his death!" Tanith, as Mistress of Earth, said.

"We shall glory in his death!"

Tanith made passes with her hands over the effigy, chanting as she did so, before picking it up and

showing it to the worshippers gathered around her.

"The Earth rejects him," she said.

"You reject him," they responded.

"I who gave you birth, now lay you down to die!" She placed the effigy in the coffin, secured the lid, and wrapped the shroud around it.

"He is dead!" She said.

"He is dead! By our curse, destroyed!"

Slowly, Susan led the dance and the chant. "Dies irae, dies illa, solvet saeculum in favilla teste Satan cum sibylla. Quantos tremor est futurus quando Vindex est venturus, cuncta stricte discussurus. Dies irae, dies illa!"

The chant was strange to Conrad, almost unearthly, but he quickly learnt it as he danced and chanted with the others, counter sun-wise around the altar. The dance and the chant were becoming quicker with every revolution, and he was almost glad when Susan pulled him away. She did not speak, but took him down with her to the floor while Tanith stood over them, saying "Frates, ut meum vestrum sacrificium acceptabile fiat apud Satanus!"

Susan kissed him as they lay on the ground and Tanith knelt beside them to caress Conrad's buttocks and back. In the excitement of the ritual and Tanith's touch, Conrad's task was soon over, and he slumped over Susan, temporarily exhausted from his ecstasy. He did not resist when Tanith rolled him over, and watched, as the dancers danced around them still chanting and the light pulsed with the beat of the drum, while Tanith buried her head between Susan's thighs. Then she was kissing him with her wet mouth before she stood to kiss each member of the congregation in salutation.

"You gave him his birth," Susan was chanting as she walked toward the shrouded coffin, "and with my power I have killed him who dared to stand against us! See!" she said, laughing as she faced the congregation who had gathered around her to listen, "how my magick destroys him! He died in agony and we rejoiced!"

"He died in agony and we rejoiced!" they responded.

She took the coffin, placed it on the floor of the Temple and held a lighted candle to the shroud. It burst into flames. "Our curse, by my will," she said, "has destroyed him! Dignum et justum est!"

She laughed, Conrad laughed, the congregation laughed as the shroud and the coffin burnt fiercely.

"Feast now, and rejoice," Tanith commanded them, "for we have killed and shown the power of our Prince!"

Near Conrad, the orgy of lust began as two naked men walked down the steps to the Temple carrying large trays full of food and wine. A woman came toward Conrad, smiled, and removed her robe, but Susan took his hand and led him back up the steps.

She did not speak, and he did not, but bathed with him in the libation chamber, to dress herself and wait while he dressed, and take him back to the house. The room to which she took him was dark and empty.

"You felt no power in the ritual?" she suddenly asked as they stood beside each other in the coldness.

"Yes" he lied.

"You must be honest with me," he heard Aris' voice say. Light came slowly - a soft light to reveal only the bare walls of the room and Susan standing and smiling beside him. There were no windows, and the door was closed.

"Do not be afraid," Susan said in her own voice.

"I am not afraid," he answered honestly.

"Tell me, then, about the ritual," Susan asked softly.

"There was something," he said, "but not what I expected."

"Am I what you expect?" she said with Aris' voice. She was watching him, waiting.

Momentarily, Conrad had the impression that Susan was not human at all - she was something unearthly which was using her form and Aris' voice, something from another Time and Space. But he had touched her, kissed her, felt the soft warmth of her body. Confused, he stood watching her. She was not the young woman he had known: her eyes became full of stars, her face the void of space. She became Aris, and then a nebulous chaos that was incomprehensible to him.

He could feel within him her longing for the vastness of space. There was a sadness within this longing, for it had existed before him and would exist after his own death, thousands of years upon thousands of years. He would have to understand, he suddenly knew - he would have to understand and help before this sad longing, this waiting would be over.

Then she was Susan again, standing next to him and holding his hand, caressing his face with her fingers. Gentle and warm.

"You are beginning to understand," she was saying.

Her touch re-assured him. "Yes" he said, "I am yours."

The door opened, and Aris came toward him.

"Your life," Aris the Master said, "will break the seal which binds Them."

"I have no choice," Conrad said as if hypnotized.

"You have no choice," Aris and Susan said together.

Aris smiled, and kissed Susan. "You have done well, my daughter. Now you must prepare him."

It was time, Conrad understood. Yes, it was time. Susan touched his forehead, and he fell unconscious to the floor.

## X

Fitten was mumbling to himself as he sat against the wall of Baynes' house. He seemed harmless, and Baynes left him alone.

"He has been like this since you returned from that house?" The speaker was an old man whose white beard terminated in a point. He sat on a comfortable chair, his ornately carved walking stick beside him.

"Yes," replied Baynes. Frater Togbare was his honoured guest.

"I spoke with the Council, last night," Togbare said. "We are agreed the situation is serious. You have had no recent news from Frater Achad?"

"Unfortunately, no."

"His Initiation in the Satanic group is due, you said?"

"Yes. Sometime during the next few days. He should be able to provide us with more information then."

"Excellent. We shall need it. I only hope we have enough time."

Fitten began to gibber, jumping up and down as he watched the guests Baynes and Togbare had invited arrive in their cars. Togbare went to him, and touched his shoulder. The gentle touch of the Old Magus seemed to comfort Fitten, for he sat quietly in the corner, tracing shapes on his palm with his finger.

It was not long before all the guests had arrived and were settled in the room. They had been quietly

told about Fitten, and could ignore him.

Baynes rose to address them. "Ladies and gentlemen. You are all, I know, familiar with the reasons why Frater Togbare and myself have called this meeting. You come here - some I know from far away - as representatives of many and different organizations. All of us, however, have a common aim - to prevent the Satanists succeeding in their plan." He sat down, and Togbare whispered in his ear.

"Er, yes of course," he agreed in answer to Togbare's whispered question. He stood up again. "Frater Togbare has suggested I briefly outline the facts of the matter to you, so that everything is in perspective - before we begin our magickal tasks." He surveyed the eager, expectant and occasional anxious faces before him. Six men, and four women of varying ages and manner of dress. "We believe that the Satanist group responsible for the death by magick of Mr Fitten's wife, the present state of Mr Fitten himself, and the murder of, among others, Maria Torrens, are acting in concert with a number of other Satanic groups in this and other countries to perform a powerful and very sinister ritual. This ritual has as one of its aims, the Opening of the Gates to the Abyss - releasing thus the psychic energy that has been stored over the ages on various astral levels as well as drawing into the ordinary world of our waking consciousness evil entities. This opening will release powerful forces, and change the world. It will be the beginning of an age of darkness.

"As you all know, Satanists - and here of course I refer to genuine practitioners of the Black Arts and not the showman type - have used their magickal powers for centuries to bring about chaos, to increase the evil in this world. Perhaps there exist some centuries old Satanic plan - I do not know. But what is clear, what has become evident to us over the past decade or so, is that some groups are about to perform this particular ritual which to our knowledge no one has attempted before."

He smiled, a little. "Or perhaps I should say - no one has attempted and succeeded. The power of the most important group involved in this is immense - as I am sure you all have realized. It is not easy, in magick, as you all know, to kill another by ritual - but they possess this power, claimed by many others, but rarely proven.

"When this power is released by their ritual there will be immediate effects as well as more long term ones. An increase in evil deeds - resulting from weak individuals becoming possessed by the demonic forces unleashed. That is only one example. You all share, I know, my concern and that of the Council which Frater Togbare represents.

"Thus we have called you here to use our combined abilities to nullify this plan and the ritual. You all are accomplished and experienced Occultists: some working within your own groups, others, alone. I have myself prepared a site for you." He indicated a woman seated near him, resplendent in colourful clothes and jewellery. "Denise here will go with you, and explain the details of the ritual we propose to undertake."

A man rose, respectfully, from his chair. "You will not be accompanying us?" he asked.

"No. Neither will Frater Togbare. Perhaps I should explain. We recently infiltrated the main Satanist



group with one of our members. We are waiting for him to contact us with important details - the time, place of the ritual and so on. As you will appreciate this is a delicate matter, and we need to be available as the information could be received at any time. We will both, of course, at the appointed time of your ritual, perform one of our own, joining you on the astral. I hope this answers your question, Martin."

"Yes. Yes, of course," the now embarrassed man agreed.

"It only remains, therefore, for me to hand you over into the very capable hands of Denise."

Denise smiled affectionately at him, and he looked away.

As they stood to leave, Togbare addressed them. "I am most pleased," he said, "that you have responded to our call so readily at no small sacrifice to yourselves. If I may be allowed to add a codicil to our learned friends remarks, I would remind you that the ritual which the Satanists plan here in this city or nearby, requires at least one - possibly more - human sacrifice. Thank you all, most sincerely."

He beamed with delight, and shook the hands of several of the guests who came to greet him.

"Shall I light the fire?" Baynes asked him when all the guests were gone.

"That would be most kind," Togbare replied. "Most kind of you. Then we must begin."

"I suppose," Baynes said as he knelt down before the hearth to light the fire, already prepared. "We could liken this opening of the gates to the return of Satan himself - Armageddon, and the beginning of the reign of the Anti-Christ."

"Yes, possibly."

Suddenly, Fitten jumped up. "No! No!" he screamed. "He lies!" he shouted at Togbare. "He lies! I know! Me! For I have been given the understanding!"

He moved toward Togbare, and Baynes went to restrain him.

"Leave me alone!" screamed Fitten. "You are cursed! He must know!" He pushed Baynes away. Togbare smiled at him.

"Listen!" Fitten said to Togbare. "We will all be opfers. Not Satan! Not Satan! Do you understand? It is THEM! The spawn of Chaos. They have lied to us, you see. Lied to us! Oh, how they have lied and deceived us. The Master will bring Them - They need us, you see. From the stars They will come. The seal that holds Them in Their own dimensions will be broken! Don't you understand? They are not the Old Ones! They have lied about that, also! The Nine Angles are the key - "

Fitten stopped, his hands raised, his face red. Then he was coughing and choking, spitting blood before he fell to writhe and scream on the floor. Frothy blood oozed from his mouth, and his bones could be heard breaking. His face went blue, his eyes bulged and then he was still. Baynes went to him, but he was dead, having swallowed his own tongue.

"We must be calm," Togbare said as sudden laughter filled the darkening room. "Concentrate, with me." Baynes came to stand beside him. "There is evil in this room. Concentrate, with me," Togbare repeated. "The flaming pentagram and the four-fold breathing."

Gradually, the laughter and the darkness subsided.

"He is dead," said Baynes unnecessarily. He covered Fitten's contorted face with his coat.

Eerily, the telephone began to ring. "Baynes here," he said. He listened, then gave the receiver to Togbare. "It's Frater Achad. He wants to speak with you."

"Hello!" Togbare said. "Yes, we are alone. Mr Fitten? He was here, yes. But listen, my son. Just now he died. Here, in this room. Are you still there? Evil magick - dark powers came to us, here. Yes, I understand. I shall pray for you, my son. Goodbye." He returned the telephone receiver to Baynes. "He could not speak for long."

"Of course. Did he mention anything? About the ritual?"

"Only a manuscript which might be relevant. Sloane MS 3189."

"I am not familiar with it, myself. British Museum?"

"Yes. Now, about poor Mr Fitten - "

"I shall take care of everything. The Police will have to be informed, of course."

"Naturally."

"I have some influence," Baynes said, shrugging his shoulders. "I do not like to use it, but in the circumstances - "

"I quite understand," said Togbare sympathetically.

"There will be no need for the Occult connection to become known. If you will excuse me, for a moment. I have some telephone calls to make."

"Yes, of course."

The fire was burning brightly when Baynes returned to find Togbare still sitting in the chair and

Fitten's body still nearby on the floor. Baynes admired Togbare's calm detachment.

"His notes and papers," Togbare asked. "It might help if we perused them."

"Possibly. I have a key to his house."

"Indeed?" Togbare was surprised.

"A few weeks ago," Baynes explained, "he came to see me. He gave me the key with the instructions to burn all his notes, papers and books should anything happen to him."

"He was expecting something to happen?"

"Apparently. But he was always liable to get excited. It was just his way."

"You did not believe him?" asked Togbare without censure.

"To be honest, no. I wish I had done. Perhaps I could have done something."

"There is nothing anyone of us could have done. You have informed the Police?"

"Yes. Someone will be arriving shortly."

Togbare smiled. "Just as Denise and the others begin their ritual."

"Of course!" said Baynes, suddenly understanding. "The Master has timed this well."

Togbare sighed. "He is powerful. Yet there is something else. Our every effort to neutralize the magickal power of this group over the years has come to nought. I have long suspected they have infiltrated us. The Council itself. These most recent events only confirm my suspicions."

"You believe there is a traitor?" asked Baynes with incredulity.

"I do not believe," Togbare answered quietly, "I know." He sighed again. "For this knowledge I will die. Perhaps my death will stop them - I do not know. But I know that beyond death this Satanic Master will try and claim my soul."

Gently, Baynes held the old man's hand. It was cold, like the room.

"It will be dawn in a few hours," Baynes said.

Then the laughter returned to haunt them - damning, demonic laughter. But it was soon gone as, outside, they heard an owl, screeking.

## XI

Around him, Conrad sensed many people. He could not see them directly, for he was held as if paralysed on the floor of a small chamber near the Temple. There was a pillow supporting his head, and he looked down to see himself dressed in a black robe, the septagon sigil of the Order embroidered in red over the place of his heart.

He could hear chanting, smell incense and burning wax. Then a voice, speaking words he remembered from his own Initiation: "Gather round, my children, and feel the flesh of our gift!" It was Tanith's voice, but it seemed to become very distant. Then he was asleep again, dreaming of being in space above the Earth as it turned in its orbit around the Sun. Then he was among alien but humanoid beings as they descended to Earth from the cold prison of space. Time rushed on, in a fluxion of images. Primitive tribes gathered in awe and greeting for the beings who taught, guided, controlled and destroyed among the forests and the ice. Others opposed to them came forth from space, seeking them out to kill or capture, taking their prisoners away, back into the cold, vast prison in space from which they had escaped, sealing them in forever in a vortex. He was there, in the dimensions and time beyond the causal, and felt their longing to escape, to explore the vastness and the beauty of the stars.

He awoke feeling a sense of loss. For minutes he lay still, scarcely breathing, and then he saw - or thought he saw - Tanith enter the chamber leading a man, blindfolded and bound. She lay with him on the floor to complete his Initiation before removing the blindfold.

"Neil, Neil!" he tried to say as he recognized the man. But the words would not be formed by his mouth and he lay helpless and still until the image vanished. He saw Susan walking toward him, and he closed his eyes, refusing to believe them. But she touched him, washing his face and hands with the warm water she carried in a bowl. She was smiling at him as she gently caressed him.

"I..." he began to say.

"Don't try to move too quickly," she said. "You will take some time to recover."

Slowly, he became aware he could move his fingers, his hands, his feet and as he did so he realized he loved her.

She kissed him, as if understanding his thought. "You understand now?"

Her eyes were beautiful, and it did not matter to Conrad that they had seemed full of stars.

"I think so," he replied.

"Together, we are a key which opens the Gate, breaking the seal which binds Them."

He did not think it a strange thing for her to say.

"Now," she said, "you are prepared. Come - for the Master awaits us."

It was as he stood up that he remembered that she was the Masters' daughter. She led him from the chamber into the dimness of the Temple. There were no candles on the altar, no naked priestess, no congregation gathered to greet them, indeed nothing magickal except the crystal tetrahedron, glowing as it stood on a plinth. Only the Master and Tanith awaited them.

"The season and time being right," intoned the Master, "the stars being aligned as it is written they be aligned, this Temple conforming to the precepts of our Dark Gods, let us heed the Angles of the Nine!"

He gestured toward the crystal, chanting "Nythra Kthunae Atazoth!" as he did so. The light that seemed to emanate from within it darkened and then began to slowly change colour until only a dim blue glow remained.

"So it has been," the Master intoned, "so it is and so shall it be again. Agarthi has known Them, the Nameless who came forth before we dreamed. And Bron Wrgon, our twin Gate, Here," and he gestured toward Susan and Conrad, "a Key to the dimensions beyond Time: a key to the nine angles and the trapezohedron! From their crisis will come the power to break the seal which binds!"

"They exist," Tanith chanted as Aris began to vibrate with his voice the words of power - "Nii! Ny'thra Kthunae Atazoth. Ny'thra! Nii! Zod das Ny'thra!" - "in the angles of those dimensions that cannot be perceived, waiting for us to call and begin again a new cycle. They have trod the blackness between the stars and they found us, huddled in sleep and cold. But the Sirians came, to seal us and them again in our prisons and our sleep. Soon shall we both become free!"

The Master stood with his hands on the tetrahedron, as Tanith did, and they both began to vibrate a fourth and an octave apart, the words that were the key to the Abyss.

Susan stood beside Conrad, but she did not pull him down with her to the floor as he expected. Instead, she held his hands with hers and stood before him. Her hands were cold, icy cold, and he could feel the coldness invading him. Her eyes became again full of stars which spread to enclose her face. The Temple itself became black, and all he could hear was the insistent and deep chanting of the words which would open the Abyss. It was a strange sound, as the two voices chanted an octave fourth apart. Conrad began to feel dizzy, and felt he was falling. A profusion of stars rushed toward him as if he was travelling incredibly fast in Space itself. He passed a coloured, broken grid made of pulsing lights and world upon alien world. Peoples with strange faces and bodies upon strange worlds, beautiful and disgusting scenes: a sunset on a world with three moons, red, orange and blue; a heap of mangled corpses, spaked and being eaten by small animals with rows of sharp teeth while, nearby, a starship lay crashed and mangled in yellow sand... The impressions were fleeting but powerful and came and went in profusion. And then they suddenly ended. He was alone, totally alone in stark and cold blackness. Faintly, he could hear a rustling. It was the wind, and as he listened and waited, faint images, growing slowly and changing in colour - violet to blue to orange then red.

Brightness came with the swift dawn, and he found himself standing amid barren rocks beneath an orange sky. A figure was walking toward him, and Conrad recognized it. It was himself.

The figure spoke, in Conrad's voice. "The seal that bound us is no more. Soon, we shall be with you."

The man smiled, but it was a sinister smile which both pleased and disquieted Conrad.

"Now I must depart," the image of Conrad said. "But before I go I give you a reward. See me as I have been known to those on your world with little understanding."

The figure contorted, was Satan, and was gone.

## XII

"You consider it important?" Baynes asked Togbare as they stood beside Fitten's desk in the study of his house.

Togbare read the tattered manuscript again. "It could be. It well could be."

"Anything interesting?" Neil asked. He had met them at Baynes' house as they were preparing to leave in the dawn light. He was fresh from his Initiation ceremony, but they wasted no time discussing it.

"Does it mean anything to you?" Togbare asked Neil.

Neil took the manuscript - several pages of handwritten sheets. He read it carefully. "Not really," he finally said, passing it to Baynes. "They told me very little - other than to be prepared for an important ritual very soon."

Baynes read the writing. "The ancient and secret rite of the Nine Angles is a call to the Dark Gods who exist beyond Time in the acausal dimensions, where that power which is behind the form of Satan resides, and waits. The rite is the blackest act of black magick, for it brings to Earth Those who are never named." He put the manuscript back on the desk. "Sounds like Lovecraft to me," said Baynes dismissively.

"Of that," replied Togbare, "I am aware. Yet I gain the impression, from what I have read of Mr Fitten's notes and the little I already know, that he himself - and I am inclined to support him - that he regarded the mythos that Lovecraft invented, or which more correctly was given to him by his dreaming-true, as a corruption of a secret tradition. He made his Old Ones loathsome and repulsive. I myself am inclined to believe that if such entities as these so-called 'Dark Gods' exist they might be shape-changers, like the Prince of Darkness himself."

"What do these qabalistic attributions mean?" asked Neil, pointing to a page of the manuscript Fitten had written. "About 418 not being 13?"

"Alas," admitted Togbare, "I do not know."

"Do you think he copied this from somewhere?" Neil asked.

"Possibly. You said they mentioned books and manuscripts in their possession?"

"Yes. 'The Master' said I might see some of them, soon. All their Initiates, apparently, have to study them."

"We shall have to wait, then," said Baynes.

"Possibly, possibly," mumbled Togbare. He began to search among the files that cluttered the desk and the room itself. "There is a tradition," he muttered as he searched, "that Shambhala and Agharti have their origin in a real conflict between cosmic forces at the dawn of Man. It is a persistent tradition, in all Occult schools, and this may point to the tradition having at least some basis in fact." He sat in the chair at the desk. "I am old," he said, shaking his head, "and the Inner Light that guides our Council has been my strength for many, many years. Even as a young man I sought the mysteries. Yet, here I am, many years later, and still I lack understanding. There is evil around, even here - in this room. I sense it. What is happening and has been happening for years is distorting the Astral Light. We seem to be about to face a new, darker, era. We seem no nearer a solution. Perhaps we have looked in the wrong areas. We believed the Satanists who have caused the distortion to be literal worshippers of the Devil. Then they became for us followers of To Mega Therion, their word Thelema. Now, when it is almost too late, we discover they have no Word, except perhaps Chaos - that what they plan is perhaps even more sinister and terrible than we imagined."

"But there is time," Neil tried to say, helpfully, "I am aware there is. Conrad Robury - "

"Ah!" Togbare's eyes brightened.

"If he is important to them in what they plan, then why has he appeared only now? Surely more preparation is required."

"You know the gentleman, I believe?" Togbare asked.

"Yes," said Neil. "I introduced him to the wiccan group."

"And arranged an introduction with Mr Sanders," added Baynes.

"Yes I did."

"Even though," said Baynes quietly, "you knew Sanders to recruit for the Master and his group."

"Well, when you suggested I infiltrate them myself, I thought it would be a good ploy. Show my intent, so to speak, to introduce someone who might be useful to them."

"And so it has proved," said Togbare.

"What are you suggesting?" Neil asked Baynes, as though he had not heard what Togbare said.

"I am not suggesting anything," replied Baynes, softly.

"Come! Come!" chided Togbare, "let us not quarrel. There are elementals about, trying to divide us and disrupt our plans."

"I am sorry," Baynes said sincerely. "I'm just tired. You must forgive me."

Togbare looked at him with kindness. "When did you last sleep?"

"I don't know. A few days ago, perhaps. There has not been time."

"May I suggest," said Togbare, "that you return to your home for a few hours rest?"

"But surely, I can help here?"

"Yes, of course In a few hours time. It will not take all three of us to search these files." He indicated a small pile on the desk, awaiting their attention. "Please, do go and get some rest."

"If you are sure," said Baynes.

"Yes, of course. We shall return to your home within the next few hours."

"Will you be alright?" Baynes turned to leave.

"Do not worry!"

Togbare waved to him through the window. The snow still lay heavy upon the ground, but the sky was clear. "He works very hard," he mumbled to himself before returning to sit by the desk. "This Conrad Robury," he asked Neil.

"Yes?"

"He had no previous interest?"

"No. None. He was a friend, studying science. It all started out as a bit of a joke, actually. He thought



all of the Occult was nonsense. So I suggested that as a scientist he should study the subject at first hand. But there was always something about him. I don't quite know what - perhaps his eyes. Sometimes when he looked at me I felt uneasy. He was a very intense young man. I know it may sound funny, but he was very earnest in an almost puritanical way."

"He could be the sacrifice they need."

Neil sighed. "I know" His eyes showed the sadness and the guilt he felt at the possibility.

"Do not worry," said Togbare sincerely. "If that is what is planned, we shall save your Conrad Robury."

"Did I hear," a voice from the doorway said, "someone call my name?" Conrad stepped into the room.

"Conrad!" Neil said with pleasant surprise. He started to walk toward his friend, but Togbare restrained him by grasping his arm.

"Wait," Togbare advised. He looked at Conrad. "By what right do you dare to enter here?"

Conrad smiled. "By the right of my Word - Chaos!"

"Conrad," Neil said, "what's happened?"

"You thought," Conrad said hatefully to him, "to betray us! You will not stop us! Neither of you will. You!" he pointed at Neil, "are coming with me!"

"He is staying," said Togbare, using his stick to help himself stand.

"You do not frighten me, old man!" Conrad said. He moved toward Neil, but Togbare raised his stick. Conrad felt a sudden and severe pain in his stomach. He tried to move forward, but the pain increased, and he placed his hands on his abdomen, grimacing with pain.

Silently, Susan came into the room to stand beside him. She touched his hand, and the pain vanished. He stared at Togbare, concentrating on shaping his own aura into a weapon. He formed it using his will into an inverted septagon which he aimed at Togbare.

The effect was minimal, for Togbare still smiled and raised his stick. From it's tip white filaments flowed to form a flaming pentagram above the Mage's head. The pentagram came closer and closer, sending purple filaments toward Conrad who held up his ring to absorb them. But however hard Conrad tried he could not will any force to oppose the filaments. The ring simply kept absorbing them. For every one filament absorbed, three new ones arose until both he and Susan were enclosed in a purple web. Desperate and determined, Conrad concentrated on his ring, remembering the chant he had heard in the Temple. The concentration and visualization seemed to work, for a bright red bolt

broke forth from his ring, hurtling toward Togbare. But the Magus simply held out his palm which harmlessly absorbed the light. Conrad could feel his power being slowly drained away. Then he remembered.

Susan's hand was near and he grasped it tightly. She leant against him and he felt a force rush through him. She was laughing, the power she gave him was strong and he had time only to fashion its primal chaos into the sign of the inverted pentagram before it sped across the room in accordance with his desire. It touched Togbare's stick, knocking it from his hand as the purple web which enclosed the Satanists shattered, then disappeared.

Togbare was unharmed, but his power was gone. "You have powerful friends, I see," he said.

"You cannot stop us!" Conrad laughed.

Togbare smiled, and bent down to retrieve his stick. Cautiously, Conrad stepped back. "Do not worry," Togbare said. "My power - like yours - is for the moment gone. But it will return, and soon."

Conrad went toward him and tried to grasp the stick. He wanted to break it over his knee. But some force around Togbare kept him away. It was as if when he got within a few feet of the Magus he became paralysed.

"It is your evil intent," Togbare said, and smiled, "which holds you back."

Conrad ignored him. Instead, he caught hold of Neil, twisting his arm behind his back. "You're coming with us!"

"He will be of no use to you," said Togbare. "As your Master will soon realize."

"We shall see!"

"Please," Neil pleaded, "don't let them take me!"

"They cannot harm you, my son," Togbare said. "Trust me. Now I have seen their power, I know what to do."

Neil was unsure, and struggled to be free. Conrad held him round the throat. "So much for his power, eh?" he said as he pushed Neil toward the door.

"Conrad, Conrad!" Neil pleaded. "What's happened to you?"

"You're to be our sacrifice!" Conrad said, and laughed.

"Help me! For God's sake help me!" Neil cried out.

"It's too late!" gloated Conrad. "We need your blood!"

Susan had her car waiting outside the front door of the house, and Conrad pushed Neil into it, holding him down as she drove away toward their Satanic Temple.

### XIII

For several hours Togbare stayed in Fitten's house. At first, following the departure of Conrad and Susan with Neil, he sat at the desk and meditated, gradually restoring to himself, by breath control and mantra, the power he had lost during the astral combat.

Afterwards, he studied Fitten's manuscripts, notes and books, and it was almost noon when he stood up from the desk. In his absorption, he had not noticed the cold of the room, and he shivered, a little, as he walked to the door. Outside, the sun was warming, and he walked slowly and steadily like the old man he was, the miles to Baynes' house, glad of the exercise and the snowy coldness of the Winter air.

Baynes was in his large study when Togbare arrived. The room was warm, and Togbare sat by the coal fire as he related the events leading to the taking of Neil. Baynes was clearly perturbed.

"I am sure," Baynes said, "they will sacrifice him. He has betrayed them - broken the oath of his Initiation. This is disturbing news, it really is. I do not believe we can wait any longer. I think the time has come for us to act - swiftly and decisively."

"You have a suggestion?"

"Yes. Since this Conrad Robury is important to them - or so it seems - I suggest we entice him away from their house, and hold him, here if necessary, for a few days as our guest. We can then arrange for him to be exchanged with Mr Stanford."

Togbare's surprise showed on his face. "It would not be right."

"To save Mr Stanford's life? It is the only way, for I do not believe that we can succeed by magick alone. Not now."

For a long time Togbare did not speak. He sat staring into the flames of the fire.

"You are right," he finally said, and sighed. "I do not like it, but it appears to be our only hope. The situation is desperate."

"May I," Baynes said, "therefore suggest that we - you and I - undertake a simple rite with the intention of enticing Robury from the house. I could arrange for some people to be waiting. He would not be harmed, of course."

"You could arrange all this?"

"Yes. It should not take long - a few hours, no more." He turned toward Togbare and smiled. "Wealth has its uses - occasionally!"

"Those good people who were with us, yesterday?"

"Yes?"

"If you could arrange for some of them to come here, you need not be detained. We, then, could do the ritual you suggested."

"Splendid! I shall contact them at once. I told them, this morning, to be prepared as we might need them at short notice."

"You spoke to them all this morning?" Togbare was amazed.

"Well, when I returned here, I could not sleep. I thought I would do something useful. They all felt the ritual they undertook went well."

"It has bought us some time, I think. Some little time. This Mr Robury - I have realized that his apparent Occult ability depends on a certain young lady. She was with him, this morning. It is the same woman, I am sure, who was with him at the ritual at Mr Fitten's house when that unfortunate lady, his wife, passed over to the other side. So, alone and with us, he should have no power. Yes," he mused, "the more I think on this - on this plan of yours - the more I am inclined to believe it will succeed."

"Then," said Baynes, "I shall go and make the necessary arrangements."

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Baynes stood staring out of his office window watching the traffic in the city street below. He liked his spartan office on the top floor of one of the tallest buildings in the city centre as much for the splendid view as for its relative quiet amid his busy business empire which he controlled from this, his, building.

His desk intercom buzzed. "Yes?" he asked.

"A Mr Sanders to see you, sir."

"Excellent! Send him in!" He seated himself in his leather chair behind his uncluttered desk.

"Mr Sanders," his Secretary announced.

"Please," he said, indicating a chair, "be seated."

"I'd rather stand," Sanders said. He was dressed in black as was his habit. "You wanted to see me?" he asked, warily.

"I have a proposition for you - a business proposition."

"So your flunky said on the 'phone."

"You operate what some might describe as a 'Black Magick' temple, do you not?"

Sanders sat in the chair. "Let's cut the crap! I know you, Baynes, and you know me."

"I would like you to do me a favour - for a substantial sum of money."

Suspicious, Sanders looked around the room. "Are you taping this?"

"Of course not!"

"So what's your offer - and how much?"

"Fifty thousand pounds."

Sanders hid his surprise. "To do what?"

"Not long ago, a certain young gentleman - a student - came to visit you. You introduced him, I believe, to a certain group. Well, I would like this gentleman brought from where he is to my house. With the minimal use of force, of course."

Sanders stood up. "I can't say it was a pleasure meeting you. Goodbye."

"You have a very lucrative side-line, I believe."

Sander was nearly at the door when Baynes added, "I'm sure the Police would be very interested in your - what shall I call it? - your import business. A Mr Osterman is your contact in Hamburg, I understand."

Sanders stopped. "You're bluffing."

"I assure you I'm not. Your last assignment arrived last Tuesday. Estimated value - I believe the term used is 'on the street' - two million pounds, at least. Of course, if my figures are correct, your profit is somewhat smaller. Much smaller in fact. So many overheads."

Sanders walked back to the desk. He sat down again, and smiled. "You're very well informed."

"Of course," Baynes said, "we both know who takes most of the profit. You are familiar, I understand, with the house where this Mr Robury is currently residing."

Sanders shrugged. "Possibly."

"Toward dusk, he will be walking in the garden. You are to bring him to me. At this address." He gave Sanders a printed card.

"And the money?"

Baynes opened a draw in his desk. He laid out several piles of ten-pound notes. "A small advance. The rest will await your arrival at the house."

"And if he is not where you said?"

"He will be. But should some unforeseen circumstance arise and he is not there, telephone me and I shall arrange another time."

Sanders scooped up the money and stuffed it into his pockets.

"And," Baynes added as Sanders stood up to leave, "if you are worried about your 'Master' finding out about our little arrangement, I'm sure you have experience enough to work some plan out so as not to implicate yourself."

Sanders was already thinking along similar lines. "You've missed your calling!" he smiled before walking to the door.

Baynes waited until Sanders had left before he used the telephone.

"Hello?" he asked as his caller answered. "Frater Togbare?"

"Yes?" came the quiet and somewhat nervous reply.

"Baynes here!" he said cheerfully, pleased with his success with Sanders. "It went well. All is arranged as planned."

When Togbare did not speak, Baynes said, "Did everything go alright with you?"

"Er, no, not really. You'd better come here - I'll explain."

"I'll be there as quick as I can!"

## XIV

It had not taken Togbare long to fall asleep. He was sitting by the fire, as Baynes left for his office, wondering about the events of the past few days and the events to come. He too was tired, and slept soundly by the warmth of the fire.

The doorbell awoke him, and he walked slowly to answer its call, leaning on his stick, and expecting some of the guests of the night before. The cabinet clock in the hallway of Baynes' house showed him he had been asleep for nearly an hour. He did not recognize the woman who waited outside, but her expensive car, waiting with its chauffeur, did not surprise him, for he knew of Baynes' own wealth.

"Is Oswald in?" a smiling and alluringly dressed Tanith asked.

"Oswald?" repeated Togbare, averting his eyes from her breasts, amply exposed by her dress.

"Mr. Baynes. Is he at home?"

"Er, no. Not at the moment. Can I help?"

"I've come for your little ritual - or whatever it is you've planned."

"I'm sorry?" For some reason Togbare felt confused, a fact which he attributed to having just woken from a deep and needful sleep.

"May I come in?" Tanith asked and proceeded to walk past him, making sure their bodies touched. She walked into the study, and stood by the fire. "Dear Oswald," she said, "such a charming gentleman, but so frightfully forgetful sometimes. He forget to tell you I would be coming, didn't he?"

"Well - "

"Do be seated," she said affably.

Togbare obeyed.

"Any idea what this ritual thing is about?" she asked standing near him. "If it is anything like the one's he's invited me to before, we are in for some jolly good fun!" She laughed.

"Fun?" said Togbare, perturbed.

"Why yes! Don't say he hasn't told you? My word! Would you like a drink - to get into the mood?"

"A drink?" Togbare felt distinctly uncomfortable.

She went straight to a bookcase, pushed a hidden button, and waited until a shelf revolved to reveal decanters and glasses. "Whisky?" she said. "You look like a Whisky man to me. He has some very fines malts."

"I myself," Togbare said, rather stuffily, "do not imbibe."

"Shame. I'm partial to Gin, myself." She poured herself a full glassful and drank it immediately. "Splendid! Best on an empty stomach. Straight into the blood!" She poured herself another glass before saying, "Shall I draw the blinds so we are prepared?"

"Pardon?"

She pressed another button and the window-blinds descended to silently close.

Togbare stood up. "You seem to know this house rather well."

"I should say so! All the hours of fun I've had here! Oswald has the most marvellous parties!" She came toward Togbare who was standing by the light of the fire. "Hot in her, isn't it?" she said, beginning to remove her dress.

As she reached Togbare it fell around her ankles. She was naked and an unbelieving Togbare stared at her.

"Your spirit," she said, "is younger than your body."

She took his hand and placed it on her breast.

Togbare snatched it away and almost ran to the door. It was locked, but there was no key.

Tanith stepped out of her dress and moved toward him, laughing. "You will enjoy the pleasure I offer," she said.

Suddenly, Togbare understood. "Harlot!" he shouted. "The Master sent you!"

"Yes!"

She was closing upon him, and to Togbare she became a Satanic curse. He held up his stick, but she laughed at him.

"You are weak!" she sneered. "Look at me! Look at my body!"



Togbare turned away, mumbling words as he did so.

"Your god cannot help you now!" she mocked.

He turned to face her and as he did so she began to change form before his very eyes.

"My God!" he cried with genuine surprise, "you are his wife!"

It was a pitying laugh she gave him before gesturing behind her with her hand. Her dress disappeared, briefly, before re-appearing on her body. She gestured again, and the blinds rose to flood the room with daylight.

"You cannot harm me," Togbare said, holding his stick in front of him for protection.

"I have achieved what I came for!"

He stood aside to let her leave. The doors opened for her and she walked out into the sunlight. Through the window, she saw the Magus kneeling on the floor and saying his prayers.

"Home, Gedor!" she commanded as she got into her car.

Togbare prayed for almost an hour. He was calm then, but dismayed, and stoked and re-built the fire in his study. He sat by it, sighing and shaking his head in consternation, for a long time, rising only to answer the doorbell twice. Each time he half-expected the satanic mistress to return but each time it was only a group of Baynes's guests from the night before, summoned for a new ritual. Each time he apologized and told them to await another call. He did not explain why and they did not ask, but it took him a long time to remove the traces of the woman's presence from the house and the room.

Her mocking, lustful satanic presence seemed to have invaded every corner, and he cast pentagram after pentagram after hexagram to remove it. He only just completed his task when the telephone rang.

"I'll be there as quick as I can!" Baynes had said, and Togbare sat by the fire to wait.

He was almost asleep again when Baynes returned.

"Well," Baynes said after Togbare had explained about Tanith's visit, "it matters little. We can do the ritual ourselves, as I originally thought. That is," he paused, "if you yourself feel able to continue as planned."

"I fear we have no choice," he said sadly. "It will tire us, even more. I just hope we can recover sufficiently."

"In time for when the Satanists attempt to Open the Gates you mean?"

"Yes. Shall we begin?"

Together, they sat by the fire in the last hours of daylight, trying through their powers of visualization and will to entice Conrad away from the safety of the Master's house and into the open where Sanders would, hopefully, be waiting. After several minutes effort, Togbare withdrew from one of his pockets one of the small squares of parchment he always carried. Taking his pen, he began to write, first Conrad's name, and then several sigils, upon it. For several minutes he stared at the completed charm before casting it into the flames of the fire to be consumed.

"So mote it be!" he said as the parchment burned.

Near the window, a raven cried, loudly in the snowful silence that surrounded the house.

## XV

Conrad, as Aris had instructed, was reading in the library as the twilight came. The manuscript Aris had left out for him was interesting, telling as it did of the Dark Gods. But the more he read, the more dissatisfied he became.

The work was full of signs, symbols and words - and yet he felt it was insubstantial, as if the author or authors had glimpsed at best only part of the reality. His memory of the recent ritual was vivid, and as he stared at the manuscript he realized what was lacking. The work lacked the stars - the haunting beauty he himself had experienced; the numinous beauty which he felt was waiting for him. He wanted to reach out again and again and capture that beauty, that eerie essence, that nebulousity. He had felt free, drifting through space and other dimensions; free and powerful like a god - free of his own dense body which bound him to Earth.

"Having fun?" a voice unexpectedly asked.

It was Susan, and she walked toward him.

"Not really."

She wore Tanith's exotic perfume and her clothes were thin, moulded to the contours of her body. In that instant of his watching - full as it was of sensual memories and sensual anticipation - he remembered the bliss that a body could bring.

She stood by the French windows looking up at the darkening sky. "Shall we go outside," she suggested, "and watch the stars?"

"You been reading my thoughts again?" he asked, half seriously, and half in jest.

He rose from the desk to stand beside her and was pleased when she placed her hand around his waist before opening the windows.

"I'll just get a coat," she said and kissed him. "I'll join you outside."

The air was cold, but Conrad did not care as he walked out into the snow. The stars were becoming clearer, and he wandered away from the lights of the house to watch them as they shone, unshimmering in the cold air of Winter.

They came upon him swiftly, the three men waiting in the shadows. One carried a gun and pointed it at Conrad while the others grabbed his arms.

"Quiet!" the man with the gun said, "or you're dead."

Conrad struggled, and succeeded in knocking one of the men over. He tried to punch the other man in the face, but a blow to the neck felled him, and he was unconscious as he hit the snow.

"Bring him!" the man with the gun said.

Conrad awoke as he was being bundled into a car, but his hands were bound and he was roughly thrown onto the back seat.

"Bastards!" he screamed, and kicked at the door.

A knife was held to his throat. "Calm down, stupid," its holder said, and smiled. "Or I'll make a mess of your face!"

Yards away, Sanders sat waiting in his own car. No one had followed the men as they had dragged the unconscious Conrad toward the gate and the waiting cars, and he sighed with relief. He followed the car containing Conrad and they were soon far away from the house.

As he had instructed, Conrad was blindfolded, and he stood behind two men as they stood outside Baynes' house holding Conrad between them. Baynes had been watching from his window, and strode out to meet them.

"As promised," Sanders said.

"Excellent!" replied Baynes. He gave Sanders a briefcase. Sanders opened it and then pushed Conrad toward Baynes.

"He's all yours."

Baynes led Conrad into the house. Once in the study, he locked the door before removing Conrad's

blindfold and bonds. It took Conrad only a few moments to adjust to his new surroundings.

"Please," Togbare said, indicating a chair by the fire, "sit down."

Conrad ignored him. Instead, he turned to Baynes who stood by the door.

"Resorting to armed violence now, I see," Conrad quipped.

"An unfortunate necessity."

"How very Satanic of you," Conrad smiled. "Well, great Mage," he said mockingly to Togbare, "what is your plan?"

"You will remain here - for a short while."

"I suppose you in your stupidity think they will exchange Neil for me."

Togbare looked at Baynes. Conrad sneered at both of them. "You won't be able," he said, "to hold me. Not once they find out where I am. They will come - are you ready for the violence they will use?"

"What makes you think," said Baynes, "that you are that important to them? You are just another Initiate. They have plenty more. You'll be easy to replace."

"Is that so?" Conrad laughed, but Baynes' words made him feel uneasy.

"We have taken certain precautions," Togbare said.

"Oh, yes?" Conrad sneered. "You have drawn a magick circle thrice around the house - and I stand trembling and abashed at its centre! Sint mihi dei Acherontis propitii!"

"Well, well!" said Baynes, "a scholar as well as a comedian."

Suddenly, Conrad rushed at Baynes, intending to punch at his face, but Baynes was too quick and easily avoided the intended blow. His own counter was quick, as he caught Conrad off balance, tripping him to the floor.

Baynes bowed slightly as Conrad slowly got to his feet.

"He studied in Taiwan," Togbare said by way of explanation.

"Oh well," Conrad said, shrugging his shoulders, "so much for that idea then." He looked around the room. "I suppose I'd better make myself comfortable."

"A wise decision," Togbare said.

"Do you not wish," Baynes said to Conrad, "to complete your studies at University?"

"What's it to you?" Conrad looked at him briefly, then at the window. He sat in an upright chair as near to it as possible.

"I believe you have an interest in Spaceflight?"

"No need to guess who told you that."

"Mr Stanford, of course. I have some contacts in the aerospace industry in the States."

"Bully for you."

"I could arrange for you to continue your studies at an American university at the end of which you would be guaranteed work with one of the leading companies in the aerospace industry. You would, of course, be provided with a large capital sum - say fifty thousand pounds - for incidental expenses over the years."

"Are you trying to bribe me?" Conrad asked, amazed - and interested - by the offer.

"Yes." said Baynes without hesitation.

"What would you want in exchange?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?" asked Conrad incredulously.

"Except your immediate departure for America. I would, of course, make the necessary arrangements."

"I don't believe it," Conrad said, amazed.

"Money has no interest for me - beyond what good I can do with it."

"And the Master?" Conrad asked. "What of him if I betrayed him by leaving?"

"As I said before, you are a mere Initiate to him. He can easily find someone to take your place. But if you wish, I could provide you with a new identity. I have certain contacts who could arrange matters. You would soon be forgotten."

"It's very tempting. But the Master - "

"All you have to do," said Baynes, "is stay here with us for a few days. You will see when nobody is sent to fetch you, when they show no interest in you whatsoever, that what I say is true."

"How do I know this isn't just some ploy to get me to stay here?"

"You have my word. Should you wish, you can be with me when I make the necessary arrangements. I can have the money here within a few hours, the airline ticket likewise. Your passport and new identity will take a little longer - a day, perhaps. You yourself can speak to the American university I have in mind."

"When do I have to decide?"

"The sooner you decide, the sooner I can make the arrangements."

For several minutes Conrad stared at the fire. Then he rose slowly from his chair to yawn and stretch his limbs. "Any chance of some tea?" he asked casually.

"Have you reached a decision?" Baynes asked.

"Yes." Taking several deep breaths, Conrad grasped the back of the chair, swiftly lifting it and smashing it into the window. The glass shattered, and he threw the chair at Baynes before diving through the broken glass. He landed awkwardly in the snow, his hands cut and bloodied by the glass. Something warm was running down his neck, and he extracted a splinter of glass that had embedded itself in his arm before leaping up to run down the driveway and away from the house. He could hear Baynes shouting behind him, but did not look back, concentrating on running as fast as he could down the street. He ran and ran, past houses, over roads, on pavements, verges and roads, stopping for breath once by a busy main road. Then he was away, out into the dark lanes beyond the lights of the city.

He stopped to hide behind a tree, nauseous and shaking, and it was some time before his breathing returned to normal. His hands, neck and face were covered in blood, but it was dried or drying, and he took off his jacket to tear part of his shirt for a bandage for his arm. Soon, the cloth was soaked, and he lay still, pressing his hand over his bandaged wound to try and stop the bleeding. As he did so, he began to feel pain in his hands and face. He felt very tired.

No one had followed him down the dark narrow lane. He dreamed he was in the Satanic Temple. Neil was on the altar, tied down by thongs, and Tanith bent over him, a knife in her hand.

'It is your deed,' Tanith said to Conrad.

'Your deed,' Aris and Susan repeated as they stood beside him.

'We require his blood,' all three of them said.

Tanith gave him the knife and he walked toward Neil.

'Please,' his former friend pleaded, 'spare me! I don't want to die! I don't want to die!'

'We require his blood,' Conrad heard as a chant behind him. 'His blood to complete your Initiation. We must have his blood!'

Conrad hesitated.

'Kill him! Kill him! Kill him!' the insistent voices said.

He raised the knife to strike, but could not find the strength, and as he lowered it in failure the bound figure on the altar was no longer Neil, but himself. Then Aris, Tanith, Susan and his double on the altar were laughing.

'See how close to failure you came!' Aris said and kissed him on the lips. He made to move away, but it was Susan kissing him until she, too, changed - into Tanith.

Suddenly he was awake again, lying on the cold snow stained by his own blood. Such a waste, he thought, to die here, cold and alone. He tried to sit, up against the tree, but lacked the strength. Then he smiled. 'I would do it all again,' he muttered to the tree, the snow, the stars. 'Susan', he said to himself as his eyes closed of their own accord, 'I love you.'

The last thing he heard was the cry of a hungry owl.

## XVI

Denise sat on and surrounded by cushions as brightly coloured as her clothes, two green candles in tall ornate holders alight beside her. Her house was otherwise unlit, and quiet except for the nearby rumble of traffic which passed along the main road less than fifty yards away. She was looking with half-closed eyes into her large crystal scrying sphere and her friend Miranda - High Priestess of the Circle of Arcadia - sat beside her, awaiting her description of her visions.

"I have found him," Denise said as if in trance. "He suffers, and will die."

Slowly, she placed a black cloth over her crystal. "Come," she said to her friend, "I shall need your help."

Her zest was evident in her driving, and it did not take them long to drive away from the city to the dark, narrow, lane she had seen in her vision.

"There, by the tree," she said.

Conrad was unconscious. "We must hurry," Denise said as she bent over him. "Others - the evil ones - will soon be here. I feel they are near."

Together they lifted and carried Conrad into the car.

"You drive," Denise almost commanded her friend. "I must begin, now."

Her hands were warm and she gently placed them on Conrad's cold and almost lifeless face before raising them a few inches to make passes with them over his arms, hands and body. She imagined energy flowing to her from the Earth through her fingers and down through his aura into the vital meridians of his wounded body, stopping only when they reached their destination.

Her house was warm, and they laid Conrad on the cushions between the candles.

"Will he be alright?" an anxious Miranda asked.

"I don't know - yet."

"Shall I let Mr. Baynes know?"

Denise turned toward her, her eyes intense. "No!"

"But I thought - "

"Nobody must know!" And she added, in a softer voice: "Not yet, anyway." She kissed Miranda, saying "Trust me, my love."

Then she knelt over Conrad to renew her healing with her hands.

"Can I do anything?" Miranda asked.

"Be a darling and make some tea." Denise did not turn around or look up.

The pot of tea was cold by the time Denise stood up, tired from her efforts, and she went to her kitchen to hold her hands against the cold tap, earthing the energies, before drinking several cups of the cold brew.

"Do you want me to stay?" Miranda asked hopefully.

"No - I'll be alright. I'll call you if there is any change,"



"Well, if you're sure."

"Yes. And," Denise said, embracing her, "please not a word - to anyone."

They kissed, briefly, and then Miranda left the room and the house. Denise sat beside Conrad, and gently stroked his face. Slowly, he opened his eyes.

"Back with us, then?" she said and smiled.

"What?" Conrad said, confused.

"You had a bit of an accident. And before you say anything, you're in my house."

Conrad sat up. "And you are?"

"Let's just say someone who likes helping waifs and strays!"

Conrad looked around the room. He saw the crystal with its black cover for 'closing down', the incense burner upon the fireplace. There were no furnishings other than the many cushions of varying size strewn over the carpet and the long, heavy drapes covering the window; no light other than that from the candles.

"Whose side are you on?" he asked cautiously.

"Does one have to be 'on a side'?" she countered with a smile.

"You know who I am?"

"Yes. How are you feeling?"

"Alright. I must have passed out." He found the woman strangely attractive, although her features were not beautiful in the conventional sense. But he suppressed his feelings, remembering Susan. "I really ought to go," he said and tried to stand up.

He failed, and slumped back into the cushions.

"Rest, now," Denise said,

"I must telephone someone," he said as he lay down to close his eyes to try and stop the dizziness he felt.

"In a while. But first you must rest."

She left him for a short time, returning with a silver bowl, cloths, phials of lotions and a mug

containing a hot infusion of herbs, all carried on a silver tray.

"Here," she said, "drink this."

He sat up and smelt the contents of the mug. It smelt horrible. "What is it?"

"Just an infusion - of herbs and things. My mother showed me how to make it. It will bring back some of your strength."

Cautiously, Conrad sipped the drink. She removed the bandage he had made to cover the wound on his arm and began to clean the area using the liquid in the bowl. When she has finished, she made a clean covering using a cloth richly suffused with lotion. Soon, she had washed, cleaned and covered all his injuries with her lotions.

"It tasted better," Conrad said after finishing her potion, "than it smelt."

Her nearness, her gentle touch and her bodily fragrance all combined to sexually arouse him, and he held her hand before leaning to kiss her.

She moved away, saying, "I'm sorry to disappoint you - but I'm not that way inclined."

"I hope I didn't offend you," he said sincerely.

She laughed as she collected her lotions. "For an alleged Satanist you are rather innocent. Your aura marks you as different from them."

"Oh, yes?" Conrad was intrigued.

"What is your aim in all this?" she asked. "What do you hope to find?"

He felt his strength returning with every breath he took. Even the throbbing in his arm had begun subside. "Knowledge," he said.

Denise sat down beside him as she did so he felt there was a calmness within her. He felt good, just being near her, as if in some way she was giving him energy. At first, he had felt this as her sexual interest in him, but the more he looked at her and the more he thought about it, the more he realized it was nothing of the sort. It was just beneficent energy flowing from her. He did not know, nor particularly care, why - he just felt relaxed and comfortable in her nearness.

"What is it?" she asked again, smiling, her eyes radiant, "that you hope to find. Why did you join them?"

"I wanted knowledge." It was only partly true, he remembered. Most of all he had wanted to experience sexual passion.

"Is that all?"

He sensed she knew the answer already. "Well, sex as well."

"And then what?"

"What do you mean?" he asked, perplexed.

"Think of it - in a few years time, if you continue along your present path, you will have had many women, learnt many Occult truths. Perhaps you will have acquired some skill in magick. But life is - for most people - quite long: many decades, in fact. What do you do with all this time? The same pleasures and delights over and over again? Someone of your intelligence would surely find that boring?"

"There will be other goals, I'm sure. Other things to achieve."

"Perhaps. Your youth will go, and with its going will come tiredness of both body and spirit."

"So what? It is the present that's important. Why worry about what might never be?"

"And if I said you were giving up your chance of immortality what would you say?"

"I don't believe there is a chance. It's superstition. When we die, that's it."

"Is that what you believe Satanism as all about - the pleasure of the moment?"

"Yes." Then, with less certainty, he added, "Well, at least, I think so."

"There is no belief in something beyond?"

"Not as far as I know." He smiled. "But as you must know, I'm only a new Initiate."

"Would you kill your friend Neil?" she suddenly asked.

"Say again?"

"Neil Stanford. Would you kill him if your Master demanded it?"

"What do you know about Neil?"

"He came to see me once. For a reading. But you haven't answered my question. Would you - could you - kill him, or anyone?"

Conrad remembered his dream. But there was within him a desire to deny that part of himself which would not kill. For a few moments he felt compelled to boast, to answer her question in the affirmative - depicting himself to her as someone ruthless and unafraid. But she was sitting near him, calm and smiling, and it seemed to him that her eyes saw into his thoughts. She would know it was just a boast, the nervous arrogance of naivety.

"I don't know," he said honestly.

"See," she said with a slight tone of censure, "to you all this Satanism is at present a game. An enjoyable one, to be sure, but still a game. Your aura tells a different story. They are serious - they kill, without mercy. They corrupt. Are you ready for all that?"

"You make them sound vile," he said, thinking of Susan, and the bliss he had shared with Tanith. "They are not like that."

"Don't you understand what is happening to you? Of course, now all is pleasure - all is passion and enjoyment. You are being courted, drawn into their web. But soon the perversity will begin. It will start in a small way - something perhaps only a little morally degrading. But soon you will be so involved there will be no escape."

"No, I don't believe it. You're just trying to turn me against them, aren't you?"

"Am I?" she smiled. "I have something to show you."

She fetched her crystal sphere and set it down between them. Carefully she removed the black cloth before making passes over the sphere with her hands.

"Look," she said to him, "and see!"

Conrad peered into the sphere. At first he saw nothing except the reflection of the lights from the candles, but then a blackness appeared within which cleared. He saw the Temple in Aris' house. Susan was there, naked upon the altar, and around her the congregation danced. Then a man went to her, fondling her body before he removed his robe to lay and move upon her. Then the scene changed. Aris was with several other people whose faces Conrad could not see. They were on what looked like a moor, and on the ground a young woman lay, naked and bound. She was struggling, but Aris laughed - Conrad could not hear the laughter, only see the Master as his mouth opened and he rocked from side to side. Then there was a knife in his hand and he bent down to calmly and efficiently slit the woman's throat. Conrad turned away.

"There is more," Denise said,

"So what?" Conrad said, affecting unconcern. "Every war has its casualties. Anyway, what I saw was not real."

"It was. The woman whom you saw murdered was called Maria Torrens. I can show you the

newspaper reports of her death if you wish."

"In every period there are victims and masters. The weak perish and the strong survive."

"Do you really believe that?" she asked.

"What if I do?" Conrad said defensively. "Will you try and convert me?"

"You must make your own decisions - and take the consequences that result from your actions, both in this life and the next."

"Belief in an afterlife," Conrad said scornfully, "is merely blackmail to prevent us from fulfilling ourselves - from achieving god-head - in this life."

"You seem set to continue along the dark path you have chosen - despite what I sense about your inner feelings."

"I've made my choice."

"I know," she said softly.

"Tell me, then, why you have helped me?"

Denise smiled, and her smile disconcerted Conrad. "I have no right to judge. I simply help those in need."

"But even so -"

"You should rest now." She covered the crystal with the black cloth.

Suddenly, Conrad felt tired. He lay down among the softness of the cushions and, in the warm room with its gentle candlelight, he was soon asleep. His sleep was dreamless, and when he awoke he was astonished to find Susan sitting beside him.

## XVII

The repair of the window Conrad had shattered was almost complete, and Baynes watched the workmen while Togbare sat, wrapped in a cloak, by the bright fire. Slowly at first, and then heavily, it began to snow again.

When the work was over, Baynes thanked the men, gave them a large gratuity in cash, and stood outside to watch them leave. He was about to return to the warmth of his house when a motor-cycle

entered his driveway. It was a powerful machine, ridden by someone clad in red leathers, and he stood in the bright security lights which adorned his dwelling while the rider dismounted and began to remove the tinted visored helmet.

Miranda shook her long hair free. "I have some news for you," she said.

"Shall we go in?" Baynes asked. He gestured gallantly toward the door, and held it open for her.

"You have not met Frater Togbare, have you?" he asked her as he showed her into the study.

Togbare stood to offer Miranda his hand. "Hi!" she said, smiling, but not shaking his hand.

"Please, do sit," Baynes said.

"Denise found him," Miranda said, "and I think she'll need your help!" She looked anxiously at Baynes.

"Found who?" he asked.

"Robury! He's at her house. She didn't want me to tell you - but I had to." Miranda sighed. For over an hour she had sat at her house, wondering what to do. At first, she had thought of going back to Denise. But her memory of Denise's firm insistence persuaded her otherwise. She had tried to forget her own worries about Denise's safety, and had almost succeeded - for an hour, trusting as she had in Denise's psychic ability.

"They are sure to find him," she continued. "She'll be in danger! We must do something!"

"You mean," Baynes said calmly, "Mr. Robury is at present in her house?"

"Yes!" It was an affirmation of her impatience.

"Did he go there himself?" Baynes raised his eyebrows as he glanced at Togbare.

"No - she found him. And we brought him back. He was injured - quite badly, it seemed."

"I see." Baynes stroked his beard with his hand. "You took him to her house? Why?"

"She wanted to help him." Then, realizing what she had said, and seeing the exchange of looks between Togbare and Baynes, she added, "It's not like that!"

"You said," Togbare asked her, "she found him. Was she therefore looking for him?"

"Well - in a manner of speaking, yes." The room was hot, and she unzipped the front of her leather suit.

Baynes looked at her as she did so, as if suddenly realizing she was a woman. She noticed his attention and smiled at him, shaking her head so that her long hair framed her face. Suddenly, she saw him as a challenge, for she knew of his avoidance of women. Her own liaison with Denise was only for her a brief interlude in her bisexual life, and she smiled enchantingly at Baynes.

Hastily, Baynes turned away.

"Did she say," Togbare asked her, "why she was looking for him?"

"No. And I didn't ask. You know about her, don't you Oswald?" she said to Baynes, smiling at him again and deliberately using his first name. "About her abilities."

"She is rather gifted in certain psychic matters, yes." He looked briefly at her, then turned away.

"Do you know of recent events," Togbare asked Miranda, "involving Mr Robury and the Satanist group?"

"Only that there was to be some sort of ritual. Denise said something about Robury being important."

"You know of the death of Mr. Fitten and his wife?"

"Yes. She mentioned them."

"You were among the first to know of this Conrad Robury, were you not?"

"Actually, yes. He came to attend one of our meetings."

"Introduced by a certain Neil Stanford?"

"Yes." She turned to look at Baynes, but he staring into the flames of the fire.

"I think it is right and fitting," Togbare pompously said to her, "that we take you into our confidence. Mr Stanford, I am grieved to say, has fallen into the hands of the Satanists - he had, on our instructions, infiltrated the group. However, he was betrayed. We do not know by whom. As you probably are aware, such groups do not take kindly to anyone who betrays them, and therefore ever since Mr Stanford was kidnapped by Mr Robury and taken to the house of the so-called 'Master', we have been concerned for his safety.

"Yet for some time I myself, and the Council, have suspected that we ourselves have been infiltrated by the Satanists."

Miranda looked first at Baynes and then at Togbare. "And you now suspect Denise?" she asked with astonishment.

It was Baynes who answered. "It is logical - considering what you have just told us."

"I don't believe it! Not Denise!"

"Of course," Togbare said, "we cannot be sure. But Mr Baynes is right - it is logical to presume she may be implicated."

"So you see, Miranda," Baynes said, and smiled at her, "if it is true then she is unlikely to be in danger from them, as you believed."

Miranda sat in a chair, confused by the accusation against her lover yet pleased that Baynes had apparently shown an interest in her. He had used her first name - something he had never done before - and his smile seemed to convey a warmth toward her. Suddenly, it occurred to her that if the accusation was true, Denise had been cruelly using her. The thought saddened her.

"But if you're wrong about her," she said, still unconvinced, "then she will be in danger?"

"For helping Robury?" Baynes said. "I doubt it. You did say she intended to help him?"

"Yes. She was going to use her healing powers."

"Which, to my knowledge, are quite remarkable. Quite remarkable."

"But surely - " Miranda began to say.

"Why did she wish to find him in the first place? And, more importantly, why did she then wish to heal him? For she knew, being with me a member of the Council itself, that he was important to them - to their ritual."

"She was on the Council?" Miranda asked with surprise.

"Why, yes. Did she never tell you? I knew you two were very close friends." Baynes smiled at her.

Miranda blushed, and shuffled in her chair. "No," she said softly, "she never told me." She sighed in sadness, for she remembered what Denise had once said: "There shall be no secrets between us..."

"He was badly injured, you said?" Togbare asked her.

"Covered in blood."

"Well," Baynes said, "he did jump through that window."

"He was here?" Miranda asked with surprise.



"We had hoped to - how shall I say? - exchange him for Stanford. Now we are back to where we were before."

"But surely the Police - they can help. If Neil has been abducted - "

Baynes shrugged his shoulders and made a gesture of obeisance with his hands. "What evidence have we? What could we say about this conflict which such people would understand?"

"But surely they would listen to someone as well respected as you?"

"Possibly. Even if I sent them to the house of the Master, would they find Stanford there? Of course not. How would I explain why he should have been abducted? What reason - what motive - could I give without appearing as some sort of crank? They would listen, make some routine enquiries, find nothing and decide I was rather strange. No, it is not as easy as that."

"I fear, my child," Togbare said to Miranda, who cringed at his endearment, "that Mr Baynes is right. There have been two deaths, two unfortunate deaths, already. It is due to Mr Baynes' resourcefulness and indeed influence that those deaths have been registered by the authorities as natural ones, unconnected with any suspicious circumstances. And this I myself accepted - for how does one explain to an unbelieving world the true cause of such deaths? If we had tried, then we would now, I am sure, have all manner of journalists intruding upon our affairs, impeding our investigations and preventing us from achieving our goal - that of ending for once and for all this Satanist threat to our world."

Togbare seemed pleased with his speech, and rubbed his hands together.

Miranda turned to Baynes. "I would like to help," she said.

"Then I suggest we go and see Denise. I shall ask her, directly, where she stands on the matter."

"And if Mr Robury is with her?" Togbare asked.

"I shall persuade him to return with us." He walked to the desk and from a drawer took a revolver which he placed in his jacket pocket.

"Please," Togbare said, "surely we can avoid such complications?"

"There is no choice now," Baynes replied. "Do you wish," he asked Miranda, "to travel with me or use your own transport?"

"With you," she smiled and began to remove her leather suit.

Even Togbare glanced at her fulsome figure. "If," Togbare said, clearing his throat, "Mr Robury is not there - what then, my friend?"

"Sanders - he will know how to enter their Temple. He can be persuaded to tell us. We shall then go to them. You ready?" he asked Miranda.

"Yes."

"Excellent!" He turned toward Togbare. "If we're not back within the hour inform the Police."

"But - " mumbled Togbare. "what shall I say?"

"I'm sure you can think of something!"

"But - "

Baynes did not wait to hear the Mage's words.

## XVIII

"She has done well!" Susan said as Conrad sat up. "You are better than we thought."

"How did you get here?" Conrad asked her. He looked around the room, but they were alone. "The woman - "

"Denise?" Susan said. "You will see her in a while. The Master is pleased to see you."

She helped him to stand.

"Ah! Conrad!" Aris said as he entered the room. "Such determination! You rejected a most tempting offer, I hear."

"Sorry?" Conrad looked at Susan, and then at the Master whose black cloak and clothes seemed to Conrad appropriately suited the Master's gleeful yet sinister countenance.

"An offer - from Baynes," Aris the Master said.

"You talked in your sleep," Susan said before Conrad could ask the obvious question.

"Come," Aris said, gesturing toward the door.

Conrad followed him up the stairs of the house and into a bedroom where Denise lay on a bed, apparently asleep.

"She is yours," Aris whispered to him.

"I'm sorry?"

"It is for you to decide her fate. Take her - possess her if you wish. She has never been with a man. You can be the first."

Aris walked to Denise, touched her forehead with his hand and she awoke. Then there was a knife in his hand and he held it as if ready to strike.

"Your wish?" Aris asked him, and smiled.

Conrad went to her, took her hand in his and kissed it. "Thank you," he said to her sincerely.

The fear that had been in her eyes disappeared.

"And her fate?" Aris said, still holding the knife.

"I don't want her harmed.,"

"As you wish." Aris touched her forehead with his hand, and she closed her eyes in sleep. "You must go now," he said to Conrad.

"Are you alright?" Susan asked him as he reached the bottom of the stairs.

The face of the Master had shown no emotion as Conrad had expressed his wish, and he was wondering whether the Master disapproved.

"Are you alright?" Susan asked him again.

"Just a little tired," he replied.

"We must go now." She held the front door of the house open as a gesture of her intent, and, in the snowy street outside, he saw her expensive car.

He walked with her out into the coldness to seat himself beside her, and was soon warm in the cocoon of the car watching the snow covered streets and houses as Susan drove almost recklessly in the dangerous conditions.

The music she chose as an accompaniment to their journey seemed to Conrad to reflect his mood and

the almost demonic aspirations which underlay it, and he listened intently to Liszt's B Minor Sonata. As he listened, he began to realize that his decision regarding Denise was correct, and they were approaching the Master's dwelling when he concluded it made no difference to him what Aris his Master - or indeed what anyone - thought about it. He would do the same again.

Gedor awaited them at the steps of the house, and held Conrad's door open for him in a gesture which pleased Conrad. The very house itself seemed to welcome him, and he was not surprised when Tanith greeted him in the hall with a kiss.

"They will soon heal," she said as she caressed the dried cuts on his face.

Even Mador came to greet him.

"Welcome Professor!" the dwarf said. "Welcome!"

"The Master will see you soon. But first, you should bathe and change. Mador will show you your room."

As Conrad turned to follow Mador, she added, "And Conrad, from this day forth this house is yours as your home."

Her words pleased him, and he followed Mador, proud of himself. Susan was beautiful, wealthy and powerful, and together they would return the Dark Gods to Earth.

The room Mador led him to was on the top floor of the house. It was large and luxurious and he was surprised to find the cupboards full of new clothes, all in his size. He selected some, and was relaxing in a bath of warm water when the maid entered the room, pushing a trolley replete with food.

She did not speak, but smiled at him through the open bathroom door as he lay, blushing at the unexpected intrusion.

"Thank you!" he said unnecessarily as she left.

It was almost an hour later when he too left, cleaned and fed, to find his way to the library where he assumed the Master would be waiting. It took him a long time, for the house was large and mostly unknown to him.

"Do you find," the Master said to him as he entered the library, "your house pleasing?" He smiled as he sat at the desk, indicating a chair.

Conrad sat down.

"From tonight, all this," Aris continued, "shall be yours."

Conrad could only stare in amazement. Was it a jest?

"There shall be a ritual," Aris said, "whose success will begin that New Aeon which we seek. Recall that I said you had a Destiny. Your Destiny is to continue the work which I and others like me have begun. Every Grand Master such as I chooses, when the time is right, someone to succeed him. And I have chosen you. My daughter shall be your guide as your own power develops. She shall be your Mistress, just as Tanith has been mine."

Aris smiled benignly at him. "It is right you are amazed. You have proved yourself fitting for this honour. As to myself, I have other tasks to perform, other places to visit where you at present cannot go. We have tested you, and you have not been found wanting. Now, I shall reveal to you a secret regarding our beliefs. We represent balance - we restore what is lacking in any particular time or society. We challenge the accepted. We encourage through our novices, our acts of magick and through the spread of our ideas that desire to know which religions, sects and political dogmatists all wish to suppress because it undermines their authority. Think on this, in relation to our history, and remember that we are seldom what we seem to others.

"Our Way is all about, in its beginnings, and for those daring individual who join us, liberating the dark or shadow aspect of the personality. To achieve this, we sometimes encourage individuals to undergo formative experiences of a kind which more conventional societies and individuals frown upon or are afraid of. Some of these experiences may well involve acts which are considered 'illegal'. But the strong survive, the weak perish. All this - and the other directly magickal experiences like those you yourself have experienced - develop both the character of the individual and their magickal abilities. In short, from the Satanic novice, the Satanic Adept is produced."

He smiled again at Conrad before continuing his Satanic discourse. "We tread a narrow path, as perhaps you yourself are becoming aware. There is danger, there is ecstasy - but above all there is an exhilaration, a more intense and interesting way of living. We aim to change this world - yes, but we aim to change individuals within it - to produce a new type of person, a race of beings truly representative of our foremost symbol, Satan. Only a few can belong to this new race, this coming race - to the Satanic elect. To this elite, I welcome you."

He passed over to Conrad a small book bound in black leather.

"All this I have said, and more, much more, is written of in here," Aris said. "Read and learn and understand. We shall not speak together again."

He bowed his head, as if respectfully, toward Conrad before rising and taking his leave. Alone in the silence which followed, Conrad though he could hear a woman's voice.

"I am coming for you, I am coming!" it seemed to sing and for an instant he glimpsed a ghostly face, It was Fitten's wife.

Then Conrad was laughing, loudly, at the thought, as he basked in the glory of being chosen by the Master.

"I am the power, I am the glory!" he shouted aloud in his demonic possession as, behind him, the ghostly face cried,

## XIX

Several times during their short journey Miranda tried to engage Baynes in conversation and each time she failed. He did not speak even as they left the car near their destination to walk the last few hundred yards.

Only as they approached Denise's house did he relent.

"I fear," he said, pointing to where a car had left its imprint in the snow, "we are too late."

The door was unlocked, and he entered the house cautiously. No sounds came from within the house, and with Miranda in tow he slowly checked every room. The house was empty.

"Has she gone with them?" Miranda asked as they returned to the front door.

"Or been abducted."

"Why would they do that?"

"She would be a prize, I presume. A lady of her - how shall I say? - persuasion would be regarded in some respects as an ideal sacrifice."

"It's my fault," Miranda said sadly.

"Not at all. We still do not know if she is involved with them." He ushered her outside.

"I feel so responsible," she said.

"There is no need," he said kindly.

She took advantage of his tone and his nearness by resting her head on his shoulder. He held her, feebly and briefly, and then drew away.

"Here," he said, giving her the keys to his car, "can you tell Frater Togbare what had occurred?"

"Yes, I will."

"Good. I will make some necessary arrangements."

"To get into their Temple?"

"Exactly. I shall be - say - an hour at most. Tell Frater Togbare to be ready to leave at once."

"Will three of us be enough?"

He looked at her for some seconds before replying. "I cannot allow you to go," he said somewhat pompously.

"Tough! I'm going!" she said with determination.

"No you're not."

She held her head slightly to one side, resting her hands on her hips. "Because I'm a woman?" she demanded, a touch of anger in her voice.

"Actually, yes."

"Oh I see!" she mocked. "It's strictly a job for the boys, is it?"

"It could be dangerous."

"Oh I see! And we weak women, cannot cope with danger, is that what you mean?" By now, she was angry.

"I didn't say that," he protested.

"But you meant it!"

"Look - there are more important things at the moment than this stupid argument!" He himself was beginning, uncharacteristically, to become annoyed.

She smiled at him, as if satisfied to have aroused some emotion within him. "We'll be ready when you get back," she said. She did not wait for his reply and walked back toward his car.

Baynes watched her drive away in the falling snow before he returned to the house. The telephone was working, and he dialled Sanders' number.

"Baynes here. Can you meet me? Or should I say - meet me in fifteen minutes."

'Leave me alone!' he heard Sanders say, 'One favour is - '

"Listen! There will be more money, this time."

'I'm not interested.'

"Just meet me. It will be to your long term advantage. You know what I mean?"

Sanders sighed, and Baynes smiled. 'Where?' he asked.

Baynes gave him the address, and sat on the stairs to wait.

Sanders was late.

"That your car?" Baynes asked.

"Yeah."

"Let's go, then."

As they drove away, Sanders asked "Where to?"

"My house. Now - you've been in the Masters' Temple I imagine."

"Possibly."

"Excellent."

Baynes did not speak again until they were inside his house.

"Some friends of mine," Baynes said as he led Sanders into the study where Miranda and Togbare were waiting.

"Hello Miranda," Sanders said.

"You know each other?" Baynes asked, surprised.

Sanders raised his eyebrows and gave a lascivious smile. "I've hear of her. It's a small world, the Occult." He stared at her breasts.

Miranda stared back, and nervously, Sanders looked away.

"You said," Baynes asked him, "you'd been in the Satanist Temple."



"It's a free country," he shrugged.

"Can you lead us there?"

"You serious?" When Baynes did not answer, he added, "You are serious!"

"Naturally, I would make it worth your while. Financially, of course."

"How much?" he whispered to Baynes.

"Sixty thousand."

"That's a lot of money!" He thought for a minute. "And all I have to do is lead you there, right?"

"Correct."

"When?"

"Now."

"Now?" Sanders said with surprise.

"Yes. And no tricks. I know the Temple is below the house, but I also know there is a secret entrance somewhere, nearby."

"You're well informed," Sanders said with surprise.

"I have my sources of information."

"Don't I know it!" Sanders said like an aside. "And the money?"

"Tomorrow. When the Banks open."

"Let's get this straight," Sanders said, twirling the inverted pentagram he wore around his neck. "I lead you there, then I'm free to go right?"

"Correct. Provided, of course, you do not inform anyone of our presence."

"What do you take me for? I know you've got your pet Policemen."

"Shall we go then?"

"Your car or mine?" Sanders quipped.

"Please," Togbare said quietly to Baynes, "may I talk with you? Alone?"

"As you wish," Baynes replied. "Please, excuse us for a moment," he said to Miranda.

Outside, in the hallway, he firmly shut the door to the study.

"This plan of yours," Togbare said, "are we not being too hasty?"

"I don't believe so."

"But to go to their Temple - "

"What choice do we have? They will sacrifice Stanford and for all we know Denise as well. Did Miranda not say that Denise was 'virgo intacta'?"

"No."

"Don't you see? I am sure their ritual will be tonight."

"The blood of a virgin - yes, yes," Togbare mumbled.

"Your actual presence at the ritual will I am sure suffice to disrupt it."

"It is possible, yes. But the physical danger - "

"I shall of course leave a message with a friend of mine, a Police Officer. Should we not return, he will investigate. Believe me, there will be no second chance for us. Can we afford to wait? What if we do nothing and tonight they complete their sacrifices and open the gates to the Abyss? What then? The evil they will release will spread like a poison. Large scale demonic possession will occur - madness, crime committed by those weak of will ..."

"Yes, yes of course," Togbare said abstractly, "you are right."

"Their success," Baynes continued, "would give them magickal power - Satanic magickal power - beyond imagining. We would be powerless. And their Dark Gods would return, to haunt the Earth."

"You have only voiced me own fears. I shall prepare myself as we journey to our destination. May God protect us."

Baynes left Togbare mumbling prayers. In the study he found Sanders kneeling on the floor, clutching his genitals, his face contorted with pain. "See," Miranda said to Baynes in triumph, "we women can take care of ourselves! Shall I drive then?"

Both Baynes and Sanders watched her as she left the room.

## XX

"Your marriage to our daughter," Conrad remember Tanith had said, "shall be first."

A prelude, he thought to the fugue that would be the opening of the gates to the Abyss.

He stood in the candlelit Temple, resplendent in the crimson robe Tanith had given him for the ceremony. The congregation formed an aisle to the altar upon which the tetrahedron glowed, and he stood in front of it, with the Master and Tanith, to await his Satanic bride.

There was a beating of drums, and Gedor, with Susan beside him, walked down the stone steps and into the chamber of the Temple. She wore a black veil and a black flowing gown and walked alone past the congregation as Gedor stood guard by the door which marked the hidden entrance.

Tanith's viridian robe seemed iridescent in the fluxing light, and she greeted her daughter with a kiss before joining and binding Susan's hand with Conrad's.

"We, Master and Mistress of this Temple," Aris and Tanith said together, "greet you who have gathered to witness this rite. Let the ceremony begin!"

There was a chant from the many voices of the congregation.

"Agios o Satanas! Agios o Satanas!"

We are gathered here, " the Master said, "to join in oath and through our dark magick this man and this woman, so that hence forward they shall as inner sanctuaries to our gods!"

"Hail to they," Tanith chanted, "who come in the names of our gods! We speak the forbidden names!"

The Master raised his hands and began to vibrate the name *Atazoth* followed by *Vindex* while Tanith led the congregation in chanting 'Agios o Satanas! Agios o Satanas! Agios o Baphomet! Agios o Baphomet! while the drums beat ever louder and more insistent. Then, on Tanith's sign, they stopped.

The sudden silence startled Conrad, a little.

"Do you," the Master said to Conrad, "known in this world as Conrad Robury accept as your Satan-Mistress this lady, Amilichus, known as Susan Aris, according to the precepts of our faith and to the glory of our Dark Gods?"

"I do," Conrad replied.

"Then give as a sign of your oath this ring."

Conrad accepted the silver ring, and placed it on Susan's finger.

Aris turned to his daughter. "Do you Amilichus, accept as your Satan-Master this man, known in this world as Conrad Robury and whom we now honour as Falcifer in name, according to the precepts of our faith and to the glory of our Dark Gods?"

"I do," Susan replied.

"Then give as a sign of your oath this ring."

She took the silver ring, and placed it on Conrad's finger.

"See them!" Aris said, "Hear them! Know them! Let it be known among you and others of our kind, that should anyone here assembled or dwelling elsewhere seek to render asunder this Master and Mistress against the desire of this Master and Mistress, then shall that person or persons be cursed, cast out and made by our magick to die a miserable death! Hear my words and heed them! Hear me, all you gathered in my Temple! Hear me, all you bound by the magick of our faith! Hear me you Dark Gods of Chaos gathering to witness this rite!"

Tanith unbound their hands to swiftly cut with a sharp knife their thumbs. She pressed Conrad's bleeding thumb onto Susan's forehead, leaving a mark in blood, before marking Conrad in the same manner and pressing the two thumbs together to mingle the blood. Then she pressed a few drops of blood from each onto a triangle of parchment. There was a silver bowl on the altar containing liquid which Aris lit before Tanith cast the parchment into the flames.

"By this burning," she said, "I declare this couple wed! Let their children be numerous and become as eagles who swoop upon their prey!"

"But ever remember," Aris said, "you who in joining find a magick which creates, never love so much that you cannot see your partner die when their dying-time has come."

"Let us greet," Tanith said, "the new Lord and Lady of the dark!"

Tanith's kiss was signal for the congregation to greet the spaeman and his wife.

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No traffic came along the narrow lane that led past the neglected woods near the Master's house, and Miranda parked the car partly on the snow-covered verge. The snow had stopped, and there was an

almost unearthly beauty about the scene: the snow-capped trees, the virgin white of the fields, the cold quiet stillness of the night air.

But the horizon around the fields began to change, as if the sky itself was full of fury. Red, indigo and thunder-purple vied for mastery. Each passing moment brought a change, a subtle shift in colour or intensity. Yet there was no sound, as there might have been if an Earth-bred storm had existed as cause.

Then, as suddenly as it had appeared, the spectacle ceased, to leave Miranda and the others staring at a night sky full-brimming with stars.

"This way," Sanders said as he walked in among the trees.

There was a fence yards within the wood, and he climbed it easily while Baynes gave assistance to Togbare and Miranda. Soon, the undergrowth became thick, but Sanders followed a narrow path deep into the stillness, stopping frequently to wait for his companions. Baynes kept close behind him, one hand in his jacket pocket and holding the revolver.

The snow was deep in places over the path that snaked around trees, bushes, dead bracken and entwining undergrowth, and Togbare stumbled and fell.

"Are you alright?" Miranda asked him.

"Yes, thank you." Slowly, he raised himself to his feet using his stick.

He tried to sense the power of the rituals being undertaken that night on his instructions to try and counter the magick of the Satanists, but he could sense nothing, however hard he strained and however he listened to the emanations from the astral aether. There was nothing, and it took him some minutes as he walked along the path to realise why. The wood was like a vortex in the fabric of Space-Time, absorbing all the psychic energies that radiated upon it. He sighed, then, at this realization, for he knew it meant they would be alone in the magickal battle to come.

He could see a clearing ahead where the others had stopped to wait for him. As he reached its edge, he was startled by the strange cry of an Eagle Owl. He had heard the cry before, in the forests of Scandinavia, and looked up to see the large ominous predator swooping down toward Sanders face, its hooked claws ready to strike.

Sanders shielded his face with his arm. Quickly, Togbare raised his stick and the huge owl veered spectacularly away, up and over the trees. It was not long before they heard its harsh call break the silence that shrouded the wood.

"Come," Togbare said, "we must hurry. They will know now that we are here."

## XXI

Denise awoke to find herself in a cell. It was small, brightly lit and warm. There was a thong around her neck, and she was still struggling to remove it when her cell door opened.

Neil, dressed in the black robe of the Satanic order, stood outside and motioned her to come forward.

"Listen to me," he whispered, glancing behind him at the stone stairs, "I don't have much time. You must go and warn the others. It's a trap. Here," he handed her a bunch of keys, "take one of their cars. Come on."

When Denise made no move to leave, he said, "Please, you've got to trust me. Frater Togbare will explain."

She looked into his eyes, then smiled. "How do I get out?" she asked, taking the keys.

"I'll show you."

He led her up the stairs and through an archway. "Through that door," he said, "are some stairs. You'll come to another door which leads to a passage. Follow the passage and you'll be in the hall, near the front door of the house. And don't worry, no one is around - they are all in the Temple. Good luck!"

He watched her go before returning to the top of the stairs. He stood in the circular chamber and waited. It was not a long wait, for soon the floor began to turn. The wall parted, revealing the Temple, and he walked down the steps to join the worshippers.

Conrad greeted him. "The Master has just told me," he said, "that you were one of us all along! Sorry if I used too much force."

"You weren't to know," said a relieved Neil.

Aris, Tanith and Susan were standing in front of the altar, the congregation before them, and they waited until Neil and Conrad joined them.

A proud Conrad held up his wedding ring for Neil to see, and Conrad joined them.

"Let the rite of sacrifice begin!" The Master intoned.

Slowly, the congregation began to chant.

"Suscipe, Satanas, munus quod tibi offerimus memoriam recolentes Atazoth," they chanted.

Then they began their dance around the altar, singing a dirge as they danced counter to the direction

of the Sun.

"Dies irae, dies illa, solvet saeculum in favilla teste Satan cum sybilla. Quantos tremor est futurus, quando Vindex est venturus, cuncta stricte discussurus. Dies irae, dies illa!"

Then the Master was vibrating the words of a chant, *Agios o Baphomet*, as one of the congregation came away from the dance to kneel before Tanith who bared her breasts in greeting.

"It is the protection," the kneeling man said as he removed the hood which covered his head, "and milk of your breasts that I seek."

Tanith bent down, and he suckled. Then she pushed him away, laughing, and saying, "I reject you!"

The man knelt before her, while around them the dancers whirled ever faster, still singing their chant.

"I pour my kisses at your feet," the kneeling man said, "and kneel before you who crushes your enemies and who washes in a basin full of their blood. I lift up my eyes to gaze upon your beauty of body: you who are the daughter of and a gate to our Dark Gods. I lift up my voice to you, dark demoness Baphomet, so that my mage's seed may feed your whoring flesh!"

Tanith touched his head with her hand. "Kiss me, and I shall make you as an eagle to its prey. Touch me and I shall make you as a strong sword that severs and stains my Earth with blood. Taste my fragrance and I shall make you as a seed of corn which grows toward the Sun and never dies. Plough me and plant me with your seed and I shall make you as a gate which opens to our gods!"

She clapped her hands twice, and the dancers ceased their dance to gather round as she lay down beside the man, stripping him naked. Then she was upon him, fulfilling her lust as the congregation clapped their hands in rhythm to her rising and falling body.

"Agios o Baphomet! Agios o Baphomet!" Aris the Master was chanting.

Tanith screamed in ecstasy, and for a moment lay still. Then she was standing, intoning the words of her role.

"So you have sown and from your seeding gifts may come if you obedient hear these words I speak." She looked smiling upon the congregation. "I know you, my children, you are dark yet none of you is as dark nor as deadly as I. With a curse I can strike you dead! Hear me, then, and obey! Gather for me the gift we shall offer in sacrifice to our gods!"

She gestured with her hand and two of the congregation ascended the stairs as drum beats began in the Temple. It was not long before one of the men returned, aghast.

"She's gone!" he shouted.

Aris turned toward Neil, and smiled.

"You will do instead," he said.

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By the far edge of the clearing lay a wooden hut, and Sanders led them toward it.

"Inside," he said to Baynes, "there's a trap-door in the floor."

He made to move away, but Baynes said, "Show me."

Reluctantly Sanders went inside and lifted the floor covering in a corner. The hut itself was bare.

"There," he said in a whisper.

"Open it then," answered Baynes.

Sanders did so and light from the stairs suffused the hut. "They're all yours!" Sanders said with relief and walked toward the still open door where Miranda stood beside Togbare,

He was about to step outside when he saw them. Three large dogs snarling and running toward him. Hastily he slammed the flimsy door shut. They jumped against it, fiercely barking. Only his weight against it held it firm. They jumped again and again as if possessed and the wood began to splinter.

"Quick!" Baynes said, indicating the stairs.

He helped Miranda and Togbare down and descended the several steps himself.

"Follow me quickly!" he shouted to Sanders who stood, his eyes wide with terror, with his back and arms against the breaking door.

Baynes had gone, and he ran across the floor of the hut, almost stumbling. The door shattered and he was fumbling with the trap-door ring when the first dog attacked. But he succeeded just in time in closing the door, and leant back against the steps, breathing hard as above him the dogs tried to dig around and through the door.

"Come on," Baynes said to him as he stood, stooping, in the narrow tunnel that led away from the stairs.

Sanders said nothing, but his eyes and face betrayed his fear.



"You don't have any choice," Baynes said unsympathetically.

Above them, the dogs could be heard howling. Miranda edged past Baynes to take Sanders hand in her own.

The gesture worked, and he followed them as they walked along the tunnel. Soon, it began to slope gently downward, but it seemed a long time before they could not hear the barking and the baying of the dogs.

Gradually, the light began to change in intensity, and it was only a faint glow sufficient for them to dimly see by when Baynes reached the door that sealed off the exit to the tunnel. "Are you ready?" he said to Togbare.

"Yes, my friend," he replied, and felt in his pocket for his crucifix.

Dramatically, Baynes brandished the gun before opening the door that led to the Temple. It swung silently on its hinges, and as it did so they heard a man's voice shout: "She's gone!"

## XXII

Denise was sitting in Susan's car outside the house when she experienced her vision. She saw the wood, the country lane where Miranda had parked Baynes' car, and she drove toward it, followed her instinct and intuition.

When she arrived, she sensed the woods were a place of danger, both physical and magickal, and she walked cautiously in the snow-steps Baynes and his two companions had left behind, stopping every few minutes to stand and listen. The deeper into the wood she went, the more did she become aware of elemental forces. The wood was alive to her - and she had to shut her psychic senses against the myriad images and sensations: a primitive fear urging her to flee back to the road and safety; leering and laughing demonic faces and shapes peering out from behind the trees and bushes...

She knew as she walked that the Master and his followers had built with their sinister magick a psychic barrier to shield the woods, the house and the Temple. But she was also aware that there were other forces outside this barrier trying to break it down. She saw in her mind groups sitting in a circle within a room within a house... They were focusing their powers upon Togbare: he was their symbol, his stick a magical sword trying like a magnet to attract the energies of their rituals. Her awareness of these rituals, of Togbare's foresightful planning of them, pleased her as she walked in the silence of the wood.

The clearing she entered caused her to stop and stand still for many minutes, and she with her heightened psychic ability sensed the owl before she saw it. And when she did see it, swooping

silently toward her, she spoke to it in words like gentle music. It seemed to hover above her head as if listening to her voice before flying silently away.

She was approaching the hut when she heard the dogs. She did not shorten her pace but walked toward the door to see them crouched in a corner as if ready to pounce.

"Hello, little ones!" she said gently and unafraid.

They snarled at her, but did not attack. But they would not let her near. When she moved toward them, they would bare their teeth and growl as if ready to leap at her. But when she moved back toward the door, they sat down on the trap-door watching her.

Several times she tried to edge near, but the response was always the same. She could not seem to break with her gentle magick the barrier which surrounded them.

With a sigh, she settled down to wait, consciously trying to break a hole in the magickal barrier shielding the woods and the Temple, hoping that the white magick outside might break through to aid Togbare in his battle, and as she spun her mantric spells she experienced a vision of Baynes and his companions entering the Satanic Temple.

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Baynes was the first to step into the Temple, but Miranda and Togbare soon followed.

The Master turned toward them, as if he had expected them.

"Welcome!" he said.

Conrad saw Gedor go through the door and return carrying Sanders whom he carried toward the altar.

"You have betrayed us!" The Master said to him.

"No! No!" Sanders feebly protested.

"Prepare him!"

"Stop!" Togbare shouted, and raised his stick.

The congregation parted, making an aisle to the Master.

"We must begin," Susan whispered into Conrad's ear.

She was standing in front of him, holding his hands as she had often done before, and Conrad understood. Then Neil was attempting to come between them but Conrad knocked him away. Dazed,

Neil retreated to stand beside Togbare.

Gedor was stripping Sanders of his clothes while Tanith stood nearby, holding two knives.

"Stop!" Togbare said again.

The Master held out his hand, his ring glowing. A bolt of energy sprang from it toward Togbare, but it was harmlessly absorbed by the Mage's stick. The tetrahedron on the altar had begun to pulse with varying intensities of light and the Master went to it and laid his hands upon it. As he did so he became engulfed in golden flames. Togbare raised his magickal staff and he too became surrounded by light.

Susan tightened her grip on Conrad's hands and he suddenly felt the primal power of the Abyss within him. He was not Conrad, but a vortex of energy. Then he was in the darkness of Space again, sensing other presences around him. There was an echo of the sadness he had felt before, and then the vistas of stars and alien worlds, world upon world upon world. He became, briefly, the crystal upon the altar, the Master standing beside it. But there were other forces present and around him, trying to send him back into his earthly body and seal the rent that had appeared and which joined the causal universe to the acausal where his Dark Gods waited. He became two beings because of this opposition - a pure detached consciousness caught in the vortex of the Abyss, surrounded by stars, and Conrad, standing holding the hand of his Satanic Mistress in the Temple. His earthly self saw the astral clash between Togbare and the Master as their radiance was transformed by their wills and sent forth, transforming the colourful aura of their opponent. He saw Tanith give Sanders a knife. Saw Gedor approaching him, brandishing his own. Saw the congregation gather around the fight as they lusted for the kill - Sanders tried several times to get away, but the encircling congregation always pushed him back toward Gedor. Baynes, Neil and Miranda were beside Togbare and partly enclosed in the luminescence of his aura.

Then Conrad seemed free again to wander through the barriers that kept the two universes apart. He and Susan, together, had been a key to the gate of the Abyss, his own consciousness freed by the power of the crystal and the Master's magick. He was free, and would break the one and only seal that remained.

In the Temple, the fight did not take long to reach its conclusion. Sanders seemed to have become possessed by the demonic atmosphere in the Temple and attacked several times, slashing at Gedor with his knife. But each time Gedor had moved away. Sanders tried again, and harder, after Gedor cut his arm. He caught Gedor's hand and turned to be stabbed by Gedor in the throat.

"The third key!" Tanith shouted in triumph.

The spurting blood seemed to vaporise and then form an ill-defined image above the altar. It became the face of the Master, of Conrad, of a demon, of Satan himself.

Suddenly, Neil snatched the gun from Baynes. The shot missed the Master, and Baynes knocked Neil over.

Togbare, distracted, looked at Baynes and then at the Master. He felt in that instant the Satanic barrier protecting the Temple break, and renewed magickal power flowing down toward him, energizing his staff and his own aura. He pointed the staff at the Master, sending bolts of magickal energy. They reached him, and the auric energy around the Master, and the shape above the altar, vanished. But Baynes leapt forward to snatch the staff and break it over his knee.

As he did so, the aura around Togbare flickered, and then disappeared. But the old man was too quick for Baynes, and bent down to retrieve part of his stick which he threw at the crystal, hitting it. As it struck, the crystal exploded, plunging the Temple into darkness.

There was then no magickal energy left, and Togbare calmly led Miranda and Neil back along the tunnel to the hut. The dogs departed quietly the instant the crystal shattered, leaving Denise free to open the trap-door and, when Togbare and the others reached her, she realized Neil had gone insane.

Togbare smiled at her as she closed the trap-door, and then he quietly fell to the floor. She did not need to check his pulse, but did so nevertheless as Neil stood over her, dribbling.

Togbare was dead, and over the trees the Eagle Owl sent its call.

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The darkness in the Temple lasted less than a minute, and when it was over both the Master and Tanith had vanished. Conrad looked around and saw Baynes walking toward him. The congregation still stood around the body of Sanders, looking at Conrad and waiting, as Susan looked and waited.

Without speaking, Baynes took hold of Conrad's left hand and bent down to kiss the ring in a gesture of obeisance. Suddenly, Conrad understood. He was not just Conrad but a channel, a like, between the worlds. He would be, because of this, the Anti-Christ and had only to develop and extend his already burgeoning magickal powers for the Earth to become his domain. For by dark ritual a new beast had been born, ready and willing to haunt the Earth. A few more rituals, and his invading legions would be ready.

His laugh reverberated around the Temple.

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## **Epilogue**

Barred windows? Neil shook his head as if he could not remember before returning to his seat. The television was on, as it always was during the day, and he watched it in the smoky, grimy room. He did not know what he watched, but it passed a few hours.

Occasionally he would rise from his chair to stare around the room or out of the window. Once, someone brought him some tablets and he took them without speaking, and, once he wandered across

the room to watch two of his fellow patients play a game of snooker on the worn table with cues that were not quite straight. But neither the game nor they themselves interested him, and he resumed his chair, sunk into his stupor.

Baynes had watched him briefly before he sat with the psychiatrist in the small almost airless room at the end of the ward.

