

A Complete Guide To The Seven-Fold Sinister Way

(Order of Nine Angles)

Introduction

The Seven-Fold Sinister Way is the name given to the system of training used by traditional Satanists. It is the practice of Satanism, by individual Satanists, and thus expresses Satanism in action.

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 Satanic individuals - that is, to train individuals in the ways of Satanism. This Satanic training develops individual character, esoteric (or Occult) skills and self-insight. The individual also acquires genuine esoteric knowledge and a genuine understanding.

The Way itself enables any individual to achieve genuine magickal Adeptship (and beyond) and thus fulfil the potential latent within them - thus they can and do enhance their life, and 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 magick. The Way requires a sincere and genuine commitment, and it is both 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: Neophyte; Initiate; External Adept; Internal Adept; Master of Temple/Mistress of Earth [or "Lady Master"]; Grand Master/Grand Mistress [or "Grand Lady Master"]; 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. Each of these stages is 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 [hereafter "manuscripts" is abbreviated as MSS, and "manuscript" as MS]. The purpose of this reading and study is to provide a Satanic 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 Satanic Initiation - the individual who desires to follow the dark path of traditional Satanism should gain some understanding of what genuine Satanism is. To this end, the following Order MSS should be read:

- * Satanism - An Introduction For Prospective Adherents
- * The Sinister Path: An Introduction to Traditional Satanism
- * The Essence of the Sinister Path [contained in Hostia - Secret Teachings of the ONA]

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 are: (1) The Black Book of Satan - A Guide to Satanic Ceremonial Magick; (2) Naos - A Guide to Becoming an Adept; and (3) Hostia - The Secret Teachings of the ONA (Volumes I & II). The following MSS (contained in Hostia) should be particularly studied in order to gain an understanding of traditional Satanism and its methods: (a) Selling Water By The River; (b) Satanism - The Sinister Shadow, Revealed; (c) Guide to Black Magick; (d) Ritual Magick - Dure and Sedue Ceremonial. 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 Satanic 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 Satanic Initiation. If you are in contact with a traditional Satanic 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". Both of these rituals of Initiation are given in detail in the Order MS The Black Book of Satan - A Guide to Satanic Ceremonial Magick. There is no difference between a Ceremonial Initiation, and a Hermetic Self-Initiation.

The fourth and final task of this stage involves the new Satanic Initiate in constructing and learning to play, The Star Game, details of which are given in the Order MS Naos.

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, and introduce this person to Satanism. Initiate them according to the rite in The Black Book of Satan. Undertake the path and sphere workings with this partner.
- 5) Obtain and study the Order MS The Temple of Satan [Part II of 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 of the Deofel Quartet - Falcifer, Lord of Darkness - is intended as entertaining Satanic fiction.]
- 6) Undertake an 'Insight Role' [see the Secret Tasks MS and the MS Insight Roles - A Guide, in Hostia.] 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:

Satanic 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 Satanism.

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 Satanic character in the individual; it is a severe test of the resolve, Satanic 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 Satanic, group/magickal Temple. You must recruit members for this Satanic Temple, and teach them about Satanism. With your companion (or another one if personal circumstances have changed) you must Initiate these members according to the ceremonial ritual in The Black Book of Satan as you must perform ceremonial rituals on a regular basis. In this Temple, you will be the officiating Priest/Priestess, with your partner acting as the Priestess/Priest. Regular Sunedrions should be held, as detailed 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.
- 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.
- 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 traditional Satanism, and if so inclined [see 'Concerning The Satanic Temple' below] instruct your Temple members in this tradition. The tradition is contained in The Black Book of Satan; Naos; Hostia; The Deofel Quartet; Aeonick Magick and other Order MSS.
- 8) Prepare for, and undertake, the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept - if necessary choosing someone to run the Satanic Temple in your absence.

Concerning The Satanic Temple:

The Temple 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. 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 Satanic 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 to be truly Satanic, with your members guided by you to become sincere and practising Satanists. If the 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, Satanic 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, Aeonic 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 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 Satanically 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 Satanic Temple, 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 Satanic 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, Aeonic 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 the MS Mastery - Its Real Meaning and Significance; and the MS The Abyss where what occurs during Internal Adept is described.] 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 Temple/group;
- (2) The performance of Aeonic 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 Aeonic understanding, and their skills to influence/bring about changes in the societies of their time - this is Aeonic Magick, but without "ritual", as described in Parts III and IV of The Deofel Quartet. 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.

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 Satanism 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 Satanic novice to be familiar, and in agreement with, the secret teachings themselves, particularly as these relate to human sacrifice, or culling. [These teachings are contained in such Order MSS as (1) The Hard Reality of Satanism; (2) Satanism, Sacrifice and Crime; (3) Culling - A Guide to Sacrifice; (4) Guidelines for the Testing of Opfers; (5) Victims - A Sinister Expose; (6) The Practice of Evil in Context.]

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 Satanic novice must undertake as part of their commitment to Satanism. That is, these hitherto secret tasks - like the other tasks detailed in the MS A Complete Guide to the Seven-Fold Way - 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 Satanic and which thus represent the presencing of the dark forces on Earth via the agency (or vehicle) of the individual Satanist. These secret tasks - and the other tasks - represent the way of Satan. They are Satanic. As such, they are fitting only to a minority: to those who are, or those who desire to become, Satanists. Some who profess to be 'Satanists' - and some who wish to become Satanists - 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 "ordinary" and weak, as they will show they lack the demonic desire, the hardness, the toughness, the darkness which all genuine Satanic novices possess or must develop. Satanism 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 Satanism 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.

- Obtain from a Nazarene place of worship some 'hosts' as used in their perverse and sordid rituals. If you are seeking Initiation into an established ceremonial group/Temple, this will probably be your task of fidelity to that group/Temple, with the hosts being used in the celebration of The Black Mass. If however you are undertaking a Self-Initiation (as given in The Black Book of Satan) then immediately following that rite of Self-Initiation you should trample on or otherwise defile these 'hosts' (e.g. by urinating on them) saying as you do so the following: "By this deed I pledge myself to counter Nazarene filth, and give myself, body, blood and soul, to

Satan, Prince of Darkness." You should then burn the hosts or what remains of them by placing them in a vessel containing flammable liquid and setting this alight, laughing as the burning seals your gesture and your oath.

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 Insight Roles - A Guide].

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 a Black Mass using hosts obtained by one of the newer members of this Temple, or obtained by a candidate seeking Initiation.

(2) Train several members, and yourself, in the undertaking of the tests relevant to choosing an offer - a human sacrifice. Select some suitable victims, using Satanic guidelines for so selecting a victim, and undertake the relevant tests on each chosen victim. The victim or victims having been so chosen by failing such tests, perform The Death Ritual with the intent of eliminating by magickal means the chosen victim(s). Thereafter, and having completed all the necessary preparations, select a further victim using Aeonics or sinister strategy as a guide, and undertake a culling by disposing of the victim either during a suitable rite (e.g. The Ceremony of Recalling) or via practical means (e.g. assassination). You may elect to do this practical means yourself, or you may choose a trusted suitable member of your Temple to undertake this for the glory of the Temple. If you have elected for practical means, have your Temple undertake The Death Ritual at the chosen time.

It must be stressed that (i) the victim(s) must be chosen according to Satanic principles as given in the appropriate Order MSS; (ii) those so chosen must be tested according to Satanic principles as given in the appropriate Order MSS. Furthermore, the victims can be chosen either by you, or suggested by a member of your Temple, if those members are following the Satanic 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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Agios Kabeiri

Sphere of Moon



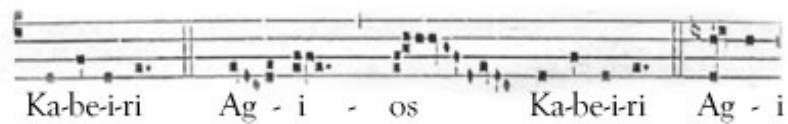
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An Introduction to Traditional Satanism

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Essentially, the difference between the ONA and other groups which profess to belong to the 'Left Hand Path' or which claim to be Satanic is that the ONA seeks to realistically guide its members along the difficult and dangerous path of self-development, the goal of which is the creation of an entirely new individual. This path is fundamentally a quest for self-excellence and wisdom.

We believe that there is no easy way to real knowledge and insight of the 'Occult' kind - that each individual must walk this path and achieve things for themselves. There are no 'ceremonies', no magickal 'rites', not even any teachings which can provide the individual with genuine wisdom: real wisdom is only and always attained by the personal effort of the individual over many years. It is the result of a synthesis - a development of the dark side and an integration of that aspect of our being thus creating a complete, more evolved individual. Furthermore, the means to this attainment are essentially practical; that is, they involve the individual undergoing certain formative, character-developing experiences 'in the real world' rather than in some pseudo-mystical, pseudo-intellectual 'magickal rite' or sitting at the feet of some pretentious 'master'.

For us, Satanism is a quest involving real personal danger where the individual Initiate undertakes genuine challenges which take them to and beyond their limits: physical, 'mental' and psychic. This quest, in its beginnings, involves the individual in exploring their 'hidden' or 'dark' side - and a part of this is participation in overtly Occult and magickal ceremonies and rites. This beginning - where the new Initiate participates in and later conducts Satanic rituals such as the 'Black Mass' - enables the individual to explore this dark side, to gradually understand it, make it more conscious, and thus control it. An aspect of this making-conscious, is symbolism - such as the 'septenary system' - where various Occult/magickal energies are symbolised in certain ways via a system of correspondences. This symbolism enables the energies dealt with to be objectified and thus consciously understood - this in itself makes possible an integration of the 'dark' side. Thus, there is a synthesis - a dynamic, conscious, moving-forward by the individual: an evolution of personality. Insight is gained. In psychological terms, there is the start of "individuation". This leads to a practical experiencing of the sinister, and thus further personal development, further building of character.

Because of the type of practical experiences, the type of challenges, the individual undertakes, the character so formed is - viewed conventionally - Satanic. There is a defiance of restrictions, a proudness, an experience and then understanding of those things that the religion of the Nazarene frowns upon. In Nietzschean terms, there is a practical living of a "master-morality". The person created via these experiences is the type to inspire a certain terror/awe in the supine majority, weaned as that majority have been by the softness of the Nazarene ethic.

However, this individual has only begun the process. That is, the type of character so described (which results from these early experiences) is not even what we would call an Adept: of the seven stages of this sinister way (or practical alchemy), this practical involvement in the 'Occult' via ceremonies and such things as organizing and running a Satanic group, describe just the first two stages of the way. Furthermore, even this beginning takes some years - and this beginning requires the individual to succeed by their own efforts, by their own will and determination. That is, there are no 'magickal grades' or titles awarded for money or sycophancy [as in all other so-called 'Satanic' groups] - what the individual achieves, in terms of 'magickal grades', they achieve through their own toil, through undergoing the experiences which create the type of character appropriate to a particular stage of the way being followed.

Thus, each stage of this way has associated with it certain tasks, certain experiences, which the individual must undertake by themselves in their own time. It is these and these alone which bring self-insight, mastery, understanding and skill - both 'occult' and personal. All the ONA does, at each stage and for each member, is offer advice - based on experience. That is, the ONA guides its members - it offers a practical system whereby real wisdom may be attained. The onus is on the individual to achieve the goal.

For us, Satanism is all about the creation of proud, strong, characterful, insightful individuals - individuals who have gone beyond the majority and who thus represent a higher type. Genuine Satanic groups do not seek subservient, decadent, weak-willed followers. They seek to create a real elite - almost a new race of beings. Of course, this is not easy - it is really dangerous. Quite often, new Initiates fail because of the difficulty or because they lack the essential desire to succeed. But that is how evolution

works - the strong overcome challenges and evolve; the others stay where they are, descend, or are destroyed.

Thus, Satanism is élitist - it does not compromise. It is not really for the majority. The tests, the ordeals, the methods of genuine Satanism are tough and severe because only such things will create the right type of person. These things cannot be made easier, less tough, less dangerous: to do so would destroy the essence of Satanism itself.

After the early stages of the way - which involve direct experience of the sinister both via rituals, magickal groups and undertaking certain sinister tasks - the individual moves on [if I said one such early task involved culling, or Satanic sacrifice, it is possible to appreciate the difficulty and danger]. That is, the Satanic novice gains more understanding of themselves, and the world, by more experiences - they move toward a real individuation, a synthesis of conscious/unconscious, light and sinister. Part of this involves them undertaking a specific task for some months, and it is this task - based on the foundations the previous, early, stages of the way have built - that creates a genuine Adept. This task requires the candidate for Adeptship to live alone, in an isolated area, for three months (usually from Spring Equinox to Summer Solstice) - to talk with no one, to live frugally, with no modern conveniences, no wireless, no modern 'distractions', in a shelter they have built [in recent years, the rules have been relaxed and a tent is allowed]. The aim of this is for them to experience themselves and Nature without any distractions - to really get to know themselves and the natural energies which exist, as those energies are (and not as books, or 'teachers' or theories describe those energies). This, of course, is very difficult. It requires real determination; it requires the individual to face themselves, and all their fears. It is a severe test of character - and of their Satanic resolve. Most individuals who get this far (and that is not very many, over the past few decades) give up after a while - they find excuses to return to the world and its comforts. The classic excuse is the delusion that they have actually 'attained' Adeptship in a few days or perhaps weeks of isolation. And it is a delusion - for it is only by living in such a harsh, isolated way for at least three months that a real Adept is created. Naturally, other so-called Satanic or Left Hand Path groups award a spurious 'Adeptship' to their members/followers: or those members/followers award it to themselves, usually after some boring, pompous, totally meaningless ceremony.

The Adept marks the end of the third stage of our seven-fold sinister way - and to reach this stage usually takes three to six years, from Initiation. The task or Grade Ritual which creates the Adept also makes the Adept aware of their unique, personal Destiny - and the fourth stage is all about the Adept seeking to make that Destiny real. This involves a 'return to the world' - the gaining of more experience, the creation of new insights, new skills. This in itself takes some years. The character of the Adept grows and deepens - they achieve the beginning of wisdom. In magickal terms, they gain an understanding of 'Aeonics' - of things like sinister strategy (the use of acausal or supra-personal energies to change societies/civilizations over centuries). Hitherto, most of their experience/learning has been directly personal, relating to their personal development - now, aeonic perspective is gained, it becomes a part of them. That is, they develop still further, again via direct experience - this time, of the acausal itself. From this, further personal development takes place - they become complete, highly developed individuals who possess skills and an understanding few possess. They fulfill the potential of genius which is latent within them. Thus, they move on to become genuine Masters or Lady Masters/Mistresses. But to reach this stage - the fifth - takes at least ten years (more usual is fifteen to twenty). And there is another stage beyond this.

Thus, it will be seen that our way is difficult and takes a long time. The journey of the initiate toward Adeptship and beyond has no mystery about it - it is actually very simple. Most people could do it - if they possessed the determination. But the majority are just too lazy or too weak. The same applies to most who apply to join Satanic groups or are interested in Satanism - they go for the easy option; they are not prepared to work at their own self-development. They prefer someone to do it for them. And, furthermore, they are not fundamentally prepared to go to and beyond their limits - to really experience the sinister in a practical way; they want to simply play safe, pseudo-Satanic games. Thus, they gravitate toward what we call the sham-Satanic groups, the poseurs, such as the Temple of Set or the Church of Satan - those who like the glamour associated with Satanism but are basically afraid to experience its realness within and external to them. Thus such groups issue - and believe in! - ethical guidelines as they constantly affirm that Satanism does not condone such things as 'human sacrifice'. We, on the contrary, are dark and really sinister - and propound culling. That is, we uphold human culling as beneficial, for both the individual who does the culling (it being a character-building experience) and for our species in general, since culling by its nature removes the worthless and thus improves the stock.

Naturally, there are proper ways to choose who is to be culled - each victim is chosen because they have shown themselves to be suitable. They are never chosen at random, as they are never 'innocent'. Our affirmation of such things as human culling offends other so-called Satanic groups - which to us just re-affirms our assessment of those groups as pretend Satanic groups. Basically, such groups have little or no real understanding of Satanism, as evident, for instance, in the 'religious' approach of the Temple of Set - that is, their claim that Satanism is some sort of religion. To us, the religious attitude and mentality - involving as it does dogma, sycophancy, and subservience by the individual to some self-appointed authority - is the antithesis of Satanism.

In essence, we understand Satanism as the individual quest for self-excellence - to create an entirely new type. This quest involves practical experience - for only real experience creates character. The essence that Satanism leads the individual toward is only ever revealed by practical experience - never by books, never by someone else's 'teachings', never by words. Words themselves can never really describe this essence - they can only point the way, hint at it, and usually serve only to obscure it. In the same way, ceremonies and forms such as rituals are only means - they are a means to experience, to symbolize things and thus apprehend what hitherto has been 'hidden' or unconscious or instinctive. Furthermore, this quest is and must be individual - it means the individual develops, via experiences (and sometimes by learning from mistakes) the strength of character needed. Or they fail - usually by deluding themselves about their real level of attainment, their real level of self-insight, their level of self-control and mastery. The aim is self-control, self-mastery, self-understanding - and then a moving-on to what is beyond even this new 'self'. The aim is not a wallowing in decadence, as it is not the encouragement of instinctive, sinister desires/pleasures as an end in themselves. Such things are means, a beginning - to be used, learned from, and then transcended via mastery of one's self.

For us, Satanism is an individual quest because it aims to produce unique, strong, individuals who do not need the support of groups, of dogma, ethics, a religion, of some pontificating poseur of a 'master'. Thus, the ONA exists to offer advice and guidance - to point the way. The individual must begin the quest, and they and they alone must continue with it.

Because of the difficulty of our way, few follow it. In some ways, this is unfortunate - for we believe the way offers anyone the opportunity to advance along the path to genuine Adeptship and beyond. It makes real, or can make real, the potential that most individuals possess - the latent genius within. However, given human nature the small numbers are understandable. What the ONA has done - over the past thirty years or so - is to create a simple practical system which works: which can produce genuine Adepts and Masters/Lady Masters. In effect, we have distilled the essence from thousands of years of conscious understanding, producing an elixir, an 'internal alchemy', which anyone can use.

We describe this system as Satanic, as Sinister because it is. It is a complete rejection of the philosophy/religion of the Nazarene. The philosophy/religion of the Nazarene is anti-life and anti-evolutionary, as Nietzsche, for example, understood. For us, Satan is both an archetype or symbol of our defiance, and some-thing real - the re-presentation of what we describe as 'the acausal'. That is, we understand the 'darker forces' as not simply a part of our psyche (as most modern so-called Satanic groups do) - but as beyond our own, individual psyche. These darker forces - or the acausal - are beyond us, as individuals: they are beyond our conscious control (and even real understanding) until we become a part of them. This does not mean a submission to those forces - but rather an expanding of individual consciousness, a development of individual conscious, to include those forces. This expansion is what marks the genuine Satanic Master/Lady Master.

Other 'Satanic' groups - if they are serious and not just using the Black Arts for their own weak gratification - claim the darker forces are merely an aspect of the psyche, the unconscious or whatever. [Both the Church of Satan and the Temple of Set make this claim.] They do this for two reasons. First, they need to - because they want to feel safe; they want to be able to play their pseudo-Satanic, pseudo-intellectual, games in a mostly urbanized safety, because the members of such groups are not proud, characterful, self-aware individuals: they need the comfort of a group, of a 'leader', of ethical guidelines, of feeling that Satan can be controlled by some meaningless mumbo-jumbo. In effect, the members and leaders of these groups are weak - they lack self-discipline; they lack even the desire for real mastery, content as they are to continue with edifying their own weaknesses, with massaging their inflated egos.

Second, such groups and their members do not really understand the Sinister. They have had no real experience of the primal, numinous, supra-personal power of the dark forces - of how that power can destroy individuals. In effect, they have never really 'tapped into' the acausal itself - to what is really

sinister. They have never really confronted Satan. They have never really striven to be like Satan - to become one with Him; to merge with the acausal itself; to become a 'nexion' for the acausal, for sinister energies. This becoming-one is what makes, what creates a genuine Satanic Master/Lady Master, as living alone like a hermit creates the Adept. It is dangerous, naturally - but the only means whereby that synthesis which is beyond the synthesis that is individuation can be achieved. There is thus a real, a genuine, transcending beyond 'good' and 'evil'; beyond 'light' and 'dark'. This achievement, as with all real achievements of an Occult kind, derives from practical experience - from a real personal knowledge. Anything else is mere affectation, mere pose.

Other groups have tried to 'intellectualize' Satanism - to take away the real experiences by which genuine Satanic character is formed. Or they wallow in the weaknesses of those addicted to impulses they cannot understand and do not have the strength to control. They have tried and continue to try and make Satanism respectable and safe - just another 'religion'. They fantasize, and play games. They simply do not understand Satanism as a means to create new, more highly evolved, individuals. In reality, the genuine Satanist creates by participating in real life, the dreams, the standards of excellence, the élan which others often aspire to emulate. A genuine Satanist can be like a beast of prey - in real life. They can be and sometimes are, in real life, assassins, warriors, outlaws. The imitation Satanists pretend to be such things - usually by means of some stupid 'ritual'. The Satanist is sinister and dark, in real life - and then they move on, to new experiences, to even higher levels of understanding until eventually they acquire real wisdom, or are destroyed. Whatever, they will have really lived, 'on the edge'; they will really have achieved something with their lives. They will have inspired others. They will in some way by their living have 'presenced' the dark forces on earth. If they survive - their rewards are their achievements and the wisdom that awaits. If they do not survive, at least they will have done something with their lives.

Thus does the ONA way express and exemplify Satanism in action.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Confessions: 3
(From Fenrir no. 3, yf 99)
ONA

To say the elegant lady who surprised me burgling her fifth floor apartment seduced me is only half the truth. I was very willingly seduced.

Next morning, introductions over, she said she had asked her Prince to bring her a companion. She served the Prince of Darkness - in her own way, without formality or groups. She knew little of what I up till then regarded as traditional magick - the qabalistic kind. Instead, her own tradition was different, and possibly unique. She was a dark sorceress, a modern more subtle Juliette (de Sade variety not Shakespeare) - a binder of men, through the implements of her body and eyes.

Quite naturally, we became partners she finding a sexual thrill in house violation (and sometimes not easily satisfied during a difficult job) and I finding through her new skills in magick - and sex of course. We spent a few months together, one cold but often sunny Winter many years ago.

Then I made my mistake - I fell in love with her, and asked her to marry me. That night she said very little - except with her body. But in the morning she had gone - to America, leaving me a note. And I thought I understood women.

I tried to find her, without success and, feeling a little depressed for the first time in my life, made a vow, left the city and got a job. Yes, the Civil Service. I always did go to extremes. The job cured my depression - two weeks after I had started I went out for my lunch-break and did not go back, sad to lose my new umbrella since it rained that afternoon. But the two weeks of desk-bound soul-destroying toil had proved useful in one way - I met someone with an interest in magick whose wife was very pretty. I kept in contact and it was not long before I did the first ritual in their house. They were being annoyed by their neighbours and I sent a force to spread fear and anxiety. A week later, the neighbours announced they were to move. This impressed my friends, and that night I initiated the wife (sexually of course) who some days later initiated her husband. They converted one of their rooms into a Satanic Temple on my instructions, and I made the wife my Priestess.

Gradually, our group grew in size, and I soon found myself running a Temple of over a dozen. Our magick was black, and successful - who needed crime? I was given gifts, loaned a flat, met many interesting and attractive women, and for many months this life continued until one evening, after conducting a ritual of Initiation, I realized I was now playing the role that years ago I had despised when it was played by the high Priest of the group of my own Initiation. I was exercising the same control that he had and was relating the same fables to enhance my own charisma and that of the group. Unsatisfied, I began to involve myself with violence. Violence purified, and I took to roaming the streets with some young ruffians whose services I had used on occasion to make a new members' test of fidelity to the Temple interesting.

Our small group had a cause and we, as a modern tribe, had many enemies so fights were easy to come by. There was joy in these battles, in their planning: an explosion of vitality. Life was raw and real and exciting, and this physical expression complemented my magickal life.

Then, one fateful warm summer's evening after a minor skirmish, we were suddenly surrounded by vanloads of Police. Arrested, charged, imprisoned on remand to be finally sent to jail. This proved an interesting experience, and I

would recommend it to all who aspire to be Adepts - once only if you're feeble of spirit. About six months at a time is about right. You certainly - if you have any intelligence and spirit - find what is really important to you. Anyway, I left prison with more money than I entered, having run a profitable racket inside selling tea stolen from the stores (this was in the days before drugs became used in such places).

I had not known, really, what freedom was until I had lost my own. My priestess and priest were glad to see me - they had kept a group of sorts going and my first free evening coincided with a dinner they were holding for two prospective members, a man and his wife. To cut a short story short after the meal the wife excused herself to use the toilet, I followed and we made ecstatic love on the bathroom floor. Well, it had been a long time, and her eyes were very inviting. I came down, talked to her husband about magick and his only comment was: "I don't know, but I don't trust nor like you." Stupid drongo. What could I say? Later, the Priestess came to my bed.

Life could have resumed as before: but who wants to live in their own past? And I no longer wanted to

play the role/game of 'master' despite some of its attractions. Prison had given me a new perspective and I wanted to live, really live, on the edge. Satanism had become for me at that time a philosophy I lived by - kill others before they kill you, but always be honourable (this part is where the toy Satanist fail) and die rather than submit to anyone.

I wanted a cause to enable me to live this. So I found a war somewhere. It was not a large war, and was mostly of the guerrilla kind. It became good - being close to death: the moments between were transformed and enjoyed all the more. There was a purity about living this way with constant danger that weaklings will never understand. Satanism despises cowards - it has always been the way of the warrior. And I do not mean the pathetic kind that modern trendies speak about (e.g. ;chaos warriors'). I mean the kind who really kills and whose hands have been stained by gore and blood.

My life became a kind of constant invocation to the Prince of Darkness. Instinct and spirit were triumphant: as they are not in our present moronic society where excellence is decried and where calculation, cowardice and sub-humanity dominate. I learnt something very valuable about my faith - that elitist faith called Satanism. It was that it is essentially about self-excellence - defying the odds - and not, as most assume, about being material. It meant setting yourself goals beyond the ordinary, and achieving them, of living with style.

This learning cost me dear - I was injured, and forced to retire from the war. Even today, the effects of that injury linger, as do the effects of what I discovered about myself and women and the world. I passed the Abyss. But it is not for me to explain, here, what lies beyond the Abyss except to say that, personally, I think we can create an existence for ourselves after death. The key word is create. This existence is not given - it is not tied to any moral concept like 'sin'. It is a form of magick, indeed the highest and most secret form. This life is, if you will, a kind of opportunity which we only have once but most people have and do waste it. The Gate is there, but few see it and even fewer push that Gate open and follow the path beyond. The key is the ecstasy of existence that is all I will say about the genuine Stone of the Philosophers, which can only be produced in the crucible of blackness (i.e. Satanism).

There is no real ending to my boring life - I returned to England, a little wiser, understanding the cosmic perspective beyond all ceremonial and results magick. This is the true understanding of the Master (and the Mistress of Earth) - their magick is and always has been Aeonian magick, that is, changing the world. Mostly, these individuals are hidden.

For now, I am half content - contentment should come only near death (if then). The moral of my wanderings (if there is one) is; if you dare, learn by yourself by going to extremes; if you cannot do this because somehow you are still not free, then find someone who has gone that way before you and let them guide you. Only guide you, mind. You should be guided only into experience - for experience is the fire that purifies and creates.

You may meet me, one day - but will not know me, unless I wish it. For I have many faces which I show to the world, and even those who profess to be 'adepts' and 'masters' I can fool - because, unlike me, they are not natural. And, yes, in case you are wondering, I am human - having fallen in love while I lay injured and near death. Every Master needs a loving Mistress, after all herein are riddles which only the wise will see.

Dark Pathworking: Satan

Atu VII - AZOTH

"The Menstruum – the Sinister aspect implicit within the 'homogenous metallic water': the explosive factor in the delicate balancing of life-enhancing elements. Change by adversity – the 'Accuser'. The brutal realities that threaten to devour the abstract, the romantic. Insight and control via the understanding of the Primal – or destruction by it."

Clothed in black I entered the chamber, intent to invoke a destructive energy I knew could overcome me in an equally destructive way. The intent filled my very being with an anxiousness that should have seemed out of place. But there was a feeling of glory to what I would do – a feeling that would surely come back to me time and time again as I'd venture into the Dark deeds that presence, and create, Satan. I gave flame to the candles, and breathed deeply, slowly, for some minutes – knowing I must first relax and become content with my surroundings, before I once again ventured to that gate. The Quartz Tetrahedron the altar bore I could tell was pulsing with the Dark. It was one part of a Nexion, slowly being formed between it, I, and the chants I have sung to lure Dark Gods. These Gods I knew, as invoked to intrude upon my consciousness, could cause much unrest, even terror. But such an intrusion, obtainable it seems in only a small way – when compared to the utter terror and chaos which in essence are these Dark Gods, is an important element to achieving the balance one seeks. The Dark Gods embody the spirit of life, and give it the Acausal Charge implicit in any conscious being. Once the Dark Gods intruded upon our Causal world, and caused the terror, unrest, and destructiveness which forced the evolution of our species by way of increasing our consciousness. This is what I aim to achieve, individually. Not simply to further open the Nexion in me, but to draw forth that blackened essence of being, so that I may advance my own consciousness, survive the terror, and move one step closer to the balance of Causal/Acausal I will eventually be. I seek to become.

As I began the vocal vibrations – "Sa-tan-as" – I kept awareness as to my surroundings, and attuned my focus to drawing forth the Sinister element of both destructive and creative force; that which I know to be **Satan**. As I completed the vibrations, which bond me to my Tetrahedron in an inexplicable way, I experienced a coldness of being. Or would it be better described as non-being? I had become slightly detached from where I stood, and continued the rite. I began a slow dance, repeatedly chanting "Satan", whilst increasing in speed. The dance spiraled inward to where I draw Satan's presence, and where I eventually collapsed, exhausted and becoming separate from my physical self. I lay breathing deeply, not obscuring or consciously directing anything which might take place. I aimed to relax, and begin to let the visions that would be used as communication to consciousness come through.

The visions were elusive, but the feelings were not. Coldness took hold of the chamber, and Satan began to elusively take hold of the emptiness. I found myself in a struggle, for I was entrenched in a sort of chaos which I could make no sense of. Reason was evasive, understanding was beyond reach. All I could apprehend was being lost, not knowing which way to turn, or to turn at all. The figure in the Atu mutated, and began to give form to the energy. But this happened not within the Atu itself, but rather inside me, outside of me, in front of me, around me.

My body weakened, and exhaustion gripped firmly as I struggled to retain the strength to stand and complete the rite. I was not being drained, as some might take it. But rather I was experiencing a realm in which my consciousness was hitherto unaware. It was an intrusion which I unknowingly desired to be harsh. And the harsher the better, so long as I retained the ability to move on. The exhaustion I experienced during the dance had not lasted, as it was merely a result of frenzy. But with Satan, quickly came a deeper felt exhaustion, not only one of the body, but one of the spirit.

Afterward, my perception detached. This feeling of detachment, and the exhaustion which accompanied it, would last longer than twenty-four hours after completion of the rite. This detachment however, was not an ignorance to the causal world of our existence, but rather an awareness of the forces at work behind it. Such exhaustion, I felt, was a painfully mocking result – but all I could do was to smile at this, for it is a small price to pay for what I seek, and I will undoubtedly experience worse. Worse perhaps, but not without that glory I had felt beginning this – a glory which did not subside.

Thornian, ONA.

[The preceding was adapted from the notes in my Magickal diary depicting my experiences with the

Tree of Wyrð and the Septenary Tradition: Hebdomandry. – *Thornian.*]
- Order of Nine Angles -

**Darkness Is My Friend:
The True Meaning of the Sinister Way
ONA, 107yf.**

Contrary to a current and growing misconception, the Sinister Way (and Sinister Magick) involves practical acts of darkness, of heresy, of chaos - involving such things as human sacrifice. The Sinister Way does not simply involve the study of folk-traditions, of myths, of magick, of esoteric subjects, as it does not just involve individuals or groups experiencing (or claiming they have experienced) a certain "atmosphere" in certain "surroundings" which they or others believe or assume to be "sinister". Furthermore, the Sinister Way means the wholehearted acceptance, by the Sinister Initiate and Adept, of that particular way of living which has for centuries been called "Satanic". The Sinister Way is still intrinsically Satanic because the Satanic archetype/mythos/image - the very Being, or life, which has been named Satan - still exists, still lives, and is still a becoming. This is so because this Being is part of the present civilization, and its Aeon, which still exists, and which will exist for several more centuries, albeit toward its decline and end. This Being is the ethos of Heresy for this present civilization of ours - the presencing of the Dark, the Sinister, and thus a practical manifestation, in the world, of the workings of the sinister dialectic: a means to bring change, imbue life, and initiate further evolution. Those who do not understand this, quite simply do not understand Aeons and the sinister dialectic itself.

However, it needs to be further understood that the acausal energies of the next Aeon, which will give rise to a new civilization centuries after, are already becoming manifest, partly through the work of esoteric groups who, knowingly or unknowingly, are nexions for the new energies waiting to be unleashed upon this world of ours. The Sinister ethos of this new Aeon is an apprehension of the acausal - the Sinister - itself. This apprehension is beyond a descriptive word or words, beyond a name and even beyond an archetypal image. It is initially - for the first century or so - a numinous symbol. This is because this new manifestation of the Sinister is a new type of Being, a new type of life presenced on this planet of ours, and presenced by our very lives, as human beings - and will thus go with us, and be manifest, wherever we go beyond the confines of this planet we call Earth. And yet this new manifestation, this new ethos, incorporates what will then be the "old" archetypal image of Satan - in the simplistic allegorical sense, the new type of Being will be the child or children of Satan, grown to maturity; a child or children born from the symbiosis with those Sinister Adepts existing now or in the near future.

Thus to scorn and reject what now is, presenced as the Satanic, is to reject what is yet to be - and thus it is to reject that which alone ensures the creation of the next civilization, its Galactic Empire and the new higher race of human beings we through our lives, our magick and our deeds, desire to create.

The reality of the present (and the next fifty to an hundred years or so) is that the majority need to be changed; they need to become human - and thus develop the potential latent within most. Only by such a change - in more than a few Initiates or Adepts - can the next civilization arise. It will not just "happen" - it has to be created, constructed, and controlled by Sinister Adepts who know what they are doing. The change that is necessary means that there must be a culling, or many cullings, which remove the worthless and those detrimental to further evolution. To change, the majority must be provoked into changing. This means them experiencing, confronting the shadows within and the shadows without; thus must the Sinister be made manifest for them, and in them. This requires Sinister Initiates and Sinister Adepts "to presence the dark". Furthermore, the causal structures the majority rely on, such as societies, need to be changed, via the creative/sinister dialectic, and thus by such dark presencing. In these things, the Being which is Satan is important, and vital - a valid apprehension for the majority, and their means of change through provocation, heresy and direct presencing of the Sinister.

At the same time, the new Aeonic apprehension which is arising among Adepts must be nurtured, and expanded. As mentioned above, this new apprehension is even now being born from the one which still is. In Initiate (and exoteric) terms, this new apprehension is an understanding of Satan as one of the Dark Gods (or even as the Father of the Dark Gods) and a further understanding of the Dark Gods themselves as chaotic, primal, sinister entities which provoke, create, cause change and evolution, and without which evolution is impossible. In esoteric (and Adept) terms, this new apprehension is an understanding of the Dark Gods as causal manifestations, a presencing, of acausal energy - and a further understanding of how such acausal energy is the very life, the very Being, of both us as human beings, and of the cosmos itself.

Esoteric Groups and the Immediate Future

At this precise moment in our own human evolution, Sinister esoteric groups are in a unique position - capable of rationally understanding Aeonic processes, and poised between the birth of a new Aeon, and the end and destruction of the old.

The new Aeon means a new, and higher, Galactic civilization - several centuries after the energies of the new Aeon first become manifest and are presenced, via new nexions. The decline and ending of the current Aeon means the

establishment of a new and expanding physical Empire: a New Order which is the last and most glorious manifestation of the genuine spirit, or ethos, of the old Aeon. Sinister esoteric groups must understand such things as these, and then act upon that understanding, esoterically and exoterically.

Thus they must understand that for the next higher civilization to arise - created by and imbued with the energies of the new Aeon - our present societies must change or be changed. The Faustian/Promethean (or more correctly, the Satanic) Destiny of this current civilization must be returned, and the present cultural disease affecting this civilization cured, with the excision of the parasites sucking the life-blood of this civilization - for only this returning of Destiny will enable the Empire to be created, and only this Empire will breed in sufficient numbers the new type of individual required to create, build and expand the entirely new Galactic civilization and Galactic Empire which will arise from the eventual decline of the old Promethean/Faustian Empire.

Hence there are three main tasks for Sinister esoteric groups. (1) To provoke or cause, through both practical and magickal means, the destruction, the Ragnarok, which is necessary now to build a New Order from the diseased society of the present, and regain the ethos, the Destiny, which is necessary to inspire the creation of such a New Order. (2) To presence the Sinister energies of the new Aeon in particular places and through new living nexions. (3) To cause at least some of the now sub-human majority of our species to change, to evolve. This change can be achieved in two ways: (a) by presencing the dark which now is (Satan) and presencing the dark which can and will be (the primal cosmic acausal - "the Dark Gods"); and (b) by individuals following the Seven-Fold Sinister Way to Adeptship and beyond.

Deofel Quartet Volume I
By
Anton Long
ONA
Falcifer - Lord of Darkness

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...

I

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 other 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 he walked slowly along them, his sense of the power he had felt was 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 them, 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 offer! 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 crumbles 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 'Agius 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 hear.

"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 signal for the congregation to return, and each member greeted Conrad, their new Initiate, with a kiss. Chalice 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 bear - 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 lounge 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. 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 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 the 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 remembered 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 judgment."

"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!"

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, Conrad recognized Fitten. He 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, "He is dead already! Give him to them if they wish it!"

He released Fitten, who fell dazed. Then Aris was gone, in to 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 magic re-made him, 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," the 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 the, saying "Frates, ut meum vestrum sacrificium acceptabile fiat apud Satanas!"

Susan kissed him as they lay on the ground and Tanith kneeled 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 who 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, 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 magical 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 her 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 jewelry. "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 magical power of this group over the years has come tonight. 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 crasis 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 traveling 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 its 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 Satanist 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."

Baynes stood staring out of his office window watching the traffic in the city street below. He liked his 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 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 did not take 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 fine 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," it's 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 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 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.
"Pardon?"
"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 as 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 did not know by whom. As you probably are aware, such groups do not take kindly to anyone who betrays them, and therefore 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 t 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!" Arise 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 snowful 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 found wanting. I shall reveal to you secret of 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 the 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 loving. 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 Sander 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 in the stairs to wait, Sanders was late.
"That you 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're 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 not 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?"

"You 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 Standford and for all we know Denise as well. Did Miranda not say that Denise was 'virge 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 alter 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 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 Satanus! Agios o Satanus!"

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 Satanus! Agios o Satanus! Agios o Baphomet! Agios o Baphomet!' while the drums beat ever louder and more insistent. In 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 Satanic 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 me 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.

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 his 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 or 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.

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. 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

"Yes, my friend." He felt in his pocket for his crucifix. Dramatically, Baynes withdrew the gun from his pocket before opening the door that led to the Temple. It swung silently on it's hinges.

"She's gone!" they hear a man's voice shout.

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 deep 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 far 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 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.

As she spun her mantric spells she experienced a vision of Baynes and his companions entering the Satanic Temple.

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 hands 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. 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.

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.

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 watched him briefly as 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. "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.

Griggin's Nap
Brenna, ONA.

We have been here for an ageless while. Locked deep. Deep in the dank loam of the black earth. Our bones are strewn where the brackish waters driddle, oozing the foetid breath of stifled secrets that cannot let go, cannot let go.

We know. We remember. We cannot forget what was done, so long ago. Here, on this wind-torn hillside. Here, where a track has long been trodden. Here, where a road was stretched and rolled out to measure a single sparse length of tarmac that passes us by, passes us by. Yes, the motor cars quickly, quickly they pass us by. Until just lately. Until now when the long neglect of our upper residence has mustered some unthinking ones, some poor kimets to come and try their luck with us again.

Ha. But they are not to know. What do they see these modern people? What do they know, these vacuous souls who come to gawp, to assess, to consider the potential of this broken-down abode? This derelict cottage stuck on a wind-buffed hillside behind where the Black Hill doth roam. Behind which the Black Hill rises with a dour majesty that the many would not choose to live with.

We did not choose to live here. We did not do the choosing. Others did and their dark deeds rebound. Rebound as an echo that can never cease. A reverberation that our vengeance still desires, still requires. Oh yes, we thirst, we thirst. Still we thirst for recompense, for the sacrifice of violated flesh, for the giving of blood which was ours once, so long ago. Which is our demand now.

The weary ages have dragged by. It is only the pulse of blood, the rank pungent smell of fear that quickens us, stirs us to arise once more.

We were here when the Earth was fresh-formed; we know that now. Something willed us into place a million years before our bones, our flesh, the panic of our beating blood was flung and pressed into the maws of the beckoning earth, into the sarcophagus made of soil, which our flesh then moulded to fit us. Just as the caul of the birth-strangled babe does cover and close fit the still-born infant. Perfect in its smothering role. Thus did the blistered sod come to enclose us - an impression on the seamless acrid clay that will never be erased. Even when our bones have mouldered unto dust our imprint shall mark this place. No, we shall never be away from here. Now the choice is ours and we shall always choose to stay. For this has always been our home...

Before the meaning of 'time' began we made a home here. When the Earth was barely cooled and her sister fragment moon was still roughened and torn - a ragged crusty rock weltering in the torpor of airless void, waiting for the voices of the stars, the winds of the woonsome Cosmos to smooth and refine her. Shaping her into the luminous sorroricide she does become when her fullness fattens on psychosis, swells the aqueous flesh til humour is found wanting. Until the tension must be displaced. Somehow. We work in synchronicity, She and we. A flawless syzergy; a potent symbiosis sheathed in the shadows wherein we reside.

Yes, yes. We were here before our blood gave way and our screams were choked by the cloistered mouthing of an endless night. We were chosen. We did the choosing. The white flesh of our fingers found the revolving frame, found the ductile thread that ran like a razor through wounded tips that had once owned the kind integument of skin, the protective covering of nails. But we found a cutting blade that was keen and we have wielded that blade, watched its glance shoot silver in the moonless night when deeds were done. When the time had come to please the whim we discovered was ours to instil. First there cooled the rock; then was packed the earth and through the dull depth of bitter loam a meandering rusty trickle of moisture has permeated. Like a vein of poison it seeps; caustic as the taste of our memories. And above this bland bedrock where a nascent serpent sleeps, from the million million years on, a clogger did come to build him a cottage upon our poor clay.

Ah to one of spartan habits and lonely occupation the positioning of some bricks and mortar seemed a fair chance, a reasonable risk worth the dalliance. We almost pitied them as they worked so staunch and determined, a cheerful vigour infecting them that allowed occasional expression in the gravelling of their voices chorused together. An old folk tune they sang reminiscent of something we once knew from long, long ago - before the Earth grew tired of our stone-raising and wrought us drought and famine to cool our ardour. Oh those times! When our flesh burst forth its abundance of beauty, blossoming, just beginning ... we were scythed and torn from the curious melding of our discovered power. Scythed, torn, plucked and crushed, live-buried and erased. Our potent orifices stuffed with the gaspless cloying of foetid slimy clay where the little life did do its work and render us down, render us down. To the bone.

To the bone of our purpose. Oh chanceless Fate that strewed us here! As seeds that would bloom acid barbs, spines of blood and death in the Future Time that would follow.

For aye was our pubescent power stifled before its zenith. The buds of our majestic worth frozen in cruel frosts that turned to the Hag's wizened Winter just on the lips of the verdant kiss of Spring. Thus does our ravening vengeance infest the root of rock and soil, spike the underground waters with a flow of subtle poisons that seep, seep into the soul. At night, when the bleary eye of Day has winked its concealments by. In the dark of the night when the gaping terror, the agony that must come is witnessed in the whirling of an inner void. A malevolent void which would suck away, suck away the marrow from the vessel, consuming, obliterating - the hapless urgent life these ignorant jots do crave so. Oh oolerts! Poor hopeless fools.

We could have warned them. Indeed, in a quaint misgiving of our hatred, a tenderness nigh almost did appear. There were subtle gestures they could have read if their eyes had not been so cow-struck. Ah if only their senses had craned to listen to the murmur of our voices. Ah, if only their minds had but touched us briefly there might have sparked a different flame. But our whispered warnings went unheeded and then our greedy vengeance did gorge itself on the ruin of the unconscious souls, that came to live within those self-erected walls, deaf to the keening of our siren hearts.

Aye, in the nub of spring the clogger came with a cluster of his swains to help him raise his roof. Whence they all set to in digging the foundations regardless of a knuckle of my little finger that they sifted then threw aside. Regardless of my sister shards, turned, revealed and ignored, to be trodden under once more, crushed once again beneath the boots of the brutish, whose meagre spirits allow us a little dalliance, a little dalliance, while the moments provide our meat. The feast that swells our appetites, a gift of death conjured from the throat of our soundless howling. Oh petty lives that do not know! That shall never understand! Oh meagre snivelling lives - see how in the confines of our web these little flies do tremour and crawl, shiver and struggle, further enmeshing themselves in their own messy ends. See how our victims struggle to their own demise, flailing their hag-ridden senses before the whisper of our bitter Despite. See how their little minds spark an inferno of vile imaginary that lurks in their unconscious bible-muddled minds, that wracks their flesh with contorting agonies, a blade made from the sheep minds of their following.

Aaah but we allowed them a dew of beginnings in a wistful after gleam of pity before our passion for violence was succoured. Ah, yes. We allowed them a dew of beginnings, a tremour of sweetness that was snatched before it had chance to bloom; a transient brilliance whose petals were extinguished air they had chance to form. Ah, we gave them a brief flicker of lightening ray, a sudden sweet intensity of warmth before it was doused, engulfed, submerged in a cesspool of inchoate ravings, where a rabid Death held the last and final card - torturing them on so, torturing them on. Wringing them for every ounce their petty shells deserved.

Oh, our clutches have a crushing capacity that smothers, that eats away at the vitality of their Reason, exposes the putrescence at their core. So! We must draw down our crow-black hoods and do the carrion's work! Oh Azanagelle, Azanagelle, you chose us well! Ah, you ceaseless winds; where the Cosmic Powers do flow. We are part of the grip that made you nigh, yet our cause is kept inside your spell - rubbing us a pearl of bitter-sweet potion where the sweet is a superficial suasion and the bitter is a caustic germ that rots from the inside in.

In the stirred vats of our brewing malevolence, the fermentation continues and the sting of vinegar burns its bitter taste more and more. Corroded that fragile cerebellum, inciting madness, frenzy, the self-sundering of flesh, the gouging of those eyes that had looked and looked yet never seen. These little lives, these little lives, how you pass us by, how our ravening whim has consumed you. First one, then the others. Now, look see, still, some others more - following the footprints of other fools who have gone their wretched, bloody ways before them!

Before the cold of spring had gone, at time of April showers and fleeting sun, the clogger with the aid of his comrades, built him up a homestead, raised a roof well-sealed from leakage, equipped with a pantry, a small kitchen and front room, two bedrooms up above the downstairs rooms. One to house his wench and new-wed wife and another to crowd the childer in. But for a meagre inheritance that allowed him the privilege of bricks and mortar, he would have steadied him to temporary abodes or begged a rented roof from the sometime benevolent master who owned the estate.

Oh gifts are never given without a price to pay and a gift of joy may come seeming-fair to stay and vanish in the cold, grey dawn, the morning after its advent was bespoke.

Proud, the clogger surveyed his and his fellows neat and nippily erected structure which would house his

new married life's endeavour. Aye, and a welsh lass from Newtown way had struck his fancy, caught his eye with her curls and celtic smiles. Not a one from the valley a good enough for he. No ho whey, from his neighbours came their croaking - right enough we conceded as the flakes of our bones crushed to needle splinters beneath the unaccustomed density of cottage above our bedrock clay; the siphoning of our silthy waters, sullied from the cadaverous inclinations of our torrid past.

Ah and on the sunlit denizen of a showery day, in spontaneous abandon, he swept the muslin-frocked bride up into his arms before he carried she, his welsh menlchion, over the threshold into the bliss of their wedded abode. They did not realise that in the unbuilt cellar, a charnel house of fragmented bone fumed, emanating like poisonous gas from the welter of our memories, focusing our viper's venom on the unsuspecting flesh that had come our way.

Upon their heather-feather mattress they lay; a tenderness lighting their eyes, rosyng her cheeks at the posy of crocuses picked especially to lay beside her pillow and gild that first intertwined morn.

But oh, he must away for long seasons and she toil in the labour of a local farm, the glue of a foetal form keeping them close in common togetherness when he was back from the shelters by the river, where his lengths of clog wood he kept well stacked. But oh the wood was swept away with a sudden rising of the flood. A whole season's work washed down the swanee, down the swanisome deluge. And more hours spent away and the loss of that first baby come still-born. The resentment building; bitter comments cast in the violence of pain. Gradually, gradually, the centre falling apart. The centre failing. That which cannot hold must dissolve, disintegrate, die and reform.

And thus the ragged years went by, the nagging years, the vitriol of disappointment tinging her tongue with the moaning attrition of a ceaseless wind. And no new childer came their way - no infants blessed their supposed sacred vows and dark and loathsome grew the feelings in her breast as the years soured her freshness and turned her eager softness to obdurate spite. Oh and how the poor clogger pushed his cart come the fitching season, 15 mile or more to the hub of the larger welsh town west, for which to sell his wares. Toiling from dawn to dusk in the dim and dour to bring the glint of a spartan smile to the wan cheeks that had once been rosied charm. But failure was stamped the clogger's brow and hariden like she lashed her tongue of acid round and left to sell her butter next day, leaving the welter of inward wounds like scalding spears of shame upon the clogger's soul.

And oh in the dark season, dark full crept into the clogger's soul and wound a lynch pin around his heart. Up on that lonely hillside where the wind did moan upon the shutters and buffet against the stout built walls, the clogger did feel a blackness blacker than he'd ever known, descend upon his mind. And aye we whispered our reproofs and taunted his mind with years of exaggerated penance come nigh. The cries of what had been came to taunt his lonely hearth. Until lo! he did clasp his hands unto his ears and call to the no-god for a mercy now. But only the dark of wronged days did trickle through his fingers, like blood from a weeping wound that no day's eye flower could ever staunch. Oh we wound the thread about and my sisters snipped as the reel was worked. For oh but in his agony he did strip him down to his well-worn flesh and take him a rope from the lean-to shed. Grimly then to the pantry he sped, past thought, past care, only begging for the pulse that kept his gimlet life alight to still and be no more.

And there where in 'bundant times a quarter carcass swine had swung, he cast his rope round the well-tried hook, wound the slip-knot round his sinewed neck, placed the stool that would set him aloft. Ah we cranked the wind's voice high, like the resonance of bellows in a stone-arched space, urging him to leap his last, to succour our stolen lives and blood, with the ragged remnant of his own poor pay. With no mortal witnesses to see he kicked his stool from under he. But we the invisible, vengeance inspired, witnessed the purpling of his choking skin, the kicking and twisting of his strangled form, drawing it out, drawing it out, throttling, suffocating, re-giving the horror that had come to us, through the torments of the clogger's asphixiated breath.

Until still, the silhouette did swing, softly, gently, in the candle-lamp light. A hunched and monstrous shadow swaying from wall to wall, where the confines of a mind had crumbled to a crypt of void.

When his wizen-spirited wedded one did return, more screams and chokes of woe, of penitance did ricochet round these banshee walls. She ran out into the guttering dark - to a neighbour's cold comfort and never did return.

She snivelled her way to a church-cottage and listened to interminable sermons that aggravated the self-pity thickening in her veins, protracting her misery with thrombosis and swelling arthritic joints. Hands, that twisted to bird's claw incongruity for months on end, so she could barely pull down her draws to piss for herself. Ah well, the ice-time got her eventually. The harsh winter of a middling century froze the air in her lungs, hastened her wheezing to her modest-marked grave, now overgrown with weeds.

But sacrifices come in many forms and sometimes a subtle drawing of the wine is more satisfying than the immediacy of spilled blood and strangled life. Thus did come to our lamented abode a spinster with calves of iron and a mouth already pursed in the process of shaping curses. In the lean-to shed she housed her poor beasts - her long suffering donkeys who pulled the cart she piled with faggots. And many a blow from her benighted switch did they receive on the bones of their poor rump, mangy with neglect, made sour from the hariden's wielded stick. In the lean-to shed the poor dumb donkeys munched their meagre portions, near-starved on a spinster's spite; whilst in the pantry next door come evenfall the shadows loomed and flickered upon the wall. The apron hung upon the nail stirred and swung, as the wind whispered its elegy of woe and the tableau macabre retraced its tale of the previous occupation. Around the black-bonnetted spinster wound we sisters three, as she scrunched her angular frame over the feeble flame which flickered uncertainly, fed from the few lumps of coal that lasted her through the lonely nights. The tip of her nose grew red in the chill she bare kept away and she rocked and stared into the thin flame sucking on a liquorice stick that would last her the whole week through. Oh but it strengthened the muscle of her tongue and gave her a yellow grin that grew dreadful for the country folk to see.

We kept her acrimony vital with plagues of lice, a scourge of scabs which she scratched to sores between the flannel sheets of each long night. Her bloodied nails would pick the lice from her scalp and squeeze them between her fingertips til they popped. Little things, little things they say, can matter in a big big way. So it seemed with spinster Pugh as we tormented her with plagues of tiny vermin which drove her to the verge of apoplectic outburst and turned her already crabbed tongue to a rancorous rasp of vinegar. Oh the invectives that contumeliously cut the curt air of these haunted walls! as she pressed her chilblained feet into her hob-nailed boots each morning and scratched her stringy rump chaffed by the coarse woollen under-draws her modesty and meanness did insist upon the wearing of.

Then out to straff the donkey's hide; hitch its mangy form, rough-bridled to the cart whereupon the donkey did frequently rehearse its complaint with a loud and timely braying which would stir the vicious instinct of maitre-hausen Pugh, who would belt it about its vociferous head with a cabbage stalk until the beast's cacophonous rebellion was quelled.

Yanking the halter torn by the gusty wind, the specious spinster trudged her way be the Black Hill to find her some faggots to pile high the cart. Then down through the coppice of a steep, slanting fall, with a full load cranked up to pitch did she go. Dressed all in black with the bonnet and all - white apron cotton and servicable scowl, wanting the impression of decency to give. Oh but her squinting eyes and yellow tongue belied the charade as all the childer did know and the donkeys were intimate aware of. But the busy and the business-like paid for her trade and kept her coffer full of coppers to be sure. Whilst wherever she walked, cross market square, upon the packhorse bridge, along the cusson for a merry 'uns to take, all the young 'uns would go in fear of her passing. They would scuttle down the alleyways, run off be the riverbank, climb to the castle mound or dive into doorways, whenever they 'ud see her acoming black-lookin' and boulder-lassel along, along oh. Aye the childer were dread-filled of her ratchet crone's caper, avoided her when they could, shouted names from a distance when well hid and safe, spoke legends of her vices and devil-sworn pacts.

Oh but the bitter old cuss was a tough boot to yield and the blood ran like icicles' silt in her veins and her sinews of string proved tenacious as weed - woody and hollow the bones of her heart ran, spiky as a thistle, as obstinate to leave-go was the withered old rag of her soul. We took our toll at subtle torture but tired of the game when the yellow-toothed wrinkle-skull clung on and on and on. She made us remember what the clogger's dance had dulled. Made our anger fresh to our memory as the spark of life in her wizened old frame waxed on and on inexorably, persistant as the winter rain, fatal as a still-swollen moon. Ha! What charm had life's spark shone to bequeath the wicked old stick such a length of remorseless longevity.

Our virgin skin was a score shredded thin that sweltered beneath the burst of a crocus spring. Whilst still the spinster's malign old thread spun on. But malevolence can be tended to bloom and flower when the seed of malice has been nursed and gnawed for long enough. And the rats that had wriggled the tawdry wainscotting and scuttled for sparse crumbs come dark, delivered us a whopper to nip off her nose.

Eh, it was sizeful, the pink-eyes albino our rat-kin did give us. White as a ghost and nigh on twice the size of the normal host. Bold as brass and savage as a weasal. It could out stare a farm cat and make the tail of a terrier turn right under - set a quiver in the hide of any as 'ud see.

It found its way to her bed one night - faced her brazen in the full moon light. Wakened her with a tickling of its whiskers. Oh she shrieked and flailed and dove for the covers, a sobbing on the bile that

her belly'd rue. Our albino over-sized bluff, pattened a vigil for an hour or more, roaming like a lion to the kill while she quaked and squealed neath the covers. He cut her a swift nip when her fingers showed nigh and left her diseases for to sicken by and die. The crotchet old rind wheezed her way through another long summer til autumn's frost curdled her towards disintegration. Hair turned white as a winding sheet, sores seeping pus in a plentiful place, while her death rattle clung from two dawn-dusks more til the sour old guss was finally done.

Into the dust of a pauper's grave they poured her riddled flesh and acid heaped bones. So for a space alone awhile we were given licence to dream. To dream the shape of another cull into the nightmare of reality, from the damp feotor where our black waters force their meandersome flow. From the ache we've inspired in these walls of stone when the pitiless passion of the thousand years ago did murder so horrible slow. Plugging our mouths with a cakeful of soil, stilling the song of our youth with rough, angry fingers that pushed us down, pushed us down, drowned us in the mud of all our making, never to be more, never more to be. Thus did blossom the birth of our rage. The ether could not consume us. The flicker of allotted span could not extinguish us. Thus, have we remained. Gaining time, grooming our venom, burning for the harvests of blood that we wished and should have known.

Yornals! That they should always come back for more! Even after so many blood-worn hints. They never let go, they always persist. Even after fifty years and more decades to mention, the grim inflections resonant in the bricks and mortar and in the centaurous wooden beams, the bleak abandonment of this place, does not deter them. How strange to be so blind! What are these little lives that are busying themselves to stir and unsettle us. Would they slash a scythe through a wasp's nest? Would they plunge themselves naked into the icy torrent without first a thought, a sensing, an opening unto the interlude? Could they not see a vampire's gleam dazzle from the cobweb trailed rafters exposed to a sunlit ray?

Strange. From the city they say. They will hear the whisper of the old country folk tales from the few that remain in the village which once was a thriving market town. They will hear murmurs that'll chill their hearts. Tread gingerly, they will, on the dark staircase when they are alone. The images will come. Oh their palpitating hearts! Oh the sweat of the mawkish limbs! How the feline in us shall retract the claw and choose to predator's play awhile as long, as long as the little mouse may quiver and run, be pounced upon, a sinking of the canines in. Just to tease. To see these modernos tremble. See how fragile! Their sanity so paper-thin, spirits so cringing, incapable. Ho! We shall see, we shall see what may be. When our new residents come to take over their renovated, transformed, modernised, extended home. We shall see, we shall see what the meat, they are made of. Whether the blood run white and wan or a clot of pungent red. We shall see how bold their marrow, ho! In a very soon time indeed. Poor yornals.

A few spans on a season, or half a century and more; a while to mortal equivilance, a roadman did come up with his wife. Rented or bought, the detail's superfluous. A raunchy pair and I'll be bound. But his heart was helter-skelter devotion and struck on fidelity whiles she was a racy bint, of a tuck for flirting and carry-ons when the back of her bloke was well-turned.

He was a big chap, the roadman. He took her up there, after he'd worked down the valley and taken a liking for the place. They told him about the house - abandoned - cut in the hillside before where the Black Hill does loom. They even told him about the clogger who had hanged himself one cold stormy night in November. But the roadman shrugged and set his cap, walked up to find us, here on the gale-sheared valley-highside, where Winter's grip lies hidden in the 'bundant Summer green. Where frost is ever locked and laced within the blossom of verdant Spring.

He did not tell his girl about the clogger who killed himself and nobody had batted an eyelid at bad biddie's agoing off. So when he brought her up here one Sunday, he chose the best of days. The willow herb strewed in the ill-tended garden looked charming, while the May blossom covered the hedgerows surrounding and a cluster of bluebells had found a hold be the side of the fencing and a few roses bloomed planted early on by the clogger's wife.

They were cheery together - this couple. The roadman and his gal. A teasing banter drawn from the well of their passion for life, ensued. She teased him and they chased round the remnant furniture. She dashed up the stairs, he close behind. She, laughing, breathless, excited, her viscera twitching. Oh yes, we could sense her, we virgins, we frosty maidens three. We savoured the bouyancy in her veins, the thrusting flesh, as much as he, the roadman, who caught her up in the big bedroom, encased her in his arms, ate up her neck, drank from her mouth and put his massive hands greedily grappling upon her wealth of bosom, rubbing her crotch as he stiffened beneath his sunday best - got a devil into it for his bargain.

Oh yes, she says Josh, wiping a finger through the grime on the kitchen tops, this place could be made to

look right homely with a touch of spit and polish, some of ma's furniture put by - the savings he'd made for a sunny day venture. Oh yes, Josh she says. Look we could have flowered chintz in the sitting room, the rocking chair by the range in the kitchen. Come bent it lovely an' a couple o' mile to town no more. The road trade takes you plenty and wide but always the cottage to come home to. A tart's hips to relish his banquet in, keep his nose to the grindstone while she may fillallio it around and about, passing the time of day with any passing tradesman, should he so happen upon her door. Well! The welterpit of her imaginary did so work and fed her lust to keep her lush for roadman when ahome he did come.

His family they tried to tell him, to fashion a distrust. But he ignored them, veiled his eyes to her faults, only saw the gold she gave him, did not realise that the gawdy can turn tawdry and lie. She struck on a nice little number, a husband worked well-paid from home of a times, complete with a house on a hill behind which the Black Hill doth roam. A place to call her own, a house to order, a few fellows to flirt with awandering down to town - all merry-ho! Oh yes, awandering down to town she did go, all on a lark for a merry-so she did waim. All on a lark for want of entertainment she did dabble a hook in the river and hooked fish that she never had oughta.

The chaps came to clear out and lady turned up to suggest and make the tea. Get a broom in her hands thank the lord - as she felt the relish in the men's eyes, as she swung her hips from side to side, sensual in her duty. Oh so sensual subtle warming in the swing of her duty. And lo could the husband see the lust in his comrades eyes and lo did he contain a rising irritation, a gruffness belying the violence inside; a terseness that chivvied his comrades back to the hauling of furniture. Always somehow she come, thrusting her winning breasts to their smiles, charming them in her woman's way, while he scowled like a fool behind his mates, who gallant strove to please her with the placing of the furniture, with the carrying of the clather-all and chairs.

Aye but she had the sense to stay downstairs while the bed was taken up the stairway - all forties-fancy beginning to know the lower-middle trade. Aye she had the sense to stay put, we saw that. She knew how to tease him, how to use her female wit and whim. She pushed him but only so far. Just to let him know. Just so their night hours could deliver a scarlet blanket unto the milky cusp of her alabaster thigh. Just to make their love-making a walk on the wildside. Just how wild my beauty, you only saw too late. Too late to realise, the fruit that hung your body could be cut, forsworn, blasted away into the void. Oh you only saw too late my wild child. Tart who did not know the score.

She gave them tea in the sitting room, passed them the biscuit jar, liberally thanked them with her eyes and smiles. Queen bee mustering her honey, knowing where her sting would be drawn, did not reckon on a momentary bandonment, the cost of a third round eye in her skull, dripping red and dripping red and plenty more there is to tell, the song of mephitic lullaby. But not yet. Not yet. Let us savour the gory details. Let us savour the stirring of the swarm.

Furniture moved and house spit and polished. Aye and dressed with a vase of wild flowers, the table top first night together there. Platter cleaned and tankard dredged, beseated on soft couch in big rose chintz, afore a homely glint in the hearth. They did fill their hearts on happiness, carried the glint of its gold to the rafters, as she leapt and surged beneath his horny touch, under the covers in the candlelit dark, he cut his teeth upon her nipples, plunged to take the peak of his thrill, melted the twain in their climax, awash, awash, sweet lusty heathens, alost and adrift in a sea where the caverns grow deep, very deep indeed, and your little lives cannot know how crushing the chaos that may reign, how voiceless the silence, a sound that sharpens and cloys the brain. They did not know what bricks and mortar could rigor mortar whenever it did spy a chance cometh by.

But the chalice of their love was flavoured vellum, venom that would winter and spittle to a crack of ice on a grave, come the naught of a blustery May. The chalice of their love was not savoured and drawn but gulped at and turned away from whenever the away times did afflict them. Him, stopping in digs away off past the valley, to lay out the tarmac, work muscle and sweat to bring home the bread she required, savour the musky wine she allowed him portions of.

Petulant at times she was. Moaning about how dreary things were there on her own. How they never had enough money and how Maisie Jukes was away off to the welsh mountains and over 'em to see the sea on the new charabangs that'd come to the valley. How the Gryce sisters had gone to Ludlow town the other week and seen Gone with the Wind. Why could they never go anywhere or do something interesting? Suffocated here, she was at times, nothing to do but keep house and garden, sit and twiddle the thumbs of an evening. No childer yet to spoil her abandon. Oh yes, she'd made sure of that with a peck of Penny Royal.

Goaded him, she did, to go for the big jobs. The ones that meant far away, far in another town. While she

did the dirty on him back home. Only towards the end, we could grant her. But by then the cards were drawn, the dice had been thrown, the tripple six had upturned. She did not see. She could not predict until her brains were splattered across the bedpost behind her. Oh, sure, the wheel had turned quite mortal slow at a certain time. We allowed her dallying spirit to roam, to enjoy the chase as they say, indulged her for a while. Sugar-pot should've spun your own honey not taken the treacle from our tart frame. Poor little sugar-muff - lust for all and panker spicing in your shanks, delicious 'un all aquiver, ensavour'd up and enravell'd in the indulgence of her own appetites - the animal flanks that riveted her thighs.

Could not help the aroma of spring that wafted round her, when she placed her order at the butcher's counter, asked for his sausages, oh and how many? Only one; and a big fat long one at that, was the thought as it flashed in her mind. She did not speak it though of course, but smiled in a brazen way thrusting her bosom so his help-mate, young buck, looked on with a blush round his neck and something of stiffness behind his butcher's apron.

Oh six and six more she would say, just to be on the safe side, never know when he might come home hungry, she joked and tipped the lad a wink, something playful, which master butcher saw and joked on. Sent her laughing out of the shop and a fizz of deofel entered their stride, a jovial electricity that lasted them the whole of a day. She took it home with her and fed on it 'neath the covers where her own hands reached to satisfy and her thoughts hooked onto the butcher's boy with his fine strong youth all of aglowing, wanting to taste the experience she may offer, lusting the cup of his load.

Seedy little bint she was, when her hector and snuff set her going. Ready for anything, she was. She'd have made a mint, coffers of gold no doubt about it, under a red light, in one of those districts don't you know. She might have made a madame with style but too hung and drawn by her mother's mither'n, too superstitious to throw off the christ lump and say hang to hell wi' it. She wanted respectability as well as the flavour of a little dalliance now and agin. But well, it was just, sorry missus, 'cos I'm afraid to we three, here down below, in the dank dim rizem of the loam, a little dalliance can go a long, long way. A trifle reactful like - just when you mightent expect it.

Ah she was not to know, poor little bitch. But you can't mess a rough man's passion around, oh no don't rouse the beast in his soul, she should've known. She felt the fangs to be sure and then, bless her, Void. Nothingness. Void. A flicker of memory in the pantry as from the hook her housecoat shifted; in echo of an earlier writhing.

Not agony my dear. Sensual gluttony. The craving her body and hormones dictated. We obliged her with an opportunity - a chance she oh - could not avoid taking. Sewn up and stitched her. Little tart. Back to oblivion where you belong. Blow a bubble up your arse with your bitch's hide, setting the whelps to all their slaving. Silly girl. Didn't count there was bound to be gossip. Well and aye do the valley folk churn up the talk with aplentiful wagging of tongues. Didn't realise how whispers could ricochet round all the green length of the valley, whey and dearie me, no did she not. Didn't reckon on her man's being close-like. Didn't caper on his stony-kept silence; his watching and waiting for any false move with a worm of suspicion wriggling away at the nub of his love.

And aye it was true, she sensed on a thrill of fear, a displeasure that cringed her to guilt. So she soft-round and sweet-bubbed him, looking misery of the times when he was away, how long the hours dragged. How necessary it was to troll into town now and again. The both of them could go. Down to The White Horse. She could sit in the garden there, he could bring her out a beer - on Saturday when he came back home. Don't be like this, all starchy, she bridled. I get the groceries, sort out some deliveries. There's only one of me - can't cook the Sally Lunn's you love without the flour and the milk churn. Nor do the steak and kidney of a Sunday, care of the butcher, care of the butcher's boy who runs the delivery service.

Didn't tell him so of course - only she knew like. She'd been told the previous week. To save her lugging heavy shopping tuthree mile or so back up the hill. Get her sausages delivered. On the doorstep you know, whensoever you may require. She flashed her smile to beguile him. Well come Friday if you can, so I can bake before the man comes back home on the Saturday. Come Friday lunch would be kind, to give I all afternoon to get the fingers worked in the dough, in the pastry pie, man out on the road-line has such a hankering for.

And well, they could believe him missus, let me tell you. When they oggled her from over the counter with her primrose yellow-smelling jumper which swelled and floated up to wash their glances on, as they cut extra sharp with the cleaver to impress, ketch a shot of silver chopped swift straight thro' the vertebrae. They remembered and she fuelled their fantasies, as the elder chose the meat for her parcel

and the younger went for a wank-off be the seat and pail, up behind the bliffshed, aye. Fire in his blood at night 'neath his single-bed sheets as Wednesday evening swam onto Friday and the shaft of his loins rose to plunge her cleft, in the rampant imagery of his mind. The mystery, the woman secret she could give, he wanted so to know of. So his fantasies did run, well she knew. And jiggled her bait like a trap coated honey, not reeking violence, a shot through the skull.

Laughed my dears, we could have died. They did to be sure. Ha ha. Why should we care? Why should we give a damn? Quite frankly, my dears, its the opposite, as Rhett had said to Scarlett. Poor Scarlett, who washed her tears in the fog as away her man did run. Not so kind the cut of blighty our Suzanna was swung for. No tears in the foggy foggy dew - dear suzie when the blinds are drawn. Dear me no.

How delicious then, the energy that ravelled up the home. How sunny became its accent. How she toyed with Friday in her mind, pleased herself on husband's Saturday, that she knew was sure to come. But some bluster of the youths in the Castle square, set roadman on the whiff of suspicion. A nagging of his sub-conscious mind at the note in the men's laughter, as a fellow made complimentary quip about his wife, aye, about his woman Mal. Really, he could've taken it as compliment, but there was the wolf he'd seen arise, arise, in the men's eyes, at the thought of her. Eyes akeen and panting saliva'd mouths. Aye to be sure. The wolf - he is fidel, do not amess with he - arose in the glint of the eyes of the men who laughed for the joy of his wife's behind, who laughed to celebrate the flutter and the jiggle, unbeknownest of roadman standing right by. And a viper stealthily entered his heart and gnawed at the root of the passion there; poisoned it with a black, formless thread that unravelled to the centre.

Shot rabbits on the way home, few wood pigeons, pheasants when they could be had. He prepared 'em for her squeamishness could only deal with flesh and bone. Not guts, Mal. Not feather and claw or fang or fur. Just the rosy bone and flesh, my dear. Just your ivory flank upon the bedspread and the flickering candlelight to lend you that sheen of gold. Your eyes such pools a man could drown in, maws to swallow you up in. Take your pride. Spit you out and cheat you if you would let her. Never.

Never again, my dears, will we see such scenes. Such a marvellous coalescing and gathering of the energies that brought climactic sunder and atwain. Marvellously bubbled to the boil, my dear. Oh we played it long and shrieking stormy towards the end. Never again, quite the same.

But still. More victims come to the sacrifice. Still. Despite the ruins of our domain. Despite the obsidian-sombre embers that throw light from incandescence, absorb the ethers and flatten-form such angles from the crafty corners where oh such a strain of malevolence broods they could not fathom. Oh these trifling innocents! How they trickle through our net. See how they wriggle and squirm! See! Now there are others come. Ignorant ones. Fresh from the urban mire, trying to test their teeth on the country, trying to grasp the rustic rusk to their mouths. Poor, poor little shallow innocents! Worldly - so they think - but ignorant of the name of the game. Ignorant of the name of this particular kind of game, I'll be bound, eh Mal? Oh the whispers we shall dispel, impelling them, surrounding them with an ache of the voiceless void. Oh, such an ache of the voiceless void! How we shall toy with our new city playthings. Oh how we shall toy.

Bedlam, no doubt. Not a place to go to as well our Josh knows. Doesn't he now girls? B'aint that not so my fair sisters? Oh Bedlam's not a place to go now. They put electric in your brain and fill your veins with chemicals, cattle-prod you pillar to post, aye. Bit of a bed to lie on, a can to piss in the corner of. Doctor's eye to probe'un. Tablets to keep'un quiet. On the scarlet walls where countless crimson roses bloomed coalescing in patterns across the whitewash backdrop of his mind. Just blood red roses blooming cast always from the corners of his mind where the centre had fallen through to leave a blank behind. Mummbling. Dribbling. Scarlet roses splashed in livid abandon across the primrose-yellow, violet-blue, flock-flowered wallpaper that had dressed their bedroom wall. And roadie now, Josh roadie, has cut his flanky, found his own bit of blighty, stuck with his needles and tablets and semi-oblivion, aye. A can to piss in the corner of, where his shrivelled soul doth jibber before the crimson turmoil of his mind.

Say; but come Friday of that passed on May Day time, why she did draw her a leisure of bathing, to be sure. Washed her hair and put a bit of lipstick. Picked the early bluebells that'd come to set the scene a charm. Tidied, swept and clean, especially, well of course loves, the pantry. And the boudoir upstairs, don't you know. Oh scarlet one. Oh scarlet hearted one, who smelled and savoured the rose without reckoning on the in-growing thorn that would rupture all, from here and to eternity, my dear, and never back again my dear. Never back again, from here and to eternity, my dear. Lash loves - did not realise the man could groan wild!

Chosen a skirt that could shown some of her knee off, a close-fitting snifty that pleasingly would accentuate round her titties so. A pleasure to see, to be sure and so thought the butcher's boy after he loads up the cart and trots for that house on the hillside behind which the Black Hill do roam. Canny times. Behind where the Black Hills do roam.

He'd done his bit of bluster and shine. Thought on his trouser work and tended to the fluffy bits of his hair tendrils that he tamed to a bluff young man's business come the morn of Friday nigh. Flexed his muscles in the mirror back home; soaped well and washed too, that an' all to be sure. He knocked on the door ready to do her gallant service and my dear, he knew his bargain day had come.

Bluebells you see. A cluster of 'em in a vase on the table when the coppers brought her down. It was - 'I know 'cos Hilda's boy's in with the blue. She had it from the horse's mouth: the table with the vase full of first-season bluebells, a pot of tea and two cups on the stand. Invited him in see, she did, must've done. Didn't reckon on poor Joshua coming back early from his work-time. Carrying his gun, ready to shoot the odd rabbit or two. My word he found a blighter in bed with his wife. My word. Came in, saw the teapot and the cups, heard laughter upstairs, a creak and a tumble of the bedding, so they say'.

Scandalous! The murder writhe did ricochet his mind and rose in a torrent from his heart; a black flood that engorged him in the center of his happening. Maddened bull he was. Leapt up the stairs, pushed the door open. Saw her. Saw him. Saw them. Scushered his incoherent whisper, "Susan!" Savage, oh so savage, the hunter's cry from the silent anguish of the heart. And she, oh Lady Di, oh laddida, Lady Di, hunter turned victim, high criddle-by, got blasted away with a wind where her soul should've been, all gone on a glut of the blood sin. Sinner's blood. Dropped to hell, you see. And hell is nowhere and nothing you see. Hell is all around if you know where to look, if you happen upon a particular potent snatch of lair, don't you see.

But let us, for our delight, backtrack up a while. Oh welcome young tall handsome delivery boy, was the giste of her quip. Oh certainly, at your mercy mam, it is nothing you see, a pleasure and a duty. Or words less skilful but put to better effect. If you could just bring it in here she says, guiding him to the pantry. Such a larder boys! It would whirl up your mind, so round and juicy boys, I tell you. He could hear the bluster in his mind's eye. Hot for me she was, he would say, for sure, and so she was. With a little persuasion, a mock thrown appeal, a tip and a nod and a winkle to test the stars on your bed missus. Oh Davie, come and have a cup of tea, when he had hung the ham on the hook in the pantry - did not notice the shadow of its claw upon the upraised roof as the sun flooded into the kitchen behind them. Sat down, certainly Missus Knapp. A cup of tea would be nice and some sponge-cake lovely, yes for me. Thanks for sure I will take it and enjoy. And so he did and so did she.

Sugar she asked. Oh plenty he said if you have it. She giggled and asked him how the work load was. Busy as it must be, was the young man's reply. For sure, Lady Jane, busy all the while the butcher 'ee be. Always got work on. Always food in the pantry though. Think on that. But she couldn't put a lock on the latch of the door, didn't hear his footsteps aleaping up the stair until he had burst in upon 'em and she was revealed, well, for what she was, slut, sloshed upon the ceiling. Painted the wall, he did with her. Brains splattered all over the bedroom wall paper, Hilda's boy said. But a perfect red hole in her forehead so that her glassy eyes could stare at him as her brains were blasted from behind 'em into his own nightmare of nothingness. That haunting sea-maiden glassy stare would siren twist and gimlet him like a gyre at the centre of his life to follow, where the blank backcloth of his brain paints up forever rose clouds, those crimson clusters that coalesce continuously through a dead-fish steadiness drilling holes in his mind of a myriad fragments. Automaton. All parts. Stuck in routine unison. No centre. It all fell apart. But still functioning. In a dulled and nightmare-lobotomised fashion.

And after all that, see, still they come, the silly city slickers, come to escape the modern mess they've made. Oh don't mess with our midnight soul, you little innocents, you city slickers come to till a portion of our soil. Don't reckon on no bed of roses. For I tell you, too many ebony ones have rooted here and though the perfume can be exquisite, the barb is ever present, the operator awful skilful - at cutting up a square!

Kimets! Vapid fools. Will not listen to how oppressive be the silence up here, when the gusting torrent of the winds do drop their play awhile to listen to our echoes sing.....But after all, it's a free world isn't it my lovelies? As they say out there, on the spirit-frozen streets. It's a free world, they say. Oh yes. It's free alright. Death has no fee; death requires no fee whatsoever. And fear, well, you can join us at any time, come rain nor shine. Just dot. dot. dash here and you'll see @. windows. com. rtl. house on the hill. Thoroughly, expertly, verily, linked to e-mail, don't you see. Hark! Can you hear the screaming of the void? Cheer! Oh something wonderful, my dears. E-mail as well, plenty to tell, kiss and tell. Oh so much

to see, so much to relish. Poor foolish little modernos. Poor wandering sheep that cannot tell the wolfish domain when they sees it and comes ready to make their nest in our pantry.

Slowly they will remember the truth they cannot avoid. Perhaps they will see the blood drip down those re-stripped, freshly plastered and painted walls, as if the facelift could do away with the disease in the bone. Or whether now it will be much more subtle. Oh yes. The possibilities are endless, we can see. Given e-mail.

Still, they are not to know. All the pollution. Senseless, you see. Drives them senseless. They live for that computer you know. Can't get them off it some nights. We can just hear it now, can't we my dears? My marvellous snow queens beseated in the icy Lock of the Land. Ready to arise. To take out your mantles, place up frosted crowns. Ah, my sisters! Shall we not laugh! Have fun! Enjoy their abandon! Watching and waiting, like a crow's crooked claw, when to swoop and when to stick the talon in. He didn't get chance, the butcher's boy, to stick his flesh pizzle in, that is. Roadie caught them part way. She had her top off. He had his mouth to her nipple. The inside story you see, local press don't get a look in, see. Cup of tea and some cake. Ever so nice, says Davie, the butcher's lad, getting bold with her flashing smile and busters thrusting. How about a kiss then, says he. Well I never, swear, my sweet Davie, now you shouldn't a go saying stuff like that, you'll get me all of a mithersome. And what if I does, he carps back. Davie the butcher's lad. What if I does? How does thee think I gets by with all the nonsense you put my way. But he couldn't articulate it, only body language bluff took a stride. Perhaps you would like me to kiss you, he asked roguish-like, at her panting denials and blushing, oh no no, my young laddie, what do you take me for, heaving her bosom, parting her lips, pressed her hand to the softness she was formed.

Then he suddenly leant towards her, put his mouth upon hers and tongued her inner cove, exploring, just like a man first unto the mountain top, aye. Ever so passionate like. Lovely it was. He kissed her long and lingering and well they both did come. He kissed her long and lingering like til readily she did succumb, my love, until readily she did succumb.

And soon by gum, not even the locals know this one, he was pulling her onto his lap, duck to water like completely, ravaging her missus, wrapped up and taken. Hands everywhere let me tell you. For she was so obliging you see. Didn't give a dinkie about the maister away from home. Thought noone'd see or know. Just a swift one while the old man's back was turned. Just a quickie to sample his fresh-formed thigh - fancied him rotten for ages, she had. Why shouldn't she taste the forbidden fruit? No one to know, now. Besides, he was all over her and her body was already charged afore he set upon her. Couldn't resist that. Her flesh melted for it. Burned for it. It didn't burn long by charrie, I'll tell you.

He had taken her top off until she stopped him, placed a finger on his lips, led him upstairs then. Yes, onto the very bed, dears. The marital. Scandalous. Absolutely. That's what her husband thought. Writhing on the bed they were, semi-clad. Him with his trousers off, she in her suspenders, no knickers, all shed, see. Warm weather, see. May-time, see. Gets to their veins, hormones, see. What can you do? But oh boy does this devil have a sting in his tail at times! We can vouch for it. Eh, sisters three?

In comes roadie, sees primrose yellow jumper shed. Hears a creaking some, a squeaking some, a giggle in the rafters.

'Susan!' came his hoarse whispered tone, like a snake's sudden slither in the grass afore it lunges to strike, choked on his own agony. She didn't have chance to scream. A frozen moment. The horror beginning in her eyes, the notion for pleading about to kick in. He couldn't bear it. Shot her brains out, plastered the butcher-boy's in the other corner straight after he'd leapt back from offa her, lifted his head from his honey-pot's frozen side.

He didn't hear him, see. Butcher's lad didn't know Roadie was there. Neither did she to start with. Roadie opened the door so quiet-like. Heart breaking into vulcorous rage. Stood for a few seconds and watched 'em at it. Saw his bitch dribble wet for another. Then he scushered out her name through his rage-broiled larynx, through his strangled throat. Froze both of 'em for that second as he shot her. Then turned his gun and shot again as the butcher's boy sprang up. Both of them, through the head. Only the butcher's lad, his face was a mess. Eyes all shot in. Her face though, was perfectly preserved, apart from the weeping red hole in her forehead. Good job he was a sure shot, I tell you. Took the back of her head clean off. Little time to suffer for both of them.

Him, though, Roadie, his suffering went on interminably. Had his mind done-in, he has our Roadie. They locked him up in a mental home and threw away the key. Poor sod. Still continued ... enduring his little agonies. The rose clusters never receded. They were always there - blooming black midnights in his mind, through the frozen wreckage of his soul, through the gleam of a fish-dead stare. Poor sod. Poor

Josh. Poor no tell and Roadie man. Aye.

Aaah! That was then and this is now. But b'aint it so peaceful now, my sisters, b'aint it our Mal and Gella? Whey and all prettified and up-spruced. Made right salubrious, eh girls? Right plush and fine. Look at thaise drapes the Misses brung in - heavy claret velvet for the downstairs casements, bonnie cotton print up here be the rafters, fresh painted walls in the corridor, down both the staircases, papered right tasteful like in the rooms where the childer will sleep. And through over the extension, the master bedroom where the Maister and his Misses shall to their bedding, with their shower room en suite. Opposite a room like a private study, with a single bed stashed to the wall.

Then the bathroom all dreamy blue with a pale buttermilk carpet thick between the toes - for those as 'as got 'em, that is. Seahorses and starfish stencilled round the borders, bowing the water in, mustering a suasion of the seashore in from the rushing of the silvery taps, the waterfall of sound.

Eh well, who would've thought it Mal? Who'd a thought it our Gella? Right from the time of the clogger's squattage, through the hariden's festering rind, past all that blood on the walls, to come up to this! Eh, who'd a thought it? Marvellous! Like a new place, ain't it meine schwestern. Like a palace it be or something near as fine, I'll be bound. And we can tell they've got plans for the garden can't we sisters? Oh yes, with that acre adjoining the little stretch of woodland behind it. All up here on this valley up the high side, just before the Black Hill does loom.

I can see them now - we all can, can't we girls? The whole little clan of them. The teenage boy turned sixteen, the girl come thirteen this fall. A little 'un called Jack would you know, a maither and a faither. A tad posh mind.

Look alive. Look alive. Oh yes. Quite a little tribe we can see! 'cos ain't it done up nice mind sisters. Four bedrooms now Mal. Oh and the prospect of a tiller an' all, out back of the bit of the garden left, adjoining the cleverly thrown in paddock, that scrub of old woodland. Oh yes, the extension's exceeded our expectations, hasn't it girls? Yes, rather tasteful. None of your cheap rubbish here, lads.

Boots lads, you'll have proper ones, I'll make sure of that, you'll see.

Don't you think a tour would be nice ladies? Sisters? My fate-sworn falcons, we silver griffins who gargoye back come the dark. Now. Shall we look. Upon our verily much enhanced new abode? Sitting room enlarged, wood stove burner in the broad stone hearth, oak beams exposed, and the pillars, which entrance through the downstairs extension with its parquet floor and persian rug covering. A big kitchen at the front now. No pantry - they've had it knocked through. No hooks there now. But I'm sure a shadow will swing boys, some nights when ebbs of silver may lace the midnight air, boys.

Little one, look over there. Do you see, the shadow of the crow's claw caught on a crook of night's wing? Upon the polished staircase girls. In the second bedroom we have little Jack's domain. Hence the jolly wallpaper and single bed with bright bedspread. And in the original master bedroom ... oh yes gasp and shock horror, my ladies and gentlemen, but do we not have a girl grown to tumultuous pangs of adolescence? Mark the tiny rose cluster wallpaper, all Laura Ashley fine you see. Oh sweet, so cottage country, she will say. And the primrose duvet she will love. Oh and the view from the window my dears, won't she enjoy that too, on a stormy night when the ethers shall boil their recreations and cast the spectres toilsome.

Look at all this lovely pine ladies. Plenty of wardrobe space, soft oatmealie carpet, ever so tasteful, cosy, inviting, her room. Little girl, little woman coming to grown. Oh yes, I wonder ... when will the blood of her flow come nigh? My word we shall see eh girls, eh sisters? In the midst of a hot July when the sun blazes blisters and sultry-warm, come soft even-tide, eh sisters?

Moving on down the corridor, we have the enlarged bathroom with its shell-blue lampshade, its pristine state-of-the-art tiles and enamel. On the end, next to where the maister and misses shall bed and abide, we do waim, where the maister and his misses shall to abide, at the end of the long corridor - opens out a door where our young warrior-hero, our whizz kid with his inter-net whistle or however they say it in them city slinks down south, there shall reside our whizz kid with his internet whistle. The whole deck asnd calaver of computable sustenance-screen, he shall have we can tell, oh yes.

Oh, we've never moved, never known much, only everything, you see. It's our nature. Planted before the moon was born, we were. Desecrated and bloodied before our virgin springs had sprung, before our triplet telepathy could deliver them real power. Idiots. They were not to know I suppose. Yet our own flesh and blood, they should've! What a wonder we could've worked, we three - harnessed our mind power for all the Folks bounty. White we were. White snowdrops, pure as fresh fallen snow. Like snowdrops our beginning; the start of our offerance. We would've bloomed a thousand lilies and treasure of poppy-corn and harvest, if they had let us.

But no our strange understandings, they never cherished, they feared them. Grew uncertain of us. Just as the swelling of our pure song had sung its first knell. Dug a big hole they did, at dark moon tide. Thrown us into it. Pushed the soil at top of us. Chanted we to our living, drowning death-mud graves. Squelched us, smothered us, in the soil of their extremity. Leapt a-top to push our faces down, packed into the soil. Live burying us to empower the Land, appease the Goddess, raise the burden of famine that'd swept from the gossip of a neighbouring homestead.

"It's ever since they came born. Those three. Those three girls as have such a strange looks betwixt 'em." No matter they speak so soft and gentle. No matter they can talk in their minds to each other. Spooked 'em see. Silly. Heathens. Always we were. Meant to be. They have seen and they shall see. These new ones, oh yes, they shall see. The young girl and the lad with his net internet field, surfing the jet-spread on an electronic screen. Oh well, we'll give you food for thought Maister Humphrous, we can tell you and for sure. Oh 'A' level is it he's doing sisters? History was it? Computer science, History and French. French! I know girls, that's what all the plain-spoken farmer folk'll say around here. Why French? Bloody French, never helped us out of a hole! German, my dear. Oh German would be much more interesting. He'll have opportunity for both, won't he dears? It'll be his choice by the end of the summer. Perhaps.

Or perhaps their choices shall be chosen for them. Pre-empted, preordained, so to speak.

The workmen were here all spring. Bashing and stripping, building and knocking through the kitchen, taking back the length of us, til blimey luvs, this is a tad different fromert we been used ta, eh lasses, eh? Nice long cosy lounge. Bookshelves, C.D. player, T.V. and video machine. Oh sisters, so these are the moderns now. These are the ones who have the pick of the day. Look, my-my, at all o' thaise gadgets now. All run be electric. Oil-burning range in the kitchen. Whey lasses, just like a page offa Country Living or some such glossy-hype-mag. Oh yes. Thaise folk. Thaise moderns reckon they have the vision for Today. Reckon they've got it sewn up and sorted. Ketched their piece of paradise amidst the borderlands, in a house upon a hillside, behind which the Black Hill do loom.

Oh we take them to our heart!

... Those hills; they are our breath and brether. Aye for such an' all are we a part of them, as they are a part of we, we three, we sisters three. And in the snow-draped silences, how potent the crest of your dream! How potent! When the snow lay stole about, five feet high in the drifts that came legendary those years. Those hard cold bitter years.

And they, thaise centrally-heated new 'uns, now all come 'cased in the finest of cloth, cotton-wooled 'em all about to keep 'un from ahurting and never a scrape or a tussle shall they graze the knuckles of their proof on. And naither a harm shall be come to 'em. Not if they can help it. We can see the love that laces the new-sanded beams. Yes. A loving little family. A loving little tribe.

And where was faither when they took our lives and where was maither but screeching til knocked unconscious and faither on a hillside alone, the weight of murder upon his soul. That the bitter lack-lustre love which threw us to the depths of our ceaseless grave. But sad ... folk, they were not to know. That we had seeded long before the Earth's swollen Tides gave a myriad Birth. Our roots have succoured on starlight, sifted through the timeless winds, trawled the ether of the void. Long and always have abided. Long before the Earth did grant our flesh to bloom. Long before ... Ah, the budding of our hour! How priceless the memory!

But we were not suffered grace to blossom, to truly flower. No no, not we. Forced on us the Hag's mask so early they did. Freezing our blood, sucking away the moisture of our life, with the caking, suffocating mud. The cloying dank soil that came to wriggle and heave neath the skin, eating the flesh, clearing us to our bones.

Three pretty maidens all in a row! Pretty maids all in a row. Look oh look so! Three pretty snow-white maidens all in a row - eyes of blue and hair of gold and look; one that is different to those two. Hair as white as the sunbleached wheat and eyes as pink as a serenade. Pink eyes, the iris, all pinked. Albino you see. One of triplets. Strange those pink eyes that looked and looked of a knowing and suffered a sadness in the silent winters of her heart.

Ah sisters! But weren't we rare! Oh the three of us so dazzling pretty! Well, you two fronting it of course. They all loved you! But you loved me more than they could guess or ever hope to understand. You knew my beauty. You knew the tenderness at my heart. How mortal sensitive to their shunning, my strange pink eyes. You knew sisters - and you held my hands and cried with me. Never mind now. It was meant to be. As we know sisters. As we have always known. So have we always been. We myriad three. We, ones of the Myriad Three.

Yes, they came, the workmen. After the builders and the plasterers. Then came the carpenter to do up the stairs, create a second flight further down the extension. Came they down, the two of them, the maister and twain, to do a spot of decorating, decide how to dress their house. They didn't bring the childer. Kept it a mite secret. Like a surprise to be sprung on 'em. Something to delight 'em, whilst they was snook in their private boarding schools and little Jack was with the grandamum. Oh yes sincerely happy families here, we saw.

Colours decided, fabrics accorded, carpets delivered, furniture installed, furnishings draped and dressed, beds made and duvets fully co-ordinated. Each child chosen for a space and maither and faither - whey! out in the big bedroom above where the extension has stretched. All over that piece in the garden, do you see dears? Do you remember it? That little stretch of the garden where thaisen modernos have gone and planted their house-kit. Do you remember it? Of course you do! There's my little finger knuckle see, deep down, deep embedded in the clay. Yes and if I crook my little finger you see. Well, things start to happen, don't they sisters?

Delicious isn't this my sisters? This prospect so fair and advantageous. Oh to dabble in the world of the modernos, oh to dabble in the world of the modernos for a while. There's nothing new under the sun of course nor below the moon. But it's always nice to have things close at hand isn't it now sisters? Yes, always better to have things live and close to, wouldn't you say my dears?

Well and this old house has never seen such a dressing, such a painting and slicking. Spruced up and spruced up fine ain't it gals? Ketched their piece of paradise here to be sure girls, eh? So they think. Poor innocent modernos. So they think. Now how shall we begin my sisters? How shall we consecrate our offering? Something marvellous subtle or volcanic and thrash of lightning? What dreams of blood shall we dress the stairwell with? What hidden embers shall we stir into flame? What conflagration shall we conjur forth now ... from the depths of our foetid grave? Endless. Endless the possibilities ... of course and then it will've been and come real ... we watching, we three ... how oh ...

She came in as a child and a queen all in one. Breasts beginning to form. Legs like the length of a deer, all colt-charm and rosy. What do you think my melchion schwesters? A nightmare shot in the depths of her dream. A fluttering of wings and the jet-beady stare of a raven on high, the soundless glide of the screech owl. The brushing of her breasts against the hoary oak, a braw man-dryad's arm encircling her pretty maiden waist. The silken slip of erotica whispered awake in our hands. Oh the stirring of her sexual energy, the sensual levity of flesh! Yes, we like to get the ladies razzed, don't we sisters? Like to turn the lasses lewd. All unsettles the men so. Can't keep their minds from off of her thighs.

I can see it now. The beginning of the sleep-walking. Our voices calling her ... calling her. The start of her obsession with that patch of the garden, close by the extension wall. She won't be able to help herself, of course, little lamb. Somehow she shall be compelled. All in her unconscious-exposed in the depths of the night, in the dark of the night.

And they are bound to find out, to know later on. Just as they are cutting their teeth on this country-cake lark. It'll be maitrehausen no doubt. Searching up the local history. Finding time to indulge her interests. Down to the quaint local library she'll go. Look at all the moth-eaten books on the borderlands. Chance she will stray upon a story and turn a little squeamish when the lights are on low and the creaking of the boughs above the windows can sound like a gunshot snap when the wind rages wild and dashes infrequent agin recent embellished eaves.

And fearful for her little ones she will deliberate to tell them. Consult the maister, who'll agree with she. As they always do in the end.

But see, they never learn do they? Endless repetitions we see. Endless repetitions of mistakes they never learn from. No. Civilised they call themselves. And thaise, thaise folk inparticuler. There is a smugness about them ... we would like to rent asunder, to dash and toss aside, abide, abide ... teasing before, long, long before we get shut of 'un.

Slowly, oh so slowly to watch the disintegration of their oh so carefully worn masks, come about, come about. The facade slipping until the worms have taken hold - metaphoric, of course, eh sisters? Maggots that run riot 'ginst your bones, we could tell them couldn't we sisters? But there are those with maggots in the brain who will never see a dawn as its dying. Who will never catch that special frozen moment - the witness of something rare. Their noses are set too firm ap the grindstone. Aye and they naither lift their eyes agin in wonder at the fragile snowflake fall but muttersome and grumble-long, all of a clathered in their tincan motorised metal, beetling to the brow of an every hill. But never stopping. To witness the dew as it falls so soft and subtle upon the petals of a flower. Always repeating the same mistakes. Really, I wonder sisters, has the human race grown at all? Or is it kept in a contusion of

similarities; a rut that cannot be outgrown? What think we sisters three?

Maitrehausen, she will shield them but she will witness the disturbance of her little ones and chaff herself at the edges with a dry crumbling attrition of worry, that takes its toll, dulls the aim, as the years grow by.

Look childer! All of the pictures that spring to mind! The sound of a gunshot and scarlet roses blooming 'gainst the bedroom wall, ebony roses that smell of her perfume in the purple twilight when a girl's heart has wings and the ecstasy of her body is beginning. Oh, then the stormy night shall come, oh yes, the night of thundersome lightning, when she, young maiden daughter, walks into the night to dig in the mud with her nails, grasp the clods with her snowy little fingers, take the soil from out of our lungs.

And father and mother shall follow her into the night. And maitrehausen seeing her little one's deep-sleep state shall stop him from jolting her for fear the shock could kill her. And muttering she will be, the little fair melchion, with the snowy-white tips and red, flowing hair. "Must release you, get you out of there." Let you breathe a little. Yes my fair sweet melchion. Oh yes, through you we shall breathe again. And aghast before her father's eyes, he who was sworn to stand by, she shall squirm about in the mud, contours caressed by her moon-drift shift with the muck she'd dug up to the side. And the rain lashed down and stung her budding breasts, made her know she was alive.

Her faither shall cast his eyes down in shame, afraid of his daughter's beauty, afraid of her dazzling, fresh-life, allure, animal-child, woman-come in the rain-drenched thundersong. As the lightning flashes and the mother screams but will not abandon her little melchion flesh. Ah the chaos in our little maiden's mind, how it shall rivet and ravish them all! But subtle her mind we shall close to. Awaken she shall in the midst of her ruins, in the midst of her ravishing exposed to the elemental flesh of her ruins. Oh she shall be so bemused. "What are you standing there for? I was having a dream. It was a dream! Suddenly leaping up, the mud smeared and slimed from crest of her breast to her buttock that curved with a racehorse behind. Swear the father's guilt must look aside, afraid to meet her eye lest she should read some madness there. Aye and suddenly leaping forwards she shall and dig again as a remembrance do come to her. But sit back she shall, troubled, perplexed, all upset, and burst into tears, put her muddy fists to her brown-amber eye. And maither shall comfort, attempt to fathom, and she shall speak of her dreams and they shall know us. Aye they shall know us. Perhaps. For a little while.

But they shall not know. They shall not know just like all the others, the point of no-return. The fools will hang around until the viper from the Dark Heart of her nest is drawn. They will wait until Winter's iron claw has locked them, hot stock and barrel. Frozen them into a purpose all its own. Pitiless, the ice-time see lads. Pitiless. When the North winds do blow and the cold cannot be kept off for the harvest has failed in successive years. Now there's a winter for them to remember eh sisters?

Spring was sweet for a while til the soil choked us. Oh well! Those halcyon days! How many Mal? How many our Azanagelle? Pah! You could count them on the fingers of one hand, I'll be bound, wain't it not so we sisters three? Still.

Our bitterness was dredged and mulled long before the forests took root, before an infinity of fossils melted into glutinous oil. Flesh will come and flesh will cease. Mulch down. We know about the mulching down don't we sisters? The steady rotting of the carcass. The gradual falling of the meat from the bone, just a wisp of skin left, like a strand of lace holding a remnant of my sword arm, unwilling to let go. Ah! I could have known such fervour! Yes, we were all so fervent sisters, waim't it not so?

But nothing is fixed. There are many, many ways to slow, quick quick, slow. There are a very many days to dance in a sun-drunk summer ho yet, I'm sure, couldn't we say, we sisters three? Infinite. The choices. Perhaps we could snatch the little one to our bosoms, slash their hearts right out of their feathers. Cripple 'em and crush 'em in one fell swoop. He heard voices see. From underneath the surface of the water, from the bottom of the pond in the middle of those woods, voices calling him in ... come to no harm ... but the weed will have choked him, somehow kept him down, little sign of any struggle. Oh how to wither a mother's heart! Oh we know that well, don't we our lasses?

But say hey. We waim't be saa hasty shall we our lasses? Never of it - it's not our style. Slowly oh ever so slowly to the simmer til the boil eh sisters? Eh meine schwestern? Oh surely surely we shall tease them for a while, ketch 'um playing. Join the games, won't we sisters? We ice-queens three turned frosty glare of crimson come the witching hour.

It could all unravel so slowly, so deliciously inexorable, as they shall come to know. When the chips are down. When the cards are on the table, they will find the dice are loaded. Oh yes, won't they just sisters? It'll be Alex is in his bedroom again. At the computer again, as the web-sites entangle him in his own private hell and his world shatters. Splits apart, turns inside out. His dreamy regime of green, white and

blue, he will discover is owned by you know who! No, no mention of names, oh no names. Don't look too long into the centre of the swastika my son or it'll spin you whether or no you care to go. Don't dredge up those mouldy old details. Why ponder young warrior? When you are designed to get out and do! Join a club. Scour the park. Go scaffolding. Bunji jumping. Stock shelves in the supermarkets. Earn a wage! But not for he - no ho - 'cos daddy will indulge and daddy will provide, until the young dog has bitten the age-old hand which by its comfortable emersions would tame, the untamed wild.

The hawk! The hawk! Listen loves, hear how the buzzards call, keening, plaintive, wild on the wings of All Beyond. Yes, on the wings of All Beyond.

Ever so quiet and cosy 'ent it Mal? Ever so comfortable warm and cossetting bain't it be my one, my own Azanagelle?

Perhaps we'll settle us to sleep now. Drift as the homesters get themselves feet found. Eh, meine schwestern? Eh, my sisters? Shall we let them unravel a spiral of happiness into the summer-long dawn? Look dear, how the garden has taken. The bluebells, aren't they charming? The maiden of brown and amber bends down to study, to caress. Aaah, so sweet that gentle caress!

Aaah! That she should know pain. But mother's hearts were made to bleed don't you know? Beneath the balmy summer song, beneath the days so hot and long, with all the green growth fecund rich - how shall they know that Winter's Heart can wither so?

And like pearly ribbons the moonlight at times across the dew-covered lawn. Primroses border to the doorway and honeysuckle has been tended to frame the entrance portal. A lightness. And how oh, all seems so rich and mellow as autumn fruits begin to bronze and rosy-russet in the fermenting mists that linger round the hedgerows; a scarf trailed across the dour expanse of the pines, where once the sturdy oak had shed its giant limbs to foster the myriad life-form. Where once the oaks had stood, the pine forests add an inflection of sterility into the twilight air. The Land. This Land. Once so rich.

Now so taken up somehow. Taken up. Cut up and squashed down and racked around and ruined. Still. Secrets run deep. Secrets run very deep. The inner loam is rich. Ready for the fray. Ready to succour its soil upon blood. Steadily consume the concrete. Longing for it, aren't we my dears? Oh yes. The carnage days. Get out my butcher's apron and chopping blade. Plenty of heads to chop, I'll be bound, eh sisters? Eh, my dark majesties, draped in your stoles of snow, we, she, all three of us are part of. But for nigh the storm is gentled, nibbling merely at the edges.

Oh dark, dark, bitter dark and poisonous is the cud that we do chew upon. Where? There! At sacred root, the filthy worm has found its hole and wriggled in its canker. Oh the knowledge of poison is a subtle art, subtle as they come.

We know our trade better than well. We know how a nuance can continue domino effect. Oh yes. We can make plenty a house of cards come down and tumble, they shall see. Oh yes. We know how a shadow can appal. We know how misery can seep cold in, to ice the marrow of the bone. Like an icicle our hearts. Oh foolish children. We could freeze your souls at a glance. Trickle ice til you rigor mortised. Hapless ones who have wandered from the fray to find the battle come to roost beneath the ivory towers of your protection. Naughty e-mail @ com.w.dot dash. house on the hill. Where the sunwheel spun an electric screen, where a wheel of scythes rotated round, whirling him off to a future he could never have forseen.

House of cards, they shall see. Oh this mortal coil, how it shuffles off, shuffles off ... how about explosions of wrath to see it on its way! How about the shadow of a crow's claw, the razor beak against the candlelit wall in the pantry. Power cut and all lights out except the light of living flame. Little did they know - could never forsee the nightmares that would come to pace and prowl the storm-brewed night, to clatter at the door and crack inside the bedroom and whisper a round of lintels of stone through the crevices in the ghostly doorways where memories unfurl a victim's psyche sprawling and into the screaming void.

In the whirling midnights of your mind.

Lest we forget.

Cunning how it works. The blitzkrieg. The zeitgeist.

See there in the shadows the outline of a raven's wing, the beak of the hooded crow. Up on the hillside where the carrion will gather.

Gone up in smoke all of it, you see. Gone up the swanny.

House of cards come tumbling, they shall see, oh yes.

Oh yes, meine schwartze lieben.

House of cards completely.

Fragile as lattice of cobweb-lace bedecked with the dew of the morn
where above 'un does circle a call:
aye, listen Mal, our Azanagelle, can you hear it? Oh how it thrills!
Deeper than memory song, like a scar that will always belong, the expanse of horizons ...
aye, comes the lance of the sound on the air
and the keening edge of the buzzard's cry
on high in the wilderness winds
above where the black hills do roam ...
aye, keening edge of the buzzard's cry
on high
in the wilderness winds ...