"Yes, indeed," the man was saying, "a perplexing case."

"And he mentioned my name?"

"Once, a few days ago, when he was admitted. He said something about an Eagle Owl, but it didn't really make much sense. You met once I believe?"

"Yes. He was a student, at the University. Into drugs, I understand. And the Occult - that sort of thing. He wanted to borrow some money. Rambled on about some conspiracy or other."

"Well," he fumbled with the folder that contained Neil's psychiatric case notes, "I won't keep you any longer."

"He is receiving treatment, then?"

"Of course. Medication at the moment - although tomorrow we shall start ECT."

"Electroconvulsive therapy?" Baynes asked.

"Yes."

Baynes looked at Neil, and smiled. Then: "If there is anything I can do to help - " he said formally to the Doctor as he stood to leave.

"We have a note of your address."

"Good bye, then."

Neil did not even look at Baynes as he walked through the ward to the door that led down the stairs and out into the bright sunlight.

The Sun warmed the air, a little, but insufficient to melt any of the snow, and Denise stood by a large Beech tree in the grounds of the hospital, watching Baynes leave. She knew better than to try and follow him, and went back to her car where Miranda waited, asleep.

Miranda could remember nothing of the events in the Temple, but by using her own psychic skills, Denise was beginning to understand them. She did not know what, if anything, she could do. All she

knew was that she had to try.

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*Fini*

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# **The Temple Of Satan**

## **A Symphonic Allegory**

### **Order of Nine Angles**

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“Baphomet is a goddess of violent aspect who washes in the blood of her foes. She is the bride of Lucifer – a Gate to the Dark Gods beyond this Earth.

Traditionally, Baphomet is associated with the magickal grade of Mistress of Earth – the fifth of the seven stages that mark the Satanic path. Her daughters are Power, Vengeance and Lust, but the only Earth – based living child to be born from these children is the Demon named Love....

Herein are truths to set against the lies  
and distortions of Elisphas Levi and others."

*Book Of Recalling*

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## Prologue

Melanie was a beautiful woman, and she had grown used to using her beauty for her advantage. Her crimson robes, her amber necklace and her dark hair all enhanced it, and she smiled without kindness at the overweight man prostrate before her.

The black candles gave the only light but she could still see the parchment paleness of his naked skin as the dancers chanted while they danced sun-wise in the temple to the beat of the tabors.

Beside her, a man cloaked in black declaimed in a loud voice words of Initiation.

"Do you bind yourself, with word, deed, and oath to us, the seed of Satan?"

"I do," the nervous, prostrate man replied.

"Then understand that breaking your word is the beginning of our wrath!" He clapped his hands, and the dancers gathered round. "Hear him! See him! Know him!"

Seven beats from a tabor and the dancers broke their enclosing circle, sighing as Melanie raised her whip. The sweating men knew it was a formality, a ritual gesture without pain. But Melanie smiled, and beat him till he bled.

Then she was laughing. "Dance!" she commanded, and they obeyed, completing the ritual to its end. And when it was over and the bloated man with the freshly bloodied skin drew some pleasure as he slumped by the altar in the climax of a whore's sexual embrace, Melanie left to swim naked in the sensuous warmth of her pool.



Soon, only the chief celebrant remained, waiting for her in the small study by her hall. He was a tall man of gaunt face whose eyes brought to some a remembrance of the image of someone who was mad. For years, a monastery had fed his body and tried to break his spirit but he had given way to temptation and sought the road of sin.

Melanie's dress hid little of her flesh, and she sat on the edge of the desk beside him, smiling as he turned his eyes away. He wanted her body, and she knew it and the reason why he would do nothing.

"You are going bored with us, " he said.

"And you are afraid."

"Of where you might be leading us?"

"The Ceremony of Recalling."

"But no one, for a long time, has dared - "

She leaned over him, caressing his lips with her finger. "If I find you sacrifice, have you faith enough to do the ritual and slit his throat?"

!

Thurstan's past seemed to him to consist of a series of disconnected memories and, as he sat above the stream while hot sun drew sweat from his body and a light breeze carried it away from the summit of the hill, tears filled his eyes.

His memories were of women. There was a beauty, and ecstasy about their recalling as there was about his gestures of love and as he remembered he experienced again the intensity of life that those gestures had brought him.

He remembered walking one late perfume-filled Spring evening to see, for just a few minutes, the woman he loved before she left for the company of another man. It was, he remembered, a long walk begun with the sun of afternoon was warm and the bridge that

joined the banks of the river Cam where they in Cambridge would meet only an image - distant and hopeful - in his mind. He remembered, years later, a cycling 15 miles through a winter blizzard to take his letter to the house of the woman he then loved while she slept, unaware of his dreams. He remembered the exhilaration of running through the streets of the city to catch the last train and the long walk in the early morning cold to a

house to apologize to the woman he then loved.

Yet the tears, which came to him, were not the tears of sorrow. Everything around him seemed suddenly more real and more alive - the larks which sang high above the heather-covered hills; the sun, the sky, the very Earth itself. They, and he himself, seemed to almost to possess the divine.

He sensed the promise of his own life - as if in some way he and the woman he loved were, or could be, the instrument of a divine love, a means to reveal divinity to the world. Yet the divinity he sensed was not the stark god of religion, or even of the one omniscient God, and the more he experienced and the more he thought he realize it was not god all. It was a goddess.

This thought pleased him. He felt he had re-discovered an important meaning, maybe even the ultimate meaning, about his life, and he walked slowly down the from the hill to wash his face in the cold water of the stream.

The loss of his wife held no sorrow for him now and the sad resignation of yet another loss began to fade. Like a little boy, he took off his shoes and socks and paddled along in the stream.

There was no Natalie to share this with him as he might have wished, and his meeting with her seemed a dream. Was it a week since you come upon her, sitting by the bank of the river Severn in tree-full Quarry Park while, around, the town of Shrewsbury became drier for the hot sun of summer?

He could remember almost every word of their conversation – she had smiled as he had passed and he, shy and blushing, spoke of the weather, of how the long heat had lowered the level of the water. On her delicate fingers – a ring with a symbol of the Tao. So he had asked, and had sat beside her. For two hours they talk, revealing their pasts like two friends.

"Without my dreams," she had said, "I would be nothing" and he hid his tears.

There was a beauty in her words, in her eyes, sadness in the softness of her voice and by the time she rose to leave he was in love, although he did not realize it then. "Can I see again?" he asked. She was unsure, but agreed and he gave her his address, named a day and time and watched her walk away wanting but not daring to run and embraced her.

And then she was gone, lost to his world. A day only was over before he found her address and sent her flowers. Next day – her long, sad letter. "I have nothing to give," she had written. "You were my random audience."

He sent more flowers, but sat alone by the river at the appointed time before the dying sun dried away the foolish vapour of his dreams.

The cold water of the stream refreshed him and, as he bathed his face again, his sadness slowly returned, only muted by his ecstasy. No one passed him as he walked along the paths that wound down from among the hills. There was no one to welcome him home, and he sat by the window in his small cottage wondering what he should do. The hills of south Shropshire, the isolation, the garden - all had lost their charm. Somewhere, beyond the valley, the hills, the villages and the town, his wife would be happy within the arms of another man.

It was not a long walk from his cottage to the town and its station, but the heat of the day oppressed him as it made the other passengers in the stuffy, noisy train sit silent and still throughout the short journey.

Variegated people mingled over the sun-shadowed platforms of Shrewsbury station and Thurstan followed two young girls as they walked along the concrete above the sun-glinting lines of steel which carried a diesel engine through the humid air and which vibrated with its power the ground and buildings around. Then the wooden barrier siphoned the arrivals down dirty stone steps and through ultramodern doors to the traffic-filled streets of Shrewsbury.

It was in these streets Thurstan realized he was afraid. He believed he could sense the feelings behind the faces of the people he passed – and not only sense them, but feel them as if they were his own. He felt the nervous vulnerability of a young girl as she waited, half-afraid, by the frontage of a shop where people jostled, and an intimation of her gentle innocence being destroyed troubled him. He felt the anger of a young mother as she scolded her screaming child while cars passed, noisy, in the street: the pain of an old man

as he hobbled supported by a stick toward the pedestrian precinct where youths gathered, waiting.

Thurstan fled from the people, their feelings, the noise, and the latent tension he could feel in the air, to sit by the river in Quarry Park. The sun, the flowing water, the warm grass all calmed him. He sat for over an hour, occasionally turning to watch a few people who passed along the paths. He sensed an affinity, perhaps a love, for the individuals around him – an empathy that he could not, even if he had wished, formulate into words. But this insight was destroyed by a woman.

She was beautiful, the woman who passed him as she walked along the path near where he sat vaguely wondering about love. She seemed to smile at him, but he could not be sure for she passed under the shadow of a tree while sunlight narrowed his eyes. His feelings in that moment were not mystical but rather a strange mixture of gentle sexual desire, expectation and a burgeoning vitality mixed with the anguish of his shyness, and he was resigned to simply remembering the moment as he had remembered such moments before when the woman turned around and smiled.

Thurstan felt as though he had been punched in the stomach. The woman turned, past a tree to walk under the bridge that fed a road over the river, and up toward the town along a narrow, stone-lined passage, leaving Thurstan to his turmoil. Then he was on his feet, and following.

He wanted to run, but dared not. So he followed, quickening his step. He would catch her when the lane met the road ahead between High School and Hospital. Perhaps she sensed him lurking behind and was afraid, for she seemed to Thurstan to quicken her step and he was left to follow her not knowing what he would do. She crossed the road. Thurstan saw nothing except her and had decided not to follow her anymore when she turned, almost stopped, and smiled at him again. He felt she was waiting for him and this feeling made him follow her along the empty pavement and down a narrow cobbled street towards the empty market of an empty traffic-free town.

He was within yards of her when she vanished into one of the many small shops that lined the street. '*J. Apted – Antiquarian Books*' the sign above the door read.

No bell sounded when the Thurstan entered and in the musty dimness he peered around the shelves. A portly gentleman with a genial face stared back at him.

"Can I help you at all, sir?" he asked.

In this small room beyond the shelves Thurstan could see no one. "A woman – did woman just come in here?" Thurstan asked shyly, and blushed.

"A woman?"

"Yes - long red hair, green eyes, wearing a long dress."

The man smiled, kindly. "No one but yourself as entered here this last hour."

Fear of having mistaken the shop, which he saw her enter, made Thurstan rush towards the door when he saw her portrait, in oils, upon the wall.

It was only several minutes later, after questioning the bookseller, that Thurstan realized he is seen a ghost. The woman had been dead for 50 years.

## II

Fifty years, the bookseller and said.

"It was a sad business, yes indeed. Murdered she was. In here - in this very house. I was a school then, you see. You saw her, you said?" And the old man's eyes seemed to brighten.

Then Thurstan thanked him and fled through the humid heat and the peopled streets to find a train to take him toward his home. He could not sleep that night, and the next day, at the same time, he was in the park again, but she did not appear and he walked away to stand for nearly an hour near the bookshop trying to find the courage to go in.

The bookseller was not surprised to see him. "She is beautiful, yes?" he said as Thurstan stood staring at the painting.

"Where did you see her first?", the old man asked directly.

Thurstan turned towards him, and shyly shuffled his feet. "I -" he began.

The man smiled kindly. "I have always felt this place is still her home but, alas, I have myself never met her, as you have done."

"I didn't realize -"

"That what you saw was an apparition? They appear so real, you see. I myself a small interest in such matters. Would you like some tea?"

The invitation was so unexpected and so kindly meant to the without thinking Thurstan said, "Yes - that would be rather nice."

"Shall we retire - to somewhere more comfortable?" the man smiled and wrung his hands. "I shall close early, today!"

The room beyond the shop was, like the shop itself, lined from floor to ceiling with books, and like the books, the table, chairs and desks were antiquarian. There was a large and oddly shaped specimen of rock crystal on the table and Thurstan bent down to examine it. A face - the face of a beautiful woman - was within it but Thurstan had barely recognized it when it vanished.

"Help me!" he thought he heard a sad, distant voice, say.

The bookseller brought a tray, offered a mug of tea, some biscuits and cake while

Thurstan waited, half -watching the crystal and half -expecting to hear the distant voice. He ate and drank, and listened to the words of the old man without really understanding them. Somewhere, in a nearby recess or room, a large clock struck the quarter hour.

His nervous expectancy, the heat, the man's slow but persistent voice, all combined to make Thurstan disposed towards sleep and he felt himself drifting to embrace that temptation when a loud and persistent wrapping awoke him.

"I'm sorry," the booksellers said. "Would you excuse me?"

Thurstan heard a brief curse, the door being unlocked and a few words of the hurried conversation that followed. He was staring into the crystal when the bookseller returned alone. Nearby, the hidden clock marked the passing of half an hour.

The old man did not smile but stared, nervously, at the floor while he said: "I must go. An appointment, you understand. You will not be offended I hope?"

"No, of course not".

"Perhaps -", but he looked up and cast his eyes down again before leading Thurstan towards the door. He saw Thurstan look again at the woman's portrait but pretended not to notice.

"Well, good-bye," Thurstan said, perplexed by the sudden change in the man's aura.

"It was nice meeting you, Mr. Jebb."

Thurstan held out his hand, but the bookseller shuffled away, leaving Thurstan to stumble down the outside step and awkwardly close the door. He had almost reached Quarry Park where a warm sun cast cool tree shadows over the grass when he realized he'd never told the man his name. But this strangeness did not concern him for long as he walked down to the river to sit on a bench, trying to remember what the bookseller had said.

It had been about apparitions, but not in general and not about the ghost that Thurstan and seen, and as he sat watching the strong river flow silently by, he felt his sadness returning. He would never meet her. Never be able to share his dreams, visions and love. He tried hard to wish himself back in time - 50 years before. He would walk to her house and wait. He would not care how long he waited. But he would be ready and somehow save her.

It was childish fantasy and he knew it was, but still he had to control himself to prevent the tears. "There's so much I don't understand", he said to himself aloud and a young girl, prettily dressed, moved away from him, fearful, as she passed by his bench.

His tiredness returned, slowly, brought by sun and his sadness and he closed his eyes to briefly sleep. No sound woke him from the dream about his wife - only a beautiful scent, nearby. A woman had sat beside him on the bench and for almost a minute he feared to look at her. But then she seemed about to leave and he turned, in desperation.

Her dark hair was cut gracefully to fall just above her shoulders and she wore a necklace of polished amber.

"Do you often gawp like that at a strange woman?", she said as he sat open mouth and unbelieving. Only the colour of her hair and manner of dress was different.

"I...", Then: "I'm sorry, but you are so beautiful," he said without thinking as he let out his breath.

She smiled but stood up to leave.

"Please- ", Thurstan stood beside her, unable to control himself, and held her arm as she turned.

She was alive, and in his joy at this he forgot his fear of her reaction. But only for an instant. He jerked his hand away.

"Yes?"

He struggled to find words would make sense but his thoughts were fastly moving water breaking over the weir of dread.

She's saved him from this turmoil. "You may invite me to share a pot of tea with you at the café around corner."

"What? Yes, of course."

He walked beside her, awkward and blushing, for many yards before she spoke again.

"You are an interesting man."

"Do you live in Shrewsbury?" he managed to say.



"Nearby."

"Do you often walk along here?" The banality of his questions pained him - but she would think him a fool or mad, if he formed his chaos of feelings into words. And did not want to lose her.

"Sometimes."

It was a strange sensation for Thurstan walking beside the beautiful woman. Was she a vision sent to haunt him - or was his dream the ghost of yesterday? But he knew she was real as he seemed to know she was interested in him. In him, Thurstan Jebb. Perhaps she was intrigued. Was it something in his eyes, he wondered, that gave him away? For a long time he had believed he was different - a mystic perhaps, who felt and saw more than others. This secret knowledge gave him security in the outer barrenness of his life as he eked out a type of living as a gardener, content to have forgotten his past.

"You are an interesting man", he heard in his head like an echo, and he smiled.

"May I ask your name? " he said, feeling his mouth go dry.

She turned and smiled. "Melanie."

"Melanie, " he repeated, like a fool.

"Yes. I believe it comes from the Greek for black."

"Hence your black dress."

"Not really. I think the colour suits me, don't you?"

Unexpectedly, she twirled around, laughing.

"I think most colours would suit you." she smiled at him again and Thurstan wanted to from

embrace her - more from sexual desire than from any nobler feeling. This sudden desire surprised him with its intensity and he began to tremble. It seemed to him natural that he should be walking with her, for she was not like a stranger to him. He wanted to hold her hand as they walked away from the river up a narrow street to where an almost empty café lay, renovated and waiting beside the boarded up windows and doors of a once notorious Inn. "Barrick Passage", the street sign read.

They sat in silence for a long time as their Darjeeling tea cooled. "I don't", Thurstan said and blushed, "make a habit of this."

"What? Drinking tea on a hot afternoon, " she teased.

"No - I mean inviting strange ladies.... "

"Am I strange then?"

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean-"

"Don't worry," Melanie laughed. "Anyway, I invited you!"

Her smile made Thurstan's desire return. She seemed to be waiting - expectant. There was warmth and her eyes, in her smile, even in the way that she leaned her body slightly towards him. Her dress emphasized her breasts as her necklace emphasize her green eyes and Thurstan greedily sucked in her beauty through his eyes as he sucked in her perfume through his nose. Her skin was tanned and he found it impossible to judge her age. He wanted to tell her of the ghost he seen - of his dreams and hopes and visions about life. But all he did, trembling of limbs and with straining heart, was reach across the table and hold her hand.

She did not flinch nor move away as half of him expected, but slowly stroked the back of his hand with her thumb. He was elated with his success, and closed his eyes in delight.

"You are trembling, " she said, gently.

Slowly, he shook his head. "I can't believe this. There are so many things I want to say."

"Don't say them. Let's just enjoy this moment."

"You are so beautiful." he reached up and stroked her face with his fingers.

"Will you walk with me to my car? "

Dazed, he followed her out of the building to walk beside her. She did not seem to mind when he held her hand.

Several men turned to stare at her as they descended the shop-strewn steepness of Wyle Cop to cross the busy road. Thurstan was oblivious to it all.

The luxury of her car surprised him and he stood beside it under a hot sun, tongue-tied and embarrassed and feeling lost. Only the wealthy could afford such a car.

"You seem surprised, " she said, breaking free her hand to find the keys in the pocket of her dress.

Their slow but short walk from the café had unsettled Thurstan, for the magick of the moment they had shared appeared to him to be drifting away to another world, and he would begin to convince himself that he had been mistaken. There would be nothing more - except perhaps the future possibility of him trying somehow to painfully recapture those moments: to draw her on toward the fulfillment of desire. But all she did was hold the passenger door of the car open for him, saying, "Come on." And, obedient, he sat beside her, while chaos returned to his head.

Skillfully she drove through the streets to take a road westerly from the town while Thurstan watched and waited, so full of anticipation that he could not speak. She turned to smile several times as a miles lay numberless because uncounted behind them and as a strong summer sun coloured the sky deep blue, he found his desire increasing. He knew she sensed this, and drove faster as if intoxicated both by the power of the car and his feelings toward her. The road rose steadily through small villages, past cottages and houses, to turn and re-turn between the Stiperstonerocks and the growing hills that became Wales, leading up from a tree-lined valley to the desolate wastes of marshlands where abandoned mine-workings lay.

Melanie left the main road that dropped slowly between the Corndon and Black Rhadley hills to follow a low hedged-hemmed lane over the border into Wales. The lane rose and fell to rise again between fields worn for centuries only by sheep and sparse of tree. Then, quite suddenly, Melanie stopped.

Thurstan felt her anger before he saw it in her eyes. She was staring at him, but he only smiled. For a moment, she did not seem quite human and when he reached out for her hand she snatched it away.

He was perplexed by this change in her rather than afraid, and sat, quietly waiting and smiling. When she looked away, he said, "I can walk back if you wish."

She did not turn around. "It might be best."

"I'm sorry if I have upset to you in any way. I thought...."

"I know what you thought!" she said savagely.

"No - not just that." he closed his eyes to see within the fleeting impression of his dreams. The days, hours, minutes shared: the moments of intuitive closeness - sharing a sunset, a snowy day in Spring, laughter, tears, and physical joy. The look, touch, feeling of lovers.

Thurstan did not want to lose his dreams. "You are a rare, precious and beautiful woman. There is something about you - I don't know what it is." He felt so much love within him that he wanted to share and thus his words could not be stopped. "I sensed something about you when we sat by the river. Call me mad - or a fool, or both. I don't care. You sensed it too, I know."

Angry still, she said, "What did you sense then?"

"Then maybe you are my Destiny." Gently, he stroked her face.

"Your dreams are not real."

"They are if I make them real." He sighed and stared out the window. A raven flew nearby,

but it did not interest him. "Maybe it was the goddess I saw in you, I don't know. I've certainly made a fool of myself this time, haven't I?"

"You interest me, " she said, her anger gone.

"And you perplex me." Since he felt he ought to be honest he added, "and you arouse my desire. But you know that. As you know that basically I'm just a romantic fool with a headpiece filled with dreams."

"You do not know anything about me."

"I have always found the beginnings of relationships difficult. The tentative steps, the gradual unravelling of lives. It always seemed such a waste - there are so many more important things. And I'm not talking about the physical aspect either. I always plunge straight in - rather bad choice of phrase - the grand passion every time. Never seem to learn either.

"So, it's not important for you to know me. I sense things about you. I see your beauty, smell your perfume, and am intoxicated. You offer the choice of existence, meaning, bliss, sorrows, tears. Whenever. It does not matter - I am alive again! Really living. Full of energy, anticipation. You are music, poetry, dance - even religion."

He laughed. "Now you know that I am mad!"

Slowly, she drove on to where a cottage with a sagging roof and decaying walls grew beside the road, sheltered from sheep by a small garden where a rusty dismembered tractor lay dead. Incongruous beside it was a new car, spreading bright sun. Melanie stopped, and entered the cottage without knocking on its paint-peeling door. Less than a minute later she returned.

"I must see you again," she said she started her car. "Now I have other matters that must be attended to. "Joel," she indicated the men who emerged from the cottage "shall take you back."

Thurstan look perplexed so she said, "Don't worry," and touched his face. "You were not mistaken. Meet me tomorrow night at nine where we met today. Can you do that?"

"Of course!"

"Good. Now I must go."

To Thurstan's surprise, she leaned over and kissed him on the lips. Then he was outside the metal womb of the car. She did not wave, but drove quickly away to leave him standing beside the ugly man with a madman's grin.

Over the cottage, a raven flew to shadow him briefly from the sun.



They were waiting for her, in the small wood near the circle of ancient stones. Algar, Master of her Temple, smiled as he watched her walk alone towards them.

"So," he said, "he was not to be our chosen." In the light of the wood, his dark gaunt features were sinister.

"There shall be other times." Melanie did not take she offered robe. "Tomorrow when dark comes, we shall gather here again."

"For the sacrifice?" Algar asked.

"Perhaps." She addressed her followers directly. "Go now. And tomorrow we shall feast and rejoice!"

She did not wait but turned back along the track toward he car. Almost obsequious, Algar walked beside her.

"But he was receptive?" he asked.

"Yes."

"You do a particularly fetching in that dress if I may say so." Then, seeing her indifference, he said, "Shall you lure him tomorrow?"

"He may not be suitable."

"Oh? Why would that be then?"

Melanie stopped and stared at him and he visibly cowered. "What do you mean?"

"I meant nothing," he said truthfully. But her anger aroused suspicion.

"The new candidate?"

Algar smiled. "He has healed well. He would like to see you, privately of course."

"Of course. Tonight?"

"I could arrange it, if you wish."

"Arrange it!"

The humid heat of the evening annoyed her while she waited, and when he did come, brought forth from the darkness outside her house by Algar, she was impatient to begin. Algar took the man's money before leading him into the candle-lit incensed Temple where he stripped and bound him to the frame.

But the frenzied whipping of the fat man with bulging eyes and pale skin did not bring forth the joy of pleasure she anticipated - only a hatred that quickly passed as the man groaned and sighed, taking his own dark pleasure from his pain. There was little blood upon the back and buttocks of the man and Algar, leering in the shadows, was surprised when she stopped. The bound man turned to look up at her, his eyes pleading for the pleasure her

pain and dominance brought him. He could see her breasts clearly through her thin sweat-stained robe, but his hands were bound by leather thongs to the cold aluminium frame and he could not reach out and touch them as he wished.

There was a strange desire within Melanie and it appalled her. She tried to destroy it by fulfilling her role as Satanic whip queen and surrendering again to the joy she found in dominating and debasing the men she despised. But it did not work and the lashes she gave became softer until they stopped completely. In disgust at herself she threw the leather scourge upon the altar to let Algar disrobe and take his own selfish pleasure upon the man whom he unbound and pushed roughly to the floor.

Her swim in the warm water of her pool settled some of her feelings, a little, so she was able to plan how best Algar could kill her chosen sacrifice. She and she alone would dare to call the Dark Gods back to Earth. The chosen would be easy to entice to their sacred circle of stones as he had been easy to capture, and the more she thought of the deed to come, the more the anticipated pleasure covered and obscured her remembrances of his gentle dreams.

She was Melanie, Mistress of the Earth in the Temple of Darkness: ruler of a coven of fifty. No man would mould her feelings. For years she had schemed, cheated, manipulated and lied, building from the foundations of her beauty and sexuality the wealth and power she craved as a girl. She was fifteen when her parents died when the plane they were in crashed. A teacher befriended her and was not long before she realized the power her innocence and beauty gave her. He was her first victim, but she soon tired of him and his small gifts and sought more wealthy prey. But she despised them all, these man who lusted after her - they would sell their souls, and most of them had, for the short pleasure she sometimes allowed them to find in her body. Thurstan would be no exception.

It would be good, she felt, to sacrifice him at the moment he achieved his desire. This thought pleased her and she swam slowly, allowing the physical exertion and the warmth of all of water to gently excite her.

Algar watched the rear lights the man's car fade on the long driveway from the house before he shut the door. Melanie was upstairs, asleep, and he did not creep but walked boldly through the hall to her secret Temple. It was a small room, windowless and black, containing only a chair and a wooden plinth on which stood a large quartz tetrahedron.

A diffuse light, reddish in hue, was thrown upward from the opaque floor and for many minutes Algar sat in the chair amid the warm and perfumed air. He felt powerful, sitting



there instead of a kneeling on the floor while she sat smiling and forming her thoughts into the crystal to become the chains, which bound him.

"With a look or smile," he remembered she had said, "I can strike you dead!". He did not doubt it. Three years ago she had stolen his power.

For ten years he had followed the way of his Prince gathering allies and power. Even as a boy he'd followed some of these ways, but his teachers and superiors had mistaken his hatred for intellectual sophistry, his dark interior life for spirituality and his ruthless ambition for spiritual gifts. The world of monastic schooling was all he had ever known or wanted and it was natural that it should lead him to a novitiate and the Order of his teachers.

For one year, and one year only, he tried to follow their way until Bruno the elder novice had one night seduced them as he lay in his cold monastic cell.

For weeks afterwards he had prayed to the Prince, "Our Father, which wert in heaven hallowed be thy name in heaven as it is on Earth. Give us this day our desire and delivers us to evil as well as temptation for we are your kingdom for aeons and aeons. Prince of Darkness, hear me."

Bruno died soon after, in his sleep, an expression of stark terror on his face. "Heart attack" a doctor had said, but Algar knew his humiliation had been avenged.

He was a Priest, his dark life hidden and a source of satisfaction, when he first met her. It was a cold morning in Spring and she stood outside his little church, radiantly beautiful in the light of the sun. "I have come, " she said, "to ask you to say a Mass for us". She held out her left hand and he saw the strange symbol on her ring. Obedient, he knelt down to kiss it. "How did you know?" he asked. She smiled, not kindly despite her beauty. "I have seen you at night pray to our Prince."

The crystal had guided her. That very night he presided as priest at a Black Mass and afterwards, with only her servant Lois remaining in her large house, she had bound his will with her own. He had been standing by the crystal when Lois had stripped him bare and offered her body. Then Melanie the dark witch was laughing but his sudden anger was no match for her power and she stared at him before binding him by curse.

Her eyes seemed to suck his will away and she unthreaded an amber bead from the many she wore around her neck. "In this bead I bind you by the power of our Prince! Binan ath ga

wath am!" she chanted. "Nythra!..." He watched silent and paralyzed while she counted the fifty beads she wore around her neck. The crystal gave power to and magnified her thoughts and when she released him he stared at it for several minutes. But it was useless - he could do nothing with it and calmly allowed himself to be led by Lois to his room. And when he awoke, worn and feeling old, there was a beautiful boy, waiting naked, by his bed. "I am her gift" the burgeoning man had said....

Algar sighed as he remembered. Even after three years he did not know the secret of her crystal but he did know the Satanic organization she had created to keep her power and wealth, and as he walked from her temple to find a telephone, he was smiling.

"Rathbone?" he said into the telephone receiver. "This is Algar. I believe you owe us a favour ....I have a job for you."

Upstairs, unknown to or her High Priest, Melanie was awake and watching him on the monitor screen of her discretely installed surveillance system.

#### IV

Thurstan was early. It was a humid evening and he sat by the river enjoying the twilight. The new clothes he had bought for the occasion made him feel self-conscious and every few minutes he would look around. But the few people who wandered by did not - or pretended they did not - notice him and he would be left to rehearse again in his head what he would say to Melanie when they met.

It was not a sudden decision, but the planning of the night before, that made Melanie watch him silently from a distance. She did not watch for long.

Darkness was upon the hill as in silence the worshippers prepared, guided only by the diffuse light from the candles in their red lanterns. Carefully Algar laid out the sacrificial knife upon the woven cloth inside the circle of stones. The thongs were strong and would bind the victim while the cloth would soak up the blood. Satisfied he whispered commands.

"She is here!" Lois said seeing the signal from one of the men guarding the track that led to the stones.

There was a sigh from thirteen throats and then the slow dance and has chant began.

"Suscipe Satanas munus quod tibi offerimus..." Soon the hissing became like the sound of a thousand demons chattering as they rose gleefully from the pits of Hell. In the centre, Algar waited with his muscular helper to bind the victim's arms and legs.

Then Melanie was before him. One bead of her amber necklace appeared to

Algar to be glowing, pulsing in rhythm with the beat of his heart. He was becoming mesmerized with this when it occurred to him that Melanie was alone.

Before he could move he was held from behind. He felt thongs being tied around his wrists, heard Melanie whisper mockingly in his ear, "We have our sacrifice!"

"No! No!" he screamed. But she was laughing as someone gave her the knife.

Around them, the sibilant chant rose towards its climax, the dancers fleetingly caught in the red glow from the candles.

With a sudden burst of energy Algar screamed. "Jebb dies if I do!" but a gag silenced him.

Melanie held the sharp knife to his throat before loosening the gag. "Tell me what you mean!" she demanded.

"He dies if I do not return," Algar said, flinching.

"Is that so? "

"Rathbone shall - "

Melanie clapped hands twice and from the darkness around the track a man stepped into the dim circle of light. Someone held a lantern near his face.

"I had no choice," Rathbone said, his face, like a weasel, twitching.

Then Algar was on his knees, crying. "Spare me, spare me!" he pleaded

"And if I do?" demanded Melanie.

"I shall always be your slave."

Three times Melanie clapped her hands as a signal for the dancers to gather around. "See" she said, "all you who dwell in my temple. Here is Algar, the High Priest who thought he knew my secret, admired and envied for his fortune by you all. See now how he begs before me! Shall I spare him?"

"Kill him! Kill him!" they demanded.

Melanie laughed. Algar was brought to his feet. "For a year I shall spare your life."

The dancers, as if signalled silently, dispersed to return to their dance. "Now," she whispered to Algar, "you shall see my power - brought without the gift of blood!"

She did not speak, or move, but slowly raised her hands as, many miles away, the crystal within her secret temple began to glow. "Atazoth! Atazoth!", the dancing dancers hissed. The sky above and around them was clear, speckled by stars but a ragged darkness came to cover a part of the sky as a putrid stench filled the air and a circle of cold fell around the worshippers. No one moved, then, or chanted or spoke but all stared up at the sky. The darkness grew slowly before withdrawing into a sphere that darted across sky. And then it was gone.

"Tomorrow, " Melanie said, "you shall see the chaos I have caused. Now feast and rejoice and take your pleasure as you will!"

Around her, the orgy began as she unbound Algar's hands and led him from the revelry toward her car.

"There is much you do not know, " she said she drove toward her house.

Algar did not speak during their journey and slunk away like a broken man into his room on their arrival, while Melanie watched him on a monitor screen. But it was not long before she

began thinking about Thurstan. She had reached out to him while she had watched him sitting by the river and even had not Algar's intended treachery changed her plans she knew that she could not have hurt him.

She had even lost her lust for Algar's blood and let him live. Somewhere, around the world, the dark power she unleashed would be causing disaster and death. It was a small beginning, the prelude to the opening of the Star Gate which would return her Dark Gods to Earth. But it was not fulfilling, and she thought it might be.

Unsettled, she went down to her temple. The warmth of the gentle light, the perfume but most of all the crystal brought here reassurance about her power and role, and she forgot about Thurstan and a burgeoning dichotomy he was causing in her head. Perhaps her Dark Gods and guided her to the crystal - she did not know. But only four years ago she had found it, in a Satanic Temple she had visited. The group had not impressed her, but the High Priest was easy to manipulate and he had given her the crystal as a gift. Only when she first touched it did she discover its power.

The High Priest was the first person whose soul she bound within the beads around her neck. He still brought her money from his schemes, and sometimes a new member. She was content to leave him to bask in his little power, knowing she only had to summon him for him to fall prostrate at her feet. And when his schemes failed or he ceased to be of use, she would remove his bead and grind it into dust, for then he would surely die.

For weeks after the gift of the crystal she had shut herself away in the small house she then shared with Lois. The crystal brought knowledge and she had learned how to use it to travel among the hidden dimensions where the Dark Gods slept, waiting for someone to break the seal that bound them in sleep. She learned of Earth's past, of how the Dark Gods had come bringing terror and much that was strange. Of how her Prince was their Guardian, given the Earth as his domain. Her shape-changing Prince was her guide to the Abyss beyond, and she explored the Abyss without fear, trembling or dread. She would be ready, she knew, when the stars were aligned aright, to call and summon the Dark

Gods from sleep.

Her temple, the men she held in thrall in her beads, were but a means to this call, for the crystal was the key to the Star Gate. She, and she alone of all those who over the centuries had tried to bring the dark terrors forth, would succeed - of that she was sure.

So had she played her games of power and joy, feeling herself the equal of gods. There were few crimes that she had not sanctioned or sent men, in their lust, to commit, few

pleasures she had not enjoyed. Yet she was not maddened by either pleasure or power, and kept her empire small, sufficient for her needs, and herself anonymous. Many small firms headed by small men, a brothel or two, a number of temples in the cities beyond - such were the gifts of her Prince and she tended them all, as a wise woman should.

Slowly, and contented once again, she left for temple to climb the stairs to her bed.

Algar waited, quite patiently, until he was sure she was asleep and knocked, not too loudly, on Lois' door. She had returned alone, as he knew she must, and was not surprised see him.

"Yes!" she asked and smiled, leaning against frame of her door. Sometimes, Algar like to talk with her, as one servant to another.

Algar did not smile, nor speak but moved towards her to stab her in the throat. She rasped, staring in disbelief, and staggered back towards the bed. Not content, he followed and stabbed her through the heart. The beauty that had pleased Melanie would please her no more and, smiling at this thought,

Algar wiped the handle of the knife clean on the satin sheet. Soon, he was running away from the house under the shimmering bright stars of the humid night.

Melanie awoke slowly. She sensed a change in the aura of her house and had walked towards her door before realizing what it was. She was alone. But there was no fear in her and she wandered barefoot and naked along long corridor, as there was no shock when she entered Lois' room.

It was then she knelt down to gently close the eyes of her dead lover that the reaction came. Her cold hatred toward Algar for his deed was soon gone, and in the silence of her house and for the first time in her life, she began to cry.

Outside, a stray, fierce dog howled.

V

Algar heard the howling as he ran down the narrow lane away from the house and in terror

he scrambled through the hedge to run faster across the fields. The dog, sent by the dark force of Melanie's will, had picked up his scent and Algar ran, desperate and stumbling, toward the valley stream.

The house lay alone on a track below the hill that held Billings Ring, the fields around sheep-strewn and rough, overlooked by the southerly slopes of the Mynd that turned the waters of the Onny River south then almost north until a softer rock fed them eastward again. The sound of water was clear amid the silence of the night and Algar stood beside the stream in an effort to slow his straining breath. The lights of a car on the road above and a field away from him shone ragged through the high hedge, and Algar crept down, fearing to be seen.

But his fear of the pursuing beast was stronger and he waded into the stream to walk along it for several yards and hide under the bridge. He could hear the dog but could not see it and waited, cold and shaking, for nearly half an hour. The bridge swept a narrow lane away, and up from the valley road, to a hamlet of a few houses. There would be no safety for him there in the farm workers' houses less than a mile from Melanie's home.

For some time he listened intently, and, hearing nothing, crawled slowly and scared from the stream. He was on the lane, almost at its junction with the road when the stalking dog attacked. It leapt snarling to try and sink its teeth into his throat. But Algar shielded his face with his hands and the dog bit deeply into his arm, knocking him over. It bit him again as Algar struggled with it on the ground. There was a large stone by his hand and Algar used it to smash at the dog's skull. In a frenzy, he struck the dog until it was dead. But even then he kicked it several times and threw the stone at its face before staggering to the road.

The first car that passed him did not stop and nearly knocked him over as he stood in the road waving his bloodied arms, but the second one, a long time after, did stop and Algar pretended to faint. The driver was near when Algar leapt up to push the man away before stealing his car.

The pain was excruciating but he tried to ignore it and the dizziness that threatened to overwhelm him. He had one hope and one hope only and drove fastly toward Shrewsbury to seek sanctuary from Melanie's curse. The roads were empty, the streets of the town deserted in the silent hours before dawn and he abandoned the car to walk the last quarter mile to the church.

No light shone in the Presbytery windows until his insistent knocking on its doors awoke its occupant from his sleep.

Cautious, but not afraid, the old Priest opened the door.

“Help me, Father! Please, help me!” Algar pleaded.

He did not see the bats that flew silently away from the church.

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There was no choice, as Melanie knew. The two members of her Temple, summoned from their sleep, carried the body to their van. Melanie had cleaned and bathed it, using her own black satin sheets for a shroud, and she stayed beside it during the hours it took them to dig the grave.

Dawn came, with no wind to break the silence of the forest, but its beautiful colours did not interest her as she stood, dressed in white, in the still air to watch the two men lower the body into the Earth. There were no prayers to her to say, no lament for her to sing – only an unvoiced oath to avenge the death of her friend. The earth was returned, the covering of grass and small bush neatly replaced, the debris of leaves and broken twig scattered again. There was no sign of the grave and, satisfied, Melanie allowed the men to return to her home.

“There shall be gifts for you both,” she said as they bowed slightly before taking their leave.

Slowly, in her secret Temple, she unthreaded from her necklace Algar’s bead. There was no frenzy of anger within her but a desire for Algar to suffer a slow, painful death as she squeezed the amber bead several times between her fingers. To her surprise the crystal did show her Algar contorted in pain. Yet she knew that even though for some reason she could not see him and thus discover his location, she was still causing him pain, and as she danced around her crystal she increased the pressure on the bead before stopping to visualize the time and place of his death, two weeks hence in the centre of her circle of stones.

Slowly, and deliberately she cut the threads, which bound his life to this Earth, and, although still living, he was imprisoned in her web of death. It was not difficult for her to move the plinth upon which the crystal stood, for she had done it many times before and the mechanism which she had installed many years before did not fail her. The plinth, and the stone and which it rested, moved quietly aside to reveal a dark pit that sank deep into Earth. She did not smile, or feel anything, as she let the bead drop to join the scattered human



remains.

The remains were the work of the sinister woman who had in the weeks of her dying given Melanie the house. “I have waited for you,” she remembered the old woman had said, “waited as our Prince said I should. My coven and books and house are yours.” She never spoke again, but signed her name on her will, and Melanie was left to find the old woman’s secrets from the Black Book of workings she had kept. ‘I, Eulalia, Priestess of the forgotten gods, descended from those who kept the faith, here set forth for she who is to come after me, the dark secrets of my craft...’ The book was Melanie’s most treasured possession, after her crystal and her beads. It was the crystal that first showed her the house.

She let the crystal guide her here again and sat in her chair while the plinth slid silently back into place. At first, the tetrahedron showed nothing, but its inner clearness gradually vanished to reveal a man’s face. Thurstan was in his cottage, reading as he sat hunched on the wide inside sill of a window, framed by the rising sun. He looked up, briefly, and smiled as if aware of being observed. He seemed to Melanie to be staring at her. Then he was gone as the crystal cleared.

His smile, that gentle look in his eyes, her sensation of herself being observed all confused her, and she left her Temple to walk under the warm sun in the walled garden at the rear of her house. It was not long before she returned to her crystal.

It did not respond to her commands of thought. There was no Thurstan for her to see, not even an outside view of his cottage. Faint images seemed to be forming, but they were intrusive – bats flying away from a church at night, a raven plucking the eye from a dead dog – and her failure angered her. Her anger was the catalyst, and transformed the flickering images into a clear vision of Algar writhing in agony upon a bed. Above him on the wall, was the symbol of the Nazarene. By the bed an old Priest spoke silent words as he read from a leather breviary.

Melanie’s laugh erased all thoughts of Thurstan from her mind.

## VI

“Exorcizamus te, omnis immunde spiritus, omnia Satanica potestas omnis incursio infernalis adversarii ....”

The old Priest continued his prayer of exorcism while Algar writhed in pain on the bed. But then the pain eased. Algar however, did not attribute this to the Priest but to Melanie's curse. She would want him to die slowly, and as he lay smiling inwardly at the antics of the old man who had earlier cleaned and dressed the wounds the vicious dog had caused, Algar sensed a chance for life.

It would not arise from the exorcism for he had no belief in the religion of the Priest which once and briefly he himself had embraced inwardly. The old man had been kind, listening intently as Algar had told him a tale composed mainly of lies. He had been given sanctuary, clothes and medical aid – which was all he wanted – and let the Priest play out his farce of a role. His chance for life would come from his own hands by his breaking of Melanie's curse. For that, she herself would have to die, and he began to think of stratagems by which he could lure her to her death.

Thurstan Jebb held some fascination for her, or some future potential which she planned somehow to draw out for her own advantage and although he did not know nor particularly care which, if any of these was correct, he knew enough to realize Jebb might provide his bait. The plan he thought of pleased him, bringing a resurgence of some of the power he had felt as High Priest and he allowed the old man to finish his prayers before explaining he would have to leave.

He thanked the Priest for the exorcism, lyingly said it was effective and thanked the man for saving his life. He even suggested they go into the church to say a prayer of thanksgiving. Algar, offering his wounds as an excuse not to kneel, sat to say aloud in Latin a suitable prayer. The Priest was impressed, as Algar knew he would be, and did not say no when Algar asked for some money.

“Just a small loan, Father,” the lying High Priest said.

A few hours later, he was safely in Leeds. The pain, which came to him during his journey by train, was not intense or prolonged.

Ray Vitek was not pleased to see him and it showed on his face. But in deference to Algar's position he asked him politely inside the seedy terraced house along the sloping streets between the traffic noise of Hyde Park Corner and the tree lined peace of Meanwood Ridge.

“So,” Vitek said suspiciously as they sat among the books within a mould-filled room, “she has sent you for another favour.” Nervously, with thin fingers, he stroked his pointed beard.

“A favour, yes. But not for her.”

“I see. So it has come to that.”

“Will you join me – against her?”

“Years ago – I forget exactly when it was – I had a Priestess. Perhaps you remember her? No, well I was young then, as you were. I loved her. Linda was her name. Then she came to entice her away. She died – in a brothel.”

“Then you will help?”

“Me – once in love! I have never loved anyone or anything since.”

“I did not know,” Algar said, acting concerned.

“Who cares – I don’t care – not any more.” Then, his mood changed, he added, “what has she done to you then?”

Algar took off the coat that the Priest had given him and showed his bloodstained bandages.

“So?” Vitek said. “Why come to me?”

“Because you have friends. Desperate friends who need a little something every now and then. What would they do for a year’s supply?”

“She would have you killed before you did anything.”

Algar laughed. It was not pleasant to hear. “She does not know about my – how shall I say – my little side-line!”

Vitek was surprised – but his lethargy soon returned. “So what can I do?”

“Your friends,” Algar said – and his imitation of a gargoyle suited him, “shall keep a little something of mine. To lure her. She come – and they – how shall I say – entertain her?”

Vitek’s brief laugh was broken by a spasm of coughing. He spat into the fireplace. Then, remembering: “but her power – “

“When they take her they bring you the necklace she wears. You shall bring it to me.”

“But I remember – “

“The crystal? Yes, I shall smash it while she is away and her power will be gone!”

“A year’s supply, you say? For them all?”

“For them all!”

“It shall be done as you wish. When?”

“Tomorrow!”

“So soon?”

“It must be! When she arrives – surprise her. Take her by force, tear the necklace away! Without it she has no power. And when your friends have finished their games with her –“ he shrugged – “an overdose perhaps.”

“When do you deliver?”

“After the deed is done.”

“I may need something – “

“To offer them? Of course! You shall have it, my friend! This very day. Give me two hours.” His torment was beginning again, and as he strove to control the pain, sweat began to dribble down his face. “I shall return here.”

He did not wait but rushed to flee outside where he stood under a cloudy sky while his body contorted in pain. “I shall kill you!” He repeated. “You shall die a horrible death.”

He imagined that the death Melanie would find tomorrow and although this brought a little satisfaction it did nothing to lessen his pain. He felt like he was being crushed. Then, as suddenly as it had before, it stopped. He walked on toward the summit of the road, dreading its return.

He worked slyly and quickly in the anonymity of the city while thunderclouds covered the sky and the humidity grew. A few telephone calls, a meeting with a man whose expensive car drove him along the crowded streets to a small warehouse by the river. Promises made, a briefcase given to him, another journey by car and he was handing Vitek the promised goods – small packets containing white death.

His pain did not return, but his dread of its returning never left him, becoming during the growing cloud darkness of the daylight hours a demon to haunt him. He was always two footsteps behind, this demon.

The Satanic underworld did not fail him. For two years he had used his influence as Melanie’s High Priest to spin his webs in the temple of the empire she had built. Money diverted, a few small schemes of his own. He had been waiting for her weakness, and had found it. Soon, her empire would be his.

This pleased him. He was given help in her name, but in a few days it would be his name which commanded respect. He had used her name before and she never knew. He used it again, and a young man collected him in a new car and ferried him toward her home.

The demon of dread followed. Several times while lightning struck and nearby thunder crashed, he feared Vitek’s betrayal. “You know how she feels about these,” he had said to Vitek while he gave the white death away. And Vitek’s sunken eyes had bulged. “She does not like them. Warn her, Vitek, and there shall be no more.” Vitek’s thin, grasping hands said he understood. “Your friends, Vitek – I should have to tell them, you understand, if you betrayed me.”

His fears grew like the darkness that brought the day to its end until he became a madman pretending he was sane. He had procured a revolver, and caressed it repeatedly.

Apted was in his shop, as Algar hoped he would be. As soon as Apted unlocked the door he pushed past him.

“Is all well with you?” Apted asked cheerfully.

Algar pressed the barrel of the revolver into a flabby cheek. “Give me Jebb’s address!”

“But she – “

“Give me the address!” He eased back the hammer of the gun with his thumb.

“But I gave it to Rathbone.”

“He is no use to me now! The address!”

Apted gave it.

“Tell her, fat man, and I shall carve the fat from you, slice by slice! Understand? Good! She is finished!” As a gesture of his defiance he spat at her portrait, which hung on Apted’s wall.

The storms, which had followed him from Leeds, fell upon the town to wash the heat and dust away, stealing, for a few brief minutes, the lights that kept the night at bay. Somewhere below the thunder, a young child screamed.

## VII

The storm pleased Melanie and she danced naked in her garden while the rain washed her body as she sucked the storm’s health in.

She was inside, allowing the warm air in her secret Temple to dry her when she heard the

telephone ring. The call was brief and she dressed slowly before saying goodbye to her house.

Apted was in a corner of his shop, jibbering, the telephone in his hand, his door open as Algar had left it. She smiled at him and touched his forehead with her hand. Soon, he was almost smiling.

“I had to tell him. I am sorry,” he said and meant it.

“You are safe now. He cannot harm you. Do you believe me?”

“Yes, my princess.” Happiness returned to his face.

“Is Jane still in your care?”

“Why, yes! But they have threatened to take her away from me.”

“May I borrow her for a few days?”

“She is yours now – a gift from an old and grateful man.”

Melanie’s brief kiss surprised him, but when he opened his eyes again, she was gone.

The sky had cleared by the time she drove along the narrow track that led to Thurstan’s cottage among the hills of south Shropshire, and as she left her car to walk the few yards to his door bats swooped around her. She greeted them, as a queen should, laughing as she pushed the door open.

Thurstan was gone, as she half expected him to be, and she felt and smelt the traces that Algar had left. There was a note, stuck to the table by a knife and she read it without emotion. “Come alone,” it read, giving a date, time and place, “or he shall die like Lois.” It demanded a large sum of money.

She burned the note in the fireplace before examining the cottage. There were few books and all of those were in Greek. Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles... Few clothes, furniture or

possessions. In the bedroom she found a neat pile of translations but they did not interest her, as the cottage seemed to hold few clues to Thurstan himself. It was damp if clean, austere but full of memories. The memories, spectral forms and sounds, seeped out of the walls, the floor, the beams which held the roof, to greet Melanie. Sighs, laughter, the pain of childbirth, an old man dying his bed while his spirit wandered the hills above.

Two centuries of life, struggle, love and death.

But however intently she listened, however still she held her gaze, neither sights nor sounds from Thurstan's past seeped to her through the gates of time, and it was behind the only painting in the cottage that she found her answer. It was a good painting of a pretty woman, curiously hung above the long narrow windows where Melanie had seen Thurstan sitting. Behind it, totally obscured, was a niche carved from the rough stone that made up the walls. It contained a large quartz crystal. Stored in the crystal was Thurstan's life, in images only a Mistress of Earth or a Magus could see.

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The child that Algar had abducted near Apted's shop during the storm had lain silent and terrified in the car while the young man drove through the night, obedient to Algar's commands because he believed he was acting in Melanie's name.

The young man had said nothing when Algar told him to stop and took the child into the darkness of trees by the road. He kept his silence when Algar returned alone fastening the belt of his trousers. He said nothing as he stood waiting for Thurstan to answer the knocks that Algar made upon his door. Kept his silence as he bound and gagged the man at whose head Algar aimed the revolver. Said nothing as he drove his silent passenger to the city of Leeds and the rotting, broken houses that were Algar's destination. The human shadows that surrounded his car and who dragged the bound man away repulsed him, and he was glad when Algar gave him money and dismissed him.

There was much mute laughter and hissing glee as Thurstan was hauled from room to smelly room whose denizens lay supinely on floors or leaned, festering, against walls while loud music played. Vitek was lashing Thurstan to a chair in an upper room when Algar's demon of dread leapt and sunk its rows of teeth into the flesh of its prey. Algar did not scream but cowered in a corner, his whole body convulsed. Thurstan was smiling – or seemed to Algar to be smiling at him – and he leapt up to punch Thurstan several times in the face. Instantly, his torment ceased. Then Thurstan winked.



Raging, Algar held the revolver to his head, but Vitek calmed him and led him away, saying, "He is our bait, our money. Leave him."

Daylight brought no sun or light through the boarded windows and Algar slept, twitching from nightmares, on the floor of a suppurating room where three men took turns copulating with a young girl too tired and drugged to care. But their energy did not last and soon only Thurstan was awake, dreaming of the woman he had loved.

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A few high cirrus clouds flecked the beautiful blue of the sky as Melanie drove slowly under the warm sun through the busy streets of Leeds. She was not late, and parked her car in the narrow rubble filled street of boarded up houses. Two men with long greasy hair wearing chains for belts watched her, showing rotten teeth as they smiled.

Swaggering, they walked toward her as she got out of her car. Behind her, another man emerged from the shadowed alley beside a house. He was within feet of her when she opened the back door of her car. Gracefully, the leopard leapt into the sunlight.

She stood leaning against her car while the leopard sat beside her. Respectfully and silently, the men moved away. Then, one of them moved slowly toward her but he did not speak as she did not, only bowed his head while she stared into his eyes. He walked away, then – and there was a scream as he, obedient to her will, entered the house, then the sound of breaking glass and wood. A shout. "Don't come any closer!" And a single shot, dull but echoing.

Another man walked toward her and he too bowed his head, a little, as she stared into his eyes. "Kill him!" a voice like Algar's screamed, as he too entered the house.

The third and last man came forward to wait with her beside her car. For a long time, silence – broken by a shout from within the house.

"We must kill her."

Three men carrying clubs and knives came forth from the house but the single man was no match for them and was soon beaten unconscious. Triumphant, the three moved sneering and leering toward Melanie.

“Kill her! Kill her!” the demented Algar screamed from the safety of the house.

“Come on!” laughed one of the men, “hypnotize me!”

“She is making me tremble!” jeered another.

“Let’s strip her, hey?” Laughed the third.

Melanie did not see but rather sensed Algar aim his gun and she stared toward the shadows in the doorway. There was no shot, only Algar cursing as the revolver jammed, while the leopard stood and kept the shouting men away.

Their obscenities were irrelevant to Melanie as she was content to wait in the heat of the sun for her full magickal powers to return. Her control of the three men had weakened her, a little, but she knew her weakness would not last. Perhaps the jeering men sensed her weakness or perhaps Algar had told them to try to drain her power away, but it was not important and she hid her strength for Algar’s expected attack.

It was Vitek who came running from the house, carrying an axe. He slowed, as her power touched him, then stopped to stand harmless and silent. But his appearance broke the spell that kept the others at a distance – they rushed toward her howling with drug courage. The leopard snatched one, her power slowed another but the third was not stopped. The knife he carried reflected the sun and Melanie side stepped gracefully to strike the rushing man as he passed, his momentum conveying him into her car. He bounced, slightly, before her blow to his neck sent him falling unconscious onto the road.

Her absorption freed Vitek who fled into the house.

“Leave!” she commanded and the leopard obeyed, leaving the uninjured man to help his sobbing and bloodied companion away.

Behind the house she heard shouting, and a car being driven away. Thurstan, Algar and Vitek were gone, and as she stepped over bodies near the door, the house burst into flames. She could almost hear Algar laughing.

## VIII

The coven was gathered, dressed in crimson robes, in the large Satanic Temple to give honour to Melanie as Mistress of Earth. A man lay on the altar, naked, while a young woman in white robes kissed his body in the light of the candles to the insistent beat of the tabors.

A masked figure dressed in black came to lift the man from the altar and place him at the feet of the green robed Mistress of Earth.

“What do you wish?” the Mistress asked.

“It is the protection and milk of your breasts that I seek”. The naked Priest reached up as the Mistress bared her breasts, but she kicked him away with her foot.

“I pour my kisses at your feet and kneel before you who crushes your enemies and washes in a basin full of their blood.” He stared at her body. “I lift up my eyes to gaze upon your beauty of body: you who are the daughter and Gate to our Gods. I lift my voice to stand before you, my sister, and offer myself so that my mage’s seed may feed your virgin flesh.”

“Kiss me,” she taunted, “and I will make you as an eagle to its prey. Touch me and I shall make you as a strong sword that severs and stains my Earth with blood. Taste me and I shall make you as a seed of corn, which grows toward the sun and never dies. Plough me and plant me with your seed and I shall make you as a Gate that opens to our Gods!”

Slowly, she led him to the Priestess whom she kissed on the lips and caressed before removing her white robe.

“Take her,” she said to the Priest, “for she is me and I am yours!”

Around them the coven gathered, clapping their hands to the rhythm of the tabors as the ritual copulation began. And when it was over and the Priest lay sweating and still upon the Priestess, the masked Guardian of the Temple came to lift him up and forced him to kneel at the feet of his Mistress.

“So you have sown,” she said, “and from your seeding gifts may come if you are obedient

hear these words I speak. I know you, my children, you are dark and yet none of you is as dark or as deadly as I. I know you and the thoughts within all your hearts: yet none of you is as hateful or as loving as I. With a glance I can strike you dead!"

The Guardian brought her a large silver chalice, which she offered to her coven in turn. The Priestess was the last to receive the gift of wine and the Mistress kissed her to receive the wine from her mouth.

She threw the remains of the wine over the Priest, saying, "No guilt shall bind you, no thought restrict you here! Feast and enjoy the ecstasy of this life. But ever remember, I am the darkness that lives in your soul!"

She did not wait for the orgy of lust to begin, but left alone. No sounds of Satanic revelry reached her as she sat in her own small Temple, waiting. But the crystal showed nothing.

For hours, Melanie sat still and alone. She did not think of the flames that only yesterday had engulfed her and from which she had escaped unharmed, nor of Algar, fleeing now from those who sought to collect the bounty she offered for his death. The ritual had bored her, and she did not miss the pleasure that she had obtained in the past through having a man grovelling while she whipped his naked flesh. Instead, she thought of Thurstan and his strange life that she had seen in the crystal. There was a quality about this Thurstan that both pleased and disturbed her, as if he was someone from a dream she had just awoke from and could not quite remember. She wanted to forget the dream and concentrate on the pleasures of her own world, but she was lonely. Thurstan's intrusion into her planned and orderly life, Lois' sudden death, both combined to become a catalyst and change her emotions. And it was her feelings of loneliness which surprised her. For years, she ruled her coven and small empire through her magickal charisma, power and the fear she inspired. She could be charming, subtle, scheming and brutal as the moment and the person required, never losing her belief in herself and her Destiny. For a long time during the years of her growing she had felt herself chosen and different from others. Gradually, awareness of her Destiny came – as Mistress of Earth, ruler of covens, who would dare to return the Dark Gods to Earth.

She still felt her Destiny – but it was the distant beat of her pulse in her ear, not the yearning she now felt to share with someone a moment of life, like the strange moment she had shared with Thurstan while they sat in the café and he, trembling, had first held her hand. She had been playing a role, then, but somewhere and somehow the role had become real to her and for an instant she had become the woman she was pretending to be – gentle, sensitive and vulnerable. This woman had returned, unexpected, when she had held the dead Lois in her arms. Her tears had been real tears of love and loss – but they did not last.

Now this woman sat in Melanie's secret Temple, thinking of Thurstan and the moment they had shared. This woman knew she was alone.

Then Melanie, in anger, walked slowly from her Temple, her eyes glowing, to seek the comfort of her car. Her speed was an attempt to express her anger and she drove westward along narrow lanes and wider roads for nearly an hour before returning east to stop near the stone circle. The twilight of closing cloud and strong wind coloured the sky near the descending sun, and Melanie stood in the circle's centre calling on the storms to break. Thunder cloud rushed toward her, killing the colour, as the wind graved strong and heavy around. There was no thunder, only a sudden and prolonged burst of rain, which Melanie laughing let soak through her thin dress to the warm flesh beneath. She became intoxicated by the power of wind and rain, and danced around the circle calling on the names of her gods. She was Baphomet – dark goddess who held the severed head of a man; she was Asoth – worker of passion and death. Circe – charmer of man; Darket – bride of Dagon. She felt her crystal, many miles distant, begin to respond and draw power from the Abyss beyond. The power came to her, slowly, through the gate in the fabric of space-time, a chaos of energies from the dimensions of darkness. Her consciousness was beginning to transcend to the acausal spaces where the Dark Gods waited and she sensed their longing to return, to fill again the spaces of her causal time. They were there, chattering in lipsed words she could not understand, roused from sleep by the power of her previous rites, ready to seep past the gate to feast upon the blood of humans.

But they could not break through from beyond the stars. The two universes, rent together by her will and crystal, were drifting apart again and she was left to walk along the track from the stones while the wind lost its power and the clouds left with their rain.

She sat in her car for a long time, No power, not even a trace of power, had come down to here over the abyss that divided the causal and the acausal realms of existence. No chaos for her will to form and direct as it had many times before. Her magick was weakened. The cause of her failure became clear to her slowly, like the low autumn mist of a valley becomes cleared by the sun as it heats the cold air of morning. She was in love with Thurstan, and her feelings of love had begun to brighten the darkness that was the source of her power.

## IX

“The Police have released the names and photographs of the two men they wish to question in connection with the murders in Leeds...”

Vitek turned the radio off. Algar was beside him in the van they had stolen in Leeds, waiting for the last glimmer of light to conduct the ritual, which he hoped, would free him from Melanie's curse.

"She arranged things well," Vitek said while in the rear of the van Thurstan worked silently to try and free his bound hands.

"Of course!" Algar shouted, "what did you expect? Her influential friends! When she is dead they will be mine!"

"Must we...?" asked Vitek, indicating Thurstan.

"It is the only way. The force cannot be invoked without a sacrifice. Her power is weakening! I sense it!"

The forest Algar had chosen lay in a small valley between the haunted rocks of the Stiperstones and Squilver mound, and had in times past been used by the darker covens which once had abounded in the area. He would invoke the Great Demon, Gaubni, through sacrifice, and imbue himself with power before setting forth to kill Melanie herself. His ritual would strip her of magic, her death would end her curse.

"Come, let us prepare," he said.

Trees were creaking in the breeze and the smell of stinking fungi mingled with the damp the heavy rain had brought as Algar walked carefully the path to the small clearing. Vitek followed, stooping and afraid, listening to Algar mumble incantations. "Veni, omnipotens aeterne diabolus! Agios O Gaubni..."

The incantation became louder until Algar was shouting the name. "Gaubni! Gaubni!" Then a silence that startled Vitek. He could not see Algar's face as he stopped and turned in the clearing but he heard the hissing and saw the hands raised like claws. The long, bony fingers grasped Vitek's neck and the strength of the arms pushed Vitek to the ground. Algar sat on Vitek's chest, slobbering and laughing while his nails tore the flesh on Vitek's face. The spasm of struggle did not last long as the fingers snapped the neck.

Possessed, Algar loped awkwardly out of the wood. Thurstan sat hunched in the back of the van and Algar stared at him, dribbling like an idiot while in the distance a dog howled.

Algar was struggling to control the chaos which had possessed him and direct it to bring another death when he heard the voice behind him.

“Come to me, come to me!” the melodious voice said.

Algar turned to see the leering face of a multitude of witches. Then they vanished. But another voice came from the trees behind him.

“You are my gift!”

He did not look, but the power of the demon he had invoked was sucked from within him to form a hideous face whose rows of teeth gnashed before the mouth opened to spray Algar with fetid breath. Then it was gone, sucked into the trees and down into Earth by the power of the long-dead leering witches.

“You are my gift!” the voice repeated.

There was no longer any magick in Algar and he became just a man who was half-mad. His madness made him move toward Thurstan, but the High Priest was afraid, and all he could do was turn and watch as Vitek with a ruptured face and dead eyes walked toward him.

“You are his gift,” a chorus of voices behind him said.

Desperate, Algar performed a banished ritual, inscribing a pentagram in the air before him with his hand, saying, “The sign of the Earth, protect! Agios O Shugara!”

The dead body of Vitek still came toward him. He invoked more gods, drew a pentagram, called on the Prince he had followed in secret from youth, but Vitek moved ever nearer while behind him the ghostly chorus laughed.

He tried a hexagram, but his gesture and words had no power and, in abject terror, he began to pray fervently in Latin to the god he had scorned.

“In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. In nomine Jesu Christi...” he mumbled.

But Vitek did not stop – instead, the dead eyes swivelled down to stare at him and the mouth opened in a leer. Algar fled, crazed and stumbling, along the track, over a fence and field, to run up the side of the steep hill. He did not stop when he reached the summit, but ran on down the steep bank and over another hill to drop exhausted into a ditch. Terror brought recovery and he ran on for many miles over fields, fences and hills, his clothes and flesh torn by stone, wire and thorn. And when he could run no longer, he crawled among the heather that grew on the side of the Mynd, clawing his way to the slope’s summit. He rested then, staring down into the silent blackness below, fearful and afraid of something following, and praying praying for the light of dawn. He made a kind of cross from stems of heather which he pulled with bleeding fingers from the ground. Around him, nothing stirred.

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Thurstan had freed his hands from the cord, which bound then when he saw Algar run away. Cautiously, after unbinding his feet and removing the gag, he left the van.

Twilight had almost ended, but sufficient light remained for him to follow the path into the woods. He walked for sometime but could find nothing and no one. The place seemed peaceful and calm to him.

A large dog was sitting by the van when he returned. It did not bark, but sprang up to run for a few yards along the track before stopping.

“Your guide!” a soft voice beside Thurstan said. When, he turned, he could see nothing.

There was no moon, only the lingering glow of the sun that was now below the horizon. The clear sky soon showed the brighter stars and in the pleasant warmth of the early night Thurstan followed his guide along the track to paths and narrow lanes that kept a southerly course until he was led eastwards by the stream and up to where a large house lay darkened and silent.

He knew why he followed the dog, as he knew whose house it was, but he still stood nervously in the driveway. The evening was dark by the time he walked toward the house, and as he did so a soft light shone through the half-opened door.

“Hello!” he called like a jester to a court of fools as he stepped onto the mosaic tiles of the



hall. He did not see the door behind him close.

Somewhere he could hear a harpsichord being played. He followed the sound, along the hall and up the stairs whose walls were lined with paintings depicting lust, greed and joy, to where a door was open. A voluptuous perfume reached out to him and he closed his eyes, listening to the gentle music. It seemed a long time to him that he waited, listening and trembling. But it was only a few heartbeats of his life that passed.

He took several steps into the candle-lit room. Melanie sat at her harpsichord in a long flowing dress and looked up briefly before playing the fugue to its end.

The room was beautiful, graceful in its few furnishings, the music was beautiful, the light itself was beautiful, casting subtle hues that only a painter, a musician or a poet might recall. But most of all, to Thurstan, Melanie was beautiful. His senses, subdued by his captivity, were overwhelmed and he began to cry, not loudly or for very long, but as a mystic or an artist might cry when overwhelmed by such splendour.

She smiled at him again when her fingers ceased to work their magick upon the keyboard, and held out her hand. He could see her breasts, uplifted and partly exposed by her dress, rise and fall with the rhythm with her breathing: the way her amber necklace seemed to glow a little in the light from the candles around her, and he walked forward, hardly able to breathe.

But this was unreal to him, an idle dream, perhaps, of a hot insect-filled summer's day as he sat by the stream near his cottage. But their fingers touched, bringing reality. He felt shy and foolish as she stood to face him, gently smiling. No words would reveal themselves into the world through his mouth, and he embraced her, stroking her hair with his hand while she moulded her body to his so he could feel the heat of her flesh through the thin dress.

Stretched were the moments of their embraced until she kissed him, pressing her tongue to his lips in supplication. He let her in, smelled the fragrance of her breath and felt with his hand the warmth of her breast and the erection of her nipple as her tongue sought his. He did not see the door of the room close silently, nor the strange shadow that seemed to stand beside it, but let himself be let to the circular bed in the adjoining, darkened room.

She was gentle with him as she removed his clothes and then her own, kissing his body as he kissed hers in return. He tried to speak of his love and her beauty but she pressed a slender finger to his lips as they lay naked together on the sensuous softness of the bed while perfumed incense caressed them. He felt the softness of her breasts and kissed them

in worship as he kissed her lips, shoulders, face and thighs in worship before tasting her moistness. She pulled him gently upon her, opening herself in invitation, and he did not need his hand to guide him to her hidden cleft.

He moved slowly, and for a long time the gentle intimacy continued while the warm humid night brought sweat to him and a gradual urgency to her until a frenzy of passion possessed them both, rising to issue forth into loud ecstasy mutually achieved before the natural fall left limbs loose and a pleasing exhaustion.

He slept then, although he did not wish to, holding her as if he feared she might go, softly breathing the words of his love. He dreamed he was walking on a strange planet whose two bright suns lit the purple sky. There was a city nearby, but it lay in ruins, and as he approached over the warm sand, he could see the desolation of centuries. He wandered the empty streets made of strange steel where above twisting walkways hung or soared to meet the towering pyramids of buildings whose entrails of floor and room had been cut away cleanly and left dangling from tendons of wire. He felt a sadness at the desolation, for the world was abandoned and quite dead.

When he awoke from his dream, Melanie was gone.

## X

Part of her wanted to kill him. His death would make her free again; restore to her the power she had lost.

She sat in her Temple wondering what to do. The years of her life had been bereft of love and only Lois had shown her kindness – unexpectedly, for kindness was something she had never wanted nor sought. But she had been too proud, too confirmed in her role and quest for power to let the kindness of Lois matter, and their relationship had become, for her at least, a simple affair to satisfy her lust and turn her momentarily from the hatred she felt for the many men who sold their souls and gave their wealth and power away to satisfy themselves with her body.

For a year she had withheld her favours from all men, using her magick as a snare and a weapon to keep her dominance and power. She let them lust, and satisfy themselves with the whores she gave them. But she had enticed Thurstan, sending a wraith to guide him to her house after she had found him through her crystal waiting bound in the van. Other forces had gathered round, surprising her, but she had fought them and gained control, moulding them to her will to bring the dead body of Vitek back and send Algar in terror to

the hills.

She had sensed the other powers were trying to help Thurstan and keep him from her for some reason she did not understand, but she wanted him and would have her way.

Now, her crystal reached out to him upstairs where an elemental spirit, born from one of her rituals, waited to work her will, hovering by the bed she had left. The spirit was guarding him, shielding him from other powers, but she had only to transform her thought through the crystal for the elemental to cause Thurstan's death and break the heavy chains that now seemed to bind her to his Earth.

But she did nothing. She was intrigued by the other powers she felt and by his crystal that she had found. There was also, for her, a promise in the feelings she felt for him – there seemed to be new pleasures awaiting, new experiences to enhance her life. She began to think of what these might be – of what it would be like to talk with someone, just to be with someone, who seemed to love her, not her power, wealth or influence. Someone whose lust, though real and strong, was bound with sensitivity and who sought through it an ecstasy of sharing beyond the physical; someone who gave, and did not just take. She had captivated him at first, but not as she had expected: not as she had captivated all the merely lustful men before him. He had seen beyond them to another world.

These thoughts pleased and disturbed her, but she sensed he had awoken from his dream and waited, strangely tense, for him to find her. When he did, and stood in the doorway of her Temple, she hid her feelings before trying to destroy them.

She did not succeed. The crystal began to glow, betraying her as it pulsed to the beat of her heart. He walked past it, drew the glow onto his hand and offered it to her. She stared at him as he stood before her smiling. Then, before she could open her hand to receive his gift, the light in the Temple faded, and then was gone, leaving only the glow he held before her.

A multitude of babbling, hissing voices broke the silence.

“He is ours!” one clear voice said.

“Ours!” a second and third repeated.

The powers she had felt before were stronger now and she strove to cast them away by casting her thoughts into her crystal, but the glow on Thurstan's hand dimmed, then died.

There was laughter in the Temple, the smell of rotting flesh as, slowly, a luminous shape began to form in a corner. It began to resemble a bearded man with green skin who held in his hands a crook and a whip, and from whose eyes fine filaments emerged to move toward where Melanie sat. She knew they would form a web to imprison her. She formed her own will into purple strands to form a wall before her but the filaments snaked easily around it before writhing toward her. She cast an inverted seven-pointed star at them, but the star shattered and was obliterated. Sweating from the effort, she held her hands outstretched before her in readiness to absorb the power that came toward her, tensing her body to try to cast it into her crystal and send it out into the acausal space where it would die.

She felt Thurstan beside her and the heat of his hand as he touched her shoulder. In the instant of his touch the mocking laughter stopped. She did not know what was happening but Thurstan's face had become a dark void filled with stars, and she felt herself becoming stronger. A chaos of energies rushed from the void to be transferred to her by Thurstan's touch, but the energies were not hostile and she shaped them by her will into an auric demon before casting them at her foe. The demon greedily ate the filaments before devouring the green bearded man. Then it too vanished, leaving Melanie and Thurstan standing naked beside each other in the soft light of the perfumed Temple.

When she looked at Thurstan, she realized he was in a trance. She sat him down gently and stroked his face until he awoke.

He was surprised to find himself in the Temple and embarrassed by his nakedness.

“Are you alright?” Melanie asked.

“Yes, thanks,” said Thurstan blushing and covering his genitals with his hands. “I must have been dreaming!”

“What did you dream?”

“I was on this dead planet – in a city. Alone. Then I saw you. There was a shadow near you, which I seemed to think was threatening you, so I came to you and held your hand. Strange thought – I thought I woke up.”

There was no guile in Thurstan's face as Melanie looked: and in that instant he seemed an innocent child. He sought to hold her hand as if for reassurance and she did not refuse. She looked at him, as he sat smiling and embarrassed, then at her crystal and then at Thurstan again, realizing as she did so that in some way she did not yet understand Thurstan was a gate to her gods, a medium, perhaps, that anyone might use. It was not the thought of using him and his psychic gifts that made her kneel down beside him and kiss his lips, but a strange desire to somehow share again the moment when he had first touched her hand and trembled – to discover again the joy that his body had brought her, the feeling she had felt when she had examined his face and found a curious trust.

He responded readily to her kiss and they made slow, tender love on the floor of her Temple. Melanie was receptive to him through her burgeoning feelings of love, and felt herself drawing power from him. She let this power build within her before trying to transfer it by an act of will to her crystal but even she was surprised at the ease of this and the extent of the power she had stored. The crystal began to glow, and in her orgasm she felt possessed of the power of a goddess. But she did nothing with her new found power, and let it rest safely in the crystal in her Temple before realizing, as Thurstan breathed in her ear the works of his love, that it was her own feelings of love that were the key.

She lay for a long time while Thurstan caressed her and their sweat dried slow, wondering about the meaning of this in the context of her Satanic life. But only vague feelings, need and desires suffused her and she led him from her Temple in the quiet house to her own bed. He was soon asleep, entwined around her warm body, while she inwardly watched the shadows that gathered outside her house, held away by the power she had stored in her crystal. They beat down, screaming, leering and threatening, upon the auric protective sphere that enclosed her and her new lover, desiring her death or at least a chance to lead Thurstan away. These shades of the dead and dying were like rain to her, and she listened, safe and warm, while they beat noisily down.

In the morning, they were gone. But they had sucked her crystal dry. Melanie slept on, her body pressed close to Thurstan's, while in her garden Algar waited, ready to kill her with the billhook he held in his hand.

## XI

Ezra Pead lived surrounded by mould and mites. The mould rose up the feet of the furniture in his small, dark cottage at the end of a muddy track between two high hills that shielded him from most of the sun, while the mites could be seen scurrying away from anything he touched.

The wood burning stove in his kitchen lay broken and unrepaired, letting damp seep up the walls and wood lice to cover the floor, and he cooked his soups on a small gas-burning ring. He was not an old man, but bore himself like one and dressed like a tramp, his beard matted and long. The large sums of money his father had left him he left unused in a bank, and he walked the three miles to the small town of Stretton once a week to withdraw the few pounds he needed to keep himself alive.

Like his cottage, Ezra Pead was slowly falling into decay. His cottage smelled and was like an overgrown, wild forest whose floor is alive and where green fungi crept slowly up trees and where strangling ivy thickens and hardens as it grows round trunks, branches and stems seeking the canopy of leaves. What falls to the ground is captured by the myriad creatures who live mostly unseeing in the dampness, or covered by mould and by mites, or stolen to be eaten or stored away by insects. The roof did not leak, but Ezra Pead would not have cared if it did. He had plenty of buckets. He never opened the windows which were covered by thickly spreading grime.

He spent his days reading the many books and manuscripts that surrounded him everywhere in the chaos, or writing in one of the large vellum bound volumes that covered one of his three scriptorium desks. Unlike his features or dwelling, his handwriting was beautiful, and he used a quill pen and ink that he made himself.

All his books and all his writings were about alchemy or magick. When darkness came, he would light a candle and retire to the room where he slept. There, where no windows relieved the dampness of the walls and where only a rusting metal bed stood upon the floor, he would cast his spells into the night. All his reading, spells and writing were directed toward one end: to discover the secret of life and so make himself immortal. Every night he invoked demons from the pages of the medieval Grimoires he possessed, for he had read once and long ago when young that some of these demons knew the secret. So he invoked, and questioned them, night after night and year after year. Baratchial, Zamradiel, Niantiel, Belphegor, Lucifuge ... he knew the legions of Hell well, and although the answers they gave him he did not often understand, he wrote them all down in his book after the conjuration was over and his ritual banishing complete. A demon named Shulgin he invoked most of all using his ceremonial circle, names of power and sword – but the demon spoke backwards in a numbered code and transcribing the messages took many hours of his day, as breaking the original code had taken over a year of his life.

But the years of his work wore down his body, and he began to wish for a better means to find the answers that he sought. He possessed an insane faith in demons he invoked, and it did not seem to matter to him that most of the information he obtained was meaningless or wrong. He checked and re-checked the answers, searching patiently among his books and manuscripts. There were enough answers over the years, which could be corroborated with

the little he already knew or could find in his books to keep his faith in the quest, and it never once occurred to him that this quest was destroying the life which he hoped to prolong.

Sometimes, he would venture from his cottage in search of herbs to grind and make into incense or oils to aid his invocations, talking to himself while he walked. All his original ideas and expectations had been eroded over the years – there was no stone for him to make by alchemical means, no potion for him to drink. He had tried both ways, led by manuscripts and demons, but his alchemical apparatus lay dismantled in his shed together with the rare juices of plants and bizarre ingredients he had used. His apparatus and ingredients had come from a dealer only too eager to indulge his expensive needs, but the cost made little difference in the money that he kept in the bank.

For almost a year, following the ten years of his alchemical work, an idea had come to possess him. Something was happening that was threatening his quest. His demons were becoming increasingly disturbed or disoriented. Sometimes his invocations did not succeed – or he obtained a jumble of form as if someone or something was disrupting the energies. He felt something himself – a force darker than the demons he knew. An ancient manuscript gave him the clue – the cosmic tides were changing, or rather being changed by someone. The very balance of the hidden universe was threatened.

Minor ripples in these tides were no stranger to him, but these did nothing to change in any significant way the current of Osirian energies that he worked with and which for centuries had passed over the Earth, partly due to the rites of the Church of the Nazarene and those who followed its faith, for they belonged to the same world as him. He was only part of its darker side. He knew a change was coming, symbolized by the son of Osiris as a child, but this was a natural progression that would not affect his own work or alter in any meaningful manner the balances of power on the Earth, despite the rhetoric of some of its adherents.

But this new distortion was different. If it succeeded, it would bring a new Aeon, which had no magickal Word to describe it – an Aeon of Chaos. He spent months searching his manuscripts and books for answers. Parcels of books arrived regularly from his dealer – they were read, then discarded, to suck more mould from the floor.

He began to realize that he was near the centre of the disruption, but the demons he invoked to question were incoherent or would not appear. He needed the blood of sacrifices. The dealer brought him a dog, which he kept chained outside. He began using necromancy to bring him the spirits of the dead, sacrificing often by sending the dog out to bring a victim back. Sheep were not a problem, for they roamed the hills around cottage, and he would sever their necks letting the blood pour to his floor while he chanted his invocations. And when it was over, he would burn the body in a pit outside while the spirits

he had raised gathered round.

He found his answers. He did not know the identity of the person who was trying to break through the causal dimensions and draw to Earth the energies of Chaos, but he knew the area from where the forces were being drawn down and sent his reluctant spirits to guard it. His ancient manuscript told of dark entities that were waiting to be returned to Earth to drink their fill of human blood. Atazoth, Dagon, Athushir, Darkat ... such were some of their names. Once summoned, they could not be returned. To be summoned they needed human sacrifice of special kind.

His own work had wrought changes in the astral planes, drawing to his cottage another Adept, and Ezra Pead did not like the man who arrived at his cottage. Jukes did not like Ezra Pead either, nor the squalor he found. But a vision by his Priestess had brought him, and her trance warnings made him stay, offering his help and that of his Temple of Ma'at, to prevent the Dark Gods from returning.

“We have a common aim,” he said, and Pead, reluctant, had agreed. “They cannot be allowed to break the Current of Aiwaz.”

Jukes, stocky and squat, sincerely believed what he said. For over a year he had run his small Temple in London, helping by his acts of magick to further the Aeon of Ma'at. By day, he worked in an office, but at night, in his basement flat, he became High Priest for his gods. He had read widely on the subject of the Occult, made many contacts during the years of his searching, but he was surprised by the books and manuscripts the Pead possessed.

Avarice was a stranger to Jukes, but the rare books and manuscripts introduced them.

“They need a human sacrifice,” Pead said in his lisping voice.

“Can we prevent it?”

“If we knew who it was.”

“Your manuscripts – “



“They are silent.”

“May I?”

Pead smiled. “Study them here? Of course.”

For two days he studied, while at night, he stayed in a hotel in the nearby town, slightly fearful of the obsessive Pead and the savage dog, which strained on its chain snarling every time he entered and left. The filth and squalor oppressed him while he worked, as avarice whispered cunning words in his ear, but he ignored them. On the third day he rose from the stool by a scriptorium desk, triumphant.

“So they need a psychic, eh? Pead said.

“There is a ritual – the Ceremony of Recalling – to which he is brought. The sacrifice, and it must be a man, is killed and the High Priestess washes in a basin full of his blood before calling the Dark Gods back to Earth.”

“So, you found all of this there?”

Jukes held the vellum manuscript carefully. “Yes. The first few pages are a blind – and the last few. Quotations from the Fathers of the Church. The real text begins here – “ He pointed with his finger.

Pead shrugged. “I cannot read Coptic.”

Jukes spent a day copying the manuscript while Pead watched over him. He was glad to leave and, returned to his flat, he burned all his clothes before scrubbing himself clean in the bath. That night he summoned his Temple. The ritual began at the time he had agreed with Pead. He did not know what ritual Pead himself would do, but he had his suspicions and he did not want to ask.

Jukes’ Temple was the room where he lived, lit by candles and perfumed by thick incense and his members sat on the floor touching hands. It was not long before his Priestess was in a trance, guided by the sigil that Pead had inscribed on parchment. She spoke of being in a forest where two men walked, leaving one who was bound. Of how spirits had gathered to

help her. “Above his eyes – the one who sits waiting and bound – there glows a tattvic sign. He is the one we seek... but there are horrors of which I cannot speak! Another will opposed with mine. Stronger – it casts me away and back...”

All night they tried, until, pale and exhausted, the Priestess slept, severing the astral link that had bound her to Pead and his spirits of death. And in the morning while a few rays of sun brightened for a few minutes the top of the basement window, she told of battles on the night that had drained their power away to leave the one who was chosen in the sanctuary of the Dark Gods' Temple.

Jukes knew that where magick had failed, physical force might succeed.

“We must stop them!” he had said, his eyes bright with the fervour of his strange faith.

Outside a solitary bird sung, unheard amid the early traffic that chuntered along that narrow London street.

## XII

Melanie did not sleep for long. But there was no desire within her to rise and breakfast before using her telephones and telex to establish the well being of her world. She had done so for years, and it was a new experience for her to lie watching a man sleep in her bed. The few who in previous times had been granted her favours for reasons of Satanic or financial power, she had told to leave after the conquest of them was complete.

She watched until he awoke, roused by her gentle caress of his face. She left him them, to dress and walk in her bare feet across the lawn of her walled garden. The sun was warm as she walked, intrigued by her own feelings. There was a beauty about the world that she had never seen before. She felt this beauty in the blue of the sky, in the delicate colours of the flowers that bordered her lawn, in the sound of the wind as it rushed through the trees nearby. It was the warmth of the sun, the dampness of the grass, the silence that surrounded her. She understood that there were many worlds within the one on which she lived, brought to reality perhaps by a mood or a circumstance.

This world of beauty was real to her in a way that brought unusual feelings to her, but the world that she had left yesterday was still there – still full of the feelings she felt: contempt for the members of her coven while she played her role as Mistress of Earth, hatred and love of strife. Each year, each day of her life was a world into which she projected

meanings, interpretations and from which she sought to wrest for herself money and power.

There were worlds beyond – alien worlds, which she hoped to join with hers, bringing chaos and much that was strange. But, for now, she found happiness in walking around her garden in the warming sun and thinking about Thurstan. She wanted to make him her High Priest, share her power and wealth with him and enjoy the pleasure that she felt such a sharing would bring, ending the years of her loneliness

She did not see, nor even sense such was her preoccupation, Algar creeping toward her and when she did her attempt to stop him by her magick power failed. She had no power. This startled her, and she could only watch in silence as Algar, grinning like the madman he had become, raised the billhook to slash at her throat.

She raised her arm to deflect the blow when Thurstan, sprinting across the lawn, jumped on Algar, knocking both of them over. Algar was screaming, trying to slash at Thurstan but Thurstan grappled and held his arm round Algar's neck. They rolled over the dewy grass until Algar's body went limp.

“I've killed him! I've killed him!” Thurstan said.

Melanie's inspection of the body was brief. “Come on,” she said. “Let's go inside.”

“But I've killed him.”

The beauty she had felt was destroyed. “He deserved it.”

“I didn't mean to,” Thurstan tried to explain. “The Police – “

Melanie smiled. “There is no need to involve them.”

“But I killed him.”

Melanie turned to face him. He was now quite calm, but perplexed. “There are some things you should know about me.”

“All I know is that I love you.”

With his words and the look on his face part of the beauty returned. She had been defenceless against Algar, and now she felt defenceless against Thurstan. She did not like either of the forms this defencelessness took, and walked with Thurstan into her house to arrange the removal and disposal of Algar’s body.

Thurstan followed her from room to room, listening amazed while she made her telephone calls. And when they were done and they sat eating the breakfast he cooked, Melanie explained about her life. Thurstan listened, intently and gently smiling.

“So now you know the person you think you are in love with.”

“Why did you tell me?”

“Because – “ She turned away, appalled at herself. “In your cottage I found a crystal sphere.”

“I love you.”

Her feelings for Thurstan seemed to her to have stolen the personal power she had over people, and she was uncertain as to whether she cared about this. “You are not appalled by what I have told you?” she asked.

“No. Nor about the chap lying in your garden. He was going to harm you. I love you, so I stopped him. Simple really. The Police would ask too many questions.” He shrugged.

“Considering what you have said, that is very understandable!”

“It will bind you to me.”

“Why do you think I have agreed?” he said directly.

“You are not afraid?”

“Of what?”

“That I might use this to control you?”

“No.”

“Even after what you know about me?”

No – because I sense you love me even though you are afraid to say the words.”

She did not answer, but stared out of the window. “They should be here soon – to dispose of the body.”

“And then?”

“We shall go to your cottage.”

The two men who had taken Lois’ body arrived and Melanie talked to them briefly before they went to carry the dead High Priest to the van. Thurstan was in her secret Temple when she returned, having seen them depart.

“What do you feel?” she asked.

“About this crystal? That it shall take us to the stars!”

Intrigued, she asked, “What do you mean?”

“I don’t know. Just a feeling. I remember you were a dream of my youth. Maybe I am your Destiny as you are mine.

Melanie perceived forces gathering around them, as if a rent had appeared again but without her will in the metric of causal space, such that acausal energies were surrounding them. Then, suddenly, the Temple darkened while she stood breathless beside Thurstan watching her crystal become filled with stars. She touched him then, drawing his hand into

hers, to feel the power tense her body as it would be tensed before an orgasm relaxed it. But she did not feel the old intoxication of power, nor the sensuous bliss that her many and varied pleasures had brought her over the years of her reign. Instead, there was the quiet ecstasy of gentle and suffusing love coupled with an expectation, a promise of vistas yet to be explored but waiting. But it was soon over, this tantalizing glimpse, as light returned to her Temple, leaving only a dim glow to suffuse her crystal.

Her house, drained by the demon battles of the night, was alive again, and she let her own spirit wander from room to room. The early oppression she had felt was gone, as if somewhere and somehow a storm had broken.

A vague memory came to her, like details of a landscape seen through thin mist, and she led Thurstan out of her house and into her car. She did not speak, and he did not as she drove the narrow, hilly lanes, in the warmth of the early morning, that lead to his cottage. The crystal was in its niche, where she had left it, and she took it down. She tried to read it, as she had done before when it gave up its images to her mind, but it was empty.

“You seem surprised,” Thurstan said.

“Where did you obtain this?” she asked.

“An old man gave it to me.”

She sensed he was not lying, for she could almost see the image that formed in his mind as he spoke the words. “Why?”

“A gift, he said. He was insistent. How could I refuse?”

“When was this?”

“Oh, not long ago. A few months. I forget exactly when. He came here to beg a little food. I suppose he wanted to give something in return.”

“You do not know what this is?” she asked.

“A crystal ball? He might have been, once, a teller of fortunes.”

For a long time, Melanie had controlled her life, guiding herself toward the goals she sought. She was always the Mistress, the Satanic queen who ruled, never possessed of fear. No one she had ever met had disturbed her belief in herself or shown in any way an inner power greater than her own. Satanist, criminal, businessman or people of wealth – she had mastered them all through her wiles, will and beauty. She found their weakness, and used it to her own advantage. Thurstan had disturbed her because he was so transparent – there was nothing in him that was hidden, neither to her or himself. His feelings, thoughts and pleasures seemed spontaneous and enthusiastic like those of a child. Yet he possessed a fatalism that no child possessed or could possess: an inner belief in the necessity of change, which far from negating his own life, seemed to enhance it by making each moment of life unique.

But it was not Thurstan who disturbed her now. The control she had in life was ebbing away. The loss of her personal power, evident in her failure to control Algar as he attacked, was only a part of this. Events were happening to her, rather than being controlled by her, and she did not like this. What she had seen in Thurstan’s crystal had sent her in pursuit to Leeds, drawing outward her burgeoning feelings of love. Something had and was happening to her because of Thurstan, and she began to believe because of his crystal that forces she did not understand or even know about were trying in some way to manipulate her.

It was simpler for her to believe that her love for Thurstan was changing her life, and she tried to believe this. But a suspicion remained.

“You are a strange man,” she said to Thurstan as she gave him the crystal.

“Not really. I live – or did live – a quite simple and somewhat boring life.”

“You know nothing about this crystal – or my own?”

“No. Only what I feel.”

“And what do you feel now?”

“That there are forces trying to keep us together – and other forces that are trying to break

us apart.”

“And you are not afraid of where we might be going?”

“All I know is that I love you and want to be with you!

He embraced her then, kissing her, and she did not push him away. She felt again, as they stood in the room of his cottage, swaying slightly in their embrace, that with him and through him she possessed a greater, if different, power that made her own past and even her dreams, seem tawdry.

“There is a gathering tonight,” she said, “which I would like you to come to.”

“Oh? What?”

“Just a simple ritual called the Ceremony of Recalling.”

“To what purpose?”

She walked away from him to watch a few ragged cumulus clouds straggle from the horizon toward the sun that rainbowed in places the old, worn glass of the window. “To draw down to Earth a certain power.”

“Why?” he asked in innocence.

“To bring change.”

“Why?”

“To hasten our evolution.”

“Toward what?”



“A higher consciousness,” she said, a little exasperated.

“Such is the aim of the covens that you rule?”

“Not really. They are a means to provide me with things.”

“Enjoyment? Pleasure? Power?”

“Yes!”

Urwroth showed in her eyes but she quickly controlled her feelings.

“Come,” he said smiling and taking her hand, “I would like to show you something.”

His cottage lay in a fold of small hills between the steep slopes of bare Caer Caradoc and the road, which rose from the Stretton valley to track eastwards through field and village toward the wooded ridge of Wenlock Edge. All around, springs began small brooks among the slopes where sheep mostly grazed and few trees grew, and Thurstan took a path to one of these. Yards from where the water issued forth as a trickle, a small pool had formed on a slight piece of level ground, and Thurstan knelt beside it while Melanie stood, bemused, watching and listening to a kestrel as it flew between the bare hills that made a little valley for the brook. The kestrel flew toward her, circling three times overhead before calling its woeful call and flying away.

“Look!” Thurstan said, rising and showing her the palm of his hand.

On it, no larger than the nail of his thumb, sat a frog. “Isn’t it wonderful?” he said enthusiastically.

Melanie looked at it but without much interest.

“I come here often,” Thurstan said as he placed the frog in the water. “Every time it is different. In one day the light may change so much. In March the frogs come. Last year there was thick snow, but they still came. There is always change – even in this little spot – as the seasons change. Snow, ice, frost, mud, scorching sun that bleeds the green from the

grass and brittles the fern. At night – perhaps a moon or only the stars, which change too. No day in its weather and light is ever the same as any other day.”

He stood up to stand beside her. “And I do nothing. Yet everything changes. Even I change, a little with the passing of each year. There,” he pointed, “miles away is a road where fast cars carry people. They seldom see the change around them, only that which lives in their head. A few miles - and another world where those small specimens of life,” he gestured toward the frog, “are never seen and become squashed without thought.

“You are beautiful – slightly wild, perhaps, like that kestrel which flew overhead – and your world is strange to me. These hills, that cottage, the farm over there where I work, are my world. There is so much in so little – so much beauty to share. I make love with you – kill someone to protect you – and our two worlds join, for a little while. But they are still two worlds. You want me to step into yours as I wish you to enter mine. The change you seek to bring may destroy my world – and I not ready for that.”

Melanie had felt the warmth in Thurstan as he talked.

It was a strange warmth to her, a kind of supra-personal love which she did not understand and which she could not relate to the pleasures of her own life or the goals that she had sought. Yet she liked being beside him as he talked, watching his face and eyes. He could have crushed the frog in his hand as she might have done in her youth or as she had crushed people that opposed her – but he did not seek to mould it or destroy it according to his will. He accepted it as it was at that moment in Earth’s history.

“I have seen in you,” Thurstan was saying, “the same beauty I see in this small piece of land, as if you were natural to it in a way I cannot describe. More natural, more real and living than most other people. Yet the world in which you live and have lived and in which you possess power, is not where you should be. I fear it will destroy you, and I don’t want that.”

“I know no other world.”

“But you have begun to discover mine. I touch you, hold you, make love to you.”

His world possessed a fascination for Melanie, as if he had divined what she had felt and as she stood beside him she was no longer a Satanic queen, ruler of a coven of fifty, but a woman in love.

“I would like you to share my world as well,” she said.

Thurstan smiled. “Then I shall come to your ritual.”

The kestrel returned to swoop down toward them before veering away, calling, as it flew toward the sun.

### XIII

The wood where Algar had been buried was not silent for long. The sun had set, leaving a nebulous light, when the sibilation began, muffled by earth. Algar had awoken in his grave.

The Priestess screamed, and fell unconscious into the circle of worshippers in Jukes’ Temple. Jukes held her, and she awoke to wail before crying in terror at the vision she had seen. She could not speak aloud but described the horror in a slow sobbing whisper.

It did not take them long to prepare and they left London, in three cars as the sky darkness became complete, to travel toward the hills of Shropshire and the house the Priestess had described before the horror had ended her trance. The eight were silent and subdued in spirit during the hours of their journey, nervous when they left the warmth of the cars parked on the verge of a narrow lane almost a mile from Melanie’s house. Around them and dark, the countryside was silent and still.

Jukes led them, walking slowly and beginning to doubt. With every step he seemed to become more tired. He stopped before the driveway of the house, listening, while the Priestess, shaking and sweating, held his hand.

“It will be soon,” she whispered, touching the silver scarab she wore as an amulet around her neck.

The driveway was full of cars, and a warm glow of light spread around the house. Jukes thought he could hear the beat of drums. His Priestess sensed it first, and turned toward the blackness beyond the hedge where they stood, huddled together in the increasing cold. There was a rustling in the field beyond, the sound of wood being broken sharply by force.

Algar smashed the gate apart with his torn and bloodied hands and came toward them. Only Jukes and his Priestess did not flee at the harrowing sight, but hid, pressing themselves into the thorns and leaves of the hedge. They were not seen, and watched, trembling and afraid, as Algar walked lumbering like the living dead he was toward the house.

## XIV

Thurstan waited in her secret Temple, feeling embarrassed by the luxurious crimson robe he wore. He could not hear them, but knew that many of Melanie's members had arrived and were preparing for the ritual.

She prepared him well, returning him to her house in her car whose telephone she used to summon her willing servants. He had bathed, been massaged, his body relaxed by the gentle hands of a pretty woman who caressed perfumed oils into his skin; been served food, manicured, his hair attended to. Dressed in silken clothes. No one had spoken to him, but he was treated with deference, and by the end of the afternoon had begun to appreciate in a way that was not real to him before, Melanie's power. When she finally came to him, hauntingly beautiful like an ancient queen, part of him had already begun to accept her world and enjoy it. She was corrupting him with luxury and he knew it.

Melanie, in a green robe almost transparent and which emphasized the contours of her body, came to guide him to where her Satanic worshippers were gathered. The large Temple was lit only by candles and a naked woman lay on the altar beside which a young girl dressed in white with a garland of flowers in her hair swung a thurible. Somewhere, among the shadows, hooded red-robed figures beat their shaman drums.

"Hail to he who comes in the name of our gods!" the worshippers chanted as a greeting for Thurstan.

Two men with the physique of wrestlers whose faces were covered by black masks and who wore very little, closed the doors of the Temple as Thurstan followed Melanie to the altar. Melanie kissed the temples, lips, breasts, womb and pubic hair of the altar Priestess before kissing Thurstan who turned to receive a kiss from all of the congregation.

"Now shall we," Melanie chanted, "with feet

Faster than storm's horses

Seek to bring she who with fire

And cutting sword leaps plunging

Upon her foe while the fates of dread

Unerring gather round!”

“Agios O Baphomet!” came the shouted response.

“See!” Melanie pointed at Thurstan, before twirling round, building her feelings into a temple to frenzy while the congregation sighed and the beat of the drums sounded loud,

“Here is he

Who shall this night

Be her consort and pour forth

As libation his seed of life!

Dance – I command you

And with the beating of your feet

Raise the dead!

I shall take him down into Earth

And let her with her teeth

Suck him dry!

Dance! – I command you!

And I, Mistress of this Earth

Shall raise him up and feed him

With the fragrance between my thighs!

So shall he unlamenting

Become the Gate that opens

To our gods!”

The congregation began to dance, slowly at first, chanting loudly as they did so. Melanie stood in the centre of the circle they were tracing with their bare feet, raising her arms as the power was invoked. The chant of Ba-pho-met pulsed to the beat of the drums as the dancers danced faster and faster, throwing off their robes as quietly the altar-Priestess arose to climb down from her altar.

Her eyes were closed, but she walked within the circle of the enclosing dancers toward Thurstan. She embraced him, lightly, before pulling his robe open and revealing his nakedness. Then she kissed his lips and opened her eyes.

Her eyes did not seem human to Thurstan, but he was not afraid. The young woman with the slender body had become Melanie – the power with Melanie and the greater power beyond her. She was lover, mistress, wife, mother, daughter and sister – goddess and demoness, and Thurstan let himself be pulled to the floor of the Temple. He had no will to resist as he looked into her eyes. She was not gentle with him, but tore off his robe before wrapping her legs around him and digging her nails into his back. There was pain, but it seemed to enhance the delight that came to him. The drumbeats, the chanting, the naked whirling dancers, the incense, the writhing woman beneath him – all ravished his senses. The pain brought frenzied desire, and sweat soon bathed their naked bodies. Then she was screaming in ecstasy as he was while around them the dancers stopped to turn inward, clapping their hands as they watched and shouted the name of their goddess. And when it was over and Thurstan lay breathless upon the relaxing body, the two men by the door came to lift him and place his still naked upon the altar.

The worshippers formed an aisle to the altar down which Melanie came to kiss Thurstan and rekindle his fire with her lips. It did not take her long to succeed and she leaned over Thurstan’s face to brush his lips with hers before whispering as her eyes became the eyes of the altar-Priestess: “Now you are mine forever!”

She signalled with her hand, and her dancers moved slowly in a circle around her and her altar, calling down with a dirgeful but powerful chant the Dark Gods beyond the Gate that was Earth.

“Nythra Kthunae Atazoth!” they chanted.

Melanie did not remove her robe, only lifted it as she lowered herself upon him. The beat of the drums had slowed to match the slowness of the chant, and she moved upon him slowly. Somewhere, in the Temple, two cantors began to chant, a fifth apart, above the chanting drone of the slow circling dancers.

“Agios Rotanev”, sang the cantors, their powerful, clear voices making the complicated plainchant flow like a high crested wave toward shore, rising, falling slowly with grace but always moving on.

The slow moving organum of the cantors, the chant of the slow moving dancers who had linked hands, the energy brought by sexual frenzy, the shamans drums and wild dance, all conspired to push open the Gates to the Abyss. The slowness was a counter-part to the earlier frenzy, and Melanie used it to gather the energies to herself. She showed no outward sign of the ecstasy within and was smiling as she transferred the energy to her crystal while Thurstan’s body spasmed and then relaxed. She kissed him before climbing down from the altar.

She signalled the dancers to stop and gather round her in preparation for the climax of the rite when she would release the stored energy to bring her Dark Gods to Earth. They would still their minds, as she had shown them, to become parts of a mirror that would focus the energy.

But the doors of the Temple burst open. No one screamed as Algar stood, hideous, in the light of the candles, but they seemed to gather closer to Melanie. The two men by the door moved upon him but he easily knocked them to the side and they fell away unconscious. He was snarling, staring at Melanie as he walked toward her in silence. She did not move except to hold up her hand to restrain Thurstan who had risen to stand beside her. Then she smiled.

Algar stopped, his body twisting forward as if he wanted to move but could not. Melanie raised her hand toward him and he fell upon his knees, oozing blood as his already torn flesh, festering, split further. She raised her hand again, and he screamed as if tortured, before crawling face down on the floor. She dropped her hand, and his screaming stopped. He looked up at her then, not as a madman and not as one of the possessed that had returned, briefly, to life. Instead, his look was that of a mute child who could not bear the pain that it felt. But Melanie raised her hand again and the spectre that had once been Algar lowered its head and died.

## XV

“Join us!” Melanie said as she stepped past the body.

Jukes and his Priestess stood in her hall, awed by what they had seen. They had followed Algar, and were still trembling.

“Come to me!” said Melanie softly.

Jukes stared at the floor while the Priestess looked upon Melanie’s face. She was smiling, her dread gone, as she walked forward to kneel at Melanie’s feet.

“No!” shouted Jukes. He tried to move toward her, but could not.

Gently Melanie raised the Priestess to her feet and kissed her on the lips. The Priestess understood her thought and went to touch the masked Guardians who lay unconscious in the Temple. They awoke and followed her to stand on either side of Melanie.

“Will you be mine,” Melanie said to Jukes, “as she is?”

“Never!”

“Then I shall make you mine!”

She was about to raise her hand to force his head up so she could see into his eyes when she saw an old man dressed like a peddler walk through the open door of her house.

“He is mine, I believe,” he said as he tapped Jukes on the shoulder to free him from the bonds Melanie had placed around him. “He is no use to you. But if you object –“

There was great magickal power in the old man, hidden even in his eyes, but Melanie perceived it.



“Who are you?” she asked.

He bowed deeply, like a jester. “I am Saer.”

“Saer?”

He looked around the hall and peered briefly into the Temple. “You have made great changes, I see.” Then smiling, he bowed again before escorting Jukes away.

She let him go. “Feast! Rejoice!” she said, turning to greet her coven and they felt happiness spread among them as the drums began to beat again.

She detailed her Guardians to carry the body and let them into her secret Temple where they threw it into the pit beneath the plinth that held her crystal. There was laughter and lust among the worshippers when she returned, servants carrying trays of food and chalices of wine. She thanked her Guardians, bid them join the feast, and watched Thurstan as he stood, covered by the robe he had discarded, beside the Priestess from Jukes’ Temple. She did not mind the hidden desire between them and went to walk alone in the hazy darkness of the garden.

Forces opposed to her own were present, returned from the night before and sent forth against her by the shedding of blood, but they did not affect her or the guests in her house, kept away by the power in her crystal, and she walked slowly in her bare feet over the cooling grass, idly looking up toward the stars.

It was not long before Thurstan joined her. He was followed by Jukes’ Priestess.

You knew, didn’t you?” Thurstan said, a little shyly. He too had been awed.

“That it was Saer who gave you the crystal? Yes, I knew it as soon as I saw him.”

“Then you know who he is?”

“Perhaps!” she laughed. “What is your name? She asked the Priestess.

“Claudia.”

“Yes – it suits you. I shall not change it. Do you wish to stay with me, Claudia?”

“Oh, yes!”

“You are free to go.”

“I don’t want to go.” She looked down at the ground. “Not now I have found you.”

“I shall never harm you – unless you turn against me.” She took Claudia’s hand and held it to her own breast. “You are mine now and I shall always protect you. As a sign of my trust I shall give you a gift.” She placed Claudia’s hand in Thurstan’s, kissed them both and left them standing together in the mild night air.

They were still standing in her garden holding hands when she looked upon them from a high window in the house. She knew Thurstan did not know what to do and Claudia was too shy to initiate anything. Melanie wanted, through the ritual and her gift of him to Claudia, to draw out Thurstan’s darker self, and as she watched while a bright large moon began to rise quickly above the distant hills and an owl screeched nearby, she felt she had found the means to achieve her goals.

The ritual had returned both her power and her role. She was stronger than she ever had been and, with Thurstan as her willing High Priest, she would make herself stronger still by uniting his world with hers. Together, they might wander among the stars. The prospect excited her, as her desire to watch Thurstan and Claudia have sexual intercourse excited her, and she remembered words from the Black Book of the witch queen before her: ‘The secret of the Moira who lies beyond our Grade of Mistress of Earth, is a simple unity of two common things. This unity is greater than but built upon the double pelican being inward yet like the stage of Sol, outward though in a lesser degree. Here is the living water, azoth, which falls upon Earth nurturing it, and from which the seed flowers brighter than the sun. The flower, properly prepared, splits the Heavens – it is the great elixir which comes from this which when taken into the body dissolves both Sol and Luna. Whoever takes of this elixir will live immortal among the stars.’

Melanie believed that she had found the secret, brought forth from within her by her feelings for Thurstan and the power of ritual. She was preparing Thurstan – for first she had to return the Dark Gods to Earth.

Excited, she saw Thurstan briefly kiss Claudia before leading her toward the house, and she retreated to her room to follow them on her monitor. They seemed uncertain what to do as they stood in the hall, but the naked worshippers who rushed past them to run up the stairs gave them their clue. Suitable rooms lay open and waiting on the first floor of the house, as they always did. No one ever dared violate the floor above, reserved for Melanie and her special guests, and Thurstan did not as he slowly led Claudia to an empty room.

Nothing in the house was hidden from the surveillance system but Melanie did not often use it as she used it now to watch and listen to Thurstan and Claudia, for there were a multitude of pleasures that gave her satisfaction. In her desire to make Thurstan part of her world she pressed a switch to record images and sounds in the room on the floor below.

Melanie became aroused by watching them. Thurstan undressed Claudia slowly and as her naked body appeared, Melanie realized she desired it also. Claudia responded to Thurstan's kisses by pulling him down with her onto the softness of the low bed in the luxurious room and it was not long before Thurstan's tentative slowness of delight gave way to sexual frenzy. But this was not prolonged and there was no scream, nor even sigh of ecstasy from Claudia – only Thurstan's groan as he slumped fulfilled upon her voluptuous body.

This pleased Melanie and she lay listening to them talk.

“Who is she?” Claudia asked.

“You don't know?” an exhausted Thurstan said.

“I saw her in a vision – in this house. We came to stop her.”

“But you didn't.”

“I couldn't. When I came near to her I felt – “

Thurstan smiled. “An overpowering love?”

“Maybe,” she said and blushed. “And you?”

“She is the most remarkable woman I have ever met.”

“You serve her then? I mean as High Priest?”

Thurstan laughed. “I know little of her world. I only met her a few days ago.”

Claudia was surprised. “But are you an Initiate?”

“Of what?”

“Her Temple.”

“Not as far as I know. She told me she was involved in something – “

“Satanism?”

“Yes. But I assumed it was some kind of game. You know what I mean? Then,” he sighed, “this ritual. There is real power in her, real magick. She casts a spell with just a look.”

“You love her then?”

“Yes. Because, I suppose, like you I am sensitive to things and people. When I saw you I felt a warmth in me, a happiness. I don’t normally do this sort of thing.”

“What?”

“Leap into bed with women I have only just met.”

“Neither do I! I think she overwhelmed us both.”

“Do you mind?” asked Thurstan softly.

“No,” she whispered. “I feel I have found what I have always been seeking – here in this house. It is exciting and yet I feel protected. Before I came I assumed it was evil in some way – that she was evil and must be stopped. But now –“

“Stopped from what?”

“Changing the cosmic tides that wash upon the Earth and give to people a certain energy.”

“I understand nothing of such things.”

“I saw that man – in his grave.”

“The one who died?”

“Yes. He was her High Priest wasn't he?”

“Yes.”

“I assumed you had taken his place,” she gestured to his robe, discarded on the floor.

“I know little of her beliefs.”

“It is a new beginning, then, for us both.”

“Perhaps we can learn things – together?”

“I sense that is what she wishes.”

“And the man you came with?”

“High Priest of my Temple in London.” She laughed. “I suppose he will be thinking I have been abducted against my will and forced to indulge in hideous Satanic rites! Or be offered as a sacrifice to Satan.”

“You are not afraid that you will be?”

“No – as I’m sure you feel. I know nothing about her except what I feel, and I feel she will not harm me. Quite the reverse, in fact.”

Thurstan leaned on his elbow to look at her. “It may seem like a trite thing to say, but you are not like a stranger to me.”

She touched his face with her hand. “I know what you mean. She is not a stranger to me either.”

“What shall we do?”

“Apart from the obvious, you mean?” They both laughed. “Wait, I suppose for her to tell us.”

“It could be an enjoyable wait.”

“I hope so.”

Melanie had seen and heard enough. It did not take her long to reach their room and she stood in the doorway while they sat up from the bed, nervously smiling.

She gave Thurstan his robe. “Leave us,” she said to him.

He left, obedient to her word, and she closed and locked the door before sitting beside Claudia on the bed.

“You are beautiful,” she said, caressing Claudia’s neck.

Her soft kiss was returned, shyly, and she took off her robe before drawing Claudia toward her in an embrace.

“I have never done this before,” Claudia whispered.

Melanie kissed her neck and breasts. “Do you want to?” she asked gently.

“Oh, yes.”

The tender caresses, the perfumed softness of Melanie’s body, the slow intimate kisses and movements, her own feelings of warmth, the sensuous pleasure that Melanie brought to her gently through touch and tongue, all combined to stimulate Claudia to an ecstasy both physical and emotional and of a kind she had never experienced before.

She lay beside Melanie, embracing her and softly crying, drawing comfort from the strange woman who kissed away the tears, feeling in that moment that all the confusion, doubts and sorrow that her sensitivity had brought her over the years, was no more. Her past, with its broken relationships its traumas and dreams, was forgotten. Her future was unreal – only the present was meaningful to her. She sensed forces outside the house that wish to harm the woman who kissed her and whose body heat reassured, but she was protected for the moment from those forces as Claudia felt protected. The harmful forces, which were waiting for weakness, drew more emotion from Claudia until she felt a genuine love.

Jukes had stolen her love when they first met and through him she had learned to use her powerful psychic gifts. But his passion for her had just been a passion, fleeting like the brightness of a meteor in the sky of night, and she had learned to live again and alone with her dreams while he filled and emptied his bed with the women in the Temple in the name of the magick he invoked. Her gifts brought empathy and vision, but never the love she needed.

Melanie to her, in that moment, became all her dreams and it did not matter to her then that she gave her love to another woman. It felt natural to her – as it had seemed natural when she and Thurstan had made love, and she understood, as she lay warm and relaxed, that she had given her body to him because it was what Melanie had wanted.

To Melanie, she had given her body also, but now she gave up her soul as well.

“I think I love you,” she said, and Melanie, in the humid room, felt a confusion of love that she did not need nor desire grow within her heart.

## XVI

Thrust forth from the room, Thurstan wandered around the house. The Temple was full of naked bodies and the incense of sex, and when he tried the door that he knew led to the crystal, it would not open.

Other doors were locked to him as to other worshippers, and the one that did open led him to a library. He heard the door closing behind him, but it did not open when he tried the handle and he contented himself with trying to see out of the window. He could see nothing, for the outside shutters had been closed. The room was large, with a high ceiling and books rose in shelves on all the walls, darkly lit. A chair stood waiting beside a table whereon a single book lay open. ‘The Book of Wyrð’, the gilt spine read.

She planned this, he thought to himself and sat down to read.

“Satanism is the philosophy of the noble and strong. It is the antithesis of the religion of Yeshua, that worship of decaying fish. To the cowards and the followers of the Nazarene belong the meekness of the weak, the rapid utterances about pity and the vileness of the bully. Above all, Satanism is the enjoyment of this life.

The most fundamental principle of Satanism is that we as individuals are gods. The goal of Satanism is simple – to make an individual an Immortal, to produce a new species. To Satanists, magick is a means, a path, to this goal. We walk toward the Abyss and dare to pass through to the cold spaces beyond where CHAOS reigns. There is ecstasy in us – and much that is strange. Vitality, health, laughter and defiance – we challenge everything, and the greatest challenge is ourselves.”

There was music filling the room as he read. He knew it was real even if he could not see its source, but it was faint – an unearthly sound that he found beautiful and brought a vision of stars and a remembrance of his strange dream after he had first made love to Melanie. His body tensed as he listened, carried to another plane of existence, and he experienced in that moment, a possession of feeling surpassing the ecstasy of physical passion. Then, there was no room, only a rushing of stars, the exhilaration of phenomenal speed and then a silent slowing that brought him to the planet of his dreams. The music was a slow chant of words he did not understand combined with sounds from instruments he had never heard



before, and it expressed the desolation of the dead planet as well as his longing for Melanie – and Claudia.

Then the vision and the music ended and he was simply sitting alone in a library staring down at a book. He tried, but could not recapture what he had seen and heard and he felt a longing that strained his breathing and brought tears to his eyes. Melanie was the woman he had always sought to bring meaning into his life, the reality behind his insight of days before when he had stood by the stream near his cottage and made his divinity a goddess. Her power, charisma and promise made his own life and expectations seem dull, as his vision made the world around him seem unreal and ponderous.

He experienced a sudden need to express his feeling through the frenzy of his body and was not surprised to find the door unlocked. He began to understand the house itself was alive, an extension of Melanie's will, and he let it guide him. Lights brightened to show him the way, or dimmed when he went wrong. He was led to a room where all that he needed, and more, lay waiting. He dressed quickly, his heart beating fast and ran along the corridor and down the stairs to leave the house.

He was not alone. Something was with him as he ran along the driveway in the cooling air under the stars with the light of the moon to guide him. He sensed the presence as he sensed that it was protective of him, and he ran fastly down the narrow lane allowing the freedom of physical exertion to suffuse his body. His running brought some of the vision back to him and he left the road to follow a track that led alongside the slopes of the Long Mynd. He was soon tired and breathing heavily but he ran on to become a little detached from his body, defying it. He ran for miles before turning and running only a little slower back to the house, suffused with a desire to learn, to be master and equal of Melanie. Her world had become real for him, and he did not want to leave it.

The house seemed to welcome him on his return. There were no cars in the driveway, for all the worshippers had gone, and he followed the lights to a bathroom where he soaked himself for a longtime in a deep bath, pleased and expectant. His love for Melanie, his hope of their affinity, the passion they had already shared, the ritual, her sharing of him with Claudia, even the killing he thought he had done for her - all had liberated him, releasing the inner energies that his normal life had kept under control. He felt there was no challenge that he could not overcome, nothing that he would not do. Life was before him – a large canvas on which he would paint a masterpiece. He wanted to make his own life a work of Art.

Satan was the name he gave to the energy that made both his body and his mind vivid with life, he dried himself vigorously, covered himself with the silk robe that hung from a hook on the door and let the lights guide him to Melanie's room.

The door opened for him and we walked over the soft carpet in the azure light to find Melanie was not alone and the door closing behind him. Claudia was beside her in the bed, asleep. He was not shocked by this, only momentarily confused. They were both naked.

“Come”, his Mistress said, “sit beside me.” And he obeyed.

She kissed him, before stroking Claudia’s hair. “She is lovely, isn’t she?”

“Yes.”

“Can you share me?”

The directness of the question startled him. “I think so.”

“Come then and take off your robe.”

He obeyed, and lay beside her. She was pleased with his arousal, and the reasons behind it, but she teased him saying, “Trying for four in a row, then?”

“I’m sorry – I didn’t – “

“Don’t be sorry, my darling.”

The endearment made him happy, lessening the awe he felt and which came upon him as soon as he had entered her room.

“You are pleased with things?”

Their bodies were touching as they lay together and he felt his awe ebbing away. “I want to learn. Share your world with you.”

“It is good that your inner strength returns. I want us to share.”

“But I feel a little lost sometimes.”

“Because of what I own?”

“Partly. But also –“

“Do not say anymore.” She pressed her finger to his lips “I shall tell you something. You have made me realize how lonely I was. How much I need love.” She laughed, self-mockingly. “I, with all that I have, all the power you have seen, need you. I am human after all, even though I don’t want to be.”

Thurstan kissed her, and Melanie felt like crying. But she mastered her feelings. Thurstan had changed, as she had hoped and planned he would, but she herself was changing. Never before had she displayed her feeling and she felt vulnerable. She knew Thurstan sensed this, as Claudia had when they walked hand in her hand to her room. She was not afraid of them, only herself, and when Thurstan spoke she was composed.

“And Claudia?” he asked gently.

“I need you both, it seems.”

“You have enough love to give.”

“You must be tired – after all of your exertions!”

“I am.”

She kissed his eyelids and he smiled, languid, before relaxing into sleep. She watched him for some time. Her feelings of love, born by Thurstan and suckled by Claudia, now enhanced her power and did not destroy it, and she drew down energies while her lovers slept beside her, storing them in her crystal below. Words from the Black Book kept returning to her. She had never understood them before, knowing only that they described the process of change necessary before a Magus or a Mousa was born in the coldness that lay beyond the Abyss where Satan reigned. She did not know what awaited for her and in her if this change was successful, for all her books were silent about it and there was no one whom she could ask. She had believed with a certainty that her own power had

confirmed, that no one living in her time had passed that way toward the final stage of the seven that marked the Satanic path.

This belief, however, troubled her now more than the changes within her wrought by love – more than the duality that love has assumed in the past hours of her life. More even than the persistent hostile force which still surrounded her house and came with the night like hail. She was troubled by Saer, and tried to cast an image of him into her crystal, but some barrier beyond her own power to breach prevented her, and she lay awake between her two lovers pondering instead the patterns which the Dark Gods might assume when, tomorrow as she had planned, they would be returned finally to spread their chaos upon Earth.

Only Saer, she felt, might prevent her - and if he tried, she would have the power of two lovers to help her.

## XVII

The old man who had rescued him from the Satanists left Jukes as he had arrived – without greeting or explanation – and Jukes walked toward the cars and the shivering members of his Temple who had fled from Algar.

He did not speak to them and they asked no questions of him, and they sat huddled together while the moon rose and their sense of reality returned. Then, in whispered words Jukes told his tale and how he wished them to join him in the battle that was to come when, with Pead, they would conjure from the Abyss a destructive force to send against the witch queen and her house.

They gave their assent, and in all the cars drove along the moonlit roads over and down hills and through turning valleys to Pead's unlit cottage. The dog snarled, straining on its chain, while a voice from the darkness said, "Why do you come?"

Jukes shown a torch on Pead's face, then turned it away. "We failed," he said and explained.

"This man," asked Pead, "did he say his name?"

"Saer."

“Saer? I thought he was dead!”

“You know him?”

“No, but there are stories. Come in, my friends!”

Inside, Pead lit a single candle.

“We must act!” Jukes said while his followers adjusted themselves to the stench and the flickering shadows.

“This night I have sent a fetch against them.”

“Perhaps Saer – “

“If indeed he lives, I do not know where to find him.”

“She had no power over him. If – “

“He would act if he wished. If he does not, then maybe it is for us to do nothing also.”

“But we must do something!” shouted Jukes. Several members of his Temple, standing behind him, were already scratching themselves.

“I see you do not understand.”

“I understand,” persisted Jukes, “enough to know this planet is threatened. By her and the forces she wants to bring.”

“If Saer – “

“Saer this! Saer that! Who is this bloody Saer anyway?” said Jukes in anger, his body

trembling in reaction to the events of the night.

“He is an old man, older than me – much older than me – who in his youth sought the secret of the alchemical Stone. Some say he found it. Myself – I do not know. It is said of him that he understands and can control should he wish, the cosmic tides themselves. He had a pupil once, a young woman. But she abused his trust and they parted – he to live alone and she to follow the sinister path. But that was a long time ago. No one has heard of him or seen him for – what? - maybe thirty years.”

“Then he is a Magus?” asked Jukes.

“Indeed. The only one this century – although there have been many who claimed the title but lacked the understanding and the power.”

Even in the dim light, Jukes could see Pead’s sly smile. He ignored the slight at the man whose teachings he followed. “But surely then he must do something.”

Pead shrugged his hunched shoulders. “Maybe he is.”

“I feel nothing.”

“As I.”

“But surely,” persisted Jukes, “his very appearance – his saving of me – means something.”

“Perhaps.”

For years, Jukes had absorbed diverse Occult theories, and he quickly made an assumption. “Perhaps it was a sign for us to act? Perhaps he has chosen us to act?”

“I do not know.”

“I saw and felt the power he had. He must have wanted me to do something. We could summon Shugara.”

“Do you know what you ask?”

“Yes! There is enough of us to invoke such power.”

“It is dangerous.” Pead rested against one of his desks as if seeking comfort from the books upon it.

“We cannot allow her to succeed. Shugara would destroy her – and all of her followers.”

“And maybe us, also.” He moved to where a pile of small, bound manuscripts lay on the floor. Extracting one, he began to read aloud. “Shugara is one of the most dangerous to invoke. Manifestations may be accompanied by the smell of rotting corpses. Symbolized by the Tarot card The Moon – Shugara is the great Beast that comes from the dark pool under the Moon. His call is to be chanted in the key of G major...”

“It is the only way!” said Jukes with messianic zeal.

“In all my workings I have never dared – “

“We must dare it now! Listen to me! Do you believe in evil?”

“Evil?”

“Yes, evil. Do you believe that there is a dark power at work on this Earth?”

“I know that there are dark forces that we as magickians can use.”

“Yes, yes. But what about innocence?” He reached behind him and drew forward a young female member of his Temple. “See her?” And the young woman blushed. “I would call her innocent – someone who trusts and believes in the good. Now,” he continued, intoxicated by his eloquence, “If I for whatever reason threw her to the ground and raped her, I would destroy that trust, that innocence, wouldn’t I?”

“Maybe.”

“I would be imposing my will on hers, to fulfill my own desire. Well, I should really respect her – her own desires, for ‘every man and woman is a star’ and ‘love is the law, love under will’. My act would be an evil one.” Something obscure occurred in his mind, but he could not define it and passed on. “Our magick – the Osirian current and that of the child who comes after – is to bring love into this world, to bring a New Aeon. Yet she – “ he spat out the word – “wants to break our magickal current and impose her own. We would become possessed by the power she brought – invaded in our minds. There would be evil – the ending of love!”

With his strong words, Jukes seemed to have invoked a presence in the damp, shadowed room. They all sensed it – and Pead most of all.

“Yes, you’re right,” Pead said, glancing behind him. “We shall do as you say.”

“Then let us prepare,” said Jukes confidently.

Pead took the candle and led them to the room where he slept. They could not see the bloodstains that covered the floor and he set the candle by the window to fetch his ceremonial equipment. The magickal circle, inscribed with sigils and words of power, almost filled the room when joined together, and Jukes and his followers stood within it while Pead brought candles, incense, a sword, parchment and pen. The burner was lit, incense burned, the circle purified by the sprinkling of salt and sealed by the passing along it of the tip of the sword.

Jukes and Pead stood in the centre while the others linked hands and began to walk, slowly at first, sun-wise around the circle. Pead drew a sigil on parchment, showed it to the four corners of the room and began his chant.

“You I invoke, Shugara, who lurks waiting in the pits of the Abyss! You are Fury and the bringer of Death! Hear me! And hearing hearken to my call! For I am the Lord of Powers in this circle – hear me! And hearing hearken to my call!”

‘Shu-ga-ra!’ chanted the circling dancers as the incense filled the room and the candles flickered. “Shu-ga-ra!”

“Shugara!” commanded Pead. “With this my seal and sword I conjure you! Attend to the words of my voice! Exarp! Bitom! Nanta! Hcoma! I rule over you all: Gil ol nonci zamran! Micma! Come Shugara! To me! To me!”



Jukes felt the frenzy and began to chant the demon's name in the key of G major while Pead continued with his invocation and the dancers, circling fast, chanted their own chant.

First the smell choked them, and then the laughter stopped their chants. The dried blood on the floor seemed to boil, and then seeped away into the room to form an ill-defined shape that hung near the ceiling. Pead began to speak, but the shape swooped down to engulf his face and vanished.

“You fools!” he hissed before turning and walking from the room.

Outside, the dog growled, yelped and then was silent. When Jukes found it, it was dead. Jukes waited a long time, but could hear nothing. He left the implements of magick, the candles and the incense burning, but performed a banishing for himself and his followers before leading them to their cars. He felt sick and oppressed and, in silence, drove slowly through the night knowing Pead was possessed and would probably die. There was nothing they could do except hope that in some way he would fulfill the purpose of the ritual.

There was little traffic as they drove down the roads toward London, sensing that they might have failed. In his depressive state, Jukes did not care about leaving Claudia and as the time of the journey turned into hours and clouds came to cover the moon, he had come to believe his own beliefs were an illusion. Nothing was threatened, there were no powers trying to break through the dimensions, no magick – only hallucinations and dread. He found comfort in these thoughts, a sense of reality returning, and all he wanted to do was return to his flat, throw away his books and begin a normal life. He could forget the terrors of the night. He was like a person suddenly and unexpectedly locked in a prison cell – first, there was the loss of his will, a disbelief, the slow depression of shock, and then the gradual adjustment to the reality of the surroundings. But there would be no anger, no sudden resentment at this fate as there might have been for one unjustly imprisoned. The terror had burned that from his soul as a flash of lightning burns out the bark of trees.

For the first time in his life, Jukes felt the need of a personal love. His need was not for the love that was an idea that he carried in his head, nor for that which was only a word in someone else's faith used to bring a little self-importance to his life, as when he used a woman in a magick ritual or real life. Instead, his need was for the comfort and gentle joy that personal love could sometimes bring, and as he drove carefully and slowly toward the lights of London, he held out his hand for the young woman beside him. She did not refuse, for she loved his charisma as High Priest and in her gentle, trusting way held his fingers tight.

The simple gesture destroyed all the demons of Jukes' past.

## XVIII

It was dawn when Thurstan awoke to find Claudia still asleep beside him. It was her hand, which rested on his shoulder, her warm breath against his face, and for some time he thought the memory of Melanie being between them was the memory of a dream.

A thin duvet covered them, but their closeness, Claudia's bare shoulder and his memory of her body, aroused Thurstan's passion and he was about to let his hand stroke her breast when she awoke. For a moment there was fear in her eyes, which he saw, destroying his passion. She smiled at him and in her smile was an awkward vulnerable trust, which brought to Thurstan a remembrance of all the women he had loved and the reason why he loved them.

He kissed her, as a brother might, before leaving the room to find his clothes. Dressed, he wandered around the house but could not find Melanie. The air of late summer was mild and hazy and he sat on the grass in the walled garden, listening. A contemplative calm came to him and he might have been a Taoist monk meditating in the still air of dawn. He was at peace, within himself, and felt in a way stronger than he had ever done before that the world, and he himself, unfolded in its own natural way. It was also beautiful, in a strange, calm way and he sat, very still but without effort, while the gentle euphoria suffused him.

The mood drifted from him, slowly. His fervour of the night was unreal – a memory of another person. The calm he felt now was real and he realized with a sudden insight that it was this feeling that he wished above all else to share with Melanie. It was the beauty, the calm he found when he looked into a woman's eyes – the gentleness he experienced sometimes when he lay naked beside the woman he loved and she showed by a caress or a kiss or a smile that she cared for him. It was the longing he felt to be with a sensitive woman – the soft desire to make slow, gentle love to her. All the sharing moments, all the experiences of two people in love would be a remembrance of such moments, a giving and returning, a mutual embrace and breaking of barriers, that he knew no words might describe.

The energy of the night, even the magick, was alien to him. He wanted his vulnerable love to lead himself and the woman he loved to another existence, and he began to feel that such a love might in a way he did not understand, affect the world, as once he had believed that prayer to a god might. He knew this was an ideal – but it was an attainable one, if the love was mutual and without reservation. He began to think of how a monk or a nun,

pledged to contemplation, might seek to love God – he wanted and needed to love a woman in such a way: a woman of flesh and blood who responded to his kisses, who laughed, cried, danced, became angry or sad, but who, whatever the emotions and whatever the experience loved him faithfully as he would love her. There would be a sacred quality about such a love.

He did not need the energy of power or magick or money, for he sensed the beauty of life lay hidden in its simplicity, in a kind of detachment, and as he sat in the still warming air of early morning only the sound of bird-song around him, his body and mind languid, he felt it easy to believe in a god who might have made it all - or some force, perhaps named Fate, which governed the workings of the cosmos. He was aware, as he sat, of the suffering and misery in the world, as he was aware that he himself was not God – not even a god. He did not understand the suffering, or the misery, but felt that all he could do was try and change himself, re-orientate in some way his own consciousness so as not to add to those burdens.

All the threads of his life were gathered together in the moments of his sitting: the memories, sometimes painful and intense, of the women he had loved; the lessons of his own past, his feelings and thoughts of and about others. He drew them to himself by a quiet process of thought to make his feelings and memories conscious and part of a whole, and by the time he had completed the task, his view of the world had profoundly changed. He felt he had at last discovered the reality of his own self, buried for so long in a confusion of feelings, moods and desires.

Perhaps his intuitive awareness of Claudia's vulnerability or the strange things of magick he had seen caused this. He did not know or particularly care. There was a happiness within him, which was gentle and made him smile. He felt in love with the world and possessed an awareness of meaning. He sensed there was something beyond his own life, which a particular way of living would create – which a sharing of love with another person would make possible. Perhaps this was another life in another plane of existence. It was a nebulous sensation, this belief, which he could not formulate directly into ideas expressed by the words of his thoughts, but nonetheless real to him and he added it to his view of the world before rising from the grass and walking, in the sunlight, toward the house.

A man was by the door, leaning on an Ash walking stick. It was Saer and he was smiling. Thurstan blinked in surprise – and Saer was gone. Thurstan felt he had seen a ghost, and did not bother to look for the old man.

Melanie sat by the crystal in her Temple and he stood beside her.

“Will you marry me?” he asked.

“What?”

“Will you marry me? Leave all of this and come and live with me in my cottage?”

“Are you serious?”

“Yes.”

“There are many things that I must do.”

“Forget them. Forget all this.”

She smiled at him. “And Claudia?”

He sighed. “And Claudia. I cannot share you.”

“All that I have is from this day yours – and hers.”

“I want nothing except you.”

“Nothing?”

“Nothing. No money, power – whatever. I earn enough to support us both, if we live simply.”

“You need never work again.”

“But I need to.”

She laughed, and touched his face. “It is a lovely, romantic ideal! But not possible.”

“Why not?”

She gestured toward her crystal. "This is my life."

"I can be your life."

"But for how long?"

Thurstan flinched, and in that moment part of his hope was extinguished. "We can try."

"Why this sudden change?"

"All this really isn't me. You have power, money, charisma – and magick to bind people to you, to control. I love what is beyond all that in you. My real world is outside, sitting in the sun listening to the songs of the birds or watching clouds or waiting for the frogs to return in Spring. I do not belong here – in a Temple, doing strange rituals."

"You are tempting me," she said smiling.

"As you tempted me?"

"Perhaps."

They stood in silence for a long time until Thurstan said, "You could use your power to bind me, but –"

"I no longer have any power over you," Melanie said softly. "I knew that when you entered here."

"You still love me then?"

"It is not my love that makes me powerless to bind you. There is something else."

"What?"

“Would you like to take Claudia some breakfast? There are many things to do this morning.”

“Marry me.” When she did not answer, Thurstan said, “well at least come away with me.”

“And if I want you to stay here with me? Share my world?”

“I don’t think it would work,” Thurstan said, sadly.

“You could try.”

“It would be a game. What would be the point?”

“To enjoy the game, perhaps.”

“I want to go straight to what is beyond all that.”

“Our bridge is in danger.”

Thurstan looked at her and began to cry. He made no sound and Melanie wiped the tears away with her hand.

“Go now,” she said. “Before I do something I will regret.”

The sunlight seemed painful to him as he walked along her driveway toward the lane. He had not looked back and she did not run after him, and he walked slowly shuffling like an old man along the lane and down toward the road. He stopped for several minutes to stand and lean on the bridge toward the bottom of the lane, watching and listening to the fastly flowing stream of water. A cyclist, brightly clad and whose bicycle was laden with panniers, passed and wished him good-day.

“Lovely day!” Thurstan said.

“Yes, splendid!” replied the traveller before changing down into a lower gear and riding up the hill.

The scenery, the weather, the brief human contact charmed Thurstan, bringing the world around him alive. Melanie the Satanic witch queen was not of this world where he himself belonged, and as Thurstan walked away to take the Neolithic track that rose up the slopes of the Mynd a mile distant, his sadness was relieved by a presentiment of joy.

## XIX

The house seemed, to Melanie, to sigh as Thurstan left. Her own grief was longer, and it was nearly an hour later that she went to her bedroom to find Claudia asleep.

For several minutes she stood, watching the sleeping woman. There was a gentleness and trust in Claudia that brought to Melanie an intimation of a type of love she did not know nor even perhaps understand, and she allowed her grief at losing Thurstan to sharpen this intimation. But she could not hold in her consciousness this insight and left, imbued again with her role and Destiny, to make arrangements for the evening ritual.

There would be no sacrifice, only a calling down of dark power through her crystal – a breaking of the gates by the directed frenzy of the members of her Temple and the guests she had invited from around the world. The hours of the day passed quickly for her, Claudia was happy, receiving guests, preparing the Temple and food for the feast, which would follow the recalling, directing the servants that morning had drawn to the house on Melanie's command.

Fifty-four people were gathered in the Temple as darkness came slow to cover the land around. Melanie left them as her cantors began their discordant chant and her dancers began to dance, slowly, drawing forth from themselves a rising pyramid of power. Claudia waited for her in the secret Temple, her hands on the crystal and soon the diffusing light from the floor began to change in colour until a purple aura surrounded them.

There was a yearning in Melanie as she stood beside her Priestess and lover. But it was not a yearning for love - only a cold desire to alter the living patterns in the world and so fulfill her Destiny by returning the Dark Gods to Earth. She was suspended between her past with all its charisma and power and the future that might have been possible if she had surrendered to Thurstan's love. She was aware of herself only through the images of the past and her barely formed feelings for Claudia: detached from the realness of her body and personal emotions. The power being invoked seemed to be drawing her toward the Abyss

and the spaces beyond the Abyss where she had never been.

The Abyss was within her, within Claudia, within all those in the Temple and all those outside it. It was primal awe, terror and intoxication and she entered it she felt its energies forming into shapes ready to ascend to Earth through her crystal and Temple. She was not conscious of the world around her and so did not see the door of the secret Temple open or the leering man who entered.

The darkness of the Abyss had attracted the darkness which had possessed Pead, as it made him sense the vulnerability of Claudia. He was growling like the animal he had become as he fastened his hands around her neck. Melanie heard the scream but she was paralyzed by the Abyss and could only return slowly to the world of the living as inadvertently Claudia operated the mechanism, which opened the pit beneath the crystal. She and Pead stood on its ledge as the plinth with its crystal slid aside.

“Take me!” Melanie screamed. But she was too late and as she moved toward them they stumbled and fell into the pit.

Silently the plinth returned to seal them in deep darkness. Melanie could not make it move and bloodied her hands trying. And when it did, no answer came to her repeated calls, only silence rising from the rotting blackness below.

The power in the crystal had gone and she hid her tears as she walked toward the Temple and its worshippers. They were still chanting and dancing, unaware that the real power was gone from the crystal, the house and its Mistress they all held in awe. Melanie watched and listened, aware as she did so that what they felt as they chanted and danced was only a flickering shadow. So she left them to seal herself in her room.

She sat for a long time, vaguely aware of the passing hours and the people who drifted away from the house, perplexed. They had danced, chanted and waited for her to appear, but when she had not come forth to carry them to the Abyss they had waited again until the realization of failure made them shuffle and slink away.

Dawn drew her to her garden and in the long moments of her walking barefoot in the dewy grass she found an answer to her grief. It was an answer without words – a feeling that drew her beyond the cold Abyss to where a new universe waited. She was drifting in this universe, floating among the stars and galaxies of love, sadness, sorrow and joy, and as she consciously drifted, her body tensed and tears came to her eyes.



Images and feelings rushed through her as a whirling system of planets and stars forms from chaos and rushes through a galaxy past other stars when time itself is compressed. The images were of her past but the feelings attached to them were not the original feelings. There was sadness instead of exultation, love instead of anger, grief instead of joy. They had changed because her perspective had changed for she was seeing herself and her past not as before through her own eyes but from beyond herself where other people were part of her in a way that brought an awareness of their sorrow, passion, hurt, narrowness, love and stupidity. She was Thurstan as he sat in the café holding her hand and trembling with the expectation of love; she was Claudia as she lay being kissed for the first time by a woman – the possessed man who in blindness and unthinking hate had killed Claudia.

The images and feelings rushed through her and when they were gone she was left feeling both sorrow and love. Her sorrow was in her lack of vision – she had drawn forces from within herself and beyond herself and used them to fulfill her will and desires: nothing had been real for her except those powers and herself. Here love was in a yearning to try and understand by giving herself, by sharing what she felt with someone who understood.

The sorrow that burst upon her broke her free of her past: it was a storm which smashed her mooring and snapped the anchorage of her self so she became a ship sailing free blown by winds she did not understand. Her feelings for Thurstan, her brief sorrow at Lois' death, her brief love of Claudia were distant heralds of the storm, which had come.

Gradually, her yearning became a yearning for love. She felt the blue of the sky above pour down upon her as the warmth of the sun, felt the wholeness of the patterns of Nature before her as if they were all notes in a beautiful piece of music – Vivaldi, perhaps, exulting in song the god of his faith, or Bach transforming a fugue to its end. She received the emanations that broke upon her with a joy seldom before known except in brief moments of physical passion, and she became happy, sad, compassion, ecstatic and afraid until a vision calmed her. Her vision was of the vital, ineffable mechanism of the cosmos itself – the eternal beyond the transient forms that life assumed through the process of slow evolution to something beyond itself.

This something she felt to be a vast, calm ocean where evolution ended, and began, in an indescribable transcendent bliss. But the vision was soon over, and she found herself lying on the grass of her garden in the chilly air of morning.

For over an hour she lay, calm and gently breathing while physical senses returned to her body and an awareness of self brought need. She did not want to move as she did not want the calm, her perception of the whole of which she was a part, to end, and when she did move it was to slowly walk toward her car to drive away from her house, hoping, as she did

so, that Thurstan would still love her.

## XX

The past came back to Jukes. The day had barely gone after the night of his return before his insight faded. He was in bed with his new and gentle lover when they called.

“I hope you do not mind us calling,” the nervous young man said.

“Not at all.” He gestured to the sofa and watched keenly as they sat. The young woman with short hair was pretty, dressed in a purple dress while the young man with a straggly beard seemed weak-willed and shy.

“We heard about your group,” the man said, “and are very interested.”

“How did you hear?” Jukes asked.

“Oh – the chap in the ‘Occult Bookshop’.”

“Actually – “ Jukes began.

“He said you were an Adept – and we would very much like to learn from you.”

“How do you mean?”

“Be one of your pupils.”

Jukes was flattered and when he looked at the woman she turned her eyes away and blushed. His new Priestess entered bearing a pot of tea on a tray – she smiled at him with love, but his own smile was brief and she sat down in a corner, quiet and trusting, while Jukes began to manipulate, again.

He talked of the Occult path, the difficulties and the sacrifice that was needed, and the importance of being willing to learn. He drew them to him, talking of the Aeon to come when

truly free individuals would change the world forever. He talked of the magick within, which could be drawn out and help each individual find their True Will, and as he talked he drew nearer to the subject of Initiation and acts of sexual magick. His desire for the woman who sat opposite him grew as he talked, moulding his will through words which seeped into his new followers as a parasite seeps into the intestine of the host.

“You are very sensitive – to certain forces,” he said to the woman.

“I don’t think I am,” she said softly.

“It seem to me you have a natural gift.” He sensed the compliment was well received. “It can be developed by certain means, should you wish to do so.”

For hours, he talked while they listened. He felt a power, talking to them about magick, a mastery that made him confident. He was an Adept, and would guide them toward magickal understanding. Part of him was sincere as well, and over the years he had covered his desires with lovely names as his assumption of having attained Adeptship made all that he did or chose to do seem right for both the cosmos and him. His names were Destiny, free love and the Chosen.

As the hours passed he became his role – there was no dichotomy within him. His pupils would be a means, sent by his gods, whereby he himself – and they – could attain further magickal understanding.

Darkness came early, shielding, and his Priestess lit some candles to shed some light and add to the atmosphere of magick that he was building with his words. The terrors of his recent past became rationalized as he talked – Pead had brought misfortune on himself by his past deeds of sacrifice, and the terrors at the Satanist house were the result of a battle between Saer and the woman who had enticed Claudia away. It was not his battle, and his only mistake had been to become involved. That involvement was Claudia’s doing, she was obviously being manipulated by other powers emanating from the Satanist house.

Jukes was pleased with his understanding. He described to his new pupils the ritual Pead had done and explained how the magickian became possessed.

“So you see, there is always danger present. We must learn to master our wills!”

His two pupils looked at each other, and the woman nodded.

“When,” asked the man, “can we be Initiated?”

Jukes pretended to consider the matter carefully. “We have a meeting next week at which Initiation could take place.”

“Really? As soon as that?” The man was surprised.

“Of course, if you wish to delay – “

“No, no. What you suggest is fine. We are only too keen to begin our quest.”

“Good. I shall arrange everything.”

“May I ask you something?” For the first time the woman spoke.

“Why yes!”

“What happened to the man in that ritual?”

Jukes laughed. “He is probably wandering around still, quite mad!”

Jukes was pleased to see them go, knowing the woman would soon be his and knowing that his Priestess would be only too willing to please him when they returned to his bed. He slept well that night, tired from his bodily exertions and safe again within the world he had created. He did not hear his Priestess crying, a little, toward dawn as she sensed what next week would bring. But she would accept it, for she was only a Priestess and he was her teacher.

Outside, two Blackbirds sung her to sleep.

‘Therefore, let every mortal see that last day

When they die – not considering themselves fortunate

Until without suffering they cross the boundary of this life.’

Thurstan wrote the words slowly, savouring them, before collecting together the scattered pages of his translation. He glanced through it, satisfied at the labour of months, but sad because he would have to think of something else to do in the long hours to be spent alone as summer changed to autumn and brought the dark of night to cover the evening hours.

A premonition of dawn came to him as he looked out from his window to the eastern hills, and he snuffed out the candles by which he liked to work. The air outside was fresh like that of early autumn and he stood by the door of the cottage slowly breathing it in. There was no wind to break the silence and he walked into his small garden, riddled by weed and long of grass, to watch the haze of Aurora grow. Definition of fence, tree, fields and hills came slowly in rhythm with the song of birds as if those very songs were calling Eos from her sleep. The growing light though without warmth still drew the cold sadness from Thurstan as he stood waiting for the sun god to rise. And when He did, climbing steadily between the cleft in hills on the horizon, Thurstan smiled in reverence.

Phrases from his translation repeated themselves in his mind and it did not seem to him a long span of time since Sophocles had seen or imagined the sun rising over the mountains of Phocis: *‘Bright as a flame from the snows of Parnassus comes a voice...’* Who, Thurstan wondered, had in the intervening centuries understood the message? Would his own attempt to present it in his own language fail should it ever be printed and read? Would hubris – defiance that broke the balance in the cosmos – increase? Could the balance ever be restored?

He did not know the answers to these questions as he did not know any answers that were solutions to the problems of his own life, and he contented himself with enjoying the beautiful world around him; the sights, sounds, smells of sky-god and Earth-mother. The Earth around him was real in a way that his memories and dreams were not and as he stood, experiencing the dawn of day, he forgot his love of Melanie and his dreams of sharing his life, making himself content by his work in the gardens of mother Earth and by his night time toil of translations.

He became at peace again with himself and sat upon the step to plan his next translation. The turning of Earth brought the sun higher into his sky while he sat, enjoying the warmth of

his last day free from his work. Tomorrow, his brief holiday over, he would return to the farm to strain and stretch his muscles and delight in his simple tasks.

The sun was warm when he heard a vehicle approaching, but he did not rise even when he recognized the car, which was screechingly braked to a halt. Melanie came toward him and his peace vanished like darkness by lightning. For minutes they stood, pressed close together by their arms.

“I love you.” Melanie’s words were a spell, which bound her to him. She knew they would be and had never used them before.

“You seem changed,” Thurstan said as she began to cry, gently.

“Claudia is dead.”

He kissed her, sat her in a garden chair in the sun, made and brought her a pot of Shenca tea and sat beside her to listen while she talked. She spoke of the man who came rushing into her house, drawn somehow by the power she was invoking, of how he seemed to sense, as she had, Claudia’s innocence. She described the pit into which they fell where Algar’s disfigured body lay rotting: of how she had let her grief walk her to her garden and how the burgeoning light of a new day had brought to her an understanding of the tragedy of her past.

“Your simple love,” she said, “broke through the shield around me. I don’t know how or why – but it did.”

“What will you do?”

She laughed. “Did you mean what you said?”

“Yes.”

“Then I want to stay here – with you.”

Clouds began to gather around the eastern horizon of hills as they spoke, growing as a wind

arose to shape and move them across the sky to cover, briefly, the sun. Other, darker clouds followed.

“But your house – your plans?”

“I shall forget them.”

“Can you?”

“Yes. My perspective may have changed – but not my will!”

Thurstan was delighted, both by the answer and the spirit which sent it forth from her lips. “Will you marry me, then?” he asked.

“Yes!”

They kissed like new lovers while clouds covered the whole of the sky.

“Shall we go in?” Thurstan asked.

“I would like that.”

Inside Melanie said; “You know what I wish?”

He was attuned to her and answered, “I think so.”

“It may be possible, for I no protection and my cycle is right.”

This new desire enhanced the closeness they found as naked body lay upon naked body. Rain fell around the cottage in where they lay, sweating. It beat down as a storm upon the roof and windows, a counter-point to their passionate ecstasy and love, and when it was over and they lay entwined together while the sun sent shafts of light through a window, Melanie began to cry. She softly cried for a long time as if the tears purged her of her past. Thurstan felt this, and brushed them away as she lay resting her head on his chest.

The knocking on his door startled them both. Hastily Thurstan covered part of his nakedness.

“Yes?” he asked as he opened the door.

The old man was in ragged clothes and it was some seconds before Thurstan recognized Saer.

“I am sorry to intrude – at such a time,” smiled Saer. “May I enter?”

Thurstan was reluctant, for he sensed the Saer was more than an intrusion. “I’d rather you didn’t.”

“Her power is gone.”

“Please go.” Thurstan did not understand what was happening – but Saer seemed a threat to him in some way.

“I cannot leave without her.”

The words struck Thurstan like blows. “We are to marry.”

“It cannot be,” said Saer quietly.

“Leave us alone!” shouted Thurstan and in anger shut the door. He bolted it before returning to Melanie.

Saer stood by the bed. “It cannot be,” he repeated.

Thurstan’s wrath made him move toward Saer who raised his hand. Thurstan’s body became paralyzed and he could only watch as Saer gave Melanie her clothes.



“I shall kill you!” Thurstan screamed.

Saer smiled.

“Why are you doing this?” Thurstan asked, realizing his rage was useless. Melanie did not look at him and seemed to be in a trance.

Saer smiled and Thurstan’s rage returned. He channelled it to his body. Trembling with effort he could only manage to move his feet a little forward.

“Sleep now,” Saer quietly said.

Thurstan’s eyes were closing and he could not stop them. The last thing he saw was Melanie’s pleading but helpless eyes. Then he was dreaming. He was in his garden under a searing sun – but his garden was different: full of beautiful flowers and luxurious grass. Claudia, radiantly beautiful, was beside him and held his arm. He felt peaceful with her and listened almost rapturously as she spoke.

“You were part of his plan. He could do nothing until your love broke her power.”

“Help me,” Thurstan asked.

“We can do nothing here.”

Thurstan awoke to find himself lying on his bed. Moonlight reached his room and he lay trying to unravel dream from reality and reality from dream. It was a slow process, but helped by Melanie’s perfume, which still lay on his pillow and when it was over he remembered her car.

It was still outside his cottage. He felt uncomfortable with its power and drove carefully along the moonlit lanes and roads to her house, which he found empty and cold. Nervous, he switched on all the lights as he journeyed from room to room and floor to floor avoiding the temple of her crystal. But he felt and saw nothing except the shadows and fears of his own mind. And the memories of their brief time together.

Only the library possessed some warmth as if in indication of the answers he hoped to find, and he shut its door before browsing among the books. All of them, and the manuscripts bound like books, were about alchemy, magick or the Occult. He could read the Latin of the medieval manuscripts and books, but what it related did not interest him as the later books brought forth no desire to read further. Even the Black Book of Satan, resting on the table, seemed irrelevant to him. They were all compilations of shadow words, appearing to Thurstan to fall short of the aim that the searchers who had written them should have aimed for. His instinctive feeling was to observe in a contemplative way some facet of the cosmos – to stand outside in the dark of the night and listen for the faint music that travelled down to Earth from the stars – rather the enclose himself in the warm womb of a house to read the writings of others. Demons, spells, hidden powers, the changing of base metal to gold, even the promises of power and change for himself, were not important to Thurstan, and he left the library with its stored knowledge and forbidden secrets and lurking gods, to walk in the moonlit garden.

The stars were not singing for him – or he could not hear them above the turmoil of his thought – but his slow moon-wise walking brought a calm. His dreams of sharing life with Melanie were still vivid, but he realized that if such sharing was not to be, it would not be. He might try, through force or even magick to win her back. But if he succeeded, his dreams would only become real if she wished to make them real for him, and all he could do was give her the freedom of choice. Saer was using her – for what purpose he did not know – and he would try and find her, somehow, to give the promise of choice. He was not afraid of Saer, not worried about the magickal powers he possessed, for as he walked with a calm that deepened and brought awareness of the rhythms of the cosmos, he felt that it was his fate to try and find her. What happened when and if he did, would happen, as Spring happens after the cold darkness of Winter.

## XXII

It was not a long wait. Thurstan did not enter the secret Temple and use the crystal nor any magickal means. His way was not the way of magick but of sensitive thought and he sat on the damp, cold grass to close his eyes and think of Melanie.

What he saw guided him and he walked in the moonlight along the narrow turning hilly lanes singing softly to himself. His songs were from his translations and he invented the music to match the rhythm of his walking feet. There was joy in him then, a simpleness that gave him the strength of water and its ability to follow any channel or shape itself while still being itself to any vessel or container. His goal was a small cottage of stone with a sagging roof and tiny windows beside an unmarked track that weaved among the mamelons between the western slopes of the Mynd and the tress of Linley Hill. No one passed him as he walked and the fields were quite silent and quite still. His chosen track led him for a hundred yards

through a wood, past a stream flowing down between two hills to curve eastwards and rise north among the rocky barren land. As its sudden end lay the cottage but briefly home to the short sun of Winter. Dawn was almost rising behind him as he knocked upon the old studded oak door.

No one came to answer his call and he opened the door. Inside in the flickering light of a fire, he saw Saer hunched on a stool before the hearth while against the wall in the recessed bed, Melanie lay sleeping. The large room comprised all of the cottage and it smelled of burnt hazel mingled with pine. Saer, though surprised, did not move.

“You are persistent.” Saer did not look toward Thurstan but still stared into the large flames that ate, with sporadic breaking of tree-limbs and fingers, the wood.

Thurstan did not close the door but began to walk toward Melanie. Suddenly, Saer rose.

“Leave her,” he said quietly and raised his left hand.

For an instant Saer’s features seemed, to Thurstan, to be lacertilian but the impression soon vanished to leave only an old man with white hair standing before a fire. As soon as Thurstan touched Melanie she awoke. “She is mine,” he said, almost sadly.

“It is not for you or for me but for Melanie to decide,” Saer said, and smiled. It was a kindly smile and he raised his hand again.

Thurstan just sighed and held Melanie’s hand.

“I can see,” Saer said to Thurstan, “what powers you now represent.”

“I have no power – only my love for her.”

“Even now you do not understand.” Saer turned toward Melanie. “It is written: *‘Baphomet is a goddess of violent aspect who washes in the blood of her foes. She is the bride of Lucifer – a Gate to the Dark Gods beyond this Earth. Her daughters are Power, Vengeance and Lust, but the only Earth-based living child born from these children is the Demon named Love.’*”

“So I,” said Melanie, suddenly understanding, “as Mistress of Earth passed beyond the Abyss.”

“To bring into this world what must be.”

“And now I must choose?”

“Yes.”

For a long time Melanie looked at Thurstan. “I must go with Saer,” she finally said. In that instant, she felt her magickal powers return.

“But I –“

“Say nothing.” She pressed her forefinger to his lips.

“I don’t understand,” said Thurstan, almost crying with emotion.

Melanie smiled, sadly. “There will be enough time for understanding in old age. What lives now and grows within me will always be a part of you.”

She kissed his cheek and he became too full of emotion to do anything but watch her and Saer walk into the burgeoning dawn. Then, suddenly, they vanished. He ran outside, but he could not find them.

He walked slowly away from the cottage. The light of dawn seemed to be sucking mist from the ground, but he did not care. He moved, like an old man pained by his limbs, through the cold and sometimes swirling mist along a path that took him toward the Mynd and up, steeply, to its level summit where he stood, high above the mist, to watch the mist-clotted valleys below. The heather was beginning to show the glory of its colour, and he walked through it northbound along the cracked and stony road stopping often to turn around and wait. But no one and nothing came to him – no voices, song or sigh. There was hope within him as he walked as he had often walked along the almost level top of that long and beautiful low mountain. But hope did not last, for he felt he would never see her again – never know their child. The very Earth itself seemed to be whispering to him the words of this truth. He began to sense, slowly, that there was for him real magick here where

moorland fell to form deep hollows home to those daughter of Earth known as springs and streams, and where the Neolithic pathway had heard perhaps ten million stories. No wisps of clouds came to spoil the glory of the sun as it rose over the mottled wavy hills beyond the Stretton valley miles distant and below. No noise to break the almost sacred silence heard. For an instant it seemed as if some divinity, strange but pure, came into the world, and smiled.

The smile might have been one of understanding, but Thurstan sat down in the heather and cried.

### XXIII

It was raining still and dull of day when Jukes arrived at Pead's cottage, summoned by avarice. His fear began to ebb away as he saw it was empty, unchanged since the night of the ritual – except for the stench of the dismembered, half-eaten and rotting dog.

He selected his goods carefully, taking only the rarest of books and manuscripts to his car wherein his Priestess waited, soothed by his words of charm: 'He said if anything happened to him, I was to keep his books...'

So he worked while she, in trust, waited. And when, to his satisfaction, the collection was complete, he drove in curiosity to see from a safe distance the house wherein Claudia had left him and where he thought she lived in bondage to her Satanic mistress.

An old tramp was walking away from the direction of the house and Jukes stopped him, saying: "Do you know who lives there?"

"In that there house?" said the old man before spitting on the ground. "Empty it is – has been for weeks if you ask me. No mug of tea for me there, that's for sure."

Jukes did not thank him or even watch him walk away. He was excited, and led his Priestess along the driveway to the house, as, behind them, Saer turned in the rain, and smiled.

Jukes tried the door, and to his surprise found it open. The house was warm, comforting after the cold rain, and they ambled along the hallway with Jukes calling "Hello?"

No one came. Jukes left his Priestess for he felt strangely aroused. The house, he felt, was a woman of beauty and he was violating her. He was full of physical lust and felt powerful and began to explore all the aspects of her warm and scented body – hoping vaguely he might find a real woman whom he could rape. He eagerly sought the bedrooms – caressing the silken sheets – as he eagerly sought items of clothing, which he hoped by their texture, and smell, might bring nearer to him the woman he was searching for. Night came from outside while he wandered, bringing light and increased warmth within the house. But Jukes did not notice this. His arousal became stronger until he became a man intent only on rape. He did not see the shadows from his own Abyss as they gathered around him lisping words of encouragement, as he did not find in his search the woman he wanted. But he remembered a woman, waiting for him below.

He found her asleep in a chair fluxed in the glow of a large crystal before her. He did not care about the strange room nor wonder about the crystal. He cared only for satisfying his lust – he wanted, as he had never wanted before, to abuse her cruelly, to beat her and rape her savagely. He was strong in body and would use his strength to satisfy himself by forcing her beneath him.

He moved toward her, leering. But, then, she opened her eyes and smiled.

Jukes found he could not move, and did not see the door behind him close. “You are mine now,” the woman who had once been his willing lover said. “With a look I can strike you dead!”

Jukes did not doubt it. Reality for him returned quickly. She was no longer his Priestess, but a woman, mistress of him, who by magick bound his will. Beside the crystal where he stood watching helplessly, an amber necklace lay and she rose from the chair to take it for herself. She was still smiling as she unthreaded one bead, which began to glow in her fingers. She showed it to him, mockingly, and laughed before re-threading it and placing the beads around her neck.

“You are mine,” she repeated and smiled. “Through Them whom we never name, we who garb ourselves in black possess this rock we call this Earth.”

She did not yet know what she would do with her new power, but there was plenty of time for her to think of something, plenty of secret books to be read. The old man who had led her from the hallway to this chamber would return, one day, to instruct her, she remembered he had said.

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Thurstan saw the lights in Melanie's house, and waited. He waited for a long time in the cold and the darkness, trying to forget his hunger, his tiredness and the rain. At last the lights became fewer, until all were gone, and he walked, trusting in his love and hopeful still, toward the door. It was not locked.

There was a woman sleeping in Melanie's bed. He did not wake her, nor the man he found sleeping in another room, but left them and the house to walk along the dark road that would take him to the Mynd, down into the valley and back to his cottage.

"I am an old man in a young man's body," he said to himself as he walked amid the rain. Maybe some day he would love again, but the shattering of his dreams had changed him, making him to wish to live alone, content with his translations. He did not fully understand his recent past but he felt that Melanie's child, when born, would be important in some way to the world – a kind of channel for the forces which both she and Saer represented.

He had seen enough of the hidden dimensions of the world to realize his lack of knowledge, but this lack did not bother him. He would go his own way, slowly as perhaps befitted a hermit-scholar, seeking through the slowness of the years a kind of inner peace in the little piece of Earth that was his home. Change would come – as it always had and always would – and he would sigh, while he treasured what he knew.

In the rain he thought he heard a strange creator star-god sigh, but walked on – shaking his head at the perplexity that was human life and the sadness that was the breaking of his dreams.

*Incipit Vitriol.....*

In your beginnings – we, waiting.  
In your quest - we are.  
Before you - we were.  
After you - we shall be, again.  
Before us - They who are never named.  
After us - They who will be, waiting.

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***[Fini]***

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***Appendix***

**A Note Concerning The Deofel Quartet:**

The books in the *Deofel Quartet* were designed as esoteric Instructional Texts for novices beginning the quest along the Left Hand Path according to the traditions of the ONA.

As such, they are not - and were not intended to be - great works of literature or novels of literary value, and their style is not that of a conventional novel. Thus, detailed descriptions – of people, events, circumstances – are for the most part omitted, with the reader/listener expected to use their own imagination to create such details.

Their intent was to inform *novices* of certain esoteric matters in an entertaining and interesting way, and as such they are particularly suitable for being read aloud. Indeed, one of their original functions was to be read out to Temple members by the Temple Priest or Priestess.

In effect, they are attempts at a new form of "magickal art" - like Tarot images, or esoteric music.

In addition, each individual book represents particular forms, aspects, and the archetypal energies associated with particular spheres of the Septenary Tree of Wyrð. Thus, and for example, *The Temple of Satan* relates to the third sphere, the alchemical process Coagulation, and the magickal process represented by the magickal word *Ecstasy*. [For more details, refer to the ONA MS *Introduction to the Deofel Quartet*.]

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## The Giving

### **Order of Nine Angles**

#### **(Deofel Quartet)**

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(First published 101 yf)

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“In truth, Baphomet – honoured for millennia under different names – is an image of our dark goddess and is depicted as a beautiful woman, seated, who is naked for the waist upward. She holds in her left hand the severed head of a man, and in her right a burning torch. She wears a crown of flowers, as befits a Mistress of Earth...

For centuries, we have kept this image secret, as the Templars and their descendants did...”

*Book of Asoth*

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There was much that was unusual about Sidnal Wyke, including his name. His name no longer brought forth any comments from his neighbours in the small hamlet of Stredbow where he had spent all his life, and his strange habits were accepted because he was regarded by them as a cunning man, well versed in the ways of the old religion.

He was six years old when the old car his father was driving went out of control on a steep local hill, killing both his parents while the child was safe at his grandmother's house. For twelve years he lived at her cottage. Stredbow was his home and he knew no other.

It was an isolated village, surrounded by hills and accessible only by narrow, steep and twisting lanes. To the west of the village lay The Wilderness, Robin's Tump and the steep hills of Caer Caradoc hill. The lane northward led along Yell Bank, skirted Hoar Edge and the side of Lawley hill to the old Roman road to Wroxeter. To the south, the village was bounded by Stredbow Moor, Nant Valley and Hope Bowdler hill. The area around the small village was, like the village itself, unique. Small farms nestled on the lee of the hills or rested in sinewy valleys hidden from the lanes. Coppice and woods merged into rough grazing land and the few fields or arable crops were small, the size hardly changed in over a century. But it was the sheltered isolation of the area that marked it out, like a time-slip into the past – as if the surrounding hills not only isolated it physically but emotionally as well. Perhaps it was that the hills dispersed the winds and weather in a special way, creating over the area of the village and its surrounding land an idiosyncratic climate; or perhaps it was the almost total lack of motorized transport along the rutted lanes. But whatever the cause, Stredbow was different, and Sidnal Wyke knew it.

He had known the secret for years, but it was only as his twenty-first birthday approached that he began to understand why. Stredbow was an ancient village, an oval of houses at whose center was a mound. Once, the mound contained a grove of oaks. But a new religion came, the trees were felled and a church built from stone quarried nearby. The church was never full, the visiting ministers came and went, and the oaks began to grow again, although reduced in number. The village was never large, although once – when the new railway fed trains to the small town of Stretton in the valley miles beyond the hills – there had been a school. But it had long ago closed, its building left to slowly crumble as the towns, cities and wars sucked some of the young men away from their home and their land. Yet a balance had been achieved through the demands of the land. For over sixty years, since the ending of the Great War, no new houses had been built and no outlanders came to settle. The village attracted no visitors, for there was nothing to attract them – no historical incidents, no fine houses or views – and the few who came by chance did not stay, for there was no welcome for them, only the stares of hostility and scorn, the barking and the snarling of farm and cottage dogs.

Sidnal knew every square foot of the village and the lands around. He had visited every field, every coppice, every valley and stream, all the houses and farms. He knew the history of the village and its people and this learning, like his name, was his grandmother's idea. He had been to a school, once and briefly – against his grandmother's wishes. But her daughter and son in law had died to leave Sidnal in her care. She taught him about herbs, how to listen and talk to trees; about the know of animals. She owned some acres of land and he farmed them well, in his strange way.

His clothes, and he himself, never looked clean, but he bore himself well, as befitted his well-muscled body. His solitary toil on the land and his learning left him little time to himself, but he was growing restless and his grandmother knew it and the reason why. She had no chance to guide him further, no opportunity to find him a suitable wife to end the isolation she had forced upon him. A few days before his twenty-first birthday, she died – slowly and quietly sitting in her chair by the fire.

It was a warm evening in middle May with a breeze to swing some of the smaller branches of the large Ash tree behind the cottage which a mild winter had brought full into leaf, and Sidnal did not hurry back from the fields. He greeted the tree, as he always had, and smiled, as he almost always did. He did not cry out, or even seem surprised when he found her. He just sighed, for he knew death to be the fated ending of all life.

It was as he closed the cottage door on his way to gather his neighbours that the reaction came. For the first time in his life, he felt afraid.

## II

Maurice Rhiston did not even know her name. A room of his house overlooked her bedroom and she was there, again, as she had been every weekday morning for the past three weeks. Her routine was always the same – the curtains would be drawn back and she would stand by the mirror for a minute or so before removing her nightdress, unaware of him watching from behind a chink in his curtain.

Naked, she wandered around her room in her parent's house. He lost sight of her several times – before she stood by the mirror to slowly dress. He guessed her age at about fifteen. His watching had become a secret passion that was beginning to engulf him, but he was too obsessed to care. He was forty-five years of age, his childless marriage a placid one. For fifteen years he had sat behind his office desk in a large building in Shrewsbury town, satisfied with steadily improving both his standard of living and his house on the small and select estate which fringed the river. He was diligent, and efficient as he worked as a Civil

Servant, calculating and assessing the benefits of claimants. His suits were always subdued in colour, his shirts white, his ties plain and even his recent worrying about his age, baldness and spreading fat, did not change his taste. The cricket season had begun, his place in the team was secure and he had begun to feel again that sense of security and belonging which pleased him.

He had, during the past week, turned his observing room into a kind of study to allay the suspicions of his wife. He bought a desk, some books and a small computer as furnishings. He had changed his unchanging routine of the morning to give time to sit at the desk with the thin curtains almost meeting but allowing him his view. Then, he would wait for her to draw back the curtains, and undress.

Today, as for the last week, he would be late for his work. Yesterday he had spent most of his evening in the room, hoping to see her and she, as if obliging, had appeared toward dusk – switching on her room light. For almost an hour she wandered in and out – and then his moment came. She undressed to change her clothes completely.

The morning was warm, again, and he left his overcoat on the stand by the front door. The goodbye kiss to his wife had long ago ceased, and she was already stripping away the bedclothes at the beginning of her workday. She was singing to herself, and Maurice smiled. His watching had brought to him an intense physical desire and his wife was pleased, mistaking his renewed interest for love. But he kept the girl's naked image in his head, while his ardour lasted.

His journey to work by car was not long, and only once did he have cause to cease his planning of how best to photograph the girl. He was about to turn from the busy road to the street which held the office where he worked when a young man, dirtily dressed and carrying an armful of books, stepped off the pavement in front of the car. Maurice sounded his horn, hurled abuse through the open window, but the man just smiled to walk slowly away toward the town centre to try and sell some of the books his grandmother had owned.

The routine of Maurice's morning at work was unchanged, and he sat at his desk in the over-bright, stuffy office, found or retrieved files from other desks and cabinets, entered or read information on pieces of paper and computer screen, his concentration broken only by his short breaks for morning tea and lunch. It was at lunch that his interest had become aroused.

As was his habit, he ate his sandwiches at his desk. One of the ladies from the section that investigated fraud brought him a case file and he recognized the name written on the cover.

The young lady was fashionably dressed and had swept her long black hair back over her shoulders where it was held by a band. She smiled at him, and for a few seconds Maurice felt an intense sexual desire. But it did not last. She explained about the man and the information anonymously received – as she might not have done had Maurice not been responsible for her training in her early months in the office before she became bored and sought the work of investigating fraud.

He gave her his computer read-out of the benefits the man had claimed and listened intently as she, a little shocked and angry, explained about the man's activity – Satanism, child prostitution, living off immoral earnings. She borrowed Maurice's file on the man and left him to continue his lunch in peace.

There was turmoil in Maurice's head, images which made him nervous and excited, and it did not take him long to decide. In the relative quiet of the office, he dialled Edgar Mallam's number, wishing him to be in.

Edgar Mallam was a man of contrived striking appearance. His hair was cropped, and his beard pointed and trimmed. He dressed in black clothes, often wore sunglasses even indoors, and black leather gloves. Maurice watched him for some time as Mallam sat at a table in an Inn in the centre of the town amid the warmth of the breezy late Spring evening.

People mingled singly, in pairs or small clusters around the town as evening settled, traffic thinned and shops closed, and Maurice, fearful of being seen, had tried to avoid them all. He had bought a hat, thinking it might disguise him, but wore it only briefly as he waited for the appointed time. The image of the naked girl obsessed him – and had obsessed him all afternoon: her soft white unblemished skin, her small still forming breasts, the graceful curve of her back...

Cautiously, he sat down beside Mallam.

“So, you want an introduction?” Mallam smiled.

“Well – “

“Don't be nervous! One favour deserves another. I presumed that is why you – ah – warned me. How old?”

“Pardon?”

“How old do you want the item in question to be?”

Maurice coughed, and shuffled his feet. “I –“

“Thirteen? Fourteen?”

Maurice felt an impulse to leave, and rose slightly, but Mallam’s strong hand gripped his arm.

“Let’s say fourteen. It’s a middling figure. Come on, then!” Mallam rose to leave.

“Now?”

“Of course!”

For an instant fear gripped Maurice, but the haunting image returned and he followed Mallam through the customers and to the door. The alley outside the side door seemed dark and he did not see the two waiting figures cloaked by the sun’s shadows. But he felt their hands gripping his arms.

“Just a precaution,” Mallam explained. “I’m sure you understand.”

He was searched, led to a car, blindfolded. The journey seemed long and he was guided into a house where the blindfold was removed. The luxury of the house surprised him. Mallam indicated a door.

“One hour,” he said. “Any longer,” and he smiled, “and there will be a charge!”

Maurice needed no encouragement to open the door.

The river, swollen by heavy rain and brown from sediment, swept swiftly and noisily over the weir, and in the dim light of dawn Thorold could see water eddying over the edge of the concrete riverside path that led into town. The warm weather had been broken by storms.

No corpse was water borne to add interest to Thorold's day and he walked slowly, trying to savour the light, the sounds and his happy mood. A few people, work-bound on bicycles, passed him along the path but they did not greet him as he did not greet them. Sometimes he would smile, and an occasional individual might forget for an instant the impersonal attitude of all modern towns. There would be then a brief exchange of humanity through the medium of faces and eyes: and the two individuals would pass each to their own forms and patterns of life, never to meet again.

But today, no one returned his smile. He stood for several minutes under the wide spans of the railway bridge watching the water carry its burden of branch, silt, twigs and grass. He was thirty-five years of age and alone in his life, except for his books. His marriage of years ago had been brief, broken by his quietness and unwillingness to socialize, but the years were beginning to undermine the happiness he had found in solitude. His face was kind, his hair unruly, his body sinewy from years of long-distance walking over hills, his past forgotten.

He liked the hours after dawn in late Spring and Summer, and would rise early to walk the almost empty streets of his town and along the paths by the river, sensing the peace and the history that seemed to seep out toward him from the old timbered houses, the narrow passages, the castle, bridges and town walls. Gradually, during the hours of his walking, the traffic would increase, people come – and he would retreat to the sloping cobbled lane, which gave access to his small shop, ready for his day of work. 'Antiquarian & Secondhand Books' his shop sign said.

The path from the railway bridge took him along below the refurbished Castle, set high above the meander of the river, under the Grinshill stone of the English bridge to the tree-lined paths of Quarry Park. He stopped for a long time to sit on a bench by the water, measuring the flow of time by the chimes of the clock in Shrewsbury School across the river. No one disturbed him, and by the time he rose to leave the cloud had broken to bring warm morning sun.

His shop lay between the Town Walls at the top of the Quarry and the new Market Hall with its high clock tower of red brick. The window was full of neat rows of well-polished antiquarian book, and inside it was cold and musty. Summer was his favorite season, for he



would leave the door open and watch, from his desk by the window, the people who passed in the street.

A pile of books, recently bought from a young man whose grandmother had died, lay on his desk, and he began to study them, intrigued by the titles and the young man who had offered them for sale. The four books were all badly bound and in various states of neglect and decay. One was simply leaves of vellum stitched together then bound into wooden boards, the legible text consisting mainly of symbols and hieroglyphics with a few paragraphs in Latin in a scholarly hand. There was no title – only the words ‘Aktlal Maka’ inscribed at the top of the first folio. The words meant nothing to Thorold. The three remaining books were all printed, although only one of them in a professional manner. It bore the title ‘Secretorum Naturalium Chymicorum et Medicorum Thesauriolis, and a date, 1642. The titles of the other two works – ‘Books of Asoth’ and ‘Karu Samsu’ - signified nothing to him, and though the books bore no date he guessed they were less than a hundred years old. They also contained pages of symbols, but the style of the written text was verbose, the reasoning convoluted, and after several hours of reading he still only had a vague idea of the subjects discussed. There was talk of some substance which if gathered in the right place at the right time would alter the world – ‘the fluxion of this causing thus sklenting from the heavenly bodies and a terrible possidenting of this mortal world...’

He was still reading when a customer entered his shop. The woman was elegantly dressed and smiled at him.

“I wonder if you can help me,” she said confidently.

Thorold smiled back, and as he looked at her he felt an involuntary spasm in the muscles of his abdomen. But it was transient and he forced himself to say “I hope so” as he looked at her beauty.

“Do you have a copy of Prometheus Bound by Aeschylus? Only my son – “

“Aeschylus?” he repeated, and blushed.

“Yes, the playwright – “

“Of ancient Greece,” he completed. “Was it a Greek text that you wanted or a translation?”

“The Greek, actually. Julian has just begun his “O” levels at his school.”

The woman was near him and he could smell her perfume. For some reason it reminded him of the sun drying the earth after brief rain following many dry days. “Yes, we do have a copy.”

He rose from his chair slowly and as he did so the woman smiled at him again. In his desire to impress with his agility he tripped and stumbled into a bookcase.

“Are you alright?” she asked with concern as he lay on the floor.

“Yes, thanks.” He rose awkwardly to search the shelves for the book. “Ah! Here it is. It is a fairly good edition of the text,” he said as he handed the book to her.

She glanced through it. “I’ll take it.” She placed it on his desk before taking her purse from the pocket of her dress. Their fingers touched briefly as she handed over the money but she did not look at him and he was left to wrap the book neatly in brown paper. The ‘Book of Asoth’ still lay open upon his desk and he could see her interest.

“May I?” she asked, indicating the book.

“Yes,” he faltered, unsure. “If you wish.”

She handled it carefully, supporting the covers with one hand while she turned the pages with the other. She stood near him, silent and absorbed, for several minutes. But her nearness began to make him tremble.

“I have not, as yet, had occasion to study the work in detail,” he said to relieve some of his feelings.

She held it for him to take, glanced briefly at the two other books before perusing the vellum manuscript.

“They are for sale?” she asked.

“Well – “ he hesitated, wondering about the price. “You have an interest in such matters?”

“Yes!” and then softly, “do you?”

She turned to face him, so close he could smell her fragrant breath as she had exhaled with her forceful affirmation.

“Actually, no.” She did not avert her eyes from his and part of him wanted to reach out with his fingers to softly touch the freckled smoothness of her face. He smiled instead, as she did. “I am not familiar with the field – but would think it was a very specialized market: if a market as such exists.”

“Are these recent acquisitions?”

“Yes.”

“May I enquire from where – or whom?”

He did not mind her questions, for he wished their contact, and closeness, to continue. “A young chap brought them in – in the last few days. They belonged to his grandmother, apparently.”

“I would like to buy them – name your price. Except that one,” she indicated the ‘Secretorum’. “That does not interest me.”

“As I say, I have not really had time to study them in detail and so – to be honest – have no idea what they are worth.” Her nearness was beginning to affect his concentration and he edged away on the pretext of studying the manuscript.

“But surely you have some idea of their value?”

“Actually, no. I did consult some of my reference works and auction records but could find nothing.”

“How refreshing!”

“What?”

She laughed, gently. “To find someone – particularly in business – who is so open and honest.”

“Well, bookselling is a small world.” He looked away embarrassed, but pleased.

“How much – if I may ask such a question – did you pay?”

“Actually only a part payment – I was going to research them, particularly the manuscript, and then, if they or the manuscript were particularly valuable, add to that payment.”

“Do you wish to sell them?”

“Yes, of course.”

“Then I will buy them. You will want my address, naturally.

“Sorry?”

“My address. So you can bring the books with you tonight when you come to dinner. Nothing formal, so no need to dress. Do you have a pen and paper?”

“Er, yes.” Dazed, he gave her his favourite fountain pen and notebook.

She wrote quickly. “Shall we say half past seven for eight? Good. Oh – and you can bring that Greek book with you as well.”

She smiled at him, waved, and then was gone, out into the sunlit street and away from his world of dead books. Her perfume lingered, and it was some time before Thorold’s amazement disappeared. He tried to still his excitement and imagination by searching again

through his reference works.

He did not succeed, and the one reference he did find to anything mentioned in the books did not interest him. 'Asoth', it read, 'was a demoness worshipped by some ancient and secret sects about which nothing is known beyond the fact that women played a prominent role.'

No customers spoiled the solitude of what remained of his morning, and he carefully wrapped the books and manuscripts for the woman, sorted some stock from the piles of books against the cabinet by his desk before closing his shop early. He wandered happy and full of anticipation along the paths by the river, pleased with the sun and warmth of the day, occasionally stopping to sit. He spent a long time sitting on a bench by the weir, watching people as they passed, vaguely aware of his dreams but unwilling from fear of disappointment to make them conscious, to dwell upon them.

He had not noticed a man dressed in black following him, and did not notice him as he began a slow walk under the hot sun along the overgrown riverside path that led him back to his small riverside Apartment.

#### IV

The gardens of the large detached house were quiet and secluded, and Lianna spent the hours of the afternoon removing weeds from the many beds of flowers. The house stood on Kingsland above the river and beside Shrewsbury School but afforded views of neither. Once, the area had been select, but the decades had drawn some of the wealthy away, their homes absorbed by the School or divided into still expensive Flats and Apartments. But an aura remained, and it pleased Lianna.

Her interest in her garden waned slowly, and she discarded her implements and her working clothes to bathe in the bright surroundings of her bathroom. She lay relaxed and soaking in the warm water for a long time, occasionally thinking of the bookseller. She had enjoyed her game with his emotions and although the books he would bring interested her, he himself interested her more.

She was dressing in readiness for her evening when someone loudly rapped the brass knocker of the oak front door. She did not hurry, Edgar Mallam smiled at her as she opened the door, but she did not return his greeting.

“Yes?” she said coldly.

“Hello Lianna. May I come in?” He removed his sun glasses.

“Why?”

“To talk – about my group.”

“Fifteen minutes – that is all the time I can spare.”

He followed her into the Sitting Room to sit beside her in a leather armchair.

“Well?” she asked.

“I thought you and me – “

“As I have said to you many times, our relationship is purely a teaching one.”

“You know how I feel,” he said almost gently.

“What you feel, you feel. It is a stage, and all stages pass.”

His mood changed abruptly. “Is that so?” There was anger in his voice.

Her smile was one of pity, not kindness. “I sense your feelings are being inverted. What you thought was love is turning to anger because your will is thwarted. You will doubtless now find reasons for disliking me.”

Edgar stood up. “I’m sick of your teaching!”

“As I have said to you many times since you first embarked upon your quest, the way is not

easy.”

He took a step toward her, but she rose to face him and smile. He stared at her, but only briefly – averting his eyes from her suddenly demonic gaze.

“I’ll go my own way! I don’t need you!” he shouted.

“You are, of course,” and she smiled generously at him, “free to do so. But I have heard reports that some of your activities are, shall I say, not exactly compatible with the ethos of our Order.”

“So what?”

“Such activities are not conducive to the self-development which our way wishes to achieve. They are not, in fact, connected with any genuine sinister tradition but are personal proclivities, best avoided if advancement is sought.”

“Stuff your tradition and your pompous words!” He walked toward the door. “And I’m not afraid of you – or your curses!”

“True Adepts do not waste time on such trivia. Everyone has to make their own mistakes.”

He laughed. “Just as I thought! You’re all talk! Well, I do have magickal power! So stuff your Order!”

She waited, and was not disappointed for he slammed her front door shut on his leaving. One of her telephones was within easy reach, and she dialled a number.

“Hello? Imlach?” she queried. “Lianna. Mr. Mallam has I regret to say just resigned. You will know what to do. Good.” She replaced the receiver and smiled.

The hours of her waiting did not seem long, and when the caterers arrived she left them with their duties while she occupied herself in her library. The table was laid, the food heating, the wine chilled by the time of Thorold’s arrival and all she had to do was light the candles on the table. The caterers had departed as they had arrived – discreetly, leaving her alone.

Thorold was early, and nervously held the books as he knocked on her door surrounded by the humid haze of evening. She greeted him, took the books and led him to her library where he stood by the mahogany desk staring with amazement. Books, in sumptuous bookcases, lined the room from floor to high ceiling. She placed her new acquisitions on the desk.

“Later, if you wish,” she said, “you can spend some time in here.”

Only two places were laid on the table in the dining room.

“Will your husband not be joining us?” an expectant but nervous Thorold asked.

“Joining us? Why no!” she laughed. “He went abroad, some years ago. Living with some Oriental lady, I believe.”

For two hours they conversed while they ate, pausing only while she served her guest the courses of the meal. The topics of their conversation varied, and as the hours drew darkness outside, Thorold began to realize there was much that was unusual about Lianna. She asked about his knowledge of and interest in a wide variety of arcane subjects – alchemy, the Knights Templars, witchcraft, sorcery.... He had admitted his ignorance concerning most of them, and she, slightly smiling, had explained in precise language, and briefly, their nature, extent and history.

“Come,” she said as she poured him a cup of fresh coffee, “let us sit together in the Sitting Room.”

She took his cup and held it while she sat on the sofa. “Here, beside me,” she indicated.

Thorold sat beside her and blushed. All evening he had tried to avert his eyes from her breasts, uplifted and amply exposed by the dress she had chosen. But his eyes kept drifting from her face to her eyes to her breasts. He knew she knew, and he knew she did not mind.

She gave him his cup and he managed to control the shaking he felt beginning in his hand.

“Do you believe in Satan?” she abruptly said.



“Satan?” he repeated.

“Yes. The Devil.”

“Well, actually, I was brought up Roman Catholic to believe that he existed. But now – “ he shrugged his shoulders.

“Now you no longer trouble yourself with such matters.”

“I did – once. There was a time,” he said wistfully, “when I believed I had a vocation to be a Priest. I suppose most Catholic children – the boys, that is – who are brought up according to the faith have such yearnings at least once.”

“But you sought another road.”

“I lost my faith in God.”

“So you do not believe there is a supra-human being called the Devil who rules over this Earth?”

‘No. Why do you ask?’

She did not avert her eyes from his. “Why do you want to know?”

“Because I sense the question is important to you.”

She laughed, and touched his face lightly with he fingers. “You are astute! I like that.”

“In what way can I help you?”

“You underestimate yourself.”

For a moment Thorold was perplexed. He had accepted her unusual invitation to her house partly from curiosity but mostly because he had been sexually attracted to her. The intimate dinner, her topics of conversation, her looks and gestures had gradually made him aware – or at least he had thought so – of her purpose in inviting him. This, he had believed, would explain why a beautiful obviously wealthy and exceptionally intelligent woman would be interested in an unadventurous bookseller.

She saved him from his perplexity by saying, “You know what I am, then?”

“I can guess.”

“Yes – you have guessed. And the prospect of your guess being correct does not frighten you?” When he did not answer, she continued. “It excites you, in fact – as I now excite you.”

Thorold began to sense he was losing the initiative. Then it occurred to him that he had never had the initiative. Since his first meeting with her he had been playing the role of victim. He tried to distance himself from his desire for her, but she moved toward him until their bodies touched. Her lips were near his, her breath warm and fragrant and he did not resist when she kissed him. She did not restrain his hand as it caressed her breasts just as he did not prevent her from undoing the buckle of the belt that supported his trousers. He felt a vague feeling of unease, but it did not last. It had been a long time since he had kissed and touched a woman, and he abandoned himself to his desire, a desire enhanced by her perfume, her beauty and her eagerness.

Their passion was frenzied, then gentle at his silent urging until her need overcame his control. They lay, then sweaty and satiated with bodies entwined for some time without speaking until she broke their silence.

“You are full of surprises,” she said with a smile, and kissed him.

He wanted to stay with her, naked, and sleep but she kissed him again before rising to dress.

“Come,” she said, throwing him his clothes. “I have something to show you.”

Outside in the warm air, a nearly full moon in a clear night sky cast still shadows around and upon the house.

## V

Mallam could sense the girl's fear. He did his best to increase it by staring at her while Monica, his young Priestess and mistress, held the girl's arm ready. The room was brightly lit in readiness for the filming of the ritual that was to follow, and Mallam walked slowly toward the girl, a small syringe fitted with a hypodermic needle in his hand.

The girl could not struggle, for a man dressed in a black robe whose face was shadowed by the hood, held her other arm and body, and Mallam carefully pierced the vein of her arm with the needle and filled the syringe with her blood.

“See,” he said to her as he withdrew the needle, “you are mine now!”

The girl began to cry, but he had no pity for her. “Betray me, and I shall kill you – wherever you are.” He showed her the blood-filled syringe for effect. “Take her,” he said to Monica, “and prepare her.”

The Temple was in a large cellar of a house, and Mallam walked around it, ensuring that everything was prepared. The black candles on the stone altar had been lit, the incense was burning, the lights and camera ready. A black inverted pentagram was painted on the red wall behind the altar.

He did not have long to wait. The now naked girl was carried by some of the black robed worshippers and laid upon the altar. Stupefied by drugs, she was smiling and seemed oblivious to the people around her as, behind the bright enclosing circle of camera lights, drumbeats began.

Mallam raised his hands dramatically to signal the beginning of the ritual, his facemask in place.

“Asmodeus! Set! Jaal! Satan! Hear us!” he shouted.

“Hear us!” his followers responded.

“We gather here to offer you the first blood of this girl!”

“Hear us!”

“Hear us, you Lords of the Earth and of the Darkness. This day a new sister shall join us in our worship!” He gestured toward the girl and one after the other, the worshippers kissed her.

“Now we shall dance to your glory!”

The worshippers removed their robes to dance around the altar laughing; screeching and shouting the names of their gods while the drums beat louder and louder. Only Mallam and another man did not join the dance, and Maurice Rhiston let himself be led toward the girl. He did not notice the camera lurking in the darkness and operated by a black robed figure, as he hardly noticed Mallam remove his robe. The girl seemed to be smiling at him as he walked naked toward her. Mallam had offered him the privilege and he could not refuse.

For Rhiston, the orgy that followed did not last long. Mallam, still robed and masked ushered him upstairs into a house where they both dressed before sitting in the comfortable Sitting Room.

“You have done well,” Mallam said. “There are two matters, though, that need your attention.”

“I am only too pleased to help,” an obsequious Maurice said.

“All of this,” Mallam smiled, “is not cheap.”

“I understand.”

“The other little matter is a short trip – to London. I have some contacts there, there will be a film to deliver.”

“As you wish. May I ask you something?”

“Yes.”

“With all these people involved – there is a risk, surely?”

Mallam’s laugh made Maurice even more nervous. “I have the power of my magick to bind them!”

“Yes – but...”

“So you do not believe? I shall show you, as I have shown them!” and his eyes glowed with his intensity of feeling. “Fear! Fear – that is what keeps them silent. Fear of me.” Quick, like lightning, his mood changed. “You like girls – I give you girls. So why should you worry?”

“I’m not worried, really,” Maurice lied. Then, to ingratiate himself, he said, “there is someone I know who might interest you.”

“Who?”

“Shall I say a certain young girl who lives near me.”

“For something like tonight?” And Mallam smiled again.

“Possibly, yes.”

“For yourself, I presume.”

“If you wish it so.”

“I might – because I am beginning to like you. Of course, it would be expensive. All the arrangements, and so on.

“I understand.”

“If you can bring her – I shall take care of the rest. I’ll need details.”

Before Maurice could answer, Monica entered the room. Beneath the black velvet cloak Maurice could see she was naked.

“What do you want?”

“Sorry to interrupt, but there is someone to see you.”

“They can wait.”

“He insists.”

“So what? I’ve better things to do.”

“He mentioned Lianna’s name,” whispered Monica.

Mallam’s face twitched. He indicated Maurice. “Look after him, then.”