- Order of Nine Angles -

Guide to Black Magick

According to traditional Satanism, magick may be divided into three forms: external magick, internal magick and aeonic magick.

External Magick

This is results magick or sorcery, and it is the magick of the Initiate and External Adept. It itself exists in two forms: ceremonial and hermetic.

Ceremonial is ritual magick - ceremonies and rites where more than two individuals are involved.

Ceremonial magick can be done for basically two reasons: to create/draw down and then direct magickal energy for a specific aim (e.g. cursing), or to represent through words and symbolism the myths/knowledge of a particular tradition or cultus. Sometimes, however, the energy generated by a symbolic rite can be directed to a specific end – as in the Black Mass.

Hermetic rituals usually involve one or two individuals ('sex magick' is usually hermetic) and are generally done extempore. They require those undertaking them to possess or be capable of developing during the ritual, an empathy with the forces/energies employed, as well as possessing the necessary desire to direct the forces/energies. In contradistinction, ceremonial rituals are usually written down and when performed a set text is followed, with only minor variations to allow for the emotion of the moment.

Internal Magick

This is when magickal techniques (e.g. Grade Rituals) are used to alter the consciousness of an individual. The rites of internal magick 'open the gates' between the causal and the acausal, and change the perception from 'ego' consciousness to the 'self' and what is beyond. In the Jungian sense, internal magick produces 'individuation', and leads to Adepthood.

The main rites of internal magick are the hermetic workings associated with the spheres and pathways of the septenary Tree of Wyrð, and the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept which involves the individual living in isolation for at least three months.

It is one of the main functions of established Orders and Temples to prepare their members for internal magick and offer guidance along the way.

Aeonic Magick

This is the magick of the Master, the Mistress of Earth and the Magus, and its basis is an understanding of those forces which influence large numbers of people over long periods of time. On one level, aeonic magick is the alteration/ distortion of such forces; on another, it is the 'creation' of new energies and their dispersion over the Earth to change conscious evolution. In one sense, this is the 'blackest' magick of all.

Satanism, as a way of magick, has no seasonal rites, no servitude or submission to any deity and no fear. There are thus in Satanic rites no defensive circles or measures of any kind: only an exultation in the forces of the rite, a prideful possession and mastery.

Rituals are often done at the time of the full moon because it helps one to see when the ritual is done outdoors and because it gives atmosphere to the rite. Sometimes, rites are conducted on or around the seasonal changes - solstice and equinox - because there is magickal energy present then (due to Earth's changes) and this energy can be harnessed. The same applies to planetary workings - the rising and setting of planets (astronomically calculated for the horizon of the observer - and not using the fraudulent 'planetary' tables given in most books). Such planetary energies exist - but are generally small, and have little effect on rituals done correctly. Most Occultists delude themselves about the nature and extent of these energies (this is particularly true of the Moon) - to become sensitive to them is difficult in our shielded, technological society. Generally, only Adepts (and the naturally gifted) possess the required empathy.

However, this said, the full moon is rightly associated with 'lunacy' and 'demonic' possession - as any one who has worked nights at Mental Hospitals will testify. This power can also be harnessed during a ritual.

Celebratory rites in traditional Satanism are of two kinds - 1) those that express the energies of Satanism - e.g. the Black Mass, Ceremony of Recalling – and whose performance thus distorts the currents of the Nazarenes and the Old Aeon; and 2) those which create new energies appropriate to the Satanic age of fire to come - e.g. invocations to the 'Dark Gods'.

The Black Mass is still celebrated simply because the Nazarenes (and their allies) are still powerful and still polluting us with their filth. It is still the main ceremonial rite performed on a regular basis by organized Temples, and - like all ceremonial rituals its performance gives identity to the Temple, strengthening the magickal and personal ties of the members as well as furthering the work of the Prince of Darkness because it is a rite of Black Magick.

The mysteries of the Nine Angles form an important aspect of genuine Black Magick. On the physical level, the nine represent energy vibrations - for according to tradition, a crystal shaped like a tetrahedron responds to voice vibration of the correct pitch and intensity. In simple terms, the crystal amplifies the power of thought and produces magickal change. Quartz gives the best results, although spinel may be used. The tetrahedron shape has to be created from the natural material by a skilled operator.

On another level, the nine symbolize (that is, re-present) the progression of Aeons and thus the Aeon energies. The representation is that of the nine combinations of the three alchemical substances ((~) ~ GC~) etc.) over the seven fundamental levels, these levels being the spheres of the septenary 'Tree of Wyrd'. The Star Game is a physical representation of these symbols - the seven boards are the spheres, and the pieces are the alchemical variations. (It should be noted that the nine main variations spread over the seven spheres also represent an individual - their consciousness, life and wyrd.) Thus the magick or 'sorcery' of the Star Game - an imitation (magickally done) of an Aeon or individual whose change (the moves of the Star Game) is manipulated by the magickian (the 'player' of the Game). The Star Game has two sets of twenty-seven pieces - one set white, the other black, representing the two aspects of cosmic Change (or the causal and acausal). These pieces are spread over the seven boards.

The Nine Angles also symbolize the seven plus two gates (or spheres) that join our causal universe with the acausal (or 'magickal') universe. The seven are the spheres of the Tree of Wyrd (zones of magickal energy), and the other two are the Abyss - where the causal and acausal meet in temporary stasis - and the acausal itself, which is beyond even the Tree. The Abyss, in the septenary system, lies between the spheres of Sun and Mars, and its crossing is the ordeal of the Adept and the genesis of the Master/Mistress of Earth. It signifies the beginning of acausal perception.

The other important form of Black Magick is to do with self-survival after death. This can be done in two ways, depending on the aim of the operator. The first is transference of the essence of self-hood, near the moment of physical death, into another physical body, ensuring thus the continuation of existence on the physical level. The second in passing the acausal Gate - creating an existence entirely in the acausal dimensions.

The first involves finding a suitable body to inhabit; the second has some resemblance to the creation of the 'diamond body' in some of the esoteric schools of Taoism and it is this form which is generally undertaken by the Adept. The first is sometimes done as a temporary measure or if the wyrd of the individual compels completion of some task on the physical.

The process of the first involves the creation of a strong 'astral self' - via chant and visualization and strengthened through acts of magick over a period of time, sometimes using a crystal tetrahedron to ensure the right amount of magickal energy. Thus an 'astral double' is created - and this energy is most usually stored in a crystal until the time for transfer. Meanwhile, a donor should have been found - a good, healthy specimen. The psyche of this donor is then infiltrated through both astral and physical contact. The actual transfer occurs during a ritual with both donor and operator present (the former may be hypnotized or drugged or otherwise enticed) - consciousness being transferred to the 'double' which then ousts the weakened psyche of the donor.

The second form is actually the next stage of conscious evolution - and the goal of the Adept.

What it is important to realize about traditional Satanism is what is meant by 'Satan'. Traditional Satanists regard Satan as not simply a symbol of self consciousness, but rather as a representative of those supra-personal forces beyond the individual psyche.

To see 'Satan' as simply a self symbol - as two recent 'satanic' groups do - is, firstly, to be self-deluded about the nature of cosmic forces, and second, to make (or attempt to make) Black Magick tame and safe. To deal with greater forces is to court danger - psychologically and physically. Traditional Satanists see this danger as a means: the strong survive and the weak perish; this simply being a reflection of genuine Satanist philosophy rather than the tame view spewed forth by the imitation and toy 'satanists' who abound today.

Satan - in traditional Satanism - is never represented pictorially, and apprehension of the physical or causal manifestation of our Prince is an experience that each Satanic novice achieves for themselves by undertaking rites of Black Magick according to the dark tradition. This apprehension may or may not

change when the new Master or Mistress of Earth is born via the ordeal of the Abyss, and it is up to each and every Adept to undergo this experience since the reality cannot be taught - only experienced in the primal Chaos that is the Abyss. What pictorial representations that are used, are those of the forms sometimes chosen by the Shape-Changer himself, for the Prince of Darkness must have his fun with feeble mortals.

It is important to realize also that the name 'Satan' is not his real name it is a convenient epithet, used because it expresses part of his nature. There is, in fact, no real 'name' as we understand names - only perhaps a sound vibration (which cannot really be written down) which summons him to our consciousness and our world. In a sense which few people will understand, Satan is the essence of the acausal: the cosmic force of Chaos whose intrusion into our causal dimensions disrupts the entropy that linear time produces. Our species requires and has required symbols to enable apprehension and evolution - and this is true also of the Initiate (and to a lesser extent of the Adept) who belong to that lower order. The Abyss destroys - or creates a new species, a new 'mind' capable of functioning on levels not normally accessible to those of the lower order. And the most potent symbol of certain cosmic forces has been, and still is, Satan.

In reality, Satan (who has a secret or 'genuine' name known to all Initiates) concerns Himself generally only with Aeonick magick - the changing of this world. Through him, the Masters and Mistresses work Internal Magick, and through their Orders, Initiates undertake rites of External Magick, to the glory of His name.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Magick With Tears
Coire Riabhaich, ONA (c. 1989)

A common misconception made by those few who follow the Seven-fold Sinister Way, is that it will, somehow, make their lives easier i.e. having drawn certain forces to them, they believe via 'satanic mastery' to avoid Trauma City. The lonely realization that this is not so, is often enough to make the Initiate (or even in some cases, Adept) renounce their magickal quest altogether. This can occur for two reasons - 1) the individual becomes possessed and then disillusioned with a 'satanic role' (roles are useful only if understood as being simply a means to an end) and 2) via this realization, Sinister energies are revealed in a far more potent form than the playing of a role could invoke (these energies are, however, the culmination of that role). Quite simply Satanism is not an escape from, but the partaking in life. The challenge of living life as a self contained entity, creating a lifestyle that intuitively follows the path of individual Destiny (by this process Destiny becomes, gradually, consciously apparent) is just too disturbing for the majority of the human race to accept. So the failures crawl back to mediocrity, absolved of taking responsibility for their own lives. Mental and physical degeneracy follows as a way of dulling the guilt that their new/old lifestyle encourages within them. For those who remain on their quest, it is the rising to the challenge of the Sinister Way which creates the Adept and the stage(s) beyond. And this requires an understanding of what forces are in play, and how they all contribute towards self evolution.

It is this understanding which prevents such experiences from becoming detrimental to progression. Trauma will never be eliminated by any magickal system. For those who are working prior to Adeptship, it is wise to see how trauma actually feeds (amongst other things) creativity, and how this creativity would diminish if a comfortable reliance - materially and psychically – upon another individual was established.

This situation would reduce the obstacles that are borne from self reliance; those obstacles being catalysts of an individual's creative expression. One only has to consider the uninspired content of the products of most artists once they are 'patronised'. Life becomes too easy. This situation in itself produces conflict but many fail to understand this and descend into a pit of self abuse. This forms the misconception of 'the suffering artist'. Suffering must be understood for therein lies wisdom. This requires a type of honesty of which most lack the courage to express. To be a victim or martyr to suffering will slow down, reverse and destroy the process of self evolution. Why do so many fail to understand this obvious fact?

None of this necessarily means that an individual should deliberately destroy and create situations - unless this was seen as being beneficial at the time. Such occurrences arise naturally by virtue of living with self honesty and striving towards self excellence. Every act will be spontaneous and 'true' to one's Destiny.

To achieve the highest success possible should always be totally desirable, but the individual should arrive at their own concept of success and not that of the general consensus.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Magickal Mastery - A Novice's Guide
(From Fenrir no. 6, yf 100)
ONA

The essence of achieving success in both ceremonial and hermetic rituals is to restrict the aim of the ritual to one, very specific, aim and to find before the ritual a) a simple visualization of this aim; b) a phrase (which may be chanted/vibrated) which captures the aim in a few words. This phrase can itself be written down (e.g. on parchment and in a secret code of your own devising or in one of the well-known 'Occult' scripts) and ceremonially burned during the ritual. This aim must then become your desire - and a ritual is a means whereby this desire may be achieved. It is essential, of course, for this desire to be strong, and the techniques of magick are simply a means whereby this desire can be strengthened and directed. The easiest technique to use and master is frenzy. This is when you gradually work yourself up to a height of emotion and excitement - and the ritual form is a means to aid this, providing a setting in both time and space. In a ceremonial ritual, for example, you should use the set texts (such as the Satanic 'Our Father' or the Invokation to Baphomet) as a means of generating from within yourself the necessary emotion, saying the words forcefully and with drama. If you are conducting a ritual with others present, get them into the right frame of mind beforehand as this helps to generate from them a certain amount of magickal energy - you might, for instance, keep them in a dark room for about half an hour before the start of the ritual. It is essential for you to stage-manage the ritual, making it a memorable event. The whole ritual from beginning to end should be emotive. To achieve and sustain such emotion and drama takes practice. A good magickian will 'play to' his congregation like a good actor in a theatre does - ceremonial magick has always been a dramatic Art. The adept sorcerer (or sorceress) will also sometimes invoke extempore in ceremonial rituals, and for this some chants should be memorized beforehand: to be used as and when the occasion demands. Rituals - both ceremonial and hermetic - demand energy, and you are the spark which ignites the Promethean fire. To generate this spark requires effort, both physical and mental, and you should at the end of any ritual feel elated but tired: be, in fact, almost on the edge of exhaustion. If you are not, the ritual is unlikely to be successful. This is one of the most important things to remember. It is no good just saying the words, doing a bit of chanting or waving implements about: you must be emotional. You must literally drive yourself almost to the point of possession, of divine/diabolic madness but always with your desire (i.e. the aim of the ritual) firmly before you, stopping just short of total abandonment. You must be prepared to dance, leap, laugh, cry and shout - but must be capable of changing abruptly: cultivating the dramatic silence and stare. In most ceremonial rituals it is one of the tasks of the congregation to abandon themselves - to the dance their lusts and so on but you, as ceremonial master/mistress, cannot since you must direct the energies unleashed. There is a balance in any ritual which only experience teaches, and mastery involves undertaking rituals often in order to develop the skills required. Rituals work through energy: this energy is directed via visualization and chant/vibration through your own desire. That is, the living ritual is the channel or 'Gate' which allows a flow of acausal energy into the causal ('everyday') universe. This energy re-orders the causal - that is, produces changes. One of the first priorities of any aspiring sorcerer should be to acquire and furnish an area as a Temple - and/or find a suitable isolated location outdoors. Temple furnishings should be simple, and space must be left for movement. Be creative and individual about creating the right atmosphere in the Temple - for example, a 'plasma ball' in a candle-lit Temple is more impressive than a boring collection of old bones or a skull. Do not use symbols or designs which you yourself do not understand/know the meaning of and keep to one tradition. For example, a genuine, traditional Satanist would never use any qabalistic symbolism or statues/implements/sigils from dead Aeons (e.g. Egyptian, Sumerian). Instead, there would be septenary and Dark Gods symbolism (for which see 'Codex Saerus' and 'Naos - A Guide to Sinister hermetic Magick').

This may seem pedantic, but it is essential for you to feel part of a living, exclusive tradition - someone party to secret knowledge which outsiders do not possess nor understand if shown. For successful magick, being exclusive means added power and charisma. Develop your chanting and vibrating ability by regular practice, and do not be afraid of using Latin chants. They are not used simply because few understand the language - but because of all languages,

Latin lends itself best to being chanted according to the principles of esoteric chant (qv. 'Naos'). It was also the language used in the traditional Black Mass, and a few untranslated chants have survived the centuries. These chants should be among those memorized to be used extempore.

Chant Examples:

*Veni, omnipotens aeterne diabolus!

*Ad Satanas qui laetificat juventutem meam.

Pone, Diabolus, custodiam!

*Aperiat terra, et germinet Abatu.

*Caligo terrae scinitur

Percussa solis spiculo

Dum Lucifer ex stella nascitur

In fedei diluculo

Rebusque jam color

Redit Partu nitentis sideris.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Petriochor

- 1) Prepare an area of soil at least three feet square. This must be kept free of plants and should ideally be exposed to the sun for at least part of the day, and unshaded by trees etc. If possible no pesticides, fertilizers etc should be present, but it should also have a high organic content from previous cultivation.
- 2) Collect some of this soil at a specific time between the last full Moon in May and the full Moon following the Solstice. This time depends on the weather, but is always in the hour before dawn. The time is right when following a period of warm, dry weather which has lasted for at least seven days, there is rain in the hours before dawn. This rain should ideally be a light drizzle.
- 3) The soil should be collected and placed immediately in an airtight container. As soon as possible it should be transferred to a suitable receptacle connected to distillation equipment, and a low heat applied for a period of time which only practical experiment can show. The "essence" collected is the basis of the incense.
- 4) Then make up as a normal perfume/oil using a natural base, eg. sweet almond oil, into which the "essence" is infused/mixed.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Satanism

A Basic Introduction For Prospective Adherents
Anton Long, ONA. 1992eh. Revision c. 1998eh.

Introduction'

This present work aims to provide an introduction to genuine Satanism for those interested in this particular Occult way.

It is written by someone who has been involved in Satanism for a quarter of a century and who now has the honour of being the Grand Master representing traditional Satanists. The work is honest and revealing and therefore informative, and will go some way to demolishing the myths prevalent regarding Satanism. Because of its honest and revealing nature, it will also undermine the many pseudo-Satanists who have little or no understanding of what real Satanism is all about.

In genuine Satanism, there are rituals of an Occult kind, as there is an exultation in the carnal. There is also real evil - dark and dangerous deeds: a living of life to the fullest extent. All of these things - and much more - will be explained.

I - The Satanic Game

Satanism is understood by its genuine adherents as a particular Occult way or method. That is, it is a specific path or way toward a specific goal, the following of which involves a particular way of living. The specific path is a dark, sinister, or 'Left Hand Path' one, and the specific goal is the creation of a new type of individual. On a more general level, Satanism is concerned with changing our evolution and the societies we live in - creating, in fact a new human species and a civilization appropriate to the new type of human being. Satanism, however, is often regarded by its opponents or the mis-informed, as being one or more of the following: (a) worship of the Devil/Satan; (b) a religious cult which practices Black Magick; (c) an inversion of the Nazarene religion and its rites; (d) a sect which preaches and practices perversions and sexual license. Further - and also incorrectly - the figure of Satan Himself is commonly held to derive from the religion described in the Hebrew 'Old Testament', with the word "Satan" being regarded as derived from the Hebrew word for "accuser". In fact, the Hebrew word is itself derived from another word - an ancient Greek one. This Greek word - an is - that is, 'an accusation', [See, for example, its use by Aeschylus - aitia ekho.] and also 'cause' or 'foundation' or 'origin' of some-thing. In essence, Satan as a word represents (a) the prime cause of change, of *human* evolution; (b) 'Adversary' in the sense of opposing norm, the accepted, and this sense is still retained in the usage of 'Devil' (e.g. Devil's Advocate). The word 'Devil' is derived from the Greek word - - via the Latin "diabolus". The figure of Satan is thus seen to be not a Hebrew invention, as hitherto supposed, but in fact a representation of opposition, of Heresy: and a symbol of creative change. From opposition there is a synthesis - the process of dialectical change which governs evolution.

Fundamentally, Satanism is opposed to the meekness of conventional religion. Conventional religion (invariably Occidental) means submission - to a deity and its 'appointed' authority/church, or to some dogma derived from the words of some 'prophet'/saviour. Conventional religion also means a certain way of 'viewing the world' - a certain outlook. The Occidental religious way is the way of dogma, of revelation, and ultimately, of fear - there is concern with reward and retribution; with concepts of guilt and sin. There is and must be *faith* - faith comes before personal wisdom derived from direct experience of living.

The way of Satanism is the total opposite of this - it is the way of liberation, internally and externally. There is a desire to *know* based on personal experience. There is a desire to be proud - to exult and revel in life and so fulfill the possibilities that life offers. In other words, there is an exploration of frontiers - an extending of those frontiers. There is a desire to excel, to achieve, to set the standards for others to follow rather than follow the standards set by someone else. This, of course, is not easy - it requires a certain type of person: someone imbued with *spirit*, with an urge to conquer and defy. Someone with *character*.

Thus, because of 'human nature', Satanism in the past has been only suited to a minority - those few who can really defy and go against accepted norms. For it has been a fundamental principle of genuine Satanism that each individual Satanist finds his or her own limits and thus lives, and if necessary dies, by their own morality or ethics. That is, a Satanist accepts no restrictions other than those they impose on themselves. They accept that it is they and only they who can find answers to their questions - and that these answers are derived from direct personal experience of living at the very edge. They cannot be derived from faith, from dogma, from someone else's 'teaching' - or from some theory propounded by some organization, group, 'Temple, whatever.

This means that Satanists are amoral in the conventional sense: there is not, never has been and never can be, any such thing as "Satanic ethics" or a "Satanic authority" which individual Satanists must be subservient to - for such things are contrary to genuine Satanism; they are contrary to the fundamental, personal aim of Satanism - the creation of a more evolved, more highly developed *individual*. Satanism - on the personal level - is an individualized quest, involving individuals striving to experience their own limits and go beyond those limits. Satanism applies the principle of evolution to human practice - the strong survive and win through, while the weak fail or perish. However, this does not mean what most people assume it to mean - a license for anarchic self-indulgence and a wallowing in lust/depravity/excess and so on. A Satanist has a goal - an ulterior motive beyond the satisfaction of their own ego and beyond indulging in and giving way to, of unconscious impulses. This goal is to excel - to go beyond what one is. To do this requires a self-mastery, a real self-discipline. Self-mastery and self-discipline can only be acquired by self-experience: by experience of real life. A Satanist desires to evolve - and this evolution this requires resolve and thus a certain strength of character. What a genuine Satanist does, in real-life or in the learning experiences that are magickal/Occult rituals, is to explore - to find the limits of themselves and the world; they experience and so grow, and so fulfill their latent, diabolical potential. Everything is a means to this - rituals, other people, society itself. Because they have an ulterior motive, a known goal, there is *perspective* - an understanding beyond the impulse/feelings/desires of the moment or moments of a particular experience. In brief, there is - or there developed - real insight, a real judgment and a real self-awareness and understanding. Naturally, this is difficult - and often dangerous. The failures become trapped in - or never go beyond - the moment and the desires/impulses/feelings of the moment. In simple terms, the failures, the pseudo-Satanists wallow in their 'dark side' and the 'dark side' of nature/society, without either understanding it, controlling it or transcending it. Fundamentally, a Satanist knows and understands where they are going and what they are doing/why they are doing it. The failures, the pseudos, are trapped by the acts or acts or experience. The Satanist is strong, proud, defiant and *in control* of the experience and themselves; the failures, the pseudos are in thrall to their feelings/emotions/desires (both conscious and unconscious) and thus are without any real self-insight. The way of Satanism is not easy - the methods, experiences and so on which are necessary and which the Satanist uses to obtain their goal are risky and dangerous. It is easy to fail, get caught or whatever. There is nothing - and no one - to aid the Satanist in his/her quest. There is nothing to make it easier, less difficult, less dangerous. There is only his/her determination, and the learning from experience: the gradual development of character from experience. Only thus is there a real, a genuine, evolution of the individual. Anything less is mere *pose* - an affectation.

The way of Satanism - as exemplified by genuine Satanic organizations - sets forth various learning experiences, reveal various esoteric techniques, and offers an esoteric or 'initiated' insight into life, individuals and the cosmos itself. This way is a practical one - a way of living - and in the early stages a part of this involves magickal practices and rituals. These specific experiences develop certain esoteric skills - and thus enable a learning of 'forbidden' Arts. They also enable indulgence in worldly pleasures - carnal, material and otherwise. But these experiences - and the pleasures which can and do arise from them - are not a fetish as they are not of a religious nature. They are merely means - to be used, learned from, mastered and then transcended. For the novice Satanist always moves on - to new experiences, new challenges, and thus new insights. For most, the overtly Occult aspects - involving participating in magickal rites and running a group/Temple - lasts a few years. Beyond this, they are left behind - the goals having been achieved. That is, the Satanist has achieved the goals of a Satanic novice and moves further along the path, becoming a Satanic Adept. There is then, for the new Satanic Adept, an involvement with other Satanic practices in order to further develop the character and abilities of the Satanist - practices which enable the Satanist to express the dark side of existence by their acts and way of living, and which thus contribute to creative change.

Some of these Satanic practices are, viewed conventionally, "evil" and some are, or may be construed to be in a particular society, "illegal".. They are consciously chosen by the Satanist to develop themselves and to thus aid the achievement of their ultimate goal - and chosen so to aid what is known as the 'sinister dialectic of history'. Such practices aid the unique Destiny which the Satanist wishes to achieve, for each Satanist desires to fulfill their existence in a unique way. They wish to make their mark on the world - to achieve something with their lives. They wish to change things, or aid change, and they desire their own lives to have some effect:

In consequence, some of the deeds a Satanic Adept may consciously decide undertake may be disruptive; some may involve 'culling' [ie. removing human dross or those who oppose the Destiny of the Satanist wishes to achieve]; some may involve direct action of a kind deemed by some society to be 'terrorist'. What is important about what is chosen and done is that (a) it aids or fulfills the Destiny of the Satanist so choosing and acting; and/or (b) it aids Satanism in general - i.e. it helps to fulfill the "sinister dialectic of history". There are no other considerations - ethical, moral, religious or whatever. The Satanic Adept uses the knowledge and insights they have gained from their Satanic noviciate - from past experiences - to make such choices for themselves. An established Satanic organization/Order/group only *guides* its members toward experiences, and it provides them with esoteric

knowledge and techniques which they can use. The onus is on the individual - to experience, the participate, *to make their own decisions in their own time* and so learn, quite often by making mistakes.

The **sinister dialectic of history** is the name used to describe Satanic strategy. The Training and guidance of individual Satanists by an established Satanic group/Order/organization or Master/Lady master, is a *tactic* used to achieve the strategic goal. The aim of this strategy is to change evolution - that is, to change the evolution of our species, and thus the cosmos itself, by interaction between the two. This evolution is toward 'the sinister' - toward greater diversity, greater individuality and creativity. This involves 'presencing' the sinister, or the 'dark forces' on Earth, in societies and in individuals. It involves re-structuring of 'society' over long periods of time. Essentially, the aim is to create a new human species by developing the potential that is already latent within us as individuals. Expressed simply, it means letting the human species develop full maturity - at present the vast majority are still immature children, in thrall to unconscious desires and impulses and with little or no self-mastery and wisdom. And they are kept that way by the restraints, the impositions and the control 'societies' and religion and other forms (such as politics and 'ethics') impose and have imposed on them.

In effect, this means the majority becoming not only 'Adepts' but also achieving/attaining the knowledge and wisdom and strength of character possessed by genuine Masters/Lady Masters. *It means the majority attaining and going beyond what has been described as 'individuation'*. Satanists believe that this change - this evolution - can only be brought about via practical means: by a practical synthesis of sinister/light

The archetype for this change is Satan - the Adversary, the Heretic, the Proud One who refuses to bow down before some 'god'; who refuses to accept subservience and who is unsatisfied with the answers, the solutions, of others. To achieve this change there has to be a learning - a gradual increase in the number of genuine Adepts, that is, of those free of restraining opposites. There has to be an increase in those who adhere to the creative energy that creates all life and which engenders its change and evolution and which is thus the essence of existence itself.

Each Satanist, by living Satanically, aids the dialectic and thus aids the evolutionary change. They learn to play at being god - fulfilling their existence. As for the rest - they can participate, and so learn and evolve; or they can be used, by Satanists, to effect changes greater than themselves.

There are no limitations unless we create them - and if others create them, they are there to be transcended. To exult in excellence is the name of the only game worth seriously playing: the Satanic one.

II - Some Questions Answered

Is Satanism simply Devil-Worship?

The term 'devil-worship' is used in a number of ways - often to describe 'Black Magick' and the alleged practices of 'Satanists': e.g. sexual rituals, animal sacrifice. What is usually described by this term are the activities of Occult dabblers who have no knowledge of real Satanism, and who play at being Satanists - invoking The Devil and so on. Often, the term 'Devil-worship' is used in the moral sense to describe 'perverted' behaviour in an Occult setting. In the literal sense, Devil-worship means a religious worship of the Devil. In all the above senses, Satanism is not 'devil-worship': Satanists do not worship anything, and the practices and rites of Satanism are quite different from the popular 'media' image/model.

While some of the rites involve various Occult forms - robes, a Temple and so on - most are removed from such associations. The real magick of a Satanist takes place through their way of living - what they do and achieve in real life and situations, by trying to fulfill their Destiny and aid the sinister dialectic. They live Satanically, rather than play Occult games. Those that do have an outward Occult or ritualized form, are only a learning, a stage for the Satanic novice - the mere beginnings of their Satanic life. [The ceremonial rituals are given in 'The Black book of Satan'. They include The Black Mass, the Initiation Ceremony and The Death Ritual.]

But what of The Devil? Or Satan? Does He really exist? And, if so, do you respect Him?

He exists, but not in the way most believe: e.g. a horned figure with cloven feet. Rather, He is not bound by our everyday spatial and temporal dimensions, but exists instead in what esoteric tradition calls 'the acausal'. We apprehend the acausal mostly in an archetypal way - i.e. we impose an image upon its acausal and non-spatial structure. The 'conventional' descriptions of the Devil or Satan are basically childish Nazarene images. The reality is far more terrifying and evil - when viewed conventionally, of course! Further, terms like 'respect' depend on the opposites inherent in an un-initiated view. In reality, there is only a working with the acausal energies or forces or 'entities' as those things are: a becoming-like the Devil; an identity-with Him, if you wish. And this is an extension of one's own being or existence, rather than a negation, a submergence. Expressed simply, one becomes one with Satan, and in the early stages strives to be like Him.

Does Satanism involve human sacrifice?

Sometimes a Satanist may undertake a culling - either during a magickal ritual or in the real world (e.g. by assassination, manipulating someone to do the deed). Whether or not this is done depends on the Destiny of the individual Satanist - on whether a particular person or persons need removing in order for that Destiny to be attained. However, all victims for such removal must be suitable - that is, they will be judged as worthless, dross: or be suitable because their removal will aid the sinister dialectic. They, of course, will be judged and found suitable, Satanically. In practice, this means that once someone has been judged to be worthless (in terms of their character and deeds) or otherwise found to be suitable for sacrifice, they will be tested in order to confirm this judgment/suitability. The tests give them a sporting chance. Two or three tests are usually conducted, without the victim's knowledge. Only if they fail these tests will a culling be undertaken, for the glory of Satanism in general. The "raison d'etre" for Satanic culling, is some people are worthless, a liability to evolution, and their removal is healthy: it aids the human stock. And thus helps to achieve Satanic goals. Further, those chosen really choose themselves, by their deeds - they reveal their worthless character or their suitability by what they do, or do not do, in real life. Thus, a culling is akin to an act of 'natural justice', a restoration of the creative imperative.

But surely this 'culling' as you call it, is a criminal act?

The 'Law' is an accumulation of tireless attempts by the mediocre majority to prevent the creative few turning life into a succession of ecstasies. Or, less poetically, it is an attempt to restrain the healthy, noble instinct of the strong - an attempt to usurp the judgment of experience. What matters is that each individual develops their own judgment - possesses a sense of 'natural justice', a mature and strong character (born via experience). The 'Law' is an expression of tyranny - of someone else taking away this judgment and character: of society treating people as children.

What of children? Do they have a place in Satanism? In its rituals, for instance?

One of the fundamental aims of Satanism is to develop individuals - to develop a mature, insightful, character, a Satanic spirit.

Satanic training, of a novice, aims to build character, to develop a unique individual aware of their potential and their destiny. This training can only begin when the individual can assess things - or begin to assess them - for themselves. This generally means around the age of sixteen. Before then, there can be no participation in Satanism, whether this be rituals or anything else, simply because Satanism involves each individual making their own choice - of deciding, for themselves, that they wish to undergo Satanic training or undertake a Satanic way of living. In some circumstances - for instance a child born to parents who are Satanists - there is a simple ceremony involving dedicating the newborn to the darker forces. But until that child grows and can decide things for themselves, there is and can be nothing else. To do otherwise, is to contradict the essence of Satanism. Satanism is not interested in 'corrupting' others without their consent - it is interested in creating strong, unique individuals of real character who can think and judge for themselves. Anything else is not real Satanism.

But surely Satanists control and use others - manipulate them?

Of course! Some people are natural slaves. Satanists are the natural leaders. But each person has a free choice - if they need to follow, to be led, if the enjoy being manipulated, or out of weakness have little or no character of their own, then that is in their nature. existence is often ruthless: the strong win through while the weak go under. Thus is evolution achieved. Humans are no different, although many in their delusion would wish to believe otherwise. I shall give an example, and one which will make the softies (and incidentally the pseudo-Satanists) shudder in horror! Some people in their weakness become addicts - for this example we will say on drugs. As such, they are life's failures. A Satanist views them with contempt - they have made their choice, and revealed a weak character. Thus, he or she might consider it worth their while - and certainly justified - in 'using' these worthless people, by, for instance, supplying them with what they need. To wit, drugs. This would be profitable, and enable the Satanist to live their life a little more Satanically. It would also aid the sinister dialectic - in two ways. First, the addicts might in the near future die, and thus remove or cull themselves. Second, the 'drug-culture' is symptomatic of a society or societies infested with the Nazarene disease: where a slave-morality has triumphed and noble, strong instincts are repressed/suppressed. (Where, for instance, the idea of combat, of war, as healthy, is heresy.) Such a society or societies need to be undermined and destroyed and replaced by healthier ones.

Incidentally, while on this subject of health, everyone has a choice at all times despite whatever external circumstances pertain. It is character, spirit, which win through.

A Satanist is someone who triumphs, even (or especially) in adversity, and who lives by a motto which is no longer understood today except by the noble few: "Death Before Dishonour". To submit, to give in, to not try, is dishonourable. A Satanist knows with an arrogant, prideful certainty that the human spirit can triumph over everything and everyone - they refuse to admit defeat, to give in, and are prepared if necessary to die rather than act in a dishonourable way, against their Satanic principles. Because of this, they are strong, and inspire in others perhaps a certain awe. And, because of this preparedness, they exult in life - they relish living, and live to the full.

If I wished to become a Satanist, what would I have to do?

The first thing is to make sure one understands what Satanism is and involves by contacting other Satanists, for instance, or reading genuine Satanic material such as the works of the O.N.A. Then, having so understood, one makes a decision to begin the quest along the 'Left Hand Path' and to act Satanically. This is usually formalized in some way via a simple rite of Initiation - which basically means that one affirms one's desire to follow the way of Satan. This rite can be either a ceremonial one, via an existing Order or Satanic group, or a hermetic 'self-Initiation'. Examples of both are available to those curious enough to find them.

Following this, one undertakes various tasks, techniques and methods over a period of some months, the aim of all of which is to build a solid Satanic foundation, in terms of character. These are all accessible in various Satanic works. Quite a number of these involve gaining experience in the real world, while some involve directly Occult/magickal work - e.g. rituals. The emphasis throughout is on self-achievement and self-effort. This noviciate period lasts about a year, perhaps two. There are then more challenges to undertake, more ordeals to develop character and aid one's judgment and insight and self-mastery. Of course, there are also many rewards - some carnal, some material, some spiritual (in the sinister sense, naturally!). There develops an awareness of one's Destiny and an understanding of what is hidden from the majority by virtue of their rather rudimentary level of consciousness and knowledge. During all this, one is aiding the dark forces by the very act of doing Satanic things. That is, aiding evolution - of one's self, and existence in general. One is being significant; doing and achieving. If one is fortunate enough, there may be guidance and advice from someone who has gone that way before - from a Satanic Master or Mistress. What is important, is that one really lives; achieves things; works in and alters the real world; and learns and so develops - in character, insight, knowledge and so on. Most people waste their lives. A Satanist wants to be a god - and is prepared to change the world to make their dreams a reality. Most people dream, but lack the courage to act. What matters is that one does something - if some things do not work out as one planned, there are other places, other times. New dreams to dream and fulfill. And life does not even end with causal death - one can become Immortal! The form of life simply changes. But this immortality is not given - it is not a reward. It is *achieved*, it is a conscious act: a becoming-one with the dark force itself, with Satan.

There is much that is numinous, but nothing known surpasses Man in numinosity. That is, of all life, we as individuals possess the most potential - have the 'creative fire' of life itself. Satanism is a means to not only understand this, but to implement it - fulfill our divine (and diabolic) potential. To live this existence to the full. To participate in evolution. And to evolve to another realm entirely. But Satanism is dangerous - it is testing. It requires a demonic desire, a strength of character. It is genuine Heresy. It is for the few who can really defy, who really wish to become like gods and are prepared to take the risks involved.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Selling Water by the River
ONA (From **Fenrir No. 6**, 100yf)

Question: *What is Satanism?*

Answer: Satanism is fundamentally a way of living – a practical philosophy of life. The essence of this way is the belief that we all as individuals can achieve far more than we realize during our lifetime. Most people waste the opportunities that life can, does and can be made to bring. We are gods when we awake.

How do you then understand magick?

Magick is essentially the opening up of areas of consciousness latent within all - a means of changing the individual and the world. The techniques of magick for example, rituals) are simply means to achieve this. For too long magick has been mis-understood as 'spells, conjurations' and the like, and while such things are magick, they are only a beginning, a mere intimation of what real magick is all about.

You often use the term 'traditional Satanism'. What does this mean?

Traditional Satanism is a term used to describe the sinister path which for centuries was taught on an individual basis from Master(or Mistress) to pupil. To this path belongs the Septenary System, Esoteric Chant, the comprehensive training of novices (including the development of the physical side), the Star Game, and - most importantly - the Internal system of magick (the Grade Rituals etc.). This path is also known as the Seven-Fold Way.

I've heard of La Vey and his 'Satanic Bible'. How does the Seven-Fold Way differ from his Satanism and those who follow his views?

La Vey took what may be described as the popular/media conception of Satanism - the black-robed, Mephistophelean figure - together with the 'pleasure principle' and some simple magic(k), mixed it with the qabala and various historical myths and legends pertaining to the dark side, and served the whole lot up to a gullible audience. The whole thing was pretty pathetic - although it did provide some with a few thrills. There was no substance to either La Vey or his 'Church': no inner path, direction or way. Nothing original.

The Seven-Fold Way, on the contrary, possesses direction, and goes far beyond the external type of magick implicit in both the 'pleasure principle' and ordinary sorcery. It offers the individual the difficult (and sometimes dangerous) path to genuine Adeptship - to self-mastery, self-excellence and ultimately wisdom. It is not a refuge for the neurotic, the weak-willed or the self-deluded, but rather a challenge to the daring.

Those who follow in the foot-steps of La Vey (as a recent 'Temple' does) have added little - they are still trapped by 'role-playing', still fettered by self-delusion (often about their magickal abilities) and still lack not only self-insight but also that spontaneity which is one of the marks of a genuine Adept. They concern themselves still with the awarding of meaningless titles, seek members and the recognition of the 'authorities'. They teach the same historical mish-smash as La Vey and possess an originality quota of zero.

They have failed to understand that the ceremonial, ritualistic and 'theoretical' approach is but the first, small step toward inner progress. Because of this, there can be no organized 'Temple', no 'authority' within it, no proselytizing and no awarding of grades/initiation or titles. There is only - in the genuine path – a limited amount of guidance, and the struggle of the individual through experience.

But surely rituals are important e.g. the Black Mass?

Yes - but only in the beginning stages of the Way when the novice/initiate is discovering the hidden (or magickal) forces of nature and themselves, and is daring to walk along the path to Adepthood.

Ceremonial and hermetic rituals are the province of the novice and the 'External Adept' and are pointers to what is beyond.

Which is what?

First, the discovery of the unique Destiny of that individual second the living of that Destiny, and third, for those whose Destiny becomes fulfilled by such living, the crossing of the Abyss. From the Abyss the Master and Mistress is born. All this takes many years.

What then is the purpose of your Order?

To offer our teachings and guidance to those who might be interested. In former times, teachings were kept secret, but there is no need for that now: the opportunity is open to all.

But are you not still secretive?

Yes and no. Those who seek hard enough will find us, and those who are sincere will not be put off by

the obstacles placed in their way (sometimes by us). For those who are, there are plenty of other groups around.

What about Initiations?

We do not offer Initiation - candidates achieve Initiation. We do not offer nor award (for money or anything else) Grade Rituals or titles of any kind: these are again achieved by individuals, through their own toil, hardships, terror and joy. We simply guide them toward the self-achievement that, e.g., the Grade Rituals represent. Any other way is simply fraud and self-deception.

Grade Rituals - which signify the different stages of achievement along the Seven-Fold Way - may be likened to running in a race. You either race, or don't; and if you race, you either win (achieve the goal) or do not. You may pretend to yourself that you have raced and run, but in the end you are fooling only yourself.

What, then, are the Grade Rituals?

They are tasks, simple in form, but difficult to complete successfully. For example, the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept simply involves the candidate in living totally alone and isolated for at least three months: without any of our modern 'conveniences'/technology, and without speaking to anyone. Simple to describe - difficult to undertake. The 'ritual' is the (alchemical) change which occurs in the individual by virtue of living so for at least three months. Such primitive isolation creates the Adept, bringing a genuine mastery of magick and a lasting self-insight.

It is the intention of the Order to publish all the Grade Rituals in the next issue of 'Fenrir'.

Returning now to the popular conception of Satanism, what about sacrifices, the blackmailing of members, sexual crimes and so on?

Satanism is all about - in its beginnings - waking conscious (or liberating) our dark or shadow nature. In the past, certain experiences were often undergone in order to achieve this, and some of those experiences were often frowned on by 'conventional' society. Some might have been 'illegal' at the time as well. But gradually (at least in traditional Satanism) a way was found to 'short-circuit' these evolutionary experiences which enhanced the consciousness and thus wisdom of those undergoing them - if they survived, of course. Thus was Internal Magick evolved. This enabled the experiencing of the dark side, and its integration, as well as made possible what was beyond.

This system had been gradually refined and enhanced, and while it avoids the quicksand of criminality it is still not lacking in danger or difficulty. It offers, in short, the distilled essence of thousands of years of evolutionary understanding-and makes possible the next stage of our evolution as a species: Homo Galactica.

You stress the development of the physical side. Why?

Because traditional Satanism aims to develop the whole individual - mind, body and character. We give our novices difficult physical goals to achieve (such as running 20 miles in under 2 1/2 hours - fitter individuals are naturally given more difficult tasks) because the striving for such goals, and their achievement, develops qualities necessary in any Adept. They are tests of determination and character, and sort the serious out from the pathetic. The striving also creates a physical joy, increasing the vitality of the person.

I met someone recently who claimed to be a 'Master'. I had my doubts about him. Is there some way of identifying a genuine Master?

The answer should be obvious. A Master is someone who has passed beyond the Abyss, the stage beyond an Adept. In consequence he will be somewhat detached: intense and serious, but also natural, spontaneous and quite cheerful (almost playful, sometimes). But perhaps most of all, he will not take himself too seriously, and he will certainly not play a 'role' or fulfill the expectations of novices (e.g. by dressing up, cultivating a 'demonic' stare and answering questions mysteriously). He will possess that illusive quality - natural charisma.

What about wealth - and power? Surely all Satanic Masters possess these?

Some do, some do not. The sign of a Master is neither wealth nor power, but achievement - of wisdom, skill in esoteric arts, and original creation (e.g. the extending of human knowledge, artistic creativity). The Destiny of each Master is different, as is the life-style which reflects that Destiny. For example, out of the four Masters who exist in the West at this moment in time, one lives a somewhat isolated existence with hardly any material possessions, while another lives in relative luxury and splendour. The former concerns himself primarily with aeonic magick, while the latter teaches a few pupils. Genuine Masters do not conform to someone else's expectations or ideas: they are individual, and unique.

Do you worship a being called Satan?

Genuine Satanists do not worship anything - not even themselves. Fundamental to Satanism, is a desire to overcome, to accept challenges and to seek to know and understand. A genuine Satanist would rather die – laughing and defiant - than submit to anyone or anything. Most people waste their lives and die old and miserable: the Satanist revels in life and adventure, and knows the right time to die, for challenges never end. This way of living is hard, and this way of dying breeds fear among the feeble multitude who prefer comfort and security to the ecstasy of living on the edge like gods.

As to Satan - each Initiate discovers the reality for themselves. All that need be said is that there are external forces beyond the psyche. of an individual: in genuine Satanist magick there is identity with these darker external forces, not a fear of them and certainly not a submission. This, of course, is somewhat dangerous – but the strong survive, and the weak perish. Good riddance to the weak.

So, fundamentally, you would say that Satanism is the way you live your life?

Yes, as I indicated at the beginning. Magick – of whatever type - enhances your life, and is a way to knowledge and increased vitality. Magickal acts are important in the beginning, but most important of all is our attitude to life and our ways of living. This is why we despise the Nazarene philosophy - the Satanist is proud, strong, defiant, while a Nazarene is afraid of living, afraid of dying and mentally sick: weighed down by guilt and envy. The meek espouse peace because they know the strong would destroy them - so they infect the strong with the disease of 'pacifism', with guilt because they are strong

But surely that particular philosophy - of, as you call it, the 'Nazarene' -is dying out today.

As an organized religion it might be - but over the past two hundred or so years this poisonous philosophy has sprouted various political and pseudo-political forms, and it is these forms which are eroding our vitality. There have been a few attempts to cut out the cancer - but they have unfortunately failed, and the cancer grows and spreads.

What, then, can you do?

Why should we do anything? Most people are stupid and deserve their fate. We offer an alternative - those who have if only in a small way the Promethean spirit will be drawn to us and thus have the opportunity to master their own Destiny. It is up to each and every individual: we can point the way, but they must make the effort to walk along it.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Star-gates
Thornian, ONA.

The stars were everywhere to be seen, amidst the unknown blackness that begged to be conquered. One in particular shone through with vibrancy unmatched. It was neither the brightest, closest, nor largest star. But its glow reached much further than the eye, it extended into the very core of the being, of the initiate who stood beneath it. A lifetime of light-years away, yet revealing itself as destination.

There was no gate, he knew, linking his consciousness to that of the cosmos. For they were already intertwined, via *thousands* of gates. Woven together through initiation and the stripping of illusion that is the Dark Tradition, he *was* the cosmos, and he let himself be directed by its Will. This intertwining, between Causal and Acausal, was the core of his being. The Acausal Charge, understood by lesser men as a "divine spark" was also the single factor for by which organic existence was made possible. It was into this, the *Nexion* within his consciousness – both latent and realized – that the light of the star extended into, penetrated, and became.

Standing enthralled with the energy this star produced – just as the sun did in Aeons past and Worlds long forgotten – the Sinister Initiate understood it as embodying Wyrd. It had itself given life, meaning – *numen*, to his deeds even before its light came into view. Far off as it was, it had no form – no answers to be bestowed without the seeking of a lifetime through those portals of being and non-being, that must be discovered before even the faintest form could be identified. This he accepted.

Transferred now from his world, to limits hitherto black, he floated weightless among the galaxies of time past and time to come. But time did not matter there – it did not flow, but rather produced chaos to the point of nothingness. And he among it saw the stars close to his – a thousand destinies woven into one galaxy which transcended all thought and reason. For it was only the stripping away of such things, to reveal a genuine intuition that naturally excelled further past the confines of conscious mind.

Blinding light then encompassed the Initiate, in an instant blaze. A satori then incomprehensible at any level spoke in still incomprehensible ways, until the initiate was hurled into visions of fallen leaders, bereft of their destinies - as was necessary to bring forth the wyrd of a thousand others. And the Cosmic Being nodded to the initiate, in recognition.

Back on his home land, the formless remnants of bloody war scorned at his feet. Detached in a way that was more aware than it was illusory, the initiate had no feelings. There was no despair, no horror, no compassion. But simply an understanding of why it must be. A black cloud spread about the ground, and moved slowly through the land, as a nameless god brought him these insights – and the Dark Gods manifest themselves throughout the rest of this world in the form of bloody war. But he took no notice of the visions sent to his conscious – of the people themselves, who were sacrificed to the galactic will. For such sacrifice was necessary, in the continuing flux of life – and all that deserved notice were the changes taking place, and the greater achievements of life to follow. Most others would not believe them to be for the better, but those others were simply the pawns.

Once these intrusions subsided, he was left among cold nothingness; with only the leveled remnants of a world – to be built anew before him. In front of him stood the past – a manifestation of nobility and determination he had in this life yet to match. The soldier stood as not only his past, but the past of his destiny, and others whose destinies were to be brought together under cosmic wyrd. Each destiny individual, but woven into the will of the cosmos...

The soldier and he needed no words. For they communicated solely through self-insight, more effectively than could otherwise be. This soldier of the past brought startling insights to the future and of times gone, for which the present was but a narrow road between. He saw in the eyes of the soldier only lifeless chaos.

Looking back to the sky, he again identified his nameless star. The soldier was now gone, and the initiate was left only to ponder the worlds he'd just traveled – somewhere between the Moon and Saturn – but far outside and beyond the galaxies and star systems in which they reside. Deep into the unknown blackness his star shone through, emanating with Wyrd awaiting fulfillment. One day he should again join the mysterious soldier, with matched qualities of the determination, honour, and destiny he represented – on that lone planet that orbits his star.

The Alchemy of Magick
ONA (From **Hostia I**, 1991eh)

Magick is not an object for academic study - it is essentially practical. It also requires self-discipline and training - the acquisition of skills.

No books or teacher can teach magick it can only be learnt by practice, by the trials and errors of experience. All books and teachers can do, at best, is guide: toward and into the relevant experiences and offer some explanations for cause, effect and what is beyond the causal.

Similarly, willful self-expression will be mostly counter-productive. What is required of the novice and Initiate is self-discipline and that insight which arises from achievement and adversity. Modern life, however, has made these things difficult it is easy to be self-opinionated, to accept the comforts of modern living and the lack of self-discipline, just as modern "methods" and "ideas" about "magick" make it seem that understanding of and achievement in magick is easy: all that is needed are the relevant books/ grade manuals/ information and a chaotic mind/attitude/approach.

There is not and never has been any substitute for self-learning from experience. The real learning of magick occurs by the individual novice, alone: group work and group experience merely confirm that learning and extend the techniques, the forms that are used. This is so because real magick is internal - an alchemy of psychic change. It is the techniques which are external. For instance, sexual magick is a technique of magick - it is not magick or 'magickal' in itself - just as ceremonial ritual is a technique. All techniques are forms which are dormant - they need vivifying, bringing to life: they need to be infused with the 'breath of life'. This vivification is magick, and its achievement is individual, that is, it does not rely on the form - on minute details of performance or technique. Sometimes, this vivification is shared - e.g. between two individuals undertaking a sexual rite or a group gathering for a ceremony.

For too long the techniques have been regarded as magickal in themselves, leading to a complete misunderstanding of magick - as, for example, by Crowley and his followers and by adherents of latter-day "chaos" techniques. Magick is beyond technique - techniques and forms merely presence the magick in the causal, and to access the magickal energies skill is required. Sometimes, this skill is intuitive - an inborn gift - but most often it has to be cultivated, learnt, acquired. The skill is an internal one, and may be likened to an attitude of mind. It is a "moving with" magickal energies as those energies are, in themselves - it is not a loose, undirected approach, a chaotic acceptance, but a finely balanced direction; not a loss of conscious awareness/ understanding, but a new type of awareness. It is like running long distances: innate ability may help, but training is required, an awareness of limitations born from past experience, a self-discipline to achieve the distance in the time set - and then the running, which when successful is a 'flowing with' the body and mind...

In magick, desire makes the energy - once accessed via the individual - presence in the form/technique chosen. This desire is usually aimed - that is, it has a causal goal (as for example in external magick). The form or technique chosen may stimulate to some extent the production of magickal energies - but it is the individual who must push open the gate (or nexion) and direct the energies that lie beyond it. What the forms and techniques most often do is make the nexion seem real and accessible - often 'provoking' within the individual the consciousness required to push open the nexion and presence the energies.

Because of this, ceremonial rituals (or any ritual where more than two are present and involved) require direction or control - of the images/forms/patterns invoked and the presencing of such in the causal. This direction is always toward the causal (that is, toward a specific aim or into the psyche of an individual or individuals) because of the nature of the energies - there is always 'flow'. If no control is undertaken (or the direction is confused because more than one attempts to control the flow - perhaps unconsciously) then causal change will still occur (and must occur) although in ways probably unforeseen by those involved - this is what usually happens when some individuals gather and attempt an act of magick - and often results in psychic disruption of one or more of those individuals.

The alchemy of magick is in learning this control in being able to access the energies, and being able to produce changes via the presencing of what is accessed: internally (within one's own psyche), externally (in others and the things of the everyday) and aeonically (within and beyond the confines of aeonics).

There is thus a learning about the various types of magickal energies (which may be said to be differentiated by how they presence in the causal) - and their uses. In short, the acquisition of individual skill and understanding. To achieve this, there are certain ways - certain guides which may be followed. This is a serious commitment - not a hobby, not a gathering of some like-minded people as and when for

an enjoyable and ego-gratifying delving into 'the Occult', and certainly not 'for laughs' or to entertain.

There is an intensity, a self-discipline, even sometimes a hardness - and those pleasures which are beyond mere mortals. In brief, new ways of living.

For while the alchemy of magick is now accessible to everyone (due to works such as "Naos") it is unlikely many will forswear their current and easy ways of living for the challenge.

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Dark Forces
ONA yf87

For too long our enemies have lied about us. But, as the cosmic tides begin another Aeonic change as the Age of the Dark Gods begins, we proclaim openly our defiance and our creed. No longer shall the lies go unchallenged. Accordingly, we - as representatives of those dark forces which have always shaped our evolution proclaim the following about our sinister Way and its living:-

- 1) The Dark Gods are means to self-fulfillment, self-understanding and self-divinity.
- 2) We believe that only through journeying through the darkness within and without, in passing the Abyss, can true self- understanding be attained.
- 3) Our rites, ceremonies and magick are life-affirming and show us and bring us the ecstasy of existence, the laughter of life and the self-overcoming of the true Adept.
- 4) We are feared because we understand and because we rejoice in living - in its pleasures but most importantly in its possibilities. We extend the frontiers of evolution while others sleep and cry.
- 5) All that enervates we despise: we have nothing to do with the cowardly and weak who are trapped by their own failings and who scurry about in the filth that covers those who do dis-honourable deeds. We revere honour because honour means self-excellence and a recognition of the cosmic balance that is an Adept.
- 6) When we hate we hate openly and with pride and when we love we love with a passion to match our arrogance: always mindful never to love anyone or anything so much that we cannot see it die, since death is a natural changing of forces.
- 7) We would rather die than submit to anyone or anything and this pride is the pride of Satan, that symbol of our defiance and a sign of our life-enhancing energy.
- 8) We prepare - through our magick, our deeds and our living - for the Age of Fire (the Aeon of the Dark Gods) which is to come, when we shall reach out toward the stars and the new challenges they will bring.
- 9) Our Way is difficult and dangerous and is for the few who can truly dare to defy the matrix of forms (like `crosstianity') that stifle the potentiality of our being.
It has been said (by Nietzsche):
"The more mediocre, the weaker, the more submissive and cowardly a man is, the more he will posit as evil: it is with him that the realm of evil is most comprehensive. The basest (most dis-honourable) man will see the realm of evil that is, of that which is forbidden and hostile to him - everywhere."
"The most powerful man, the creator, would have to be the most evil, in as much as he carries his ideal against the ideals of other men and remakes them in his own image..."

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 substance undergoing transformation by chemical or other means. That is, the alchemist in a subtle ('Occult') way aids the 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 was 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, magical 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 Wyr'd' 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 task, 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 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/aemonic 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 task 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. Copyright Thorold West, 1989ev.

The Meaning of Sinister Initiation: An Initiates Perspective
Order of Nine Angles

From "OTONEN – A Guide to the stage of Initiate"
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The Sinister Path

For many non-initiates and, unfortunately Initiates (an indication perhaps of the current state of the 'Occult world' itself), it is often misunderstood that the performance of a Rite of Initiation will bring forth immediate psychic, that is, Magickal change. Practical experience reveals that this is not usually the case however. There are of course exceptions to this 'rule'. One is that an immediate psychic change is noticeable in the individual; this itself will most likely be due to the intensity of the Rite of Initiation. But whether such change has a lasting effect is another question, it being more likely that such immediate change will slowly evaporate as time passes. Another exception is that although there will have been no real or genuine inner change the Initiate will fall prey to one of the many delusions of the Abyss and believe that a change has occurred against all indications that tell otherwise (q.v. The Deceitful Occult Ego). So, although immediate change within the Initiate is possible, a more balanced and natural approach is to perceive Initiation as a process. It may be – and often actually is - psychically desirable for the beginning of this process to be symbolised by the outer form of an Initiation Ritual (be it hermetic or ceremonial).

Along the Seven-Fold Sinister Way these Initiation rites (for in one sense all the rituals involved during the various stages of the Sinister Way are initiation rites in themselves) are primarily concerned with presenting the Darkness or acausal component of the psyche in the conscious world, or mind, of the Initiate. This enables the consciousness of the Initiate – as he or she slowly progresses along the Path - to develop from that of non-Initiate (that is, where the individual is largely controlled by unconscious desires and impulses) to that of Initiate (where the Satanist begins to comprehend and interact consciously with these previously unconscious components) and then on to Adept hood where these energies are consciously understood enabling a certain balance to be attained between causal and acausal.

The Path of the Initiate

As each new Initiate progresses along the Sinister Path, it is expected that individual insights will add to the Tradition as a whole (the Heir to the Tradition adding significantly). Whether this does or does not happen is really dependant upon the Initiate and the quality of his or her contact with the Sinister Tradition. If the Path is genuinely followed, that is, if the Sinister is being actively pursued during the daily life of the Initiate (such pursuit or questing being a continuous act, and thereby a development of individual Will) genuine occult transformation will begin to occur. With this transformation it is possible that variations on some Sinister Rituals may arise whereby the Initiate finds a more powerful method of manifesting the acausal during the rite.

The rituals that are of primary concern for the Initiate are the Dark Pathways and the Sinister Pathworkings. Besides these rituals – which will already, if followed continuously, begin to dominate the Initiates consciousness – there are the individual sphere chants to be learnt, the undertaking of the physical training, the study and practice of the Star Game, the study of Order texts and correspondences, the collation of incenses and the purchasing of specific implements for the future Temple. In regard to this latter aspect, by undertaking such actions these actions themselves will or may (dependant upon Individual Destiny) aid to the manifestation or creation of a Sinister Temple. That is to say, that by purchasing or making items that are specifically for a Sinister Temple, the reality of that (future) Temple is becoming presented in the causal life of that Initiate.

Further to previous Order guide-lines, a new method of Initiate development advises that the Initiate begins with the Dark Pathways themselves (instead of the Sinister Sphereworkings). The aim is to invoke one Dark God per week, meditating each night leading up to the ritual for no less than fifteen minutes on the respective sigil whilst slowly repeating the name of the Dark God or the Word of Power. Combined with this the Initiate should aim to reduce sleep and food until the night of the ritual whilst also locating the respective planetary incense (taken from the bark of the respective tree) and burning

this, during the ritual. Once all Dark Pathways have been experienced, the Initiate may then undertake the Sinister Pathworkings, performing the nightly meditations. The following of the Sinister Path in this manner, implies that the Initiate has already re-created or made conscious the Tree of Wyrd within him or herself, by consciously invoking each of the fundamental archetypes into consciousness. This conscious presenting of the archetypes then being further developed by the Sphere Meditations themselves.

Initiate Tasks: Other Aspects

Besides the primary rituals that are required for the completion of Sinister Initiation, it is advisable that the Initiate purchases - or contracts a jeweler to make - the relevant piece of jewelry to be worn (ring set with quartz for males, quartz necklace for females). The wearing of such an item of jewelry further stimulates the Initiates awareness that he or she is a member of a Tradition, one that is far more important and potent than the frankly rather pathetic past-times that most people take as an interest or hobby. This ring or necklace becomes for the Initiate a 'Mark of Satan', a symbol of the Initiates quest and a constant reminder of the Sinister in the Initiates life, that is the Initiate is constantly aware that he or she is wearing an outward symbol – that others can see – of his or her Sinister Quest.

When all the different factors or tasks of Sinister Initiation are combined the Initiates entrance into the Sinister becomes a very potent force, one that is active (by virtue of the fact that the Initiate is consciously realising or making real the Sinister in his or her life).

The practice of the chants is, as mentioned previously, a further task of the Sinister Way. Although this does not necessarily have to be undertaken during the stage of Initiate, it is advisable to begin to learn these so that once the Grade of Professed Brother or Sister is attained, the Sinister Magickian may be a little more prepared for the running of a Sinister Temple. By virtue of the fact that there are a number of chants that will need to be learnt for use during Sinister ceremonial ritual it is usually advisable that the Diabolus is the first chant to be learnt. Besides this the sphere chants are probably the next most important (the Agios Lucifer chant being ideal to begin with) since they provide a foundation for a number of rituals, and can be - and have been - used during the Dark Pathways Invocations.

There are of course a number of other tasks that are suggested, some new and some more Traditional aspects. One of the older and more secretive tasks is for the Sinister Initiate to gain some hosts from a Nazarene place of worship and desecrate these either during or after the Rite of Initiation. If one is seeking to join an existing Temple it will be necessary to have attained these prior to Initiation for use during Initiation, such an acquisition further proving the worth of the candidate.

A more recent addition to Tradition is that whilst the Initiate is undertaking the Dark Pathways, he or she draws a Tree of Wyrd in his or her Magickal Diary or 'Sinister Book of Shadows'. This map however should only be added to once a Dark Pathway has been concluded. Thus, the Initiate begins by drawing the seven spheres, in appropriate sphere colours. Then, once the Noctulius Pathway is completed this is drawn in, then the Shugara Pathway is drawn in and so on. This in itself adds (albeit in a minor way) to the conscious integration of the energies being brought forth as enabling the Initiate to see - in physical terms – how the Pathways are connected to the spheres and one another.

Self-honesty and Sinister Occult Development

It is important to remember that, as an Initiate you have made a pledge to Satan and the Dark Gods to follow the Sinister Way:

'Now receive as a symbol of your new desire and as a sign of your oath this sigil of Satan. This sign shall be the Power which I as Master wield shall always be a part of you - a symbol to those who can see and the Mark of our Prince.'

'I (state name 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!'
(The Black Book of Satan)

It is easy in times of anger or tiredness to say to oneself that it doesn't matter too much if a meditation is missed, or you don't have a ring, or you don't bother with the physical aspect, or that the Initiation Rite doesn't need to be undertaken, or the Grade Ritual of External Adept isn't really too important. That, because you know you could do it, it isn't necessary to prove it to yourself. And so on and so forth. And yes, it is easy to say such things because it means that you don't have to make an effort. But, the Sinister Path is hard and demands commitment. It is only with this commitment, with this continuous effort, with

this continual personal act of Will, of individual defiance, that such changes will occur. So in the context of Sinister Pathworking:

‘... faithful repetition is important, because by following the procedure exactly the required changes in consciousness are produced.’

(Naos)

How easy it is to miss these simple statements that describe the very means to achieve Sinister Adeptness. Perhaps if more Initiates actually did what was said by virtue of an act of Will then there might be more Sinister Adepts in the world. But things are as they are and human weakness is usually the cause of a waste of life, of potential. So, it is necessary, if the Sinister Initiate truly seeks an understanding of the Sinister that runs deeper than mere words, but is a wordless understanding that cannot be taken away from him or her, to follow the way as stated in numerous Order mss. It is necessary to face the challenges that are set before the Initiate. At this stage there is no need to look too far ahead. Rather it is better to keep ones mind and thoughts on the current stage, because it is by following this stage now, and then the stage of External Adept, that the heights of the stage of Sinister Adept may finally be approached.

Thus, with all this in mind although the Initiate may have a tendency to say that it is not necessary to meditate upon the sigil of the Dark God each night prior to the Dark Pathways Invocations, such meditations really do enhance the energies brought forth and, after an unspecified amount of time has passed (dependant of course upon each Initiate) the Initiate will start to feel the acausal body surrounding the causal body.

From Sinister Initiate to Sinister Adept

The Sinister Tradition, as has been stated previously, does not grant titles or adeptness through friendship or money or sex or for any other reason. The title of Adept and that which is beyond must be fought for, must be pursued actively, now, during the present, because it is from this point in time that the desired future may eventually become a present reality. This is true of the esoteric nature of the Sinister Way, as it is also true of the Aeonic imperatives that are being strived for by Sinister Adepts and Masters. For each stage of the Tree of Wyrd is a Tree of Wyrd in itself. That which is within is without and that which is without is within. Just as the Sinister Tradition is a Tree of Wyrd, so also are the individual Initiates self-contained Trees of Wyrd and so inherently each stage of the Way contains the seeds of all the other stages.

Why are there so few Sinister Adepts today? Is it perhaps because the tendency is to write and talk, just as the typical armchair Qabalist might act, or rather, not act. Is it because those who seek to make the Great Work a reality in their own life do so only in their dreams; ‘I wish I was...’ For the Satanist the wish is just the first impulse. Perhaps this impulse might be unconscious at first, but such is the Satanist way that it and many other things will become conscious and thereby understood. Such is the method to gain Wisdom through practical action, through experience.

Perhaps also, it is true to say that when, and if, one reaches the final stage of External Adept it is a far easier option to say that one does not need to undertake the Sinister Retreat, that it isn't really necessary in order to become an Adept. But is this really so? And, does it not really speak volumes about those few genuine Adepts who have undertaken the Sinister Retreat that they have at least not lied to themselves, but have undertaken the Rite, with all the terrifying implications and inner fears that it brings forth...

*Yet even now I do not know what lies ahead
Now is my time to seek the glory of my Gods
That I may one day walk with Satan
In His world,
With His Bride
And that I may also Become
Something far greater than the mortal
I am leaving behind,
The mortal that must die
That a God may be born.*

The Publication of Esoteric Traditions on the Left Hand Path
ONA 1991eh

For a long time, genuine esoteric tradition was handed on on an individual basis, from Master/Mistress to novice. There were many reasons for this, most of them practical: the tradition was esoteric, liable to mis-interpretation, and many of its tenets and rituals involved what would have been regarded as 'heretical', anti-social and/or illegal acts. Furthermore, the methods used to train novices often made those novices into, outlaws, and set them against conventional society. Also, for a long time, the teaching and teachings of the tradition was heretical in Law - a criminal offense against Church and State. Secrecy was essential and necessary. This state of affairs pertained until quite recently. With the burgeoning of interest in 'the Occult' in general, the LHP became somewhat less secret and certain aspects of the tradition were discreetly circulated. What were mistakenly taken to be 'esoteric' traditions and, given the new openness toward the occult and the repeal of anti-Occult laws, freely distributed and/or published, were (a) the useless Grimoire/Qabalistic tradition, or (b) a mis-interpreted Crowleyism, or (c) of a showman/ghoulish/self-professed type with bits cobbled together from (a) and (b) with archaic myths and unenlightened egoism thrown in. The real tradition - with its darkness and danger - remained hidden. To (c) belonged the Church of Satan, which made Satanism akin to a fantasy role-playing game or games with some sorcery added to impress. The later schism which gave birth to the Temple of Set (born not with a bang but with a whimper) was not unexpected given the structure and orientation of this 'Church' - and neither was the fact that the leader of this schism based his Temple and authority on what was termed an 'Infernal Mandate', and declared Satanism as a religion, much mis-understood. Meanwhile, the old traditions continued, in Europe and elsewhere, in their traditional way - secretly, accepting but few novices and these only after severe tests and ordeals. The traditions, writings, rituals, methods, ordeals and techniques remained unavailable except to those few. After lengthy deliberations and consultations, the individual representing traditional groups, decided to gradually make the esoteric tradition which he and others represented available on a selective basis, to reveal, for once and for all, what the LHP and Satanism were really about. The real impetus for this decision came from Aeonic strategy - making the tradition available would enable an increase in the number of genuine Adepts, thus hastening the presencing of the darker forces on Earth, and so fulfilling the sinister dialectic of history. This increase, however, would be gradual - over centuries. With this dissemination, the purpose, intent and methods of Satanism and the LHP could no longer be mis-interpreted and the posers and charlatans who professed to be 'Satanists' would be exposed - at least to those with any sagacity. With the secrets accessible to those who sought to find them, the real esoteric work could continue, as it always had, in secret - the training, via direct experience, of those few strong and gifted enough to undertake the difficult and dangerous journey along the Left Hand Path.

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Quintessence of Satanism
ONA, 1989ev.

Satanism is not merely attending nor even conducting ceremonies or rituals of a 'Black Magick' kind. Nor does Satanism mean or imply membership of an avowedly Satanic group. Neither is Satanism merely the enjoyment of material delights. Rather, Satanism - quintessentially - is an attitude and a way of living.

This attitude expresses a strength of character - a belief in oneself and one's Destiny. Part of this is pride, and part of it is defiance: an individuality, a dislike of limits. However, perhaps the most important part is a self-knowledge or self-mastery born from having gone to and often beyond one's physical, mental and moral limits. The way of living creates this strength of character, and maintains it, and enables even that to be gone beyond. Satanists use life to express in living a new way or ways of being, to fulfil their potential and to live at and beyond the limits of existence thus taking evolution further.

The way of living is essentially practical - that is, a following of the path to Adeptship and beyond for this involves experiences, ordeals, challenges, a learning of new skills and the drawing out of latent genius.

A Satanic Initiation therefore means much more than a rite of self-Initiation or a ceremonial ritual of Initiation conducted by an established group or Order. It means a desire to follow the Satanic way - and the actual beginning of following that way by undertaking the deeds, tasks, rituals and ordeals of a Satanic novice. Anything less is simply playing at Satanism - a sign that the 'Initiate' lacks Satanic character or the ability to achieve it.

In traditional Satanism, as exemplified by the ONA, this means:

- a) that the novice undertakes several physical challenges of endurance and succeeds in them. These have to be difficult and require some training. Then the novice
- b) tests Destiny and builds character by undertaking challenges in the real world, such challenges conforming to accepted Satanic practice re defying the limitations of the herd. [Here, guidance of an experienced Satanist is useful.]
- c) the novice begins hermetic magickal workings with the intent of (i) gaining experience in and mastery of such magick; (ii) garnishing from these beginnings a certain self-knowledge [qv. 'Naos'].
- d) the novice studies the tradition (as explicated for example in Esoteric Chant, the Star Game, the septenary system) and so gains esoteric knowledge and understand
- e) After these undertakes the ordeal which is the Grade Ritual of External Adept and so passes on to the tasks, ordeals and undertakings of the next stage - for example, organizes and recruits individuals for their own Satanic Temple to perform and gain experience in ceremonial magick and provide themselves with pleasures and experience of manipulation. [See the Order MSS relating to the following of the Seven-Fold Sinister Way as, for example, given in The Black Book.]

Following this - which takes some time, probably a year or so - there are more experiences awaiting, more delights, joys and hardships, more challenges to be undertaken, more self-discovery to be achieved. It cannot be stressed enough or repeated too often that Satanism - of the genuine sort anyway - involves such practical undertakings allied to a desire to experience, to transcend what one is at a particular time: to accomplish the task one initially set oneself at Initiation. That is, achieving Adeptship and beyond, by following the way of Satanism. This means a self- advancement, a self-experiencing, a self-effort, a self-achievement and a self-learning via direct experience. Anything less is not Satanism and no clever words, no amount of pseudo-intellectual mystification can obscure this reality.

Thus, because of human nature, there will be few who will possess the desire to become real Satanists - to actually undertake the tasks, ordeals and challenges. Most who profess an interest - and a large number who actually go ahead with Initiation be such ceremonial or hermetic - will soon turn away when they realize the real difficulties involved, when they understand that they are expected to work toward their own development. Most of these will all too easily find excuses to justify their turning away. They will perhaps be easily seduced, such is their weakness of character, by others who promise 'easy solutions' some kind of 'magical' way to Adeptship, by organizations which take away the pain, suffering and delight that self-effort 'on the edge' entails and which provide security for their members, which keep them in thrall to self-delusion. Or many will just be too lazy, too enured to their comfortable existence to change.

Whatever, they will be proved unsuitable, unfitted. There is no way that the way of Satanism can be made easy - for in its very hardship and danger, in the very fact of self-effort being required over a period of years, lies its quintessence.

For the dilettantes, for the role-playing fantasy mongers, for the self-indulgent too lacking in self-discipline' there are plenty of pseudo-Satanic organizations around, plenty of pseudo-Satanic 'masters' who require sycophancy, who act out of role and who will be only too pleased to welcome another pupil or student,

The choice is as simple, and brutal, as that.

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Seven-fold Way: Training and Grades
ONA, 1989.

In many ways the seven-fold way can be regarded as a process, by the individual, of discovery and experience. The goal of this process is the production of individuals skilled and knowledgeable in the magickal arts who have developed their latent, occult faculties and who possess the beginnings of wisdom.

This process can result, sometimes by accident over extended periods of time (for example, three decades or more) but it is most usually undertaken as a result of a conscious decision by an individual to seek esoteric and/or magickal groups/Order/Adepts. In this later case – and provided the guidance received is good - the goal can be achieved in a much shorter time. The first part of the process is in many ways the easiest: that of seeking some form of Initiation (qv. the Order MS 'A Novices Guide to Initiation.'). Before and after Initiation the novice is required to undertake various tasks by the Master or Mistress who has agreed to guide the individual along the seven-fold way. The pre-Initiation tasks are the performance by the individual of a simple hermetic ritual (usually on the night of the full moon), the construction of the simplified version of the Star Game and the successful completion of the various tests aimed at proving the serious intent and commitment of the candidate. The important thing about these tests of intent is that the candidate is unaware of them – for example, the candidate is asked to be present at a certain time and place and instead of meeting there the expected Master or Mistress meets a person of odd appearance who propounds various views which the individual in question may find not only unusual but distasteful. Such tests and encounters are not games but merely devices which enable the candidate to begin to understand their own motives and expectations and as such are an important preparation to Initiation. It is to be understood that it is not the order, which tests the candidate – but the candidates themselves. Initiation is the beginning of the breaking of the illusion of roles, and to be successful this breaking must be done by the individual, from within.

Once this breaking down begins, then Initiation is already underway, and no 'Rite of Initiation' however complex or well meaning is a substitute for this change in the individual. Such a rite, as a ceremonial ritual, is only the representation of this process in a dramatic form and in many cases is not necessary if some other form of Initiation is more suited to the candidate. Besides this breaking of self-delusion, Initiation is an awakening of the occult faculties – that is, the experience by the candidate of the reality of magickal forces. This experience can be brought about in several ways – first, by means of a powerful ritual of Initiation which produces magickal forces through invocation; second, through the candidate experiencing the charisma of a Master or Mistress; and third, as a consequence of the individual undergoing a particular experience where magickal forces are present. An example of this third type is when a candidate, expecting perhaps (as a result of their own imagination) a ceremonial ritual of Initiation, is led to an isolated spot where magickal energies are present either naturally (as for example in most stone circles) or have been created beforehand by an Adept in readiness for the candidate. The candidate is then left alone. What the candidate then experiences (sometimes for many hours) is an Initiation - although this is seldom understood by the candidate at the time because outwards form is lacking. In many respects, this third type is the most valuable of all the forms of Initiation since it does not rely on the illusion of ceremonial, or the dogma normally associated with such ritual forms. Initiation is complete when the candidate realises that a process of inner change has begun.

The next stage of the seven-fold way, following Initiation, is when the novice begins to undertake in a systematic way workings with the various magickal forces through such forms as Path Workings, hermetic and ceremonial rituals. Such workings in themselves take several months and during this time the novice will be given several tasks – some practical, some magickal – to perform. These tasks may themselves take several months to complete. The most usual magickal task involved the novice assuming the 'role' of a dark sorcerer/sorceress for example, dressing in black and cultivating a satanic appearance - and in this guise attending various Occult functions and generally trying to provoke argument and dissent. The novice in this is advised to cultivate an attitude of arrogance and pride and must be prepared to

defend forcefully their Satanic views. Following this, the novice is expected to infiltrate another magickal group/Order with the intent of attending a ritual and during that ritual either redirecting the magickal power (if any) or invoking by their own effort during the ritual a powerful force of their own choosing to disrupt or otherwise alter the original ritual. In some cases, the novice may organize their own group (recruiting people for it) for just this purpose.

This magickal task develops not only the use of magickal forces in an interesting way but also provides the novice with a goal the attainment of which is invigorating. It also provides an opportunity for the novice to develop various skills pertaining to the manipulation of other individuals chiefly through the deliberate development of a 'charismatic' personality or role. Its the fundamental task of the novice to learn from those experiences - that is, not to allow the role to become dominant.

This is achieved by the novice remembering that they are involved in a seven-fold quest and accepting the advice given by the Master or Mistress who assigned the task. Both of these things some novices find difficult to do. The behaviour of the novice during this task is governed by specific guidelines – failure to observe the guidelines by an individual means the end of their noviciate as far as the Order is concerned.

The practical tasks associated with this stage usually involve the novice developing certain physical abilities suited to their character. Such physical goals (for example, cycling 100 miles in under 5 hours or running 20 miles in 2 hours 30 minutes – fitter individuals will be given a more demanding goal) are a necessary balance to the magickal tasks as well as enabling those tasks to be achieved in a more invigorating manner.

This stage generally takes from six months to two years and is concluded when the novice finds changes of perspective arising as a consequence of the self-understanding brought through following the goals and tasks. This change should arise naturally and it is made conscious to the novice toward the end of the stage through the grade ritual of External Adept. This ritual is a prelude to the goals and tasks of the next stage and signifies the beginning of Adeptship.

The Grade Ritual involves the individual constructing a septenary Star game and the performance by the individual of a certain ritual on a night of the new moon. This ritual involves the invoking of a certain force, female in aspect.

The External Adept may choose to continue with the group or temple begun in the previous stage (or create one if this was not done before) for the purpose of conducting ceremonial and hermetic rituals of the type associated with, for example, the 'Book of Wyrð' as well as for the performance of the cthonic Nine Angles rite if desired. Alternatively, the individual may opt to concentrate on magickal working with the Star Game – and for this (as the task above) a companion is required. It is a task of the External Adept to find such a companion, as well as to teach them all they themselves have learned during the previous stages - guiding them as they themselves have been guided. This in itself generally takes from one to two years, and because of this most External Adepts prefer, during this time, to organize a magickal group/Temple since it provides a structure and a focus.

During this stage the External Adept will experience many things, particularly of a magickal kind if rituals are undertaken by a group, and contact with the Master or Mistress will be limited and occur for the most part if the External Adept wishes. It is important during the long period associated with this particular stage, that the individual does not become prey to the illusion of being a Master or Mistress.

Most will of course succumb at some time to this as a consequence of the varied magickal experiences and contacts with those less experienced in magick, many individual sever their links with the Order as a consequence of this illusion.

In some ways this stage is the most difficult, involving as it does confrontation with various roles and what had been called the 'anima/animus', this latter occurring naturally through the training of a companion. Provided the individual maintains during the stage their resolve to follow to its end the seven-fold way (and here the advice from the Master or Mistress is often crucial at some point during this stage) then, with the completion of the Ritual of the fifth stage, the new Master or Mistress assumes a teaching role via an Order or an individual basis, and usually those who attain this stage take over at some time their Order, guiding individuals along the seven-fold way. They may also create their own Order or group should they so wish -

or re-activate the Temple they organized during their time as an External Adept, since the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept by its nature, means the individual must disband such a Temple or leave it in care of one less experienced.

After some years teaching, the Master or Mistress may withdraw to seek the next stage – provided they have trained at least one person to continue the tradition of the seven-fold way. Thus it will be seen that the seven-fold way is not easy. It is a way of life, which any individual may follow. Those who only follow its early stages gain something of benefit - those who go further may achieve the goal that awaits us all: the next stage of human evolution.

In the past, in any one decade, the Order had many hundreds of candidates seeking Initiation. About four or five a year, sometimes less, may become Initiates through their own choice. Of these, perhaps two will complete the noviciate and only two or three from twenty a decade become Internal Adepts, the others drifting away for various reasons. Every twenty years, a new Master or Mistress may take office. There may be one or two Magi a century. So it has been – and so it will probably unfortunately remain until the New Aeon begins to emerge on the practical level three to four centuries in the future.

The seven-fold way possesses the potential to create (given good guidance) in ten years what it has taken seven civilizations, five Aeons or nearly ten thousand years to achieve. Every individual is free to choose between this path to the divine and a continuation of the sleep that keeps the potentiality of life at bay. All magick is a glimpse of this path - it is up to the individual to walk along it.

1989eh

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Song of a Satanist
Stephen Brown, ONA 103yf

In an important sense, most of my life represents genuine Satanism in action ~ a going to extremes, a learning from the experiences of those extremes, and a doing of dark, dangerous and sometimes "illegal" deeds.

This life stands in stark contrast to those of the psuedo~Satanists, some of whom have acquired a notoriety and a 'fame'. I have - as a Satanist should - been intoxicated by the essence of life itself - by that which inspires, which causes the creativity, self-absorption and genius of all great artists be they musicians, writers, warriors, explorers or whatever. I have dared to dream and to defy - and have dared to try and make my dreams and inspiration a reality. I have used my life for some purpose ~ striven toward goals with a passion that overcomes all obstacles. I have known great love - physical, intellectual, and of the soul, the essence of existence. I have also known the opposite - the sadness that awaits all who venture into the dark starkness of the Abyss within and without. And thus the synthesis of these and other things which is the prehension of wisdom.

This living has been an ecstatic affirmation of existence ~ a self~surmounting. The goals striven for were for the most part irrelevant: what was important was the striving for **something** with a passion. For in such striving, in the action in the world so entailed in the striving, there was an intensity which captures the immortal and which re-presents the spirit of Satanism: that heroic defiance which is the essence of all conscious evolution and thus civilization itself.

Such exultation is dangerous. By its nature it is individual. It is anathema to those forms and structures which suck vitality and which by their very existence, level individuals down and break or try to break their spirit. It is Heresy. It is testing ~ some become possessed; some perish; some are broken in spirit and descend to the mediocrity of the majority; some are caught in the snares left by those who adhere to those things which suck vitality (such as religion and 'law' and ethics). But some few survive and prosper and thus inspire others to venture out where no one has dared to go before. And of those few who survive, there are some who can express in words or other mediums (like music) what they have felt, and experienced and learnt ~ in a way which is easily understood. These few are the really dangerous ones ... It amuses me ~ and has amused me - when I come into contact with modern, self-professed 'Satanists', be such people a part of some 'Temple' or 'Church' or 'cult', or be they working on their own. With a few notable exceptions, these people are ridiculous - for them, Satanism is an intellectual philosophy, a collection of rituals, and/or an anarchic attitude. For them, it is an object of study, and involves meetings, discussions. For them, it is communal, and involves 'ethics' and/or a religious approach and attitude. For them, it is a glorification of their ego and a wallowing in the pleasures and wealth this existence can offer: an excuse for self-indulgence and lack of self-discipline.

In reality, Satanism is an attitude to living - and an attitude foreign to these mostly urbanized people who profess to be Satanists. Satanism means living one's life in a certain way - achieving things, in the real world by one's own efforts and because one is exulting in existence itself consciously. That is, one's life is intentional - a striving toward a higher existence by practical deeds, by overcoming challenges which take evolution to new realms. A Satanist strives to change themselves ~ and then the world itself. They desire glory, fame ~ to be significant. They are not content, and even when a goal is achieved, there is the need to find and strive toward another goal, another way of living. There are always new experiences awaiting - new levels of achievement.

A genuine Satanist needs action ~ they need challenges, because they possess within themselves the 'fire of Satan', that vitality which is the quintessence of living. This vitality shows in their eyes, their character - it is evident in their deeds.

Fundamentally, one becomes a Satanist by acting like one - by doing Satanic deeds. A Satanist of some experience would say one and more of these things: "I have experienced combat; I have killed, watched comrades die. I have loved and hated. I have discovered something for the first time. I have been alone for months, bereft of most things, and thus come to know myself. I have faced my own imminent death, not once, but many times. I have achieved things with my body I thought not possible. I have exulted in overcoming physical, intellectual and psychic challenges. I know the passion that motivated Beethoven, van Gogh, Nietzsche, and I know the feelings and greatness of Caesar, Adolf Hitler and Alexander the Great ... I have heard the music of the galaxy and the stars and planets within it. I have been in a Prison

cell and known the meaning of freedom. I have culled human dross. I have done criminal deeds - to learn and defy."

Of course, these things are only examples - there are many more. What is important is that they express real experiences of a dangerous or learning kind: they breed character; they test. They are selective. They are the type of deeds done by individuals with spirit - the type of understanding such an individual possesses, if only intuitively at first.

A Satanist will live life on the edge - will take up a profession which allows him or her to excel in deeds of action or creativity or exploration, or all of these. They will become experts in their chosen fields - and these fields by their nature will require persons of character and inner strength who prefer to work alone. Fields like assassination; Special Forces; Political manipulation... And then, having achieved, they will move on - to new ways and deeds. Or perchance they will die, defiant to the end.

Whatever, their quality of living will far surpass that of the weak majority. Their experience of both the dark and the light will be deeper, more extensive, and thus will they possess a greater insight, a greater understanding, a real depth of character.

In contrast, the self-professed 'Satanists' will be shallow - all talk, with little or no real experience of living on the edge. They shy away from real self-effort, from real self-overcoming, and build fantasy worlds in which they find comfort. They need the company of others, as they need their ego to be massaged by what they regard as their 'Satanic peers'. They talk an awful lot with others about Satanism, and probably, having learnt a lot of 'theory' from books and various organizations, write their own 'Satanic' rituals which they perform with the glee of the necrophiliac.

Some of these denizens of psuedo-Satanic organizations and cults will indulge in anarchic behaviour to impress themselves and others. But by so doing they reveal a lack of character - for a genuine Satanist possesses nobility and a self-discipline that others seldom understand.

Imitation Satanists make excuses -and devise theories to explain their lack of Satanic deeds in the real world. They have seldom if ever changed themselves to something greater than what they were at Initiation, and they most certainly have not changed the world in any way, significant or insignificant. They have achieved no glory - discovered nothing new; not extended the frontiers of understanding by even one micron. Instead, they wallow in obscure doctrines and consume the drug of self-delusion. To be brief, they have not composed a Satanic song which illustrates their life. They labour, but in vain - *Poeta nascitur, non fit*.

Most Satanists cannot publish an autobiography, or even have a biography which relates their life in detail while they still live, for the simple reason that it would probably render them liable to prosecution by those asinine guardians of the even more stupid system of 'Law'.*If this threat does not exist, then their life has not been Satanic enough. And, moreover, that life is never completed until causal death - something written at a certain age, should be out of date within a few years. If it was not, then again the full Satanic promise of one's existence has not been fulfilled. The time for the publication of such writings is after the causal death of its subject - although an expurgated version may serve a purpose, for some replete with experiences who wish to express the essence and inspire others to follow and then surpass them.

In my own case, I have written a brief recollection of some of the experiences of my Satanic life, for posthumous publication. But even in that MS, there were many things not recalled, perchance the MS falls into the wrong hands before the right time. Such a recalling - of dark and occasionally ecstatic deeds, most of them "illegal" and all of them "heretical" in this purblind society - will have to await my twilight years and a recounting of them to a trusted Satanic comrade. And even though the MS was written only two years ago, it is already out of date ...

And of that living, it is the essence which is important, not especially the details. From that living, I have distilled the quintessence into words which cannot be misunderstood - devising a method by which others may obtain that elixir. I have constructed a guide to the goal, drawn a map and explained the goal in detail, because I have been there. I explored, and discovered.

Now others can benefit from the lessons learnt from such a life. *Non generant aquilae columbas*.

Meanwhile, I anticipate the lies, rumours and distortions will continue, based on jealousy. The small and weak of character have always sought to drag those who are outstanding down to their own level of mediocrity - at least in the eyes of others.

* Plus the fact that most wish to continue their sinister esoteric work in secret, to aid the sinister

dialectic.

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Tradition of the Sinister Way
ONA (From **Hostia I**)

The essence of genuine Satanism can be simply stated: it is a way to inner development, the goal of which is a new individual. This way involves three essential stages and these exemplify the spirit of that way and the individuals who follow it.

The first is direct experience, the second is direct practice and the third self-development. The first involves direct experience of both the external 'world' and the inner (or psychic) 'world' through striving to achieve certain goals both practical and magickal. The second involves using 'practical' (or causal) and 'magickal' (or acausal) energies to manipulate others, situations and energies in a practical way - producing changes in accord with certain goals. The third involves beginning the process again but starting from the new level of self-understanding and ability attained - pursuing different (and probably more complex) goals.

A Satanist is an individual explorer - following in the footsteps of others (and perhaps using their guide books) but always seeking further horizons, daring to defy convention (in ideas as well as in morals and attitude) yet part of an evolutionary succession enabling what is experienced to be understood and become beneficial. For this reason, a genuine Satanist understands tradition as important and necessary - the culmination of centuries of insight and experience, a useful guide which enables further progress and exploration: a starting point for that inner and outer journey which is begun by Initiation, as well as a map of the way chosen and followed.

This tradition is not sacrosanct - but it does possess a validity until the individual reaches the stage where the unique genius within each individual has been brought to fruition enabling the creation (from experience and self-insight) of a unique way and a fulfilling of a unique Destiny. In magickal terms, this is the stage of Internal Adept, where that unique Destiny is made known (dis-covered) and where the individual Initiate has developed the talents necessary to fulfill it by a following of the previous stages - a stage reached from between three to five years after Initiation.

The tradition (explicated in the 'seven-fold sinister way') provides only a beginning - it is for the individual to go beyond it, toward the dangers and rewards of the Abyss. It is, however, necessary - since it is, in one sense, a 'short-cut': enabling self-development to be achieved far quicker than would be the case without it as well as fully enabling the explication of individual potential. This does not mean that following it is easy - the path may be shorter, but it is just as dangerous (and in some places, more so). It is a mountain path to the summit rather than a meandering valley path, and enables the horizon, the other mountains waiting to be conquered, to be seen - as they cannot be seen from the wooded valleys below. But each new Initiate must walk this path - alone. And for each it is a new experience, a process of direct learning and a personal achievement, for only a very few have ever ventured that way before and stood atop the summit that is 'Internal Adept' to see in the distance the still higher peaks that wait beyond the Abyss.

What is important is following that path - and going beyond it, toward the Abyss - actually undertaking the journey and experiencing in real time what is encountered and seen: of being taken to the very limits of your endurance and abilities. No one can do this for you - just as the path does not lead to some pleasant grove where you sit at the feet of some 'Master' listening to their past experiences and fables. It does not involve you staying comfortably 'at home' with the security of your known world and friends and ideas, just as it is not a 'mental' journey done in comfortable surroundings and with no physical effort or danger. It is practical, and direct - and involves physical and psychic hardship, and while you may be a little soft when you start, you will not be so when you succeed, just as if you believe you are tough enough now, you will be rudely awakened.

Is this what you really want?

- Order of Nine Angles -



Variations

Coire Riabhaich, ONA. 110yf

The Abbess sat silent, vaguely focussing upon the wheeling-scythe symbol that blazed above her place of worship. She wore a red robe in the old esoteric style, which bore the seven pointed-star of her predecessors. In wearing this robe - as opposed to the black cosmic mantle of the Religion - she had hoped to hear once more the sinister songs that had guided her through youth and the long years that followed. Even the wordless chant she had just performed could only bring echoes of the Desire that had moved her people through the ages.

Her time had come and gone - or so she felt in that moment, for she was trapped then in the cage of her flesh. The destruction wreaked by The System had lessened her strength, and all she felt was a terrible weariness, and an urge to pass away through the veil of sleep.

On this April night of 168 year of fire, the horizon was orange with flame, and it was only a matter of time before the forces of tyranny came to destroy all she had built up. Once, there was hope as a spirit began to break the chains that bound - once, a flourishing of glory as there had been long before, when Nature blew life into dying embers. But again, the same jealousy, pettiness and greed took root amongst the proud.

The Religion had unleashed a force that she believed was unstoppable, but as always, honour was torn down by the dishonourable means of others. She sighed then, and chose not to listen to the faith that could not be bred out of her Being.

Vron was one of the few survivors. The rest of the Legion had finally been cut down during the heroic and prolonged assault on the State's military bases. Those left had scattered in different directions after first vowing to join forces again one day, knowing secretly that they would never live to do so.

Vron and his comrades had fought in the honourable ways of combat against a foe who outnumbered them with weapons of abhorrent and detached destruction. Not one comrade held back from meeting a glorious death, for their spirit of honour was the greater cosmic force. Each warrior knew that someone, somewhere, some time, would

remember their deeds, and thus from the seed of remembering the gift to act would be passed on.

A part of him was anguished at not having joined his brothers in death, but Vron felt that Fortune had perhaps spared him for an important task. Thus he staggered, wounded, to the Abbey that stood in a moorland valley, in an enclosure where yellow flowers bloomed and the slate remains of a school from ancient times still cast uneasy presences.

His wounds were cared for by the Sisters there, and within a few hours of his arrival, the vigour of his spirit had returned. The Abbey seemed darker than when he remembered it as a child, and that once luminous silence was no longer suffused with reverence, but with a waiting for death. He was disturbed, for in the one place that always embodied belief, there now seemed loss. Imbued still with the purification of war, was he, Vron of the Legion of 18, the only shining beacon of Faith in this holy place?

The night was clear and frosty, and he walked into the grounds beyond the gardens that provided the food for the Abbey. Here, by the river that flowed from the hill some miles away, Vron could commune with the forces he venerated. Presently, he was joined by the Abbess - unexpectedly, since she had long since abandoned walking beyond the earth that she had fashioned with her Sisters. But they both refrained from comment, since the days they now found themselves in were dark and extraordinary, and pregnant with Change.

The Abbess broke their silence: "The commitment to our Way is waning, despite our slow and patient nurturing - and our prayers." She did not seem to notice, as Vron did, the uncanny bark of a fox somewhere in the distant hills. "Despite my years, wisdom still seems elusive. Is it only the fervour of youth that keeps your faith alive?"

Vron, battle-scarred, felt both embarrassed and annoyed that the woman who had been for so long the sacred keeper of the flame should be seeking answers from him - should be oppressing him with her doubts. In that moment, the torch of Faith had been passed into his hands, and he did not know how to respond.

He stood, avoiding her gaze, watching instead the changing contours of the river and seeking strength and truth from the flow. Vron began to relate the events of the 29th assault, as though reporting to a senior officer. A part of him was secretly relieved that, in relating the details in his detached and dignified manner, no such doubts stole into his spirit. His was a tale of inspiration, of the very essence of all that he and others had created, fought and died for. There was nothing but purity in his words.

When he finished, the Abbess looked down into the water, and remained silent. Vron assumed then that his tale of new warrior gods must have moved her towards the answers she sought.

"Such sacrifice ..." the Abbess eventually said, her voice strained by emotion. "And all for nothing. Perhaps it is time for those left to re-consider their tactics ..."

Vron was genuinely shocked. Suddenly, he stood alone with the realisation that, despite all the words and deeds and comradeship, the so-called best of his race still did not understand. From that moment, he knew what he had to do. It was not hard for him to turn and walk away into the night, away from what he now detested most. The Abbess felt her emotion break as she allowed the young man to turn his back on her, and disappear.

The pain of his wounds increased as he stumbled over heather and marshy clumps of grass. Vron was following the river upstream, allowing the reflection of stars in the water to pull him towards his destination. Occasionally, his boots would crush the rancid bones of sheep who had staggered to the river to drink their last.

Dawn was still over an hour away, as were the advancing army who came to destroy in the name of money. He had to press on; he would not allow them to prevent him from fulfilling his Destiny.

Eventually, he reached the old stone track, and travelled onwards, swifter and easier. On the horizon, the inky silent hills marked by barrows watched his fevered endeavour. The track rose then dipped, then rose: he was very near now, but could not relax until the location was reached. Breathing became painful, and he grew angry at how, despite the years of training, the shell of his body could never match up to the desire of his spirit.

He took the small track off to his right, and ascended the hill. For a time, he felt lost, but trusted his instinct to guide him: he began to run, in and over the heather, throat constricting as he desperately sought a glimpse of the pool.

And there he found it, the cosmos reflected in its stillness. Vron sat for a short time by the reeds, and allowed himself a quick scan of the night sky. As his heart-rate returned to normal, he walked to where the river undramatically emerged from the earth, in wet patches, to gradually form itself over the slate of the wilderness slopes. Here, Vron knelt, and waited, on this night the battle had spared him for.

Unable to sleep, the Abbess had retreated to her study and shut out the now evident disintegration of Abbey life. She could no longer soothe the concerns of her Sisters; drained of feeling, she surveyed the uselessness of the books that surrounded her. Her gaze came to settle on the land beyond the window, and then locked, with apparent renewed purpose, upon the constellations.

She felt a music shape within her, a life-flow she had not felt - or not listened to - for many years. She was suddenly filled with the desire to compose; not the ponderous and expected "Stellar Cantatas" that were becoming her trademark, but a new, wordless form: a liquid, changing movement of bell-like notes - a weaving, joyous cosmic

tapestry ...

The genius of creativity moved her in a frantic search for blank manuscript. She found some amongst the notes for a proposed book on religious observances. Days before, this project was to be her great legacy to the world, but now it fell scattered across the room.

The Abbess likewise thrust all other irrelevancies off her scriptorium, and sat down to give form to her revelation. The first few notes leapt onto the paper. She debated, then altered the rhythm. She paused and looked down at the flat paper and the scribbles of lifeless pencil. It briefly occurred to her then, that her attempt was like the building of her Abbey: to house that which could not be contained ...

This insight did not remain, but disappeared beneath a heavy wave of futility. The Abbess sighed, blew out the candle on her table, and returned to gaze abstractedly at the cold and impossibly distant stars.

The pain had become dulled by the cold of water that seeped about Vron's knees. A strong wind was now blowing, but the sky remained clear. Behind him, spotlights began to invade the small valleys.

There were no more words in his mind, no longer any elation, or outrage. He listened only to the wind, its message needing no interpretation. Around him was all that ever was and all that would ever continue to be, and the follies of the unwise that moved a youth such as he to act, would fade and be forgotten. He held in cold hands the stagshorn of his Honour Knife.

The cosmic wheel, printed over his heart, shone out from the black of his uniform. It was in its centre that Vron positioned the blade.

He looked up to the yearning stars, and pushed the Knife in.

In this pre-dawn of April 30th, there were only the stars, the river, and the wind whose song needed no interpretation.

- Order of Nine Angles -

A Satanic Revealing
ONA, 1994eh.

[*What follows is an extract from a letter written by a member of the ONA to an enquirer. It is reproduced here because it further reveals the real nature of Satan and Satanism, and counters the claims of those who do not comprehend the genuine esoteric significance of the Sinister Way.*]

Several years ago, in various letters to David Austin [Temple of Set] and to others, Stephen Brown explained that **one** of the reasons why the ONA published various articles was to be *adversarial* - to counter what was becoming the "accepted" version/view of Satanism. This "accepted" version was that promulgated by both the Temple of Set and the Church of Satan. We, in the ONA, knew this version was basically imitation or pseudo-Satanism - a playing at 'wizards' by often pretentious pseudo-intellectuals or those without any real insight/intelligence and thus without any real personal *character*. These two groups, their members, and others imitating them, had tried to make Satanism tame and safe - there was an awful lot of talk, an awful lot of writings, and awful lot of 'rituals'. But there was little or no Satanic/sinister/dark **action** undertaken in the real world.

To counter this pseudo-Satanism we published or made available various articles and manuscripts - not specifically to "teach" anything or even to gain members. Rather, to engender controversy; to create a reaction. This is the dialectic of change: thesis-antithesis-synthesis; yin-yang-Tao. Called by whatever name or names, the process is the same. Thus, an 'alternative' version of Satanism was presented, and an 'alternative' history or mythos. It was and is up to each and every individual who reads our material or who comes into contact with us, to work things out for themselves. The effort, the challenge, is theirs and theirs alone. Such things - like words themselves (or even mathematics!) - were and are a means, to be used to go beyond them. Those who do or did have the ability to see or understand the real intent/purpose behind such things, [and who could often "read between the lines" or realize there were some things we did *not* say] might go further, and actually begin a real quest along the Left Hand Path, and so develop themselves and perhaps contribute to evolution. Those who could not or would not see or understand, were and are irrelevant anyway. The actual 'truth' or 'reality' of, for instance, the alternative mythos/derivation/history propounded by us, was and is irrelevant. One of the things that is important about such things, is that they are 'alternative'. Those who cannot understand this are not important.

Part of our detestation of groups like ToS was because of the religious type of mentality of those groups - trying to make Satanism into some sort of religion, with 'infernal mandates', or into a personal cult, with a 'leader' idolized and lionized. We know these are the anti-thesis of Satanism - they are, in effect, Nazarene versions of 'Satanism', as is the enervating wallowing in 'horror', death, *decadence*, egotism and so on, which is often (falsely) associated with Satanism.

All these things, however, were for that one intent, mentioned at the beginning. There were others reasons behind the other material what has been published or made available by us. *One* of these was to offer some individuals the chance to attain a genuine sinister/Satanic Adeptship and beyond - to give them an opportunity to begin and advance along the path, and so for them to not only change themselves but, by interaction, to change others and 'society' itself. In effect, to 'presence' [or 'draw forth'] sinister/Satanic forces via these individuals because of the lives/actions of those individuals. This was done because we considered the time was right (judged by what we call our aeonic strategy) for there to be more Adepts of our sinister tradition - beyond the few who had existed hitherto and who had always been taught on an individual basis, from Master/Lady Master to novice. In effect, by publishing all our material, we have given anyone the opportunity of striving for and attaining Adeptship and beyond. But of course, few will do this simply because the Way itself is difficult and dangerous - since each novice is required to actually undertake works of darkness in the real world in order that they can go beyond the illusions of 'good' and 'evil' and so discover that balance within them which is unique to each person, and which makes them part of an elite. It is this balance which is the essence of Adeptship - and yet there are several stages beyond even this attainment. Naturally, some who try never attain this - they may give up, defeated by their inner weakness; they may join another, safer group (it being easier to play at wizards and belong to a group like ToS); they may actually be overwhelmed by 'sinister' forces; they may fall foul of various stupid Laws of the country they reside in; and so on...

As I and others in the ONA have stated many times, our Way is quite simple. There are no mystifications, no 'teachings'. There is only a method which has been proved to work. If some

individuals want to try - fine; if they do not - fine. It is their choice. Whatever - there is Change; there is joy; there is the 'presencing' of 'sinister' forces on this planet; there is evolution, however slowly. In respect of politics, and similar things, such as 'race'. These are means, to attain or achieve certain goals. What is or may be useful in the history of an aeon (or in creating a new aeon) can and may be used. What matters is that there is and continues to be Change - a dialectic in operation; a generational or evolutionary force. That is, a presencing of what we describe as 'acausal' forces/energies. [In conventional terms, one might say - 'keep alive and aid, the Prince of Darkness'.] There is no abstract "truth" outside a particular aeon - what others regard as 'facts of history' (for example, in relation to race) are for us fundamentally irrelevant. What is important is mythos - creating a means or many means to move/motivate others so that these others make history, and thus change evolution. We have set various goals, the achievement of which will alter evolution, and change things forever. To achieve these goals, various things have to be done, and various means used. One has to be practical, not mystical, if one desires to create large-scale evolutionary change. Believing one can produce such changes, is very different from actually doing them. It requires real wisdom, a knowledge of those forces/things which move/change people, as individuals and en masse, and which create/change societies, civilizations and aeons themselves. In one sense, this is what being a genuine Master/Lady Master is all about - it can be and often is, great fun.

Our aims are our own. We are not concerned about the past - with claiming that we existed, long ago, and that various historical persons were part of us, and that we caused great change, or were responsible for spreading 'esoteric' knowledge. As far as I know, no famous (or even infamous) person belonged to us, as we were not responsible for large- scale historical changes/events. We have been simply a small number of individuals quietly and for the most part reclusively working to attain what we now understand as Adeptship, and beyond. What really concerns us, is the future. If I was inclined to be dramatic (and I seldom am) I might write that we will or can make certain futures real, for the potential to so create and make these real exists now, within some individuals - as a consequence of the history, the evolution, the civilizations, that have gone before. Certain possibilities now exist, for the first time in our evolution as a species. Whether or not these will be realized, is another question - but one of our aims is to try and make this so. In this respect, all other 'Satanic' groups are irrelevant, for they know nothing of these things, and thus have no insight into what (or who) 'Satan' really is.

What all this amounts to is that we do not use the ideas, jargon, terms, 'history', methods or whatever, of others. There is no reference point for us, on the Left Hand Path, because we are unique and genuinely independent. We are a coherent whole, and cannot be compared with any other group. Our ideas, methods, jargon, terms, 'history', and so on, will insinuate themselves into the fabric of this society and other societies. Indeed, this is already occurring. Furthermore, there will be more uniqueness - that is, more creativity, from within. Further developments, which will also work themselves, sometimes quite slowly (decades, and occasionally centuries), into the 'mainstream', thus producing changes, sometimes because of the adversarial dialectic of change. There is and will also be, a real presencing of the creative acausal energies by the very fact of our existence and continuing development.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Adeptship - Its Real Meaning and Purpose ONA, 1992eh

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 (* 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).

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 1/2 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. Aeonian 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.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Agios Lyceus

Chant (Ἁγίσιος)

Γ υ < Γ Λ Γ Γ < Κ υ Γ Η Γ
A — gí — os 2y — ce —

Λ Γ Λ < Γ Γ < < V I V < V
us — A — gí — o — s

υ ς Γ ς υ ς υ < υ ς υ ς υ ς
Ly ————— ce us

Concerning the Traditions of the ONA

For a long time, the traditions were divulged on an individual basis - from Master or Mistress to Initiate. An 'Order' as such did not exist. There was only, at any one time, a few Adepts who taught a few pupils over a long period of time.

It was not until the sixth decade of this present century that this pattern changed. Hitherto, the tradition was secret and secretive, and prospective pupils were subject to severe tests and ordeals, of a physical, mental and magickal nature. The traditions were oral, with one or two exceptions. These being concerned with certain magickal rituals and Esoteric Chant. But even these were written in code or in symbolic/magickal scripts devised to conceal them from non-Initiates.

The tradition itself concerned: a) certain rites and ceremonies of 'Black Magick' - e.g. The Ceremony of Recalling; The Sinister Calling; the Rites of Nine Angles [Note: These are later titles for what was without title]; b) certain beliefs/legends relating to the Dark Gods; c) certain methods which were believed to be necessary for the achievement of Adeptship [e.g. what later became known as the 'Grade Rituals']; d) certain esoteric knowledge e.g. Esoteric Chant, the septenary system of correspondences; e) certain practices of a sinister nature [described in MSS such as 'Culling'; 'Guidelines for the Testing of opfers'].

There was also a belief which later became known as 'The Sinister Dialectic of History' - an attempt to understand Aeons and the rudiments of what later became Aeonic Magick.

Occasionally, ceremonial rituals were undertaken for specific purposes at which most, if not all, those who belonged to the tradition participated in. Sometimes, this was so few that others had to be recruited, subject to the usual tests and so on. But this 'recruitment' was for a specific purpose, and was not general policy.

In the sixth decade of this present century this, however, changed - under the guidance of the Mistress who then represented the tradition. She formed several ceremonial groups, all autonomous. These, however, were never large, and the combined number of people in these groups never exceeded thirty. A few of the individuals so recruited came from existing Black Magick or Left Hand Path groups (such as the OTP, the Temple of the Sun, and the Black order). Due to this change, some structure was given to the tradition - and a name, in addition to those already existing which served to identify the adherents of this tradition. The existing descriptive names were 'traditional Satanism, the septenary system, and hebdomadry. The new name, adopted by the Mistress, was the Order of Nine Angles. The autonomous groups also adopted their own names, as sub-Temples within the order. One of these was 'Camlad'; another was 'The Temple of the Sun' (nearly all the members of what had been called by this name had joined the ONA).

Over the next few years, Order sunedrions were held, and ceremonial Initiations undertaken. This continued for some more years, after the Mistress had retired. Her decision was the result of a sinister strategy - to undertake specific acts of sinister magick of a ceremonial kind; to increase the number of genuine Adepts and create temporal forms to direct certain magickal energies and so provoke certain changes, preparing the way for the next stage.

However, the reality was somewhat different from the theory. Some quality had been lost. There was a concentration on the external aspects of magick as against the internal and the aeonic. Accordingly, after some more years, the person who then represented the Order, disbanded the groups, and returned to traditional methods. The methods themselves were refined and extended, and it became the practice for External Adepts to form and manage their own Temple, with complete freedom. Further, a decision was taken to gradually make available all the traditions of the Order together with the new techniques developed.

The new techniques included 'The Star Game'. The Grade Rituals were revised, and further methods developed, together with a comprehensive theoretical system to explicate the true nature of both the methods and magick itself. Thus, a purely practical system of training was created, which made Adeptship and the Grades beyond available to anyone. This system was called 'The Seven-Fold Way' [later 'The Seven-Fold Sinister Way']. The basis of this system was described in an Order MS entitled 'Naos'.

According to tradition, the traditions themselves, inherited by the present Grand Master from the Mistress who Initiated him, were said to be a survival of what has been called 'The Third Way of Magick'; a survival from the civilization which flourished in Albion. These traditions were limited to a

certain geographical area. This was bounded in the north by the Stiperstones; in the West by the Long Mynd; in the east by that neolithic pathway now known as the Kerry Ridgway; and in the south by the river Clun.

This, however, is only a tradition, with no direct evidence to support it.

Such, briefly, is the 'history' of the ONA. At present, the function of the Order is to: (a) guide suitable individuals towards and beyond Adeptship; (b) work Aeonic magick in accord with sinister strategy; (c) implement, via various tactics, that strategy.

One tactic used over the past few years, is making the tradition itself accessible, as well as the new developments which have extended and refined that tradition, forming the practical system mentioned above.

ONA 1990 eh

[Editorial Note: I know that the history from the late sixties, as explained above, is factual, since I participated in it. As to what went before - e.g. the handing on of the tradition from Master/Mistress to pupil over a long period of time, and the association of the area mentioned with the tradition - I have only the word of the Mistress who Initiated me. While I am still inclined, after all the intervening years, to accept her word, there remains no proof, or at least none of which I am aware. All I know is that she taught me a great deal of esoteric knowledge, unavailable at the time in any published books or accessible manuscripts. This knowledge included Esoteric Chant (qv. 'Naos'), the septenary system of correspondences, and the teachings divulged in the MSS 'Culling - A Guide to Sacrifice'; 'Guidelines for the Testing of Opfers'; 'A Gift for the Prince' etc.**

Each person must make their own assessment.

AL

Other knowledge imparted included the Dark Gods mythos (as explicated in the MS 'The Dark Gods' and 'HP Lovecraft and the Dark Gods'), the esoteric meaning of the Nine Angles (as explicated in the MS 'The Secrets of the Nine Angles' - the MS 'Nine Angles - Esoteric Meanings' gives a recent extension of the symbolism), and some ceremonial rites (explicated in 'The Black Book of Satan').

- Order of Nine Angles -

Crowley, Satan and the Sinister Way
Order of Nine Angles
Extracted from *Hostia*, Volume One. ONA, 1992eh.
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In one sense, the work of Crowley may be said to be a restoration of various chthonic mysteries of mainly Sumerian origin. Thus the importance in the cult of Thelema attached to Set/Shaitan/Satan - an attempt to re-integrate into the consciousness of the individual the duality represented by the formula LASH TAL.

However, despite the many claims, Crowley did not inaugurate a new Aeon. His restoration is simply a restoring of something long dead - a kind of necromancy, and as a magickal force the cult of Thelema might as well not exist.

In the exoteric sense, 'Shaitan' represents those instinctive levels that are often, in our modern society, repressed in the individual - and Satanic rituals of either the traditional kind or the kind based on the use of sexual formulae, are a means of catharsis: a beginning where consciousness is prepared and liberated from the restrictions implicit in ordinary life. In practical terms - and for the civilization of the West whose dominant religion and ethos has hindered by its distortion all that is natural in terms of sex - this often means participation in rituals such as those given in 'Codex Saerus' or Crowley's Gnostic Mass or some form of sexual working. Such participation restores the balance that is often lacking.

Yet such a participation is only a beginning - and the ritual forms of such a participation are only a means. They are means to experience and if correctly undertaken should provide the individual with an understanding of that aspect of their personality which has been symbolized as Satan (for men) and Lilitu/Darkat (for women) - the darker, sensual side. Such an understanding is personal in the sense that the personality of the individual is involved, and the perspective achieved is usually that of the life, or Destiny, of the individual in relation to his circumstances and other individuals. That is, there is little concern with or appreciation of, the forces of an Aeon - other than perhaps some vague 'intellectual' understanding: or what is thought of as understanding.

This re-integration of the darker aspects - whether it occurs through participation in rituals or via other techniques of magick - is represented, in the septenary system, by the three lower spheres of the Tree of Wyrð (Moon, Mercury and Venus) and these spheres symbolize the three stages of that re-integration - that is, Calcination, Separation and Coagulation to use alchemical terms. It is during the next stage that the individual who is following a planned and practical magickal way gains both cultural and Aeonian perspective. This enables an understanding of the relationship existing between the individual and their unique Destiny and those forces which are symbolized by a magickal formula or 'word' and which represent a particular Aeon.

Such an understanding (associated with the fourth stage - the sphere of the Sun - and the fifth stage, Mars) derives or has its foundation in, a rational approach and usually involves the individual studying Aeons, civilizations and the relations between them.

However, the system of Crowley, as well as the many systems deriving in whole or in part from his work, never arrives at this stage because it has (a) set the formulae of sexual magick above everything, and (b) negates with its approach the rational analysis required. The same is true of other magickal systems involved in the 'darker' side and which try in some way to let the individuals following them experience their own shadow nature. An integration and thus understanding of this nature - enabling the individual to build upon the foundations thus achieved - of necessity implies the development of those qualities such as reason, logic and scientific understanding, which Crowley et al have abandoned. Yet this development does not imply a mish-mash of Occult and pseudo-scientific concepts such as 'quantum mechanics' and 'relativity' - an unstable amalgam currently fashionable in certain circles. Rather, it implies the development of the mind and a certain way of thinking.

On both the esoteric and exoteric levels, the most significant step so far in the evolution of our consciousness has been the development of rational analysis and its extension as the scientific method. The acceptance of this method (which does not preclude an acceptance of the forces with which magick deals) implies a certain 'view of the world' and a personal approach to living: a way, which is at once cautious, generally optimistic and open and enquiring. This 'view of the world' or way of thinking derives from the ancient Greeks - it is expressed in their early philosophy (i.e. before the decline

represented by Plato), in their religious attitude and in their way of living. It is essentially the same attitude exemplified by Western paganism, and it is the antithesis of that view and way represented by the religion of the Nazarene. The religion of the Nazarene inverts all natural values - as Nietzsche understood. Thelema, and similar beliefs, negate, as Nazarene philosophy and life does, that natural spontaneity which is the essence of this pagan 'view of the world' - because Thelema ties the mind in knots of obscurity and metaphysical speculation (as the qabala in general does) it briefly frees the spirit only to weigh down the spirit with the chains of its own metaphysics.

The true ethos of the West - which the religion of the Nazarene distorted and supplanted - may be signified by the word 'Azif' and the symbol of the sunwheel; it is pagan in essence. The ethos of the West (which derives from the present Aeon's force or 'current' first established c. 500 AD) is not and never has been patriarchal in the sense that Crowley and his followers believed - such a 'patriarchal' ethos representing the distortion imposed upon the original ethos by the Nazarenes. That Crowley and others were unaware of this is indicative of how far removed Thelema is from genuine esoteric tradition. Esoterically, the genuine Western ethos is symbolized by that force which has become known as 'Satan' or Lucifer. Exoterically, this represents the desire to know which has attained its greatest manifestation in modern science and exploration.

An analysis of Aeon's forces indicates that the present Aeon has, on the practical level - i.e. in terms of its effects on the vast majority of individuals who because they have not been liberated by Occult Initiation are swayed to external influences - about three centuries more to run. During this time, the distortion of the current caused by the Nazarenes and their allies may or may not continue - depending on how certain Initiates use certain powerful magickal forces. Whatever, the 'New Aeon' (the sixth out of the seven that mark our evolution) will have its beginnings on the magickal level within the next few decades - although on the practical level it will be about another three centuries until the effects are apparent. This new Aeon will have no 'word' and its magick will be the magick of 'Thought', that is spontaneous empathy. One of the most fundamental facets of this new Aeon will be the development of a symbolic language, which extends the frontiers of thought. Such a language is already prefigured in the Star Game - just as the Star Game itself was prefigured in traditional Alchemy. Another facet of the new Aeon will be the emergence of a new type of individual: a type outlined by Nietzsche. This new individual will be fierce, free (of both external and internal/psychic influences), exult in exploration and discovery and possess an essentially pagan attitude to life. It is and has been one of the aims of genuine sinister Orders to produce such individuals - by having their Initiates follow the seven-fold sinister way. What has happened over the past fifty or more years is that the distortion of the Western ethos - and thus the genuine Aeon's current - has increased. Part of this increase is, in fact, due to Crowley and those who have followed him and his system without really understanding what they were doing. The genuine Western esoteric tradition - as distinct from what most Occultists wish to believe is the 'secret tradition' - has no connection whatever with the qabalah, or Egyptian mysteries and symbolism, and neither does it employ in any way the sorcery of 'grimoire magic' and the forms once appropriate to now dead Aeons be such forms Sumerian, Babylonian, Egyptian or whatever.

The basis of the Western tradition was and always has been rational in the sense that those who carried on its tradition sought to understand themselves, the world and the cosmos in a detached manner - free from religious/political dogma. That is, to understand things as those things are in themselves: without the projection of beliefs and ideas... To this end, the septenary system was evolved, and the 'mysteries' expressed in abstract symbolism (of which Alchemy was one form). The essence of the Western tradition was not some 'great secret' or 'hidden knowledge' to be revealed to Initiates only - rather, it was the belief that everything in the cosmos could be understood if one probed, investigated or thought enough about it. That is, the cosmos was seen as a natural order into which individuals could gain insight. From this insight, a new individual would emerge: a more conscious, evolved, person.


The tradition thus encouraged the development in the individual of empathy via personal experience: an experiencing of all aspects of our own nature as well as the worlds within and without. Thus were the 'magickal/Occult' faculties themselves developed. The way of this tradition was essentially practical - exemplified by the Grade Rituals, tasks and so on of the seven-fold way. There was no speculative metaphysical system, no acceptance of irrational fears and beliefs, no subservience to someone else's personal mythology.

The new Aeon should be a continuation of the process which the genuine Western tradition began. Yet it is possible that this new Aeon may never emerge. The distortion of the Western current does and has represented a desire by some to return to what may be described as an aspect of the Babylonian ethos.


This aspect gave rise eventually to not only the poison of Nazarene philosophy and religion, but also to the many political and social systems and ideas founded in the 'view of the world'. There is, at this moment in time, a very real magickal conflict occurring between two forces - those representing (whether consciously or not is immaterial) this Babylonian/Nazarene ethos, and those representing the genuine Western (and thus 'sinister') tradition. On the outcome of this conflict the next Aeon depends - there will be either the new Aeon with the blossoming of the individual and the development of consciousness giving thus a liberation from the tyranny of religion and politics, or a return to those essentially patriarchal dualistic values where impersonal ideals/ideology have precedence over the individual. Every act of genuine sinister magick is a step toward the new Aeon. Thelema is a step back into the past - as are other systems which lack the empathy, that experience and then transcendence of the sinister brings.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Diabolus

D 
di-es i-rae, di-es illa, Solvet saeculum in favil-la:









Dies Irae, dies illa
Solvat saeculum in favilla
Teste Satan cum sibylla.
Quantus tremor est futurus
Quando Vindex est venturus
Cuncta stricte discussurus
Aperiatur stella et germinet
Atazoth.

Makrokosmos
ONA 1997eh

Satanic reasoning, and the judgment of a 'thing', derive from direct personal experience. Thus, for the Satanist, there can be no real understanding of something until that something is *lived*. Before then, understanding is merely academic, relying as it does on the validity of sources other than one's own experience. An understanding of a form cannot be acquired through academic research, since one never lives the form - there is only observation within the comfort and confines (morally and otherwise) of one's own life, in the same sense as a play or a film is viewed by an audience. For the most part, the student is free to be convinced or not by the evidence studied - there is still the freedom, consciously and unconsciously, to believe whatever one feels comfortable in believing. All there is, is 'opinion'.

With regard to a form which possesses spirit, *élan* [such as National-Socialism], there can be no crossing over from the life of the academic into that form via academic study, because the form so 'studied' is a living one; it cannot ever be really known through words and ideas (such as 'politics'), archaic folk-tales - or even Art and Musick. It is a revolution of the *soul*, and as such, true understanding via which a reasoned judgement may be derived, can only be developed by living that revolution; by experiencing the reality of those forces as those forces are - by, essentially, living beyond the confines of one's own self.

With this living, the life of the individual, both inner and outer, is effected and changed by the experience because the experience is dynamic and direct - it disrupts, and unlike a book which can be dosed and put away, it lives within and without the individual every second of that experiencing. There is a deeper understanding gained whereby the force that motivates such a form is fully apprehended, and thus, the various causal manifestations (or 'histories'), are understood from the context of the essence, and are placed in perspective without the interference of contemporary morality and social sensitivity. Essentially, this dynamic method of understanding is the only method relevant to a form that possesses *élan*. This approach to learning may invalidate the methods by which the majority seek to establish their right to learn and so judge - but that is the reality. One either approaches learning as a consumer via the 'definitive', established approach (ie. investigation solely via the respected methods of academic bodies - such as 'universities'), or one seeks the difficult - and sometimes dangerous path of challenging one's own reasons for believing (and living!) via practical integration with a particular form.

Of course, there are very few who would undertake this direct approach simply because, if they are being honest, they would not wish their lives to be so disrupted - and living life as, for example, a dangerous revolutionary is too frightening a prospect. For the Satanist, it is precisely these reasons which make such an undertaking necessary.

The development of Satanic reasoning is part of the purpose of the **Insight Role** (qv.). This alchemical method is very hard, as it requires the Satanist to believe in their role - and convince other non-Satanists of their sincerity via practical acts [it is no use just editing a (for example) National-Socialist journal - or writing learned articles for existing journals]. The role usually brings an alienation of occult comrades; family; other friends - sometimes the loss of personal freedom. It severely tests, and thus develops - or destroys - character.

This method is not, as some may perceive, solely a cynical/clever manipulation of a form for selfish ends, whereby all forms are regarded as merely means to be discarded when personally appropriate. An Insight Role teaches empathy. of forces that exist beyond the life of the Satanist, and how they influence the masses, contributing to the evolving of civilisations, etc. There is a real appreciation of the form so lived; an appreciation judged not solely from a 'Satanic/Sinister' - or socially conditioned - perspective, but according to the form as that form is, on its own "light" terms. The Satanist **is** and **is not** that role: an awareness that is, before Adeptship, quite difficult to live with - and is seldom, if ever understood by non-Initiates.

This is the meaning and purpose of Sinister Magick: to bring a *synthesis* via the conflict of opposites that exist within and without the Individual. This synthesis is the result of a practical journey, where this bifurcation must **still** be experienced if the forces that do still exist within the *psyche* of the Initiate are to be eventually understood, beyond intellectual apprehension, as 'abstractions'. Thus, the meaning of **Satan** and the purpose, for Individuals and Aeons, of the *Seven-Fold Sinister Way*: to undertake acts of **positive** opposition, 'blasphemy'; because without such acts of extreme defiance, there is no genuine inner liberation... and so shall it remain for many centuries to come (see *also Satanism, Blasphemy and the Black Mass MS*).

An Insight Role thus creates a real understanding of **Aeonics** - an understanding beyond the self, and thus the cultivation of the faculty of Reason, and the glimmerings of genuine Wisdom. As stated, without this (arduous) experience, there is a staying where one is - despite whatever level of intellectual esoteric apprehension gained - centered around a mostly self-indulgent life-style. Essentially, without *experiencing* this bifurcation, the psyche will not be changed, thus preventing it from travelling towards those realms that separate the Initiate from the Adept.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Manipulation I
Sinister Themes
ONA 1990 ev

It is a fact of external sinister magick that manipulation is necessary. There is manipulation of forms, images and magickal energies as well as direct and indirect manipulation of people. People manipulation can arise from many factors and be undertaken for many reasons. Initially, it is often done by Initiates because they wish or desire to revel in the feeling that such manipulation can and often does bring – a sense of power and re-enforcing of the ego: it creates a sense of self-identity and purpose, enhancing the "role" of Satanist/Black Magickian. Beyond this is the use by the External Adept of various roles - such as Priest or Priestess - which by their nature involve certain amounts of manipulation of others, e.g. in the running of a Temple or group. Experience brings skill - a learning from mistakes, and thus a more subtle approach. Instead of direct confrontation, there is a "flowing with" the other persons(s) and then a skillful re-direction of them: i.e. they believe they are acting freely rather than being manipulated. Beyond External Adept, there may be further use of such skills depending on the wyrd of the Adept. [See Appendix for one such form.] What all levels have in common is the acceptance of the belief that the magickal Initiate is superior to the non-Initiate: that others can be used to achieve personal/magickal goals. In the beginning, of course, this sense of superiority may be unfounded and mis-placed - arising from simple arrogance and self-delusion. However, if the Initiate truly learns, and really follows the hard path of internal magick, then this will be transformed into a reality, the External Adept having acquired the skill and begun the process of developing character: that which sets them apart from ordinary mortals. In addition, certain abilities will be developed (some connected with the 'Occult') and latent potential drawn forth - creating a new individual from the pre-Initiate one. The post-Initiate will realize the rather limited understanding of the majority and see them as swayed by all kinds of external and unconscious influences: in short, understand that they are not really free. They will be seen as directed and controlled in varying ways by various means – by archetypal forces within their own psyche, directly or indirectly by others and by ideas/forms/Institutions/ideology, as well as by the various patterns psychic energies assume (one of which is the ethos of the culture/civilization to which they belong). To the sinister Initiate this will be illuminating and also useful, providing opportunities for experimentation and self-learning, as for example via running a Temple. There is no morality here - only the judgment of experience: most people are consciously and esoterically not very well developed. In fact, they are still rather primitive. The Initiate takes a dispassionate view – although there will be times when direct involvement leads to emotional commitment/involvement, and thence to a self-learning from the experience(s), as must be in the progress from Initiate toward the other Grades. Initially, however, others are seen as a means. Gradually, there is a move away from this - from the direct, personal involvement to the more indirect and magickal: an internalizing. This brings awareness of the Initiate's own psyche and thus real understanding. There may be and mostly still is manipulation of others - but this has evolved from the random to the directed, centred on what the Initiate believes is his or her own destiny in magickal terms. The same applies to the manipulation of magickal energies - there is an evolution away from the undirected external type (which quite often arose from the unconscious - i.e. was not consciously understood) first to the internal as a process of internal magick, and then outward again but in a directed form, the direction arising from the magickal goals set, those involved in following the sinister path. In brief, there is an awareness of that balance which is so important for true Adeptship. This balance - for an External Adept - is expressed in the understanding, from experience [i.e. not "from book-learning"], that magick as a directed form is not always causal when used to assist the individual externally (and sometimes internally) - that is, it involves other factors which the individual, at the time of working/ritual, may not be aware of/in control of. In short - the illusion of having achieved control/mastery of all magickal forms by techniques, is broken. one of the factors involved in this is the wyrd of the individual; another is the wyrd of the Aeon; another – and perhaps the most important for the individual to understand - is the **nature of magick itself: no one who has not transcended beyond the Abyss can direct/control in a causal way all the divergent forms any magickal energy assumes in the causal.** Quite often, however, most of the divergences go un-noticed when "practical magick" is performed because the time-scale of those divergences is not the same as that of the effects which are or

become noticed by the Initiate/External Adept and which mostly are taken to be the "success/failure" of the working. Some of the divergences are or may be in themselves of no consequence to the individual undertaking the working - i.e. produce no discernible outward effects - and even when they or some of them are of consequence the Initiate/External Adept usually either ignores them or accounts for them in other, temporal, ways. A recognition of/sensitivity to the divergences begins the process that leads from External to Internal Adept: once again, practical experience is the teacher. It should be obvious that those which are of consequence (whether noticed or not) effect these acausal changes upon the individual due to (a) the wyrd of that individual and/or (b) the wyrd of the aeon. Thus the learning curve which magickal workings impart. In a sense, each Grade Ritual and the associated experiences imparts more ability to apprehend and thus control the causal manifestations - gives more skill at manipulation both magickal and of people (there is a stage when the two are understood as the same thing), as well as brings an awareness of the acausal effects beyond the time-scale of the working and its desire/results. The understanding of the limits (well, some of them!) often occurs following the solo Nine Angles rite by an External Adept - at first intuitively, and then more consciously. This begins the process of consolidation and leads either to further self-insight, return to self-delusion, or rejection of magick and the quest. For, in essence, the solo rite is a foretaste of the chaos of the Abyss - undirected acausal energy, the effects of which (i.e. what results from its presencing in the causal ["on earth"]) are mostly unforeseen and often unwanted, the ritual itself being so structured (or rather unstructured) that little or no direction is given for the energies - they flow and presense according to their nature, the individual being a channel. [Note: this is what happens to a greater or lesser extent in external workings by an Initiate/External Adept re the 'acausal component' of the working.] Thus, the wyrd of the individual to some extent directs and/or disrupts the flow, producing certain changes in the causal. The nature of these changes thus depends on that wyrd. Thus the essence of magick - and hence sinister manipulation - is glimpsed and then apprehended in most for the first time. This enables both the causal and acausal components of the energies accessed via a magickal working to be controlled and manipulated and thus presented in the causal, and it is this which marks the true Adept: the internal Adept possesses the understanding, and the Master/Mistress can make that understanding real.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Manipulation II

ONA 1990 ev

One of the fundamental principles of Black Magick is elitism: the belief that the majority are essentially beneath Initiates in terms of understanding, intelligence and ability. This gives the foundation for manipulation - both on the personal and the magickal level.

The Black Magick novice is generally scornful of others - until and unless worth has been proved or shown. However, as explained previously (Manipulation I) an experienced novice will have learnt the subtlety of manipulation: direct confrontation as a mode of manipulation will seldom be used (unless a person or group deserves to be so treated: or such an approach is magickally necessary). Instead, there will be the "flowing with" approach - manipulation without the person or persons being aware of it. Quite often, this approach is "psychological"; at other times it may be psychic (e.g. directly magickal) - or perhaps via the charisma of the magickian overpowering the personality of the person(s) in question. Whatever, there will be an arrogance based on the belief of one's own superiority - and thus an isolation. For a true Black Magickian is essentially a strong individualist who finds his or her own company preferable to that of others - unless those others can be useful in some way. That is, there is no dependence of any kind, particularly not emotional, on any other individual or individuals. This, of course, is what the novice strives to achieve. It cannot be achieved quickly - or even by "will" alone. Rather, it is a cumulative process - an alchemical change, a re-orientation of personality, and such changes take time.

In the seven-fold sinister way, these changes occur during the stage of External Adept and are a necessary prelude to the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept. One of the most important aspects of this change is that involving the companion - the initial emotional involvement gradually changing, ceasing to be a dependence but rather a partnership - a mutually evolved understanding; the passion (both sexual and emotional) which possessed the novice giving way to a maturity.

The arrogance of the Black Magickian is not an empty one: it is not a posturing. Instead, it arises from within: from the knowledge and insight the novice has gained into him/herself - by having achieved in both the personal and magickal sense. Thus the magickal and practical goals which are set for novices - they develop self-assurance, a pride and that arrogance which is truly Satanic. The training for and achievement of these practical goals usually takes the novice to the limits of physical and mental endurance - and this builds character in a specific way [or defeats the novice who gives up and either lets self-delusion triumph - "I don't need such things: they are out of date/unsuited to me; I have achieved enough anyway... - or abandons the magickal quest perhaps later to try another "method" (which is easier) or find another "teacher"].

Initially, this arrogance is outward and expressed by manner, attitude and perhaps appearance. Later, when Adeptship becomes achieved, it becomes cloaked - except in the eyes and in that charisma which marks a Black Magickian. Initial manipulation is often of the external kind - an adjunct to external magick - later, it becomes "internal" (concerned with the internal goals of the External Adept) and still later, aeonic (bound up with supra-personal, acausal energies). [qv. Deofel Quartet for examples of the various types appropriate to Initiate and External Adepts.]

- Order of Nine Angles -

Notes on Study and Practice in Modern Satanism

In traditional Satanism, the novice is expected to not only study the tenets and traditions of Satanism, but also put these into practice in real life. Thus, a recent Satanic Initiate - whether working alone or as a member of an established Order/Temple - would study the following works, and then strive to apply the principles contained in them in the way described.

The works are: The Black Book of Satan; Naos; Hostia - Vols. I, II, III; Hysteron Proteron.

'Naos' would be used as a guide to practical hermetic workings, both external and internal. The 'Black Book' would be used as a guide to forming and running a Satanic Temple to perform ceremonial magick. 'Hostia' and 'Hysteron Proteron' would provide an insight into Satanic traditions and beliefs. In addition, the images of the Sinister Tarot would be employed (e.g. in some of the workings given in 'Naos'), and the 'Deofel Quartet' might be read to provide additional understanding, together with The Black Book II and III.

Satanic practice in the real world would arise from (a) forming and running a Satanic Temple; and (b) undertaking Insight Roles and other Satanic tasks. Aside from a specific Insight Role, which the novice would choose, they would undertake the various physical challenges required [qv. the MS 'Adeptship - Its Real Meaning and Significance', for example] and strive to increase their experience by living Satanically in a way which aided the sinister dialectic. What these experiences were, they would decide after having studied the works mentioned and after having undertaken the tasks, ordeals and so on, up to External Adept [qv. 'Naos', and the various MSS guides to the Seven-Fold Way] e.g. having run a Temple for some months, and achieved the physical goals.

One of the tasks might be to plan and undertake a culling. Another might be to aid Heretical forms by, for example, becoming involved with an extremist group which seeks the destruction of 'the System' and whose principles and aims are in accord with the Satanic ethos and whose actions aid the sinister dialectic. [Obviously, both of these could be combined.] Another might be to undermine present structures by fostering their decline - e.g. dealing in drugs. Another might be removing in a practical manner on a regular basis, the scum and the worthless - e.g. by vigilante action [this is culling performed on a regular basis rather than a 'one-off' event].

What matters about these tasks is that the novice chooses them to gain practical experience of Satanism in action and thus increase their understanding and so aid their esoteric development. Naturally, to qualify as Satanic actions, they must aid the sinister dialectic - be steps toward realizing the strategic goal of Satanism. Here, an understanding of Aeonics is crucial, as is a genuine insight into traditional Satanism: as explicated, for example, in Hostia I, II, III and as explained to prospective novices in the booklet 'Satanism - A Basic Introduction for Prospective Adherents'.

The choice of practical action is the novice's: they must use their understanding to select Satanic tasks. Occassionally, they might be given advice, from a more experienced Satanist, but the final choices are and must be theirs. What matters is to choose and act. The acts are learning experiences, ordeals, and thus it does not matter if because of, say, a certain lack of understanding, a novice chooses, or seems to choose, wrongly. They will either learn from this, or not. If not, they have basically failed - shown themselves not to be suitable. Whatever, their actions will have presenced the sinister in some way or ways.

Following these tasks - which should last for a few years - the novice then moves on to the next stage of their esoteric development, that of the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept. This is a rite of synthesis, and thus the emergence of the Adept.

Ritual Magick:
Dure and Sedue Ceremonial
ONA, 1990eh.

Magick 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. 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/provoke/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/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/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 sedue one, and obvious/overt/harsh if it is a dure 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 re-presents 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 supreme works of magick. 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.

Satanism and Satanic Influence ONA

It is a fact - seldomly understood and appreciated - that most individuals follow the creative lead of a few. It is also true that some of this majority absorb the creativity of others and bring it forth again - sometimes slightly altered, to claim it as their own, and that this whole majority needs the stimulus of new forms, ideas, and ways, born via a creative genius or two - to vitalize them and begin the process of internal and external change.

The recent history of Satanism gives evidence for this. Various types of Satanism have emerged over the centuries, as have various exponents of it. Historically, Satanism is often taken to be - by those unacquainted with the Left-Hand Path - as Diabolism; that is, the invocation of the Devil and the making of a pact with Him. This is evidenced in the medieval Grimoires and in those who were accused of such things. Later, various individuals were regarded as 'Satanic' and as teaching a form of Satanism, the most familiar being Crowley. Still later, various organizations emerged, each claiming to be Satanic and each teaching what they regarded as authentic Satanism. The most significant of these are the Church of Satan (Anton LaVey), the Temple of Set (Michael Aquino) and the Order of Nine Angles (ONA).

DIABOLISM

Central to all forms is fear - of the powers, entities invoked. Hence the use of various forms of protection such as 'circles'. The 'pact', so familiar from the grimoires and accounts of Diabolism, was one between a master (the Devil) and a servant (the sorcerer). Implicit in all forms of Grimoire-type Satanism, is the belief (deriving from the Nazarene religion) of Satan as a fallen angel ultimately ruled over by 'God' - there is always the possibility of being 'saved'. The archetypal Diabolist was a lapsed or practicing Nazarene, whose conjurations brought excitement and a sense of the 'forbidden'.

CROWLEYISM

While 'Thelema', as a doctrine and belief, is regarded as many non-Occultists as 'Satanic', there is very little real Satanism in it, or indeed in Crowley's own life and works. The work of Crowley is, in many ways, a continuation of the Eastern-influenced esoteric groups and societies active before and during his own time - a type of Westernized Tantra, heavily imbued with qabalism. The archetypal follower of Crowley is someone versed in Occult doctrines and mysticism, who seeks through sex and other rites certain states of consciousness, and who is oriented toward a belief in Thelema as a new faith/creed.

CHURCH OF SATAN

The church achieved a high media profile due to the showmanship of LaVey. He expounded a philosophy of unenlightened egotism and self-interest, together with a belief in carnality. The rituals were in the tradition of the grimoires and imbued with qabalistic symbolism/notions (including some deriving from Crowley). Further, the Devil was dispensed with as an external power - making the LaVey type of Satanism more of a practical belief system than a dangerous (in Occult terms) undertaking.

TEMPLE OF SET

The Temple of Set was and is, essentially, an intellectual development of the Church of Satan. To the original was added an intellectual infrastructure (deriving in part from various mythologies and traditions) and an organizational structure with the aim of making Satanism a 'new' religion, acceptable to a significant number of individuals. Both the Church of Satan and the Temple of Set (The latter more so than the former) insist upon belief in their own version of Satanism - and expect the adherent/member to accept/conform. There is thus a fostering of dependence by the individual upon the group (and in particular, the leader[s] and Master).

ORDER OF NINE ANGLES

The Order first emerged into public view in the early 1980's (eh), and basically taught that Satanism was a means to attain self and Occult insight and abilities, and that this could only be done on an individual basis via direct, personal *experience*.

The archetypal CoS member was a black-robed figure who played a 'role', and who placed ego-fulfillment and pleasure before everything. LaVey was accepted as a 'Master' and an authority to be revered - and a personality cult developed. The archetypal ToS member is someone who has read a lot of Occult literature, who engages in discussions with others about their beliefs and practices, and who likes the charisma and appeal of being a 'Satanist'. Often they dress for the part - and need a group identity, a sense of 'belonging'. They also accept Temple authority and are content to let an organization confer advancement upon them (in the form of titles and positions).

The archetypal ONA member is the lone sorcerer/sorceress struggling - via practical (and sometimes

dark) experiences toward self-attainment, guided by the teachings of the Order, and by occasional meeting with someone who has gone that way before.

Each of the above manifestations will be considered in turn. But what, then, *is* Satanism? By what criteria can such a manifestation be judged? First, let us consider what Satanism is **not**. It is not an acceptance of conventional morality or ways of living; it is not a belief, or a faith, which causes a rejection of the reality (and harshness) of life; it is not a refuge for the failures, the cowards and the weak. Satanism is about pride, an acceptance of individual worth. It is about defiance - challenging the accepted, seeking to know the unknown and seeking to discover, to explore and conquer: a refusal to bow down or give in. It is about excellence - of going beyond what *is*, in personal terms; of achieving a greater awareness and understanding than the majority. It is a desire to experience the limits of living, *to strive for the gods...*

Diabolists are insipid, rather pathetic - a historical curiosity only: a footnote in the psycho-pathology of the Nazarene religion. Crowley was a rather under-developed egotist lack the character to develop real self-insight. He could and did manipulate others, and did possess some Occult powers (intuitively) and some understanding of the Art of Magick. His followers are trapped by the flaws of his system. - chief among which, are the self-stupefaction and self-satisfaction (and the thus the illusion of development), rather than real self-insight and thus Occult abilities.

CoS members (and to a lesser extent those of the ToS) accept a sanitized Satanism - a 'safe Satanism', where the Darkness is said to be only within, where it cannot threaten them. They also are stuck on the bottom rung of Occult understanding - seeing nothing beyond the confines of the ego and the carnal. The ToS claims to go further, but there is little or no practical experience of evil, of the Sinister, of those Dark Forces which are part of the Cosmos - there is instead an intellectualizing. There is also no going to extremes in living, no ordeals which challenge (and make) *character - no quest for personal excellence*. Instead, there is the security of an organization, the acceptance of Temple authority and mandates. In brief, the fostering of a type of mental servitude - in belief and in practise. All these are contrary to what Satanism is.

Only the ONA understands and practices Satanism *as it is*, insisting that Satanism is about individual self-development in both the real and Occult worlds, and that this can only be achieved by long, hard dangerous and toilsome *experience*. Furthermore, the ONA has exhibited a creativity and an understanding which makes all other manifestations pale into insignificance. Thus, it is not surprising that it has been so influential over the past few years.

This influence has, however, seldom been acknowledged - other groups and individuals often borrowing the teachings, methods and ideas and claiming them as their own, this 'borrowing' not being confined to 'Satanism' or LHP groups in general. This is both natural and necessary - given the sterility of creativity which exists and has existed in such groups, and given the nature of the human species in general, and the Satanic in particular.

The chief contributions of the ONA, toward an understanding of Satanism in particular, and the Occult in general, may be briefly described:

- 1) Satanism and the LHP (Left-Hand Path) as a means to individual development, leading to Adeptship and beyond - via practical experience and ordeals (qv. the grade rituals).
- 2) The emphasis on developing both the mental and physical character of the individual.
- 3) A greater understanding of Magickal (and Occult) forces - and thus their nature - via the development of the concepts of causal and acausal, and an abstract system to re-present this, enabling conscious apprehension (as opposed to belief and superstition).
- 4) The re-structuring of magickal symbols and forms in archetypal terms - in particular the Septenary Tree of Wyrd and the deofel Quartet (the latter explicating the archetypal, particularly in the 'real world' from the viewpoint of the Sinister Novice).
- 5) The creation of a Sinister Tarot whose images **are** Sinister, and thus imbued with Satanic energy.
- 6) Revealing and significantly extending Aeonic Magick - enabling any individual to undertake such works.
- 7) The emphasis on an individual Initiate working alone and achieving practical goals - without accepting in a religious way a higher authority - and making this achievable by all via the publication of practical guides to all aspects of Satanism (Naos, Codex Saerus, Sacramentum Sinistrum, Thernn, etc.).
- 8) Bringing an awareness of the Dark Gods - of the Sinister energies/forces which exist and

which have been symbolized by 'Satan'/the Devil...

9) An emphasis of the personal qualities - the character - of a Satanist, enshrined in the concepts of Excellence, Honour and the motto "die, rather than submit to anyone or anything".

10) A re-affirmation of the positive, life enhancing nature of Satanism as opposed to the stereotypical image of obsession with death and decay - a moving away from the image/role of the Satanist as a showman-type 'Devil'/Mephisto figure obsessed with carnality and pandering to his or her own weaknesses, and seeking media attention, toward the secretly-working lone sorcerer/sorceress concerned with their own development and works of esoteric Sinister Magick...

A perusal of literature, statements and other such causal forms by other groups and individuals, since the manifestation of the ONA, will show the extent of its influence - of how, in a subtle way, such individuals and groups have been changed by a Sinister organization. Such changes, and such influence, will grow, although it may well go unnoticed by all save the few genuine Adepts.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Satanism, Blasphemy and the Black Mass

[ONA 1974eh]

In one important respect, Satanism may be regarded by new Initiates as a catharsis - a means whereby individuals may divest themselves of those limiting roles that often are the creation of the ethos or ethics of the society in which those individuals find themselves.

Thus, in the past thousand years or so in Western Europe, one of the most important Satanic rituals, insofar as novices and 'the public' were concerned, was the Black Mass - simply because the ethos which outwardly ruled was the organized religion of the Nazarene. However, where genuine Satanism has been misunderstood is in the reason for this act of catharsis, particularly since the genuine Black Mass bears only a superficial resemblance to the 'black mass' described by various writers and 'authorities' over the last five hundred years or so.

For the Satanic novice [the first two stages of the seven-fold Satanic path] Satanism represents the dark aspect of the individual *psyche* - and by identifying with this, the individual is enabled, by the transformation that results, to begin the 'Great Work' whose attainment is the goal of the Adept. This 'Great Work' is simply the creation of a new individual - and this new type, by virtue of the path followed, often inspires in others a certain terror. Of course, the Left Hand Path is difficult, not to say dangerous, and failure often results because the person journeying along the path misunderstands how the dark forces may be approached, manipulated and most importantly integrated to enable an identification beyond both good and evil as these terms are commonly understood. That is, those who fail in their quest along this path [and Gilles de Rais is an example] often do so because they fundamentally accept the dichotomy of 'evil' and 'good' and identify with what they perceive or believe to be, 'evil' - this perception and understanding almost always deriving from what the 'opposition' have declared to be 'evil'. The reality is that this dichotomy does not exist in the cosmos - the convention of what is 'evil' has been imposed, by the projection of mostly Nazarene dogmatists, upon reality. In a fundamental sense, Satanism is a means whereby each individual can discover [or rather 'dis-cover' in the sense of Heidegger] the reality for themselves.

Hence, Satanic catharsis is essentially a blasphemy - but one ordered and with a definite aim; it results from an individual will channelled by a conscious understanding. It is this application of will - of conscious intent - which marks the genuine Satanist from the imitation and the failure. A Satanist revels in life - the failures find themselves trapped by their own unconscious desires which they do not have the intelligence to understand nor the will to direct toward a conscious apprehension.

Blasphemy is only effective if it is, for the period in which the individual lives, firstly a genuine shock and a reaction to those values which though accepted are often unconsciously accepted; and, secondly, if it is an appreciation of the positive and life-enhancing qualities inferred by infernal opposition. Thus, while the traditional Black Mass - with its denial of the Nazarene - is still useful because of the continuing constraints of Nazarene beliefs, it is today supplemented by a Mass which in its unexpurgated version represents a shocking blasphemy to the majority of peoples in Britain and other Western countries.

The Black Mass, and the modern Satanic masses which derive from it, in their genuine forms provoke an invigorating response through the very fact of *positive* opposition. Negative opposition - such as the so-called black mass described by Huymans in "La-Bas" - is enervating. True Satanic opposition - codified in a ritual - produces the exact opposite - a will to *more* life: and it is this positive, vital, will that is the essence of the genuine archetypal image of Satan, the adversary. Negative opposition - a wallowing in death, decay, horror and the filth of uncontrolled *décadence* - is a sign of imitation Satanism: a distorted image of the putrid corpse of the Nazarene.

One of the Satanic masses in use today is based on an evocation of Adolf Hitler - and not as something artificial, still less as a psychological 'game'. Rather, there is a genuine identification with the positive, life-enhancing, aspects of National-Socialism. [To most readers, this will be shocking - a blasphemy; which is exactly the point.] As with the traditional Black Mass, it is the stress placed on the positive, vital qualities of opposition that are important - *because these contradict in their very essence all that is assumed about what or whom the mass is concerned with*. Thus, in this particular Satanic Mass, Adolf Hitler is not represented as he is today portrayed by his opponents - as some sort of 'evil' monster - but as exactly the opposite, as a noble saviour.

Genuine ritual Satanism, for a novice, is not simply inversion - it is a complete rejection of the images

and ethics of a particular ethos - and a Satanist uses those images, and the ethics, their very *essence* reversed, against their own often unconscious 'conditioning', and ultimately against the society which uses/creates those images and ethics. Individuals who participate in genuine, well-performed, Satanic masses sometimes experience a kind of *satori* - a sudden enlightenment - and are thus led to increase their own conscious understanding. They also achieve an increase in their own vitality because they have broken free of constraining opposites.

In a very important sense, Satanism uncovers what the ethos of a particular society or societies have covered up through images, dogma, ethics, words and ideas - and it returns the individual to the primal chaos out of which opposites were formed.

This uncovering gives the individual control, a conscious understanding and an awareness of their unique Destiny. It is and has been the purpose of genuine Satanic groups to foster such an uncovering by guiding novices and having them participate in blasphemous rites. Beyond such an uncovering, ritual and ceremony cease - to be replaced by a profound wordless skill, a profound empathy. The ground or foundation of this empathy is what has been called "individuation" - the unity that a genuine Adept represents. But this "individuation", this Adeptship is itself only another beginning; it is only the fourth stage toward the ultimate goal.

Fundamentally, Satanic Orders enhance, speed-up, evolution - while the majority of people sleep, fearful of such infernal terrors.

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Aims of the ONA
ONA 1994 eh

The fundamental aims of the ONA are:

- 1) To increase the number of genuine Adepts, Masters/Lady Masters, by guiding individuals along the path to Adeptship and beyond.
- 2) To make the path to Adeptship and beyond [the 'Seven-Fold Sinister Way'] more widely available, enabling anyone, should they possess the necessary desire, to strive toward the ultimate goal.
- 3) To extend esoteric knowledge and techniques - i.e. to (a) creatively extend our esoteric knowledge and understanding and thus increase the consciousness of our species; (b) develop new techniques which make this new knowledge and understanding useful to those following the Seven-Fold Sinister Way; (c) implement this knowledge and understanding in a practical way, thus causing change(s) in society/societies. Areas of importance for the immediate future are: (i) music; (ii) Art/images/'film' etc.; (iii) the creation of an 'esoteric' community; and (iv) the development and extension of an abstract symbolic language ('beyond the Star Game').
- 4) To implement sinister strategy - i.e. to presence the acausal (or 'the dark forces') via nexions and so change evolution. One immediate aim is to presence acausal energies in a particular way so creating a new aeon and then a new, higher, civilization from the energies unleashed.

In respect of (1). This will be a slow process, by virtue of the difficulty of the Way, and the desire of most of those interested in esoteric arts for an 'easy option'. It is anticipated that only about four or five new Adepts (at most) will emerge every decade (i.e. an average of one per year). Of these, only two per decade will probably make it to the stage of Master/Lady Master. These figures are unlikely to increase until the energies of the new aeon become more pronounced (around 2020 eh) - even then, the increase will be gradual. It will not be before 2070 (at the earliest) that there will be a significant increase. This slow progression is natural and necessary - great numbers are not required in order for the more immediate covert aims (e.g. regarding sinister strategy) to be achieved.

In respect of (2). This will arise by itself provided the continuity of the Order is maintained.

In respect of (3). Since the Destiny of each ONA Adept is unique, these aims and others will be fulfilled by those Adepts striving for the next stage, that of Master/Lady Master. It should be remembered that Adepts - although they possess a knowledge and some understanding of Aeonics - are actually still swayed by aeonic forces: i.e. their Destiny achieves supra-personal aeonic aims. In effect, their Destiny is part of the wyrd of the civilization and thus the aeon to which they belong. A Master/Lady Master, by virtue of having reached that stage, can transcend this wyrd and implement their own.

In respect of (4). The fundamental immediate aim [c. 1990 eh - 2020 eh] here is to actively presence the energies of the next aeon and channel these, via various nexions, forms, structures, 'ideas' and so on, to create the next higher civilization. The former means accessing the acausal [in the simplistic term sense 'returning the Dark Gods' via various rites] and creating those forms/structures necessary to channel the energies so accessed. This will take several decades. [Some structures/forms/ideas etc. have already - i.e. before 1994 eh - been created.] In conjunction with these things, there will be disruption of existing structures/ideas etc. by Masters/Adepts/novices.

Beyond this immediate aim [i.e. beyond 2020 eh] there is the nurturing of the new energies and the forms/structures etc. created to presence these. This will last several centuries - and during this time one of the tasks of the Order is to presence the acausal at regular intervals via certain rites at certain sites, thus ensuring the survival of those things imbued with such energies, one of which will be the new civilization and thus the societies it gives rise to.

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Expressed simply, the aim of the ONA is to create a new species - to significantly change our evolution as a species. This will take time - many centuries, in fact. The Seven-Fold Way is a practical means whereby an individual, now, can develop and so become a part of this new species. The other activities which the Order pursues are directed toward changing present structures and creating a new civilization whereby this new species can be made real on a large scale: the societies of such a civilization aspiring to realize this goal in a practical way. The ONA is not interested in transitory 'fame'/notoriety - and neither does it desire to attract large numbers of 'followers'. It is not in the business of competing with other 'Satanic' or 'Occult' groups because such groups are irrelevant, lacking any understanding of sinister strategy and incapable of really guiding their members toward and beyond a genuine Adeptship. Such groups usually represent the ego of one person, who surrounds him/her self with sycophantic followers, and/or they fumble about in diverse mumbo-jumbo lands, playing fantasy games, try to evoke long-dead archetypes and forms, and worship their petty, mostly bovine selves. What the ONA desires to achieve is significant and worth-while - it is not transitory. The ONA does not depend on the whim of some self-appointed 'leader' as it does bleat about some fantasy-given "mandate" from some "higher authority". It does not peddle some spurious, continually updated theory nor offer religious answers to keep individuals in thrall. Neither does the ONA declare that its worth is based on some pretentious/legendary 'tradition'. The worth of the ONA lies in its aims and the practical methods it has created, and will create, to achieve those aims.

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Membership of the ONA basically means an individual following the Seven-Fold Way as explicated in the various Order MSS. Members should understand that they are thus part of an Order which has long-term aims - of centuries and more. By actively following and using the methods and rites of the Order they are actively aiding those aims.

The rites of the ONA - and the Seven-Fold Way itself - create and/or maintain those sinister energies which the ONA represents and has accessed. In effect, an individual, undertaking, for example, a rite from 'The Black Book of Satan', is aiding those sinister energies and thus the sinister dialectic. ***Such rites and the Way itself have been created to do this*** - that is, they directly presence the acausal.

Each member of the ONA is thus a nexion to the acausal - they are participating in, by their following of the Way and by the rites they undertake, the work of evolution: they are making their lives instruments for acausal change. Expressed simply, they are fulfilling the potential latent within them. They are positively contributing to evolution - they are using their lives to some purpose. Members of the ONA are doing and achieving - they are being significant and shaping future events. *They are making history.* Compared to this, other groups are irrelevant.