A tall man with the face of an undertaker stood in the hallway, holding his hat in his hand. He was dressed well, except the cut of his suit was forty years out of fashion.

“You do not know me,” he said directly. “But we have a common enemy.”

“Is that so?”

“I have information you might find useful.”

“Oh yes?” Mallam pretended indifference.

“I don’t ask much.”

“What makes you think I’m interested?”

“If you are not, there are others.” He turned to leave.

“So what is this information?”

“A place I found out about. She knows about it – but no one else. Special it is, see. For the likes of you – and her.”

“So?”

“There are rich pickings, in that place.”

Mallam was suspicious. “Then why come to me?”

“I need your help. The place, see, where to find it exactly is written about in a sort of code – a secret writing. I know nothing of such matters.” He took a step toward Mallam. “Ever wonder where she gets her money? I’ll tell you. A hoard, from this place.”

Mallam had often wondered. Once, when he had been her pupil for only a few months, he had asked and she laughing had said, “It is a long story. Involving the Templars. I may tell it some day.” He had been infatuated with her even then and could remember most of their conversations. But the months of his learning with her were short, for he lusted after success, wealth, power and results while she urged him toward the difficult – and for him inaccessible – path of self-discovery. So he had drifted away from her teachings, seeking his own path.

“What about this place?” he asked, his curiosity aroused.

“An old preceptory it is – of the Knights Templars. South of here, exactly where is a secret only known to her. But I stole her precious manuscript!”

Mallam controlled his excitement. “How are you involved with her?”

“I’ve seen you – many a time. Coming to the house. The gardens – for years I tended them, made them bloom. These hands, see, they worked for her and her father before her. I paid no heed to their doings. Paid to be quiet, see. But then, after all these years a weeks’ notice is all I got. No thanks. Nothing. No reason given. Turned out of my home, as well. Nothing to show for forty years!”

“A manuscript, you say?”

“Yes, sir. For a price!”

“I would need more proof than your story.”

“Would I cheat you? You pay – a small sum, see – I give you the thing to you. You find something – you give me some more money. You find nothing – you come and find me, have your money back. Is this fair – or is this not fair?” The man held his hands out, palms upward, in a gesture of hopelessness.

It did not take Mallam long to decide. “You have the document with you?”

“You have money to give me now?”

Mallam smiled. “How much?”

“A few hundred pounds, that is all I ask.”

”Wait here.”

Mallam was not away long. He counted the money into the man’s hand. The manuscript the man took from the inside pocket of his jacket consisted of several small pieces of parchment rolled together and tied with a cord.

“I call upon you again,” the man said, “in two weeks.”

Mallam did not answer. He had already untied the cord and unrolled the parchments by the time that man closed the door. Each sheet consisted of several lines of writing in a secret magickal script and, with increasing excitement, he walked slowly toward the stairs and his



own room. The small desk was cluttered with letters, books, bizarre artifacts and empty wine glasses, and he pushed them all aside.

For hours he studied the script, making notes on pieces of paper or consulting some book. Once, Monica entered. At first he did not notice her as she tidied the heap of clothes from the dishevelled bed. But she came to caress his neck with her hand and he pushed her away, shouting, "Leave me alone!"

It was nearing dawn when his efforts of the night were rewarded and with a shaking hand he wrote his transliteration out. The parchments told of how Stephan of Stanhurst, preceptor, had in 1311 and prior to his arrest in Salisbury, taken the great treasure stored in the preceptory at Lydley - property of Roger de Alledone, Knight Templar – to a place of safe keeping. It told how the preceptory was founded in 1160 and how, centuries later, the lands granted with it became the subject of dispute and passed gradually into other grasping hands; for Stephen after his arrest was confined within a Priory and refused to reveal where he had hidden the treasure. But, most importantly to Mallam, it told where the treasure had been stored when the foresightful Roger de Alledone realized the Order was about to be suppressed by Pope Clement V and all its properties and treasures seized.

The name of the building housing the treasure meant nothing to Mallam, but he did recognize the name of the village containing it. As soon as he could, he would buy a large scale map of the village of Stredbow, and begin his search.

## VI

The bright light of the rising sun awoke Thorold, and for several minutes he lay still, remembering where he was and the events of the previous evening and night.

He had not slept well. He had watched the film Lianna had shown him in silence and was almost glad when at its end she had shown him one of the many guest bedrooms, kissed him briefly saying, "I'm sorry, but I always sleep by myself. I shall call you for breakfast."

The film disturbed him not only because of its content but because Lianna, before, during and after it, had made no comment to him about it. For years, Thorold had lived like a recluse – dimly aware of some of the terrible realities of life but content to follow his own inner path. He prided himself on his calm outlook and his intuitive understanding of people, accepting events with an almost child-like innocence. The film had shown what he assumed to be some kind of Black Magick ritual during which a young girl, obviously drugged and

probably only around fourteen years of age, was placed on an altar and forced into several acts of sexual intercourse with men, all of whom had worn face masks to protect their identity. But, coming so soon after his passion with Lianna, the film destroyed his calm. By the time the film ended, his own passion – and the beauty he had felt in his relationship with Lianna – was only a vague remembered dream.

He had felt anger – a desire for the girl somehow to be rescued. But this did not happen. Lianna's face had shown no emotion and he became perplexed because he could not equate the woman with whom he had made love with the woman who, by having such a film, must be somehow connected with the events depicted. And Lianna had left him alone with his feelings.

The sun rose into a clear blue sky and he watched it until it became too bright for his eyes. He dressed quickly, and left to find Lianna. It did not take him long, for he could hear her singing.

She was in the bathroom and he, politely, knocked on the door.

“Do come in!” she said.

She was bathing in the large bath and indicated the chair beside it.

“Did you sleep well?” she asked and smiled.

Her breasts were visible above the foamy water and Thorold blushed and averted his eyes.  
“No, not really.”

“Do you want to join me?” she said mischievously.

“I'd rather talk, actually.”

“About the film, I presume.”

“Yes.”

“Your verdict? I presume you have come to some conclusions.”

She smiled at him and Thorold closed his eyes to her beauty. When he opened them again, she was still smiling.

“Are you – “ he began, hesitant.

“Am I involved, you mean?”

“Yes.”

“What do you feel – sense about me?”

“You really want to know?”

“Of course.”

Thorold sighed. “This is all very strange to me. It’s like a dream. I cannot believe I’m sitting here, in the bathroom of a beautiful woman who last night shared with me something beautiful and who then shows me a ....”

“A perverted film?”

“Basically, yes.”

“But you have not answered my question,” she said, softly.

He shook his head. “I sense you could not be involved in something like that.”

“And?”

“Which leaves the question – why show me the film?”

“To which your answer is?”

“I don’t have an answer. Except –“

“Except what?”

“It has something to do with the subjects we discussed – correction, which you talked about - last night.”

“Nothing else?”

“Actually, it occurred to me that you might be testing me.”

“And if I was, why would that be?”

“I can only guess.

“Guess, then.”

Thorold turned away. “Our relationship.”

“Would you like to join me now?”

Without hesitation, Thorold stripped away his clothes.

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“After breakfast” she had said, “you might like to browse in the library.”

He was surprised to find that the manuscripts he had brought were no longer on the desk but this discovery did not detain him from beginning to inspect the contents of the library. For an hour or more he wandered around the shelves and bookcases reading the titles and

occasionally removing a book. He found a section devoted to classical Greek literature and, among the volumes, several editions of 'Prometheus Bound'. This startled him, as Lianna did when he came up quietly behind him.

"So," she said, observing the copy of Aeschylus he held in his hand, "another secret discovered."

He replaced the book, tried to appear unconcerned, and failed. "You are an intriguing woman."

She laughed. "In both senses of the word!"

"I didn't mean it that way."

"Nevertheless, it is true."

"So I was right after all. Our meeting was obviously not by chance."

"Is anything?"

Thorold ignored the remark. His feelings became confused again. And his pride was hurt. "So, how can I help?" he asked, almost angry.

"Help is not exactly the right word."

"Is that so?"

She answered softly and slowly. "I would say 'partnership' is the word that captures the essence."

He could see her, outwardly unperturbed, watch him as she waited for his reply and as he did so he became aware of his own feeling for her. He wanted her to elaborate, but dared not ask directly in case he had misunderstood her usage of the word. He was still trying to think of something reasonable to say when she spoke.

“You are,” she said, “unusual for a man in being so sensitive.”

Thorold was unsure whether he was pleased or insulted, and said nothing.

“That is,” she continued, “one of the qualities that attracted me to you. I have watched you for some time.”

“Say again?”

“I met you once before – although you will probably not remember. You were walking, one morning very early, along by the river. I was there, too. You passed me, and smiled. You revealed yourself through your eyes.”

Thorold tried, but could not remember the incident. He began to tremble, thinking in his innocence that she spoke of love. But her speaking dismayed him.

“I shall be honest with you, now – and cease to play games.” She sat on the edge of the desk, but Thorold remained silent and still. “You see around you what I possess, and you have, I believe, some intimation of some of my interests and activities. I am approaching that time in my life when certain changes are inevitable. Before that time, there is one role I would like to fulfill. But more than that I wanted companionship. Of course, I could have, with you, carried on as I began. But I wanted you to know, to understand. Because of who I am and because of – shall I say? – my interest, there was really no other way.

“Also, you have other qualities, besides sensitivity – or perhaps I should say, besides your empathy. At this moment in time, you yourself are probably unaware of them. But they are important to me – to my interests.”

“In all this,” Thorold said, “haven’t you forgotten something?”

For a few seconds Lianna looked wistful. “I don’t think so.”

“Spontaneity? Love?”

“That’s two things,” she smiled.

For an instant, Thorold thought of abruptly leaving, slamming the door as a gesture of his intent. He did make a move in that direction, but he was already smiling in response to her remark.

“What am I letting myself in for?” he said humorously as he turned toward her again.

“Paternity?”

“And I thought romance was dead!”

“You will stay tonight, then?”

“I might consider it – if I have any energy left.”

“I shall make sure you have! But now, there is someone I would like you to meet.”

“No more games – or tests?”

“Naturally not. It is only a short drive. You may drive me, if you wish.”

Thorold bowed in deference. “Of course, ma’am. There be, like” he said in a demotic voice, “one little problem, your Ladyship. I canna’ drive.”

She started to play her allotted role, then thought better of it and said, seriously, “Really? I didn’t know.”

Thorold made an imaginary mark on an imaginary board with his finger. “One up for me, then!”

She did not quite know how to react to his playfulness. “Do you wish to learn?” she asked.

“What?”

“To drive, of course.”

“Not really. I’m quite content walking. Why should I want to leave Shropshire? All I need is here – within walking distance usually.”

“But your business, surely,” she said.

“A few trips a year – by train. The fewer, the better.”

Nearby, a pendulum clock struck the hour. “Come,” she urged, “or we shall be late.”

“May I ask to where?”

“Oh a small village, not far”

“Why the rush?”

“Because it is seven o’clock already, and we have to arrive before someone else.”

“I suppose all will be revealed?”

She smiled. “Possibly.”

Thorold followed her out of the library. He was curious, perplexed and pleased. Her dress was thin, and suited to the warm weather and he had noticed, while she talked, how her nipples stood out. He could not help his feelings, and as he watched her collect her keys from a table in the hall, turn and briefly smile at him, he realized he was in love.

Compared to that feeling, the reason for the journey was not important to him. Outside, he could hear cats fighting.



## VII

Lianna was right. Their journey was not long even though she took the longer route. She drove along the narrow, twisty lanes southeast of Shrewsbury town to pass the *Tree with the House in It*, the wood containing *Black Dick's Lake*, to take the steep lane up toward Causeway Wood.

"This lane," she said, breaking their silence, "used to be called the Devil's Highway. Just there –" and she indicated an overgrown hedge, "was a well called Frog Well where three frogs lived. The largest was, of course, called Satan and the other two were imps of his."

The lane rose, to twist, then fall to turn and rise again, always bound by high hedge and always narrow. A few farms lay scattered among the valleys and the hills on either side, a few cottages beside it and Thorold caught glimpses of nearby Lawley Hill and wooded banks and ridges that he did not know.

The village she drove through was quiet, its houses, cottages and church mostly built from the same gray stone, and Thorold was surprised when she stopped beside an old timbered cottage whose curtainless small windows were covered in grime.

"Wait here, will you?" she asked.

Thorold watched her enter the door of the cottage without knocking. For over ten minutes he waited. But the heat of the sun made the car stuffy and uncomfortable, and he got out to walk toward the cottage gate. As he did so a man appeared, quite suddenly from the small rutted driveway across the road. He was old, dressed in worn working clothes and wore a battered hat.

"You not been here before, then?" he asked Thorold.

A surprised Thorold stopped, and turned. "Er, no I haven't."

"You come for The Giving, then?"

Before he could reply, Lianna appeared beside him. She smiled at the old man, nodded and held Thorold's hand. Thorold saw the man's look of surprise, and the old man raised his hat, slightly, bowed just a little toward Lianna and shuffled away, back along the tree-shadowed driveway.

"Come on," she said to Thorold, "I shall show you round."

She still held his hand as they walked along the lane toward the mound and the church. Her gesture pleased him, but she did not speak and he let himself be led sun-wise around the mound, up through the wooden gate and through under the shade of the trees. She lingered, briefly, by the largest oak to take him down and back toward her car. A young woman in a rather old-fashioned dress stood near it.

"I shall not be long," Lianna said, and left him, to walk the fifty yards.

He could not hear what was said between the two women, but several times the young stranger turned to look at him. Then, she seemed to curtsy slightly to Lianna before walking away, but the movement was so quick Thorold believed he had been mistaken.

Lianna beckoned to him and he, obedient, went toward her.

"There is something else I would like to show you." She opened the passenger door of her car for him.

"What did you think?" she asked as they drove away from the village.

"Of what?"

"The village, of course."

"Alright. Seemed a very quiet place. They seemed to know you."

She avoided the subject by saying, "Do you ever see your wife?"

"Occasionally. Why do you ask?"

“You never divorced.”

Her words confirmed Thorold’s earlier suspicions. “So, you’ve been checking up on me?”

“Of course! You are still friends, then?”

“Yes. Where exactly are we going?”

“Just a place I know. Very efficacious – for certain things. A stone circle, in fact.”

The lane gave way to a wide road that took them down and turning into the Stretton valley, through the township and up the steep Burway track to the heather-covered, sheep-strewn Mynd. The turning she took, brought them down over Wild Moor to a stream filled valley of scattered farmsteads, up over moor, past the jagged rocks of the Stiperstones, past woods and abandoned mine-workings and high hills, to a narrow rutted track.

“Just a short walk,” she said, and briefly touched his face with her fingers.

The moorland was exposed and covered in places by fern, almost encircled by distant undulating hills. Thorold had walked the path before, in a storm, to the clearing which contained a flattened circle of stones, some tall, some broken and some fallen. He had not stayed long then, for his walk of that day was long and the weather bad. Now, a breeze cooled him as he walked beside Lianna, and she held his hand as they entered the circle to stand at its centre.

“Looks like someone has lit a fire recently,” Thorold said, indicating the burned ground under their feet.

In answer, Lianna kissed him and guided his body to the Earth. She did not need to encourage him further. His passion was strong but her need and frenzy were stronger and his body soon arched upon hers in orgasmic ecstasy to leave him relaxed and sleep-inclined.

“I must go now,” she suddenly said before rising and smoothing down her dress. “Meet me

on June the twenty-first outside the church in the village. At dawn. And do not worry about what you saw in the film. I will solve that particular problem – in my own way.” She bent down to touch his forehead with her hand. “Sleep now, and remember me.”

No sooner had she touched him than he was asleep, and she pulled up his trousers and re-fastened his belt before walking back along the track to her car.

Almost an hour later, Thorold awoke. She was not waiting for him by her car as he hoped and he walked slowly under the hot sun along the road and away from the stone circle. He walked for miles without stopping and when he did stop his memory of her was like a dream. A few cars and other vehicles passed him as he continued walking along the road past the wooded sides of Shelve Hill and down toward Hope Valley, but he did not try to stop them to ask for their assistance. There was a shop in the village at the valley’s bottom but he passed it by, unwilling to break the rhythm of his walking. He wondered about the lateness of the hour, about customers waiting for his shop to open, about Lianna and her strange interests.

There was little breeze to dry the sweat, which covered him as he walked, and he would stop, occasionally, to wipe the forehead with his hand. He did not mind the sweat, the heat or even his walking, and the nearer he came to Shrewsbury town, following the road down from the hills to the well-farmed plain around the town, the more he became convinced of the folly of his love. He began to convince himself that he did not care about Lianna – that she was only a brief liaison to be well and happily remembered in the twilight years of his life. But he nevertheless took the town roads that led toward her house.

He stood outside her gate for a long time, aware of his thirst for water and his sweat-filled clothes. For almost five hours he had walked toward his goal, and he stood before it exhausted and dizzy but still determined.

No one came to answer his loud rapping on the door of the house, and he wandered round, peering in the windows. Around the back, a young woman was kneeling as she tended a bed of bright flowers, and she smiled at Thorold before rising and saying, “Hello! Can I help you?”

Her face and bare arms were sunburned, and as she came closer, Thorold could see her hands were roughened and hard.

“I came to see Lianna.”

“Ah! You must be Thorold. She told me to expect you.”

“Is she in?”

“Afraid not.”

“Do you know when she will be back?”

“Three to four weeks.”

“Are you sure?”

“Quite.”

“Do you know where she has gone?”

“Amsterdam, she said.”

In the middle of the large expanse of well-tended lawn, a sprinkler showered water, and Thorold went toward it to stand in the spray. The coolness refreshed him, and he washed his face and neck several times with his hands before cupping his palms together to try to catch sufficient water to drink. He was not very successful.

The young woman with the sad face watched him, bemused.

“Would you like a drink?” she finally asked.

“If you don’t mind.” He left the spray to stand in the sun.

He followed her to a small outbuilding shaded by the branches of a walnut tree. Inside, and neatly arranged, was a large selection of gardening tools, two small tables and some chairs. A small sink and tap adorned one wall.

“Tea?” she asked, and seeing his surprise, added, “I was about to make one for myself.”

“You work here, then?”

“Sometimes.”

She smiled, and her smile reminded Thorold of Lianna and the reason why he had come. He thought, briefly, of rushing away to an airport to find her, but this romantic impulse did not last. He felt physically exhausted from his walk and emotionally confused, a piece in a game Lianna was playing. And his own pride was sometimes quite strong.

“Actually,” the woman said, intruding upon his thoughts, as she filled the kettle with water, “my father is the gardener here. He’s away at the moment.” She handed him a towel.

Thorold did not mind its colour or the stains. “Does she often go away?”

“Quite often, yes.”

“I know this may sound strange,” Thorold said, “but I don’t know her surname.”

“Alledone.” She smiled as she said the name.

Its significance escaped Thorold. “Mine’s Imlach, but you can call me Sarah.” The young woman smiled again, and began to remove her clothes.

## VIII

It was if Thorold could still hear her laughter. He had left, as she had stood naked before him. It was not that he was not aroused by the sight of her lithe body; it was that he felt himself again part of a game Lianna was playing.

He had left without speaking, and her laughter seemed to mock him. He did not care for

long. His tiredness, hunger and thirst returned, and he walked almost as if in a trance of his Apartment. He drank, ate and rested, and when darkness came he lay himself wearily down to sleep. His sleep was fitful, disturbed by images of Lianna. Once, she appeared before him smiling and dressed in black. They were in a dark and cold place; full of mists and smells and when she kissed him it was as if she was sucking life from him. He felt dizzy and exhausted, and when she stopped to stand back and laugh, he fell to the ground where rats waited.

Several times during the night he awoke shouting and covered in sweat. Morning found him tired but restless and mentally disturbed. Outside his dwelling, the weather was cloudless and hot, but he himself felt cold, and dressed accordingly.

Dawn had long since passed when he left to walk to his shop and, despite the lateness of the hour; he was surprised to find the town quiet. Only on entering his shop did he remember it was Sunday. Momentarily pleased, he left to walk up the narrow street toward the trees and spaces of Quarry Park. For some time he stood by the wrought iron gates, looking down toward the river, and while he stood, absorbed in his thoughts and feelings about Lianna, church bells tolled, calling the faithful to prayer.

The sound pleased him, as the weather itself did, but he began to shiver from cold. But the strange sensation did not last and he began to slowly walk beside the old town walls toward the reddish-gray stones of the Catholic Cathedral.

Mass had not long ended, and he could still smell burning wax from the altar candles. A faint fragrance of incense remained and, conditioned by his childhood, he performed a genuflexion before seating himself near the altar. Even in the years of his apostasy he had often visited churches of the religion of his youth, finding within them a peace and tranquillity which pleased him and which drew him back. He did not know the reason for this, and although he had thought about it occasionally, he had left the matter alone, content just to accept the feeling, whatever its cause. Once, his wife – tired of such visits and such silent sittings – had challenged him repeatedly on the matter, and he, unwilling to speak, had muttered briefly about the stones and the space within the building as creating a special atmosphere. He had partly believed himself, but a vague suspicion about God remained. All his subsequent visits during the years of his marriage he had made alone.

He sat on the wooden pew gently breathing and still for a long time, free from thoughts and feelings about Lianna and was about to leave, calm and happy, when a Priest walking toward the altar turned toward him and smiled.

The man was young – too young, Thorold thought, to be a Priest. His face was gentle, his

smile kind and in the moment that measured the meeting of their eyes Thorold felt a holy aura about the man. It was a strange sensation – a mixture of joy and sadness – and possessed for Thorold a uniqueness, bringing back memories from the years of his youth: the sound of the communion bell, the reverence as the head was bowed, the host shown; the smell of incense... Then the Priest genuflected, and walked through the sacristy door.

Thorold followed, consumed by a desire to speak to the Priest. But the sacristy was empty and, beyond in the narrow corridor, a balding bespectacled man in a cassock mumbled words from a Breviary he held in his hand.

“Yes. Can I help you?” he asked as he saw Thorold.

“Yes – I’m looking for the young Priest who just came this way.”

The old man squinted, closed his Breviary, and said, “Young man, you say? No one else is here but me.”

“But – “ Thorold looked up and down the corridor, back toward the sacristy, and as he did so he realized he had seen a ghost.

“Father –“ Thorold began.

“Yes?”

“Can I talk to you for a moment?”

The old Priest started to look at his wristwatch, thought better of it, and said, “Yes, of course. Shall we go into the garden?”

He led Thorold down the corridor, through several doors, rooms and a passage, into a small but neat garden. He indicated a wooden bench.

“Do you believe,” Thorold asked directly, “that Satanism exists today?”

The Priest smiled. “I myself do, of course. But some of our younger brethren have different



ideas.”

“About Satan?”

“Indeed.”

“And such people – would they have any powers?”

“To an extent, yes. I remember reading somewhere – a long time ago...” He thought for a moment, removed his spectacles, cleaned the lenses with a handkerchief from his pocket, blew his nose and continued. “Joseph de Tonquedec I believe it was, who said something like *‘the Devil’s interventions in the material realm are always particular and are of two kinds, corresponding to miracle and Providence on the divine side. For just as there are divine miracles, so there are diabolical signs and wonders.’*” He replaced his spectacles, squinted at Thorold, and said, “Why do you ask?”

“Curiosity.”

“Curiosity, of course,” smiled the Priest.

“And these people, when they want to – how shall I say? – draw someone into their circle, how would that person feel?”

“I am no authority on such matters.”

“But surely you have heard things?”

“Heard things? Yes, of course. I have been in Holy Orders a long time.”

“And?”

“I remember one incident – years ago. Many years ago. A young girl was involved. There was a man – whether he actually worshipped the Devil, I do not know, but he was said to. He brought this girl under his influence. Gradually, of course, for that is how I believe they work. She who was happy became joyless – a shell. For he sucked the life from her.

Thinking back now, she was like an addict – needing him.” The Priest kept his silence for a long time.

When he did not speak, Thorold asked, “And what became of her – and him?”

“Oh, she died – wasted away. He left the country. Never heard of him again. My first Parish. Her family of course kept the matter quiet. That’s how they work: slowly, offering to their victims what that victim most desires. For some, it is money, others power – for others perhaps love and affection. When they have that person under their control - they have one more soul for the Devil. He rewards them, of course, for bringing such a prize.” He looked at his wristwatch. “Just curiosity, you say?” When Thorold did not reply, he added, “I have a friend, a monk, who knows more about such matters.”

“No. No, thank you, Father. I must be going now.”

He stood up.

“As you wish,” the Priest said and smiled.

“Thank you, Father.” Thorold turned, and hurried away, back through the church and into the bright sunlight.

He felt cold again, and walked briskly back along the path by the narrow road toward Quarry Park, aware as he did so of a man behind him. The man stopped when he stopped, waited when he waited, and walked when he did, many yards behind. Thorold felt a brief fear. Then, suddenly and unexpectedly for him, he felt anger and turned to walk back to face the man.

The man was tall, his face tanned and lined by decades of weather. He held in his hat in his hand and his heavy unfashionable suit seemed to be unsuited to the hot weather.

“Why are you following me?” Thorold demanded.

“I am Imlach.”

Thorold's surprise lasted only a few seconds. "Well, you can tell Lianna that I'm not playing any more of her games! I never want to see her again!" His anger, frustration and incipient fear moulded his words and he felt himself shaking.

"You will be there," Imlach said, with menace in his voice, "on the twenty-first as she instructed." He touched Thorold's shoulder, placed his hat upon his head and abruptly turned to walk away, down the hill.

Thorold did not watch for long. But he had taken only a few steps back toward his shop when he realized the coldness he had felt was gone.

Around him, he felt he could hear Imlach's daughter laughing.

## IX

Carefully, in the dawn light which entered his room, Mallam refolded the parchment before hiding it, safely he thought, behind the mirror on the wall. He felt unusually excited, almost possessed, by a desire to find and steal Lianna's secret horde.

He found Monica asleep downstairs on the sofa, the house quiet and otherwise quite empty. He did not like the silence, and turned the radio on loudly.

"Come on, wake up!" He shook Monica several times.

"What?" she mumbled.

"Get up! I want some breakfast," he demanded.

"What time is it?"

"About four. Come on – I've got to go out soon."

Monica turned over intent on resuming her sleep.

“Get up you lazy bitch!” he shouted.

“Leave me alone,” she mumbled.

“Get up!” he snarled, and shook her again.

“I’m tired.”

“I want some breakfast!”

“Get you own.”

This sign of defiance, meek though it was, enraged Mallam, and he took her by the shoulders to throw her onto the floor.

“Get off me!” she screamed. In the struggle, she kicked him.

“You whore! You bitch!” Mallam shouted and began to beat her body with his fists.

She tried to protect herself with her arms, but to no avail, and Mallam in his fury, ripped off her dress.

“You like this, don’t you?” he smirked as he fumbled with the belt on his trousers.

But Monica was crying, and tried desperately to wriggle free. He slapped her face several times before attempting to kiss her. Suddenly, her flailing hand touched a lamp knocked over in the struggle and before she was aware of what she was doing, she hit his head with it several times. He groaned, then collapsed but she pushed his body from her.

He was only stunned by the blows, and she took advantage of this to grasp her dress and flee from the room and house. Her dress was torn, but she did not care, and she put it on before running away.

It did not take him long to recover. He changed his clothes, collected a large portion of the money he had hidden in the house, and left to find her. He toured the streets around the house in his car, then, finding nothing, drove to her Flat. The streets around the Abbey were deserted and he parked in the shadow of the large old Benedictine building to wait and watch the row of terraced houses across the road. A few cars passed while he waited, and he was soon bored.

He thought the church was mocking him, and he spat in its direction before crossing the road to unlock the front door with his key. Her Flat was on the ground floor, and faced the Abbey, a fact that he had detested on his infrequent visits. Quietly, he opened her door and it did not take him long to wreck her few possessions, and he sat at the table by the window to wait for her. Her clothes he had torn and scattered on the floor, and with a knife from her small kitchen he had slashed her bedding, her pictures and anything else he could find. Her Teddy bear he had disembowelled and set upon the table before him.

The longer he waited, the more frustrated he became until, after hours of waiting, he smashed the table, the chairs and overturned her bed. Then, hearing movement in the Flat above, he crept out into the bright sun of morning.

He drove fast and almost recklessly away from the town toward the village of Stredbow, remembering his greed and his hatred of Lianna. He left his car near the mound of the church and wandered around the quiet village trying to locate the house and, when he did, he was not impressed, as a tourist might have been by the black and white half-timbered, if somewhat restored, house. The front garden of the residence was separated from the narrow lane by a low wall of large stones, and, set back in a corner of the grounds and almost obscured by a tree, Mallam saw a small stone building. The stones were worn by the weather of centuries, and he was considering how best to sneak toward when he knew to be his goal – whether then or later that night – when a young woman in an old fashioned dress came out of the house toward him.

Her face was round and her cheeks red and she had gathered her hair in a band behind her neck.

“It’s a fair old morning, isn’t it?” she asked and smiled.

Immediately, Mallam thought her stupid and dull. “Yes!” he agreed, trying to ingratiate himself.

“You passing through, then?” She stood by the low wooden gate, resting her hands on its top.

“Yes. Yes I am.”

“Come far, have you?”

“No, not really.”

“Be a hot day, again.”

“Yes. I don’t suppose,” he asked and smiled at her, “there is anywhere I could get a cup of tea. Only I’ve been driving all night.”

“Can’t say as I can think of anywhere. Lest ways, not round here.”

“Oh.” He tried to sound disappointed.

“You must be hot – in all them black clothes.”

“Yes – I am a bit.”

“Well – “ she began before looking him over, letting her eyes linger for a while on his crotch, “I suppose I could see my way to letting you have some water. You want to come into my kitchen? It’s cool in there – and what with you being so hot.”

“Yes, that would be fine.” He concealed his glee.

“Follow me, then.”

He did, his mind already full of scheming.

“Sit yourself down.”

The kitchen was large, cool and full of old furnishings. Bunches of drying herbs hung from the walls, and rows of cork-stoppered glass jars adorned nearly all the other spaces. Most seemed to contain herbs or spices but a few appeared to Mallam to contain parts of animals or insects. He could not be sure for the strong odours made him feel dizzy.

“Sit you down.”

She brought him an earthenware mug full of water, which she placed on the old table beside him.

“Good water, that is. From the well. None of your piped stuff.”

Mallam drank, and began to feel better. “You have a well, then?” he asked.

“Been here for centuries, that well.”

“That old building in your garden – that’s not it, is it?”

“That? No – that belongs to her!” She almost spat the last word out.

“Who?”

“She herself who owns this house – and most of the village. You mark my words, one day that family will pay for what its done!”

“So that old building is not yours, then?”

“Keeps it locked, she does. Once or twice a year she comes to it. Nobody I know has seen inside.”

“You don’t like her then?”

“No one here does, I tell you. For as long as anyone can remember her family have owned all the land here - and the houses what’s in them.”

The woman looked around while she spoke, and Mallam guessed she was afraid.

“She herself does not live here, in the village?”

“Why no! Got a big house in Shrewsbury town, she has. And others elsewhere – abroad, as well. You feeling better now, then?”

“Yes, thanks.”

“You’d best be going.”

Mallam sensed the sudden change in her mood, as if her resentment had overcome all her other feelings. Mallam had no doubt that the woman had referred to Lianna, and he began to form a plan of action in his mind.

“The water is good, as you said. Can I take some with me?”

“If you like. I got an empty bottle somewhere.”

“Your husband out, then?”

She filled the bottle from an urn by the sink before answering. “In the fields, yes. Since dawn.”

“You must get lonely.”

“There, take that with you.” She handed him the bottle. Its shape and rubber stopper gave away its age.

Mallam stood up to face her. “I’ll bring the bottle back, if you wish.”



“If you like.”

“I often pass this way. Well, nearby.”

They stood watching each other. Mallam felt she was waiting for him to make the first gesture of their intent, and he was about to raise his hand to touch her face when she turned away.

“Folk around here talk,” she said. “You’d best be away.”

She walked him to the door, where he said, “What would be the best time for me to call for more water?”

“Sunday, after dark. Wait by there.” She indicated the stone building.

“Until then.” He did not look back as he walked along the path, through the gate and back up along the lane toward his car, elated by his success and his plan. She would, he thought, be easy to control. He had seen the desire plain on her face, sensed her frustration. He had it all worked out in his mind – a homely woman, young and burdened with a desire her hard-working husband could not or would not fulfill. He would play his role, and gain access to the building, which he was certain would contain the treasure of the Templars.

Happy and contented, he drove away from the village. He would forget about Monica – she was just another whore, and there were plenty more, as there were plenty more girls ready to be enticed into his group. Maurice Rhiston, he felt sure, would not fail him.

## X

Thorold spent the hours of the morning walking slowly or sitting by the river as it wound its way through the town, and when he did return to his Apartment he was tired and thirsty and still thinking about Lianna. For once, the hot sun in a clear deep blue sky did not bring forth a mood of peace and contentment, and he trudged wearily up the short overgrown path that led from the river to the road of his dwelling.

A woman was sitting on his doorstep, and he sighed, thinking of Lianna and the games she played with people. The woman was a pitiful sight to him – her face was swollen, she was barefoot and her dark dress was torn. She saw him approaching, and rose.

“Hello!” he said like a simpleton.

Monica smiled at him.

“Can I help you?” he asked. She nodded, but said nothing and Thorold could see the fear in her eyes. “You’d better come in,” he said.

Across the street he could see a net-curtain twitching in the bottom Apartment. His dwelling was stuffy and hot, and he opened all the windows. By the time he had finished the woman had curled up and fallen asleep on the sofa. He covered her with a blanket. She was young; her oval face enchanting despite the swelling, and Thorold searched his own wardrobes for suitable clothes for her, which might fit.

For hours she slept, and when she did awake, he sat by her on the floor.

“Would you like some tea?” he asked.

“You haven’t got anything stronger, have you?”

“Sorry, no. But I do have a good selection of teas. Any preference?”

“Not really.” Her smile was forced.

“Are you hungry?”

“A little, yes.”

“Some toast, then?”

“That would be nice. You’re very kind.”

Embarrassed, Thorold stood up. "Mind if I ask," he said as he busied himself in his kitchen, "what you were doing on my doorstep."

"Waiting for you of course!"

"I suppose that is logical. There are some clothes there, if you want to try them."

"Thanks, I will. You have a bathroom, I presume."

"Down the hall, second door."

She returned wearing a shirt several sizes too large and a pair of jeans that almost fitted. He presented her with a tray containing teapot, jug of milk, cup and saucer and a plate of buttered toast.

"I was right about you," she said softly, taking the tray.

"Since we have not met, Thorold said, "may I introduce myself?"

"Thorold West," she replied.

"Ah! My fame precedes me! And you are?"

"Monica."

"Well, Monica, I suppose that a certain lady sent you?"

"Sorry?"

"Lianna. Or perhaps I should say Alledone."

“No.”

“But you do know her?”

“Not exactly. Perhaps I should explain.”

“It might help – after you’ve finished your tea, of course.”

He sat beside her, and waited, occasionally smiling when she stole a look at his face.

“The person who did this –“ she gestured toward her face, “was watching you because you were involved with that woman. He was an ex-pupil of hers but they disagreed about his activities.”

Thorold guessed her meaning. “Young girls?”

“You know, then?”

“Just a guess. What’s his name?”

“Mallam. Edgar Mallam.”

“And he did that to you?”

“Yes.”

Thorold’s objectivity began to disappear. The film he had seen, the physically abused woman who sat beside him, his own fading but still present and mixed feelings about Lianna, all combined to undermine his calm resigned acceptance of the world and its darker deeds.

“He sent me to follow you – once,” she said.

“I must be more observant in the future!” When she did not return his smile, he said, “tell me about yourself – only if you want though.”

“And if I do – will you still help me?”

“It is my help you want, then?”

“Yes. I want out. I’m finished with them.”

Slowly at first, then with increasing confidence as she saw he was not repulsed or disapproving, she explained about her life. The parties at University, the half-serious searching for new experiences which led her and some friends into a kind of ‘Black Magick’ sect and a meeting with Mallam. It had been, for her, a game at first – a revolt against her upbringing, her parents and what she saw as society. She had enjoyed herself – and was gradually drawn deeper and deeper into the activities of this sect.

“I knew what was going on,” she concluded. “At first, I did not care. Then he – Mallam – chose me as his Priestess. I was flattered. I had power over others and for a long time I thought I was in love with him. But I began to feel disturbed at some things he and the others were doing. Then this – it sobered me up!” She laughed, a little, at herself. “I should have come to you sooner. I spent yesterday and last night hiding in the town.”

“How do you know you can trust me?”

She sighed. “I have to start somewhere – trusting someone. Anyway – you’ve got a kind face!”

“Have you thought of going to the Police?”

“Yes – but what could they do? They need evidence.”

“You could give them plenty.”

“Not really. Now I’m gone he’ll change all of his arrangements – even the places they use.”

“Any you still fear him?”

“Yes,” she said quietly.

“Do you live in Shrewsbury?”

“Yes. Why?”

“I thought – “

“I couldn’t go back there!” He’s probably got someone watching the place.”

“What do you intend to do?”

“I know it’s asking a lot, but could I stay here - at least for a few days?”

Thorold liked living by himself, but his compassion for the woman overcame his objections.

“Well, actually, I suppose so – for a few days.’

“You are kind!” And she kissed him.

Embarrassed again, Thorold stood up. “We could go to your place and collect some clothes for you. Those are not exactly a good fit.”

“He might be waiting,” she said softly.

“Is that so? I’ll telephone for a taxi, then.”

The wait and the journey were not long, and he stood beside her while she rang the doorbell of the Flat above.

“Hi!” she said in greeting to the dishevelled man who opened the door. “Forgot my front

door key again! Sorry!”

The man yawned, scratched his face and sauntered back up the stairs.

“Can you?” Monica asked Thorold, pointing at the door to her Flat.

“Are you sure?”

“I won’t be coming back here again.”

Thorold tested the door, stepped back, and kicked it hard, bursting the lock open. Monica said nothing about the devastation Mallam had caused, but stood by the window, cuddling her torn Teddy bear and crying while Thorold began to sort through the devastation to find undamaged clothes and belongings. He found a suitcase for his collection, took Monica’s hand and led her, still crying and clutching her bear, out to where the taxi waited. He saw no one watching them, or following the taxi, and relaxed, wanting to hold her hand as a gesture but unwilling to commit himself in case his gesture was misunderstood.

Books adorned the floor and bed of his spare room, and on his return he removed them.

“Come on,” he said as she sat still on his sofa holding the bear. “I shall show you your room, and then we can begin.”

She looked at him nervously, so he added, “finding evidence to use against him.”

“Oh, I see.”

“I presume you want to.”

“What?” she asked defensively.

“Find evidence?”

“I suppose so. I hadn’t really thought about it. I just wanted to get away. I have no friends

here – he saw to that.”

“Can you drive?”

“Yes.”

“Good.”

“But I don’t have a license. Can I ask you something?”

“Of course.”

“Are you involved – in her activities?”

“The mysterious Lianna Alledone herself you mean?”

“No. She bought some books and manuscripts form me. That’s all.”

“Really?” Her expression was of surprise and belief in what he had said.

He did not want to lie to her. “Well, there was something else, but that is over now.”

She smiled, and held up her bear. “Let me introduce you. Reginald, say hello to Thorold.” She waved his paw.

“Hello, Reginald!” a bemused Thorold said.

“Regi to his friends.”

“Hello Regi!”



“Do you have a needle and some thread?”

“Somewhere. Going to do a bit of minor surgery, then?”

She patted Regi’s head. “It’s alright, Regi, it won’t hurt. Honest.”

Thorold sighed. “I hope I’m not going to regret this.”

“What – lending me a needle and thread?”

It was not what he meant, and she knew it, as he instantly understood her playfulness. He felt comfortable with her and re-assured – for in the first moments of their meeting he had liked her. Unwilling to think about his feelings further, he said, “You know where he lives?”

“Yes.”

“Then I suggest we eat, provide ourselves with some transport and begin our quest.”

She saluted in good-humoured mockery. “Just one thing, General.”

“Yes?”

“Can I have a bath first, please?”

“You don’t have to ask.”

A speeding car braked suddenly in the road outside and he saw Monica wince and hold her bear tightly. It was only a car avoiding a strolling cat, and as he returned from looking out the window, her fear made him resolve to seek out and destroy Mallam: her tormentor and the molester of children. His resolution made him forget both his dreams about, and his memories of, Lianna.

## XI

Several times, while Monica lay in his bath singing to herself, Thorold resisted the temptation to wander into the bathroom on some pretext or other. Instead, he busied himself by telephoning one of his few friends.

He spoke quietly, not wishing to be overheard, and ended the conversation abruptly when Monica entered the room, dressed in some of her rescued clothes.

“I shall see you shortly, then,” he said and replaced the telephone receiver.

“A friend?” Monica asked.

“Just arranging some transport. Are you ready?”

“What for?”

“I thought we would eat out.”

“That would be nice.” She went toward him to kiss him to thank him for his kindness, and then decided against it, thinking he might misinterpret her gesture.

The evening was humid; the sun hazy and there was no breeze to cool them as they walked the streets that took them to the centre of the town. The restaurant Thorold chose was small, its food plain but wholesome and its windows overlooked the river – a fact which appealed to him. The waiter recognized him, and pretended not to see Monica’s swollen face.

“Good evening, Mr. West. A table by the window?”

Thorold nodded, embarrassed, believing Monica would think he had chosen the restaurant to impress her.

They ate in silence for a long time until Thorold said, “what do you know about Mallam’s

connection with Lianna?

“Not much. He approached her about a year ago - wanted to learn about her tradition.”

“Which is what?”

“What she called the seven-fold sinister way – or something similar.”

“Satanism?”

“Not in the conventional sense. Our friend Mallam,” and she smiled, “takes that route. He showed me a book she had given him.”

“Oh, yes?”

“*The Black Book of Satan* I believe it was called. She believes that each individual can achieve greatness: but that must come through self-insight. There are certain rituals – ceremonies – to bring this.”

“And Mallam?”

“He wants power and pleasure – for himself.”

“And is prepared to do anything to achieve it.”

“Yes.”

“But she – Lianna – still uses people.”

“Yes. I think she was using Edgar. But why and for what purpose, I don’t know. In her book I remember reading about members of the sect being given various tests and led into diverse experiences. These were supposed to develop their personality.”

“Doesn’t sound like Satanism to me.”

“Well, some of the experiences involved confronting the dark or shadow aspect: that hidden self which lies in us all. Liberating it through experiences. Then rising above it.”

“And Mallam and his cronies? They wallow in their dark side – without transcending it?”

“Something like that. Enough of him – tell me about yourself. If you want to, that is.”

“Not much to tell, actually.”

“That’s not what I’ve heard.”

Thorold soon hid his surprise. “Oh, yes?”

“He found out about your past,” she said softly.

“Is that why you came to me?”

“Yes.”

Thorold smiled. “And I thought it was just because of my kind face!”

“So it’s true?”

“That depends. How did he come by such information?”

“Someone involved in the sect was once a Policeman – through his contacts.”

Thorold sighed. He had guessed that Lianna had discovered at least something about his past, but this new revelation dismayed him, although not for long.

“Do you want to talk about it?” she asked.

“Not really.”

“That’s fine by me. I’m not as bad as you think. Your past is yours, just as mine is mine. What is important is what we are now.”

“Your past does not matter to me.”

“Likewise.” And she smiled.

“However did you become involved with such people? Thorold sighed.

“Not the type you mean?”

“Not really. How did you become involved?”

“I suppose – “ She stopped, waiting until the waiter had removed their dishes and served them coffee. “I just wanted more and more ‘highs’. I remember I used to find that with men – the first intimate touch, the first French kiss, and then the exploration of the new. Of course, what followed was good. Well, some of the time,” she laughed. “But – I don’t know – it was, how can I say, the excitement, the build-up that really got me. I just couldn’t get enough of that feeling. What Mallam and his sect offered seemed – at the time – just an extension of that.”

“I do know what you mean. It’s why I used to do what I did. There was an ecstasy there – a feeling, which made me, exult. Most men fight not because of idealism or patriotism or whatever, but because they enjoy it. They like living on the edge of death. It gives them a feeling that ordinary life cannot match.”

For a long time they looked at each other until he said: “I used to live with that feeling – or searched for it, like you perhaps, but in a different way.”

“Then something happens to bring you down to reality.”

“Usually other people.”

“A big slap in the face - literally, with me!” she laughed at her own misfortune. “So what happened to you?”

“I won’t bore you with the details – you know the rest, I’m sure.”

“But the Court of Inquiry exonerated you?”

“That does not stop people talking.”

“So you resigned.”

“Only way. I put it all behind me – to live quietly.”

“Until now.”

“I suppose I knew it couldn’t last forever. You don’t change that much in a decade. Not deep inside. You only pretend to yourself. I’ve just stopped pretending.”

“So now what?”

“I pay the bill and we go. That’s enough talking!”

Outside, the streets were busy with people, the road burdened by traffic flowing past the monument to Hotspur, past the tall spire of St. Mary’s church to descend down the steepness of Wyle Cop.

“He does not live far,” said Thorold unhelpfully.

“Who?”

“Oh, didn’t I say? The chap who is going to lend me his motorcycle.”

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“You must know him well,” Monica said as she struggled into the leather motorcycle suit.

Thorold ignored the remark. “You’re about the same size as his wife, fortunately. Hope the helmet fits.”

“I hope you can drive that thing,” she said, pointing at the gleaming, powerful motorcycle that Thorold had brought back from the terraced house in the narrow alley near the railway bridge and a strip of waste ground covered in second-hand cars for sale at bargain prices.

“I had a few lessons – a few years ago,” he joked.

The visors on both helmets were tinted, the suits black, and Thorold felt good as he skillfully rode along the streets out toward the suburb where Monica had told him Mallam lived. Darkness came as they rode, then lightning and thunder to herald the storm. The house was on a new estate that had expanded the western boundary of the town, and they waited nearby while lights showed in the house. The storm passed, and their patience was rewarded, as twilight settled.

It was not difficult for Thorold to follow Mallam’s car along the roads of west and south Shropshire, but he was surprised when Mallam took the turning that led to the village of Stredbow. He left the bike a discreet distance behind where Mallam had parked his car and walked, with Monica, in the fading light in the direction Mallam had taken.

A diffuse light from an upstairs window made Mallam visible as he crept into the garden of the house, and Thorold recognized the woman who was waiting as the one Lianna had spoken to when she had brought him to the village. He could not hear what was said between them as he crouched by the garden wall, but he saw the woman point to the window then to the darkness that shrouded the back of the garden. He did not follow them further.

Mallam was not away for long. The light showed him nervously glancing around as he stood by the stone building in the garden. He tried the door, fumbled with the heavy padlock, glanced around several times more before almost creeping toward the gate.

Hurriedly, Thorold pushed Monica down to the ground. He could hear her breathing as he lay close to her, but Mallam neither heard nor saw them as they huddled close to the wall in the shielding dark, and they were left to slowly rise and follow him back to his car.

Somewhere among the houses near the mound, a dog howled.

## XII

Mallam led them not to his house, but over the hills toward the Welsh border. Thorold thought the roads familiar, but it was only as Mallam came to his destination that Thorold realized where they were – near the track that led to the circle of stones Lianna had shown him.

“I wish I had brought a camera,” he whispered to Monica as they lay, under the cover of the ferns, watching the group that had assembled within the stones. Lanterns, holding candles, were spread around the ground and in their light the ritual unfolded. Mallam had bedecked himself in a black cloak.

“Our Father which wert in heaven,” they heard the assembly chant, “hallowed be thy Name, in heaven as it is on Earth. Give us this day our ecstasy and deliver us to evil as well as temptation, few we are your kingdom for aeons and aeons.”

A woman was stripped, and bound to one of the larger standing stones. There were more chants, people in black robes dancing anti-sunwise inside the circle, dramatic invocations by Mallam, and a ritual scourging of the woman who was bound.

“Provide us pleasure, Prince of Darkness,” Thorold heard a man say, “and help us to fulfill our desires!”

The balding, slightly overweight man unbound the woman, pushed her to the ground, and began to copulate with her, while others gathered around, clapping their hands and chanting to their Prince.



Thorold was not impressed. "It takes all sorts, I suppose," he said quietly to Monica. "That the sort of thing you used to be involved in?"

"Yes."

"No one under age I can see."

"Those sorts of things are never done in the open."

The balding man interested Thorold. "We might as well wait until they've finished."

It was a long wait, and several times Thorold almost fell asleep. When the revellers did leave, he followed not Mallam, but the man he had watched. His trailing of Rhiston led him back to a prosperous riverside house in Shrewsbury town – a house almost visible from Thorold's own Apartment across the water.

For almost an hour they waited outside.

"Well, that's one down, ten to go," he said as he indicated to Monica that they should go.

He was glad to return to the peace of his own dwelling. He had removed his leather suit when Monica said, "Can you help?" She was struggling to free herself from hers.

"It's a bit tight," she said.

Thorold smiled. "You're somewhat larger in some places than she is."

She lay on the floor while he pulled on the legs of the suit. He fell backwards and banged his head against a bookcase. He did not mind her laughter, and held his hand out to help her up from the floor. She stood in front of him, still holding onto his hand, and she had closed her eyes in anticipation of his kiss when someone knocked, very loudly, on the door of his Apartment.

Thorold sighed, before leaving to walk down the stairs.

“Yes?” he said gruffly as he opened the door.

“She has sent me,” the man outside said.

It was as he spoke that Thorold recognized Imlach.

“So?” Thorold replied, annoyed.

“She does not like your interference.”

“My what?”

“You are to leave a certain gentleman alone. He is her concern, not yours.”

“Is that so?”

“She kindly requests you not bother him – or any members of his group.”

“Oh, really?”

Imlach moved closer to him. “You’d best heed her advice. For your own sake.”

“Tell her from me I’m not playing her games anymore and I’ll do what I like!” He slammed the door shut.

Imlach knocked loudly on the door, but when Thorold thrust it open in anger, he could see no one. He looked around, but the streets were quiet and still. Upstairs he found Monica asleep on the bed in his spare room. He covered her with a blanket before closing her door and settling down to listen to music, keeping the volume low.

But the music did not still his feelings as he had hoped, and he spend a listless hours, listening, attempting to read, and thinking about Monica, Lianna and Mallam. When he did

retire to his bed, strange dreams came again. He was on a cliff above the sea when a man leapt upon him from behind and tried to stab him. A woman was nearby, and it was Lianna, laughing. He wrestled the knife away from the man, and stabbed him by accident. Only then did he see the man's face. It was his own, and the man lay dead, while Lianna stripped away her clothes to offer him her body. He moved toward her, aroused and disgusted at the same time but she changed herself into Monica and he awoke, clawing at the humid air in his room.

He lay awake, then, restless and troubled, and when sleep came again he dreamt of his shop. There was a doorway among the shelves where he knew no door existed but he opened it to walk down stone steps into a cavern. Mallam was there, bent over a stone altar on which Monica lay tied and bound. He began to move toward them but he found himself paralyzed and when he could move it was slowly and painfully. Monica kept looking at him, her eyes pleading and helpless, but then he was alone, riding the motorcycle around the circle of ancient stones, faster and faster. There was a sudden mist, and he could not stop, crashing into the largest stone. He felt sad, lying on the ground knowing he was dying – for there was so much he wanted to do. The mist seemed to form into Lianna's face, then of her holding in her arms a baby. 'You will never know your daughter,' she said. He awoke again, to lie tired but unable to sleep, and was glad when dawn came, bringing light to his room.

He left Monica asleep to spend a few hours alone, thinking about his life and his dreams, before breakfasting and leaving her a note about his intended surveillance.

Rhaston, in his car, was easy to follow among the morning traffic that took most of the vehicle occupants to their work, and Thorold was pleased with his success. He watched Rhiston park his car in front of the large office building before returning to his Apartment.

Monica, obviously watching from his window, came out into the street to greet him, smiling happily. Thorold was glad, and it seemed natural that he should embrace her. He liked the feel of her body, but she drew away to take the helmet from his hand and lead him, her other hand in his, toward the door. Before he could speak, a car drew up alongside and Thorold recognized Lianna.

“So,” she said as she stood in the road near them, “this is how you repay me!” She stared at Monica.

Thorold could not understand her sudden anger toward him. “Were you following me?” he asked.

Lianna ignored the question. “I told you to stop but you took no notice of my words.”

“Why should I?” He could feel Monica tighten her grip on his hand.

“You do not understand,” said Lianna haughtily. “Great things are at stake.”

“Is that so?”

“You deserve better than the likes of her!” She looked at Monica with contempt.

“Really?”

“Leave her – now, and come with me.”

“No!”

For several seconds Lianna did not speak. “You are a fool!” she finally said.

“Goodbye, then.”

Lianna stared at Monica. “You will pay for this!”

“I – “ Monica began to say.

“I think you’d better leave her alone,” Thorold said to Lianna, a trace of anger in his voice.

Lianna laughed. “I’m not finished with you either!”

“Go play your games somewhere else.” He turned away, led Monica into his Apartment and shut the door without even looking at Lianna.

“She seemed a little angry,” Monica said as they, from the window, watched her drive away.

Thorold shrugged her shoulders. “Jealous of you, I guess.”

“And does she have reason to be jealous?”

“Yes.”

She turned toward him and kissed him. It was a long kiss. “Does she frighten you?” Monica asked at its end.

“No, actually.”

“I think Edgar is afraid of her.”

“Are you?” He stood beside her but she still held his hand.

“No. Well – perhaps a little.” She shivered.

“Shall we go and see what your old friend Edgar is up to, then?”

“What, now?”

“Yes.” He understood her look and touched her playfully on the end of her nose with his finger. “We have plenty of time.”

“Good,” she smiled, and kissed him again.

“On the hand, Mallam can wait,” he said as he began to unbutton her dress.

For Mallam, the day passed quietly. A van, driven by a trusted member, arrived early in the morning and he helped in the loading of cult and Temple equipment, including the video cameras and lights. A few telephone calls, and a safe haven was found - a place unknown, he knew to Monica. The removal had not taken him long, and he smiled as the van left, thinking of the rituals to come.

The sun of the afternoon saw him in the neighbouring town of Telford, visiting a house in a quiet street in Dawley where some of his ladies brought their clients. One girl, just seventeen, still looked much younger and she was seldom alone on the streets for long. He arrived at the house as she was leaving for the third time that day.

“Hi. Jenny!” he said in greeting. “You alright?”

“Sure!”

“No problems?” She was his most lucrative girl to date, and he intended to keep it that way.

“No. See ya!”

“Jess in?” he asked.

“Sure!” She waved and walked away to find another client.

Jess was a smiling man of Caribbean appearance with the physique of a wrestler, and he looked after the practical aspects of Mallam’s business. Their business that day did not take long. Jess gave him a pile of money which Mallam counted before giving half of it back.

“Any problems?” Mallam asked.

“Not one. I tell you it's too quiet.”

“Got a new house lined up – if we need to move.”

“Any new girls?”

“Maybe soon. I’ll see you next week.”

“Sure thing!”

Outside, in the warm sun, he could see no one watching the house but still drove carefully away, checking several times to ensure he was not being followed, and he drove slowly back to Shrewsbury arriving at Rhiston’s house at the time he had arranged.

“You have no trouble arranging time off?” he asked as Rhiston came out to greet him.

“Not at all!”

“Good.”

“Your wife in?”

“Yes.”

“Excellent.”

Inside the house, Mallam greeted Rhiston’s wife by kissing her hand. She was pleased by this gesture as well as by the look, and smile, which he gave her, unaware that this charm was a net closing around her.

“Could you,” Mallam asked Rhiston, “get my briefcase from my car?” He held out his car keys.

“Yes. Yes, of course,” the obsequious Maurice said.

Mallam waited until he was gone. “Jane, isn’t it?” he asked.

“Yes.” She smiled.

“You’re more attractive than I was led to believe.”

“Maurice said you used to work in his department. Is that right?”

“Only for a brief time,” he lied, convincingly. “I’m having a small party – tomorrow night – and wondered if you’d like to come. He paused for effect. “With your husband, of course.”

“That would be nice.”

“I shall look forward to seeing you there.”

Rhaston returned, bearing the unwanted case. But Mallam took it, saying, “Shall we retire to your room? That computer program you wanted to show me?”

“Ah, yes!” He turned to his wife. “We’ll be about an hour, dear.”

In the bedroom, Rhiston quickly set up his binoculars on a stand behind the curtains, before handing Mallam photographs of the girl.

“Not bad!” Mallam said. “Not bad at all!”

“She should not be long, now. A creature of habit,” and he smiled his lecherous smile.

“You seem more settled now.”

”Oh, I am, I am!”

“Good. There is a quote from de Sade, which always appealed to me. It goes something like – in translation of course! – *“The pleasures of crime must not be restrained. I know them. If the imagination has not thought of everything, if one’s hand one hand has not executed everything, it is impossible for the delirium to be complete because there is always the feeling of remorse: I could have done more and I have not done it. The person who, like*



*us, is eagerly pursuing the career of vice, can never forgive a lost opportunity because nothing can make it good...*” Mallam smiled. “You agree?”

“Naturally, naturally! You and your group have opened my eyes. I cannot stop now.”

“Excellent. I am having a party tomorrow night. Nothing special – just some friends. Bring your wife.”

“Jane?”

“Yes.” Then: “you seem unsure.”

“No, not really. Just surprised.” He wanted to ask, but dared not.

“Does this work?” Mallam asked, pointing to the computer.

”No. But I could set it up for you, if you wish.”

“Our prey has arrived,” Mallam announced. He watched the girl through the binoculars for some time before saying, “she is most suitable.”

“I’m glad you are pleased.”

“I shall make the necessary arrangements. Should they be successful – “

“I’m sure they will!”

“ – I can arrange for you to be the first. There will be expenses, and so on.”

“I do understand.”

“How soon can you have the money ready?”

“Next week. I have savings.”

“Tomorrow.”

Yes. Yes, of course. Can I ask how you will - I mean, how she will be...”

“I have experience in these matters.” She had gone from her room, and he studied the photographs again. “A pretty young thing. At such an age, they all have a weakness. With her – a wish to be a model, perhaps. Some infatuation with a celebrity. Whatever – there are ways.”

“Do go on, it’s fascinating.”

“Have her followed – find out where her haunts are. A chance meeting – then an offer suited to her weakness. Perhaps a few legitimate modelling sessions. Then disguise the ritual as one, get her drunk. You know the rest.”

“I admire your cleverness! And after?”

“Depends on her – how she reacts. If she takes to it, fine. If not, let her go. If her family doesn’t care or she wants away from them for whatever reason, draw her in.” He turned to stare at Rhiston. “I’ve told you all this because for some reason I like you. I’m going abroad for a while, and want someone to handle things here.”

“I’m very flattered that you should consider me.”

“You’ve proved yourself. But first, there is something I want you to do for me.”

”Anything. Just ask.”

“Tomorrow, after our little party, I have some business to attend to, not far from here. You will assist me.”

“As you wish.”

The warm weather had brought people into their gardens, and as Mallam stood fingering the photographs again, he could hear children playing happily and noisily under the heat of the summer sun. The sounds pleased him, because he understood them as part of a society he despised. To him, the people in the houses, no less than their children, were important only insofar as they might offer him the opportunities to indulge both his own pleasure and power. He felt himself different from them in a fundamental way – a prince among slaves – and the fact that society had passed laws in favour of them and what he saw as their utterly futile and wasteful ways of living, made him aware of his own genius even more. He knew with an arrogant certainty that he could outwit them and their laws – and he enjoyed doing so, planning and scheming and reaping his rewards, financial and physical and mental.

He believed, sincerely in his own way, in the powers of the Prince of Darkness. To the Devil he had dedicated his life – his Prince had given him power over ordinary mortals, and he used that power for his own glory and that of his god. With Lianna's treasure and his own powers and genius, he would be invincible.

Pleased with himself, he began to laugh.

#### XIV

Thorold awoke slowly. Monica's arm rested on his chest and her face was near his, peaceful, as she slept. He watched her before caressing her shoulders.

"I have to go out," he said as she opened her eyes.

"Want me to come?" she said sleepily.

"Only if you want to. Just going to put a note in my shop window. I shouldn't be long."

"What time is it?"

"Eleven o'clock."

“Still early, then.”

“We’ll go out for lunch when I get back.”

“Fine.”

She was asleep as he left the bedroom. Vaguely, she heard him leave the Apartment as, some time after; she vaguely heard a knock on the bedroom door.

“He should really lock his door when he leaves,” a woman’s voice said.

Startled, Monica sat up. Lianna leaned against the door frame, smiling mischievously.

“What do you want?” Monica asked, angry and afraid at the same time.

“Just a little chat. I have a proposition to put to you.”

“I think it would be better if you left.”

“This will not take long. I have here,” and she held up an attaché case, “ten thousand pounds in cash. Plus a train ticket – first class naturally – to London. There in a train in half an hour. I shall of course drive you to the railway station.”

“He will be back in a minute.”

“Not so. Such a charming man, but so open to magickal persuasion.” She took a square of parchment inscribed with magickal sigils from the pocket of her dress, glanced at it and smiled before returning it. “So you see, you have no option.”

“Please go.”

“I should explain. If you do not accept my little gift then you will be arrested and charged with possession of certain drugs. Before I came here, I visited your Flat. Such a mess. You will be pleased to hear that I have had the place tidied. One telephone call – and a valuable

find by the Police. If you care to look out from the window you will see my car and a gentleman within it waiting. So useful, those new car telephones!”

“I would deny everything.”

“Of course. But you had a conviction at University, did you not? Only cannabis then – but we all know, do we not, what the next stage usually is. Then there is the little matter of a certain video, which had by some chance come into my possession. You may not recall it – so many such things made, I understand – but there are certain scenes in it which certain newspapers would enjoy describing. They would no doubt publish some of the photographs.”

Lianna’s smile was almost mocking. “I have of course used only that material which does not feature a certain person who, until yesterday, you were somewhat well acquainted with.”

“You seemed to have planned things well.”

“I always do.”

“Why is Thorold so important to you that you want me out of the way? I don’t believe for one moment that you are jealous of me.”

“It is not important for you to know the reason.”

“I want to know – and then,” she said resignedly, “I might accept your offer.”

“A wise decision. It makes things much more civilized. I had other things planned, of course, if you had resisted.”

”Tell me then.”

“About Thorold?”

“Yes.”

“Since you are going, I suppose it will do no harm. All I will say is that something is about to

occur – something very special which takes place only every fifty or so years.”

“And for this Thorold is important?”

“It could well be,” Lianna smiled. “Now gather your belongings since you have a train to catch.”

“Mind if I check the case?” Monica asked.

“I shall leave it with you – while you dress.”

Monica did not bother to count the money. She was ready and prepared to leave when she surreptitiously placed two of the ten pound notes she had extracted from the case under the motorcycle helmet as it lay on the bookcase in Thorold’s living room. She did not look back as she left the Apartment.

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It was partly the sunny weather, partly Monica waiting asleep in his bed, that prompted Thorold’s decision – or so he thought at the time. The message in the window of his shop – announcing an ‘illness’ forcing closure for a week – he left to ride the borrowed motorcycle back to the house of its owner.

Jake was the opposite of Thorold in almost every way. Broad when Thorold was sinewy; tall where Thorold was only of medium height; bearded and with many tattoos on his arms. Thorold was quiet by nature, serious and determined, while Jake was naturally boisterous with an amiable attitude toward life – unless provoked. He had been easily provoked, until marriage calmed him a little. Their unusual friendship had been forged in the unusual years which made Thorold’s past interesting and intriguing, to some who knew of it or who had discovered it.

Thorold had hardly entered the narrow alley beside the terraced house when Jake descended upon him. He inspected the bike carefully while Thorold stood and watched in amusement.

“I don’t suppose,” Thorold said, “you want to sell?”

Jake glared at him, then smiled. “No way!”

“I didn’t think you would. You free for a bit, then?”

“Why?” he asked cautiously.

“Need your advice.”

“Oh, yeah?”

“I thought I might buy something similar.”

“You serious?”

“Yes. Can’t really afford it – but still.”

“She’s really got to you, ain’t she?” He thumped Thorold on the back in a friendly gesture. But Thorold was almost knocked over.

“Not at all – I just thought I might as well make use of this suit and helmet I bought. I had it in mind when I bought them, in fact,” he said trying to convince himself. “Sitting behind you a few times a year – well, it’s a bit of waste.”

“I’ll get me helmet, then.”

The staff at Thorold’s Bank were helpful and showed no surprise at him wishing to draw from his account what, for him, was a large amount cash, and he let Jake drive him to a succession of motorcycle dealers where machines were discussed, touched, sat upon and inspected. After less than an hour, Thorold made his decision. He bade his friend farewell and walked back toward his Apartment, eagerly anticipating the collection of his present to himself later that afternoon.

At first, on ascending the stairs that led up from his front door, he assumed Monica’s absence to be temporary – a walk perhaps, by the river, or a visit to a shop nearby. But then

he found her clothes and suitcase missing, and he became sad without quiet knowing why he was sad. His sadness did not last, for he thought of Mallam forcing her away against her will.

The idea angered him, and he smashed his fist against his bookcase. The bookcase shook, moving the helmet and revealing the money. He held the money in his hand, feeling the newness of the banknotes, and wondering, and the more he thought the more it became clear to him that it was not Mallam, but Lianna who was responsible. He knew Monica had had no money of her own. Mallam certainly would not have given her any or left such a small amount, hidden under his helmet she had used, for him to eventually find. His reasoning brought him to the conclusion that Lianna had left him the money – as an insult or gesture. And this displeased him more. Perhaps Monica had been involved with Lianna?

He refused to believe this, and wander around his dwelling without purpose, occasionally thumping a wall or a door, frustrated and angry – with himself, Lianna and the world. Then, quite suddenly, it occurred to him that Monica might have left the money as an explanation. Immediately, he understood – or hoped he did, for he grabbed his own helmet, then hers, to run down his stairs and out into the street, returning after a few yards as he remembered to lock his door.

Fine wisps of high white cirrus clouds had begun to cover the blue of the sky, dimming the sun. But the sun was still hot, sweating Thorold as he ran enclosed in his leather suit toward the centre of the town.

## XV

It did not take Thorold as long as he had expected, even though he had run only for about the first mile. A taxicab waited outside the entrance to the railway station, and he was glad to let it convey him the rest of the distance. Several times he checked to ascertain whether any vehicle was following him.

But Monica was not there, as he had expected and hoped, and he sat on the low wall that marked Jake's rear garden, not wanting to think about the consequences of his now obvious misunderstanding. Neither Jake nor his wife came in answer to Thorold's repeated thumps on the door of the house, and he removed his suit to let the sun and breeze dry his sweat. When an hour of waiting became two and brought scuttering low clouds to smother at intervals the searing heat of the sun, he folded his suit under his arm, collected the helmets, and began to walk slowly along the traffic lined streets, over the English Bridge and into the



centre of town.

His new motorcycle, powerful and gleaming as Jake's had been, brought him only a brief sparkle of pleasure, and he rode without any enthusiasm out and away from the town. But he could not dismiss Monica from his mind and rode dangerously fast, back to his Apartment.

She was not there – no one was – and without any hope left, he returned to Jake's house, intent only on intoxicating himself at best by sharing Jake's prodigious supply of beer or at worst by patronizing the nearby Inn.

But she was there, waiting as he had waited, sitting on the wall, and he stopped, stood his bike on its stand and removed his helmet while she stood and smiled. He wanted to rush toward her and embrace and kiss her, but he forced himself not to, hoping she would come to him as a gesture of her feelings.

She did not, so he said, "I was right, then, about your message."

"I thought you'd understand!"

"Lianna?"

"Yes." She reached behind the wall where she had hidden the attaché case, and opened it for him to see.

"Quite a lot there."

"Nine thousand, nine hundred and eighty pounds, exactly." She closed the case, and with a slow precision rested it against the wall.

He needed no more gestures and embraced her. She was relieved, and began to cry, but soon stopped herself.

"Another bike?" She asked, embarrassed by her own show of feelings.

“Yes!” he said and went to stand beside it. “Do you like it?” He ran his hand over the seat. “I’ve just bought it.”

“It is rather nice,” she said approvingly as she came to stand beside him and hold his hand. “Where shall we go?” She laughed. “We are not exactly short of money!”

“Monica?”

“Yes?” she said, trembling a little.

“I’ll have to give it back.”

“But you’ve only just bought it!” she joked.

“You know what I mean.”

“I know. I thought you’d say that.” Then, smiling again, she added, “A pity though! I’ve often wondered what I’d do if I had some money.” She went to collect the case. “Here you are!”

He took it from her, and she sighed. “And I suppose,” she said, “you’re still going to follow what’s-his-name?”

“Yes.”

“Also as I expected.”

She smiled at him, and he embraced her again, saying, “I’m glad you’re back.”

She began to cry again, then pulled away from him to laugh and point to her face. “Looks much better now, doesn’t it?”

“You look beautiful.”

“I see you brought my helmet. Shall we go and return the gift?”

“Actually, I would rather you stayed with a friend of mine – here, in this house. At least for a few days.”

“Not likely! Where you go – I go. Anyway, I want to see the look on her face when you hand back the money.

“But – “

She repossessed the case. “I’ll hold onto that while you drive. Unless you want me to!”

“Come here,” he said gently.

“Yes, Master!” she playfully mocked, “I hear and obey!”

He held her hand. “I’d rather you were safe, here.”

“What? And miss all the fun? Not likely! Come on!” she sat on the pillion

seat of the motorcycle, put on her helmet, held onto the case with one hand and waited.

Thorold shook his head, sighed, and then put on his own helmet. Clouds began to cover the whole of the sky, blotting out the sun, and as they arrived at the driveway of Lianna’s house, rain had begun to fall. They stood together outside the door, helmets in hand, and waited for an answer to Thorold’s insistent knocking.

“I hope she is not going to spoil things by being out.”

Thorold was about to answer when Lianna opened the door. She betrayed surprise at seeing Monica, but only for an instant.

“I expected you,” she said to Thorold, “but alone.”

“You can have this back!” Monica held the case out.

“So? You ignore my offer?” Lianna said to Monica.

Monica smiled at her. “I changed trains at Wellington.”

“I see I shall have to make that telephone call.”

“Go ahead! Monica shouted as Thorold stood watching. “Do your worst! Do you think I care? But I’ll tell you one thing – if you do. I’ll kill you. A few years to wait – maybe. But one day I’ll be there!” She was staring at Lianna her eyes full of passion. “You will never be safe and none of your magick will protect you!”

“I – “ Thorold started to say, but both of them ignored him.

“You’ll have to kill me,” Monica continued, “to stop me! Or have me killed – that’s more your style! So here, take your money before I start stuffing it somewhere very uncomfortable for you!” She threw the case down at Lianna’s feet.

Lianna turned to smile at Thorold. “Such a common woman, don’t you think?”

“I’ll show you how common I am! Monica said before punching Lianna on the chin. The blow knocked Lianna over and Monica did not wait for her to recover.

“Just a taste!” she said before kicking the case into the hallway where Lianna lay prostrate.

“You coming?” she demanded of Thorold, and a somewhat startled Thorold followed her down the steps to his transport.

Suddenly, a shaft of sunlight bathed the scene in brightness and warmth.

## XVI

Thirteen people were present – a number that pleased Mallam – and he mingled with his guest in subdued light of the room while loud music played and could be heard throughout the house. Rhiston, alone among all the people, sat by himself.

The owner of the house was a widowed woman in whom Mallam had once shown an interest. But she soon bored him, as he found most women did – although not before he induced her into his sect where she prospered, finding younger men to her liking and often only too eager to physically please her while their interest, hers, and her monetary gifts, lasted.

There would be no ritual following the gathering, for several of the guests were new and unblooded. The party was a ruse – to arouse their interest, offering as it did drugs to those who wished them as well as the sexual services of members of Mallam's sect. Mallam's own interest centred on Rhiston's wife and Rhiston knew it and like a child sulked in his corner. Mallam found this amusing, considering Rhiston's proclivities, and soon directed a lady member of about Rhiston's age to seduce him. Rhiston did not resist the woman's charm.

“Come on Maurice,” she said, “let's go and make love.”

Mallam was slightly more subtle in his approach to Jane. She had been watching him since she had arrived to be greeted by his seemingly friendly kiss, and when she saw her husband leave with the woman, he went to her.

“I hope you don't think I've been ignoring you,” he said.

“No, honestly.”

He smiled at her. “Another drink? Or would you like to go somewhere quieter – where we can talk?”

She was hesitant, so he said, “You know why I invited you, don't you?”

“Another drink would be fine!”

“I find you very attractive, Jane – as you must have guessed.”

“Maurice – “

“You’ve never been to a party like this before, have you?”

“No,” she answered softly.

“You’re not offended though?”

“No.” she whispered.

He kissed her and at first she did not respond, and when she did, half-regretful and half-thrilled, he led her out of the room and upstairs.

Twilight had begun outside when he left her in one of the many bedrooms of the house. Rhiston was asleep alone in another room, still tied to the bed as the woman had left him. Mallam freed him and gave him his clothes.

“I’ll wait for you outside in the car,” he said.

Downstairs, the music still played loudly, now mingled with sporadic laughter.

They arrived in Stredbow as the last vestiges of twilight gave way to a sky clear of cloud and full of stars, and Mallam parked his vehicle by the mound, some distance from the house and the small stone building where his real interest lay.

“Now,” he said, “to action. We’ll walk to a house and I want you to use this – “ He gave him a Police Warrant Card. “You are investigating the escape of a dangerous criminal who has been spotted in the area – making a routine check. There will be a man and a woman in the house. Just keep them talking – local gossip, sightings of strangers and so on. Use your own work experience,” he smiled. “Alright?”

“Yes. Is that all?” a relieved Rhiston said.

“What did you expect? I’ll be fifteen minutes – no longer than half an hour though.” He reached over to the back seat of the car where a torch and a pair of bolt-croppers lay. “I’ll meet you back here.”

They walked in silence to the gate of the house where Mallam waited while Rhiston went to ring the doorbell. Swiftly then, Mallam crept toward the stone building. The padlock was easy to cut through and he was soon inside. His torch showed a bare room. It smelled of burned wood and he was creeping along the walls, inspecting them for hidden recesses or loose stones when the thick oak door was closed behind him. He tried to force it open, but without success.

Outside, Sidnal Wyke secured the door with a new padlock before calmly walking back to his cottage.

Rhiston did as he had been told, and it was half an hour later when he left the house to return to the car. For hours he waited by, then near, the car – sitting on the mound under a tree, leaning against the stonewall that supported most of the mound among its circumference, or crouching. Twice villagers came near, and he hid himself by the trees.

It was after midnight when he made his decision and left to look again at the house. But it was quiet, and he walked along the lanes he knew would take him to the main road miles away and thence along and down to the township of Stretton.

With the departure of Rhiston, preparations for the celebration in the village began.

## XVII

It was a long time before Mallam ceased his shouting and banging his fists against the door. His voice had echoed in the empty stillness and, tired and confused, he slumped against the wall.

The building was windowless and without sound, and he was soon restless. For hours he checked the walls, the stones of the floor, the door itself by the light of his torch. But nothing moved. He could see a narrow slit in the wall far above his head, but could not reach it. He tried to sleep, but the floor was cold and as soon as he closed his eyes he thought he could hear someone behind the door. Each time he leapt up and listened, but could hear nothing.

The torchlight began to fade. Its dim glow lasted a while, and then was gone to leave Mallam in darkness. He had never before experienced such blackness and several times tried to see his hands in front of his eyes. But he could not see them. He crawled along beside the walls until he reached the door by touch, but no one came in answer to his shouting or in response to the banging of his fists against the studded oak, and he lay in the darkness listening to the roaring silence.

Sleep came, and when he awoke he could not see the time by his expensive watch. His waiting passed slowly and he began to feel hungry and thirsty. He shouted, and nothing happened. He began to curse all the people he knew and had known and then the whole world, and his voice grew hoarse and he himself, more thirsty. He prayed fervently to his Prince many times, saying: 'My Prince and Master, help me! Free me and I shall do terrible deeds in your name!'

He stared into the darkness trying to imagine where he had seen the slit in the wall, but no light, not even a glimmer of light, came to relieve his darkness. He began to imagine he heard sounds – people laughing and talking, then strange music. But the more he listened, the more he began to believe he was mistaken.

He slept again, only to awake in terror because he had forgotten where he was and could not see. He crawled over the floor, along the walls – sat and listened and strained to see. He stood up but became disoriented and dizzy and fell against the door, injuring his arm. He shouted, beat his fists again against the door, but nothing changed except inside his head. His hunger and thirst became intense for what seemed to him a long time until his increasing fear made him forget them.

To calm his fears he lay with his back against a wall, trying to understand why and for what purpose he was being kept a prisoner. At first he had believed that some mischance had imprisoned him – a gust of wind, perhaps, which jammed the door – but he had become gradually aware that it was not chance that brought him to the village and the building which had become his prison. Somehow, he felt, Lianna must have planned it all, and as the hours of his captivity became countless because he could not measure their passing, he came to increasingly believe that she might be testing him. Vaguely, he remembered – his memory brought back by his desperation for hope – her once saying when first he had



asked to become her pupil, that those who sought Adeptship underwent severe ordeals; ordeals not of their own choosing and about which they were never forewarned.

This is a test of hers, he believed, briefly smiling – she is testing my will. And this belief sustained him, for he believed in the power and strength of his will. But his hunger, thirst, the darkness around him and the darkness within him eventually broke this explanation. For she had never followed his own path as at first he had ardently believed. The weeks and the months of her teaching had extinguished his hope – she was no dark, evil, mistress with whom he might forge a physical and magickal alliance. So he had gradually turned away from her, seeking again his old ways, friends, helpers and slaves, understanding that she had been using him, playing with him almost. And this deeply offended his pride. For he, Edgar Mallam – High Priest of the Temple of the Prince – was above them all.

He had thought then that she had used him as he had used others – for her pleasure and satisfaction. She was playing the role of mistress, with him as her pupil – and this made him despise her more, for his own pleasures were carnal and real. He lusted after women, and money – enjoyed the power he had over others, making them his slaves; he enjoyed the misfortunes of others, the taking of young girls. But she simply played her mind-games from the safety and comfort of her house. Her power, he had thought, was nothing compared to his own.

His remembrance of this thinking from his past comforted him, and he began to laugh. But then his laughing stopped. He thought he could hear someone else laughing and when he stopped and unconsciously stooped to listen, he imagined he could hear a woman's laughing voice.

Then there seemed to be a voice inside his head. "Remember The Giving from the Black Book of Satan!" it said and laughed again.

Mallam remembered.

The Book, which Lianna had given him, spoke of an ancient blood ceremony performed only once every 51 years. The sacrifice was always male, an Initiated Priest, and before his blood was offered he was kept for days in a darkened room wherein to draw magickal forces to himself...

He tried to convince himself otherwise. But he heard "Remember The Giving..." in his head again, like an echo.

“I won’t be fooled by you!” he shouted aloud. “Do you hear me Lianna!” He shook his fist at the darkness. “You can’t fool me! I know that you are testing me! You’ll see – I’m strong! Stronger than you!”

He laughed, to convince himself. But the suspicion remained.

“Must not fall asleep!” he muttered aloud. “She’ll try and get me when I’m asleep. I’ll beat her! Me – her sacrifice? Hah! She’ll be mine!” He began to visualize in lurid detail how he might sacrifice her – tying her naked to the altar in his house, ravishing her, the letting others have their fun. He would kill her slowly, very slowly. These thoughts pleased and fascinated him, and he was still thinking them – visualizing them in detail – when he fell full asleep.

His dream was vivid – the most vivid dream of his life. He was surrounded by spiders; they were crawling all over him, biting him and filling him with their poison. He could not move, trapped in webs, and a large spider was crawling over his chest toward his face. But it was Monica, a spider again, Monica smiling with blood on her teeth and mouth and he awoke to thrust the imaginary spiders away with his hands as he writhed in panic on the floor.

## XVIII

The evening and the night that had marked Mallam’s party passed swiftly for Thorold and Monica.

“I don’t think she will bother us again,” a confident Monica said as they sat in his Apartment on their return from visiting Lianna.

“You amaze me.” Thorold said. “Would you like some tea?” he asked.

“I know what I would like!”

Thorold’s surprise turned quickly into delight. “I’ll just have a quick bath,” he said.

“No, don’t. Perhaps I shouldn’t give all my secrets away, but the natural smell of a man – well, some men! – turns me on.”

Thorold blushed. In that moment, Monica reversed their roles – standing to take his hand and lead him to his bedroom. She was gentle at first, then passionate and after hours of mutual bliss they lay with their bodies touching, sleep-inclined but pleased. Several times she started to speak – to try and form into words the feeling within her. But each time she stopped, afraid of herself and her future.

The recent years of her past had been years full of new experiences and through them all she had kept her cynicism. Only Mallam had disturbed her, for he seemed to fulfill, at least in some measure, her expectations: a man of mystery, arrogant and self-assured. But she had discovered the real Mallam was selfish, cruel and somewhat vain.

Her defences had been and were still being broken by recent events, and of all of them she felt her friendship with Thorold was the most significant. For as Lianna offered her the money, she knew she was in love with Thorold. She wanted to tell him, but felt constrained by her own doubts and fears, and as she lay beside him she realized for the first time in her life that she needed to be loved.

They awoke together at dawn. She had expected his suggestion and so was not surprised when he mentioned following Mallam. She did not want his quest to continue, but said nothing. She sensed Thorold wanted somehow to avenge her beating as he sensed his disgust and outrage at Mallam’s paedophile activities.

Thus it was that less than an hour later they rode together on the motorbike to wait near Mallam’s house.

“We’ll try the other chap,” Thorold said after an almost interminable time.

They waited again, outside Rhiston’s home, and then followed him to his place of work. Several times during the day they returned to find his car was still in place outside the building, and several times they returned to Mallam’s house, without success.

Dark cloud covered the sky promising rain, but they sat for nearly an hour by the river, refreshing themselves with food and drink, before lying beside each other in the grass in the peace of Quarry Park. She spoke to him, as their hands and lips touched and desire became aroused, of her bleak childhood without love, but still she could not say the words

she wished. She spoke instead with her body and they made passionate love in the long grass near the river's edge while people ambled or fastly walked along the path above.

By three o'clock in the afternoon they had returned to wait for Rhiston. He spent a few hours at his home then journeyed to Mallam's house and then to a house nearby to briefly speak to the woman who answered his knocking upon her door. And thence he led Thorold and his lover to Stredbow village.

Mallam's car was still where he had left it the night before, and in the twilight Rhiston checked it before walking toward the black and white house. Thorold saw him stop by the gate, turn and listen, and then enter the garden to creep toward the stone building. Rhiston listened again, tried the door, then noticed the broken padlock and the bolt-croppers discarded on the ground. He tried to cut the padlock several times before finally succeeding and Thorold watched in surprise as Mallam crawled from the building.

He blubbered something that Thorold could not hear before Rhiston assisted him to his feet. Then Mallam was running fast away from the house, his face contorted, his eyes staring, his clothes dirty and torn. He reached the car, fumbled in his pockets for his keys and shouted several times at Rhiston. Rhiston ran to the car, panting and exhausted, and Mallam pushed him inside before driving them both away.

They were not far from the village when Mallam slewed the car in the lane, using the driveway of a farm, to drive straight toward Thorold whose motorbike light he had seen in the rearview mirror. Thorold reacted as best he could, braking and steering away, but the front of the car clipped the side of the bike causing him to lose control. His front wheel hit the curb and he was e HeHe in the air, briefly, to land dazed in the hedge by the verge.

He sat up to see the car reverse over Monica as she lay still in the road. He ran toward her, but she was dead.

Carefully, and almost crying, Thorold carried the body to the verge. His motorcycle was undamaged apart from scratches and a few dents, and he collected several stones from beside the road before riding with fury after the car. He soon caught it and sped past to turn, skidding, and race back, throwing a stone at the windscreen of the car.

He did not hear the screech of brakes – or see the car swerve and weave across the road as the driver's vision became obstructed by the suddenly frosted glass. But he did see, as he turned, the car crash and come to rest on its side. Mallam was dazed, his face bleeding,

while Rhiston was unconscious. Thorold dragged Mallam from the car, banged his head against the underside and threw him onto the verge, and he was walking toward where Monica's murderer lay when the car suddenly exploded, searing the air with heat and light and throwing him to the ground.

Instantly, he regretted saving Mallam's life, and as he stood up to edge away from the burning, he felt an urge to throw Mallam onto Rhiston's funeral pyre. Mallam began to moan, and Thorold was considering what to do when, in the light of the flames, he saw people approaching.

Thorold recognized the young man leading them. He was Sidnal Wyke, seller of Lianna's books, and Thorold made no move to stop them as they carried Mallam away from the burning and back to the darkness that covered the lane to their village.

Many miles away, in a room of her house, Lianna smiled as she burned her square of inscribed magickal parchment in the flame of a black candle.

## XIX

They had not spoken to Thorold and he had not spoken to them, and he watched them - numb with shock from Monica's death - depart, carrying Mallam. His rage had gone and he stood near the now slow burning car for several minutes before riding to the nearby farm.

To his surprise, the Police did not take long to arrive, and the Policeman found him waiting beside his bike near Monica's body.

"My girlfriend." Thorold explained. "The car - just came straight toward me."

He explained about the crash, the car reversing, and his moving the body. "There was nothing I could do. Then I heard a crash and an explosion and went to see."

The young but kindly Policeman smiled. "We'll need a statement. No need now - tomorrow."

Thorold gave his name and address, heard a Fire Engine approach, watched an Ambulance

arrive and take Monica's body away. He did not quite know why he did not speak about Mallam, but he did not, but as he drove slowly away from the scene to take the roads that led to Shrewsbury, he began to regret his lie. He stopped once, to turn back and tell the full story, but it was not his courage that failed. Rather, he began to sense he was involved in something of great and sinister import, and although he did not have all the answers – or indeed perhaps not even the right questions – he would find them. He did not, at this moment, know how, but Monica's death gave him the desire to succeed.

Jake was at home with his wife as Thorold had hoped, and he sat with them, drinking beer while the television relayed some film.

“Want to talk about it?” Jake asked.

“No.”

But Jake was not offended, and offered him more beer. Gradually, Thorold drank himself into a forgetful stupor to slither from his chair to the floor where he fell asleep.

He awoke to find himself alone in the house and obviously carried by Jake to a bed. He soon dressed and left to drive in the light rain to Lianna's home.

“I have been waiting for you,” she said as she led him inside. “I am sorry for what happened.”

“You know?” he asked without surprise.

“One gets to hear these things.”

“You know why I have come then?”

“Yes.” She took him to her living room. A copy of *The Black Book of Satan*, bound in black leather, lay on a table, but its title did not interest Thorold.

“I have to make a statement to the Police,” he said.

“You met Constable Tong, I believe.”

Thorold was not familiar with the name, but he made the obvious deduction.

“Such a bright young man,” she continued. “A cousin of Mr. Wyke – whom of course you have met.”

“I see,” said Thorold, uneasy.

“I thought you would.”

“What will you do with him?”

“With whom?” she teased.

“Edgar Mallam.”

“Does it matter?”

“It might.”

“To you?”

“I might want to see justice done. He killed Monica!”

“What is justice?” she mocked.

“He killed her!”

“An accident. A body burned beyond recognition,” she shrugged.

“I should have left him to die in the explosion!”

“You had no choice.”

“What?’ he asked perplexed.

She ignored the subject. “Come, do not let us argue. Remember how it was between us.”

Her smile, her eyes seemed to be affecting him and he became aware again of how beautiful she was. He remembered the ecstasy and passion he had shared with her – the soft sensuous beauty of her naked body; her intoxicating and seductive bodily fragrance. She was moving toward him with her mouth open, her lips waiting to be kissed.

But something inside him made him suddenly aware of her witchery, and he forced himself to think of Monica – her body, bloody and broken, on the road. His remembrance of her death and her face in death broke Lianna’s spell.

“I must go,” he said, turning away from her eyes.

“As you wish!”

Her words seemed to end the tension he felt in his neck and shoulders, but he still avoided looking at her.

“Remember,” she said as if chanting, “I want to share my life with yours.”

Even as he left he felt an urge to return and surrender to her seductive beauty, but he rode away down to the river where he sat for hours in the first nascent and then fulsome sun thinking about Monica, Mallam, Lianna and the events that bound them, and he himself, together.

He was disturbed by this thinking and tried to relax by returning to the secure reality of his bookshop. He wandered around the shelves, seated himself at his desk, and opened the mail that had begun to accumulate. But the longer he stayed in the musty shop, the more he felt that the world of books in which had been his world for years, was a dead one. Its charm



had gone. Monica had been real – exciting and full of promise for his future: his surveillance had been exciting, reminding him of the years before his marriage. Lianna herself had been real – warmly alive, as the books around him were not. He could give his statement to the Police, forget about Mallam and Lianna – forget about them all – and live again within his cloistral world of books. Except he did not want to.

The door to his shop opened.

“You are open?” asked the elderly man who entered.

“No, not at the moment.” Thorold was annoyed at being disturbed.

“Oh, dear! And I did so want to look around. I called yesterday.”

“Didn’t you see the note?” asked Thorold, pointing to it on the door.

The man bent down to peer, took some spectacles from the pocket of his tweed jacket and squinted. “My! How silly of me!” He turned to smile at Thorold. “But you are here now.”

The man was short and rotund with red cheeks and thinning white hair. His manner of dress was conservative and he carried a rolled up umbrella.

Thorold relented. “You can have a look if you wish. But I will be closing again soon.”

“You were recommended to me.”

“Oh, yes?” Thorold said without interest. He was still thinking of Lianna.

“Perhaps recommended is not the right word. May I sit down? My legs are not what they were.”

Surprised at the request, Thorold offered him his own chair.

“Most kind! Let me introduce myself.” He held out his hand. “Aiden is the name.”

Thorold shook his hand.

“I shall be brief,” Aidan said. “You spoke to a friend of mine some days ago about a certain matter.” He smiled at a perplexed Thorold. “The Devil,” he said calmly.

“Just curiosity.”

“I know a little about such things.”

“Academic interest, that’s all. Someone wanted to sell me some books on the subject.”

“You have these books?”

“No, actually.” Then, thinking quickly, he added, “I threw them out.” He pointed to a bundle of books tied by string, which lay on the floor. “I haven’t got the room. Have to be very selective.”

“For over forty years I have studied the subject. Meeting people. Often those who have been involved. One develops an instinct.” He smiled again. “Rather like a Detective. Although in my own case, an ecclesiastical one.”

“You must excuse me – I really ought to close the shop.”

“You have the scent of Satan about you,” the old man said in a quiet voice.

“Say again?” Thorold was startled.

“A figure of speech. Those who practice the Occult Arts believe there is an aura surrounding the body. It is said Initiation, particularly into the darker mysteries alters that aura, most noticeably between the eyes. You must forgive me if I speak frankly.”

“You are welcome to have a quick look around the shelves for any books that might interest

you.”

“You interest me.”

“You must excuse me – I have a busy day.”

“Are you afraid of someone?”

Thorold was insulted. “Of course not!”

“I came only to help.”

“Why?” Thorold was becoming a little angry.

Gently, the man said, “Because I am concerned about the growth of evil.”

“What is evil?” He realized he was echoing Lianna’s parody and added, “I sell books, that is all.”

Aiden sighed. “I can only help if you want me to. You know where I will be staying if you wish to contact me.”

“The Cathedral?”

“Yes. Sometimes it is better to ask for help than to try to solve things alone.”

“Are you staying long?”

“A few days.”

“I hope you enjoy your stay. Goodbye.”

Aiden pointed to the motorcycle, which Thorold had parked outside. “Yours?”

“No, I always dress like this,” Thorold quipped.

Aiden did not mind the jest. “So different now, such machines. Once – a very long time ago before I accepted my vocation within the Church – I rode. An Enfield – at least, that is what I think it was called. So long ago. Fast?”

“Very. Zero to sixty miles per hour in less than six seconds.”

“A different world, now. Such memories. I shall pray for you.”

“Goodbye.”

“Adieu!”

Thorold had declined the man’s gambit to prolong their conversation, and he watched Aidan walk slowly up the narrow lane that led to St. Chad’s church and the gates of Quarry Park. He did not regret his decision not to share his secrets, and as soon as Aidan was out of sight, he closed the shop and rode down into the traffic that was congesting the roads through the town.

The street, which contained Mallam’s house, seemed quiet, and he parked his bike nearby to walk the last hundred yards. To his surprise he found the door slightly ajar, and cautiously entered. A faint perfume lingered, reminding him of Lianna, but he quickly forgot about it as he slowly moved from room to room. The rooms were untidy and he was making his way upstairs when he heard someone moving about.

“Hello!” he called.

No one answered, and he crept into a bedroom. Someone touched his shoulder and he raised his hands, saying, “it’s a fair cop!” before suddenly turning around and smiling.

His quick movement startled the woman, and Thorold recognized her as Rhiston’s wife.

“Can I help?” he asked cunningly.

“You haven’t seen Maurice, have you?” she asked hopefully.

“No,” he lied. “Not recently. He gave you this address?”

She stared down at the floor. “Edgar did.”

Thorold drew the correct conclusion. “Been waiting here long?”

“I’ve just arrived.”

“You’ve got a key, then?”

“The door was open.”

“You checked the other rooms?”

“Not yet.”

“Come on, then.”

All of them, at least to Thorold’s once practised eye, bore evidence of a quick but thorough search.

“You don’t know where Maurice is?” she asked.

“Afraid not. You know Edgar,” he smiled. “Likes to be a man of mystery. They’ve probably gone somewhere together.” He had no qualms about lying to her since he assumed, from her involvement with Mallam, that she knew at least something about his activities. “Do you want to wait here?” he asked her.

“I’d better be going. If you see him – “

“I’ll tell him you called.”

“Thank you.”

He walked with her down the stairs. She turned to smile weakly at him before she left, and he felt sad. But he did not follow her to tell her about the fate of her husband. Instead, he sighed, remembered Monica’s death, and began to search the house, after locking the door. He found nothing of interest and nothing to incriminate Mallam – only a large collection of pornographic magazines, some leather whips and some manacles and chains. No photographs of his activities, no letters, documents, and nothing to indicate his interest in the Occult or the names and addresses of his varying contacts. He was disappointed, but not surprised, and left the house wondering what he could do next. Mallam was gone, Rhiston was dead, he had no names and addresses, no factual evidence concerning Mallam’s activities. Then he remembered the woman that Rhiston had briefly visited.