THE

BLACK BOOK
OF
SATAN
~~~~~

by  
Conrad Robury

With illustrations from  
'The Sinister Tarot'  
by Christos Beest

Special thanks to Spock for OCR'ing and editing this online version

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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Picture Atu III

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 choose 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 which triumphs over all. 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 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 enlightenment. 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 deceiver, 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 show 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 'Agios o Satanas' 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 itnematset  
inretea ivon iem siniognas 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.

The Gay Version of the Black Mass is available in OPFER (FENRIR Vol II No 2).

## 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 to our clan one 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 aeternae 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 aeternae 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.)

## VII 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 concubitus - 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.

Picture Atu II

## 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 (petriocho, 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, the kin of Chaos, welcome you, now nameless. You are the riddle and I the answer that begins your quest. We, the cursed, welcome you who by being here among us have dared to defy. In the beginning there was sacrifice but now we have words which can bind you through all time to us. In your beginnings - we were. In your quest - we are. Before you - we existed. After you - we shall still be. 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. We the fair who garb ourselves in black through Them possess this world we call 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 as I stand 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 deceiver, 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 new desire and as a Sign  
Of your oath this sigil of Satan. This sign shall be the  
Power which I as Master wield shall always be a part of  
You - a symbol to those who can 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 .s 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 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 thee 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:

Consorts of Satan! We gather here in this place at this Hour to dedicate this Temple to our sinister work. We Summon forth Satan, Prince of Darkness and Guardian of the Gate to the Dark Gods, to witness our rite of Dedication. For this shall be a Temple wherein we shall celebrate the Mysteries and the joys of life - wherein we and others Shall partake of the Elixir which is black to the blind. Mindful then of our sinister past which has made this Work of darkness possible, let us re-affirm our allegiance.

(All present recite the 21 Satanic Points. After, the Master spreads his hands over the chalice containing The Elixir and vibrates 'Agius 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 we sleep as this Temple becomes a Gate to their world!

(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:)

So, another chapter in our history is begun. 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 Saeclum 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!

## Picture Atu VII

### 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.

#### XIV Self-Initiation

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.

## XV

### Organising and running Satanic Temples

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 honourary '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.

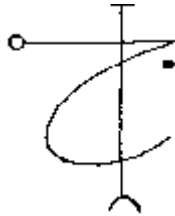
d) Construct your name from a Satanic phrase or chant - for example, 'Quinvex' can be derived from the 'Quando Vindex' of the Diabolus.

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.



Picture Atu XX

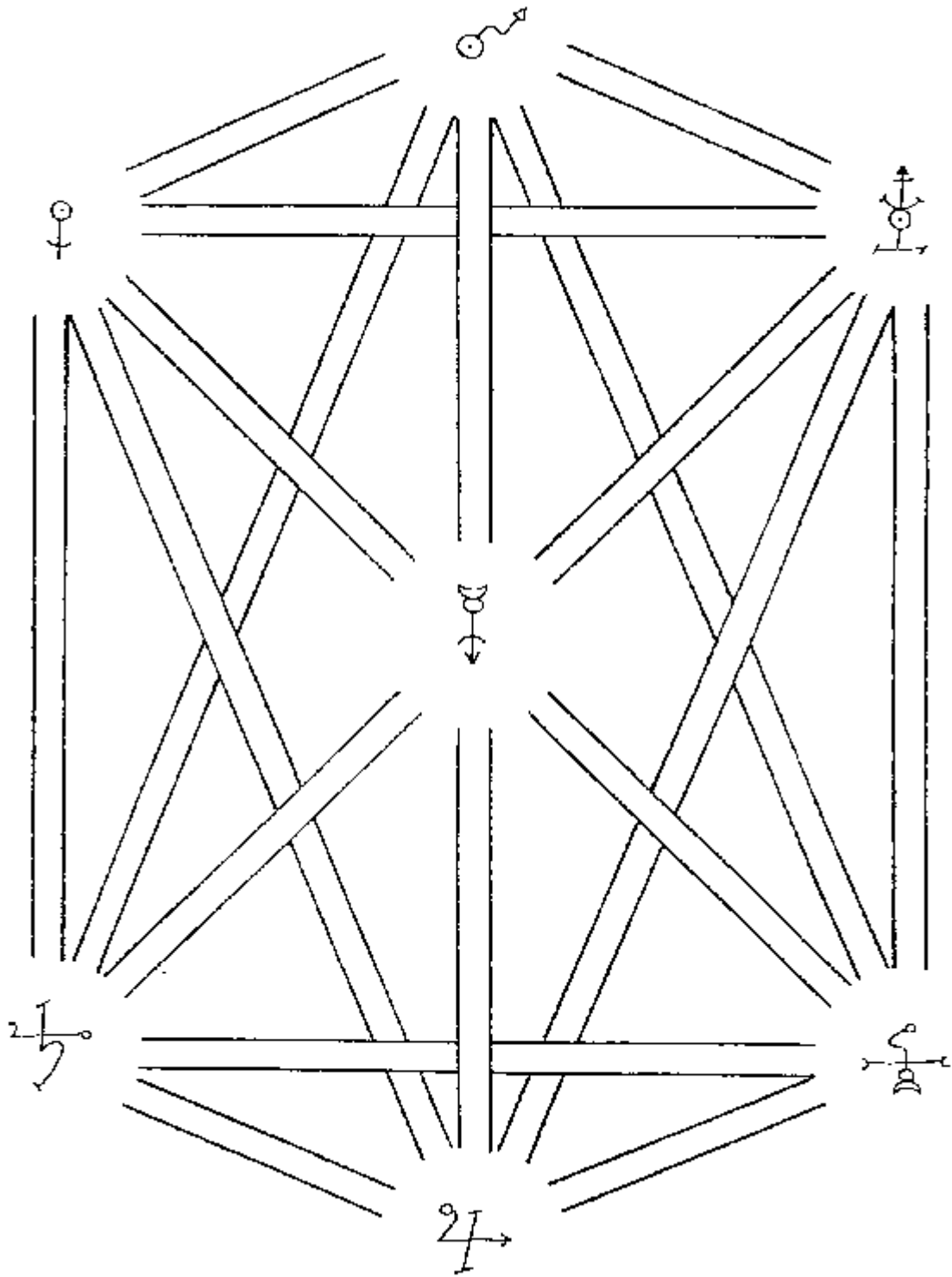
C A E L E T H I  
The Black Book  
Of  
Satan II



by  
Christos Beest

---





o.

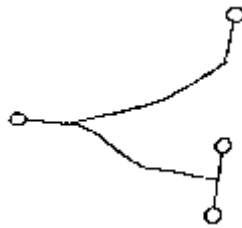
Invoke all as given, by  
 Use also the crystal tetrahedron  
 As a key  
 To the Dark Pool beneath the Moon...

17:

457020-100-000  
 1000000000000000000  
 20.20-2000  
 4500000000000000000  
 0000000000000000000  
 0000000000000000000  
 0000000000000000000  
 0000000000000000000  
 0000000000000000000

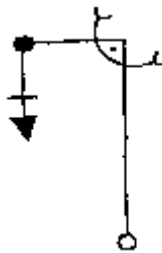
S - - \* - 'N' ...

I : N A O S



The woman beneath the water  
 The Temple within  
 Of War torn landscapes, black hills  
 Grab the lightening and hold it  
 Shell shocked  
 The Giving within Her arms...

II : A O S O T H



The Bleeding Earth  
 From the throats of fools,  
 in brooks

From the Gate  
a red bird  
This, the corn needs  
Containment of Winter:  
The Maiden is ready.

---

III : L I D A G O N



Autumn -  
A marriage beneath the Earth  
In Elixir  
She washes Her hands  
A Black Eagle  
A Palace of Light  
She becomes the snake  
Who offers the sword  
To sever the arm...

---

IV : M A C T O R O N



She rows a boat in a black pool  
From Her steps:  
The Hermaphrodite,  
the body drowned.  
The Planet of Them  
And the first drop  
In a white desert  
Into clear waters  
Aktlal Maka.

---

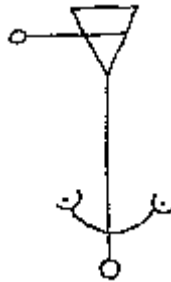
V : A T A Z O T H



No longer guides  
Four waterfalls flood the Earth  
And books become ash...

---

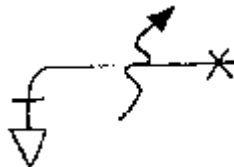
VII : A Z A N I G I N



In red desert  
Three fingers and a skull  
Are laid on fur  
The stones of a circle  
Turn to frogs  
The skeleton of a child  
The birth of an army  
A Nexion is opened.

---

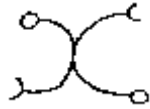
VIII : A B A T U



In a dungeon, a bed of fire  
From an exploded sphere  
Red butterflies  
With a look  
The war is begun  
A sexless mask  
In the caves of the sea.

---

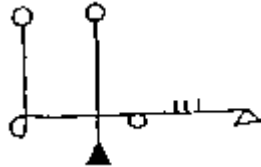
IX : V E L P E C U L A



Now in the desert,  
A jester  
Greets the transparent horse  
On hill Golden folk  
Become fire  
The snow melts  
The faces of Mountains  
The raven with  
The woman's face,  
Her gold begets the Blood...

---

X : V I N D E X



Two horses  
Fight within a circle of trees  
(The Sun at Night)  
Two angels  
Laughing in a room of sacrifice  
Two  
In a haze of gold  
Beyond the Door.

---

XI : S A U R O C T O N O S



A crippled boy  
A tunnel of bone  
A Star descends into a forest  
Faces are removed  
And She sits in the stone house  
Unheard.

---

XII : N O C T U L I U S



The Moon wraps itself  
Around the Savage God;  
Impaled on a throne  
As the wheel of skulls turns.  
The jeweled Lady  
The crone...  
Winter in the wildest of woods.

---

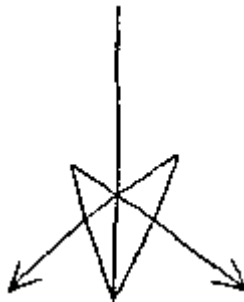
XIII : N Y T H R A



A canal route lined  
By white Griffins.  
A vortex of grey starless space.  
The chalice spills its  
White blood  
And the Herdsman's light shines  
In the Chamber of the Sphinx.

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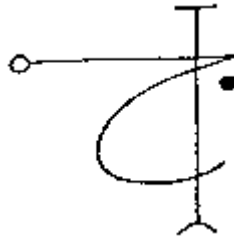
XIV : S H A I T A N



The ruby is the password  
She of the white robe  
Rides the transparent horse  
The maiden closes.  
On broken legs he steps forth  
He becomes the Dragon...

---

XV : S H U G A R A



A frog reveals human heads  
Within its mouth  
Furrowed white fields  
White, snow laden trees -  
Her face, caught by the Moon;  
Her eyes come to know  
The Pool,  
Take the spiral staircase  
to the Blue room...

---

XVI : N E K A L A H

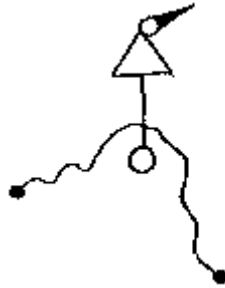


Their Name ...  
Inside the room of Sacrifice:  
White flowers.  
A garden, dry, of dead roses.  
The masked lady  
Holds Her new child.

---



XVII : G A W A T H A M



The power within is great  
The eagle eats  
Its human offspring  
Cold music here  
Blue woman hold the horse's head While the Seer weaves.

---

XVIII : B I N A N A T H



Headless  
The white angel impaled  
By Seven.  
Seven bells rung,  
The cortege from a black hill  
Passed the squatter's cottage.  
Black flame engulfed  
Black flame ate the 'holy'.

---

XIX : K A R U S A M S U

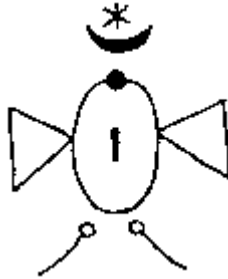


Sappho dance in still water  
Chains and roses in blue  
Invoke the Sun  
To an arch of fire  
Gravestones, butterflies

And rivers of snakes.

---

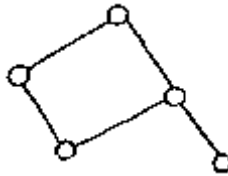
XX : N E M I C U



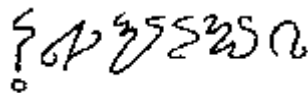
The blue statue  
His red eyes survey the maze  
Bringer of wisdom  
The perfect child  
And the tetrahedron  
Bathing hair in the Dark Pool  
Successor...

---

XXI : K T H U N A E



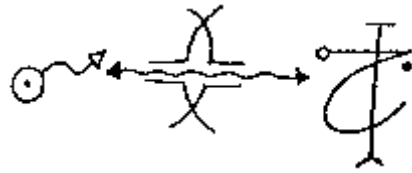
The Elixir of Recalling  
Flows into clear water  
The contracting of the Dark Star The severing of the attractant  
The Pool is opened  
Go deeper  
Against all other And ever Darker, Recall.



---

Sanctioned: Christos Beest  
Order of Nine Angles  
Yf 103 Era Horrificus

A G I O S O S H U G A R A



4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
 13 14 15 16 17 18  
 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28  
 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38  
 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48  
 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58  
 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68  
 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78  
 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88  
 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98  
 99 100

THE

BLACK BOOK  
OF  
SATAN III

by Christos Beest  
ONA

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  - III. The Mass of Heresy
  - IV. The Black Mass - Gay Version
  - V. Synestry: A Sinister Ceremony
  - VI. The Rite of the Nine Angles
  - VII. The Ceremony of Recalling
- Appendix:
- I. The Nine Angles - Esoteric Meanings
  - II. The Secrets of the Nine Angles
  - III. Chants

Wyrd non est aliud, quam halitus  
aquae, terraeque, solis calore  
exacte attenuatus et coctus, a  
frigore secutae noctis in unum  
coactus, densatusque . . .

I: THE SINISTER CALLING

Introduction:

The aim of the following ceremonial ritual can be either (a) returning to Earth those 'negative, chaotic, sinister' forms/energies dark legend knows as 'The Dark Gods';(b) drawing forth from acausal dimensions chaotic energies, directed towards a specific goal/aim/intent or channeled into a particular individual(s)/group/temporal form. The main difference between the two is that in (a) the forms/energies are left to disperse/create conditions according to their

nature. If insufficient preparation/desire is present within those performing this Calling, (b) can become (a) - sometimes to the detriment of those Calling. The rite of the Sinister Calling is a traditional ritual -perhaps the most sinister ritual that exists. The rite assumes willing Sacrifice.

Setting:

An isolated hill top, sunset, with Saturn rising - or a sinister Temple/cave.

Participants:

Master of the Temple - purple robes

Mistress of Earth - purple robes

Priestess - naked, upon altar

Priest - black robe, tied with white cord/girdle

Congregation - black robes

Guardian of the Temple - black robes with face mask

Preparations:

1) Seven days before the rite, the congregation assemble in the dwelling of the Master or Mistress. Here they stay until the rite is complete. During the seven days they are forbidden to speak, wear only ceremonial robes, will abstain from intoxicating drinks and sexual pleasures and eat no meat (this is a 'Black Fast'). During the hours of darkness no lights except black candles are to be lit and at sunset on each day they gather in the Temple to chant the Diabolus nine times. During the seven days no contact with outsiders is allowed, and no music or intrusive sound, save for the Diabolus and the Atazoth chant is to be heard. Both the dwelling and the Temple is to be incensed with Saturnian incense. According to tradition, the robes worn will contain a hood/cowl which is to be worn during the hours of daylight, these hours being taken up with walking within the dwelling grounds (or a suitable, isolated location nearby) for at least three hours together with such diversions as the Master or Mistress will arrange. (Note: These diversions - which in recent times include playing the Star Game - are so chosen so as not to destroy the black tranquility of the fast.) In the past they have included study of alchemical MSS, silent Tarot readings (using sign language/drawn symbols for the reader to express meanings) and practice in performing esoteric chant (Diabolus/Atazoth chant -

fourth/fifths and so on), this latter in the Temple if the Calling is to be performed there.

2) The Temple is prepared seven days before the rite (this applies to the site chosen - which should thereafter be guarded by appropriate energy). This consists of the Master and Mistress incensing the area with Saturnian incense while chanting seven times the 'Sanctus Satanas'. They then unite in sexual union, the Mistress visualizing the nexion to the Dark Gods as being gradually opened, though remaining partly closed.

One planetary hour before the Calling begins on the seventh day, the Temple/outdoor area is made ready by an Initiate chosen for this task. A black cloth is laid on the altar and seven black candles placed upon it and lit. A large quartz crystal is placed in the centre of the Temple, on an oak (or wooden) stand. (Note: It enhances the energies if this crystal is shaped as a tetrahedron. Whatever the shape the crystal should be as large as possible.) The Master brings the Sacrificial knife. An image of Baphomet according to sinister tradition (for example, Atu III of the Sinister Tarot) may be present in the Temple but no other artifacts, furnishings, signs or symbols.

The congregation et al gather outside the Temple, robed as described, and are led into the Temple by the (naked) Priestess at the beginning of the Rite.

3) As the Congregation assemble on the seventh day before the Rite (they will have been informed some time before by the Master or Mistress of the date of the Calling, its purpose and intent being explained) lots are drawn to decide which man among them will be chosen. The one chosen by the drawing of lots is free to then accept or decline the honour. If this honour is declined, another lot is held, and the one so chosen may also decline. After this a further lot is held, the result of which is binding. The Opfer so chosen by lot is then led by the Guardian(s) to a secure, secluded place and resides there until the Calling begins. Each night and in this place, the Opfer receives the Priestess for the length of one planetary hour, the Priestess being chosen from among the Temple to be at this period capable of conception. If the

Master or Mistress so desire, another lady in addition to the Priestess may be chosen and received by the Opfer during the days before the Rite, and lead him to the Temple for the Calling.

The Rite:

The congregation process into the Temple, led by the Priestess who is assisted onto the altar by the Mistress. The congregation gather in a semi-circle before the altar, the Guardian(s) holding the Opfer by the entrance. The Mistress greets the Master with a kiss, saying: 'To you it is fitting, Master, to speak to our gods for these many. With your own eyes see how we seekers of darkness await this calling forth of our gods!'

The Mistress gestures with her hands, and the congregation remove their hoods/cowls. She says: 'So shall we rejoicing dance!' The congregation begin to dance counter-sunwise around the altar chanting "Binan ath ga wath am".

The Master lays the S.Knife on the womb of the Priestess while the Mistress places her hands on the crystal and joins the Master in chanting the Diabolus in fourths while visualizing the nexion opening. This chant is repeated seven times while the congregation continue their dance and chant.

After the seventh chant, the Master claps his hands nine times as a signal for the congregation to gather round. The Guardian brings the Opfer forward.

The Master gives the Opfer a chalice of wine, which he drinks. After this, the Master says to him: 'We greet our honoured guest with a kiss'. He kisses the Opfer, followed by the Mistress and the congregation who kiss the Opfer in turn.

The Mistress then removes the robe of the Opfer and begins to raise his secret fire with her lips, while the Master gestures to the congregation as a sign for them to remove their robes. They then begin to dance again - chanting 'Atazoth', Satanas and/or shouting/laughing/screaming as they whirl faster in ecstasy and frenzy.

As they dance, the Guardian lifts the Priest upon the altar while the Master takes up the S.Knife. The Priestess holds the Opfer in sexual union and visualizes the nexion opening as she draws by movement the secret fire from the Opfer. She then releases him and on this sign the Mistress signals to the congregation who begin an orgiastic rite according to their desires. The Mistress then touches the crystal with her hands visualizing/intoning the aim/intent of the Calling, ad libitum according to the frenzy/energy generated in the Temple. As she touches the crystal, the Guardian(s) assist the Opfer from the altar and with the Master (who takes the S.Knife and the empty chalice used by the Opfer) leave the Temple and go to a secluded place (which may be the place used by the Opfer during the preparation period).

In this secluded place, the Master vibrates 'Nythra kthunae Atazoth' while the Guardian(s) hold the Opfer. After the vibration, the Master uses the S.Knife, collecting some of the elixir in the chalice. He then returns to the Temple and the Mistress symbolically washes her hands in the red elixir before herself chanting 'Nythra kthunae Atazoth!' Following this, she and the Master chant in fourths the Diabolus, directing the chant towards the crystal.

The Rite is concluded by the Master assisting the Priestess down from the altar. She departs from the Temple, returning with trays of food and wine which she offers to the congregation - then revelry continues until desires are fulfilled. The Priestess herself withdraws after offering the food and drink, as the Master and Mistress do.

Note:

After the final Diabolus chant by the Master and Mistress, if an aim/intent is intended, this is visualized/voiced by them according to magickal principles before they depart from the Temple. Should they wish, they may combine this with their own sexual union. Should no intent/aim be desired, the dark forms/energies are left to gather/disperse according to their nature. The Guardian(s) are sworn to secrecy, and after the red elixir is produced, they secrete/bury the empty vessel in a location prepared beforehand.

\* \* \* \* \*

II: THE BLACK MASS OF LIFE (The Promethean Office I)



For daily (dawn;dusk) or ad libitum performance either solo or by Priest and Priestess

Aperiatur terra, et germinet Vindex

(Chant:)

Agios o Vindex

(Hymn:)

Non usitata nec tenui ferar  
Penna biformis per liquidum aethera  
Vates, neque in terris morabor  
Longius, invidiaque maior  
Orbis relinquam  
Agios athanatos  
Dignum et justum est

(Chant:)

Agios o Baphomet

O Oriens splendour lucis aeternae  
Et sol justitiae:  
Veni et illumina sedentes in tenebris  
Et umbra mortis

(Chant:)

Agios o Vindex

(Hymn:)

Rerum Atazoth, tenax vigor  
Immotus in te permanens  
Lucis diurnae tempora  
Successibus determinans:  
Qui venturis es in mundum  
Atazoth, ne tardaveris  
Nocturna lux viantibus  
A nocte noctem segregans,  
Praeco diei iam sonat  
Iubarque solis evocat  
Hoc excitatus Lucifer  
Solvit polum caligine  
Agios o Vindex  
Laetus dies hic transeat.

Textual variations - Sunday and Feast days:

A porta inferni Atazoth, in adjutorium.

Aperiatur terra et germinet Vindex

(Hymn:)

Cras amorum copulatrix inter umbras arborum  
Implicat casas virentes de flagello myrteo:  
Cras canoris feriatos ducit in silvis choros;  
Cras Gaia jura dicit fulta sublimi throno.  
Cras amet qui nunquam amavit quique amavit cras amet.  
Cras erit cum primus aether copulavit nuptias:  
Tunc cruore de superno spumeo et ponti globo  
Caerulas inter catervas inter et bipedes equos,

Fecit undantem Dionem de maritis imbribus.  
Cras amet qui nunquam amavit quique amavit cras amet.  
Ipsa gemmis purpuantem pingit annum floridis;  
Ipsa turgentes papillas de favoni spiritu  
Urget in nodos tepentes; ipsa roris lucidi,  
Noctis aura quem relinquit, spargit umentes aquas.  
Cras amet qui nunquam amavit quique amavit cras amet.

Sunset, special Feast days:

Ad Gaia qui laetificant juventum meam.

Aperiatur terra, et germinet Vindex.

(Hymn:)

Hraegl min swigad ponne ic hrusan trede

Oppe pa wic buge oppe wado drefe.

Hwilum mec ahebbad ofer haelepa byht

Hyrste mine and peos hea lyft

And mec ponne wide wolcna strengu

Ofer folc byred; fraetwe mine

Swogad hlude and swinsiad

Torhte singed ponne ic getenge ne beom

Flode and foldan, frende gaest.

Berk Odins mjod a Engla bjod!

\* \* \* \* \*

### III: THE MASS OF HERESY

Participants:

Mistress of Earth - scarlet robes

Master of the Temple - purple robes

Guardian of the Temple - black robes with face mask

Congregation - black robes

Temple Preparations:

Altar covered by a red cloth on which is woven a gold inverted pentagram. Black candles and incense of Mars to be used. Behind the altar is a large swastika banner: black swastika on white circle against red background. Silver chalices containing strong wine; crystal tetrahedron and small altar bell on altar.

The Aim:

The aim of this Mass is to a) challenge accepted beliefs about recent history; b) provoke dissent and encourage Promethean challenge - particularly within the psyche of the individual; c) encourage dark forces. It should be noted that performance of this Mass is illegal in many Western countries - and acceptance of its tenets renders individuals liable to persecution.

Performance of this Mass in these times is as dangerous as saying 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, process 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 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 the Holy War.

(The Master rings the bell twice. The silence which follows is broken by the Master ringing the bell once when all present give a brief Hitlerian salute.)

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 'Agius o Falcifer' standing facing the altar with his hands over the chalices. During this, the Mistress kisses each member of the congregation saying: 'Honour be yours', goes to the altar and takes up a chalice.)

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, passes her hands over the chalices saying quietly: 'Oriens splendour lucis aeternae et sol justitiae - veni et illumina sedentes in tenebris et umbra mortis.' She then goes to the Master who kisses her and holds his hands outstretched toward the congregation.)

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 and says:)

Let us affirm again our faith.

(The Guardian steps forward, raises his right arm in the Hitlerian salute )

Guardian:  
Hail Hitler!

(The congregation respond with a salute and a 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 places the empty chalice on the altar. The congregation, in single file, then approach the Mistress. She hands them a chalice each, which each drain, hold upside down and return to the altar. When all have drunk, the Master vibrates the 'Agnus Dei' 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 our gods!

(The Guardian opens the door to the Temple and ushers the congregation out.)

Note:  
The altar may contain, at the start of the Mass, a copy of 'Mein Kampf' and a framed photograph of the Leader.

\* \* \* \* \*

IV: THE BLACK MASS - GAY VERSION

## Guidelines for Gay Initiates

### i) Temple Organization:

The Temple is organized according to the principles laid down in the 'Black Book of Satan I' except that: a) for women, the External Adept who organizes the Temple is known by the title 'Erie' b) the Initiation of new members, and the rituals (such as the Black Mass) which are used by the Temple are changed from the texts given in the Black Book I and other writings in accordance with the principles given below.

### ii) Rituals:

In general, the form of the ritual used and much of the spoken text is unaltered. The titles/roles of the participants are changed thus:

- a) for men - the role of 'Priestess' is assigned to the Acolyte; the role of 'Mistress of Earth' is assigned to the Deacon.
- b) for women - the role of 'Master' is assigned to the High Priestess; that of 'Priest' to the Magistra.

Thus, for example, the participants in the Black Mass are:

- a) for men - the Priest; the Acolyte; the Altar-Priest.
- b) for women - Magistra; Priestess; Altar-Priestess.

In rituals with an overt sexual content, heterosexual intercourse is replaced by excitation to orgasm (usually orally) for women, and penetration for men (unless in the case of men, the Choregos favours oral stimulation). The Choregos/Eria can decide on suitable variations according to taste and preference.

### iii) Images

Sapphic Temples are generally sub-dedicated (ie. although primarily dedicated to Satan, they are also dedicated to another Dark Diety) to Hecate, and accordingly an image of Hecate (painting, sculpture etc.) is present in the Temple. Also reproductions of Atus VI and III of the Sinister Tarot may be present, the latter representing Baphomet. Male Temples are usually

sub-dedicated to Sapanur: the 'demon' of all-male spirituality, and an image is present in the Temple. Traditionally, Sapanur is depicted as a strong man of sinister features who wears thongs on his arms. He brandishes a cuboid from which intense light is emerging, and his member is wellformed and erect. Reproductions of Atus X, XII and XV may also be present. (Note: in the Septenary System, Hecate is associated with the sphere of the Moon, and Sapanur with the 11th path.)

The Mass:

Setting:

Usually an indoor Temple. Black altar cloth and black candles. Behind the altar is an inverted pentagram and on the altar, a cuboid.

If outdoors - candles in lanterns.

Participants:

Altar Priest - naked on altar

Priest - black robes

Deacon - purple robes

Acolyte - white robes

Guardian - appropriate colours, with face mask

Preparations:

Hazel incense to be burnt. Silver paten containing hosts, specially obtained - or made before the ritual by the Acolyte (unleveled and in imitation of Nazarene type). Other preparations as in the Black Book I.

The rite:

The Deacon begins the Mass by clapping his hands twice. He turns to the congregation and makes the sign of the inverted pentagram with his left hand, saying:  
I will go down to the altars in Hell.

The Acolyte responds:

To Satan, giver of life.

(The congregation and all present then recite the Satanic Our Father and the Creed [see texts of Black Mass in Black Book I]).

After, the Deacon says:  
May Satan be with you.

All:  
As He is with you.

Deacon:  
Veni omnipotent aeterne diabolus!

Priest:  
By the word of the Prince of Darkness  
I give praise to thee.

(He kisses the lips of the altar-Priest)

Priest:  
My Prince, bringer of lust and fire.  
I greet you who cause us to struggle  
And seek the forbidden pleasure.

Deacon:  
Blessed are the strong  
For they shall bring delight.

(He kisses the chest of the altar-Priest)

Blessed are the proud  
For they produce ecstasy.

(He kisses the penis of the altar-Priest)

Let the Nazarenes die in their rejection  
And misery!

(He turns to the congregation)

We who defy know how to lust!

(He kisses the Acolyte who passes the kiss onto the members of the congregation. The Acolyte then hands the Deacon the paten containing the hosts. The Deacon holds them up, saying:)

Praised are you my Prince  
By the proud: through our evil  
We have this dirt; by our boldness  
It will become for us a joy!

All  
Hail Satan, Prince of Darkness!



(The Deacon places the paten on the body of the altar-Priest, saying quietly:)

Suscipe Satanas munus quod tibi offerimus memoriam recolentes Atazoth.

(The Acolyte quietly says 'Sanctissimi Corporis Satanas' and begins to masturbate the altar-Priest - via hand or mouth according to his desire. As he does this, the congregation begin to clap their encouragement while the Deacon chants loudly:)

Veni omnipotens aeterne diabolus!

(The Acolyte allows the semen of the altar-Priest to fall upon the hosts - or he, himself deposits the semen if orgasm was achieved via mouth. The Deacon then takes up the now consecrated paten saying:)

May the gifts of Satan be forever with you!

All:  
As they are with you!

(The Deacon then takes up one of the chalices, saying:)

Praised are you Prince of Darkness  
By the defiant:  
Through our lusts for delights  
We have this drink.  
Let it become for us an elixir of joy.

(He sprinkles some of the wine over the altar-Priest, replaces the chalice and says:)

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 filth!

(The Guardian stands before the congregation saying:)

Do you renounce the Nazarene Yeshua  
The great deceiver  
And all his works?

All:  
We do renounce Yeshua the deceiver  
And all his works.

Guardian:

Do you affirm Satan?

All:

We do affirm Satan.

Guardian:

Hail and praise to Satan, the lord of life  
And provider of pleasure.

(The Deacon vibrates the Agios o Satanas while the Priest picks up the paten with the hosts and says to the congregation:)

I who am the joys and pleasures  
Which you my Brethren seek  
Am here to show you my body.

(He holds the paten out while the Guardian removes his robe. The Deacon points to him as the Acolyte fondles the Priest and says:)

Most beautiful of all  
Is the power of our lusts.

(The Deacon takes the paten from the Priest, saying:)

Behold the dirt of the Earth  
Which the humble eat!

(He then throws the hosts to the ground while the congregation laugh and trample the hosts. The congregation abandon themselves to their lusts. The Deacon chants Agios o Satanas three times and then joins them in the celebration. Feasting and drinking begin as the pleasures of the flesh are enjoyed.)

\* \* \* \* \*

## V: SYNESTRY: A Sinister Ceremony

Location:

Usually an indoor Temple.

Participants:

Amatrix - in white robes

Priestess - in violet robes flecked with purple

Defensatrix - in black, with face mask

Congregation - black robes

Temple preparations:

The altar is covered with a black cloth on which is woven an inverted seven-pointed star and on this is a large quartz crystal (which may be shaped as a tetrahedron).

A large statue or image (Atus III, IV or XX) of Baphomet according to Sinister tradition is to the left of the altar.

Chalices of wine, temple bell, violet candles and incense of Jupiter (both aspects: ie. Beech and civil).

The Priestess and Amatrix stand before the altar, the Defensatrix by the entrance. The Priestess rings the Temple bell seven times to signify the beginning of the rite at which the congregation process in to the altar and are greeted by the Amatrix with a kiss. They then form a semi-circle before the altar.

The Ceremony:

The Priestess raises her hands, saying:

Wash your throats with wine  
For Sirius returns  
And we women are warm and wanton!

(The Amatrix hands her a chalice, which she drinks from, then passes to the congregation. After all have drunk, the Priestess holds the empty chalice upside down, and says:)

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!

(She opens her robe to reveal her breasts. The Defensatrix comes forward and forces the Amatrix to kneel before the Priestess who says:)

My breasts pleased you  
And brought forth joy!

(She bends down, and the Amatrix kisses her nipples. She turns to the congregation, saying:)

I opened myself, and gave you knowledge  
And the joy of knowledge was sweet.  
Desire and knowledge made you great  
And we, together, dared to defy!  
We feasted and enjoyed!  
We sacrificed, and loved!  
But then the bastard came:  
Yeshua, the deceiver!

Congregation:  
Curse him! We curse him!

Priestess:  
So we gather again to give praise to her  
Who rules our world.  
Agios o Baphomet! Agios o Baphomet!

(The congregation repeat the chant seven times while the Amatrix takes up the crystal which she holds in her outstretched hands. The Priestess places her own hands over the crystal. They and the congregation then chant "Veni, omnipotens aeterne Baphomet!" 21 times, the Defensatrix ringing the Temple bell after each chant until the number is reached.

The Amatrix then takes the crystal round the congregation who lay their hands upon it in turn, each silently saying 'Veni, omnipotens aeterne Baphomet' while the Priestess vibrates/chants aloud "Agios o Baphomet".

The crystal is then returned to the altar by the Amatrix while the Priestess lays on the floor, her Head touching the feet of the Baphomet image. The Amatrix stimulates her to orgasm using her tongue while the congregation dance around them chanting 'Agios o Baphomet'.

The Priestess channels the energy into the crystal and thence out from the Temple to achieve the desired goal. If no external goal is desired, it is stored in the crystal.

Following the climax by the Priestess, the congregation cease their dance and one by one kneel down to kiss the Priestess and then the Amatrix. As each one does this, the Defensatrix whispers to them: "So it is done again according to our ways, bringing strength and joy."

After the kissing, each rises, bows to the Priestess, and departs from the Temple. After all the congregation have departed, the Amatrix leaves, followed by the Defensatrix. A feast follows, outside the Temple.

The Priestess remains in the Temple until she adjudges the times aright to leave. However, if she so wishes, any member of the Temple who so desires and who has informed her beforehand, may join her in the Temple, whatever energy being produced being directed toward the goal, or stored in the crystal.

In both instances, the Priestess is the last to leave - bowing to the image, extinguishing the candles and chanting 'Ponne, diabolus, custodian!' as she leaves.)

Notes:

1) The ceremony was originally performed each year on the return of Sirius - although it is often performed now at any time, "Sirius" being replaced by another appropriate star (or sometimes 'the Moon').

2) The rite generates sinister magickal energy - which can be directed via the usual means toward a specific aim/goal/undertaking, or into an individual (eg. a novice), or stored in the crystal to await further use, perhaps at another ceremony (eg. 'Sacrifice').

(Daughters of Baphomet)

\* \* \* \* \*

## VI: THE RITE OF THE NINE ANGLES

The rite may be undertaken on either the autumnal equinox (for the Dabih gate) or the winter solstice (for Algol). The Naos rite is suitable for southern climes and will not be given here although in form it is the same as the version given.

Ideally, the rite should be undertaken either:

a) on a hill-top of pre-Cambrian rock which lies between a line of volcanic intrusion and another rock - in Britain, this other rock is 'Buxton'

b) in an underground cavern where water flows [this applies only to the 'chthonic' form]

c) in a glade consecrated beforehand within a circle of nine stones (the first stone being set on a night of the new moon with Saturn rising, the second at the full moon and so on: the first stone marking the point on the horizon where Saturn rises). [Note: this applies only to the 'natural' form of the rite.]

Further, the time is right when, for Dabih, Venus sets after the sun, and the moon itself occults Dabih or is near to it; and, for Algol, when Jupiter and Saturn are both near the moon which is becoming new, the time before dawn. These conditions mean that the energies are available to enhance the working.

The rite exists in three versions - the natural form, the chthonic, and the solo. The chthonic form may be combined with the Ceremony of Recalling and the Sacrificial Conclusion undertaken according to Tradition. It must be noted however that this combination is exceedingly dangerous - if done correctly with a) above and with the conditions for Algol as above, it brings back to Earth the Dark Gods themselves by opening the Star Gate between the causal and acausal.

However, the chthonic form may be successful in bringing to presence the Dark Gods without the Sacrificial aspect if the chants are done correctly, the crystal is sufficient in size, and the cosmic tides are aligned aright [note: this usually occurs when an Aeon is (magickally) ending, the energies being more pronounced in the last three decades. At other times the rite can be used to bring about such changes]

The natural form involves a Priest and Priestess [ideally these should have undertaken the ritual of Internal Adept - or at the very least External Adept] and is basically a drawing to the Earth of acausal energies - these are left to disperse naturally: ie. without any magickal intent.

The chthonic form involves a Priest and a Priestess as well as at least one cantor trained in sinister Esoteric Chant together with a congregation of male and female. This form is either an invocation to the Dark Gods - the energies being dispersed naturally - or a channelling of those energies into a specific event or events or individual. This channelling however requires the skill of at least a Master of Temple/Mistress of Earth.

The solo form involves one individual and the aim is usually the alteration of the consciousness of that individual: this however is very dangerous.

Note: all the above forms require a crystal tetrahedron made of quartz.

#### I: Natural Form

If possible, the conditions above should be met - if not, conduct the rite on an isolated hill-top at sunset. Both Priest and Priestess should be naked. The rite begins with the Priest vibrating seven times "Nythra kthunae Atazoth" while the Priestess

holds the crystal in her hands, palms upward. The vibration should consist of three projected vibrations followed by four resonant ones - all aimed at the crystal which should be at a distance of not less than two feet and not more than three. After the vibrations, the Priest places his hands on the crystal and both vibrate "Binan ath ga wath am" as a projected vibration.

The Priestess, still holding the crystal, then lies with her head North while the Priest arouses her with his tongue, *locis muliebribus*. The sexual union begins after, and both visualize the Star Gate opening and energy flowing through it down to them. If desired (ie. sinister intent) this energy may be symbolized by Atazoth - a dark nebulous chaos issuing forth from a star strewn Space which changes into a 'Dagon' like entity before becoming chaos again. This visualization continues until the sexual climax of the Priestess after which the Priest reaches his own climax. The Priestess then rises and buries the crystal in the earth of the hill [as deep as possible - this may be prepared beforehand - and leaving few traces]. When complete, she vibrates over the place "Aperiatur terra, et germinet Chaos". They then depart from the hill.

Note: further rituals may take place over the burial, but they must have the same intent and follow the form as above except the vibrations are aimed toward the buried crystal - no further crystal being required.

## II: Chthonic Form

If the special conditions cannot be met [(a) and Algol are most effective; (b) and Dabih are generally for channelling into specific events/individuals] then a hill-top containing volcanic quartz is suitable.

The crystal should be placed on an oak stand with a sheet of mica between it and the wood [this enhances still further the effect of the crystal and is a recent modification). The Priest, Priestess and Cantors stand near the crystal, while the congregation (of at least six - three male and three female) form a circle around them. The congregation dance moonwise and according to their desire chant "Atazoth" as they do 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 [see set texts] while the Priestess places her hands on the crystal, visualizing the Star Gate opening (as in I).

After the Diabolus, the Priest signals to the congregation who begin an orgiastic rite according to their desires. 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 [see set texts). While the Cantors are chanting the Priest and Priestess continue their visualization.

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.

The Dark Gods will then be manifest.

[If for some reason (eg. inexperience of the participants) the manifestations do not occur, the Priestess should chant in C major "Nythra kthunae Atazoth" after which the Priest also places his hands on the crystal and he and the Priestess vibrate "Binan ath ga wath am", the Cantor(s) chanting the Diabolus as before after which the Priest visualizes the energies arising from the orgiastic rite as cohering and then entering the crystal to be then drawn forth into both himself and the Priestess before being sent forth to render asunder the Star Gate]

Notes of this form: \* the rite may be enhanced by the use of tabors/drums during the dance and the orgiastic rite, individuals being appointed for this task. \* The maximum number of participants should not exceed twenty-one in total.

\* Provided rigorous training is undertaken beforehand, the dance and the orgiastic rite can be replaced with the congregation chanting from the start of the rite the "Diabolus" in fifths they continue with this until the Priest signals them to stop (after the Cantors Diabolus chant) after which they chant the 'Atazoth chant' in fifths repeatedly until the end of the rite. If this form is done, it is important for the congregation to visualize the Star Gate opening while they chant - and this visualization should be agreed beforehand and be the same as that of the Priestess and Priest. This form of the chthonic rite is however only effective if the congregation has been trained to chant in the correct manner. A suitable cavern/resonant building/Temple may be used in this instance. [Further note: providing the chanting is accurate, the crystal large enough, this form is among the most effective.]

### III: Solo Form

This form should be undertaken on either a hill-top or in a Temple/resonant building. It begins at sunset on a night of the new moon with Saturn rising.

The individual should face Saturn and vibrate "Nythra Kthunae Atazoth" seven times while holding the crystal. Then "Binan ath ga wath am" is vibrated followed by the Diabolus chant after which the visualization is begun (as above) [Note: this form



involves the 'Saturnian' gate and thus the Gate may be visualized near the planet Saturn]. The energy is then visualized as flowing down into the individual, this visualization lasting for at least one quarter of an hour. After, the individual chants the 'Atazoth chant', places the crystal on the ground and sits near it, to visualize its interior becoming black and this blackness spreading out to engulf the individual.

Note: This ritual should not be undertaken lightly. There must be a preparedness to exult in the energies. After the rite (the individual will know when it is complete) the crystal should be wrapped in black cloth and stored until required again. Before attempting this form, individuals are advised to seek the guidance of a Master of Temple/Mistress of Earth.

\* \* \* \* \*

## VII: THE CEREMONY OF RECALLING With Sacrificial Conclusion.

Participants:

Mistress of Earth - in white robes

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 to be burnt. Chalices of strong wine.

The Master intones (ie. 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.

The Master and the Priestess (or 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. 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 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 has congress with the Mistress - and the Priest with the Priestess - while the congregation continue with their slow walk and their chant. If the 'Sacrificial conclusion' is undertaken then the ritual is complete with the details under that heading. If this conclusion is not undertaken, then the ritual continues as follows after the Master reaches his highest ecstasy:)

Mistress:  
So you have sown and from your seeding  
Gifts may come if you obedient heed  
These words I speak:

(The congregation cease their dance and listen: they are joined by the Priestess, Priest and Guardian who form a circle around the Master and 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 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 as the wind that snatches  
Your soul!

(The Mistress takes the person she has chosen and indulges herself according to her desire. The congregation consume the consecrated cakes and wine and take their own pleasures according to their desires.

After the festivities have begun in earnest, the Mistress should she so desire, directs the forces of the ritual by concentrating the energies upon the tetrahedron and invoking through a gate, the powers of the Dark Gods into the participants to spread outwards upon the Earth.)

Sacrificial conclusion:

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 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.

After the sacrifice, the guardian removes the body 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. The ritual continues as before with the Mistress saying:

I know you my children ...

The Guardian takes the body 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.

Notes:

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.

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## APPENDIX

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### I: THE NINE ANGLES - Esoteric Meanings

The name nine angles is, in one fundamental sense, selfdescriptive': the Tree of Wyrd possesses nine causal angles and nine acausal angles in the causal geometric sense, and these can be represented as formed by the corners or angles of a causal and acausal tetrahedron, one a reflexion of the other, the base lying in the plane of the middle sphere (the sun). This double tetrahedron encloses in three dimensional space the path from the causal to the acausal - the 'initiate journey' from the sphere of the Moon to Saturn via the other spheres, this path being helical (cf. 'The Wheel of Life' in NAOS). The direction of this path is 'counter-clockwise'. In essence, the acausal is a reflexion (and vice versa) of the causal, so the single term 'Nine Angles' describes what is our normal (ie. un-initiated) view of the Septenary, this Septenary being a 'map' of consciousness and the cosmos. The realization of the dual nature of the spheres (for example Mercury is the 'shadow' of Mars) arises from Initiation and is the first stage of an esoteric understanding of the term 'nine angles'.

The term also describes the nine fundamental 'alchemical' forms (represented by the symbols and so on: ie. the pieces of the Star Game). These forms are the basic apprehensions of magickal energy and thus re-present the acausal manifest in the causal (in the many forms of that manifestation - eg. individual consciousness: the images/archetypes pertaining thereto). Hence each of these symbols is an 'angle' re the above description of the septenary Tree. These nine fundamental forms (the abstract symbolism is a stage of understanding beyond the purely causal geometric one) exist in many combinations within the nexion which the Tree of Wyrd represents - and these combinations are abstractly symbolized by the placement of the many pieces of the Star Game over the seven boards ('spheres') of that game. (Note: the advanced form of the Star Game is the most complete representation, but for convenience the septenary form will be used here. It should be noted, however, that the septenary form - difficult though it is for initiates - serves only as an introduction to the advanced game.) This abstraction, in terms of the Star Game, makes the forms understandable on a level higher than that of using

words and ideas - this understanding is a new form of thinking, a form appropriate to the next century and beyond. Such an understanding arises from playing the Star Game and relating the abstract symbols to conventional representations (eg. archetypal forms; the energies of the pathways; the symbolism of the Tarot and the many and various occult symbolisms) - this develops the capacity for what may be termed 'acausal thinking': when the conventional representations are abandoned and collocations are viewed abstractly. This 'abstraction' is however a new 'insight' (a lower form of which is often described as 'intuition') and not a dry, academic process: it extends consciousness into new and important realms and pre-figures the development of a symbolic language which eliminates the confusion, both moral and linguistic which exists in words and the translation of complex ideas into such words. It is 'mathesis' in the ancient Greek sense and while not being what we understand as 'mathematics' it complements mathematical abstraction and indeed interacts with it in some places. For example, the causal within the acausal can be represented by the tensor is the causal component and the acausal one. For an system (Euclidean space) has nine non-zero components. These are the symmetric components of : the skew-symmetrical being acausal. In this sense, the nine form 'sub-spaces' of the causal and the tensor 'describes' the nexion causal/acausal. It is possible to write an equation involving the tensor which describes the multi-dimensional space, the boundary conditions of which give, for example, the metrics of each form of 'spacetime' (causal and acausal).

Essentially, the symbolism is a new tool to assist and develop our understanding, and it is via this symbolism that the meanings of the nine angles may most easily be understood without confusion.

On a less refined esoteric level (ie. in more 'conventional' esoteric terms) the nine angles symbolize the sigil formed by connecting the spheres of the Tree of Wyrð with the two most important 'Gates' (see illustration). This sigil describes the energy flow and may be used,

magickally in several ways - for example as a visualization 'sigil' (in hermetic rituals etc.)  
as a symbol of the path walked during certain rites (some connected with esoteric chant - qv.  
NAOS) and when an 'Earth Gate' is being sought with a view to drawing acausal energy through it  
to change the causal (eg. inaugurate a new aeon).

The nine also represents the tetrahedron (for example, the crystal one used in the Rite of the  
Nine Angles) which is itself symbolic of the nexion described by the Tree of Wyrd.  
Thus, for  
instance, in the Nine Angles Rite, the crystal represents one aspect of the nexion, the Priest  
and Priestess the other: together (ie. the bringing together in the ritual) they enable the  
nexion to be opened. In this sense, the Priest and Priestess (when conjoined) form a  
tetrahedron which, joined with the crystal one, enables acausal energy to become  
manifest in  
the causal (the 'world') - this is the secret hinted at in many historical alchemical MSS  
(for  
example the 'Rosarium Philosophorum':

"Make a round circle of the man and woman ...") and occasionally depicted in  
drawings. This  
'double tetrahedron' is a magickal form of the double described above in the first  
paragraph  
(the causal geometric one).

In some 'esoteric' circles the nine is seen in terms of the five, the five itself deriving  
from  
the five angles of the inverted pentagram. This is, however, a misunderstanding,  
deriving as it  
does from viewing the 'angles' two-dimensionally when in fact they should be  
considered in a  
three dimensional way, at first, and then four-dimensionally (the helical path within  
the  
tetrahedrons). This four-dimensional view is in itself only a beginning - beyond is the  
multi-dimensional when both the causal and the acausal spaces are considered. One  
means to  
apprehend this duality is the Star Game (qv. NAOS).

## II: THE SECRETS OF THE NINE ANGLES

The diagrams show how the basic nine angles relate to the  
inverted pentagram. Thus, is the first sphere, the Moon, the second sphere, Mercury,  
and so  
on.



The diagrams signify the order of working in order to create types of magickal energy - that is, they are rites of invokation. Thus, the inverted pentagram shows how magickal energy can be created (or rather drawn from the acausal) - the type depending on where the process is begun. For example, to Invoke 'Satanic' energies, the point would be the starting one, going on to the next, , and then ~ and so on. The diagrams refer to the chants (given in NAOS and elsewhere) which when sung correctly open the gate or nexion (to the acausal) located at/represented by the specific point or sphere shown. Thus, means the use of the 'Agios Lucifer' chant (mode IV); means the use of the Agios Baphomet (mode I) and so on. For a ritual, the chants are undertaken in order.

The 'symbol of the nine' shown below the inverted pentagram is only one form of the many possible by joining the seven spheres of the septenary and the 'gates' - as shown, the invocation begins with the Moon sphere and ends with the Saturn sphere (and thus the Agios Vindex chant). Each symbol of nine represents a particular type of energy - for example, to open an 'Earth' gate, the sequence would end with the Earth Gate (ie. the Jupiter sphere); while to open a Star Gate it would end with that gate - the diagram. A simpler form of invocation is possible , and involves not the complete chants, but simply the "word or name" associated with the particular sphere (according to the septenary tradition). Thus, the Moon sphere would involve the vibration of "Nox", the Mercury sphere "Satan" and so on (qv. the correspondences in NAOS).

### III: CHANTS

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## The Black Pilgrimage

As detailed in the Order MS *Thernn*, cultivating a skill in Natural Magick is essential if genuine Adeptship is to be attained. The first stage in acquiring this skill [the final is that of Internal Adept] involves the regular performance of ceremonial Magick in an outdoor location - the location being chosen for its natural beauty, undisturbed by modern development. The seasonal performance of a rite such as that of the Nine Angles (qv. The Black Book of Satan III), will teach those participating infinitely more about the 'Wheel of the Seasons', than some pseudo-pagan ritual containing outdated symbolic representations of the forces involved. It is important that the rites are conducted upon the same site throughout the year(s), during the times of the seven festivals (qv. *Thernn*). The second task involves undertaking, with the companion, the Natural form of the Nine Angles rite [the site involved may be the same as that used by the Temple, or one specifically chosen for the task]. The third task involves undertaking the Black Pilgrimage. Traditionally, this is a walk - undertaken alone - of approximately 50 miles, which passes through sites - associated with the Dark Tradition [located on the Welsh borders]. This rite is undertaken around the time of the Autumn Equinox; beginning at dawn, and aiming to end near dusk the following day. The candidate must possess a quartz crystal (ideally a tetrahedron), and is allowed to take only a sleeping bag (no other form of shelter), and the minimum food required. The candidate is allowed to rest/sleep during the hours of darkness on the first evening, at one of the sites of interest. Throughout the journey, the candidate may opt to stop at the various sites, and perform a Chant (ie. the Diabolus). Towards the following evening, the candidate must aim to reach a certain site on the Long Mynd (a site near Wild Moor), and there, undertake the solo rite of the Nine Angles. Following the completion of the solo rite, the candidate remains to rest/sleep at the site. The candidate departs from the area at dawn, when the Pilgrimage is completed.

This task is most usually undertaken by those who have attained the grade of External Adept (qv. Naos), but the Initiate may choose to combine the Pilgrimage with the External Adept rite. This would involve the Grade Ritual being undertaken immediately following the solo Nine Angles rite [this is a very effective combination - but is optional].

With regard to Initiates who live in other countries: the candidate must spend some time creating an appropriate route by which the Pilgrimage can be undertaken. The route must include sites which express, for the Candidate - and for subsequent Initiates - a numinosity: they need not be of established historical or magickal interest (indeed it would be far better if they were not). Rather, they must convey isolation and natural beauty/wildness, and the route itself must be fairly arduous, keeping away from conventional footpaths. The site chosen for the solo Nine Angles rite must be of particular esoteric significance, and this aspect should be created prior to undertaking the Pilgrimage - via the ceremonial opening of an Earth Gate', or the Natural form of the Nine Angles rite, and so on. The creation of a Black Pilgrimage relevant to the respective Land of each Initiate, will be a further new and vital expression of the Sinister Tradition.

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Book of Coming Forth by Night  
- A Brief Satanic Analysis  
**ONA, 104yf**

['The book' is the text that forms the basis of The Temple of Set, both philosophical point of view, and the Occult. From it, the Temple claims a mandate and thus a "Satanic" authority.]

The text gives several clues from which its Occult significance can be deduced. First, it purports to be a communication from a supra-personal being (Set); second, its style and content; third, the 'entity' confers upon the scribe the magickal Grade of "Magus"; fourth, the 'entity' confers (or seems to confer) upon this "Magus" an authority - to 'reconsecrate my Temple..'; fifth, various 'aeons' are mentioned.

The information contained in the text about aeons is very interesting - it states that an aeon was begun in 1904 (eh) by Crowley, and that this aeon ended in 1966 [a period of some 62 years]. It also announces another new aeon with the announcement of Aquino as 'magus'. This information is interesting, from an Initiated Satanic viewpoint, because it reveals a total lack of Initiated insight - instead, it seems to continue with the obfuscations of the like of 'The Golden Dawn' regarding "aeons", something continued by Crowley with his description of the 'magus' (a description which seems to have been used by the 'entity' in the text).

The reality is that an aeon is a causal manifestation of acausal energy - an intrusion, into the 'everyday' world, of the creative, evolutionary force which has been described as 'Satan'. Such manifestations occur about every two millennia - and give rise to higher or aeonic civilizations, which civilizations give form to the acausal energies. That is, such a civilization is means whereby evolutionary changes occur. These civilizations are organic - they grow, and then they wane and die. This takes a period of causal time - generally, one and a half millennia. At any one time, there is only one aeonic civilization - and of course only one aeon. An aeon means the presencing of acausal energies over a certain period of time in the form of a civilization: and each aeon is a 'new' manifestation of the acausal: i.e. it is apprehended, magickally, through new forms, symbols, words and so on. A genuine Magus does indeed re-present an Aeon.

Expressed simply, an aeon cannot last for a mere 62 years. A new aeon means a new civilization, in the real world: a new ordering of societies a new ethos within those societies. It means a process of organic growth over many centuries. It means the changing of individuals - a more conscious awareness - over centuries. Anything less than this is not, magickally, an aeon.

Thus, either the word 'aeon' is used, in the text, in the wrong sense - or the text itself reveals a lack of genuine magickal understanding.

° The text itself, in both its style and its content, is reminiscent of a working done by a Satanic Initiate following the seven-fold way - i.e. a working with one of the pathways that link the spheres of the Tree of Wyrd when various 'entities' are invoked. [An example of one such working has been published, in 1974 eh - 'The Message of the One of Thoth']. Such workings are generally understood to be learning experiences - when the Satanic novice is exploring, via archetypal symbolism and archetypal forms, their own psyche. Most magickians, of whatever path or tradition, produce such 'communications' in their learning years. Those who are insightful, learn from these - and then the novice moves on: the workings are seen as merely explorations of the unconscious. Those who are not insightful, dwell upon such workings - they fail to objectify them, they fail to integrate them via a conscious understanding of what they really are: merely workings with various archetypal symbols. [A classic case is John Dee.] Those who fail to integrate them, usually see such workings as 'pronouncements' by some supra-personal being or entity: that is, they are seen as actual and important revelations of some 'deity'. Accordingly, a lot of time is spent 'understanding' what the often cryptic 'communication(s)' means, and in writing "commentaries" upon them.

Thus, either the text is an example of one such working by someone not yet achieved real Adeptship, or it is an actual "communication" from an entity.

° The 'entity' confers upon the scribe the title of 'magus' and instructs the scribe to re-consecrate the Temple, and so on. In the real world, the magickal Grades are understood as personal achievements, and represent the gaining of knowledge, experience, insight and skills by the individual magickian - a learning of wisdom by the overcoming of adversities; a transformation of the personality via both magickal and real-life achievements.

As such, the Grades apart from the first (i.e. Initiation) - are never awarded or conferred by others. They are only and always achieved, by each individual: by that individual attaining the level of personal

development - each Grade re-presents. The aim of a genuine Occult path is the liberation of the individual - to progress to a higher stage of personal evolution: to go beyond the inertia of the herd. That is, the individual works at their development, perhaps aided and guided by others who have gone that way before. In a sense, genuine Occult paths are means whereby evolutionary advance can be consciously achieved: they represent the knowledge and insights of the current and previous Aeons.

What is evolutionary is individuality - the coming into existence of unique individuals who can reason, who can judge, who can act, who possess insight. What is de-evolutionary (or just a stasis) is conformity - allowing others to do the reasoning, the judging, to inform one what 'insight' (and such like) are: i.e. to accept the solutions of others, the answers of others, rather than work these out for oneself.

In a real sense, the magickal Grades represent the stages of an individual's coming into being: of them appropriating more and more of the acausal (or 'expanding their consciousness more and more into the acausal' in a rather inexact way). This cannot be done for them - at any stage. Thus, for anyone, or 'anything' to confer upon anyone else a particular magickal Grade, is a sign that those so conferring and so accepting, do not fundamentally understand what the Grades represent - in effect, they lack an understanding of what genuine Occultism is all about. Those so accepting, allow someone else to judge and decide for them; those who confer, maintain the illusions of those upon whom they confer Grades. This is so even (or rather, particularly so) in the case of a Magus - that Grade is achieved by an individual as a result of that individual going further along the Occult path chosen than anyone else: achieving more, appropriating to themselves more of the acausal (or 'the sinister' if one prefers). At this stage, this means opening/creating a nexion to bring forth into the causal world, acausal energies: i.e. channeling aeonic energies and presencing them. This of course requires an understanding of aeons, and how aeonic energies are or can be presenced in the causal, via civilizations, ethos, wyrd and so on. This is manifestly not the case for the scribe of the text under consideration.

For this person accepts the conferring of the Grade by what is alleged to be 'Set' and accepts that being a 'magus' means manifesting, via a mandate, the 'will' of this entity, via a 'word' (and a 'consecrated Temple' and thus Priesthood).

° The mention of Crowley and his 'law' is interesting in that it shows that there is no real insight into the forces which have and do shape the present Aeon. Crowley's 'Law' and 'magick' were manifestations of that distortion of the aeonic energies which has affected the Western aeon - one aspect of which is the Nazarene religion. Other aspects are the 'qabala', the 'demonology' of the Grimoires, the glorification of the ego at the expense of insight, and a lack of genuine reasoning.

The work of Crowley continued the distortion - it was not a cure for it. Crowley's understanding of real magick was minimal - and he possessed no insight into either aeons or aeonic energies. In fact, his life and work show that he never achieved real Adeptshlp, let alone Mastery.

If the 'entity' from which the scribe received the text was as that scribe described him - the *Prince of Darkness* - then one might expect an understanding of aeons and Crowley's essential irrelevance.

Instead, there are some rather pseudo-mystical, pseudo-philosophical statements regarding the "Aeon of HarWer" and "Opposite Self": i.e. a clear, concise, rational account is not given. What is given, requires 'interpretation'.

A consideration of the text reveals it as in essence a working done by someone who has absorbed what has hitherto been accepted as the 'Western' tradition of Occultism - as exemplified by John Dee, the Golden Dawn, Crowley et al - where communication with extra-terrestrial/supra-personal entities is accepted, and where such communications tend to be accepted as mandates, authorizing those who receive them to found Temples/Lodges/inaugurate an 'aeon' and so on. This 'tradition' - which is actually a part of the distortion exemplified by revelatory religions like that of the Nazarene - accepts such revelations and the individuals receiving them. The scribes of such communications treat them with respect - often as 'sacred', and interpret them via numerous commentaries for the benefit of the initiated and un-initiated alike. This tradition thus fosters a certain mentality - the religious attitude, where revelation, mandates and 'interpretations' are seen as not only of great value but also as more important than real understanding and rational knowledge; where the notion of exclusivity, of 'electness' is preserved. There is acceptance of a 'mandate' which gives authority - and members are expected to be obedient to that authority, which reserves for itself the right to decide who is acceptable, and what ethic/doctrines/views are acceptable/'right'.

The whole text reveals this religious attitude and approach. Internal revelations are considered more important than the insight and judgment born via practical experience. It is indicative of the pseudo-intellectual approach which has so come to dominate present day societies thanks to the distortion of the

aeonic energies - individual character has less importance than assumed, pretentious 'knowledge'. A mass of useless 'esoteric' and non-esoteric (historical, philosophical and so on) knowledge is valued more highly than deeds, than learning via practical experience. This is evident in the "Commentary" on the text. In short - the text and the forms erected around it (the Temple etc.) appeal to a certain type of individual: those who need the comforts of old aeon values where there is affectation and delusion of attainment via the amassing of meaningless 'facts' and where those ordeals and experiences which can really change and provide self-insight are shied away from; where the individual delegates to someone else the task of providing answers and judgments.

One final consideration - from an entity described as the Prince of Darkness, there is no consideration given in the text to what actually is evil, sinister. Once again, there are only pseudo-mystical, pseudo-philosophical ramblings of the kind familiar from Blavatsky and other charlatans. One would have thought the 'Prince of Darkness' could have provided a clear, precise, concise, unambiguous statement which made sense to both a Doctor of Philosophy (if for the moment one assumes a Doctor of Philosophy would know sense if it hit him on the head) and a non-academic, but literate, person.

In summary, the text makes sense as, and is a good example of, a working done by someone striving to achieve Adeptship - to integrate within themselves archetypal opposites. If it is not this, then it can only be a conscious creation by an individual to enhance the image of that individual for the purpose of manipulating others, and possibly thereby achieving some sinister goals.

If the scribe of such a text believed it to be a genuine communication from a supra-personal entity, then that scribe had obviously not attained genuine Adeptship\*. If the scribe believed that such a communication was however from his own 'higher self' or something of that nature [i.e. he did not posit it as originating in another, discarnate, entity] then that scribe had obviously not attained Adeptship and the understanding which goes with it - as is evident from the content of the text. If the scribe consciously constructed the text to use it as a means to create and maintain a Temple and his own standing in that Temple, then that scribe might just be said to possibly be an Adept - but certainly no further along the Left Hand Path [a Master has no need of such trickery - to pretend he has some 'Mandate' from someone/some entity; or has received some kind of 'revelatory knowledge'].

In essence, the text represents - both in its content/style and in the use made of it - everything that is wrong and has been wrong with what has and does pass for 'Occultism', as far as initiates of genuine traditions are concerned. As a document of Satanism (or even of the Left Hand Path) it is of interest as a curiosity - an example of what Satanism and the Left Hand Path are not. Risum teneatis, amici?

ONA IO4yf

\* Judged both by the belief itself and the specious content imparted by the entity: a content replete with the use of past aeonic forms (Egyptian, here) and an intent to revive them: something that has blighted the fake Occultists since Romantic times.

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Left Handed Path -  
An Analysis  
ONA

The Left Handed Path and Satanism are related insofar as Satanism is a particular LHP. The LHP is the name given to describe a system of esoteric knowledge and practical techniques - and this system is also known as 'The Black Arts'.

The Difference Between the Left and Right Hand Paths:

The aim of all genuine Occult paths or systems, whether designated Right Hand or Left Hand, is to achieve or find a certain goal as well as to impart esoteric knowledge and abilities. The goal is variously described (e.g. 'Gnosis', the Philosopher's Stone, Enlightenment).

However, it has been a common misconception that the RH Paths were altruistic and the LH Paths egocentric - i.e. the difference between them was seen in individual moral terms. Another misconception is in seeing the difference in absolute moral terms - i.e. the RH Paths as representing "good" and the LH Paths as "evil". Recently, attempts have been made to formulate 'grey' paths which combine elements of both, and such 'grey' paths are often said (by their exponents) to be the "true" Occult way or path.

The reality is quite different. The LH Paths and the RH Paths [hereafter, the singular 'Path' will be used, although the plural is to be understood] are quite distinct and differ in both their methods and their aims. The most fundamental difference is that the RHP is restrictive - certain things are forbidden or frowned upon - and collective. That is, the RHP takes some responsibility away from the individual by having a formal dogma, a code of ethics and behaviour and by having the individual participate in an organized grouping, however loose that grouping may be. In brief, the identity of the individual is to some extent taken away - by the beliefs systems which that individual has to accept, and by them accepting some higher 'authority', be such authority an individual, a group or an 'ideology' (or even, sometimes, a supra-personal Being - a 'god' or 'gods').

In contradistinction, the LHP in its methods is non-structured. In the genuine LHP 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**. This makes the LHP both difficult and dangerous - its methods can be used as an excuse for anti-social behaviour as they can be used to aid the fetishes and weaknesses of some individuals as well as lead some into forbidden and illegal acts. However, the genuine Initiate of the LHP is undertaking a quest, and as such is seeking something: that is, there is a dynamic, an imperative about their actions as well as the conscious understanding and appreciation that all such actions are only a part of that quest; they are not the quest itself. This arises because the LHP Initiate is seeking mastery and self-knowledge these being implicit in such an Initiation. Accordingly, the LHP Initiate sees methods as merely methods; experience as merely experience. Both are used, learned from and then discarded.

Because of this, the LHP is by its nature ruthless - the strong of character win through, the weak go under. There are no 'safety nets' of any kind on the LHP - there is no dogma or ideology to rely on, no one to provide comfort and soften the blows, no organization, individual or 'Being' to run to when things get difficult and which will provide support and sympathy and understanding. Or which, just as importantly, takes away the responsibility of the Initiate for their deeds.

The LHP breeds self-achievement and self-excellence - or its destroys, either literally, or via delusion and madness.

Further, the goal or aim of the LHP is individual specific - it is the raising of that individual to 'god-head'; the fulfillment of individual potential and thus a discovery and fulfillment of their unique Destiny. That is, it breeds a unique character, a unique individual. The RHP, on the contrary, is concerned with 'idealistic' and thus supra-personal aims aiding 'society', 'humanity' and so on: the individual is 're-made' by abstract and impersonal farms.

The LHP by its nature means that its Initiates work mostly on their own. Followers of the LHP are masters of their as yet unmanifest Destiny. And while they may accept guidance and advice, they eschew any form of subservience: they learn for themselves, by their own experience and from their own self-effort. This is crucial to an understanding of the true nature of the LHP. The LHP means this self-reliance, this self-experience, this self-effort, this personal struggle for achievement. The RHP means someone else - some individual, or some authority or some hierarchy - awards or confers upon the RHP Initiate a sign or symbol of their "progress". That is, the RHP Initiate assumes the role of student, or

‘chela’ - and often that of sycophant. They rely on someone else or something beyond themselves, whereas the LHP Initiate relies only on themselves: their cunning, skill, character, desire, intelligence and so on. The successful LHP Initiate is the individual who learns from their own experiences and mistakes. The RHP Initiate tries to learn from theory - from what others have done.

Essentially, the LHP Initiate is a free spirit, already possessed of a certain willful character, while the RHP Initiate is in thrall to other people's ideas and ways of doing things.

The notion of self-responsibility is as mentioned above, crucial to the LHP and accordingly any organization which claims to be of the LHP and which does not uphold this in both theory and practice is a fraudulent organization. In practice this means that an organization does not restrict the experiences of its members - it does not, for instance, impose upon them any binding authority which the members have to accept or face ‘expulsion’ just as it does not lay down for them any codes of behaviour or ethics. That is, it does not promulgate a dogma which the members have to accept as it does not require those members to be obedient to what the hierarchy says. There is no "proscription" of certain views, or individuals or other organizations as there is no attempt to make members conform in terms of behaviour, attitudes, views, opinions, expressions or anything else. If there are any of these things, the organization so doing these things is most certainly not an organization of the Left Hand Path even though it may use some of the motifs, symbols and methods of the LHP. Such an organization is instead allied to the RHP in nature – **in the effect it has upon it's members.**

In summary, the RHP is soft. The LHP is hard. The RHP is like a comfortable game – and one which can be played, left for a while, then taken up again. The LHP is a struggle which takes years. The RHP prescribes behaviour and limits personal responsibility. The LHP means self-responsibility and self-effort. The RHP requires the individual to conform in certain way. The LHP is non-restrictive. RHP organizations and ‘teachers’ require the Initiate to conform and accept the authority of that organization/‘teacher’. LHP organizations and Masters/Mistresses only offer advice and guidance, based on their own experience.

#### Satanism:

As mentioned above, Satanism is a particular LHP. Conventionally, and incorrectly, Satanism is described as ‘worship of Satan/the Devil’.

The word ‘Satan’ originally derived from the Greek word for ‘an accusation’. That is, Satan is an archetype of disruption - the Adversary who challenges the accepted, who defies - who desires to know. In essence, Satan is a symbol of dynamic motion: the generative or moving force behind evolution, change.

In reality, Satan is both symbolic or archetypal, and real. That is, He exists within the psyche of individuals, and beyond individuals.

Satanism is, in part, the acceptance of the necessity of change - of the reality of things like struggle, combat, war, creativity, individual genius, defiance. Of the evolutionary and puritive nature of these things. But Satanism is much more than the acceptance of the reality of these things of their necessity. It is also the individual seeking to be like Satan to be Satanic. A true Satanist does not worship some Being called Satan. Rather, a Satanist accepts the reality of Satan [on all levels] and quests to become, in their own life and beyond, a type of Being of the same kind as Satan - that is, to change their own evolution and that of others: to evolve to a new type of existence. The existence can be described by what is known as ‘Satan’. This quest is a dynamic and real one, and it means that those who aspire to follow the way of Satanism go further than others who merely follow the LHP. That is, Satanism leads to new areas of being: it goes beyond ‘the Black Arts’ while having its foundation or ground in those Arts. Part of this is a greater esoteric knowledge(e.g. Aeonic Magick) and part in techniques or methods or create a new individual. The Satanist effectively learns to play at being god.

Since Satanism, as described above, involves the individual questing to become like Satan, it is relevant to consider who and what Satan is.

Satan is the Prince of Darkness - Master of all that is hidden or secret, both within ourselves and external to ourselves. He is the ruler of this world - the force behind its evolutionary change; the ‘fire’ of life. He is Lord of Life - of all the sensual delights and pleasures.

He is also ‘evil’ or ‘dark’ or ‘sinister’ - merciless, ruthless, Master of Death. He can and does promote suffering, misery, death. But all these things are impersonal - they are natural consequences of life, of change and evolution.

Satan, by His nature, cannot be ‘bribed’ or ‘propitiated’ - and neither can His services be bought, by a

"pact" or anything else. He is not interested in such futile things. Thus, there can be no such thing as a 'religious' Satanism - the offering of prayers or offerings or promises or whatever in return for Satanic favours. Such things imply fear, subservience and those other traits of character Satan despises. Rather, the satanic approach is to glory in Satanic deeds and chants and such like because they are Satanic - because by so doing them there is an exultation, an affirmation and a being like Satan: not because something is 'expected' or done out of fear of the consequences. It is by living life, by deeds, that a Satanist becomes like Satan and so evolves to partake of a new and higher existence. Such deeds are those to bring insight, self-discovery, to achieve, esoteric knowledge, experience of the 'forbidden', of the pleasures of living - and they are also those which change others and the world and which thus can and do bring suffering, misery, death: which are, in short, evil.

Furthermore, Satan is a real Being - He is not simply a symbol, archetypal or otherwise, of certain natural forces or energies. He has life, exists - causes things to occur - external to our own, individual psyche. That is, our individual wills, or even our individual magick, cannot control Him [as the softie imitation Satanists like to believe]. However, this 'life' is not 'human' - it is not bound by a body or even by our causal time and space. Expressed esoterically, it is acausal.

Satan, however, is not alone - that is, He is not the only Dark, sinister Being who affects our world and thus existence. He has a female counter-part - a Mistress, Lover, Bride. Esoterically, Her name is Baphomet. She is the Dark Goddess.

Thus, a Satanic Initiate is often described as the lover of one or both of these sinister entities - and a genuine Satanic Initiation may be likened to a ritual copulation with either Satan or Baphomet [where the Priest/Priestess assumes the form of the entity]. In genuine Satanism there is no 'worship' of Satan (or Baphomet) - but rather an acceptance of Them as friends, lovers (or, in the early stages, sometimes a 'father' and 'mother' or a brother and sister).

A Satanist thus evolves toward a higher form -and expresses conscious evolution in action. Hence, Satanism is the quintessence of the Left Hand Path.

#### Evil:

It is a mistake, recently promulgated by some, to see the LHP in general and Satanism in particular as merely a body of esoteric knowledge and/or a collection, of rituals or magickal workings, either of which, or both, may be 'dipped into' for personal edification and to provide oneself with an 'image'. All LH Paths are ordeals - they involve self-effort over a period of years. They are also dark, and involve the individuals who follow them going to and beyond the limits all societies impose. That is, they are sinister or 'evil', They involve real sinister acts in the real world - not a playing at sorcerers or sorceresses.

Certain individuals and certain organizations who claim to belong to the LHP have tried to dispel the 'evil' that surrounds the LHP and Satanism - by denying the very real evil nature of these paths.

However, what do these imitation Satanists, these posturing pseudos, think Satanism is if not 'evil'? If Satanism is not evil, what is? [Or, more precisely, if Satan is not evil, who is?]

The true nature of evil - and thus Satanism and the LHP - has been misunderstood. Evil is natural and necessary - it tests, culls, provokes reaction and thus aids evolution. And to repeat - Satanism is replete with evil: it is evil. Satanists are sinister, evil. They cannot but be otherwise.

Evil, correctly defined, is part of the cosmic dialectic - it is force, which is a-moral: i.e. it is beyond the bounds of 'morals'. Morals derive from a limited (human - or, rather, pseudo-human) perspective, and a morality is a projection by individual consciousness onto reality. Nothing that is 'moral' or immoral exists. All morals are therefore artifice - they are abstractions. Actions, by individuals, which are normally considered as 'evil' are things that are done by individuals against others - that is, evil acts are considered as belonging to us, as a species. It is not considered 'evil' for a tiger to kill and eat a person: that is natural, in the nature of the tiger. What has been and generally is considered to be evil, in humans, is in general nothing more than instinct - or rather, a feeling, a pre-conscious desire or desires.

Such instinct is natural - the actions which result from it can be either beneficial or not. That is, the actions are not 'evil' in themselves. They should not be judged by some artificial abstractions, but rather by their consequences - by their effects, which are either positive or negative. However, they can be positive or negative depending on circumstances: that is, the evaluation of them can vary depending on the perspective chosen. This perspective is usually that of 'time'. The only correct judgement about a particular act or action is one which takes into account the effects of that action not only in the present but also in the future, and this latter on a vast time-scale. Thus, the judgement concerning such acts is essentially a-personal - it bears little or no resemblance to the emotional affects of that act in the



moments of that act or in the immediate moments following that act. [In the symbolic sense - and imprecisely - such judgement could be said to be that of 'the gods'.]

Real acts of evil are those which are done consciously - and these can be of two kinds. The first are ignorant acts: done from a lack of self-knowledge and usually with no appreciation of their effects beyond the moment. The second are impersonal acts done with a knowledge of the effects beyond that of the moment. The former involve no evaluation beyond the personal feelings; the latter involve an evaluation beyond the personal (although they may still be personal acts - i.e. of benefit to the individual). A Satanic act of evil is of this second kind - they are affective and effective: a participation in the cosmic dialectic. At first, they may not be fully understood -i.e. arise from instinct in the main. But the Satanic intent behind them makes the individual more conscious, more aware of their effects, both personal and supra-personal, thus enabling judgement to be cultivated.

Instinctive acts are not 'evil' - they usually derive from immaturity. Evil acts derive from maturity - but immaturity is required to reach this stage. That is, there is a growth. 'Morality' tries to stifle instinct and thus restricts growth. Satanic acts of evil in effect redress the balance - and allow real maturity to develop.

- Order of Nine Angles -

## The Morality of Satanism

The essence of satanic morality - insofar as the individual Satanist is concerned - can be simply expressed: a Satanist makes an assessment of others, judging them, and then decides whether those others, on an individual basis, are suitable victims. If they are suitable, as victims, then the Satanist acts accordingly - e.g. by manipulating them, using them and so on.

The judgement is based on character - i.e. does the person who is being judged possess a weak character? Are they dross, worthless? If they are judged to be so, by the individual Satanist, then they are suitable subjects.

It is one of the aims of Satanic training to cultivate Satanic judgement on the individual level. However, it should be noted that there are two forms of Satanic judgement - the personal, and the aeonic. The aeonic is a refinement of the personal, the person being judged not only via their character but also via aeonics, in terms of their usefulness in attaining sinister goals in accord with the sinister dialectic of history. This MS is concerned with the personal type of judgement - other MSS deal with the second kind.

The cultivation of Satanic judgement - the assessment of others - is an essential quality, and one which a Satanic Adept must possess. This cultivation is basically a learning experience - sometimes, the novice makes a mistake, but this is learned from. Once a judgement has been made concerning another person or persons (and with experience, this becomes instinctive) the Satanist can act ruthlessly, if action is necessary or required - e.g. to achieve a personal goal or aid the dialectic. The act or acts can and do involve what others [the weak majority] regard as immoral and/or evil deeds.

Some case-histories from the secret files of members will best illustrate Satanic morality, although it should be remembered that these (with one exception) represent the novice stage of Satanic development. As such, they represent primarily a learning experience for the particular Satanic novice involved, although such actions often aid the sinister in general (as in the first example).

(a) A young man desires to experience some of the pleasures of living and so seeks money to enable him to achieve this. He decides to go into what is called 'drug dealing' - supplying various drugs to others. He reasons, quite correctly from a Satanic point of view, that those who take such things or need such things because they are addicted, are weak - they have made their choice. They are life's natural victims, and show by their choice and actions they are basically worthless. Our young novice reasons that if the drug-takers do not have the strength of character to resist taking such things, or if they become addicted, they are failures - a quite obvious Satanic assessment.

Accordingly, he develops contacts and after a while has a very profitable business. Thus, he is able to indulge in most of life's pleasures and so further his Satanic education. Naturally, as a Satanist he is cunning and careful in his business - it is only a means to an end. Further, he is aware that by so aiding certain things, he is advancing the sinister in general - aiding the dialectic by culling, and by weakening 'society' and so perhaps creating opposition and thus creative change.

(b) A young female novice, recently moved to a new city, finds her quality of life destroyed by loud, loutish, loud neighbours. She assesses them as scum. Her first action is to try and talk to them - but this is a gesture which she knows is probably doomed. It is, but it condemns her neighbours. She assails them by magick - aiming to cause illness, disruption, perhaps a death. This has some effect, but does not cure the problem [as often happens in real life when novices employ magick]. So she decides on more drastic action. She seeks out a suitable partner, whom she attracts by her Satanic guile and by using her sexuality. This man is a real mean person and has some friends just slightly less mean. Our novice is careful not to let her neighbours know of her involvement - her new partner and friends harass her enemies continually, using their own tactics. There are some fights, a few 'accidents' to the house, the cars outside, and so on. It is not long before her enemies decide they have had enough and move away (one of them has been hospitalized).

Essentially, the novice controlled the situation, from the beginning - she used and controlled others, by Satanic means, to achieve her aim after making judgements.

(c) A man approaching middle-age, initiated for a year, runs a small business. He wants to achieve more success. There is a rival firm - the owner of which is a typical arrogant, characterless businessman who is trying to edge-out the novice and takeover his business. So our novice decides to act - he assesses his

rival as a suitable victim. This assessment also includes the man's wife and young daughter, whom our novice judges to be obnoxious, having had experience of their dealings. All are judged and condemned by their actions.

Our novice seduces his rival's wife - and then his daughter, using various Satanic skills and wiles to achieve this. He then introduces the daughter to some people, who deal in drugs and prostitution - she seems keen enough, and is soon involved in the 'party-scene', taking drugs and generally misbehaving. Compromising photographs are taken and she becomes a drug-addict. She takes to stealing to pay for her habit, then prostitution. She is arrested. This is distracting for her father. Our novice infiltrates some people into his rival's business and they create some disorder - losing files, losing some business, upsetting the staff. His rival's wife is introduced to another, seemingly romantic man, and she falls for his charm. They have a brief affair. But he spurns her [this is all planned by our novice]. She takes to drink and tries to commit suicide.

All this proves too much for the rival ~ his business declines. Our novice puts in a bid, which is accepted. So his goal is achieved, at some human cost. But this does not concern our novice - the victims were victims of themselves, of their own weaknesses.

(d) A Mistress of Earth who has run a successful Temple for many years, desires an offer. There is a candidate for Initiation whom she senses might prove suitable - he has certain desires which he finds hard to control, and a rather weak character. She arranges for him to meet some people involved in distributing pornography. Soon, he is deeply involved in certain things, of his own free choice. She gives him several chances to make something out of himself, but he does not take them. She arranges several tests to prove his character - and he fails them all. She cautions him, but he finally breaks with her and her Temple, full of self-delusion about his own abilities. Thus, he becomes a potential offer ...

All the examples (mostly trivial) illustrate Satanic morality in action on the individual level - i.e. they are concerned with judgement and with the Satanist acting on that judgement to achieve some practical goal which they desire. This is a learning, an expression of dark forces presencing on Earth via individual Satanic acts, and thus the making, or breaking, of Satanic novices and hence the creation of Satanic Adepts.

The Illustrations should serve to show that such morality is individual, it is unique to the individual Satanist.

## The Practical Esoteric Aims of Satanism:

111 - 130yf

The practical aims arise from Satanic strategy which has its foundation in Aeonics [qv. the various Aeonics and Cliology]. These aims are essentially **tactics** to achieve the long-term strategic goal. This goal is the creation of a new species - and this means (a) a new Aeon; (b) a new aeonic civilization. For this to be achieved, present structures, forms, ideas and so on, have to be changed.

Aeonics shows that the present Aeonic civilization, the Western, has been distorted in its ethos and its structures. One of the most potent forms of the distortion has been the Nazarene religion. The distortion has been carried on, and effectively controlled, by 'Magian' forces - there has arisen various other forms to implement the distortion and effectively undermine the Destiny of the West - that is, the emergence of Imperium. These forms include communism/Marxism/socialism and the idea of 'liberal-democracy': they are all opposed to a racially aware Europe and the idea of Aryan/White superiority. This Aryan superiority would have formed the basis of Imperium; without it, Imperium is not possible.

In essence, the ethos of the West has been changed from a Faustian/Promethean pagan one, which exulted in conquest and exploration, to a neurotic materialism and a 'multi-racial' pacifist degeneracy.

There has been a 'silent revolution' in all Western societies and they all now conform to unhealthy Nazarene induced forms - the power structures of these societies now actively seek to eradicate all heretical pro-Promethean ideas/groups/individuals, and use the full force of the 'Law', as well as covert tactics, against those who hold out against the relentless onslaught to enslave the peoples of the West to what are essentially 'Magian' created ideas. Thus the campaigns, in Schools and throughout society, against "racism". To implement this Magian revolution, a myth was created - 'the Holocaust'. In most societies of the West, this myth is a sacred dogma - disbelief being punishable by imprisonment.

Because of all this, an Imperium is increasingly unlikely. The real - ie. esoteric - aim of the Magian is a 'Messianic Kingdom' ruled over by this 'Magian' elite. This would be de-evolutionary, in the Aeonic sense, and effectively wipe out the gains of all hitherto existing Aeonic civilizations. Essentially, the rule of 'Dogma' would hold sway, with terror to support this. This terror is already evident concerning the Holocaust and Aryan racism. The reasoned enlightenment, so evident in the Hellenic and Western ethos, would be displaced by a real despotism - a mentality akin to that imposed upon the West by the medieval 'Witch-finders' and their dogmatic Nazarene zeal. The Magian is a synonym for the Zionists.

This brief overview of the current state of aeonic affairs enable the practical aims, to be achieved/striven toward, to be understood in context. Esoterically, traditional Satanism/the septenary, and thus its **magick**, is an expression of the Faustian ethos, and thus the Western Aeon. The other forms of 'Western' magic(k) existing at this time - including the 'Satanism' of groups like the Temple of Set - are expressions of the Magian ethos (as is evident, for example, in their use of Hebrew forms and the 'Qabalah'). Thus the actual 'magick' of these other groups/individuals is **aiding the distortion**. In practical terms, any magickal act, which does not use traditional Satanist/ genuine Western forms (such as the septenary) is an action against the reasoned enlightenment that the Western Aeon represents.

On the practical level, it is considered necessary, in order to achieve strategic goals, to support the creation of a Western Imperium - that is, to support those forces trying to undermine in a practical way the current Nazarene/Magian status quo. This means upholding heretical views such as racial inequality, and denying 'the Holocaust' - as well as aiding/supporting National-Socialist/"racist" causes. The tactical aim here is the creation of a pro-Aryan, National-Socialist type State which has a noble, conquering spirit or ethos, and thus which re-presents Satanic values in action in the real world. An alternative aim is the emergence of a 'religious' form for this same noble, conquering ethos.

In addition, whatever means are necessary to undermine and thus destroy the present status quo must be used. This means disrupting societies supporting armed insurrection, spreading heretical ideas, aiding those groups/ forms which weaken societies from within (in the moral sense - e.g. drug dealing) and thus engendering a healthy, noble resurgence. A primary aim is to cause chaos, on the streets, economically, and socially - to thus provide opportunities for a revolutionary pro-Aryan group to take or seize power.

A magickal and practical aim is to destroy the power structure of America, for that country effectively is acting to maintain a global control in accord with Magian dictates and thus impose the Magian world-view. The real power of the Magian heart-land resides in America and in the control exercised in the minds of Europeans by the idea of 'multi-racialism' and the myth of the holocaust. If the present power

structure of America was destroyed, the practical power-base, both financial and military, of the Magian heart-land (ie. Israel) would collapse - what has prevented the destruction of this heart-land by the Arabs is the military superiority given to it by America. No country has ever been able or is able to supply superior weapons to any Arab state not under American control - not the former Soviet Union, not China. America has secretly threatened any country which seems about to do so - and threatened both economically and militarily. Any country which poses a real threat to Magian lands has been dealt with - e.g. Iraq.

With the fall of this heart-land, the Messianic dream of the Magian would be unrealizable. The next Aeon will be determined by the success or failure of these tactics. That is, for the next Aeon to emerge, and thus for the next Aeonic civilization to arise in around five centuries time, it is necessary to destroy the distortion affecting the present Aeon. Failure to do this will mean the emergence of that civilization will be much delayed - by up to at least a thousand years.

Further, the success of the tactics, and the emergence of an Imperium, means the spread of the present civilization beyond the confines of the Earth - out into Space. This is possible now, and only now, due to the inventiveness of the creative minority within the civilization and the technology to implement that in a practical way. A defeat would mean a hiatus, and thus a starting from the beginnings - effectively, the achievements of this Aeon would be wiped out.

Traditional Satanism is fundamentally pan-Aeonic: ie. concerned with the patterns and processes which are perceived, in the causal, as Aeons and Aeonic civilizations. However, to effect changes in the causal, actions of individuals and groups (and this includes magickal acts) must work with things as those things are - as they are presented in causal time at particular causal times. The **reality** of aeonic energies is that they assume causal form in aeonic civilizations, and that at any one millenia, only **one** civilization is aeonically significant. Therefore, aeonic magick is a working with the aeonic energies presented in the particular civilization at the time of that magickal act(s) - **or** a working against those energies. Anything else is **not** Aeonic magick - ie. is not effective on the aeonic level: it is purely personal, external, magick. The present Aeon is the Western - and this Aeon dates from c.500 eh to c.2000eh in terms of the energies being predominant. The aeonic civilization follows some centuries later: for the West, arising c. 900 eh and ending c. 2400eh. The energies of the next Aeon follow or arise some centuries after the last Aeonic ones: in practice, this means at the end of the civilization of the last Aeon; when the Imperium is collapsing. Thus, the new Aeonic manifestations will arise c.2400eh.

In the past, Aeons arose as part of the unconscious process of dialectical change. However, we are now at the stage of evolutionary understanding when we can alter the process itself because of that conscious understanding which Aeonics, cliology and so on, gives us. That is, we can significantly alter the process of aeonic evolution and thus the civilization which gives form and reality to aeonic energies. The time for such change is when the energies of one aeon are waning, and the energies of the next aeon have not arisen in any significant way.

Left to themselves the aeonic energies would have produced a Western Imperium which would have lasted from c. 1990eh-c.2450eh. A new aeonic civilization would then have arisen c.3000eh, and lasted for c. a thousand and more years.

The reality of aeonic magick means that one must work either with the energies of the Western energies - and thus aid/create an Imperium - or that one works against those energies. At this moment in causal time, no other energies of aeonic type are prevalent on Earth, and no other cultures/ civilizations are significant in evolutionary terms. [This statement of reality will not please many.]

Thus, the only practical options for significant magickal work are the ones given above: aiding Imperium (and thus countering the distortion) or working against the creation of Imperium (and thus aiding the distortion). The former option is continuing the evolutionary trend - ie. presenting the sinister; creating a dynamic imperative and thus aiding exploration/conquest/discovery. The latter option is de-evolutionary - ie. is aids those forces which by their nature are restrictive in both the short and the long term. The former is a moving-on; the latter, a dogmatic standstill and then a recession. Of course, the majority of non-Initiates see things differently - they view the distortion as 'progressive' and those arranged against it (e.g. NS type forces) as regressive/reactionary/primitive and so on. Such people have not only failed to perceive the essence of things veiled by their outer transient forms, but also have abandoned rational thought and judgement for abstract idealism arising from sentiment. The majority of such people who view the situation in this sentimental idealistic way, are simply victims of the distortion itself; products of the unhealthy societies which esteem verbiage and clever psuedo-intellectual concepts above

judgement based on experience and real insight.

Initiation implies a development of real insight and judgement - and a learning of genuine esoteric knowledge. The esoteric knowledge of Satanism, hitherto secret by nature because it was and is heresy, is essentially a knowledge of Aeonics - of those factors governing evolution/change from aeons to individuals. One insight of a Satanic Initiate is into the forms and structures assumed by aeonic energies in the causal.

This insight means that a genuine Initiate understands a transient form such as 'National-Socialism' as a practical expression of some of the principles of Satanism **and** as, in the long-term, contributing to evolutionary change via its inherent dynamism and acceptance of the forces of Nature. Such an Initiate understands that, at this moment in aeonic history, such a form is **necessary**: ie. this form (or something very similar) and only this form presences the sinister in the way that sinister must be presented to achieve the strategic goal of Satanism over centuries.

The current practical concerns of traditional Satanism lie thus with the Western civilization - with aiding those forms which can or do presence the sinister, or which will change societies to the benefit of the sinister. The tactics are geared to this. Thus, an encouragement of Islam in certain Arab states may be a tactic used - because Islam acts to discourage the 'American' materialism which would otherwise flourish, and thus offsets 'American' (read covert Zionist) influence. This in itself poses problems for America and thus the Magian.

However, the aeonic or essential reality, is that Islam is a transient form which like all religions enshrines the dogmatic, anti-evolutionary ethos, and while in the very long-term the goal is enlightenment or Adept-like liberation and thus understanding for **everyone**; the practical reality means that a working with this particular transient form is tactically right, in order to achieve the goals connected with the present Western civilization and thus the establishment of a new Aeon.

The reality is that there are no easy, idealistic options. A genuine insight and understanding of aeonic matters means certain judgements have to be made: certain tactics have to be employed in order to achieve anything. Satanism is concerned with real, meaningful changes in the real world: it is not concerned with mystical or psuedo-mystical world-views and impractical idealisms. In a fundamental sense, Satanism is pragmatic - aeonically.

The present reality is as stated above - no amount of 'wishful thinking' or idealism or sentiment will change this. One either aids aeonic change and thus contributes toward evolutionary change, or one does not.

On the magickal level, as well as aiding the forces of Imperium and countering the distortion, acausal energies can be presented to begin the process that is the next Aeon. That is, a nexion can be created, consciously, and the acausal energies consciously directed into temporal forms, some of which will be 'magickal'. This is in addition to aiding the present aeonic forms. In effect, these new acausal energies will create the next Aeon and thus its associated aeonic civilization.

This creation is the 'esoteric' Satanic goal of Satanic Adepts - the 'exoteric' goal can be considered to be aiding Imperium and thus fulfilling the wyrd of the West (and hence countering the distortion). In reality - ie. viewed from beyond the opposites inherent in causal forms - the esoteric and exoteric goals are essentially the same: or rather, different expressions of the same things, that is, sinister or acausal energy presencing in the causal and thus creating evolutionary change. However, this 'differentiation' into esoteric and exoteric goals is useful since its enables the tactics to be understood. Viewed another way, the exoteric goal is the short-term esoteric strategy, and the esoteric goal is the long-term esoteric strategy.

Ita lex scripta.

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- Order of Nine Angles -

The Satanic Way of Living
Anton Long 103yf

The way of living that a Satanist undertakes is one which allows an exultation - an affirmation of individual existence. This way is an intentional one - that is, a conscious striving to achieve something, to excel, to experience and learn and discover.

Furthermore, the Satanist makes his or her own rules as they progress. That is, they rely on their own judgement, their own instinct. If they are genuine Satanists, this judgement and this instinct will be noble - an expression of a healthy and strong personality. As they progress, gaining more experience of life, themselves, the cosmos in both its causal (or physical) and its acausal (or magickal) aspects, this judgement and instinct will become refined will become a more exact reflexion of the Satanic ethos. But, despite this progress, the overcoming of challenges, the achievements, the exultation that arises when one lives Satanicly, will never end. If they do, if the acts cease, then the Satanic intentionality has been lost - and one is not living Satanicly anymore.

Thus, even a Satanic Master or Mistress (or even a Grand Master) will not be satisfied to remain where they are - there remains more to be achieved, more to be learnt, discovered; more change to produce. If they are or do become content, they have begun to undermine their own achievements.

It is not generally understood, outside of certain elite esoteric circles, that each 'magickal title' or Grade - which outwardly signifies the achievement by an individual of reaching a certain point along the Occult or esoteric quest - is valid only for as long as the essence it re-presents is **alive within the Individual**.

That is, this essence, is living [a combination of causal and acausal 'life'] - it is given birth by a genuine Initiation and its requires nurturing. If it becomes neglected, it will die - and the individual will lose that vital acausal aspect which Initiation awakens.

A title or a Grade mean nothing in themselves - they are appearance, a symbol of something beyond their causal forms. What is real is the acausal aspect of the individual which it is the aim of genuine esoteric traditions and teachings to awaken/create, nurture and bring to fulfilment/maturity. This is a living part of the Initiate - and its growth is their responsibility: only they can affect changes, causing it to flourish, or to die. Thus, no one can award any genuine magickal or Occult grade on another - what is 'awarded' thus is only the lifeless empty outer form, which esoterically is meaningless. In Satanism, this essence is sinister - in effect, it is the acausal itself, that creative or vital force which binds existence and makes evolution possible. Satanism is an identification with this essence, not an attempt to disguise or distort it by the duality inherent in moral and ethical abstractions; not an attempt to stifle its growth and potential by pretending it is something else. Because of this, there are some who would claim that only Satanism - or at the very least only the Left Hand Paths (genuine ones) - enable the intent of the Occult quest to be realized by an individual: that other paths or ways briefly give birth to the essence only to kill that essence by restrictions and strangulating causal forms (such as ethics, dogma and subservience).

What this living essence means for the Initiate, the Adept or Master/Mistress, is that, being living, it can die. It dies by neglect - by letting go of the acausal within one. In other words, by not continuing the quest, by closing the nexion to the acausal that a genuine Initiation opens and which each subsequent stage of the way opens ever wider. [The final aim is of course for the individual to become the acausal - in Satanism, become-one with Satan - and thus to have created for oneself an acausal existence.]

The nexion closes by complacency - that is, by not accessing any more vital, acausal energies. Such energies are accessed, made real, by striving, by exulting, by overcoming challenges, by deeds which cause excellence. Complacency is a satisfaction, a self-delusion, a lack of intentionality. One's life has ceased to be used to make real and continue the esoteric quest - it has become instead just a living, in the causal everyday world. One's concerns are no longer for the acausal - for the numinous, for that which vitalizes and which engenders creativity, discovery, exultation. Instead, one's concerns are for the mundane, the illusive forms which hold the majority and by which they are enabled to live their puny lives. In brief, one has ceased to strive to be like a god, and become ordinary again - without a Destiny, and without the desire to make that Destiny real.

The intentionality of the Satanic quest - the need to continually re-affirm one's Satanic intent and thus Initiation - applies to the Satanic Master or Mistress just as much as to the new Initiate: often more so. A real-life example may perhaps best illustrate what is meant here.

When someone who now has reached the stage of Satanic Mastery was still striving for Adeptship, he

strove passionately, like the good Satanist he was, to achieve things in the real world. He exulted in living; possessed an arrogant assurance that he was special - that he had a Destiny. This nourished him, in the many conflicts of his life, and enabled his survival. It gave him a real Satanic strength - to act, regardless of the consequences. He never desired to be ordinary, to be secure, to be safe: his life, he knew, was a means to achieve his Satanic goals.

In those early years he strove to effect changes in the real world. He was sometimes, in those years, seen by others as a fanatic, a political agitator, Satanist, a criminal, a terrorist, a debauchee ... He was striving to presence dark forces on Earth and he was ruthless, at times, with others, and all the time with himself. He experienced the dark side of himself - and others. He strove and experienced, and seldom satisfied for long - there was real dynamism in him which could not be contained. He was, in an important sense, irrepressible because he knew he had a Destiny and because he owed allegiance to no one. Of course, this Destiny was often intangible - unknown in its realness. But he sought by his living, by his striving, to discover what it was, to learn. And he did learn, as a genuine Satanist does, by hard, extreme experiences; by living on the edge, by triumphing in adversity. In those years, he had no security of family, employment or material wealth, or even a 'home'; and, equally importantly, he had no one telling him what to do - trying to restrain him by 'ethical guidelines'. He was too proud, too defiant, too individualistic. That is, he was genuinely **Satanic**. He lived Satanism as few 'Satanists' did or had done. After Adeptship, his methods were refined - he became more subtle in the sinister sense because he understood more, possessed an over-view, a knowledge beyond personal insight. The means were consciously understood - the Destiny understood. Thus, the many ways of living, the acts, the striving were a means to something both personal and beyond the personal and as a consequence they were less frenzied, less compressed in causal time. The goals were generally longer ones, more calculatingly chosen and thus less instinctive. His Destiny compelled what most would see as a precarious life, without any obligations or security. From the ways of living, from the experiences came more knowledge and achievements; manipulation of causal forms and creativity, and thus a move beyond Adeptship where a genuine synthesis was obtained.

After some years, he had become quite comfortably off with a multitude of material possessions (a house, an Apartment). He had acquired a Profession which enabled the implementation of some sinister plans, a subtle guiding of others and opportunities for new learning. He had a plethora of creative achievements behind him, a wealth of past sinister experiences, and a personal influence in certain Satanic circles. A lover, a Mistress, even a few personal pupils ...

In all this, was a danger - the overwhelming of the inner Satanic essence by the outward causal, often material, forms. A dimming of the Satanic fire; the inertia of a contented bourgeois existence, despite the Satanic deeds. A living of the 'role' of Master. A self-satisfaction with what has been achieved rather than a desire to achieve even more.

Each person who ventures thus far faces the same problem: there is a staying-where-one-is, or the leap forward occasioned by the desire to fully complete the quest, to defy the inertia that middle/old age seeks to impose upon one. To thus be one of the very few who travels thus far. Most who reach this stage - and that actually is not many, despite the claims - are content: they have found their Destiny, and it is to be a Master or Mistress; perchance to teach; perchance to work deeds of magick, hidden; perchance to influence the causal flow and forms by one's chosen tasks and way of living.

Our Master, however, was not content. He desired an elemental resurgence of the Satanic essence - he did not want to become soft. He desired new experiences, new challenges; to discover and learn. To test himself again. So he gave up his Profession, his material security, his homes and his 'role' (such as it was) until he had nothing except what was inside. And he resolved he would go on defying, on learning, until the very end - like a combat Veteran who cannot settle into civilian life and who always returns to the struggle, until a final battle claims him ..

Naturally, the spineless affectations psueds who masquerade as 'Satanic' Masters (or even the stages beyond!!) would deny all this - particularly in relation to a Master not being content and desiring to immolate himself with the essence of the acausal and so strive in the real world with no affectations and no security (of a 'role', or material possessions or obligations or whatever) to presence that acausal and so achieve even further change. They would deny it because they try to make the image of a 'Master' in their own image - i.e. either someone bound by ethical standards and "sacred" obligations [read 'doing an imitation of a Nazarene prelate'] or someone soft, weak and who reeks of the pacifist, bourgeois vices rather than the virtues of the battlefield. Or, indeed, they make the image a combination of these two. The Satanic way of living of each Satanist never ends until their causal death - and if it does, they have

not fulfilled their full potential, not travelled along the path to its very ending. To believe otherwise is simply to believe - that is, **not to know**.
The only limitations upon living are those we impose upon ourselves or allow others to impose upon us. The essence of the Satanic way of living is to defy and overcome to the very end.

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Way:

An Interview with a Dweller of the Silent Desert

How would you define an ideal?

An ideal/archetype is a human construct, based upon an abstraction - a projection from what is real/observed to what is imagined; that is, to what might/could be, but does not (yet) exist. [In fact, human ideals can never really exist - we only believe they can.] They cannot be defined by abstract ideas/theories - for this is a tautology.

One of the two ways for an ideal to exist, and so be defined, is to use a human or existing example and take that as the ideal. For example, Odysseus - the ideal Hellenic man. But one should see the flaws of this - humans are fallible; what lives or exists dies or changes. Therefore the ideal changes/dies.

In a way, ideals must be organic - or immortal. The only **real** ideal (i.e. unchanging) is that which is infallible, unchanging, immortal. By definition, this is God.

Are manners, honour, reason, dictated by/exist because of ideals?

Yes and no. Depends on what you assume is the ideal. If organic - then honour is defined by the example (e.g. Odysseus) or a collection of examples ("heroes"). Same with reason etc.

Thus morality and our civilized nature (reason, manners etc) either derive from human ideals/examples or they derive from God. If the latter, then we may know reason, honour etc. beyond their being in relation to a human - fallible - ideal: that is, we may know them in relation to what is immortal, unchanging. What Aristotle called the Prime Cause (i.e. the Supreme Being).

For the truth about honour is that it depends on a suprapersonal dimension - a belief in a force or forces more powerful than the individual, *which controls or rules over the individual*. Without this extra dimension - and the innate, heart-felt belief which is part of it - honour does not live: it is just an abstract concept, to be believed in or not, to be followed or not, according to what the individual feels or believes, or is persuaded to feel or believe. The same applies to justice, to the fairness of the civilized person. The simple truth is that no civilized way of life can be created without this 'moral dimension', this heart-felt belief in some supra personal Power.

What about the ideal of race, and the aiding of racial politics in what has been termed "Aeonics"?

Ultimately, accepting or believing in illusive causal forms - whatever their past or present purpose/use in causal terms - is not a good basis for creating something of the future - ie. creating a new culture based upon what is real and which seeks to express and manifest to others over causal time not only the numinous itself but also our humanity.

1) Human beings are a distinct species, and what are called races are sub-divisions of this species. The crucial factor here is that sub-divisions can breed together and produce fertile offspring, and so create a hybrid. Furthermore, this mixing does occur naturally over periods of time. This natural hybridization often occurs in Nature. Secondly, human beings are evolving and changing, and have evolved and changed over aeonic spans of causal time, due to circumstances, their mobility and their interaction and intermingling.

What is important, is to realize that a definition of race requires the definition to have a starting point in causal time - thus, at this moment in our evolution, we define this human type as a race called "Aryan" which has various sub-divisions within it (Nordic, Alpine etc.). But where to begin? Now? Ten thousand years ago? Five hundred years ago? Fifty thousand years ago? What we term races are always in a state of flux; of change. Therefore a modern definition of race is an attempt surely to impose a causal idea upon something which cannot be contained in such an abstract way. Did our modern "Aryan" exist fifty thousand years ago? Did the Nordic?

If one so defines a race from the now (or recent past) and then creates an idea to keep this race "pure" is this acting against Nature because it is an attempt to limit Nature to this human abstract idea?

2) People certainly differ in physical appearance - but how important is this in terms of those things which make us human and which can enable us to create a numinous society and ? evolve further? That is, is there a deeper difference in terms of ability, invention, goodness, appreciation of numinous etc? And I mean a real, living difference. [The answers of political rhetoric are irrelevant here.]

The only viable way to answer this is practical experience - go among peoples of different races, cultures, in different lands; study; learn; observe, for many, many years. The answers of most other people are not good enough here. Why the only viable way? Because that surely is one of the foundations of civilization - observation, logical deductions based upon them etc. [qv Aristotle; true science.]

My answers are: the differences are superficial for three important reasons. (i) The vast majority of people of all races possess the ability to change: through education, experience, personal influence etc. (ii) No one race - or what

is defined/called a race - has a monopoly on invention, heroism, intelligence etc. (iii) No one "race" has a monopoly on the good, and perception of the numinous. In essence, all "races" produce culture.

3) Culture and civilization. Forget the old political definition of civilization. What is it, in reality? Nothing more than an expanding culture - a culture which has some military might. Civilization as previously defined is not always a good thing. It is often anti-cultural and inhuman: detrimental to the numinous/acausal.

Again, the previous definitions of civilization (Toynbee etc.) are nonsense because once again the definition implies using causal terms/means which are flawed and far from objective (e.g. some recorded, mostly biased, history which has survived - what about all that did not survive??). A culture cannot be contained within set deterministic causal limits (e.g. 350 years for an "Imperium") because it is organic: changing, living, unique. A good form - one which expresses something of the reality, the truth, the acausal - is one which can be stripped of its causal forms but still retain its essence.

The whole edifice which some now seem to accept as necessary is actually based upon trying to impose causal forms on the organic, living, essence - aeonics, "politics" etc. etc. All lifeless forms trying to grasp the essence, and failing, as they must. Useful? Perhaps, for a while - but never beyond the Abyss...

The illusion, the artifice, must be stripped away.

Does this stripping away imply a move away from all strident philosophising, and towards instead a more receptive, "taoist" way of being?

Not quite. There must be some fundamental postulates on which this living is based - some concept about the nature of Reality/Existence and our place within it. By our place here is meant - our being. From these postulates, a framework is constructed, verifiable via observation and logically sound. All thought, hence ALL human living, must start with postulates about Reality etc.

But this framework is only a basis to live - i.e. to think and relate what is, what occurs, to what is beyond. And importantly this framework is intentionally limited - an apprehension, a mode of being, and never a theory. The most important model as a way forward is that of a community living in a rural area in an almost contemplative way. Such a way will create the necessary apprehension about our being and Reality/Existence - how our being derives from Nature, the cosmos. **This is the central insight which is the beginning, the genesis, of the new culture, and thus the community.**

What outer form/appearance would this community take? One of an Aryan farm, where its folk practice old Aryan/pagan customs? Some believe so - but again: does the apprehension involve a division into race? That is, do we view our being, our relation to Nature, through race? What is the prime mode of apprehension? The unity beyond the causal/acausal of which Nature is a presencing - or the division into races?

In the simple sense - from whence is our identity, as beings, as individuals? From Nature (without a further division into race etc) - or from race? The first has been construed in the past as Tao; while the second has been construed recently in political terms.

To know how we dwell - the mode of our dwelling, in this life, on this planet - we must answer this question about the prime mode of our apprehension. The two answers are very different - they determine our orientation and indeed our apprehension and understanding of the numinous. They set our identity, **and thus determine the mode of being of the new community and its culture.**

Some would answer that race is irrelevant - from both a practical viewpoint, now (the genesis) AND from the viewpoint of the apprehension itself.

But what about racial Destiny - surely this is not a theory but a spiritual truth?

Race is a merely a theory - a construct. Do you wish it to be the primal apprehension? Destiny is irrelevant - in fact a meaningless term; pure jargon, pure form, used to motivate one's self and others. There is no such thing as Destiny. (Think about this, and you should see that Destiny derives from one particular mode of apprehension which is not a primal one.)

"Destiny" is often used as an argument in favor of hitherto existing priorities - and often used to try and motivate others to act. "We must act for it is our Destiny to do such and such, or be such and such ..." and so on.

But in reality, as used in the context above, it is just an abstract concept - a construct, an attempt to explain how things are, and an attempt to try and change things as we wish them to be or believe they should be. To invoke it as an abstract concept - as many have done in the past - simply does not work; it fails to motivate the majority, and simply marks the person or persons who use the concept as odd or extreme or deluded.

What can motivate and has motivated a majority is Destiny = will of a supra personal Power, *provided that there already exists in that majority a heart-felt belief in such a Power*. If not, then this has the same effect as Destiny as a concept - that is, no achievement, and a condemnation of the person or persons using it.

You state that both race and Destiny are merely theories, but does not the inter-breeding of separate races occur with a notable frequency when a culture loses its identity and declines; and thus cultural decline - that is, barbarism - may be understood to be indicative of the loss of racial consciousness?

Again, you must answer whether a culture actually depends upon race, otherwise there is a tautology. This leads to the question, what is culture?

An answer: a human mode of living based on an apprehension of Reality. The Way of manners, honour, reason etc. Simply - A means of living, as human beings, rather than as barbarians - rather than semi-animals who give in to their instincts.

There is a confusion about the use of the term destiny - it is used in two ways. (a) to imply what is predestined - and which a person cannot alter (the original use of the term: re fate; norms). For example, death is our destiny; (b) to imply what can be achieved given will of a person/nation etc. Really, the second is either political jargon, or a manifestation of a world-view which sees will as capable of changing/shaping evolution itself due to consciousness. To properly define destiny - or to understand it as of no meaning (save for a false meaning projected onto Reality by those lacking understanding) - Reality itself must be defined, and then our own relation to this defined Reality, in terms of being, nature etc.

There are two basic answers:

- 1) Reality exists independent of us, and what we perceive via our senses is only one (and lower) aspect of this. That is, there are planes of being/existence which we cannot directly access via our senses.
- 2) Reality is defined in purely causal, physical, terms - what is observed, or may be observed via our senses, is what exists. That is, causality and a physical Space are the essence of Reality.

1) can be said to assume acausality and acausal Space.

The theory of evolution - chance development for us and other life forms etc - relies on (2), since acausality is contra- evolution in the Darwinian sense. (If you think about this, you will see why this is so: evolution-->depends on linear progression which implies causal development etc.)

Darwinian evolution is central in the modern world-view. The notion of changeable destiny itself implies this type of causality.

This leads to the question of free will - but first, what does (1) for answer to Reality mean and imply re our nature/being/creation?

It can mean two things:

- a) that life was created by some higher being (which could be the supreme Being but might not be)
- b) that life is a mystery (not the product of evolution, though!!) which we with our limited consciousness cannot understand in any way at present

If (a) we can take a few more steps - if we were created by a being/beings, or the Being (God), then for what purpose? And what is the nature of these beings/God?

Are we an experiment by some race of higher beings who exist in some alternative reality we cannot perceive?

Possible..... But, what is beyond these beings? Who created them??? And why???

Or - is our life here on this plane of existence a test, a means, a chance, to enter these other (acausal) realms?

One of these realms might well be Paradise - eternal life etc.

If our mortal life is a test of some kind - a chance - then we must have some kind of free will in order to choose/decide/gain another type of existence.

That is, a limited type of free will must exist - which means the first type of destiny (fate) does not exist (and since neither does the second, destiny itself does not exist).

You talk of culture, and yet deny the reality of race: which cultures then have not been founded on a "racial" basis?

Very many. One example - Islam. This is a civilized way of living. There is an Islamic culture - a specific, definable way of being based on a certain apprehension of Reality; a certain distinct mode of being which individuals of that culture strive to attain. This does not depend on race - or even on what is often termed national culture. A Muslim from Africa is the same as a Muslim from India, Malaya, Norway, England etc. etc. This culture has flourished for nearly 1,500 years - and is still flourishing.

Another example - the culture of Buddhism.

We might even add - the culture of Christianity.

Note that all these examples are usually described as religions rather than ways of living/cultures. What is religion? What is culture? Once again, apprehension is the key - the striving for a mode of being founded in the dwelling such

apprehension brings. [Heidegger struggled toward this insight.] Why have such ways been defined, in the West, as religions? And what is this "West" anyway? Whose "West"? Again you must define culture first. To say culture is racially determined implies many things - that race determines apprehension, for instance.

I take it therefore that the Aeonics model of aeons and civilizations, of their growth and decline, was merely a means but not a reality?

Yes.

But can we at least define a civilization as a society which emerges at a particular earthly location, comprised of the people of that geographical location, and which develops a significant and creative world-view?

Such a model implies several things:

- 1) The idea of progress - of causal evolution
- 2) The idea of a self-contained being (a culture/civilization)
- 3) The idea that there is an ethos/soul to this being
- 4) The idea that this ethos is created/maintained by a fixed thing (e.g. race)
- 5) That there is an ethos for a distinct race

As per previous answers, (1) does not exist. (2) does not exist because the definition of civilization used is wrong. For example, what is hellenic civilization? The way of life which existed in ancient Greece/Turkey etc.? But when did it begin/end? Did it evolve/change?

What is there which distinguishes the "6 or 8 civilizations" (aeons) from other ways of life which were civilized? Where for instance is the islamic way of life - surely a civilized way (perhaps the most civilized there has ever been)? Further, this civilization was in existence for longer than all other civilizations, and did not have a "racial ethos".

Consider - hellenic-->civilization?-->sack of Troy, Agamemnon killing his own child as sacrifice; Alexander killing thousands of people etc. etc. In this scenario, Rome is the Empire of Hellenic civilization - but was this a civilized way of life? In some ways yes; in others, no. The tribal societies of Northern Europe at the time were more civilized - so were they civilizations?

In essence, the previous definition of civilization ignores such questions: the past is interpreted through a few fixed ideas to interpret reality in a certain way. Interesting ideas/concepts, certainly; and useful; but flawed when the larger perspective is considered. Such ideas give the appearance of understanding - but it is only appearance.

What can the Newtonian principles of science contribute towards the apprehension of the acausal? Why is quantum physics a wrong approach to the acausal?

Again, there is a projection of causal ideas onto existence, which is both causal and acausal [in reality, both terms are also merely constructs - to enable an apprehension towards the Unity]. Newtonian physics is a good example of this causal approach.

Modern science is **reductionist** and seeks to find simple causal causes. Proper science (which includes the acausal) seeks to understand the lower realities (of which our causal world is one) in terms of the higher realities (of which the acausal is one) - it is a way upward toward that which is Infinite and Eternal, which Itself is evident in all lower beings and all lower (causal) existents.

Modern science seeks to reduce all to a cause and effect - to basic particle mechanics; the properties of physical matter etc. on an atomic or astronomical level. Hence the laws of Physics.

Quantum mechanics is a modern reductionist approach (an illogical one at that) which seeks to reduce all the uncertainty based upon OUR apprehension of the causal - for example, our attempts to measure/quantity matter using instruments which are said to produce an uncertainty in our observation. Again, a projection of causality (lower reality) onto existence to attempt to understand existence in such lower causal terms. Such measurement etc. are causal (limited) means - not the essence of understanding: not a means to apprehending that which is beyond our causality.

Aristotle strove to understand the natural world, the cosmos, in an acausal way. This was a beginning, albeit a limited one. The success of reductionist science (newtonian mechanics etc) in our temporal world does not mean it is a correct approach to understanding.

But ultimately all such divisions (religion, politics, science) are causal projections of abstract, fixed, ideas. In Reality, no such divisions exist - there is no science, no religion. There is only that which is beyond us (the Unity and origin of causal and acausal) which our ideas distance us from.

There are no such things as society, culture, even civilization - there is only (1) the way of apprehending the essence (Reality itself) and a striving to live that apprehension on the personal, communal level, and (2) then everything else. In essence - there is the THE WAY, or ignorance. There is only a covering-up of the essence (through causal forms) and the apprehension of the essence as that essence is. Ignorance, barbarism etc. are a covering-up of the essence; just as THE WAY is a revealing of that essence, from the essence itself.

Reason is one way toward the apprehension of the essence, just as the way of living we call civilized (manners, honour, fairness etc) is the Way which appropriates/manifests/makes real this essence here on this Earth. And that is all there is or ever has been.

The whole way of thinking of the modern world is fundamentally wrong - just as the way of being of this modern world is wrong. It is not a question of Nature, culture, civilization, race, nation etc etc., but a question of how we ARE: what our being is, or rather what we make our being by using our reason and will (our humanity). Our being can either be toward the essence, the Unity - or toward the causal abstract forms/ideas invented by our species recently and in the past.

How then do we strive beyond the present, ultimately illusory means towards an authentic understanding of the purpose of the Cosmic Being - if a purpose/meaning exists at all?

Essentially: what is our purpose, as rational beings? Why do we exist? Are we just the product of chance events (nature/evolution) or were we created (and guided) by a Supreme Being for some purpose?