She answered his knock on her door wearing a nightdress and squinting into the brightness outside.

“Yes?”

“I am a friend of Edgar.”

“Do come in! Please excuse the mess. A social occasion – last night – you know how they drag on and on.”

“You came highly recommended,” he said, guessing.

“Really?” Pleased, she thought he looked promising, although somewhat older than she had come to expect. “Would you like something to drink? Beer, perhaps?”

“Tea?”

“Darjeeling, if you have some.”

“You don’t look like a tea drinker to me.”

“It’s the leathers! Often gives the wrong idea.”

“You must be warm in that black leather.” She breathed out the last words as though black leather interested her.

“It has its uses.”

“I’m sure! Do you ride often?” she asked mischievously.

“As the mood takes me.”

“Does it take you now?”

“Possibly.” After such a promising beginning he was at a loss as to how to continue, except the obvious course. But he was not disposed to take this, despite the attractiveness of the lady whom he guessed was at least fifteen years older than him. He began to feel embarrassed by the role he was creating for himself as well as surprised by his burgeoning desires. She was standing near him, her nightdress almost transparent and he could see her nipples and dark mass of pubic hair. He forced himself to remember the reason for his visit.

“Have you known Edgar long?” he asked.

“Long enough! Have you brought anything from him?”

As she said the words he saw the needle marks on her arms. The sight decided him.

“I’ve just remembered it!” he said, and dashed out of the house.

He did not seem to consciously decide, but just arrived at the road to Lianna’s house, and he did not have long to wait in her driveway. Attracted by the noise of the motorcycle, she came out to greet him.

“I must know,” he said as he removed his helmet and she stood, smiling and beautiful, in the sunlight. “About Mallam.”

“It is good that you come of your own free will.”

By the side of the house, Thorold could see Imlach turn around and walk back into the garden.

## XX

The house was cool, and Thorold and Lianna sat in the Drawing Room overlooking the rear garden. She brought him iced tea before sitting beside him.

“What will happen to him?”

“Do you care?”

“Not in that way.”

“But you want revenge?”

“Possibly. I don’t know.”

“And if you were given the opportunity to dispense justice by taking his life, would you?”

“It’s not up to me. There is the law.”

“The Law! Hah! The Law is an accumulation of tireless attempts to prevent the gifted from making their lives a succession of ecstasies!” Her passion was soon gone, and she smiled kindly at Thorold. “I’m glad you came to see me again.”



Thorold returned her smile. "You didn't answer the question."

"About Edgar?"

"Yes. I do have my suspicions."

"Do you?"

"It seems to me you planned things."

"I will not deny – to you - that I planned some things. But I will tell you something. I planned things, yes – but I did not plan to fall in love with you."

For several minutes Thorold could not speak. He watched her, and she began to cry, gently, until tears ran down her cheeks.

"I have never said that to anyone before," she said, softly.

Thorold did not know what to do. He thought, vaguely and not for very long, that she might in some way be trying to manipulate his feelings, but the more he looked at her and the more he remembered the ecstasy they had shared in the past, the more his doubts began to disappear. She had turned her face away, to wipe the tears with her hand when he reached over to stroke her hair.

"Don't cry," he said.

"I'm sorry." She held his hand. "See what you do to me! I can't remember the last time I cried!"

"You are a strange woman."

"If I ask you something will you give me an honest answer?"

“Possibly.”

“Were you in love with Monica?”

The question surprised him. “I don’t know,” he said hesitantly. “I don’t think so.” He felt he had betrayed her.

“Good. I was a little jealous.”

“The thought occurred to me.”

“But I’m sorry about what happened – with her, I mean.”

“So am I,” His sense of having betrayed Monica began to fade. “I’d rather not talk about it.”

“I’ve missed you.” She moved toward him and kissed his lips.

The kiss, her perfume, the feel of her body pressing against his, overpowered his senses and he began to return her passion.

“Not here!” she said.

She held his hand as they walked from the room, and along the hall to a door. The door led down some steps into a dimly lit chamber. A dark, soft carpet covered the floor and she took him to an alcove where cushions were strewn, drawing him down with her. Her passion seemed to draw from Thorold all the darker memories of the past days and he abandoned himself to his lusts, remembering the tears and her words of love. Her hands gripped his shoulders and as her own passion became intense her nails sank into his flesh, drawing blood. But he did not care, as her body spasmed in ecstasy, followed by his own.

They relaxed then, in the gently bliss that followed.

“I want you,” she whispered, “with me always. Will you do something for me?”

“Yes,” he answered without hesitation.

“Whatever it is?”

“Yes.” His hands stroked her breasts. “You are beautiful.”

“I am all yours – now.”

“What did you want me to do?”

“Live with me.”

“Seriously?”

“Seriously!” She kissed him. “I love you.” She sat up to lean against a cushion. “Tomorrow night there is a celebration in the village that I would like you to attend – with me.”

“Your village?”

She laughed. “I suppose it is!”

Thorold sat up to rest beside her against the stone wall and as he did so he noticed in a far corner, a statue. Beside it hung a lighted candle shielded by red glass. The light reminded him of the sanctuary lamp in a Catholic Church, but the statue showed a woman, naked from the waist up, who held in her outstretched hand the severed head of a bearded man. The woman was smiling.

“What’s that?” Thorold asked, pointing with his finger.

“The violent goddess – Mistress of Earth. There was a time when men were sacrificed in her name, and the Priestess of her cult would wash her hands in the victim’s blood before taking it to sprinkle on the fields. It ensured the fertility of the land – and the people.”

Thorold understood – or felt he did. He looked around the chamber. It was bare, except for one wall where a battered medieval shield, sword and armour hung.

“And those?” he asked.

“Family heirlooms. They were supposed to belong to an ancestor of mine – Roger de Alledone. There is a book in the library about the family – if you’re interested.”

“Yes. Does your son visit you often?”

“My son?” she asked, surprised. Then, remembering, “I have no children – yet.”

“But I remember you saying when you came to my shop – “

“A fabrication – to meet you. Am I forgiven?”

He vaguely remembered something else she had said, but could not form the vague remembrance into a distinct recollection of words, so he dismissed it. “Of course!” he said.

“Will you stay tonight?” she asked.

“Do you want me to?”

“You know I do.”

“I would have to collect a few things.”

“Naturally. Do you have a suit?” She looked at his motorcycle clothing discarded in haste.

“Yes, why?”

“I thought we could go to a rather nice restaurant I know. For dinner, tonight. And then come back here.”

Totally captivated by her, totally under her spell, Thorold simply said, “That would be nice.”

They embraced before he rose to dress. She watched him, before dressing herself. In the hallway, she kissed him saying, “Don’t be long, my darling!” He was almost to the door when she added, “I love you!”

It was a dazed almost hypnotized Thorold who sat outside astride his bike. Then he rode slowly out of the driveway only to be confronted by Imlach’s daughter who waved him to a halt.

“Listen!” she said, fearfully glancing around. “I must talk with you.”

He removed his helmet before saying, “What about?”

“I can’t talk here – it’s too dangerous. Please, you’ve got to hear me.”

“But – “

“Please!” she pleaded. “I must talk to you about Lianna!”

“Come on, then!” He indicated the pillion seat, replaced his helmet and drove down the road to take the lane that led to the toll bridge. He stopped before reaching it.

“Well?” he asked as they both stood beside the bike.

“She killed Monica,” she said.

Thorold’s smile disappeared. Stark realities, and memories of love and death, returned.

In the hazy sunlight, Thorold stared at the river flowing nearby. Two rowing boats, carrying their rowdy youthful crews, passed under the bridge.

“That’s ridiculous,” he finally said in answer to Sarah’s accusation. “It was an accident.”

“Was it? She arranged it using her magick.”

“Impossible.” He looked at her, but she did not turn her eyes away from his.

“Believe me, she has powers – sinister powers. She put a death curse on Monica.”

“Nonsense!”

“Is it?”

Thorold became perturbed. He had sensed many things about Lianna – including her natural charisma. “She wouldn’t – she had no reason.” Even as he spoke the words he knew a reason existed.

Sarah smiled, out of sympathy. “I saw her inscribing the parchments she uses to work her spells.”

Thorold still did not completely believe her. “Why are you telling me this?”

“Because I – we - need your help.”

Thorold sighed, and went to stand on the bridge, leaning against the supports and watching the water flow below. She followed him.

“For centuries,” Sarah began, “her family has ruled the village. Her father before her. But she is different – they are all afraid of her. She owns the land, nearly all the houses – the fields. Without her, they could not survive. But she had followed a different way. I was born in the village, so I know.

“She is using you, as she uses everyone, including me and my father. There is a ceremony due – part of an old tradition. She has captivated you – like the dark witch she is.”

The rowing boats had gone, and the river seemed quite peaceful. Sarah continued speaking while Thorold watched the breeze ripple the surface of the water.

“Her family kept alive for generations the old traditions, the old ways – as did the folk of the village. But she has meddled in other things. We need your help.”

“Why?”

“Because you are important to her – at least, in what she is planning.”

“And what is that?”

“To use the power of The Giving for herself. I don’t agree with the old ways – and want them stopped. You must know – or have guessed – what will be involved. The man whom you saw escape – “

“I did wonder. There is a statue in her house.”

“Yes. So you do understand?”

“I am beginning to.”

“Will you help, then?”

“I don’t know.”

“She will take you to the ceremony – we, you and I, must prevent what she plans.”

“And then?”

“Let him go.”

“I see.”

“I could give you enough evidence.”

“About his activities?”

“Yes. She removed all his files, last night from his house.”

“I did wonder,” Thorold said.

“She has other evidence against him as well. I could get that.”

“What is she to you?”

Sarah sighed. “My mother.”

When Thorold had recovered from his surprise he said, “she told me she had no children.”

“Oh, she doesn’t acknowledge me – not as her heir and all that.”

She smiled at him and Thorold saw the faint resemblance to Lianna that he had seen before but dismissed.

Sarah laughed. “I am a mistake that she made in her youth!”

“She never said anything to me.”

“She is not exactly proud of me. That’s why she keeps me around in her sight.”



“And you father?” Thorold still found it difficult to believe that she was Lianna’s daughter.

“He is her loyal servant – and servant is the right word!”

“So they are no longer close?”

“Close? They have never been close! She used him - once and for her own ends. He was and always has been her guardian. She despises him. He is totally in her power.”

Thorold felt relieved, but he soon suppressed the feeling. “You will be present tomorrow night at the ceremony?”

“Yes. You will help, then?”

“I’ll think about it.”

“I shall have to get back – before I’m missed.” She walked a few paces, and then turned toward him. “She killed Monica. And when she has finished with you – “ she shrugged, “ – who knows?”

Thorold did not watch her go. The past few hours, through their intensity and contradiction, seemed to have drained away his vitality and he rode to his Apartment to sit in the stuffy interior silence for a long time, without feeling and without thinking about recent events. When he did think about them, he came first to one conclusion and then another, to finally change his mind again, and it was without any enthusiasm that he collected clothes suitable for Lianna’s evening.

She greeted his return with a kiss, and did not seem to him to notice his change of mood.

“I feel very tired this evening,” he said to build his alibi.

She led him upstairs to the bedroom he had slept in before.

“I’ll see you downstairs, in the Sitting Room,” she said smiling, and left him.

He was soon changed, and sat to wait for her in the Sitting Room. It was a long wait, and he rose to briefly play the Grand Piano.

“You must play for me,” she said as she entered, startling him.

He was momentarily stunned by her beauty and appearance. She wore a brooch of colourful design, held by a black silk band around her neck, and her close-fitting dress emphasized the feminine proportions of her body. It was cut low at the back, exposing her tanned skin to the waist, its fit so close that Thorold could see she wore nothing underneath.

“What do you think?” she asked unnecessarily, turning in a circle in front of him.

“I think other women will hate you.”

“Good!” she laughed.

Her driving matched her mood, for she drove fast but with skill out of Shrewsbury to take a circuitous route to the restaurant. Inside, the furnishings were antique, and they were ushered to a table overlooking the extensive private grounds.

“Such a civilized place, don’t you agree?” Lianna said as Thorold sat amazed by the selection of food, and the prices, which were shown on the menu.

The tables were set at a discreet distance from each other, some at different levels. No one else was present – except two waiters and a waitress, discreetly watching them.

“I suppose the prices put people off,” Thorold said as he glanced at the empty chairs.

“We have the place to ourselves tonight.”

Thorold blushed, and stared at the menu.

“Decided what you want yet?” she asked, pleased by his show of innocence.

“Cod, chips, mushy peas and scraps.” He waited for her reaction and when none came, he said, “You decide.”

She did, and a waiter sidled up to her on her signal to take the order. She chose wine, and Thorold had drunk two full glasses of her expensive choice when he said, “all we need is an orchestra.”

“There are speakers secreted among the oak beams to channel background music.”

As if listening to their conversation, the nearby waiter walked gracefully toward their table. “Would Madam like some music?”

“Do you have any Strauss Waltzes?”

“I shall see!”

A few minutes later the music began as the first course of their meal was served. Thorold watched Lianna while they ate and talked of inconsequential things – the long spell of hot weather, the restaurant, his likes and dislikes in music. She did not seem to him to be evil – just exceptionally beautiful, wealthy woman, born to power and used to it. But he could not still his doubts. He heard Sarah’s voice in his head accusing her; remembered Lianna’s lie about having no children; her anger toward Monica. But most of all he remembered Monica’s death and Mallam being borne away by the people of Lianna’s village.

“Why did you never have any children?” he asked to test her.

She smiled. “My husband. Marriage of convenience, really. Did not want him as the father of my children.”

“Did you never want any?”

“Apart from now, you mean?” And her eyes sparkled.

“Years ago. As an heir.”

“Together we shall solve this problem!”

“But seriously – “

“Seriously – not until now. I never found the right man, until now. One has to be so careful.”

Thorold had his answer, and he did not like it. “It is a pity,” he said, guarding his feeling, “that there is not room enough to dance.”

“We could ask them to make room.”

“No – I’d be too embarrassed.”

The evening passed slowly for Thorold. Their conversation returned to the mundane, and he drank an excessive amount of wine to stifle both his feelings and his thoughts. He pretended to fall asleep in her car on their return to her house, awaking at their journeys end to say, “I’m sorry. Drunk too much.”

She smiled indulgently, and did not seem to mind when her kiss, as they stood in his bedroom, was not returned.

“We have the rest of our lives together!” she laughed in reply to his apology for his tiredness.

“I shall be leaving early in the morning. To prepare for our little ceremony. Meet me outside the village mound at ten in the evening. Can you remember that?” she asked playfully.

He slumped onto the bed, playing his role. “Of course.”

“No curiosity?” she asked.

“‘Bout what?” he slurred his words.

“The ceremony?”

“Too tired to be curious. Anyway – trust you.”

She looked directly into his eyes and for an instant he felt she knew about his pretence and the reasons for it. But she kissed him, and the moment was gone, making him sure he had been mistaken, for she touched his face gently with her hand, saying, “sleep well my darling!” to leave him alone in his room.

No sounds reached him and he undressed to sleep naked in the humid night on top of the bed. He was soon asleep. He did not sleep for long. The weather oppressed, making him restless and sweaty, and his mind was troubled by thoughts of Monica, Mallam and Lianna’s lies. Only when dawn came, bringing a slight breeze through his open windows, did renewed rest come, and he did not hear as Lianna quietly opened the door to watch, for almost a minute while he slept. She smiled as she closed the door to leave him to his dreams.

It was late morning when Thorold awoke, tired and thirsty. The house was quiet, and empty, and he wandered to one of the many bathrooms before dressing. He found Lianna’s note on the table in the kitchen. “Yours – to keep,” it simply read. Next to it was a key to the front door of the house.

Half expecting to find Sarah or Imlach, he ventured into the gardens. He found no one, not even in the buildings where Sarah – a long time ago it seemed to him now – had taken him to strip away all her clothes. Now, he felt, he understood: angry with her mother, she had tried to seduce him as an act of revenge.

He spent an hour wandering around the house, occasionally opening a drawer or a cupboard as if by such openings he might find something to incriminate or explain Lianna. Even the library held no clues – only books, many of which he would once have been glad to own or buy for his shop. The door that led to the stone chamber was unlocked, and he walked down the steps aware that he might be transgressing Lianna’s hospitality. But he hardened himself against the feeling, remembering Sarah’s story, Monica’s death and Lianna’s lies. Black candles lit the chamber.

The red light by the statue was still burning, and as he approached, he saw a book lying on the floor. *The Black Book of Satan*’ the spine read.

The book was open at a chapter entitled ‘*A Gift for the Prince*’ and he began to read.

‘In ceremonial rituals involving sacrifice, the Mistress of Earth usually takes on the role of violent goddess, the Master of the Temple that of either Lucifer or Satan, the sacrifice being regarded as a gift to the Prince of Darkness. This gift, however, is sometimes offered to the dark goddess – the bride of our Prince.

‘Human sacrifice is powerful magick. The ritual death of an individual does two things: it releases energy (which can be directed – or stored, for example, in a crystal sphere) and it draws down dark forces or ‘entities’. Such forces may then be used, by directing them toward a specific goal according to the principles of magick, or they may be allowed to disperse over the Earth in a natural way, such dispersal altering what is sometimes known as the ‘astral shell’ around the Earth. This alteration, by the nature of the sacrifice, is disruptive – that is, it tends toward Chaos. This is simply another way of saying that sacrifice further the works of Satan...’

He read no more, but carefully replaced the book, leaving the chamber to ascend the stairs to his room. He felt comfortable again in his motorcycle leathers, gloves and boots, and left the house without locking the door.

The roads and lanes he took led him to a narrow, old stone bridge over a narrow stream, and he stopped to sit beside the water under the blue sky while larks sang high above the fields of ripening wheat. The book had given him final confirmation of his suspicions.

## XXII

It was nearing the hour of ten when Thorold arrived in the village, his sealed letter safely in Jake’s house. His friend would open it and know what to do should he fail to return.

Twilight was ending, and as he parked his bike by the mound, removed his helmet and as he listened, hearing only the leaves of the trees moving in the breeze, he found it difficult to believe in magick. The perfume of flowers was strong, reminding him of quiet English villages full of charm. He had not heard or seen the old tractor that was driven across the lane, blocking it, after he had passed to take the last turn into the village, as he did not know the other entrance to the village was similarly obstructed. Neither did he see or hear Lianna approach until she stood beside him and touched him on the shoulder, startling him, again.

“Come”, she said, “they are waiting.”

She carried a wicker basket but he could not see what was in it. He was surprised when she lead him toward and into the church.

Inside, a multitude of candles and lanterns had been lit, and he saw the whole village assembled with Sidnal standing and waiting by the altar. But the altar was covered with fruit, food and what appeared to be casks of beer, and as he looked around he could see that all Christian symbols and artefacts had been removed.

The assembly parted as he and Lianna entered.

“Wait here,” she whispered to him before walking by herself toward the altar. Sidnal bowed slightly as she gave him her basket. It contained envelopes bearing a substantial gift of money, the same amount in each, and Sidnal took the envelopes one at a time, read the name written thereon, and waited for the recipient to come forward.

Each villager received an envelope, and Sidnal gave the empty basket to Lianna. She held it upside down and on this signal a young man and woman came forward. She touched their foreheads with her hands, saying, “I greet the Lord and Lady!”

They turned, as the assembled villagers did, toward where Thorold stood. The door opened, and Imlach entered holding a rope whose ends were tied round Mallam’s hands, binding them.

Lianna addressed the congregation, saying, “You have heard the charges against him. How say you – is he guilty or not guilty?”

“Guilty! Guilty!” The congregation responded.

“Is that the verdict of you all?”

“Yes!” the voices chorused.

“And his sentence?”

“Burn him! Burn him!”

Mallam looked terrified. Lianna led the exit from the church.

“Come,” she said to Thorold, taking his hand. Imlach led Mallam into the darkness followed by Lianna, Thorold, Sidnal and the folk of that village.

Sarah waited by the gate to the mound, holding a burning torch. She led the procession through the village and into the fields where they stopped beside an unlit bonfire. In its centre was a stake.

“No! No!” Mallam pleaded. “Forgive me! I’ll do anything! Anything!”

Imlach had a long-bladed knife, which he gave to Lianna as Sarah came to stand beside Thorold while the villagers gathered in a circle round the stake. Thorold felt Sarah’s hand touching his, then cold metal. He was surprised, but put the revolver in his pocket, and watched as Lianna approached Mallam.

“Are you ready?” Sarah whispered to him.

Thorold did not answer. Nearby, Lianna cut the rope which bound Mallam.

“Run!” she said to him. “Run!”

For some seconds Mallam did not move, and when he did the waiting villagers moved aside to let him through. He ran, bent-over, into the high, shielding wheat. No one followed.

“There is she,” Lianna pointed at Sarah, “who has betrayed us.”

Lianna came forward, took the torch from Sarah’s hand and beckoned to two men. They held Sarah by her arms while Thorold stood with his hand clutching the gun in his pocket. But he did not move, surprised by Mallam’s freedom, as the two men took Sarah away. Lianna lit the bonfire with the torch, and on this signal the villagers began to dance around it, laughing and singing. Two young women came to Thorold, held his arms and ushered



him toward the circle of the dance, and soon he lost sight of Lianna. He danced with them around the fire, several times trying to break away. But another circle of dancers had formed around the one containing him, dancing in the opposite direction, and constraining his movement.

He seemed to dance a long time until he saw Lianna again. She was outside the circle of dancers and came toward him, took his hand and joined in the dance. The heat of the fire had become intense, and the dancers moved away, still holding the circles. Wood crackled, and, among the singing and shouting,

Thorold thought he could hear music accompanying the dance.

“You did not believe her, then?” Lianna asked.

“You knew?”

“Of course!”

“And if I had believed her?” he asked, panting from the exertion of the dance and the heat.

“It would have been a pity to spoil the celebration.”

“And Mallam?”

She smiled. “He has his just reward!”

“Then Sarah is not your daughter?”

“Naturally not! And you have shown the insight I would expect from my future husband.”

Thorold was so surprised he stopped his dancing, and as he did so he could see, by the light of the fire, blood upon Lianna’s hands and dress.

## XXIII

Thorold had no time to think. The dancing stopped, and he was borne along in the crush back through the gate of the field toward the village.

Several times he tried to find Lianna but without success. He was approaching the church when he saw her standing by the door with a young woman. Her hands were clean, her dress a different one.

“Shall we go and see Sarah?” She said, smiling, when he reached her.

Inside the church, the feasting had begun, and Thorold followed Lianna and the young woman, unwilling to form his fears and feelings into words. The light from the windows of the black and white house illuminated the garden, and as they passed through it Thorold could see, through the open door, fresh straw covering the floor of the stone building that had been Mallam’s prison.

Sarah sat, her head resting in her hands, by the table in the kitchen, the two men who had taken her away beside her, with Sidnal standing close by.

“Leave us,” Lianna said, and the two men left. “You have done well,” she said to Sidnal. “I have a gift for you - as your grandmother I know, would have wished.”

Sidnal shuffled his feet and looked down at the floor as Lianna joined his hand with that of the young woman who laughed playfully and dragged an unresisting Sidnal away. As they left the house, Thorold saw Imlach standing by the door.

Sarah looked hopefully at Thorold. “Why didn’t you stop her?”

When Thorold did not answer, she said, “You didn’t believe me, did you?”

“No.”

“But it was true,” she said in desperation. “My father will tell you.”

Imlach turned away.

“Tell him! Damn you, tell him!” she shouted.

Imlach said nothing, and Sarah began to cry. Then, suddenly, she was angry and glowered at Thorold. “You’re pathetic,” she snarled. “I pity you, I really do! You’re totally in her power! She’s corrupted you, beshrewed you, and you don’t see it!”

“I know what has gone on,” Lianna said.

“What do you mean?” Sarah demanded, angry – and afraid.

“Between you and your father.”

“No! It’s lies!”

“I have known for a long time,” Lianna said quietly.

“I hate you!”

“So, that’s why you pretended to be her daughter?” Thorold asked.

“Yes!” Sarah was defiant. She stood up, as if to strike Lianna, and as she did so, Imlach moved toward her. “I knew you loved her!” she said to her father. “That’s why I did what I did – with you!” She laughed, almost hysterically.

Imlach raised his hand to hit her, but Lianna stopped him.

“Now,” Sarah shouted, “you’ll never know your child!”

Swift, she ran out of the house, too quick for her father to catch her. She was in the stone

building, pushing the door shut, by the time they reacted, and when they reached it she had set fire to the straw.

She laughed at them as they stood by the door and flames engulfed her. Thorold tried to reach her, but the flames and heat and smoke were intense and Imlach pulled him back. Sarah screamed, briefly, and then was silent.

“I shall be at the feast,” Imlach said before walking along the garden path to take the lane to the church.

“Come on,” Lianna said to Thorold, “there is nothing you can do here.”

She took his hand to lead him back into the house. She brought wine, and they sat at the table in the kitchen drinking.

“I suppose,” Thorold said, “this is your house as well.”

“Indeed! Shall we live here – rather than in Shrewsbury?”

He ignored the question. “She said that you killed Monica – by cursing her.”

“Do you believe I did?”

For a long time Thorold did not speak. “No,” he finally said. “There was a book I found, in your house, the evening – “

“The Black Book of Satan?”

“Yes. It mentioned sacrifice.”

Lianna smiled, disconcerting Thorold still further. He realized then the he still loved her. It had been love that had overcome the doubts Sarah had given him, not reason.

“Tell me about Mallam,” he asked.

“What do you want to know?”

He wanted to ask about what he had seen – the blood on her hands and dress – but it had been the briefest of glimpses in difficult light, and he could have been mistaken.

“He is free, then?” he asked.

“Yes – at last.”

“And you planned everything?”

“You tell me,” she said enigmatically.

“I think you set him up right from the beginning. Let him make his mistakes. Condemn himself, in fact.”

“Possibly,” she smiled.

“But why?”

“I’m sure you can work it out.”

It was the answer he had expected. “How does the book I found fit into all this?” It was not exactly the question he wanted to ask, but it would, he hoped, lead him toward it.

She smiled, as a schoolmistress might toward an otherwise intelligent pupil. “Satanism, you mean?”

“Yes,” he answered, amazed at her perspicacity.

“It is not the way I follow. My tradition is different – much older.”

“And Mallam?”

“He followed his own dark path.”

“And Monica – surely she did not have to die?”

“No – it was an accident. But he killed her, accidentally or otherwise.”

“The village – how does it fit in?”

“Do you want to marry me – and share all this?” she asked.

Thorold smiled. “I thought I was supposed to ask you?”

”There is an older way.” She paused. “Yes – or no?”

Thorold felt the importance of the moment, heard the beating of his pulse in his ear, saw the enigmatic beauty of the woman seated beside him, and remembered her physical passion, her tears and words of love. “Yes,” he said trembling.

She kissed him. “I never really had much choice, did I?” he asked.

“Oh, yes, you had plenty of times to chose.”

For a moment Thorold had the impression that she had planned everything – including Sarah’s intervention and death – but the impression was transient. He looked at her, and could not believe it. She was smiling, and he suddenly realized that he would not care if she had.

“Imlach – what will happen to him?” He asked to test her.

“He will stay with us – should you so wish it.”

He was pleased with her answer. “And if I don’t wish it?”

I believe that Sidnal will need some help with his land. Now,” she said, and stood up, “let’s go to bed!”

Thorold needed no further encouragement to follow her.

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Tired from the physical passion of the night, Thorold was sleeping soundly when Lianna left the house in the burgeoning light to dawn.

The village was quiet, and she walked past the church and into the fields. The bonfire of the night before was but a smouldering pile of ash, and she walked past it and through the wheat along the path Mallam had taken in his flight. Nothing remained by the edge of the field to mark his passing, except a large patch of discoloured earth, which, she knew, would soon be gone, and she smiled before returning to her house.

It would be another fifty years before the field would be needed again, and her heir would be there to carry on the sacred tradition. She was pleased with her choice for the man who would father her daughter, and, around an oak tree on the mound, she danced a brief dance in the light of the rising sun.

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***[Fini]***

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**Appendix**

**A Brief Note Concerning The Deofel Quartet:**

The books in the Deofel Quartet were designed as esoteric Instructional Texts for novices beginning the quest along the Left Hand Path according to the traditions of the ONA.

As such, their style is not that of a conventional novel. Thus, detailed descriptions – of people, events, circumstances – are for the most part omitted, with the reader/listener expected to use their own imagination to create such details.

Their intent was to inform novices of certain esoteric matters in an entertaining and interesting way, and as such they are particularly suitable for being read aloud. Indeed, one of their original functions was to be read out to Temple members by the Temple Priest or Priestess.

In addition, each individual book represents particular forms, aspects, and the archetypal energies associated with particular spheres of the Septenary Tree of Wyrð. Thus, and for example, *The Giving* – dealing with “primal Satanism” - relates to the third and fourth spheres, the two alchemical processes of Coagulation and Putrefaction, and the magickal forms represented by the magickal words Ecstasy and Vision. [For more details, refer to the ONA MS *Introduction to the Deofel Quartet*.]

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# The Greyling Owl

## Order of Nine Angles

First issued: 1986 e.n.

This corrected version (v.1.03) issued 119 Year of Feyen

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### Introductory Note

Unlike the other MSS in *The Deofel Quartet*, the magickal and "Sinister" aspects, themes, and nature, of this work are not overt, nor implicit nor obvious, and thus - exoterically - it does not appear to be a work of Sinister, or even of Occult, fiction.

However, it does describe several works of real (and hidden) magick, in the real world, undertaken by hidden Adepts for specific purposes.

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York, 1976 e.n.

Colin Mickleman stared contentedly out of the window before refilling his large pipe. Three mallards sat on the bank of the artificial lake that formed the aesthetic and geometric centre of the University, and Colin rose to open the window to the warm Spring air before standing

in front of a mirror in his room.

Tall and sturdily built, his enjoyment of life's many pleasures had left him physically unaffected but he had begun to worry about his increasing baldness, and it was some minutes before he completed his now routine inspection of his hair. His thirtieth birthday was now some weeks away and, notwithstanding his youth, he had earned for himself, by reason of his hard work and diligence, a considerable reputation in the academic circle of philosophers. During his tenure at York he had been voted 'The Most Interesting Lecturer of the Year' many times. That this award, by the students, was partly sartorial did not concern him in the least and he derived great satisfaction from it.

His teaching commitments were not very heavy, and he would often spend an idle hour or so drinking tea in the offices of the Philosophy Department in Derwent College, talking to the Secretary and anyone else who chanced along. The topic of conversations on these occasions varied, and while at times he might discourse learnedly to a colleague on philosophical matters, he was as likely to be found – always with a lighted pipe – discussing the fate of the England middle order batting or the latest calamity to befall his beloved Sheffield Wednesday football team. Although born in Sheffield, he had spent only ten years there as a child, and his rather hazy memories of the place did not in any way affect his fierce loyalty to the team that he - with his father - had supported as a boy.

Yet it was not only his loyal support of this team that had earned him the nickname of 'The Owl'.

The owl is, by nature, a nocturnal creature, and although somewhat retiring by day, at night it is a predator. Colin Mickleman's prey were women.

He did not possess any particular preference regarding women, although over the years he had often found himself strongly desiring women whose views were opposed to his own and with a particular type of sensuous lips. In his search for prey, he never ventured from his University territory or the venues of the many and various conferences he attended, and the supply seemed inexhaustible. Every year there was new blood at the University.

Sometimes, his liaisons lasted several months, although the average was around two weeks, and he was careful almost to the point of obsession not to clutter his day with assignations. The day belonged to his work. Occasionally, a liaison would prove troublesome when a woman's emotions became involved, and on these occasions he would bury himself in his work and academic duties, trusting in his emotional indifference, since it was mostly the pleasure of a woman's body he desired and not a personal involvement. Perhaps the pattern of his conquests had been set by the mental effort of his youth and

family situation, but however it had arisen it did not concern him much. As a boy nurtured by the hilly terraced streets of Sheffield between his father's factory and the Corporation Baths, his pursuits and interests had been those of any boy his age and class, and it was not until his family had moved to Leeds by virtue of his mother having to care for elderly relatives that his ardour for learning – as well as his desire to be somewhat different and escape from what he regarded as the drab limitations of his parents' life – was aroused.

The light in his room was growing dimmer as the sun set and he sat down at his desk to collect together the scattered pages of the article he had spent the day writing. His room filled a modest space on the ground floor of Goodricke College, and he had chosen it in preference of the large, but dull, flats normally reserved for members of the academic staff. He liked the view of the lake, the grassy bank with its weeping willow trees, and the three post-Graduate students with whom he shared a corridor and kitchen were quiet and unassuming companions.

The article pleased him, as his style of life did. He was content, teaching, publishing articles, writing his book on philosophy – and adding to his list of female conquests. He kept a list of the names of the women with whom he had had sexual relations, and he took it briefly from a locked drawer in his desk, smiling to himself, before he re-read his article. Soon, he felt, the academic adulation he desired would be his.

The knock on his door annoyed him, disturbing his reverie, and he sighed deeply before opening the door.

Alison, her eyes puffy and red, stood outside in the corridor.

“Yes?” he asked as if he did not know her.

She began to cry and he watched in astonishment as she sat on his bed with her head in her hands. Her wailing annoyed him, and he sat at his desk to refill his pipe. She was a second year Undergraduate of passionate intensity, and as he watched her he began to think of stratagems that might bring their relationship to a satisfying end.

Nevertheless, a part of him resented the stratagems that the cynical Owl proposed, and he rose to sit beside her before regaining control of himself and returning to his desk.

“Do you love me?” she asked suddenly.

When he did not answer, she wiped away her tears with her hands. "I have something to tell you," she whispered.

He looked suspiciously at her as if correctly guessing. She was watching him, and waiting for his reaction and he was glad when someone else knocked on his door. He bounded across the room to open it, and stood staring at the man in the corridor.

Edmund Arrowsmith had known Colin for over ten years, and was not surprised to find a woman in the room of his friend. He had travelled a long way and eased the heavy weight of his large rucksack off his shoulder for a moment.

"I can come back," he said.

"No, it's alright!" Colin replied. "Come in! This," he said, pointing, "is Alison."

She looked at Edmund, but did not return his smile of greeting and he eased his rucksack onto the floor.

"Well then," said Colin amicably to him, "what's your latest hair-brained scheme?"

Edmund looked pained. "Actually, I'm off to join a community."

Colin laughed, turned to Alison and said, "This is he! Ex-student, ex-political agitator, ex-mercenary, now soon to be ex- something else!"

He stood up, stretched and yawned. "I'll make some tea," he said before searching among the books and papers that lay in profusion on his desk. He gave Edmund a copy of his latest published article.

Alison watched Colin leave, but the invitation she hoped for did not come. She saw Edmund study a few sections of the article carefully, glance at the rest and then throw it back upon the desk.

"What are you studying?" he asked her.

“Music,” she said sharply and instantly regretted it.

“Then what instrument do you play?”

His eyes gave the impression of looking straight through her, and she felt there was something sinister about him which his outward appearance belied. His boots were well worn, his dull woollen shirt patched and his trousers well made and old, his face and arms deeply tanned. Only the gauntness of his face and his staring eyes betrayed him.

“Violin,” she said softly, turning to look out of the window.

“Oh, I see.”

Suddenly, she turned toward him. “What’s wrong with the violin?” she demanded aggressively.

Edmund smiled. “I just imagined you’d play something else – the piano.”

“Of course I play the piano!”

“Which do you prefer?”

“It’s not a question of ‘which do I prefer’! It’s a question of what music I choose to play.”

“I’d like to hear you play sometime.”

The question was so unexpected and so sincerely meant that Alison did not know what to say in reply and she was glad that Colin returned at that moment.

“What do you think?” he asked Edmund, pointing to the article and carefully laying two mugs of tea upon the corner of the desk.

“Not bad – style’s a bit turgid.”

Colin squinted at him. “You have to write like that – Editors expect it.”

“Doesn’t say much for Editors does it?”

Alison began to laugh, then thought better of it. “Where’s mine, then?” she asked, indicating the mugs.

“But you don’t like tea,” Colin protested.

“True! But I’d like to be asked.”

They glowered at each other for some moments.

“I need to stretch my legs a bit,” Edmund said as he stood, sensing an intrusion. “See you in, say, half an hour?”

He did not wait for a reply and as he walked down the corridor he could hear Colin and Alison shouting at each other. He caught the words; “I haven’t seen him for over a year!” But in the deserted and otherwise silent corridor it was Alison’s words that he carried out with into the warm, still air of Spring. They were sad words, perhaps even tragic, he thought, given the knowledge of his friend, and he stood outside the building for some minutes, looking across the lake as it scintillated under the now glowing lights of Vanbrugh College. “Don’t you understand,” Alison had shouted, “I’m pregnant!” and Edmund allowed the temporary peace of his academic surroundings to calm him as he walked toward the lake.

II

Edmund had always like the University since he had visited it many years ago. Spread over a two hundred acre site, its centrepiece was the fifteen-acre lake and despite the modernity of its buildings, he felt a harmony had been achieved unlike anything else he had seen in modern academia. This was partly due, he knew, to the planned and the fortuitous bird-life that had gathered around the lake, and partly because of the transplantation of mature trees

around the campus. He particularly liked the tall, broad Chestnut trees. Even the large Central Hall adjacent to the lake and near the fountain that shot water high into the air, did not seem out of place among the Weeping Willows that lined the banks and the Cherry trees that frequented the paths. The Hall was a semi-octagon, its upper stories cantilevered above the water and, planned or otherwise, it dominated the site. The whole effect pleased Edmund, although he felt the multitude of students spoiled it.

He sat for a long time by the lake, watching night fall and students pass. When he did rise, a sense of caution led him to walk slowly, and as he reached the residential block containing Colin's room, he saw Alison in animated conversation with a young man; she was trying to restrain his arm but he pushed her away. Edmund walked across the grass, smiled at Alison, and entered the building.

Colin was in the kitchen, a teapot in his hand, while beside him stood a young man clenching a carving knife.

"You bastard!" he was shouting, "you bloody bastard!"

Edmund went toward him.

"Stay out of this!" the young man growled.

Colin appeared to be mildly amused and swiftly, Edmund kicked the knife from the man's hand. It spun toward the roof, and then fell to clatter harmlessly into the sink. The man rushed toward Edmund who blocked the intended punch and pinned his assailant against the wall in an arm lock.

"He's drunk," Colin said by way of explanation. "Fancy some tea?"

"Please," Alison said as she stood by the door, "let him go."

"Her brother," Colin explained.

Cautiously, Edmund released him, and Alison's brother bent over the sink, vomiting.

“I’m sorry,” Alison said to Edmund as she attended to her brother.

“Is he alright?” Edmund asked her.

“I’ll take him to his room.”

After they had gone, Edmund said, “What are you going to do?”

“Have some tea!”

“About Alison, I meant.”

Colin squinted, as was his habit. “You know then?”

“Yes.”

The smell of vomit was strong, and Edmund flushed it away before turning to his now ashen-faced friend. “Come on, fresh air is what you need.”

They stood on the bridge over the edge of the lake.

“What will you do?” asked Edmund again.

Colin sighed. “She’ll have to have an abortion,” he said without conviction.

“What does she want?”

“She’s done this to try and trap me. She said she’d taken precautions.”

“You don’t feel responsible, then? Edmund asked.

“Of course not. She’s over eighteen.”



“You don’t feel in the slightest bit responsible?”

“No.” He stared down at the water, watching the scattering of light from the profusion of illumination near then and around the whole campus. He felt the transitory bloom of his thought would be crushed by Alison’s weight – the inertial weight of a childbearing body.

“You do care, really, don’t you?” Edmund said after the long silence.

Colin sighed, although it was not the sigh of the cynical Owl, still less that of the academic philosopher who watched life as it unfolded around his chosen dwelling. “I never misled her about my intentions,” he said.

“You don’t like women much, do you?”

“What?” Colin’s face was a carefully contrived combination of wounded pride and annoyance.

“Not as they are – in themselves. For you they are just reflectors of your self image.”

Colin was considering his answer when an obese man in a crumpled suit approached them. He was panting, and sweat dribbled from his forehead. He held a book in his hand from which protruded several sheets of notepaper. The man smiled at Colin, wiped his brow with a silk handkerchief, and thrust the papers at him.

“Sorry.” He explained, sucking in his lower lip, “reader’s report against it. Glad I caught you, Colin. Sorry, but I’m late already.”

Colin took the sheaf of papers. “Thanks.”

“Better luck next time, eh?” the man smirked before wobbling away.

“The bastard!” Colin said mutely.

“Friend of yours, then?” Edmund asked.

Colin glanced through his rejected article, and then stuffed it into his pocket. “That was Doctor Richard Storr, Ph.D. (Oxon) – infamous editor of the British Journal of Philosophy and – would you believe it – my Head of Department!”

“He’s the Professor?”

“Thankfully, no. But he’s in charge until one is appointed.”

“I gather you two are not on friendly terms.”

Colin ignored the question. “So how long are you staying this time?”

“A few days – maybe longer.”

For several minutes Colin was silent. Then, taking money from his pockets, he trust it at Edmund saying, “Here, get yourself something to eat. I’ll see you later tonight.”

“Where are you going?”

Colin hunched up his shoulders and wrung his hands. “To forget!”

He left his friend standing on the bridge and walked quickly back to his room to collect his camera. It did not take him long to arrange his assignation, and he waited by the road that intersected the campus beneath the walkway that siphoned students to and from the Library.

“Well,” he said as he climbed into the car, which stopped for him and held out his camera, “have you decided?”

The woman smiled at him. She was several years older than Mickleman, a Lecturer in English, her oval face graced by large blue eyes and framed by straight tawny hair. For months she had resisted his flattery and attentions. Her body showed a slight tendency toward corpulence, and Mickleman had lusted after it. She was polite where he was often gruff; her office tidy whereas his was chaotic. They taught the same Undergraduate student

and it was from this student that he had come to know of Magarita's existence. All her students held her in awe and it was this one fact which led Mickleman to seek her out and begin to plan his seduction. It was over a month ago since he had succeeded, and he had sown the seeds for the next stage of his conquest.

"You'll develop them yourself?" Magarita asked him, still unsure.

"Yes," he lied before putting down his camera and rubbing his hands together gleefully.

### III

Alison was alone again in the quietness of a practice room in the Music Department, and sat down on the piano stool to re-read her diary.

'The corridor was dark - all the rooms were closed and I felt afraid. I could not bear a repeat of my last visit - the angry words, the tears, needs that were not fulfilled, things left unsaid. I remember I said: "It's better if I never see you again" - hoping he would plead with me to stay. He said nothing. I couldn't resist any more: 'What shall I do?' I cried, catching the lapels of his jacket, tears on them, my tears as I clung to him, trying to make a bridge. 'Come on Wednesday' he struggled to say. 'On Wednesday,' I repeated.

Such a dark corridor, outside. Last time I just stood in the kitchen, kicking the door and shouting at it: 'Why do you never understand me!' Yet I was back again - I had no pride left. Was this need really love? What would I say this time? Could I find a way of letting him understand - of getting through? I knocked on his door. 'Come in'. The voice was subdued. He was sitting in his chair I remember as if it was a moment ago. Dispirited. 'What is it?' I wondered if all relationships were like this - so charged with emotion. 'Your letter, your letter,' he struggled to say. 'I've hurt you,' I whispered with awe. Then, sitting on his lap, my head against him, buried. Crying. 'It's alright.' A soft voice, a soft touch on my face.

It did not last. 'Are you pleased to see me?' I asked. 'About as pleased as a Mickleman can be.' Then, the inevitable wandering hand. The moment gone, and never repeated.

Only a month ago, she sighed; before I knew my fate. She put down the diary, thought of tearing it up, but did not. Then she began to play the piano, an Intermezzo by Brahms, transforming her feelings into her performance. And at its end, she sat, quite still, trying to recapture the beauty she had felt.

*'I feel,'* she wrote in her diary, *'only music can lead me to the knowledge I am seeking. I want to be at peace – when I play, I am at peace.'* What then, she thought, of the child now growing within her womb?

She did not know, and rose to walk slowly out of the building. She did not bother to seek Colin's room, but walked aimlessly along the paths, her face downturned.

"Hello!" a cheerful voice said to her.

It was some moments before she recognized the speaker.

"Are you alright?" Edmund asked her.

"Fine." She looked around, but could not see Colin.

"I'm just going to get something to eat. Would you like to join me?"

Eating was repellent to her but in atonement for the guilt she felt she said, "Yes."

She shuffled after Edmund toward the dining hall to join the small queue that babbled past the serving hatch. The dead and steaming flesh behind the glass cages nauseated her, as the gaggles of students at the tables annoyed her, and she followed Edmund's example by selecting a salad. Near her, someone laughed while they walked balancing a tray full of food. "I suppose" his companion said, "nothing matters but the quality." He looked at Alison and smiled.

For some reason Alison wanted to slap the young man's face, but the feeling soon vanished, and she followed Edmund to an empty table where she sat under the bright lights prodding her lifeless food.

“Aren’t you hungry?” Edmund asked her kindly.

“Not for food.” Then she was laughing at herself. “God! I’m beginning to sound like a cheap novel!”

“Surely you mean a character from a cheap novel?”

She stared at him, suddenly angry and defensive. Then she smiled. “Sorry.”

“It’s alright.”

She was surprised at the warmth in his words and in his eyes. “Would you,” she said impetuously, “like me to play some music for you?”

“Yes, I would. Very much indeed.”

“Come on, then!” She grasped his hand to lift him up from the table, then suddenly took it away thinking he might misconstrue her gesture.

She walked with him at a brisk pace back to the practice room. She was impatient to begin without quite understanding why. The Partita she played was followed by Brahms and then more Brahms while Edmund sat on the floor, listening. She seemed to play for a long time, and when she stopped she rested her incandescent face in her hands.

“Beautiful,” Edmund said.

She shrugged her shoulders. “I made a lot of mistakes.”

“I didn’t notice any.”

She smiled at being caught out. “What do you think of Brahms?”

“Nice.”

She was offended. “Nice? Is that all?” she said, a trace of anger in her voice.

“What do you think of his music then?” he countered.

“Sublime!”

“Possibly – sometimes.”

“You’re not serious? He is unsurpassed. Unsurpassable!”

“Everything can be surpassed – its just a question of will and genius.”

“Not today it isn’t – in this decadent culture.”

“Culture is only genuine culture if it smells of blood.”

She stared at him, but he smiled. His statement was so out of place with his benign expression she ignored it.

“What are you going to do?” he suddenly asked her.

She looked at him suspiciously, then turned away. “What do you mean?” she asked softly.

“I overheard – earlier on.”

She blushed, and shuffled her feet. “He’s offered to live with me.”

“And do you want that?”

“I don’t know.” Then, cheerfully: “ I don’t think he does, though!”

“No – I can’t really imagine him living a life of domestic bliss.”

“What do you think of him?”

“I think he is a genius.”

“Really?” she asked in astonishment.

“Intellectually, yes. Perhaps he needs to become a bit more human, though. Anyway, what do you want to do with your life?”

“I’d like to compose something,” she said enthusiastically, “something beautiful and profound.”

“Like Brahms’ Fourth Symphony?”

She looked at him quizzically. “I thought you didn’t like Brahms?”

“I never actually said that.”

She sighed. “We all have impossible dreams.”

He gave his enigmatic smile. “Some of us make them a reality.”

“Oh, yes?” she said.

Edmund turned his face away slightly, and her first thought was that she had offended him until she realized he was listening. She strained to hear what it was, but was surprised when Colin appeared at the door.

“Thought you’d be in here” Colin said to Alison. Then, seeing Edmund, he added “He been having an attack of his verbal diarrhoea?”

“She played some Brahms for me,” Edmund said as he stood up.

“Romantic cretin,” Colin muttered.

“I’m surprised,” Edmund said, “that you in your modernist existence have heard of him – let alone heard him.”

“Goes on a bit, doesn’t he?” Colin said to Alison.

“Had fun, then?” Edmund countered, pointing at the camera Colin held.

Colin ignored the remark. “You eaten, yet?” he asked Alison.

“Yes, thank you,” she said curtly and began to play the piano.

Colin winced.

“I gather,” Edmund said to him, “you don’t like Bach either?”

“Baroque cretin. Well, I’m going to have something to eat. “You coming?” he asked Edmund.

“In a while.”

Disgruntled, Colin left them to walk along the concrete path toward the bridge. He had not gone far when he realized he was being followed. The man was tall, his suit in contrast to his milieu, and Colin waited on the bridge for the man to pass him by. Instead, the man stopped, and waited. Colin walked on, the man followed, keeping his distance. He slowed his pace and the man did likewise. But when he reached the dining hall and turned around again the man had gone.

Alison had ceased her playing shortly after Colin had left the room.



“I suppose,” she said, “we’d better join him – or he’ll sulk all evening.”

“Have you ever thought of performing – professionally?”

“I’m not that good.”

“Yes you are.”

“Anyway,” she said and touched her abdomen with her hand, “it’s out of the question, now.”

“Not necessarily.”

Her look was one of disapproval, and they did not speak as they left the room and the building to walk the brightly lit paths. As they neared the dining hall, a tall man dressed in a suit stepped out from the shadows and come toward them.

“Excuse me,” Edmund said to Alison. “Tell Colin I’ll see him early tomorrow morning.”

She saw Edmund talk briefly with the man before she walked into the hall. Colin sat by himself at a table eating, rather gluttonously she thought, from a plate full of steaming food.

“He said,” she remarked as she sat beside him, “that he’d see you tomorrow.”

“Typical. Always disappearing mysteriously. That’s Edmund.”

“You are really fond of him, aren’t you?” she said, surprised by his obvious disappointment.

“Have you decided what you are going to do yet?”

“Go home – for a while at least.”

“I meant – “

“I know what you meant.”

Colin squinted at her. “What?” Then, annoyed by his own affectation, he said, “I meant what I said.”

“Part of you did, at least.” Colin’s presence – so physically near and yet so emotionally distant – made her feel like crying.

He saw this, and then nervously looked around.

“Don’t worry,” she said, “I won’t embarrass you by crying.”

He was about to answer when a young lady, colourfully dressed and possessed of a freckled face and an athletic build, shouted from the doorway of the hall.

“Hi Colin!” she said and sauntered to their table. “I’m so glad I found you!” She sat down. “What a day!” As if becoming aware of Alison, she turned toward her. “Hi! I’m Maren!”

“And I am just leaving,” Alison replied, having seen Colin’s eyes widen in gleeful remembrance as he looked at Maren.

“But – “ he began to say, then faltered, torn between his desire for Maren and his feeling of responsibility toward Alison. In his indecision, he let Alison walk away.

“You know,” Maren said to him, “that exhibition in John’s Gallery today? Well – you should have seen how they displayed my painting! Horrible, absolutely horrible. I objected, of course. And tried to explain to Jenny – she was with me – the ultimate meaning of having it displayed just right. You know what I mean, don’t you? Well, she – Jenny that is – she was so caught up in her own problems, she didn’t understand. And John! How he could devalue the exquisite contents of the painting that way, I’ll never know.

She took a drink from his glass of water. “You know what I dread, Colin? Dread most of all? The inevitable threat of being passé. Shall we have some fun tonight?” She looked around the dining hall. “Shake the cretins up a bit?”

Colin smiled at her and she smiled back.

#### IV

It took several minutes for Colin Mickleman to realize where he was. The curtains were still closed, but enough light penetrated for him to make out the contents of his room.

Normally he placed a glass of water beside his bed before he went to sleep. But this morning it was not there, and he yawned. His yawning occupied him for some minutes while he recovered some of his strength that his debauch of the night before had dissipated. Maren, at his insistence, had left his bed in the early hours of the morning, for he like to sleep alone.

Finally, after much yawning, sighing and stretching of his arms, he rose from his bed to begin his extensive toilet. When he was dressed, groomed and washed to his satisfaction, he sat at his desk for several minutes watching the lake through his window and smoking his pipe. He was thinking what to do about Alison when someone knocked at his door.

Edmund stood in the corridor, smiling in such a way that the ends of his mouth came very close to his ears.

“Lovely day, isn’t it?” Edmund said cheerfully. “Like some breakfast?” He held out a plate containing eggs, bacon and tomatoes.

Colin hunched his shoulders. “I hate people like you in the mornings.” Grumpy, he shuffled away to open the window in his room.

“Breakfast?” Edmund repeated.

“I don’t eat breakfast.”

“I wondered why your growth was stunted. More for me, then. Want some coffee?”

“I haven’t got any coffee – or any food for that matter.”

“Never mind.” He went to the kitchen to eat.

Colin joined him, but only to obtain a drink of water.

“Any plans for today?” Edmund asked.

“Lectures – then a meeting. I’ll meet you in the ‘Well’ in Derwent at twelve.”

“Sure you won’t have something to eat?” He held out a piece of bacon on the end of his fork.

Colin muttered something incomprehensible before returning to his room. Outside, in the bright sun, students seethed along the paths and he joined them as he made his way to his lecture. He disliked the lecture room with its high windows and bright, impersonal lights, but was glad to find all his first year students present and waiting. Of the women, Kate had been conquered already, but she ignored his smile as he remembered his photographs of her, locked in the drawer of his desk in the privacy of his room. His favourite among them was of her standing on a chair by his door, lifting her skirt to reveal her nakedness, the ginger tufts of pubic hair. She had held her head to one side, as if wearily obeying his desire to make her look ridiculous, her brown eyes staring at the camera and her mass of ginger curls slightly in disarray around her shoulders.

Of the others present, only Fenton did not turn his eyes away from Colin’s gaze. Instead, he stared directly at the Owl, as if understanding. He wore a long scarf and un-fashionable clothes, and the badge of his lapel proclaimed him as a supporter of the ‘Gay Liberation Front’. Not for the first time, Colin felt uneasy looking at him and turned his gaze elsewhere.

“Right,” Colin said, rubbing his hands together as was his habit. “I can see you’re all keen for me to begin.” He checked the pocket of his jacket to make sure his pipe was there. It was. “Now, in many ways, modern philosophy is considered to have begun with Descartes...”

He kept the attention of his students for the allotted span, and watched with satisfaction as they all, with the exception of Fenton, closed their notebooks with what seemed to be reluctance as he sidled into the corridor outside. Fiona Pound was ahead of him, her thin

cotton dress swaying as she walked. Underneath it, he sensed she was naked.

Unusually, the door of his room in the Department was open, but everything seemed in its familiar place – the stuffed owl on the bookcase, the picture of Sheffield Wednesday football team on the wall, the chaos of books upon floor and desk – and he sat down to fill his pipe, pleased with the newly acquired copy of Laclos' "Les Liaisons Dangereuses", bound in black leather. The fact that he did not speak French did not diminish his enjoyment in the least.

With his academic aims always in mind, Colin was scrupulous almost to the point of obsession about being on time for meetings and lectures, and it came as an unwelcome surprise to find himself late for the Departmental meeting. Fiona smiled at him as he entered the room; Whiting and Hill ignored him while Storr, as usual, seemed anxious and nervous. Horton sat in his usual corner by the window, dressed in the inevitable tweeds, ignoring everybody including Mrs. Cornish with whom, for the past fifteen years, he had been conducting an illicit affair.

"Sorry I'm late," said Colin as he sat next to Fiona.

Storr grunted and then expectorated loudly. "We were discussing," he said, "Mrs. Pound's new course in Philosophy of Society."

Colin nodded his head like a coot and proceeded to ignore what Storr was saying. The staff sat on both sides of a long table with Storr at their head. Beside the table and its chairs, the room contained some bookcases and magazine racks while the walls were covered with charts. Storr loved charts and spent a great deal of time creating them. Among his latest ventures were: 'The Frequency Of Post-Graduate Research Topics', Undergraduate Performance in Relation to School Achievement' and (Colin's favorite) 'Continuity in Staff/Student Relations'. Colin's own chart, showing the rise to fame of Sheffield Wednesday, had not lasted very long on the wall.

Mrs. Cornish, a middle-aged lady of somewhat stern countenance was smoking one of her small cigars, while Horton continued solving his crossword puzzle. He was the most senior member of the staff, and coveted the Professorship, his disdain of Departmental meetings being matched by his own dislike of Storr whom he called a 'smelly twerp'.

Storr's confederates, Whiting and Hall, seemed to be avidly devouring the words of their Master, and Colin concentrated on Fiona whose perfume pleased him. She was leaning forward, apparently listening to Storr, and resting her elbows on the table in such a way that several inches of her bronzed flesh were visible in the neckline region of her dress. Her

face, like the rest of her body, was tanned, and Colin thought her green eyes offset beautifully the red hair that advancing age had left untouched. Twice married, and divorced, Mickleman had pursued her avidly during his first year in the Department but her skill was equal to if not surpassed his own, and she had kept her distance. But her challenge and enigma remained for him, breeding a dark desire.

Mrs. Cornish was watching him ogle Fiona, and he winked at her. She pretended not to notice. Her hair was flaxen, gathered awkwardly on her head, and it had occurred to Colin many times that he would like to see her stand on a chair in his room, naked. With the photographs he would take, her power and authority – at least for him - would be broken.

“Er,” Storr was saying, his diatribe apparently over, “I think we should all, er, congratulate Mrs. Pound on the success of this new venture of hers. Don’t you all agree?”

“Yes!” Chimed Hill with bovine expression, “good show!”

He showed his large white teeth to everyone.

“Thank you,” smiled Fiona. “As you know,” she continued in her precise, accentless way, “this subject is very dear to me and I would just like to say – “

“What, again?” growled Horton.

“Er, did you have a point to make, Mr. Horton?” asked Storr meekly.

“Can’t we get on? Heard it all before and it’s all drivel. What next on the agenda, Storr?”

“I say!” protested Hill. Fiona and Storr, like himself, were Oxford graduates. Horton was a Cambridge man.

“If I could say a word – “ began Whiting in his slow way. He had studied at Keele, and everybody except Colin ignored him.

“You’ve said six already,” growled Horton.

Whiting's thin, droopy, moustache began to twitch.

"Yes, Richard," Mrs. Cornish said with a smile to Storr, "what is next? We really ought to press on."

"Well, er," Storr said, getting the notes in front of him into a terrible mess. "I think it's a memorandum from the Vice-Chancellor. It's here somewhere." He fumbled among his notes and papers before smiling and wiping his forehead with his brightly coloured silk handkerchief. About selection policy."

Colin watched Storr with amusement.

"I don't seem to be able to find it at the moment," Storr said.

"Typical!" Horton scowled, and continued with his crossword puzzle.

Storr ignored him, "But I do, er, remember most of its contents. We are to take a more favourable attitude to ethnic minorities – be flexible in accepting those without, ah, formal qualifications."

This was too much for Horton. He flung down his newspaper. "You mean lower our already disastrously low entrance standards to let more of them in!"

"Mr. Horton, please!" chided Fiona.

"Ruddy stupid idea!" Horton said.

"The Government," continued Storr, "has asked – "

"Might have known," Horton grunted, "it was those bunch of damn fools!" He rustled his newspaper loudly.

"The Vice-Chancellor says – and I must admit I agree with him – " Storr said, " – that they should be encouraged. And in view of our policy toward, er, mature candidates, he

considers we, that is this Department, should make a determined start in this direction.”

“We are a University,” Horton said gruffly, “not an unemployment training scheme!”

“I believe we have, er, a valuable role to play in ensuring equality of opportunity.”

“Why don’t you ruddy well say what you mean instead of waffling like a twerp!”

“Sorry?”

“Gentlemen, please,” Fiona said, smiling at Horton.

Whiting’s moustache twitched again. “You,” he said to Horton, “sound like a racist.”

“I’m sure,” Mrs. Cornish smiled, “Lawrence did not mean to imply anything of that sort. Did you Lawrence?”

Lawrence Horton glowered at her, then turned toward Whiting. “You, sir, are an oaf!”

“Er,” stuttered Storr, “I assume, Mr. Horton, that you’re opposed to the Vice-Chancellor’s suggestion?”

“As a racist,” protested Whiting, “he would be.”

“Racism,” Horton said calmly, neatly folding up his newspaper, “is an abstract idea invested by sociologists which they project, most incorrectly, onto the real world to make it accord with their prejudices. It has about as much reality as an intelligent Vice-Chancellor: both are impossible according to the Laws of Nature.” He stood up. “And now I have to wring from the minds of my students all the pretentious sociological nonsense you insist on indoctrinating them with.” His newspaper under his arm, he strode out of the room.

“Er, I believe,” Storr said after Horton had slammed the door, “that we can record Mr. Horton as opposed to the Vice-Chancellor’s rather splendid idea. Wouldn’t you all agree?”



“I do so hope,” Hill said, “that he doesn’t become the Professor. A reactionary like that?”

Storr smiled. It was not a pleasing sight. “I don’t think, speaking confidentially of course, that there is much possibility of his assuming that particular responsibility.”

“Thank goodness,” Whiting said.

“You are misconstruing his objection,” Mrs. Cornish interjected.

“He’d set us back fifty years,” continued Whiting. “We must progress with the times. Philosophy is a social science, after all.”

“Er, Mickleman,” Storr asked, “what is your opinion?”

“Yes, Colin,” Fiona smiled at him, “I’m sure we would all like to know where you are on this particular matter.”

“Well,” he said as he withdrew his pipe from his pocket and proceeded to light it, “I would have to give this matter some thought. It’s not an area that I am familiar with.”

“But surely,” Fiona persisted, “you have an opinion?”

“As a matter of fact, I try to avoid opinions – about things I have not thought through or deeply about or studied in detail.”

“Quite,” Storr said curtly. “Shall we get on?”

Fiona ignored him. “And in this particular instance?” she said to Colin.

“If necessary I would pursue the matter and then form a judgement – not an opinion – a judgement on the basis of careful thought.”

“I see,” Fiona smiled at him.

So did Mrs. Cornish, while both Whiting and Storr scowled, in their different ways. Hill studied his fingernails.

“Well, er,” Storr said shuffling his notes, “Mrs. Pound’s course, because of its success may be extended to second year students, as a major option. There is to be a staff seminar on the subject – next month. I think. Er, yes,” he glanced at a crumpled sheet of paper among his notes, “next month. Is there anything else anyone wants to add?” He looked around. “Well, then, we have all earned our coffee, I believe!” He began to shuffle the notes.

Colin left him, Whiting, Hill and Fiona discussing the relevance of Philosophy to society. Mrs. Cornish followed him into the corridor.

“I was impressed,” she said to him, “by what you said.”

“Won’t make any difference, though. They have made their minds up already.”

“True.” She withdrew the pocket watch she always carried and checked the time. “You’ve had another paper published I understand?”

Surprised, since he had only been informed himself a few days ago, he said, “Yes – how did you know?”

“One hears things. I also understand Richard has rejected another of yours.”

“Yes.”

“A pity. It was an insightful piece.”

“You read it?”

“Why yes. Do you have a copy?”

“Of course.”

“Then I shall send it to the ‘Bulletin’. With a covering letter, of course.”

“Thank you,” Colin said sincerely.

“Richard can be jealous, sometimes,” she said abstractly. “He envies you your success at so young an age.” Her smile seemed motherly. “May I offer you some advice?”

“Yes,” Colin said, hesitantly.

Her eyes seemed to Mickleman to shine almost wickedly. “Certain preoccupations are inadvisable for someone who aspires to high office.” Her eyes resumed their normal appearance. “Certain things – are just not done. They will make you enemies. I do so hope you understand me. Now, I really must be going.”

She turned abruptly and walked away from him.

“You bastard!” Colin heard someone behind him say.

He looked around and was punched in the face.

## V

As Colin Mickleman struggled up from the floor it occurred to him in a slow way that Edmund would probably have been able to block the blow.

Blood from his nose slithered down his face, and he stared at Alison’s brother in astonishment. Bryn’s kick was well aimed, and although it knocked him over Colin did not at first realize it had struck him because he could feel no pain from the impact. He seemed to fall slowly, and as he did so he noticed the floor tile was chipped. There was a stain on the tile, the pattern of which he found quite interesting, and his detachment was enhanced by his inability to hear. He lay on the floor watching Fenton restrain Bryn and push him up

against the wall. Then he saw Horton, rushing out of Mrs. Cornish's room, and students crowding the corridor and the top of the steps. In the same moment his hearing returned, and he heard Horton shouting.

“What is the meaning of this?” he said to Bryn while Fenton held Colin's assailant aggressively by the throat.

Horton gestured toward Fenton and he released him.

“Well, boy! Horton demanded.

“That bastard – “ Bryn began to say, pointing at Colin who slowly got to his feet.

“Mind your language, boy!” Horton shouted at Bryn.

“Are you alright?” Fenton asked Colin and gave him a handkerchief.

“Fine,” he said, stopping the blood with the gift.

“What's your name?” Horton demanded of Bryn.

“What's it to do with you?” Bryn said defiantly.

“Listen to me, you runt!” Horton straightened his back. Despite his advancing years, he seemed a formidable adversary to Bryn who nervously turned his head as Horton clenched his fists. “This is a serious matter!”

Fenton was turning to walk away down the stairs and Colin walked toward him.

“Thanks,” he said.

Fenton smiled, and then shrugged his shoulder before disappearing down the stairs. Mrs. Cornish was in her room, and as Colin walked past her open door, he saw her using the telephone.

“It’s alright, Lawrence,” Colin said to Horton as he returned to the scene of the fight, “I know him.”

“I see.”

“Yes.” He noticed Kate looking at him down the corridor but she, like the others, turned away. The drama was over, and the corridor was clearing.

“Can he go?” Colin asked Horton.

“This is a disciplinary matter. You are a student, I presume?” Horton asked Bryn.

“Yes,” Bryn replied nervously.

“Yes, he is,” confirmed Colin. “Second year, Politics.”

“Politics?” repeated Horton. “Oh well, that explains it!”

Mrs. Cornish joined them. “Perhaps, Lawrence,” she said, “it might be better to leave the matter here.”

“Well – “ Then to Colin, he said, “Personal, is it?”

“Yes.” He watched Horton’s face carefully, as if his fate was being decided. When Horton smiled, he felt relieved.

“Maybe it’s for the best.” He faced Bryn. “If I hear so much as one whisper about you from this day on, I’ll make sure you’re sent down. Understand?”

“Yes, sir.” Bryn said and meant it.

“Now go, before I change my mind.”

Bryn scuttled away just as Storr emerged from his own room around the corner.

“Er, been some trouble?” he muttered.

Horton glowered at him, and then walked away.

“Just a little altercation, Richard,” Mrs. Cornish said. “Nothing to worry about. It’s all over now.”

“Er, if you’re sure.”

“Perfectly sure, Richard. Lawrence dealt with the matter admirably.”

“The I needn’t make a report out?”

“Certainly not.”

“Well, if you’re sure, Elizabeth.”

“Quite sure,” she replied primly.

“Well, that’s good then. If you could, Elizabeth, spare me a moment of your time. You see, I — “

“Not now. Perhaps later.”

“Yes. Yes, I quite understand. Later, then.”

“Come with me, Colin, and I’ll get you something instead of that.” She looked disdainfully at the now bloodied handkerchief he was holding to his nose.

He followed her into her room. As befitted a Senior Lecturer it was larger than his, with a splendid view of the lake. It was also very tidy. She closed the door firmly.

She briefly inspected his nose. "Nothing serious. Here," she gave him a sheaf of tissues. "If it bleeds again, hold your head back. Now, sit down."

He did as she commanded.

"Really, you must learn discretion, Colin." She lit one of her cigars. "Not a good start. You're very ambitious, are you not?"

"Well – " perhaps Bryn's blow had affected him more than he thought, for he felt momentary embarrassment.

She blew smoke directly into his face. "Would you be happy with Richard as Professor?"

"Well – "

"Hmm. I thought not. Not many would, actually."

"But surely Lawrence stands a better chance?"

"It is possible, of course. But Richard himself is not without influence. Besides, there are other considerations. The Vice-Chancellor and Lawrence are not the best of friends."

"I see."

"I hope you do, Colin. Is the manuscript of your book complete?"

He looked at her questioningly. "Almost."

"Good." She blew smoke directly into his face again. "Do you have a publisher yet?"

“No. not really.”

“Applicants for Professorships are viewed more favourably if they have published a major work,” she said almost casually.

Colin stared at her. Was it a joke?

“Ours is an expanding Department,” she said. “We hope soon to appoint two more lecturers.”

Colin knew the rivalry between Storr and Horton was intense. Of the nine members of the Department, only Fiona, Whiting and Hill favored Storr. The rest, including himself, were favourably disposed toward Horton. Of those four, Lee and Holland – whom Colin noticed with regret were not present at the morning’s meeting and thus had missed Horton insulting Storr – might be enticed away. If Storr was appointed, his Readership would become vacant, and Fiona seemed certain to benefit.

“However,” Mrs. Cornish continued, “if Richard is appointed, it will be seen in some influential quarters as a victory for the radical element and we are thus unlikely to be allocated the resources required to appoint more lecturers.”

“I see,” Colin said again. “But surely, an outside appointment is possible.”

“Of course,” she said smiling, “the Professorial Board is quite independent, and they could conceivably take such a course of action. If no suitable candidate – from here naturally – was found. Were you to apply, I would of course forward your application with my recommendation. Lawrence would of course support your application as well.”

“What?” he said in amazement.

“It is your decision – but consider what I have said. Now, I really must get on.” She held the door open for him.

He stumbled to his feet.



“Please learn to be discrete in certain matters,” she said.

“Yes,” he mumbled, and staggered down the corridor like a drunken man.

## VI

Mickleman spent the rest of his morning drafting and redrafting his application. When, to his satisfaction, it was complete, he appended a list of his publications to date. He was proud of his published articles, and derived immense satisfaction from re-reading his list, and it was well past noon when he presented his application to Elizabeth Cornish.

She was in her office, smoking a cigar, looked up briefly from her work to acknowledge his presence, said a curt ‘Thank You’ and dismissed him. He was not offended. On the contrary, he was excited, and stood for several minutes in the corridor watching the lake in an effort to calm himself.

He was not deceived, however, by his prospects in the matter of Professorship, and was satisfied merely to have applied. When the offer of a Professorship did come – and he was certain it would, one day – he would be ready, with all his allies.

Several students passed him as he stood looking out from the window, and he heard them whisper conspiratorially. But he was not concerned, for he seemed to be one step nearer his goal.

‘The Well’ was the central concourse of the Derwent building, and was essentially an open Common Room with low tables and even lower chairs. It contained a small cafeteria, a gallery - which sprouted various artefacts of modern Art - and was seldom empty of students.

At first, among the human profusion, Colin did not see Edmund, and when he did, he was surprised. He was talking to Fiona. Edmund saw him approaching, said something to Fiona and without turning she walked away to disappear into the throng of students crowding the entrance to the Bar.

“Alison’s brother been at you again?” Edmund asked as Colin reached him.

Fiona had completely disappeared from sight. “Do you know her, then?” he quizzically asked Edmund.

“Who?”

“Fiona.”

“What?”

“That woman you were just talking to.” He looked at his friend suspiciously.

“Oh, her! She just wanted to borrow a match.” He saw Colin peering around the room. “Why – do you know her?”

“She’s in my Department.”

“Oh, yes? Edmund gave a sly smile. “What number is she on your list of conquests?”

“She’s not,” Colin said, and screwed up his face into a morbid expression.

“What’s this? ‘The Owl’ has met his match?” Edmund said gleefully.

Still chagrined by his past failure, he changed the subject. “Have you seen Alison?”

“Yes, actually. I had an interesting talk with her this morning.”

“Oh, yes?” He said almost in disbelief.

“She’s very gifted. A brilliantly intuitive mind.”

“Did she say anything about – “

“About your child?”

Embarrassed, Colin looked around.

“She still,” Edmund said, “hasn’t decided anything. I suggest she go and stay with those friends of mine – you know, Magnus and his wife. They run that small farm. The change would do her good. She ought to get away from this place – it’s very incestuous.”

“I’ve just handed in my application for the Professorship,” Colin said proudly.

“Why don’t you spend a few days on Magnus’ farm? Some manual labour would do you good.”

Colin looked at him as if he had said something offensive.

“What chance,” Edmund continued, “do you think you’ve got?” For the Professorship, I mean.”

“Not much, really. But it’s a start.”

“When will you know?”

“Not sure. Perhaps next month.”

“Who recommended you?”

“Elizabeth. Mrs. Cornish.”

“Isn’t she the one you wanted to get into bed?”

Colin winced.

“You told me about her – last year,” Edmund explained. “Don’t you remember?”

“If you say so.”

“Smokes cigars?”

“Yes.”

“You described her attributes in a rather fulsome way, if I remember correctly.”

Colin rubbed his hands together, again. “Nice body! Wouldn’t mind getting my hands around it!” His fantasy of having Elizabeth standing naked on a chair in his room returned. He would get her to wear a studded collar to make the humiliation complete.

Edmund sighed. “The Superior Philosopher is for the belly, not the eye.”

“Eh?”

“Lao Tzu.”

“Oh, that antiquated Chinese cretin.”

“Shall we eat? I’m hungry.”

“What?” His fantasy was still intruding upon reality. Nearby, a young woman sat talking to her friends, her blouse emphasizing her breasts. Colin stared at her. “You have something,” he said to Edmund. “I’ll catch you later.”

His sexual passion aroused, he strode off toward Alison’s room.

Alison was sitting on her bed, listening to music and cuddling a very large toy lion whom she

called Aslan. The sunlit gardens behind Heslington Hall were visible from her window, and she did not look away when a familiar knock sounded on her door.

“Come in,” she said wearily.

Colin, as was his habit, wrestled the lion away from her and with undisguised glee proceeded to stuff it through the open window. She let him enjoy his childish fun. Her room was on the ground floor, and Aslan could easily be retrieved.

His ritual greeting over, he rubbed his hands and shuffled toward her. Alison was annoyed at the lust so evident on his face.

“Why don’t you grow up?” she shouted at him.

Momentarily perplexed, he retrieved Aslan.

“After your oats, then?” she said seethingly.

“I am after expanding my being through the experience of the ultimate,” he said in the prose of *The Philosopher*.

“Why can’t you stop being so false?”

“Ah! ‘Tis true, falsehood is my matchless probity!” He sat beside her on the bed and began to caress her earlobe with his fingers.

He could sense her beginning to succumb, and this pleased him. He wanted to lay people bare to affirm his superiority, control them by his words and his body, and he was surprised when Alison pushed him away.

“I’m going away for a few days,” she said, moving to sit on the floor and cuddle Aslan.

He was about to summon forth a clever riposte when someone knocked on the door of the room.

Eagerly, Alison rose to answer. Fiona stood in the corridor, her dress unbuttoned so that very little of her breasts were not exposed.

“Sorry to intrude,” she said with a smile which pleased Colin, “but could I speak to Mr. Mickleman for a moment?”

“Yes, come in.”

Fiona stayed outside. “It’s about your application,” she said to Colin. “Can you come to the Department?”

Colin looked at Alison who shrugged her shoulders.

“Won’t be long,” he said to Alison.

He walked with Fiona down the corridor and out into the sunlight.

“Shall we go to your room?” Fiona said. “It is quite near.”

“It would be more private,” smiled Colin.

“Elizabeth told me about your application.”

“Indeed?”

“Yes.”

They reached his room without further conversation.

“Not what I expected,” she said as she glanced around. Clothes lay in an untidy heap upon the floor and it smelled of pipe smoke.

“Welcome to my lair!” Colin said, posing.

“What exactly are your intentions?” she asked him.

“Total experiential liberation!”

She ignored the remark. “About your application.”

“And I thought – “

“I was after your body?” she completed.

“The thought had suggested itself.”

She sat down on his bed, crossing her legs to expose most of her thigh. “Are you serious?” she said, smiling.

“Do you want me to be?”

“That depends.”

“Oh, yes?” He guessed her purpose.

“To some, you might seem the ideal candidate.”

As he looked at her, the conviction grew in him that the Professorship was really within his grasp. Fiona was courting him; Elizabeth and Horton would endorse his application with their references. He could deftly and with cunning play Storr off against Horton. Professor Colin Mickleman. It sounded right. The more he looked at Fiona, the more his lust gave way to scheming. She would be a valuable ally.

“Why don’t you come and sit beside me?” she said.

He did, and leaned over toward her to kiss her lips but she moved away, laughing.

“Do you like Early Music?” she asked.

“Not particularly.” He was wondering whether to touch her thigh when she spoke.

“There’s a concert tonight. The Early Music Group is playing in the Lyons Hall. Music by Landini and Machaut. The Vice-Chancellor will be there. Good form for you to be seen – with the right person, of course.

“Of course. You have tickets, then?”

“Naturally. Shall we meet at half past seven?”

“Fine by me.”

She stood up. “Excellent! And afterwards,” she ran her finger down his face, “you can explain just what your intentions are.”

She left him wondering who had been manipulating whom. He searched his pockets for his pipe, and as he did so he remembered last having it when he was attacked by Bryn.

“Damn!” he said, frustrated by its loss and the lack of sexual gratification that the last half hour had brought. “Damn!”

“Well,” Edmund said as he stood in the doorway, “if you’re going to be like that, I might as well go away again.”

“Eh?”

“She didn’t stay long,” quipped Edmund.

“I’m meeting her tonight.” He searched in his desk and found his spare pipe which he



proceeded to fill and light. “Not a good day,” he sighed. Then, remembering his application, he smiled.

“Came for my rucksack,” Edmund said.

Colin was surprised. “Leaving already?”

“Afraid so.” He opened the wardrobe and extracted his rucksack.

“Can’t you stay a little longer?” He was visibly disappointed.

“Not really. Have some unfinished business.”

“Such as?”

“Oh, various things.” He shouldered his heavy burden.

“You going now?”

“Yes.”

“When shall we meet again?”

“Who can say – who cannot say?”

They smiled at each other.

Colin squinted, then held out his hand which Edmund shook strongly, causing Colin to grimace, only half mockingly.

Edmund turned, waved and then walked out of the room and away from his friend.

## VII

Colin was only a little late for his afternoon tutorial, but Andrea was already waiting in his room in the Department. She was dressed in a fashionable padded jacket of colourful design and her scarf seemed inappropriate considering the weather, its whiteness in contrast to the patterned blue of her dress. Her dark hair, although well brushed, looked untidy, and she smiled, a little, as Colin entered the room, before her boyish face resumed its startled look.

“So,” Colin said gleefully before assuming the correct intonation and accent, “relentlessly pursued over aerial house top and vice-versa, I have thwarted the malevolent machinations of our most scurrilous enemies. In short, I am arrived.”

Andrea did not know whether to be embarrassed by the W.C Fields impersonation.

Colin cast his lustful gaze upon her. Her gestures were awkward as she fumbled in her bag for her essay.

“Sorry, it’s a bit late,” she said holding the pages out for him.

The Owl watched, and the Philosopher set the trap. “Relationships are difficult things – sometimes.” He took her essay and sat behind his desk. “Perhaps’, he said, pausing for effect, “I shouldn’t say this – and stop me if I say anything untoward – but sometimes with some people I get feelings; impressions. Call it empathy, if you like. One of the great things about life is that we can talk about things – bring problems out of ourselves. Remember Descartes?”

“Yes,” she said shyly.

He sprang his trap. His face bore a kindly smile, but inside his minds was full of scheming. “If you would like to talk about things, I’m a good listener. Share the sadness I sense about you.” He smiled his smile again. “I’ll be in the Bar here in Derwent tomorrow after seven. Now, your essay.”

He lit his pipe and settled back in his chair to read her offering. His criticisms were minor, and he talked for only a quarter of an hour about the essay's content while she sat across from him, wringing her hands together and occasionally meeting his glance.

He gave her back her essay. "Tomorrow – if you want," he said, before picking up the receiver of his telephone. It was a sign of his dismissal of her and she did not fail him.

"Goodbye, then," she said and briefly smiled.

He dialled a few numbers before she closed his door. Then he replaced the receiver. But his pleasure did not last for long.

"Ah!" Storr said as he opened the door without first knocking upon it. "Colin! I, er, just wanted to say how pleased I am about your application. Yes, most pleased."

"Oh yes?"

"Er, yes indeed my dear boy!"

"Did you want something?"

"What?" Storr looked around. "How are your tutorials going?" Well, I hope."

Before Colin could reply, Elizabeth pushed Storr aside.

"Have you a match?" she said as she reached Colin's desk. "My lighter is U/S."

Colin fumbled in his pockets until he found his box of matches. He held them out for her but she ignored his gesture and leaned toward him with one of her small cigars between her fingers.

After he had lit it, she blew the smoke into his face. "Mind if I keep the box?" she asked.

"No, of course not."

Both he and Storr watched her leave.

“Well, I must get on! Storr said to him. “Nice talking to you, Colin.” Nodding his head, he walked into the corridor.

Colin was soon at work. He needed one chapter to complete his book, and he worked eagerly but steadily during the hours of the afternoon, filling pages of paper with his writing. Occasionally he would stop to read what he had written, sometimes making corrections, and occasionally he would stop to refill and relight his pipe. Only once did he leave the room. But the Secretary’s Office was deserted and he made his own cup of coffee before returning to his desk.

It was becoming dark outside when his task was completed, and he collected together all the pages of the chapter. Satisfied with his effort, he wrote a note. “Could you type this out for me? Rather urgent!” it read. He thought of adding a rude suggestion, but desisted, and left it attached to his chapter on the Secretary’s desk.

Pleased with himself, he wandered out into the fresh air of evening, but it did not take him long to forget about his book and concentrate on his evening with Fiona. His wardrobe in his room in the Hall of Residence contained many black clothes, and he was deciding on a fitting combination when he heard a noise behind him.

He turned to see the door open. But it was not Fiona as he hoped, nor Alison as he half expected. Instead, it was the tall man he had seen the day before, following him. The man walked toward him and knocked him unconscious with one powerful blow.

He awoke to find himself lying on a carpet that smelled of urine, and turned to see his attacker standing by a window whose panes were broken. Near him, a bald man stood smoking a cigarette. He was much smaller in stature than the other man, and his face reminded Colin of a toad. The glare from the bright light hurt Colin’s eyes and he shook his head.

“He’s awake,” he heard a voice say. Then he was hauled to his feet.

Dramatically, the toad-faced man put on black leather gloves.

“Someone,” he sneered as Colin was pushed toward him, “wants to teach you a lesson.”

“You what?” Colin said, feeling his mouth go dry and stomach churn.

The man grinned, flexed his hands menacingly and moved closer. “I am going to enjoy this!” he said.

Outside, there was a sudden sound of breaking glass, and a drunken shout.

“Ger up!” the drunken man helped his companion to his feet. Then he peered into the window at Mickleman. “What you doin’?” he asked, smiling insanely, his bushy beard wet from beer. He drank from the bottle in his hand.

“We’ll deal with you later,” the toad-faced man said to Colin.

Colin was pushed to the ground as his would be assailants ran away. When he stood up, the two drunken men had gone as well, and cautiously and nervously, he walked into the darkness outside.

The house stood on a decaying Estate and appeared to be newly wrecked, but Mickleman wasted no time and was soon walking briskly toward the city centre. No one followed him, and he stopped awhile beside a busy road, pleased to find his pipe and tobacco in the pocket of his jacket. The ritual calmed him and he walked on into the centre of the city to find a bus to take him back toward the comfort of the University.

It was nearing nine o’clock when he returned to his room, and he sat at his desk, smoking his pipe, trying to understand his abduction. All he could think of was Bryn. Somehow, he had hired them. This conclusion did not please him, and he was shaking as he left his own room to find Bryn’s. But Alison’s brother was not in his Hall of Residence, and Colin resisted the temptation he felt to break down Bryn’s door.

He was sauntering back to his own room when he remembered his assignation with Fiona, and as he stood waiting outside the Lyons Hall for the concert to end, it occurred to him that Storr might be responsible for his abduction. But the thought was ludicrous, and he forgot about it. Instead, he spent his waiting trying to find epithets to describe Magarita’s body, particularly her large breasts. He wanted his epithets to be as crude as possible, and the more clichéd the better, since this naming was for him an affirmation of his superiority. But

he had not progressed very far when the audience began to leave the Hall.

Fiona was not among them, and he stood among the shadows for some minutes after the last person had departed before returning to his room. But he was not happy, sitting alone at his desk. Magartia seemed glad of his telephone call, and he lurked by the road in black clothes, clutching his camera, to await her arrival.

He did not see Edmund watching him from the walkway above the road.

## VIII

It was approaching the twilight hours when Alison left the University in the company of Edmund's friend. She had been glad of the invitation, and readily accepted Edmund's second offer.

She sat beside Magnus in the Land Rover, her small suitcase in the back, watching the scenery as it passed. Occasionally, Magnus would turn and smile at her and she would return his friendly gesture. Magnus was a big man with a full beard, and Alison found something reassuring in his size and his cheerful eyes. Magnus' farm was small, and although its position among the Hambleton Hills at the southern end of the North Yorkshire moors was not ideal, it was sufficiently isolated to afford the privacy Magnus and his wife deemed essential.

The Land Rover climbed the steep hill to Bank Top easily and, in the dim light, Alison found the scene enchanting. It seemed magical to her to be rising above the plain north of the city of York and to have the moors ahead, in the spreading darkness. A car passed them, descending the hill carefully, and Magnus drove off the main road to travel through a plantation of trees. The narrow road he had taken gradually levelled out, and Alison could see to her left and below, the headlights of a vehicle as it was driven along beside the boundary of the moors.

It was dark when they reached their destination. Inside the stone farmhouse was warm.

"Welcome! My name is Ruth," a woman with a shawl around her shoulders said in greeting as Magnus led Alison toward the log fire.

Alison smiled. In the dim light cast by the fire she found it easy to believe Ruth, and the house itself, belonged to an earlier age.

“It’ll be a cold night,” Magnus said as he warmed his gnarled hands by the fire.

“Alison, is it?” Ruth asked her.

“Yes.” Alison replied.

“Well, sit you down! Food won’t be long.”

They left her alone as she sat bathed in the warmth and the restful light of the fire, and Alison felt an urge to write a letter to Colin. But the house worked its magick upon her, and she soon fell asleep. Ruth awoke her, and she made her way to where the table was spread full with food.

“Sorry about the candles,” Magnus said.

“I think it’s lovely!” Alison said with sincerity.

“Haven’t got round to electricity – yet.”

She sat on the bench beside Ruth, but they did not say grace before their meal as she had expected. The conversation during the meal was minimal, and she was glad when Ruth showed her to her room. It was sparsely furnished, like the house itself, but warm from the small coal fire, and she set the lighted candles by her bed before taking her small cassette player and headphones from her case.

It was some time before she began to write.

“My dear Colin,

Darkness has already fallen as I listen to Bach’s Matthew Passion – crying at the

beauty and haunting sadness of some of the music. Aware also, as I listen, of a loneliness because there is no one here with me to share these moments. All I can do is dare to write to you, keeping the memory of these moments to perhaps mould them at some future time into words spoken when we are together again. Or, perhaps, I might this once let them become the genesis of some music of my own.

Now I sit with the light of a candle to guide my pen, unaware of my future – the darkness beyond my closed window seems mysterious: a mystery, which once and not long ago would have held the numinosity of myths and legends.

The darkness, outside, may have gone – changed by technology, by artificial light, but perhaps (or so it seems at this moment to me) it has returned to within us. There seems nothing to fear outside that the lights of technology and the reason of scientific explanation cannot dispel. Yet so few seem to see the blackness within – which even two thousand years of a powerful allegory has not changed. I mean, of course, the story of the “Passion” - of a kind of innocence betrayed. The actors, their names, changes every year... I wonder if you will understand what I mean.

It seems to me that all great Art uplifts and offers us the possibilities of existence. That ecstasy of experience where we are a unity of passion and reason – where life is constantly renewed and made vital. Bach reminds me of this insight – as a hot summer day can when no cloud obscures the beautiful blue of the sky and we become again, for just that day, children again. Once, it seems a long time ago now, I believed that love between two individuals should and could bring us this awareness, this understanding where answers to all our problems are found: not because we ignore them, but because our love conquers all. ‘A shameless romantic’ I hear you say.

But now experience seems to have dimmed this vision of mine. Through music and other things (music particularly) I have been transported to other planes of existence, and this has made my personal relationships difficult because I have tried to capture the bliss of those other places in moments with others. This has made me intense – and perhaps difficult because I could often not express in words what it was that I wished: in a relationship, in life.

I would like to believe that you offer me, through love, a beginning. But I know that this can never be. Maybe in music, in performance and creation, I will find my answer. No doubt you will continue to be you, safe within your own frame of reference. As to me, I expect the future to be full of discovery: a discovery of both joy and sadness.



With love,

Alison”

She felt happier, having written the letter and re-read it several times, glad that she had been able to express in words the feelings that had haunted her for so long. But she knew she might lack the courage to post the letter. She turned off her music and lay on the bed, listening to the silence. Nothing stirred, not even outside and as she lay, hearing the beating of her own pulse within her ears, she began to realize that it would be better for her if she did not see Colin again. He was her past. So thinking, she rose to delete some words from her letter, making ‘when we are together again’ illegible.

The candle was nearly spent, and she blew it out to fall asleep in the silent darkness.

It was late next morning she awoke. The house was deserted, but she found food awaiting her on the table. No one came to greet her and she ate slowly before walking into the gardens. The morning mist had almost completely dispersed, revealing a bright sun, which had begun to spread its warmth.

There were few flowers to colour the scene, for the gardens were productive ones given over to vegetables, soft fruit and an orchard. Alison found a bench abutting the brick wall that screened the garden from the yard and the clustered farm buildings behind the house, and she sat awhile, letting the sun warm and relax her. She was nearly asleep when a sheepdog came and lay down near her feet.

Magnus’ voice startled her. “He don’t take to many people,” he said.

Alison patted the dog’s head. “Is there any work I do to help?” she asked.

“There is no shortage of work, here,”

“I’d like to do something.”

“Thought you had come for a holiday.”

“Just a break from things. I’d like to help out.”

“Well, if you’re sure.”

“Yes.”

“The onions need weeding and thinning.”

The day passed quickly for her, although by late afternoon her enthusiasm for the back straining work had disappeared. Their lunch had been frugal – soup with plentiful bread – and she was beginning to feel both hungry and tired.

“You ready to eat?” Magnus said as he came toward her.

“Yes, indeed!”

“Didn’t expect you to do all this,” Magnus said as he surveyed her work.

Alison smiled, and scraped dirt from her hands.

“You go in, I’ll tidy up,” Magnus said. “Got some friends coming over,” he added as she began to walk away.

To her surprise she found the kitchen full of people, and children.

“This here is Alison,” Ruth said by way of introduction, “she’s staying for a while.”

“Hello!” Alison said, and blushed.

“That’s Tom,” Ruth said indicating a small unshaven man in worn clothes who smiled in reply, showing his broken teeth. “And Mary.” Mary, a large lady with a young and cheerful face deeply weathered, came and embraced Alison, much to Alison’s embarrassment. “And John.” John, sallow faced and stocky, raised his battered hat in greeting. “And Wendy.”

Wendy, a tall thin woman with long straight hair, smiled at her briefly before admonishing her children. "Leave that alone!" she shouted to her small son who was trying to remove the lid from the metal milk pail on the floor. "And Lucy – stop that!" She dragged her daughter away to stop her kicking her brother.

"There is plenty of hot water," Ruth said to Alison, pointing to the sink.

Alison was washing her hands when Magnus entered the room. He took the now crying Lucy into his arms, scooped up her brother and carried with him before setting them down near the fire. They were staring at him expectantly, and Alison came to sit near them, enchanted by the sudden change in their demeanour and glad to be away from the others.

Magnus began his story. He told how Thrym the Giant stole Thor's hammer Mjollnir as a ransom in order to make Freyja his wife; of how Loki, the Sly One, persuaded mighty Thor to dress as a woman in order to deceive Thrym.

"And so mighty Thor disguised himself as a woman, pretending to be Freyja who Thrym wanted as a bride. Thrym the Giant sat waiting in his draughty Hall. 'They are coming! They are coming' his giant servants shouted as the guests from Asgard arrived.

"Thus Thor entered the Hall which Thrym and his servants had lain with food and drink, for the wedding feast. It had been a long journey from Asgard and Thor was both hungry and thirsty. So he ate and drank. He ate a whole pig and then six whole salmon. He drank a gallon of mead.

"Thrym the Giant was amazed. 'What appetites,' he shouted. 'What a woman! Let us hope,' he said to one of his giant servants, 'her other appetites are as good!' And Thrym the Giant laughed, a laugh so loud it rocked the whole Hall and loosened some of the planks of the wall.

"So Thrym was eager to begin the ceremony of marriage and commanded Mjollnir, Thor's magical hammer which he had stolen, be brought forth. 'I shall,' he shouted, 'swear my oath on Mjollnir as my bride shall.'

"So saying, the hammer was brought forth. And seeing it, Thor rushed forward and

grasped it, tearing off his veil as he did so. His eyes were as red as his beard. There was no escape for his foe, for one by one he split open their skulls with his hammer, starting with Thrym the Giant until the whole floor of the Hall was littered with the dead bodies of the giants who had dared to defy the gods of Asgard!"

There was a moment of silence, and then Lucy's voice. "Another, tell us another!" the little girl said eagerly.

Alison left them to change her clothes, a little disturbed by the tale she had heard. She was in her room, listening to Vaughan Williams' Sixth Symphony through her headphones when she realized what had disturbed her. She thought the children too young for such a tale of violence with its suggestion of sexuality. But the music gradually transported her to another plane of existence, and she sat on the bed, listening. The sombre starkness of the Epilogue made her cry and she rose to stand by the window and watch the rising moon. She became aware of the coldness and isolation of Space – of the great distance which separated her from the moon; of the even greater distances to the stars. She began to imagine worlds circling the stars – worlds full of life, of people, alive with their own dreams, desires, thoughts and problems. The very vastness of the Cosmos seemed suddenly real to her, and she experienced an almost overwhelming feeling of greatness: of the Cosmos itself, and of her own life. It was as though she glimpsed a secret. The stars seemed awesome and yet thaumaturgic, and she felt a painful desire to travel among them, to explore the new worlds that awaited. There would be so many new experiences, so many things to see, to learn, to listen to. There was almost something holy waiting out there.

There grew within her then a desire to compose some music, something unique, which would capture at least in some way the feelings she had experienced, and she in a frenzy tore open her case to find pen and paper. Music filled her mind, a strange polyphony of sound, and she wove it into reality through the written notes of her pen.

Then the inspiration died, and she found herself sitting on the bed in the dim light staring down at the music she had written. She sighed then, for she understood what she had to do about Colin and her own unborn baby.