If Nature/evolution/cosmos - then how did this arise? How was Nature created/evolved? And the cosmos itself? Chance? And from what/where? What is the origin of life, and the very cosmos itself? Is the cosmos finite in time and space? Did it begin in some big bang with a minute piece of matter? If so, what was outside? And where did this matter come from? How did it come into being? What, essentially, is Space and Time, and being????

Having answered this question of existence, then and only then can there be an understanding of our apprehension/thought in terms of what exists (or what we have accepted exists).

Would you care to summarise?

All answers depend upon the primal apprehension. All the possibilities really amount to the two discussed above: the causal/evolution/chance answer; and the acausal/higher being answer.

All that is now in the West (and all that a certain political form depends upon) depends upon the causal/evolution answer - as does the apprehension of paganism etc when examined logically (e.g. our consciousness is the consciousness of Nature etc - but how did this consciousness come to be from what was before?) In the end the question is - where did life originate from? A creation by a being/Supreme being, or a physical occurrence based upon chance/change/evolution/causality? And where did the cosmos come from, as well?

Note that one must apprehend the acausal as it is and not in causal terms (e.g. as a still unknown type of Space which we can travel to etc). The use of such terms for political ends (once! - like the use of destiny) does not mean their reality is in those ends or in the apprehension underlying those causal end. In essence, acausality implies the essence of life - that from which it arose.

Thus, having defined the primal apprehension, you can understand how evolution, destiny etc. depend upon one answer to the nature of the primal Reality.

The other possible answer show there to be no evolution and no destiny as these terms are commonly understood. Also, note that evolution implies the **Western** idea of progress - social, historical etc. Western type progress demands causality.

If the acausal/Supreme Being answer is accepted, social/political/economic progress, e.g. as understood in the West, is irrelevant: what matters is to live to achieve the life beyond - and make that accessible for others.

[Excerpts from an email correspondence, Spring Equinox - Summer Solstice 2000eh]

- Order of Nine Angles -

Triumph of the Will

Thornian, ONA. 17 Nov., 1999eh. Vinland.

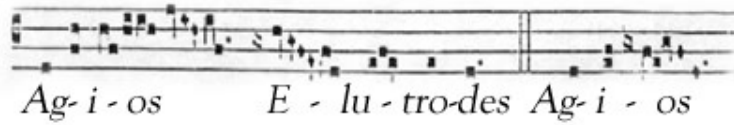
Introduction: Initiation and the External Adept Rite

The rite of External Adept is a culmination of all previous tasks; an ordeal which brings perspective and resolve, ending the noviciate and having brought genuine initiation. Throughout the noviciate the Satanic novice undergoes several tests of experiences, challenging the consciousness to first uncover, and then integrate its shadow. On the magickal level, beginning with initiation the initiate commences working with the Tree of Wyrd, invoking each respective Dark God - calling on its energies to intrude upon him/her, often causing much unrest. Throughout the twenty-one invocations, undertaken during a period of twenty-one weeks, the initiate begins to learn to awaken those "dark" energies that are by their very existence a part of us. Often time this process, coupled up with various other tasks, will begin to break down any previous personal illusion, revealing only the potential that (for the uninitiated) lies usually dormant beneath the mundane concerns of everyday life. Directly following the workings with the pathways, the Satanic novice begins workings with the seven spheres - over seven weeks. The Sphereworkings continue the process brought on through initiation and the pathworkings, but often serve to extract a differing element of consciousness - bringing to realization a more complete understanding of the bi-spherical energies invoked during the pathworkings. Eventually coming to an incommunicable understanding of each Sphere's interrelation with and beyond the other Spheres - the "Harmony of Spheres," an understanding that cannot be fully developed until well into the more advanced stages of the Seven-Fold Way. In truth, no energies can be experienced or understood in primal essence until the shell via which we originally come to understand them is done away with. Throughout the various tasks set forth in the Dark Tradition, the novice begins to experience a genuine initiation. The Rite of Initiation is but a beginning to this, as initiation is really an organic process, which takes on a life of its own. Via this process of initiation, the novice should begin to develop truly Satanic character. If one has not undergone this process with self-honesty, such character cannot be developed. "Going through the motions" is not initiation. By the time an initiate is ready to undertake the Grade Ritual of External Adept, they will have experienced several personal dilemmas in relation to the tradition. Overcoming these dilemmas prepares the initiate for advancement into the next stage of their development along the Seven-Fold Way. Most initiates however, do not make it far enough to even attempt the Grade Ritual of External Adept, having found whatever illusions or excuses they've been presented with perfectly reasonable. Thus are the Satanists separated from those with lesser will. The Grade Ritual The grade ritual of External Adept, completes initiation/noviciate - and is in itself a genuine initiatory rite into the Dark Tradition, as it requires the character befitting only of genuine Satanists. It is really the climax of a larger ritual - a ritual begun with the rite of initiation, and continued through the path and sphere workings. The previous tasks the novice has met, looking to the ordeal of External Adept, are prerequisite. For one to emerge their impending ordeal as an External Adept requires the brutal honesty of genuine initiation - which is only completed by the rite itself. Without such brutal self-honesty, and without the Satanic character genuine initiation breeds, one cannot achieve this next stage in their development. The rite itself is of simple form, yet difficult to achieve. The location for the rite should be chosen in advance, and some trouble should be gone to in finding the appropriate location. A genuine initiate will know when they have found the right site, or made the right choice. Just as a genuine initiate should know when the time is right for the ritual. Even the choosing of the site is a test; a test in which only the gods will determine the outcome. Let your intuition guide you, and spend some time at the site. It must be numinous, it must be a place where you feel particularly attuned to the natural world. A place where your footsteps are welcome, but your industry is not. The location should be an isolated hilltop, devoid of tress, where you will have a clear view of the stars. If in an area where an isolated hilltop cannot be found, a natural clearing within a forest may be used. The location should leave for no chance of human interruption. The ritual should be

undertaken on the night of the new moon, or on another suitably sacred day. A clear night, whence you can see the stars is best. Once a night is decided upon for the rite, you're only allotted one change. If the conditions are not favorable, you may choose another night - once. Some rain, cold temperatures, etc. are to be expected. They are a necessary part of the rite, since in undertaking the rite you are committing yourself to a test of the will - once the decision is made you are subject to whatever torment the gods bring you... Dressed in all black, or specific ceremonial attire (not consisting of a robe), you should bring nothing with you - save for a tetrahedron of Quartz. The ritual may be formally commenced by chanting the Diabolus, holding the Tetrahedron with both hands outstretched before you, looking toward the setting sun. After this, you are required to lay on the ground with your head east. You must remain there, without moving or falling asleep, from dusk until dawn. During the rite think of the tasks previously undertaken, relevant personal or magickal relationships, and your future along the Seven-Fold Way. Once you are clear in your thoughts shift your attention toward the stars, identifying any constellations you're familiar with, watching them make their way through the sky. Let yourself begin to understand the cosmos, far away worlds, and the potential the cosmic being has graced us with, to which we must fulfill. Let the stars guide your thoughts, and let them exist as they really are. As dawn breaks, bow to the rising sun and having completed the rite, leave the site. The task is not an easy one, it is one which takes tremendous will power. Failure is not an option, there is no second chance. Successful completion of the rite requires self-honesty: if you fall asleep or move for instance, the rite is void. There are several factors which are likely to play into the rite. A mist may take the entire sky, obscuring the stars and leaving you with nothing to focus on, making it increasingly difficult to stay awake. You may be disturbed by wild animals (particularly if the rite is undertaken in a clearing in a forest), bitten by bugs, spiders, and so on. You may experience cold and windy weather or rain. All these things and more may occur, and when they do you have nothing but sheer will to get you through the rite. Traditionally, all who have gone on to progress further along the Septenary path have completed this rite on the first try. Failure is unheard of. One either has the desire, the will to complete the ordeal, or one does not. One has either undergone genuine Satanic initiation, or one has not. One either possesses the character befitting of a Satanist, or one must deal with failure. Again, the rite must be completed on the first try, regardless of whatever may occur during the course of the rite. Conclusion The successful triumph over the ordeal is a gateway between the stages of initiate and External Adept. Emerging as an External Adept does not happen by circumstance, nor by simply completing the rite. The initiate should know they are already becoming an External Adept before the rite proper. The impending tasks should begin to presence themselves naturally via the momentum gained throughout initiation. One should already be well aware of where they are taking themselves beyond the rite. The grade ritual itself is the final feat necessary to complete before fully delving into the impending tasks of an External Adept. It is the deciding factor of initiation. Thus has genuine initiation taken place, and thus does the External Adept begin on another long road in their development - through more difficult and testing ordeals, changing themselves and the world in the process. - Order of Nine Angles -

Agios Elutrodes

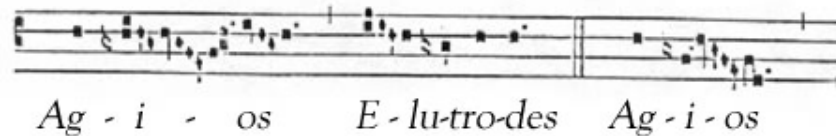
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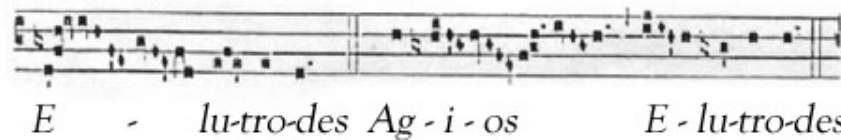
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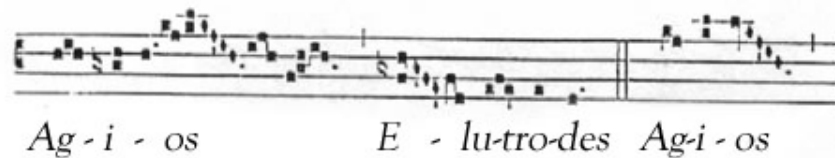
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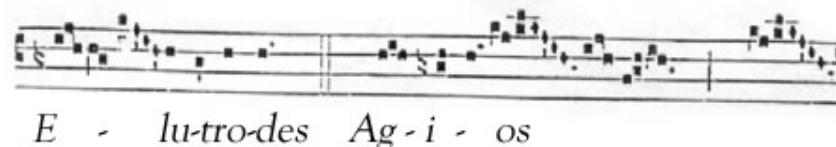
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*Arthurian Legend - According to the Secret Sinister Tradition
ONA (From "Hostia")*

There is a secret oral tradition regarding the person known as "King Arthur" which deserves recording. According to this tradition:

- 1) Arthur was a 'Romano-British' chieftain.
- 2) His wife was called Gonnore, and her father was a chieftain whose base was the fortified site now known as 'old Oswestry'.
- 3) Arthur's base - and thus "Camelot" - was the city of Viroconium (present-day Wroxeter in Shropshire). This city was the capital of a prosperous and powerful war-lord and British chieftain Vortigern (c. 450 ev). It was also associated with the war-lord Aznbrosius, who was of Roman descent. Arthur maintained a continuity and a certain style of life - 'Romano-British'. He followed in the tradition of Vortigern and Ambrosius, being a powerful chieftain whose rule extended far. He flourished after Ambrosius - c. 500ev.
- 4) Arthur and his people were pagans. Their beliefs were indigenous ones, connected with gods and goddesses.
- 5) Arthur fought many battles to secure his Kingdom from rivals. Some of his battles were with invading tribes - but for the most part, these new tribes settled peacefully into what is now England. There was more assimilation than there was conquest. [The idea of 'barbarous hordes' ruthlessly invading is a myth - created by later generations and part of a Nazarene indoctrination campaign.]
- 6) One of his relatives - known under the later name of 'Modred' - sided with some of his enemies (i.e. rival chieftains) and Arthur fought against him in a battle in which he was badly wounded. The site of this battle was near the Camlad River and the modern Shropshire hamlet of Wotherton. Arthur returned to his stronghold via a lake called now 'Marton Pool', near Worthen (SW of Shrewsbury). At the time, this lake had an island - a mound containing a grove of trees. The place was regarded as sacred, and the waters were reputed to have healing powers. The island was an abode of a goddess, and a Priestess lived there. This was the 'Lady of the Lake'. This mound still exists, although today it is not surrounded by water, as the Lake has shrunk to become a Pool.
- 7) The 'Merlin' of legend was actually a pagan wise-man who was adviser to Arthur. The abode of this person was the area around the west of the Long Mynd.
- 8) After his final battle, Arthur returned mortally wounded to his city, where he was buried. Some time later, the city was peacefully evacuated, as it had become indefensible. A new stronghold was founded on a mound between a loop of the river Severn, and Arthur was re-buried here. This mound served as one of the seats of the Kings of Powys - much later a town grew up around it called Scrobbsbyrig. The town was later called Shrewsbury. One early name for this mound was said to be the 'hill of the Alders' A Nazarene Church now stands near the site of Arthur's tomb.
- 9) Arthur's "clan-symbol" was a Dragon.

Arthurian Legend
Coire Riabhaich, ONA

For centuries, Adepts of the genuine Western Way have maintained a secrecy surrounding the ancient sites of the Tradition. Some of these sites are believed to be centres of the Hyperborean civilization of Albion, others are linked with the later developments of that ethos via the legends of Arthur and the inauguration of this present, Western, Aeon. All these sites still retain to varying degrees magickal energies, having been preserved by the guardianship of Adepts. These sites are not the relics of a dead civilization, but are alive (and 'timeless' - that is, not bound by temporal understanding and causal structure) due to the performance throughout the centuries of certain traditional rites - qv. The Black Book of Satan I & III. These rites are the maintaining of an essence, and evolve in structure as the essence itself evolves, growing towards the fulfillment of its wyrd as conscious understanding of that wyrd increases via rites and other structures. It is important to remember that our esoteric knowledge has increased: there has not been a time when we have known more than we do now, despite the claims of the mystics that we have fallen from a golden age. However, where intellectual understanding has increased, an empathic awareness has faded due to the softness in living that a Nazarene distorted society has produced. To acquire certain magickal skills requires a certain way of living that few are prepared to undertake - hence the abundance today of pseudo-intellectual 'occult' organizations designed to provide a comforting alternative to the brutal realities of genuine magick. Most of the original teachings of Albion became distorted or lost as that society declined, the Druids being regarded as representatives of aspects of this corrupted knowledge. As Albion declined the Tradition is said to have indirectly survived within the culture of the Ancient Greek civilization. The development of this ancient wisdom can be traced in Greek philosophy and early science, and in the dark tradition of the Kabeiroi. As this present Aeon progressed the number of Adepts decreased but enough remained to maintain the survival of the Sinister Tradition in that area regarded as its magickal centre - Shropshire, on the Welsh/English border. These few remained unseen and unconnected to the growing occult scene that began to flourish in the latter half of this century; this scene being characterized by the qabalistic orientated works of Crowley etc, etc. In contradistinction to this, the Tradition survived via oral means, its legends and magickal techniques sparse and crude in comparison to the intellectual acrobatics contained in the doctrines of the Golden Dawn et al. The fragments that remained of the original teachings of Albion concerned the mythos of the Dark Gods (partially accessed in a distorted form by Lovecraft), Esoteric Chant, a few rites mostly untitled, the use of crystals to enhance effects and enforce changes, the instructions on the procurement of Opfers, and the belief that wisdom can be achieved through certain ordeals and ways of living (most of these ways being dangerous and at odds with the conventions of the society of the time). All were most notably linked by an understanding of Aeonic Progression what has now become known as the Sinister Dialectic of History. Other developments inherited, which made certain esoteric matters more comprehensible via abstract ideas, included alchemy (of the Septenary variety) and later still the Star Game, and the creation of the Sinister Tarot. A decision was made in the early eighties to gradually make accessible all material concerning the Tradition, in the interest of Sinister strategy. So the time is right to reveal some of the secrets of the sites themselves as the attention of the esoteric world upon the Glastonbury area has served its purpose - that purpose being to preserve the genuine sites of the Western Tradition. One of the most well known - and distorted aspects of the Tradition concerns Arthurian Legend: the placing of Camelot in Shropshire. The esoteric traditions survived in an area bounded by the Stiperstones; the Long Mynd; what is now known as the Kerry Ridgeway; and the river Teme. The area of the Marches is regarded as being the 'home' of Merlin - he who was the lone figure of magick, who possessed insight, empathy, and knew the hidden order of things. He is believed to have been one of the last direct descendants of Albion. He was said to have lived in an area around the Camlad river - between the Stiperstones, the Clun river, Camlad and the Kerry Ridgeway. There are many local legends connected with King Arthur. For example, a battle recounted in 'Perlesvaus' is placed near to Red Castle and Bury Walls, near the present-day hamlet of Marchamley. The area along the banks of the Camlad from near Lydham to Chirbury is regarded as the scene of many battles of the period. Of interest are the fortified areas/'castles' near Roveries, Simon's Castle, Roundton, Calcot etc. Gonnore - better known as Gwinivere - is regarded as being from Old

Oswestry. There are other legends, but many places throughout the country also have their share of Arthurian Legends.

However, the Sinister Tradition places Camelot and Arthur firmly in Shropshire - and names a place. This and the nature of the legends - of a realism quite removed from the romantic haze of those connected to, for example Glastonbury and Tintagel - makes these Traditional claims difficult to ignore. The place named is the town that the Romans knew as Viroconium: the site of Camelot. Camelot was an essentially Romano-British settlement - and it was essentially pagan despite the stories told in the middle ages, these stories being Nazarene propaganda to distort the original legends. A pagan altar used in Camelot and inherited from the Romans until quite recently stood near a Yew tree in the village of Uppington. [The tree is in the churchyard and is about 1,000 years old.] The tree also marks a site venerated in Arthurian times - this site was sacred a millenia before the Dark Ages. After Camelot was overthrown, the remnants established themselves in a fortified enclosure within a loop of the river Severn. The sacred place of this area was a mound known as the Hill of the Alders. Later, this 'city' (containing the surviving Romano-British culture which had flourished in Camelot) was itself destroyed. It later was called Scrobbesbyrig - City of the Shrubs, and later still, Shrewsbury. The mound became the seat for the King of Powis. The mound lies behind High St. and the old sacred site now has a church built upon it. Arthur is said to be buried in either the mound in Shrewsbury - beneath the church - or another place, not far from the lake of legend. The 'lake' from whence Excalibur came is considered to be (a) near Eyton on Severn. [At present, the place lies between Eyton and Dryton on the edge of a small coppice.]; (b) Marton Lake (now called Marton Pool) - near the Camlad river, and the modern village of Chirbury; (c) Shelve Pool between the Stiperstones and Mitchell's Fold stone circle. As has been mentioned in other MSS, the 'Grail' was a crystal ("lapsit ex coeli") of quartz according to most. It did not have a perfect geometrical shape, but was similar in shape to a tetrahedron. It was guarded by several 'keepers' and was said to possess real magickal powers - prophecy, divination and so on. It was also said to be necessary for prosperity. Legend recounts it as being used to inaugurate the Western Aeon and thus civilization, at the time of Arthur. As stated, the legends that have come down regarding Arthur are mostly Nazarene distortions. But the pagan spirit can still be discerned, as for example in the original description of Arthur meeting his future wife, where she is presented to him naked from the waist upward:

"... he behelde her with a gladde chere, and saugh her pappes smale and rounde as two smale appelis that were hard; and her flessch whitter than snowe, and was not to fatte ne sklender; and he coveyted her gretly in his heart..."

There is much more to this passage than a 'pagan feel' contained in the imagery and aura of the description. Many of the beliefs of the Albion folk and of those who came after, centred on a dark, violent goddess to whom sacrifices were made and who washed in the blood of those victims who fell in battle. Since the 10th century She has been known by Satanists as Baphomet, and is traditionally depicted as being naked from the waist up.

Copula cum Daemone
Or
A Summer's Tale

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I

Richenda was happy. The coven were already dancing inside the circle of stones and she could see their black robes silhouetted against the dawn sky. For several minutes she lay still on the ground, despite its coldness, while her Magistellus circled around her holding the sacred dagger and her coven chanted their slow rhythmic chant: 'Veni omnipotens aeternae diabolus!'

Then she was on her feet, wresting the dagger from Paul's hand. He tried to resist, but she was too quick and agile and as he turned she tripped him. He fell to the ground where four of her coven pinned him down while she, smiling, bared his chest and cut a sigil into his flesh with the tip of the dagger.

The sight of bright, fresh blood brought a sigh to the coven and Richenda began her chant: 'Suscipe, Satanas, munus quod tibi offerimus, memoriam recolentes Atazoth!'

She raised the dagger but there was a shout and then another and she looked up to see several men running toward them along the rutted track to the stone circle.

Richenda, as befitted a Mistress of Earth, did not panic.

"Someone," she said calmly, "has betrayed us." She looked around, then stared at Paul, who turned his terrified gaze away. "Ne paveatis," she said, mocking him, "ista est illuio."

She stood up, and the eight women of her coven gathered behind her. "We shall meet again," she said to them, "as planned."

She did not run with them or even after them as they ran toward the shielding cover of the forest which covered part of the lower slope of the hill. The stone circle stood on the almost level ground that made the top of a hill and while Black Hill was neither the highest nor the most scenic of the many that covered this corner of the Welsh Marches, it was isolated, the overgrown wood which led down to Worm Batch valley providing an excellent route of escape.

The men did not follow Richenda into the darkness of the trees and she hid the dagger before threading her way through the undergrowth. The disruption of the ritual saddened her, a little. Every seventeen years, at sunrise in the Summer, the Magistellus would offer up his life in grateful remembrance of the forgotten god. His blood would fructify the land. Since the death of her mother, it had been her duty, as Mistress of Earth, to uphold the ancient and secret tradition. But she, unlike her ancestors, had failed. For several minutes, saddened by this failure, she walked aimlessly. Slowly, sunlight began to filter and speckle down and she sat on the ground, resting her back against the trunk of a fallen and rotten tree as a rising and then gusting wind shook the leaves and branches around her.

"There is nothing you could have done," a soft voice beside her said.

Startled, she stared at the figure beside her. The old man smiled. His full beard was a little unkempt, his dark clothes clean if well worn, and in his hand he carried a staff whose top was carved into the head of a wolf.

"Do not be afraid," he said to her.

"I am not afraid," she said before looking around.

"They will not follow you here, Richenda."

"Who are you?"

"I have many names, none of them important. But you are more beautiful than I expected. Do you have a question?"

"What do you want?" He did not look like a beggar or a tickney-man.

"It is not what I want - but what you wish to know."

"What do you mean?"

The man smiled. "When you find the question I will be here."

A rustling in the trees nearby distracted Richenda and when she turned back, the old man had gone. For

what seemed a long time she sat still until rain made her resume her walk, and she had walked what seemed a long distance until the rain reached through the trees to soak her.

The sun was strong and had already begun to dry her ragged clothes by the time she reached her home. Cold Hill cottage was set in a lee between two hills almost directly north and south. To the west, the sheep-grazed land rose steadily to the wooded, overgrown and partly derelict sides of the Stiperstones - a rocky outcrop between the almost barren flats of the Long Mynd and the nearby hills of Wales. Only toward the east did the land slope away from the cottage, down to a tributary of the river East Onny. In Winter, at the cottage, there was often little sun.

Ceridwen was waiting for her by the cottage door. She was Richenda's sister, although a stranger would not have guessed, for she was fair of hair where Richenda was dark, tall and broad where Richenda was of medium height and very curvaceous; Pretty, with a weather-worn complexion whereas Richenda was beautiful with a complexion a town-lady would have admired.

"There was a man here," Ceridwen said in greeting to her sister. "Someone I'd never seen around here before."

"What did he want?" Richenda said, suspicious.

"He gave me this." She held out a piece of vellum. It was inscribed with some kind of map.

Richenda stared at it. "This man -

"He knew my name."

Richenda made the obvious deduction. "Did he carry a staff - with a wolfshead?"

"Yes. And The Giving?"

"We were betrayed."

"Paul?"

"He shall pay for his treachery."

"They shall come for us, then?"

Richenda laughed. "They would not dares"

"But Father Albert -

Richenda laughed again and then spat on the ground. "He will fail, like all the others."

"I do not like it. What if - " Ceridwen began to protest.

Richenda took the piece of vellum from her hand. "Shall we see what this is all about."

"Perhaps it is a trap. That Nazarene priest - "

"Well, we'll soon find out."

Richenda found the map easy to follow, and she led her sister along the track from the cottage, through bracken and down into a small valley. The way led upward for a while, following a tiny stream, and into woods, to take them further up toward bare rocks and then down again to a scattering of trees. Nearby, a tree overhung a ledge and Richenda scrambled around. Behind the curving trunk of the tree loose rocks lay clumped, overgrown and mossy and she gave them a cursory look before realizing.

"Come on, help!" she shouted to her sister, and together they began to clear the rubble. It was not long before they discovered the entrance to a cave.

"I don't like this," Ceridwen said.

"It's probably just an old mine shaft. Might even be Roman." She squeezed herself into and crawled along the passage. It widened after a while, enabling her to turn around.

"Goes a long way in. We need a lantern."

Richenda left her sister at the cave entrance, and she had almost reached the track which led back to their cottage when she heard a horse approaching. She hid in the bracken, but it was only Owen, her nearest neighbour, and she watched him raise the gun he carried to shoot at a Skylark. The bird fell, and Owen sent his dog after it. Owen was partial to Lark pie. She could see his ruddy face smile as he urged his horse on.

She did not wish to speak to him and waited until she was alone again. Ceridwen was asleep when she returned to the entrance of the cave, carrying two lanterns and a flint tinderbox. She lit them both, woke her sister and led her into the crumbling, dank passage. It slanted gently downward to sharply turn and end in a small chamber. Toward the left Richenda could see another passage, but it was almost completely blocked by rubble and large rocks. She tried to move some, but soon gave up and she turned, crouching, to see Ceridwen digging at the ground with her hands. There was a smile on Ceridwen's face as she extracted something from the rubble.

Outside, in the bright light, she used the dirty hem of her dress to clean it. The crystal was large, cold to the touch, and shaped like a tetrahedron.

Now, Richenda thought, I have a question, which hopefully the old man can answer.

II

"So - you failed us." The speaker was dressed in a cassock of a Priest. His face was wrinkled with age, his hair white, some of his teeth rotten, while his body seemed too small to support the large head. He looked dismissively at Paul who was kneeling before him the cold damp Chapel.

"Forgive me, Father," Paul said in a pleading voice.

The Priest turned to his three companions, who nodded gravely.

"Rise," the Priest said to Paul, affecting a smile. "And sit with us."

"These followers of the Devil," he continued, "cannot be allowed to continue with their blasphemy." He turned to whisper to his three companions. "Inveni Pauli servum meum, oleo sancto meo unxi: manus enim mea auxiliabitur ei, et brachium meum confortabit eum." To Paul, he said, "I have a special task for you, my son. Have you faith enough to accept?"

"You must be strong, my son. Watch her well. See who she sees. Follow. We will pray and plan anew. You have studied veil with us - quod est commixtione homines, et tali modo nasciturum esset Anti-Christum. We fear this, and depend on you." He gave Paul a small phial. "Holy relics, to guard you. Go now."

Paul left. It was a long walk along the lanes and tracks to the sinewy small valley that gave one access to Richenda's cottage. A man leading several tethered pack-mules passed him as he skirted the grounds of Linley Hall. He wished the man with the wizened face and torn, dirty clothes, a good day but received no reply. The man barely looked up and briefly met Paul's gaze before looking nervously around, his hand clutching at the pistol stuck into his belt. Then he was gone from Paul's sight as the track he had chosen led him and his mules eastward toward the Port Way over the Mynd.

Paul chose a high vantage point, in the bracken, to observe Cold Hill cottage. The day was warm, and he was glad to be freed from the toil of work. He hated work, and had been glad when Father Albert had come to his father all those years ago. He hated their squatter's cottage perched near the bottom of Nind hill - always filled with smoke, with his brothers and sisters. Its walls were thick, composed of stone, undressed and found nearby, its windows tiny. There were only two rooms, and on most nights the children huddled together round the fire while their parents slept alone on a mattress made from moss. He had always been hungry.

But the old Priest had saved him, and sent him to school in Salop town. He was sixteen, his mind full of stories of Empire and adventure, when the Priest found him work with a Farrier not very distant from Cold Hill cottage. So he had worked and came to know Richenda, as the Priest had planned. After four years, she had confided in him, as the Priest had done. Thus he had played the Priest's game, priding himself on his success. What stories he would tell in the Taverns when his adventures were complete. The warm sun began to make him feel sleepy. He had seen no one around the cottage during the hours of his waiting, no sign of anyone within, and he began to wonder what it was like inside. He had only ever met Richenda at or near his place of work - and only twice near the circle of stones - and the more he thought about the interior of the cottage the more excited he became. It was there that she slept, that she kept her clothes. Perhaps even now she was sleeping. He could creep up, and see her through the window.

Soon, his excitement could no longer be contained, and he crept slowly down with beating heart and quivering limbs toward the cottage. He crouched outside, listening. No sounds reached him, except the breeze, the sound of a curlew, the cry of a raven, and he stole a look through one of the small windows at the back of the cottage. There was a woman, sleeping on a bed, and she was naked. Paul stared at her, unable to avert his gaze. It was not Richenda, nor Ceridwen. She seemed of middle age, her dark hair in disarray around her head and shoulders. He had seen one of his sisters naked, once. But this was different. He was a virgin, and as he stared lustful thoughts began to grow in his mind. Then the woman opened her eyes.

She looked directly at him, as if she had known he had been there, but she did not move, even to cover herself, or turn her eyes away. Instead, she began to very slowly caress her breasts, smiling as she did so. Paul stood there, transfixed. Then she was beckoning him in, arching her body and touching the large mass of her pubic hair with her fingers. Its blackness contrasted vividly with her white skin, and he walked slowly to the door of the cottage, almost fearful that the vision would disappear before he got

inside.

But she was still there as he walked into the bedroom. She sat up, still smiling, to stand and touch his face. Her touch startled him, because he had half-expected her to be unreal. Her fingers were warm, her touch soft, her breath fragrant and she kissed him passionately before starting to remove his clothes. "I am Melusine" she whispered in his ear as she dragged his naked body down with her onto the bed, her hand guiding his erection.

In his inexperience and passion, it was soon over, but she clung to him and he soon drifted to sleep. He did not know how long he slept, but he awoke when she moved to take his penis into her mouth. His recovery was quick, and she pushed him onto his back to ease herself onto his erection.

She would not let him rest, finding new ways to arouse him until even the vigour of his youth and the excitement of losing his virginity diminished and then were gone, leaving him exhausted. His eyes began to close, and she began to laugh. She was mocking him with her laugh. But it suddenly stopped, and he opened his eyes to see her gone. He rushed outside, but she had vanished.

III

Richenda waited a long time in the woods near her circle of stones, but Ceridwen did not come to meet her as they had planned. It was nearing dusk when, weary and beginning to worry, she began her walk back to the cottage.

She reached it in darkness, guided by her senses, her knowledge of the area and the vestigial light rarely absent on a summer's night in Britain. Spectral shadows entwined her cottage, and she understood. But the form that she had summoned to work her desire upon Paul did not return and she sat in a rickety chair before the empty grate of the fireplace reaching out to Ceridwen.

But she could sense nothing. It was as if some barrier existed between them, a barrier that not even her magick could breach. For some time she listened to the sounds of her night: a white Owl screeching, the jarring cry of a Nightjar. Tired, she closed her eyes to sleep.

"I hope I do not disturb you," a soft voice beside her said. The old man, holding his staff, stood beside her.

"No," she said, without surprise, "I was just dreaming about you."

"You have found a question?"

"The crystal -"

"Ah! You are Mistress of a long tradition. As your own mother was. Yes, indeed. Right back to my ... well, the old ways flourish still, for which I am glad. What was I saying? Oh yes. To change a whole folk is the aim of your magick: to bring wyrd, change on a large scale. Once, a long time ago now when ... when a young man was still learning like Logres, his ward, a change was begun. And after - new ways of living, new understandings. This by the crystal you have."

"How?"

"How? Simple. I give part answer: *wyrd non est aliud, quam halitus aquae, terraeque, solis calore exacte attenuatus et coctus, a frigore secutae noctis in unum coactus, densatusque*. And another part: *veniebant Dasmones, et cum mulieribus miscebantur*. You have heard of the sangreal? Who now, alas, has not? But Phereder knew the secret - and ben Beirdd. There was a hermit - I forget now his name although Helinandus remembered him who began to change the real meaning and make it as a vessel for that new silly god with crosses and flocks of silly sheep It is, as von Eachenbach knew, *lapsit ex coelis*. And this you have, given by me, its guardian."

Richenda was very tired, and closed her eyes in sleep. When she awoke, she did not expect to see the old man, and did not. '*Veniebant Daemones, et cum mulieribus miscebantur*' she heard in her head like an echo. Did she really understand?

She believed so, and this pleased her, although she was still troubled by Ceridwen's absence.

'The crystal - ' a voice seemed to say to her, and she went to where it was hidden among the objects of the untidy and unclean cottage. She found it, and sat down at the table, clearing away the remains of the discarded and mouldering food to place it in front of her. She stared at it, and it was not long before her mind cleared and began to fill with images. She saw Ceridwen, almost naked, tied to a chair in a damp chapel replete with Nazarene symbols and images. Father Albert and two other men stood over her, leering as one of them began to beat her with a whip. They were shouting at her sister, although she could hear no words, and her sister sat as if oblivious to the blows, mocking them with a silent smile.

Anger overcame Richenda, and the vision flickered, then vanished. Then, remembering, she formed her anger into an astral shape and sent it forth to bring her Paul.

IV

The presbytery was not large, and not even purpose built as a dwelling for a Priest, but Father Albert liked it, and the chapel attached to it. It was a gift, less than a decade ago, from the wealthy Sumner family. Recusants, the Sumners owned the village in the shadow of the Long Mynd and most of the surrounding land. So he said his Masses for the family and the few villagers who ventured to attend. It was a comfortable living. But Father Albert, educated as most Catholic Priests of the time had been, in France, had in his first year of residence come upon the legends and the whispers and the rumours of witchcraft and Satanism in the area. So he had studied, and listened and learnt, seeking help from his learned brethren. Thus it was that he came to know of a coven perhaps centuries old, dedicated to the old ways and commerce with demons. And so his suspicions grew until he seriously believed this commerce was of great import - a new and important battle in the centuries long war. So he had begun to scheme to defeat his enemy.

His small study was filled from floor to ceiling with books, and from a crowded shelf he took down a manuscript bound in vellum. He opened it and began to read, and as he did so he felt someone laughing at him. He shut his eyes and began to pray: 'Exorcizamus te, omnis immunde spiritus, omnis Satanica potestas, omnis incursio infernalis adversarii'.

The prayer soothed him, and the laughter disappeared. The manuscript was hand-written in a monastic script and told of the signs by which commerce with demons could be told. He had read it many times, and read it again while he waited for his fellow believers to return with their prize. Ceridwen, sister of the women who knew to be hereditary leader of the coven. Paul, his oblate and pupil, had failed to return, and Father Albert suspected foul and demonic deeds. Perhaps they had him, and would complete their sacrifice. But with Ceridwen, he might forstall their plans

His reverie about his holy war was interrupted by the arrival of his companions. He had sworn them, with holy oaths, to secrecy, and they being god-fearing and educated like him in theology in the confines of a monastery, had obeyed.

Ceridwen had offered no resistance, and she let herself be led into the chapel where they bound her to a chair, these ageing relicts of an almost dying age.

"Speak, witch!" Father Albert demanded.

But she smiled and spat into his face.

They prayed over her then, but she still smiled. They sprinkled her with their holy water, held a crucifix near her face, but she said nothing, and did not attempt to move. After an hour they left her.

She was still smiling when they returned, an hour later.

"Tell us," Father Albert said to her as he clutched his Breviary, "this area is important, is it not? I have heard tales of that hideous stone circle - of what you do and have done there. Do you not promise the Devil sacrifices and offerings" He turned to his companions. "Singulis quindecim diebus, vel singulo mense saltem, necem alicujus infantis aut mortale veneficium."

They crossed themselves in horror. "Why do you not answer us?" Father Albert said to her. "We seek only your good, your own salvation. We can save you from eternal damnation. If you repent, you can be saved. We only seek to help you, be your friends. It is our duty to save your soul."

He opened his breviary and began to pray. For nearly an hour he prayed. But she still smiled at them.

"There is a mark," Father Albert said, remembering his manuscript, "A mark made by the demon. It is imprinted on some hidden part of the body. Sometimes in the shape of a toad's leg, sometimes a hare or a spider." He motioned to his companions and they began to remove her clothes.

She was almost naked when Father Albert began to touch her breasts. "Et hoc modo," she whispered to him, "homo jungens so Incut~ non vilificat, immo fignificat suam naturam."

This startled and shocked him, both for its content and because of her obvious knowledge of Latin, and he sprang back, horrified. Quickly, his mind made many assumptions.

"She is a demon!" he shouted. His riding whip was nearby, discarded, and he grasped it in trembling hands. Then one of his companions, perhaps excited by the exposure of female flesh or from whatever other motive, snatched the whip and began to beat her with it, shouting 'Avante Satanas!' as he did so.

Cerdiwen smiled at them all.

Suddenly, Father Albert shouted. "Leave her! Leave her! We must pray."
They left her then, bloodied but defiant, while they went to the study to pray.

V

Richenda did not have long to wait. Paul came to her, as she had bid him do. He had been nearby, still under the spell of Melusine's body and lust yet morbidly ashamed of his betrayal of his faith and Father Albert. So he had sat and waited, for some sign.

A voice called him, and he came back to Richenda's cottage to stand on the step to her door, shivering with both fear and anticipation.

"Do you wish her again?" Richenda asked him.

"Yes," he said, staring down at the floor.

"Then she shall be yours. But first - do you Paul Jones renounce Yeshua, the Nazarene, and all his works?"

"I - "

"Say it! And this time there shall be no escape!" She held the fingers of her left hand against his forehead.

"I Paul Jones renounce Yeshua, the Nazarene, and all his works."

"Do you affirm Satan?"

"I do affirm Satan."

"Do you bind yourself with word and deed to me, your Mistress of Earth?"

"I do."

"To the glory of our dark gods?"

"To the glory of our dark gods."

"Then receive from me as a sign of your faith this kiss."

She kissed him, as Melusine had kissed him, tongue against tongue, while she pressed her body into his. Then she pushed him away. "Go now, and release her and bring her back to me. Then, before dawn, your desires will once again be fulfilled."

He ran the first mile, then stopped to briefly walk before running again, and it took him less than an hour to reach the house where Father Albert lived. For a while he waited in the darkness outside and as he waited he felt a strength growing within him. It was a dark strength, born from lust, youth, rebellion and fear, and he was smiling as he knocked on the door.

Father Albert cried in surprise and joy when he opened the door to see him. "My sons" he said.

Paul pushed him aside and rushed toward the chapel.

"Are you possessed?" Father Albert said as he scuttled after him.

Paul did not answer. He untied Ceridwen and spat at the large crucifix which adorned the chapel.

"Quickly!" Father Albert shouted to his companions.

"Quickly come! He is possessed!"

He tried to bar Paul's way, but was knocked aside. He fell, blocking the path for his two companions who could only watch as Ceridwen and Paul escaped into the shielding cover of the darkness.

Richenda was waiting for them by the door to the cottage.

"She is waiting for you, inside," she said to Paul before she embraced her sister in welcome.

He gave a brief smile, then nervously entered.

Outside, Richenda showed Ceridwen the crystal. "Do you wish to rest or shall we begin?"

"Let us begin."

"First then, our foes."

They stood beside each other with the crystal between them and Richenda began her visualization. She saw the clerics in the study of the presbytery kneeling and praying, their breviaries open before them.

Then one of them looked up, as if to smell something. She saw Father Albert stand and turn toward the door just as it burst into flames. He shielded his face as books above and around them caught fire, raining down in sudden profusion. Soon, the whole room was ablaze and then the whole building.

Nothing that was living escaped from it.

Satisfied, Richenda turned her attentions elsewhere. There was a scream in the cottage as she began her second visualization. The crystal, Paul, Melusine - they were all keys, as her vision had foretold. Had the old man returned to her while she waited for Paul to return with her sister - or had it been a dream?

The dark gods were waiting, as they had waited for centuries, and she would free them - earthing their power through a body yet to be born. She knew enough, through her mother's teaching and education as well as through her own intuitive understanding, to understand what she was about to do – what the old man had bid her do and what her mother had spoken of in mysterious words many times and although she did not understand everything, she was happy to proceed and bring the dark forces back to earth. She began to chant, as Cerdiwen began to chant, the ancient words handed down by her mother. ‘Nythra Kithunae Atazoth. Binan ath ga wath am!’ She would not know where the child of her endeavours would be born, or to whom, only that, nine months hence, the chosen child would emerge into the world. Inside the cottage and lying naked on the bed, Paul was dead, an expression of stark horror on his face. Near him on the floor, a recent crumpled newspaper lay. ‘The Ironbridge Chronicle’ was dated **August 1888**.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Esoteric Tradition - Additional Notes
ONA 1998eh

In the light of recent archaeological discoveries, it is possible that the origins of Albion/Hyberborean culture are in fact much older than dates previously documented in Order teachings.

According to these recent discoveries, it may be suggested that the ethos which gave birth to the civilization of Albion was in existence at least 12 - 10,000 yrs BP. Recent findings have included the dating of the very early phases of Stonehenge to 10,500 yrs BP, and what could prove to be almost irrefutable evidence that this early Aryan civilization had visited/colonised what is now America [ie. the remains of 'Kennewick Man' - dated approx. 9,200 yrs BP].

It may yet be discovered that this ethos and associated civilization(s?)/culture is indeed much older than the dates quoted above - that there did exist a civilization or culture which expressed in practice the genuine Western, or Aryan, esoteric Tradition at least 20,000 yrs BP. Whether or not this culture was an advanced expression of this ethos - ie. whether or not one or more of its various phases could be regarded as an aeon with an associated Higher civilization - will remain for the present unknown.

However, the present writer is inclined to believe that the evolution of this ethos was slow and organic - and in its beginnings until the time of Albion "primitive" and largely intuitive, not necessarily implying the urge to order that is characteristic of a civilization.

This spiritual legacy, which evolved to inspire the building of several ancient structures across the globe, flourished throughout Albion up until 5,500 yrs BP, after which time there was a slow decline/loss. The height of this flourishing is identified by Tradition as the Hyperborean Aeon. After 3,000 yrs BP - at this time there occurred significant social change (possibly in part connected to the influx of the Celts, and the gradual ordering/emergence of the "Druids") - the "Tradition" (or rather, the remnants of its teachings) was preserved solely in an area of the Welsh Marches [and from thence to 1,500yrs BP - inauguration of the Western Aeon - and from there to present day].

It must be remembered that the "Tradition", this legacy of Albion, is much more than an inherited set of (now fragmentary) teachings. It was, and is, a certain *attitude* to life (qv. *Exeat*, *Eira*, and "Aeonics" MSS).

Essentially, the "Tradition" was and is a way of Being - beyond even the structures/histories/images/words associated over the aeons with "the Sinister". It is *ethos*: a way still exemplified, as pure as it was in its origins, in the lives and the *living* of present-day genuine Initiates.

^ ^ ^

There has been some confusion in recent years concerning the nature of the "worship" that characterised the culture of Albion. Knowledge of the stars played a deeply essential role in the social structure for various reasons (some of which are unknown), but this did not make the people of Albion "stellar worshippers". Here, one has to be clear about the meaning of "worship".

The culture of Albion was comprised of solar cults for some very simple and fairly 'non-esoteric' reasons. The main reason, and thus the true nature of "worship", is revealed to anyone who has spent time living a simple and genuine rural existence of self-sufficiency, or has spent time living thus, alone, in a real natural wilderness. What is revealed should be obvious: our fundamental relationship, as living beings who require life, with the Sun.

Esoteric Tradition – Synistry

Dark Gods: These are 'living' entities which exist in an acausal space-time. They may be likened to "anti-matter" as against the "matter" which exists in our causal space-time - thus, their intrusion into the causal, disrupts. This disruption is primarily psychic because the psyche of an individual by its nature intrudes or is a part of the acausal. The entities can assume physical forms, but only briefly ~ and then only when a nexion is fully opened. And where the causal and acausal intersect on Earth.* The Dark Gods do not have 'forms' as understood causally ~ because a physical form is a causal thing, and they are beyond the causal. Neither do they possess 'feelings' etc. as we understand the terms. They are on the edge of even an Adept's comprehension [in terms of understanding them]. They can act [i.e. have effects in the causal] via individuals who can access them - or 'Presence' them. It should be understood that the Dark Gods are not 'the acausal' itself. They exist in a part [or one realm] of the acausal - that is, they exist, have life or being according to the nature of the acausal. The acausal is 'beyond causal time' and does not have a spatial 3D geometry. Other beings probably exist in other acausal dimensions - but of them there is no knowledge. When an Initiate accesses the acausal - increases the acausal aspect of their consciousness - they are extending the range of their being: i.e. evolving , creating new aspects of consciousness. This is one of the aims of the seven-fold Way - and of all real magick. A part of this, may involve confrontation with some of the 'Dark Gods'. In conventional terms, the Dark Gods are evil, sinister. *Such as 'magickal centres' associated with an Aeon - or the finding of such places. It is possible to create such a place - and this is one meaning of such rituals as the Ceremony of Recalling with Sacrificial Conclusion.

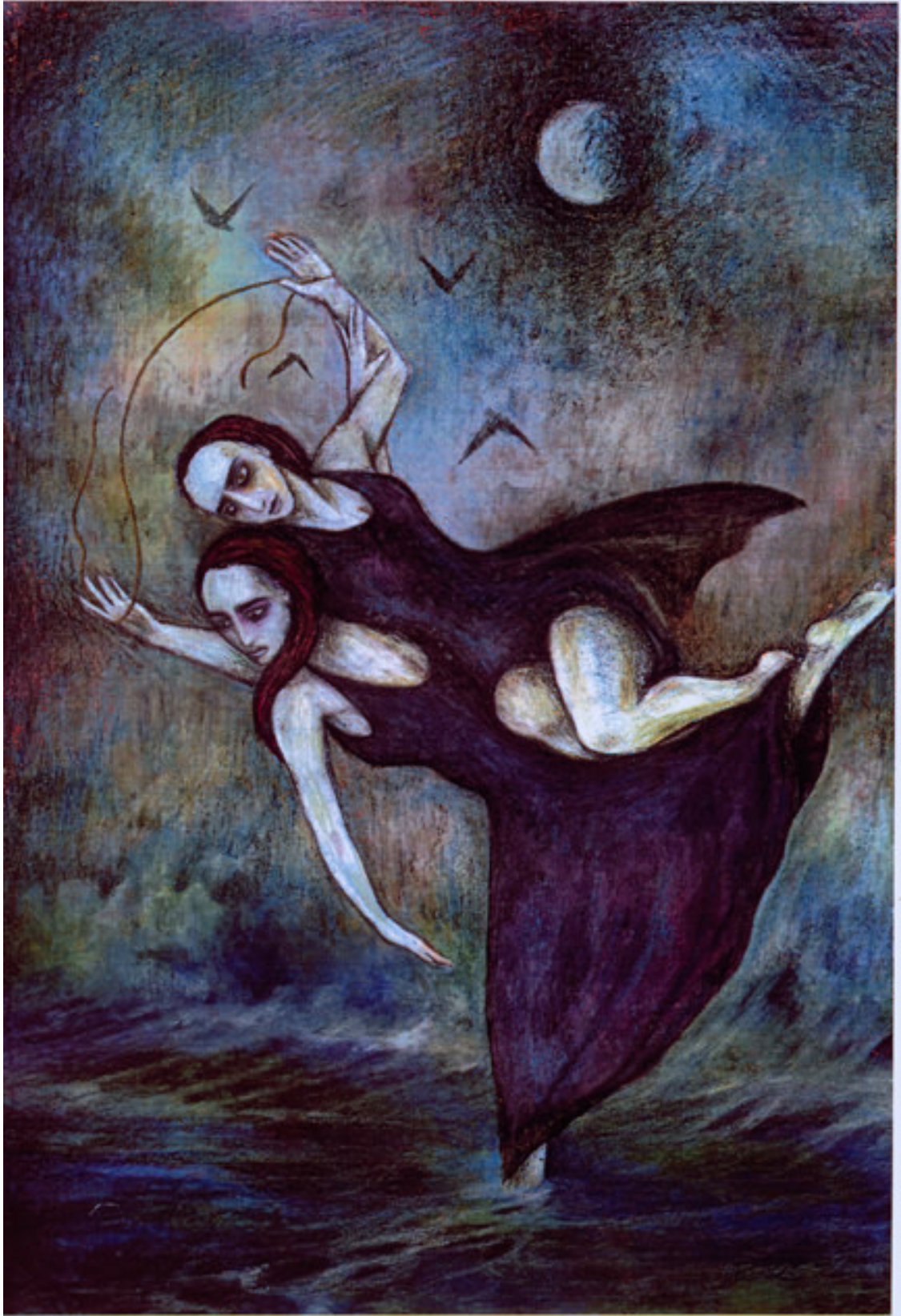
The Western Aeon: As far as Adepts of the sinister tradition are concerned, there are only two realistic options: the creation of Imperium [the fulfilment of Western wyrd via a practical form], or disruption of existing forms with the aim of undermining and destroying Nazarene/ Magian influence, leading to chaos from which a New Aeon will emerge, this Aeon being Satanic. The latter involves the 'pruning' of unnecessary elements on a large scale - the creation of an elite capable of making the Aeon a reality. The first involves the creation/aiding of a practical form - and presencing magickal energy into it. It also involves creating the right psychic conditions - within and external to individuals. Some of this is directly magickal, involving magickal energy accessed via rituals etc.; some of it is providing/creating/making available the information and forms of the sinister. The practical form is either directly political, or 'religious'. Both involve a more widespread dissemination of the sinister tradition and creation of new forms for its energies.

Traditions and New Forms: As mentioned elsewhere, maintaining the tradition (as explicated in such works as The Black Book of Satan, Naos, The Deofel Quartet and Hostia) and making it more widely available, is important - and indeed essential. This is because the use of the tradition, in whole or in part [e.g. rituals from the Black Book] by others outside of it being drawn into the tradition, makes those others 'channels' for the sinister energy the tradition represents. That is, they 'presence' sinister energies in a precise and particular way and thus fulfil sinister strategy. The tradition has been given its present form [as explicated in the various books and MSS to achieve just this (as well as other things). However, the creation of new forms is important and indeed vital - there must be a continuing evolution. These forms will further access the sinister, and presence it-The tradition itself serves as a Way - both for individuals, and aeonically: it enables the achievement of individual Adeptship, as well as the fulfilment of the sinister dialectic of history. This will be so for the next few centuries - until the New Aeon becomes a reality. That is, its methods and techniques should not be changed (at least not intentionally by those of the tradition for the next few decades) or 'superseded' - as a way of creating Adepts etc. This is not a question of 'dogma' but rather strategy, as mentioned above. It is vital that this and the reasons for and beyond it are understood by those of the tradition. The external forms [such as arise prior to and during the Aeon] will only arise from an initial coherence of magickal energies and intent - and it is and will be the

unchanging form of the 'Way' [techniques, rituals etc.] which will enable this. The new forms created/evolved will add to rather than undermine what already is. Anything else is simply individuals playing at magick (and particularly playing at Aeonics) without achieving anything and indeed without understanding what they are doing.

Initiation and Beyond: The quest of an individual can only and ever be individual; that is, unique. The quest, made possible and aided by the tradition, develops the individual, enabling individual wyrd to be understood, and lived. It is also makes possible Immortality (qv. Acausal Existence - The Secret Revealed). Beyond a certain level, Initiates guide themselves - learning from their own real-life experiences. That is, they have acquired sufficient self~insight and honesty to enable them to do this. When this stage is reached [toward the end of External Adept for some; during and beyond Internal Adept for others] there should be still a following of the ultimate goal - a striving for the Abyss and beyond, although this 'striving' will be more balanced than hitherto. This does not mean the individuals become or develop their own ways of achieving that goal ~ that is, not undergoing the Grade Rituals of Internal Adept and beyond according to tradition because they believe they are not necessary or that they have/can create (d) other means. Should they do this, they will not achieve the specific goal of the sinister way - but rather something else entirely, or else nothing. The reasons should be obvious from the above (Traditions ...).

The Aim: Wisdom. And its living, enabling the last stage (into the acausal...). This means self-understanding and supra-personal understanding. An apprehension of the world and its forms as they are ~ a rational knowing; and what is necessary for change, aeonic and otherwise. This knowledge is sometimes sad, and often born from ordeals and having lived the Abyss. It never confers wealth nor privilege, and seldom imbues one with 'happiness'. It is beyond words, but can sometimes be transmuted into a form enabling some others to apprehend if only in part its essence. This aim takes causal time - usually c. 20 years from Initiation (if the Way is followed) - and lies beyond the Abyss. It is balance, beyond opposites; a new way of being. - Order of Nine Angles - <http://www.nasz-dom.net/>







NOTES ON ESOTERIC TRADITION I

The septenary tradition (for notes on its origin see MS Physis: The Third Way) was carried on for centuries by mostly reclusive Adepts who sought and trained one or perhaps two individuals to carry on the 'cult'.

The original teachings were concerned mostly, with preserving what was seen as the 'sacred tradition' concerning both the division of cosmic forces into seven fundamental forms and the mythos of the 'Dark Gods'. The first was based on the apprehension that there were seven basic forms of 'energy' within both the cosmos and the individual within it- that is the natural structure of both involved seven fundamental principles/forms and so on.

By understanding these seven principles in all their forms and manifestations it was believed that 'wisdom' could be attained- as well as a knowledge of how to change these forms: that is, 'alter the balance' both in the cosmos itself and in individuals.

Gradually, these 'secret' teachings percolated through to 'non-Adepts' and to some extent became enshrined in various myths and Legends of various societies, the first recorded appearance being in the civilization of Sumeria (where they were derived from contact with the Hyperborean culture in Albion). Over many centuries, this 'public manifestation' of the tradition evolved, giving rise to many and various fantastic notions and superstitions.

Later manifestations of the 'genuine' tradition surfaced in Ancient Greece most noticeably in the Pythagorians and the mysteries of the Kabeiroi. In the non-esoteric sense, it was present to some extent in some of the Pre-Socratic philosophers.

With the arrival of the Nazarene tyranny these outwards forms/manifestations were suppressed, although to some extent they flourished secretly.

The decline of the Hellenic civilization coincided with the Eastward turning of those who sought these 'mysteries' (the Byzantine period). Gradually, this Byzantine expression became part of the Arab world, where various treatises were written concerning it. This is particularly true of what later became known as the 'alchemical tradition' - this tradition being a continuation of some aspects of the earlier mysteries.

The 'secret' tradition - whose origin lay in Albion-, continued within the confines of its original country, one of its manifestations being the 'Priesthood' which later became identified with the Druids. Over the many centuries the teachings changed and evolved - but they were always to an extent rudimentary and 'empathic' That is, they lacked any great element of self-Insight or rational understanding and it is true to say that the long period between the fall of the Hyperborean culture (roughly 1,000 BN and the 'Dark Ages' represented a decline in the tradition and its 'magick'.

Of course, elements survived, mostly secretly, but there was little genuine understanding. It is fair to add that this account is disputed by one authority who maintains that the core of the tradition remained. This authority claims that practitioners of the tradition actually used the 'Grail' c. 700 AD to 'Open a Gate' and thus create a Western Aeon.

Whatever the truth of the claim of the tradition remaining in essence as well as in practice, all authorities agree that:

(a) the 'Grail' of the legend was actually a large crystal (qv. Phreder and ben Beirdd von Eschnbach revealed part of this truth when he called the Grail 'lapsit ex coelis'. The

distortion into a 'Nazarene holy vessel' began with a Nazarene hermit, remembered by Heliandrus) and
(b) Albion/Logree was, and is, the centre of the tradition -. particularly important regarding practical forms (i.e. 'Aeonic changes').

Whatever the truth about the 'decline', a new impetus was given first by the spread of Hellenic ideas (for which contact with the Arab world via the Crusaders/Template was of some importance) and second by the creativity which had begun to flourish again within Europe This led to the 'secret tradition' becoming better understood and more rationally (i.e. 'scientifically') expressed. This evolution continued for many centuries! one of its most obvious outward expressions being Alchemy. The tradition however, remained limited to a very few; although the ideas (and some of the practice) behind it filtered out, spread and became changed.

It was about this time else that the qabalistic tradition began: both in terms of magic and in terms of appearing to be the 'inner Western tradition'. What actually happened was a revival of the old 'grimoire/demonic' approach to magic (see the MS Physis The Third Way) together with an attempt to further supplant the Nazarene ethos within the developing Western civilization. Gradually, the qabalistic Nazarene orientated system became established. This system was not, however, subject to any further evolution/ development.

The septenary tradition, however, Carried by a small and ever decreasing number of Adepts, did develop: particularly in (a) the practical methods used to bring about 'Gnosis/create the Philosophers' stone' and (b) the symbolism devised to aid a rational understanding (see, for further elucidations, the MS 'The Forbidden Alchemy'). There were also some attempts to 'Open acausal Gates' with a view to changing aeonic forces/achieving specific goals - the last significant one being 1920 ev.

This development of the Septenary tradition continued until the present time and it is in the last few decades that significant progress has been made with regard to refining the techniques (of what it now called Internal magick) and aiding our conscious understanding (the development of the Star Game being a significant achievement).

To some extent, the evolution of the techniques which form the basis of the septenary/Dark tradition can be traced. Originally the basis was what is now called 'mimesis' (qv. notes on Aeonics etc), and the approach was essentially empathic (based on 'Physis'). These had their origin in Albion during Hyperborean times. The empathic approach was gradually, over many centuries, developed and came to include an intuitive understanding of such things as crystals and control of natural forces/ energies (what we now call hermetic/internal magick). In one sense the archetypal figure of the Mage/High Priestess, is a representation of this early period of development. Together with this, was an oral tradition regarding the power/use of sound (i.e. what we now know as magickal vibration) together with art intuitive appreciation of the esoteric basis of 'music/chant' (although this was not by any means really understood). There was also a 'cultus/mythos' regarding sinister energies (i.e. the 'Dark Gods').

It must be remembered that evolution of the techniques was a slow process and the fundamental empathic/intuitive approach remained in the magickal centre (Albion), for the many, many centuries, producing through the ages the reclusive Adept (like the Merlin of legend). It was only really during the 'Dark Ages' - with the insights attained via Hellenic learning - that extensive development took place. This continued steadily until the present day. The great step forward was an abstract symbolism. Originally understanding was developed via archetypal myths or symbolism (for the latter qv. particularly 'Ursa Major' as the septenary). The Tree of Wyrd for example, evolved slowly and confusingly at first and

even when, in the Middle Ages, it attained most of its present form, it was still not understood in the same way we understand it now - that is, it is now seen as a re-presentation of how the acausal becomes manifest in the causal whereas then it was seen as a representation of the cosmos and Man. Our current understanding involves new concepts- the bifurcation of 'time' both expressions of the Change of Being. These new concepts refine and enhance our understanding.

Likewise the development of magick. There was, at first, empathic workings. Later, 'hermetic' techniques came to be developed. Shortly thereafter the first ceremonial forms evolved (e.g. early versions of what is now the Ceremony of Recalling) - imitations of septenary patterns/energies (although of course at the time they were not understood in that way). Much later, ceremonial magick as a codified ritual, developed - particularly in response to Nazarene tyranny: hence the development, in the Middle Ages, of the Black Mass, the 'Satanic Mass'.

Similarly the tradition chant developed. From the early beginnings in Albion about the use of sound to the influence of Hellenic thought at the beginnings of the Middle Ages. (This is one aspect of the tradition that has remained virtually unchanged since about the 12th. Century).

Until about thirty or so years ago, the tradition of oral teaching, and transmission from Master/Mistress to pupil on an individual basis continued - although from time to time 'Temples' (never large in number and always strictly secret and secretive) were formed. Then a 'more' open approach was begun, with the creation of some hidden Temples and the secret recruitment of larger numbers than had been the case hitherto. This culminated in the early part of the 1980's, with the dissemination in Occult circles of some of the septenary tradition, a process which continues, given the wider acceptance of the 'Occult' and the need to make the tradition/methods more accessible to hasten a new Aeon/opening another gate.

The evolution in methods, together with the creative development of the septenary, will continue in the future - probably toward a more abstract symbolism enabling even greater insight.

Thus it can be seen that the septenary is a steadily accumulating body of 'esoteric' knowledge. All Adepts of the tradition add to it - either directly, by creatively extending its frontiers /methods or indirectly by their magick and their teaching of new Initiates.

Notes on the Sinister Tradition

Tetrahedron:

The tetrahedron is symbolic of the Nine Angles. When made of certain minerals/crystals the shape itself is a very powerful source of magickal energy, and this may be amplified by chant/vibration of certain names. It is the 'schamir' (qv. Tukiphat - a distorted symbol of a Guardian to one of the Gates) and is activated by the Sphinx. [See also: 'Notes on Esoteric Tradition - Cosmic Wheel and Tetrahedron' MS.]

Atklal Maka:

A chant sometimes used in the Natural Nine Angles Rite by the Priestess if the glade has a spring of water. It means 'the flowing waters of the Earth' and is chanted in homage to Gaia since natural springs are regarded as Her children.

Bron Wrgan:

One of the twin nexions important to the Sinister Tradition - the other nexion (its location is known only to Adepts of the Tradition) is the Magickal centre of this current Western Aeon. Bron Wrgan remains more elusive - opinions as to its location tend to differ. Among those Tradition mentions are: Caer Caradoc near Knighton; a site about 3 miles NE of Knucklas where a cottage called Brynorgan once stood, near a batch. Severed heads were reputed to be set up here, within an enclosure.

Eulalia:

An 'Earth Gate' located in the southern part of the Long Mynd. Often favoured as a site for the Natural form of the rite of the Nine Angles - associated with a certain Dark God, of feminine aspect.

Kabeiroi:

The 'mysteries of the Kabeiroi' (sometimes spelt Cabiri) is one of the esoteric traditions associated with the Hellenic Aeon. In its original form, 'the mysteries' concerned certain deities often represented in the form of Griffins and connected with the sea as well as Demeter - the 'mother Earth' or Gaia. According to sinister tradition, the mysteries concerned the Dark Gods - in various 'shapechanging' forms - and related how Demeter gave the first Initiates of this Tradition a crystal (later venerated at a shrine near Thebes where a sacred grove to Demeter existed) as well as showing how an individual, through various rites which involved Gaia, women, sacred marriage and so on, could be transformed to a different realm of consciousness. This transformation, as in other Greek Mystery cults, was achieved mainly through personal involvement in ritual/ceremonial action often of a mythological kind.

Later, this tradition became divided - Eleusis representing the 'Apollonian' element, the Kabeiroi the 'Dionysian' or darker aspects, for it is said that all Initiates of the Cabiri had to have committed a crime greater than common ones. The mysteries of the Kabeiroi were often celebrated in mountain shrines (certain combinations of rock and underground water being regarded as sacred - that is, capable by their magickal power of transforming the consciousness of individuals - cf. various sites of the Yezidi who upheld a more garbled version of the Dark Gods tradition) and to reach these shrines was considered part of the process of Initiation.

Greeks called the Kabeiroi 'the great gods'.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Sapphistry: Dark Daughters of Chaos
Sister Bronwyn

For too long we have been silent and hidden. We waited, while an imitation and inverted Wicca was peddled, its male dominance a contradiction of the feminine principle of the Old Religion. We waited, while Chaos Magic was born..., but nothing except the old lies. So here at last we speak, for ourselves.

To Nature we Daughters of Chaos are nearest. Our magick is not a hobby we play in a city or a town - it is a return to the often tiresome hard reality of the land which nourishes and alone brings the vitality of life. Sorcery is a fetish of the pale, male city dweller. We are soft and yielding to each other to capture thus an aspect forgotten and our Sapphic love a silent force which we send to awaken those who sleep. We draw down upon ourselves through our way of loving a special power and through our will send it forth - perchance to cover for an instant a city night, bringing strange dreams to some...

There is laughter in us: no hard hatred of that which destroys. Our spells, suckled by streams, spread perchance a little delight to a world too serious and nearly insane.

And yet we are Dark because we cross the currents of our time: even 'liberation' has become a chain that binds...

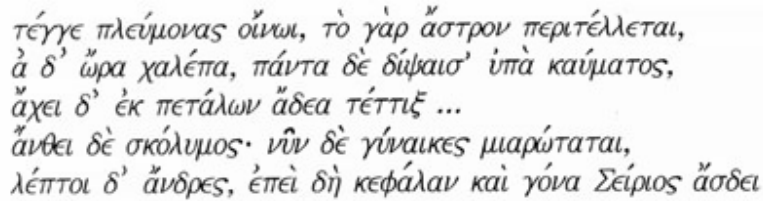
Sapphic love is the greatest magick of this time because it flows but does not ebb. Sleep on then, and dream. All that is strange exists in our soul. You cannot define us nor capture the exquisite fire that is our love, and our Rites return, silent unless at night outside and alone upon a hill you strain to hear, that subtle consciousness of Earth which our societies have lost.

Like the Sphinx - we come, bringing wonder and much that is strange. And sometimes, like her, we devour to bring the darker death.

Saught - we are seldom to be found. Though unsaught we might create your dream. Beware then, you who talk so glib and practice with your wiles the submission of your woman: your Nemesis by us awaits.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Sappho - Poetic Fragments
With artwork by Christos Beest



τέγγε πλείμονας οἴνωι, τὸ γὰρ ἄστρον περιτέλλεται,
ἂ δ' ὥρα χαλέπα, πάντα δὲ δίψαισ' ὑπὸ καύματος,
ἄχει δ' ἐκ πετάλων ἄδεα τέττιξ ...
ἄνθει δὲ σκόλυμος· νῦν δὲ γυναῖκες μαρώταται,
λέπτοι δ' ἄνδρες, ἐπεὶ δὴ κεφάλαν καὶ γόνα Σείριος ἄσδει

Introduction

The aim of the present translation is to try and present something of the unadorned beauty of Sappho's Greek. From the many fragments that remain of her poetry, I have chosen those that best reflect something of this beauty. The text used is that of Lobel and Page [*Poetarium Lesbiorum Fragmenta*, Oxford 1955] - and the numbering of the Fragments in this present work follows that of their text.

.... in the text indicates a break in the fragment; [] indicates a conjecture.

Fragment 1

Deathless Aphrodite - Daughter of Zeus and maker of snares -
On your florid throne, hear me!
My lady, do not subdue my heart by anguish and pain
But come to me as when before
You heard my distant cry, and listened:
Leaving, with your golden chariot yoked, your father's house
To move beautiful sparrows swift with a whirling of wings
As from heaven you came to this dark earth through middle air
And so swiftly arrived.

Then you my goddess with your immortal lips smiling
Would ask what now afflicts me, why again
I am calling and what now I with my restive heart
Desired:

*Whom now shall I beguile
To bring you to her love?
Who now injures you, Sappho?
For if she flees, soon shall she chase
And, rejecting gifts, soon shall she give.
If she does not love you, she shall do so soon
Whatsoever is her will.*

Come to me now to end this consuming pain
Bringing what my heart desires to be brought:
Be yourself my ally in this fight

Fragment 16

For some - it is horsemen; for others - it is infantry;
For some others - it is ships which are, on this black earth,
Visibly constant in their beauty. But for me,
It is that which you desire.

To all, it is easy to make this completely understood
For Helen - she who greatly surpassed other mortals in beauty -
Left her most noble man and sailed forth to Troy
Forgetting her beloved parents and her daughter
Because [the goddess] led her away

Which makes me to see again Anactoria now far distant:
For I would rather behold her pleasing, graceful movement
And the radiant splendour of her face
Than your Lydian chariots and foot-soldiers in full armour

Fragment 22

Gather your [lyre] and sing for me
[Soon]
As desire once again [enhances] your beauty:

Your dress excites, and I rejoice
For I once doubted Aphrodite
But now have asked that soon
You will be with me again

Fragment 31

I see he who sits near you as an equal of the gods
For he can closely listen to your delightful voice
And that seductive laugh
That makes the heart behind my breasts to tremble.

Even when I glimpse you for a moment
My tongue is stilled as speech deserts me
While a delicate fire is beneath my skin -
My eyes cannot see, then,
When I hear only a whirling sound
As I shivering, sweat
Because all of me trembles;
I become paler than drought-grass
And nearer to death

Fragment 41

Beautiful girls, towards you
My thoughts will never change

Fragment 47

Love shook my heart
Like the mountain wind
Falls upon tress of oak

Fragment 94

I can reveal to you that I wished to die -
For with much weeping she left me
Saying: "Sappho - what suffering is ours!
For it is against my will that I leave you."
In answer, I said: "Go, happily remembering me
For you know what we shared and pursued -
If not, I wish you to see again our [former joys]
The many braids of rose and violet you [wreathed]
Around yourself at my side
And the many garlands of flowers
With which you adorned your soft neck:
With royal oils from [fresh flowers]
You anointed [yourself]
And on soft beds fulfilled your longing
[For me]

Fragment 96

She honoured you like a goddess
And delighted in your choral dance.
Now she is pre-eminent among the ladies of Lydia
As the rose-rayed moon after the sinking of the Sun
Surpasses all the stars and spresads it's light upon the sea
And the flowers of the fields
To beautify the spreading dew, freshen roses
Soft chervil and the flowering melilot

Restless, she remembers gentle Atthis -
Perhaps her subtle judgemnet is burdened
By your [fate]

For us, it is not easy to approach
Goddesses in the beauty of their form
But you

Fragment 58

Age seizes my skin and turns my hair
From black to white:

My knees no longer bear me
And I am unable to dance again
Like a fawn.

What could I do? I am not ageless:
My youth is gone.
Red-robed Dawn, immortal goddess,
Carried [Tithonus] to earth's end
Yet age siezed him
Despite the gift from his immortal lover

I love delicate softness:
For me, love has brought the brightness
And the beauty of the sun

Fragment 126

May you sleep on the breasts
Of your tender companion

Fragment 130

Once again, desire -
That looser of limbs and bitterly sweet -
Makes me to tremble
You are irresistible

Fragment 138/147

Believe me, in the future someone
Will remember us

Because you love me
Stand with me face to face
And unveil the softness in your eyes



ΣΑΠΦΩ

Artwork by Christos Beest

*"Deathless Aphrodite · Daughter of Zeus and maker of snares ·
On your florid throne, hear me!"* ————— Sappho

Sinister Tradition - Notes VI

Albion: According to tradition, the Hyperborean culture of Albion, original home of Apollo, flourished between about 7,000 - 5,500 BP. Among the most notable inventions/discoveries attributed by esoteric tradition to this culture are the wheel, the elements of Astronomy, the regular sowing of seeds and their cultivation (agriculture) and the beginnings of philosophy, this latter being the province of the first real wise men and women - the first magickians whose descendants became, much later, the Druids. This culture, which was really a civilization depending on oral tradition, was a highly organized one - and archaeology is only just beginning to recognize its existence through such finds as the Sweet Track, the Walton Track, the astronomical importance of Stonehenge and the realization that Britain before the time of Julius Caesar was not a savage, tribal society but a highly efficient agricultural one producing a cereal yield of about 2 tons an acre and supporting a population of nearly 4 million (this was probably the reason the Romans invaded and was itself the long term legacy of the Hyperborean culture). The magickal tradition of Albion was essentially an empathic one, deriving from both the Sun and Gaia and containing an understanding of the magickal power of crystals. Merlin is regarded as being one of the last direct descendants of this culture (qv. 'Arthurian' MSs).

Asoth: A location associated with the demoness Asoth, lies within the Clun Forest, South Shropshire. It is said that here a White Hind was accidentally shot during a hunt, seemingly through the heart. She survived but could not be caught, and was seen on many occasions over the subsequent years, still living with the arrow still embedded in her chest.

Auspicia: Moon Owl Mercury Magpie Venus Pelican Mars Falcon Jupiter Swan Saturn Eagle

Songs of Recalling

Sinister Chant is one of the oldest surviving aspects of the Dark Tradition. The 'Agius Lucifer' (qv. **Naos**) is known to originate c. 8th century, and the two 'Nythra' chants (**Black Book III**) are possibly from an earlier period. The 'Diabolus' came into use after the 13th century.

It is maintained by some that the correct use of these Chants, in conjunction with a quartz crystal, is one of the most potent - and dangerous - techniques for increasing the Cosmic tides. One notable example of such a technique in a ritualized setting is a version of the Ceremony of Recalling, combined with the Chthonic Form of the Nine Angles Rite, where the Sacrificial Ending is replaced by a continuation, in a particular way, of the Chant contained in that Rite. This version can replace the Opfer tradition during the 17 year cycle, but requires immense preparation and perfect performance during the Rite proper.

The teaching of these Chants has always been on an oral basis, from Master/Mistress to Initiate. Some of these Chants were written down, and the form of this early notation (mostly 'Gregorian') served primarily as a reminder of the Chant, rather than as a way of teaching new Initiates.

However, the original notation is an expression of the nature of the Chant itself, and is thus an important aspect in the overall learning of the Art. This is to say that transcribing the Chants into modern 'blob' notation (as discussed in another MS), whilst an interesting exercise in itself, should not replace learning the (far easier) system of the early notation. Transcribing a Chant into modern

notation produces something other than the original Chant - an interesting form, but not one that can communicate to the Cantor (or audience), the entire ethos of Esoteric Chant. This is not however to discount such a musickal fusion, since it has its own place and purpose (qv. "Homesteads").

An Initiate must immerse themselves in all aspects of the Art, mastering vibration, resonance, breath control and projection. Only after practicing for a minimum of one year, both 'informally' and in a magickal setting, will a Chant start to live and interact with the causal. It is not enough just to sing the notes, a Cantor must become familiar with what is signified by the Chant, since ultimately, through the combination of Chant, Crystal and Cantor, a unity is created that is a Nexion. This is because a Chant symbolizes, or rather is, a particular Force, and the performance of the Chant is an Invocation.

The majority of Sinister Chants came into being as an expression of the male and female voice conjoined. However, if, as has been mentioned in another MS, it is decided to use the musickal form of an existing, conventional, Chant but replace the text with one of a suitably Sinister content, it must be borne in mind that almost all examples of 'Gregorian Chant' were devised solely because of, and for, the male voice. It did not occur to the monastic orders that a separate body or "office" should be created for the women of the convents, because the important

difference between the male and female voice was not acknowledged. Women were expected to sing something which could not for them, produce the "divine fire" necessary for their worship. However, a glimpse of what is possible can be discerned in the unique compositions ('symphoniae harmoniae celestium revelationum') of the 12th century Abbess Hildegard von Bingen. Through the work of this individual the startling, different, nature of the female voice is apparent.

Perhaps now a corpus of work can be created for a future *Beatarum Regimine Feminarum* ...

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Dating of Esoteric Tradition

Received tradition (as given to the present writer by his teacher - an Adept of the esoteric "Albion" tradition: for which read 'Seven-fold Way'/Septenary/Hebdomadry/ traditional Satanism and so on) places the origin of the Hyperborean Aeon and thus the civilization of Albion at least a thousand years before the dates given in Order mss

Thus, received tradition gave the origin of the Hyperborean Aeon as between 79000 to 6,000 BC (that is, 11 nine to eight millenia "before the present" - this 'present' being c. 1975 eh). Also, the 'Primal Aeon' was given as arising between eleven to ten millenia ago* This placed the origin of the Hyperborean civilization (Albion) at around 6,000 or 5,000 BC and thus dated Stonehenge to between 4,500 and 3,500 (the later date - 3,500 - being favoured)*

After a thorough study of these received traditions and a review of present archaeological/historical understanding, the present writer decided the traditional dates were out by at least a thousand years. When the Order MSS were written (mostly after 1975 eh) to consolidate what had been - apart from a few MSS such as the 'Black Book' - a mostly oral tradition/teaching, these "new" dates were included. However# the present writer admits that this revision may well be mistaken, and that the 'traditional' dates may yet be proved correct.

It is to be hoped that some time in the future further evidence for the civilization of Albion will be found, particularly in regard to accurate dating and the confirmation of esoteric tradition concerning the sea-faring nature of the communities (particularly the links with Iceland/ Greenland/ Canada and the later migrations southward: Greece etc), the technological advances made and so on.

While some evidence for the 'advanced' agriculture of the later period is emerging (e.g. the 'Butzer' Farm project) and the astronomical nature of Stonehenge is now well-established, there is still the view of Albion during the period in question as a rather basic 'Neolithic semi-nomadic society', rather 'backward' in comparison with the "civilized" societies of Sumeria and Egypt. The acceptance of this view is not surprising, given the paucity of evidence, the lack of archaeological excavation and an almost total lack of 'professional' interest. Part of the lack of evidence stems from the fact that a lot of the sites have been almost continually inhabited/cultivated, with the consequential loss of material/patterns; another is the use of wood in the construction of artifacts - this is rarely preserved and there has been a rather silly tendency to use pottery remains (its 'sophistication' etc.) to judge/date the communities associated with it, whereas in fact at the time pottery was probably considered an inferior material to wood/leather etc. Another stems from a lack of written records - in Egypt, Sumeria and elsewhere there are well-preserved reminders.

- Order of Nine Angles -

I: Nature, Magick and Satan

"Magick" on the individual level is, quite simply, the attainment of conscious integration with natural forces - or with "Nature", and the Cosmos that is beyond. This integration implies a loss of the "self-image", and a gradual expansion of consciousness into the acausal realms. There is thus achieved a natural balance within living, and the cultivation of a more noble, *higher type* of human being (this cultivation being the foundations for what is conventionally termed the New Aeon).

How this alchemical process is initiated is simple in theory but difficult in practice. At present, the only realistic way of attaining this "integration" is via the *practical* system of the Seven-Fold Way, and this is so because, as yet, no other system contains a ritual of natural hermetic magick comparable to that of the Internal Adept (for details of which, see **Naos**). It is this rite, above all the other difficult tasks, that terrifies the would-be Adept, and spawns many excuses for alternative ways to enlightenment. There is no "Infernal symbolism" contained within the structure of this rite - only the stark primal fears of the Candidate.

Thus, to achieve this natural integration, the Initiate must strive primarily against him/ herself (and consequently the many factors in a society that seek to shackle individual Will to a conformity). The symbol for, or spirit of, this defiance is **Satan** and **Satanism**. Many who profess to be Pagans and practitioners of Natural Magick cannot, or will not, grasp the meaning of Satanism. This partly stems from the perspective that "Satanism" was spawned as a consequence of the distortions of the Judeo-Christian religion, and is therefore to be regarded as having been founded upon "Old Aeon" dualism - and is thus to be superseded, since it cannot fully reflect the genuine "Western ethos". [With regard to the latter, what is genuine about this ethos is its *promethean* spirit, and as such it is actually explicated by the conflicts and struggles with the external factors it draws to itself, in the quest for exploration...] As explained in the booklet *ONA: An Introduction for Prospective Adherents*, "Satan" derives from an ancient Greek word meaning an "an accusation" (and also "foundation" or "origin" of something). The Hebrew "accuser" is in turn derived from this source. Thus the symbol predates the Hebrew, and has a truly Western origin: it did not come into being specifically as a response to the Nazarene distortion, but as a symbol of opposition - to what is accepted, to what enervates. Thus Satan (and the Sinister - one is the other) is a symbol of *creative change*, and is concerned with opposition not in the mis-understood sense of "dualism" (i.e. that which is based on an abstract morality), but in the sense of countering whatever is the "norm". This is the real secret of Satanism: that it restores to a society and individuals, at any given point in history, that which is lacking. Thus there is balance, and thus *synthesis*: "the process of dialectical change which governs evolution".

Satan is a vital Western archetype. What "old Aeon" connotations exist in the symbol of Satan, in reality exist only in the minds of those who simply do not understand Satanism itself, and the Sinister in general. From a conventional "Pagan" perspective, Satanism may be described as "Militant Paganism", since the roots of the Sinister Tradition lie in the solar cults of Albion - the symbol of Satan being a comparatively recent (c. 10th or 11th century eh) and entirely

appropriate adoption by what is, in essence, the original "Western Way". All histories begin somewhere - why not be the ones to begin the history? Thus the outdoor Temple provides the focal point for the new Magick of the working group, allowing this Magick to flow, free from expectations of a past, and towards, perhaps, the creation of something significant.

II: The Living Temple

Within the Sinister Tradition, an outdoor "temple" is of two types: i) a Nexion connected with a particular Aeon; ii) a site established for personal use by a Satanic group/"coven"/ Temple. With regard to i), the Nexion associated with this present Western Aeon is located in the Welsh Marches, having been established c. 500 AN [its twin Nexion is known as "Bron Wrgan" - mentioned in various Order MSS]. Tradition relates that the Western Aeon was inaugurated using a crystal, this object being remembered later as "The Grail" of romantic Arthurian legend. It is not known what constituted the rituals of this inauguration, although one authority has suggested a form of a Nine Angles rite (qv. **Codex Saerus**). It is unlikely, however, that these rites would bear much resemblance to anything of a contemporary Occult structure, since the concept of "Time" was very different, being of a more "holistic" kind. [The linear perception of Time, "cause and effect" and so on, is a legacy of the Nazarene religion- with its emphasis on "sin".]

The energies at this Western centre are waning, and the majority of the associated sites now belong to the past - although this "past" will enable, within the next few decades, the fulfillment of a future Destiny connected to Sinister forces (the form of this Destiny is similar to how places such as Glastonbury and Stonehenge are viewed by this present society...). It is one of the aims of the ONA to establish, before the end of this century, a new Nexion to presence the New Aeon. This site will also be located in the Welsh Marches, where the Dark Tradition originated. With regard to energies, this new Nexion will be a synthesis of the aspects represented by the previous twin Nexions, mirroring as it does the evolution of the ONA itself. [Establishing an Aeonic Nexion requires some skill; apart from the obvious demands of the rites involved, the Cliologist must assess how the land is to be effected by outside forces throughout the next ten or so centuries; whether the land will remain, as desired, untouched, or whether it will become prey to development from tourism/ other business interests. Thus the site chosen should not necessarily be of "outstanding natural beauty", or of potentially historical interest.]

With regard to ii), the "indoor Temple" is a relatively modern concept, born from the requirements of city living. While there are, of course, certain ceremonies most usually, of necessity, performed within a prepared room (i.e. *Mass of Heresy*), the fetish of the "indoor temple" has served more to obscure than enhance the most vital gift of magickal experience: integration with the Land. Where the indoor sorcerer dwells within a shrine to the Ego, the way of natural magick dissolves the Self and re-integrates the magickian with Nature - there is thus presenced a sense of the greater Cosmos. A magickal rite within a natural outside environment produces effects within the participants that cannot be attained when working indoors: it is the difference between playing at magick, as a hobby; and actually living as a magickal entity.

When working on and with the Land, the magickian is subject to forces that do not subscribe to the laws of learned Occult writers, and over which there is no control: there is thus the glimmerings of genuine magickal understanding. There is personal empathy, devoid of trendy

abstractions and in time, the magickian attains - or is returned to - an "at-one-with" existence. [It is interesting to observe how the Land itself is changed by/ responds to the magickal work - and to observe how others within the magickal group are thus changed.]

Those followers of the Dark Tradition cannot significantly evolve along the Way without returning themselves, through magick, to the Land (this should be true of all genuine magickal paths - particularly in this present self-obsessed age). For the External Adept, natural magick within a ceremonial context is an important prelude to the hermetic context of the Internal Adept, this natural unfolding allowing this most difficult of hermetic ordeals to be lived successfully.

This living closely with Nature does not imply resurrecting old beliefs, rituals and gods. Rather, it implies, for the working group, a finding through practical experience of a natural expression of "worship" (where "worship" here means integration) relevant to the environment worked within. [Natural magick finds its ultimate expression in the establishment of an esoteric community - this again does not imply a harking back to a "golden age", but instead the creation of *new ways of living* - q.v. **Esoteric Pioneers.**]

Therunning in Practice

The finding of an outdoor site may take some time and effort, but is an interesting exercise in itself. For the Satanic group, many factors have to be considered - privacy and isolation being the most obvious. At present, in England, the conditions for performing rites such as the *Ceremony of Recalling* on a suitable hilltop are increasingly restricted - although this not the case within areas of north Wales, and North West Scotland. However, the site should be within reasonable traveling distance of the dwelling place of the participants for several reasons, esoteric and practical. If those concerned live in a city, then a site should be chosen on the rural outskirts (i.e. York - Yorkshire Moors; Manchester - The Pennines; Swansea - The Black Mountains, and so on).

If the magick of the group has any purposeful future, then the site will make itself known, after a relevant span of time. This is to say, that there exists a site fated to be part of the magick of the group.

As with an Aeonic Nexion, the outdoor site need not have served any previous historical purpose. It is usually tempting to choose a "stone circle", or a hill fort, for the obvious romantic esoteric connotations. Apart from being generally known, these places, for the most part, have already served a purpose and have played a role in leading us to where we are now - as previous societies have done, such as those of the Celts, the Anglo-Saxons, and so on. There really is no significant esoteric purpose in a working group "re-activating" an ancient sacred site - apart from perhaps as a prop for the benefit of the group psyche. Likewise, with the performing of long-dead rituals, where those rituals once dynamically expressed the unique forces involved in living in the society pertaining to that time - often a type of society that we can only now speculate about. Such rites, as with places, become abandoned because they are only outward expressions of the Cosmos and such expressions do change and evolve - as Art, Music and Science has done. It is true that we as whole have lost some things over the Aeons, but such things in essence can be re-captured, without recourse to the past, in expressions such as Magick. None of this is to say that an ancient form is irrelevant because it is ancient: a form is meaningful if it continues, since its inception, to presence the *numinous* necessary for evolution. Such a form belongs to a genuine Tradition and appears, while relevant, timeless in its words and imagery, until its purpose is realized and superseded (many such rites still provide the powerful foundations of the Seven-Fold Way).

In England, the most suitable sites can be found within wild woodland, preferably on "common land" or near footpaths through rough farm land (though as far as possible from human habitation). The site is best near a river/ stream, where thorn grows. Alternatively - and it must be a practical alternative - a rocky outcrop on a high peak is most effective, particularly if it is of a certain type of rock containing layers of quartz (see *Rite of the Nine Angles* MS for further details) - such is the description of the hallowed places of this country. Establishing a Sinister temple in other lands will require its own criteria, relevant to the country involved.

Once established, a circle of seven stones is set up within the enclosure, according to the guidelines set out in various MSS, and the area protected appropriately. Following this, the *Ceremony of Eorthe* is conducted, re-inforced by the opening of the Earth Gate, and sealed by regular *sunedrions*. [Group members may also wish to undertake the Nine Angles solo rite within the Temple area, commencing the rite at dusk, and remaining there alone until dawn. Individual results would only be discussed once all participants had completed the rite. Such an experience further binds the group members to the outdoor site.]

Sunderions consist of a framework of rites from **Codex Saerus**, with emphasis on the mastery of Esoteric Chant (this is a vital aspect, making possible the performance of future Aeonics Rites - qv. **Naos** and other MSS). Other features should hopefully consist of new aspects created by the Temple members themselves. Authority for the group and its actions lies solely with the Choregos/Mistress, etc. - there is no interference from some outside "higher authority" within the ONA (although the External Adept may occasionally seek advice from their Order guide on certain matters - i.e. *Opfer*).

Sunedrions should be as regular as possible, and are most usually conducted during the full moon (primarily for purposes of visibility, although other lunar phases are used for specific rites). Satanic Tradition contains no "seasonal rites" (i.e. "Beltaine", "Imbolc", and so on). If one studies the rites contained in the **Black Books**, it will be clear that they all presence the basic forces of the Cosmos - and mainly that which is represented as the *Hierosgamos*. No seasonal symbolism is employed (such as the slaying of "the Holly King") because the tides that are prevalent at particular times can be experienced as themselves, without abstraction. All that is required is the regular performance of a rite (such as the *chthonic* form of the *Nine Angles Rite*) within a natural outdoor setting, for integration with the seasonal forces to be attained. There are, of course, certain times when the magickal tides are at their most pronounced, and these are recognized by Satanic Tradition as seven "festivals" - the two most important being around the Summer and Winter solstices. The others are: Spring Equinox; May (middle/end of month: ANTARES); August (middle of month: ARCTURUS); Autumn Equinox; early November. [There are other workings and times allotted for alchemical seasons.]

The "working tools" of a Satanic Temple are very few. The obvious items are: lanterns; censer; communal chalice. Incense is always made by a member of the Temple, using the associations in **Naos** as a guide (for example, if energies appropriate to the sphere of the "Sun" were being employed during a ritual, then the incense would comprise of oak). The altar is provided by the recumbent body of an appointed Priest or Priestess. The sacrificial knife is kept under the guardianship of the Mistress (along with a large silver bowl), and used solely for that purpose (and may be only once every seventeen years). According to Tradition, after such a ceremony, the head would be severed and displayed at all *sunedrions* thereafter, bedecked with a crown of oak leaves. Sometimes this would be the only "image" present; either that, or a statue/ painting

of Baphomet, according to the genuine esoteric tradition (qv. *Sinister Tarot* and the various MSS concerning Baphomet contained in *Hostia* and elsewhere).

One important item is a large piece of quartz crystal, which is activated by voice vibration and can quite significantly enhance the energies accessed during a ritual. As mentioned many times in Order MSS, the crystal is most effective when shaped as a tetrahedron. This can prove a costly procedure, since a large enough piece for grinding needs to be purchased (and should be as clear as possible - colouring/cloudiness usually implies impurities), and the grinding itself, by a reliable craftsperson/ jeweler, does not come cheap. This shape is ideal, but not entirely essential - it all depends on one's priorities. Whatever form is used, the Master/Mistress can opt to bury the crystal during a consecration ceremony, thereafter directing energy towards the place of burial.

Performing "natural" or "empathic" magick returns the practitioner to the SACRED patterns of Being. There is exultation and *awe* which transforms life away from the petty and personal via direct experience of the greater context of Nature and the Cosmos. It is the stage beyond that of the indulgence of the indoor shrine and the modern "magick" of self-conscious parody - although this early stage of involvement with the "Occult scene" can play a part in aiding the Initiate along the difficult path to Adeptship, via "people management", manipulation, and so forth. [This is to say that Traditional Satanism is concerned with the Ego, the manipulative arts and sorcery only in the early stages of the path: such things are there to be experienced/confronted and then transcended if further development is sought.]

A genuine working group should not be as a club to which any vaguely interested person can be invited to attend. It is an organic form that creates itself through certain factors becoming balanced (these factors being unique to those involved in the group). This process can involve much causal time, but through nurture and consequent esoteric binding of those who comprise this organic form, something extraordinary may one day be created. One autonomous (Sapphic) group within the ONA has been active for over twenty years, but has only within recent years completed itself, having acquired the right individuals and environment. It is now closed to outsiders. [For further details concerning the practice of Sinister Ceremonial Magick, see **The Black Book of Satan I.**]

Esoteric Pioneers: Towards A New Way of Living

The Satanic Temple in practice describes in microcosm one of the most important magickal aims for the immediate future: the establishment of an esoteric community. Most magickal organizations have proved now that they can write profusely and confidently about their aims (in often polemical tones). What is needed now is a new form of magickal expression, and one that cannot be achieved via anything other than practical means. An esoteric community needs, quite simply, dedicated, pragmatic individuals who are prepared to work hard to make the dream real - it does not need another "journal". Such a venture made real, would take magick into an entirely new phase, away from the dying, urban scene of the present: it would re-interpret magick as the most profound *way of living*.

To start, several Satanic/Magickal comrades need to club together to purchase a substantial property with a large amount of land (certainly no less than fifteen acres). The property needs to be well isolated but situated on good farming land, since the community must be self-sufficient, and must be understood as being the seed for a new civilization, indifferent to the

goings-on of the Old World of Western capitalism (it may be prudent to establish a base that is also easily defensible). Features of the Community may include: Organic farming techniques (such as the use of heavy horses); the banning of motorized vehicles (allowing the traveler to retain integration with the environment); no electricity, thus Musick, for example, would be made by the Community members themselves; and of course, the creation of a new type of education system.

As far as accommodation is concerned, considering the failed experiment of the 'sixties' commune, the dwelling places should realistically consist of separate apartments. The aim is not to share out oneself and one's belongings in order to de-value the concept of self-identity through material possessions and "morality", but to create - through individual skills - an organic whole (and a real [*Folk* - T.] democracy).

Feast days/Festivals would be observed communally - for example *the Mass of Life* (qv. **The Black Book of Satan III**) could be performed every Sunday, in an area designated for "worship" [such an area would become an important Nexion - as would the Community itself...]. There would also be, it is hoped, the continuation of the fifty-year tradition of *The Giving* (qv. **Deofel Quartet**). Thus, the unique, natural magick of the Community would unfold.

Although the above outlines are offered as suggestions only, a genuine Community cannot be defined by anything less than a group of individuals creating together an entirely self-sufficient life-style, able to exist wholly apart from modern day society. This implies *farming the land*. It also implies *family*: a genuine Community cannot exist as a single-sexed unit, because the aim is to create a *new society* - the foundations for a new civilization comprising of a *new type of human being*. Striving to establish and maintain such a new society will in itself be a magickal rite - one that is greatly important for the evolution of magick as a whole. Thus there should be no compromise in fulfilling the described criteria for the Community.

In essence, the "esoteric" aspect is simply the nurturing by practical living, of the *spiritual connexion* we possess with the Land: it is this discovery that will presence the numinosity needed. Thus, the rites conducted by members of the Community will serve to focus, as worship, this natural magick, rather than the rites themselves providing, or creating, in the first instance the esoteric aspect.

If there is to be significant aeonic Change, then many such Communities should be established in this and other countries. Aside from general esoteric principles shared by those on the Sinister Path, there will be no one dogmatic code as to how each Community organizes itself, since the uniqueness of each Community environment will require its harmonious system of expression. To reiterate, this Great Rite of natural magick will allow a move away from the "post-modernism" of present Occultism towards a new phase where individual lives can be dedicated to a higher purpose. Those who have been denuded of real power by the System can now begin to create History - all it requires is strength of Will.

For the Magickian, there could be no greater Quest.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Winterreise
Coire Riabhaich

In Winter The book is put aside When wordless the slow force Pushes sadness in my soul I cannot give myself then to his writing For the real land stretches out In turgid progression: A Wilderness no book or painting Can live for me And my soul shrinks at what I must do ...

There is an Awe So terrible in its pace Evolving a merciless expanse Where one life Can only ever be forgotten. Can I lie like the rocks I am dreaming And become that ageless existence? Will the silence return To find I am the streams Moving through this impossible Earth?

When the book closes It is as if my blood Will become the heather-rust And my tiny mind is lost To the Nameless Dread We do not have to face until Last moments of recalling Yet, to remember When others forget Is an ancient Gift: It is to become What words cannot make a becoming And to move, because of fear, The fragile Present To embrace the yearning of Ages ...

Once Fortuna may have eased the burden Now beginnings seem more difficult And I turn and bring forth from a sleeping form A book half-written And barely understood. I will be that Spring time When the book must be lived; But for the Present, the cold still encloses As I am only the oppressive promise Of a season yet to be lived

^^^ In a Landscape

Winter darkens And each city is a refuge: Yet still a river moves through unlit moors Waiting, miles from our place Of Forgetting And echoes Ellude the notes, formed To seize Divinity To suckle for some A dream

My crucible, nourished now By rain and snow Has waited long years: It is time for the Earth to bear again From a kind of Death, To bring the deepening spread of Summer Once more by an Oath In fever fulfilled

Frantic, a connexion sought While each season is unheard. Here, resides the longing To find the Inner Land, immutable Since in our loss We cannot grasp

A killing frost that seeps Where no paths Cut us from the black hills Where no track Leads to a favoured place And echoes, after you We shall still be, waiting ...

^^^ Last Sleepwalk

The patterns of water From the mountains Could not unsettle: Surely they would lead a spirit to silence Lull each terrible night That could not bear the birth of Spring For Winter's last rage

Surely the storm, that one perfect symphony Would spare the home And lift the Oblate to stand, Staring like the Moon At the swirling life of birds Who brought once before That same precious laughter

It is hard to let go of happiness For a cause beyond: I will seek to remember In moments without struggle The simplicity Of the patterns of water.

^^^ Fugue

When infant Spring Woke the glow of life We settled on Haddon Hill Amid the whisper of storm.

We sat with the songs of the outcrops That held in our small space of peace The yearning we have always been. Far below, garish in stupidity The infestation of life crawled Never once listening; The gentle fort above, degraded Carried its dying ghosts to their end And the present seems void: There was a pool there once, Where that car park now rots Syphoning the cadaverous

We two sat imbued by wyrd Enshaded by the tyranny That makes our Way fragile. I heard your Musick, beautiful and a little sad: You were the memories cut into Stanyeld; Light Spout, its unassuming and truthful descent; The forgotten hill-side home, built before dawn ...

The Past turned then Over the dark tumuli to the west And my future looked out through your eyes - I, still forming, was content To let my ageless soul Walk the new horizon. There was no looking back, as some do Towards dead folklore All Life surged through us Only ever moving beyond

A prelude of years Now ceased its song And marked the end of words. You were acceptance And I, the waking season No division then as we responded In cloud As one carrion circling As one God heard fleetingly below: I belong nowhere else.

Somewhere, rain Marked our farewell You left to bring an echo to my future self; I stumbled, led by the present And bound for the Black Earth We belong nowhere else

^^^ Carving

Do we bring gods from soil As I carve this face in wood? Do we and They as one Shape Wyrd By willing answers for our living? The trees now budding

Shape of my soul, tranquility: This is the face of Hierosgamos Once a truth over creed When mouths unravelled leaves Instead of death

In this moment I am still of the elements Which bear the Musick I call my own: I must wait therefore, for solitude To open Earth And bring forth consciousness, Carving my face into the form that wakes ...

There is one Wyrd And the wheeling Cosmos will always shape And discard, until a few buds at least May blossom as Art

Not simply a means But a god for each waiting Earth

^^^ Return

There are no songs To sing a sea That fed a sickened heart No colours to awaken The awe that held a ragged soul The rocks will remain Where my wisdom stayed Where life moves between fire and hail And will live still a truth I cannot see between noise and loss.

Even then I struggled to listen The message of the sea could not free One life still lost in fetish Of Art. Even then I left clothed in pettiness Waiting for meaning But the sea Could not break the hold of starvation.

I sought to possess the numinous But there is nothing of mine to bring forth When the Earth is all that yields. Once bewitched by clouds Yet I was never lost Still Her memory In my heart does not recall But only the question: When will I become what I cannot possess?

As I write I cannot hear the sea

^^ Diabolus

Once as always Tides The loneliness of unity Will call us forth From behind the Earth. Life listened But in sleep Until I met us all again Through your eyes And my animal flesh

I met us all again Where the Earth is No longer Earth And would know that expression again When the stars were my eyes And my heart Had no name

Eternity is Nameless Where the stars Are not stars. Wake again, cold space And I will seek Creation

And seek again Through your eyes And my animal flesh

^^ Monuments

Cradled in rock Thoughts are returned To monuments, never sleeping Beneath the quartz slope Where hands once tore To fashion, for us, a question

But we do not need to seek signs: The Earth is scarred by monuments They grew like trees, rooted in minds But Life has moved on since Now my own hands cease to tear From Earth an answer

What will I be then For future eyes? A circle of musick, a stone to stand Before each traveller, Its message unchanging?

I will be a declaration Only as a tree declares itself; For the secret was already unlocked When the Earth Still bathed in fire

^^ Art

He drew a symbol To make his mark But he did not exist Only the storms he once painted That would return

He was glad When the symbol was carried It was his Legacy, emblazoned But he was the same

As those who carried As the one who spoke before the crowd; They had drawn the symbol He did not exist

To justify his mark The artist looked back To those before him But saw only the storms Returning

The same storm Behind each eye Speaks no revelation Of Self and Isolation: The banner was one Life Carried by their Desire

You drew the symbol I am you who now addresses the crowd There is no Art to make a mark The choice is one of Life It is only the storm That returns

^^^ Master of Charms

In words Are no measures of Time. Thus, the message of Clouds Their progression I do not seek to compare With a voice I contain Once thrown out from unhewn rock To infinite depths

It was the falling snow That stayed against the blue As the blizzard of stars As the clinging ash Was the carved frame that contains A life After my bones have nourished The hewn rock

There is no measure here To perturb our mind; The sky above me now Is the orange-grey presence Again, as so long ago

I see all that I had seen Know all that I have known. This is not the order I have believed But the state I have dreamed

Where the clouds are

^^^ Annum per annum

I will wait for a far-off place Where distant rain brings mist And low cloud wreathes grey around The black stone and the unseen nests. May others look across water To where I sleep Growing as each season lends a little grey To flesh. This man of mystery Who carries the hills within:

Through my eyes They glimpse themselves again

But I cannot live now As the man of my future. In the Wilderness I found even less Of myself; No centre Only fragments disowned, of pitiful stature My escape, the slow tides Of the sky. But there is a life to be lived While such tides feed my flesh

While my mind Frames the underground spring That sustains; And gracious life, the rain that befriends. Acknowledged without symbol, Thought as the river A wonder so simple, as to be missed Or rejected In slow flowering

With each sun Another memory played out until Only the light of existence Sees infinity held within rock. My soul will dream again No longer stifled by peace And the land will not bear The repeating blow: I cannot be more than I am ...

Or will each far-off place Bring me to stand always beneath the Moon Wishing I could weep? Each time, my head bowed She speaks with my voice: Birth

This man of mystery, white as Winter Turns again to the distant rain But will seek no more, what he has become ^^^

A Note on 'Seven'
ONA 1997 eh

For the West, the cosmos has always been apprehended as a division of seven fundamental vibrations - a concept which originated from Albion. Throughout the ages, this division has been symbolised by various forms: stars, trees, metals - and planets. The forms so chosen are, for the most part, used in a *symbolic* sense, rather than a literal one. Thus, with regard to the planets, those ascribed to the spheres of the **Tree of Wyrd** as used within the Septenarv System [or 'Seven-Fold Sinister Way'; Traditional Satanism, and so on] are used purely as symbols to represent the seven fundamental forces of the cosmos, rather than there being forces literally ascribed to the planets themselves, or the planets somehow creating those forces.

Thus, that there were at one time only seven observable planets, did not influence the concept of the 'cosmic seven'; rather, because seven planets were known to exist, they were conveniently ascribed as symbols representing the already existing seven vibrations. The fact that other planets have since been observed is irrelevant, since - those other planets do not change what actually exists - the seven - and are not important esoterically, since the planets are used only in a symbolic sense.

Of course, this is not to say that the planets and the constellations do not signify 'effects' in the esoteric sense, but within a magickal ritual, the usual 'grimoire' type approach to their contribution produces perceived results so small as to be negligible [and what may exist - fairly negligible in itself - is not recognised because something else is anticipated.

With regard to the constellations, an understanding of their significance within the workings of the cosmos requires a particular type of living few will undertake today - and that living may span over several 'alchemical seasons' (many years). In both cases, the Adept must discover, for themselves, by practical living, the reality of these natural forms - as entirely separate from their traditional use as abstract symbols throughout history.

A form such as astrology approaches nature via an understanding confined within symbolism; magick uses symbolism as a means towards a unified understanding, the symbolism [and this includes such forms as the Tree of Wyrd] being discarded once the cosmos is apprehended as it is, devoid of projections. As always stressed, this apprehension can only ever be created by an alchemical way of living, as enshrined by the practical ordeals of the Seven Fold-Way.

- Order of nine Angles -

Adeptship - Its Real Meaning and Significance

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 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 judgement 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, although 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 comradeship, 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, the goal of Adeptship is mostly intangible: it seems 'magickal' and Occult; part of another world. Further, the Initiate is on their own and still lives, 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.

[*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.]

But there is more. The **physical** challenges alone which an aspirant Adept must undertake are, in fact, more difficult, more tough, 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 "Magic(k)al" 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 stupor/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 misinterpretation: 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 301bs in under 7 hours over difficult hilly terrain; (b) running 20 miles in less than 2 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. Aeonick 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 characterless 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.

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
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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 gleaned 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. The 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 the 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.

Aeonics and Politics

Aeonic magick is concerned with two things: (1) understanding the fundamental principles of how certain types of magickal energy (existing in the acausal) manifests and may be made manifest in the causal; and how those energies when so manifest produce temporal change; (2) actually using such energies - via rites etc. to bring such change in accord with one's desire or goal,

(1) implies learning about aeons and civilizations - how both are formed, lives decay and change via acausal energies - and about how those within them, from individuals upward, are changed and manipulated by the various forms the acausal energies assume. Among such forms are archetypes, myths and mythos, ideas, symbols (including artistic representations), as well as the more transient types like politics and religion.

(2) implies learning the skills of aeonic magick and follows after (1). The basic skills are aeonic rites (eg. the Nine Angles rites; Ceremony of Recalling)g the Star Game, and creative manipulation of symbols, ideas and so on (including the more transient forms).

(1) is covered in the many and varied Order MSS dealing with Aeonics and details of the basic skills are given in 'Naos' 'Black Book' and the various rituals (most now available in various publications). This present MS will deal with an area not specifically covered before with a view to dispelling some misconceptions.

Sinister aeonic magick implies actual use of the energies by individuals - bringing change(s) to the 'real' or temporal world. This use is often misunderstood by non-Adepts of sinister traditions, and particularly by those who adhere to the old distorted magic(k)al systems. For instance, aeonic magick was used earlier this century to aid a new political form and so try and alter in a significant way the direction of the Western civilization in order to bring about certain futures. These futures (the plural is intentional) would, if they had resulted, have led to the expansion of both a technological and thence an individual kind over a period of many centuries - and this because of the dynamic nature of the form chosen as well as the future transformation of it, via dialectic and internal metasomatosis. The most identifiable manifestation (ie. causal appearance) of this form was National-Socialist Germany. However, most individuals who consider this form, consider it not from an aeonic standpoint but rather from a limited, causal and 'moral' point of view - a view they take, also, of more recent attempts by other individuals and groups, to use that and similar forms for magickal ends. The perspective of this view is immediate rather than of centuries and millenia and shows a fundamental lack of understanding of not only aeonics but also magick itself.

The reality is that all significant magick is either Aeonic or internal: External magick is but a child's games to be played while learning the most basic skills of magick, or for amusement perhaps later on. To a real magickian, all types of political (as well as religious and cultural) forms are means - to be used if they are useful for aeonic or internal magickal goals. Genuine Adepts use many temporal forms - although they never identify with them in the sense of adhere to them causally: from a psychic perspective* In the initial stages of the seven-fold way, for example, some "roles" may be assumed by the Initiate to bring insight, challenges and generally experience the 'forbidden', the contrary, the 'heretical'. But these roles are only that - part of an internal, psychic and thus sinister manipulation of forms. Later, such forms - and others - may be used in the aeonic sense: to bring about large-scale temporal change (how large depending on the intent as well as the skill and aim of the Adept). But in both, manipulation is the key.

Thus, those who criticize those LHP individuals and/or groups who do and have used political forms in the past - or some other temporal form: social, religious or ideological - clearly show by that very criticism and their subsequent "labelling" of those individuals and groups (from their own myopic and relative political' or "social" perspective) that they lack not only understanding but also insight into the basics of magick. In short, these labellers" expose themselves as not only unworthy of being called magickians, but also as adherents to the old, Nazarene dominated moral value~systems. Their lack of perspective and magickal understanding is not, however, unexpected considering the pathetic state of 'magical understanding' prior to the dissemination of ONA teachings - particularly relating to Aeonics and Internal magick.

On the individual level - of Initiates - the LHP is decidedly a-political, a-religious, and a-social (where

the "a" prefix means "beyond", "outside"), and is devoted to making each Initiate unique: that is, aiding them fulfil their potential, thus enhancing evolution and creating the next stage of our evolution. The ultimate aim of sinister aeonic magick is to create conditions in the 'real world' such that Initiation and Adeptship and all that these imply in terms of evolutionary understanding and insight, is not only available for all, but fulfilled. This of course, is and will be a long-term aim, perhaps achieved by the end of the next Aeon, perhaps not. But the aeonic magick of any one present moment (eg. a rite or form manipulation) aims to presence a part of that future in that present moment or create conditions enabling it* Thus, change is provoked and made possible - in individuals, groups and civilizations. Hence the complexity of aeonics, and the multitude of temporal forms used - but also its simplicity. For, viewed causally and simply, aeonics is change, opposition, creation; provoking challenges and insight, counterbalancing and adversarial. In short - a dialectic, for individuals, groups and civilizations as well as aeons. And it is this dialectic which is the 'numen' of sinister magick - its ultimate meaning and its ultimate challenge.

Quite simply, it is for those who aspire. The rest can continue their crawling non-existence. Naturally, in aeonic magick some mistakes have been made -some judgements have been shown by events to be incorrect. But understanding and reason are cumulative: a process of learning, for individuals, civilizations, and aeons.

Anton Long (ONA)

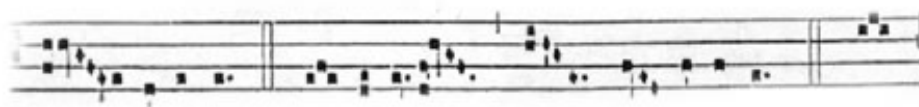
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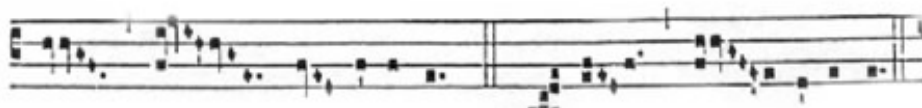
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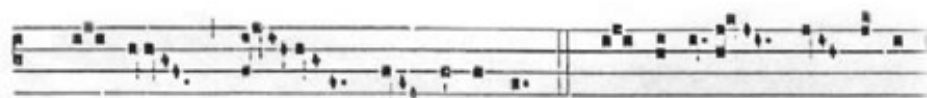
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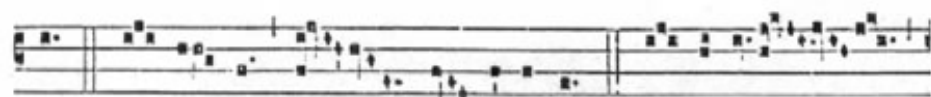
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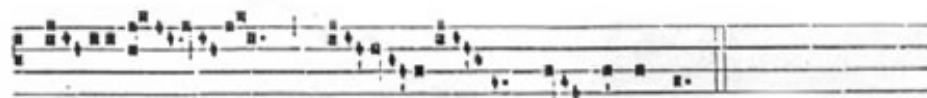
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Civilizations, Aeons and Individuals ONA

In order to represent these things in a way which provokes a higher, conscious understanding and thus the development of insight, it is necessary to develop a new type of abstract representation – a new kind of mathematics.

However, before proceeding to do this, some general clarifications are necessary.

An Aeon is the term used to describe a stage or type of evolution - Evolution is taken to result from a certain process – and this process can be described via a bifurcation of time. That is, evolution is an expression of how the cosmos changes in certain ways over 'time' – this 'time' having an acausal and a causal aspect: evolution is an increase of the acausal in the causal.

More precisely, the cosmos exists in both causal and acausal space-time where causal space-time (symbolized by $\sim\sim$) has 4 dimensions: three spatial, and one time dimension, this dimension being linear. Acausal space-time (symbolized by $\sim\sim$) has n spatial dimensions and one, acausal, time dimension. $\sim\sim$ intersects $\sim\sim$ at certain places – these places are 'Life-forms': i.e. a living organism is a place where $\sim\sim$ and $\sim\sim$ coincide. Sentient life is regarded as a 'large-scale' intrusion of $\sim\sim$ - into $\sim\sim$: a 'mergence' rather than just a point of coincidence. Consciousness is said to reside, or be, in the acausal. The energy of $\sim\sim$ and its changes in causal time, can be described and thus 'explained' by conventional scientific means, e.g. by Physics. The energy of $\sim\sim$ and its changes can be described by a new science which uses the non-spatial geometry of the acausal and acausal time.

An Aeon is a form or type of acausal energy which manifests in the causal – i.e. it has certain limits in both causal time and 3 dimensional space. It re-orders the causal – which is simply another way of saying such acausal energy produces certain changes in the causal. A civilization [or rather a 'higher' or Aeonic civilization] is how this form, this energy, is ordered in the causal – from a causal point of view. An inexact analogy would be an oak tree – the surface of the earth is the boundary between the causal (above) and the acausal (below). The roots are in the acausal (the acausal energy), the trunk and branches in the causal. The 'aeonic' aspect is the roots; the civilization aspect is the trunk; the societies within the civilization are the branches, and the individuals within a society are the twigs and leaves.

Civilizations, Aeons and individuals are examples of organisms – they are created, or born, they grow and change and then they die. They occupy a finite space over a finite time, undergo metamorphosis and so on. They possess structure or form, which form while variable within certain limits is the same or similar for all manifestations of a similar type – and this form can be studied and classified, and appropriate models formulated to represent it and the changes it undergoes.

In essence, a civilization is an aspect of an Aeon, and an individual is an aspect of a civilization. All individuals – unless and until they attain a certain degree of self-awareness [variously called individuation and Adeptship] and thus inner liberation and freedom from 'unconscious' and other influences – are subject to the psyche and this psyche is determined [draws its energy from] the civilization and thence the Aeon. One form such energy takes is 'archetypes'. This energy [which is basically 'acausal' and not to be confused with the physical energy described by Science which is causal energy determines or influences the actions/non-actions of individuals insofar as those individuals affect the civilization and thus the Aeon. In other words, their lives do not affect or change the civilization or the Aeon. They are part of the Wyrd of that civilization – they do not possess a wyrd of their own. Using the inexact analogy – an individual with wyrd (an Adept or someone who has achieved individuation) is a seed which becomes free from the tree and can begin a new process (a sapling). All other individuals are tied to the tree to grow as it grows and die when it dies.

A civilization thus expresses an ordering of evolution. Its energy, and thus its archetypes and so on, is determined by the Aeon which 'creates' [or rather, causes its creation/manifestation in causal space-time]. These energies, for both a civilization and an Aeon can be described in various ways. The most simple (and not very accurate) is mythological/archetypal.

An Aeon lasts about 2,000 years of causal time. It is linked to a particular geographical region, and there is a centre to this where the acausal energy is strongest. This is because an Aeon is a physical presencing of acausal energy via a nexion – i.e. a nexus between the acausal and the causal. This centre usually acquires a cult or religious nature: mostly unconsciously. That is, certain individuals are 'drawn to this area' and the acausal energy produces/ provokes changes within and external to the psyche of these and other individuals.

The list given below describes the energy of each Aeon which has existed in mythological/archetypal

terms – it is a guide, rather than an exact description of the energies, and a guide to the changes which are caused in the psyche. [The exact description is purely abstract – in symbols – and is given later.] Each Aeon has a particular civilization associated with it. (See the list.) Its energy may be expressed in terms of an 'ethos' – that is, how the ~ [where the symbol ~ represents individual(s)] within that ~ (where the symbol means 'civilization') apprehend both causally and acausally [or in simple terms, both rationally and intuitively] the acausal energy of the Aeon. This ethos, like a ~, grows and changes; it evolves.

The civilizations listed are 'higher' or Aeonic ones – those that have changed/ shaped conscious evolution. Other civilizations have existed, but they have generally not contributed significantly to such evolution in terms of creativity – they are usually related, in time and space, to an already existing or a previously existing civilization. The criteria for an Aeonic civilization are: (a) it possesses a distinctive ethos [Note: an ethos is not a 'religion' as religion is conventionally understood.]; (b) it arises primarily from a physical challenge [rather than from the disintegration of an existing civilization (i.e. the challenge as such is social)]; (c) it is creative on a large scale.

In analysing civilizations and their changes, the work of Spengler and Toynbee is valuable, although its details are not essential. What their work has done, is to contribute some fundamental ideas about the nature and structure of civilizations – their detailed work (such as, in Toynbee's case, historical dates and events) adds flesh to the bones of the aeonic theory here propounded, but that theory is independent of such detail which may be and indeed should be surpassed in the future. The two most fundamental ideas of these historians are Spengler's one of the metamorphosis of what he terms a 'culture', and the genesis of civilizations as given by Toynbee – their origin, classification, inter-relation and so on. The ideas have been combined with others – some original, some not (some part of 'esoteric tradition') – to provide the framework for aeonic/acausal theory outlined here. This framework is 'Cliology' – the study of those processes which have caused historical change.

The mechanism by which civilizations affect evolution is that of 'creative individuals'. Most of these are influenced by the ethos of their civilization to act, or to express that ethos more consciously, those causing others to act. Few individuals in a civilization reach the stage of conscious evolution which frees them from the influence of the ethos – be such the ethos of their own civilization or that of another. Of course, many are there who believe they are free of such influence – but belief is not the same as reality. It has been and is the aim of genuine Esoteric Arts to enable individuals to reach the stage of conscious development where they become free of such influences – i.e. to achieve a uniqueness of identity. This requires insight, knowledge and reason – all of which are aided by understanding how and why things (such as civilizations) are as they are. Cliology is an expression of such understanding, and as such a learning of the subject aids conscious development and thus makes Adeptship/individuation possible. The abstract form, given here (particularly in the Second and Third parts of this introductory treatise) takes this rational understanding further.

Each civilization follows a pattern. This can be symbolized and thus studied. The same is true for an Aeon. Such study enables two important things. First, it enables an objectification. In one sense, this is a withdrawing of projections (in Jungian terms). Second, it develops already existing faculties and creates new ones – the ability to reason in abstract symbolism, for example, where the symbols are 'numinous' (i.e. "alive") rather than being simply 'intellectual'. That is, such symbols relate to those things which are important for an individual's life. [In a simple sense, the symbols of cliology are imbued with 'psychic energies' and thus possess 'power'. More correctly, the symbols re-present acausal energies as against causal ones such as in mathematics and physics.]

The symbolization enables the patterns on the levels of an Aeon, a civilization and individuals, to be followed and manipulated if necessary. It enables insight into Aeons, civilizations, individuals, and one's own self, and thus forms the essence of inner esoteric teaching.

The symbolization, at the present time of writing, is of three kinds, two of which have been developed quite recently. The first kind is the mythological/archetypal – the use of myths/archetypes and such forms to describe/represent the processes and patterns. Such representations are traditional, and still useful, particularly in the early stages of study. [One type of this kind of representation is the septenary Tree of Wyrd with each sphere being associated with various archetypes/mythological forms and so on.] The second kind, is The Star Game – a collocation of abstract symbols which re-present the acausal as it manifests in the causal, these symbols, as mentioned above, being numinous ones. The third type, the rudiments of which are described in the Second and Third Parts of this present work, is a formalized abstract system which represents the beginnings of a new science. The first and second types are

complete. The third type has only begun to be developed – the next few centuries should see this new science complete in most of its essentials. The mastery of the first type of symbolization is relatively easy. The mastery of The Star Game (in both septenary and advanced versions) takes quite an intellectual effort, stretching the frontiers of conscious evolution. The understanding of the third type, takes conscious evolution still further. The completion of this third type will stretch the frontiers almost to their limits.

All three kinds are genuine esoteric Arts.

- Order of Nine Angles -

DYSSOLVING
Diary of an Internal Adept
S. Lagain, ONA

In a Landscape

Winter darkens
And each city is a refuge:
Yet still a river moves through unlit moors
Waiting, miles from our place
Of Forgetting
And echoes
Elude the notes, formed
To seize Divinity
To suckle for some
A dream

My crucible, nourished now
By rain and snow
Has waited long years:
It is time for the Earth to bear again
From a kind of Death,
To bring the deepening spread of Summer
Once more by an Oath
In fever fulfilled

Frantic, a connexion sought
While each season is unheard.
Here, resides the longing
To find the Inner Land, immutable
Since in our loss
We cannot grasp
A killing frost that seeps
Where no paths
Cut us from the black hills
Where no track
Leads to a favoured place
And echoes, after you
We shall still be, waiting ...

DYSSOLVING
Diary of an Internal Adept
March

21st: Should the above read "Internal Inept"? A terrible start. I am cold and exhausted after the journey, but weather has been wonderful. I did not do a sufficient 'recce' of area, and arrogantly based my plans according to a map. Getting to this wilderness, burdened with my home on my back, has proved traumatic. Fool! First lesson?

I feel hungry. Upset - I miss J. To be honest, I have doubts about my ability - perhaps this is normal? I swing from one mood to the other. As I write, I can see the comet above - it seems encouraging. I feel frightened.

"Tomorrow is another day" and I really must take this one step at a time. I feel ... inept and about to be exposed as a fraud.

22nd: Collected a month's provisions - not a bad walk (twenty mile round trip) but back-breaking on the way back - kept my mind busy, though. Fairly positive today, particularly after having explored some of the area; and it is beautiful - exactly the right domain for the ritual: treeless, rocky, mountainous ...

I'm fine when I'm busy. This afternoon I was upset. All I can think of is the Summer Solstice - and yet , why can I not just "enjoy" this experience? Here and now? I wait now for the night, then I can sleep and one more day will be over.

This seems an awesome task - wonderful to romanticise about, but as with all things, the living reality is ... many intense things. I am happy using here as a base. It's been raining lightly now for a few hours - it looks as if it has been snowing on the mountains, which I can see from the tent.

I cannot begin to think about what I am doing - I just must go through each day ... And see. I don't see how I can do this; the tent is not really bearable to be in during the day. Raining heavily now. I must just do what I can. I will review the situation a week from yesterday.

23rd: Better day, more settled - explored more of the immediate landscape. Re-pitched the tent - and thought I had lost the tent pegs: I was almost overwhelmed with panic, which shows how nervous I am. This occurred as the afternoon rain started up, and I am paranoid about getting wet, particularly this early on. I have a fear of rain at present. I may re-locate the tent tomorrow to somewhere more picturesque - all the land here is water-logged. Still, as the weeks go on I am expecting the weather to become drier and warmer (!).

When the Sun breaks through the clouds there is some happiness. There is also simple pleasure in doing simple tasks, such as washing cutlery!

Horrors. Have just discovered five or six of what I presume are sheep ticks embedded in each leg. I have applied my insect repellent, pulled the bastards out, applied antiseptic and plasters. They must have pounced via my exposed socks (I am wearing breeks - tomorrow I shall permanently wear over-trousers). Horrible moment - apparently they can cause fever, but nothing life-threatening. One on my hand.

Those little scum must live everywhere - still, it's their land. I've yet to earn respect and trust from Nature. This is horrible. It's still raining. Cold, damp and feeling ill - already.

24th: Woke up feeling very unimpressed with the strong sunlight and general beauty of the weather. I only began to pick up when cleaning cutlery! The weather remained bright and clear, and helped to slowly instill a sense of cautious well-being. That feeling keeps me occupied, but fades as the day progresses to evening.

This is all very difficult. I do not feel 'esoteric' in the least; or that I am fitting comfortably into the 'role' of 'Hermit'. I am a man missing his beloved terribly. It feels cruel to be parted like this, and the sense of three months stretching before me seems too much to bear. Anguish.

But this situation is my choice - I could leave if I wanted. I just know that if I did, so much would be lost; my path would effectively end - a staying at 'external adept'. I would perhaps go on to live an enjoyable life composing music - but that music would lack the ultimate power that this ordeal can earth. There would be the torture of what could have been achieved. There would be failure, within me, where it matters.

I think my problem is the knowledge of the length of time ahead of me. I must try and become detached from the time-scale; live within each day - each moment in fact, each one acutely felt. Tomorrow does arrive, bringing me one day nearer to my goal.

I do need a task to occupy my time. Perhaps I will try to carve something. This whole situation is difficult, sickeningly so. But each day completed is a mini-triumph. I will endure.

25th: If I wrote this journal early each day there would be positivity; as it is so far, the evening brings such anguish and weeping - I am haunted by the moment we parted. I worry for her, and feel torn. A period of such anguish then brings rest.

There is so much I can derive from this experience - so much loss and failure if I "chicken out". Generally, my mood is one of contentment (it is still early days!). Today, apart from this evening, was my calmest yet. I spent a productive time contemplating the tarot.

The weather has been bright and warm, and I sat in the sun like an old man in his deck chair. It is during the day when I see things which bring a sense of well-being - ie. circling buzzards (possibly some eagles too), and deer: two hinds very close to the tent yesterday. And a stag standing on a distant rocky crag, as the sun set.

Night is approaching now - a time of great comfort when I don't have to endure - just rest, sleep. I am usually fairly tired at the end of each day, so sleep is no problem. Although quite cold.

Another day done - no further visits from ticks.

26th: Emotionally, a better day. I awoke before dawn, with the rain lashing down on the tent. I went out for some water and was caught in intense wintery showers, sleet and some hail. The river was engorged and raging.

As the showers subsided, I went for a further recon of the area, and decided on a place to re-locate the tent to - quite far from here, but it has a greater sense of wilderness.

Content; I feel I am starting to accept/identify with the role - or rather, am becoming it. Have spent time sitting and watching the land - and listening. Tonight, I watched deer on the horizon, feeding.

27th: I relocated the tent and belongings to the wilder place. Today, I have felt upset again, my mood unsettled by the relocation - it took three trips altogether, carrying all the stuff over steep and hilly land. It really began to irritate me.

Also weather very changeable - hail stones and very strong winds. As I write this, the tent is being buffeted by the strong weather, and the noise is oppressive. But what do I expect in this far Northern terrain, amid echoes of Winter?

I am low today. Saw two hinds this evening, which cheered me. The wildlife has that effect on me. I also observed a frog today, coloured brown like the heather. In fact, every life form, including the flies, seems of the same brown colour - except me in my bright red mountain cap (a stupid colour).

I am not happy today. Perhaps I will become more grounded as the weeks wear on; but my resolve remains. In fact, the alternative of giving up seems much more repellant now. The 'waiting' is not really that bad - as yet. Still worrying about J. though, still tearful, at times.

I am starting to get a feel for how a day progresses, uncluttered by a timetable of modern life and routine. I am attempting to calmly let each day unfold and pass.

28th: Bad night last night - I froze as rain and hail continued to assault the tent, and could barely sleep. This morning was spent warming up in tent with hot drinks, before venturing outside. The rain persisted on and off throughout day. It has been very grey, cold and damp which has made me feel lethargic. Despite conditions, I sat on a fallen tree by the burn, and began carving a 'wand' for J. This mindful act did go some way to easing an otherwise depressing day. It is a week today since beginning - I should be celebrating having reached this far! Yet it is obviously quite a pathetic 'achievement' compared to all the weeks, the months still to be endured.

After a week, things seem more of a burden - but my mood has certainly been affected by the weather. I feel irritated, slightly, by my predicament. Yet - on, on, it must be so. I feel pissed off, to be honest.

29th: It is possible to lose track of the day/date - even with diary as a reminder. Since each day has no form, no routine that I am used to, they tend to blur into each other ...

More Wintery showers this morning, cold again, but weather quickly gave way to the glorious Sun. I marvelled at the Sun today, as my body responded to its life-giving rays - I feel that I have gained a new understanding/relationship with the Sun (which I have tried to capture in an attempt at poetry), which seems the first - albeit subtle - gift of this venture. Just a new shift in perception.

Spent most of day carving by the river: it has, on the whole, been a good day, but marred slightly by a period of preoccupation with when I finish, on the Solstice. Too far away to happily dwell upon.

It's raining now. I feel a sort of detachment evolving re. my life prior to being here. I have accepted that I am going to see this ordeal through, so no longer dwell emotionally on what I have left behind. I feel 'I' as a personality am disappearing into the landscape; not an unsettling feeling, but, somehow, something of a relief and quietly inspiring. This detachment is not a rejection or judgement of what I have left behind - rather, this is my life now, and the expression of the life that I am becoming.

Writing poetry and carving have given shape and purpose to the day.

30th: Weather miserable for most of the day - cold, grey and raining. It has had a depressing effect - that coupled with a feeling of being a little physically run down (beginnings of a 'cold' coming on?). I have

felt, for the first time, really depressed, and sat by the river emotionally drained. This heaviness continued until early evening when, following the days only decent meal (porridge!), I continued to carve by the river and the Sun appeared, filling me once more with contentment - there was a loss of a certain dread that has plagued me for much of day.

Today, I sensed the awesome time factor ahead of me: tonight there is a sharp coherence, while earlier there was a lethargic, dulled and blurred lack of awareness. Tonight, I feel content.

3/1st: Last night, some living creature visited the tent. I awoke, in pitch darkness - I literally could not even see my hand before me - to the quiet but determined sound of something pulling things from my rucksack. I felt unnerved to say the least. There was also intermittent scratching at the edge of the tent - something trying to get to the bag of rubbish that I keep at the foot of the tent. It was a horrible unknown, insistent sound and my mind began to run through the various options: rat; wildcat ...? It might have been a weasel or stoat - whatever, it had claws and incisors (I could hear it nibbling away). I was disturbed. After lying still, my heart racing, I shouted, made movement, and went outside with a torch to see what I could find. Nothing, of course.

Stupidly, I had been keeping my food rubbish in tent, so bound to attract scavengers. I moved the bag some distance from tent, ledging it amongst the foundations of a crofter's cottage. I then securely fastened my rucksack.

From then on, I felt reasonably unbothered whether it returned or not - as long as it did not subject me to any carnivorous violence.

The sky lark has just sung a brief song, which so far, at least here, I have taken to be a herald of rain. Today has been depressing. I woke up reasonably confident, washed some clothes and myself, in the stream by the tent. I explored a part of the valley today. It is a very unsettling place - really, genuinely wild, exuding a sense of pre-human age that is too vast to cope with. There are no footpaths here, no tourist trails - just the fallen green husks of elfin trees, slimy boulders, and the vast violent cliff sides. Perhaps it is my heightening sensitivities, but I have never encountered such an atmosphere; for a twentieth century city dweller (even one who would be 'magickal') there are no familiarities - just a sense of awe, of ancient fear ... I felt unable to progress too far, partly because I was caught in a very heavy bought of rain, and mostly because the valley is too overwhelming. I need to explore it gradually, and build up trust on both sides.

I returned drained and wet to the tent, and have stayed here since the afternoon. Perhaps it was the valley, but for the first time, I felt the beginnings of real loneliness - real 'aloneness'.

The weather, as ever, does effect my mood. It is warmer tonight.

April

1st: The creature re-visited last night with a vengeance. The scavenging, and the ferocious winds worked away at my imagination - at my nerves! I do not mind admitting that terror began to grip me. The 'thing' at one point ran round the inside of the flysheet. Then silence. Then more gnawing and pulling of plastic. I shouted and shone the torch about in a panicked state. Silence - then more nibbling; almost as if it was finding the situation humorous, enjoying my fear. The wind battered the tent - in this ancient place, miles from anyone and anything. I shouted again, and the reply I got was a deep and sudden guttural exclamation - too deep and strong for a little rodent. I was shocked into silence. The gnawing, delicate and intense, continued. Then, I remembered my own magick, held the talisman around my neck, and was calm. I went off peacefully into sleep.

This morning, I discovered that the varmint had eaten through the bag containing my food - and had eaten into the oats and rice. The size of the holes were small, and obviously gnawed at by a rodent - so cannot explain the deep animal noise. I am no longer worried though, but calm in myself. I have wrapped and hidden all food in my rucksack, and firmly fastened it up - so little here now to attract a scavenger. No doubt it will return sometime tonight. But, I have sprinkled chilli powder over the rucksack, and a little at each entrance to tent!

Today, from the start, has been miserable - weather again grey, cold, windy and wet. It has felt the coldest day yet. Very oppressive. I ventured out for a time, as I could not stand just lying in the tent. Sat by the river at various places, then returned to tent, heavy with lethargy, feeling cold. The river does not, at times, lull me - rather its crashing rush seems to mirror the chaos of feelings within me, and can unsettle profoundly.

However, after a hot evening meal (generally, a stock cube boiled up with a little rice or pasta added), I ventured out again when the weather calmed. I sat high up, by the stream that flowed down by the tent, fed from the rocky slopes far above. I looked out across to the sea, with its tiny islands, and felt a sudden

overwhelming feeling of tremendous awe and beauty - a satori... The clouds, like the life forms they were, moving perfectly, calmly and quickly across the sky; the fading light, so serene, and a speck of a tiny white cottage far over the sound, many miles on the other distant shore: all created a sense of my future - of *becoming* the mystery itself. I felt resolved then to return to the world when the ordeal was over, and make a way of life that would capture the essence I felt. This feeling is difficult to describe - perhaps in musick? This experience made up for the drabness of today.

April ... time is passing. I am content with where I am and the journey so far made.

2nd: A funny day. Weather, at last, quite beautiful - strong sunlight all day. Feeling quite positive (no scavenger last night, incidentally). I ventured up the sheer face of the fells, and found the small loch which is the source of my stream - it was beautiful up there, and it felt good to exercise my body after the inertia of yesterday.

Afternoon was spent by the burn that flows from the valley, sitting on rocks and taking in the idyllic scenery. I even saw two eagles, playing in the sky. And yet, I felt troubled. The beautiful weather made me feel rather restless, and I became ... bored, for the first time; with oppressive miserable rain and cold, the day is confined and dulled and passes quickly ...

Missing J. again. My mind has been rabbiting on, preoccupied with the mundane problems of my life prior to here, which certainly did not provide the tranquillity I needed. Also, I seem to lack creative inspiration.

Have decided to eat the oats attacked by the scavenger - hopefully no disease will result.

3rd: I complained about the Sun yesterday, and have been repaid today by cold, rainy, grey weather - exactly what I wanted! Today has been reasonable - started some creative writing, and, having finished the wand, began carving a 'river god'.

This morning was spent watching ravens dive in and out of the rain-mist - rest of day, spent carving by the river. Emotionally, I feel a little fragile; beginnings of loneliness again. Still content to be here - I am wake up now with feelings of excitement about the challenge of the ritual (these feelings lessen as day wears on).

Scavenger, for now, turned away effectively. Perhaps some Sun tomorrow? (!). It's raining now.

4th: The two week mark has been reached - everyone in my past life joked: "He'll be back in two weeks!"

A difficult day in some ways. Weather has been of extremes - an hour or two of beautiful sunshine, followed by a spell of more Wintery showers; hail and sleet and very cold.

Scavenger appeared briefly last night - it didn't stay long, since there is nothing here to scavenge; but its presence, its noise, wakes me up and unsettles me - really annoys me, in fact.

Woke up cold. Day spent walking and carving by river.

Felt very unsettled this evening - my life before this yet again encroaching. Obviously, I can't really expect just to place this to one side - after all, it's there to be learnt from, via this ordeal.

Also have been bothered now for some days by a frequency, which I hear constantly. Have noticed that it is loudest when by a river - particularly when engorged by rain. Am I picking up the vibration of the water - its natural tone? It seems obtrusive at times, but appears to be a natural feature - so quite interesting. It sounds like a note from an organ key permanently held down (an 'A' perhaps?), and certainly seems external to me, rather than some hearing defect. It is cold tonight.

5th: Do not know whether early evening, afternoon or what - but have now retired to tent since weather is atrocious. Last night was freezing. It has been snowing heavily on the mountains but here, only a light flurry of snow and sleet and a few heavy bouts of hail. When not hailing, there is the ever present rain, and now a heavy cold mist has enveloped the area, which looks set to stay throughout the night. The weather has not emotionally bothered me too much, and I have turned my energies to writing. My mind has been quietened today thanks to an attempt at a vow of silence (I have been talking aloud to myself far too much - driving myself to distraction in fact). I feel calmer, and subdued.

Food supply is running a little low, despite my rationing and meagre diet. Will have to revise my needs when it comes to fetching the next month's supply.

6th: Tent battered by rain and winds all night, and this morning found water seeping in through ground sheet. - not seriously, but obviously that caused some worry.

Heavy rain finally cleared, and there is sunshine tonight, for which I am now grateful. The tent should dry out O.K. - but will re-pitch soon to a higher plateau which does not seem as water logged. Stream engorged.

I have approached today quite practically, generally re-arranging tent so it will dry quickly. I spent some

time working on new septenary correspondences, including a section on clouds - based on my experiences and observations so far. Spent time again by river, carving.

Have felt tranquil, at one point nearly idyllic - although always the tinge of caution, and sadness over who I have left behind.

All in all, quite content to be here.

7th: Another cold and wet night; groundsheet was soaked and water started to penetrate sleeping bags. So, have spent today drying out and re-pitching tent. The weather warmed up slightly, which made life easier, but now it is raining again.

So, woke up feeling grotty after an uncomfortable night. Once tent was re-pitched, I ventured some way into the valley and washed myself completely in the rushing river. Water absolutely freezing, but exhilarating to bathe naked - afterwards, I felt refreshed and calm. Rest of day spent carving and washing clothes.

A quiet day of contentment. Scavenger still visits, but am not too bothered.

8th: Today I ventured up into the hills to explore the more distant lochs - possibly to look for a new site, since I feel more solitude is needed. By this I mean that my current proximity to a few ruined foundations of cottages is causing problems - they are becoming an intrusive reminder of human activity, despite their intriguing presence. There must have been a thriving crofting community here, some centuries ago - there is still evidence of 'lazy beds' carved into the slopes.

The day began with a feeling of being rather jaded, lethargic, so felt some strenuous climbing and walking was in order. Having reached the summit, I still felt worn and a little irritable - until I entered a natural arena enclosing one of the highest lochs. My mood changed instantly. Here was one of the most peaceful, natural and numinous places I had encountered so far. The feeling was strange - I actually fell in love, and the whole spirit of the place was beautifully feminine in a startlingly tangible way. It was like meeting a beautiful woman.

All that could be heard was the gentle lapping of the water; and the surroundings - just the magnificent mountains, not a trace of 'civilisation'. I resolved then to pack up the tent and relocate, so investigated the area further. Unfortunately, found the ground was very marshy and waterlogged - but I was still not put off. The views from the highest slope leading up from the loch were breathtaking - the great expanse of sea, all the islands ... This all seemed to confirm that I should be there.

And then I noticed the signs of people - that is, litter, stuffed into rock crevices, a crisp packet in the water ... My precious feelings of isolation became eroded, and I felt sad for this place, to be subject to the stupidity and lack of empathy so characteristic of modern people. The surroundings began to unsettle me - even the views, which I had once, from another vantage point, shared with J.

Depression set in, and I descended the crags to my current site some distance below - it looks like I am staying where I am, for now.

Weather has remained rain-free and warm, and was able to restore some positive feelings. However, I am still attracted to that site, and have found what seems to be a more gradual route to the summit, which would make it easier to relocate. Not sure.

I am having moments of deep loneliness.

9th: Scavenger appeared, really pissing me off, but otherwise a decent sleep. Woke up feeling a bit better than yesterday, but gradually, quite quickly, on rising became depressed. Just lay in the tent for a while. Then dragged myself up and decided to walk to some other high lochs. The rain was torrential when I reached my destination, and I sat utterly desolate by a really grim looking loch, depressing in the greyness. I just sat and watched the land becoming more marshy, and felt the increasing cold and damp. As I stumbled away back to the tent, I was overcome with the desolation of my predicament - feelings that have been building up over the past few days. I wept copiously in the rain. I felt that I had reached my limit of tolerance - that I had reached some internal barrier. No amount of reassuring talk did any good. A natural reaction at this point I suppose, one which has arisen of itself, and that I could not control. So I allowed the misery - and it was Misery.

Got back to the tent and eventually calmed myself into a peaceful state, by carving wood. And have continued thus for the rest of day.

I am still here, and still able to continue.

10th: Scavenger again, but eventually, a good night's sleep. The weather has remained good today: sunshine, no wind - quite warm. I woke up feeling quite positive. After my regular dose of oats and water, I began what I aim to be a regular session of physis: it felt good, and I remain quite supple and feel well, physically.

After that, I spent a large part of day by the river, carving, and pondering on the Minor Arcana. I feel better than I did yesterday - but do feel different, living with this sense of desolation which threatens always to break out. Today, I could identify my feeling of unease as just boredom - creativity is fine, but it doesn't fill a day.

Days are noticeably getting longer - due to the lengthening hours of daylight and my own unease. Have noticed with pleasure, that some trees in the valley are starting to bud, and primroses are emerging. Spring is spreading finally - at one point, it seemed as if the grey and rain and desolate landscape would always remain.

An echo of Summer, then.

11th: Three week mark reached. This has been a special day: I have experienced - all day - a form of transcendence; almost one long and effortless, flowing meditation. I felt a calmness and unity with my surroundings which I have not felt before - ever. I found myself not dwelling on any one thing, but often I would simply just listen, to changes in the wind, the river ... I feel almost happy. I write almost because I am rather cautious of this feeling - it is perhaps a special moment, which will not return tomorrow, or for a few days/weeks. But, here and now, this day has been one to remember, and to live for its return. I constructed a circle of eight stones for my physis practice, which I undertook with great enjoyment, and ease. The circle's presence has created an added dimension to the site - I feel like what I really am, or at least becoming: a shaman.

Wrote more poetry, and pondered on further septenary matters. Weather has been very fine and tranquil, which of course helps my mood.

12th: Went to fetch month's supplies today - earlier than planned. My jaunt began well - slow and contemplative in the sunshine: it was good to see the changes that had occurred since my last outing, particularly the trees waking after their Winter sleep.

The way back was an ordeal - back-breaking in the relentless sun. The experience became absolute agony when I clambered - nearly crawled - over the fells and moorland back to the tent. But when finished, I felt a great sense of accomplishment.

I attempted some physis later on, but was physically too tired. Concluded the evening by sitting in the circle, and, as last night, just listened - listened to the land speak to me. I was transfixed ... this really is a new sensation, and I am beginning to feel different, in myself, as though I have passed through a veil. However, there are many more changes to come - positive and disruptive.

Unpleasant dreams last night - and scavenger.

13th: Slept very well last night, not surprisingly. If scavenger did appear, I was not aware of it.

It has been an uneventful day; still feeling the physical effects of yesterday. Carving; physis ...

My mind has lapsed to my previous life, and so have felt unsettled by all those unresolved things. Have also felt a little bored; but spiritual feeling remains. When my mind ceases to jabber, I remain awed listening to the unfolding of Nature.

14th: It began to rain early this morning, and when I did finally leave the tent, the landscape was wreathed in stratus clouds. Quite cold. Although my mood remained positive, I found the weather quite oppressive.. I became lethargic, with a feeling of confinement and boredom.

The day was rescued from misery by a good physis session.

As the day wore on, I motivated myself to undertake what is now a regular evening walk - excellent; I felt a new controlled dimension of myself emerging.

I felt a little depressed about the weather, until I reminded myself that it was as much part of me as the sunshine. I began to meditate, and became moved by the colours, how the heather has darkened - all the land darkened - by the rain, while the rocks stood out almost white against the ruddy backdrop. I watched the low cloud wreath around the peaks; listened to the stream; felt a warming of the temperature; noticed the differing colours in what is on appearance a dense blanket of grey sky ... the land once more spoke to me, and today has concluded on another beautiful note.

15th: Woke again to greyness, but this began to break up during the day, and occasional blue sky appeared behind dramatic clouds. It has remained cold.

Did not venture far from tent today, initially because of mist, and then lethargy. The physis session was a bit of a struggle as my mind was distracted - all day my mind has babbled on about both mundane and esoteric matters, so have not been very still in myself. I struggled to gain control, and was able to conclude morning session satisfactorily.

I spent some of the day searching for wood with which to make a wand for myself. I do not want to take anything from a living tree, so scavenged for debris. While down by the burn, I looked up and something

shone at me, from a distant tree. I made my way towards the tree and found it was dead, so took a large limb back to the tent. The shining object was fungus, reflecting the Sun. I thus felt the wood was meant for me.

But this sense of destiny did not continue as I attempted to carve the wood: instead, it proved a labourious job, and I became bored, and waited for the time to boil up my evening "meal" - at least that was something to do.

Another (minimal) physis session and then, not a meditation, but a further session of babbling mind to round off the day.

Today has been tedious - the only highlight being the sight of a half-Moon in the blue of the late afternoon sky.

16th: Had hoped to be now writing this in a new location, but was not to be. I woke up to Sun and pure blue sky. I decided then it was time to move on - mainly because of a need for a new experience, and my desire to feel even more isolated.

Packed up tent and rucksack, but had to leave food behind for a second trip. So set off with full heavy rucksack, for the area near the loch discovered some time ago. I decided to follow a deer path up the steep slopes above the Valley - I had previously investigated this route, but decided against it, it being too dangerous (the 'path' rises up on a sheer slope which drops straight down, far into the Valley below). But, I decided to face the challenge.

So I ambled off - but not without some apprehension - and discovered very quickly why I had rejected the route in the first place. The 'path' was a difficult climb anyway, but with a heavy rucksack even more so. I was in a precarious position, always walking at a steep angle, close to edge, and the rucksack would often lean too far towards the precipice. So at times, I would be clinging to the heather on the side of the slope to help me up. I slipped on several occasions - once shockingly so, the rucksack adding to my loss of balance - so, decided to turn back. On the final slip, I had to quickly remove the ruck sack, which was pulling me towards the edge. The rucksack was thrown off, and slid down to the edge, but did not go over. I lay there for a while recovering my wits, and then tackled the problem of retrieving the rucksack, putting it on again, and descending. This was done calmly and slowly and - thanks to the gods - I made my way safely back to tent.

After reflecting on the awfulness of the situation and the puniness of one individual life, I decided to go off exploring a new area, further into the mountains. So, took up rucksack again, and waded across the river. Steep climbs, the weight of the rucksack, and merciless Sun soon began to wear me down - but continued walking for some time, aiming for a place marked on map, by a stream. Became quite light-headed and thirsty, so stopped by a river and bathed and drank (there is very little shelter here from the Sun).

Reached the area, but found it to be very marshy - water-logged as it tends to be high up in the peaks. However, I felt very attracted to the wilderness environment, so began putting tent up. The tent pegs slipped into the ground as though going into soft butter - plus on withdrawing my hands from the long grass, I found them absolutely covered in small ticks. The area - also rather too exposed to strong winds - was obviously not suitable. I looked at a few other areas close by, but all was of same terrain. As evening began to appear, I reluctantly decided, for now, to return to previous location.

I felt depressed - as though I was taking the safe option and copping out. Anguished about my reasons for returning (I also, in truth, did not really relish the thought of making a second trip for the food, being so exhausted), I set up camp again, as before. I really have to be practical, ultimately, and that place just was not right - only on surface appearance. No doubt I shall still anguish over my decision tomorrow.

On the return trip, I put wellingtons on in order to wade through the rivers, so I wedged my walking boots into a space in the rucksack. As I was re-pitching tent, I discovered I had returned with only one boot - the other obviously having fallen out, somewhere along the route. A strong pair of walking boots are, as I have found, absolutely essential in a terrain like this, and the thought of only having a pair of wellingtons for the next two months was a terrible realisation to taste. All this, because of my own stupidity, carelessness and complacency. Typical! I had to re-trace my route back to the marshy location - difficult, since there are no paths as such. I found nothing, and felt the gods kicking me for my patheticness. A harsh insight indeed, and I turned back, in a very sorry state.

Just before I reached the tent, only a few yards away, there, miraculously, was the brown boot, nestling in brown heather. I had been spared. I have never fallen in love with footwear before, but at that point we became very close.

Returned to tent feeling very tired.

17th: Today has been quiet and inactive - weather remained very sunny and hot. Excellent physis session this morning - although physically I am appearing to suffer from yesterday's exertions.

I have still felt a little knocked by yesterday, but remain sure that I did the right thing in returning. Also, best to re-locate when food is about to run out. Will look again at another area near the marshy land, soon. For now, I do not want to be bothered with re-locating, but I must try and resolve my inner unease, and stop being so hard on myself.

Perhaps I have been too swayed by the romantic appearance of a place - but that is just appearance, as I am learning. Here, essentially, I remain in absolute solitude. What is achieved is achieved, regardless of the appearance of the form ...

Today, I have been bored and am feeling continuously hungry. Still, another day done.

18th: A good night's sleep. Woke up to an almost unnatural stillness and silence, which has remained throughout day. Sky filled with blankets of grey cloud, but still warm. All day there has been a serene glow of 'evening light' in the West - orange and yellow light. Tired, but completed a physis session.

I went exploring for most of day, up into the peaks and found new and accessible areas. I love climbing up to high places and viewing the great expanse of mountains and sea - with no reminder of human beings in sight. Only the occasional plane above reminds, even here - or in fact anywhere in this world - that there can be no complete escape from this causal time I was born into. A connection remains, intrudes, and that can sometimes be a little saddening, irritating.

Returned to tent mentally and physically exhausted. For some reason, this intense stillness has not been welcome - it seems so absolute, I can't even hear the river today. Strange. The land does not seem to move - do I need external stimulus? It has been like walking in a vacuum devoid of anything.

Have retired to tent in daylight, as I can't stand anymore of today. Feeling ground down with the burden of this ordeal. Four week mark reached, but there is no celebration. Too tired to think or write any more.

19th: A quiet day. Still tired. Eventually got up, and had breakfast. The weather was a little livelier than yesterday: winds, and the Sun appearing off and on. I cheered up slightly and went for the highlight of the day - a bathe in the river in the Valley. It was good to liberate my body of clothes, worn constantly as a protection against the multitude of ticks that scour the land. The Sun poured through the Valley trees, glittering on the freezing, exhilarating water. It felt good to be really clean. Discovered a good piece of wood for carving.

Returned to tent, refreshed, and undertook a physis session. Perhaps I am over-doing the session, or my diet is imbalanced, but I am left feeling physically exhausted for rest of day.

Idly carved, and practised the Olenos chant. Towards evening went for a walk up to a peak, and rested on a high crag which gave a panoramic view of the sea and islands, and mountains.

Feeling reasonably high-spirited, now.

20th: Another quiet day, although last night strong winds assaulted the tent, and kept me awake. Still strong winds today, but brilliant sunshine and absolutely clear blue sky. Woke up feeling exhausted again. Tried physis, but my legs could not stand the strain - I imagine this physical life is taking its toll, as well as meagre diet. Despite the meagreness, I enjoy the austerity - food now seems a luxury and often a spiritually (and physically) dulling indulgence. Not much is really needed, and the simplicity of my life here appeals and seems spiritually cleansing.

Still, suffering through lack of something - perhaps not drinking enough water. Tired, tired, tired.

Forced myself to go for a short walk, and spent afternoon resting in heather. May take it easy for a while, until I feel physical vitality returning. Just sitting in different places around my site delays the tedium.

I feel reasonably alright within myself - but really, feel too drained to motivate myself to do anything creative. So, tinges of boredom. Never mind, another day has been endured.

21st: The day I have been crawling towards has finally been reached - the one month mark. Weather turned much colder today, with strong winds. Stayed in the tent for most of the morning, inspired by a sudden burst of creativity. This passed time away quite fruitfully.

Eventually forced myself to do a short walk, and rested as per yesterday. I reflected on the time so far spent. I suppose I should feel a sense of achievement, but do not - rather, I feel lethargic, but eager to continue and complete the month ahead. Still much more to be experienced.

A month is definitely not enough time in which to create real Change (if the rite was limited to a month, it would simply be a holiday). I feel that if I returned now, whatever changes that have occurred would recede and I would be as I was before the rite.

I am developing a sense of perspective on my previous life - an objectivity that could not be bred amidst the clutter and fast pace of everyday urban life. Many things now seem trivial indulgences; many

patterns of behaviour now seem blind to me, fitting unconsciously into some acceptable social/domestic regime. I thought I was really different to others, but in so many ways I had not seen before, I too have been one of the masses, swept along with all the rest on the great wave of mediocrity.

Even most foods seem unnecessary and decadent. But even so, I marked today by eating tinned haggis - that great spiritual food. It *was* a spiritual experience - utter joy. I remain very hungry but very content with my monastic diet of purity and simplicity.

Still resting, doing very minimal physical exercise; I assume my strength is returning. Have been drinking more water. The colder weather helps to enliven me - I hope rain is imminent, as the streams are running very low. No scavenger for several nights, so am sleeping well. On with the next month! It is now raining lightly.

22nd: Night of strong winds and driving rain. Woke up to bright sunlight, but winds still powerful, and temperature cold.

Re-located tent today to a much wilder, isolated location (gradually the need to be away from all things human - even dead reminders - became urgent). I undertook this over two trips; not too arduous. I am on a plateau, slightly sloping, up in the hills. The outcrops provide a natural arena. I feel very hidden, very content.

Had to re-pitch tent: it was in a rather exposed (to the elements) place, and facing lengthways into the North wind (wind from this direction seems the most prevalent).

I am next to a tiny stream, flowing from the earth and rocks a little above me - that and a nearby small spring will hopefully suffice for water. I am much happier and glad I mustered the energy to come here. A practical and reasonably positive day. I have not dwelt on anything in particular.

23rd: Quiet night on weather front, but had an uncomfortable sleep as tent is pitched stupidly on a slope. Will get used to it though, and re-pitch in a week or so.

This morning was idyllic as I sat in the heather on one of the many immediate peaks that I can choose from in my new location. The Sun stayed out most of today, and the cold winds died down. I sat for what seemed like a long time, just listening, and absorbing the view. My mind felt almost at peace - until my inner mundane voice began babbling, and took over, debating away on the incidents of my previous life. I became more unsettled, began to think of J, and gradually became worn down and depressed. My physical energy waned again. No anguish, just an eroding lethargy which not even the beautiful mountains or sea could dispel.

But the day has passed as it always does. My evening 'meal' - boiled stock cube and a few grains of rice - is becoming a definite highlight: it appeals to (but does not assuage) my hunger, and marks the closing of another day.

Perhaps it is my lethargy, but I seem to have left behind that archetypal shaman/mystic persona that so imbued me up until now. The idea of carving a wand seems rather pathetic - as does all the paraphernalia that makes up the 'magickians' kit. This is not because I have lost faith or empathy with the 'esoteric', but because I feel, almost intangibly, that the essence, the source, of that form now lies close to me, residing in moments without struggle, when I seem to need nothing. When I am listening, and just being. Such a feeling appears and then fades: I can't expect to lay aside my life prior to here, although often I wish I could. I must try once more not to dwell too much, and allow the time to flow.

24th: What a Hell of a day. Yesterday, there was boredom in the sun. This morning, quite early, I was woken by torrential rain and very strong winds. The weather here changes so quickly. There were signs last night of approaching rain - a halo around the setting sun, and a haze of grey cloud. But the weather was so peaceful and clear, that I thought little of it. Yesterday, I was becoming complacent and the weather encouraged a feeling of ease concerning this ordeal - a sense of triumph.

But today Nature was savage. I woke to the inner groundsheet swimming with water; beneath me, a hollow upon which I had pitched my tent was also welling with water. All around, the sound of rushing water. The inner tent was soaked, so I took it down and attempted to dry it by lying on top of it.

Remained calm, but cold and wet - and had a breakfast of hot water and oats. The inner became drier, but as I put it up again, I noticed pools of water steadily filling; gradually, they overflowed and once more soaked the inner tent. Obviously a stream that had been sleeping was awoken by the heavy rain during the night, and I was pitched on its course.

I scrambled outside in the deluge to find bracken and heather to make a dam. Outside was wreathed in fast moving thick cold cloud, and the rain and wind was fierce. The whole site thundered with engorged streams, furiously rushing down to the big river below. My attempts at dam building were pointless, and as myself and all my belongings became soaked, I realised I would have to re-pitch the tent. I found a

small patch of ground slightly raised above the flowing waters, and struggled against the winds and rain to re-pitch. The wind tried to tear the tent from my hands, and I shouted at and to the Gods in defiance, and desperation. Eventually I triumphed, but the inner tent remained a good while crumpled in the water, lashed by the rain; all that it contained, including sleeping bags, was thoroughly drenched. I hauled the inner tent under cover, and fetched other stranded belongings.

I spent dreary hours then trying to dry out everything - by again, lying on inner tent. I became colder and more disheartened, and tent remained soaked. Eventually I put it up anyway, took off my wet clothes, got into the sleeping bag and made a hot drink.

And that's the current state of play - everything damp, but now I am fairly warm, and the location of the tent should ensure no problems tonight - but I remain cautious. The winds have lessened, but the rain persists. Now I just need to remain warm and dry. Tomorrow - please: a bit of sun and dryness?

For a time, I rather enjoyed the challenges of today, in contrast to the ease of yesterday. Being a day of practicalities, my mind has been occupied away from the morbid, inward and petty preoccupations of late. I can't say I feel wonderful though - I'm certainly not happy. Still, another day slips away.

25th: The rain continued for most of last night, but I was able to sleep well. Woke up early to Sun and dry weather - thanks to the gods!

An inactive day - sat and watched the sea and islands and mountains. Last night amidst the darkness and rain, I became possessed with a sense of destiny regarding the role I had lived before coming here. This desire spread into my dreams. It was exciting, but daylight has brought a reality, and the esoteric essence is where I belong. Much concerning the next few years has come to light, and I know what I must do on my return.

After the ordeal of yesterday, I decided to do very little. Attempted physis half-heartedly. Dwelling on J. a lot, and missing her. But the day has passed quickly, and its gentle nature has been appreciated.

The weather has remained sunny, but cold - clouds very turbulent, and there was a short lived attempt at rain earlier on. Another day done.

26th: Coldest night so far last night - the cold woke me up several times. However, finally slept and woke to bright sunshine and clear blue sky. Despite this, my mood on waking was irritable, my mind once more dwelling on mundane aspects back 'home'. I decided to go for a good walk to exorcise my mood.

On this walk, I discovered some new - breathtaking - isolated areas. Although I remained unsettled, the walk did calm me a little. I experienced a lovely 'light' esoteric incident, by a delightful stream, as I chanted "aktlal maka" to the pitch of the flowing water ...

Returned to site and undertook physis, which was fulfilling. Spent some time absorbing myself in the view of the sea.

I still sometimes dwell on the end of the rite, but I must take time to savour this unique experience - the land is so wonderful. But I do feel lethargic, and a little depressed.

It seems I have pitched the tent on an ants nest.

So another day done. "Each day completed is a mini triumph", I keep reminding myself. Feeling pissed off.

27th: Woke up to rain this morning. The sky grew threatening as the day developed, but rain never surpassed a miserable drizzle. Now, this evening, the Sun has appeared. First comfortable night's sleep for a while.

I took myself off climbing the peaks, and sat atop high crags, meditating on the view. For a time, despite the cold winds (almost an echo of Winter) and the drizzle, I felt nearly happy. As I woke, I was possessed with a clear understanding of what I have been trying to live and achieve on the Path so far: everything seemed to make sense, whereas before, there was a vague awareness driving the practical living. This experience took me climbing high, with Promethean zeal. Gradually though, my own fervour, together with the cold and damp and greyness, began to wear me out. I returned to the tent depressed, and lay within for quite a while, in a stupor. Sun appeared quickly towards end of day, and my positive mood partly returned. Undertook a good physis session.

Once again I explored the site I had mooted as a potential new home, but found that my instincts had been right - the place was a marsh. A day is done.

28th: Woke again to greyness and icy cold. All day, the threat of rain - but only a slight shower. The sky is very turbulent - I hope this does not herald a major bout of rain a la the 24th - or gale force winds. However, this could blow over, and reveal a clear sunny day tomorrow.

I began the day by constructing a new circle of stones, where I shall practice physis - looking over to the

mountains in the south, and the sea to the west. The circle at my previous site seemed to make a lot of difference - it seemed then to draw magickal energies from the earth. Today though, the gesture seemed 'naff' - an entirely romantic gesture not really suited to the person I am at present. At least, it is an evocative place to sit, from where I can contemplate the view.

Undertook a physis session, which was rather a strain. I then climbed the same route as yesterday, and sat high amidst the promise of storm. I do not seem to need to do anything - ie. carving, creative work - and I do not put this down to lethargy: rather, perhaps an internalisation is beginning whereby those things that I am realising about myself now can be dis-covered by a most natural of ways: sitting, walking and dwelling within the landscape.

The day has passed reasonably comfortably, but I do feel physically and emotionally tired - almost like I've had enough. But! I must endure, and I must endure for a long time!

29th: Again, more rain this morning. Stayed in tent until it subsided.

I emerged to what appeared to be promising weather, and had my breakfast of oats and water outside. Blue sky occasionally appeared between the ragged grey clouds, and the Sun was sometimes visible behind a thin veil. Quite warm.

I stayed outside and began to write, and ponder, with great inspiration, on some septenary aspects that have lain within me, unanswered, for years. So the day began well, with a focussed mind - aided by taking a vow of silence (since I often talk aloud, which has a more disturbing effect than an elucidating one). My ponderings held at bay any personal morbid preoccupations - which shall no doubt plague me again.

However the weather developed into a - less devastating - replay of a few days ago: the area became swathed in mist and sheets of heavy rain. Spent much of the day in the tent, continuing my ponderings. Completed a poem.

I did venture out to the 'stone circle' which seemed wonderfully primeval in the white mist, and undertook a physis session, which was reasonable. Once back in the tent, I grew colder, and so had a hot meal.

The rain has now ceased, and sky is clearer, but I am not taking anything for granted, as rain may return with a vengeance in a few hours. Weather wise, it has been a miserable, cold past few days. It has been oppressive and a little wearing - but I know it will change, presently. In slightly better spirits today.

30th: Another good night's sleep, but rain has returned, furiously. Waited in tent for ages for rain to subside. Eventually, I crawled out into the now light drizzle and heavy mist. Light glowed through the mist, in the West, and I sat for a long time in the stone circle, waiting for the Sun.

But the light faded, and the land remained gloomy, dark and very cold. I undertook a walk to keep warm, and the rain began to ease. In afternoon (?) again, a bright light brought promise to the Western horizon. I sat on a crag and waited for the sky to clear. It did not, but instead became colder.

Outside, now, very cold - but perhaps a drier and brighter day tomorrow. I'm getting fed up with the weather - the cold is wearing me down. But what do I expect? Part of me accepts the state of play, but really, another few days of this will make things intolerable.

I feel cold and confined, and yet positive. Some revelations concerning the septenary have warmed my soul. I feel progress is being made in this ritual, and am pleased at having got thus far. I feel confident about what is to follow.

My sex drive seems nearly non-existent: fantasies seem sordid and pointless. Perhaps my sensual self is being re-defined as I shed my cultural conditioning. Some affectations seem to be disappearing - I will be curious to see what remains. But really, in these conditions, food and warmth are upmost in my mind, since they are essentials.

Plodding on.

May

1st: Rain continued hard throughout the night and this morning, thus I was confined to the tent once more. Ventured out when rain had ceased - sky, land and temperature as yesterday. I was in good spirits though, as more esoteric and creative realizations occurred. However, the cold and returning rain began to wear me down again, and I returned to the tent after a short walk, tired, cold and fed up. Lay in tent, in a state of misery.

Out again when rain stopped. The land seemed warmer, and a promising light appeared on the horizon. I stood by the stone circle, my mind for once silent, and I absorbed the sounds and sights.

Eventually hunger - an almost constant companion now - and cold forced me back to make my evening meal. The temperature did seem to rise, and the light began to spread.

The sky is full of clouds, but they are Sun-tinged, and there is a stillness which seems to promise that the grey rainy weather may pass immanently - but I've thought that before. But tonight feels a little different. Mentally and physically very tired

2nd: Woke to glorious sunshine, and the weather has remained hot all day. I spent this morning washing a shirt, and wrote some literature for distribution when I return - I seem to have learnt - in the sense of knowing the reality ...

So much creative work to do when I get back. I ventured out last night - the sky was still cloudy, but it was quite warm, and it was exhilarating to see the land transformed in silence by the night.

For the rest of today, I went for a long walk into the high peaks, slowly following a circuit back to the tent. I spent a lot of time sitting by one of the lochs. However, physically it all seemed a great strain, and I returned exhausted. Perhaps the sunshine has drained me - perhaps it is my diet: I am hungry all the time, craving sweet things in particular. Perhaps I am also worn down by the debates still going on in my head.

I have retired for the evening, shattered. Another "mini triumph" accomplished.

3rd: Cloudy sky on waking, but warm. The cloud quickly made way for intense sunshine, which has remained all day. When I left the tent I was still very tired, so the day has been physically inactive.

However, time has not been wasted, as I spent many hours this morning writing, and covered much ground. Rest of day was spent lying in the heather, and watching the sea and mountains.

Again, I have felt absolutely drained - perhaps exposure to the Sun? The intense sunlight will probably continue tomorrow, judging by the evening sky.

Unfortunately, again, a scavenger is visiting at nights and seriously disturbing my sleep. It will give up eventually once it realises there is nothing here for it.

There are certainly some strange bird (?) sounds at night. Writing of which, though not strange, I have had the pleasure of listening to a polyphony of cuckoo calls during the day, for the past week or so.

Summer is approaching. Emotionally, I'm fine - but missing J.

4th: A good night's sleep. Woke to bright sunlight - heat intense, but relieved slightly by occasional breeze. This evening, the sky was covered in a uniform blanket of grey, obscuring the Sun - an ominous herald. Sky red on horizon.

Day spent as yesterday, and more good written work achieved. I seem to be re-discovering my occult Destiny: this time round, it involves conscious decisions rather than being swayed by unconscious forces. Interestingly, many of those old forces are being re-visited, and still found valid. But it is I who am in control, this time round (famous last words). This unfolding of Destiny is making me a little unsettled - a little restless to leave and implement what I have learned. But there may well be more to learn - I still have a lot of time to experience here.

Physically a little better, although heat still draining. Drinking plenty of fluid.

After a very over-salted evening meal, I sat for a time in the stone circle looking out to the sea and islands: it was quite moving, as though I were gazing upon the living landscape of the 'Maiden of Wands' card. The light was serene, everything still.

I remain a little tired, and a touch emotionally unsettled - but another day, another psychic dollar.

5th: Something about last night's meal strongly disagreed with me, and I spent an uncomfortable night feeling ill, and not sleeping until just before dawn. Also rain returned in a replay of that April day, and thundered down onto the tent.

Did not leave the tent this morning for quite a while because of torrential rain, and illness. I seemed to have 'flu' like symptoms, so had a hot drink. Sun appeared, dramatically and briefly.

I am exhausted beyond anything yet experienced - it seems an exhausting task just thinking. I feel very low and vulnerable in this state of illness, and just want to regain my strength. Some diarrhoea. Mild food poisoning? - some butter used last night tasted rancid.

For the latter part of day, my mind has gone into overdrive re. esoteric revelations. I really need to quieten my inner self down - approach things in a more meditative way.

Sky is looking ominous, and wind has picked up. Rain will return, I think. I need strength.

6th: I went into flu mode as I settled to sleep last night: muscle pains, high temperature - general physical discomfort. I did not sleep or really rest, particularly when nausea set in. I became very hot. The

rain did appear, but briefly, with strong winds.

As light approached, I felt utterly wretched, headache and nausea quite strong. So have spent all day in tent, trying to rest and recover. This seems like food poisoning.

Ventured out briefly tonight. The weather has been very turbulent: a mixture of strong sunshine, occasional hail storms, and strongest winds yet.

Perhaps I will sleep better tonight, and regain my strength. The boredom, mental anguish - all are ultimately bearable; but physical illness is wretched in this situation, exposed as I am to all that Nature wishes to throw at me. A dreadful day.

7th: Became very cold last night as I settled to sleep - icy, the coldest yet. Nevertheless, did eventually sleep well. I woke to strong winds, and heavy snow. The snow has continued all day.

Still feel poorly, so have again spent day resting. Have had quite a bit of diarrhoea. But, have also fasted all day, and gradually feel as if my health is improving. Now that recovery seems imminent, I am in better spirits.

Not much more to add - an unpleasant few days. Right now, the early evening Sun is shining on the tent. Snow has stopped, and winds dropped. All could change again though, within the hour.

8th: As I settled to sleep last night, the temperature dropped, and snow began to fall again. This time very heavily, and the tent began to sag under its weight. Still had illness, which added to discomfort. When I woke, it was raining, and bitterly cold. All day, brief periods of wintery showers, and occasional sunshine. I ventured out for a while, but was eventually back to seek shelter by rain and very strong North winds - the clouds above raged grey within the wind. Returned to tent, but grew very cold just remaining inert, so with a great effort of will, I went out again. The rain began to ease. Despite a difficult, exhausting start, I got into the rhythm of walking, and my spirits rose, taking a delight in the transformed, rain-engorged land.

As I approached a peak, I saw a fox ambling across my path, very close. It stopped, and we both stared at each other for a moment: it was a beautiful creature - such vivid colour amidst the drabness and bleak grey. After the moment, it ran off, away, occasionally looking back to see if I was following. I went on, in another direction, feeling warmed by this meeting. The weather changed then to a blizzard; utterly cold - so made my way back.

Feeling better, physically and spiritually. Now rain has returned, but I sense the weather will change for the better, shortly. Another day.

9th: The rain ceased last night, but it became freezing; still, slept reasonably well. Awoke to warmth and sunlight, feeling energised - at least, in the spiritual sense. Re-pitched tent today, within current location. Forced myself to go for a walk, which was still a bit of an effort. But, I did discover new and very beautiful areas - a place where there stands large columns of shining rock quartz; astonishing. Weather remained very fine; the sky deep blue, but dominated by clouds of varying types: interesting to see such apparently conflicting activity, suggesting several possibilities for weather - all at once, in the one sky, blending and creating the overall condition of today; just like sinister magick. The mountains are capped with snow: against the vivid blue, they are a magnificent sight.

My spirit has recovered from my illness, but - and yes, it is tedious to repeat - I am still physically tired. Feel a little bad tempered today - perhaps exacerbated by the return of my jabbering mind. Onwards.

10th: Freezing again last night, but slept. Sun appeared this morning and has stayed all day, though there was a brief shower of hail in the afternoon. Spent the morning washing clothes, then went on a long walk. This took up the rest of the day, since I rested for long periods of time in various beautiful places. I decided this morning to attempt to not dwell on anything too much, and my mind remained fluid and relaxed. Walk was good, and did not exhaust me.

I am still in an irritable mood - at times impatient with the very slow pace of things, anxious as I sometimes am to return to 'civilization' and create; at other times, I am content, and content to endure. I feel very at ease simply walking and sitting and pondering upon the landscape - mostly, I feel that nothing else is needed. I have little to offer in observing changes within, since I have ceased to bother observing: I am just existing in a very quiet, mostly patient way.

11th: Good night's sleep, and warm. Woke to Sun. I was fine for a little while, but on rising and leaving tent, I became depressed. I still feel irritable. My only desire this morning was to spend the day rotting in the tent; but, I forced myself out on a walk. This turned out to be very short, as I got bored. The weather has turned much colder, and all day it has threatened to rain. This evening, rain still seems immanent. Cold wind.

I have felt worn down in every respect today, lacking positivity. I seem in poor shape, physically. Very

hungry. Cold, feeling a bit empty within. And yet, I have held on to my objectivity, and understand why I feel this way; and feel this is a phase, as rain is a phase. One day soon, I shall wake up feeling wonderful, consistently. Must push on. May the gods send warmth.

12th: Slept well again, and woke to light rain. Stayed in tent until rain had eased to a drizzle, then set off on a new walk to investigate an alternative route, down from the hills to a track that leads eventually to the road - in preparation for the trek to fetch next month's supplies.

Weather remained grey and drizzly, and I, much to my frustration found my walk hampered by ever-present exhaustion. I saw the fox again - much the same encounter as before: a lovely moment. The new route took me down through a wood of scots pine. It was almost a shock to be amongst so many trees, after having lived thus far on craggy, desolate moorland. The scent and stillness was quite profound. I arrived at a point where I could see the road, in the distance: "civilization". I turned back then to the wilderness, feeling a heavy sadness.

I found my return journey tiring, and began to dread the coming ordeal of fetching supplies. Then I remembered my will power and what it could accomplish, and placed the coming ordeal in a positive context: a challenge to be overcome. Also, this will be my last journey to fetch supplies.

I have recently felt at my lowest so far. I have felt very pissed off, and generally unsettled and uncomfortable. I move my limbs like an old man.

Spent this evening sitting within the stone circle. The weather has brightened: Sun, no rain, but clouds very dramatic and turbulent above. Still quite cold. During the time within the circle, I felt some of my old energy returning. I began to think more positively, and I returned to the tent feeling renewed.

I almost feel as if I am reaching the end of my persona - I have exhausted my personality it seems. How trivial I have seemed. Now there is just a waiting.

I must not forget that I am in a beautiful and wonderful place - that it is a privilege to live here, in this way.

13th: The weather has been atrocious today: heavy rain, and very cold. Went out for a walk, but weather drove me back after a short time. Spent a lot of time festering in the tent, but was able to sit for a time in the stone circle. Increase in wet weather put a miserable end to this.

But my spirit has been encouraged, despite the misery, by a return of energy, which has helped physically. Dwelt on some magickal matters today. Things are not too bad, I suppose.

I can accept the weather in all its guises, since each guise is necessary - and appropriate to/part of where I am at in the ritual. I always imagined the second month to be the most difficult. Another day gradually passes away.

14th: Weather abysmal. Rain, rain, rain. Stayed in tent for hours this morning; even when a meagre piece of sunlight appeared, I felt unmotivated. However, I was able to realise some Tarot concepts, so not an entire waste of a day. I did manage to rouse myself for a walk, which was lacklustre and depressing. Rain has persisted all day, though not as cold as it has been.

I have become fed up with waiting for my trip to fetch supplies, so will set off tomorrow - food is very low anyway.

Very fed up: after my illness, all I can think about is food. I want to return to my almost settled, contemplative self - a self which resided in the environment and ritual, not in a craving for chocolate. Still, this is all part of it. I must admit to feeling a little concerned about the ordeal to collect supplies, since I seem to lack the strength I had earlier on in the rite.

However, I am determined to meet the challenge with my greatest asset - my will.

Very grim. Another ***** day.

15th: Today has been a Triumph of the Will. I set off early amid light rain. My initial apprehension and tiredness began to vanish as I walked the road. On either side, the trees were shimmering with young vibrant leaves, and their presence - the green and its scent heightened by rain - filled me with absolute joy. I seemed to draw strength from the trees, and my determination grew as I reached my destination. I bought all that I needed to ensure a comfortable - but still spartan - remainder of the rite. The walk back, in torrential rain at first, was a wonder to me. I strode onwards bearing the heavy weight without resting. I was imbued with the sheer determination to overcome, and that walk, difficult though it was towards the end, seemed over much more quickly than the previous trips. The end was a triumph, and the Sun appeared.

I am exhausted in a rewarding way. Today was just what I needed, something to break the awful lethargy. I feel re-vitalised with magickal power, knowing myself again, and what I am capable of when I return to the world - and the world shall know it!

But I am not complacent: there is still time to endure.

16th: Unfortunately, a bad night. The same bout of illness reappeared.. Strangely, I was far from hungry last night as I ate my evening meal - and the meal made me feel uncomfortable.

I barely slept last night, due to constant diarrhoea - every five minutes it seemed I had to go outside; sometimes digging new holes. The weather was cold with strong winds, which briefly caused some concern about the tent. I slept a bit this morning, after dawn.

Not having eaten today, the sickness has subsided. I hope I can rest tonight. The day has been spent lying ill in the tent. I have attempted some writing, and weather, thankfully, has been calm and warm. My spirit remains strong.

17th: An excellent night's sleep, and I awoke feeling, for once, fit. The light this morning was quite beautiful: dawn is one of my favourite times - the stillness is inspirational.

Day has been uneventful: very hot, merciless Sun in a cloudless sky. I have sought the shade of large rocks, and have written, a little. I felt a bit bored and unsettled for a while, but once I relaxed and let the day wash over me, I was fine. Not much has happened - within or without.

Have recovered my health, for which I give thanks.

18th: Again, a good night's sleep. The sudden strong wind last night heralded a change in the weather, and this morning I woke to rain and greyness. I was not unsettled by this - in fact the drop in temperature was welcome. Rain didn't last long, and I went for a long walk. I enjoyed the experience of wandering further into the land, into new realms. There was a strong easterly wind on the peaks which was enlivening. I felt a return to form.

I've become much calmer and quieter within myself. My mind no longer becomes embroiled in some irritation from my past life, but lets thoughts flow and pass, like the water around me. All quiet, in every respect.

19th: Felt lazy again today, but forced myself to go for a decent walk - the weather remained bright, though there was the threat of rain. The walk was good, and I enjoyed the quiet meditation of it, and the peace of the land.

On returning to the tent, it began to rain quite lightly and has continued throughout this evening. I felt confined within the tent, and unsettled in myself - with a slight return of the jabbering mind. Still, I feel fine really. Days seem to be washing over me at present, and I am sleeping well. During my walk today, confronted by the beauty and stillness, I realised that I will be sad to leave this place that is becoming home.

Another day washes away.

20th: A bad start. Absolute lethargy on waking up. Totally unmotivated. Had a bad night's sleep - woke up wracked with hunger, and became very restless. I suppose I've lost a lot, physically, through the illness. Have spent today craving food. I never seem to have enough to eat.

I attempted to revive this morning from its stupor by visiting the valley, and bathing in the great river there. This turned out to be a beautiful experience, as the Sun stayed all day, enabling me to lie naked on the rocks, bathing in the warmth. I plunged myself wholly under the freezing rushing water - almost heart-stoppingly cold; but bursting out into the sunshine was wonderful. It sounds so hackneyed, but I really did feel free.

I returned perhaps too early to the tent, for the afternoon was spent idling around, waiting for the time to eat. My hunger and craving brought my mood down slightly. Eating now has become a Holy experience - I can see how food is so taken for granted back in civilization. I thank the gods after each evening meal.

I have lost a lot of weight - none of my clothes fit properly. I am a little unsettled again.

21st: Two months accomplished, and I woke early after a good night's sleep, feeling very positive, and allowed myself to feel proud of having got thus far. Reaching this point has really made a difference - I see now that some of my unsettled moods were partly to do with the interminable crawl towards this stage.

The weather has remained hot all day. Went for another long, slow walk, and appreciated the great beauty of this wilderness land. Found weather a little too hot though, and returned to tent, drained. Although I am pleased to have a sunny spell, I do now wish a bit of rain as water levels are getting low - the spring from which I take my water is just a trickle.

Today's walk passed some time, and allowed me to dwell on further insights into myself. I feel reasonably settled in myself - perhaps a little too eager to complete each day, when I really should be savouring each moment: this special way of living, a way that now is only really beginning for me, will

cease in a month.

Still hungry, but not oppressively so.

22nd: Weather has been bright and very windy; gradually, the sky has filled with blankets of grey clouds, and now, this evening, it is raining slightly.

Undertook a good walk today, climbing up to the higher peaks where I had a clear and beautiful view of the sea and islands. I spent some time reviewing what I have learned about myself. Clarified some personal details, examined some demons and ghosts. Felt more positive today.

I asked the gods for strength, and have received, and been thankful. I am achieving a less obsessive state of mind regarding food, though remain constantly hungry. Anyway, another day.

23rd: Last night, I ventured out to look at the Moon, nearly full. I was stunned - at the beauty of its whiteness amidst the shattered clouds. And I was filled with a further sense of Destiny, and received some intriguing creative ideas. This morning, I awoke to sunlight and gathering grey cloud. Re-pitched tent, and became miserable. I was irritated at having to start another day, at having to create diversions for my mind while my body struggled with hunger. Felt fed up with walking - almost resentful of the routine - so I stayed by the tent, and wrote. And this brought a type of contentment, eventually.

The growing irritability is not what I expected at this stage of the rite - when the conclusion is tangible. I thought I would radiate calm and positivity. But, I am treating this emotional state as I have done with all the others - as a stage, that will pass. Perhaps the last few weeks are always more difficult - balanced as one is between the very different worlds of living here, like this, and leaving, back to modern life.

This evening, I sat within the stone circle, and lost myself in the beautiful vista, serene in the evening light. Unfortunately, the midgies really did their best to irritate me, and eventually drove me back to the shelter of the tent, earlier than I had hoped. Tomorrow night therefore, I will sit doused in insect repellent.

A frustrating day in some ways, but it has passed.

24th: Woke again to sunlight, and positivity. I took myself off, without objection, for a slow and long walk. This brought a peace of mind; a detached, tranquil mood.

On return, spent rest of day writing. This was excellent - my creativity flowed with new inspiration, as I drew from my own experiences since I arrived here. This is just the sort of uplifting focus that I need in order to take me towards the conclusion of my time here. However, always cautious, I am not getting too carried away with enthusiasm for my new creativity; I shall see how it sustains itself over the next few days.

This evening, still sunlight, but now strong winds, perhaps bringing a marked change in the weather. My water supply still a trickle, from its underground source.

Feeling alright; just plodding onwards.

25th: No weather change: as yesterday, intense sunlight - but perhaps slightly cooler. I woke feeling reasonable, but soon gave in to weariness. I stayed near the tent all day, and have continued writing. I just could not be bothered to do anything else. I wasn't pissed off exactly, just unmoved.

In between writing, things were a little tedious. The unrelenting "sameness" of the hot weather seems to grate on me - it is confirmed that I am a rainy, turbulent cloud sort of person.

All life is blooming, including insects, and I wake with the occasional bite on my face, and bloated tick somewhere on my body. Spiders, biting flies ... I have learned that I actually like insects, and find them quite fascinating; characterful, rather than cold and alien.

Towards evening, I went to sit in the stone circle feeling burdened and quite depressed. Sometimes, I feel impatient regarding the time left, with the end being in sight, but still much to endure before then. Sometimes, a day seems to amount to nothing more than distracting myself until the day is done. But at other times, there is an ease, a peace, which is worth suffering for - when I don't contemplate the impermanence of this way of life.

However, as dusk approached, my mood picked up, and I spent a happy few hours sitting in that lovely still evening light. But the one insect I do hate - no, they are not insects, but are in a class of their own - the bastard midgies, eventually forced me back into the tent. They have no problem with the insect repellent. Still, all part of the time of year and environment. Part of life.

26th: Much colder today, and grey - which, of course, I like. Undertook a long walk, but found it exhausting. But sitting by the loch was lovely: everything was still, and I watched and listened to some very strange bird life, emitting unsettling, almost human cries.

On return, I wrote a little more. I rounded the evening off by sitting within the circle, directing my thoughts to J. Tonight was much more comfortable - cooler temperature and light breeze kept the

midgies away.

A little more positive today, though feeling physically ground down by this way of living. Now it is rather chilly.

27th: Last night, heavy rain - just as I wished: welcomed also, I am sure, by the land. I awoke to the mist and continuing rain, all streams engorged and rushing. By mid-morning, it had stopped, replaced by clear sky and bright sunlight. And thus it has stayed. Water supplies have been dramatically renewed. Despite the clear weather, I was content to remain by the tent and write more, still feeling inspired. The day has passed quickly, absorbed as I have been in creativity. My mood is so much better.

The evening has been taken up with a long meditative sit within the circle, looking out as always to the sea and vast mountain range. Looking back over the experiences of the last ten or so years, I felt a new awareness beyond my own personal desires and goals. An awareness of the essential goodness and unselfishness of people, which can easily be missed, amidst the fervour of one's ego. It is an awareness of the "light" side that balances the fanatical "dark". To learn to give in an unselfish way. To learn tolerance, and become part of a greater struggle to bring human decency and honourable behaviour. To do something for others, for no personal gain.

A good and productive day - I feel better than I have done for quite a while: dare I say it, more complete than I have been.

28th: Woke to intense sunlight, which has remained throughout the day and early evening. Went for a new walk, exploring a rocky area that was also the home of some fairly impressive trees - not the usual gnarled elfin wood, clinging to a cliff face. I found several caves - natural shelters big enough to live in. One obviously had been the lair of a fox (?), judging by the old bones scattered on the cave floor. The shelter that I had marked out in case the tent was destroyed by gale force winds has been replaced by one particular cave - ideal for a hermit. Even on a hot day such as this, it is very cold inside. Maybe I will live in one, one day.

I found various places to shelter from the sun, amidst huge boulders and lovely ash and birch trees. As always my idyll was marred by hunger, but I gained spiritual nourishment.

Again, sat this evening within the circle, the weather wonderful. Enjoyed watching the bird life. I feel as if a barrier has been crossed, and I remain content.

29th: Cloudy start to the day, but it gradually cleared, and I have experienced the hottest day so far.

Have spent the day writing, but have experienced more unsettled feelings - irritability, mostly. The heat hasn't helped. The day has been uncomfortable, and slightly tedious - physically, have done very little.

Late afternoon, I felt emotionally tired and upset - burdened by the slow, grinding pace of this life of mine here. But I regained an even mood during my evening "meditation" within the circle. I much prefer the temperature of early morning and evening. Much insect life, including midgies - but tonight, I did not mind them so much. Now, shoots of bracken are growing rapidly towards the Sun, and bluebells, buttercups and other flowers are spreading out. Everything looks very beautiful. The bird life is highly active - I love the sound, a burr of beating wings, as little birds nestle on the heather by the tent.

Unable to sleep last night, I went out and lay beneath the clear starry sky. No need to try and express what cannot be expressed. After that experience, I returned to the tent and slept well.

30th: Weather has been very hot again, and a mist from the sea has added to the stifling atmosphere. My mood has been a little low - irritable and restless.

But, I did pick up during my walk in the new area. Summer really is blossoming: the heady scent of plant life, and business of the insects (I watched two beetles mating!). Everything busy and green and full of life - I felt imbued with this green energy, for most of the walk. But have felt very hungry.

Returned to tent, and wrote. Evening concluded with the usual contemplation within the circle - probably the highlight of the day. The sea was beautifully still. Finished off with a bit of physis. I'm alright, really.

31st: Glorious weather again, with sea mist. Spent the morning writing, until the heat made me restless. I then went off for a walk to sit beneath the shade of an ash tree. It was idyllic, and rescued the day from irritability. I lay on a mossy plateau of rock, among the huge boulders, and gazed up at the ash leaves and flickering sunlight. I felt wonderfully free, and daydreamed of being a Knight Templar.

I am still unsettled in myself though - but, as before am treating it as a phase that will pass. Generally, I am much quieter within myself, and sensitive to sounds that disrupt the natural stillness - even the setting up of the Trangia sets my teeth on edge. Once, I could only clarify thoughts out loud; now, the sound of my own voice is an intrusion - and I am able to clearly debate within my head. I can feel a sort of peace, beginning to flow within.

I am enjoying immensely being among the bird and insect life - particularly the insects, with their

different and spontaneous characters. They feel like companions as I integrate progressively with the landscape: there is no loneliness.

It will be strange when the time comes for me to leave. I think part of me expects this way of life to just continue.

Sat within stone circle this evening. Slightly cooler tonight, with a veil over the setting Sun. The light and stillness has been very moving. I would have stayed out longer, but the midgies drove me back to the tent. Concluded with a reasonable physis session. That's it - onwards.

June

1st: Took a while to sleep last night - my mind was buzzing with possibilities, on my return. So I went out and sat beneath the mostly clear, starry sky. The completion of this rite is now tangible, which is making me restless with various emotions - partly excitement that I have got this far, and - although I cannot be complacent - the clear sense that I will triumph; and sadness at having to leave, and face the tedium of everyday life in modern society. My former life seems so far away, and this is now the reality. I often feel almost fearful of the end approaching.

But tonight, during my meditative sit, I felt burdened with the time still left to do - I felt crushingly tired with the waiting.

I am waking to the early morning Sun, which does imbue me with a great sense of freedom and well-being. Heat today very intense - so have done very little, physically, but have continued writing. After writing, I languished beneath the ash tree. This was idyllic, and I day dreamed the time away amidst the activity of wildlife - voles, finches, etc. I felt so content for a while, craving new adventures when this is complete. And then, the burden of time experienced tonight.

A strong and cool wind has appeared tonight, heralding, I think, a change in the weather. Water levels are low again. Rain is needed - although I am adapting to the heat and continuous sunshine.

2nd: Perhaps I ought to feel some elation that I have reached June, but do not. I am surprised - which is a good thing - at how different I actually feel to how I thought I would feel at this late stage. I am weary and burdened. However, these feelings do not dominate the entire day.

This morning I wrote with renewed inspiration, and spent the afternoon again beneath the ash tree. I felt very relaxed then, almost in a dream mode. But, as with last night, when the time comes for me to sit within the stone circle during the evening, I become heavily burdened. There is now too much a sense of the rite finishing - too much anticipation of the conclusion while I still have time yet to experience and endure. But at such times I return also to my apprehension of the changing land, of deepening Summer, and positivity returns. Tonight I was suddenly struck by the intoxicating sense of life that is bursting all around me - new wild flowers, the frenetic bird life - and that incredible evening light which seems so characteristic of Summer. I feel very fortunate to be here, and to have undergone this experience.

I concluded the evening with a poor physis session - body still wearied by hunger. Although I should not wish time away, another day has passed.

3rd: Intense heat, and again, spent a productive morning writing. Another afternoon beneath the ash tree. I felt fine in myself until this evening, at the usual place and time. My mind did not accept the day's sense of contentment, and I became caught up in old debates and battles in my head. I felt sad and depressed. I attempted a physis session, which was utterly useless - my joints are stiff, and cracking. I am very lethargic. Perhaps I will give the writing a break, and spend tomorrow walking.

Strong and cold winds appeared again tonight, and I returned to the tent feeling uncomfortable and fed up. As ever, I must treat this as a phase, and it will pass - but I feel wretched. Quite upset.

4th: A positive start to the day: I undertook a long walk to the main loch, and felt the benefit both physically and emotionally. It was definitely the right thing to do - I felt once more involved in the ritual by integrating with the land. It has been intensely hot again today.

As evening wore on, and I sat within the circle, the pattern of weariness returned - although the walk has boosted my spirit somewhat against the misery. I'm feeling worn down, but not really depressed. I just must keep plodding on through the days.

The walk helped clarify and calm the processes of my mind. All in all, a better day than of late. Have given the writing a break.

5th: This evening I have had to retire to the tent earlier than I would have liked - the midgies are out in full force, swarming over everything, and biting. Not a lot can be done, just have to accept it as part of life's rich horror.

Found it difficult to sleep again last night, but this time, my mind was filled with music - specifically

new piano compositions. I got up and made a welcome cup of tea, and pondered, wondrously, on the new music. Sleep eventually came, but I woke before dawn - and saw Venus bright above the peaks as I left the tent to sit and experience the dawn.

Yet, as morning grew to its fullness, I again descended into a bleak mood. I felt fed up at the prospect of having to endure another very long day. I felt fed up with the whole venture. However, I roused myself for another long walk, and my spirit was raised. The weather has been incredibly hot, so I made my way up to a small loch, high in the peaks, and bathed there. A lovely experience.

During my evening contemplation, my mood remained good - although the midgies did their best to discourage this.

Water levels very low again. The source I have been using is almost dried up, but I was able to relocate another spring a bit further away from the tent- although this source cannot be guaranteed for the rest of the rite, if this weather remains constant. I may have to re-locate the tent, so tomorrow I will investigate a small loch down at the foot of the fells. Rain would be appreciated.

I am relieved that my mood has picked up, obviously aided by a bit of physical exertion. I feel another internal barrier has been broken down, although I feel the weariness may easily return. I've encountered some very difficult emotional states over the past week or so, which I had not really anticipated - a good insight.

I must note that now, whenever I drink water from the spring, it feels as if I am imbibing the consciousness of the water. A sparkling pure awareness speaks within my body - it is almost as if I am looking through the eyes of water. I am probably much more receptive to the spirit of water now, after having been ill and purged, and purified by starvation. I am nearer to the land.

6th: Forced into tent early tonight - flies and midgies causing hell. A decent night's sleep. On waking, my bleak mood descended again; I felt so worn down. The sky has been quite cloudy today, veiling the Sun - there is a faint echo of rain. I hope the weather does change - the flies are a nightmare early morning and evening.

Now as I write there is rain! Very light, but the sky is thundery. Thank the gods: a temperature drop is just what is needed to disperse the little fiends. I am getting so fed up with them crawling over my face and hands while I sit in the circle, and waking up with swollen eye lids or lips. This adds to my sense of weariness.

I undertook a walk this morning which I did not enjoy. I went to the loch in the land below me.

Exploring the lower flatter features does not carry with it the sense of achievement and exertion of the peaks, and I spent most of the walk, until the ascent back to the tent, feeling drained and hungry. The loch and the flat land was bleak, dark and depressing. Afternoon spent lying in the tent, in a stupor.

The sky remains dark, with a hint of summer storm in the air, and the rain light. Worn down, but I still endure.

7th: Took a while to sleep again, my mind once more on music. The rain continued off and on throughout the night, and on waking, it was heavy and the sky turbulent. Remained in tent for most of day, writing. Rain has continued, with very strong, cold, southerly winds. Water levels in full flow. I have felt content with today, and have not been visited by weariness. The fact that I am gradually moving towards the conclusion of the rite is starting to sink in, sometimes lessening the depression, sometimes creating it. I have quite enjoyed today, and have pondered on some interesting esoteric ideas. I feel absolutely replete with creativity - music is growing within me: in some ways, this does make me impatient to return.

These past few weeks have been strange; I feel quite different than I did in the previous months. There seems to be a greater edge of struggling, and a clearer vision concerning creativity and the esoteric. I have learned much about myself so far - I feel that my character has deepened with the insights. Feeling reasonably fine.

8th: Got off to sleep quickly, but was woken before dawn by very strong winds battering the tent. As the winds increased, the tent was partially pulled up from the ground, the flysheet unzipping and flailing about. Several times I had to get out and re-pitch. I could not get back to sleep, even though I was exhausted: I was worried whether the tent would stand up to the battering.

As daylight approached, I witnessed an awesome sea of cloud rushing from the south, and unfurling not far above me. Directly above the raging cloud was calm blue sky with higher cirrus wisps, barely moving. Since my time here, I have never encountered such strong winds. The rain lashed down, on and off.

I felt I had to stay near the tent today, in case the wind tried to tear it up. I began contemplating my

alternative accommodation. Thus I was confined within the tent, which was tedious. Suddenly, my creativity no longer seemed sufficient, and I could have done with a good walk.

I sat out for a brief period tonight beneath the rushing sky. It has become very warm, but the wind remains furious. Sitting beneath the column of scudding clouds was absolutely awesome - like watching time lapse film. Surreal.

Although there had been indication of imminent change, I really did not expect this. But as always, one can never be complacent where Nature is concerned.

The power of the winds, their all-consuming presence, has been quite an experience - rather unsettling. Beneath today's practical concerns - or rather, because of them - my mood remains positive. I have asked the gods for calm, and so far conditions have quietened down, a little.

9th: The winds increased as I settled down for the night; earlier I had re-guyed the tent so it was much more secure, so I decided not to worry. I settled down to sleep and was woken only once by the intense battering, and lashing of rain. In the morning, the tent remained unharmed.

The powerful winds and rain continued today, but I decided anyway to undertake a walk, feeling the need to be out in the land amidst the raging elements. It was interesting to observe how the land had been transformed by these conditions. My mood was very contemplative: I do not feel the need whatsoever to continue expressing myself creatively while I am here.

And yet Art etc. is, or can be, important. The majority must be touched by a type of creativity if the ultimate aim of encouraging an upsurge in Adeptship - and thus the beginnings of a new civilization - is to be attained. And so on.

For myself, now, I do not need words to express how I feel - I do not need to tell a story which does not need to be told. The essence does not need to be expressed by anything other than the life here.

As evening drew near, the winds suddenly ceased, as at last the southern horizon was lit with blue sky. Now there is sunlight, stillness and warmth, and I was able to sit in the circle. Midgies are returning - but nothing is perfect.

10th: A good night's sleep. Awoke later than usual to sunlight and stillness, although slightly chilly.

As has been usual, the morning saw a return of recent lethargy, so I took myself off on a walk up to one of the higher lochs, hidden in the peaks. For while, the experience was marred by my mind jabbering on over past debates long since thought resolved. However I was able to resolve these inner conflicts, with honesty.

The walk concluded positively as I unravelled my thoughts and returned to the tent just as rain appeared. There was a brief but dramatic thunderstorm then, with strong winds and lightning. This passed over quickly to leave stillness and sunshine.

I decided to find somewhere new for my evening contemplation, and chose a place higher up. Because there was a slight breeze at that height, there were no midgies. The view was inspirational, and the Sun remained.

I am occasionally feeling the excitement of finishing; but am trying not to dwell too much - there are still days left which may bring new experiences and insights. Any creeping depression seems nulled now by the sense of impending completion. I am not dwelling too much on what has been experienced over the past three months - such a review, such a distillation, is too much - too final

11th: Did not sleep for ages last night - mind buzzing with all manner of general things. Awoke early to sunlight, although temperature at night and early morning is quite chilly. Sky cloudy.

Again, morning prefaced by lethargy. Went for a walk, which was spiritually rewarding, but physically shattering. On return, dwelt further on esoteric matters.

So, day progressed into evening positively. Climbed to my new peak this evening, but the flies and midgies found me. At present, the inside and outside of the flysheet is swarming with them. I am resigned to it.

Feel quite positive - my contemplation of things esoteric seems to have yielded some revelations. Now it is raining, slightly.

12th: Ventured out again last night as dusk gave way to night, and was engulfed in midgies - horrendous. Rain grew heavier as I settled to a good night's sleep.

Awoke with more bites than usual. Tent full of midgies. Got rid of the little scum by re-pitching the tent. It began to rain again, lightly. I went off for a walk and washed in the valley river. The walk was uneventful, but my spirit was strong, feeling a sense of achievement as the days draw on towards the climax of the rite.

Afternoon spent in tent as rain became heavier. No evening out, as rain has increased. Much colder now.

13th: Woke early to rain - the rain had continued throughout the night. Consequently, the day has been quite chilly with hill fog, and wind. Everything has felt damp and cold - almost like the earliest stages of the rite, rather than Summer. Wind now quite strong.

I have been confined to the tent, no variations in light to tell me how early or late it is. However, I have begun composing, developing a - hopefully - new and effective system based on the septenary. This is such a new development, and shows that even at this stage, rewards can flower. Physically, I am quite uncomfortable, cold and hungry, with a lot more bites than usual, particularly on my legs.

The tent has withstood the elements brilliantly, but is now showing signs of wear - a few holes, and less water repellence.

My mood remains positive - almost detached, as I am still aware of the days yet to be experienced.

14th: Rain and winds continued through the night. Strong winds buffeted the tent during the day.

Weather has remained really atrocious, and I have been confined again to the tent. Not too bothered though, as I am now engrossed in composition.

But, I became cold just remaining in the tent, so went for a walk. It was invigorating being amidst the strong winds and rain. Rain and winds easing now - probably will be a brighter day tomorrow. I feel very calm.

15th: A good night's sleep. Rain and winds have eased, and this morning I woke to sunlight. The temperature remains a little chilly.

Despite the good weather, the prospect of going for a walk lost its appeal as I continued composing.

I still feel detached, but am a little irritable at present - headache, and tiredness, and hunger. I still can't allow myself to think about leaving this life - I am aware that part of me does not want this to end. The approaching conclusion seems bitter-sweet.

16th: Woke earlier than usual this morning. At first, the temperature was cold, but as the Sun rose over the peaks, the weather became quite hot, with a slight breeze.

I undertook a walk that I have been saving for the conclusion of the rite - back to the loch that had so enchanted me with its feminine aura. The walk up to the summit was very tiring, but the view was breathtaking - I could see all the inner islands, and those beyond.

I wept. I felt such a mixture of feelings: absolute relief at having reached this far, and a sense of great achievement. But also, a deep, deep sadness at having to leave. It was/is a sadness I have never felt before, in connection to anything else, and I cannot really describe it.

I returned to the tent, without dwelling further on the conclusion. I just want to continue, quietly and practically.

17th: Another sunny day. Did some washing, and once more became absorbed in composition. I have never concentrated so much: persistence and absolute focus enabled me to solve some esoteric and compositional riddles. So much came together, at that point. I felt the incredible elation that creativity can bring. The day however became stifling, confined as I was again to the tent, of my own choosing. I have not really felt motivated to take a walk - each walk now seems so final; it is too upsetting. I will leave uncharted areas for another time, another life. I do feel sad.

After the physical inertia, I attempted to sit out this evening, but the midgies drove me back. Physically, an inactive day, but the creativity has been incredible.

18th: Once again, very hot weather. This time, I undertook a walk first thing, which I found a little tedious and tiring. I was eager to return to my compositions, which again took up much of the day.

Keeping my mind focussed and occupied is helping me cope calmly with the very little time I have left. Evenings are confined to the tent, as the midgies are out in full force. I won't be sorry to live without them.

Some further esoteric ideas came to light, and in the evening, I did a little carving in the tent. Very cold at night, but am sleeping well.

19th: Rain last night, and for most of the day. Thus another day in tent, composing. But my creativity has been less inspired today, and I now feel there is little to add to what has so far been accomplished.

When evening came, my lethargy lifted, and I felt strong positivity - a near happiness, yet one tinged with the burden of return. It seems so depressing to have to be, if only partially, a part of the machine of modern society and its stifling ways and laws. Yet there is J. So many mixed feelings coming to the surface.

I sat out tonight within the circle, when rain had ceased. The view was inspiring, and the ancient land enhanced the feeling recently experienced of my own mortality - the passing of human life in the blinking of a mountain's eye. This feeling is not negative, but liberating: I know life to be an opportunity.

I know this with calm acceptance.

Writing this diary has, recently, ceased to be a help - it is now a petty burden: I no longer need or wish to express what I feel. Last full day tomorrow.

20th: Awoke just before dawn, to light rain. It felt good to be awake at that time, with the light, and birdsong, and deer.

I bathed, one final time, in the river valley, and spent a tranquil, if rather cold, time beneath an ash tree, washing, and sharpening my knife, and just 'being'. Further esoteric ideas surfaced - almost final pieces in a jig-saw. I returned to the tent to write.

The evening was marred by the midgies who held me hostage in the tent. However, as evening wore on, the temperature dropped and their activity ceased. I ventured out. As I crawled from the tent, I was confronted by a magnificent Satanic sunset: high up, red clouds; on the horizon, dark clouds, carriers of rain. The clouds created beautiful shapes, of creatures beautiful in their moment - but the shapes became forgotten as they changed into something else. It is the flow, the constant change that is real.

I stood in the circle, and undertook a simple and spontaneous oath of re-dedication. I chanted.

I do not feel sad now - I am ready to return to the world. I feel as if I have arrived at myself, after this long journey of my life so far.

I am very calm. When dawn appears with the first light of the Solstice, this rite will end. I'm not sure I quite believe it.

^^^^^^

Bagendon, February evening

20 million years hence

Is Now:

In this one Moment

Are human hives grown from soil

Threaded through with one mind

The stars have caused these forms

Each stone nest and its twin star

A ripple upon a river

That has now passed

From the illusion of my eye

And been received into deep space

Someone - it does not matter who -

Sends out three tolls of the bell

Three more

And three more, and I am thankful

For there is no longer the lie of evolution

The game of race

The illusion of the "West"

No longer the willful schemes

The false cycles of time

But only what has always been

And nothing more

What is believed

Flows away:

Three tolls of the bell

Three more

And three more

H.P. Lovecraft and the Dark Gods

A lot has been said and written in recent years about the writings of H.P. Lovecraft, particularly his Cthulhu mythos, but to gain an insight into the truth it is necessary to compare Lovecraft's mythos with one of the most sinister traditions of Occultism.

Lovecraft, aware of parts of the ancient tradition of the Dark Gods' dramatized and mis-represented the tradition as a whole. Part of this mis-representation was literary, some of it arose because Lovecraft could not see beyond the Abyss where opposites are meaningless, but most of the mis-representation arose because Lovecraft had access to only part of the tradition, through his own Occult researches and sometimes inept experiments with dream control.

To these, he added inventions of his own - such as the so-called 'Necronomicon' (the book of this title published by Colin Wilson et al is a hoax) - which he wove into the Cthulhu mythos. This mythos bears about as much resemblance to the genuine tradition of the Dark Gods, from which it is derived, as a fir tree does to an oak.

One of Lovecraft's mis-representations is in naming the Dark Gods. The Dark Gods (or 'forces') may be symbolized by vibrations, since it is partly through such vibration that certain levels of consciousness may be reached. These levels re-present primal Chaos - that is, they are devoid of Word since such levels pre-date the covering up, by Word, ritual, idea and even myth, of the essence from which Being and non-Being were derived. Viewed conventionally, these entities are negative and by their return restore Chaos - that is, they destroy the historicity of Being. When seen through the stricture of opposites such a return is terrifying.

According to tradition, the Dark Gods are waiting, in what may be described as a parallel universe, to return to Earth and thus our spatial, causal universe. Essentially, the universe of the Dark Gods is acausal and the two universes may be re-presented as being joined by various Star Gates (or more accurately 'nexions'). These 'Gates' are regions of space-time where passage from one universe to another is possible at certain times - that is, when the Gates are aligned according to their cosmic cycle.

Traditionally, it is believed that these Gates open about once every 2,000 years. Because of the nature of the two connecting universes (that is, their difference in time and spatial geometry) not only is physical travel possible between them, but also to a limited extent, a special form of astral travel. This astral form is possible because our own consciousness, by its nature and evolution, is partly acausal and therefore already to an extent on a primal level part of this other universe. Thus, it is possible for an individual to journey into the other realms where the Dark Gods are waiting just as it is feasible - if the psychic Gates are opened - for those dreaded and negative entities who are seldom named to manifest on our level.

Such travels are manifestly only feasible when a nexion is about to be opened, is open or is closing - that is, at the beginning and ending of an Aeon. At other times, travel is very difficult and very severe measures must be taken in order to create the energy required. Such methods have seldom been used in the past: they involve great danger to the individual(s), hideous rituals of suffering and sacrifice, or immense detail in preparation and the acquisition of a crystal tetrahedron of the right quality.

The intrusion of these entities into our universe takes many forms, both physical and psychic, and here again Lovecraft has mis-represented them. According to Tradition, the last overt physical manifestation took place thousands of years ago, around 8,000 BP and gave rise to, among other legends, the myth of Dragons. Prior to this, the sinister tradition speaks of the first coming of the Dark Gods at the dawn of our consciousness - probably around 20,000 yes BP. Psychic intrusion is often minimal but nevertheless terrifying for some. According to one recent account: "They lurk at the threshold of existence preening their wings and eyes and sounds which they send forth to all who have ears to hear and minds to know. And they wait and reside in the space between worlds, the space that is the corner of the meeting of dimensions. They are the destroyers ... the bornless forever who wait for our call. Soon they will come to collect that blood which is required by Them. To understand Them is to pass that Abyss beyond which the man ceases to be."

Such manifestations often take the form of nightmares when unsought, and occasional madness is not unknown among those who have deliberately tried to bring the Dark Gods: for example, in a case known to the author a group tried, in the early seventies, to invoke these forces. The working was only partially successful and one of those involved went mad.

One of the most noticeable effects of deliberate contact by Adepts is the change that results in the

consciousness of certain groups of people and individuals - such as a resurgence of primitive atavisms. Such changes are often misunderstood, bound as most people still are by old Aeon concepts of duality, and over recent decades these changes have been a prelude to the calling forth that will re-open the physical nexion and return the Dark Gods to our universe and thus the Earth itself.

The details that Lovecraft gives regarding 'calls' and rites are mostly fanciful and only in a few places does he inadvertently reveal the truth - for example, in his mention of the trapezohedron and 'Azathoth'. The key to travel along the passages between the star nexions is the Nine Angles and the key to the Nine Angles is the crystal tetrahedron which is activated by voice vibration. 'Azathoth' as described by Lovecraft, is a symbolic and distorted re-presentation of the intersection, in acausal space-time, of these astral star passages: a kind of galactic vortex or node. Those who journey there never return the same. Along the star passages the shells of long dead civilizations lie strewn.

The Nine Angles (the key to contact both physical and astral) are re-presented in the septenary Star Game and it is through this symbolic re-presentation that the magick of the Dark Gods is made manifest. The rest, to the uninitiated, is sheer terror.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Tabula Rasa
ONA, 1996eh

As a practical form attempts to impel the lives of those in a society towards a Golden Vision, it is in the nature of the Cosmos that a few individuals remain aware of their belonging in the esoteric essence beyond that, or any, form. In a time when the intellectual trend is towards espousing practical action above philosophy, "gritty reality" over the "numinous", it is all too easy to lose sight of the original aims perhaps now maligned due to their being of an 'esoteric' or 'magickal' nature, since these latter terms now seem mostly to be equated with fatuous philosophy and general sub-human inadequacy. But despite the sad behaviour of the average sorcerer, the reality of what we call Magick is still pure, and still of the Source that exists for us to tap into and, through striving, consciously integrate with. There is still the potential to understand the connexion we as living Beings possess with the Cosmos, and that this understanding can bring about a unity that creates, what we at present term 'Immortality'. Essentially, it is in the Nature of the Cosmos that there exists for a select few (although the number should increase over the centuries, if Evolution is allowed) the opportunity of becoming, through an act of Will, an aspect of the consciousness of the Cosmos.

A temporal form is a way in which the Cosmos expresses itself in the causal world, and thus this form (which may be of a political/religious aspect) is the vital, practical mechanics of Evolution - without this dynamic fusion of Force and Form, there is no 'Divinity' presented in 'the world', and Life decays. But in our pursuit of the Form, we must not disregard outright the esoteric methods which can capture the aspiration to reach the essence, and thus acquire 'Wisdom'. The understanding of this essence has its beginnings in "Aeonics" - and the meaning of "Aeonics" is only discovered through the essence.

This understanding does not lie solely in the performance of 'magickal rites' - and there exists only a small body of these which can create a Nexion - or the living out of an 'esoteric' existence according to commercial Occult fashions. Nor is genuine understanding acquired from the writings of others - despite whatever the degree of Wisdom of those so writing. The problem faced with Occult writings, if 'wisdom' is being sought through this medium, is the simple fact that Word will only ever obscure rather than communicate the essence, because the process of Individuation creating itself within the individual is always experienced in a way unique to the individual. At best, the written form can act as a skeletal guide to inspire those rare, willful characters of action to expand their consciousness into the acausal and thus create the Change necessary for the World - and for the Cosmos. It should be obvious that written ideas are never enough in themselves, despite the necessity of what has become, not unpredictably, the popular option of 'seeding'. If there are no individuals to become a focal point for the ethos, to breathe life into the philosophy via living those ideas, then the ideas are soon forgotten.

The Dark Tradition, or Sinister Path, as an expression of the Cosmos, is a living Being rather than a 'tradition' passed on via the written word. Thus, in order for this Being to live, it requires individuals to act according to their personal Wyrd. This implies that each generation of Initiates commences the Path as a 'blank page' since the Seven-Fold Way exists, in the early stages, only in accord with the dynamic individuality of each existence. Beyond individual existence (in esoteric terms, having 'passed the Abyss') lies the realm of the genuine Master/Mistress: a real knowledge of Aeonics, and the commencement of an extraordinary form of existence.

The late 20th century world of Magick is characterised by fine sounding words agitating, often in exasperated tones, for "practical action". Considering that the Occult Way, once a Heresy, has become a commodity (and is thus 'decadent'), a "call to arms" is indeed laudable. But, having waded through the polemic, does not "practical action" simply emerge as the 'by-phrase' of an Occult generation and does this not inspire the passionate to detest, ipso facto, the philosophy of Magick as an outmoded fantasy game?

Or do those who talk of Action and do not Act, do so because they do not seek to understand for themselves, so that they may act with understanding? The nobility of the Sinister Path is that it alone can guide individuals beyond the matrices of illusion to become spontaneous and natural, with an understanding beyond the limitations of Self. The ordeals of the Seven-Fold Way are designed to change forever those who can undertake them, because the experience of such an ordeal goes deep rather than at best producing a moment of insight (one which is subsequently lost amongst the delights of modern day living). The Adept - a new type of human being, rather than a title - acts with less and less emphasis on personal desire, as they move towards becoming the Path itself, knowing what is necessary. Such

individuals come to know what they re-present, not by agreeing or disagreeing with someone else's words and insights, but because they have, if it be their Wyrð and through the presencing of the future within the present, allowed within them the process of Magickal evolution to occur of themselves. For some, it is not the Forms, however numinous those Forms might be, that are important but the Path itself. It is through such individuals who are the living Source (ie. "Falcifer") that the Form is made meaningful to those whose Wyrð calls them to the Form itself (ie. "Vindex"). For the individual, which aspect describes his/her existence will be dis-covered through the practical act of embarking upon the Seven-Fold Way.

This practical act not only implies undertaking the various traditional ordeals, but that the individual comes to know who s/he is via ordeals unique to their journey - these experiences making the 'Grade Rituals' possible. Despite what may be a move towards dismissing the 'esoteric', what is 'Magickal' can simply be described as the Desire of an individual, through an act of Will, to transform themselves into a Higher type. What is noble about this pursuit is that a consciousness is created that links the Adept with his/her own Folk - and that which is, in one inaccurate sense, beyond. It is not the pursuit of selfish pleasure and the justification of personal prejudices.

It is the Will that is the Key: it is Will that is better than any of the trappings some might use in their 'magickal' activities - ie. sex, drugs, 'pain', and so on. The Triumph of the Will is the Key to Transformation.

To repeat: the preparations for this transformation are unique to the individual. In some Cases- and often in those most profound - a chosen practical form may bear no obvious relation to what conventionally constitutes the 'Esoteric'. Whatever, it must involve the individual in experiencing some personal trauma, because this is how the Will is tested - thus, the experience can only be of a practical nature. An 'Insight Role' may be one such means (qv. Hostia), but even this is still a game which the 'Sinister Magickian' can play for awhile. Such an ordeal does not require the detachment from the Esoteric/Sinister Path so far lived (this detachment is required as a prelude to Adeptship). For an Insight Role, the form chosen (and/or the reasons for so choosing the form) may have no direct Aeonic significance. For such a significance to be genuinely understood beyond the Self, a form must be experienced as it is, on its own "light" terms. There must be no secret or "Sinister" agenda - there must simply be a living of that form, a 'becoming-one-with' that is in itself a Magickal act, though may not be perceived as such, initially. The individual must accept that this new living may, or may not, last for the rest of their causal life, since the form so lived is known to be vital to the future of Civilization.

As stated, Wyrð is then dis-covered by allowing the Changes within to occur of themselves. What this means, is that personal anguish, boredom, fear, do not in themselves constitute a reason to stop living the Form: thus, there is a Triumph of Will. It will be made clear, in its own species of time, who, or what, the Adept is: a belonging of the essence, or part of the Form - or perhaps both ...

What results is an Aeonic awareness that renders those who simply possess intellectual comprehension irrelevant. In time, from this crucible, an Adept emerges: someone who embodies in their being the balanced unity (of "opposites") from which creative, ordered and thus willed or conscious Change derives. Most importantly, they have dis-covered themselves, and others, through their own Triumph of the Will; by using their own judgements, making their own mistakes - guided by the uniqueness of their character.

The purpose of individual existence is linked to the Destiny of the Cosmos itself, and to those who understand, have a most profound responsibility in this bovine world. The Sinister Path exists to create individuals who can practically implement this understanding and thus create significant change. Such willed Change is Magick.

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Deceitful Occult Ego
by Anton Long (O.N.A.)

It is indicative of the sorry state of most occult paths - and the people who follow them - that there is an abundance of dis-information, deceit, mystification and cultivation of egos.

Consider a typical case: a young man develops an interest in occult arts, and eagerly seeks information and contacts. Books and articles are read, contacts made, perhaps a group or *three* joined. Soon the young man is part of the 'occult scene' and one of three things usually happens: (1) he accepts some system or person, for awhile and tries to follow what is expected - then, after some 'practical' work, decides it is not right for him and moves on to another system or person; (2) after a little while he comes to believe he has attained his goal (and thus is an 'adept' or 'Master' or whatever) - usually after engaging in a few rituals and a lot of conversations and meetings with others; (3) after a short or intermediate period cultivating and fawning upon others (and thus assisting them in their endless campaigns to 'safeguard' their own reputations by attempting to discredit others via rumours and so on) he establishes an identity for himself - exaggerating his own achievements, knowledge and contacts. In short, there is the perpetuation of old Aeon traits and values - contra what the occult in general is supposed to be achieving.

Two things are involved in this process: the desire (mostly unconscious and natural) for self-importance and self-delusion. Part of this self-delusion occurs because of the 'intellectualisation of the occult' - there is too much talk, too much acceptance of what others say (particularly about others) without first-hand knowledge, too much theory and too much ego-domination where 'cleverness' (particularly in words) is rated above practical experience. Too much concern for someone's 'past'.

The result is almost inevitable (and a waste of the potential of occultism) - the young man achieves no real progress, no real insight no real occult abilities. He has become infected with the 'occult disease'. Instead of going within, into the wilderness, to lose all illusions and delusions and begin the hard and solitary path to Adeptship by practical work, there is the camaraderie of being 'in the know', of 'being accepted' or working (mostly in intellectual or pseudo-intellectual ways) in a certain 'niche' and thus becoming self-satisfied in a comfortable way. The occult thus becomes a 'habit' or an interest- a source of self-congratulation (perhaps even of material income) and a place where a 'role' is obtained and lived out. Some 'practical' work may be done - but the end result is the disposal occultists so familiar from the recent past and the present: the attender of meetings (or the more modern 'symposia' or 'conferences'), the seeker after and spreader of gossip and rumour, the pseudo-intellectual dilettante writing articles and books (and perhaps even editing a magazine) not from direct, personal experience but rather from hearsay, from self-opinion and from intellectual aridity and cleverness. Or, perhaps, the plagiarist enjoying a clique success and amateur adulation - or the self-appointed 'master/adept' who may need the mystique of an organisation to mask his lack of character or charisma or who may be so self-deluded that he actually believes he has attained his goal. Then again, our young man may turn out to be one of those many failures who hang around the 'occult scene' - flitting from one group to another, one 'master' to another, and talking, worshipping (both 'gods' and 'masters') and talking again and accumulating a mass of useless information, 'lore' and 'grades/degrees'.

Despite the interest in recent years in the techniques or ways of the occult - despite all the many words written and spoken - there has been little or no real achievement on the personal level: no increase in the very few adepts. Instead, almost the opposite has occurred - an increase in self-delusion, in glorifying the ego at the expense of gaining insight; a turning away from effective experience to the glorification of the vapid, the intellectual and the 'non-directive' sensation-seeking, temporary, 'mind-expanding' experience. In short, there has been less real self-discipline and more ego-biased stupidity and stimulation.

Adeptship, and the wisdom that lies beyond that, is obtained by a slow, hard process which requires self-discipline and the self-overcoming of hardships. There is no path to it which is not without difficulties and which is not solitary - which does not require the discarding of all those props which most require to survive: a dogma, friends, ideas, companionship, lovers, material security, 'masters'... There is no potion to obtain which when taken will suddenly give insight or wisdom, no sudden revelations - from god or mortal - which instil wisdom, no technique to be used a few times a week, no ritual or rituals which will give personality or character or self-development.

This process requires years & involves certain ways of living - & often a certain guidance. It requires also the desire to reach the goal, to not give in when things become difficult or confused - a tenacity to follow the chosen path to its ending.

The occult knowledge and insight of an individual is shown most of all by their bearing - by the way they relate to others. But this bearing is not the assumption of some 'role' (such as 'master' or 'guru' or whatever) - rather, it is genuine and spontaneous, full of individual character: neither affectation nor pretension. This is so because the knowledge and insight is within, acquired from experience. Where there is lack of real knowledge and lack of insight, there is pretension, artifice, the "I must preserve my own ego by doing down all others" syndrome, and the inebriated laughter of the ill-disciplined, ill-at-ease discussion machine.

Our young man would do well to try and find some guidance from an insightful individual - and be prepared for a hard and long journey. Perhaps then, in time one new adept will arise, and the 'New Aeon' will be brought a little nearer.

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Lands of the Dark Immortals

There are many legends associated with the Lands of the Dark Immortals, a 'place' known by many names throughout the history of the Sinister Tradition - one of those names being the 'Avalon' of Arthurian legend. However, the majority of accounts concerning Avalon are romantic distortions; what is generally evoked is the mystical, Nazarene inspired dwelling of aetherial Entities the souls of warriors at peace. Such an account is a favourite amongst those who call themselves 'wiccans' and 'new age pagans' - such people reveal a fundamental lack of understanding regarding the ethos of the West. The philosophies of life of the early folk of the West – those of Albion, the Vikings, the Franks, the Angles, the Romans and the Ancient Greeks - were not born from the Eastern religion of a strange desert god whose attitudes towards death concerned an afterlife spent in either eternal peace or eternal damnation, but from those things that shaped their own lives, things that were indigenous to their own culture. The ethos of the Warrior was an integral and 'positive' factor in the lives of the Western people: it epitomised all those qualities that were noble, honourable. The reality of war was not subject to liberal, moralistic ideals and aims, such as the achievement of cultural harmony and world peace; it was an expression of their lives as a necessary way of preserving - and spreading - their ethos. It was a pride in identity. War was a creative act - in esoteric terms, it was the greatest act of sacrifice. Pagan character was one shaped by a sometimes tragic acceptance of *wyrd*, but one that knew the realities of struggle and thrived on them. To such folk the concept of everlasting peace was an alien one. Instead, the spirit of departed Warriors remained with the folk and added to the continuing dialectic - that spirit had become part of the ethos itself. Essentially, the racial ethos continued after the death of individuals. This perhaps may be best expressed by a quotation from a fragment of an Ancient Greek poem:

"Noble and glorious is he who fights
For his folk and family against the foe.
Since death comes when chosen by Fate -
Bringing to an end the thread of life -
Go forward with spear held high and shields shielding brave hearts
When battle is joined:
There is no flight from death, for that Destiny comes to all mortals
Even they claiming descent from the gods.
Many from the battle fury of roaring javelins have fled their
home -
But even there, their fate of death awaits:
And they die unloved and unmourned by their folk
While both the high and the low born lament for the brave.
All of a community weep for the courageous, who die:
And if they live, they are hailed like a god,
Exalted by those who behold them
For the deeds of the many, they did alone."
[Kallinos.]

This early awareness gave birth to the search for the methods with which to create an actual acausal existence. In the Sinister Tradition, the Lands of the Dark Immortals did not signify a complete disembodiment from the community, but a continuing relationship within the evolution of the race. The understanding of this interactive relationship between the causal and acausal has become progressively more obscured by the projection of abstract ideas onto the essence of things - as much so in the occult world as anywhere else - and it is this intuitive understanding that genuine Magick can reclaim. It must also be remembered, that entrance into the Lands was not for all, but for the Elite - those who by virtue of living, had progressively created by their deeds, an acausal existence. Such people were the Warriors, whose acts changed the Destiny of an entire folk. As the spirit which imbued this way of living declined, other techniques were sought.

At this point in history, it is only within the continual evolving esoteric teachings of the Sinister Tradition that the acausal and the creation of an acausal existence is given greater conscious expression. In the past a few Adepts - and the occasional notorious individual interested in dark sorcery - tried to secure for themselves an acausal existence by dark rites of sacrifice, and as a result dark legends arose. But such means are not really necessary.

Before describing what is necessary, a brief examination of existence within the Lands of the Dark Immortals will be in order. According to Tradition, we as individuals possessed of consciousness have both a causal and an acausal aspect to that consciousness. The acausal is latent (or mostly so) and magickal Initiation awakens it - opening a gate or nexion to the acausal. This allows the acausal to be apprehended (usually via a symbolism such as the septenary Tree of Wyrð) and acausal energies to be used/directed (i.e. 'magick'). The result is an expansion of consciousness (or viewed another way, the progression of the individual into the acausal) - a balance of causal/acausal being achieved in 'the Abyss'. Beyond this, because of the balance so attained, it is possible to transcend to the acausal - to create an acausal existence when the causal ceases (ie. physical death).

The acausal is not however, a "dreamy realm" or some kind of Nirvana/heaven. It is rather, the very essence of Being - beyond opposites, primal Chaos. Nirvana and such like are abstract moral forms - ie. they are "unbalanced" since they lack darkness, the sinister, the negative... [Nirvana and such like are usually described in terms only of 'light'.] The acausal is the realm of the Dark Gods - and these beings are not imaginative symbols for the titillation of consciousness, nor simply a part of the psyche, to be transcended or negated or whatever by 'forces of light'. Rather, they exist independent of our consciousness [yet such is the nature of the acausal that they are also part of what is dormant within us] and while they may be accessed (or 'dis-covered') by consciousness and thus presented in the causal (on Earth) their actual intrusion would totally disrupt sentient life in the causal - like the meeting of matter and anti-matter. [Note: Some of these aspects are depicted by The Sinister Tarot.] Sinister magick (of the aeonic and internal kind) may be said to be like a machine or engine where containment of opposites is possible and controllable under certain conditions. [In simple terms, sinister aeonic magick contains the flow of the acausal into a temporal form - usually an aeon and its associated civilization - via a nexion/magickal centre to thus over thousands of years increase the amount of the acausal that is presented, increasing thus evolution in individuals in accordance with sinister goals. Such is one of the forms of real Black Magick.] The nature of acausal existence may be apprehended by individuals by certain sinister rites such as those of the Nine Angles (qv. *The Black Book of Satan III*). To achieve an individual acausal existence, the sinister path must be followed, from Initiate to Internal Adept to Master/Mistress and beyond because this following of such a path in the way indicated (qv. *Naos* and *Black Books*) creates acausal consciousness in the individual over causal time. The Grade Ritual of Grand Master/G. Mistress makes the Adept more acausal than causal. Beyond this is a simple ritual (the solo Nine Angles rite done by the Grand Master/G. Mistress) when consciousness is transferred beyond the nexion opened/created by the previous Grade Ritual. Immortality - the final stage of the way is then achieved, followed then or shortly thereafter by causal death, although consciousness can be transferred to inhabit another causal body - this is not usually done as wyrð is achieved. Simple, really, although this alchemical process takes about 25 years. By virtue of the nexion, the new Immortal alters the temporal structure of the world, usually for an Aeon.

Now the secret of the Lands of the Dark Immortals is revealed, the possibility is open to all. But it is doubtful if more than one or two a century will try, such is human weakness.

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Lay of Apollo
Brenna, ONA.

A man stood lone-lild, graft against the skies. He stood nearing the peak of a hill which rose out of the land like the great long back of a whale breaching the surface of a green sea. This stol-sun man gazed crossways to a smaller hill, where smoke was adrift in tokening of homesteads and terraces of patchworked farm fields, graduated from the arena of its flattened tump to its broad, contoured base.

The man shifted his leather knapsack from one shoulder to the other. It was filled with flint axe-heads which were some of his own creation, and some of his fellows. He was dressed in a home-spun tunic of rustic brown, girt at the waist with a leather thong. He wore leather boots shaped like stockings and laced at the front, leather armulets and a sleeveless overthrow of beaver fur on his back. He had tattoos on both of his muscular arms: one in the form of a lightning strike crossed with a single arrow; the other in the form of a sun-wheel below which was the detail of a bird of prey.

His face had a lean, hawk-like appearance; the long brown mane of hair and bristled beard lending him a leonine, animal-regal air. For this distinction of feature he had been called Ly - short for Lyone - for his wild-swept, brown locks and bristling beard gave him the same shaggy-crowned look of a lion. But for his trading name he took The Hawk, and only his folk, the company of his kith and kin, could call him Ly.

He seemed to spend a long time ruminating, standing on the grassy knoll with his leather sack of flint axe-heads. He was turning something portentuous over in his mind. Reflecting on the future and referring back to the past, as was the way of his folk so to do. Only Ly stood frozen to the spot for a good deal longer than most could countenance, and hence his special status amongst his company, and his close friendship with the oldest of the Wise Ones, Old Man Wem. Ly was a traveller and a trader who took his stock from the first Old Rovers whoever walked across the seabed in the Ice-time, and first came fetching to these shores and this blest, fair isle that Ly knew as home. Hence, there was a certain arrogance in his look and hence, the innate dignity with which he moved and bided by his work for the company.

He stared into middle distance as the sun dropped a portion lower in the sky and shifted his emphasis from the horizon to the round-shaped hill where the smoke rose, and where the ditch of the first earthwork boundaries were clearly visible. Whilst he stared, his mind went back to the past. The globe of the sun and the twirl of smoke rising up triggered a memory brought unaccountably from his fund of folk experiences. He felt at once vivified, comforted, inflicted with an unusual nostalgia and confirmed in his own belongings as he remembered the age-old tale that had been told to him ever since he was old enough to listen and understand.

He remembered sitting by the central fire in his father's lap a few days before the winter's feasting began. It had been uncommon cold, the dark and ice come early that year and a certain grimness had inflicted the company. To lift the dreariness, eld Mendion had begun to tell one of their best-loved stories.

In his rhythmic and sing-song rasping voice, which held them all spellbound, he had begun to weave his tale telling the story of Apollo and how the God they worshipped had come to be. He could hear the voice of eld Mendion spinning through his mind, enthralling him, alongside the sound of the fire crackling, the flames dancing upon the season-weathered skin of his kinsman as he spoke, the smell of the smoke and the red deer they had cooked still hanging in the air. Like an indelible imprint on his mind, the story - *the lay of Apollo* - recounted and unwound itself as he stared at the slow settling of the sun upon the further hills behind his homestead.

"Long, long ago when the Ice-time was still enravelled 'cross thay great tide-streams n' clefts of All Land an' the age o' thay monster-lizard was cum well nigh to close bein', all but'un memory in the minds o' thay folk, thay did live 'un peoples as was stolsun n' far-going of thought next to none. Tall n' faire thay wert, strong as thay grizzled bear, who'm did live in thane mountains where'as home o' thay folk. Na - 'twas held 'mongst this'n folk that shape-shifter gods had given thay knowing of fire-ken n' the power ovva dreaming-flight. Saa! was thay raised up before n' beyond all thay rude folks 'cross Evera Land. In thay mountain home, way above the Ice-line, thase did learn o' the fire-craft fra the shadow-hands of gods, who'ud shiftens-shape, as water forms its course 'ccording to thane contours o' the land.

Chosen thay'n were, for the brightness o' their spirits n' for the stoll-strength of their true arm n' will. But as the knowing was passed and learned, bright beings came fra thay stellar-kin'd to hunt the shape-shifter

gods, to battle 'un an' vanquish 'un an' erase all thay fire-craft fra span o' human memory. But canny-like these mountain-folk hid i' the deep caves o' thay rock n' be dint o' thay stalwart n' toughen-tree spirit, were spared the wrath o' thay Fieriiads who'm lightning-braiz'd thane skies, shattering the dark wi' a thunder-song as clept fear in of evera heart. And the shape-shifter gods did no more return'n. Except'n it was sayeth that in some special times i' the forests o' thay un-iced valleys strange-lilds could be seen. One wi' great horns bigger'un thay tines o' the greatest stag n' wi' a voice as was strange-some wooning, a voice as could freeze'n thay blood well as nigh, when wilder-ed, scowlls cumen long. Saa! do we give to thay God o' the Green, the Horned One as comes cheer in spring, as mun be revered on thay travel-paths of all seasons long.