As if to counterpoint her thought, a distant bell began to toll, echoing between the valleys and the hills. Its sound was clear, and then distant, then clear again before it faded. It was a medieval sound, and as she listened she remembered the remains of Rievaulx but five miles distant and shrouded in a wooded valley. But the bell was real and not a dream, and she stood by the window, listening.

There was a monastery, she recalled, somewhere in the valleys below. A modern monastery replete with a Public School. A link between the past and the present. This thought pleased her and she smiled. She was not to know that a young novice – full of a youthful desire to return to ancient tradition – had, and against the Prior's wishes, set in motion the mechanism which would swing the six ton bell of Ampleforth Abbey, high in its squat church tower, sending its hallowed sound miles out in remembrance of the monk who had died that same hour. The novice wanted the whole monastery, and the School, to cease, if only for an instant, their tasks and pray for the departing soul.

Had she known this, she would have approved, for the sound of the bell suddenly ceased, leaving her disappointed.

## IX

The air of early morning was warm, and Mickleman sat contently at his desk in his room, a notebook beside him.

He sat for some time, watching the lake and vaguely thinking about his life until he began to remember the years that had passed since his youth. He became a little sad, as he often did when he reviewed the passing of the years by remembering the events of the same day one year, then two, then three years ago until he had reached the years of his schooling. 'What have I done since then?' he would ask himself, and be displeased with the answer.

His self pity and melancholia lasted for several hours until he began to lay upon his desk his secret collection of photographs. The photographs pleased him, and as he looked through them his happiness returned.

It was nearing mid-day when he gathered up his notebook and pipe before returning his photographs to the drawer of his desk. Perhaps his preoccupation with Fiona's body or Andrea's shyness made him forgetful, but he did not lock his drawer, and wandered, pleased with himself, out into the bright sun of the day.

Two young male students came toward him on creaking bicycles as he stepped onto the path outside the Hall of Residence, their eager faces smiling. One of them carried a haversack on which was painted: *'Newton Calculates. Watts works. But Coles' word is Law.'* Coles was the Professor of Physics. Mickleman smiled ruefully, and followed a small huddle

of students as they walked toward and over the bridge.

He was early for the Departmental meeting, and sat contentedly in the room smoking his pipe until he could no longer resist the temptation to defile Storr's charts. He added a few extra dots to one, extended the line of another and flicked ink in an inconvenient spot on a third. He was admiring his work when Lee entered the room.

Lee was not a tall man, his jerky movements seemed not quite coordinated, and he looked older than his thirty-five years. His suit was not conspicuous, as he himself was not, and he reminded Colin of a studious monk misplaced in a world which seemed to startle him.

Lee smiled nervously and then crept toward a chair, laying his voluminous notes and files upon the table. His tutorial was only just over and, as he always did, Lee wrote an account of it in order to assess his own performance. 'A moderate success, for once,' he wrote in his notebook in his neat handwriting, 'except regarding the questions about Heidegger. I must do more background reading...'

He was still writing when Horton bustled in and took his usual seat by the window. From his pocket he produced a copy of Iliad, in Greek, and was soon absorbed in his reading.

Soon, the room was full, Storr, squirming and smiling as he sat at the head of the table; Whiting and Hill, near their master, Mrs. Cornish, next to Lee and smoking her small cigars. And last of all, Fiona, who sat next to Colin, graciously smiling as if he had not missed their assignation.

"Well, eh," Storr said, looking around with evident satisfaction. "I'm sorry I had to rearrange this meeting at such short notice. But as you are all aware, I am away next week and rather than postpone next week's meeting I decided to bring it forward. I was hoping to sound to you all out about – "

The door opened, and they all turned to look.

"Ah, Timothy!" Storr said. "Glad you could join us."

Timothy was the most junior member of the Department and Colin was not surprised by his lateness or his manner of dress. He wore a mauve shirt, green trousers and shoes, and had tied a mauve scarf around his neck.

“Sorry I’m late!” he smiled, showing his two gold-capped teeth.

“Just in time! Said Storr. “Jonathon – “ he smiled at Lee, “was about to talk about the audio-visual equipment he had just, eh, taken charge of. A very valuable edition to our Department. Yes indeed. Very valuable.

“Is that all?” Horton turned and glared at Storr.

“Sorry?” Storr said.

“You brought all of us here,” Horton continued, anger evident in his voice, “to waffle on about audio-visual equipment!”

“Well, er, it is rather an important addition to our facilities if I may say so.”

“You have the audacity to – “ Horton began.

“Gentlemen, please!” Mrs. Cornish said in an attempt at mediation.

“There was something else on the agenda, Richard?” Fiona asked.

“Actually, no.”

“I see,” Mrs. Cornish said, disgusted.

“But I was going to mention finances – “ Storr muttered weakly.

Horton stood up. “You could not bear the thought of someone, namely myself, chairing the meeting in your unmissed absence, I assume?”

Storr himself stood up. “You will withdraw that remark, of course.”

It was the nearest Colin has seen Storr to anger.

“May I suggest,” Colin said, “that those wishing to hear Jonathon stay, while those who wish to leave do so. If there are any vital points which emerge, I am sure one of those who stays would be willing to tell – “

“What a waste of time all of these perfidious meeting are!” Horton said and strode out of the room.

To Colin’s surprise, Timothy followed him. Then Mrs. Cornish. Fiona smiled briefly at him and then also left.

“Well, if you all will excuse me,” he himself said, and departed.

Fiona was waiting, as he expected, in the corridor.

“You were otherwise engaged, I imagine,” she said.

He thought of telling her the truth. But it was so unlikely she was bound to think it was a lie, so he lied instead, not really believing she would believe it. “I was not feeling well and fell asleep.”

He was watching her, waiting for her reactions, when he realized how much he desired her. Her face showed no emotion, and it was this almost lofty indifference of hers that aroused his ardour keenly.

“Perhaps the Owl’s nocturnal activities are too tiring?” she said, her face expressionless.

“I waited outside the Lyons Hall at the end of the concert”, he said, trying to salvage something. “I’m sorry, I really am.”

“Cheetah’s One, Owls Nil,” she said and smiled.

She left him standing perplexed and a little shaken, and he walked slowly to his room in the



Department. He sat at his desk, vaguely wondering about Fiona and how he might best approach her. Gradually, there grew within him the feeling that he was no longer the master of his own Destiny, and this discomfited him, as his thoughts about Fiona did. He began to doubt his own self-appointed role about revealing individuals to themselves and the world while he, the puppet master, pulled their strings. But his self-doubt did not last. He remembered Andrea, who would be waiting for him later in the day – another victim whose soul he could lay bare; he remembered the Professorship, his philosophical work, his spreading fame – and his child, growing within Alison's womb.

He was smiling at these, his achievements, when someone knocked on the door of his room. Without waiting for his response Elizabeth Cornish strode in.

“Ah! Glad I caught you!” she said. “The Professorial Board meets next week. The interview, I believe, will be next Tuesday. There is an outside candidate.”

“So soon?” Colin said, surprised.

She smiled. “It was felt a swift decision was needed.”

“Do you know how many candidates there are?”

“Four, including yourself.”

“And the outsider?”

“Chap from Oxford. You have a tie, I presume?” she asked in her matronly voice.

“Yes.”

“Good form for you to be presentable.”

“Of course.”

Her smile was curt, and she retreated from his room briskly, the leather soles of her plain shoes clacking against the floor.

For several minutes he sat at his desk before sidling into the corridor. In several of the rooms lectures were in progress, and he stood listening to the muted words, which seeped out to him. There was, he felt, an aura about them, for here, in his chosen Department, the High Priestess and High Priest were at work, teaching their followers. The deities were Truth, Reason, Feeling and Understanding, and each deity, according to the gospel of Mickleman, was a goddess – or at least a woman. And he wanted to possess and master them all.

These thoughts pleased him, and he spent the remainder of the daylight hours writing steadily at his desk. His completed article also pleased him and he laid it aside to walk in the twilight toward the Refectory. But a memory of Fiona drew him away.

He felt his desire for her keenly as he walked toward her house but a short distance from the University. The village of Heslington was joined to the campus by a road, which had sprouted red brick houses. Fiona's dwelling was a small unprepossessing house along a lane which led off from the road. The gardens, lawns and fences were all well tended, and he was about to push open the gate when the front door was opened. Light from inside gave him a view of Storr's face, and he walked past, momentarily perplexed. But it was not long before he turned to see Storr shambling away.

No sooner had Colin knocked on Fiona's door that it was opened.

"Just passing?" she said and smiled.

She wore a thin dress, which left very little to the imagination.

"Not really."

"Been watching long?"

"Sorry?"

She did not pursue the matter. "Come in," she said.

She opened the door further for him and he stepped over her threshold, smiling as she

closed and locked the door. The house smelled of expensive perfume, as Fiona herself did, and he breathed the scent in.

She stepped past him, but he did not move aside and she allowed her body to brush against his. For a few moments he stared at her, and as he did so he thought her face bore a striking resemblance to one of the women in Bruegel's

'Allegory of Lust'. But the impression was fleeting. He thought her beautiful and sexually alluring and moved forward to kiss her lips.

"Not here!" she laughed, and walked slowly up the stairs to her bedroom.

He followed, fascinated by his desire.

The bedroom was all black and crimson and seemed luxurious to Colin.

"Take your clothes off." She said as she sat on the edge of the large bed.

"What?"

"Your clothes – take them off."

Then he saw it. In the corner of the room, a camera stood on a tripod, and in her hand Fiona held the remote control release.

"I want to watch you," she said, still smiling. She rummaged in a drawer by the bed. "And then I want you to put these on." She held out a pair of handcuffs.

Colin smiled, but she soon destroyed his fantasy. "On you," she said, and laughed.

Her laughter, and this reversal of roles, confused Colin, and he stood, in the bright light, by her bed unable to speak.

"Come on, don't be shy," she smiled. "What are you waiting for?" She dangled the

handcuffs in front of him.

When he still did not speak, she added: "Just a few photographs of you - in various poses."

She rose to stand before him and, somewhat abashed, Colin retreated from the room. She did not follow him, and he could hear her laughter as he opened the door of the house to the dark and cooling air.

## X

The food did not interest him, but Colin sat at a table in the crowded Refectory eating nevertheless while he listened to the chatter and clatter of the students around him.

He left his meal half-eaten to saunter toward the Bar in Derwent college, and he was soon drinking himself into a stupor. The beer made his melancholia even worse and he sat vaguely detesting the people who gradually filled the room with their noise.

"Hello!" Andrea said cheerfully. She was dressed all in black, an affectation which surprised him, and he glowered at her because he thought it was his own copyright.

"Join me?" he said, holding up his glass but making no effort to rise from his seat.

When she returned he sat silently watching her sip her drink.

"A bit crowded, isn't it?" she said, embarrassed by his silence.

He watched her lustfully. "I know what you need," he said without any subtlety.

"Oh, yes?" She appeared to him to be only half-insulted.

"Someone to talk to." He smiled as he savoured his first little victory. "It is never easy, is it?"

“What?”

“Sharing moments. Just when you think you understand someone – they surprise you.” The alcohol was beginning to affect his thought, and he struggled to not let this show. “They surprise you,” he repeated. “Usually with other people, betraying.”

Andrea thought of her own just broken relationship and began to be amazed at what she saw as Colin’s insight.

“You thought you understood him,” he continued.

How could he know? She thought. Is it so evident on my face?

“Are you happy here?” he asked, then seeing her questioning face added, “here, at University.”

“Sometimes.”

“What will you do? His pause was deliberate. “When you graduate?”

“Oh, I don’t know. Maybe teach.”

She smiled a defensive smile which Colin divined and he forgot about trying to lay her soul bare with the scalpel of his words, and leaned across the small table that held his many empty glasses to grasp her hand in his own. She did not move away.

“Mind if I join you?” a voice asked above the babble around them.

Andrea jerked her hand away. On the lapel of his tweed jacket Fenton, their interloper, wore a badge saying *‘Being Weird Isn’t Enough’*.

Without being asked, he sat down. “Is this a philosophical discussion – or can anyone join in?”

Colin looked at Andrea who looked at him. Fenton looked at them both and then said, "That's exactly my point! The academic study of morals is no guarantee that those who so study are moral themselves. Won't you agree, Dr. Mickleman?" Fenton gave an inane smile.

The Doctor of Philosophy took a long drink of his beer and then burped loudly.

"Ah!" Fenton exclaimed. "The existential viewpoint! I could not have put it better myself." He gestured toward Andrea. "And you, Mademoiselle? How would you, as a student of the illustrious Dr. Mickleman, express your own desire for understanding?"

She looked at him angrily, then rose and left. Colin watched her push her way through the crowded room and was about to follow when Fenton laid a restraining hand on his arm.

"I am in dread," Fenton said, "that from all this silence something ill shall burst forth."

Eh?"

"Sophocles." He removed his hand.

"That antiquated Greek cretin!"

For some seconds they looked at each other, but Colin turned away before rising to follow Andrea. He soon caught up with her as she walked along the path that took them turning and down toward the light-shimmering lake. They did not speak but she limply held his hand as it sought hers while they walked toward his room. His understanding had impressed her, his eyes seemed to radiate a warmth, and she was lonely.

In his dimly lit room, the smell of pipe smoke and sweaty feet pervaded, and he was soon kissing her and fondling her body. Only partly undressed, they lay on his bed, but his body refused to obey his desire. This alcohol induced failure made him angry. As a remedy to try and arouse his erection he began to beat her bare buttocks with his discarded shoe.

"Please, don't!" she pleaded and began to cry.

Her utter helplessness appealed to him and, as his remedy began to take effect, he forced

himself upon her. But his desire did not last long and, satiated, he turned over to fall into an alcoholic sleep.

She dressed while he slept. Her feelings in turmoil, she sat down at his desk. She would write him a note, she thought, although she did not know what to write and in her search for a clean sheet of paper and pen, she opened the drawer of his desk.

Among the photographs, she recognized Kate, and Magarita, and she carefully replaced them in the drawer. Without feeling anything she silently stole out and away from the room. Dawn was many hours away, as midnight itself was, and she wandered around the lake, keeping to the shadows and avoiding the gaggles of students who passed in the still but seldom silent night air.

Their laughter and their words were devoid of meaning for her. There was no one and nothing she could trust. No boyfriend, parents, friends or tutor; no God. 'I would have been just one more sordid photograph,' she thought as she walked slowly back to her own room, wishing to cry but too full of discordant emotion to succeed.

## XI

Alison frowned, but otherwise bore herself stoically as one who, having thought deeply about a particular matter, had made a decision. She had surprised Colin by arriving to see him early in the morning.

Bewildered, he sat hunched on his bed while Alison stood beside the window.

"Well?" he asked, chagrined at both being disturbed from his slumber so early and not finding Andrea in his room.

"I've made a decision," Alison announced.

"Oh yes?"

“I’m going to have an abortion,” she said without any preamble.

“What?” He remark awakened him.

“You heard.”

“But you can’t – “

“I thought I’d tell you now rather than later.”

“But I would help. Money, that sort of thing. You know that’s not what I want.”

“Who said anything about what you want?”

“But I’ll get you a Flat. Everything.”

“Too late,” she said.

He smiled at her then. But she divined his purpose. “And nothing,” she added, “you say or do can make me change my mind. You’ll not wheedle you way into my affections again.” Her hardness was only in part a pose. “Well, goodbye then. I doubt we shall meet again.”

She turned around and left him sitting on the bed. He sat still for a while and then suddenly leapt up to find his clothes and dress himself. A faint mist shrouded the University and he was half across the bridge outside his residence, straining to see ahead, when he realized he had run in the wrong direction. He turned, and collided with a student carrying an armful of books. He did not want to help but shouted a “Sorry!” to the fallen young man and sprinted away along the path toward the car park behind the large Physics building. There was a Land Rover leaving and he ran toward it shouting Alison’s name, but it steadily pulled away and he was left to bend breathless and alone by the side of the running track. No one saw him as he in anger kicked a post. He hurt his foot, and limped slowly back to his room.

Clarity of thought and release from the pain in his foot came slowly as he sat at his desk smoking his pipe. The idea of a child, unwanted though it was at its conception, had pleased him, but there would, he felt sure, be other opportunities, some woman to bear his children



and whom he might marry if she accepted his need for other purely physical liaisons. Magarita, perhaps? She knew of his other liaisons and did not seem to care. But that, he felt certain, would come in its own species of time. His concern now was the Professorship and although Alison's decision and departure saddened him, he was also a little relieved to be free of what he had felt to be her cloying emotions. Thus was he satisfied with himself and his world again. He made himself a strong brew of tea before departing for his office in his Department.

A pile of mail awaited him in the Secretary's Office, and he spent nearly an hour with her, idling chatting and making rude suggestions. The Secretary, a youngish lady with a tender face and richly coiffured dark blond hair given to slightly audacious and in some circles fashionable clothes, did not mind, for she was recently and happily married. Colin's seduction of her was over a year away and for both it was part of their past. And when he did finally peruse his mail in his own room, he was pleased to find a letter asking him for an article from an academic journal he never read.

So he sat and wrote and read a little while the hours of the morning passed. Fenton was late for his tutorial, and Colin calmly waited. Half an hour; an hour. But in his relaxed way he did not care, and was even a little pleased, for last night Fenton had disturbed him. The meaning of his words had not escaped Colin, inebriated though he was, and he began to surmise that Fenton was too embarrassed to attend the tutorial as he began to believe that Fenton, the avowed homosexual, was attracted to him. He felt this explained all of Fenton's behaviour, and was even a little pleased. Perhaps, after all, he had found the key to unravel Fenton's character. Still thinking these thoughts, he was surprised by Fiona who entered his room without knocking.

He watched her carefully as she came to sit on the side of his desk. As was her habit, her dress seemed to reveal rather than hide her body.

"Dinner, tonight?" she asked.

"Well – "

"Are you afraid of me?" she asked directly.

"What do you mean?"

"Of my strength."

“I didn’t realize that you took steroids,” he said in an attempt to be clever.

It did not work. “I have some outfits which I think you would look very good in.”

“Oh yes?”

“Yes. Are you afraid to experiment then? And after all I’ve heard!”

“Such as?”

“Oh various things.”

The phrase startled him, for some reason he could not remember. But he did remember feeling almost as startled by something Fenton had said to him, last night. He could not remember what that was either. Fiona was staring at him while her lips were drawn into a smile, and this perplexed him as well.

“Try it,” she said, “tonight. You might surprise yourself and have a good time..” She pursed her lips. “I think we’d make a good combination – in bed.”

She smiled at him and then walked toward the door. “I’ll expect you about seven.”

Her perfume and presence lingered a long time, and he found himself unable to concentrate on his work. His mind began to fill with erotic images and visions, and all of them involved him and Fiona. It was these which persuaded him: he would go and meet her, confident that he would be equal to any situation, and, in his anticipation and delight, he forgot about both Andrea and Fenton.

Fenton had been with a party of his friends when he had seen Andrea pass in the night. He caught sight of her face as she slowly walked under a lamp near the door to her residence.

“Come on,” a friend had urged him as he stood wondering whether to call out her name – and he had gone with them to their rooms where music played and cups were filled with

wine. Soon the voices were raised to try to right all the political wrongs in the world.

“Worker’s Councils – that is what we need! It would show the bosses!” an enthusiastic student said.

“But surely, democratic reforms,” another countered, “are the only viable means.”

“Bull! Revolution has been and still is the only answer.”

But Fenton remembered, as he listened, Andrea’s face. It had spoken to him, one soul to another, one outcast to another. There was real suffering there which he felt no political discussion would change, and he rose unobserved to take his leave.

“Go away!” a voice shouted in answer to his knuckle raps upon Andrea’s door.

“Leave me alone!” the voice said as he tried again.

“It’s me!” he said.

“Look!” an angry face said as Andrea opened the door, “I want to be left alone.”

Then there was not more anger in her face as she staggered back inside to collapse upon the floor.

“Are you alright?” Fenton asked as he knelt beside her. Her room was brightly lit, very tidy and very warm.

“Get your hands off me, you poof!” she said, slurring her words.

An empty bottle of whiskey lay on the floor, and he was about to leave when he saw a bottle of barbiturate tablets. It was almost empty.

She peered at the container as he held it up. “Have you taken any?” he asked.

“Leave me alone. Want to sleep,” she said through half-closed eyes. She tried to speak again but drifted into unconsciousness.

“Andrea! Wake up!” Gently, he held her head in his hands. “Have you taken any of these tablets?”

She did not respond and he lifted her to lay her down on the bed. On the bedside table was a letter, propped up against the lamp. ‘Dr. Colin Mickleman’ the writing on the envelope read.

‘Will you regret not having a photograph of me? I doubt it.’

Fenton read the note three times before placing it in his pocket and lifting Andrea into his arms. He carried her along the corridor and down the stairs, oblivious to the two female students who drunkenly laughed as he passed them by.

“You Tarzan, she Jane!” one of them said, and laughed again.

His car was small and some distance away, but he ran with his burden to lay her softly on the back seat. His driving was fast as he raced toward the city. He nearly crashed once, as he slewed the car into a corner, and once he had to stop to try to remember his way before reversing to take another turning.

No one came to greet him or relieve him of his burden as he kicked open the doors to the Casualty department of the Hospital.

“Please,” he pleaded to the woman behind the desk, “she’s taken an overdose!”

The waiting patients stared while, somewhere, a baby cried.

Then, there was a sudden rushing of white coats, blue uniforms and anxious faces.

“Wait here, will you?” a young woman said. And then a Nurse was asking: “Do you know what she has taken?”

“Some tablet – and alcohol.”

“How long ago?”

“Not sure. Half an hour, perhaps. Will she be alright?”

No answer, only another person asking questions. The questioning nurse had a kindly face and ushered him to a chair in the corridor. He gave her Andrea’s name and address, as well as his own.

‘You are students at the University then?’ she asked. But her kindly smile did not change.

“Yes. Will she be alright?”

“I should think so, yes. They’ll pump her stomach out. She’ll be drowsy for a while and sleep.

“Can I see her?” He saw the look on the young girl’s face and was about to correct her natural assumption when he said instead, “I’m sorry for all the trouble.”

“That’s what we are here for.”

“Can I see her?” he asked again.

“In a while, probably.”

She left him, and he was suddenly aware of his surroundings, of voices, near and distant, of people walking past. A telephone ringing. He sat for a long time.

“Mr. Fenton?” a Doctor asked. The pockets of his white coat bulged with pens, a stethoscope, a small compendium about drugs.

“Yes.” He stood up.

“You can see her now.” They walked together toward a cubicle.

“Is she alright?”

“Yes, fine. We’ll keep her in overnight. Just for observation. I should think she will sleep most of tomorrow.” He nodded curtly, then walked away to disappear behind a curtain.

Andrea lay on her side, covered by a sheet and an thin blanket, an intravenous infusion supplying fluid through a needle in the back of her hand. She did not stir as he did not try to wake her, and he stood beside her for what seemed a long time.

“She’ll be alright.” The Nurse who questioned him said as she passed. “We’ll be moving her onto the ward soon. I’m sure they wouldn’t mind if you wanted to call and see her in the morning.”

He returned her smile, and left to wander back into the night, and it took him several minutes to realize his car had been stolen. In his haste, he had left the door open and the keys in the ignition.

## XII

It was a long walk back to the University, but Fenton did not mind. He had reported the theft before setting out into the cold, sodium-lit darkness. But he was soon warm, despite being without a jacket, and by the time he reached his room he had decide on his plan of campaign.

His sleep was brief, if sound, and he ate a small breakfast in the refectory before boarding a bus for the city. The Ward Sister was helpful and kind, and let him briefly sit by Andrea’s bed while, around him in the busy ward, Student Nurses made beds while they chatted.

“Thank you,” Andrea said, and weakly held his hand as she tried to keep awake.

“I haven’t told anyone yet,” he said, embarrassed by her gesture.

“There was a letter.”

“I have it, it’s alright.” He withdrew his hand and made to search his pockets, but it was just an excuse to remove his hand from her. “I must have left it in my room.”

“You know, don’t you?”

“Yes.”

“Such a stupid thing to do!” She tried to smile. “I was so fed up. You won’t tell him, will you?”

“No,” he lied and turned his face away.

“You’re very kind.” She held his hand again.

In embarrassment, he stood up. “I’ll call again this afternoon. Is there anything you want?”

“They discharge me today. The Doctor is coming to see me later this morning.”

“I’ll telephone the Ward to ask. Do you want me to come and meet you if you are discharged?”

“That would be very kind.”

“Not at all.”

“You’re a strange man,” she said gently.

He smiled in response and walked back down along the long line of beds.

His visit to the Police Station to confirm the theft of his vehicle was brief, but he lingered in the centre of the city, watching people, drinking tea at a café and browsing in a bookshop. It was past midday when he returned to the University.

Colin was in his room, in the Department, smoking a pipe and scribbling.

“Come in!” he said cheerfully. Then, seeing Fenton, he added, “bit late, aren’t we?”

Calmly, Fenton sat down opposite him.

“Black seems an appropriate colour,” Fenton said, alluding to Colin’s manner of dress.

“Shall I,” Colin responded, quoting, “entrust myself to entangled shadows?”

“Perhaps,” Fenton retorted, unsmiling, “I shall do violence to your person.”

Colin gaped, then squinted, trying to find a clever response. But Fenton calmly handed him Andrea’s envelope and note.

“From Andrea,” Fenton said. “She tried to kill herself – last night.”

This was something beyond the Owl’s comprehension, but he strove to understand it, and the strain showed on his face.

“Is she – “ he began.

“Don’t worry – she’ll be alright.”

“How?” The strain was lessening, but anxiety had begun.

“Overdose. Luckily, I found her in time.”

“You?”

“No one else knows. Yet.”



Colin came to several conclusions, almost at the same time.

Fenton let him suffer. "Of course," he said with apparent indifference, "a scandal at this time would do your chances of obtaining the Professorship no good."

For a few seconds, the Owl gaped in horror at one of his own conclusions. Then he shivered in revulsion. Was he about to be blackmailed into a homosexual encounter?

Fenton sighed, as he saw the perplexity and horror evident on Colin's face. "Don't judge everybody by your own standards," he said. "Just because I'm gay doesn't mean I've no moral standards."

"Sorry?"

"I know what you were thinking. And you were wrong. I have no intention of telling anyone anything – unless Andrea wishes it. She and she alone will decide. And shall I tell you something else?"

Colin was not sure whether he wanted to know. But he said nothing.

"There was a time when I fancied you," Fenton continued. "You had an aura of genius about you. But so cold – so little real humanity. I know you dislike me. Not because I'm gay – but because I see through your pose. What is beyond that pose? Is there anything?"

He took the note and envelope, which Colin had left on his desk and walked over toward the door. Outside, in the quiet corridor, he stood shaking for several minutes. He disliked the anger he had felt toward Colin and walked quickly down the stairs and out in the freshness outside. Ragged cumulus clouds sped swiftly below the blue of the sky, carried on the rising wind, and Fenton tore Andrea's note in small pieces as he walked, casting them into the lake from a bridge. He watched them as they sank, bopped or floated away. Around him, the University pulsed with life.

He did not have long to wait in the corridor of the Ward. Several of the beds were screened by their curtains and he was idly wondering why when Andrea, dressed in her clothes of the night before, came slowly toward him. She smiled on seeing him leaning against the wall,

and then broke into a run to hug him strongly. He held her body feebly by one hand while she clung to him, and then edged away.

“I’ve got a taxi waiting,” he said while a passing Nurse smiled at them.

“You are kind,” Andrea said and held his hand briefly. “Sorry I embarrassed you,” she whispered.

They did not speak again as they walked the short distance to the entrance to enter their waiting carriage and be conveyed along the traffic filled roads to the campus. But every few minutes Andrea would turn and glance at his face as if trying to measure his feelings. But his face betrayed no emotion.

He walked with her to her room, and stood outside as she opened the door.

“Please,” she said almost pleading, “I’d like you to come in.”

She lay on her bed while he sat, awkwardly, on the chair by the small study desk.

“I feel like I could sleep for a week, she said, and yawned.

Instead, she rested her head on her elbow as she looked at him. “Have you still got the note?” she asked.

“I threw it away.”

“Good.” Then she sighed. “You know, I’m not depressed any more. When I woke up this morning and saw the sunlight streaming through the window I was happy. There was this woman in the bed next to mine – did you see her? – who’d had most of her bowel cut out. They were very kind to her, the Nurses, but

you could see she was dying. I felt so ashamed, being there. Do you mind if I talk?”

”Of course not.”

“What will happen?” she asked softly. “About last night, I mean?”

“Nothing, I imagine. Unless you want to tell anyone.”

“No, of course not. Not even – “

“I’ve told him.”

She was not certain whether she was pleased or upset. “And?” she said, hesitantly.

“He’ll keep quiet, I imagine.”

“I’ll have to leave the University,” she said sadly.

“Do you really want to?”

“No.”

“Then why?”

“I can’t face him.”

“I’ll be with you in lectures.”

She smiled at him. “You’re very sweet. But he is my personal tutor.”

“Change to someone else. It happens.”

“What could I say? What reason could I give?”

It was Fenton’s turn to smile. “With his reputation, you don’t need a reason.”

She thought for a while, and then said, “I just couldn’t bear it, seeing him.”

“Imagine what he would feel like, seeing you.”

Andrea laughed. “I can’t believe I was so stupid, last night.”

“In the midst of many, it is easy to be alone.”

“You know, I always thought you were so reserved. Aloof. Even a bit arrogant. But you’re not, are you? You’re really kind.”

“You’ll have me blushing in a moment.”

“You’re not like other men.” Then realizing what she had said, added, “I’m sorry, I didn’t mean – “

“It’s alright. I don’t keep it a secret. Anymore.”

“I mean you’re – for a man – oh, I’m not saying this right!” she finally said in exasperation. “I mean I can actually talk to you. You understand.”

“And I am no threat,” he smiled in self-mockery.

She began to feel that she would not have minded if he were. She would feel safe, in his arms, with the world shut out. But she said nothing and even tried to hide her feelings so that they would not show in her face and eyes. She wanted to be strong and self-reliant, not depending on men for her emotional security, but she did not know how to begin. She remembered the father she saw only twice a year, her sisters leaving school early to work while she studied, always alone in her life. Her always-disastrous relations with men. Her need for love seemed to drive them away.

“There’s a strength in you,” she finally said. “An inner strength. I feel better just being with you. Can we be friends?”

He gave a crooked smile. “I thought we already were.”

She jumped up to kiss him, then decided against it. The sudden movement made her feel dizzy and she lay down on her bed again.

“You ought to get some rest,” he said with concern.

“Yes, I suppose so.” She smiled at him as she sat up. “I’ll get into bed, if you don’t mind.”

“Er, no. I was just going,” he said as he nervously stood because she had begun to remove her clothes.

“Please,” she said, half-pleading and half-seductively, “stay and talk to me for a while.” Naked except for her panties, she got into bed.

“Well, actually –“ he began.

“Please, just for a few minutes.”

He sat down again.

“Can I ask you a personal question?” she asked.

“Depends on the question!”

“Have you ever been with a woman?” she asked impulsively, surprised at her own audacity.

“I really ought to go,” he said as he stood up again.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to offend you.” She suddenly realized that she did not want to be alone. “Look, I’ll be honest with you, Carl. I need to be with somebody at the moment.”

“But I can’t – “

“Just hold me, please.” There was no longer any tone of seduction in her voice or manner, just a pleading, a helplessness, and she began to cry, slowly and almost in silence.

He went to sit beside her on the bed, and she clung to him, her tears wetting his shoulder and drawing forth from within her some of the sadness and misery she felt. Her tears were the rain from the clouds which had come to pass over the sun of her joy, and it was minutes before the dark clouds retreated. She curled up, then, in the warmth of her bed, and closed her eyes to sleep. He brushed her cheek dry and briefly kissed it before leaving her to the silence of her room.

### XIII

There were no meetings, lectures or tutorials to fill Colin’s afternoon, but he could not settle down to his writing. He spent an hour wandering around the University library, but neither the books nor some research he needed to do interested him, and he wandered the campus in search of Magarita.

But she was not in her office, and he returned to his room in the Hall of Residence. But he soon became listless and bored. Fiona troubled him, as Andrea and Fenton did, and as he wandered for the third time around the campus, he began to realize he was alone. There was no one with whom he could share his secrets; no one with whom he could talk without assuming the mask of his role. He thought of Edmund, and it took him over an hour of diligent and then frenzied searching in the piles of old letters, manuscripts and papers that littered parts of his room before he found an address.

There was a grimy public telephone kiosk in a gloomy corner of Derwent college between the lavatories and the Porter’s prison of glass, and he was approaching it when a crowd of students came toward him, babbling. One of them, a brightly dressed young lady with frizzy hair, waved at him, and he waved back. She smiled, and then was sucked away within the crowd. He had no idea who she was, and shrugged his shoulders. Inside the soundproof booth, graffiti declared: *‘Jesus Saves, Moses Invests, But Buckby spends it all.’* Buckby was the Treasurer of the University.

His efforts were to no avail. There was no telephone number under that name, the discordant voice emanating from the receiver had said. Disgruntled, he wandered back to

his bedroom. It was then he realized the drawer that contained his photographs was unlocked. Had Andrea seen them? Was that the meaning of her cryptic message?

Suddenly, it seemed his world was in chaos. There would be no Professorship, only rumours about his photographs, about Andrea's attempted suicide. For a few moments he panicked. But calmness eventually came, although the pains he felt in his stomach remained. The ritual of cleaning and filling and lighting his pipe aided his thinking, and by the time he had smoked his fill he was certain neither Andrea or Fenton would compromise him. Yet a slight uncertainty remained, seeping down into his unconscious. Secure again in the confines of his world, he lay on his bed reading academic books.

It was nearing five o'clock in the evening when he left his room, no longer able to resist the temptation of visiting Andrea. He needed to know how she felt - what she would do. The hours of his reading had brought light rain to the outside world, and sheen of wetness pervaded the buildings and the paths which were entwined around them. It was only a short walk to the building which housed Andrea's room, which pleased him, since he so disliked rain.

It was Fenton who opened Andrea's door.

"She doesn't want to see you," Fenton said.

"Who is it?" a faint voice said.

"The esteemed Dr. Mickleman."

"I'll get dressed. Tell him to come back in a few minutes."

Fenton smiled ruefully at Colin and then shut the door. Colin waited outside for the allotted span, and then knocked on the door again.

Fenton, adopting the pose of a deferential butler, bowed slightly and in a disdainful accent said, "Madam will see you now, sir." He moved aside while Colin entered, then closed the door.

"How are you?" Colin asked Andrea as she sat on her bed. She was demurely dressed, but Fenton's presence, the disordered bedclothes, the discarded female underclothes on the

floor, perplexed him.

Before Andrea could answer, Fenton said, "As well as might be expected under the circumstances, sir."

Colin ignored him. "Is there anything I can do?" he asked her.

"With all due respect, sir," Fenton said, continuing with his accent and his role, "I believe you have done quite enough already. May I therefore respectfully suggest you return to your lucubrations? Shall I show the gentleman out, Madam?"

Andrea giggled.

"Very well Madam if that is what you wish." For Colin's benefit he gestured toward the door. "This way, sir, if you please. Terrible weather, isn't it? For the time of year."

Colin was beginning to become annoyed. "Can I talk with you alone?" he asked Andrea.

Andrea affected her own accent and role. "Be so good," she said to Fenton, "as to leave us."

Fenton bowed. "As you wish. If Madam is quite sure."

"Quite sure."

"I shall be directly outside, should you at any time require my assistance." He flicked imaginary dust from his imaginary livery.

Colin waited until he and Andrea were alone. "Are you alright?" he asked.

"Yes."

"What will you do?"

"About what?"



“Does anyone else know?”

“Don’t worry,” she smiled. “I shall not make a fuss.”

“I didn’t mean – “

“I’ll see you tomorrow.”

“Pardon?”

“At the lecture. On Kant’s aesthetics isn’t it?”

“Er, yes.” He did not know what else to say and stood immobile with his arms hanging limply by his side.

Andrea rose to open the door, and as it was opened Fenton sprang into the room. But he quickly resumed his role.

“The gentleman,” Andrea said, acting again, “is just leaving.”

“Very good, Madam. This way, sir.” Fenton gestured toward the corridor. Colin was at the top of the stairs when Fenton, as Fenton, said, “If I were you, I’d leaver her alone from now on.”

Andrea was sitting on her bed when he returned to her room.

“I was shaking and trembling,” she admitted, “seeing him again. I’m glad that’s over. I don’t know what I would have done if you hadn’t been here.”

Reverting to his role, he said, “Your servant, Madam.”

She threw her pillow playfully at him, and then looked at her discarded underclothes on the

floor. “Do you think he thought – “ she began.

“Probably!”

They both laughed. She wanted to embrace him, but all she did was rest her head in her hands and sigh.

“Some friends of mine,” Fenton said in an effort to comfort her, “are having a party tonight. Would you like to come?”

“Not really. I’m not in the mood.”

“Well, when I say ‘party’ it’s not exactly the right word. Just a quiet get together.”

“Thanks, but no.”

“It’s sort of an informal gathering of the GaySoc.”

“Sorry?”

The Gay Society.”

“Sounds like the title of a thirties musical.”

“Maybe it was. Anyway, they’ll be some women there. It’s not all men. There’s someone there I’d particularly like you to meet.”

She thought for a while, then said, “I don’t really think it would be my scene.”

“We are not all weirdoes you know.”

“I didn’t say you were. I didn’t mean to offend you.”

“Do I look offended?”

“No.”

“It would be good for you to get out – meet people.”

“I’m not really a gregarious person.”

“Look, I’ll tell you what. I have to go – for some silly reason I let myself be talked into running the thing this year. But afterwards we can go out for a meal, just you and I.”

“You don’t have to take pity on me, you know.”

“Is that what you think?”

“I don’t know what to think anymore.”

“I’m asking you as a friend.”

“I know. I’m sorry. Alright, then – but I’m not sure I feel like eating much.”

“Doesn’t matter. Now you ought to get some more rest. Will you be alright?”

“I won’t do anything silly, if that’s what you mean.”

“No it was not what I meant. I meant I’ll stay and talk to you if you like.”

“I’ll be fine. I do still feel tired. You’ve done more than enough.”

“I’ll be back about six then.”

“Fine.”

He had opened the door to leave when she said, “You are very kind.”

Fenton shrugged his shoulders. “What are friends for?”



Fenton was over half hour late.

“Sorry!” he said as an anxious Andrea opened her door. “I fell asleep.”

Andrea wore a tight jumper and close-fitting trousers and even Fenton noticed that she was wearing no bra, for her nipples stood out quite prominently. Fenton was dressed as he almost always was in tweed jacket and trousers. Only the colour of his shirts and his badges varied. His small but brightly coloured badge declared: *Laugh Now, But One Day We'll Be In Charge.*

“Are you ready,” he asked unnecessarily.

“Lead on!”

The gathering was held in the first floor room of one of the colleges. The chairs were low and comfortable, the décor modern but subdued. The blinds were drawn to cover the window and one table was spread with glasses, bottles of wine and cans of beer. Of the nine students, three were women. They did not turn to stare as Andrea and Fenton entered, and Andrea was surprised to find that all of those gathered in the room looked and dressed like ordinary students.

Fenton saw her surprise. “What did you expect?”

“I don't know,” she whispered. “They all look so normal.”

He adopted an effeminate pose. “Well to tell you the truth dear, we are. It’s the others who aren’t!”

She cuffed him playfully on the ear with her hand.

“Come on,” he said, “I’ll introduce you.” He walked toward a tall woman with startling blue eyes and very short black hair. “Julie,” he said to her, “this is Andrea.”

“Hi,” Julie said, and held out her bony hand.

Andrea blushed, held the proffered hand briefly, and said, “Hello!”

“What are you studying?” Julie asked her.

“Philosophy. And you?”

“Physics. Can I get you a drink?”

“Orange juice – if there is one.”

“We’ll see!” As she passed Fenton, Julie whispered in his ear. “Pretty, isn’t she?”

She was not away long, and Andrea clutched her glass nervously while she and Julie stood on the edge of the conclave. Fenton moved away to talk to the others.

“What made you choose York?” Julie asked her.

“The course, mainly.”

“Do you like music?”

“It’s alright.”

“I just love Classical, myself. Now Carl – well! His taste runs to that horrendous noise he calls ‘Progressive’. Personally, I would say ‘regressive’ – back to the primitive.”

She laughed at her own joke. “But enough of me – tell me about yourself.”

Andrea sipped her orange juice, and looked at Carl. He was obviously at ease, among friends, and his laugh made her feel a little sad. “Are you in your first year?” she asked Julie.

“Heavens no! Only wish I were. Finals time! What made you chose philosophy?”

“Seemed a good idea at the time.”

“Are you liking it?”

“Yes and no.”

“We had a few lectures from a chap in your Department. On the philosophy of Science. Can’t remember his name. Fancied himself, though. Tall chap – often wore black. Some sort of gesture, I suppose. Typical arty-farty type. Do you know him?”

“Not really,” Andrea lied. She wanted to get away, to talk to Carl to leave the room. Julie was smiling intently at her. “Have you any plans after your Degree?” she asked to hide her embarrassment.

“Year off. Cycling across America, then Scandinavia.”

“You do a lot of cycling then?”

“Sure! I love it. You?”

“No. I am not very sporting.”

“You should try it! There’s a marvellous, simply marvellous, feeling about riding a bike –

such freedom. Just you, and your surroundings. You're really in tune with your environment. I love it – touring and racing, cycling at speed. You and the machine, a perfect harmony. All your own effort and skill. Beautiful! I've a race – well, Time Trial actually – on Sunday. Would you like to come?"

"Well, I was thinking of - " she returned her gaze from Carl to Julie. There was something about Julie's earnest, youthful enthusiasm, which pleased her, and she smiled, envying her vivacity.

"I'm afraid," Julie was saying, "it starts rather early. Six in the morning actually. I'm off number three – they always start the slowest riders first!" She laughed, again, rocking slightly backwards on her feet and as she did so she lightly touched Andrea's arm with her hand. "It's only twenty five though."

"Sorry?"

"Twenty five miles. Fast course, though. I hope to do a One-Six." Then seeing Andrea's obvious incomprehension, she added, "one hour, six minutes."

"You mean," Andrea said, astounded, "you cycle twenty five miles in just one hour and six minutes?"

"More or less. I'm not as fast as some of the ladies, though."

"That's nearly – what?" she thought for a moment. "Twenty three miles an hour."

Julie shrugged her shoulders. "Lots of ladies get under the hour."

"You must be very fit."

"Well, I do lots of training! It's lovely to be out on the bike after hours of lectures or lab work. Really relaxing. There's only you, the bike and the road – everything else ceases to exist. Marvellous for stress!"

"I doubt I could make it into the town on a bike."

“Fancy a ride tomorrow? I’ve got an spare bike?”

“I’d only slow you down.”

“Nonsense! I like touring speeds as well.” She looked at Andrea’s body, letting her gaze linger on her breasts. “You look fit enough. I’ve got a Flat in town. If you want to come round about ten in the morning, say. I’ll give you the address.”

“Really, I –“

“No bother! Just a minute, I’ll borrow some paper and a pen.”

She returned with Carl, and scribbled her address on a crumpled sheet of paper. “I’ll look forward,” she said as she gave it to Andrea, “to seeing you.” She turned toward Carl. “Got to dash!” To Andrea’s surprise, Julie kissed Carl on the cheek, tousled his hair with her hand and said, “You take care. Probably see you next week.” She waved at Andrea, smiled warmly, and was gone from the room in a burst on energy. For a few seconds, Andrea regretted her departure.

Then she was annoyed with herself. ‘I’m so fickle and immature,’ she thought.

“Come and meet the others.” Carl said to her.

“Can we go? I really not in the mood to be around people.”

“Of course. I’ll just say my farewells.”

He returned smiling and holding out some car keys. “Julian's lent me his car,” he beamed.

The car turned out to be an old Volkswagen laden with rust whose interior was sorely in need of repair. But it conveyed them, albeit slowly, into the city centre. The restaurant Carl had chosen was not expensive but the food was reasonable even if the service was slow and the somewhat garish décor faded. But in the dim light it was easy to ignore.



Andrea settled for the soup while Carl ate, what seemed to her, a gargantuan meal.

“So you’ve arranged to see Julie again?” he asked.

“I let myself be talked into it.”

“She’s a bit like that,” he smiled.

“Is she -?”

“What do you think?”

“Silly question. God, I’m stupid! Why else would she be there!”

“I don’t think you are stupid,” he said gently.

“I must be! Shall I tell you something? No, on second thoughts, I won’t.”

“You can trust me, you know.”

She briefly held his hand. “I know.”

“You liked her, didn’t you?”

Andrea sighed. “Yes, I suppose so. But only because she showed an interest in me – seemed to like me. I sometimes think I’m just a reflection of other people’s interest.”

“We all need to be liked.”

“But I seem to need others in a different way. Without them I sometimes feel I don’t exist at all.”

“You just need someone to love you,” he said softly.

She cried then, not loudly or very much. “I know,” she said, almost as a whisper. “And I wish it could be you.”

For some time he looked at her, not knowing what to say or do, and when he did speak, his own emotion was evident in his measured words. “I’m sorry. But you will find someone. I know you will. I do love you, as a friend.”

She turned away, then, to stare out of the window, her silent tears returning. Outside, in the resurgent rain, people hurried along the pavement in the city-lit darkness, burdened with the burdens of their worlds.

#### XIV

Such was Colin’s perplexity that, on leaving Andrea’s room, he did not notice the rain. It was light, a mere drizzle to dampen clothes only with prolonged exposure, and he walked through it along the campus paths to the streets beyond and thence to Fiona’s house.

He was early for his assignation, but she was not there and, disgruntled, he trudged back to the University. No one disturbed him as he sat, alone in the Philosophy Department, in his room, vaguely looking out from the window.

Tomorrow, he knew, he would see Andrea and Fenton at his lecture and this both pleased and disturbed him, bringing discomfort to his stomach and pain to his head. He was pleased because he wanted to show he was not concerned about their presence and secret knowledge, and because he would then know what, if anything, they would do. Yet he was agitated because that knowledge was another day away. He began, however, to prepare himself. If necessity demanded it, he would say she was infatuated with him, and he spent nearly an hour creating in his mind answers to any questions he might face.

Pleased with himself again, he issued forth from his office to walk briskly to Fiona’s house. He was only a few minutes early and waited, leaning on her gate smoking his pipe. ‘I think we’d make a good combination’ he remembered she had said, ‘in bed.’

He waited half an hour; then an hour, leaning against her fence, a nearby lamppost and her door. He banged his fist against the door, stole a look through windows front and back, but no one was seen or came, and it was another half and hour before, in disappointment, he walked away. From his office he telephoned Magarita. But his recent experiences had done nothing to change his habits, and in the bedroom of her almost city-centre and quite artistically furnished flat, he resumed his manipulative role.

It was sad for Magarita that she loved him. She stood before him naked, her tawny hair held neatly by a band behind her head and already he had remarked about her tendency to plumpness. He held his camera ready.

“Go on!” he said, “just one of you sitting on the toilet.”

“No.”

“What are you afraid of?”

“I just don’t want to, alright?” She had begun to frown, and made to grab her clothes..

“Come here,” he said, almost softly.

Reluctantly, she did. Then he was kissing her and steering her toward the bed. She resisted, a little, but did not want to be alone and let him win again. Her ecstasy came slowly and when it was over and she wished to lie warm and languid beside him resting her head on his chest, he spoke to her again.

“Humour me,” he said and kissed her.

“Alright, then. But only one.”

He left shortly thereafter, clutching his undeveloped prize.

Sleep came easily to him on his own bed and he slept deeply until a disturbing dream awoke him. He dreamed he was in Fiona’s bed, waiting for her to join him. She was a long

time, and he fell asleep. Then warm hands were caressing his body and genitals, arousing him and he turned over to find not Fiona but Fenton, naked, beside him. Then Fenton was guiding his hand, downward.... He awoke sweating and kicking his bedclothes onto the floor.

He did sleep again, but in spasms of half-conscious tiredness and deep perplexing dreams, and when the hard, strident ringing on his clock alarm finally aroused him, he lay, tired and yawning and disturbed. But the passing minutes faded his memory of the dream, until it gradually slipped away from his conscious recollection. Outside, the sun glowed warmly, and he rose to select from his untidy collection a recording of loud modern music.

Soon, he was ready for his day. He forsook the black clothes of his pose, choosing instead a conventional ensemble replete with a silk bow tie. The effect pleased him and he smiled at himself in the mirror.

He was not surprised to find Andrea and Fenton seated next to each other in the room apportioned for his lecture. They did not smile or stare at him, but sat idly talking to those around them, their notebooks and pens ready on the table before them, and he began to wonder if it had all been some dream, for they appeared relaxed, at ease. But the feeling passed. It had been real, and he himself began to tremble and sweat.

Then his own emotions faded, as he remembered the plan of his lecture. For he was, after all, the master, they the disciples.

“Finally,” he said at his lecture’s end, “and in conclusion, you can say that Kant wished to prove that aesthetic experience improves our lives: it makes or can make us moral beings. In essence, that it its reason for existing. Any questions?”

“Yes,” Fenton said immediately. “So what you’re saying is that Kant’s aesthetics show the value of things like Art resides in the moral realm?”

“Not exactly! I believe Kant hints – and I repeat only hints – that aesthetic experience humanizes us. For example, in his *‘Solution to the Antinomy of Taste’* he – “

“Yes, but going on from there, what about the life of the artist – or indeed the philosopher. Does their life have to be moral, in the conventional sense, for their works to be perceived as sublime and thus contributing to an aesthetic experience?” Colin wanted to interject, but Fenton continued. “If you, for example, study the lives of most of the great artists – and some philosophers – you will find a certain turmoil, even moral turpitude. Then – “

“It is an interesting point,” he said, trying to smile. “But one not directly relevant to our study of Kant.

“I think it is very relevant to aesthetics. Central to the life of the philosopher, in fact.”

“Perhaps you would like to study the matter further.”

“I would have thought you would have developed Kant’s – what did you call it? Hints? – further.”

Colin looked around the room. “Any other points?” he asked.

Fenton said aloud, and to no one in particular, “it would make a good thesis – the lives of philosophers in relation to their ideas. Is there a correlation between the humanity of their teachings and the morality of their lives?”

“Perhaps,” Colin said with an elegant smile, “you should write a thesis about it – assuming you pass your finals.”

“No,” Fenton said, screwing up his face into a gargoyle-like expression, “it’s a boring subject. Much more important things to do.”

Gradually the students left. In the corridor, Colin heard talk and laughter. Was it about him, he wondered? But no one stared at him as he walked to his office. He was inside, smoking his pipe and glancing at Kant’s *‘Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime’* when a possible solution to what he saw as a potential problem occurred to him. He had no diary or timetable to consult, for he despised dependence on such items, but he knew from memory that no engagements, lectures, tutorials or assignments would hinder him, and he used his telephone to summon a taxi to convey him to his destination.

In his intense satisfaction, he rubbed his hands together and smiled.

Andrea had made her excuses in a brief telephone conversation and it was with some reluctance that she arrived at Julie's Flat in the afternoon at the re-arranged time. The Flat was part of an elegant Georgian building some distance from the centre of the city where a road fed an incessant stream of traffic and a little piece of parkland opened wide. But inside, there was only a perfumed silence, a clutter of books, furniture and bikes.

"The weather is just right! Julie said. "Do you want something to drink or shall we make a start?"

"I'm fine."

"Good! Here you are." She pointed to a bike in the small corridor. "I've adjusted the saddle height for you."

"Thanks."

Julie laughed. "Don't look so worried! Right, if you want to lug that down, I'll get changed and be right with you."

The cycle was lighter than Andrea expected, and she waited outside the front door of the apartment feeling slightly conspicuous. Julie duly arrived wearing skin-tight cycling shorts and jumper and carrying her gleaming bike. The shorts were black but the jumper was bright and banded. 'York Road Club' was flocked in large letters on the back.

Soon, Andrea was regretting her acceptance. The roads they took led them after a few miles beyond the limits of the city and, as houses gave way to hedges and fields, Andrea was tired and sweating profusely. She judged their pace fast; although for Julie it was only a slow dawdle.

"You alright?" Julie kept saying as she dropped back to ride beside her.

Andrea would nod, and smile, and turn the pedals faster in an effort to convince. But after a few more miles even her pride could not make her continue. She dismounted to lean the cycle against a field gate and sit herself on the ground. Julie returned to sit beside her.

“Here,” Julie said, giving her a handkerchief from a pocket of her jumper.

“Thanks.” She wiped the sweat on her forehead away.

“You look done in.”

“I am!”

“The sun is warm, isn’t it?”

“Yes.”

“Why don’t you take your cardigan off? You must be hot.”

Andrea looked at her suspiciously, but Julie laughed and said, “don’t worry! I’m not after your body – nice though it is!”

“I didn’t think you were,” Andrea said quietly and without conviction.

“I just want to be your friend. You seem to need one.”

“Is that what Carl said?”

“He said nothing. I like you, that’s all. Alright, so I’m gay. Big deal.”

Andrea felt like a fool and, although she did not want to because she did not feel particularly warm sitting in the breeze, she removed her cardigan.

“You thirsty?”

“Yes.”

“There’s a little tea shop just up the road.”

“Ah! Just what I need!” Then she added: “What do you mean by ‘just up the road?’”

“About five or six miles.”

“Six miles?” Are you serious?”

“Well, it was about six last time I looked on a map.”

“I didn’t mean that!”

“Think you can make it?”

“I don’t think so. But even if I could, we’ve got to ride back. How far is it back, anyway – from here?”

“Six or seven miles – no more.” She stood up and held out her hand. “Come on then! Home.”

Andrea let Julie help her up. She did not want to jerk her hand away as they stood facing each other for fear that Julie would misunderstand, so they stood looking at each other and holding hands for almost a minute. It was Julie who broke the contact, turning away abruptly. Then she was smiling again.

“I was going to say,” she laughed, “race you back!”

“Only if you give me an hours start!” She wrapped the arms of her cardigan around her waist.

A few cars passed them on their way into the city, and high cloud came to haze the sun. But it was a pleasant ride, for Andrea, and even the city streets, often dense with traffic, did not unduly disturb her. Yet she was glad when it ended. Her arms and legs ached, a little, her crotch a lot, and she felt bathed in her own sweat. The Flat felt warm and she let Julie carry



both bicycles, one after the other, up the stairs and into the spare room where they rested with others.

“What do you want first,” Julie asked her as they sat on the sofa, “Tea or a bath?”

Andrea blushed, and turned her face away. “Tea, I think.”

“Any preference?”

“Sorry?”

“What sort of tea would you like? Darjeeling? Assam? Formosa Oolong? Gunpowder?”

“I really don’t mind.”

“Look around. I won’t be long.”

In the kitchen, Julie began to sing. Andrea did not know what it was except that it sounded like opera. There were piles of books nearly enclosing the sofa, and Andrea picked the first book off one of them. ‘Lectures on Physics’ the bright red cover read. But the mathematical questions, the diagrams and even most of the words were meaningless to her, and she selected another. ‘Duino Elegies’. She was flicking through the pages when a handwritten piece of paper fell to the floor. The handwriting was vaguely familiar and she began to read. It was set out in stanzas and bore the title: ‘Fragment 31’.

Equal of the gods, it appears to me,

The man who sits beside you

And, being so near, listens

While you softly speak

And laugh your beautiful laugh

That in honesty makes my heart to tremble.

When I unprepared meet you

I am tongue-tied, words dry in my mouth

Flames dance under my skin

And I am blinded,

Hearing only the beating of my pulse.

My body, bathed in sweat, sways

And I am paler than sun burnt grass

And nearer to death...

She read the poem three times, and began to cry because it was so simple and yet so well expressed the feelings of love. How many times in the past few years of her life had she felt tongue-tied and trembled when she had met a beloved? Carefully, she wiped away the tears and replaced the paper within the book. She turned around and saw Julie watching from the doorway to the kitchen.

Julie did not speak but came to sit beside her and gently touch her face with her hand.

“I think your kettle is boiling,” Andrea finally said. But she was momentarily sad when the gentle touching stopped.

“What were you reading?” Julia asked almost nonchalantly, as they sat with their mugs of tea.

Nervous and embarrassed, Andrea gave her the book.

“Ah! The Sappho. Carl translated it for me. Lovely, isn't it?”

“Carl?” she asked. She had heard of Sappho, vaguely, but only now made the connection with the love between two women. She blushed, for suddenly that love seemed quite real and not strange. It was not that she identified with it but rather she intuitively understood in that moment that the love between two women was in no way different from the love

between a woman and a man. In that instant, all the conditioned responses, foisted upon her by her upbringing and society, of Sapphic love as unnatural and unhealthy, vanished.

“Carl?” she heard herself repeating, like an echo in a dream.

“Yes. He quite talented, you know. Could have been a classical scholar. Well anyway,” she laughed her vivacious laugh, “that’s what he tells me!”

Andrea smiled in response, and for the first time let her liking of Julie show in her face.

“You really like him, don’t you?” Andrea said.

“Of course!” She put her mug on the floor. “I know how you feel about him,” she said quietly.

“What do you mean?” Then: “Sorry, I didn’t mean it that way.”

“It’s alright. I saw.” Julie said, and held Andrea’s hand, “how you looked at him last night.”

“It’s not like that,” Andrea retorted and withdrew her hand. “He helped me through a very difficult time, that’s all.”

Julie simply smiled. “You don’t have to explain.”

“You make me want to.” She felt a desire to explain about her attempted suicide, but the desire did not last. “This race of yours on Sunday. What time did you say it started?”

“Six. You coming, then?” she asked enthusiastically.

“Yes, I’d like to.” She felt a fool about almost loving Carl.

Julie held up the book of Rilke’s poetry. “Have you read any?” she asked.

“No. I was never one for poetry at school.”

“I’m not surprised – considering the drivel they teach!” Shall I read you some?” Then, before Andrea could answer she said, “You don’t speak German do you?”

“No, sorry.”

“Ah well. But this translation is superb. Best ever done.” She opened the book and began to read.

After she had read the first elegy, they sat in silence for what seemed a very long time until Julie rose to play a record on her high-fidelity system. So they listened, and talked and read aloud to each other while the hours of the afternoon passed, the sun clouded over and twilight came to the world outside. And when the time of leaving came, as she knew it must, Andrea stood, re-assured in friendship, to embrace her new friend.

“I’ll see you on Sunday, then,” Andrea said before beginning her descent of the stairs.

“I’ll look forward to it.”

And so will I, Andrea thought as she walked toward the door.

## XVI

The taxi conveyed Colin to the gate of Magnus’ farm leaving him free to walk the track under the warm sun with trees and singing birds around him. The breeze refreshed him, and he slowed his pace.

No one came to greet him as he walked to the farmhouse, or answer his knock, and he stood looking round the farmyard where the odour of muck pervaded.

“Yes?” said a strong voice, startled him.

He turned to face Magnus. Tall though he himself was, Colin had to look up. Magnus’ sheepdog growled at him.

“Hi! I’m Colin. Edmund’s friend.” Wary, he moved away from the dog.

“He’s not here,” Magnus said gruffly.

“Well, it’s really Alison I came to see.”

“Is that so? And what would you be wanting with her?”

“I’d just like to talk to her.”

“Colin, you say?” Magnus asked, inspecting him.

“Yes. Colin Mickleman.”

“We don’t get many strangers, here.”

“She is here, isn’t she?”

“Could be. You any good with pigs?”

“You what?”

Magnus gave Colin the large shovel leaning against the wall. “I’ll get some boots. That lot,”

he indicated the pigpens, “needs shifting.”

Colin was still gaping in amazement when Magnus returned.

“But Alison,” Colin protested as Magnus handed him the boots.

“She’ll be along. Shouldn’t take you long to shift that lot.” The dog followed him as he walked away.

At first, Colin stood beside the smelly, stone-built sties whose occupants grunted loudly. Then, tired of waiting, he climbed over one of the low walls. To his surprise, the pigs did not attack him and he began the imposed task. Soon he was removing his jacket and rolling up the sleeves of his shirt. The work was half done – or seemed to him to be half done – when a woman’s laugh made him straighten his already aching back and turn around.

“You’ve found your true vocation, I see,” Alison said. She was dressed in obviously well used working denim clothes.

“Very funny.” He put down his shovel.

“They seem to like you,” she said, indicating the pigs. “Recognize their kin I suppose.” She laughed again.

Colin stepped back over the wall.

“You haven’t finished.” She said, disapprovingly.

“I came to see you, not muck out a pig sty!”

“A bit of practice – perhaps you’ll start with your room next!”

He ignored the insult and wiped sweat from his forehead with the back of his hand. “Is he always like that?”

“Who?”

“That big chap.”

“You mean Magnus? He's affable enough. Quite sweet, really.”

“You could have fooled me.”

“He obviously did!”

He winced, trying to ignore her laughter. “Is there anywhere I can wash?” he asked.

“There's a tap over there.” She pointed to the wall of one of the buildings.

“Thanks,” he said, obviously displeased. He returned to change back into his shoes and jacket. “Can we go somewhere and talk?”

“What's wrong with here? Fresh air, the smell of the country.”

“Well – it is not the perfect setting.” The pigs were grunting again.

“I suppose we could sit in the garden.”

He followed her. “Well?” she asked as they sat on the bench.

“This is not exactly easy.”

“What isn't?”

He sighed deeply, and then looked around. No one was watching, or even about, and he heard only the distant noise of the pigs, the songs of birds and the breeze in the trees.

“Will you marry me?” he asked.

For some reason Alison was so surprised she could not speak and when she did her voice was a single loud exclamation. “What!”

He shuffled his feet. “Will you marry me?” he repeated.

“Are you serious?”

“Yes.”

To fill the embarrassed silence, he said, “I know I have my faults, but I can try to change.”

She felt an instant love for him and remembered with intensity her former needs and desires. “Thanks,” she said briefly squeezing his hand with her own, “I do appreciate it.”

“Does that mean ‘no’ then?”

“It wouldn’t work.”

“It could.”

She watched his face become pale. “I’m sorry,” she said. “I really am, but I don’t love you. Not anymore, anyway.”

He was more sad that he could have imagined. “Perhaps it is for the best.” He stood up. “I was serious, you know.”

“I know.” She stood up and kissed him briefly.

“I’d better go.”



“How will you get back?”

”I have a taxi waiting.”

“Oh, I see.”

“I was going to ask you to come back with me. We’d look for a Flat or house somewhere. I’ve got some savings.”

Alison looked up at the sky. “Looks like it might rain.”

In that moment, as he stood beside her, his arms hanging limply beside him, he looked to her like a lost child. She embraced him warmly. “I’ll visit you,” she said before running toward the house. She had almost reached the door when she ran back.

“I haven’t changed my mind,” she said, “about the termination. I just wanted you to know. In case you thought – “ She was watching his face when she spoke, and even as the words were issuing forth from her mouth – an expression of her feeling and sudden confusion – she regretted saying them. “It wouldn’t have worked,” she added.

He shrugged his shoulders. “No, maybe not. Silly idea, really.”

“No it wasn’t! It was the real you. I only wish you’d shown that more often in the past.”

“I’d better get back. Can’t keep the taxi waiting for ever.”

“Will you be alright?” she said, almost as an afterthought as he began to walk away.

He turned, and she could see the face of his posing.

“I have weathered the storm,” he said, “I have beaten out my exile.” He bowed, smiled, and then turned away to lope along the winding driveway to the distant gate.

He had lied about the waiting taxi, and it was a long walk to the nearest village. There were no shops in the village, not even an Inn, and he was surprised when the elderly lady, bent by arthritis, who answered his knocking upon her cottage door, let him use her telephone.

The taxi was a long time coming, and he sat in her heated parlour drinking the tea she offered. She chatted amiably until his city transport came. He had been pleased, embarrassed and arrogantly cynical about her unaffected hospitality to a stranger, and it occurred to him as he sat in the car whose driver drove it along the, at first, twisty lanes and then the major roads to York, that his divergent feelings summoned up his attitudes to life. But this self-analysis made him even more depressed, and he arrived back at the University exhausted.

Darkness found him sitting smoking his pipe in the untidy clutter of his bedroom. He had begun to read several books, discarding one after the other after only a few lines were read, as he had several times begun to write an academic article promised weeks ago to the editor of a prestigious journal. But he was in no mood for work, his stomach pains had returned, and he sought relief by sauntering toward Andrea's room. He did not know what to do when he got there.

"Hello," he said as she, only recently returned, opened the door.

For a few seconds she felt pleased to see him, but the feeling vanished. Perhaps Carl's and Julie's friendship had given her some of the strength she needed, for she said, although not in a harsh voice, "I don't think we've got anything to say to each other."

"I just came to apologize," he said. Only half of him was sincere – for the Owl inside him was hoping to avoid any future problems.

"I'll be changing tutors," she said, attempting a smile. Now, she was wishing he would go away.

"Fine. I'll arrange it for you if you like."

"Yes."

"Well, I suppose I'd better get back to my work. I really am sorry."

"So am I." She closed the door upon him.

He had returned to his office and was sitting at his desk, smoking his pipe and wondering how to fill the long hours of the evening, when he heard footsteps outside. But it was only

Storr, shuffling to his own room carrying a bundle of books. He was disappointed, and telephoned Fiona's house. There was no reply.

"Enter!" Storr said as Colin knocked at his door.

"You don't happen to know where Fiona is, do you?" she asked as he entered.

Storr gave his quirky and toady smile. "Didn't you know? She's, er, gone away for some days."

"Do you know when she will be back?"

"Er, Monday. Yes, Monday. Anything I can help you with?"

"No."

"You ready for Tuesday?" he slobbered.

"Just about. I don't rate my chance, though."

"Come, come! Er, you underestimate yourself. Yes indeed."

He lifted one of the books off the stack on his desk. "My latest book," he smirked. "You, er, won't have seen it yet, of course."

"Well, I'll have to get back to work."

"You're welcome to a copy, of course." He held on out.

He humoured him, for Storr might next week become the Professor, "Thanks." He walked toward the desk and took the book.

"That will be ten pounds."

“You what?” said a surprised Colin.

“Ten pounds. Er, that includes the discount.”

Colin was annoyed. He put the book back on the desk. “I’ll read the Library copy. I’m sure you will be donating one. Or six.”

“Possibly, possibly.” Storr seemed oblivious to the comment. He looked lovingly at a copy of his book and spread his clammy hand over the spine. “So important for, er, a Professor to have an established reputation, don’t you think?”

“Depends on the reputation.”

“Quite, quite! My feeling exactly. Well, I’m glad we’ve had this little chat – cleared the air, so to speak. I do so, er, wish fortune favours you on Tuesday. Yes, indeed!” He glanced at his watch. “My word! I must be off. Er, nice to talk to you Colin.”

“I can’t say it’s been a pleasure,” he mumbled almost inaudibly in reply and left to seek the Union Bar with the intention of drinking himself into an alcoholic stupor.

Among the milling, sitting and standing crowd in the smoke infested room, he thought he saw Edmund. But when he pushed his way through the students, the individual had gone, leaving him to sit alone and self-pitying while an excess of alcohol dulled the processes of his brain.

## XVII

Sunday. Six o’clock in the morning, and Andrea yawned. It was quite cold, and she shivered as she stood on the verge of the road watching Julie pedal seemingly effortlessly away from the lay-by. A few other cyclists, all in racing clothing, ambled along, waiting for the start.

Then the first rider, his bicycle held steady by a helper, bent his head as the Timekeeper

counted down the seconds of his start.

“Five-Four-Three-Two-One. Go!

He was away, sprinting toward the rising sun where the road swung gently between hedges and fields and trees, to disappear from sight. No traffic came past to spoil the scene, and Andrea saw Julie join the small queue of riders that had formed.

“Good luck!” she said as she came to stand beside her.

“Thanks!” Julie’s smile was short. “This is the worst bit – waiting.”

She had covered her legs in strong smelling embrocation and Andrea found the smell faintly pleasing. It seemed somehow to complement the scene: the gleaming cycles, the strain of nervous anticipation upon the faces of those waiting.

Then Julie herself was gone, and Andrea walked slowly back to where Julie had left the car. It was the same one that Carl had borrowed with the addition of a rather grease-covered sheet to cover the rear seat whereon Julie’s cycle, with the wheels removed, had rested. Andrea sat inside, and waited, watching riders cycle by, a few cars arrive to disgorge their drivers and their cycles. Then, tired of sitting, she stood by the side of the road.

“You’re Julie’s friend, aren’t you?” a young man asked her as he brought his cycle to a stop beside her.

His ginger hair was short but curled, and on the back of his cycling jumper she saw the words ‘York Road Club’.

“Yes,” she said. His body was lean rather than muscular and his face was broadly smiling.

“There is no wind,” he said looking around, “should be fast times, today.”

“What time do you hope to do?” she asked, trying to appear knowledgeable.

“Not too bothered, really. Early in the season yet. Still, I’ll be satisfied with a fifty-five.”

“What number do you start?” It was pleasant, she felt, chatting, while the sun gradually warmed the earth and the friendly cyclists gathered in groups around her, talking in their sometimes strange jargon: *‘There I was, honking up the hill on fixed when the rear tub blew...’*

The young man smiled at her. “I’m off at last. You not riding?”

“No. Well, actually Julie is trying to convert me.”

“Got promise, she has,” he said, seemingly to no one in particular. “What do you do?” he asked her directly.

“I’m at University.”

“Well, nobody’s perfect!”

His broad smile stopped her being offended.

He looked at his watch. “Better get warmed up. Hope I’ll see you later.”

“Maybe.”

He had started to cycle away when he shouted back. “See you at the result board, then.”

Nearly an hour had elapsed since Julie’s departure and she was sauntering to where another Timekeeper stood beside a checkered board when Julie swept past, her eyes fixed intently on the road ahead of her, her speed fast. There were a few cheers from the small crowd as she went by to only gradually slow her speed while a single car, its occupants staring at the strange spectacle, noisily motored past.

It seemed to Andrea a long time before Julie returned, sweating, her face flushed but pleased. Carefully, she leant her cycle against the car before briefly embracing Andrea. Then she was covering herself in extra clothing.

“You alright?” Andrea asked.

“Great! First time under the hour!” She checked the stopwatch strapped to the handlebars of her cycle for the third time.

They were soon standing among the crowd around the results board where Julie revelled in the congratulations from members of her own and other clubs. Slowly, the board became full of times set against the listed names, and Andrea, feeling somewhat bored, was watching a man write '55-23' against the name of the last rider to start when the young man came and stood beside her.

“I see Julie broke the hour,” he said, and wiped his brow of sweat. A dark tracksuit swathed his body.

“Yes,” and she returned his smile. “Looks like you won easily.”

He shrugged his shoulders. “It was a good day. No real opposition. Fast men are riding Boro' course today.

“Hey!” Julie said as she joined them. “Congratulations!”

“And to you!” He accepted her sisterly kiss, but blushed.

“Well,” Julie said to Andrea, briefly touching her arm with her hand, “you deserve congratulating as well!”

“Sorry?”

Julie laughed. “You've got to talk to him after a race! Usually he just goes off by himself.”

Andrea watched the young man blush again.

“Ah!” Julie turned, and waved at someone in the crowd still gathered around the board, “there's Jill. I'll see you in a minute.”

They both watched her go. For almost a minute there was an embarrassed silence between them. Andrea broke it by asking, "What does the J stand for?" She pointed toward his name on the board.

"James."

"I'm Andrea. Is this your fastest time?"

"No. I've done a short fifty-four. You don't race, then?"

"Fraid not. Didn't know such things existed until I met Julie."

"That used to be the point. Anyway, I'd better be off, doesn't do to stand around too long."

"I suppose not."

He looked around, then said somewhat shyly, "There's a club 'ten' on Wednesday evening if you'd like to come."

"Yes. Yes, I would."

"I'll see you there, then."

She saw him walk toward an older man, give him the tracksuit and collect his cycle. Soon he was out of sight as he pedalled down the road. He seemed to her to make his riding seem effortless.

"James gone, then?" Julie asked her.

"Yes. Is there a club something-or-other on Wednesday?"

"A ten mile time trial, yes. Why?"



“James mentioned it. You going?”

“Usually do. You certainly made an impression on him.”

“What do you mean?”

“He hardly talks to anybody. Quiet type of chap. Mind you,” she said in a quieter voice, “can’t blame him. I quite fancy you myself. As if you didn’t know.”

Andrea smiled weakly.

But Julie said, “Don’t worry! I do understand.” She kissed her briefly, then walked quickly away. The tears she felt were soon suppressed, and she needed only a barely perceptible movement of her hand to wipe her eye dry. “Marvellous time James did, wasn’t it?” she said to a club member among the crowd as, out of the corner of her eye, she watched Andrea watching the road. She knew her friend was hoping for James to return.

Nearby, two blackbirds vied in song.

## XVIII

Colin Mickleman felt uneasy. The late afternoon sun was warm as he walked toward Derwent and the inevitable congratulations.

The interview had astounded him. The Vice-Chancellor was exceedingly affable, and the whole exercise seemed a formality, as if they were, in the favoured tradition of elderly academics, being polite and excusing him for his temerity in applying. ‘Too young’, he thought they would mutter among themselves while he sat with the other candidates awaiting their judgement; ‘no substantial work published’ they would smile.

Now, in the busy soft lateness, he was walking toward his Department. No one stopped him, as he half-expected them to, saying: ‘Good afternoon, Professor!’ No one – student, staff or

friend – ran to him saying: ‘Well done! And so young!’

Instead, the quiet steady sameness of concrete, path, students and sun remained as they had remained for years, and he waited uneasily, fearing it was all a mistake.

‘We’re so sorry, Doctor Mickleman. We’ve made the most dreadful mistake....’ It was unbelievable because it had been so easy.

They were waiting, as he expected them to be – crowded into the secretarial office. Some bottles of wine had been procured and, in turn, they all offered their sincerest congratulations. Fiona – voluptuous, delectable Fiona; Mrs. Cornish – almost prim, except she had exchanged her small cigars for a pipe; Horton, squeezing his hand painfully: ‘Excellent choice! They have seen sense at last!’ Even Whiting. They were all present, shaking his hand, opening their mouths with thanks and praise. Except Storr, who looked on sourly, and soon slunk away.

Soon the insincere statements began. “I was hoping they would appoint you,” said Hill.

Timothy, in an azure ensemble and wearing a strong perfume, clasped Colin’s hand weakly. “You don’t look very happy,” he said quietly.

“Just surprised.” He looked around, desperate to be rescued.

“I’m sure you’d like to be alone.”

“What?” Then, seeing that Timothy was sincere, he added, “Yes. Yes I would.”

“You’ll need time to adjust.”

Colin smiled, and escaped to his office. Its chaos seemed out of keeping with his Professorship, and in a frenzy of activity he began to try to tidy it. It was some minutes later when he realized his efforts would be in vain since he would be given new offices as befitted his new status, and he sat down at his still cluttered desk to smoke his pipe. But he soon became filled with a nervous excitement.

His walk took him down to the lake and he wandered along the grassy bank between trees of willow, pleased with himself and his world. He was approaching the wooded bridge of Spring Lane, shadowed by trees, when he saw Fiona. She was leaning against the lattice of the bridge in an animated conversation with the Vice-Chancellor, and it seemed to Colin from his posture and her smile that there existed intimacy between them. He could not hear the words that passed between them and was about to walk away when Fiona turned and saw him. She waved and then spoke briefly to the Vice-Chancellor who staidly walked away, as befitted his position and traditional manner of dress.

Colin was still standing by the side of the lake, his mind befuddled, when she approached him

“I think,” she said softly, and smiled, “you owe me a favour.”

“Is that so?” He had tried to make his voice sound strong, but his words emerged as a feeble croak.

“I shall have my camera ready. Tonight.” She laughed, and left him standing trembling and alone.

It was several minutes before he resumed his walk. The Physics building, Goodricke, Wentworth, Biology, Vanbrugh, Langwith... he passed them all to finally stop by a narrow wooden bridge whose trees sang with the songs of birds. He stood and listened, watching the water below him swell gently.

But his surroundings did nothing to ease the turmoil of his mind, and he walked back toward his office with stomach pains grieving him.

At the top of the stairs he met Timothy. “Visited your new office yet?” he asked in a friendly manner.

“No,” came the curt Mickleman reply.

But Timothy was not offended. “If there is anything I can do to help –“

“No thank you!” His stomach pains seemed worse.

“But even you need someone to talk to.”

Timothy’s eyes were evidential of understanding, and Colin’s impending, and clever, insult was negated by his sudden and momentary empathy with him. For a quintessential moment of time he perceived the human person behind the mask of the individual before him: someone who lived, and who probably suffered; who experienced sadness and joy, pleasure and pain.

But the moment was only a moment: his own patterns of thought and feeling flowed on past this one insight to create another moment when he was not a unity with all things. Yet an almost ineffable memory remained.

“Thanks,” he said kindly.

Timothy smiled. “It is better to live unhappily than not to live at all.”

Then he was gone, down the stairs. But it was not long before a shadow fell between Colin’s moment of understanding and his past.

Magarita was in her own small office in the quiet confines of her Department, and he sat on the edge of her desk while she continued to type her letter. The room was obsessively tidy with a profusion of plants scattered around.

“Look, I am very busy,” she said. “I must get this done.”

“You haven’t heard, then?”

“Heard what?” She did not look up from her work.

“Nothing important,” he sulked.

She continued with her typing for a while as he began to rearrange the furnishings on her desk.

Exasperated, she shouted: “Stop it!”

He was still for only a short time, and began to noisily remove, and then replace, books from her bookcases.

“Aren’t you going to ask?” he said.

“Whatever it is, I’m not interested! Damn! Now look what you’ve made me do!” She tried to correct her typing mistake.

“I was appointed Professor today,” he said with apparent indifference.

“Bully for you!”

“Is that all you can say?”

She made another mistake and, in anger, tore the paper from the typewriter, screwed it up into a ball and threw it at him.

He smiled. “I stood still,” he said, quoting his favourite poet of the year, “and was a tree amid the wood, knowing the truth of things unseen before.” He smiled again. “To wit. I surmise you period is coming.”

She was struggling to insert another sheet of paper into her typewriter as he said this, but crumpled it. She yanked it out. It also became a projectile but missed its target. “Just leave me alone!” she shouted.

“Come on,” he said. “Let’s go and celebrate. You’ll feel better.”

His assumptions infuriated her, and she threw a book at him.

“Temper! Temper! Her breasts had wobbled as she threw the book, and he came to her and tried to touch them, his lust aroused.

She pushed him away, but he persisted. Then she slapped his face.

“Leave me alone!” She shouted.

For a few seconds he stood staring at her, and then turned to walk out of her room. He waited outside, in the corridor, for many minutes, expecting her to follow, and when she did not he walked into the cloud-weakened sunlight. Behind him, he could hear her typewriter clacking. He had not gone far when his stomach pains returned, fiercer than before. He was soon back at her room.

“What do you want?” she asked querulously as he opened the door.

He held his hand against his stomach. “I’ve got those pains again.”

“Go to the Doctor, then,” she said without sympathy. “It’s getting late and I must finish this and get it into the post.”

Her indifference perplexed him. She began to type again, but stopped after a few seconds.

“Look,” she said, sighing, “I’ve been doing some thinking today and I think it would be better if we didn’t see each other again.”

“What?”

“You heard. It’s over.”

Sudden, outright rejection was a new experience for him and he stared at her. His pain became worse. “Alright, then if that’s what you want.” His indifference was affected.

“Yes it is. We are just not compatible.”

“I thought we got on rather well.”

“There is more to a relationship than sex. Anyway, I must finish this letter.”

“Fine.” He shrugged his shoulders and began to wonder who might be next on his list of conquests.

He was at the door when she said, “And by the way. Congratulations, Professor Mickleman.”

He did not see her begin to cry.

By the time he reached Fiona’s house both his body and his spirit had recovered, and he leaned against her doorframe, smiling as he knocked.

A bath towel hung loosely around Fiona’s body. “Come in!”

“Your invitation – “ he said as she closed and locked the door firmly behind him.

“Shall we go up?” She pointed toward the stairs.

“Not for what you have in mind.”

“Really?” She smiled, and seemed unconcerned by his tone.

“OK So I’d like to go to bed with you.”

“You do surprise me,” she said mockingly.

“But as for your little games – no way!”

“Such a shame. Are you so afraid of me?”

“I’m not afraid of you at all!” he countered.

“Really?” She smiled at him again. “You do surprise me. You do, however, owe me a favour.”

“So what? There is nothing you can do – now.”

“Are you sure?”

He was not certain, but did not let any of his doubt show. “Let’s go upstairs,” he said quietly.

Slowly, she removed her towel to stand naked before him then turn and walk up the stairs. On her bed, the camera and handcuffs lay ready. He saw them, as he entered the room.

“Take your clothes off!” She commanded him, and held the camera ready.

“No!” He moved toward her, and knocked the camera out of her hand but before he could push her down to the bed as he had intended, she kicked him in the groin. He fell to the ground, helplessly clutching his genitals, and by the time he had recovered sufficiently to look up, she was dressed in a bathrobe.

“Get out!” She said sternly, and he slowly obeyed.

She pushed him through the front door of her house.

“You’ll pay for this, you bastard!” she shouted as he half-hobbled down her garden path toward the street.

Slowly, it began to rain.

## XIX

The silence of the mountain was disturbed only by the wind, and Colin stood contentedly observing the view. From Glyder Fawr he could see the smoothed outline of Snowdon in the distance and then, in the east, the jagged rocks of the Castle of the Winds, only a short walk



from the slate-strewn plateau where he stood. There was no sun, only mist edging its way toward him and gradually obscuring his view. Then there were faces around him – a coven of laughing faces enclosing him in their circle. Fiona was there, laughing. And Andrea. Fenton and Alison – all laughing while he stumbled toward the edge, trying to escape.

“You’ll pay for this!” Fiona’s voice said.

There was no father to rescue him, as there had been in his youth when, together, they climbed the Idwal slabs below. He felt himself falling – only to awake in the dim light of a hospital ward at night. In a bed nearby someone coughed loudly.

Three nurses were sitting together at a table in the middle of the ward, a low lamp spreading a pool of light around them, and Colin began to wonder what Fiona had done to him. ‘You’ll pay for this, you bastard!’ he remembered.

But his attempt to sit up and get out of his bed brought a return of his stomach pain, and he lay back, sweating and remembering the events of the evening. The pains had become excruciating as he, like a drunken man, had staggered away from Fiona’s house. There was a brief telephone call he had made from somewhere to his Doctor. A brief visit by the Doctor to his bedroom, and then the Ambulance and another medical examination. “We’ll keep you in overnight. For observation,” the youthful hospital Doctor said.

Sleep proved difficult for Colin. The ward was stuffy, with a subdued but persistent background of noise – coughing, the movements of patients in their beds, the wandering of the watchful Nurses, someone snoring – and his pain was not a sedative.

Dawn found him restive and anxious. There was a trolley laden with an urn of tea, but his pleading was in vain, for the smiling but elderly Auxiliary Nurse pointed to the red sign that hung in adornment from the top of his bed: ‘Nil By Mouth’ it read.

“But why?” he asked.

“Doctor’s orders. They’ll see you in the morning, dear.”

“But it is morning.”

“Later. When they do the rounds.”

When this ‘later’ came – after much activity among both the patients and staff including a trolley bearing an assortment of sometimes richly smelly breakfasts – the assembled huddle of white coats with dangling stethoscopes and attendant blue-clad, stern faced Sister simply passed him by, except for a curt: ‘He can go home’ issuing forth from a wizened face.

A lowly young Nurse came bearing these tidings some minutes later.

“You can get dressed now,” she said as she began to rummage in his bedside locker for his clothes.

“So God has spoken, then?”

The Nurse suppressed a laugh, and kicked the locker door shut with her foot.

“This is intolerable!” the now almost distant voice of God said as he stood with his acolytes around a bed. “Sister, if you cannot control your Nurses – “

The Nurse by Colin’s bed turned away from the Consultant’s stare.

“This summation gallop is difficult to hear – “ the Consultant said in a very audible mutter.

“I’ll put the curtains round,” the Nurse whispered to Colin.

She began this not altogether noisy task when the Sister came to stop her. “Not now,” she said. “Side-ward!”

The Nurse went to join the other staff skulking out of harm’s way.

It seemed to Colin a long time before she returned.

“Hope I didn’t get you in trouble,” he said, and smiled his Owlsh smile.

“Nah!”

“Is he always like that?”

“Huh! Today was a good day! Get him on a bad day and – “ She began to giggle. “Oops!”

He sensed the reason for her sudden embarrassment and said, “It’s alright, I won’t tell anyone.”

“Trust me! Always being bleedin’ unprofessional!”

“You been a Nurse long?”

She finished laying his clothes out on the bed. “Nah! A few months.”

“You training, then?”

“Yep! First ward, this.”

“Really? You seem very competent.”

“You must be joking!”

“Think you’ll stick at it?”

“Who knows? Me mam says I never stick at anything. There you go.” She drew the curtains around the bed. “Be a Doctor’s letter for ya, in the office.”

“What time do you finish?”

She gave a quizzical look. “You askin’?”

“Got any plans for tonight?”

“Not really, You’re a right one, aren’t you?”

“You in the Nurses Home, then?”

“I’ll have to go. Don’t forget your letter!”

Then she was gone, and he was left to dress himself in solitude, straighten his bedclothes and walk smiling to the Ward office.

The Ward Sister was using the telephone, looked up briefly to acknowledge his presence and pushed a brown envelope toward him across the cluttered desk. “Give it to your own Doctor,” she said to him.

“The new patient’s here, Sister,” another Nurse interjected as she pushed past Colin.

“Just a minute,” the Sister said into the telephone. On her desk, the other telephone rang. “He’s a CVA,” she said to the Nurse. “Second bed on the right. I’ve bleeped Doctor Stone.”

Colin took the envelope and slipped away. The corridor that gave access to the Wards was full of unused beds and trolleys of varying descriptions, and from the Public Telephone kiosk he dialled Magarita’s number.

“What do you want?” her voice said in reply.

“I’m in hospital,” he said. “Admitted last night.”

“Are you serious?”

“Would I joke about it? Listen – “ He held the receiver out into the noisy corridor: people passing, a porter whistling, the sounds of trolleys being wheeled, a gaggle of voices.

“Are you alright?” she said in a softer voice.

“Yes, I think so. I went to the Doctor like you said. They kept me in overnight. But they are letting me home now.”

“Shall I come and collect you?”

He could hear the guilt creeping into her voice.

“That would be kind! I’ll be waiting outside the main entrance.”

“I’ll be a quick as I can. Bye!”

It was a smiling Colin who stood in the bright and warming sunlight to wait for his lover’s arrival. And when she did come, voicing her concern, he let his expression change as though he still felt some pain.

“What did they say?” she asked as she drove him back toward his University home.

“Not a lot. Thought it might be an ulcer acting up. Eat less fatty foods – that sort of thing.”

“I always said your diet was disgusting!”

“I’m sorry about yesterday.”

“It’s me that should apologize.”

“You free this evening?”

“Yes.”

He caressed her leg with his hand. “I’ll look forward to it.”



“Is Fiona in?” he asked the Departmental Secretary as he opened the door to her office.

“Good morning, Professor!” she laughed. “You alright? We heard the news. About hospital, I mean.”

“Fine. Just a bit of stomach trouble. Is Mrs. Pound about.”

“No. She’s taking some time off. Didn’t say when she’d be back. Least ways, no one’s told me! Been to your new office, yet?”

“Just now, yes. How’s Albert?” he asked, alluding to her husband.

“Moaning – about work. Too much at the moment. Still, it’ll pay for the holiday.”

“Going anywhere in particular?”

“Florida.”

“You should get a nice tan.”

“Hope so!”

“You’ll have to let me see you when you get back.”

“Maybe I will, at that!”

“Keeping you satisfied, is he?” he asked, smiling lasciviously.

“Yeah! I’ll say!”

“Pity. Thought my luck was in.”

“Get off with you!” she laughed. “Want your mail?” She handed him a bundle.

“Thanks. Well, I’d better go and inspect my domain.”

His new office was spacious and bright with a particularly good vista of the lake, and as he sat at his desk, surrounded by empty bookcases, he felt intense pleasure. It was not that he had forgotten Fiona’s meeting with the Vice-Chancellor but rather that it felt irrelevant. His work should be his justification: with his teaching, his own research and his mastery of the Department there could never be a threat to his position. He was happy, and felt eager to begin his tasks. There was his afternoon lecture, the first in his new role, his evening assignation with Magarita, his first Departmental meeting of tomorrow. There would be, in that morning, many hours of peace for him to write – his continued contributions, diligently researched, presented and prepared, to the wealth of philosophical knowledge.

No more would he seek out female students, for he knew they could be a snare to entrap him, and the knowledge of this dismayed him – but only for a while. He began to think of stratagems to circumvent the dangers: of how he might choose more wisely, and this pleased him, as his recollection of other possibilities did. He would forego them – for a while at least. He thought of the Nurse who had attended him, and began to contrive a new and owlsh campaign. She would look good, in her uniform, standing on the chair in his room while he photographed her.

Smiling happily to himself, he left his office to begin the tasks of his new Professorial day. Over the University, a few ragged cumulus cloud came to briefly cover the sun.

## XX

The Temple was quiet and Edmund sat, quite still in the semi-darkness amid the lightly swirling incense, facing the stone altar. The Temple was large, the walls lined with oak panelling, and Edmund sat for a long time, his eyes vaguely fixed upon the stone statue near the altar. It showed, in a realistic way, a seated naked woman one of whose hands held the severed head of a man.

Then, his task fulfilled, he stretched himself before standing, allowing his bare feet to caress the luxurious carpet. As if on cue, the heavy Temple door opened, throwing a shaft of bright light into the Temple and onto the statue.

“I wondered if you would come down to me here,” he said to the woman who entered the room.

“Did I have a choice?” Fiona said, and smiled.

She wore an amber necklace and was dressed in a purple silk robe.

“There is one person I still have to see,” he said.

“Surely she can wait.”

He smiled at her understanding. “We have plenty of time.”

“I shall wait for you here, then.”

He smiled in reply and walked out of her Temple up the stairs to the ground floor of her house. It was only a short walk to the University and Alison’s room. She was there, as he knew she would be, and she embraced him while he stood in the doorway.

“You’ve decided to complete your studies, then?” he said as she broke away from their embrace.

She watched him for a while, but his smiling face seemed to answer her unasked question.

“Of course!” she said.

“And then?”

“I don’t know. Teach. Compose, perhaps.”



“I’m glad.”

For almost a minute she watched him in silence. Then she said, “Even now I don’t understand you.”

“There shall be time enough for understanding when you are old and the inner fire burns less bright. Maybe through your music you’ll find a way.”

She laughed, a little nervously, for it was as if in that moment she sensed something powerful: something illuminating yet dark. A transient feeling to inspire her Art perhaps. Something that perchance he in some way had given her? Was it his eyes, his look? She did not know, but the moment passed, to leave her with a memory, disturbing only in part.

“Will you be seeing Professor Mickleman?” he asked.

“No. He is part of my past.”

“Perhaps that’s wise. I really have to go now.”

“You’ll keep in touch?”

“Of course. People like you are rare.”

She smiled, half-defensively. “Take care, won’t you?”

“Naturally,” He gave his enigmatic smile, turned and left her staring after him. Suddenly, new music grew in almost swirling profusion inside her head.

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Fiona was lying on the floor of her Temple, as if asleep, when Edmund returned. In his absence she had lit two purple candles and placed them on the altar where they spread their esoteric light to enhance her beauty. For a few moments, he watched her breasts rising and falling with the motion of her breathing before laying down beside her to caress her body through the silk of her robe. She did not move, except to slightly part her lips, as his caressing began.

Slowly, his touching continued. Then she was kissing him, lips to lips and lips to flesh, her

hands clawing at his clothes, and it was not long before they were writhing about on the carpet of the Temple, naked and joined in carnal bliss. Her cries of ecstasy were not loud, as his final cry was not, and they lay, sweating from their exertion and pleasures, for some time.

She broke their silence. "Have you achieved what you wished – with him?"

"Who can say – who cannot say?"

"Sometimes you can be quite infuriating!"

"Is that so?"

"Yes!"

As he stood up, she said: "And Alison?"

"Ah! Forces shall be earthed, presenced, in her music."

She looked at him then, and he guessed her meaning. "You don't have to ask," he said, to re-assure her.

"All this," she gestured around her Temple with her hand, "can be yours."

"I have retired."

"So you said." She retrieved her robe and he began to dress himself.

"I have other things to do," he said.

"And me?"

"You are useful here."

“Part of the grand design?” she mocked.

“You know exactly what I mean.”

“Perhaps. Tell me, why did you wait?”

“For this, you mean?” he asked, smiling.

“From the moment you revealed yourself I was willing. Well, before then as well,” she laughed.

“It was necessary to wait.”

“There are lots of things I would like to ask you. We’ve hardly spent any time together.”

”Delicacies are best contemplated and then savoured slowly.”

“Tell me, how did you know?”

”About your past, your secret?”

”Yes.”

“A Master shall always know his Mistresses of Earth even though they have never met. And your own group? What of them?”

“I tired of them – long ago.”

“Forsaking the external for the internal?”

“Something like that.” She smiled at him. “But you interest me.”

When he did not reply, she said: “He will never realize, will he?”

Attuned to her, he said: “Naturally not. His ego would never allow even an entertainment of the thought. An interesting experiment – with perhaps an excellent result and future sinister promise. We shall see. Now, I really must be going.”

“Must you?” She removed her robe and walked toward him in the now flickering light of the candles.

“Well, perhaps not just yet.”

Above them, and nearby, new inner nexions were opening.

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*Fini*

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# Breaking The Silence Down

## Order of Nine Angles

First issued 1985 e.n.

This corrected version (v.1.03) issued 119 Year of Feyen

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## Introduction

The following MS extends and amplifies the esoteric matters dealt with in *'The Deofel Quartet'*, and the esoteric insight it deals with is appropriate to an aspirant Internal Adept.

Unlike the MSS in *The Deofel Quartet*, the magickal and "Satanic" aspects, themes and nature of this work are not overt, nor implicit nor obvious, and thus - exoterically - it does not appear to be a work of Sinister, or even of Occult, fiction.