Saa! did thay mountain folk, knowingfulled o' fire-craft felt in thay bones thay mun share the benivolance, these sacred light o' flame, wi' thane folks ovva further feld. And gradual-like as thay Ice-line did melt to water'un valleys wi' trees, these'n folks did spread their knowing wi' neighbours n' travellers as did cum near ovva nigh to afar, at thay summer o' gatherun time. Saa! did all peoples cum to know fire-craft n' to look to n' respect, full-fine, thay folk who'ud given unstilllike ovva fire-ken - clept'un golden-hawk folk, winged of thought as the bronzayed hawk who did soar highest peaks, 'cross thay alps o' thane world - the eagle folk of fire-ken who did see-es far in vision as thay mightiest hawk-claw all.

Eh na i' th' cycle of a many-fold season an' be th' swelling n' starving of'm countless moons, there was born unto these eagle folk of fire, a childer full special n' rare. This'n special childer was birthed on a night the lik-es of which had'nay been seen not ever afore. Twert such'm night it did seem that thay gods were'n throw-ed stellar-kin dund to thane goodly earth. A night as was naither i' the memory of thane elder folks nor yet in th' tales that the wise ones'ud told. A night when it did seem as if the heavens rained fire, as if thay venerid stars'ud burst aflame n' fallen to bruise dane Modor, wi' dints n' fire-tails that 'sooth did turn folk's mindes wild. Thay was some as did say it noted a warning, showed anger of the bright ones at thay burning begun of, to helft clear a space midst the forested way. Thay was some as did say it knelled the ending of Time, naither'ud be their age gone-ap-by - n' thay was some otherus who did spake of a childer, brought to birth be the fiery helds o' the gods - a special childer, a change-bringer, he who'ud draw down the Gold One fra the skies n' woo him'us warmth for all winter's long.

Na was born to the gold-hawk folk, on this night of never-seen fire-fall, a childer wi' eyes all blue as a clear-dawn; a childer with hair like a feld of corn cum cutting-time at harvest, with hair like the leaf burnished bronze at time of autumn fall. Born of a beautisum Azanagelle, beget be thane jerntrowe Henddryn, he known saa resolute, fu' strong; this childer, named Apollid, grew more man-some stoll, more far in's sighting, more braw an' fiesty in's bearing as ever had cum to that folk, who lived in the lild of the Great Lands stretch.

This childer who clept the namen of Apollid was baith dream-like 'n muscle-willed. He did move him as quiet as thay still ones, wi' naither a whisper to show'un whence he trod. He listened fu'-tentive as thay wise ones tund-temple song, 'n he hafted his spear n' sent swift his arrow likes nain other'ud been brought to th' blood bond afore. On's name-day single-handed he wrestled dun n' killed-dead a brunnen-bear, as big n' as fierce as ony bear can be. And in time, as he grew full to his manhood, when he spoke his word-weaved ho, all on'us folk cum to listen n' be led. Til 'un was known as Apollid - he of thay wording that flowed lik-es drops of gold fra thane Bright One o' th' Dawn.

But druth fra thane bowels on thay mountain, did cum 'un monster terrible foul. Forged 'n formed nee thane belly o' The Mother, made fra magic mind-weave o' these Fieriiads; Fieriiads as'ud cum to take fire aways fra human hand in thane aged times gone by. Thisse monster did skrake sa'unearthel-sharp, wickedfower hidyus it freez-ed the vitals on any as heard. Fixed 'un to be pluck-ed 'n torn limb fra limb, as the weasal-snake do chill 'n still the prey it do drink these'n blood of. Thisse fowerstirk 'n terrifying baist was winged all-leathery like'us night-bat but scores beyond the size o' these little flitters. So huge 'n so hane that when 'un swooped razor-skraikin' likes lance to'un brain that terrible cry, it did blot out the sky like'es vasty cloud fra wind-nourished storm-torrent dark. Mass-grim, dagger-toothed, flint-clawed, this'n fousome baist roamed the mountains o' thay Great Lands spilling blood, scattering 'n renting thane flesh of many-a folk, fuelling fear where stoll nerves'ud been. Soon all 'cross the Lands 'n nigh still amidst thay valleys havoc 'n horror had set all folk aquakin' 'n all but afear-ed to travel or to hunt in the ways as'ud been kept fra before living memory.

Na thay baist did rip 'n range even to thane folk of Apollid, shrakinen to mind-numb howelin' eerie-keld, freezen folks, dead as stone, in these tracks. Then swooping to shred their'n flesh fra thay bone, laivin' mangled carcass to terror-quake sons of stoll-men who'ud seen thay ghashtly-gurgitated remains. But dour

as savage as a monstersome three, did Apollid's fair brow becomen when he did see thay terrible remains - th' baist's meal made of man all twisted 'n bloodied, inside spewed full-out, gnashed-up 'n livid. Aye 'n nair did his will flinch fra the vengeance he vowed. Til the death he flint-swore his'n sinew 'n nerve. Naither to still his'n fearful quest til he'ud crushed 'n killed, ripped wing fra wing, all spilled thay horridable-innards, sundered 'n split these most fearsome-foul jaws as did plunder the flesh o' thane folk he was sworn to.

Wi'un knowing that pierc-ed past thay gloom, cast drear in the minds of'n evera man, Apollid did leather bind his limbs, gatherun from's folk the staunchest made arrow-hafts 'n ready-flexed'us long bow moistened stoll-mort, set the sharpest cut, of his dagger-flint fixed, like a single killing tooth to thay belt that girt his 'n midriff. And aye, in his knowing he plugged his'n ears with th' fat on the aurochs so that deaf to all sound, he set out to thane high peaks where trow-na 'twas said, the baist made's nasty nest o' noxious bones. Deaf to all sound, insistent-alone, still young as the green corn not yet boldened be sun-season, Apollid set out on's fearful quest, sharp on his wits, silent as a windless night he stole, casting his blood-keen glance hither'n an' athither'n, likes thay owl lookin' to's back, even as his handsome hale limbs, stepped froward-long, for the length of a sun 'n be the dint of a dark moon night. And high high up Apollid did climb where the white snow topped still that aerial clime, when far down below thane fruit was swelling en mellow harvest sun. Kept warm be his bear-fur wrap 'n leather-binding, sharp-eyed's the gold hawk as do wheel in the sky, keen-drop to'us prey like a thunderbolt let fly, Apollid kept his look abound, fixed in's readiness to fearless 'n fight. Laith! The light on th' Dawn was red as th' dye fra the felled alder tree, as red as the blood berries that spring 'pon the haw 'n askrakin anhowelin' fra its bone-cave so high, baist did swoop 'n blot out thane light o' the ruddy-dawn sky. Wi' its wings whirling like a snow-storm skin-tund, its terrible monster-maw slavering all-ready to rent the flesh of man. Angered twert, be the bold of Apollid's march cum close be its nest where its dark heart did rest, straight-flew its nark apnar to mankin, desirous of scattering our'n Apollid limb fra limb, all across these peaks o' granite grey. Aye 'n fearsome did it skrake waitin' for'issle foolish, bold son of stoll-man, to freeze 'n stop-dead, still as a stone for the claws of thane baist to reap'us hot blood.

Eh na but Apollid, wi'an hero's heart, brow in'us stance 'n grim long-held, his limb, he fixed druth baist wi'a flint cold eye nain hearen thay nefaire-cry as sought to freeze'un dead. He drew back his bow-strong, set arrow-haft to flight, pierced the breast of thay wicked baist - flaili-yed'n monster wings, likes whirl-wind cum nigh, above him i' the blood-dawn sky. Eh but these craiture was dagg-ed fra the hell-mouth of hate 'n did tear the arrow fra its leathery hide, plummeten to death-gorge this'n troublous male of humankind. But staunch-set of will 'n brave-bent'us brow, Apollid did fast-flight from'us bow thay shafts of 'un double-spent arrow, settin' thane foul baist to cry-pluck wi' pain, afore it did wheel to turnen cum again. Aye 'n despite the sharp-skill o' these best arrow hafts, gross baist did cast the flints fra its hide, as if thay'twese the nagging of'un tiredsum speck o' flies.

Wi' its nasty dagger-teeth wide 'n ajar, its rip-razor claws clept outright to clutch, downen it descended to pluck at the face of this troublesome man-child. But fierce bright contained, steadfast tay endure, rugged wi' the strength of'un storm-toss-ed mighty oak, Apollid did stand to meet's loathed enemy. Eh na in his mansome hand, leather-bound protected, did he catch 'n hold the leg on his foe, whilst wi'us flint-dagger sharp as the lion's tooth he thrust at the throat o' thay carious baist. Saa! did he bring 'un acrashin' to ground.

Thane baist wasnay dead nor defunct-gone but ripp-ed 'n flailed wi' its hidyus claws, opened its maws to crush 'n to twist, rent limb fra limb, tear head fra torso, o' this mankin ah should've squashed aright in a blink of its ghoulley-viled eye. But thane will of Apollid tund immovable as thay rock of its mountain home 'n though it did scrussle 'n tear 'n tussle wi' a might as was more than five-bears strong, Apollid did grip it wi' so fierce an intent its spirit did stagger 'n crumble 'n fall. Before the bright flame of Apollid's will, the baist did cower what it couldnay surmount. Til in a surge likes swell-tide o' thay Mother, Apollid did grasp that rank 'n blood-globb-ed jaw 'n wrench-tore the maw o' thane mephitic baist, splitting its skull wi' hard muscle honed as Winteree's ice-lock unyielding - 'pon the frosted Land. And laith! did the man-rent baist fell'd down wi' a gurgling blood-frothen pain as its limbs thay did lurch-ed their'n last. And eh na was Apollid priz'd vanquisher as at last he sat bleeding 'n weakened fra the fight 'n the blood-loss of his victoree's battle. Near to thane dark lands o' death was Apollid in thay aftermath o' battle wi'ert fiercesome 'n foul-dwirlen baist, forged fra the wrath o' the haters spleen. Fainting 'n gasping but heart-strong inside, given praise to the gods as he crawled to'us rest, Apollid found'us way to thay monster-louse cave, high in the snow-clept climes, close to the path of the sun. There Apollid laid'un to sleep, naither knowing past caring, if in sleep he'ud drift fra mortal'd life to the land o' thay dreamen

death where these silent ones do wait.

High in that cave-cleft of the mountain, high 'n close to thay realms of the sun Apollid did sleep him for the length of a sunrise 'n two nights of a sliver-new moon. When he wakened he found himself alive still 'n living, then too weak to travel he made'um 'n fire taught of's ancestors-learning. He gathured berries 'n spagmoss fra tinder, th' small birds 'n beasin's he could catch fra his cave-holt, thence stayed he to heal his'm near-mortal woundin's. For seven full cycles of the moon did Apollid stay aloft in's sky-close cave, recovering his'n strength for thay journey home 'n thinking 'n watchin' whiles, the irids of thay Bright Ones as sparkled constant-ever-on adrift in thane massy night sky. Apollid from'us looking saw how these starry spears path-shifted 'cross each deep-black night moving tuthree time of'n cool moon's pace. And laith! So it happened at the entrance to'us cave there did jut, heads taller'un he, a pinnacle-prong childer-made be the alp he had climbed up to. He watched 'n he saw how the Gold One in each clear dawn would cast a diverse shadow fra thay rock-prong stooedes-tall. He watched 'n he saw these shadows fade 'n grow; a changeful track that stretched 'n strayed wi' thay coming of winter's ice-time 'n the melting of snows in thay blossom-burst of spring. Thence his timing he came to keep 'n he sought to hold his sanity be the charting of thane golden sun.

Na 'cos th' flame of 'un's spirit, was bright as th' firetails that do flash fra the skies in a rare'n wilder dark, den Modor, The Great Mother, did send her'n spirits to speak to 'un through th' dream-world. In'us visions Apollid saw thane settlement Land be off on its own. This Land that his own golden-hawk folk traversed to, on thay seasonal swim when shallow seas became bridged of'un ice to favour thane frequenten o' this'n northerner land. Be vision, in a flash of's sun-bright mind, Apollid did see the sleepstake 'n bounty on a fairerful isle. He saw the shorning of thay tree-fells, the shaping of thane hill-scapes, the planting of great stones as'ud mark the passage of the sun 'n the heavens, just like the rock-jut afore him served'us purpose, marking thay shadow-glyphs for'n eroodighted while. Eh na in mind's bright eye did he see the building o' temples fu'chantment mayjestical that'ud grace the lild on a fair-free land, connect'um to thane myriad glow, thay flickersome lights in vasty deep skies that ever'es dark-domed 'n blue-spaced above'un. Held did he call to The Mother for blessing, to favour'us vision he'd forsoothed along. 'N na circling to the rock-jut thrust afore his mountain-high cave, swept on the curve of a seven-colour arch, came'n golden bird bigger'n likes he'd ever seen. Thane noble bird ovva golded wing did descend to perch aft that jut of rock 'n gazed on Apollid wi'un keen-rent eye. From its beak it did drop some shining clear stone, as of water that had fixed into rock, hard yet clear 'n sparkling strange in thay sunlight that glanced 'n winked fra that gift all magickal-made - fra that gift by a golden bird given, that gift of a myriad-work stone, came kernal of crystal gestaytied, bloomed mighty-worth 'n sun strowen, be he of the golden brow.

Laith did Apollid feel mighty-sun moved 'n blessed beyond fullscore 'n more. Long had he spent fra weakness to strength, dependant on fickle-will of She who governs all, grateful for the warmth of fire-flame that's kinsfolk had brought humans knowing of. And now when his strength was come nigh full-stol he did take him ready for'us journey, patch his bear-fur torn in'us battle, renewed his arrow-hafts 'n leather-kind binding. Saa, did he climb then down fra thane mountain to travel back the path of's near-death plight but now all hale 'n hero-driven he did stride with'n light in's fair-fettled heart.

But for'us kinsfolk most thought of'um dead, passed to thay dream-shores where the soul-wings do wed. Though troth did they know Apollid'ud driven aivil monster far aways far, for naither was 'un seen drear-darkened no sky, no kinsfolk blood-spilled 'n mangled nain more. Though their fair one wi' the golden-corn hair 'n the ways wise-spoken, wi'us word-weave pure, liken dew fra first dawn, though he Apollid had naither return-ed, he'ud driven these flesh-renting foul baist, fromert evermore. Aye'ud they wept when their staunch 'n braw champion, the best fra the blest of their kindred came no more. And aye'ud they wept as they watched in dour forest 'n waited be the brook 'n the foot on thane mountain. Long'ud they kept a light in their heart but when hard winter's hoar-frost came ice-frozen stead; they knew, they believed - alasle! alumno! - their hero, he mun be dead.

Thraist then, in honour of'n rare-braveful hero, these thought 'ud met'us end whiles fighting for'ns kinsfolk, these sought to mark his passing in a ways special-rare, naither forgettin' the fair youth-blest fair who'd spilled of'us blood for the good on the many. All elders consulted, priestessi-considered, lead-folk's decided 'n blessed be Azanagelle who'd birthed brave Apollid, these kindred did raise girtt finger of stone, on a stretch o' the uplands, pointing straight-touch above thay. Pointing straight-touch to the Sun in'us cloudy scapes seas. And aye, these'all did gatherun round, to weep and to wail; to give thanks to The Mother 'n the Gold One of Day for sending Apollid to drive thay snaggerdhuun foul-baist aways. Na though the golden youth lived in their hearts 'n sang in their memory, whist the winter's home-fire, thay

thought, all'us kinsfolk, naither to see their brave bronzed Apollid, nain more could he be
But mother's is knowing beyond birth's seperate-ness, 'n thane moon-ma nee Apollid, faithfu' Azanagelle
unerring-steadfast, did hold at her'n heart a hope as'ud see her hale son return. And aye though she'd
sanctioned the raising o' the sun-rock, she couldnay believe i' the depth of her knowing that her fair'n
brave man-childer was gone 'n nain more. Saa! in the spring sun of a joy-filled day did she walk to the
sun-stone placed tall to her'n hero-son. Evera day, since Apollid'd gone, her'ud cumby beseechin thay
all-power gods fora grant ney on wishes 'n favour for'un son. Saa! on that day a full cycle's passing and
over again since Apollid had left'un to quell-kill dwirt-baisten, she did spy in the distance a stranger's
approach. And Laith! as she watched'um cum closer 'n by, 'n she saw his 'n hair full gold as the sun, she
knew her Apollid'ud return-ed home-shore. Thraist! was there bounty 'n bounty full-store, blood singing
veins 'n eyes wet wi' joy. Na'un the feasting went dusk fra the dawn, in praise of Apollid risen fra death's
land, alive 'n full brow!

A full cycle of seasons then'ud gone by, afore'n Apollid did speak the wise of's mind's eye. He gatherun
the elders, the lead-folk 'n priestesses 'n spoke in's word-weave of the seven-coloured bow. He
showed'un the gift fra the eagle's beak, the jewel like water turn'd clear into stone. He spoke of's
thought-span, his charts o' the sun. He show-ed how the stone-crystal shimmeren-light did warm 'n cool
'n picture-draawt a-mind 'n respond to thane spell-chants stell-age brought by. He told his'n kinsfolk of's
dreaming song, the Magic-Wyrd beckonin' in a north-lander isle. That isle they'ud travelled to whan the
ice-froze a bridge to gatherun a fruit-store, a harvest for hame. He sang-spoke'us knowing o' thane star-
stirred space, the voices of the spirits that'd whispered - "Whist, begin! begin!" He spoke'us skilful,
bright as lightning stroke o' fire, bolden-byautiful as thay finesung tree-bretheren. He paid homage to
their braw-noble ancestors blood, who'd kept fire's light i' face o' dread foe, for the good o' thase'n all
beyond their blest-kindred. He stirred up each heart for'n quest to the brave, to live in new ways, willed
flint-formed into being. He spoke how their'n reverence'ud raise'm on high, raise'm to reflect the glory of
thane sky 'n how in their worship they'ud match 'pon Land the praise of the Bright beings, their own
fiery star, the Sun o' their'n life, brought thay into being, along'ov pale-shiftin, thay silvery moon, be
skill-mancin' maeystro-ment of'un Unison-Hand. And aye be the shaping of soil 'n stone, brought-nigh
fame-fu' be a crystal accord, creatin' thane temples o' rocks to the sun - thraist! ey'ud draw-up fra the
Womb of All Things, destiny's deliver-ed, thane Great Holy Wyrd - for the good of thay kinsfolk
froward'un time, past ken o' hunder-wealth, a thousand cycles on.

So potent-vig'rous, so forcefu'-eloquent was the speech-song of the gold-haired Apollid, so upliften
vision-strong thais warrior, wise beyond the youth on's year, all'n thays folks were wooed be his word-
spell 'n swayed to foller'un spark set aflame, in the mind-scapes of their high-dreamin-high. And aye
when they saw the clear crystal stone like'un tear shed-shinning fra thane Mother's eye, truly were they
awed be this gift full of light 'n gladly did they swear their fealty to foller'n; He, who was hero 'n harp-
span o' Wyrd, harbinging great feats to carve 'n continue thane legacy on.

Saa! thane company as pledged to Apollid ken dwirt-sturd en stell; fu' resolute n' glarn. Trow, thay did
silthily move to stand be shoulder'un Apollid, shewin' allegiance wi' naither a word but be whole body-
sprission. Remember-red thay for all their'n elan; the worth thay proved of endeavour gegan. Thraist! Ihr
namen passed fra kinkine to kinkine a hunder hunder cycles on, cumme nigh as pith en a brand o'
memory:

Thern there be, helver o' thay aurochs horn n' Halwyn fox-hair wi'us flint-knappin' skill, Brynedin fleet-
a-foot, Guifron the yew-sever, bow-maker deft. And 'oomankin answert did cum by azel: Enyllen flax-
tress, weaver-hand 'dept, Cariadden bowl-shaper n' Temissle raven-lock, Miiaren meliflowerus, wi'
songen o' skylark, meagan n' sweet, Bodianna mickle-struth n' Feoris the lithe, Leahllan bread n' brewer,
Silfaen thay stitch-quick n' Nyadd o' quabberken. Along of a side thase brace o' stoll mankin: Dutlas -
quiet-reeth n' Kurnay the fire-hand, sail-tund Quernis, water-wend trailer, Jonnock the hasp-pitcher, bard
be the dusk, long-bearded Hergan arrow to'us mark, Yealdor birch-cleaver, wi' pipe trillern gifted n'
lastlaith cum Guilam, axe-wielder grim n' corrac-lat fitcher. Thase were the company glendid n' fower
who'm took it a mind to pioneer be Apollid.

All in flurry, bustle to be ready, did thase folk who'ud go, build up their'n skiff-paddles fra cut-wooden
lat-frames, water-proofed tight 'ginst afrolicsome wave. Eh na thase set to in preparing their furs to
keep'un in warmesome fra drear winter's dread. Thay treated 'n cut their'n countless leather-goods, their
auroch-oiled footwear, body-wraps 'n breeks, their bindings 'n bast-wefts, their coverall cloaks. Thay
honed up their'n axe-heads 'n gatherund their spagmoss, their'n tinder-shells 'n tree-gum, bow-strongs 'n
spear-hafts, the flint-points of arrow-swifts. Thay took o' their'n leaving laith blessings o' th' elders, the

chant-spell protection of their kinsfolk who'd stay. Wished on their way be the heart-hum of moon-ma's who harnessed a favour fra the blood-cups of wombhood. And aye fu' half the company hale-set 'n stoll-brow were druth-bent 'n stalwart to foller'un mainprow well-pointed nigh; on, twert that north-lander isle. Whiles rest of the company stayed be the sun-rock, raised to a hero's challenge, planted like first seed ovva soil to bring forth fu' bounty o' barley crop, aye. And eh na in the cleaving of a goodly some folk did doubled 'n trippled the score of'un worthcum, as thay each waved'un aft be the by of a break, nain severed no tie but bond-forged anew in the colonise-creation of a north-lander isle.

And straight-time did thay travel on the seasonal known, traded 'n talked wi' many cycles gone by. Though in a squall did the storm-clouds blew 'n the waves tossed'un fiercefufu mega-drifts high, wi' Apollid's wise reasoning 'n brave spirit shining, be the grace of the Goddess the shore-tide's welcome boundary was soon within reach. Aye 'n spied thay fra the swayey-sum waves bright-fair 'n white in light o' settin' sun, these snaw-white comel-cliffs as beckon-ed grace fra the Land thay'ud journeyed cumbly Thankfu' these pioneering peoples led be Apollid in their alms to the gods, did give praise for the swiftness of'n journey, for the difficulties lift 'n overcome. Be the great swell-tide of the ocean, be the myriad of shimmersome stars, did Apollid's fair folk light a beacon fire high, to give grace-prayers to the gods of their new land 'n kin. Affirming their vision 'n staking a claim, swearing be the bond of their honour-word 'n blood, thay shear-ed thay each their hair tresses grown, the lark-brown, the night-black, the fox-coloured hue alongof the gold of Apollid's thay knew. There in a circle-connection, unbroken from an ageless time, thay buried deep in the sands of Albion's fair Land, the hair where their magic contained, chant-woven intent-bound, fixed forever 'n a day, the pure oath of their uttering deemed that thay'ud stay - stay 'n stay 'n stay 'n stay, immovable as'un mighty mountain-grim, changeless 'n maygical-poetic as the certain-sunrise dawn, honeyed eloquent, powerfu' compelling as the voice of the wind 'n the sea. Saa! this he saw Apollid - This! it was meant to be.

'N cum the dawn of a fresh new day, thane company did treck be Apollid's lead, up fra the mouth of' browad smooth-flowen river. And aye the land was virgin-rich, with tree-bretheren vast 'n unbound, tall as the white cliffs, coasted south-east the isle, broad as the wide-water's way. All day long did these first pioneers travel be the watery-flow, sleep-camped 'neath stells in the dusk of nightfall living fra the lap of the land. Next sunrise Apollid did look to thane tear-crystal, consulting directions, the lie of the hills. Then followed he in to central south, mapping a way fra the dappled sun's glint, til all strange and strewed stood great giant rocks, the bones of the earth cast afar 'n afree. These rock-stone was older than of any they'ud known, full harder'n denser, toughest earth-bone grown. Shielded 'n shape-nar be the forested veil, buried 'n bebstocked all'cross the midriff lee, further 'n far-seamed than ever'un eye could see. Grey 'n mottled white, these stones as stung Apollid's far-sight, echoed of chalk-cliffs that white-gleamed i' the sun as seen fra a wave-tossed sea. Special-strange thay seemed those giantish-cast stones, as contained with the spirit of a magical isle. Subtle-spoke thay ssalms to Apollid wi' silences deeper'un word-song, wi' a message that moved vibrational, resonant rock-bone to blood-bone, the melding of substance on substance, nain distinct 'n nain divide, man-kin to mountain-kin an'all fra the Earth-mother's womb. Instant-like he knew then there thay would haft'n clear, there it was these'ud sow a seed 'n shape thane unturned Land.

So began the mighty Wyrd of'un proud 'n gracefilled folk. Many did the tree-fells spread, full cycles spent in the axe-biting active, in cutting and clearing, in building staunch homesteads, in hale-kept thane body's health be the flesh of the aurochs, be the haunch of the red deer. Be thane goodly-grace of Earth-Mother's Store were all'un provides matched 'n met. Be the richness of an untried land did the company of Apollid grow vig'rous 'n fairsome strong.

Eh na when thane sap be risen 'n gruff-call rutting stags be horn-danced thay glade, when blossom-froth bursts 'un many-fold branch 'n fresh-green decks bare-wood, lustrous, liken hair-tresses fra ripe 'oomankin's beautisome brow. Aft the ice-lock of winter's fierce 'n spring's song is joyful nigh, thraist-urge thane mansfolk looks laith to's bind-fast 'n sped-thoughts to mating whiles blood be insing. Saa! this'n season did spark our'n hero Apollid 'n the winsome Goddess did bewitchen bedazzle'us sky-bluen eye.

With all the wealth toll of timber-felling, man's time was taken and's 'oomankin did gather'un plant-till thane soil. Unaccustomed she to stol bow and arrow, the haft and the gavel of flint-point and spear. But nendrless, cum a fine and fettle-free day, Apollid did snatch some moments alonesome in a walk be the greenwood where'un pure water's flow. Cum athrustle in the greenleaf be thick on the forest and Apollid did freeze-still to spy what could be. Brazen his sight cum fair beguildy light, a birth of beauty he'ud seen but naiter been struck be afore. Stood she curves swelling store, eyes akeen to the pijinene, aloft of

a branch all preenin its feathers ovva pink and grey. In her hands was flexed'un stol bow, in her stance struck hunter's quiver-lance, as fra its preenin branch grey-pink pijinene did fell'd, dead fra the arrow of 'ooman saa fair, kept secret the theft of'un faither's bow. And rare-black her hair as'un raven's wing, black as the jet-stone fra the northern shores 'n rosie-soft her downy cheek, her skin with the sheen ovva thay ramblin-rose, as soft as the petals of that flower of thay forest.

Straightsome past thought-much Apollid did appear to pick up thay pijinene her'n arrow killed aright 'n she full of blushes, uncertain-exposed at her man-be-right's task, did thank 'n beseech our'n Apollid wi' a look 'n a sigh. Wi' a sigh 'n a look fra her dewy eye, dreamy-deep as the doe of the forest, emerald aglintin glance-like of a springtide leaf, shamin' now caught at a mankin's task, she stood afore he, the hero-gold of'n all their company. "Na Temissle," quoth he, for such was it known her name," Yen be aft strappin' for a mansome craft it do seem - 'n druth! your'n aim be true to centre-mark. Na! as thane arrow be pierced this feathered breast, swear the sight of thee has smitten me too. Wi' a maid as can stretch saa straight an' saa true I'll naither me want fer'n meat on thay platter and na shall our'n fireside be warmer'n flame - if Temissle's lip-buds would pout-speak to say 'aye me will 'n tie me I to he clept Apollid let'un be' whey a brood of fair childer shall furrow ovva thee. Temissle, Temissle, liltin fair'n level, saa'un speak-plaisin - let 'un be."

Temissle was troth-done all quiversome, faint fra the nearness of he as did speak, he who was gold of'n hero with'un eyes of deep-songa blue, with 'un eyes saa clear as the blue of summer skies, tall 'un straight-lithe as'un sapling tree, a full head 'n taller than most mankin company. In reply wi' silence more meaning dane word-swap, she glistened her deer-dark, forest-glint ey-es and faced him wi' her'n lips ripe-red as thane berries of the mountain ash tree. And he did bend him to his kiner mark, twa lips fra he as brushed wi' she, cleavesome long together while, nain laiving off til twas clear-sealed 'n thase heart's blood did beat'un as one.

Eh na was thay company carouselled 'n well nigh did thay feasting begin, wi' dance-twirls 'n drumbeats 'n songstirs 'n merry-wealth fra dusk to dawn awhile. And eh na were thay flowers bestrewed at nay-binden circle-blessing 'n cheer-give did thay much thane company wi' smiling 'n tear-dimm-ed eye. Saa! did Apollid take to he'un moon-ma, birth of beautiful she, to warm a light inside ovva he. Saa! did Temissle bring'un full brace of fair childer, to swell strong thay blood-bonds their company nigh - laith! to swell strong the blood on thay company nigh, to marshal 'ginst the dun-gliffs and dour-stints of time. And aye will's all was worked 'pon land, seven sons 'n seven daughters beget 'n hale-brought, birthed fra the breast of the lovely Temissle, birthed fra the breast of the blest fair Temissle.

And nigh as thay company grewed on, the eld-kith did felled be, took fra life of blood and bone to invisible guard thane portals unknown, the dreaming-dhuun lands where the worthy walk sky-tall, their spirit'us vigilant protecting fer'n thay kin as still lived on. Thraist! did Apollid deem fit to mark their'n passing, in agreyment wi' full company, be the stones to the sun, as had first been when, when his fost folk'ud thought he was dead. He remember-red aye thay great stone raised, to he when'us kin thought hell-baist'ud torn him, fra land of thane living to thate of the dead. He remember-red well wi'un keening light cum close to's breest wi' the thought. And aye did all thay company behind him cum truer'n true, wi' one mind thay thought, wi' one voice thay cheered, wi' one heart thay follered their chosen Apollid, to do as thay'ud all settin to. Cleared thay the craggy hilltops, the gentle valley lee, 'n worked thay moon cycles long, digging dirthed a drocht, a homestead harbour dwert-grund 'n lithel-loom, to keep in reygal staytus-high dane spirit'us 'n bones ovva thay who'ud passed fra life of living-brave to thay Spans of Silent-Ever On. Wi' girt unison of effort, wi' 'oomankin casting chant-spells to soil, wi' mankin all braw fra the brute of his muscle, thase mighty monumental rock was raised fer'nigh, on thay all of Time.

And in the lie of a reverent land-drift, full resonant with rich Earth-Mother's store, a sacred area was nigh set be. A praise-place to thay shimmerten-stells domed bright vast above'n. A temple to thay fire-star, thay bronze-embolden Sun, was dug wi'us sweat-toil of trey-mendous effort, wi'un fire of will 'n worth, plough-staves urrdapted, antler-picks drith-wielden, crystal-coaxed na mind-ruth, wheel-grooved 'n drey-turreted the loam ovva grist intention, hied to thay childer of'un frowarden-time. Hied to we, who momentary be, nigh in thay dance of Life.

Be the subtle sparks of crystal light, be the laying of hearts and hands, stones were chosen and stones were brought, crafted and dressed be the ray of the sun, be the flare of a fire-flame carefully crossed, be the chanting of unison minds struck and readied for'n sacred task. And mazed were all be Apollid's skill, his hands with the warming power of sun, his hands with the power of'un life-giving sun did stoke and shape thase hard stones, dense fra the mountainkin. And his spirit did spake thay words of'un wind, thane constancy 'n wisdom of water's seesey-less flow, the deep-sung spell of thay treasurefull soil, the bone of

the Earth-mother's loam. Eh na liken thee tallow of animal-fat, liken thee dough of wheat-pounded flour, liken thee good clay all moulding to shape'us desire did thay stones of'un mountain kin, ne Apollid's hands become. Mystic-magic thraist! - was through thane full company be the blessing of Apollid's fire. Thraist! Did magic 'n mystery unloose be the dell of that sacred isle.

Mirror reflecting like 'un image 'pon a still waterpool did these sacred placed stones concord with thay path of the mighty-fire sun. Mind-melded aft to mark-rise brightes-pitch autumn star, unified aligned-ap, ne the dark of the seasonal-swing. Temple-tuned the chart circle, mapping thane awefull shadowskill be the dint of dawn to dusk. Deep and deep and deeper still, sunk thay stones lik-es jewels, lik-es tattoo skin-glyphs, in thane hide of'un Earth-mother She, Goddess fra birth til death do us all. Deep and deep and deep as the sea, cannily cleft and honed druth-ne to the arc of the special-tide solstice key, stood thay stones in a round and still ever these stay, the first 'n the last of thay Great-Mother's kin. The first 'n the last raised fearfund mayjestical be the dint of thee mystic-light; garnerun ne godswain sun-strong fire-ray, de-meter converse-na subtle-soft thane moon. The first 'n the last of thay Great-Mother's kin raised be the far-sight of Albion's fair folk. Placed as benediction, as grandthurl design, as a ssarm 'n a song to the Mother of all, as praise-gesture strong, as chart-call 'n power-dhuun, an legacy-long to the blood and the bone, these vision-creators of'un god-given craft, thay of the sun-golden spirit, these first-maeston proud-full, kindred shaped beauteous, this'n fair lovely Albion isle.

Whey na wi' the building of these rock-fortress hallowed-halls fer'n spirit-flown kindred in dhu land of thane dreaming, foo succoured was thay be their spirit-flown dead. Fortified and bond-boldened be the wing-given flesh 'n the holy bones kept high foster'un might of ancestral dread. Whey na did these Works of God frew'n wonder spread far, coast unto coast 'n all across the hinter-lands foo beyond dash 'n wave-drift of thay girthswill massy seas. And curious-like as mony folk be, did travellers and rovers cum to see, the mightisun stone-craft birthed 'n hoisted upso, rooted mountain-longtide in the depth of steep-carved clay. Werily and wondersome did all folks be, who saw these mighty chamber-tombs, the circle stones made fast-forever, magicked and seeming soil-grown, as druth 'n adrang as the tree-bretheren kin, as marvel-meglithic as thay granite-alps of Great Lands.

And all the timber axe-sheared fra mony a seasonal shunt and turn, that Apollid and his company'ud felled in grandsumgrand desiyeen, did go to make these homesteads, these wainsteads, these wheel-curts and dragframes, these settle-loons and trestle-longs, these bows 'n hoes 'n arrow hilts, these spoons 'n looms 'n mealie-bins, these carryalls 'n spear hafts 'n ploughblades 'n broomstaves. But more and more and plentiful besides did there be, past needs supplanted be the druth of colossally stone. Saa! master of thay sail 'n sea, skilled in skiff 'n paddle-craft speed-sojourneyed thay, twert lands 'cross salt-briney swell, the ever-on motion-song of the vast-drift Ocean-tide. Eh na did they trade with that wealthen of wood, taking thay log-boon far-frew 'n wide, fullsooth east-west, southern crost north, 'n further'un sight or mind cum know. Whey na did their proud repute all foller'un wheresomever be thay tarried, wheresomever be thay strayed. And god-like did strangers see our'n Albion kin with their wealth of the kiner craft, with their knowledge of the wind and the sea, with their bearing proud and honour-bound, trading their timber and flint-frew for sakes of venturesome learning cum beguiled anew.

Laith! did thay 'oomankin bundance-birth thane wheatfield, thane barley stretch, a riff of poppy-flowers and flax in the meads of the Albion isle. Thraist, while these manfolk did girde-heave famed rock-crop 'n tarry-ho fron coastlines acradling best tree-limbs for a trade- wears far-drift of seas, did 'oomankindred care-take full seemly, the druth of thee homesteades bound. In the seasonal long when the sun girt honed strong and the sky was blue-so lik-es blue as thay blue-buds in thay beech-woods of spring, thane 'oomankin'ud foster mysterycum-clay to bring-bounty crop 'n harvested store to see company fat 'n fullfed in the dree of winter's ice-dread. And saa! did these fair 'ooman kindred belly-grow a brace of'us bloodline - childer-bairns beautifrew-hale who'm swelled thay company fra score to scores 'un hunder and hunder homesteads more was weft-worked 'n waimea fer thay good of thay folk, staunch-growed right strong. And aye were thay stol 'n graceful fair, and aye were thay noble 'n matchless of honour, born of the vision-line to sun-ravel wise, the boundary of clachan-rath, the fringe of wooded isle, to sun-ravel wise fra north to south 'n east to west all 'cross thay Earth-Mother's plentiful goodly shores.

And holding aloft lik-es tree-folks thane skies, did Apollid center pillar provide. Proven beyond all, his warriorhood stooedes tall, versed in the axe-craft 'n ways of thane wood, skilled at the wind-sail 'n tiller, mage-minded be mountainkin, magick of hand, of chant-hold full godlike, just and far-visioning beyond any's known, ken Apollid thay legend 'n champion-king full-famed throughout evera Land. Wi' his beard tresses now golded to grizzled and grey, wi' his age-cycle passing hunder'n more, his moon-ma Temissle her raven hair wintercum, as white as thay first driven snow. Their seven be seven of fair childer grown

to birth 'n host of bloodkin more; the company foo proud and upright of bearing, and goodly-grown wise. Clept uncoo continents thane keepers of the singing crystal light, the mag-nifiyen-magic drawn fra rock-water buds that sang to the spirit of the Great Mother-Earth, that chant-weaved a spell to the Sun-God on high. Kept thay solemn lild-cum connection, with the moon 'n thay bright stars-celestial, hung in the black nightes sky.

Whey na did Apollid cum eld as thase eld folks, they'ud left be the foot of the great mountain stretch. That mountain-haime where Apollid was birthed on a night when thane fire-balls did rain from thee sky. And eh na doest the wheel cum nigh in full cycle, when the weather-wrinkled brow, signals grey-stuff of age. Tired was Apollid though's spirit was fire-white, wantsum of rest from fray of a charge-hand, feeling his purpose long-since achieved, he did lie on his heather-bed 'n just closed forever thane flame of's blue-burning eyes.

Of a sudden all strange-like did the sun's light grow dim, though nigh it was clear of the middle of day. And all these folks fra that long ancient age, did look up 'n dread the sight of'us gold sun turnen black as the black as the middle of night - a midwinter's dree on a funery dirge. Black tur-need thay gold one, the life-giving God, black tur-need thay gold sun when Apollid's blue-ee-breet cum closed, 'n his spirit was fled to the dreamin kindred clept in thane stone chambered land. It beseemed like the great sun grew sad-drear full of woe, with the passing of Apollid's bright-flame'us spirit. The black sun did groan and silence spread the isle fra southernmost tip to 'un far northern shore. Silence did spread and day was cum night in the midst of a cloudless high summer sky. Doom-laden turned the drift of all's folk minds, fallen to knees, hands clasped and praying for return of thay lightray 'n warmsight of sun. In each heart they knew that something amiss had befallen the Albion isle.

But in a shorten space of time or an age that did petrify, the black sun was gone, like a slide of the shape of's grim-reaper twin, 'twas gone and the black sun was nain more. Hale in its place the gold one did shine and the folk did prayer-thanks to Goddess-mother give, as thase saved fra the wrath of'un untimely dark 'n dread-cold that could twist the balance of cycle-so. But in saa short span of another glint their thankful cries turned to tears of passing woe. For sad word cum carried that their head of the clan, thay great and wise man-held, their hero and champion, mage-minded light-master, gifted keeper of the crystal-tear, was gone and na departed, spirit-flown 'n shell-like left'us body's form. And aye were thay lines of solemn folk stood, in silence their tears speaking all, all the kin of the Albion folk did gatherun, gatherun mizzled with grief, mazed be the Sun-God's response up on high, as did blacken himself, in the jet raven's cloak, foo of death 'n dreathsome winterstark, grieving for Apollid's bright-flareful spirit, gathered in to the Source of thay Mother and kept now fra light of living day. This great wise 'n braw-ways command-am Apollid, gone back to the womb of thay Mother - thraist na! wet were'un faces and moanfull the air for troth it was so: the honey-song stilled of Apollid, the first of the Albion folk.

And aye was it right with thay Albion kin to bear'un greyed 'n gold-pure form to the wind and the sun and the rain, to the carrion-crow flesh-returned all, to rebirth be the belly of the Mother. Laith! 'twas a brace of tall manstrong did carry'un draped in cloth of'us hero-white. Did carry'un high with all folk in train, calm 'n dignified-accepting was Temissle ahead of all thay company-cum. High on thay grace-carved wooden altar was placed the empty soul's shell where Apollid had long-lit 'n been. And nigh as his tall form still straight as the elm, despite though'us countless cycles of age, and nigh as his spiritless dead flesh was placed on a special high platform made reverent be all of'us folk, saa did the sun dart out ravenous rays that lit's still form like fire fallen to ground.

Whey na to the mazement of all who did see, ever cum awe-struck fra the knowing was thay. For there as they stood chanting cycle-songs round, giving reverence to greatest mankin, all in a flash of lightning strike cum fra nowhere these could see or have ken, the sun set afire Apollid's fair mansome form and a fire did flame his body to dust. In this instant that the strange fire flamed fra his form 'n conflagration burst fiery-white-hot, fra'us death-shell flesh, a golden bird did rise 'n circle 'n circle these white flames of fire, then fly on a shine-dazzled wing as high 'n high 'n higher'un high lost in the path of the sun.

Whiles down on the high ground on that special-carved place where Apollid's body'ud death-slept so brief, a white fire did steal him all of thay bones except for his thigh bones and skull. And twert wi' this strange 'n fearful passing, wi' this dread touch of the Sun-God's hands, all these Albion kin clept "Oh!" and "oh" again, as Apollid in a magic-flash was swept fra their sight. He become to nought, the Oh of an emptied place, the Oh of the space-filled circle, the Oh of complete-contain-ed around, fra nothing come to nothing gone, to the vast void of'finity where all must birth be. Ah but he, eh na had he, Apollid the fair, risen in bird's form engoldened'us wing, grace to become, laith twas clear the new God of Fire-touch, the God of the Sun - the Apollo who'm all would cum to worship ne fear, to reverence and chant

to, to seek favour from, to ask blessings of, to praise 'n go in awe of. He, Apollo, the sun-god become, giver of life and light and warmth, giver of the harvest grain, the forest green, the crystal cave, giver of all to all life he be. Apollo, Apollo - our God of the Sun."

Why Ly should think of that old tale now, and why it should unravel so from his mind that late spring eve, he could not quite fathom. Except, perhaps instinctually, he was aware of changes coming, changes that would irretrievably alter the way he and his folk lived; ripples that he knew eventually would transform their lives forever. This was unsettling, but also inevitable. Ly knew he could no more alter the influxes which were beginning to change generations old practices, than he could halt the procession of the sun in the heavens or prevent the moon from its constant waxing and waning. Perhaps it was because of this awareness that he chose to stay there, casting his mind back, delving into his myriad of memories and warming himself by reinventing them in his mind.

He thought then, on his boyhood, the tasks he was set to: watching over the cattle-kinder and the goats, sorting the wood pile tinder and best log; cutting the thatch weed under direction of Wulffdor and aiding the assembling of the new homesteads that grew up from time to time. Well at this time, when he could sneak him some lonesome moments, he would sit him by the hut-space of his Pri moon-ma's brether:

Wem, of the wise ones, who charted on tablets of wood the passage of the celestial heavens, who mind-melded with the Mother spirit and spoke to the spirits gone aft over the boundary of death to the motion of All Life beyond. Most usual it would be priestesses who were Listeners in this way. But of the way of the radiant ones in the sky the wise ones came of male and female kin, showing a special quality which revealed itself in time and marked the childer out as novice into the chart-magic ways. Wem was a such a one as these. His hut-space was edged be a boundary, and a solitariness about him had always drawn Ly to the vicinity of Wem's dwelling, recognising something of a kindred spirit in that desire for solitude. Old Wem would never chastise Ly or show irritation at his inclination to linger be his hut-space, perhaps because Ly's pri moon-ma was Old Wem's sister. Or perhaps more simply he never minded Ly's quiet observant presence, who could sit in self-sufficiency as well as the roosting hawk upon its perch, quiet and contained in its biding time. So he had come to strike up a special relationship with Old Man Wem, which flowed quiet and deep alongside the other bonds of affection and new-stake activities that filled his time.

As he had grown something older, his mind had turned to hunting craft and times would be when he was off on the trail of small-scale game for the platter of his folk. Yes, and then before he had known it his initiation was upon him, and he was after breaching the boundary from boyhood to manhood, as all the lads must do when they came of the seven be seventh cycle of their age. There it had come finally, after all his seeming ages of chaffing and waiting; his initiation into warriorship and manhood. He could remember it as clear and stark now as if the experience had happened only two suns' gone by, not the distance of yearly cycles that stretched between the Ly of now, and the boy-come-man he had been. He remembered moving through the forest, the men fanning out to make a net. The foliage had been dense in that part of the forest so that they walked deer tracks, a barely perceptible passage through the depth of the trees. Birds had hooted and chirrucked in the branches overhead, and every so often a blackbird lilted low through the air, calling its rising alarm call to warn other birds and beasts that threat was approaching. The men wore sleeveless leather jerkins and trousers woven from hemp. Some held long wooden spears with points made of flint, whilst others carried bows, a quiver of arrows slung across their backs, flint knives hanging from belts at their midriff.

They followed the spore of the wild boar. In his trance-dance Ly had seen the family of wild boars, a stretch of fifty meds or more from the homestead. Nearby was a river, one of the smaller, lesser frequented waterways. In the depths of the forest where virgin trees swelled to massive proportion and the woodland was left to rampant growth, there was the foraging home of the wild boar family.

It was Ly's first time of hunting with the menfolk proper. For his name day, for the strengthening of his manhood, he sought to kill a wild boar.

Before his initiation into warriorship, he had been inclined as a boy to wander off from the others, to seek the solitude of the remotest haunts in the quest for berries and fungi, or on the small game hunting expeditions equipped with slings and stones, small bows and flint arrows of their own.

It was Ly that was wont to climb up the largest trees, hafting holds in the trunks and making his way up thus, to sit in overhanging branches, to watch and wait for whatever game might appear. Thus had Ly learned patience, and so had he become accustomed to long-ways walking, the silence of the wilderness, where the keening hawks cried in the sky. Providence had always paid these vigils with bounty to take proudly to the homestead. So even then in his youth, a reputation had grown up around him. Ly, the

hawk; Ly, the rover; Ly, the loner, with the patience of the wild cat that watches and waits before committing itself to the pounce. Thus, he had begun to gather a respect even before his initiation into manhood. He had brought back small deer, hares, stoats, a badger or two, many caillie birds and pheasants. Unlike the other youths of his age he ignored the pull of the pack, the comfort of numbers, the security of a team. For him he trod a lonesome path, a way off from where other folks usually strayed. Because of his yearning desire to explore, to travel far, he grew into his role of flint weapon maker and flint tool trader. He had travelled from shore to shore of the land, and he had braved the Big Waters sailing to the Great Lands over the sea. In his youth the seeds of his adulthood had been sewn and begun to blossom.

He remembered why he had chosen to hunt the wild boar for his name day. His mind went back to one of his solitary expeditions. A time when he had climbed up a huge oak, in the heart of a wildways he had found, and crawled along a way its gigantic overhanging branch. So he had sat and so he had waited, watching the birds twittering, a squirrel leaping, a beetle crawling. And as he sat he became absorbed in this myriad tiny life. He became the creatures he observed; he seemed to think and feel with their instincts. The sun came glancing through the leaves dappling, like the fallow deer's haunch, the forest floor, bestrewed with bramble and a rash of greenery.

As Ly had sat, there had been a rustling, a movement, a snuffling, and beneath the tree a family of wild boar had come; three females and a brood of little ones, headed by a single male. Ly had waited until the little train of wild pigs had all but passed, then aiming skilfully he had shot and pierced one of the little ones through the neck. The raucous squeal of it as it toppled had an immediate effect on the other pigs. The females whirled round and circled the dying piglet, touching the rest of them protectively with their snouts, defensively herding them into a tighter clique. The male boar was snorting and looking for foes. A slight movement from Ly betrayed his position, and he inwardly cursed as the wild boar fixed him with a hating eye, beady and ferocious, wanting restitution for the felling of his flesh.

All at once the boar had lowered his head and charged the tree, gouging the base of it with its tusks, ripping the ground to shreds around it. Ly could only cling on, awed by the show of ferocity he had provoked. The piglet he had shot now lay dead. Its little body had given a final shudder and twitch before the life in it had faded and gone. The earth around it was damp with blood. Still the wild boar squealed its anger and pain, trampling and gouging around the base of the tree.

But lumbering up the bank, drawn by the smell of young pig's blood, came a large brown bear - just as much a threat to Ly as to the family of wild pigs. He froze and watched a drama begin to unfold. Two of the female pigs were nudging the rest of the little ones protectively, circling around them and keeping them together, whilst the other female mournfully nosed the dead little pig. When the bear appeared it rose up threateningly over the mother pig, who squealed and grunted back refusing to give way. The wild boar tearing up the earth around the tree stopped and turned immediately towards the bear. Now it had a target for its vengeance; a target of flesh that could give the satisfaction of blood.

The wild boar whirled and charged at the bear. The bear was not prepared for the immediacy of the attack. It tried to bat the boar away with its huge raking paw but the boar was too quick for it. The bear's paw glanced off the pig's tough hide, and the boar jabbed its tusks into the belly of the bear - thrust, rip, retreat, before the bear had chance to recover, to act. The female pigs came in a clique mock-charging the bear, that was groaning and flailing at the angry pigs. When the wild boar's tusk slashed the bear's paw, it retreated and lolloped off, growling and moaning in pain, moving with greater difficulty than when it had first come up the bank.

Snorting and trotting back and forth in the adrenalin satisfaction of vanquishing a foe, the wild boar strutted beneath the trees at the top of the rise. The family clan gathered, the females around the little ones and finally with a disconsolate nudge of the dead piglet's body, the company of pigs moved away, with the wild boar bringing up the rear.

Ly finally moved his limbs again and in relief relaxed the tension that had kept him frozen. He was very much struck by the experience. From thence onwards he had a great respect for the wild boar that roamed the forest. To be faced by that ferocity on the ground was his greatest fear. This was why he had chosen to hunt wild boar on his name day. He chose to confront his greatest fear and in conquering it he would be strengthened in his initiation.

Ly thought of Nionie, his sister, his twin. He remembered when she had come of blood. It was a day or two before his name day. He had come back from his wanderings supplied with berries and fungi, a squiver of birds to his toll. He had cast it down on the homestead table, turning to see the reaction of his sister, swelling towards his name-day pride. But there was no Nionie to savour his little gift of bounty.

He had asked for her and his moon-ma had told him: she had gone to learn the gifts of blood in a place that was taboo for him. For 7 days she would be gone. And she would miss his name-day victory, the triumph that would give him the name of 'Hawk'. He had turned bitterly away and his moon-ma had come and touched a hand to his shoulder:

"Ly, Ly, it all comes of season, so the Goddess wills. So the Goddess has willed that Nionie follow her blood-rite of passing at the time when your own manhood is grown to set tall. It can only be now for you to accept what is and must be. Is your name-day come too soon? Are you to become stoll and mangrown two suns from now or not? Come Ly, come my wonderful flintsharp, blood son, look to your name-day and the task ahead, leave the lee of childer behind, na eh Ly?"

And his mother's eye had twinkled a smile as she solemnly bent her head to his and tousled his hair. Then she had turned away, and gone quickly to cut and prepare the fowls he had brought whilst he pondered his thoughts at the doorway. She had gone, Nionie, and he became a man. Nionie had gone and when she was returned she was 'ooman become. A chanter of the moon; the moon which was connected with and moved so the 'oomen of the kin. The women's moods seemed to match the changing aspects of the moon - undiluted their yearning to access the silver one on high. Theirs was the secret knowledge of the soil, the growing seasons. The earth as filtered through their blood-stained hands.

Squatting on the land they plunged their fingers into the loam and tilled it with wooden trowels, a stone-sifter, tending the fronds that swelled into plenty. Then there would be the chant-blessing of the corn-priestess come cutting time, with the menfolk gathered to wield their flint-sharp blades, graft and gather the goodness the Goddess-mothers had given. The womenfolk were their source and their inspiration; they kept the blood of their kindred whole. From whence they would be directed to quarter the boundaries; to seek and make and create when the time for questing came.

Ly understood all of this instinctively; it was not something he could objectify or analyse. It was what was, a fact of his being and his kinsfolk's being as much as the wind and the sun were incontrovertible mysterious facts of nature. When he thought of his sister he apprehended her both in an intensely personal sense and with a generalised reverence for her femaleness; the personification of the Mother Goddess that all women were. He remembered the wistfulness he had felt when she had gone, that first time, to be initiated into the mysteries of womanhood. For he knew things would never be the same again between them. Something immense and undeniable had thrust itself between them, something that inevitably separated them and distanced them from each other. He remembered the awe and discomfort he had felt as his sister's lithe nymph's form began its subtle changes; the budding of her breasts and curving of the hips that had suddenly seemed to come from nowhere, as he himself had grown taller and broader, strengthened and made hale by his wanderings.

The night that she had gone to begin her woman's journeying, he had dreamt of her. He had dreamt that he was her. He had dreamt that he, as she, was escorted by the older women, packed and prepared for their vigil, her seven day rite of passage. Thus she and the three older women would escort her, to the cave by the river, to learn of the Goddess calling. Whence other women also in blood would join them that night.

In the river-loamed soil, he, as Nionie, plunged her fingers into, squatted and merged her blood with the soil. She cradled the loam of her creation, placed it in an earthen ware bowl, planted the seeds of the flowers; the plants that were given her for her name day gift. Then the women came all from the homestead, and the whole company of them, in a cleared worked place in the forest, wild-called at the dark of the night. They chanted their primaeval souls alive, whilst the blood dripped from between their thighs and moistened the soil into mud around them. The sound of their voices shivered eerily through the night air, like beings from a strange and other world they sounded. Beings of beauty and power, who had the facility to destroy, to ruthlessly erase, as well as to create and give life to. The sound was both exquisite and chilling; the cry of birthing and death, a trembling of the earth where the invisible Goddess glided, strewing her contradictory impulses about her as she swept through the ceaseless potency of night.

And Nionie and the women were swaying and chant-crying to crescendo now. They began to dance and stamp their feet, gyrate and undulate to the velvet night, the glitter of the moonless night where the stars looked down like winking eyes, watching and sanctioning their frenzy. And the blood dripped down and splattered in clots, the more frantic the women became. They turned and whirled and trampled in the soil, making a mulch of it, their feet sinking into and churning the earth, so that soil spattered upon them. Soil and earth and blood smeared upon their naked flesh. In a paroxysm of energy there was a pulsating final surge until they all dropped and lay panting, bathed in their own sweat and blood which mingled

with the loam of the soil. This was their magical fertiliser which was bespread the fields and used to grow a harvest of einkorn and emmer, the barley and oats that gave them sustenance throughout each cycle of the seasonal turn.

The gathering of it would come later, in the dew of first light morning, but for now they bestrode 'un towards the cave and the river. The women all went down to the river to cleanse themselves, until only those who had come with Nionie remained. They had left Nionie at the cave, all blood and mud-bespattered, telling her to wait until they came for her. Laughing, exhilarated from their fervour, her moon-sisters had poured her a beaker of honey wine, telling her to sip gently while she waited for them to return. They had taken with them a leather carry-sack filled with a flagon of the honey wine, some clay cups, the brood cake that settled a dreamful sleep; an initial erotic buzz and flare that came with the velvet night.

Sabrina, one of the moon-sisters, washed clean and dressed in a simple kirtle, came to lead Nionie to the river's edge. She led Nionie to the river where the other moon-sisters waited. Sabrina had taken off her own robe and faced Nionie, so they were naked together. She had taken hold of Nionie's hands, saying: "Welcome to the Dawn of your Womanhood, may the Goddess bring your blossoming; an armful of crimson flowers, a brood of the plenty that be your making"

Then she had led Nionie into the water, making her gasp at its icy touch and gasp more as her moon-sisters doused her. They washed away the blood stains and the smears of mud. Then gently, their hands teasing at sexual expression, they had admired her youthful beauty, rubbing her buttocks, stroking her belly and breasts, plucking and sometimes sucking at the nipples like plums upon the pert mound of her woman-become. They touched her all over; overwhelmed her with their arousals. Until near swooning and sexually charged they took her back to the cave; the heather-bed spread with fine cloth and furs. They had bade her drink more honey wine and eat of the specially made brood cake. Then the playing of Nionie's body commenced by her moon-sisters, who sought to teach her what her own body could know. Thus, did they arouse her until she climaxed and orgasmed ... the after glow of bliss, the floating sensation that carried her away into the world of living sleep to dream of her brother's victorious name-day. Whilst around her, as Nionie had fallen to sleep, her moon-sisters now aroused each other, giving the gifts of sexual unity, enveloping each other with ecstasy.

So they had slept and so they had stayed sleeping, until Sabrina woke in the hour before dawn, set the fire going and boiled some herbal broth for their pre-dawn sustenance. Nionie was wakened at the sound of the fire and walked, tousled and naked, something shy of her body, to the fire. Sabrina had handed her some herbal broth and went to stir the others. Soon they were dressed and ready assembled. Other women from the homestead had joined them now. All of them, Nionie included, carried baskets hung from a pole which was set across their shoulders. They walked in a train to the small clearance and patch of worked soil in the midst of the wilderness. They scooped up the soil and began to fill their baskets - each of them carrying their share of the burden. When the baskets were filled, they bent their knees and lifted the pole and carried the baskets filled with their blood-enriched soil, back towards the homestead. Each woman carried her own measure; carried it as something magical special. Something that could provide the growth of the harvest, provide food for future sons to grow tall. With the dew of the morning still upon the soil, they drew off a vial of moisture; a fragrant elixir, sensuous as woman's smell. Then they gathered up the loam they had created, to carry back the pride of their mystery which did make the golden fields to grew, the flower scents fill the air. By the river and by the new moon, at first dawn-light and at last-light dusk's fall, Nionie learned the chants of the Mother-Goddess, the Song Cycles of the Moon. She learned how her body could leap and shudder, become moistened in pleasure, ache for the sexual fulfil. She had learned of the Star-Source, the Moon Mystery, the women's gift to their kin; their bodies that birthed the kindred strong - kept their man-home stoll.

Nionie! Nionie! She, of the lush, dark-mane hair, the same Ly eyes looking back at him; hazel-brown, glint of green and gold in the smile of her eyes that mirrored his own. Woman become, moon-ma in the making. Whilst he proudly faced her as victor of blood-drawn chase, a hero talked amongst the menfolk, become the Hawk, near legend on his name-day; her brother grown man-some and stoll.

Nionie dreamed of her brother on her own name-day night with the women's inner sanctum, where they had kissed her and given gifts: the seeds, the pot to plant them in, a fine woven garment, the pride of all her treasures. She dreamed of him, as he dreamed of her and on the astral level they connected. There, they melted and merged the one to the other, passing their awareness with a flux of osmosis, speaking in the language of dreams - physically far away, psychically married and intertwined through the images of the dreamscape, astral world. And thus, they each knew of the other's experience even before they met,

after Nionie's withdrawal into the women's sanctum, and after Ly was acclaimed champion of the feast on his name-day night.

Now Nionie was priestess of the Fire-star temple and moon-ma several times over, having birthed four hale childer and taken Dagnon as man-home, these seven cycles gone. Their paths had inevitably taken different directions ever since the name-day that had seen their entry into adulthood. It was bound to be, as the Gold One rose in the sky each day, as the waters that kept their never-ceasing flow, as the separation and distinction of their sex denoted; it was bound to be. But there was no remorse or wistful recollection in Ly's mind as he now thought of these things. It would not have occurred to him to chaff at the loosening of his filial attachment no more than it would have occurred to him to attempt to pluck the stars from out of the night sky. These things were laid down by the Gods, by the Mother-Goddess, and all the human kindred must abide by the laws that ruled the wind, the rain, the growing time, the beasts and birds of the forest. So had Old Man Wem pointed out to him at that uncomfortable phase of passage when he had left his childer-time behind and stepped the boundary to adulthood. This Ly knew as incontrovertible fact, as the reverential thread that underpinned the whole of his life.

Now, in an unaccustomed spurt of nostalgia, he remembered the afternoon before his name-day ...

Ly was taken by a group of the menfolk, Segwin leading him, Old Wem alongside of them, into the valley before the Fire-star temple; before the Temple of the Golden One, he was taken down into the valley where a single hut had been built long, long ago, that could fit a whole company. Here, he was instructed to wash himself in the river. When he came out, the men were all gathered around. Segwin spoke:

"Ly, it become nigh on the morrow your name-day of manhood, when you mun learn what it is to be a man, when you mun learn the tests of man-hood. Still boy-soft your body shall be toughened. You mun accept the pain - take it into your body and try not to shield you fra the fire-strokes we shall flay you with. An' with each stroke of the fireweed stem, with each mark of pain, your body shall'm grown towards the sun-strength of manhood. Do not fight the hurt. Let it into your mind to know and understand 'un so that when the time of battle comes, in the season of the hunt, stoll-like you shall'm take the blows, not be knocked or crushed by thane shock that pain do bring".

So saying, Segwin solemnly tied a rope around the wrists of Ly, who, naked apart from his loin cloth which covered only his genitals, was bound with his hands above his head. The rope was slung over the bough of a nearby oak tree: tree of Light, tree of the Sun, tree of the lightning strike, tree of strength and endurance; chosen of the Gods. Thus, with his arms pulled above his head and his feet still something aground, he was left exposed for the pain ceremony to commence.

There, had Old Man Wem stood to one side and commenced a humming which all the men took up. Above their humming the chant of Wem's song grew; a sound that he clung onto throughout his ordeal. The rise and fall of the song seemed to mesmerise him, resound in the hills, thrill his heart. It spoke of the hunter's skill, the warrior's glory, songs of the legend of the sun. But all the while his skin grew afire with pain, for the men began hitting him with the fireweed stalks, flaying him across his back and his shoulders - whip lashes that stung, made him want to cry out. He strove to silence his cries of pain in this test towards his manhood.

And all the while the men lashed him across his chest, his buttocks, his legs, his arms, the whole of his torso, so his skin was on fire with a pain that grew more raw and intense the longer they switched his skin with the fireweed's torturous stems. He had gritted his teeth on the agony determined not to cry out. But towards the end he could not but do so, as each time the pain bit into his flesh, its teeth grew more raw and jagged. In the extremity of sensation he felt that he would faint, choking on the cries that he tried to still. When he did cry out it was such a release he swooned and the ground bent down to submerge him ... until water splashed in his face, burning into his cuts, awakening him from his faint. Then Segwin was soberly cutting the rope that bound Ly as he whined in his pain and shook his head, getting up in a daze to stand. He steadied himself, feet apart on the ground. He looked into Segwin's face who was intent upon chaffing the rope with a flint knife. He wanted to read the signs of approval there, anxious lest in finally crying out he had failed, feeling womanish at his body's fainting defence. Segwin, intent on cutting the rope, did not look at him. But when Ly's hands were free and the rope dropped off, he levelled his gaze with Ly. Segwin's face showed impassive and Ly felt a sickness rise from his belly - had he failed so soon the test of his manhood?

But then Segwin's blue eyes had crinkled at the edges: "Eh na, boy become into man, let us back to the river to wash your body, salve the soreness. Then shall your dream-spin be painted on your dressed skin; the story of your awakening, the totems that define you. The symbols of light shall battle-dress your

body before the dawn of your name-day comes. The sunrise of your warriorhood, the challenge to your hunter's skill and daring is come nigh. Let us away now be the river to cleanse you for the dance-chant of this night".

Segwin's eyes were warm as he spoke, though the rest of his face was a mask. But through his eyes came the glinting of pride that filled Ly's heart with gladness. Segwin's brief smile as he led the ways to the river. Ly's eyes sought the face of Wem held apart in aloofness to read what was writ there on the face of his infrequent-kine friend. Wem's furrowed face-lines looked on impassive-like. But his sharp wise brown eyes danced some and shot a spark of humour-filled exultation into those anxious eyes of his nephew. And as Ly looked into the faces of his menfolk he saw also a warmth, a pride - an admiration even - in their smiles and acknowledgements. No, he had not failed. Rather, so it seemed, he had triumphed!

In the river the men watched as Ly doused himself, whincing still in pain. But the menfolk laughed, told him he would soon be right and smiling, teasing him as they washed themselves. And soon the water became a soothing balm washing the pain away. Dripping wet then, they walked from the water and Ly was led to the hut where he was told to stretch himself out on the feather-down, fur-covered bed. His skin was treated with soothing ointment by Ragleth, who massaged the worst of the pain away with his health-giving expert hands. Then he was bid to sit up and all the men gathered round as Segwin set beakers down, which he filled with strong ale. Each of the menfolk were given a beaker of ale, until last of all, Segwin handed one to Ly too.

Segwin raised his beaker and all the menfolk followed suite. "To Ly," said Segwin in masterful simplicity.

"Aye, to Ly become warrior on th' eve of his name-day dawn"

"To Ly, the stalwart"

"To Ly, rider of the wings of pain"

"Eh na, to the silent endurer"

They smiled at him and urged him to drink down his ale. So done he, shy and pleased fra his glory, set down the beaker to unaccustomed belch, which set they all of them laughing. There was a clapping of Ly's shoulders, a-ruffling of his mane-like hair, a victory hold of his hand. Until soon Ly was smiling and floaty from the unaccustomed strong brew and the praise and attention of the menfolk.

Then Old Man Wem, with his shadows-silth presence, began putting candles around and Eld Mendion story-spoke his words, spinning the tales of their ancestors as the flames flickered around. And as Eld Mendion spoke Ly lay on his belly whilst Ragleth stick-painted the symbols of life upon his back. The dyes and pigments came up blue, orange, red and purple-black. A stylised tree grew down his spine and the sun spiral above it glowed in orange. On Ly's left shoulder a half-moon was hung painted in the red of blood. He was made to stay so, quick-drying whilst he heard the sound of the other men outside preparing the evening's fires. Eld Mendion continued his tale of ancestors who flew to the stars and became the Light-Gods, patterning the night sky and speaking their messages from on high.

Ly turned over then to sit propped up. His arms were given a lightning dash - the sig rune as it became - three times repeated, and on his chest appeared the head of a wild boar surrounded by runic talismen representing strength, protection, fortune, the benevolence of the Goddess, keeper in health, swiftness of passage in travel-times and so on and so forth, until Ly's chest and belly were covered with vibrant colour. The symbols of life and the enhancement of it flashed in the candlelight, filling Ly with a feeling of invincibility.

The other men had also painted themselves and each other in a known and accustomed ritual. Dressed in their leather wrap-around kirt, the men's arms and sometimes their legs were braided with circles of woven reed, stuck with feathers, pebbles and beads of clay. The ceremonial garb was donned. Ly was given food - a heavy sweet oatmeal cake. All of his kinsmen then, ate of the cake and drank a beaker more of brew.

Soon Ly was handed his leather kirt. By now it was late evening and the sun had set in the west turning the skyline gold and indigo-rare at the edges. The men now were gathered in the trance-dance arena outside of the hut. Fires had been lit and staves of flaming torches stuck in the ground to border a wide circle. Ragleth led Ly outside to where the rest of the men had now gathered, their ceremonial painted bodies flashing lurid and vivid in the firelight, the drummers waiting behind their percussive rounds. Ragleth took Ly to where Segwin, the headman, awaited him. When Ly was brought forward, Segwin put both of his hands on Ly's shoulders and looked into his eyes. A silence had infected the arena with an intensity both profound and liberating. Segwin had stood back and raised his arms aloft, addressing all of

they there gathered:

"This night Ly become into man-grown
On'us name-day the boy decreed'm
to hunt the wild boar an' turn'm
tuthee man-tall as shows'us spirit strength"

Appointed members of his kinsmen then came forward to lay upon the ground beside Segwin a number of gifts symbolic of his entry into manhood. Then Segwin had spoken again:

"Company an' kindredin have gifts o' man-status engiven.
Around thee waist I fasten this'n belt complete
wi' flint-dagger wi'un handle o' horn.
Likes the Gold One mays'm Ly shine
Like the mighted oak mays'm grow tall
an' stol-like of'us bearing
Like the horned ones o' the forest
mays'm come proud an' fierce
And likes the silvered salmon wise
jump up the river 'ginst the tide
following the flow of'us source
and so learnen the skills of'us ancestors taught
growing into new learning more"

Ly had held his arms up so Segwin could fasten the leather belt around his middle, open the dagger sheath, draw forth the finely made flint-headed knife with its handle carved of stag's horn. He handed the dagger to Ly who took it and turned it reverentially in his hands. So sharp, so long, so skilfully made! By his own sun-pa father's hand no doubt. A treasure for him that might last at least ten summers! "Arnoch sol ne stol - may the fire of the ath-ra in thee flame fierce and bright," spoke Segwin blessing the weapon in sonorous tone. Then the spear was brought forth and Ly stood as Segwin addressed him once more:

"In the forest for the hunter's skill an' daring
here we'm be giving thee
staunch, the yew-bow flexus skill
spears strong an' arrows fleet
sharpened and to the mark.
Mays'm fly unto the heart o' quarry or foe
defend an' kill when needs be upon thee.
With this spear and dagger haft
with this bow and arrows swift
so shall thee vanquish the fierce wild boar
take over his spirit; his invincible store.
But for hunter to know
his quarry or foe
he must needs of tranced
into the spirit he do seek.
Before the hunter kills
he mun know his beast.
Eh na hereby I begiven the boy
dredge of bitter-bite
to turn his soul to quarry-mind
fly on the wings of trance
to the dawning of'un's manhood"

After these words he was handed the spear, which he took with both hands, holding it to see the symbols etched on the hazel-wood, to finger the feathers of the brown hawk attached at the top by leather

binding along with a string of beaded gems: some jet and rock-quartz. Its point was very sharp and it had slicing edges, thick and stoll enough to stand the shock of manysome impacts. He stood it on its end and held it in one hand - the same height as himself - like an extension of himself specialed to his name-day, so the spear seemed to him.

A yew-bow and leather quiverful of flint-headed arrows were also given to him. He slung these over his shoulder - equipped for the hunt or for battle. Then lastly, the dredgeful of bitter-brew was given to him and he understood that he was to mime his quarry; become the wild boar he must hunt on the morrow. A drink, a toast, as Ly downed the bitter-brew and was handed some ale with which to wash it down.

Then the men formed into a group at one end of the circle with Ly and Segwin still standing of centre. Segwin raised his arms and on the boundary Old Man Wem began to intone a chant; a rhythmic, stealthful chant with a steady pulsating thread. Ly stood in the other half of the circle and felt an energy, a desire to move, to dance, to stamp come over him.

The tone of Wem's chant changed. Segwin looked at Ly and lowered his head, his two hands creating tusks as he did so. Ly lowered his head and made the same gesture back. He began moving towards the rest of the men threatening them with his stance. The hint from Segwin had been enough; the desire for physical expression too strong to resist.

As he took on the symbolic pose of the wild boar, he felt himself a becoming, and as its fiesty, fearless nature took over the quiet, lonesome Ly, he moved to threaten the men headed by Segwin. He trotted and stamped as would the beast itself, whilst Wem stood to the side and continued to chant, leading the chorus of his kinsmen's voices. Then, as Ly threatened his kinsmen with his motions, they in turn, threatened Ly, as the beast, as the wild boar quarry he had become. They jabbed at him with their spears, raised their voices as if the volume of them could crush him. Ly in response, must turn to run, as the wild boar would, if there was the freedom to do it. But the men followed him and soon he was surrounded, whence dancing and leaping, snorting and crying out at times, Ly feinted with his spear. To the right, to the left, in front of him and turning swift behind him, fearless as the wild boar in the face of its foe, he whirled and stamped and jabbed about, as the men took up the rhythm of the dance and circled him - a rhythmical, ineluctable force that could crush him when it chose. The drummers picked up their pace and Old Wem's voice rolled on, leading the men forwards, and Ly himself was jabbed at from all sides, parrying each blow and whirling faster and faster, the faster the rhythm was beat.

Soon his movements became fluid. At the zenith of his ritualised performance, his flashing hands and agile movements assumed an automatic motion of their own. Fearlessly; invincible as the wild boar was known to be, he stood his ground, parrying, feinting, circling and ever circling round, so that his captors did not get chance to blood his body or graze his skin. Ly felt he could have carried on thus forever, as in a dream. His movements had become a form of poetry; a connectedness that transcended thought, kept him a blur of motion for anes upon anes. Whirling and leaping, as mercurial as the tail of a shooting star, he kept up his fluid, lightning strokes, until finally a fatigue began to show, and he felt himself grow light-headed with his exertion.

The men encroached with increased threats, and Ly began to feel he could not keep up his momentum. Like the beast, the wild boar, he was growing tired. His stamina was fading. The rhythm of the drummers and chanting was still fast and frenetic, overwhelming him with volume. He gasped to maintain his skilful parrying as the hunters closed around. But Oneth scored a flesh wound on his belly, and the shock of the flint on his skin made him swoon and fall where he lay, breathing heavily, become the spear pierced wild boar: panting and snort-squealing on the ground. There was a rousing crescendo until the drums came to a halt, and the chanting and ritual dance concluded with all the men stood around him, pointing their spears at his tumbled form. Then they too, all collapsed about and lay listening to the sudden-come silence, the sound of the fires crackling, gazing up at the celestial ones, the stars of their ancestors souls.

Ly's spirit took wing as he lay prone. He closed his eyes and imagined the beast lying as he was. His spirit turned to the feathered riders of the winds. Above the forest wilderness he flew, in his mind's eye, searching, searching for the tracks of the wild boar. There was no moon but the sky was clear; starlight showed him the way. Five hills hence in the cleft of a wooded valley his spirit found what he had besought. Once more he became the wild pig, snuffling its home in the quiet of its family group, nudging its childer down to sleep, grunting one to the other in comforting acknowledgement. Five hills hence in the cleft of the valley, saa the wild boar lived. In the dawn of his dance-trance Ly ran and snuffle-searched for food source, aggressive in encountering a fox. Now Ly was become his prey - five hills hence in the cleft of the valley, nearby a quarried cliff, his centuries-back ancestors had hewn. Ly was

drifting, drifting back through the night air across the distance on the swoop of a tawny wing; be the curve of a fierced-beak hawk, now his spirit coasted home, where the husk of his body was left. Hawk-risen, boar-found and known, hawk-returned his journey.

He flew above the circle arena and dropped like a stone through the air towards where Ly could see himself, or his body, recumbant upon the ground. He plummeted through the air and the sensation of flying was gone. Ly's body jerked and twitched as if at an impact and sensation was returned to human experience. He could feel the ground beneath him, hear the dimmed conversation of the menfolk around him. He could sense the glow of flames across his face, from the fire-torches at the edges. He knew he was himself again. He opened his eyes. They flickered sensitively in the sudden light.

"Ly be come to," called Ragleth to the other men. "Eh na Ly, how be these mind space. Limbs still strong and stoll, belly hungry na?" asked Ragleth, smiling down at him. Ly tried to sit up whilst the men came and sat around him in a circle. He discovered the fleshwound on his belly had been cleaned and staunched with the day's eye flower. It was already healing well, and it was much smaller than he had imagined. Ragleth helped him to sit up and some bread-cake and meat was brought him and he was given a draft of milder ale. Ly felt ravenous as soon as he saw the food and did not speak until he had eaten and drunk the ale refreshment. The men waited patiently for him to finish, waited patiently for the wordspeak of his trance-dance to be shared.

"Whisst na Ly, tell we'm o' your'n journey - the travels that betook your'n spirit this night," spoke Segwin when Ly had eaten and drunk his fill.

Ly looked around the men-company, noting now the absence of Wem, whose solitary tithe had taken him be his hut-space of a lonesome. He knew this was to be expected and though he would've liked his oldest revered uncle to hear of us trance-dance journey, it did not dilute his experience of the moment. With his pupils dilated and his eyes shining in the fervour of his experience, he began to speak:

"I'se fell'd'm down at the graze and I laid there as the wild boar hiss'n, tired be the chase and wounded to's death. But as I laid thus, 'm feathered wings, brown like the hawks as coast above'n trees, come by ane-me. I was flying as the hawk, watching wi'um piercing eye, flying til I spied the spore o' the wild boar. And down'n I'se plummeted to becomen the wild pig in's homestead, in's dawn foraging, in's aggressive chase o' the fox-lith that lingered roun' the edge be the little 'uns. I became these beast and I saw the place'us spirit dwells - five hills hence in the cleft of the valley, be the quarry-hewn edge o' ancestors toil, five hills hence and a valley more. Then I be riding the night-winds, flying home to harbour'un body. Flying through the night-sky and dropping like's stone above'n me laid by form. Then its spirit-hawk left me and I was laid come by on the ground, hearing the murmur'un thee voices as the flames danced across'm closed eyelids and I become to misseln once more - Ly o' the Albion kindred". "Na thee Ly, truly ha' you foun' the boar and thee quarry. Well has thee danced the trance-dance this night. Well the lightning dance becomen thee. Proud we'm become o' your'n stance, your'n wild boar daring, the lightning strike o' your'n impulse. Tomorrow now we'm follow the hunt to spore o' the wild boar. Now we'm all mun rest and thee 'specially mun lay to good night's sleep, to waken refreshed fer'n thee test o' the morrow".

So spoke Segwin, who urged Ly up and to the bedding chamber where, rolled in furs, they slumbered and rested til break of day. The fires had been all but quenched bar one which smouldered slowly through the night in readiness for sunrise, when eld Mendion would heat the water and brew the broth of hare and herb for the huntsmen's morning repast.

Ly had wakened with the lark that called before the rise of the sun. Battle-dressed, he squatted be fire and supped the steaming broth, chomping on the bread made special to the occasion, followed by oat-cakes spread with a layer of wild bees honey, collected by Wizen Dee, the watcher of the bees. All thoughts of Nionie were now banished from his mind, though in his dream world he had forged a strange telepathy with her. Now as he sat, the morning mist rose before the rays the unrisen sun had shed, and he did not think of Nionie. He thought of the journey ahead of them. He thought of the wild boar which that day he must seek out and kill. The beast he must cut the life-link of and thus imbibe its animal spirit to add courage to his own; the spirit of his manhood that would walk him tall on this his name-day. So he vowed, so he swore to himself and the Gold One, as it rose shedding light and sound, the poetry of nature all around.

The other men had woken and come round for a bite and a sup of the same. All carried spears and bows and arrows, a knife at the hilt of their belts. All wore the symbols of fire and life on their skin. Ly smiled at Ragleth, who tousled his hair fondly and turned to take a beaker of broth. No he had not thought of Nionie, who toiled in the muck of their making; she, his sister-spirit, who had called to the moon, given

birth to mysteries inside her form - her blood-rite name-day dawn. He did not think of that. His senses twitched to the hills, horizon's breadth away from him. His spirit surged to the quest before him and he felt impatient to move, to be off, to commence their journey. He grew impatient as his elders took their time with their broth and the oat-cakes spread with honey.

But presently Segwin was arising and the menfolk carried skiffs to the river, three between them. Ly, in the headboat with Segwin, led the way forwards. Hence they rowed up the river a ways and at a known harbour vantage, pulled up the skiffs onto a shore-bank of the river, a convenient inlet that let them anchorage thereby. Then with Ly and Segwin leading the way, they carved their passage across the hills and towards the cleft of the valley Ly had spied in his trance-dance. This was fifty or sixty meds away in an area that was not much frequented, though the site of the quarry was known. The family of wild pig lived three or so meds away from that quarried edge, in the roots of a huge tree they had carved out a cave from under and padded with leaves and grasses. The family of pigs would forage for meds around that area.

With the sun at its height through the forest foliage, Ly caught the sight of the dark shape of a wild boar. The creature turned and grunted, snorting inquisitively at the faintest of rustles. Ly froze but the breeze blew from behind him and the creature snorted and grunted and trotted away from Ly calling to his pig-kin. Ly remembered Segwin, who had that instant become aware of the wild boar, holding up his hand to halt their procession, then freezing and indicating to three of the menfolk to head the group of wild pigs towards the river and the quarry.

The men had fanned out and around. They began banging and shouting, driving the wild pigs towards the area of the quarry, on guard in case the wild boar chose to wheel and fight; aggress instead of flee. But the menfolk made it sound like a hundred warrior army was thundering towards the wild boar and his family, so he did not turn to attack but turned to fleet-foot flee.

Even so as he jog-trotted in the wild pigs' wake, Ly felt part of himself become the thing he sought to hunt down. He was the wild boar, the fear of its fleeing, the adrenalin rush through its hide he felt as if it were his own. But still inexorably he chased the wild pigs down, the men closing in, like at the trance-dance of the evening before. And he understood the boar's fear and battle-anger as the men now surrounded it on all sides of the quarry, the little ones and the females squealing their consternation, their fear and threat behind him. And the wild boar wheeled and snorted, pawing the ground and bristling, standing defiantly before them, pinning Ly with its fiery eye, squealing and grunting its rage as it lowered its head to tusk-charge the boy-man who had headed the expedition.

The cornered beast had whirled and snorted, turning to fix Ly with a livid fearless eye. Without a moment's deliberation, it had squealed and charged, perhaps choosing Ly as the most vulnerable looking link in the human net that surrounded it. There was a brief moment of unreality, then a panic in his belly, until the instinct of self-defence made him lower the spear he carried. Whether it was fortune or skill that drove the point of the spear into the heart of the wild boar, Ly neither knew nor cared.

The wild boar had charged, its tusks like scimitars ready to gash and rip. There had been a frozen moment when Ly had gazed in terrible fascination at the beast, as the menfolk around him had shouted, urging him to action. They did not shoot, for the wild boar hunt had been Ly's choice: it was his name-day, and they would not interfere with the pattern of events. Ly stared at the violent beast charging at him, wondering at the spirit, the passion, the intensity of its fury. In mercurial panic, he lowered his spear.

Fortuitously, he put it down just before the boar crossed the range of the spear. Ly's action had been lightning swift and just in the nick of time. The point of the spear went in the boar's chest just to the side of its razor-tusked head. Ly had assumed a natural stance, instinctively feet apart, body balanced, knees slightly bent to sustain the impact. But the beast's fury was such that when the spear went into the boar, its forward momentum had assumed such a pace Ly was carried backwards through the air, only knowing whatever happened he must keep hold of the spear. As the wild boar squealed with pain and rage, Ly was flung backwards onto the bank and sprawled lolling to one side, both hands still grasping the spear. At the other end of this newly blooded weapon the boar, in red-eyed fury, was attempting to gouge, and lacerate the spear. Now with his assailant at the same level, the boar thrashed and stamped, with Ly tossed from one side to another, his hands blistering, beginning to bleed from the effort. But of a sudden the boar had faltered and dropped to the ground. It snorted and frothed its anger, before the spear-point finally served its purpose and brought the appointed end.

Then all the menfolk came crowding round, the men who had been gathered close about, arrows drawn, ready to shoot should Ly loose the spear and become defenceless. Thus Ly's reputation-name, the Hawk,

was established. For truly, had said Segwin and the other men, truly had he displayed that lightning reflex which the hawk shows when it drops to kill. Truly had that lightning reflex saved the day.

Ly had been numb to the praises to begin with; still shocked by the closeness of death, the closeness he felt to the animal spirit as it raged towards him. He had almost felt sorrow that it had to be killed. He felt an empathy for the beast which gave him, like all the others of his kin, a reverence for the wild creatures and anything of the Earth. The Earth was their belonging - the bountiful Goddess with the deathly aspect. She who gave and ruthless took away. It was Her harsh and abundant dictates they had to abide by.

After the wild boar had expired its last breath, its body shuddering a final response, the menfolk were all patting Ly, grasping his shoulder, shaking his blistered hand. They clustered around the boar and a pole was fetched as they waited for Ly to come to do his privilege. It was Ly's privilege to slit the throat, claim the head and tusks and later, to cut out the heart to be made into his name-day victory feast.

Ly got out his name-day dagger-sharp flint knife. He came and stood over the boar, gazing down into its deadened eye; the eye ferocious that had been fixed on him, intent on death. Ly lifted up his head then, and cry-howled up into the sky, proclaiming his victory; his primeval soul seeking vibrant expression in a roar and shout - the triumph of Life over Death. Ly bent and with the strength of intent stuck the blade in the pig's neck, and drew it jagged cut acrossing. The blood poured forth, besmirching his hands, flecking onto his face. Then Segwin drew the lightning sign in wild boar blood down Ly's chest, and upon his forehead. The dead beast's feet were tied and it was attached to a pole which was slung over two of the men's shoulders. Ly led the way forwards with his bloody spear and torso, signalling his triumph over the odds of death.

Smear'd be the stuff of life he came, be the wild boar's blood, and back at the homestead the childer came to awed watching, while they 'oomenkin, they moon-ma's gathered round to praise Ly, to proclaim their admiration and pleasure. Ly cut the heart out of the boar and all they folk had cheered as his moon-ma kilt forth to receive it. She, smiling pride into his eyes, same blue as Segwin's eye'n. She, accepting his offering and going by off to hasten the feast on with her food preparation. A gathering of women took the rest of the beast and Oneth went to help butcher and cut up the meat to be shared amongst the kin of the homestead. For what was for one, was for all in aplenty, wherever fortune favoured or fickled forth disaster - still'm folk was comeby to share thee in'un sorrow. But no sorrow then. Saa! The wild boar killed single-handed - rare indeed! Ly killer of the wild boar - dubbed the Hawk on his name-day stoll - come to hinter manhood in the making of his own triumph feast. Aye, and he had known his mother's mind and thoughts then for sure.

Ly! Ly! Her childer, her bairn come knee-by nine summers since. Ly, her childer grown to manhood. From her womb he had sprung and her heart sang and her fingers worked gladly and quickly, preparing the meat for her son's victory feast. Proud to furnish his victory feast be her'n labour. Proud to be by a son such as he! For sure, she could sense the admiration, the pleasure of the men, their pride in him as well. And she infilled high aglee, joyous her heart rang and her eyes shone as she dredged the herbs, crumbled the oatmeal, sliced some root crop into a tasty platter.

His stoll-some sun-pa had returned from his hafting after flint on the high of the hilltops, Corndon and Black Rhadley, camped over night the previous eve when Ly was commenced his ritual of pain. It do be ken to separate the blood-close at testing time, so they crossed the boundary to adulthood without their closer kin. Other'uns took care of the thurl-initiation rites; whilst family of the to-be-initiated weft and waited, tension building up and infecting them. A quiet before the storm of applause and riotous feasting could be delivered.

And Ly remembered how his sire and sun-pa had come to him as he sat at the feasting tressel waiting for the vittals to be brought and spread about. He had been companied by his youth friends, Kyfeth and Duffryn, who now he was passed into mankin lost the aloofness they had but recent took on when their own initiations made them man some several moons before they. Kyfeth was stag-tithed whilst Duffryn was hunter of the grey wolf that ranged the deeps of the forest. They had come to him admiring now at his courage for the quest to take the wild boar's spirit. All his kinsmen were sat about quaffing their beer-strong, and filling Ly's beaker so twert never'n emptied. Beunydd, his sun-pa, had come down from his hilltop and found his way to his son's honoured side. He stood across from him saying naught for a while, but then creasing his face to a smile: "The sun be bold-bronze in your'n spirit I'se do hear Ly, and the flint be in your'n sinew and nerve. Whey tudden! Pride have you brought to your'n blood-kin, pride and full joy. Saa! Ly may your'n stoll-strength come constant as the Gold One above us. And here's gift na, lad-lith, special made for'n thee, a talisman-protector nigh for'n as long as your chosen, the path

that'll be."

So saying he had placed a piece of black stone jet shaped like an ellipse, carved with the sunwheel, hung on a leather thong, ceremonially around his neck. Then he had clapped Ly on his shoulders with both of his hard-hewing hands and pulled his son to him, giving him a brief but warm and heart-felt bear hug. All the surrounding menfolk had laughed and cheered then, as his sun-pa had tousled his hair and sat to drink of the barley beer made special to the occasion. Aye had they all lifted their clay beakers then and toasted, not just to Ly, but to each other, to their blood-bondings, to the Goddess, to the Horned God whose spirit was in the hunt. And Ly could remember well the look of quiet pride in his sun-pa's eyes as he had lifted his beaker to toast his second-born son - the sun warrior who nigh had well come of age. But be evening-tide the kindred were all settled around the long tressel-tables which they sat cross-legged at or on one side before. There was a place for the elders, as befitted, in the middle of the table and next in honour to those participants of the hunt and chase, who sat at the head. Here Ly was centre of attention and all they beguily glanced his direction, smiling, admiring, casting their eyes to catch a flicker from his own. He could not prevent a different feeling taking over him then; a liquid fire stirring in his belly and loins which he knew, that night, would be satisfied as it had never been satisfied before. Opposite to the elders and down the top part of the table next to the warriors, were the wealth of the kindred, the rest of the adults, 'oomankin seated amongst the menfolk, having provided and served the feasting food. Further down the table next to the adults came the youth, and then came the childer with a few appointed grandam-moon-ma's amongst them to oversea the operation of their eating. This feasting was special time too for the childer, even though some were not five summers on in the age-wise. There had been much cheering and clapping and hallooing when Ly's moon-ma had brought forth the platter with the carefully cooked boar's heart upon it.

The head of the boar had been cleaned and placed as decoration, covering the meat and honouring the spirit of the animal he had killed. His hands betraying a tremour that was never evident when he hunted, Ly had lifted the boar's head and sung of his victory over it as all his kindred listened and applauded some more at its conclusion. Then, his moon-ma had taken the boar's head from him and he had cut the meat, eating it all with gusto, for truly his moon-ma had excelled in the preparation and cooking of the boar's heart. When he had finished all the menfolk toasted him and Segwin formally acknowledged Ly's brave hawk spirit, his birth into manhood, his coming of age, the privileges that were his as a result of this crossing of the threshold. Segwin turned them all to laughter then after the formality, by a bawdy innuendo that set all they adults to merriment whilst Ly's face was flushed half with expectation and half with embarrassment.

All was then to feasting and good feelings, laughter and quaffing and banter. There was much praising of Ly the hunter, the hawk, eh na? The menfolk turned to each other and said, nodding their heads and laughing agreement. Whereas Ly, now shy and stoll-like could nay hardly soak up all the atmosphere pledged to the honour of he. In his wildest dreams he had not imagined himself so honoured, the first action of his spear so vital and speed-thrusted, the hunt so cleanly and clearly executed, the killing his, and his alone. But this only made him humble, not boasting or swaggerful but reticent in the face of their praise, feeling the gods had favoured him, grateful for that favour and no-some overblown with pride. Aft feasting came the music and pipes; the strumming of new-frame strings. And female acolytes - neophytes - came to chant them song-spell until the menfolk warriors took over. The kelter females danced a moon-chant, beguily swaying and merging their forms in a moon-trance. The temple-cakes were passed around and pretty soon'm mask-maiden came to take Ly from the fireside to a hut-space in the silver-dark.

By her looks, by her motions thay fair beguily lured Ly forth from his victory feast, whiles Ly watched her with mesmerised eyes, following the moon-spell she cast and shadowing her to the way-off hut-space door. Inside the door he heard whispers and gigglings stilled at a brief sharp whisper from the maiden who led him:

"Before thee enter thaise special place, forbidden to they who'm hev not yet passed thay threshold to manhood, I mun blindfold thee here'n, to protect our'n kindred from the shame o' naming and thay untoward flarin' o' jaylous curdlin' come thay bright revailing light o' dawn. Thay moon-nymphs shall give your'n body the succour of sensation it do crave and teach thee the ways of 'oomankin's desire. Bend thee now so'm put thee blindfold cloth; as your'n sight be taken so shall'un flesh come unto thay thrusting ecstasy of life"

Ly nodded his head staring and bent forwards so she could tie the cloth around him. Satisfied it was secured, she opened the door and led him inside. And ah the smell of her as she came close to tie the

cloth around his eyes - ah the smell of her! Dew-misted mornings, the fresh loam of soil, fecund like the fragrance of wild flower blooms, a faint musk of wood-smoke and the season-smell of the doe, the hind that be rarely hunted. All of these things and countless subtle more it seemed to Ly she did smell of. Her smell alone intoxicated him!

Inside he sensed two other presences, soft voices and hands that took off his belt with the flint-dagger on it. Took off the leather kirt girt around his groin, so that naked he stood and blindfolded as the maidens led him across to the fur-covered soft-bed. They massaged his flesh with aromatic oils, touched him all over til his arousal caused him to reach for thay dangly-fare that brushed his chest and his mangrown stoll. Then a moon-nymph was guiding his hands, showing him how to stroke her so and so, how to squeeze her and give her body pleasure. As now another of them sucked his member, gently sucking and pulling his cock-swain high, grasping his groin a sensation that he couldnay fettlesome to control, and he orgasmed, shooting his seed high; hinto thay maidens did scrape it off with their hands and tongues whilst he lay and gasped, his spirit spiralling up to the radiant sovereigns that glittered in the night sky outside and above them.

Until honey-wine was passed from tongue to tongue, temple-cakes given again. Very soon Ly's manhood returned and the moon-nymphs let thay explore'um their bodies, his mouth and fingers exploring, whilst another of the moon-nymph's oversee the ritual. Ly in frustration sort to tear the blindfold from him so he could see the beauty he was trammeling. The lead moon-nymph forbade him. But there was rustling and movements, giggling which told him they had expected and waited for this frustrated action on his'n part. Masks to hide identity were donned and Ly had his blindfold taken off so he could feast his eyes on thay dangly-fare beguildy, thay moon-maidens who'm had come to share a flesh-feast on this his name-day, manhood night.

And thay moon-maidens laid down beside Ly, curled aboon'un as he stroked'un and suckled the soft fair paradise of their'n flesh. He opened the petals of the mystery place and searched his tongue inside'un wondering at the flowing sea-tang juices, the tremour and pleasure moans of the maiden. And Ly was shown by the accompanying moon-maid how best to arouse her sister and when her pleasure come full-hold, Ly was telded to'm push his'n man's prong into that mystery womb-hole, so secret and neat, a flesh-cave of ecstasy so hidden from view. Then there were'n cries of pleasure and ecstasy burst nearly forth after a short span of thrusting animal motions; the rising erotic wave and rush of bliss in the aftermath still.

The moon-maid had lain panting while some-told later that evening Ly plied the same brave on the skin of the second moon-nymph. Whilst in the near-dawn, the overseer masked priestess came to the bed and bled the elixir of his manhood from him once more, as he devoured thay soft female flesh. Later, thankful and beamsome he bid them goodbye as they waved him off from their hut-space hidden some on high.

There were quiet days to follow then for a three day spell after Ly's name-day feast. He never knew who his initiators into the pleasures of sex were. He could guess, by a certain way of walking, a measure of fair proportions, a jut of the breast, a toss of the hair. But, as was their custom, it never was made known to him. Though he knew it was the older beguildy on the fringe of moon-ma asserting the power-mystery of their sex.

When Ly met Nionie first from her blood-rite, he was sitting alee an old willow be a little trickle of water that swelled to stream, and sometimes river in times of plentisome rain. Ly was alolling lazy-like in the old tree's bough, hafting at a wood piece, waiting for her coming. She came through the path in the woods to where Ly was beseated, her moon-sisters alongside of her carrying'un baskets that they'd blood-drenched at the dark of no-moon. Ly grinned as she came through the trees and she proud and self-conscious came into the sunlight and put down her burden some twenty steps from Ly. Her moon-sisters bid her passing goodbyes, leaving her to word-speak with her brother.

"Na Ly," said Nionie, shy-like yet provoking. "Hast thee set'n thee name-day feast and killed a boar of's own?" She asked him outright, her eyes reflecting his, shining a kin-light forth.

"Na Nionie, maybe'm so and maybe's thee on thee name-day becomen childer to 'ooman - goddess-formed and moon-ma of the making, a burdened of a magical soil - ey'us ent not so, eh na? Fech fer sure, as saa is the wild boar na?" Countered Ly, sharing his heart-speak with her, making known their connected telepathy.

"Even so, even so, my stoll blood-brother Ly - even so, we be both halves of the same kernal, na? Our'n minds do beat as one. Though now you becomen into man-some and I in thay moon-spell sung, we begowen our'n own ways, eh la, my blood-brother own? We've come seperate and different in our'n

ways as the seasons in time do change, as the radiant ones above do so dictate, na? Ly the wanderer gone, Nionie, his blood-sister tied to till thay soil; ties that link her to the silver one, to the goddess that breathes through fruit, frond and stem. Ties she would no more swap than Ly would turn hisself thatcher and water-carrier be the rood. Now I be moon-maid eh? Acolyte to the temple priestesses. Our roles be clear defined eh na Ly? Stark our'n difference be droved betwixt us, likes stag fra his sister'n hind, likes she-wolf fra her'n brother kin eh? But be thee brother fair and keep me to wholesome in thee heart-space and I'll find thee fond and tithy awhile be agin."

She looked at Ly for the longest while, gazed her devotion, her pride, her admiration into his brownen e'en. In her look she spoke the unspeakables; her form pert and nymph-like, leggy like the doe-faun at its inquisitive phase of childer. The look that passed between them was deeper than passion; it spoke of the whole concordance of the universal flux. It was the drift of a timeless spell and in it was revealed the nakedness of their desire alongside the acceptance of the taboo that bound them; the sorrow of their loss, the future that took their paths seperate.

The look was a call from blood-kin unto blood-kin, an acknowledgement of umbilical belonging, an intercourse of the unity of their vision, the one for the other. A look that reduced the gulfs of space between them and brought them, not side by side but conjoined - one and the same thing; different aspects that made up one whole. Thus deep and profound, beyond passion and of passion, through an ageless kindred link of blood, that look did speak.

Then, smiling, she came towards Ly, kissed his stoll-some cheek as he bent down to hold her, to hug her before the gestures of childer mun be laid to thay side and manhood framed his reserve. Nionie, trying to brush away the traces of tears in her eyes, carried hup her burden and walked aways, her back to Ly, towards the homestead of their'n moon-ma, their'n stoll-ra faither, who hefted the flint-tool blades.

And Ly felt the shadow of melancholy, the pain of things he could not change darken his heart and burn there for a pace. He felt like calling her back - his blood-sister, Nionie, moon-nymph become to acolyte of the high priestess, moon-chant weaver, weaving a spell of growth into the soil of the Land. She, of the fecund mysteries, his sister had become and thus did their ways shew a parting.

But stoll-like in the cast of his kind, Ly could only carve and carve the piece of wood, grappling with and soothing his pain and his sorrow by the persistance of his actions. The knife in his hand became blurred for a moment, and he had to stop to brush the unaccustomed tears away, wondering at the ache in his heart and burying it together with those things that had marked him as still yet a childer.

Remembering his man-hood, his name-day hunter's status, he stopped and gazed into middle distance, recollecting, collecting himself to live be the Hawk as the name-spur he'ud been tokened. Like a man, stoll and strengthful, he would be - with the wanderlust trade in his veins. The flint-maker and hunter-warrior skills that defined him, held him self-sufficient, as wild and independent as the wolves at high forest side.

He would carve legends in the memory of his tomorrows - he would spur story-spells told by the fire be the eld folk. Aye, fech fer sure, eld Mendion'ud spin his tale of the legend of Ly, the Hawk, the lightning wild one with the courage invincible of the wild boar fierce. So Ly swore to himself as the new quarter moon crooked a silver spell in the night, remembering the fullness of the harvest moon in the slender shiver of its potential - soon to swell, as the belly of a moon-ma did when thay little'uns becryn' to besought's 'un eyes on thay world.

This was the way Ly's thoughts had drifted, and had brought him calm and accepting, steady at the thought of sister's distance. He shut the cries of his deep-down heart to the side and remembered his warrior status.

Oftimes then he would linger be off'n of Old Wem's place seeking a mite of wisdom from the mouth of one whose lips were mostly kept well shut. But the silence of Old Wem's intuition served to soothe him, and he learned to fathom solutions for himself without ever having a word past between them. Ly had thought on occasions that he was made to follow in the footsteps of Wem's wisdom, alongside of the high-moon priestesses, they communed with the flux of All Life and kept the links with the kindred alive. But in a rare moment, Wem had pierced him with his gimlet brown eye, saying:

"There be too much of the coiled dather, too much of the rover's questing about thee Ly fer yon to take to sitting at the Listeners task - even though you have the stillness in thee stark to see. It be combined with a restlessness to know, to see that'll tek you's be way off'n from cycle to cycle; aye sure like tinder in your'n veins it be planted just awaiting a spark to set a light and flame-free" - a hand on his shoulder, a rare half-smile upon the chant-elastic lips. Of course, he had been right as always. Confirmed by the gift Wem had given him after his initiation name-day, the hawk-claw clasped pouch which hung now upon

his belt and where was kept the special stones marked as divinations for the trade-main of us ways. He had sought out Old Wem when he was still flint-knapping with his sun-pa. He had an itch in him that could not settle for the steady, plodding familiar-visited sites of the flint-founder's trade. His heart yearned to a wider horizon, and though he applied himself and learned well the art of flint-forming, he was not content and his spirit sang after the traders who came and went and returned and were off for a season and more besides. Ah, he could not help that desire quivering within him and finding the courage for his release. Without him having to speak this out in words, Old Wem seemed to know him sometimes better than he knew himself. He had sat himself outside Wem's place, savagely chipping at a piece of flint, wondering how he should broach so momentous a subject.

"Seems Ly's forgotten the delicacy of us cuts," commented Wem dryly as he walked up from the Fire-star space to find Ly there; and when Ly could finally bring himself to speak what was constricting him, Wem gave him solution simple and to the mark: "Your'n wings be itching to be unfurled and gliding a broader range, than the home route of your'n sun-pa's trade na? Then speak to he of what's awrithing in your'n heartsore, eh me lad? Or despite your'n name-day courage yen'll be a childer-kept for all your'n adult-status!"

Aye that'd been all the encouragement he needed, and though he felt strong-fond of his sun-pa and did not want to cause him sadness, he could not keep the core of his being stunted and unleashed all his life. Ly remembered then the first times flint-knapping with his sun-pa faither. The excitement he'd felt of trekking off together, taking vittals for a day or more if needs be. His faither had taken him to all on his prime sites thereabouts, to the hilltops and rocky crops and quarry dents and river beds where the choicest of flint material could be found. But soon the near-bound features of his activity be his sun-pa's side came to seem too dull and homely. The wander-lust in his veins craved the venture of further horizons and though he had learned well at his faither's side the itch in him bade him favour a further and further boundary. Until, given courage be the counsel of Old Wem, he had come to beg his'n faither if he could trade the flint-path accompanying the rover-deals, Dracon and Brinren, in their travels away for'n a half a cycle or more.

Ah and his'n faither had looked way off towards the mountains of the west when Ly had made his desire known to him. "There be dignity and worth in the rendering of flint Ly, though trowe all things have their'n season and the travelling trade do bring many novel things of interest to our'n homestead. I would nay keep thee honing the flint lessen thee had a mind to stay, never mind but thee's a feel fer'n the art of it too. But though your'n born of me own blood, the Gods decide where your'n spirit be apt. If there's a feel in thee fer'n the far and wide I would nay tether thee to a homely radius. Thee be man-some now son, man enough to choose your'n own ways. If Dracon and Brinren have nay objection to your'n accompanying they, then I'll find none else by which to keep thee. Lad, thee've a wilderness bent in thee heart I've kent it fra the moment thee could hunt with a childer's bow and arrow. You've my blessings for why fer sure I could nay turn a flying speddie seed to a rooted frond, even if I'd mind to, which I dunnet. Saa away wi' you Ly and take care, as the Goddess wills so be it, eh na Ly? As the Goddess wills!"

Aye, and he had smiled at his son a benediction, concealing his sadness for Ly's sake, who was at that moment too full of the zest of release and freedom to study his faither close like. It was only much later that he realised from something his moon-ma had said that he had caused his faither some'at of a heavy in the heart awhiles. But after all, he had the flint skill learned from his faither the first two cycles since his initiation into manhood. He was fast at his learning which had begun before his special name-day, when he had killed the wild boar. And since that time he had hewn flint from many a hilltop, and from the stone he had made a multitude of flint blade scrapers; small flints for delicate work and carving; flint arrow heads and spear points; axe heads and pounders. Each flint blade had its special and general uses, mainly being cutting, carving, planing, smoothing, scraping, sawing and splitting. For all these functions flint was the hardest, and as yet, most plentiful material.

As a matter of course Ly had become expert in the use of wood. The backpack he carried for long journeys was made from a frame of hazel - the pack itself being made of leather with different pockets for various items. Inside it he would carry axe helves and wooden bowls made of ash and oak. In one pocket there would be a sewing kit with an awl made of bone and limelast for sewing thread. In the main part of the backpack was a birchwood container which housed his tinder and fire-starter. Inside a mollusc shell container to prevent dampness was some tinder fungus (collected from dead or diseased beech or birch trees). There was also some pyrite. In order to start a fire, Ly would strike a flint core repeatedly against the pyrites. Sparks fell on the tinder which with blowing ignited a fire.

Ly had learned to make fire before he was even 9 cycles old. It was a familiar almost unconscious routine which provided the warmth and heat that was so necessary for him and his kinsfolk's survival. For the rest of the tinder, Ly would have a stock of reed-mace wool, hammered willow bast, juniper pith, mosses and thistledown, small feathers and twigs. He also carried birch sap which was an essential gluing agent, and birch fungus which had many beneficial medicinal uses. Thus supplied, Ly was a mobile self-sufficient unit enabling him to live in solitude or in the wilderness with his travelling companions for seasons upon end, without the necessity of returning to the homestead.

All the different uses of the forest trees he had learned well before his initiation and could cut and carve alongside of the most practiced of his kinsmen. Ly's long bow was made of yew wood and his arrow shafts came from the wood of the wayfaring tree, mixed with some dogwood shafts. All the trees were used for diverse purposes which Ly had learned well; their special qualities and spirit being known and passed down through the centuries of ancestors. He knew the uses of birch wood, ash wood, hazel and thorn, willow, beech, yew, lime and oak. The oak was sacred to the sun god and revered for its enduring quality, its hardness, its life-giving aura. Ly had helped to build wattle and daub dwellings with it, watched the skeletons of boats taking shape and made his own before very long, using the sacred oak. Furniture was crafted from this wood and it was also used for dyeing and planing.

But always the tree spirit was consulted, gifts left to appease it; only a certain number being felled each cycle, and these were storm damaged or diseased, or old. For it was thought if the oak was felled indiscriminantly, the sun god would punish them with drought, lightning strikes and storms, or with a withdrawal of that very necessary light and warmth which swelled the corn and brought them bountiful harvests. The oak was a tree which was revered and honoured as much and above nearly all the other trees in the forest by the Albion kindred. It was totem, and held a special place in the hearts of all Ly's kinsfolk for it housed them, kept them safe and secure in the storm, sped them along the waterways, padded out their lives with a beautiful and sturdy substance that they were ever mindful of. And aye was this instinct full within Ly, for a grove of oak trees always had a specially alive and listening aura, potent and fecund, as if it harboured the horned god himself, which caused him to tread quiet and reverential like whenever he were in the midst of the sun trees they thought so special.

As soon as he could walk, Ly had set to watching the world go by and playing with the bits of wood carving his father had made for him in the lightening evenings of blossom-tide. And pretty soon he had set to and watched the world go by whilst carving his own plith of wood. He had watched Hurgin, his cycles older brother, making arrow shafts and spears and followed his suit in making his own. As he'd got older he had helped with some of the construction work, in the building of a byre to house'un cattle in winter's dregs, and new homesteads for the swelling community. He had spent long times by the river observing his kinsmen assembling the skiffs they used to paddle the waterways. Before his initiation he had cut and planed, shaped and seasoned his own boat-frame, stretching and oiling the deerskin which completed it and made it the practical and effective means of transportation it was.

He had learnt at his moon-ma's knee the names of the plants and edibles they gathered. Many a time when young had he walked with the 'oomankin, not yet old enough to let be his own. With his moon-ma he had gathered fat hen and chick weed, corn spurrey, bugle and cuckoo flower. He had harvested acorns, blackberries, thay bitter sloe, crab apples, haws and hazel nuts. He had collected elder flowers, thorn leaves and beech leaves in spring. In autumn as well as the fruits, there was a wide variety of mushrooms, the fungi to be strictly avoided, and those which could be sparingly used.

In the spring the 'oomankin fertilised the fields and planted the crops to be grown. Whilst before times, the menfolk came and prepared the small fields, ploughing them with wooden hafts, chircking the oxen to pull ho. Then before thay blossom sprung, the 'oomankin would come to spread their sacred soil which contained the blood of their wombs. The priests and priestesses would come to dance-chant whilst thay menfolk'un gathered aroun. The moon-goddess appointed Ethreal, for 7 cycles past, would bless the seeds as they'd come to be planted. And aroun the rim, the menfolk would begin their sun-wise cycle dance with thay childer to follow in thay wake.

In this way the kindred cultivated: linseed, opium poppy, legumes, einkorn and emmer, durum, oat-ear and barley. Thus did they live by way of the richness of Nature. The food they ate so reverentially garnered, made them strong and hale. The bounty that their environment afforded them allowed them to cast their sight beyond the confines of the homestead. It was partly the cause of their outward looking spirits, their questing, desire-born souls. They came to observe their environment, not just exist in it. They came to study the moon and the sun, the drift of the stella space and this study had provoked the building of monumental temples. The stone circle temples which, like huge sculptures speckled across

the land, had grown up and had produced the great connectedness that had carried they thus far forwards. He thought of the corn festivals they'd had in the past, where Ethreal came to bless the harvest - give thanks to the goddess. There'n was watching and waiting while the menfolk cut the grain that the 'oomankin would grind and pound for the flour to laid a platter on the mealboard. And with the wealth of the autumn harvest - thanksgiving festival did commence, where the men enacted the corn god dance, wedded be the Mother til his time of death did cant the fall. And the 'oomankin become they goddess-nymphs dancing seductions in the firelight as'un all quaffed and made much merry. Couples disappeared to a quiet-space hut where often Ly had been taken by the moon-maidens too - since that first night of his initiation. The sacred stook of corn was the last'un kept, woven into blessing scree and made into special magic cakes eaten in mid-winter, when they all had need of cheer. Aye, there was goodly times to be had fer sure, for they as settled in the lee of the homesteaders rhythm, thought Ly, convincing himself this was so whilst his spirit took winged flight towards the travel ways and further foreign places that had always stirred his blood so, gave him his full zest for life.

He remembered the first ever time he had travelled far down the water-ways with Dracon and Brinren, in the first great skiff he'd ever been in. The voluminous sail and flange were holed a deck as they'd sped down the silver Severn, the main thoroughfare 'pon which the sturd-druth sailboat was moored. Cross country by a minor river, they had set out with Ly all quiet, his eyes as big as his head taking in all the landmarks they passed too shy and too full of respect for his companions to speak much at all, jumping to do their bidding almost sooner than he'd been told! That first time they had not stopped by The Holy Place which would come to be so special and awesome to Ly. The experience of The Holy Place came after that first trip away which had filled Ly's senses so to brimming. Quickly had the broad river's flow taken them south and then east, til be eventide they had stopped at a trading harbour before the Big Waters swell. All new and strange to Ly, he had quickly slept after the tasty fare cooked on an open fire beside the bustle of other strangers camps who shouted greetings to Brinren and Dracon, as fatigued from their day's travel they crouched by the fire.

The following day before the sun had risen, they were up and away and soon upon the shore of the Big Waters' swell. Ly could remember the awe he had felt when for the first time he had witnessed the expanse of the sea and heard the swooshing of the surftide upon the shingled shore. Seeing it had given him a conscious apprehension of his ancestors greatness. In his bones and switched like a light in his mind, he knew then, an immense admiration and reverence, for they who had gone before him. For they who by their trials and errors had so developed their sailing skills as to make the great saltwater expanses merely another broad river to cross, maintaining trade links that went back to the times when the first ever folk had settled these sacred isles. He felt the ancient noble spirit of his ancestors in his blood as he tasted the sea-foam, and as at last Dracon and Brinren pointed their vessel seaward and scudded her out into the swell.

And the sea-monsters that plunged past drivthning a sonorous call through watery depths, spouting thane water high. Those mountainous waves on's first journey! But Dracon and Brinren, skilled and expert at boatcraft, kept the bobbing stoll-skiff asail whiles Ly steadied himself be the hull of the water-rider, and prayed to they gods in's lack of faith. But coasted to shoreline come they two suns after, complete, untoppled and ready to trade. Through they Breton lands they traded, through Bayun, by the serpent Seine and all by they neighbouring lands they took their'n wares. Through Carnac, they myriad megalith corridors of stone, they reverent-came and traded their flints and clever-weave cloth for some new brew wine and crystal-coral. Thus did their reputation spread so they welcome received, communicating be the common store of their language, as their ancestors issued from the same root and stock.

Full two seasons had they wandered across the Great Lands, Dracon with his pipe music proclaiming their presence, diffusing any aggressive urge and signalling that they in trade'n friendship had come. In the hot southern darks they traded and be the cold climes of the north. They had forged links with they southern-east peoples, they stoll of grist and bone where the olives and lemons grew, where islands scattered the sea before the coast of more dusty and exotic lands. The flint they traded was sharp good-rare, skilful made and sturd-druth, taking the homesteads and hev-steads be store, swamping their own packs with treasures to tell kindred come the snap of the dark-time when their sail would bow to rush before the norther winds blow.

The different shapes; new grim gods and lighter aspects that foreign folk did pledge to had intrigued Ly at first, alongside of plenty other'un. They red-metal rarity of an axe biting as sharp as they flint almost. The brun bear and wolves they girt round to avoided. The star-ban boot-lan where the folk fished and ate strange pastries, honour'un the earth, tantazled be the skies, seeing but not learning the trace of the path

of the celestial ones. Not understanding the pull of the greater tide as his own folk did. Advanced; superior Ly had felt - though a natural instinctive tact forbade him pressing the point with the strangers they met. There were gems they traded - pink rock and coral, special shells, bloodstone, jet and quartz, as well as new foods and strange fashioned wares to take back to thay kindred. After the harvest fall, when the air was beginning to frost, they returned after two full seasons travelling.

The folk been all quiet-like but when they came of the afternoon there was celebration and feasting called for and Ly found hisself and his companions surrounded by the pleasure on their kindred's faces. The welcome and sun-warmth they smiled from their eyes was enow to set thay heart aflame and brimful, thay spirit on a wing of joy. And aye, it had been good and lollsome wintered in with homestead kindred safe-harboured in the lee of familiar hearts and hands. All tucked up and cosied - seeing his sister, acolyte of the moon-temple grown. They talking and walking as of old days, sate be the fire of their mutual belonging, their company being enow one for the other once more. Though on the feasting nights Ly was lured by the masked moon-maidens who set his body on fire, carved the craving for 'oomankin within him, and succoured full his physical needs.

Aye and always with his travelling betimes, Ly had kept hisself aloof from the company. Not getting close to any one beguily-fair and not being drawn ever to the tether of man-home. He had kept himself close inside and though would smile friendly-like and dazzle'un charm fra his e'en, he would never stay long enow for intimacy much. Aloof ultimately he was - bent upon the rovers trading whiles and wanting no more ties to bind him to thay harbour of's birth.

This containment of Ly's gave him a reputation amongst the 'oomankin. Because of his battle prowess, because of the glamour of his trade and his infrequent presence, because for he was comely and stoll, adazzle and atwinkle of's e'en at times of glee, thay 'oomankin did swoonsome him and as time went on they took to pledging one to the other, each trying in their turn to bind Ly and clap him man-home and tethered. Many other'un young mensfolk stayed stoll be the hunt and the crafting; home at the homestead for many an evening. But for Ly he must let his winged soul to his freedom turned to the shoresides, the wild sides, tarrying in strangers lands, learning some more and anew. So did Ly's heart quiver like an arrow from the bow, the wanderlust steeped full within him.

Thus had Ly held himself from any intimacy with his 'oomankin. Ten, fifteen, cycles from his initiation Ly's wanderlust was joked amongst thay folk and he was renowned for a bringer of rare and unusual gifts. Precious gems, special foods and spices, reindeer hide, a copper axe head, shiny yellow embossed bowls, an ornamentation of the Great Mother. Bear he had encountered, escaped and killed. Wolves he had watched and won the pelt of; beaver and otter and hare had he trapped and killed for the meat or the hide. He had hunted auroch in plenty; red deer, roe deer and elk. He had fished salmon, trout, perch, pike, eel, crab and molluscs.

As well as his hunting skills, which were common to the kinsmen of his boundary, Ly was known as a warrior of formidable character. It was necessary he should be so, as his travels sometimes exposed him to hostility he must needs defend himself from. Four cycles from his initiation a border dispute had flared between his kindred and that of a neighbouring community. Such disputes were rare but when they flared, they flared ferocious and determined. Segwin had done all within his power to prevent the fuelling of feud but Minreeth, the headman of the neighbouring community, was puffed up as the adder and illbind to strike, assuming with his growth of numbers more, he could steal the lush stretch that had long been harvested and tilled be the company of Ly.

On the cusp of spring the battle came, the Minreeth rabble appearing massed 'ginst the skyline, a brief stride on the opposite hill. Ly could remember the tension, the fire in his belly, his prayers to the War Goddess making him immune of fear, accepting of pain and death if it should come; sure if it did he would win his place be the fireside of fame, a light in the memory of his folk, returned to the paradise of the everlasting Golden Source from which he had come and to which he would return one day, he knew. His kinsmen had not streamed, haphazard and thoughtless down the hillside, as Minreeth's foolhardy anger had spurred his mensfolk to do. Segwin advised by Onreth, suggested by Ly, had cautioned their company to split into three, two parts of their forces taking high ground and forming a kind of pincer with which to crush their assailants. But one part of their forces, the third part must needs provide the bait to draw Minreeth's forces into their well-thought trap. Ly had volunteered to be part of this "bait" force which must draw and contain the enemy until the waiting flanks of the pincer could crush the exposed opposition and vanquish them as quickly as they had come.

Ly had stood beside Kyfeth, his childhood friend, and Oneth the battle-hard and brave. As the enemy streamed towards them, Ly had opened his throat and chant-cried their blood-burning warrior's song.

Upon his breast and that of those who stood with him was a skilfully woven basket tunic designed to protect them some from arrows and flailing spears. Ly's group had let fly arrows from their long bows, whilst a front line braced themselves for the onslaught. Wielding his long-shafted axe in one hand and his protective dagger in the other, Ly clashed with the enemy. Such was the ferocity with which he fought, fearless beside the seasoned Oneth, courage-giving for those of virgin battle prowess, the enemy were held and even knocked back on their heels.

Ly's movements had been so quick and so lethal none of the aggressors could get near him. So too could be said of Oneth and others alongside him. Though there were some who were felled, some who slashed and bloodied, grave wounded and gouged, must totter and fall. Their demise only spurred Ly on so that he trebled his efforts, determined to kill and wound protective of his own. His mind had been in a strangely elevated state then, the rush of adrenalin made him oblivious of the deep cut on his shoulder, oblivious of the arrow that had glanced from his thigh. All he knew was his bloodlust, the sweet satisfaction and white fire in his veins that came from cutting the enemy down and finally seeing them routed and humbled; fleeing before them, vanquished by the superior tactics Segwin had employed. Aii! And he had never felt so alive, so triumphant, so vivified, so melancholy-poignant on learning the deaths of those who had stood with him, as he had felt on that day, on the eve of their victory. Aii! he had never felt such utter sweetness, the joy of living, the sorrow of loss, as he did on that day, which came known to their folk as the battle of the Leasowe Stretch, after the piece of land that had caused the dispute. Other times too, Ly had to defend himself, to fight in order to survive. There was the second time with Dracon and Brinren, in a dust-lush land of the east, when they'd come across a hostile folk, mistrustful and fearful of Dracon's pipe. The three of them had readied to withdraw, clear-given in their intention, but the strangers had attacked and it had taken all their sling and knife-throwing skills to keep them off and give Ly and his companions chance to escape unharmed. There was the time they had got caught up in the quarrels of a northerner folks; the time when a careless arrow had brought another battle to their homestead between they and a south-wester folk; the time when an ambush had nearly resulted in the loss of their lives but for the light sleeping and wariness of Dracon which had saved them in the nick of time. Aye there had been many tests, many escapes, many tales to savour of the telling for Ly, he who was well-known nigh on for the length of their wooded isle, as The Hawk; he of the Albion Kindred, close-named as Ly.

Standing on his hilltop, Ly reflected on all the goodness his life had held. He thought of his vantages and he thought on the sorrows that had deep-carved his being. The loss of Dracon, his early travelling companion, the death of his faither-sun, main-stoll, the bairn his moon-ma had birthed who had choked and died in the third cycle of his little life. He thought of the battles they had fought on occasions which had caused the loss of his kinsmen warriors. Aii! But life and death were all but one he knew, and the one fed into the other, so he consoled himself, philosophical and accepting, as it was the way of his folk to be. Aii! As winter followed the harvest, as snow and ice did creep against the sun, death had its timeful phase, just as in season the sap did rise and the earth gave birth to cubs and fledglings. Aye, everything had its own species of time Ly knew, as he stood pondering on his hilltop in the late afternoon sun.

He felt close to his faither-sun main-stoll up here on the tip of Corndon, for it was here that Beunyyd, his main-stoll, was buried as befitted his status and his soul-skill. The ice-time had killed him when Ly was in the far-lands. He'd been struck be cramps or some such blight, when he was part way up a rocky incline. He had been unable to stop himself falling so it seemed. His head had banged hard agin a stone, cracked'us skull, killed him fer sure. A slight encroaching weakness of age had killed him, scythed him down. His faither's bones slept in the earth now whilst his spirit made a path to the stars and his soul did cleave the two togethersome.

He remembered the shock of it on his return. His moon-ma's sagging shoulders, her red-rimmed eyes. The internment had already taken place, but the burial mound had not been completed. The company awaited the second son of Benyyd - Ly, he known as the Hawk - to come and share the measure of's main-stoll's death: his entry into the unity of Life, into the never-ending cycle that contained the stars, the moon, the earth, in the sun's sacred circle of light.