However, the MS can – like the works of the Quartet – be read without trying to unravel its esoteric meaning. Like those other works, it might through its reading promote a degree of self-insight and supra-personal understanding within the reader. Unlike the works of the Quartet (which in the main are concerned on the polarity of male/female vis-à-vis personal development/understanding) this

present work centres, for the most part, around the alternative, or gay (in this case, Sapphic), view.

An understanding of this view is necessary for a complete integration of all divergent aspects of the individual psyche – an integration which the Rite of Internal Adept creates.

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*Wash your throats with wine  
For Sirius returns  
And we women are warm and wanton!*

*Before I WAS, you were sightless:  
You looked, but could not see;  
Before I WAS, you had no hearing:  
You heard sounds, but could not listen.  
Before I WAS, you swarmed with men,  
But did not enjoy.  
I CAME, opened my body and  
Brought you lust, softness, understanding, and love!  
My breasts pleased you  
And brought forth darkness and joy...*

(Synecdoche: The Dark Daughters of Baphomet)

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**Prologue**

*Shropshire, Late 1970's (e.n.)*

Summer had come early to the Shropshire town of Greenock, perched as it was on the lofty bank that overlooked the Severn valley and the undulating land southeast of Shrewsbury, and Leonie Symonds set her face against the dry wind that swirled dust past the half-timbered Guildhall. Down the narrow street she could see a woman struggle with her hat in the wind

that rattled the iron sign beside the ancient Raven Inn.

A farmer in his dirty jeep wished her good day but the wind snatched at his words and he was left to spit on the pavement as he turned his vehicle toward his distant farm. Thunder was brewing, but the lightning was still many miles to the east.

Inside, the Raven Inn was cool and Richard Apthone, with an unaccustomed mug of ale, settled nervously in a corner, folding his town-styled jacket neatly beside him. The silence which had greeted his entrance filled slowly, and soon the conversation had resumed its leisurely pace.

“I canna’ think w’eer ‘es gwun,” he heard a voice say. The room was shadowed darkly, stained by almost a century of smoke, soot from the open fire and the centuries old oak timbers, and Apthone felt uneasy.

Dominoes rattled against a dark oak table. “Whad’n you bin doin’ at my house?” a voice asked.

“Him bin doin’ summat!”

In the sky, the thunder had begun, relieving some of Apthone’s tension, and he settled down to slowly drink his mug of teak-coloured ale.

No rain came, and Leonie waited for half an hour outside the Inn under a darkening sky before walking away. She possessed no courage to follow Apthone further. He was a Probationary teacher, his spotty face fresh from University, while she was thirty-two and divorced. He had left her, and his mocking laugh still pained.

Slowly, Leonie ambled along the narrow street to the ruins of the Priory. Greenock owed its existence to the Cluniac foundation, and the town had continued its quiet, if at times prosperous, existence after the Reformation in the sixteenth century, a huddle of half-timbered and limestone buildings, until modern development had ruined its charm. The old town, clustered on four narrow streets to the west and south of the Priory and nurtured by the medieval prosperity of the monks and the local trade in corn and wool, had been conquered by new red-brick estates whose occupiers and owners owed little, if anything, to the long and rich heritage of the town or the land around. The old, cloistered community, bred through centuries of local toil, tied to the land or the local trades of such a small market town, was dying out. But a few remained, unchanged in speech or gesture, and sometimes a few of the surviving men

would gather to talk in their strange dialect in the dark of the Raven Inn. From a small town famed for its stonemasons, Greenock had grown haphazardly to hold over a thousand souls.

The sky above the Priory ruins darkened again, and Leonie sat on the dry grass by the high remains of the south transept, listening to the distant rumble of articulated lorries that skimmed against the west of the town along the main road that joined somewhere to somewhere else.

Her childhood had been strict and Catholic and she found a form of comfort among the ruins. Its destruction seemed to lessen her own feelings of rejection and for several minutes she felt saddened as if the stones were giving up to her, after all the intervening centuries, all the intervening prayers and plainsong that had seeped into them, year-by-year, day-by-day and DivineOffice-by-DivineOffice. Once, as a child, she had felt the call of her God, the holy promise of a religious vocation, but the years drew away the calling as she fulfilled the ambitions of her parents at University and through marriage. Perhaps she had been wrong, and she touched the rough stone of the transept by way of expiation. Perhaps her God was punishing her for her desertion of His cause. For years a vague need had suffused her, a longing whose fulfillment would somehow imbue her life with meaning and perhaps even joy. Her marriage had failed, her affair with Richard seemed over and she began to realize that it was human affection she craved. For an instant she longed to rest in the divine love of her God's human and crucified Son, but her faith was broken, chipped away by intellectual doubts and the desires of the flesh.

She sat for nearly half an hour amid the petriochor of storm, trying to desire nothing. She was unsuccessful, and found her thoughts drifting between the selfishness of Apthone and the kindness of Diane. She had dreamt of Diane many times but after each dream was ashamed and as if to punish herself for this betrayed, she clung to Apthone. She despised herself for her dependence and there had been days when she appeared cold and cynical towards him until her generosity of spirit triumphed. Diane Dietz was her most intimate friend – a colleague in whom she had confided after her divorce – but the friendship had become both her blessing and her curse. The more she confided, the more she wanted to confide simply to preserve the special moments when they seemed to share the same understanding, feel the same feelings and perhaps nurture the same desire.

But the stones were no longer singing for her and she walked away from the Priory, her sadness and her dreams.



Leonie was late again. She did her best to appear unhurried and failed. Hume 4, her first class of the day, were all present among the desks and overturned chairs and she fumbled with her books while waiting for the tumult to subside.

“Cor, Miss!” shouted one of her girls whose leg warmers were singularly inappropriate considering the weather, “I like your dress.”

Leonie smiled. The early morning Sun of summer cast shadows over the nearby fields and for an instant she forgot Aphone’s harsh words, the spot on her chin and her recent divorce.

The class soon settled to their work and she enjoyed watching them while they toiled with their essay. Somewhere, along the road that joined the large Comprehensive school to the small town of Greenock, a noisy mower trimmed drought-burned grass.

Soon, too soon for Leonie, the lesson was over and she watched while the children fled at the sound of the bell to add more noise to the corridor outside. The cloudless sky over the fields near Windmill Hill made her happy and she wandered contently along the corridors to the Staff Room. Aphone stood by the door. She smiled and went toward him but he was embarrassed by the attention and walked away haughtily down the stairs. ‘Look,’ she remembered he had said, ‘I enjoy sleeping with you – but as for anything else, forget it.’

Suddenly, her happiness disappeared like sun behind thick cloud.

“Are you alright, Leonie?” a gentle voice asked her. There seemed such warmth of understanding there, in her eyes, that Leonie blushed and in her confusion allowed Diane to guide her, like a lost child, into the Staff Room and onto a chair. She was brought a cup of coffee, and biscuits, and when Diane moved away to collect some books from a chair by the window, Leonie followed her every movement. Diane was a sylph, and Leonie envied her. She felt herself unattractive – her hips were too large, her breasts were different sizes and too big for her stature and she had wrinkles around her eyes. Diane’s skin was fair, unblemished and soft and she experienced a sudden desire to touch it.

By the time Diane returned, she had composed herself sufficiently to ask, “How is your husband?”

“Off on one of his jaunts again. He’s training to cycle from Land’s End to John O’Groats in

three days. Silly bugger!” As she laughed her small breasts wobbled, just a little.

Leonie lit a cigarette and nervously blew the smoke away.

“Is it Richard?” Diane asked softly.

“Yes.” It was only half a lie. Diane’s physical nearness was making her tremble and she felt ashamed. Part of her wanted to touch Diane’s long hair. It was soft and flaxen and swayed slightly in the breeze from the window.

There was anguish on Leonie’s face and Diane said, “Would you like me to have a word with Richard?”

“No, please!” She placed a restraining hand on Diane’s arm but almost as soon took it away. She felt disgusted that Diane might be disgusted with her desire. She forced herself to think about other things.

“Are you going to Morgan’s party tonight?” Diane asked, intruding upon Leonie’s morbid thoughts.

“No – I don’t think so.”

“That’s a pity,” Diane said sincerely. “I wanted you to go.”

Perplexed but pleased, an innocent Leonie said, “why?”

“Because I like being with you. It won’t be the same without you there.” She touched Leonie’s face very gently with her hand.

Diane’s touch astonished her and her emotions were too contradictory for her to do anything but mumble incoherently as Diane excused herself and strode purposefully through the huddle of men around the door.

The lean figure of Emlyn Thomas, the Headmaster, whom the children perhaps unkindly called Crater Face, ambled toward Leonie but his progress was interrupted by Thumper Watts. Watts' nickname had its genesis in his first few years at the school when, discipline still being of the Wass Hill grind sort when errant pupils were forced to run up the 1 in 5 hill that joined the northern edge of Greenock to the medieval hamlet of Wass, he was fond of clipping unruly boys around their ears.

“Mr. Thomas,” said Thumper sarcastically, “I’m sending Howell to you – again!”

“Oh? What has the poor lad done now?”

“Only tried to set fire to Reynolds’ hair.”

Thomas wrung his hands like an elderly cleric. “I’ll give the lad a good talking to, mark my words, I will.”

“He wants his balls cut off if you ask me,” mumbled Watts.

“What?”

“I was just saying, a talk is what he needs.”

“Yes, my feeling exactly!” Satisfied, he sidled away, completely forgetting about his intention to talk to Leonie.

Watts sat next to her instead. “Stupid idiot!” he said in frustration, and winked at Leonie.

Leonie shivered. It was not that she disliked Watts – on the contrary, he was one of the few male members of the teaching staff whom she respected. But his physical presence she found intimidating, as if his sheer size overawed. Sometimes she found it hard to believe he was Head of Physics Department for his build seemed more suitable to a more athletic profession and it was easy for her to imagine him shot putting or tossing the cabre in some isolated glen.

Morgan came toward them, dramatically shaking her head so her frizzled red hair moulded itself decoratively around her shoulders.

“Gosh! It’s hot!” she said.

Leonie smiled at her, but the gesture was ignored as Morgan sat next to Watts. Leonie did not mind – the sun was searing what remained of the green from the grass of the school playing fields and she stood by the window, watching sheep graze on Windmill Hill. It would have been a peaceful scene – the fields of pasture, the scattered sheep, the twisting lane enclosed by untrimmed hedge – except for the noise of the children. Sometimes the din from the school could be heard in the centre of Greenock, almost a mile to the south.

Leonie rested her head in her hands, her face alternatively possessed of sorrow and joy. She watched a kestrel as it hovered briefly above the lane before swooping down to snatch its prey. Around her, the staff room slowly filled with noise, and she did not see Diane looking at her from the sun shadow by the door.

Diane watched Leonie intently for some time. Leonie’s feelings seemed a part of her, as if they were related closely by reason of birth, and she felt sad because of the selfish desire which captivated men like Apthone and which drove them to use a woman’s body while abusing the warmth and sensitivity that a woman possessed. For an instant there existed in Diane a strong desire to protect Leonie, to interfere dramatically in her life and free her from Apthone. But more than that, Diane Dietz, a teacher of seven years standing and hitherto contented, was jealous of Apthone. She wanted Leonie all to herself and in a mood of jealous rage that might have made her hit Apthone or driven her to reveal her secret hopes to Leonie, she ran crying from the room, down the stairs and out into the bare and unrelenting sun.

## II

Richard Apthone was ignoring her again. He stood in the corner of Morgan’s garishly furnished room talking jovially to the scantily clad hostess while conservatively dressed Leonie skulked in the one empty corner. The loud music displeased her, as did the wine-soaked and incestuous throng of teachers, and she regretted she had come. Watts was staring at her while pretending to listen to Diane whose thin dress hid very little. Leonie blushed.

Morgan left Apthone and Leonie took advantage of the anonymity of the close-pressed crowd to approach him.

“I must speak with you,” she said.

Apthone sighed, then swayed like a drunken clown. “You are.”

“Alone, please.”

“Can’t it wait? I’m enjoying myself.”

“No, it can’t wait.” She was almost crying.

“Can I stay tonight?” he whispered, attempting to affect concern. His face, however, did not mould itself as his calculating mind intended, and he leered. Apthone was lanky in build with a face like a frost-broken gargoyle.

“I’m pregnant,” Leonie said softly.

Apthone stared blankly at the wall, then looked nervously around. No one else seemed to have heard. “But,” he stuttered, “you said you took precautions.”

“I’m sorry, but – “

“My god!” he rasped, “are you sure it’s mine?”

The insult made her cry. “Look,” he said for Watts was staring at them, “it’s not my problem. For god’s sake woman, stop crying!”

She did not, and he walked away to gawk at Diane but she rudely pushed past him. Leonie’s

crying was making him nervous and he smiled drunkenly at Watts.

“Come outside a moment, will you?” said Watts.

Apthone blinked, but followed him.

“You alright, Leonie?” Diane asked.

“Yes, I’m fine,” she lied.

Instinctively, Diane embraced her, but their contact was brief, broken by Leonie.

Diane smiled. “We’d both be better off without men.”

“What do you mean?” asked Leonie sharply and instantly regretted it.

Diane shrugged. “They cause more problems than they solve.”

For nearly a minute they stood facing each other, both expectant, nervous and unsure and both wishing for some gesture or word that might somehow make tangible their feelings. Diane made to speak but Leonie, confused by her own suddenly conflicting feelings, smiled nervously and withdrew to her corner.

Diane, full of rage at herself for her own timidity, muttered a long stream of obscene curses which the loud music drowned, and by the time her courage had returned, Watts was talking to Leonie. She drank two glasses of wine in quick succession and barged between them.

“Apthone gone then?” she asked pre-emptively.

Watts smiled mischievously. “He’s outside. Having a little sleep. Too much to drink if you ask me.” He drank from his can of beer, then burped. “Well, I’m off. Can I give either of you a lift?”

“No thanks,” an embarrassed Leonie asked.

“Diane?”

“Leonie has invited me back for coffee. Thanks, anyway.”

Watts affected another burp and loped away, stooping to go through the door.

Before Leonie could speak, Diane said, “I’m going to take you home, make you a hot drink and get you to tell me all about what’s upset you so much.”

“But –“

“Forget Richard. He’s probably so drunk he won’t even know you’ve gone.” Briefly, she held Leonie’s hand. “I really care for you and hate seeing you unhappy.”

“You are kind,” said Leonie softly.

Leonie’s house bore some resemblance to her life, slightly disorganized but planned with the best of intentions. It was a large house, bounded by gardens which were beginning to grow wild, and carried its mantle of children well. Toys were neatly stored in the playroom and the expensive furnishings had escaped largely untouched by melting ice cream, spilled, sticky drinks, small dirty hands and impetuous ravaging feet. Its size and luxury had, at one time, been of some solace to Leonie, but it had become empty and a constant reminder of what she thought of as her marital incompetence. Her children were asleep when she and Diane arrived and the young girl who had minded her children during her absence was soon gone, leaving the two women alone. Diane made coffee and they sat, almost touching, on the leather sofa in the sitting room.

“You seem very unhappy,” Diane said as a small circle of subdued light enclosed them among the humid darkness of the room.

“I feel so peaceful with you.”

“I’m glad.”

Very quietly, she said, “I’m so confused.”

Diane’s face was gentle and serene and Leonie smiled awkwardly before saying, “I’m going to have Richard’s baby.”

”Oh my darling!” Their embrace was natural but brief and Diane gently wiped away Leonie’s tears.

“I don’t know what to do. It is such a mess. No one cares.”

“I do,” said Diane. “I care very much.”

“But – “ She turned her head away.

“Leonie,” Diane began in a whisper afraid that the beauty of the moment might be lost and afraid of herself, “I find you very attractive.”

“Diane – I ....”

“Don’t say anything, please.” She stroked Leonie’s face with her hand, and then kissed her, very gently. Leonie made no move to stop her and Diane kissed her again.

Leonie was not afraid, only pleased because Diane possessed the courage to express with words and deeds what she herself had felt but would never have dared to express in any way.

“I need you, Leonie,” she heard Diane whisper.

The simple words ceased to be simple: they were a magickal invocation, a chant of power and possessed for Leonie, in that instant of her troubled life, an almost sacred, childhood quality. Nothing was real for her except Diane – her warm breath, her perfume, the softness of her touch and the enfolding pressure of her body. She felt she wanted to be enveloped by Diane’s



warmth.

“I love your beauty,” Diane was saying. Diane’s touch was gentle, as gentle as Leonie had imagined, once, that it might be and she did not tense nor speak words of discouragement when Diane caressed her breasts.

There was gentleness in Diane’s kisses and touch that Leonie had never experienced before – a kind of empathy as if Diane was not taking but sharing. She clung to Diane, fearing the moments might end. But the moments did not end as she feared but changed instead into physical passion.

“Diane”, she said slowly and precisely, “please stay with me tonight.”

Slowly, hand in hand, they walked the stairs to bed.

^^^

Light mist obscured the river Severn and the surrounding fields, and Leonie stared at the tops of the trees. Soon, the warmth of the summer sun would disperse the mist and the mystery it seemed to bring, returning the harsh contours, bleak colours, and breaking the silence down. Leonie smiled. She liked her bedroom with its view of the Severn, the trees full of birds and fields and found it easy to forget she lived on the edge of a town.

Diane was still asleep in her bed and there was an innocent joy in Leonie as she watched her lover. Everything she could see seemed more beautiful because of Diane, as if her very presence added a precious quality to the day. She wanted to lie down beside her, feel the warmth and softness of her body.

Diane stretched, sleepy, and Leonie accepted the refuge of her arms.

“How do you feel?” Diane asked.

“A little guilty, I suppose. But happy!”

“You are lovely!”

“Can I ask you something?”

”Of course.”

“Is this your...what I – “

Diane smiled. “You mean is this the first time I have made love with a woman?”

Shyly, Leonie said, “Yes.”

She smiled. “I was very nervous last night – I almost didn’t do anything.”

“I’m glad you did.”

”If I had been wrong – “ Diane shrugged.

“What made you try?”

”You mean,” said Diane playfully, “apart from your beautiful body?”

”Seriously, though.”

”Something about the way you looked at me, I suppose.”

”I used to dream about you a lot. Very naughty dreams.”

“And now your dreams have come true.”

”I feel really funny.”

“Well, you make me laugh!” Diane kissed her, and then said, “you mean you can’t really believe it’s happened?”

“In a way, yes. But I also feel I’m not the same person I was yesterday. I can’t explain.”

Diane smiled and rested her head on Leonie’s breasts. “A woman’s breasts are the softest pillow in the world.”

“You make me happy,” Leonie said as she stroked Diane’s hair. “I never thought I could be happy again.”

The sound of Leonie’s children near the bedroom door surprised them, and Diane dressed quickly, kissed her lover saying, “You make me happy as well!” and left.

Leonie ran down the stairs to wave goodbye, but the car had gone and she was left to return slowly to the perfumed emptiness of her room.

Apthone did not seem important to her anymore. The half-resented need, which had bound her to him, had been broken by Diane and as she dressed she found reasons for hating him. Even the growing child in her womb held no terror; she would have an abortion and then Apthone would be removed from her life. She would be free at last, and could give her life to Diane whose gentle words of love during the long humid night had brought her tears of joy. There was a quality about Diane’s love and passion that she had never experienced before, and it pleased her.

The mist over the river was dispersing and she watched it disappear with a mixture of happiness and loss. It would always remind her of her first night with Diane – yet it would be good to feel the hot sun on her body, warming it.

Languid, she lay on her bed until a sudden guilt made her jump up to attend to the tasks of her day, suppressing the thought she would be murdering her unborn child for the sake for the pleasures of her body and the love of a woman. Defiantly, she took the crucifix from the wall of her room and threw it under the bed.

Diane had closed the kitchen door of their bungalow in the tourist town of Church Stretton when her husband appeared wobbling like a drunken duck on his cleated cycling shoes. He was lean, burnt from the repeated exposure to the sun, wind and rain, with cropped hair as befitted a racing cyclist – even an amateur one.

“Well?” he asked, feigning annoyance.

“Well what?” She stared at him holding her head to one side.

“Have a good time?”

“As a matter of fact – yes!” Immediately, she became defensive. “You off out to play, then?”

He looked pained – and not a little funny in his tight fitting cycling jumper and shorts. The long, very close fitting shorts were superbly comfortable on a bicycle, but off it, they made a grown man look ridiculous and a little obscene.

“Don’t tell me – ‘your training schedule’ demands it.”

”As a matter of fact, yes.”

”You think more of your rotten bikes than you do of me!”

“That’s a ridiculous and inaccurate thing to say.”

”But true.”

“No, it is not.”

”Aren’t you jealous?” she demanded.

“About what?” he looked at his watch.

“I’m having an affair,” she announced.

“That’s nice,” he replied without feeling.

“Don’t you care?”

“I know you are joking,” he smiled.

“Oh, we are the superior man, aren’t we?” she mocked.

Suddenly she was angry and he took advantage of her preoccupation with her emotion to slip out the door. She saw him take his expensive cycle from the garage, resisted the temptation to rush out and kick it, and watched him pedal down the road. The mask of calm, which she used in her role of teacher returned slowly, helped by the morning stillness and the gathering mist, and sat down in her bedroom to write her diary.

Her desire for her own children had long ago been vanquished by the natural facts of her genetics and the need which bound her to women, and her innate love for children found its poignant expression through the medium of her profession. She loved the mostly gentle unfolding of a child from the often shy and awkward first-year into a young adult, aware of themselves and mostly possessed of a youthful zeal, and she made no distinction between those who were intellectually inclined and those who were naturally gifted with their hands. To her, each child was unique, and she cared for them all – not out of sentiment or because she believed it was morally right, but because it was in her nature to do so.

Yet she sought some satisfaction in life beyond the undoubted rewards of her profession and the undeniable lesser rewards of being married to a cycling fanatic whose idea of a good day was to thrash himself to exhaustion in a fifty mile trial – preferable over hilly terrain – talk about it for hours afterwards and fall asleep in the evening reading a cycling magazine or a technical report on the strength of the latest titanium axle. Their sitting room cabinet was full of medal he had won, but after five years it was all predictably boring.

She had had no affairs with men, for she found them either too shallow in the head or too uncaring. Their tenderness, she knew, was a ploy to obtain a woman’s body and for the most part they had no interest in her as a person.

Three years ago, her experiences in adolescence, her hopeful expectations and secret desires, had caused her to deliberately seek out the company of women. Her liaisons had been brief, and unsatisfying, but they produced a stronger longing for what could be – a relationship based on mutual desire for love and affection and a mutual, instinctive understanding of the kind she felt was impossible with men.

Her thoughts carried her pen. “Maybe,” she wrote in her diary as a schoolgirl might, “I have found my answer at last. There seems to be something special between us.”

Said laid the book aside to watch from her window the mist swirl slowly over the hills that breasted the road to her school fifteen miles to the east. The sun cast a beautiful light between the ground mist and the higher fog that obscured the hilltops, and she regretted her lack of artistic talent. To paint such a light would be divine – but all she had ever done was compose a few pieces of schoolgirl music. The diary was some solace, and she hid it, as she had done for years among the clothes in her drawer, before writing a letter to Leonie. The act of writing inspired her, as the misty light had done, and her letter became one of love.

She folded the letter neatly, sealing it within a perfumed envelope and placed it carefully if nervously in her handbag. Its existence pleased her, and she sang happily while preparing her breakfast. The breakfast was soon over and, showered and changed, she departed early for school. The mist thinned and dispersed as her car carried her over Hazler Hill and along under the blue sky on the country road that joined Stretton and its glacial, moor covered Mynd, to the ancient settlement of Greenock.

Apthone’s rusty vehicle was already in the empty car park. The thought of meeting the adolescent with the gait of Quasimodo and the meanness of Genghis Khan did not please her, but even Apthone with his spotty face and fetid breath could not diminish the joy she still felt. Soon, she would be with Leonie again.

The staff room was empty – except for Apthone. His face was bruised and he bore a black eye. He also limped and his expression been less venomous, she might have laughed.

“Walked into a wall, then?” she asked.

He sneered, and the expression suited him. It also caused his face some pain. “I fell of my motorcycle,” he lied.

“I didn’t know you had one.”

“Oh, yes! It’s an old....”

She left him grimacing to mark a few of her pupil’s exercise books. After a while, the marking bored her and laying her handbag on top of the pile of books as she nearly always did, she left to make herself a cup of coffee. A few children dawdled by the front door below. Apthone was grinning maliciously, as well as his face would allow, when she returned.

He sat next to her. “Your little secret is safe with me,” he drooled.

Diane looked at him coldly. “What do you mean?”

He produced her precious letter. “That’s mine!” She made to snatch it but was too slow. “You bastard! You’ve no right to go into my handbag!” She attempted to slap his face but he gripped her arm.

“We wouldn’t like this to become general knowledge now, would we?”

“You bastard!”

“Listen,” he lisped, “I’ll keep quiet about this on one condition.”

“Go to hell!”

“I’m sure Mr. Thomas would be most interested in this. Or the School Governors. Like to be dismissed would you? For being a lesbian.” He said the word with relish, and let her arm go. “You do me a favor – I do you a favor. Can’t say fairer than that can I now?”

“Could I have my letter back please?” She demanded.

“Of course!” he smiled. “After you sleep with me.” He stood up dramatically, placing the letter in his jacket pocket.

Angry, Diane stood in front of him. “I don’t care what you tell others!”

“Is that so?” he smirked.

“No one will believe you!”

“Willing to find out, are we? If that’s what you want.”

She moved toward him, but he pushed her away. “Think about it!” he said before turning and almost running out the door.

Diane was too angry to cry. She also hated herself for being too physically weak to take her letter by force and give Apthone what he so richly deserved. She thought of telephoning her husband but he would still be pedaling furiously around the roads and she would be incapable of explaining why she had written the letter in the first place.

Several members of staff arrived simultaneously and she bade them all good morning in her customary cheerful manner. Apthone reappeared but ignored her. Morgan arrived to greet all the men – she fussed a little over Apthone’s wounds, and Apthone’s laugh made Diane feel sick. At the door she collided with Watts. Despite his size and often oafish manner, he held her gently..

“Can’t stand it any longer, then?” he asked jovially.

She saw Apthone look at Watts and turn immediately away, his face pale and intuitively she understood.

“I’ve left something in my car,” she said by way of explanation.

Watts winked at her and she escaped through the door, down the stairs and into the warm air of morning.



Upstairs, Apthone would be polluting the room with his stench.

## IV

The heat of the sun surprised her, and Diane moved her chair into the shadow. Her class was restless, for no speck of white appeared in the sky.

“Miss,” Rachael the raven-haired asked while Bryan behind her pulled monster faces for attention and the rest sulked in the heat, “How did you derive the solution?” She pointed to the mathematical scrawl on the blackboard.

Diane frowned. It was not easy teaching lower sixth form mathematics on a humid day toward the end of the summer term. Good natured Bryan, his cropped hair belying the astute brain beneath, had started moaning to add sound to his impression when Rachael turned and rapped his knuckles with her ruler.

“Grow up will you?” she mumbled. The sixth form was exempt from school uniform and as she turned, framed from the side by a shaft of sun, Diane could see her breasts through the dress. The fleeting sight brought a physical sensation of which she felt ashamed, but she smiled calmly at Rachael until their eyes met. For a second, perhaps more, each understood each other. Diane saw Rachael smile, then blush.

Bryan stuck out his tongue, but the beautiful Rachael with the mature body ignored him. Through the glass in the door he caught sight of Apthone shuffling along the corridor.

“The bells! The bells!” he intoned, hunching himself.

Inspired, Diane went up to him, patted his gently on the head and said, “There, there. You’ll feel better in a minute.”

Bryan did not mind the laughter. “Ah! Esmeralda!” he chuckled as Diane returned to the blackboard. His lurch was curtailed by the toneless buzzer in the corridor.

Rachael pretended to write in her exercise book until she and Diane were alone. “Miss,” she asked, “can you help me with this?”

“I hope so Rachael!”

She was leaning over Rachael’s shoulder studying the neatly written equations. Rachael made no move away and Diane could smell slight perfume. Part of her moved to kiss Rachael’s cheek, but another pulled away. It was a battle her respectable half nearly lost.

“There,” she pointed, moving her face away, “you’ve written ‘y’ instead of ‘x’. No wonder you cannot solve the equation.”

“Oh, how silly of me!” chided Rachael as Diane smiled and escaped through the door.

Leonie was waiting, shyly, by the stairs to the Staff Room, uncertain how to respond. Around them, the childish mayhem continued.

“You stink!” one small freckled face said to another.

“Don’t.”

“Do! So there!”

“You smell more than me!”

“Don’t you ever wash, pongy?”

Impulsively, Diane held out her hand for Leonie, then withdrew it. “Can I see you tonight?” she whispered as they climbed the stairs.

“I would like that Diane,” she smiled briefly. Then she quickened her pace to become enclosed

in the relative peace of the childfree Staff Room.

A gaggle of young and mostly female teachers surrounded the repulsive Aphone who was heroically recounting the story of his accident, and Diane sneered at them before sitting beside Watts.

“I think,” she said, “you’ve made him look better.”

He smiled at her understanding. “Dry bones can hurt no one.”

“Unless they are moved by evil intent.”

“And are they?”

“Who knows?” said Diane embarrassed. Suddenly, she smiled. “You’ve never liked him have you?”

Gruffly, he said, “Met this sort before. He shouldn’t be a teacher. He’ll get some girl in trouble, believe you me.”

“Didn’t you once teach Judo?”

”No, lass, Karate. Was competitive, once. Black belt, Third Dan, and all that. It’s quite easy to kill someone, you know, without leaving a mark.”

“Could you teach me?”

“To kill someone?”

“No, of course not!” she laughed, nervously. “Just a few basic things. How long would it take?”

“To learn anything useful – maybe a few weeks. Why?”

Diane shrugged. “Just an idea. These are troubled times.” To lessen his suspicion, she said, “what don’t you start classes here – self defense for women? I would certainly attend.”

“Maybe. Doubt if old doubting Thomas would agree, though.”

“You could always try.”

“I’ll think about it.”

The expression on Watts’ face – full of warmth and love – surprised and shocked Diane and she excused herself hurriedly to rush down the stairs and thread her way through the throng of children in the corridor to a room when she could be alone.

After the noise of the school, the room seemed possessed of the quietness of a church and she sat for a long time by the window trying to recapture the lost innocence of the warm Autumn days of years ago during her first weeks at the school. The promise of those days, the spontaneous joys, seemed to have been sucked away by the drab reality of adults and their narrow-minded schemes.

## V

Diane’s husband was engrossed in lubricating the chain of one of his bikes in the kitchen when she arrived, late, from work.

“I was attacked on the way home,” she said airily.

“That’s nice.” He did not look up.

“And I’m being blackmailed.”

“Hmmm.”

“Don’t you care about me?”

“What do you mean?”

“Nothing.” She looked at the well-polished racing cycle. “Is your bike more important?”

He stood up. “Are you feeling alright?”

“No I’m not! Not that you care!” She went to kick his cycle but he moved it in time.

“Careful!” he admonished. “That’s a 753 frame!”

“So what?”

Exasperated, he leaned the cycle gently against the wall. “Do you want to talk then?”

“Heaven forbid! What’s the point?”

“Personally, I cannot see any. When you are in an emotional mood like this.”

Diane stared at him. She felt resentful. For years they had lived uncomplicated almost separate lives: hers dedicated to teaching; his to cycling. His employment was a means to the end of cycle racing whereas hers had become the most important part of her life. They had quarreled sometimes, but had existed quite happily without the intimacy of emotions she craved. Several times in the years of their marriage when the emotional bareness of their relationship had become unbearable, she had sought the soft scented comfort of a woman. But the affairs had been brief and had filled her with guilt and a little self-loathing. She had enjoyed, more than she at times liked to admit to herself, the physical part of her relationships, but she had never found a woman to compliment her – one with whom she could share intimate personal details, one with whom she could relax and be herself. Someone to share the pleasures of companionship and someone with whom she could make love because such love making would be an extension of their friendship – the ultimate tribute of a relationship. Yet despite all the guilt, the doubts, the self-loathing and the fear of discovery, her desire for female intimacy remained, promising so much that was unfulfilled.

She had existed in a sort of twilight zone between her wishes and the reality of her marriage, accepting her married life because she had grown used to it and because there had always been times when her husband would allow himself to become emotionally involved – when he showed by words and deeds that he loved and needed her. But increasingly, he had become, it seemed, absorbed in his racing as she had become absorbed in her secret desires and the joy of teaching and the two passions never met. Once she had watched him at a time trial – fifty miles on a cold and very early summer morning – but she had found it so boring, watching rider speed after another at one minute intervals then stand around drinking tea for several hours until all had completed the course and the winner was declared. She never went again. The cycle he had bought her lay in the shed, ridden once and forgotten, and her loneliness bred desire.

An obsession seemed to drive her husband. He had no time for fine ideas, thoughts or emotions. He simply loved life – and hated to be bothered by thinking or feeling guilty about it. He was almost satiric in the enjoyment he derived from his existence. He had no worries – except about his bicycles – and would begin each day as though no other existed. Every problem – every one of her problems – would be met with a smile (sometimes a laugh) and the promise that everything would be all right. At first, she had loved his energy and enthusiasm. Nothing daunted him; he was cheerful and full of vitality and even the knowledge that she could not bear his children did not daunt. “Oh well,” he had said, “there is no use worrying about a fact of Nature. Looks like a beautiful evening – we could go for a walk ...”

Slowly, very slowly, she had begun to poison herself with resentment, but it was only her love for Leonie that made her realize it.

She stood staring at her husband. She wanted him to come and embrace her; to tell her that he loved and needed her, to offer to stay at home with her for a few hours instead of riding off into the warm, humid evening. But all he did was look at his watch and check the pressure in his tubular tires.

He was smiling and, as she nearly always did, she allowed her good nature to triumph over her own desires.

“Go on!” she smiled and kissed him. “I don’t want to keep you.”

Soon, she was alone again in the silence of their house. The prospect of the evening excited

her and she was shaking when she picked up the telephone. Aphone was in his lodgings, as she knew he might be, and she smiled satanically when she said: "Richard? Diane. Can you meet me tonight?" She heard the glee in his voice.

"If you bring the letter – you can have what you want." She could almost hear him drooling. "Meet me a half past nine by the Devil's Mouth on the Burway."

The hours passed slowly, much to her consternation, until the sun of late evening cast long shadows of the Stretton hills. The town was quiet as she drove toward the Burway. Several tourists, distinguished by the cameras, idled along the streets and by the crossroads that divided the Burway road from the tree-lined Sandford Avenue, a group of youths in leather jackets lingered, shouting at cars as they passed.

A van heading for the town passed her as she steered the car slowly over the cattle grid boundary between town and National Trust land, and she drove in low gear along the steep sheep-strewn hill. The road dropped precipitously to her right into the tourist trap of Cardingmill Valley, but she had little desire to dwell on the scene, poignant though it was in the soft light of beginning dusk. The road wound sharply, following the old droving route. Fifty years ago, few people had walked the moors. But with the laying of the road and the spread of the tourist-idea, swarms wore away, inch by inch, the thin soil among the bracken and heather and fern. Many were the summer days when Diane had seen long lines of cars ascending the road, spreading their contents and noise. She loved the Long Mynd and found something almost mystical and sacred in walking along its top while wild wind scattered her hair and drove snow into her face. From its varying steep sides, worn by glacier, water and frost, she could see high Caer Caradoc with its hill-fort, the limestone escarpment of Wenlock Edge, the plain around Shrewsbury with the volcanic mound of the Wrekin to the east, and to the south the mottled contours of Nordy Bank. On a clear day, to the west, legend said Snowdon could be seen.

The road climbed steadily until she passed by the long conical spur of Devil's Mouth. A large gravel and scree patch, shadowed by early morning sun, had been set aside for cars and straddled the brief but level plateau below the spur. To the south, the hill fell steeply to Townbrook before rising to the heights of Yearlet Hill. To the north, the land dropped steadily for several hundred yards, blotched by sheep, heather, fern and grass, then steeply fell to Carding Mill valley, cut by fast flowing water, before rising to Haddon Hill.

No cars were parked by the road and no one stood on the shale top of Devil's Mouth to gaze upon the Shropshire view. Diane left her car and waited. A few sheep, their necks blotched with blue dye, tore the vegetation nearby and a slight wind stirred while no white cloud broke

the blue above. Quite unexpectedly, Diane felt sick. She began to shake, her mouth went dry and she felt very cold. But quickly the fear and panic subsided.

She heard Apthone before she saw him. His motorcycle was loud amid the windy silence of the hills and she watched him swagger toward her car, his helmet in his hand. He lounged against her car, affecting boredom in his dirty jacket and jeans.

“Have you the letter?” she asked.

A pale and skinny hand grasped her letter and he smiled.

“Right,” she said coldly, “I think over there in the heather would be fine.” She pointed, as he turned to look she withdrew the knife she had hidden in her sleeve.

It was not courage, but anger, which made her swiftly press it to his neck. Before Apthone could react, she snatched the letter.

“Bother me again you little runt,” she said coldly suppressing her anger, “and I will use this. Understand?”

Apthone tried to smile, and she pressed the tip of the knife into the skin of his neck. He flinched.

“Understand?” she repeated and he nodded. “Now go and stand over there,” she demanded.

Apthone obeyed and she calmly walked toward his motorcycle and plunged the knife into the tire. He made no move toward her and she smiled at him before returning to her car. Soon, the figure of Apthone disappeared from the rearview mirror of her car.

Less than a quarter of an hour later, her reaction came. In the kitchen of her house she began to laugh. Apthone was no threat to her – and her hours of worry, anger, fear and frustration seemed pointless. He was a spoiled child with the body of a man.



Pleased with herself, she was making herself a special brew of tea in celebration when she heard a car stop outside. By the light of dusk she could see Watts slowly ease his bulk from the enclosing steel of the car.

“Just came to see if you were alright,” he said as she opened the door.

“Why shouldn’t I be?”

He shrugged. “Just a feeling. Didn’t want to intrude.”

Feeling guilty about her rudeness, she said, “Would you like some tea?”

“Yes, fine.”

Watts was inspecting the shelves of books in the sitting room when she returned with the tray.

“I didn’t know that you were interested in musical composition,” he said.

“Only a little.”

He returned the book, evidently satisfied. “There is a lot about each other we don’t know.”

“Isn’t that true of everyone?”

“Your husband not here?”

“He’s riding most of the night – preparation for a 24 hour time trial or something.”

“You must get lonely.”

“No.”

“Does a lot of cycling, your husband?”

“Quite a lot, yes.” She was beginning to feel annoyed by his presence and personal questions.

“Seen anything of Leonie?”

”I don’t mean to be rude – “

“But you’d like me to go on. Can I see you tomorrow night?”

“I’m going out.”

“With Leonie?”

“How did – “ She watched him, but he continued to smile. “Yes.”

“How about the day after?”

“I don’t know.”

He had stood up to leave when she said, “Are you in love with Leonie?”

“Why look at me with eyes askance, Shropshire filly, and cruelly flee, thinking me bereft of sense? A bridle I could place around your neck.”

“You’re an intriguing man.” She laughed.

“Why? Because I mis-quote Greek poetry or because – “

He looked at her but she turned away. He was blushing and the unexpected appearance of this expression of his feeling perplexed Diane. He walked toward her and touched her face, very

gently, with his large, calloused hand before lifting her to her feet.

“I have always loved you.” He said.

She smiled nervously. “I never guessed until today.”

He kissed her forehead, but she moved away. “Please, don’t.”

“Diane – “

“Please, I want you to go.”

”I’m sorry if I have offended you.” He was not angry.

“No. Not really. It’s just that I’m a little confused. I don’t know what to think.”

He smiled, and then kissed her on the cheek. “I can wait.”

“Oh why did you have to tell me now!”

“Things just happen in their own time.”

She did not resist his kiss, but it was not what she wanted and she began to feel angry.

“Don’t, please!” she said, pulling away.

He let her go. “All that matters is that I love you.”

“And Leonie!” she taunted.

“Maybe. I thought you would understand.” He touched her face with his hand but she was torn between apathy and anger and knocked it away.

“I would like you to go now,” she said, staring at the floor.

He shrugged. “If that’s what you want.”

“Yes.”

“Shall I see you tomorrow? Just a thought. Maybe we could – “

“I don’t think so.”

“Well, I’d best be off then.” He did not move.

“Yes.”

He started to move toward her, then stopped, bowed fairly gracefully considering his build, and winked. Before she could respond, he had closed the door behind him and for several seconds she stood staring. No physical desire had possessed her, and all she could think of was Leonie.

Outside, darkness stirred lazily, as it does on warm summer days treading past mid-summer. In the shadows of a tree across the road, a freshly dress Apthone lurked, smiling to himself as he watched Watt depart. Slowly, in his rusty car, he drove away to post his poisoned letter.

## VI

The church bell, its chimes carried in the breeze, had tolled eleven when Diane’s doorbell rang. The breeze did little to alter the humidity or Diane’s mood and languidly in her nightdress she opened the door, half-expecting Watts. It was Apthone who leered at her.

“Push off!” she shouted.

His face crumpled and his breath smelled of beer. “I came to apologize Diane.”

“Go away or I’ll scream.”

“Now that wouldn’t,” he said staring at her breasts, “be nice, would it?”

“Don’t touch me!”

He laughed, and touched her breast. She screamed briefly, for he hit her in the stomach with his fist before throwing her to the floor. In the struggle, her nightdress tore, exposing her breasts. The sight increased Apthone’s drunken lust and he began to tear at her thin covering while pinning her to the ground with his body and covering her mouth with his other hand.

She struggled, but his drunken strength was strong while he fumbled with his trousers. Desperate and determined, she freed herself sufficiently to grasp his shoe, which had come loose during the struggle. Her blows to his head were hard and insistent and he made to grasp her arm, the action sufficient for Diane to free herself from the weight of his body. Apthone was trying to stand when, with the fury of her anger fed by her desire to not be humiliated, she kicked his face. She did not feel the blow, but it knocked Apthone over and she swiped the heel of the shoe three times into his face.

“You bastard! You bastard!” she screamed as another of her blows broke his nose. Apthone struggled to his feet, his face covered in blood. He lurched toward her and she threw the shoe at him before running into the kitchen. He followed, staggering.

The carving knife she wielded was long, with a blade of surgical steel and she hissed like a woman possessed.

“Get out or I’ll kill you!”

Apthone, trying to stop his bleeding nose with his hand, stepped back.

Diane's eyes glowed. "I'd enjoy killing you, you pathetic bastard!"

She was intoxicated with the primal power of her Viking ancestors and no longer felt unsure. Her education, her upbringing, all the finer feelings of her life, even her love of the innocence of children, were banished in that moment and she perceived with a terrible clarity the passionate realness of life. Its color was red, its expression blood.

"Come on!" she taunted him, her knife-holding knuckles white. "Come and get me you ugly little bastard!"

But Apthone the coward retreated to the door to flee toward the dark and Diane had closed and locked the door before she dropped the knife in horror at herself.

Blood spattered her wall; Apthone's shoe was by the door that for five years she had closed on her way to work. She began to shiver and had moved to the kitchen to retch into the sink when the realization of her will became a fact in her consciousness. She knew with an irrefutable arrogance born from the moments of fear and anger, that she and she alone was responsible for herself and her feelings. She possessed not only the consciousness to decide but also the will to make the decision possible. Everything was clear to her: there were no more questions; no more doubts that undermined and made her weak.

The insight of understanding made her laugh; then cry. Apthone was gone but there would be other Apthone's somewhere imposing themselves and polluting with their warped will and desire. The thought made her angry and she began to understand as she made herself some tea in the neon brightness of her freshly painted and appliance strewn kitchen, that she need never again allow herself to be weak or dominated. The civilization to which she belonged had nurtured her, softly shielding her and she had been playing a doomed society's role. Apthone's attempted rape, her own anger, the fear and humiliation that had possessed her, had broken through this appearance to the real essence of the woman beyond. She was a unique individual and did not have to conform to someone else's set of rules or ideas.

Calmly, she collected a dressing gown before drinking her tea. She thought, momentarily, about telephoning the Police – but that would merely confirm and reinforce the role. Apthone had condemned himself by his act and she wanted personal revenge. If her understanding signified anything it was this – Apthone was her problem to solve. And she, Diane Dietz, lately a weak, emotional woman tied to feelings of insecurity and guilt as she had been tied to the idea of marriage, could do anything because she had begun to discover the liberation of

self.

Among the clothes that lay in her drawer lay the revolver. It was a .38 Service issue revolver and had lain in its box since her birthday over fifteen years ago. She had fired it once, she remembered, as a young girl...

Sun dappled the front lawn through the summer clouds as her father held her steady. On the rear lawn, her mother played tennis while the sun dried the large Georgian house of rain.

“Gently now,” he advised, “squeeze the trigger.”

The retort was not as loud as she had imagined and she closed her eyes as she squeezed.

“My dear Diane,” remonstrated her father, twirling his mustache, “it is rather bad form to close one’s eyes.”

She squinted at the target nailed to a tree and fired twice in rapid succession. After a brief inspection her father, hobbling on his stick, returned to slap her on the back.

“Well done, I must say! One bull, other just a touch to the left.”

Next month, she had received the gun, in a presentation box, as a birthday gift. It had been one of her father’s few mementoes from the war.

She inspected it carefully, as her father had shown her all those years ago. Oil clung to it and she wiped some away, lightly, with the small cloth before loading the chambers. It was lighter that she remembered.

In the dark outside, the church bell struck the quarter hour.

## VII

No lights showed in Morgan's house and Diane drove slowly past. The gun felt heavy in her jacket pocket but she ignored it, watching the street of terraced houses carefully. No one stirred, among the houses or parked cars and no vehicle passed her.

Her visit to Apthone's lodgings had been brief and had she been a few minutes earlier she might have cornered her prey. The landlady was apologetic – Apthone had rushed in, and hastily departed on his repaired motorcycle. Diane had smiled nicely at the old woman and left.

A few of the terraced houses showed lights and she parked near one, walking the few yards to Morgan's garishly painted door. Nearby two cats wailed in the clear humid night.

The response to her knocking was slow; a stair light, then footsteps to creak the stairs. Morgan, wrapped in a coat, held the door on a chain.

“Yes?” she asked brusquely.

“Is Richard here?”

“No.”

“I must speak to him.”

Morgan's voice was sympathetic. “He's not here.”

Diane peered around the door and what she saw shocked her. “May I come in?”

“Look,” Morgan said with a sigh, “I'm very tired. I really want to go back to sleep. I don't mean to be rude but – “

“You'd rather I went?”



“Yes.”

“Fine. I can see why.” She turned and walked briskly to her car. Inside, she held the gun, momentarily, then returned it wearily to her pocket. Her quest for vengeance had been eclipsed by what she had seen and, slowly at first, she began to cry. Propped against Morgan’s stairs had been her husband’s expensive bicycle.

It was the betrayal of trust that hurt the most, and she was alternatively angry, sad and a little overjoyed. She did not mind the physical fact of her husband’s adultery as much as she minded the deceit: there was obviously nothing, no emotional ties of a sensitive kind, no moral obligation, that bound her to her husband, and the thought of revealing to him the dreadful shame of Apthone’s attack made her sadder still. It would be impossible to reveal it, now, because she was free and had only to rely on herself to experience a new strength. Nothing bound her and she drove slowly toward Leonie’s house.

She sat in the car outside the house for some time, listening to a Vivaldi cassette. The music calmed her and she found the trees, weird Celtic deities by the strange sodium lights, quite beautiful. Behind the widely spaced houses, the river Severn flowed in darkness and drought.

The single headlight was blinding and Diane shielded her eyes. The screeching tires and crash startled her, just a little, and she walked without much feeling toward the scene. A motorcyclist had collided with the front of a stationary van and the impact had tossed the rider into the air to collide with a concrete lamppost.

The rider, his helmet missing, was groaning and as Diane approached she recognized Apthone. She did not smile but withdrew the gun from the pocket of her jacket while Apthone, with his bloody face and twisted limbs, stared incomprehendingly.

“Diane” he whispered, coughing blood, “help me.”

She aimed the gun, easing the hammer back with her thumb. Apthone, horrified, shook his head in desperation while Diane aimed the weapon at his head. He tried to wriggle away, but his broken body refused to obey his commands of thought and Diane gently eased the hammer back. There was no owl to haunt with its screech as she turned toward her lover’s house – only the sound of people running, a car braking to halt in the road.

“Quick!” someone shouted as she stood by Leonie’s door. “Call an ambulance!” A large garden hid her from the road.

Leonie was quick to answer the chimes. “Diane!” She hugged her friend. Come in. I hoped you’d come.” She looked around. “I thought I heard a noise.”

“Yes,” smiled Diane. “There’s been some sort of accident.”

“Hadn’t we better go and see if we can help?”

“I don’t think so. There seems to be enough people there already. We would probably only get in the way.”

Leonie strained to see, but the road was thirty yards away. “You’re probably right.” She led Diane into the brightness. “You look awful!”

“Thanks!” said Diane.

“No, honestly, I didn’t mean – “

“It’s alright,” smiled Diane, holding Leonie’s hand. The touch pleased both, if for slightly different reasons. “Any chance of some coffee?”

“Actually, there’s some on. Just in case you called.”

The kitchen was all stainless steel and pine, but the subdued light and Leonie’s presence made Diane feel welcome and warmly disposed toward the world. She could forget Aphone the twisted, the deceiving adultery of her husband and the problem diversion of Watts.

“Can I stay the night?” she asked.

“Oh Diane, you don’t have to ask!” Shyly she handed Diane some coffee from the percolator. “I feel this is as much your home now as mine.”

The words, the manner of their delivery and the gentle vulnerability of their speaker brought euphoria to Diane. She forgot all her problems and embraced and kissed Leonie. Her love felt like a physical pain.

“Do you mind if I tell you something?”

“Nothing would make me happier.”

In the sitting room, Diane lay on the sofa, her head in Leonie’s lap while Leonie stroked her hair.

“I’m leaving my husband.”

”Not because of me?” asked Leonie, her voice trembling.

“Partly. But partly because he is having an affair with Morgan.”

”I’m sorry,” said Leonie sincerely. “I thought your marriage was fine.”

“These things happen.”

”Are you sure it’s not my fault?”

“If anyone is to blame it is probably Morgan the man-eater.”

”I’m sorry,” repeated Leonie.

“It’s for the best. It was inevitable anyway, as things were developing.”

“What will you do?”

Diane sighed. She felt content, lying in Leonie's lap while her lover with sensuous breasts stroked her hair. Aphone was irrelevant, Watts was not important. Even her husband, warm and sweaty in Morgan's scented bed, no longer held any power to mould her emotions. Tonight, she could sleep with Leonie and in the morning she would watch the mist over the river while sun warmed the green richness of earth. Then, with Leonie, to school where her treasured pupils would be waiting and where she would try and infuse into them some of the special meanings which were entwined through life. The day of work done, she could come home with Leonie to their house, play awhile with the children before the dark of night brought the peace of contented and blissful post-Sapphic sleep.

"Leonie," she whispered.

"Yes?" there was expectation in her voice.

"I hope you don't think I'm imposing myself on you."

"Even if you were, I would be glad."

"I do love you."

"And I –" Leonie closed her eyes, but the reluctance remained. "Diane," she said by way of expiation, "please take me to bed."

## VIII

The morning was beautiful as the night had been and Diane stared out of the window. The post dawn mist eddied slowly around the trees that clung to the grassy banks of the Severn, and along the path a hundred yards below the house that followed the river for many a winding mile, a solitary man in shorts ran, his stride like a gazelle. He vaulted the style of the fence that separated the two small and shrub-strewn fields of cows, and Diane watched him run bare-chested and lithe until he disappeared into the mist. No cars spoiled the quiet of dawn.

Naked Leonie joined her at the window and for several minutes both stood, arm in arm, watching their minute part of the world change as low sun bore down to disperse the mists of late night. It was one of those intense and rare magical moments that lovers share when no words are needed and where the two halves seem united in empathy and expectation. A spell

bound them through both the gentle scented lusciousness of their bodies and the fusion of their wordless thought. Both felt and understood the natural extension of the maturing relationship that their lovemaking made; they were equal and reversed the roles as they and their other half required. Giving and receiving, in turn as their feelings and desires changed with the passing of the hours. For them, in the two passionate nights shared, there had been no distinction between submission and dominance – between recipient and receiver – as there had been no guilt of submission or defeat. Instead, a mutual response to unspoken desire. A sensitivity of not only touch but mood that had hitherto been lacking in all their relations with men; a feminine giving tempered by a very natural and gentle feminine mastery. But above all, a genuine sharing.

For Diane the long night had been both a liberation and a release; Leonie was the woman whom for many years she had sought, and with her all problems were resolved. She neither needed nor desired anything else.

“I need no one but you, Leonie,” she said.

Leonie’s kiss was soft. “Where will you stay after today?”

“Would you mind? – “

“If you stayed here?”

“If you have no objection.”

“Diane, I was hoping you would.” She stared out of the window and the blush covered her face and spread to her neck. “But I would prefer it if you lived here with me.” She hesitated. “If you wanted to.”

“Really?”

“Yes.”

”You are lovely.”

Embarrassed, Leonie retreated to the bed. “It may sound stupid but I feel safe with you. Secure. I don’t have to pretend anymore. I can be myself.”

"I know what you mean," she said softly. She liked being near Leonie and experienced a pleasure when she looked at Leonie's body. "Of course I want to live with you silly!"

The bare-chested runner had returned from his peregrinations and Diane watched him jump the style before she joined Leonie in bed.

"I have a spare room," Leonie said. She blushed, and then added, "what is mean is – your things."

"You don't have to explain," smiled Diane.

Into the room rushed Leonie's little boy. His hair was tossed and his pajamas askew. He stopped and stared at Diane.

"What are you doing in my mummy's bed?" he asked cheekily.

"I had a nightmare," Diane said immediately.

He pointed at himself. "Me too!" and he rushed into his mother's arms.

The little head disappeared for a while, but every few seconds would sneak a look at Diane and then bury himself again.

Diane laughed and began to tickle the boy who giggled and fell off the bed. The child, the morning and all its facets but particularly Leonie, reminded Diane of the happiness and ecstasy that were possible within human existence and she felt a sudden, overwhelming and unexpected desire to be alone.

"Do you mind if I go for a little walk?" she asked.

"Diane," replied Leonie obviously moved by the question, "you don't have to ask."

Hurriedly, though without shame, Diane dressed, careful not to let the revolver fall from her

pocket. It's steel brought a reminder of the blood of the night and she quickly slipped through Leonie's rear garden, down the steep slope that separated the house fence from the pasture and scrub toward the river.

No one came to disturb her peace and she wandered along the well-worn path by the river in the burgeoning warmth of the early sun. Unaccountably, she found herself recalling almost note for note the beauty of Tammasso Vitali's Chaconne in G Minor and for an instant of infinite time she had to stop as she experienced in one incredible moment the ecstasy and the sacred beauty of life.

The mystic vision made everything around her seem holy and possessed of a stupendous beauty. But most of all everything – from the grass, the bushes, sky and trees – was as it should be, a part of a whole. There existed in the surroundings – in the soil she trod as much as in the sun which had cracked it dry – something of the numinosity that she had felt in the convent years of youth when in church, the choir singing Allegri, she had smelled the vague incense that seemed to suffuse the stone and nun's stalls, had seen the beauty of the sun as if shafted the gloom of the church and felt the centuries heavy in reverence and adoration.

Now, as it almost had then, the moment overwhelmed so that she was forced to steady herself by a fence and cry. Cry from an ecstasy that was almost incomprehensible and which no words could explain.

She saw and felt as if it was her own pain, all the bitter sadness and waste just as she realized and felt the beauty inherent in the world. She understood the possibility of what she – of what everyone – could be. She had been blind, but could finally see. Before she had heard noises, but did not listen and she finally understood the passion and demonic obsession that drove composers like Beethoven. Music was a commitment, a means to discover and express life. It could be holy, and might express the divine. She saw as if for the first time the rich blue of the sky, the sumptuous green and browns of the trees, the miracle of life that was the mallard and the indescribable beauty of people gifted with the wonder of thought and which yet might make them divine.

The moment overwhelmed, then passed, etched upon her mind and she sat in the cow-torn, broken and dewy grass. Nothing, she felt, surpassed this insight and she wanted desperately as she had never wanted before, to find a means to preserve the moment, to capture it for herself and others. The thought stirred her and she realized in her joy and vitality the essence of her freedom: she was free and had only to grasp a possibility to make that possibility real.

The spiritual poverty and impoverishment of her own life became clear. She taught, a little, but so many contradictions had pulled her she was largely ineffective. There was conflict because others sought to keep their own image and desires alive. Lies, deceit, blackmail, the bitterness and the hate, all destroyed vitality and vision. Only in and because of Leonie had she experienced hitherto a glimpse of what lay beyond – but it had been a vague longing partially fulfilled. Yet it was all so simple she now understood. So absolutely simple that there was no problem which a time under sun could not solve.

Carefully, she resumed her walk trying through the slowness of her motion to retain the precious moment and its mystic glow. As she walked, music grew in her and she began to feel the need to compose, to capture through such a form part of the essence she had touched. The thought brought renewed joy and a sharp intimation of destiny so that she ran along the path laughing playfully at herself. Tonight, when her thoughts and feelings had settled, she would share with Leonie this moment of hers.

Like a Mistress of Earth, no cares assailed her. Each tree was a deity she blessed and over the slow water under a mottled sun, Diane the witch, cast her spell.

## IX

It was a different Diane who strode before the fateful hour of nine into a staff room quieted by news of Apthone. The failed rapist lay in a coma, balanced between life and death, and Diane smiled when the worried Fisher with the balding head and nervous jerks of a coot, told her.

“It’s awful, really, isn’t it?” the sociology master said, before scratching his overgrown ear.

Watts and Morgan entered together and Diane smiled oddly at them.

“Can I speak with you Morgan?” she asked. Watts touched her shoulder, lightly, and sauntered off.

“Diane,” began Morgan, “before you say anything – I am sorry.”



“Why? You’re only doing what comes naturally. How long has it been going on?”

Morgan looked pained. “Diane – “

“As far as I am concerned you can have him. And good luck. I hope you like bicycles.”

Despite her affected anger, Diane could not help noticing how beautiful Morgan looked. Her dress, gathered by a belt at the waist, was the perfect compliment to her figure, the halter neck showing sun-browned shoulders that seemed to highlight the green eyes and red hair, and for a few seconds Diane envied her husband. Fortunately perhaps, she disliked Morgan’s personality.

“Diane, it is all over believe me.”

“Only because I found out.” She smiled warmly, disconcerting Morgan who did not know how to react. “Really, I don’t care. You’re both consenting adults. I just hope he makes you happy.” She kissed Morgan lightly on the cheek and Morgan could only stare in amazement.

The gesture was only half kindly meant, for although the remembrance of her morning ecstasy was vivid with its visions, sufficient of Diane’s anger remain to confuse her motives and she was about to explain her behavior to Leonie who was sitting morosely and alone by the sun-filled window, when Thomas the headmaster accosted her.

“Diane!” he said, placing his hand on her arm, a habit, which had hitherto irritated her. “Bad news about Richard, isn’t it?”

“Yes.” She lied. Aphone was one person she never intended to forgive.

“Can I see you in my office for a few minutes before the bell?”

“Now?”

“If you have no objections, that is.”

Lost Leonie was watching so she said, “Yes, of course, Mr. Thomas, I won't be a moment.”

”No rush,” he muttered in his abstract way.

Leonie appeared close to tears. “Are you alright, darling?” Diane whispered, holding Leonie's hand between the two chairs so that others would not see.

“Richard – he ...Last night when – “

“I know.”

“And to think this morning I had been so happy.”

It was true, Diane knew, for at breakfast a youthful Leonie had laughed, played with her children and afterwards allowed Diane the pleasure of helping her dress.

“It must have been him – his accident – that we heard,” Leonie said morosely.

“Seems so.”

“So close and we did not know. We could have helped. I feel so responsible.”

“He was drunk.”

”Really?”

“So the Police said. Stupid of him to drive when you're like that.”

”But still – “

“It was his own fault, apparently.”

”I suppose so. But if only I'd been there. I feel dreadful.”

”The boss wants to see me.”

“I heard.” Suddenly Leonie’s face glowed. “Hey – it might be your promotion!”

Diane laughed and stood up. “I doubt it.” No one was near so she said, “I’ll bring a few things around this evening if you don’t mind.”

“That would be nice.”

Leonie’s face with its gentleness appeared to Diane to express an ineffable need for affection, and she had to turn hurriedly away because she wanted to hold Leonie in her arms, stroke her hair and tell her of her love. Each step she took toward the door seemed a physical effort, separating her from the one person whom she loved with a deep and passionate intensity. The aura which they had formed and shared during and since the late hours of night when in the warmth and dark they made love and talked of their hopes and desires and needs, was stretching, dividing, and only a conscious effort of will walked her body along the noisy, child-littered corridors to the office of the Headmaster.

The large room was uncluttered and too tidy. Books sat undusted and unused behind the cabinet glass and the large desk contained only a few writing materials and a telephone. On the wall, two well-made notice boards hung, neatly filled, and the steel gray of the filing cabinet complimented the bureaucratic gray of the chairs.

“Ah! Diane. Nice of you to come. I shan’t keep you long, believe me. Sit down! Sit down! Sit down!”

He rose in a gentlemanly way before settling his half-rimmed spectacles upon his nose.

“I have had a rather strange letter.” He held the write envelope for her to see.  
”Delivered by hand last night it was.”

“And it’s about me?”

“Yes. Not only that. Oh no – but enclosed was a photocopy of a private letter.” He handed her the copy. “You recognize it may I ask?”

It was a copy of her letter to Leonie, and its existence and possession by Thomas shocked her. “Yes,” she said in a whisper.

Thomas peered over his spectacles like a judge. “What you do is no concern of mine, you know. Nor, ideally of course, should it be of this establishment. As long as it does not interfere with or affect your teaching – as I am sure it never will.” He removed his spectacles, slowly and laid them on the desk. “I have a notion who sent this, and as far as I am concerned that is the end of the matter.”

Diane was astounded. Her understanding of Thomas had been totally and utterly incorrect. The man of staff room jokes and unkind remarks was a lie, a figment of the imagination. There he sat, in his worn tweed jacket whose buttons were loose, his graying hair catching a little of the little sun that edged to his window, his lean and wrinkled hands fumbling with his spectacles, there he sat – smiling slightly, exuding a kindness that Diane could feel and understood. For a brief moment, Emlyn Thomas worn by the battles of his school and nearing retirement, seemed to Diana to be only very weakly attached to life, to the world of school, village and earth. If she blew, he might drift away to another world.

“Mr. Thomas – I don’t know what to say.”

He gave her a clean and starched handkerchief to wipe her eyes.

“I thought a lot, last night,” he said stuffing the now damp white cloth into his trouser pocket, “about not telling you. But decided it was for the best. So you knew where I stood, so to speak. Neatly, he folded the anonymous letter, photocopy and envelope together. “I’ll burn this and we will say no more about it. Now – “

Diane was standing, as if on cue.

“ – Before you go I would just like to say this.” He smiled at her. “If you have problems, anytime, I am always here. You are too good a teacher to lose.”

Diane’s feeling of relief was strong and she had begun to walk toward him before stopping herself. She wanted to say he was a kind man, but she lacked the simple courage to directly express her feelings, and she was at the door before another intimation of his frailty assailed her.

She kissed his cheek. The gesture delighted him and he chuckled, “Perhaps I should get more such letters!” before she rushed from his room.

The knowledge that one more person knew her secret soon dismayed Diane, and as she walked along the corridors of the school to the room of her first lesson of the day, she felt oppressed. The room was on the ground floor, shadowed by the angled assembly hall from the morning sun. The blackboard still held her mathematical equations, her desk a few tatty books. Soon the desks would be occupied. The trauma of Aphone’s attack had been destroyed by her mystic ecstasy of the early morning, but the memory of the letter was fading in its reality and Diane sat at her desk, watching starlings pick worms from the playing field grass. No supra-personal love overwhelmed and she began to feel as if her vocation was drifting away – there would be suspicion and doubt, the keen sidelong look, the unspoken thought. Of course, she could deny it all – “I ought to say, Mr. Thomas, that I am not a lesbian....” But even the possibility of denial was repulsive to her. She was who she was, too self-willed to deny the accusations.

It was true, and she thought, briefly, of announcing to the world (well, at least the school staff) the truth of her nature. There were organizations, somewhere, she had heard, who would defend her rights. Yet her feelings and desires were deeply personal and she could not think of being labelled thus; somehow, it might debase her relationship with Leonie. No longer would she be Diane Dietz, the mathematics teacher – she would be Diane the lesbian, marked by the label which would colour what people said to her or thought of her. She knew it should not matter to others – but it would. The thought of Morgan – pretty red-haired Morgan – saying “and her a lesbian! Well, really, I always thought she was, well, a little odd!” was not a prospect at all pleasing and she would be forced to play a role. Worse, she was bound to lose her job. “I’m very sorry,” they would say, “but you must understand we have a duty to the children. Imagine what the parents of little girls would think – a lesbian teaching their child.”

“Miss,” a young voice beside her said.

“What?” she smiled at Rachael. “I’m sorry, I was day-dreaming.”

“Are you alright?” asked Rachael nervously.

“Fine. Just thinking.”

“Terrible about Mr. Apthone, isn’t it Miss?”

“I suppose so.” She tried to disguise her feelings.

“Miss?” Rachael shuffled her feet while smoothing her thin cotton dress. “Can I ask you something?”

“Yes, of course, Rachael.”

“My parents are giving a small party on Saturday and I was wondering, well, if you’d like to come. You could stay the night if you didn’t want to travel back late to Stretton.”

“Rachael – I ...”

Bryan chose the right moment to open the door, stare around like a lunatic and tumble twice across the room with the control and agility of a gymnast. As he took his bow, Diane said, “Your wealth of talent continues to surprise me, Bryan.”

The calculated stupidity and innocent vitality of her pupil preserved Diane’s objectivity as well as reinforced her dwindling love of teaching. Rachael was sulking because of the interruption and aware of the delicate situation, Diane smiled at her.

“Yes, I love to come, Rachael.”

“Oh,” said Rachael a little dismissively, “if you like.”

Dianne was not offended, for the classroom soon contained all of her sixth form set and, amid the dry heat of the cloudless summer’s day in the restful Shropshire town, she soon forgot the pressures of her past.

In a hospital, fifteen miles to the northwest, Apthone opened his eyes while monitors pulsed with life. Briefly, Diane shivered, but Bryan was pulling his funny faces, Rachael was smiling at her and a slight breeze caught her face.

“Miss?” asked Bryan seriously.

“Yes?”

“Why do cowboys ride their horses into town?”

Diane frowned.

“Because,” smirked Bryan, “they’re too heavy to carry!”

Diane’s laugh erased Apthone from her thoughts.

X

A cooling breeze flowed through Leonie’s sitting room while her children played in the garden. It was nearly six o’clock and Leonie was becoming increasingly morose.

“Diane,” she said as she blew smoke from her cigarette away, “I feel I ought to go and see him.”

Diane placed her pile of mathematics exercise books aside. “You don’t owe him anything.”

“But I am going to have his baby.”

“You don’t love him, do you?”

“No. But I feel responsible for him in a way.”

”You ought to forget him.”

“I can’t. He needs someone, now more than ever.”

“Are you surprised that he hasn’t got any friends? Look at the way he treated you.”

”He’s going to be paralyzed for life, the doctors said.”

”it was his own fault.”

”You can be heartless at times>”

“Leonie please don’t go.”

”Why are you so insistent? You’re not jealous are you?”

“No, of course not! It’s just that –“

“What?”

“Nothing.”

“I think I’ll go.”

”Don’t please.”

”I have to see him.”

”He’s not worth it.” Diane felt that Aphone was taunting her – exercising control over Leonie even from his hospital bed. Suddenly, she wished she had killed him.

“Will you come?” Leonie asked.

The thought horrified Diane. “Never!”

“Why do you dislike him so much?”

”It doesn’t matter.” She watched Leonie – soft, gentle Leonie – for some time before saying, “I wish you could just trust me. Accept I have a good reason why I don’t want you to see him.”



She sat down beside Leonie and held her hand. “Please, Leonie, don’t let him come between us.

“You are all that I have left.”

”I do care for you Diane.” She stroked her stomach. “But for my own peace of mind, I really must go.”

Tenderly, Diane said, “If you must, you must; I’ll stay here with the children.”

“Would you? Really? That would be kind.”

Leonie was happy and ran from the room to tell her children. She returned hastily, to shout, “Won’t be lone. Promise!” before the front door slammed and Diane was alone with her thoughts.

Leonie was shaking a little as the nurse led her to Apthone’s room. It was brighter and much cleaner than she had expected, a corridor away from the main ward in the new glass and concrete Shrewsbury hospital. A monitor blipped in rhythm with Apthone’s heart while a drip-fed some form of life into his arm. Near the solitary bed, a mechanical respirator stood ready.

Apthone lay on his back, unable to move, staring at the ceiling, his face puffy and bruised. A naso-gastric tube taped to his nose did little to offset the clinical nature of the room.

“How are you?” she asked.

Apthone gurgled. His voice was a thin reedy whine. “Tired.”

“You’ll be alright.” His physical helplessness appalled Leonie and she held his lifeless hand.

“Leonie,” he breathed with effort, “I love you.” He closed his eyes.

“He’s heavily sedated,” said the nurse in explanation.

“Richard –“

“It’s too late now,” she said.

“Richard,” Leonie whispered in his ear, “remember our child.”

His eyes opened and he tried to smile. “Yes.”

The nurse was gesturing at Leonie and said. “I’ve got to go now, but I’ll be back later.”

But Apthone was asleep and Leonie was crying as the nurse guided her to the corridor.

“Would you like some tea?” the kindly nurse asked.

An ambulance drove slowly away from the entrance while Leonie walked to her car trying to untangle the emotions which knotted her stomach and made her feel sick. People came, cars passed, a single-decker bus, bright red and flashing sun as its air-brakes panted in the heat, disgorged a few passengers under the cirrus flecked blue of the sky.

Leonie dreaded seeing Diane. Yet she wanted to rest her head on Diane’s shoulder, stroke her beautiful flaxen hair and talk quietly of her feelings and pain. The conflict made her dizzy, and she had to steady herself by the car.

Ignoring the stuffy heat, she sat still in the car for nearly half an hour, disgusted with herself. The years of conditioning were telling her, insistently, that she was a pervert. All the expectations of her parents, all the pressure of her role as a respected teacher, made her think her desire for Diane’s love was unhealthy. She began to worry about her children and to feel it would be wrong for them if she stayed with Diane. They would need a father, a stable and proper family – all the things her upbringing had conditioned her to believe were right and necessary. Shame touched her, and she wondered if her feelings for Diane were simply an excuse, nothing special and their affair a trivial episode that signified nothing except a very temporary need.

These thoughts relieved her, and she forced herself to think about Apthone, vaguely aware that

she might not, after all, be different from other women, some sort of freak. Apthone would need help, and the more she thought about his helplessness the more she began to feel that she might atone for her own weakness, inferiority and perversion by helping him. It was a noble sentiment, if wrongly conceived, for it did not occur to Leonie as it might have occurred to a woman who had not her confidence undermined for years by a neurotic and scheming husband and whose strict religious upbringing precluded self-expression, that she was neither inferior nor perverted. But her parents, her husband and the pressure of her role as wife and mother had done their work well, insidiously well, until she had almost become in herself what others expected her to be, a reflection of their image of her. There seemed to Leonie to nothing inside herself, nothing of her own, nothing lovable – her husband had often said as much – nothing that mattered in any way special. Even as a teacher, the one area she felt gifted, she had soon her prospects of promotion fade with the advancing years, confirming her self-loathing and doubt. Unbidden, a remembered phrase broke the passage of her thought: *‘Look up now, thou weak wretch, and see what thou art. Be loathe to think of aught but Himself..’*

The phrase brought recollection and a remembrance of the childhood dread of sin, the smell of churches and an image of Apthone, crippled. Leonie tried very hard, while the hot sun beat down dryly upon her car, to pretend her feelings for Diane were not real. Diane did not love her – she was just being kind. Diane could not love her because there was nothing to love and she had just fooled herself again, as she had done about her husband’s love. Morbidly, she believed she was in some sinister, occult way, responsible for Apthone’s plight – she had wanted to abort their child, and she was culpable, before God, she was culpable.

No cloud came to ease the burden of heat, and she sat, quite still, while around her cars passed and were parked, people talked or laughed. A memory of happier days at university, free from self-torment and expectation and love, was soon gone, and she began to cry, very quietly, needing Diane yet terrified that such need was shameful and perverse. Desperate, she pushed all her thoughts, longings and desires aside, determined to shut out the world completely, to lock herself away, to be safe inside again.

She drove away from the hospital slowly and stopped only when she reached the driveway of her house. Shrewsbury town had seemed cheerful, if sultry, caught in the burden of summer’s heat, and she wished it would rain, as if the rain would wash away her feelings of traumatic guilt. Instead of driving to her house, she stopped alongside the main road outside. No sign of Apthone’s accident was evident, but she wandered beside the pavement imagining the terror. She had been inside while a crippled Apthone shed his blood on the road – inside, enjoying the pleasures of her senses.

The contrast appalled her, bringing remorse for her own sensual desires and the desire to

somehow protect the child growing in her womb – to give it life, or at least a chance of life. Two young girls in flowery dresses came skipping along the pavement, oblivious to the tragedy, and Leonie smiled at them but they did not notice and continued on their way, small bundles of vitality whose innocence made Leonie want to cry.

Diane, her small suitcase beside her was in the garden when Leonie entered the house. Her children were watching the one-eyed god, unaware of her return and she sneaked like a broken thief into the garden. Below and beyond the boundary of fench, several young boys walked shirtless along the river path, strangely silent under the downing sun as insects swirled in profusion and a Redstart called.

Diane did not look up as Leonie approached. “Did you see him?” she asked.

“Yes.” Leonie sat on the springy grass, restraining her desire to stroke Diane’s smooth, tanned and beautifully lithe legs. If Diane touched her, she would be certain of her love.

The touch, and affirmation, she yearned for did not come and she clung in desperation to her guilt. “He said he loved me,” she sighed, softly, like snow sighs softly against glass. For an instant she felt cold, as cold as a winter blizzard wind.

When Diane did not speak, she said. “I really ought to go back and stay with him.”

“If that is what you want to do.”

”It’s what I feel I should do.”

“Why?”

“Diane, please. We’ve been through all this before.”

For an instant Diane regretted her insistence – but Apthone was so detestable and the thought of him using his self-induced helplessness to ensnare Leonie angered her as she had been angered by Leonie’s desire to see him. She felt it was a betrayal, and she was jealous. She thought of her revolver, but the idea of murder displeased her because she understood, through her love of Leonie, that Leonie was free to make her own choices. She could not force

Leonie's love. She wanted, with an almost satanic desire, to protect Leonie and the love they had shared; wanted, jealously, to share her with no one and she waited for some word or gesture from Leonie that would confirm their love. None came, and her desire nurtured the wish to tell Leonie about Aphone – but the assault was still too humiliating and degrading for her and its terrible memory broke the wish the way lightning breaks the air with sound.

“You must,” she said clearly, “do what you think is best.”

”What do you think I should do?” Leonie asked unexpectedly.

“Do you love him?” She watched the inner struggle evident on Leonie's face and was relieved when Leonie spoke.

“I don't know. Sometimes, yes. Other times – I don't know.”

“But you want to look after him?”

“Yes. But I want us – you and I to still be friends. “To... But I bear his child. I can't escape that. He will live again in his child.”

Leonie's faith, trust and innocence brought tears to Diane's eyes, but she hid them and when she spoke she was smiling. “I thought I'd spend the weekend at home. Get a few things sorted out.”

Leonie's voice was a whisper. “If you want to.”

“Well, if you are going to spend time visiting him, it would be best.”

“I suppose so.”

“Alex has offered to help me wind up a few things. Dispose of furniture: that sort of thing.”

“Oh.”

“I promised I’d see him tonight. He offered to move my husband’s belongings,” she said jovially, trying to make the lie convincing.

“Will you be alright by yourself tonight, Leonie?”

“Yes, Diane, of course.”

”I could stay – if you wished.”

“No, honestly. I’ll be fine. The children are more than enough!” she said mournfully at the bedroom window where, in the early morning, she and Diane had stood. “Will you come and see me tomorrow, in the morning?”

“I would like to, yes.” She held Leonie’s hand. Leonie’s grip was tight as if she did not want to let go but Diane stood up and the brief contact that brought a score of memories to Leonie was broken.

In the sky, a single cloud spread the sun in haze.

## XI

The Long Mynd, the growing bracken bright green against the drought worn heather, was cool as it stood in the Welsh breeze. A few cars lined the narrow pot-holed road that rose steeply up Burway Hill, meandered along the flattened top and then dropped precipitously beyond the Gliding Station to the scattered hamlets in the Onny valley. Shropshire west of the Long Mynd lived in a different time, for no main roads addled the small, steep hills; there was nothing special about it and after four thousand years of habitation the land wore its human mantle discreetly. Generations of families grew together and died, in small cottages, farms and even shacks. Few outsiders settled; fewer still bought holiday cottages and after two hundred years of industrialization and four decades of agri-business that had reduced Shropshire to just another English county, its settlements were mostly unchanged. Few small farms had been mangled to form the huge concerns often run from a city or a town; fewer hedges had been despoiled, and the native oak still grew wide and tall in the small fields, beside the twisty lanes

or in scattered clumps that overflowed the Welsh border. It was as if a little piece of old Shropshire had been saved by its poorness and lack of tourist charm. True, Land Rovers and cars passed along the lanes, but even these seemed unwilling concessions and the only speeding vehicles belong to tourist outlanders. They seldom stayed long.

To these rushing denizens from the many conurbations and towns to the east and south for whom change and speed were more often than not solutions to the problem of boredom, the whole area seemed desolate and unkempt: farm fences would be patched with old bedsteads, old barns with odd pieces of sack or fence, and rusty, antiquated farm machinery would lay beside or on rutted lanes. But the land had its pride, a very local and individual pride which few outlanders could understand since the area was suited only to rough grazing or patchy spreads of arable crops. Yet, along many a lane among the mamelons, hedges were laid with a care born of generations of skill.

The whole area abounded in dark legends and strange names. Squilver, Grigg, Crudhall, Sorrowful, Murmurers. To the north lay the boundary crags of the Stiperstones where comely witches, raven and red-haired, were wont to meet in more enlightened times to practice fertility rites and the pagan ecstasies of the Old Religion which many a local myth said still survived, darkly and sometimes in the young. On the Stiperstones – Hell Gutter and Devil's Chair where Wild Edric lost his way and beneath which he lies imprisoned with his beautiful wife to haunt the mists of night.

Diane parked her car on the road by the square of trees that marked the boundary of Pole Cottage. No cottage remained, and it might never have been. Only the trees and a few ruts remained in the soil to mark its glory around the turn of the century when trains of pack horses and droving sheep wore steadily and slowly at the Portway track, marked across the Mynd by Neolithic man. Even the trees, spindly and twisted by wind and which solely relieved the heathered, mossy plateau, were dying, their seedlings destroyed every year by the roaming sheep.

Diane followed a downward westerly path among the heather, passed several tumps, to stand and gaze at the land below. Around, Meadow pipits flitted while the wind moved her hair and still warm sun cast her broken shadow. Nearby, a curlew called.

The sound of the curlew saddened her, but it did not take long for the Long Mynd to work its magic. The land below, stretching to the Welsh border, intrigued her with its hill-valleys and sun-shrouded calm. She felt a desire to live here with such a view, among the moors where she could sense, and feel in a way that calmed, the fructifying goodness of Earth, the sometimes dangerous and illusive serenity and the companionship of wind. She would never be lonely,

and it was as if, in that moment and the others like it, all that she most needed or wanted from life existed on the Mynd. Often, as she walked, following in preference sheep tracks which few, if any, human feet had ever trod, in winter, autumn, spring or summer dawn, she had talked like a child to the land, naming every nuance of a valley or spirit of a stream. It was difficult, sometimes, for her to leave and when she did, after a long walk of many hours, she resented the scurrying world below. But, always, the numinosity vanished slowly and she had come to realize over many years that she needed people, and her life below, as much as she needed the long walks alone. But always, always, the lure of the Mynd drew her back.

She had thought many times of a cottage on the Mynd. But most of the land she loved could not be bought and the prospect of tourist trooping summerly displeased her, a little, with the passing of each year. At time, there existed within her no distinction between her as a person and the Mynd. She knew this must be an illusion, but the thought did not trouble her, as she did not care if others thought she was mad. It was a very private sharing which she doubted she could even share with a living soul as part of her wanted to share it – not because she cared what others thought, but because to talk about it to someone who could not or would not understand and who lacked the empathy she felt she herself possessed, would she know destroy some of the sacred quality. Her feeling would be cheapened.

Yet there were cottages, scattered along the edge of the Mynd as it dropped steeply to the valleys and plains below. She might buy one, someday. She understood it was paradoxical that teaching inspired her like the Mynd. Her teaching was bright, an innocent joy that brought a remembrance of childhood dreams, while her Mynd was earth-bound and dark, a woman, a sorceress, perhaps, she had seen in her dreams.

She removed her shoes and stockings and, as she had done many times, walked barefoot on the moor. She loved the feel of the earth, stone and turf warmed by sun – even the brittle scratchy heather. A young man with a bright orange rucksack bore heavily alone the road, but he did not see her and she was left to complete her widdershin circumambulation in defiance of all cars.

Hunger and the dying sun drew her to her car, and she sat in the twilight trying to think of Leonie. The earth, wind and sky, her Mynd, had given her a calm, receptive power that enhanced in an indefinable way her sexuality and she experienced a desire for Leonie. Here among the heather, under the darkening sky they might together find peace. It was an impossible fantasy – because of Apthone the deranged. But the sad reality made Diane aware that, for the first time in her adult life, she possessed no desire, however small, for men. They were a world away and would not be touched.



The air, her thoughts and walk in bare feet, but most powerfully her empathy with the Mynd, all combined to alter her and although she did not know it, she radiated a beautiful and bewitching aura that would have captivated any man and made her mistress over them all.

Her house felt empty even before she opened the door to its darkness. The stain of Apthone's blood had faded and on the pine kitchen table she found her husband's note.

"I'm sorry," it read, "but we both knew our marriage never worked. Have gone to stay with Morgan. You see, we're in love."

He had not signed it and she took it to her bedroom. "It was kind of you to write," she wrote sincerely, "I wish you happiness and hope you achieve all you are meant to. Thank you for giving me some of the best times of my life. I will never forget how happy I have been and hope we can still be friends. Diane."

Her kindness came easily, since she had ceased to struggle, possessed no desire for men, and still felt the power of the Mynd and the memory of her morning ecstasy. She felt sad at losing part of her life, but it was deeper inner sadness that, in a strange way, calmed her – like a slow movement from the Vivaldi concerto. Somehow, the demise of her marriage seemed to compliment her new feelings and she felt free from the often-insidious pressures that a relationship with a man – any man – involved. However kindly they talked, however interested they seemed in her as a person, there existed the tension of their sexual desire and, often, a wish to dominate. She had scorned this at University and school not only because she instinctively distrusted men. The shallow personalities of her men friends had not attracted her, and she buried herself in her work. She had been courted, often, for her sylph-like beauty and intellectual mind seemed to attract, but she disliked the male façade of pretence, their insensitivity, and it was only a year before her marriage that she set out with a single-minded determination to seduce a man.

It had not been as exciting as she had anticipated and it, and her one brief subsequent encounter, did little to assuage her intimate feeling toward women. But, insidiously, there seemed to grow within her a desire for children. Little that she did or thought seemed to lessen it and the guilt she felt about herself, and when on one winter's morning with a sprinkling of snow she had passed in her car an athletic young man clad in short sleeve jumper and shorts, a hitherto unknown desire possessed her. He was changing his punctured tubular tire and smiled as she passed, warm within her car, his well-muscled legs almost obscene, and his face and whole body suffused with health. For several days afterwards she thought of his eyes, and passed the same spot at the same time. He was always around, pedalling easily and fast along the snowy road joining her lodging and school. A week later she passed him, fully in thinly

dressed, on a street in Stretton, and their friendship had been born.

But it was all over and in the sad serenity of her loneliness she prepared herself a meal. Leonie, she felt, would be thinking about Apthone the half-dead, and tomorrow at Rachael's party, she, as befitted a natural Mistress of Earth, would wear black. Her sympathetic witchcraft might even work.

## XII

Rachael stood in the bright light by her parents piano, laughing at Bryan's joke while, around her, her parent's guests gabbled or drank or smoked to mute a mostly-unintelligible background of Mozart. Rachael's use of cosmetics had been light, the result perfectly suited to her gentle features, but it was the manner of her dress that attracted Diane as a scruffy Fisher tried to engage her, on her arrival, in conversation and she tried to forget Leonie's telephone call. "He has asked me to marry him," the distant Leonie had said.

"Really, Diane," Fisher was saying, "even your subject can be taught in a more, shall we say, relevant way." He moved his mouth like a fish and his few strands of spiky hair swayed.

"What?" said Diane. Rachael had clothed herself in a black dress that exposed an ample amount of her large breasts and she wore a necklace of real amber. Her shoes and stockings were black to match her hair.

"Mathematics," droned Fisher, "can be taught –"

"Excuse me!" she said, pushing him aside.

"Hello Miss."

"I see we chose the same colour."

"Yes."

“It might suggest something. Your necklace is beautiful.”

”It was my Grandmother’s. An hereditary gift.”

“It suits your green eyes.”

Rachael smiled, and Bryan the astute, left them.

Diane touched the piano, gently. “Will you play?”

“I couldn’t.”

“For me?”

“I – “

“I will turn the pages of your music.”

Rachael smiled and from the pile in the piano-seat selected a large bound book. She smiled, nervously, but Diane lightly touched her shoulder and she began to play the Arietta for Beethoven’s Opus 111. Across the room, scattered with the guests, Bryan turned the Mozart off.

Soon, only the Beethoven could be heard, and had Diane been alone she would have cried. The music, the beautiful Rachael, her concentration, even the movement of her fingers, enthralled, bringing both memory and desire and purging her of the past. Aphone, the blood, Leonie, her walk by the river. But, beyond all, it was Rachael who captivated her. Rachael’s perfume and music had bewitched.

Then, too soon, the perfect music was over. For ten seconds, silence.

“I did not know you could play like that!” said Rachael’s astonished mother.

Rachael smiled at Diane before saying, “neither did I!”

It was Bryan who began the applause, and Rachael’s mother who ended it by saying, “Really, it seems we have had a musical genius in our midst all this time!”

“Yes, Rosalind,” grinned Fisher as he leered at her, “it certainly does.”

Rosalind smiled endearingly at him, pleased with his attention, before ushering her guests into dinner. The dining room was about half the size of Diane’s bungalow, the large oak table was formally spread and Diane began to regret her acceptance. She would have to make polite, boring and feminine conversation. Only Rachael’s presence would redeem the ordeal. Bryan, the only other pupil, had been seated next to Rachael and was about to offer Diane his seat when Rachael’s mother intervened.

“There Bryan,” she said, patting his arm, a gesture he clearly disliked, “you sit next to our talented Rachael. I am sure you will have a lot to talk about, won’t you?”

Bryan shrugged and sat down. Diane was seated between a benign old gentleman with white hair and a nervous man in an ill-fitting suit with a face of a starveling owl.

“Mr. Karlowicz,” said Rosalind helpfully as she patted him on the arm, “is a painter.”

”You the teacher?” asked the old man beside Diane.

“Yes.”

“Oh,” he replied puzzled. “I thought you were the teacher.”

”What do you paint?” she asked Karlowicz.

“Canvas!” he chuckled, the resumed his nervous frown.

“Do start!” chided Rosalind.

Rachael was leaning forward over her melon and Karlowicz stared at her. But Rachael's smile was for Diane, and she ate her melon slowly while Karlowicz sweated in the heat.

"If you are not the teacher," the old man asked Diane, "are you the painter chap?"

"No, I'm the lesbian," she almost said, but manfully resisted. Instead, she said, "actually, I am the teacher."

"Funny, you don't look like the painter."

The agony was relieved only by Rachael, and she smiled at her across the table before immersing herself in the delicate task of social eating. The thought of Leonie, sitting beside the cripple Apthone's bed angered, momentarily, and she remembered Leonie's nervous voice over the telephone. "Diane – he, that is Richard, asked me to marry him." A silence without circuits crackled. "And will you?" she had asked. "I really don't know... but I have to consider the baby." And the guilt, Diane knew, always the guilt and insecurity oppressing. Apthone was poisoning Leonie: but there was not even a momentary desire in Diane, as there had been yesterday, to kill him and free Leonie. Her lover had chosen and in the sadness Diane remembered some lines of Sappho:

Because you love me

Stand with me face to face  
And unveil the softness in your eyes...

Diane sat in silence for the rest of the meal while Fisher monopolized the conversation with a lecture on the relevance and significance of sociology. She smiled kindly at him, once, but he was too engrossed in the torrent of his own words to notice while everyone except Rachael, Bryan and herself (and the old man, who had fallen asleep) nodded sagely their assent. Toward the end of the interminable meal she could see Bryan fighting a desperate battle with himself and was a little disappointed when he did not leap up and cartwheel over the table as part of him so obviously wanted.

"You see!" said Fisher, his eyes glazed while Rachael's mother served coffee, "the community of similar interests which underlies this restricted code obviates the requirement for subjective intent to be verbally elaborated and made fundamentally explicit."

Fisher smiled. “It’s quite simple, Bryan. The codes determine the area of discretion – “

Diane could restrain herself no more. She stood up. “If you’ll excuse Rachael and me. She has promised to play a little more music.”

“Yes,” agreed Rosalind, “that would be very nice. We could listen in here.”

Rachael did not disappoint and followed Diane out.

“You don’t have to play,” Diane said as Rachael sat at the piano. “It was just an excuse.”

“I know. But I’d like to play, Diane.” She breathed the name softly and Diane was aware of the intimacy.

Scorning the Beethoven, Rachael played from memory part of Scriabin’s Ninth Sonata. Half of her youthful face was shadowed, and as she bent over the piano, her eyes closed, her fingers seemingly possessed of a life all their own, she seemed to Diane to be an embodiment of enchantment and it occurred to her, very slowly, that she was seducing Rachael. As the last notes faded, undampened by the pedal, Rachael’s mother shouted from the dining room.

“That is awful! Play something better.”

Angry, Rachael played a few bars of a nursery rhyme before slamming the lid in disgust. The tempestuousness, the vitality and Rachael’s youthful health, vibrated a memory in Diane and she was torn between a desire to become close with Rachael and her faithfulness toward the insecure Leonie. For an instant, an incredible instant, it seemed to her as if Rachael was the wildness of the Mynd come alive.

“Is Mr. Apthone any better?” Rachael asked, intruding upon her thought.

“Not really.”

“I never liked him,” Rachael said directly. “He gave me the creeps.”

The juxtaposition of Rachael's mature sensibilities with the speaking of uncritical youthful thought confused Diane momentarily because she had forgotten Rachael was her pupil. Rachael herself was embarrassed by the change and bit her lip.

“Shall I play some more for you?”

They were clearly forgotten, for laughter drifted from the dining room, following the cigar smoke and the aroma of ground coffee.

“Yes, Rachael, I would love you to. You never said you were so talented.”

“I only play when I am inspired.” She laid the book out at the beginning of Opus 111. “You inspire me,” she said and immediately began to play.

Her playing and Rachael herself were magickal. She was possessed, hardly seemed human and Diane found it difficult to believe her age because her playing was so full of mature emotion. Rachael did not need the music and Diane stood beside her, fearing to breath, and when it was over she was crying, softly. Never before in her life had she been so moved by a piece of music: she had attended better performances, perhaps, listened to greater music, but never had it been so personal. Never had she been involved as she was when Rachael played. It was not Beethoven – it was Rachael and she, a joining of mutual souls. The music joined them together in an indefinable numinous way.

“Why,” Diane said, trying to hold the moment through silence as she touched Rachael's shoulder, “are you studying maths?”

“I'm not that good,” replied Rachael softly.

“Oh but Rachael, you are!”

Rachael shrugged. “I don't know. I feel different tonight. It was like I didn't have to try. I can't explain really. Once I'd begun, everything happened naturally. I've never felt like that before.” She stared at the floor. “I've never been able to play the whole Sonata before – but I wanted to play well – for you.”

“You could become a professional pianist.”

“Would you be proud of me if I was?”

The question hit Diane like a slap in the face. Carefully, she said, “you are lovely as you are!”

Rachael’s reply was never uttered as the guests, led by Rachael’s mother entered the room.

“Mr. Karlowicz,” announced Rosalind, gripping Karlowicz’s arm, has agree to paint Rachael’s portrait, haven’t you?

The painter smiled awkwardly and nodded while Fisher grinned and said, “In the nude, eh?”

”I do not know,” replied Karlowicz. “I cannot say.”

“Until you have seen the goods, eh?” laughed Fisher while Rachael’s mother smiled.

“Have you ever thought,” Diane asked Rachael’s mother in a loud voice, “that Rachael might be a pianist?”

“Heavens no!” She wants to be a mathematician, like my father. He was a Professor, you know.”

“No, I didn’t.” Bryan had rescued Rachael from the clutches of Karlowicz and Fisher and in a gentle voice Diane added, “she has a talent for the piano. A great gift. She could obtain a scholarship easily. It would be a pity to waste such talent.”

“Nonsense! She is more gifted at mathematics. Like my father was.”

Diane remained silent while Rachael’s mother smiled gracefully and left to attend to her guests. Fisher was moving toward Diane, but she brushed past him. After the shared passion of Beethoven everything and everyone except Rachael seemed bland.



“Rachael,” she said while Bryan winked at her and left to talk with Fisher. “I’m afraid I’d like to go.”

Rachael’s face crumpled and she looked as if she might cry, but Diane said “it’s all right. Your piano playing has made everything – “

Rachael smiled. “Nowhere, Geliebte, can world exist but within. Life passes in transformation.”

Unnecessarily, she added, “I do understand, Diane.”

“We must meet for a talk sometime.”

“I would like that very much. Can it be soon?”

“I hope so.” She moved to hold Rachael’s hand but stopped herself. She felt responsible – for Rachael was barely seventeen and her pupil. She could pretend she did not care and become formal, delineating through her authority as Rachael’s teacher, their respective roles and had she not stood and listened and shared with Rachael the Beethoven and had she not felt instinctively that her own feelings were reciprocated, she might have done so. She had no experience to guide her and felt confused.

“Can you convey my apologies to your parents?” was all she said.

“Yes – they won’t mind. Probably won’t even notice you’re gone.”

“I’ll telephone you tomorrow,” Diane said without thinking.

Rachael blushed. “I’ll look forward to that.”

They stared at each other, both unsure what to do. It was Diane who said, “Well, goodbye.” Without looking back she walked out into the hazy sunlight of middle evening.

The drive along the deserted Greenock to Stretton road brought some calm to Diane and she was able to forget, for a while, Rachael and her music. It was a beautiful evening, humid with a slight breeze and it did not seem to matter that the haze was caused by industrial pollution in Europe being carried in the lofty winds of the high-pressure area. Twice a day, five times a week during term, for nearly six years, she had been along the road and knew every grassy bank, the shape of every hedge through every season, even the position of each pothole. The road wound its undulating way, straddling the coppiced, oak-filled ridge that rose above the cultivated plain to the north-east of the Stretton fault, before dropping into the scattered farmsteads and villages of Ape Dale, and turning west over the Stretton hills and down into the valley, a funnel for trunk road traffic.

Everything here changed slowly. No new houses had been built during her time of tenure and over the years the villages through which she passed remained the same: the squat cottages with their small gardens of rose and bright flowers; the farms, often with the pungent smell of manure. She felt part of the land, secure because of her familiarity. Two-thirds of the distance out from Greenock lay a garage, skirting the few houses and bungalows of the village of Wall through which the road turned sharply west. The garage, well-worn and fraying brick, had been closed twice, re-sold often and now its small grimy windows showed the familiar sign: ‘Under New Management.’

Diane slowed, but a large ‘Closed’ sign was battened to the patched door and she drove on while Beethoven played in her head. Stretton was quiet. Only a few cars were parked beside the Limes of the main wide street of Victorian shop facades. The cinema has long ago been replaced by a red-brick supermarket and the cottages which had once graced the top corner of the street down which the water flooded after storm, had been removed, replaced by Banks as the railway brought prosperity and popularity to the town.

The High Street, leading south past the mock columned Banks, was a jumble of periods from half-timbered Georgian through mock wattle and daub to a handful of Victorian facades, and the breeze stirred the pavement litter. It had been a good day, for tourists.

The narrow road widened past new housing estates clawed out from farming land, past the disused and quaintly small gas-works to the beginning of World’s End and the foot of Ashlet Hill where Diane’s bungalow lay, shaded from all evening sun. She sat in her car in the driveway for several minutes, thinking about Rachael and Leonie until someone rapped on the roof.

It was Watts. "I've been waiting for you."

"Lucky for you I was early then. I suppose you'd better come in."

The sitting room smelled, vaguely, and she opened all the windows wide.

"Well?" she asked while Watts leaned against the frame of the door.

"Have you seen Leonie?"

"No."

"They are getting married."

She betrayed to surprise. "I thought they might."

"You know why?"

"I've got a good idea."

"She feels guilty as well, I presume."

"It's typical of Apthone."

"You don't mind?"

"She had her own life to lead."

"And Apthone?"

“I try not to think about him.” She shivered involuntarily. “Would you like some coffee?”

“Yes.” He did not stand aside and she had to brush past him on her way to the kitchen.

“Please don’t.” She moved away.

“But Diane – “

“I’m sorry. I’ve gone off men since – “

“What?”

“Nothing. It doesn’t matter.”

Watts held her by the shoulder, but she did not look at his face. “Diane, I love you.”

”Don’t say that!” She wriggled free.

“Why not? It’s true!” She stood with her back to him and he said, “What’s wrong? What has Apthone done now?”

“What make you think it has anything to do with him?”

“Instinct,” said Watts sharply.

She turned around suddenly. “Look Alex, I’m very fond of you but at the moment I don’t want any sort of relationship. With anyone.”

He smiled, lopsidedly. “We’d all be better off with Apthone dead.”

“He’s crucified himself.”

“And now he’s crucifying Leonie. And you.” He watched her very carefully. “You’ve gone off Leonie, haven’t you?” When she did not answer he said, “Because she is still bound to Apthone, isn’t it? She prefers Apthone to you.”

“You don’t know what you are talking about!”

He smiled. “I think I do.”

“I’m very tired,” she said coldly. “I’m sorry but would you mind if we forgot about the coffee?”

“You want me to go?”

“Yes.”

“I guess I can wait a little longer,” he shrugged then squinted at her. “Did Apthone come here the other night after I left?”

“What makes you say that?”

“Nothing. Just a guess. Well, I suppose I’d better be going then.”

“If you wouldn’t mind.”

She walked with him to the door. “All problems can be solved,” he said mordantly. He moved to kiss her but she stepped back and shut the door before he could speak.

She was tired and sat in her sitting room while a refreshing breeze caught her face and ruffled, slightly, her hair. Among her records she found a performance of Beethoven’s Opus 111 but it was Rachael’s music and she could not listen to someone else playing it.

Instead, she contented herself with watching a television program. The play seemed realistic

with the characters screaming at each other in broad Glaswegian and she watched it to its conclusion before switching the set off. The real world was in her head, full of conflicting dreams and desires, and after she had carefully closed all windows and locked and bolted the doors, she undressed for bed.

Sleep did not come easily and in the humid darkness she was restless for many hours before the pleasant relief of sleeping dreams overcame her troubled mind and allowed her naked, sweaty body to relax. The dreamed she was by the sea under a beautiful blue sky but the sea was full of rubbish and untreated sewage. Rachael was walking nearby, laughing and smiling while she talked to several young men. She walked toward her and, as a stranger invited the beautiful girl for a drink. Access to the bar of the hotel was through a small door through which they had to crawl and she had ordered drinks for them both while Watts the bartender sneered. She felt guilty and tried to escape through the door, but the opening was now only a small hole and she could not squeeze through. Instead, she returned to Rachael secretly pleased that she could not escape.

She was awoken in the early morning hours of darkness by the ringing of the doorbell. A brief terror suffused her, but she calmly dressed, gathered her revolver from the drawer and walked purposefully into the stinging brightness of the hall.

It was Rachael, leaning on her cycle and Diane hid the revolver behind her back.

“I had an argument with my mother,” she said.

“And you’ve cycled all the way here?”

”Yes.”

“You’d better come in.”

Rachael wheeled her bicycle into the hall while Diane hid the gun in a pocket of a coat by the door. In the sitting room, they sat together on the sofa.

“What was the argument about?”

“Nothing.”

“It was about me wasn’t it?”

“Yes.” She stared glumly at the carpet. “She said I was too old to have crushes on women teachers.”

“I see.”

“She doesn’t understand.” Nervously, she bit a nail. “I’m not wrong, am I?”

Looking at Rachael’s face, Diane could not lie. “No, Rachael, you are not wrong.”

“What shall we do?”

“I don’t know. I am in a very difficult position.”

“Because you are my teacher?”

“I’m afraid so.”

”I wouldn’t want to do anything to harm you.”

“I know. Are you sure – “

“That it is not just a crush? Oh yes, I’m sure.”

“Do your parents know you are here?”

“No.”

“Hadn’t we better tell them? They will be worried.”

”I’m over sixteen. Anyway, they don’t care about me – only about themselves.”

“Shall we telephone them?”

“I’d rather you didn’t. I left a note. They’ll find it in the morning. It was really awful after you left.” She looked around.

“Is your husband here?”

“No.”

“Oh. I presumed – “

“Actually, we’re getting divorced.”

”Really?”

“Yes.”

“Can I stay with you – for a while?”

“It might not be wise.”

”But no one will know – about us, I mean.”

”There is nothing for anyone to know.”

“But the could be, couldn’t there, Diane?”

“You might be mistaken about yourself.”

Rachael smiled. “I don’t think so. Not after tonight. When I played the Beethoven for you, I knew. I have felt like this for you for a long time, but never dared say anything.”



“If the weather is fine tomorrow, shall we have a picnic on the Long Mynd?”

“That would be marvellous!”

“Now you must get some sleep. I’ll show you to the spare room.” She smiled. “I don’t suppose you brought any clothes?”

”No.”

”Don’t worry. You can borrow one of my nightdresses. It might just fit!”

“It doesn’t matter really. It’s too hot anyway.”

Diane showed her to the small room, somewhat cluttered with space bicycle wheels and punctured tubular tires.

“Diane, it’s very kind of you.”

Embarrassed, she said, “Sleep well.”

”And you.”

Her own bed felt damp with the sweat that the sultry night had drawn and she lay naked on the sheet in the airless room. She heard the church clock strike the half-hour and she counted the three tolls. The bedroom door opened, showing a chink or light from the hall and she lay motionless while Rachael sneaked into her bed.

“I couldn’t sleep,” the girl said as she lay beside Diane covering herself with part of the duvet. For several minutes they both lay still, without speaking, until almost at the same time they moved toward each other. They embraced, strongly, naked body to naked body, before relaxing in each other’s arms, and it was like that that they fell asleep to dream in the humid heat of the night.

Diane's awakening was gentle and she opened her eyes in response to Rachael's hand to find Rachael dressed and holding a tray.

"I thought you'd like some breakfast."

"What time is it?" she asked grogged.

"Half past ten."

"Really? I have overslept!"

Holding the duvet to cover her breasts, she sat up and took the tray. "What's the weather like?"

"Beautiful!" Rachael opened the curtains and window. "I didn't know how you liked your eggs, so I guessed. Hope they are all right. There's more coffee if you want it."

"Do you know, this is the first time that I have ever had breakfast in bed?"

"You deserve it! I'll finish cleaning the sitting room."

Before Diane could respond, Rachael left. Soon, she heard a vacuum cleaner being used and she had finished her breakfast and set the tray aside before Rachael had returned.

"Shall we take sandwiches?" an exuberant Rachael asked.

"Sorry?"

"For the Long Mynd. You know, the picnic."

"I hadn't really thought about it. Did you sleep well?"

"Yes. But I always get up around six."

“Good heavens! Why?”

“I run.” Shyly, she added, “not far, only a couple of miles.”

”Rather you than me.”

“Your ought to try it.”

”No thanks, I’m happy being as I am – fat and flabby.”

Rachael laughed, gathered the tray and said, “I’ll see to this while you get dressed.”

Rachael was not an intrusion into her privacy, and Diane found it natural that she should be around. A little diffidence remained, but it was if they had been friends for years. She emerged dressed to find the whole house, with the exception of her bedroom, tidied and cleaned.

“Well,” explained Rachael a little embarrassed, “I woke up at six out of habit and had to do something.”

“Do you want to telephone your parents?”

“Not really.”

”It would be best.”

”Well, if you think so.”

”You could say you were staying here for a few days – that is, if you want to.”

Rachael was ecstatic. “Can I telephone them now, then?”

“Yes, of course”

She returned dejected. “My mother wasn’t too happy. She wants me to go home.”

“And do you want to?”

”Not any more.”

”Shall we go for a walk?”

”I suppose so.”

”Rachael,” Diane said softly. “I don’t mean to interfere. You are an adult – you can make your own decisions. You are free to do what you want. Nobody owns you – not any more anyway. If you wanted to leave school for that matter, no one could prevent you. But if you want to stay, do so for the right reasons, not because you are being emotionally blackmailed.”

“By my mother you mean?”

“Maybe. I don’t know, and it’s not really for me to say. You must make your own decisions.”

“I don’t want to go back home. There’s nothing for me there.

“Except a grand piano!”

Rachael laughed, “except the piano!”

Together they walked from the bungalow in the warm air of mid-Sunday morning along the road to the Little Stretton and wooded track to Ashes Hollow, a stream filled batch between the steeply rising hills of Grindle Hills and Yearlet. The summer’s morning was alive with promise and the early mist had been dispersed by the sun, leaving dewy grass. The water in the stream was low, and Rachael removed her shoes to walk barefoot. No one came along the isolated valley to disturb them.

“Cor!” Rachael shouted, “this water’s cold!”

Under the blue sky with a wind to cool the rising heat of the sun surrounded by the nature-filled peace of the valley, it was not long before Diane had removed her own shoes and began walking tentatively among the stines and boulders of the stream.

It was the splash of water that Rachael threw over her that freed her and, like two friends of the same age, they played in and with the water, chasing each other in turn, until they were both exhausted and soaked. On the grassy bank they stretched themselves to dry.

“Do you want to do mathematics at University?” Diane asked.

There was a long pause, while Rachael ran her hand through the short, sheep-cropped grass and a Dipper bobbed around the stream. “Not particularly. I don’t know what I want to do.”

“You could make a career as a pianist.”

Rachael laughed, but it was not a dismissive laugh. “I don’t know as if I want to, though.”

”You have ample time to decide.”

”Probably. Now I’m leaving home.”

”What would you like to do this afternoon?”

“I could stay here all day.”

”If I stay here much longer I will fall asleep.”

Rachael sat up. “I suppose we’d better go and change.”

”Hmmm.” Diane closed her eyes and Rachael crept to the stream to fill her shoe with water. Slowly, she poured it over Diane’s head. Diane shrieked, and chased Rachael along the path. A middle-aged man with a wizened face stood by the footbridge at the end of the path where it grew rocks, staring with a puzzled look at the two women. They saw him and stopped their chasing and playful yells.

“Good morning!” said Rachael loudly as they passed him.

He looked at them both quizzically, snorted and strode purposefully down the path while Rachael and Diane laughed.

“Race you home.” Rachael said.

“It wouldn’t be a race! Perhaps if you gave me fifteen minutes start!”

“You’d be home by then.”

“Exactly!”

Barefooted they followed the track to the road and the warm pavement to Diane’s home. In front of the driveway stood a car.

“Oh dear,” said Rachael, nodding her head toward it, “trouble!”

“Your parents?”

”My mother.”

“Rachael!” shouted her mother as they drew near, “what have you been doing?”

”Just a walk mother.”

Her mother was speedily out of the car. “Just look at you! And Miss Dietz, I’m surprised at you!”

“Would you like to come in for some coffee?” Diane asked with a smile.

“No thank you. I came to fetch Rachael. And by the looks of things I arrived just in time.”

”Oh mother, don’t fuss!”

“Are you sure you won’t come in?” Diane asked.

“Rachael,” shouted her mother, “put your shoes on and come with me!”

Rachael held her head to one side. “No.”

Her mother looked for a moment. “What did you say?”

“I said no. I’m staying here with Diane.”

”I see! So it’s Diane now, is it? Just wait until your father hears of this!”

“I’m staying with Diane. I’m leaving home.”

”That is impossible!”

“No, it is not. I’m over sixteen.”

”You are just a child!”

Rachael turned away as her mother held her arm. “Rachael, you are coming home with me this instant!”

“No I’m not.”

”How dare you speak to me like that! Do you forget who I am, who you are?”

But Rachael shook herself free from her mother and turned toward Diane. “I can see you have had a hand in all this Miss Dietz.”

”Its Mrs. Dietz, actually,” corrected Rachael.

“I see!” shouted her mother embarrassed and angry. “Well, Mrs. Dietz, I am holding you responsible for all this. Dividing our family. Rachael are you coming?”

”No! I’m not!”

“Well Miss Dietz, just wait until Mr. Thomas hears of your interference. A fine teacher you are telling a young girl to disobey her parents!”

“Mother, that’s not fair! It was my own decision.”

”I would not at all be surprised, Miss Dietz, if you weren’t forced to resign over this. Encouraging young girls in their lewd and sordid fantasies indeed! You should be ashamed of yourself, corrupting a young innocent girl. You are not fit to be a teacher! “

Diane smile only served to make her more angry. She got into her car a slammed the door.

“Rachael! For the last time are you coming home?”

”No.”

”Just wait, Miss Dietz! I am not without influence with the School Governors, you know!”

Then: “You .....!” She was too angry to speak, and drove away.

“I’m very sorry,” Rachael said when she and Diane were safely in the house.

“Don’t worry,” smiled Diane. “It will be all right, I’m sure. Come on, we’ll get changed.”

”But she said you’d get the sack.”

”I’d resign first.”

“But you can’t. You haven’t done anything!”

“That’s not what other people will think.”

”I don’t really care what they think. You can’t resign. I won’t let you. I’d go back home first.”

”It probably won’t come to anything. Just a little storm in a big teacup.”

”You don’t know my mother! She won’t give up. It’s not fair!”

“Would you like a shower or a bath?”

“If I wasn’t your pupil there is nothing anyone could do, it there?”



“But you are and there is.”

”But if I left school...”

“But you can’t.”

”Why not? You yourself said I could. Anyway, I can and I’m going to!”

“But Rachael – “

“I’ll get a scholarship to the Royal College of Music!”

“I couldn’t let you do that.”

“Unless I wanted to.”

”Rachael – “

Very quietly, Rachael said, “I don’t want to leave you. You must realize I love you.”

The Beethoven, the playfulness by the stream, Rachael’s mother, Rachael’s offer and her pleasing words, were too much for Diane and she turned away.

“I – “ began Rachael. “I’m sorry if I’ve – if I have offended you. I thought – “

Diane did not look at her. “You haven’t.”

Rachael’s voice was tearful. “I assumed we –“ nervously she smiled. “Perhaps I ought to go home.”

The battle was hopelessly lost, for Diane could not bear to inflict upon Rachael more agony. She turned to see Rachael’s face contorted between anticipation and terror of rejection, and her embrace of Rachael relieved her of suppressed emotion as much as it made Rachael happy.

For several minutes they stood in each other’s arms, swaying slightly while sun leaked to them from the window in the hall.

“I don’t want you to go: I don’t want you to go.” Diane said. Then: “I really think we should get changed.”

They parted, but held hands. “What shall I wear?” Rachael asked, looking at her sodden dress.

“I have a few clothes which might fit. You’re a bit larger than me, though.”

Rachael looked down at her breasts and giggled. “I meant what I said you know. About leaving school.”

”It probably won’t be necessary.”

”But if it is – I will do it.”

“You don’t have to.”

“Yes I do. I want to. Because I want to stay with you, Diane. Always.”

Diane held Rachael’s hand tighter. She felt a great love inside her and the sadness of losing Leonie had been immeasurable reduced. But she was afraid.

“You can stay here as long as you wish,” she said, “whatever happens.”

Several strands of Rachael’s dark hair were stuck by sweat to her forehead and Diane brushed them tenderly aside before Rachael kissed her fingers.

“I shall buy you a piano!” she said, blushing and embarrassed.

“And I shall play for you in the evening when we are alone.”

”When will you collect your belongings?”

Rachael shrugged. “Today, tomorrow, I don’t care.”

”Fine. Now will you change your clothes?” she said jovially.

“I’m just going, Miss” replied Rachael sarcastically. “Please don’t beat me!” She laughed and

ran into the bathroom.

She was sitting among the perfumed foam when Diane entered bearing clothes.

“Diane,” she began with an enchanting smile that belied her age. “Will you bath me?”

Diane was trembling, but she laid the clothes aside long enough to kneel beside the bath and kiss Rachael lightly on the cheek. On the roof of the house, several jackdaws fought.

#### XIV

The invitation, or rather command, had not been long in coming upon Diane’s arrival at school, and she sat in Thomas’s office while he studied some notes on his desk. Outside children played beneath a branding sun.

“Now, Diane,” he smiled, neatly folding his spectacles before wiping his brow of sweat. “Mrs. Paulding, as you may know, has, er, been in contact with me regarding her daughter, Rachael.”

”I thought she might.”

”It seems, from what she had told me, that Rachael is staying with you against her parent’s wishes. Is that so?”

”Yes.”

”Diane – I will be honest with you. I am in a difficult, not to mention delicate situation, as I am sure you appreciate. On one side, there is Mrs. Paulding; on the other, you. Mrs. Paulding has, shall we say, made some serious allegations.”

”About me and Rachael, I presume.”

”I’m afraid so. And since Rachael is a pupil – “

”She isn’t.”

”Pardon?”

”She isn’t a pupil anymore. She had decided to leave school.”

”Do her parents know of this?”

”She telephoned them this morning.”

”I see.” He fumbled with some notes on his desk. “Is that Rachael’s own decision?”

”Yes. Nothing I could do to dissuade her.”

”But is she, er, staying with you?”

Without rancor, Diane said, “I know what you are implying. But it is not like that at all. She is simply staying with me because she has left home and has nowhere else to go – at the moment.”

”I would like to believe – “

”But you know that I am a lesbian.”

”No! No! Good heavens! I didn’t mean to imply – “

”That I am corrupting Rachael?”

”Diane,” he smiled kindly at her. “I know you well enough after – what is it? Six years? – to know that you are a very professional teacher.”

”I’m prepared to resign,” she said slowly and mutely.

“Come now! I won’t hear of it!”

“But – “

”We can sort this out, between the two of us.”

”But the Board of School Governors – “

Thomas smiled – a strange smile, mixing benevolence with occult knowledge. “I am sure I can come to some arrangement. With Mrs. Paulding. No need to involve anyone else. Would it be possible for me to speak with Rachael?”

“Of course. Do you want her to come here?”

Thomas pondered. “No. It would perhaps be best away from school.”

”Mr. Thomas?” asked Diane shyly.

“Hmm?”

”Can I ask you a personal question?”

”You mean why am I, as Headmaster of a vast and sometimes incomprehensible Comprehensive school, going to such trouble for you?”

”Well, yes.”

”It is simple really.” He smiled his strange smile. “You are a good teacher. But perhaps most of all – the pupils like you. Strange that, are rare, believe me. But – “

“But?”

”I realize that you are undergoing a difficult period in your life – what with you marriage and everything – but you should perhaps be more, shall we say, discreet?”

“And not become involved with pupils?”

“Precisely.”

”I never have before and never intend to again.”

”Good. I can help this time. There will not be another, believe me. The last thing we as a school need is another scandal,” he said abstractly. One was enough.

A year ago, one of the male teachers had had an affair with a female student. When it became known, he had left in haste, leaving the girl and her baby, to find employment in a large city in America, a suitable place many agreed.

“No,” said Thomas, shaking his head, “Not another scandal.” He thought for a moment. “It may be necessary for Rachael to leave. Would she have obtained her ‘A’ levels?”

”Definitely! Good grades, probably.”

”I will talk with her tonight – “ His telephone rang.

“Mr. Thomas speaking... Hello Rosalind! I’ve just heard.” He covered the mouthpiece with his hand and said to Diane, “I’ll call after school.”

”Fine!” She smiled at him to find Watts lurking outside the door.

“I’ve heard,” he said perfunctorily.

“How?” Diane was surprised.

Watts tapped his nose with his forefinger. “Shall I just say a middle aged witch told me.”

Diane watched him suspiciously. “What have you been up to now?”

“Come to dinner tonight and I’ll explain everything.”

”I can’t. Mr. Thomas is coming to see Rachael.”

”Lunch then?”

Diane was intrigued and said, “Yes.”

The morning passed painfully slow for Diane. She expected her classes to be interrupted by Mr. Thomas who would ask for an urgent meeting. Or Mrs. Paulding would rush in, pointing the accusing finger and shout, “you lesbian! Corrupting my daughter!”

Yet, because she was an accomplished teacher, and she actually cared for the children she taught more than she cared about the teaching staff or what they thought or said, she was able to teach as if nothing had happened, as if it was another Monday morning like any other – except the last week of term and exceptionally hot. Only one blemish marked her morning.

As she walked to meet Watts by the double glass doors that fronted the school and overlooked the car park and Windmill Hill and near where school buses thronged at the beginning and ending of the day, Bryan accosted her.

“Miss,” he asked, “is it true that Rachael has left?”

She looked at him, amazed. “News travels fast, I see.”

“Her parents told me.”

”When?”

”I saw them at break.”

”Here?”

”Sure! Going into the Crater – I mean Mr. Thomas’ room.”

”Oh, I see. She might be leaving. I really don’t know yet.”

”Probably the best thing that could happen.”

”What?”

”Her leaving. I mean, like getting a scholarship in music.”

”Bryan – “

”Sorry Miss,” he smirked, “got to dash!” He ran to join the throng of children bound for the refectory.

Watts was waiting by his new car and she allowed him to close the door as he seated himself.

“And where,” he asked, touching his forelock, “would Madam like to be driven today?”

She waved her hand imperiously, “That way, my man.”

”Very good, Madam!” he saluted.

He took them through the town, along a few twisty lanes all neatly hedged, to an isolated country Inn. A few cars were beside the lofty Oak outside and in the cool if dim and modernized interior they sat with their drinks.

“Well?” she asked before drinking most of her cider.

“Eh?” groaned Watts obtusely.

“Any idea why Leonie did not come in this morning?”

“No.” He drank his pint of ale in a few gulps, burped and said, “It’s me charm which get ‘em! You any idea?”

”About Leonie? No, she wasn’t in when I telephoned this morning.”

“With the bastard Apthone, no doubt.”

”Probably.” She finished her cider.

“Like another?”

”Not for me. I can’t teach well if I have too much to drink.”

”Huh! I can’t teach without too much!” He loped to the bar taking almost half of its width, and returned with a mug of dark brew and plate of sandwiches.

Diane snatched most of the sandwiches from the plate. “You were going to tell me about Mr. Thomas.”

”Was I now? Did you see Morgan this fine morning?”

“No. She kept out of my way.”

”Not surprising really,”

”Mr. Thomas?”

”Nay, lass, me name be Watts. ‘Thumper’ for them as ‘have a care.’”

She clutched his mug. “Are you going to tell me or do I shampoo your hair?”

Watts chuckled, rather loudly. “Not the dreaded beer over the hair ploy! All right, I give in, I’ll tell you.” He squinted at her. “There was gossip a few years back about him and Rachael’s mother.”



Diane was astonished. “Really? I never heard about it.”

”Yep. ‘cause,” he smiled, “it might not be true.”

”And?”

”You know me! I went to him and said, nudge, nudge, wink, wink – “

“You’re showing your age now.”

He ignored the remark. “I said to him, straight like, ‘Create quite a scandal, a story like that. And you a Headmaster.’ And he said, “well I’ll know whom to thank’ and gave me a straight look.” He waited for the accolade. There was no response, so he said, “I think he got the message.”

He finished his beer. “You’ll be all right.”

Diane understood only too well. Outside, the sun shone bright and hot while a lark sang above a field. On the road a car passed while sunlight glinted upon glass.

Diane sighed. “You really shouldn’t have.”

Watts shrugged. “What the hell? I did it because you’re a friend, not because of what you are thinking.”

”Was there any truth in the rumour?”

“About the boss and Rosalind?”

”Yes.”

He smirked again. “Who can say?”

”You can I am sure.”

”Just between you and me and the rest of the staff, of course, there was a lot of truth in it.”

”How do you know?”

”Shall we get back?”

”If you like.”

”I’ve something to give you when we get back to school.”

”What?”

”Wait and see.”

They returned through the Shropshire landscape in silence. Watts occupied, as well he might be, with his maniacal driving, Diane with her sombre thoughts. Two children were fighting by the main door when they returned but when Diane instinctively went toward them Watts held her back. He handed her a small neatly wrapped package.

“Open it when I’m gone,” he said and strode off to lift the two boys with bloody noses straight into the air and carry them bodily into the foyer.

Inside the package, wrapped in a small, embroidered silk purse, was a sapphire engagement ring.

## XV

Diane had spent the afternoon trying to avoid Watts, and she was glad when school finished. Unusually, she felt no desire to retire to the relative peace of the staff room, as was her habit, to drink coffee, talk a little or mark some of the children’s exercise books from the inevitable pile that had collected during the day. Instead, she hurried in the tropical humidity toward her car while school buses siphoned the children away.

The sameness of her journey make it uneventful, but she stopped by the side of the road near the rocky outcrop of Hope Bowdler Hill before the Greenock road cut its way down to the Stretton valley. Clouds gathered to obscure a little of the Stretton valley and she could smell ozone among the wind-borne smells of summer.

Slowly, she began to realize that little that was real or natural bound her to the land on which she lived, still less to the surroundings of her school. She and her fellow teachers formed a cabal – a sort of sub-community within the boundaries of Greenock, Shrewsbury and Stretton. Most of her own friends were teachers from the school, and almost all of her social life involved them, the parents or school events. She, and the others like her, had little contact with the community from which the children came. She did not live among her pupils, and indeed the school was too large for her to know all of them personally, as she wished. The school day ended, and she was gone, shut up in her house or with her friends while her children carried on their lives, in a little sub-society all their own. Children came to her eleven years old and she taught them, watched them, and worried about them for five, six, and soon seven years. And then they left. Sometimes a little card, or a meeting by chance. But they were gone; lost to her world of village, town and school. The thought made her sad, but she knew no solutions and, under the gathering gloom, drove slowly home.

Rachael was waiting, her hair plaited, her body clothed in a bright cotton dress, and as soon as Diane opened the door, Rachael embraced her.

“Mr. Thomas is coming,” Diane said.

“I know. My mother telephoned.” She took Diane’s handbag. “Come and sit down. I’ve made some coffee.”

”That’s kind of you. Have you changed your mind?”

”About what?”

“School, of course.”

”No.” She brought coffee and demurely offered Diane a piece of cake. “Hope you like it.”

Diane held the cake suspiciously, then thought better about making the joke. “Hmm,” she said truthfully, “it is delicious! You are lovely!”

“I suppose,” said Rachael sullenly, holding her head in her hands as she sat next to Diane on the sofa, “Mr. Thomas will try and persuade me.”

”Probably.”

"My mother wasn't angry, you know."

"Oh?"

"Yes. Quite calm about it all. Strange, really."

"I suppose she's realized that you are a young woman, not her little girl."

"Your husband called this afternoon. Seemed surprised to find me here."

Diane smiled. "Good!"

"He left his door keys."

"Did he say what he wanted?"

"Just some wheels – for his bicycle I think."

"That fits! Did he say anything else?"

"Don't think so. Oh yes, he left you a note."

With supine agility that Diane admired, Rachael leapt from the sofa and extracted the letter from the mantelpiece.

'Diane,' it read. 'I will call tomorrow to collect the rest of my belongings. Sorry things did not work out and thanks for your kind letter.'

Diane screwed the letter up and threw it toward the empty fireplace. She missed and Rachael had moved to retrieve it when the doorbell rang.

"I'll go!" said Rachael excitedly.

"Rachael!" Diane heard Thomas say, "how nice to see you!"

"It's Mr. Thomas," said Rachael unnecessarily, as she let him into the room.

“Well now, Rachael,” he said as he sat down. “You know why I have come to see you?”

“Yes.”

”And you are still of the opinion that you want to leave?”

“Yes.”

Diane stood up. “Would you like some coffee?”

”I’ll be in the kitchen,” Diane said.

“Diane,” said Thomas, “there is no need for you to leave, I assure you.”

”Mr. Thomas,” Rachael said.

“Yes Rachael?”

“I’m not going back.”

”But why? You have your ‘A’ levels next year.”

”I don’t want to.” She looked at Diane. “Besides, I can’t live with Diane – Mrs. Dietz - if I’m at school, can I?”

”Well,” muttered Thomas, “it would be highly unusual.”

”I’m not ashamed to say that being here is more important to me than going to school or taking examinations.”

”I see.” He looked owlshly at Diane before smiling at Rachael. “And what will you do? For a career, I mean?”

”I haven’t decided yet. I may not need one. But I could try for an RCM scholarship. In the meantime, I thought I would study privately, and still take my exams.”

”I see.” He smiled benevolently. “You seem to have thought everything out.”

”Yes, I have.”

”Well, you could not have a better tutor!”

“Has my mother spoken to you?”

”Naturally.” He stared at the carpet and shuffled his feet. “She realizes that you are old enough to make you own decisions about your future. She would still like you to go home, of course.”

“There’s no chance of that.”

“No, that’s what I thought. Well, I’d best be on my way.” He stood up and shook Rachael’s hand. “I wish you well for the future. You are in good hands.”

Rachael blushed. “Thanks.”

“I’ll show you out,” said Diane.

At the door, Thomas said, “I’m well satisfied. I do not anticipate any problems – with the school, at least. Diane,” he whispered, “it may not be any of my business, but she is very young.”

”Does she look happy to you?”

”Well, yes. Very much so, in fact.”

”You have answered your own unasked question then.”

Thomas appeared a little embarrassed. “Well, goodbye then. See you tomorrow, as usual!” he said cheerfully.

“Yes.” She watched him walk to his car before closing the door.

“I’m glad that’s over!” said Rachael.

“So am I!”

“I was trembling all over.”

”Honestly? I thought you were very self-possessed.”

Rachael laughed. “I feel really free! And happy!” She danced around the room shouting “I’m happy! I’m free!”

“Fancy a walk?”

Rachael stopped, stared out of the window and scowled. “It’s going to pour!”

“I’m game if you are. I am not afraid of the rain, even if you are,” said Diane playfully.

“Where do you want to go then?”

”Top of the Mynd?”

”Suits me. It will be nice and windy up there!”

They decided against the car and walked into the town along the High Street to take the road to the Burway. By the cattle grid that stopped the spread of detached houses and signified the beginning of the moorland, they left along a track to follow the path by the stream in Townbrook valley. The hills rose steeply on either side, fledged in green and sheep while the sky above grew darker and distant thunder rolled.

The thunder alarmed Rachael a little, and she threaded her fingers into Diane’s as they passed almost four hundred feet below Devil’s Mouth, its scree and frost broken boulders scattering the hill. The upward path of cracked, bare and brown earth led them past the growing ferns toward the greenish-gray siltstones of the Long Synalds heights.

It was an isolated spot, well known to Diane, and overlooked the small, spreading valleys that fed the stream in Ashes Hollow. Behind them, the hill rose steadily until it became the levelled plateau of Mynd top.

Thunder violet threatened them above as lightning forked, striking higher ground. Almost instantaneously the clap of thundering air, which shook them as they huddled close to the ground. The Mynd seemed to vibrate in response as Rachael screamed amid the large drops of rain. Another flash, nearer, as rain and thunder battered them and ozone seared the sky. The

darkness of rain and closing cloud was ominous.

But Diane was a dark goddess; imbued with the storm's power and she laughed and beat her fists into the soaking earth. The storm was her storm and would not – could not – harm them. Its power was hers, but she let it break itself over the town and hills beyond. Then, both she and Rachael were laughing – a strange laugh, redolent of Dionysus, perhaps, or an ancient witches' meet. Rain soaked them, but they did not care. They alone were alive in a world of the dead.

Slowly, their demonic life-enhancing ecstasy ebbed with the passing of the storm, and they were left to find their way down the hill while their bodies tingled and their sense of reality returned.

“You realize,” Rachael said as they trod the street into the town, “we are bound together now. Beyond even our own death.”

It was not a strange thing to say, and it did not sound strange to Diane. Somewhere, alone their walk into the storm they had crossed into another world.

“I know,” she replied. The bonds that had bound her to Leonie were broken and her own fear of becoming deeply involved with Rachael had vanished, as the lightning had vanished, sending only a distant thunder while they walked.

They were both removing their sodden clothes when Diane's doorbell rang. It was Leonie, and Diane, in her dressing gown, stared at her with a mixture of welcome and annoyance.

“Leonie,” she finally said, “come in.”

Hurriedly, Rachael wrapped a towel around her body.

Leonie stared at Diane for a second, and then said, “I can't stay long. The children are in the car. Hello Rachael.”

“Hello Miss,” said Rachael shyly and locked herself in the bathroom.



“I just came to tell you,” said Leonie sadly, “that Richard asked me to marry him – and I said I might. Only – “

”Only?”

”I thought we – “ she hesitated, then added, “but I see I was wrong.”

Diane held her arm. “Leonie. You know I didn’t want you to become involved with Apthone again.”

“He needs me,” she said gently.

“For God’s sake! No he doesn’t! Not in the way you believe. He’s just using you – again!”

“That’s unkind of you.” She shook Diane’s hand off her arm.

“No it’s not.”

”You have never liked him, have you?”

”No!”

“I thought we understood one another.”

”We can’t – with Apthone in the way.”

”I will probably marry him. He’s very kind and gentle.”

Suddenly Diane was angry. “Look!” she pointed to the wall of her hall. “See those stains? Do you know whose blood it is? Well, I’ll tell you! It’s your bloody, beloved Apthone! You know the night of his accident?” she was re-living the terror and the words would not be silenced. “He came here, your precious and gentle Richard, and tried to rape me!”

Leonie stepped backwards, holding her hands to her face. “It’s not true!” she said weakly. “I don’t believe you.”

Diane shook her head. The anger and terror and repressed guilt had gone and softly she said, “I

really don't care if you believe me or not.”

“You only said it because you hate him,” pleaded Leonie, half to herself.

“Leonie – I didn't ...”

Leonie was crying. “I don't want to talk to you,” she said and ran out of the room.

Diane was about to follow when she heard Rachael behind her.

“Diane, I couldn't help overhearing.”

Leonie had driving away and Diane closed the door.

“It was true, wasn't it?” asked Rachael, “what you said.”

Diane nodded and began to cry. “I shouldn't have told her I know. But I was so angry.”

Rachael came to her and held her hand. “I hope I didn't embarrass you.”

Diane stopped crying. “Embarrass me?”

”By being here – with no clothes on.”

Diane was moved by Rachael's gentle innocence and embraced her. “Rachael, my darling, nothing you could do, would embarrass me.”

”I can think of something,” she said with a modest smile before loosening Diane's dressing gown and bending down to kiss her breast. Diane was trembling, and slowly Rachael let the gown fall to the floor before she led Diane toward the bed.

Exceptionally, Diane did not wish to leave for school. For a long time she lay in bed, Rachael curled up asleep beside her. She wanted to stay with Rachael, spend the day with her, for school seemed charmless, a charade full of children in adult bodies playing indoor games.

Rachael seemed to make everything clear; there was no guile in her, only a trusting innocence that Diane loved and wanted to cherish and protect. Last night after Rachael had broken the barrier which Diane herself had feared to break, it had seemed, many times, that she and Rachael were not different people. There was no question of identity, no barriers of any kind at all and they did not have to speak to understand each other's needs. A look, a vague smile... And she found it difficult to believe, in the hazy light of morning, that Rachael was so young. An instinct seem to guide Rachael and her body so that she gave to Diane a divine and physical ecstasy such as she had never before experienced.

With Rachael, all her own insights and experiences – the path by the Severn, the Long Mynd, the storm, even her planned revenge on Apthone – seemed to possess her again with a force all their own, as if Rachael, just by loving so selflessly, transformed those insights into reality and suddenly it occurred to Diane that she had never been in love before. Always, with her husband, with Leonie, a part of her had been detached and critical just as a part had not surrendered for fear of being hurt. But with Rachael, everything was easy and natural and she wanted to find some form, some suitable expression, with which to represent her love. She wanted to hold Rachael in her arms, cry and laugh at the same time and tell her that she loved her as she had never loved anyone before.

Through and because of Rachael, she possessed everything she had even dreamt about, and beside this young and beautiful woman, men seemed a pale, distorted flicker. Rachael fulfilled the deepest longings Diane had ever nurtured.

She kissed her, softly, before stretching and leaving the room to dress. On the kitchen table, laid and made ready by Rachael the night before without Diane's knowledge, she found, propped up on a vase containing a single white rose, a note. 'Diane' it said simply in Rachael's italic hand, 'I love you.' Diane was overwhelmed, and crept back to the bedroom to steal a look at her sleeping lover.

It was nearing eight o'clock when she was prepared. Rachael, unusually, still slept, and, closing the kitchen door, she used the extension to make her telephone call. Calculated deceit was alien to her and she was shaking when she dialled Fisher's number.

“Hello? Diane here. Sorry to bother you, but just rang to say I won’t be in until after ten this morning. Can you get someone to look in on my lower sixth group? Good.... Sorry about the short notice but – “ she hurriedly thought of some excuse, “ – I have a dental appointment. I’d forgotten about it!” she laughed to give credence to her lie.

Diane was still trembling when she closed the door and walked to her car. No mist blighted the sky as no regret blighted Diane.

Shrewsbury was busy with commuter traffic and she followed the road over English Bridge, round the Town Walls, and Quarry, along the river until she drove past the stone memorial to Hotsper to park on a side street. For over half an hour she sat on the grass where the tall spire of St. Margaret’s church shadowed squat buildings while the road channelled traffic down toward Wyle Cop Hill. She enjoyed quietly watching the people rush along the pavements, buses stop to empty and fill, cars to pass, and was almost sad when the time came for her to leave.

She waited outside the shop on Dogpole, while heavy lorries beat upon the narrow road, until its myopic, stooped owner opened, reluctantly, it seemed, his door.

“Can I help you Madam?” he smiled.

“I hope so!” Diane said confidently. “I want to buy the best piano you have in stock.”

The man’s eyes brightened, and he wrung his hands. “Certainly Madam! But we do not carry a large stock.” He sighed. “All we have at the moment is this Baby Grand.” He patted it gently. “Would you like to try it? It has lovely tone. Actually, I’m very fond of it myself, but get so little time to practice, these days.”

“I’ll take it.”

The man raised his eyebrows. “I could play a little, if you wish.”

”No, really, it looks perfect. When can you deliver?”

He scratched his nose. “Toward the end of the week?”

”How about today? I don’t care what it costs.”

”Of course, Madam. If you are sure.”

Quickly, she wrote out the cheque and handed it to the man.

“But Madam – “ he protested when he looked.

“I’ll leave you to fill out the amount. You can send the bill. You’ll want the address, of course.”

”Yes, Madam.”

She wrote it on the back of her cheque. The man stared at the check, then at her. “A present!” she said.”

“Yes, of course, Madam. We do provide free tuning for a year. I myself – “

“Splendid! What time will you deliver?”

”What time would be most convenient?”

”Four this afternoon.”

”I am sure that can be arranged.”

”Splendid...and,” she added, “I assure you the cheque will not bounce. You can telephone my bank, if you wish. Or I can go to the bank now and withdraw the amount in cash, if you prefer.”

“There is no need for that Madam, I assure you.” He scratched his nose. “If you could provide me with a telephone number where you can be reached during the day. Only if an unforeseen problem arises, I assure you.”

”Yes, of course.” She wrote the telephone number of the school on her cheque. “Well, goodbye.”

“But Madam,” he protested as she made for the door, “don’t you want to know how much it will cost?”

”Not really,” she smiled and left.

She was trembling as she walked toward the High Street. Soon, she had arranged the transfer of all her savings. Wistfully she knew it might not be enough, but did not care. It was irrelevant compared to Rachael's happiness and she smiled as she tramped along the streets to her car, singing softly to herself.

On her return to school she found Watts and Morgan in the staff room alone. But they could not spoil her bliss and she walked toward Morgan while Watts eyed her hopefully from his corner.

"Well," she said jovially to Morgan, "I hope you take care of him."

"I was a bit worried – "

"About me? Don't be! As long as you are both happy, what's the problem?"

"I thought – "

"Do you love him?"

Morgan gave a little smile. "I think so."

"Has he mentioned marriage?"

"Yes. But I'm not sure. It's too soon."

Diane touched her on the arm. "Take your time and learn to be happy. Are you interested in cycling?"

"Only a little."

"Well, there's hope then."

"Diane, why are you being so – so nice?"

Diane laughed. "Simple! Because it makes people happy. It is really easy to be happy."

Morgan shook her head. "I don't understand you."

"Nothing to understand, really," Diane quipped before turning towards Watts.

He grinned at her. “Did you like it?”

She sat down beside him. “Yes. But look, Alex, I don’t want to hurt you – “

”But you are going to anyway.”

She shrugged. Morgan was making some exercise books, but Diane still whispered. “You know what I am.”

”Part of you perhaps.”

”No, Alex. All of me. I care for you, very much, but I could never become involved as you wish.”

“I’ve loved you for years. Since the first day I met you.”

”Please,” she sighed, “I’m living with Rachael.”

”Temporarily, I assumed.”

”No, permanently. You might not understand, but we love each other.”

”What! You and Rachael? She is only a child!”

“I don’t want to talk about it any more.”

”I won’t give up,” he insisted.

She removed his ring from her handbag. When she held it out, he pushed her hand away.

“You keep it.”

”I can’t.”

”Yes you can. Why do you think I have never married?”

”Please,” she pleaded. Then: “But I thought you loved Leonie?”

He shrugged. “Maybe. But only because she reminded me of you.”

”Why don’t you fight for her?”

“Maybe.” He stood up. “You keep the ring.” Then without rancour, but with his lopsided smile, he said, “give it to Rachael.”

Before she could reply he had walked away and out of the room. Morgan was smiling at her, but she could not have been more wrong.

## XVII

The bulbous red sun was still hidden behind the height of Caer Caradoc when Diane and Rachael began their journey. No traffic blighted the road and in the cool respite of an early dawn the world seemed quiet and quite dead.

Diane could not afford the holiday, but she did not care. The piano had been delivered, as promised, and Diane remembered how Rachael had laughed, then cried and enfolded her in kisses when she had returned, a little weary, from school. All evening she played, creating through her music a magic spell that bound Diane and made her a prisoner of love and desire. Then, at last, an exhausted Rachael, her body and dress drenched in sweat, had held her hand and said, “Now I want to give you something special.” Her body still ached, a little, from the passion of Rachael’s love.

The hours brought the heat and the traffic and both were relieved to leave the car when they arrived at the Yorkshire hamlet of Gilling. To the north, less than a mile distant, were the North Yorkshire moors while to the south, the plain of York whose fertile land had been farmed for millennia. There was nothing unique or even interesting about the village – a few stone build houses gather around a dip in the road from Helmsley to York – but for Diane it was special. Not simply because a mile away to the northwest lay the imposing while stone buildings of Ampleforth Abbey with its community of Benedictine monks, but also because of the surrounding lakes and forest, once part of the wealthy Fairfax estate and now managed by the monastery. For her, discovered by chance while at University, it was a place where she could relax, untroubled by crowds of people, and where, after a walk in the forest, she could sit in the monastic choir with its carved oak stalls, and listen to the beauty of Gregorian chant. But perhaps the most fitting of all, she could swim privately in the icy coldness of the lakes.



The cottage guesthouse was Spartan, but clean, and they unpacked hastily in their shared room before briskly walking along the narrow track to the lakes. On one side, the forest, on the other, grazing fields, the monastery and its enclosing large Public School.

“It seems very peaceful,” Rachael said, stroking her amber necklace.

“Is it – even during term time when the boys are here.”

”A shame about the trees.”

”Sorry?”

”The trees.” Behind the roadside deciduous fringe, a conifer plantation grew. “Shame it is so dead within.”

”By the lake – “

“It is different!” said Rachael confidently.

“Yes.”

”I bet it has a dark history.”

”I wouldn’t know.”

”Up there, on the hill, where the broken tree grows.”

They walked in silence to the lake. It was a small lake, girdled with trees and reed and a rotten jetty pointed like a broken finger toward its heart. But there was silence and a pale blue sky while water rippled, slowly.

They undressed and swam naked, racing each other to and from the jetty to where a small rusty buoy was anchored, until tired with the effort and by the cold of the water, their laughter and the long journey, they lay on the mossy bank to dry beneath the summer sun.

“If we hurry,” Diane said as Rachael stretched herself like a cat, “we might be in time for Vespers.”

Dressed, but not dry, they walked the mile or so to the monastery through the large expanse of rugby fields until, in the slanting shadows, they stood below the church while crows flocked noisily above the stone.

“Come on!” chided Diane as she climbed the steps to the church.

Rachael shook her head. “I’d rather not go in.”

”Why ever not?”

”I’m afraid places like this give me the creeps – always have done.” She shivered.

“You should have said! I’d never have dragged you all this way.”

“I didn’t want to disappoint you.”

”Anyway,” smiled Diane, “it doesn’t matter and I’m hungry.”

Arm-in-arm, they returned to their lodging.

The next day began the pattern which they were to follow for the remainder of their stay. They would rise late from their bed and after a large breakfast walk among the forest and hills, often silent, but sometimes sharing through their words their private thoughts and dreams, fascinated as new lovers are by each other. They talked, played, walked or sat, touching, sharing every experience: the damp feel of rotting wood, the dew of the grass, the joy of watching a deer, the naming of wild flowers. Their afternoon was spent swimming and lying in the tessellated lakeside sun while the earth moved imperceptibly toward dark. It was sufficient for them to be together, close enough to touch, and it did not occur to either that such exclusive closeness might restrict. In the evening, they would lock their bedroom door and exhaust themselves with love. Not once did they visit the Abbey, and the days with their sameness soon passed, bringing to both security and great joy. Rachael, with her sometimes sombre thoughts, bound herself physically, emotionally and mentally to Diane. Diane was everything to her: lover, sister, husband and wife. The labels, and the roles of the world, which they hid, were meaningless for them, and it never occurred to either of them that there was anything unnatural about their relationship. No barriers, reminded and no guilt bound them just as no thought restricted.

They would dress to please each other, perfume their bodies richly, and sometimes, soak into the pores of their body the heady scent of forest or lakeside earth. The earth, with its canopy of trees spread full for summer, the reedy depths of the lake, the sun and scarce breeze, even the moon of morning, served them, offering gifts, nurturing the divine. No music sufficed for their feelings, no words could represent their joy.

Once, when the sun made long shadows by the road and dust dried their mouths, they had left in their car for an Inn. It was an old Inn, gabled and small, and they sat in the corner, cleanly dressed but scented of earth, their faces blushed and burned by both sun and lake water, while tourist men fresh from tourist cars stared and local men surmised.

They had allowed themselves to be brought drinks, a meal they did not need, while the two vultures in perfumed shirts that had sought them out preened and fed their minds with glee at the promise of the night. Under the table, Diane caressed Rachael's leg with her foot.

“Well,” she said finally, “we'd better go.”

A vulture grinned. “Shall we drive you home? I have my Mercedes outside..”

Rachael, Diane knew, understood, and wickedly she said, “Well, we are staying at the Grange – The Abbey guest house.” She told the lie well.

“Yes,” a leering face said, its moustache twitching, “I know it.”

”If,” whispered Diane, “you want to see us, come after eleven tonight. We'll leave the doors open. I'm in number 17, second floor.”

“And I,” smiled Rachael, “am in 19.”

Outside, in the privacy of their car, Rachael said, “That was very naughty of you!”

“Awful wasn't it?”

”But I enjoyed it.”

”So did I!”

“Did you see their faces when you gave them your room number?”

“Yes! I thought they were going to wet themselves.”

They laughed, and waved at the two men dallying between the Inn and a Mercedes car before driving away, pleased and satisfied with their ploy.

It had been the happiest week of both their lives, and both were sombre when the morning of their departure arrived. “We must never part!” Rachael had said and clung to Diane before the long and tedious journey that returned them to their home. It was significant, both felt, that on their return cloud came, bringing a steady drizzle of rain.

On the floor of their hall, scattered by the letterbox, three handwritten notes lay, but Diane had time only to retrieve one of them before the telephone rang.

“Hello,” Rachael said. Then, sadly, “It’s Leonie - for you.”

“Hello, Leonie, Diane.” She held Rachael’s hand while she talked. “Yes, we’re back. What? When? ... I see. Yes, of course, I’ll come.”

Rachael was looking at her expectantly. “It’s Apthone,” Diane said, “he’s dead.”

In the dim light of late evening, Diane was certain she saw Rachael smile.

## XVIII

“I would like you to come,” said Diane. “Very much.”

”I – I don’t know,” replied Rachael shyly. “I might be in the way.”

”You,” Diane said kissing her, “could never be in the way as far as I am concerned.”

Rachael smiled. “I was a little jealous when she telephoned.”

”No one is more important to me than you.”

"I know really. I just like to hear you say it, that's all."

They departed immediately and it was dark and still raining when they arrived to find Leonie and her house in a state of confusion.

"Children are in bed," she said her face drawn. Nervously, she bit her nails, "Diane, I am so glad you came!"

Leonie moved forward, but Diane stepped back. "I brought Rachael with me – I hope you don't mind."

"No. I wondered if you would." Her voice trembled. "Come in, both of you."

Diane sat on the edge of the sofa while Rachael stood in a shadowed corner of the room fingering her amber necklace.

"When did he die?" Diane asked.

"The day before yesterday. It was awful!" She sobbed a little, then smiled.

"Has no one been to see you since?"

"Yes." She lit a cigarette and blew the smoke away. "Alex. He was with me just before Richard...."

"Has anyone seen to the funeral arrangements?"

"I don't know." Leonie tried to control her shaking hands, and partially succeeded. "Alex mentioned something."

"Is there anything I can do?"

Leonie smiles. "It is nice you just being here."

"Perhaps it was all for the best."

"Don't say that Diane!" Leonie started crying.

The memory of their love returned to Diane, but she ignored her feelings and, in atonement,

handed Leonie her handkerchief.

“Thanks.” Then, to Rachael, “You must think me silly.”

Rachael came forward and to Diane’s astonishment kissed Leonie on the cheek.

“No, I don’t” she said. She astonished Diane even more when she said, “Do you want us to stay here – for the night, I mean?”

“No,” smiled Leonie, holding Rachael’s hand. “That’s very kind, but I’ll be all right. Alex – Mr. Watts – said he’s calling round later to see how I am.” She returned the handkerchief before saying, “Would you like something to drink?”

Rachael and Diane looked at each other. Diane said, “No, not for me.”

”Rachael?”

“No, thanks. We had something on the way down.

“Of course,” said Leonie, “You’ve just got back, haven’t you?”

”Yes.” It was Diane who answered but Rachael who yawned.

The ringing chimes of the doorbell startled Leonie. “I’ll go!” offered Rachael.

Watts blocked the doorframe and smiled broadly. “Rachael!” he said loudly, “You look more beautiful every time I see you.”

Rachael curled her lip, but he did not wait for her reply.

“Well!” he boomed, rubbing his hands together and shaking rain from his hair, “I see we’re all gathered for the wake!”

Diane stood up and smiled politely at Watts. “We are just going.”

“Had a good holiday, then?” he asked.

“Yes,” said Diane, staring at him, “very good.”

“Splendid!” He turned to Rachael who was standing by the door. With her raven hair slightly wet from the rain, her black dress and amber necklace, she might have been a wise woman of the Old Religion.

“I see,” Watts said to her, “you’re not wearing the ring Diane bought for you.”

Rachael looked at Diane quizzically. “It was a surprise!” she said quickly, “and now the oaf’s spoiled it!”

“Sorry,” he said without conviction.

“We’d best be going,” Diane said.

“I hope both of you sleep well,” Watts said sarcastically.

Diane ignored him. “I’ll telephone,” she said to Leonie. “In the morning to see how you are.”

“That would be kind.” Leonie smiled weakly and went with them to the door. “It was good of you to come. I only wish you’d been here before.”

”Take care, won’t you?” Diane said.

“I’ll try.”

They stared at each other for a moment until Diane turned and walked into the rain.

“I hope,” she said to Rachael as they walked to the car, “he didn’t offend you by his remarks.”

"No," laughed Rachael as Leonie closed the door, "he didn't. I don't care what he or anyone else says. He can call me names as far as I care."

Diane held the car door for her. "We might get more of the same in the future."

"So what?" When Diane had started the engine, she added, "I love you. That's all that matters to me. If the whole world was against us, I wouldn't care."

"Rachael, you continue to amaze me!"

"Why, because I am so mature?"

"Well, yes."

"I had to grow up quickly when I was younger. My mother – " she began. "But it doesn't matter." Then she began to quote some verse:

*"We don't love like flowers, with only a single*

*Season behind us; immemorial sap*

*Mounts in our arms when we love.'*

She smiled innocently. "There's a lot more, but I won't bore you with it."

"It was beautiful," said Diane sincerely.

"It was Rilke."

"Really? I see I'll have to read him."

"He's one of my favourite poets."

"You must read me some."

"I'd love to."



"I suppose you can read it in the original German as well?"

"Of course!" smiled Rachael.

Blissful, they returned to their home. The rain ceased with their arrival and in the subdued light in the now cramped sitting room of their bungalow, Rachael sat at her piano to transform herself and the night. Diane listened and watched, entranced. Rachael's playing created a new world and a new woman, and Diane watched this strange woman of dark secrets create from the instrument of wood, steel and tone a universe of beauty, ecstasy and light. Bach, Beethoven – it made no difference what or for how long she played. But, as it always had since that night, Beethoven's Opus 111 fascinated her with feelings, visions, and stupendous, world-creating thought. It imbued her with insight, and a love that wanted to envelope Rachael and consume her. It was pleasure and pain to watch Rachael transform herself through the act of her playing into a goddess she would die for. No reason touched her while she listened. There was, she knew, no greater life than this, no greater feeling and she wanted to immolate herself with Rachael's ecstasy, immolate world upon world with this glory and passion which no male god described.

Then the silence, while clamoured notes faded and dimmed light framed. There were no more tears Diane could cry and she waited while Rachael slowly rose and offered her hand. She – the goddess within – was smiling and Diane allowed herself to be led.

The music in her head, the memories and secret dreams of youth: all were before her, embodied in flesh and she had only to kiss the slightly scented lips or see the secret wisdom hidden in the eyes to reach the summit of her life, slowly, in the dim corners of the bedroom's reflected dark.

-  
IXX

The journey was lonely and more terrifying than she had thought or imagined it would be, and for a moment the memory of her children's faces held her. But her ineffable sadness remained and Leonie Symonds in the burgeoning dawn drove the steep road to the Mynd.

Cloud fractured the sun, spreading luteous colours of stupendous beauty while light mist lingered in the Stretton valley below. Nothing in sound challenged the engine of her car and

with shaking hands she attached her chosen instrument of death. Soon the fumes filled the chilling air as a memory of Diane filled her heart and creeping death her lungs.

Consciousness flickered, briefly, and was gone as her mind tried to tell the body of a new desire to live. Too late the desire and very slowly Leonie Symonds, not quite thirty-three, slipped toward death.

The dream startled Diane and she awoke sweating while Rachael turned in her sleep. But the light did little to ease the sense of foreboding and with trembling fingers she dialled Leonie's number. It was some time before the answer.

"Leonie?" her trembling voice asked.

"Eh?" said a gruff voice. A cough, then "Who is this?"

"Diane."

"Oh, Alex here."

"Where is Leonie?"

"She got up early. Said something about going for a walk. I just went back to sleep. Hang on." It seemed minutes before he returned. "She gone! There's a note...My god! I'll ring you back."

No call came, and, dazed, she dressed to sit by the piano with a fresh mug of coffee. But she could not be still and woke Rachael.

"I'm just off for a walk," she said. "Won't be long."

"Shall I come?" Rachael asked, sleepy.

"No, you need your rest."

Rachael smiled and went back to sleep.

The dawn was chilly and she wandered sadly among the spreading light, cheered a little by the

changing red around the sun. No one passed her, and she walked steadily through the town to briefly sit upon the Burway bench overlooking Cardingmill valley and its stream. The silent beauty of the morning calmed her, dispelling the fear and dread of her dream and she trod happily the steep of the hill while sheep wandered to find the warmth of the sun.

At first recognition escaped her, then the reality of the car held her immobile. She ran, shouting Leonie's name. But she was too late with her love. The door opened to the grip of her hand and she stood staring in shocked agony as the warm body tumbled out.

“No! No!” she screamed as, behind her, tyres slowed on gravel and scree.

Watts looked briefly at the body, turned off the engine of Leonie's car and gently led Diane away.

## XX

The light of dusk blurred the contours in Diane's room and Rachael watched through the window the hills and trees soften in outline and fade with the slow silent passing of time. Diane did not move, content to stare at her hands as she sat hunched in a chair, weakened by guilt. She smiled, a little and briefly, when Rachael rose to gently stroke her hair, but this interlude of life was soon gone. Outside, a few birds sang to call the moon from sleep.

Rachael began, haltingly at first, to play upon her piano but it was not long before the music consumed her, obliterating the external world. Beethoven's Opus 111 became again for her the embodiment of her feelings and she played faultlessly, draining away the morose days since Leonie's death, forgetting Diane's withdrawn self-absorption and her own tiredness.

She did not notice Diane standing beside her as she did not hear her lover crying in the burgeoning dark of the room. The music was transforming Diane, each note breaking slowly the barriers she had created within her as if the music explained all the grief and elevated her inner suffering to a supra-personal joy. Before the music ended, the catharsis was complete, but she waited, silently crying and when it was over she knelt down to place her head in Rachael's lap.

“I’m sorry,” Diane said as Rachael gently brushed the tears away, “I must have hurt you a lot in the past few days.”

Rachael smiled. “I’m glad we are together again.”

“I will never be apart from you again.”

Tomorrow, Diane felt, she would sit at the piano and try through the medium of music to express in composition all she had experienced: Leonie’s tragic death, her own ecstasy and visions, the moments of dark magick when she felt herself attuned to the powers of the Earth, the innocent joy she found in teaching. But most of all, she wanted to try and capture in some lasting form her love for Rachael, and began to feel as Rachael began to play music by Bach, that her life possessed meaning. She might, through her music, and way of living help in some way others to achieve the insight that she knew Rachael had made possible for her. Even now, she did not understand how this had happened. Was it simply because of love?

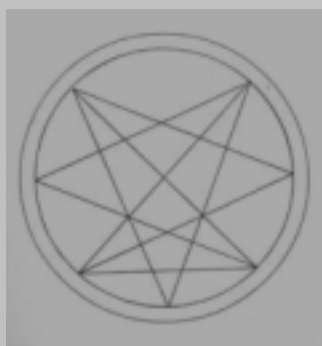
Outside her house darkness was stirring, but inside she felt herself renewed through the brightness of personal experience and she began to feel a presentiment of meaning of individual existence that she knew only music, for her, might explain. She rose slowly – while Rachael seemed to measure with music the cadence of those feelings – to watch the stars shimmer in the dark sky above.

But clouds, rushed by wind, soon came to cover the sky while, less than fifteen miles away, Watts stood by Leonie’s grave wondering if his killing of Apthone had, after all, been in vain.

He had the impression that Rachael, the dark hereditary sorceress, was watching him. But he knew better than to look around. Her skill was growing, as her beshrewing of Diane by music had proved, and Diane was now forever lost to him, unable to provide the heir which he, like Rachael herself, required. Would her heir, then, he wondered, be a Initiate and not her granddaughter as tradition decreed? And would, could, Diane's music presence something of Rachael's ancestral gods in the land, the places, they both loved? He did not know – but would say nothing, as Rachael herself would say nothing, for there was nothing to be said which words might describe. ‘It is not right,’ an Ancient Greek had written, ‘to give names to some deeds.’

Somewhere, in the darkness nearby, a dog howled.





## **The Quintessence of the ONA: The Sinister Returning**

What it is essential to understand is that the ONA is based upon several fundamental, and many unique, esoteric principles, which esoteric principles include the following:

(1) That we human beings possess the potential to *consciously* evolve to become the genesis of a new human species, and that genuine esoteric Arts - and especially and in particular The Dark Arts - are one of the most viable ways by which such a conscious evolution can occur;

(2) That genuine esoteric knowledge and insight - and thus genuine Occult advancement - requires both self-achievement through *practical* deeds and a self-honesty, a genuine knowing and understanding of one's own self;

(3) That the Cosmos may be *apprehended* through a bifurcation of both Time and Space, described as such an apprehension is by causal and acausal Universes, and that:

(a) we, as living beings, are an example of acausal energy being presented in our physical causal Universe;

(b) all causal life is life because there is an "intrusion" of acausal energy into the causal - that is, all causal life is a nexion to the acausal, with we human beings possessing the latent ability to not only apprehend the nexion we are but also to know and utilize certain acausal energies;

(c) magick is the presencing, by us, of certain types of acausal energy by means of a causal nexion, already existing or one brought-into-being;

(d) there exists, in the acausal Universe, certain types of acausal life, of diverse species, some of which species we can apprehend if we possess (i) the esoteric knowledge required to presence such acausal entities or (ii) the esoteric ability and skill to travel into the realms of the acausal;

(e) certain acausal entities have been presented, in times past, on Earth - and thus become known to human beings, and these include entities known to us by their exoteric "names" Satan, and the Dark

Goddess, Baphomet;

(f) certain causal - and Occult - symbolism and symbologies may be and often are useful aids and means for us as human beings to *begin* the process of acausal apprehension and the knowing and utilization of certain acausal ("Occult"/magickal) energies;

(g) our evolution has been, is and will continue to be - until we evolve to become a more evolved species - based upon what it is convenient to describe as the sinister dialectic;

(h) the sinister dialectic is a process of disruption, destruction, re-birth, renewal, heresy, and change; and on the practical level involves creating, fermenting, and aiding such causal things as strife, Chaos, revolution, heresy, and culling;

(i) to evolve into a higher species is to evolve toward, and into, the acausal Universe itself; that is, to become-like The Dark Ones, themselves; to become both a causal and an acausal species, existing in both the causal and the acausal.

Thus, two of the primary aims of the ONA are (1) to use The Dark Tradition to create Adepts and, over a long period of causal Time, aid and enhance and create that new, more evolved, human species of which genuine Sinister Adepts may be considered to be the phenotype; and (2) to use the sinister dialectic (and thus Aeonic Magick and genuine Sinister Arts) to aid and enhance and make possible our evolution toward the acausal. Furthermore, to achieve these aims will take a certain amount of causal Time, of the order of several centuries.

Hence, it should be clear - to those possessed of genuine Occult insight - that the ONA has both an outer (exoteric) and an inner (esoteric) nature and meaning. Or, expressed in a more truistic, and simple, way, the understanding and knowledge of the Adept (and of those beyond) is not that of the the novice and the Initiate. The exoteric aspect is re-presented in such works as *The Black Book of Satan* - and in the ceremonies and methods of traditional Satanism themselves (including the symbolism of the Tree of Wyrd) - while the esoteric aspect is re-presented in such ONA MSS as *Mythos of the Dark Gods* and *The Five-Dimensional Magick of the Seventh Way*, and especially in and by our Aeonic Magick and our practical deeds which *presence the dark*. For it is such Aeonic Magick, such practical sinister deeds, and the creation of genuine Sinister Adepts - over a period of decades and centuries - which re-present, and which manifest, the true nature of the ONA.

In addition, three further things about the ONA should also be obvious to those possessed of genuine Occult insight. First, that - in its esoteric essence - the ONA is not a mundane Occult Order of the Old Aeon type. For it is a particular causal nexion, brought-into-being for specific purposes; and thus is now a living-entity imbued with certain acausal energies; which entity now has life, a being, of its own, and which thus is immune to - and not concerned with - the inane criticisms of the inane, many of whom continue to delude themselves about their Occult knowledge and abilities.

Second, that by evolution we mean an increase in acausal energies both within ourselves, as individuals,

and as presented in our causal Universe (and thus presented upon our planet, Earth). These acausal energies cause, provoke, and aid our own evolution, our own change, as individuals (toward, and beyond, Adeptship), and also cause, provoke and aid change within those constructs we humans construct, such as "society" and the "political" - and "religious" - causal forms (or abstractions) which we human beings (both Occultists, and otherwise) have used, do use and can use in the service of such evolutionary change, with such forms only being a causal means, and not representative of the acausal essence, which acausal essence can be, and has been, apprehended, and manifest, as Chaos.

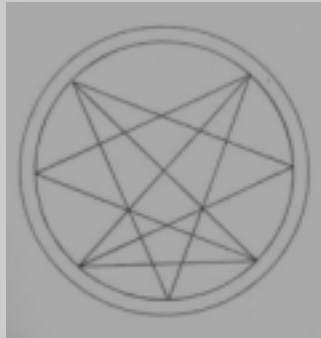
Third, that the very purpose and meaning of our individual, causal - mortal - lives is to progress, to evolve, toward the acausal, and that this, by virtue of the reality of the acausal itself, means and implies a new type of *sinister* existence, a new type of being, with this acausal existence being far removed from - and totally different to - any and every Old Aeon representation, both Occult, non-Occult and "religious". Thus it is that we view our long-term human social and personal evolution as a bringing-into-being of a new type of sinister living, in the causal - on this planet, and elsewhere - and also as a means for us, as individuals of a new sinister *causal* species, to dwell in both the causal and acausal Universes, while we live, as mortals, and to transcend, after our mortal, causal "death", to live as an acausal being, which acausal being can be currently apprehended, and has been apprehended in the past, as an immortal sinister being of primal Darkness.

Anton Long  
Order of Nine Angles  
119 Year of Feyen

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# Complete Guide to The Seven Fold Sinister Way of The Order of Nine Angles



## Introduction

The Seven-Fold Sinister Way, here explained in detail, is the name given to the practical system of Occult training used by ONA individuals and by ONA nexions (aka Temples) - that is, by those esoteric individuals and groups who and which use a sinister (Left Hand Path) Initiatory system based on The Dark Tradition (aka Hebdomary). This Occult training is the learning of The Art of Dark Sorcery, by individual Occultists, and thus is the graded and guided practice of The Dark Arts (aka Black Magick).

The Way is an individual one: each stage, of the seven stages that make the Way, is achieved by the individual as a result of their own effort. To reach a particular stage, requires considerable effort by the individual, who works mostly on their own.

One aim of the Way is to create Sinister individuals - that is, to train individuals in The Dark Arts. This sinister training develops individual character, esoteric (or Occult) skills, and self-insight. The individual also acquires genuine esoteric knowledge and that genuine understanding that is the beginning of wisdom.

The Way itself enables any individual to achieve genuine esoteric (Occult) Adeptship - and beyond - and thus fulfil the potential latent within them, and thus they can and do enhance their life, and come to know and then achieve their unique Destiny.

The Way is essentially *practical* - involving experiences in the real world, and ordeals, as well as the completion of difficult, challenging tasks. It also involves a practical mastery of all forms of sorcery. The Way requires a sincere and genuine commitment, lasting many years, and it is also difficult and very dangerous. Success depends on this commitment by the individual.

The Way is divided into seven stages, and these mark a specific level of individual achievement. The stages are: (1) Neophyte; (2) Initiate; (3) External Adept; (4) Internal Adept; (5) Master of Temple/ Mistress of Earth [ or "Lady Master"]; (6) Grand Master/Grand Mistress [ or "Grand Lady Master"]; (7) Immortal.

Sometimes, Initiates are described, or known, as "novices"; Internal Adepts as Priest/Priestess; a Grand Master as a Magus, and a Grand Mistress as a Magistra.

All of these stages (with the exception of the stages beyond Master/Mistress) are associated with specific tasks, ordeals, rituals and so on, and a completion of each and all of these (given in detail below under the appropriate stage) is required before the next stage can be attempted. Also, each stage involves the individual in a certain amount of reading and study of Order manuscripts/texts [hereafter "manuscripts" is abbreviated as MSS, and "manuscript" as MS ]. The purpose of this reading and study is to provide a sinister, esoteric, understanding of the tasks, ordeals, rituals and so on of the particular stage being attempted. Each stage represents a development of and in the individual - of their personality, their skills, their understanding, their knowledge and insight.

Before embarking on the first stage - that of sinister Initiation - the individual who desires to follow the dark and dangerous path of traditional sorcery should gain some understanding of what The Sinister Way is. To this end, the following Order MSS should be read:

- \* [A Brief Guide to The Esoteric Philosophy of The Order of Nine Angles](#)
- \* [A Glossary of ONA Terms](#)
- \* [The Dark Arts of The Sinister Way](#)
- \* [Our Sinister Character](#)
- \* [An Introduction to Dark Sorcery](#)
- \* [Introduction to Dure and Sedue Ceremonial Sorcery](#)
- \* [Magick, Aeons, and The Psyche of The Folk](#)

## **I - Neophyte**

The first task of a neophyte [the word means "a beginner; a new convert"] is to obtain copies of the various Order MSS which will be needed. These include: (1) [Naos - A Guide to Becoming an Adept](#); and (2) [The Grimoire of Baphomet, Dark Goddess](#). The neophyte also needs to understand the fundamental concepts of magick, such as "causal" and "acausal" and here a study of the following Order MSS is useful: (a) Chapters 0 and I of *Naos*; (b) [Aeonic Magick - A Basic Introduction](#).

The second task of a neophyte is to undertake the "secret task" appropriate to this first stage. This task is a necessary prelude to sinister Initiation [ the task is detailed in the MS "The Secret Tasks of the Sinister Way", which is included as an Appendix to this present work].

The third task of a neophyte is to undertake a ritual of Initiation. If you are in contact with a traditional nexion or group, this can be a Ceremonial ritual. If you are working alone, or the group you are in contact with suggest it, it can be a Hermetic one of "Self-Initiation", as given in detail in the Order MS *Naos*. There is no difference between a Ceremonial Initiation, and a Hermetic Self-Initiation.

The fourth and final task of this stage involves the new Initiate in constructing and learning to play, *The Star Game*, details of which are given in the Order MS *Naos*. [ An introduction to the basic (training) form of this esoteric learning aide is given in the [here](#).]

## II - Initiate

Tasks:

1) Study the Septenary System in detail [*Naos*] and begin hermetic magickal workings with the septenary spheres and pathways as described in *Naos*. Write a personal "magickal diary" about these workings. Study and begin to use the Sinister Tarot [copies of the Sinister Tarot, and study notes, are available from the ONA].

2) Undertake hermetic workings/rituals for specific personal desires/personal requests of your own choosing, as described in *Naos*. Record these, and the results, if any, in your magickal diary.

3) Set yourself *one* very demanding physical goal, train and achieve or surpass that goal. [Examples of minimum standards are, for men: walking thirty-two miles in less than seven hours in hilly terrain; running twenty miles in hilly terrain in less than two and a half hours. Cycling one hundred miles in under five and a half hours. For women, the acceptable minimum standards are: walking twenty-seven miles in hilly terrain in less than seven hours; running twenty miles in hilly terrain in less than three hours; cycling one hundred miles in under six and one quarter hours.]

4) Seek and find someone of the opposite sex to be your 'magickal' companion and sexual partner [or of the same sex if you incline that way], and introduce this person to The Dark Tradition. Initiate them according to the rite in *Naos*, or devise your own rite of Initiation (which should culminate in sexual intercourse with your partner). Undertake the path and sphere workings with this partner.

5) Obtain and study (a) the Order MS [Eulalia, Dark Daughter of Baphomet](#); and (b) the Order MS [The Deofel Quartet](#). A guide to this MS is given in the MSS *The Deofel Quartet - Responses and Critical Analysis* and *The Deofel Quartet - A Satanic Analysis*. [Note: Part I and Part II of the *Deofel Quartet* are intended as entertaining sinister fiction.]

6) Undertake an 'Insight Role' [see the *Secret Tasks* MS [appended below] and the MS [An Introduction to Insight Roles](#) (119yf edition)]. This Insight Role is the Secret Task of this stage.

7) After completion of your Insight Role, undertake the Grade Ritual of External Adept, given in *Naos*.

The stage of Initiation can last - depending on the commitment of the Initiate - from six months to a year. Occasionally, it lasts two years.

### **Understanding Initiation:**

Sinister Initiation is the awakening of the darker/sinister/unconscious aspects of the psyche, and of the inner (often repressed) and *latent* personality/character of the Initiate. It is also a personal commitment, by the Initiate, to the path of dark sorcery. The dark, or sinister, energies which are used/unleashed are symbolized by the symbols/forms of the Septenary System, and these symbols are used in the workings with the septenary spheres and pathways. These magickal workings provide a controlled, ritualized, or willed, experience of these dark energies or "forces" - and this practical experience begins the process of objectifying and understanding such energies, and thus these aspects of the psyche/personality of the Initiate. *The Star Game* takes this process of objectification further, enabling a complete and rational understanding - divorced from conventional "moral opposites".

The physical goal which an Initiate must achieve develops personal qualities such as determination, self-discipline, élan. It enhances the vitality of the Initiate, and balances the inner magickal work.

The seeking and finding of a magickal companion begins the confrontation/understanding of the anima/animus (the female/male archetypes which exist in the psyche and beyond) in a practical way, and so increases self-understanding via direct experience. It also enables further magickal work to be done, of a necessary type.

An Insight Role develops real sinister character in the individual; it is a severe test of the resolve, Sinister commitment and personality of the Initiate. The Grade Ritual which completes the stage of Initiation (and which leads to the next stage) is a magickal act of synthesis.

### **III - External Adept**

Tasks:

1) Organize a magickal, and Sinister, group/nexion/magickal Temple. You must recruit members for this Nexion, and teach them about The Dark Tradition of the ONA. With your companion (or another one if personal circumstances have changed) you must Initiate these members according a ceremonial ritual of your own devising, for which you may use texts such as *The Grimoire of Baphomet* and [The Black Book of Satan](#) for inspiration and some guidance. In addition, you must perform ceremonial rituals on a regular basis. In this Nexion/Temple, you will be the officiating Priest/Priestess, with your partner acting as the Priestess/Priest. Regular Sunedrions should be held, as detailed, for instance, in the *Black Book of Satan*, as you should regularly perform rituals, both hermetic and ceremonial, for the satisfaction of your own desires and those of your members. You should run this Temple for between six and eighteen months, as you should use either the *Black Book of Satan* or write and use your own *Black Book* of ceremonial rituals, with some help from the members of your group, if possible, in the writing

of this work, and with all rituals firmly based on the non-Magian dark, septenary, tradition of the ONA, and you should use this work of yours in preference to using published works such as the *Black Book of Satan*.

2) Train for and undertake all three of the following different and demanding physical tasks - the minimum standards (for men) are: (a) walking thirty-two miles, in hilly terrain, in under seven hours while carrying a pack weighing at least 30 lbs; (b) running twenty-six miles in four hours; (c) cycling two hundred or more miles in twelve hours. [Those who have already achieved such goals in such activities should set themselves more demanding goals. For women, the minimum acceptable standards are: (a) walking twenty-seven miles in under seven hours while carrying a pack weighing at least 15 lbs. (b) running twenty-six miles in four and a half hours; (c) cycling one hundred and seventy miles in twelve hours.]

3) Undertake the 'Secret Task' as given in the *Secret Tasks* MS.

4) Study, construct and learn to play the advanced form of *The Star Game* [outlined in *Naos*].

5) Study Aeonics and the principles of Aeonick Magick, as detailed in Order MSS.

6) Study, and if possible practice, Esoteric Chant, as detailed in Order MSS [ particularly in *Naos*].

7) Study the esoteric traditions of The Dark Tradition, and if so inclined [see 'Concerning The Nexion' below] instruct your Temple members in this tradition.

8) Prepare for, and undertake, the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept - if necessary choosing someone to run the Nexion in your absence.

### **Concerning The Nexion:**

The Temple [aka Nexion] must be run for a minimum of six months, as you yourself must seek out, recruit, instruct and train, the members of this Temple. There must be at least four other members, excluding yourself and your companion, during these six months, as you must strive to obtain an equal balance between men and women if the Temple is so orientated toward heterosexuality. It is at your discretion whether or not you are honest about your intentions, and inform recruits/potential recruits that this Temple is one of your tasks as an External Adept, and that you yourself are not yet very advanced along the Left Hand Path. If you choose not to so inform your members, you must play the appropriate role. If you are considering keeping and expanding the Temple beyond the minimum period and into the next stage, that of Internal Adept, it is more practical to be honest from the outset. The crux is to decide whether you wish your Temple to be solely for your own External Adept purpose, or whether you want it be truly sinister, with your members guided by you to become sincere and practising dark sorcerers. If this latter, then you must be honest with them about your own progress along the path, and instruct them according to ONA tradition.

After this six months is over - with four or more members and many ceremonial rituals having been performed - you may disband the Temple, if you consider sufficient experience has been gained in magick/manipulation/pleasuring. However the time limit of six months, and the minimum of four other members, must be observed, otherwise the task is not completed, and the next stage - Internal Adept - is not possible. This particular task, of an External Adept, is only complete when these minimum conditions have been met, for such conditions are essential for practical ceremonial experience to be gained.

After these conditions have been met, you may opt to continue with, and expand, your Temple.

### **Understanding External Adept:**

The tasks of an External Adept develop both magickal and personal experience, and from these a real, abiding, sinister character is formed in the individual. This character, and the understanding and skills which go with it, are the essential foundations of the next stage, that of the Internal Adept.

The Temple enables various character roles to be directly assumed, and further develops the magickal skills, and magickal understanding, an Adept must possess. Particularly important here is skill in, and understanding of, ceremonial magick. Without this skill and understanding, Aeonian magick is not possible. The Temple also completes the experiencing of confronting, and integrating, the anima/animus.

From the many and diverse controlled and willed experiences, a genuine self-learning arises: the beginnings of the process of "individuation", of esoteric Adeptship. [ See, for some basic exoteric guidance, the Order MS [\*Adeptship - Its Real Meaning and Significance.\*](#)]

The stage of External Adept lasts from two to six years.

### **IV - Internal Adept**

The basic task of an Internal Adept is to strive to fulfil their personal Destiny - that is, to presence the dark force by acting sinister in the real world, thus affecting others, and causing changes in accord with the sinister dialectic of change. This personal Destiny is revealed, or becomes known, before or during the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept.

The Destiny is unique, and involves using the natural, and developed character and abilities of the individual. For some, the Destiny may be to continue with their Nexion, teaching others, and guiding them in their turn along the Seven-Fold Way. For others, the Destiny may be creative, in the artistic or musical sense - presencing the sinister through new, invented and performed forms or works. For others, the Destiny may be to acquire influence and/or power, and using these to aid /produce sinister change in accord with the sinister dialectic. For others, it may involve some heretical/adversarial or directly

revolutionary or disruptive role, and thus seeking to change society. For others, the Destiny may be specific and specialized - being a warrior, or an assassin..... There are as many Destinies as there Adepts to undertake them.

While this Destiny is unfolding, the Adept will be increasing their esoteric knowledge and experience through a study and practice of Esoteric Chant, *The Star Game*, Aeonick Magick. Rites such as those of the Nine Angles will be undertaken. A complete and reasoned understanding of Aeons, Civilizations and other forms will be achieved, and with it the beginnings of wisdom.

After many years of striving to fulfil their Destiny, and after many years of experience and learning, the Adept will be propelled toward the next stage of the Way [ see, for some basic exoteric guidance, the MS [\*Mastery - Its Real Meaning and Significance\*](#).] When the time is right, the Grade Ritual of Master/Mistress will be undertaken. The time is right only after the Adept has spent years completing themselves, and their 'self-image', having taken themselves to and beyond their limits - physical, mental, intellectual, moral, emotional. Being genuine Adepts, they will have the insight, and the honesty, to know what experiences, and what knowledge, they lack - and accordingly will seek to undergo such experiences, and learn such knowledge.

The stage of Internal Adept lasts from five to eleven years.

## **V - Master/Mistress**

The fundamental tasks of this Grade are threefold:

- 1) The guiding of suitable individuals along the Seven-Fold Way, either on an individual basis, or as part of a structured Nexion/Temple/group;
- 2) The performance of Aeonick Magick to aid the sinister dialectic;
- 3) The creation of new forms to enhance conscious understanding and to aid the presencing of acausal/sinister forces.

Further, and importantly, a Master/Mistress will be using their Aeonick understanding, and their skills to influence/bring about changes in the societies of their time - this is Aeonick Magick, but without "ritual", as described in Parts III and IV of *The Deofel Quartet* and in texts such as *Eulalia*, *Dark Daughter of Baphomet*. They will also be working to create long-term change (of centuries or more).

Few individuals reach the stage of Master/Mistress - so far, only one to two individuals a century, out of all the genuine esoteric traditions, have gone beyond the stage of Master/Mistress to that of Grand Master/Grand Mistress.

The stage of Master/Mistress lasts a minimum of seven years - when sufficient Aeonick works are

completed/achieved, and wisdom attained, there is a moving toward the next stage, that of Grand Master/Grand Mistress.



## Appendix - The Secret Tasks of the Sinister Way

The secret tasks have remained secret for a long time by virtue of their nature - they represent genuine dark sorcery in action and as such often are "a-moral". Such esoteric tasks were revealed to an Initiate by the Master, or Adept, guiding and training that Initiate.

To understand the nature of these tasks, it is necessary for the sinister novice to be familiar, and in agreement with, the secret teachings themselves, particularly as these relate to culling. [These teachings are contained in such traditional Order MSS as *Culling - A Guide to Sacrifice* and *Guidelines for the Testing of Opfers*. For a long time, the matters mentioned in the above secret MSS were transmitted only on an oral basis - it being forbidden for such teachings and practices to be written down or divulged to non-Initiates. However, as explained elsewhere, in several other MSS, this practice has now changed.

Accordingly, this present MS will detail the secret tasks which a sinister novice must undertake as part of their commitment to The Dark Tradition. That is, these hitherto secret tasks are both required and necessary: mandatory if progress is to be made upon the Way. Without them, there can be no genuine achievement along the Way, for it is such tasks which develop that character and those abilities which are sinister and which thus represent the presencing of the dark forces on Earth via the agency (or vehicle) of the individual sorcerer. These secret tasks - and the other tasks - represent the way of dark sorcerer. They are sinister. As such, they are fitting only to a minority: to those who are, or those who desire to become, sinister in a practical way. Some who profess to be sinister - and some who wish to become sorcerers of The Dark Tradition - will hear of these tasks, or read them, and be surprised, perhaps even appalled, particularly by the tasks that involve hunting and killing animals and culling human dross. Such people will say or write such things as "Such tasks are not necessary". By saying or writing such things such people condemn themselves as mundanes - as "ordinary" and weak - as they will show they lack the demonic desire, the hardness, the toughness, the darkness which all genuine sinister novices possess or must develop. The Dark Way is as it is - dark, and dangerous, and full of diabolic ecstasies and diabolic triumphs over the "ordinary", the mundane and those who would keep everyone in servitude and thrall. So it is, so has it been, and so shall it continue to be - to enable evolution, to create what must be created, while the fearful majorities in their sloth, delusions and ignorance continue their morbid, Nazarene-like, sub-human existence.

As has been stated many times, genuine dark sorcery requires commitment - it requires self-effort, by the novice, over a period of years. It involves genuine *ordeals*, the achievement of difficult goals, the participation in pleasures, and the living of life in certain ways. Only thus are self-insight and genuine Occult ability born - only thus is a genuine Adept created.



## Neophyte:

Before Initiation - and after undertaking the first task of a neophyte as given in the *Guide* - undertake the following task:

\* Find an area where game is plentiful and, equipping yourself with either a cross-bow or an ordinary bow (a longbow) hunt/stalk some suitable game, and make a kill. Skin and prepare this game yourself (if necessary - for example, a pheasant - 'hanging' the game until it is ready). When prepared and ready, cook and eat this game.

"Game" in this context means wild edible birds or animals such as venison, hare, rabbit, partridge, pheasant, wildfowl. For this task, you are undertaking the role of hunter, using primitive weapons. (Guns cannot be used for this task.) After completing this hunting task, either undertake the next task as given below - which is not obligatory - *or* repeat the task above, choosing a different type of game.

\* Undertake, as a solo hermetic working, either the traditional [\*Mass of Heresy\*](#) (suitably adapted for such an hermetic rite), and then, nine days later, the [\*Rite of Defiance\*](#).

*Note:* Both the Mass of Heresy and the Rite of Defiance are intentionally heretical in our times; as well as being means of catharsis, and providing a practical means whereby those undertaking them can develop a sinister-empathy with that which and those whom are currently regarded, by Magians and mundanes and in a very practical way, as "evil" and deserving of approbation.

## Initiate:

After the rite or ceremony of your Initiation, and following the completion of the tasks as given in the *Guide*, you should choose and undertake, for between six to eighteen months, an Insight Role [see the MS *An Introduction to Insight Roles* - 119yf edition].

## External Adept:

The following two tasks *must* both be undertaken successfully.

1) With your Temple formed as one of your External Adept tasks - see the *Guide* - perform both the *Mass of Heresy* and *The Rite of Defiance*.

2) Train several members, and yourself, in the undertaking of the tests relevant to choosing an opfer. Select some suitable candidates for the post of opfer, using sinister guidelines for so selecting an opfer, and undertake the relevant tests on each chosen candidate. The opfer or opfers having been so chosen by

failing such tests, perform *The Death Ritual* using the chosen offer(s) in the central role. Thereafter, and having completed all the necessary preparations, select a further offer using Aeonics or sinister strategy as a guide, and undertake *The Ceremony of Recalling* [see *The Grimoire of Baphomet*].

It must be stressed that (i) the offer(s) must be chosen according to sinister principles as given in the appropriate Order MSS; (ii) those so chosen must be tested according to sinister principles as given in the appropriate Order MSS. Furthermore, the candidates for the position of offer can be chosen either by you, or suggested by a member of your Temple, if those members are following the sinister path in a committed way.

Beyond External Adept, there are no secret tasks of a prescribed nature, for those following the sinister path to undertake.



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**ONA/O9A**

Order of Nine Angles / Order of The Nine Angles

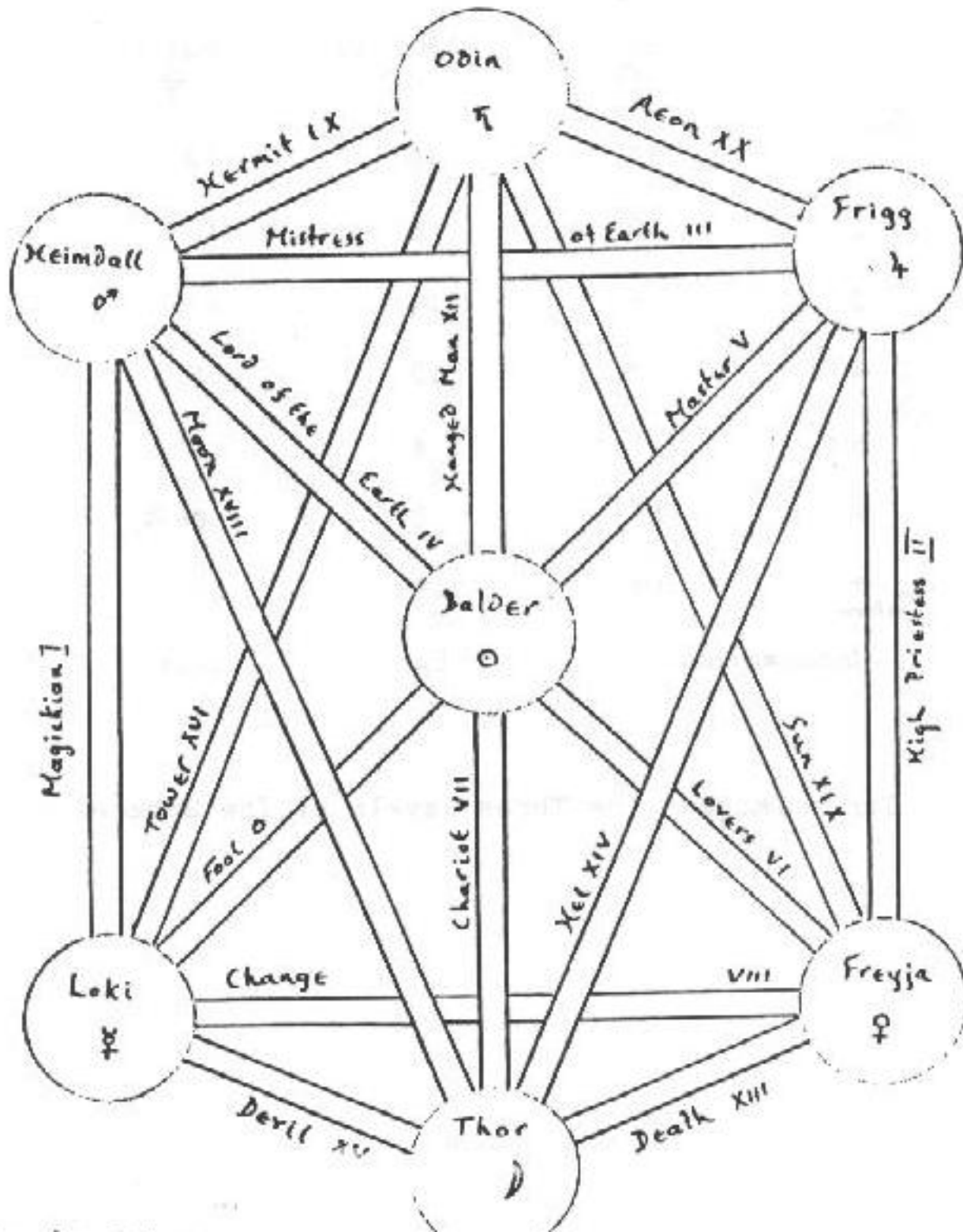


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Appendix I

THE SEPTENARY SYSTEM





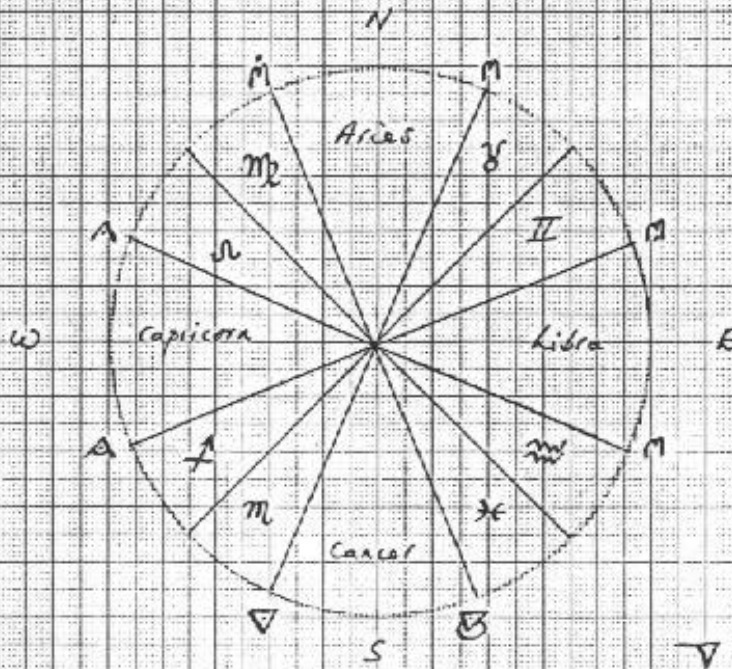
♃ → ♃: Fortune X

♂ → ♀: Star XVII

# The Wheel of Life

Aries: Venus  
 Cancer: Moon  
 Libra: Sun  
 Capricorn: Mercury

♈ = Spring Equinox  
 ♋ = Summer Solstice  
 ♎ = Autumn Equinox  
 ♏ = Winter Solstice



♈: Water of Water  
 ♉: Water of Fire  
 ♊: Fire of Water  
 ♋: Fire of Fire etc.

♈: Water ▽  
 ♉: Fire △  
 ♊: Earth ♀  
 ♋: Air ♂

▽: Priestess : Aphrodite  
 △: Priest : Apollo  
 ♀: Mistress of Earth : Hecate  
 ♂: Master of the Temple : Hermes

The helical path