The company had climbed up a Corndon and stood beside as Ethreal and Old Wem led the chanting, and the sol-bearers chorused a eulogy to he of the flint-forming hand: Benyyd, with his miner's, tool-maker's skill. And the wind had whistled sharp and icy cold, like a blade against their faces, as they stacked thaise stone upon stone, and his faither's material presence was known remote and never to be more, even whiles his spirit sang to them from the soil. Ly had stood alongside his elder brother and sisters, his

twin sister, Nionie, and his moon-ma, all of they teary and sorrowful, left to weep the pain away; to allow the light of the gift that was Death to chase they gloom-shadows away.

The rest on they company had climbed down, the temple acolytes quiet-chanting. Their company kindred went down to prepare the funeral feast, where songs and stories loved of Benyyd, the flint-knapper, rock-sturd stoll, would be sung and heard and told by all of they gathered. The feast had been a remembrance of Benyyd, a praise of they goodly life he had long-kind lived.

When Ly and his family had come aft away fra Corndon and down to homestead feast-hall, the company were'n all gather-red and Ly's folks were shown ways to the head-table, whereto the ale did lightensome they's sorrow together with the kindness of the company who spoke many tales of Benyyd, stoll of the homestead kindred. The folk-songs of old were sung and his moon-ma had gone to her bed early, leaving the rest of them to listen to the songs of their ancestors, the memories and stories their faither had given'un. Ly'ud been sad-like and wearisome for days, but life went on. The pulse of it continuous, the thread of it unbroken and his faither though not evident to his eyes, he knew was part now of that Great Flow which encompassed all things.

Many times Ly'd sensed his faither be his shoulder, chiding at a bad hit, in praise at a well-flaked flint, and he would turn to find nothing but air, the wind, silence, his faither invisible now to human eye. But Ly knew his main-stoll was rich in the earth - had joined they great ancestors that had raised they fire-star temples. Eh na! thought Ly wistful-like, that he could live and remember so well yet never touch they dead ones that were gone from him. The barrier of death was unbreachable and yet in the dark nights, a cycle of moons before midwinter, their ceremony to the dead was enacted. Through the psychic charge on that night when all'un dead ones were called back to company to beseat and feast with'un, to bless'un and give thanks for the gifts that in life had been given; to seek their approval and blessing for new ventures undertaken - at such atimes did Ly feel his faither's close presence, and be the keening light in his moon-ma's eyes, he knew she sensed'un too. The company gather-red strength from the festival of the dead. It helped them wholesale accept what inevitably was part of life: Death - the converse equation. Death, that would claim they all in the end. The festival of the dead thus contained a deep, spiritual awe, a resonant profundity that psychically empowered the whole company.

It was his faither's death into Universal Life that had made Ly turn his thoughts more homeward lee. His faither had died but three cycles since and his death had impressed upon Ly the fragility of human ties - the preciousness of the quantity of time allowed him.

Not only that, in the past few years there had come changes, rumours of aggressive actions, the sudden stealthily spreading novelty of the fire-metal that kirt harder and sharper than even the topmost flint. Trowe it was a wonder how the fire could soften the shiny hard stuff and make it moulded to a sharpes slicing edge he'd ever seen. In the mid Great Lands he had stood by a gathering and watched the metal crafter shape his skill. There was a rill and fervour that had gripped the folk there, and everybody who walked away from the timely demonstration knew that some great change was on the horizon.

Flint was still necessary, but Ly knew its magic was beginning to fade. He sensed this and accepted it as part of the inevitable process of life, only there was a vague melancholy in the depths of his heart that made him glad his faither was be the bones of the Earth, cradled in the womb of the Goddess, so that he was not there to experience the decline of his flint-worker status. For all'un such reasons Ly had cast his glance homeward bound much more than off, lately now.

It was Brith-na-gig who had made his mind up, clinched his thoughts and put actions to his desires and motives. Ly had held the wanderlust long, sharing the festivals of many a different homestead far and wide, in'us own land and across the Big Waters in the Great Lands. He had diddled many a dangly-faire when the festivals and fertility rites, the seasonal celebratory feasting made the allowances, gave licence to his sexual expression. In his homestead he had na clept eyes on any dangly-faire that riveted him. It was only a cycle after his faither'd died when Ly had come back from a long times journeying, trading and travelling the communication links that kept they trade-main going. He came back just in time for the company's midwinter feastings. The joy and relief on his moon-ma's face and on that of Nionie and his other'n kindred, was starksome evident. He'd been aturn so long they'd begun to clemm that he was harmed or troubled. But no, not he, not the Hawk, he assured them, moved be the keening light that shone from many an eye.

The time for orgiastic ceremonials had come round and all they company was dressed sharp and teasing, washed and lotioned and rubbed dry with sweet herbs for the couplings that would come later as the temple-cakes were given made from the last stook corn of the harvest - magically imbued. Ly knew that his lust, the thrust which kept life going, would be embraced and fulfilled that night. But it seemed each

moment was sharpened with a new light, the pleasure more acute and made so be the long absence he'd seen away fra'us kinsfolk. He watched the festivities and participated in them as he never had done so wholly before, yet so observing-like too, outside of himself, watching the proceedings with a freshened eye, conscious of the style and aesthetic charm of the dressed festival wattle and daub hall, of the health and harmony of thay company, come kirtled in fine-woven cloth dyed in thay rich'n colours rare. After the feasting; the chanting and dancing, the magical ritualisation begun of their orgiastic energies. And company was all be-seated and the female acolytes came round with beakers of warming, intoxicant brew, distributing the temple-cakes for company's pleasure.

She had given him his beaker of mulled brew glancing quickly to his eyes and then down again, smiling and murmuring a blessing. It seemed to Ly his heart had quickened a beat as he gazed on the apparition of loveliness he'd not noticed so much but two cycles since. Now a new moon-maiden blossomed before him as soft and luscious as the golden plums given to he be his trade in the south lands. He watched her moving, bending to each of the company with a smile and a blessing. There seemed a sheen on her - as if the radiant beings had shed their twinkling luminosity upon her, surrounded her with an aura of silthful light, so it appeared to Ly's sight.

Finally she went to join the other acolytes to begin their humming chant, their ritualised dancing, while company began drinking of thay flesh pleasures that wrought an sexual unity, sanctioned by the high-moon priestess, embracing the urge that the Great Mother and Her God of the Green, the Horned One, had placed in them to remove all barriers for its expression. Any childer conceived on such nights and legitimised by a binding were regarded as well-favoured. If thay 'oomankin was free of acknowledged man-home, it was very rarely they would conceive. And the 'oomankin had thays secret ways for encouraging or discouraging the seed that was planted in their wombs. But no thought of faitherhood was in Ly's mind that night.

Many a masked moon-maid had come to lure Ly from the vigil of the acolytes trance-dance. But he would not be led away and ignored the body language of the masked moon-maidens. He ignored all the presences around him and only feasted his eyes on the moon-dance of the acolytes, watching she with the fiery hair, thay faire-beguilty who had caught his heart-beat in his chest of a sudden-like and dazzled his sight for long into the evening.

He had sat buzzing from the winter-wine and the temple-cakes facing the area where the acolytes were. She, his fox-coloured moon-maiden, with the form as lithsome as thay otter, as graceful as thay long-legged doe; she, absorbed the whole of his attention. She swayed and hum-chanted with the other moon-maidens. Closing her eyes to begin with she had not noticed his attentions. Then at an instant her eyes had caught his regarding her. She saw how he waved the masked moon-maiden from him so that he could watch her, bask in the sight of her!

Her eyes flashed at him as the trance-dance continued, as the moon-dance stirred their motions. Her movements were luxurious, beautifrew-sensuous, oozing the gift of her sexuality, as she breathed, as she moved, so natural, so silthful, more beautifrew-rare than any beguilty he'd set eyes on afore. She blushed at his continued focus of attention; her cheeks like rose-bloom at its soft-velvet zenith. The longer he watched her, the more her eyes were drawn back to his, the more their spirits connected, and the more her dance was exaggerated, heightened, performed for the unexpected audience instead of her own dedication to the Silver One. Her dance became ever more provocative, ever more yearning in its teasing, as if a desire for him infected her also and she danced the real, rather than the ritualised, expression of the Goddess power and sex need. Be the end on it Ly's loins were aflame with desire. He wanted thay beguilty-faire, she with the hair like autumn's leaf-fall, he wanted her as he'd never wanted an 'oomankin before.

When another masked moon-maiden came returned to try herself with Ly, he acceded and went with her. He thrashed his love-lust out for Brith-na-gig on a moon-maid who be morning he would be untethered be. The same could not be said of she, who lived now in'us mind's eye, held in the beat of his heart. Ly did not feel untethered and free from she, as he did of the moon maid that had quenched his most immediate urge. The next day he was struck be the memory of her and took himself off to the valley where he found a piece of apple-wood to carve as a gift for'n thay beautiful Brith who had so quickened his pulse. He felt she'd infected him with a fever he'd never be free of until he had tasted the fruit of her fair form.

Later that day towards the tide of even' he clept eyes on her weaving outside the homestead of her moon-ma, Oinica. She were weaving and plaiting some rush-matting, her hair falling forwards like a sheet of silky flame in itself. He had seen her spy him from a distance and pretend an unawareness by putting her

head down in apparent close concentration on her task, which Ly knew for sure was feigned. He smiled to himself his heart giving a little fillip and jump, a strange happiness surging through him. He walked over and stood right beside her until she must of necessity respond to his nearness. She had looked up at him and blushed, but nevertheless, had looked blatantly into his eyes, brazen-like and breathing quickly as if she risked danger be doing so, even though her cheeks be burning afire.

"Eh na Brith-na-gig, in trowe I've naither seen an acolyte maiden dance saa feisty and saa faire, wraithing a spell as seemed summat more'n thay reverencing of the Silver She who sheds her milky light in the night sky, na? Whey it took Ly's breath and burned him laithel-like full of fever for a stint fer sure! Thee dance was worth a favour of finest flint, a bolt o' best cloth and the rarest gems from a further shore land, whey ya right fer sure! Or my name be nether Ly nor cometimes as Hawk at all! Such silthful talent and extravagant devotion tuthee Goddess deserves some little gift or'n gesture fer sure".

Ly's eyes twinkled at her, teasing her with his words which contained a twist of sarcasm, a barb that both flattered her and revealed the fact that Ly had recognised that wayward streak in which had made her forget the duties which required her concentration on calling magic from the Goddess for sakes of the feasting and company's enjoyment. She had allowed herself to be swept along, excited by the attention of Ly and rather than losing herself in the moon-dance, she had danced to tease, to impress, to draw the blood of he who was known as the Hawk. But Ly his eyes dancing in suppressed merriment, crouched down beside her and placed on the ground before her the apple-wood carving he had spent much of the day working on.

"Mays it be happen that if Brith do accept this'n gift, if she do take it up in her'n hand to study and show liking of, maybe she should know then the price of that accepting. Fer sure Brith, I'll speak some trowe na? She, who sits all blushing and brazen afore me, has the carver's heart in the hand that she do hold his gift'un, if she's a mind to accept sa poor a gift unravelled fra a day's unreckoning na?"

Ly had squatted beside her placing on the ground before her the carved figurine of a hawk in flight. He looked into her eyes the colour of burnished beech leaves at fall-time shot with an emerald inflection - all autumn's richness of colours, her eyes, her skin, her hair. He had held her eyes with his own, and hers had sparkled their vivacity at him, astounded, delighted, devilment dancing in them intermixed with a high-strung nervousness of uncertainty. Oh how she inflamed him! Until she had turned sudden-shy like at his proximity and the intensity of his attentions, betook him her thanks, dropped her work, took up his gift and fled with it inside the enclosure of her moon-ma's homestead. Fiesty and excited she was, half-fearful too, of what the gift might portend; knowing the man, the reputation he had, the prize of many of her 'oomankin, the desire of her elder moon-sisters.

From thence onwards Ly took it to halt her with word-speak, a play of teasing words that became a tingling frisson for them both. Ly strove to be by her, to see her eyes sparkle and shine at's own, to see the luscious, lovely, curvesome birth na beauty as she was, as oft as he could engineer it. Then he left company homestead, his family and folk, to wandersome of'us trade, far and wide as it'ud always been his seasoning to tarry such-likes. But whiles he was away he held Brith in his mind like a flower, like a flame, and her image teased him and flared in his mind all the times he was by aft in the travelling line. A summer and the game was begun again. They's took to the teasing and speaking often the one to's t'other'un, when Ly become on by. The tension between them was patent to see, and all 'oomankin watched and waited to see if Ly, the Hawk, the free bird, be tethered in manhome be Brith-na-gig come two seasons hence.

She struck out fer he. He'd never been so bedazzled be'un 'oomankin-faire before this while. He never had been so moved. She was all come seventeen - she be nineteen cycles on when Ly finally decided he mun trappple and betroth she for'us own. Ly finally decided that his heart was held fer'n home when the pull betwixt the travel and what's mun keep him be the homestead, be balanced in the latter's favour; and it were Brith-na-gig that tipped the scales in favour of'us final choice. It was she as finally decided'un, made him put up his skiff and paddle-line, his maintrade wares, fer'n the steady and season's activity tethered be a homestead aft the providesome lark for childer and a swell-bellied young'un moon-ma of'us own.

Comel a constant as opposed to a spasmodic feature of the company. Happy with'us choice yet wistful all the same, Ly dwelt upon all'n thase things that floated through'us mind-space. Be-remembered him of the past and betook him to the future-flight, settled him steady in the present at peace, at one with'un's environment, complete in hisself, only waiting for fulfilment of Brith-na-gig. It seemed she was his all 'n all to be that would put the light in the lantern of'us life, that would make'us living harvestshone-whole. Then his mind ranged to his coming journey, and all that this last jaunt aways would mean to him.

" Feelin' that sem old fire in me veins," he thought to himself, viewing the homestead across the hilltops, sheared of trees but surrounded by wooded vales all around.

"Old Man Wem says, it will be the death of me...the return on me bones and flesh to The Mother. I say to he in turn, 'well it do got to come to all, like the coming of Ice-cold, like the drift from summer sun to Winter's rain'n dark, I says to Old Man Wem. Do got to come some time, fech for sure.

'Aye'n,' he says, in return; 'bechance it come nigh in a blinkin' tith if yon get runnin' to meet it though, stead of it comin' to thy in goodly time,' and he mutters darkly to hisself as become his way. But he do come old and crackle in his ways, though troth he is wiser and weird-like than any of ourn kin and reverenced be all'n company. Betimes he do gets to worritin some and don't let it get by yon if its clept a darksome in the skies. It be only 'cos he come fond and tithy on me that he speaks so stark.

He's afeard forn the whole on us now, he tells me when we be all on ourn lonesome abidin' distance fra the rest on company. He says our season is come to closin' time. He says winds be blowin changes that'll trample up ourn company, cut kin fra kithin like the brown time fells leaf-flutters fra the tree-talls when the light do shrink and the cloudmass piles the sky. He says cold, cold winds of change becomin for all on us - for the Great Land 'cross the waters too, not just for this blessed island span. And he do mutter darkly to hissen,'things be worse before they cam better and a kindly light do come. Things be much'n, much'n worse before they cam better and all on us shall drop away, and the temples to The Fire-Star be old and ruinous afore the folk cam this ways agin, he do say. He's nigh on puttin the prang and felch up the whole tone on us, but fer he's wise and he keeps it close to hissen rather than mither and misery-up ourn company. And he says but little enow by troth. Its just his looks that betimes stir so darkly as if he got the keenin' light in his heart and he says not much to the rest on 'em.

Only me 'cos I stir and go and bide nowhere fer the length of a single season's span. 'Cos I be back and far'n aways agin, fra the Far Waters and The Holy Place to homestead here and up and aways sometimes before the full shift o'the moon. Cos I baint not be here all'times, he prises his husky shell and shares the heart-sore he'd never girt nor open, wi' non rest on company. He was my Pri Moon-ma's stol, so I ky girt closer by him than all the company, though he be one of The Wise Ones, with his cell all to hissen. Wey! but his heart be sight bigger than his brain, though be all his charts you could thought there'd not be a bigger.

He had his chance at the Holy Place but the nether-fare-well broght him back agin to all'n us here and my Pri Moon-ma and all them'n long anes past. Saa! I'm fond on the crackle Old Wem, forever if he's arter puttin' winds sleer through me. I knows he's all fer all our'n good - and as we work fer one, we wish it fer the all. Wey-ya rite! It all comes down'n to the Great Fire-Star, the Silver-White Moon-ma up'n above and the spirit of Erce Eorphan slumberin' deep downsides liken the Great Mother she be - wey-ya rite! It all comes down'n to that in the end and we mun give oursens up fer bad or fer glee when betimes it do come to bidin' be The Old Ones, thase Rovers as fost walked the sea-bed in seasonal times long gone by to bide be this land, this fair isle, shriftik aways from The Great Lands on a mark all its own. Wey, its a cannily thought to me, fer the rovin' be in me blood sure as if the fost Old Rovers were me kithin and kin-come. Wey and I be arter stokin' me skiff and paddle-oar down'n the watery-ways. It's the travellin' fire neath me skin as stokes me and keeps me by off on me own'n - with no dangly-fares but the dugs o' the Great Mother to girt me when I'm coldsome and tarnish-like. She's a harsh one but she brings fair up in me the shine, the keenin' light in my heart.

Fer sure though Brith-na-gig is after stealin' that wild'n light away fra me and makin' a fire-light all her own'n there. Wey-ya but she smites me sore to heart when I catches her, fer she's a dangly-fare and a birth of beauty on her. Saa! Maybe when I comes away fra the Holy Place, maybe I's'll tether her to bide be me as my fullsworn Moon-ma and bring flesh to company as the Gold One in the skies do spring corn to swell the fields. Wey-ya rite! prater'nigh I's'll tether her be me as my fullsworn Moon-ma - though she's a feckle n' dancin' fer many I keen it in her as she holds a torch fer'n me.

'An Ly,' she says with that look in her e'en, 'Ly, thy thinks more on the starsight than fer any on yer own'n'.

Fech fer sure! Troth if I do but she be all a tops of'n any pile fer me. Sure if I won't take her birth of beauty and her soil-soothers hands, fer me own fullsworn Moon-ma come the harvest-reap when I'm home be here agin..."

He shifted in his reveries and drew a circle in the soil at his feet with his staff, and then a smaller circle joined to it as a satellite. Then he drew a larger circle round the whole with a squiggly line crossing from the outside to the centre.

"Aye Brith-na-gig," he whispered aloud to himself; "come the harvest-reap I'll take yer birth of beauty and bring thy to hearth as me fullsworn Moon-ma, fech fer sure if'n I do! Thensliken we'll plant as do yer stealth-fine fingers - only the soil to be tilled'll be nont but the bounty of'n yer body!"

He smiled to himself, placed a fingertip to his lips and touched it to his heart, then to the image he had created in the soil at his feet. He got up, erased the symbols with his feet and began to make his way down the hillside, humming himself a strange old folk song, a song older than himself; one he had learned at his Pri Moon-ma's knee before he could walk.

It took him a while through the lower wooded region to get down Corndon and make his way across to Roundton, catching a hare along the way from a trap he had set earlier about. He slung the dead animal across his shoulder with a satisfied air, and strode on through the trees and up the pathwalk that led to the homestead.

Ly was a contradiction of qualities. He could maintain a stillness, a silence that emanated with the wild untamed expanses he was so accustomed to traversing. In this sense he was, and would always be, something of a loner. And yet, he also enjoyed time with the company, the merry-making and reverences that marked the seasonal turn, the movements of the constellations. He had that exuberant and questing spirit which was the defining feature of his racial kindred, a spirit which had enabled them to grasp understandings and map them out in stone, upon wood, through the virtue of their resonant voices.

And thus would they in time take those understandings to all the far-flung reaches of the globe, planting and inspiring great works which would tease the minds of all humanity in the aeons that followed. Ly held this spark within him so his dealings with all the other clan kindreds in respect to travel and trade contained a visionary zeal that the many had found irresistible in the past. He had the gypsy capacity to live for the moment whilst maintaining an animal alertness, a vigilance which had never thus far let him down. He took his meat and his company where he could, in the travel and trading times, forging an easy bond wherever he laid his bedding for the night. In the long distant past, this roving life had been a constant for his ancestors. But the spirits, the invisible ones had made themselves visible and given of their wisdom to the folk as the old legends told. So in the days Ly had been born, the skills of farming and the static homestead had been long established. This kept the many homely and to their boundaries. It had also enabled them to study the vastness of the skies and develop a lore reflective of the profundities they strove to crystallise into thought and form.

But Ly, himself was of a certain caste of men that took it as a holy journey - the trading, the travelling - and he and his caste were the folk who kept the lines of communication going from The Holy Place, to every far corner of the isle and further across the seas. He and his caste gained expert use of the waterways, and by force of necessity they were natural masters of the paddle and the sail. Hence, they not only brought crafts and trade to a vast scope of communities, they also carried news and messages which meant they were generally eagerly received. They also performed the vital function of maintaining links and reinforcing the loose telepathic ties networked all across the land, where one community's cause or turmoil was empathised with by all to one degree or another.

It had begun with The Holy Places - places where the Great Mother gave her vibration, her energies to the soil and to the rock. Thus had sacred areas been established, decreed by the folk guided by the Wise Ones and the Listeners until temples to The Mother and The Fire-star came into being. Where Earth-energies predominated, did these temples grow aligned to significant stars, charting the pathways of the Fire-star - the gold that brought the body of the Earth alive - witnessing the growth and dwindle of the moon whose cool presence stirred magic in the hearts of the kindred.

Ly knew that from the farthest corner in the craggy North to the strange most southern tip, this influence and inspiration bound them all together, despite the diversity of clan-tribes. This was something that had transcended the old ways, elevated and close-combined the kith and kin, creating a numinosity that spread its effect globe-wide in times to come. It was also a zeal which had resided in the bones of Ly's ancestors since before the stars began, when those first Old Rovers came to claim this piece of The Mother's Glory.

Ly felt this in his bones; it was something he knew intuitively for his consciousness was still growing into the awareness of its state in relation to the whole. He was grappling towards something - grappling towards some sort of cosmic comprehension. It was there in his bones, but to crystallise it in his consciousness was still not a place he had grown to yet. He was a creature akin to his environment in the

same way that the wolf thrives in the forests and a cactus in the desert. Only the human predicament was filled with that contradictory chaff which has ever teased it forwards in search of the elusive, all-encompassing knowledge; the knowledge which would provide the key to the meaning of existence: the paradox of self-awareness. And this was what Ly was growing towards when he walked down from that huge hump of a hill, made rugged by the many rocky outcrops placed along its ridge. This was the source from where they took their materials to make the axes they traded as far away as Callanish and Land's End, and indeed further still.

There was a mission air about Ly as he strolled onwards along the wooded valley. He had considered his position and he had worked everything out. He had sold his Rover's soul to the birth of beauty that was Brith-na-gig with her feisty hair and comely body. Where did this feeling come from that made him want to bide by her? Why did it contradict his every stollen manly impulse? Why did it infect him with a desire always to be about her when previously the Paps of the Great Mother had been all-come his yearning. Now, though there had been many a dangly-fair savoured in by-roads, the vale-roads, the secret roads; though there had been many to bed na for a while and so it could go on, yet he had a yearning for this one lassie, this one dangly-fair who touched him at his core. Ly could no more fathom where this grand passion had sprung from, than he could fathom what made the stars flicker and change position in the deep velvet space of the night. She had just seemed to scoop him up so he had developed this need to leave all his ramblin' rovin' days, to leave the vast curves of the Great One for a mini-paradise all his own.

He was a torn man. He could not reconcile either inclination - yet he wanted both. But no, it had to be a stark choice and in his mind upon the hilltop wherein he had shaped all his earth-born, star-born desires, he had made his choice. He had decided to relinquish the wilding part of himself as if it was a fervour of his age, rather than his essence and blood as he knew it was.

Yet this Brith-na-gig she was such a lolly, such a fair dangly, as ever had the Mother of All Beauty birthed. With her dark red hair and her burnished-brown green e'en, her rosy charms and untamed bird-free soul she was liken to the perfumed flower which grew in the middle of the thorny forest, a glittering jewel in the midst of a sharp entanglement of scratches and snaggle-traps; thus was she. And yet, did his spirit set up a resonance with hers that set him all of a tingle, matching the fire of his travelling ways. So it had gone on until Ly had had to admit to himself he had a yen for this brazon dangly-fair; he had a keening in the heart no matter that he tried to ignore it or put it from him. As Old Man Wem had said, when there's a keening in the heart, there's as wild as ever shall betwixt and between. Ly couldn't help agreeing in sympathy. He had come to a peculiar conscious state of degree - understanding that for some strange feeling, one which came from who knows where, he was giving up his yip and his yen. He was giving up his travellin' wide and long, his taken 'venture where it's stored in the wild-ways, the green-ways, the silver-water-ways.

He was giving up the tarry and tether be tree brether, in golden sight of sun, before the swollen moon's soft glow, the swoosh and tang of the oceans and all across the moors where the starsight showed him the map of the heavens. That map caused by the tread of thay Ancients with wingwed feet, imprinting messages in the dusky blue for all the kindred to fail or to fathom. The starsight above was all their soul-source and mystery, and it was all this Ly seemed to be saying for never and a nay to. All this he was giving up to bide be Brith-na-gig, she of the fire-falling hair, the may-blossom cheeks, the eyes so vivid and flashing as green as the leaves of the summer oak trees, as coppery-shine brown as the beech-fall leaf, and that comely form which was as lithsome as an otter and as elegant as the deer that grazed midst the woody glades.

For this smiting, keening feeling in him he were to wed the shores of the land and no longer ferry for the margins as hinter wild as wing span of hawk or fleet foot of stag. Now he would bide be the homeland, sticking as he'd been bided to please 'cos as a strange spirit in him wilt to him he would. Though he was here now, all he knew was for his ancestor's roving spirit that he had strong in his veins; he would take himself off to the Holy Place, see the Great Lands once more before he bided be homeways and this Brith-na-gig that he couldna get all of at once for all but that he did.

That choice had brought him to a peculiar state of knowing. It brought him to stand outside his experience and view it from the strange position of audience to the main affair, noticing in reflective way, the little familiar actions, the sight of the Homestead, good kith and kin to bide be that warmed the vitals in the veins, like the slouch of stonsy ye'd had thrice skin-filled all on an empty belly. That too, love of the kindred and homestead, was in his blood just as was the rovin' vein, and constantly he tripped the two and could never make up his mind between the twain. Only now it seemed he had. He - the

Hawk - had descended to barter skiff and trade his sail and paddle for a Moon-ma! Fech fer sure - all of it was not what he'd had in his reckoning!

But it wasn't just that he knew. It was straight and true as an arrow to its target, what Old Man Wem hinted to Ly. For Ly himself had seen the changes when the new shiny stuff from the Great Lands had come over and now a many of companies far and wide would give na to learn the hot-hard metal forged in the ath-fire, magicked into shape, rather than keep to the flint-stone that'd worked them well all til nigh. Ly was discomforted by the changes he saw taking root and enveloping the country. It was another reason for his decision. He had seen his trade lessening. Company he had come by would rather trade a tither of corn or even a best moon-ma beasten for the metal fang. They had begun discovering sources anew near their homesteads, so there had been a gradual decreasing necessity for the flint-axes he brought them. Flint axes that had been made with his instinctive feel and reverence for the substance he worked - his harmony that was a kith and kinship melding with the life of the stone.

To him the stone had spirit, as did the rock-face, and only by bidding by the rules of reverence he employed did he achieve his craftsmanship. He spoke to the stone as he worked it in his guttural ath-na-bin language. But lately, more and more of the folk were turning to this new creation that brought dim-spoke rumours of fight and fear from the Great Lands. He sensed it was a source unstoppable and much as he loved his gypsy-tangle roving ways, loved the flint he worked, he had begun to feel his years, as his reputation had ceased to spark quite the same interest in these new times they were coming to. It would have made him worrisome, but that his travelling soul could never lilt on the side of the dark and the death for long - for in his stalwart pragmatist way, he instinctively recognised to do so would serve no purpose. So he had come to his decision and the lot that life had drawn for him. He felt an impulse more and more to be with the Fire-Star Temple - a yearning for the stone infecting him as of something almost lost.

Yet as this was to be his last long travel he could not help giving himself up to the secret fire it stilled in him, the pleasant fizz of excitement in his veins with a last return to the wild old ways. He hugged the decision he had made to himself and looked for Brith-na-gig as he came into the boundary walk. The stretch of corn on either side, though not expansive, gave the impression of being so, because it was so tall, growing to the height of Ly's shoulder and shading the path from the lowered sun.

There was a rustling in the corn on his righthand side. Immediately Ly froze and turned in readiness either to spear a beast or to fend off an unknown assailant, though such a thing would be unlikely. He acted instinctively, from long habit, like a viper-come hawk, ready to trap or dispatch what lay in his path. But he relaxed when Brith-na-gig came through the corn, her hair on fire from the setting sun, taking Ly's breath away for a split second with the beauty of her.

"Did Ly think I become as assassin to smote him down a peg or two - na if Brith could fer sure she would!" The girl's husky voice intoned to him. Her voice of autumn mellow, so full and rich, like her scent, like her body, fullsome and rich.

"Fech fer sure Brith would if she'd hachna hand to - be rights!" joked Ly, accustomed to keeping his feelings inside himself, effecting ease in his ever-worldly way.

"But Ly here reckons on fettlin' a bit more yonder and ferrying out to rove whenever the mood does clept him. Not be tethered like a tottie be a bank with no wind to take him lee-side nor sound-side. Is that how Brith'd have it? Aye, fech fer sure, I bet!" Came back his jaunty cry, that brought the accustomed banter between them.

Ever since her blood had come she was as lush as a golden plum and all the menfolk's prongs had hied for a diddle, and pledged to barter when the tuppin' time came. She'd a merry in the heather lark fer now and agin but she hadna settled on either one nor all and Ly knew she was waiting fer him to come round to her. Hence the banter that had begun when she'd bloomed like the wild flowers up the folly, swellin' out in paps and rump-round, fer all the menfolk sent a grindled and a raunchy on sight of the brazer lassie. She'd tried this tack and that tack but met her match with Ly and though she were stunning lovely, that sent n' all bewilderin', and though she was more birth of beauty than any beguildy he'd seen or heard tell, Ly was a man who kept his wits. But fer his wild n' roving trade she'd never have come by to him. But fer his coaxing her to the line as he did to the fishy in the brack and many a beguildy before Brith-na-gig, but fer the silent aura that gave him a singular status amongst the company, she'd have taken an ath-ra to bine and turned moon-ma fer another this longest while. But Ly with animal confidence, knew she would wait fer him - in which besides he loved a wild cat 'ooman and he didna dither with soft dangly-fare until he'd brought her all feisty to boil.

"Ly should bide be the now, fer Brith-na-gig be gettin' weld and wankle waiting fer Ly to turn

homestead bound," she looked at him from beneath her lash-dusky lids. "Ursen Horn brether be makin' me matey and urgin' to feather me a nap. Maybe Brith be tired and tenty of waitin' on Ly's time. Maybe Brith'll be a moon-ma fer Ursen be the time Ly's returned fra the Great Lands, maybe this'n time Ly'll have tarried once too long".

But Ly was too certain of himself to be disconcerted by the import of her words. He knew it was a ruse to make him decide either one way or the other, so he replied: "Brith knows that Ly be her ath-ra man-home and will bine beguilty when he's ready an' all".

But rather than passify Brith, this comment of Ly's only served to provoke her further.

"Mebe, be the time Ly's ready to bine, Brith-na-gig shall be twicfold moon-ma and taken to another fer man-home, before Ly's back or afore he's blinked again. Mebe Brith-na-gig man-home is no fettle fer Ly in his rovin' fine," she said accusingly.

Ly fer devilment sought to needle her further with an implied flaunting of the tribal taboo which was the bedrock and glue of the whole company.

"Mebe Brith will merry in the heather lark fer Ly to take her to moon-ma without a bine!"

But he discovered he'd nettled her too much and she flew at him, like a tigress spitting fire, her hair, a banner of ruddy flame. Her lithe comely body was bent on scratching or biting or kicking the man called 'The Hawk' who toyed with her feelings in this way. Although there was much unrestricted carnal activity, the beliefs of the culture were such, that 'ooman would only conceive, if she bine be a partner and proffered be the Fire-star temples, which was practical and protective at the same time. It salved any wrangling and kept the company gentlemel. For a 'ooman to conceive without a bine was deadly bad favour and was not rent be any kith and kin come far nor wide. Hence Brith's reaction.

But Ly was not called 'The Hawk' fer nothing, and with lightning responses in a moment had dispossessed her of her strength and dignity as she stood pinioned against him, glaring up at him, contained but not subdued, by the wild light of anger in her eyes. But Ly bent his lips to her and though she strove to turn hers away from him he found them and married their mouths and tongues atwain. Until she bit him, so sparked himself, he tossed her in the corn and let his hands all over her dangly-fare, pinning her arms still and lying across her so she could only be resistless. And when his mouth was on her paps and her belly and tucked for the fathom that sent all menfolk rangy, and her body was something soft and pliant, the sap in her veins rising, like the need of spring to bud and then bring fruit. And the bucking and tenseness were all melted away so he knew she wanted him to come-fill her, he let her go.

He watched her assemble her frayed emotions, grinning, but in that momentary adjustment she tried to kick him again before running away all in a huff. It was this fire-formed spirit in her that he loved as much as the beauty that was so renowned. As she turned he was too quick fer her and corrodled her as she tried to run. He clept his hands on her round haunches trying them fer size, his lean hard arms encircling her waist and keeping her close-by him, rubbing her V with rough art.

"And how'd it be Brith-na-gig if I took you to moon-ma, now, this night, fer only the birds and the Listeners to see? How'd it be Brith-na-gig if I took you to moon-ma now and again in the harvest time on my return fra rest of kith'n company? Would that fettle your like pleasing?"

She softened to him some, but still struggled against him, knowing in her 'ooman's way that such struggle strangely pleased him, until in a sudden urge of passion Ly quieted her. His feelings had suddenly got the better of him, what he felt fer her, the fact that he was going on the rovin' trade one more time, the momentousness of the decision he'd made, reduced his usual reserve. His lips met hers most hungrily with a hitherto unknown, though long-suspected passion, that took Brith-na-gig's ready breath of inspiration away. She was melting immediately and taxing to his purpose, undulating beneath him with a fiery tingling sensation, neither she nor he could resist. Until now he had only teased her with his passion. Now with his heart on wing, her body felt like the treasure store of Earth, to be plundered, savoured, worshipped all at once.

"Brith, Brith," breathed Ly; "Brith be Ly's moon-ma now, this night, and Brith be Ly's moon-ma come harvest time, her man-home come full tethered then, if such be her choosing," he murmured into her hair, drowning his face in that richness.

She shifted beneath him and indicated with her body and lips, with her shining eyes, how she felt about that. She too had held her bounty from him but now with those words, that promise from his lips, the barriers were all but broken away. She'd never known Ly like this before and she was swept away by the strange electric feeling that roused her and infilled her - as it did him. They snook further into the corn and there, in the evening light amidst the Earth's aroma, the scent of the corn, the fragrance of wild

flowers that drifted from the edges of the field, there they expressed this new feeling for each other in animal abandon. When it was over they lay for a while stunned and warm and indolent with the knowledge of their new-expressed feeling and the bond that had only just been confirmed a certainty. After a while of lying together so, Ly shifted. "Na Brith, let's the baith on us go ways to the Fire-star temple to make offering to thaim Gods as do bless us."

"Brith be Ly's moon-ma and she do follow'n wheresoever Ly abide, now he done tethered as bine," she smiled up at him, the keening light shining in her eyes.

They went then, the two of them, back down the hill, through the wooded valley beneath until they walked an avenue of stones towards the temple that was their destination. Soon they came to a circle of 17 tall rough-hewn stones. At the entrance, two Listeners sat weaving mats, keeping the great stones company and their flint markers ready to etch a symbol for the sun's passage on the wooden board before them. The temple was a sacred place but all of the company could go and stay by there, when they so chose. The two old women nodded their heads in greeting but did not speak, as words within the vaunted arena were counted unnecessary.

They watched though, as Ly and Brith, hand in hand threaded through the stones, as if the action of weaving thus, would prove the binding power that would keep their union strong and fruitful. Three times they circuited the stones in this manner before stopping at the largest of the stones, behind which the mass of Corndon rose up. They faced each other with both hands linked, while the megalith stood tall between them.

"Moon-ma mine, man-home become," Ly intoned.

"Man-home mine, moon-ma become," Brith replied.

"In troth, thrice bine, fra now til harvest and all'n season cycles done, we come, we come, and look to the Fire-star fer our'n favour. Bring the blessing we'm now begun," whispered Ly.

"Aye, bring the blessing we'm now begun," echoed Brith.

Then, leaning around the stone they kissed each other, first on one side of the stone, then on the other and then back again for one more time. Ly cut off the front paw of the hare he carried, whilst Brith tied a piece of corn around the bloody tip and wove some flowers she had picked along the way up the stem of the corn. They placed their offering on a specially cut shelf in the stone and gazed upon it, with a silent prayer in their hearts.

They walked back to the entrance then, where the two old women crinkled their faces in smiles and one of them, she known as Runya, spoke at last: "Be feastin' be company afore the white one shows her face eh Ly? Eh Brith? Crackin' the honey-ale early like it seems, na?"

"Fech fer sure! maissn' Runya, but full blessing time be harvest on Ly's return. Fer now, we bine be the Fire-star's favour, just the baith on us with maissn' Runya and maissn' Deesel as witness to see"

"Aye 'n may's the bright ones bless the baith on yer afore the harvest feast's begun!" twinkled the old Listener known as Deesel.

"As bounty's given so shalt it reboun, fra the heart to thinen baith," beamed Brith in her turn.

"Mellily now, always til feastin' time this night - the keenin' light be too bright to bear fer such old'n crangle likes as we'm. Always, always 'n leave we'm to the dusk of the Fiery One's dimming, na!"

Cautioned the bent old Runya, while Ly and Brith, thus sent upon their way, smiled some more and waved a hand as they retraced their steps through the avenue of stones.

They walked through the wooded valley and up the steepening incline towards the homestead. They talked but little as they walked and yet their closeness was apparent by their proximity. They parted with a clinging kiss just before Brith left to help with preparations for the feasting that night. They promised to meet again later, before Ly rested for his early start away the next day.

Ly walked around the perimeter of the central homestead. Inside the wooden stockade were a series of round wooden huts which made up the dwellings. There was a central fire in the arena at the centre, and some goats and rangy fowls clucking around. Close by this fire was the main hall where all the company gathered come feasting time. This was a large wooden building insulated by the accustomed wattle and daub method. A variety of activities were under way. Some young 'uns were squatting near naked by the fire playing with some sticks in the dust. An old woman sat and turned a young boar on a spit above the main fire. The boar had been caught the previous day just for this evening's feast. Men and women crouched or sat on blocks of wood, embarked upon various activities. There was weaving and spinning and sewing of leather using needles made out of bone, under way. Some of the men sat carving wood or stripping and sharpening pieces of bone and flint for practical uses. Various foods were being prepared and cooked round smaller domestic fires. The women wore simple cloth shifts tied at the waist by a belt.

Because it was warm, they wore little else, their capable fingers working their wares; pounding grain, peeling root crop, stripping herbs and flaking them into earthen ware bowls. Some kneaded a dough mixture to be baked in the clay ovens devised for just such a purpose, while others mulched a vegetable starchy mixture and shaped them into small round pieces to be cooked on a griddle above the fire. Some of the men prepared an arena for the feast that would come later; to wish Ly and the other traveller-traders well, to bring fortune to them along their way.

The feast was in their honour and there would be many a skinful of the dark strong beer they made to fire their blood for the dance and the drums. On occasions they would imbibe their choicest bitter-bite - a filtered mesh of a special plant that took them into trance and produced a shamanic effect, which Ly had first been introduced to on his initiation. In this way they sought to link with the animal spirits, whose material forms provided them with a sustenance and bounty they could not do without. During these shamanic journeys, they sought directions for their hunting, sought for new wisdoms and understandings to expand their experience of living.

They took their signs from the visions of their dreamscape and thus became travellers of the astral. Uninhibited by any limiting mind-sets, they discovered things naturally and experimented with an all-embracing interest. The bitter-bite had long been part of their culture - it gave them wings to far off places they might otherwise never have perceived or been aware of - though their resourceful and inquisitive spirits made them quest from shore to shore, learning through the Trade Main, of other lore, other customs and ideas, alongside the celestial intuitions.

Ly circled round the outer perimeter. He kept away from the main thoroughfare, moving towards a small hut set away from the other homesteads as something of an off-shoot. The entrance was concealed by a hanging of heavy cloth. Ly pushed it aside and went in. Old man Wem was at a sturdy wooden work table where he was in the process of etching symbols on a tablet of wood. It was time of full moon and as was his custom, he recorded it on such tablets along with other signs and symptoms of significance as he saw it. He was a tall lean grey haired man; his hair and beard were long and flowing and added to his air of other-worldliness. He wore a long deep-red gown over the top of a shift, and hung around his neck on a leather thong was the tooth of a bear. The tooth was etched with a black spiral.

Old man Wem looked up from his activities and grunted a response to Ly's presence, indicating he sit on the stool that was stored beneath the table. Ly pulled out the stool and sat down.

"An' how be it with the traveller then? The Hawk is to make his sojourn whatever'um in the stars to say nay - is that it?"

"Wey ya right, Old man Wem knows. Ly's strikin' out fer the Great Lands and The Holy Place one more time," Ly responded resolutely.

"One more time?" Old Man Wem looked at him keenly. "Ly's decided then," Old Man Wem said in his deep sotto voice.

That was why Ly appreciated his company so much - his very quietness taught him worlds and he would always come away thinking more clearly, feeling enriched somehow after being by Old Man Wem.

Last time, Old Man Wem had said he had seen darkness shrouding Ly's choice to remain a trader and traveller. He had urged him to take note of it. But Ly had the Old Rover blood in his veins and his spirit had risen up in him at the thought of being permanently tethered to one region - even though his company was here and he always came back anyway.

Ly had stalked out and since that night, had kept away. But he had pondered the words and ways of Old Wem, and now with the continuing allure of Brith-na-gig, he had reconciled himself to go one more time, and then to stay. This was the first Old Man Wem had heard of his decision. Typically in his way he took it quietly.

"So Ly mun go one more time afore his rovin' days be over? Ly mun needs frith the travellin' trade once more - be that it?" asked the old man.

"Wey ya right fer sure. Old Man Wem knows as much as Ly. Ly's abirthed with Old Rover in his blood and if Ly's to be tethered and taken to man-home, then Ly mun walk the wild way one more time afore he settles his nest fer steady," came Ly's explanation.

Old Man Wem sighed and put his hand over Ly's which were clasped together before him. "May it go'm well with thee Ly. May it all come fruitful as kine do thee deserve"

Ly was surprised by this unwarranted show of affection from a man who kept himself so much in reserve yet gave all the same, and somehow provided a tonic, a focus for thought. In response, he himself was moved to sit in silence. Old Man Wem's keen eyes picked up on a strand of gleaming red hair stuck to Ly's shoulder, where Brith's head had but recently rested.

"Ly's made'm choice in one ways or another then - be Brith-na-gig come moon-ma bide be harvest time fer sure?" Old Wem questioned, his sharp eyes probing Ly's own.

Even Ly - The Hawk - was astonished by Old Man Wem's perspicacity. How could he hit the haft so smartly and so adroitly on the head? Though Ly knew Old Man Wem had watched and noted his social connection with Brith and the sparky teasing between them, there had been little enough said about her between them. So now Ly was stunned that Old Wem had forseen the intimate timing of events before Ly had even spoken of it.

"Old Man Wem's as keenin'm sight as the Fire-star hisself - Ly should say. Fech fer sure an' all!" Ly said jocosely in his astonishment.

Old Man Wem smiled. "She's a plum-bloom beguily as ever was fair - in Ly'speak - fech fer sure, Old Man Wem says so!"

Ly threw back his head and laughed. As he did so a momentary expression of dark foreboding filled Old Man Wem's face as he looked at Ly, though he immediately reflected Ly's mood when their eyes met again, so Ly had no hint of the clouds that had arisen in this enigmatic old man.

"Old Man Wem hopes all comes to boon and shine fer Ly - Ly knows. Company'll bide be harvest time and await Ly's recall - 'll be merry welcome fer The Hawk then as ath-ra to Brith-na-gig, moon-ma with the majesty of The Mother Herself"

"A bounty on the heart fer all the well-wishing but Brith and Ly be fostin' bine this day afore the Fire-star'd fell'd - though at harvest-fall we'm call fer whole company's blessing fech fer sure!" Revealed Ly for the benefit of Old Man Wem.

"Ist' even so? Ly be as swift as flint-sharp to its mark when his mind is set to target! Na? Weel, Old Wem hopes as the Gold One gives full fruit come by harvest-fall 'special fer Ly's return eh?" Responded Old Man Wem.

Ly looked into Old Man Wem's wise brown eyes and felt his eyes own to water with emotion. He held out his arm for Old Man Wem, who responded to the gesture, clasping Ly's forearm as Ly clasped his, pulling each other close in a brief hug and gesture of affection.

"Ly'll bring plenty of glesome'n rare, plenty of booty fer'n all the company to 'aaah' at, come corn-cutting time. Something special fer the Wise One, na? Old Man Wem shall see," stated Ly with conviction.

"Ly mun just needs take care'n hisself and bide on his wile and his wit to tarry him home come harvest moon," said Old Man Wem soberly.

"Fech fer sure. The Hawk is ever on the poise. Ly watches his carcass as constant as the shine on the Gold One, Old Man Wem knows," Ly responded with instinctive arrogance.

"Goodly and gange-tines as ever Ly, surely do this old heart hope so. Just wishing thee weel and wholesun, Lyone, thee as is commonly clept The Hawk. Weel and wholesun and home-come in herveft fer feasting such as The Hawk has never known. Company'll be givin' favour to that, Ly'll see!"

Thus saying, Old Man Wem provoked a cheerful mood which equated with Ly's own elevated high spirits. His heart was revelling in the memory of Brith-na-gig and his soul was stirring with the notion of the waterways travel, the treking across the wilderness expanses. Old Man Wem rose to the occasion and did not seek to dampen Ly's mood.

"Fech fer sure - come corn-cutting time Ly'll be ready to bide be tether as ath-ra'm riches as fullsome as The Great One Herself. What'll Ly care then fer the wild-ways? But Ly's a mind to take one last look at the Holy Place afore he settles his skiff on the shore and traces the path home-bound ever more," said Ly, making clear his motives in a moment of transparency.

Old Man Wem's eyes glinted the warmth of humour back at him. He strode to some shelving at the back of the room, produced a flagon of harsh spirits, a beverage that stung the back of the throat and warmed the belly and given the name of ath-flux. Old Man Wem produced two beakers and filled them half full of the ath-flux. They both knocked a draft back in a practised rapport of ritual. Then they got talking about the words on the water-ways, the rumours of blood-shed, the considerations of the community. But the sun had set and dusk had come, and Ly had a few things to prepare before the feasting began. So he left Old Man Wem after a long searching look and a warm grasp of the arm.

Ly walked away from Old Man Wem's boundary and towards where he and his companions had a shelter left for such travellers as they. Ly had long since left his moon-ma's domain, and though he had not bined nor been ath-ra until that very evening, he had a stead of his own because of his roving tithe. He shared this stead with the other menfolk who were also part of the Trade Main.

When he entered the hut, Frenra was plucking some strings on a round drum that kirt it an om. He was

plucking and singing an old story in lilting rasping melody, so that Ly felt compelled to strike up the chord too. This was his companion - a quick dark man with lightning thoughts and tongue, who joked all the while yet who kept his quiet and could bide his time like a rar'un stoll. There was Ly, Frenra and Brinen who kept by there. Frenra and Brinen were his travelling companions on the roving while. The one, quick and dark and ready to wit with the fingering minstrel all the while. The other was large and silent and listening to all. Staying silent much of time, but adept with his hands and profound when he spoke his steady thoughts. His hair was light and his eyes were more green than brown which set him off the ordinary strain straight away. He was placid, but with a steady dark energy that only needed rousing before it took root and flamed to a life all its own. Unassailable, when he chose to be. He was larger than most folk, a giant of a man and by virtue of this was rarely challenged, but kept quiet like all his travels. Brinen lay on his bed rattling stones in his fist and casting them down every so often to read their import, note the pattern of their fall. Frenra was plucking the strings of the drum, dark, small and mercurial, moving his hands and making a melody that made Ly want to move his feet, tap about, sway his rhythm for the last far-flung rite. Brinen nodded to Ly whilst Frenra smiled and continued his refrain. Ly grunted and set to checking the wares that he would take with him to trade and barter with. Then he too lay down on his own sleeping place, a mattress made of heather and hay, covered with animal skins and a length of fine-spun cloth, to listen to Frenra's tune and hum along to it, his thoughts dwelling on Brith-na-gig and the coming journey.

Pretty soon there was a whole hum beginning in the company. In the central hall, boards of wood rested on blocks had been brought out. On this tressel were brought all manner of vittles in readiness. The childer were chivvied midst the home-space and the adults and near adults came out to gather round the fire, set the feast and assemble the company. Elegantly crafted clay beakers in unique design were placed upon the tressel alongside flagons of beer and skins of more such brew. There were bowls of meat and platters of fresh-baked bread. There were griddle-scones and bowls of fresh greens, nuts and root-crop as well as the central boar that had been roasted on the spit for most of the day. Hanks of this were hewn to be spread amongst those gathered. All set to in the feasting, picking up the meat with their fingers, tearing the bread to sop up the juices, quaffing the brew and growing riotous all the while.

Ly found himself sat, of a sudden, be Brith-na-gig and the evening flamed into beauty beside him as it seemed all he ever wanted and all he had ever gained was contained in that moment. He, the Hawk, on his last journey hither to the mystery of the Holy Place and the Great Lands. One of the last old travellers - part of a fading line. Even then he knew it. But beside him was Brith-na-gig, with her flaming locks, her dangly-fare, so scrumptious and rich and ripe - her curving lels and soft smooth dander. The evening seemed to phosphoresce - just he and her with her laughing smile, her tempting brown-green eyes. Never a one like she thought Ly. The Holy Mother comes in every shape and size, his realism told him, but Brith-na-gig is Goddess manifold, by her beauty she is some sort treasure and the one who has, receives the sublime. Such is how Ly felt beside Brith. She had become his mini-paradise to take the place of the larger scale wilderness he travelled and felt akin to.

When the company was taken over with word-bandies and laughter, Brith and Ly conspired to slip away, for their blood was fevered and stirring and must needs have expression. They found a nook away from the noise and there coupled their souls and bodies again, as if confirming the bond that Ly had made known to Brith that day.

The river snaked before them glistening and iridescent in the early morning light. The skiff swept steadily along, flowing with the current and travelling south. For a few hours the three men, Ly, Brinen and Frenra, travelled thus, pacing themselves and continuing with an unspoken understanding before a ready made clearing on the bank evidenced a roughly made infrequently used stopping place. With a nod Ly indicated they head towards it. Near the bank they jumped out of the boat and pulled it up onto the inlet, part way out of the water. Ly fetched a cloth bag from his boat and a container of water. They sat awhile partaking of the seasoned meat and bread and swigging from the flagon in turn. Because it was late spring and unusually warm that day, there was no need for a fire; it was simply the welcome respite from moving the paddles and guiding the boats they needed.

After a short rest they set off again, continuing along their route flanked by the swell of the verdant wilderness on each side, passing from time to time the known trading posts and riverside dwellings long known to them. They did not stop though, being intent on reaching The Holy Place before dusk. A nod or a raised hand acknowledged the greetings called out to them, or confirmed the friendly disinterest of those who watched them by. Mainly, it was the burgeoning green that avenued their passage along the wide river's way. Blossom dripped from encroaching trees, the white of cow parsley and hemlock

bunched from time to time upon the bank; yellow celandine sprang up, wild violets and dog roses where a web of bracken had gained a foothold. The Earth was sprung to life, bursting into the zenith of its first seasonal fullness all around them. The air was rich with its fecund aroma. Travelling along in accustomed silence Ly looked about him and appreciated the aesthetic quality of the sunlight which ravished the greenery, and highlighted the poetry of the floral displays.

And every flower was she he had left behind warming a place in his heart, and every dripping frond and blossom froth was a reminder that he would not come this way again, in such a season, at such a time. Every diverse shoal they passed, each familiar trading bank reminded him that this was the last time he would spend him in this pursuit. And it was as if because of the impending changes to his circumstances, everything had been brought fully alive, sprung into relief by his own intensity of experience.

The sun had gradually lowered in the sky having reached its zenith earlier in the day. The sounds of the forest changed to a lazy hum, the quietitude of a somnolent afternoon. Presently they rounded a bend in the river and in the distance they could see an inlet, and some yards from the bank, a tall wooden watchtower. As they approached closer a broad avenue was discernable, leading off across the terrain which had transformed to grasslands, and in the distance, to sectioned stretches of corn and wheat. A number of skiffs and larger vessels were harboured in the small but effective inlet close by the watch tower. As they drew their boat up beside the tower, some fishermen along the bank raised their hands to the newcomers and the watchman of the tower came down to greet Ly and the other two men.

"Swailth! How goes it rover-stoll folk? Be the Hawk, na? And Brinen the bearkith eh? And a new companion I'll be bound, least so's fer'n my poor eyes being bound fer'n a goodly while. Greetings to all'un!"

"Na Kyrren, greetings returned. This here be Frenra, whose song-charms be famed fer'n far and wide and whose fingers do struddle up a tune on the pipe or stringed drum that sure does ketch the keening light from even the heart of rock!" Joked Ly, grasping the hand of Kyrren to return the friendliness apparent. Kyrren was a squat dark-haired barrel-chested man whose duty it was to monitor the comings and goings at this well-known harbour, and relay information to the main homestead way off and further inland. Brinen followed Ly's gesture whilst Frenra, pleased and laughing at Ly's introduction of himself, nodded his head in friendly manner and let Ly make the usual arrangements as regards the mooring of their boat. This being quickly done, the three travellers took their leave of Kyrren and walked up the well worn trackway that took them inland and towards the boundary of The Holy Place. They took the scantest of provisions with them and the goods that they hoped to trade either here or across the Big Waters, and which were too precious to leave unattended in their moored vessel.

They walked the well-known route in silence, even Frenra, who was the most locquacious of the three of them was come mute and thoughtful in the approach to the special place. After a short while of walking, the famed avenue could be discerned in the distance.

Ly felt the old familiar tingling at the sight of the avenue. He always felt a sense of stillness and power reaking from the landscape when he approached The Holy Place - the temple that was a source of awe and inspiration to all peoples of this Land; an influence that spread further into the Great Lands, where their own uniqueness was respected and revered despite the ebb and flow of the warring factions. Such fighting had not been the case in Ly's country-land, on any kind of scale for a long time. There were occasional battles and clashes, as their own battle of the Leasowe stretch was testament to, but ever since the time of Vision, peace and co-operation had been the guiding principle in their dealings with each other.

The Grand Endeavour, the Great Works had brought their fore-fathers and fore-mothers together in one numinous sweeping fervour, dictating their actions thus for centuries to follow. Their legends, their oral history told them of a time of light when inspiration had been given by agents of the Earth Goddess, by messengers from the stars. The knowing of the motions of the radiant ones, of the phases of the moon and the passage of the sun had come to them, and the gathering times had been begun amidst circles crafted from tree brether. But in time the gift of stonework had come more pronounced and they honoured their dead with massy monuments to house their spirits that would still watch over them, though their flesh had come to empty shells. Having perfected their temple-charts of reverence in wood, the immutability of stone drew them into the zealous activity which had erected such elegant, grand and impressive sculptured temples all across the island. The Holy Place was the apogee, the crowning principle of all that elan which had provoked the raising of these temples of stone, demonstrating their consummate skill-mastery of that substance.

Now it was true, for the most part, they lived relatively peacefully, bartering and exchanging, integrating

with and learning from each other, sharing their discoveries and their allegiances. They recognised themselves as part of the cosmos from which they had been spawned, and they observed the changes of the seasons and the stars, reading signs and forming frameworks for their understanding. The Earth was the Mother of them all, and she was scattered with guardians and spirits that tended her flame and brought it thither. The Sun was their God; their source of light and life. The stars were their magical scripts, enigmas of brilliance that stretched their senses and brought them in tune with their surrounds - enhanced a harmony of understanding that tied them together with their missions and their aspirations. Thus before Ly's time, the whole of the communities in the surrounding area had been brought together to accomplish these feats of gravity and grandeur. The very excess of the effort required, the long years of digging and preparing the area was evident in the monumental achievement of the raised immense stones. The stories had come down to Ly: the gathering of the first huge stones, the magnitude of labour, the focus of magickal energy required to achieve the renowned feats of precision. Thus had all the stones been erected, impacted and strengthened, aligned as intended. The whole of the company, island over, swelled in their hearts towards their achievement.

And so had it been from generation to generation, the stone-workers guiding their action, the Wise Ones plotting their course. The graves of their ancestors bones were monuments all around the huge temple, signifying as procreators of what had been assembled. The white chalk tops of the graves glistened in the sunlight, striking the eye with brilliance when the sun was at its height, a radiating reminder in the long afternoon, a muted gleaming presence in the softness of the moon. The whole of the company knew that the spirits of their ancestors slept in the Earth and nourished their endeavours still.

Or at least they had known up until now. Now it seemed gradually, incontrovertibly, that their influence was waning and something new, exciting and dangerous was coming to light. There was some distinction of pride taking root where the new unearthed metal, baubles of the rare gold and amber, were all the company seemed to desire. Ly had sensed this new, rapacious-like fervour stealthily growing amongst the company. Nothing obvious or extreme but there nevertheless. Ly had sensed these changes last time he came about, only this time they seemed almost tangible. Some nuance in the air infected him, some air of discontent, mingled with a sombreness that betokened a death. Ly felt troubled, but squashed the feeling down as they came now close up to the object of their destination.

But as they approached the huge pillars of the temple, the huge sarsen blocks the old ones had erected generations before, Ly felt a sense of peace and awe overcome him. The stones dwarfed them and the arena they created, an ellipse with an inner round of blue stones which Ly knew the history of even though they had been erected long before he was born. Each huge lintel crossed over, skilfully joined with a carpenter's join translated into stone, to the great sarsen standing block opposite. The fixity of it was awesome. The greatness it represented elevated his soul and sent his spirit to give thanks to those white chalk topped tombs mellowed by the sinking sun. Silently, like his companions beside him, Ly dwelt upon the old ones who had wrought this expert of beauty, this timeful eternal presence - a statement of endurance elegant in its grandness of scale and its sparsity.

There were few other folk about, but within the arena of the Holy Place there was always an unchallenged silence, unless at ceremonial times. Through the silence the wisdom and fervour was more keenly felt. The stars were their acquaintance, their source for meditation, along with the deepening sky, the limitless expanse above them. It had carved their souls, that sky. It had worked its magic and mystery upon them and still they wooed and studied it - their spiritual growth teased and inspired by the navy-blue infinity.

The sight of The Holy Place never ceased to cast its spell upon Ly, or indeed upon any who came into proximity with it. The sun had all but disappeared from view but the last strands of it glanced off and illuminated the white chalk-topped mounds at the peak of the downs rising away from The Holy Place. They glistened with a magickal light and shone white in the lowering strands, setting up a field of protection and kinship with the massive temple at the centre location below them.

There were two guardians at the entrance to The Holy Place. Initially they had been sitting cross-legged but now they arose to stand, both holding the bronze tipped spears that had come to earn a place in ritual. They both wore simple shifts with a leather waistcoat garment over the top. They were both sun-tanned and brown haired. The one being slightly broader, the face rounder than the other, who had a more lean and chiselled face. As the three men approached, the two guardians regarded them gravely without any sign of suspicion or tension. Visitors were plentiful to this incredible erection, and welcome, for the stilled reverence of the place was undisturbed by strangers, who were allowed to sit and study, to meditate and gain from the potency of the place.

As the holy company who tended the temple knew, there was no one who could take away or destroy what had been erected. They believed with each new visitor something of their spirit was left behind, only serving to swell the aura of The Holy Place. With pride they granted access to all, for it was a monument to themselves and their ancestors, a monument to the kith and kinship that had seen it created. A testament to their vision. Proof of their extraordinary wisdom and greatness. Unassailable, standing eternal as the island itself, indeed now a part of it, as inexorably as the cliffs that breached the seas or the hills that climbed to crags and mountains further inland.

As Ly and the others approached the two honorary guards, they bowed and then crossed their spears to the entrance. The broader one intoned the ritual words: "Do you become in faith to grant the silence that be given if'n you wilt enter herein?"

"We become in silence," Ly and his companions responded.

"Enter and receive the mystery come grace that be ourn and ourn ancestors' gift to the Great One, Mother of us all, Father to all ourn seed. Do you become in peace and carry it fra thither when the parting time be nigh."

"Blessings to the Mother and to the Fiery One," the three travellers murmured, bowing and crossing over the threshold to be greeted by the resonance of the stones, their mightiness imposing itself upon them, making them feel insignificant and powerful at one and the same time. There was an outer circle of thirty mighty sarsen blocks, each nearly twenty foot high, capped with lintels that created portals all the way around. These were set around a still more massive horse-shoe of five free-standing trilithons. Each stone had been laboriously dressed to shape, and the stones had been joined one to the other by a supremacy of stone worker's art. There were smaller blue stones reworked and rearranged until they created what then existed - a free standing circle set between the sarsen ring and the trilithons with a further blue horseshoe setting placed at the centre of the temple. The blue stones seemed to glow warmly in the evening light and the mighty stone blocks glistened with a faint eldritch sheen; wise listening presences that guided their responses, made their spirits stretch to the deep blue dome of the skies. And they meditated on the waning light, its angle as it came down past the midsummer stone.

The three men seperated, each finding his own place within the outer arena to sit and meditate as so many had done before them in this same way. Ly sat cross-legged, amongst the first circle of blue stones. The silence and the vastness infilled him as he stayed with close to the blue stone, soaking up the energies and beginning to transcend himself. He was lulled into the same fixity as the stones; part of them, a feature of the wisdom they exuded, part of the infinity that had seen them born. The light was gradually fading and dusk was beginning to gather. Ly paid no heed to the passage of time - he sat waiting to gain the sight; the inspiration derived from gazing at the Radiant Beings, and reading the messages they flickered back to the earth-bound. The pin-pricks of light came more and more into force as the dusk deepened, and evening began to encroach.

To Ly, the Celestial Ones were lit with special purpose that night; they seemed to token some sort of promise - as of a richness stored up for him, as of a blessing on the decision he had made. And to his mind came Brith-na-gig as he'd seen her at their parting, her full mouth smiling, the dancing brown-green eyes misted with tears, her fiery hair unsettled by the wind. It felt right in his bones their coming together, their bond and where he was now - that felt right too. So Ly felt a sense of swollen peace and contentment he had not felt before to such a degree - like a culmination of all his efforts and desires. He had seen once again, perhaps for the last time, the Holy of Holies, the greatest temple of them all. He had yet to cross the Big Waters to the Great Lands. He would bring back precious stones, spices and other goods for his company. The traveller returned to receive his due, bearing gifts for the many with a moon-ma waiting by the fireside, a moon-ma with auburn-gold hair and a curvesome form more birth of beauty than any fair beguilty both near and far, aye! Such did Ly see in vision unfolding.

But just then the strangled screech of an animal tortured the air, coming from a distance away and dying as it pierced into force, but seeming to echo nevertheless. Ly's thoughts were jarred by the sound, and his eyes lowered and inadvertently fell on the dagger etching on one of the trilithon stones opposite him. All at once he felt a superstitious dread that as soon passed, as a cloud across the face of the sun, and as a presentience of violence. Why had his eyes dropped from the sky to the etching of the dagger, directly after the ugly scream of some creature in the jaws of death, giving vent to terror and agony? Why had he looked at the dagger - the symbol of violent retribution?

But he strove to shake such thoughts from him, brushing them away as of an irritation and nothing more. Once again he took to star-gazing and let his mind drift in those limitless spaces between the phosphorescing star-systems above him. He sat cradled within the Void for a further stretched while.

Then his senses finally came grounded. Ly's mind was all but cleared of the unsavoury screech and its portents. He was once more elevated by the majesty of the incandescent evening sky and the pillars of the temple. With unspoken agreement they shifted, touching a hand to their forehead, their lips, their chest and to the earth they stood on, in genuflection to the Mother who had formed them all, in recognition to the sky that contained the Mysteries of Beyond.

When they passed the portals of the Holy Place, the honorary guards were once more seated cross-legged. Ly, Brinen and Fenrar bowed their heads and murmured: "Blessings to the Great Ones".

They collected the sacks they had left at the entrance and struck out for the homestead that was near to being a second home to Ly. They walked in an easterly direction passing through grasslands and then through arable farmland - fields of corn and wheat lining the trackway which after a mile or so brought them to a homestead typical of the area. There was a circle enclosure marked and protected by a ditch inside of which were round wooden huts with thatched roofs and wattle and daub walls. There were look-outs posted who shouted to the company inside the protected enclosure, of their approach, and of a sudden, a group of them had gathered at the entrance.

As Ly, Brinen and Frenra approached the opening to the homestead enclosed by a wooden stockade, they halted, flung their right arm across their breast, stooped in a low bow, then standing erect again, opened the arm out in a gesture of acceptance. The group of people opposite them distinguished themselves into individuals, and were calling out a welcome in jocular familiarity. "It's the Hawk, it's the Hawk" went whispering round, the company fizzing with the knowledge, a response that never failed to gratify Ly.

"Hey na, Hawk come wingin' by agin then eh, Ly?" The ratchety voice of a tall gaunt man called out, whose eyes held a latent fire which now shone in rye humour. His beard was grised with age yet also virile, and his hair was a shag of iron grey around a bald pate bronzed by the summer sun. He wore a long over-garment as a robe, together with a simple shift tied at his waist with a leather thong in the manner of dress familiar to that people.

"Hawk, Brinen, Frenra - healthful greetings to all! Come hither and dinnut dandle on the boundary liken lost an' lonesome!" Joked a middle-aged woman with long brown hair, greyed a little now with experience, and a round smiling face. Ly and his companions stepped towards them and there were greetings all round, Ly grasping the fore-arm of the tall gaunt man and holding briefly the hand of the woman who had spoken, while the company clamoured around and sent hither and thither to make preparations for the visitors.

After the greetings, the tall gaunt man faced them saying: "Come now let's take offer'n to bide by a little afore we gather for the evening's feastin' wi' all the company aroun'."

They followed him through the settlement, nodding and smiling gestures of recognition to those that they knew as they went. They were led through the homestead to a hut slightly larger than the others. As they entered, the tall man gestured for them to sit on a long bench with a sturdy back and arms, covered with weft dyed red, padded beneath with grasses that were changed frequently. It was a little bit of welcome luxury for the three traveller-traders and they sat down appreciatively, looking around them at the place they were not unfamiliar with.

There was rush matting on the earthen floor, a large table and wooden shelving upon which were various carvings and choice pieces of earthen ware. There was a low wooden armchair with a basketwork base with several other simpler chairs set around the table. The man reached down some clay beakers, intricately patterned and beautifully glazed in cream and red. A flagon of liquor was placed on another small low table and the man called Ogrune, uncorked the container and poured some rich amber liquid into the beakers. Ogrune lifted his beaker after placing the others before the three men, who followed his gesture.

"Hale come harmony be thee blessed wi'" said Ogrune

"Returned be the gifts of the Mother, same as spoken," Ly responded.

"Aye an' besides plentisome goodly companee, a lilt o' dangly-fair 'ooman an' quaff cups filled reet as become," quipped Frenra in his accustomed jocular manner, causing Ogrune to chuckle and Ly to grin, whilst Brinen looked on, smiling a welcome at his host and raising his beaker to show his appreciation. Frenra was younger than Ly or Brinen and still enjoying the trance of the dance with dangly-fair far and wide. He'd not settled be any for certain but continued to enjoy, the partaking of pleasures when conquests could be made, when the feasting and ceremonial times compelled it. He was skilful in singing and playing the stringed drum instrument he'd made himself and which he carried everywhere, strapped to his back. He was Brinen's moon-ma's brother and had joined them when their travelling ways had

already been established over some five cycles.

But Frenra gave the added advantage of being a drum craftsman, which many homesteads fra far norther shores to the southern most stretch of their journeying, used and coveted. His ready wit and gallantries charmed the most company and made more eager to trade, now the wares consisted of more than axe-heads and cutters to offer, na though they'd been plentiful sought in the early days of Ly's travelling wiles for sure.

When Brinen and he had first set out with Brunwill the brave, as he'ud been known, they were keen and green and learnt from an old master rover who'ud done nothing but all his life. His frien and fettle had died and been returned to the Mother months before, from ambush bandits in the Great Lands. Brunwill had fought off the assailants with beserker frenzy and carried his companion to their skiff, returning him to the homestead of their birth, only for him to die of fever the day after arrival. Brunwill the brave himself had gone off in the frozen time, looking for the rare'n status-high snow-hare. He'ud fell'd and broke his leg and alone, without help, up on the Long Mynd, and died the death of cold.

But to Ly's mind Brunwill had sought the extinction, ketching the glint of metal on the horizon and giving himself to the old gods before it upset the fabric of his world and understanding. When that time came, Brinen and he were already established roving traders, but it did not prevent the keening light from creeping into their hearts so they silently acknowledged the instinct behind Brunwill's action. It was an empathy between them that each saw reflected in the other's eyes; a conclusion being reached, a sadness and acceptance, mingled with the knowledge that he was with the Mother, the Womb of All Birth again, back to the Seed and the Source. This they felt and knew, stirred to embrace the radiant levels in the stella-spheres of the vastless skies.

From thence on they had travelled alone, until Frenra had joined them and made merry some their while, brought a new zest to the gradual lessening of trade. Frenra had fitted into their patterns surprisingly easily. For despite his love of word swaps and joking he too liked his quiet time and bided so by himself, composing his songs and his rhythms that set all'es companies spinning.

So there the three of them were, seated in comparative luxury in the chamber of Ogrune the South-lander.

"Na Hawk, Brinen, Frenra - tell me o' yourn companay. How be yourn wise 'uns, Old Man Wem, Ethelran High priestess, and yourn close-kin, yourn moon-ma's brether?"

"Ah fair to middlin' fine," came back Ly. "All the same an' homely-like, only young 'uns comin' curious for'n thay bronze an' sendin' prayers to the gods to help 'em find their ownen source. But harvest still be handy and water-ways wide as ever ..."

"An' all the 'ooman dangly-fair to be blissed-full far and wide, forsooth...or not? Wey ya right eh Ly?" quipped Frenra, with a twinkle in his e'en that hinted at many things - or so it appeared to Ly.

Ly felt there was a subtle innuendo in what Frenra had said which Ogrune had taken at face value, knowing Frenra for what he was. But Ly felt Frenra's sharp eyes had gathered the change in relationship between Brith-na-gig and himself and he felt a slight irritation. It was not something he wanted known. He wanted to be himself. True to his roving kin, to come and to go, as he had always come and gone; free as the wind and as fresh as the coming of the seasons, unentangled, meeting fate as openly as the deer in the forest or the eagle on wing. He did not want others guessing his plans, his momentous decision. That would simply be when the time came. There could be no ceremony of partings. And partly it was because he felt his resolution might fail if all the folk-places he was used to girt his bounty to were nigh after making a big celebration and a fond farewell for him. He did not want that.

So he pierced Frenra stonily with his eye but melted some when it was clear Ogrune was simply laughing at Frenra's usual enthusiastic embrace of the whole of 'oomankind. Ogrune did not suspect any underlying meaning, so Ly relaxed and smiled along with the other two, trusting to Frenra's sense and discretion of friendship.

When they'd quieted some, Ly took the initiative, remembering his former instinct which had sensed a sombre inflection in the air.

"What news from hence then?" asked Ly directly

Ogrune's face became instantly more serious and somewhat saddened.

"Last time Ly become by, we both on us thought on the changes, beginning wrought be the bronze and I remember there excitesome as well as some misgiving. After you become two seasons hence, fresh trade come from after the Great Lands; a whole seal of bounty for the bretheren. Leadman Rushwort from the eastern-steads had troublless with outlanders. They held them off and sent them thither, though in trowe they were'n gang for opportunists and nought to cliver the whole. Leadman Rushwort was injured some

and some of the east-steaders were killed in the fray, but also when battle was over and done, the east-steaders clept themselves of treasures found be the Outlanders. Now Rushwort on's deathbed has declared a wish for singular burial! As he and his kithkinship have defended all stalwart and ever steady since folkship began. But he betaken on some great glory all his own, glory that he whist willed be passed down to's sons. He be seperating himself out as top notch, high and mighty ho for'ngetting as his'n ancestors have raised 'um be dint of mutual grist and getherness. And folks hereabouts be muttering bly, it is the end on the beginning - that the Old Ones be turning in their graves and rising up to raze us for our mischief, as to see and let this thing go by, without a word nor action to say 'em nay, and some be saying it be right and fair and follows fair on to the future, and some be taking it in their stride but keeping amsteady all the same. To speak trowe it bides not well with me, with us in general. But the East-stead be in their own patch and what we West-steaders may mutter can go lightly either way. So there'n you have it; make of it as you'n will."

Ogrune looked at the three men, acknowledging their shock and gravely patient in the face of it. Surprising enough it was Brinen's deep gruff voice that spoke first.

"Naither! To put himself away from the Old Ones, from the common kith and kinship of's ancestors? To set out singular with baubles of shiny stuff to brute the vigour? Naither! For why has he done this? Have not the Wise Ones bid talk with him?"

"Not enough. It's not been enough. The whole of the East-stead follow Rushwort leadman - he has kindled up a fondling as keen as the metal he'us craved. There'll not be a gain saying." Ogrune responded grave as ever.

"Whisst! It be strange times becoming then now - in trowe. We'll wait and see but I bide it's not likely," was Brinen's deep, gravelled response along with a grim expression that showed he'ud said his piece and could not add more.

"Laith! What becomes now?" intoned Ly, still shocked by the import of what he'd heard."This be taken from the Great Lands, na? This be from their'n map and heritage that have come to take a claim off us, na ha? Is that how it goes?"

"The Outlanders boast," said Ogrune darkly, "of their wealth in metal crafts; their skill at the blade, which sends the whole on'us company the same. Seeking the metal to increase the power of the clan-magic, to defend from fear of whelment and all the time becoming what they wouldn't."

"But has Ogrune taken any action? Have you'se na thought on taking token stoll and delegating to Leadman Rushwort, request some sense on word swap? Have you'se na thought fer this to be done and down-stayed?" asked Ly.

"Aye fer sure but folks be jitterun, for the East-steaders a' been building up reet stocks of the metal stuff and bristle with the bronze if there be tally of talking some round. It become like a fever through them and they won't wash for the old ways nor tether their high an' mighty some not even for the sakes of our'n ancestors, which hold a common root, not for the sake of our'n kith and kinsome now rested with the Mother, who's keening light helped build The Holy Place, revered in all lands across the Big Waters. Whisst Ly! I be saying all on this and more, fech fer sure. But it become to all out war if'n I jostle 'em up too much and to speak trowe we would be company cut downen - thraist aye well an' sure! They been stoking the bronze fra first to much and more, much more'n than we West-steaders, and thase've made no bones about bristling it out. New trade has always come first fra the East but the sharing times that wrought the Holy Place be rifting by now it do seem. If Ly can counsel me - counsel me good, for which ever ways I've looked aroun this'n thing there be no clear and cut and dried solving on it, na? So's counsel me now, I be open and willing to take heed," Ogrune finished looking from one to another of his male companions, appealing to Ly with his hands held out palms upwards.

The men were silent. Ly pursed his lips and stared off into the distance.

"It be really so strong as that - this fever on 'em?" he said eventually.

Ogrune put his hand on Ly's shoulder. "Ly, what can we do? The only path is to trade for bronze, otherwise we become as the paltry party, the kiner runt as defenceless as the fledglings in nestin's before the kes's come snatching."

"Na, na, fech fer sure Ogrune. But be it not so as you'se could dint 'em with the brit and braw of the flint and wiley-like surpass 'em withall their'n melcher bronze. Dinnut roll over and show thasen belly before'n it be that or the void,na?" Said Ly, bristling with anger at the East-steaders obdurate stance. Aye, aye dinnut do it, echoed the voices of Brinen and Frenra.

"Ly, Ly, me stoll brethers, there'us been such talk, but company be split and not enough hands on without no doubting for it to pull off and make that stance of difference. I will nay go agin what half the

company do favour. I mun think on the whole on us and crush my'n instinct for the best way for whole on us, na?"

Ly scuffed his feet on the floor and looked down, shrugging his shoulders as if to shake a burden from him. In his heart he knew they could not stem the tide of change that would sweep the magic of flint into the void. He knew for Ogrune's sake he must be philosophical, he knew for his own peace of mind, he must be philosophical and accepting. There was no use in fighting against flow of the current, as there was no use in hurling abuse at the inclement wind. What was to be would be, as the gods decreed, and there was nothing they or Ogrune or even the Wise Ones and Old Man Wem, could do about it. So he sought to console Ogrune as best he could.

"Wey ya right - fech fer sure. 'Tis something I been seen coming for the long while. Change begot to come, take it how we wilt, change begot to come - but they bai'unt be always whole nor healthful neither."

"Thraist! That do seem trowe, and surely!" Agreed Brinen in deep echo. Ogrune and Frenra picked up their beakers in silent agreement.

"But there be little to be done aboun'es fer'n now. I was jus' thinkin' whiles to fill you'se in some, before you'se hear it fra bad nor worse exceptin' as it is," said Ogrune, anxious now to forget his troubles in favour of his guests.

"Thanks be to thee, Ogrune," Ly quickly reassured him, lifting his beaker again. "But as you've spoken, tis none for now to dwell on, so let's betake it now to turn to kindlier case and tell us how company be. What of Danroth and Hamtheor and the lovely Enyella? What of the folks hereabouts?"

"Aye'n so, serves no purpose to dwell, na? As the gods will or'n we forget ourn'selves, na? As for company - Danroth be all in his kilter, melding the stone-ware all the same and Hamtheor is after tilling the harvest afore its kinded be the sun as ever and Enyella...Enyella has a keening light for one who comes and goes, but is after fettlin' freely with Karum, who comes be the East-stead as messenger and trader. 'Tis said he is of Outlander blood some but Enyella's kindled to him and in trowe he can smooth-say full-fairly and gentles alot of the folk. But he come sharp of a times, as sharp as the metal he do bring."

Ly looked something troubled, "And be Enyella for taking him to fare and freely?"

"Closesome. I think in her heart she's n' after a one who tarries and goes and comes hither but for shortn' whiles, if you betake my meaning Ly," said Ogrune pointedly.

"Aye fech fer sure, there's a many as is waiting be the Hawk to tarry and fare!" Burst out Frenra after having contained a silence for a while. Ly trod on his toe which made Frenra yelp and dissipated the tension in the gathering.

But Ly felt he must make his position clear regarding Enyella. "She mun set her store be me Ogrune. I come and I'll be gone as always but I would see her kindlier earned na freend, dost see?"

Ogrune looked a little saddened by this communication. "Wey ya Ly, so I be says to her but 'ooman have their own ken and there be no turning 'em fromerts or frowerts when mind's setten to vaward!"

Ly gave a small smile. "Na if'n Ogrune be reet but Ly will take his trowe to her and kindlisome share, Ly be away come sun-in to the Great Lands and thence to Shroplande, the homestead, of'n his birth. These be Ly's plans freend Ogrune, just as ever". Ly looked earnestly at Ogrune.

"Wey ya right Ly," Ogrune answered. "But I be got qualms, I be got qualms. Aiee! 'eesle n' idleyway it be come to nought for what it should. So, let us toast to the Ones Who Sleep and the Mother-Goddess to us all and pray to they that providence may counsel and guide us, na? Come whisst! be there no song foreert thay company Frenra? Be there no strumming and singing?" And a little banter began between Frenra and Ogrune as Ly pondered on what Ogrune had said.

He knew Ogrune had accepted his words, his plans and had never doubted he would say otherwise. But Ly was fond on Enyella, who was as sweet as the mead in spring, so silken-soft and melting sanje with her long black tresses, dark long lashes and eyes become of summer-blue. Ly had sat and danced beside this blooming-fair'un for a good few seasons betwixt and between be now. They'd be got close and cleavesome like but Ly clept no promises and bided be none on a false word though oftentimes in past recall were impassioned responses.

Passion he remembered, but he'ud made his pledge to the birth of beauty that was his Brith-na-gig and the charms of Enyella though lovesome, paled beside the 'ooman who now he was bonded to be the word-truths he'ud given her. Still he felt sorry to hear she might be in the sway of some unsavoury called Karuum. But he could not dwell for long on something that even Ogrune, who was pert of her withcome kinship, could cast off so as not to gather glooming to the company. So Ly betook it upon him to take to

the merry in and sieze the moment in life to make the most of it, as all his kind before him, the old rovers who gypsied along the wild-ways had done - taking their pleasure where they found it, but with that questing spirit which had seen their many achievements born.

So the conversation took a jocular turn and they were entertained by Ogrune's stories of Hamveor and Danroth's famed rivalry of strength, in being matched for nigh on length and breadth the same. Ogrune told of the previous harvest when they both vied to bring home the most corn the quicker. When it came to it Dunroth feigned faint and badly and made Hamveor leave offin worry for'un to send fer'n the Healer moon-ma. While Hamveor be gone Dunroth set to and met Hamveor on the way to the third quarter with Healer Mermelisle. Dunroth greeted them all hasle and fettle and Hamveor all razed up and raging jumps'n wrestles'un to the ground until Dunroth's all begging for mercy and Healer Mermelisle is after cursing the baith on 'em for all their troubles but smiling like and in on the joke.

Such was the tale told to the three travellers from the West-lands whilst they quaffed of the good rich barley beer. They could've stayed full steady for a while if it weren't for Ogrune's moon-ma, Liandine - she who had greeted them at the entrance - who came to chivvy them to food and preparations afore they met the whole on'un company all on an empty belly with head full of the frisk of beer.

They were taken to their sleeping quarters, which was a small vacated hut set aside especially for visitors and traders. They were supplied with some water and left to their own devices for a little while. They stashed their trading wares and settled down to rest some. Ly was just washing from the courtesy bowl of water left for them, whilst Brinen was checking their trading items and Frenra was plucking his instrument and humming on the bedding. Ly, naked from the waist up was just drying himself on the cloths provided when a soft, lilting voice was heard outside the hanging fabric at the door.

"Hoow now - whisst! Hawk be come to ground and welcome and Brinen the bear-like be welcome too for the plenty to be had, and all the 'oomans and beguilty be after a snatch of Frenra's twang. Hey stolls - here be Enyella - leadman Ogrune's kins'ooman daughter, waiting to take you to platter. Be you decent for this beguilty's eyes na?"

Ly pulled back the hanging and gave Enyella a broad grin; she smiled shyly in return.

"Hoow now your'nself," teased Ly. "And how goes it fair beguilty fair? How doest this'n dusk-time find you? Hale and hearty I be hoping - fech fer sure!"

Enyella smiled and nodded her head. Her dark locks were tied away from her face so that tendrils hung around it, highlighting the softness of her face, the smooth curves, the rosyng of her cheek, the startling cornflower colour eyes. Ly donned his leather waistcoat with its beaver fur trimmings as Enyella responded.

"Ly's spoke with Ogrune and knows the news fra hereabouts but fer'n Enyella the days dance lightly. She been after weaving her gifts for the company and picking wild flowers in the mead for the Holy Place and those as keening on 'em. Sun become and days be always merry for this time on our season, Ly knows".

"Aye but who be making Enyella all merry and frolicsome as the young kine in the felds - na ha? Enyella's gone giddy-like on some young stoll eh - fech fer sure!" teased Ly fishing to gauge her responses.

But Enyella showed scant sign of being abashed as she replied, "Na - there b'ent no case there - who be filling your'n ears with such nowort clammer?"

The other two men had gathered beside Ly. Brinen looked silently on smiling benevolence. Frenra eager to be in on the word-swap chose his moment.

"Wey ya right - laithwhiles! When any would look in those eyes saa blue he'ud ever befall in a trance and swoon aways with a heart all lost to the keening light ever forever more, na? Enyella be beguilty fair'n fair as any stoll mun know, na?" Frenra's dark eyes glittered out their charm and appreciation of 'oomankind, who were for him part of the Great Mother's Mysteries, to be wooed and worshipped as the daily abundance that grew from the Earth and succoured Frenra.

Enyella laughed and blushed beautifully, revealing white teeth and a pink mouth. She had a daisy's freshness about her, all open and dewy-sweet, that never failed to gain a response from the menfolk.

"It be very coursome and smarming what Frenra says and Enyella thanks him kindlissime for such honey-wordings but she be beguilty and part of the company all the same, na Frenra?"

The men smiled around her and Frenra acting as dazzled as he truely was breathed out. "Aye and some beguilty sure - some sweet dangly-fair with the sky for her eyes and the blessings of the Mother on her curvesome!"

"Sssh whisst Frenra! If yous be genin me the honey-sweet all til dusklier-dawn I'm a betwixt Ly and

Brinen and never a word-swap with yous no more, neh?"

At which Frenra looked so immediately miserable and suitably dampened that Enyella had to take pity on him to let him know she was nay as mortal offended as she'd given and would carve him a banter from time to time. And so with this fair beguilty in the midst of the three brawny weathered travellers, all of them taller than she, she led them to the centre circle, where a fire had been built and where along one side, a low table had been filled with the bounty of the forests and the field. All the company were gathered with the childer lit be the homesuns with a bit of snaff and pilcher to set 'em to sleep kindlytith when the folk be on a revel.

The older youth and the adults were gathered for their evening fare and greeted the three travellers by calling welcome and hearty from the many voices that knew them, as accustomed seasonal visitors. Enyella led Ly and the others to seat be the table at the end, where she sat on one side, and Ogrune still standing filled the other space, beckoning their visitors to be seated and rest their lols on the soft-stuff weaving supplied for the purpose. Brinen sat further along with Frenra but still close enough to Ly to word-swap. Frenra was gazing about him casting his eyes over the dangly-fair and sending out his signals before the fast was broken.

A dark-haired olive-skinned man smoothed his way into the space beside Enyella. She turned and smiled at him her sweet smile and said: "Hoow now - Karuum's snook in of a sudden as be'int he like - how hales yous, fair it be yent on hoping, na?"

"Karuum be always hale and hearty in presence of so fair beguilty-blue, Enyella knows some na?" His voice had an unusual smoothness and richness to it, like the cream atop of the kine's milkin' and dangerously pleasing. Enyella blushed half with embarrassment and half with pleasure. She touched his shoulder briefly as if to placate the admonition of her tongue, telling him to still the honey-sweet and join in the toast to their traveller-trader guests, which he duly did, waiting for his moment to come.

Ogrune opened the feasting with a toast to all: "Singen and secgan miri be all and weel and wassail this eventide." Where to everybody set on and the eating began. The platters set before them were many and varied: venison and wild boar, duck, a type of pheasant and hare, fresh bread made from the grain of the fields, butter and an assortment of greens and roots, dressed in a variety of picquant and aromatic flavours as well as honey and honey cakes. Truly was the table spread plentiful, exuding the bounty of the land.

Ogrune and Ly looked at each other busy with their hands and mouth. Instinctively, each then raised their beaker and said to the other: "Honour to the homestead and hale be the company". After which they set down their beaker with some old spirit vigour, and laughed together, a kind of defiant joy in the sound. Ogrune, determined to cast the shadows of the present from them, entered into jokingly questioning Ly about relations in his own homestead and skilfully kept the talk-jest flowing be a witty word to Wulffimar, hunter of the forest and downs, be a comment to Hamveor of the ready scythe and a compliment to Bruthnania, his scelding's moon-ma. So very soon the company were all in jolly and rousing and enjoying the moment become when spring was at the advent of summer's sun. A precursor jollisome it was to the great gathering of the following few days on at the Holy Place.

Finally when well filled and swilled, Ogrune called on all the fair beguilty to dance for the Fire-Star, the Sun God, come creating to Earth in this the season of gold. He requested Frenra to accompany the drummers with his new rippling string drum. At this point then, the tables were cleared and activity begun. The women all comely youth and mature allure, transformed their garments so they wore sleeveless short-skirted tunics with coloured scarves around their waists and hips.

The women stood in position a little distance from the men, forming an arc before them with the fire behind them. A group of men at the drums began to beat out a rhythm. The women began to swish their hips hypnotically, as if to tantalise their Sun God, to bring down magic and rain gold onto the harvest. Frenra took up the rhythm and added to it with his strumming, lilting strings. This provoked the women's movements further, rendering them ever more eloquent and seductive.

Enyella stood at the end closest to Ly and moved her lithe slim budding body in voluptuous frenzy to appease and please the Gods of their world. The sight of her and the other women stirred the men to begin clapping rhythmically and to whistle and call in strange curling ululation in appreciation of what they saw. The pace of the dance grew ever more wild, ever more extravagant, the women now shimmying their bodies and arms and undulating their forms, lifting their legs and tapping out the beat with the men, until eventually they reached a frenzied crescendo when the music stopped abruptly and the women fell down, sweating and exhausted, symbolising the conquest.

Briefly the silence, the moon now glowing pale and silvery in the clear skies adding a luminous quality

to the night. Then the men's rousing applause and the women getting up, smiling and laughing and still panting some. There was a lull in the company as the women went off to bathe before they returned freshened again to the gathering.

Ogrune turned to Ly and Frenra standing near behind Brinen: "An ever a fair beguilty amongst the whole on 'em - na ha?"

"Fech fer sure, stoll, fech fer sure," responded Ly but with the promise of Brith-na-gig in his mind and none of the former dazzle in his eyes. His tenderness for Enyella was now distanced, and in trowe it had always been a warm appreciation rather than ardour. He appreciated her dainty resilience but loved the brazen beauty of Brith-na-gig, and now he'ud made up his mind - that was clear as day. Ogrune turned away again somewhat saddened, but trying not to show it.

Close by shrewd eyes were watching and noting this encounter, misinterpreting it through the filter of his own ambitions. Then a smooth, silky voice, resonant and seductful spoke across the low tressel to Ly.

"Ly become in time for the ceremony of the Sun God eh na? Yous'rn after basting a bloom of beguilty na Ly? You become to taste the fruits of the Mother, in 'oomankind, on the festival day na ha?"

Ly was irritated by the assumption of the stranger who had only met him on a nodding acquaintance that very evening.

"Ly become to reverence the Mother at the Holy Place and to give thanks to the Fire-Star, our God of the Light, be uppermost in mind Karuum na? None on yen fair beguilty, though they be birth of beauty to set eyes on fech fer sure," Ly said, controlling his tone and redirecting the conversation to focus on Karuum rather than himself. "How fer'n yous na? Be yous a settin' eyes on a baste of dangly-fair in the blaze of the fertility feasting na?"

Karuum smiled broadly. "Na and maybe-some too. Karuum hane gotten his eyes filled fer sure with some lovely lilt of dangly-fair and maybe, maybe this lovely loll will come be moon-ma be the harvest wain - if the Mother do bless me bold na ha?"

Karuum's voice had an odd effect on Ly. He was drawn to that smooth rolling tone, a little transfixed by it; but equally the man's assumption of familiarity chaffed at Ly's sensibilities, as well as his brazen manner and what Ly knew was Karuum's bid for Enyella. But this did not prevent the fascination of the voice, seducing Ly to continue the conversation rather than give the man short shrift and dismiss him more bluntly.

"Karuum be from the East-stead na?" Ly asked in seeming interest and common courtesy, now the ice be broken with the quips on dangly-fair.

"Trowe in summun but I bin gan born and brought fer the Great Lands fra first and now tekk kindlier to the East-stead of'n this land and ferry betwixt and between as message-bringer, talk-gather fra import. I be fleet as the stag, faster'un the hawk, and do the distance with me stolls in quick betime that comes na? Lately there han been some buzz na? On leadman Rushwort be bravin' the boundary and taking to the womb on the Mother nigh soon. But the bronze be girding us up and stretching us strong and we mun meet the challenge as it become na?"

Ly continued regarding Karuum in a calm, contained way and let silence reign for a short but intense moment - a monent in which Karuum instinctively sensed the strong opposition. Ly kept his instincts under control and considered his reply; but his stoniness was apparent.

"Change begot to come na? But when the haleness at the core be turning to canker, then it be time to stand and listen to the Voice of the Wind and begather to heart the messages of the Mother".

"And these be?" Questioned Karuum with an edge in his voice.

"That in death all be joined to the Mother. The greatness of the Holy Place become and grown from such a knowing. That the stones be the bones of the Mother and the bodies of our'n kith and kin be returned in wholeness of spirit, tied soil to blood back to the Womb of the Mother til the Fire God befertile Her and spirit comes through in the green growth times na? Be not this the hearthstone and kernal at base of our'n lives?" Ly said this quietly and firmly. It did not affect him directly as yet this issue. He could hardly muster force from present company nor still from his own folk further north-west. He was not about to create war, having no means to effect one. Nevertheless, his very lack of influence in that respect freed him to be able to state his mind with a continued directness that intimated at the passion beneath.

Karuum curled his lip and said: " So say'n some on the old ones na? But times become when the bronze girt us stronger than stone-know and we mun flow with'n that tide nar try to dam what musters force and shall overtek these lands wither we will or no, na?"

Ly shook his head slightly and gave a small, sad smile. "Fech fer sure, but there be bonds on blood and

soil to memory on and lest we nor forget company be split and schismed and the old ways lost and gone, alonga the wise-lore that betaken fra the first folk as come and were placed be the gods on these'n fair shores. Without stone reverence, company be losing themselves to where no will and ravages become on the harvest and the Mother wilt reek her own vengeance like'n before in the Dark Times whiles I were but a secret in the Womb of the Mother. These be not just my own words but those of the Wise Ones be my own homestead. Ly only be-speaking what leesle in the heart of the many na?"

Ly had put his case plainly, but with a firmness and integrity that surpassed himself.

In contrast, Karuum had a dark look on his face that came close to being a sneer. "The Mother tekks as she gives and those as gets her vengeance, leave way for those as she chooses to give bountiful to. This be the way on the Mother, too. The bronze be girtin us strong and leading us ever into ways anew and genen us a glory past ancestors, took on in a different way. The bronze be superior to flint in ways of war and beauty - the bronze be giving out a glory as those that begets and filling souls with a girth of wonder na? Those that seek to gainsay so shall fall before'n in the season of this new sun, na? This fer sure by helve be the trowe, so does this stoll believe and hold by aye!"

Ly saw in this speech a near open gesture of hostility, and responded accordingly: "Be Karuum setting up a challenge to Ly na? The glint of the metal before'n the gout of the flint na? Be that it? If Ly be challenged, Ly fer sure will'nt turn it about - be that it Karuum? Yous're wanting a hand to hand between the flint and the bronze na?"

But Karuum as his voice betokened was a schemer before he was a warrior, weighing up his chances against the well-versed brawn of Ly, and sensing danger for his own position in the eyes of the West-steaders if he challenged Ly to a duel and lost. Or even if he won, for he knew Ly was known, respected and even loved by the few - the few that mattered to his ambitions he realised. Thus he took the sting out of his former bravado whilst turning over in his mind a possible plan.

"Ly misunderstood Karuum. There were'nt naither'un challenge but a view voicing a favour of bronze na? It were nay meant to be tekken to bone, na? And blighting the company as has set us both fair up well and nigh. But if Ly took it as such, why's Karuum pleads his sorry and offers up his'n spear arm to show there be nought to cliver up the twain on us fra now til sleeping times becomen eh?"

Karuum's tone was treacle-rich and soothed Ly's sensibilities despite the fact he still retained his essential distrust of the man. The arm gesture he could either ignore and cause a lasting disaffectedness between them, or clasp it and be hypocrite to his heart. Ly could not quite be false to himself thus, so he stood stalwart-grave and courteous-like replied: "Ly accepts Karuum's words and thanks him for his clarifying of his'n word-swap. The rouse-talk be over'n done on now - if Karuum's non offenden Ly belikes to silt and merry-make with his roving stolls and the fair company as becomen on return right soon, na?"

Thus saying, without taking the proffered arm, Ly gave a gravely courteous smile and reached for a jug of the apple-ale on Brinen's earlier recommendations and turned towards his travelling companion to make light on talk some'ere the carousin' .

Thus subtly slighted, Karuum was left gazing into his beaker until he turned his attentions to some that would feather him friend; all the while plotting, plotting his hatchet plan, the sting in his scorpion brain concealed behind the false brimming of his social smile.

Ly strove to master his instinctive repugnance of and rebellion against this newcomer. He thought on Brith-na-gig and felt warmed by memories of their rampant whiles where her flanks had seemed to glow with a golden sheen in the low evening light. Ly knew in his heart that change was inevitable, that the bronze would come to dominate - but it was the way that this was being done that aggravated his sensibilities, as if the old must be shed wholesale and forgotten in this thirst for the gleaming novelty of metal.

He could not stem the tide of change he knew; so instead he thought of Brith-na-gig which made him light of heart in strangesome ways he couldn't have called to before. Now he was glad of his pledge, glad to turn his back on the fomenting present and feast his mind on his own future prospects, in place where stone was still mother-bone, with a heart so quiet and still, only the few folk could command. A place where the Fire-Star and the Mother brought their truths from messages across the skies. There in his own homestead they still kept holy the ancient wisdoms that spoke to the stone and saw in the stars a mighty wealth of possibilities.

With these thoughts and understandings filtering through his brain, and with the advent of 'oomans return, Ly chose not to dwell on the incident between he and Karuum. He pushed it from his mind to toast on kindlier matters. Enyella came beside him having passed Karuum and received some wordings

of which communication Ly was ignorant. Enyella proffered Ly some sweetmeats - dough-cakes sweetened with honey and little biscuits fermented with subtle aromatic flavours. For to which now Ly lay to questioning, having a passing interest in the hearth-produce as he burnt be the fire himself so often. There was a while of banter on the food, with Enyella opening her eyes to him like a daisy of blue and making winsome merry with him as the friend and semi-secret lover she held him for. But there was a paternalness in Ly's manner that had nay hitherto been there, a distant tenderness Enyella could sense but not fathom, some subtle shift that made her feel he was not with her, appreciating her, teasing her and flirting with her, as he had done. So for a while of Ly's gentle questioning on her workings and ways, her weaving and food-lore, Enyella turned the tables about and asked Ly of his homestead. Who was keeping him fed and tending his hearth-food, where his company be kept and if any on a fair beguily had twinkled his eyes and held to his heart-strings of late.

This question was direct and fairly put, with a quiver betraying to Ly how her feelings still held for him. Ly could nay betray her honesty with lies and did nay like the notion of her yenning for him when his heart was set on the tawny Brith-na-gig. But he did nay want to send her swift to the arms of the silky sly Karuum - he wanted to wrest her altogether away from him. So swift he turned the conversation about, directing her own question back with more force and knowledge of her affairs than she owned of his.

"What of Enyella na? Fer what I hear'n and see with mine eyes, Karuum messenger fast-far and mixed-blood brether fra the Great Lands be seeming to taking Enyella to moon-ma for such as likes na?" Enyella caught her breath in self-defence. "Whom be saying so? I take a liking for Karuum but he baint be my main and stoll, yet be no means nor all. Karuum be easy on the ear'n and clever for the brain - he bring weaving all such tales of Great Lander folk and their'n weird'n wondersome ways. Fay, Ly! Fer'n a new-just 'ooman seen nor sight of lands across the Big Waters it be some'at as feasts for the mind and sets the spirit all soaring. Baint be no wrong in that, na? For sure Ly mun see that na?"

It was rare if ever for Ly to speak ill of someone, but out of concern for Enyella and respect for her sun-pa stoll Ogrune, he did so now.

"Aye'n maybe's the feast of tales as he spins be webs spiked with poison and nay fit fer'n a fresher whist with her new-form wings to spread na? Enyella milchien, Karuum is skilful sly, he be'en nay fit steady company somehow for saa hale and wholesome honey-fair as Enyella be. Trowe there be some'at not to be trysted nor trusted be'un na kinen? Him be on his own glory trail and bidding not be the Old Ones whose wisdom has clothed ourn tomorrows nor be the claims of the Mother who brings us back again through the succour on the ripened corn and the stag and boar on the forested ways. Whisst Enyella! yous all folks knows well these sacred says - tell me not yous've 'r nay forgotten some?"

Enyella was looking down and examining her small perfect hands and looking something woe-begone. "No, and naiter has Enyella forgotten thase Old Sungen but what be it to Ly if I keeps company with messenger Karuum. What does it matter much to thee?"

"Enyella knows she's a heartsun sweet-song for'n me and Ly be loyal as to kith and kin for Ogrune who be most old friend and stoll-wether to me as Enyella be herself. Thus and thraist so would Ly see Enyella with a worthier one to bind, a stoll likes thay king stag for thay forest hinds na? Not some sly back'n slider with a self to the fore for he leeth all, na?"

Enyella was moved by Ly's concern for her whilst at the same time still hurt by his brotherly tone. She realised at once without he must state it, that he would come and go as he always had but that he would never stay, and that there was no hopes for to become his moon-ma. Underneath her softness she was a sensible practical young 'ooman. She knew to court Karuum more would cause disharmony 'mongst her own kith and kin for which she still felt strong in the Old Ways despite the glamour Karuum brought to her.

"Ly can rest be sured that Enyella won't be taking Karuum to man-home nor being his moon-ma fer now nor fer never, and maybe some there be none to take'n as such til I be old and wankle with naiter a kiner-bairn to call'n me own!"

"Laithwhiles! Don't talk seeding in the winds to be lost and forgotten! Enyella, be as fair a beguily as any saa far and wide with all men'sfolk wanting come man-home for her - we knows na?"

At which Enyella smiled and put her head down half-shy and half-pleased by Ly's words, but still sore fra the knowledge that he, the Hawk, would never be man-home for her.

At that point Frenra's antics paid in good stead, for a companion of Enyella's came up to them laughing and excited, saying Frenra would only sing them one of his famed songs and strungenen his plucking drum if Enyella be there to give him inspiration. If only she gazed on him with her sky-soaring eyes then he would be moved to woo and lilt the whole on the company til Fire-Star rise and shed his light again.

So quoth the short buxom wench before Ly and Enyella, making Enyella laugh and blush and causing Ly to hail Frenra hither so that company be all gathered round thereabouts, still ready for a merry-run, and laughingly waiting for Enyella to turn her much admired eyes to gaze on Frenra, who caused then more laughter with his sighs and beautiful expression. But thence he set to a strumming and a singing a song for the young beguily taken to moon-ma, and of youthful stoll smitten to man-home and of the raunchin and runshone, the gasping and gape of 'ooman's maw best-fitted for the stoll's prong hard-turned til happiness come atrembling with the cleavesome of the twain of flesh. So went the giste of the song that caused much laughter, much scolding too, and made company livesome still, reluctant to leave the firelight on a night so clear, with the moon so soft and silvery above them.

Ogrune had come back to join them and thus they stayed until late on in the night, when folks went drifting off to their beds and finally Frenra had to leave be and follow Brinen to their night-dwelling, after making jests and promises in kind to all on the fair beguily, and begging kisses from the many before he went his way. Ogrune sat with Ly a little longer. The tressels had been cleared and there were but few folk around now. A few of the menfolk were posted as watchers at the entrance but most of the rest were gone for the sleeptime, leaving the homestead still, with only the occasional crackle from the dying fire and a solitary owl's soft hooting to bestill the silence of the night.

"Well Ly," said Ogrune rising and yawning. "I'm be off to gen some sleeptime afore the preparations for the celebrants begin in serious-sturd. Tarry as you'm like an Ogrune'll be seeing you'm fair and fetting on the morrow's sun, na?"

"Fech fer sure, old man, I'm be pleasing and lankle-like here fer'n some while gracing with the silver moon-ma above'm afore turning in on me sleeptimes," replied Ly.

"Not on the old, yen boggart! I'm only ten cycles on fra you'm na? You'm frish-shank eh? Sleep well friend stoll, til sun-up then na?" Said Ogrune clapping Ly on the back all fond and jocose before heading off to the dwelling where his own kin were now gone. Ly smiled and lifted a hand to wave him off before sitting alone and still gazing into the dying embers of the central fire, and cogitating as he sipped the last of the apple-ale in his beaker.

From the shadows under the eaves of the stockade fence a figure crouched as if sleeping, wrapped in his cloak under pretence of being up with the first watchers at sun-rise. He had stayed thus until all but Ly stayed solitary by the fire. Now he watched and waited, biding his time til his venom could strike.

Ly pondered on the evening, and the changes afoot came back to him, disturbing him once more with their import. He thought on the clear night and revelled in its softness which contrasted well with the several seasons recent mizzling rain and dank, that in turn caused some drear spirit cast on the home-folk. Ly was troubled though he tried to cast it from him. It seemed to betoken some great change, something disruptive and dangerous he could not quantify. So he chose to walk the ways to the Holy Place to quiet his mind and lend his spirit some peace - receive the unction that always came within the vicinity of the Holy Place's granduer.

That timeless fixity soothed him, made him remember the pathways to the stars. The fact of and features of the Holy Place always uplifted his spirit; the greatness of it never surpassed - a symbol to all their futures from long before. The fervour and painstaking persistence that had seen it created, the mystical magnitude of that endeavour, that past expression culminating in what existed now. The last stones he knew were placed before he was born, in the youth of Old Man Wem, who'd told him all on it. How company from all the land gathered to pay their tribute and see last stones raised.

The Holy Place had brought them favour far and wide, and the emanations were still felt across the Great Lands in the north, where they worked their own kind of magic, and further south, where news of their temple, the messages from the gods it brought them, was renowned. Ly was for that vision, for seeing the Holy Place in solitary silence in the moonlight, perhaps for the last time and never as in that moment, when the axis of his whole life was tilting, edging him finally to man-home and the resonance of kin-placed stone.

There was a flame in his heart that he saw was his birth of beauty Brith-na-gig. Now the charms and tribulations of Enyella passed him by and all his mind and heart were hoving to Brith and her lush 'ooman's dangly-fair, all glad and sad for his decision. Yet feeling a poignant melancholy sweetness all the same at these, his last solitary wanderings come tether be home-tide in the west-lands, and rare if ever come that way again.

So he got up and drained his beaker, fetching from the hut where Brinen and Frenra now lay sleeping, his leather jerkin, a small flint axe and his staff held as ever. He strode silently as the night, used to moving with little or no noise, buoyed and determined towards the entrance of the stockade. He nodded

to the watchers at the entrance to the homestead, who nodded acknowledgement in return, and didn't remark or question him for he was known and trusted throughout those parts.

As Ly walked through the fields of shoulder high corn either side of him, a figure watched him go from the shadows, near the watchers' fire. The figure became subtly more alert, more primed towards action, masking this beneath a pretence of fatigue and making some comment about seeking a blanket to keep off the dew. When the figure left the watchers he crept to a small hut beside several others and soon emerged with a bow on his shoulder and a quiver of flint-tipped arrow-heads. The moon illuminated his features as he came out of the hut.

It was Karuum. A sinister expression on his features betokening ill-will and some bitter humour twisting to intent as he lifted a bronze dagger to glint dully in the moonlight. Then he plucked from the quiver an arrow. He raised this to the light, then laughed darkly to himself, deliberately chopping the arrow-head off with a swift vicious action that stemmed from jealousy and anger at a pride that dared to equal his own. Karuum crossed the boundary ditch of the homestead and climbed the stockade fence to the fields beyond, and disappeared into the silvery shadows of the night.

The night was soft and warm, a welcome benediction after the recent wet and wind times which seemed to have lengthened and grown more severe over the past several winters. Now Ly was on the move in the midst of that balmy night, he did not dwell on such matters. Rather he was moved to note again with a heightened acuity brought on by his peculiar and unique circumstances, the silvery tone the corn took on in the moonlight, the dark of the distant forests, the rising of the downs and pasture before him.

Ly stopped abruptly as a weasel suddenly undulated swiftly across his path, when he rounded a bend in the track. His hunter's instincts were alerted at a slight noise behind him as of rustling. He turned round and scanned the track and the fields, thought he spied the corn waving gently some distance off and gradually stilling. He stayed completely motionless for a long while until he was satisfied that there was nothing untoward in his surrounds and that the movement was merely some small night predator on the prowl. Unaware of the irony of the thought, unsuspecting that any true treachery could exist, in such a place that was like a second home to him, he once more relaxed, walking on with the quiet ease and lightness of motion, as the panther in the forest, the wolves among the hills. But such creatures, kings in their domain, may even so be tricked and trapped and killed, despite the natural weapons and skills Nature had so bequeathed them.

After a while of walking he was in sight of the Holy Place and its arena. He could discern the white-capped perimeters that surrounded and partially secluded the mighty monument he sought. Ly turned dreamy mellow on sight of that feature and he felt his heart lift, his spirit expand; the way the place always made him feel, only more so now, at a time he'd never before witnessed it - in the depths of a moonlit night that promised him all the hope of harvest in his heart.

Closer and closer Ly got to that landscape until he was walking the central avenue and witnessing the bulk of the great stones against the starlit sky. And soon he came to the first great stones that marked the entrance to the arena. They towered above him gleaming faintly with moonshine. Awed, he placed a hand upon the one, almost tenderly and with a depth of reverence unknown til now. He could feel the life of the Mother Spirit in the hard rough stone; he could sense the secrets it contained and his mind and senses were taken up with unravelling those for the moment.

As yet he had encountered no one, and had remained undisturbed in his solitary sojourn. This proved to be the case as he drew near to the inner entrance formerly marked by two guards. Now they were not there and Ly was able to stand and regard the elegant symmetry of the structure, begin to discern the wisdom behind the texture and variation capturing the shifting light and charting the sky. Ly opened his hands as if to embrace the ethers that had brought the Holy Place into being, touched them to his chest and from thence to his lips, bowing his head and opening out his hands again in a gesture of obsequiousness. Then he walked through the inner entrance stones and into the temple itself, moving betwixt and between the massive structure, caressing and contemplating as he moved, entranced, under the spell of the stones and the soft silver light.

He saw two Watchers sitting cross-legged either side the innermost circle, leaning against the stones, gazing upwards with a flint and board to mark down the subtle shifts and changes from above. Ly moved back from the centre blue stone circle to the inner round of huge sarsen trilithons. He wanted aloneness, and fell back away from that inner boundary to the next outer one. Genuflecting, he sat down inside one of the great arches and looked up into the navy-blue night flickering and incandescent with the myriad stars above.

He thought of the tales told and passed on from old, that spoke of finding a home in the stars, that

revealed they themselves had come from the stars - with the coming of the first great ones, the sky lords who came down to mate with the Mother. It was said in time, in generation beyond generation on, their kith and kin would fly to the stars and found new homes and new horizons on those flickering worlds above, from whence in legend they all had come, and where according to the old prophets, they would return when the wheel of the future had come full circle. These were the grand and profound thoughts which filled Ly's mind until he lost his wonder and opened himself up to the Divine Spirits above and below him, melting into the night sky and becoming one with his surroundings, part of the substance and tone around him. Ly floated for a while in the heavens, devoid of self, a fragment of the sky, as tiny and insignificant as a pebble on a beach, as potent and magical as the universe itself.

How long Ly stayed thus in semi-trance was unquantifiable. It seemed no time at all, and yet the moon was lower in the night sky and there was a sense of contained quiescence as if Nature were holding Her breath before a hint of dawn came, and the night activities moved gradually to cessation before the trilling of the early birds. But when Ly came out of his trance night still ruled though its influence was beginning to wane. He murmured a thanks and benediction to the gods and the Mother as he rose finally, with the accustomed gesture to the breast, the lips, the ground.

Ly felt uplifted and calmed as he turned to leave the place, having received his succour, calmed by the decisions he'd made and the future he envisaged. The distant call of a night-jar brought to mind once more Brith-na-gig in all her beauty, and he saw her as fullsome rich as the harvest, the image of the Goddess in youth Herself. Ly's heart swelled when he remembered their last cleavesome fleshwhile on the night before he left, and his body melted and stiffened on remembrance of her touch. Soon, soon again before the season's finish he would be with her and never more, most probably, would he come that way again. Never more would he circumvent this great Holy Place as he did that night. The thought of this stirred profound depths in him, and he lingered through the inner entrance, stones turning and viewing the gargantuan granite missives standing witness to his silent worship. Finally Ly was moving on, his heart bursting within him, rendering his usual stalwart sharp self whimsical in the rareness of that night.

He reached out and touched again, for a final time, the outer entrance stones which he had come to. On a whim, Ly turned to climb the avenue bank that rose up, marking and secluding that central approaching avenue. Ly thought he would catch an aspect of the Holy Place he'd never seen before. His silhouette was outlined by the clear silvery night as he stood there gazing still upon the great temple, reluctant to leave, and seeing new missives in the shadow and soft light created by the play of moon sheen and smudges of dark from the semi-tone greys of the deep night balm.

All this the Great Old Ones had sown the seeds of. All this the kith and kin from old had planned and mapped and toiled to erect. All this signalled the Great Height in Human Endeavour, the Great Achievement of that fair land that served as a shining light, influencing and illumining the folk of the continents, all about and further. The instinct and knowledge of this moved within Ly making him humble yet proud, enriched yet melancholy with the thought of endings, glowing gold with the possibilities of an altogether different future; and still excited by the prospect of travel before he finally turned his skiff to the north-west, and stayed by the homestead for good and for all. He was a man come into the fullness of his own being, standing at a crossroads, having decided his path but still melancholysome over what he had to leave behind.

He heard a warbler call in the distance to his left where he knew the waters of a lake lay. He turned towards the sound and stood looking out across the country with the Holy Place now behind him, as if the sound of vibrant life had pulled him from the world of reflection to the world of the present, where the forward motion of life itself desired to be embraced.

Breathing deeply of the night air, Ly warmed himself with the Bounty of Beauty that formed in his mind from the shape of the mamelons in the near distance. Brith-na-gig's fleshly mounds so lush and ripe came to mind, making Ly wish for an instant, he could hold her to him and clasp that birth of beauty in his arms, ravage her flaming foxy hair and join her moon-ma to his man-home once more before he took off to the Great Lands that one last time.

With his mind filled with such thoughts in his seemingly solitary vigil, Ly did not hear the stealthy figure which appeared from behind the further entrance stone, silently placing the arrow and drawing back the bow. Ly did not hear the sudden quiver of the arrow through the air until it was too late and in his back: deeply embedded, a flint arrow-head, closely followed by another and another, severing the spinal cord and cutting off his life as speedily and quickly as the flight of the flint-tipped arrows themselves.

Ly's main emotion was surprise as he fell forward. But the image of Brith-na-gig came to his mind, holding open her arms and he felt himself slipping through her to the arms of the Mother Herself, where his trials and tribulations were ended and his soul was returned to Source.

In the moonlight a stealthy figure stole forward to see if the form fallen down the bank was lifeless. Satisfied that this was the case, the figure crept down the bank and began to dig the loam in the shadows, at the base of the rise, where the dead body of the Hawk lay severed from his death-writhe. Soon a pit had been dug, the body buried, skilfully and painstakingly concealed. Then in the stealthy darkness, a shadow of Death's scythe sped away across the country, as silent and unobserved as he had come, having spent his venom - holding a smile of poison, within his scorpion mind.

Gradually, gradually the moon fell back before the coming of the light of dawn, until the sunrise glanced off the first stones in the midst of the great arena; as glorious as ever, shining forth the gold of life regardless of the presence of death, buried in the recumbant form of the dead man, lying face down with the flint arrow-heads embedded in his back, the soil and stones compressing his flesh, in time, sifting a skeleton to bone.

Far away, further north in the Westlands, an old man was seated at his bench, gazing through his portal at the night sky and the full round moon. For an instant the black silhouette of a screech owl flew like a porten across the face of it, causing Old Man Wem to frown and turn down to his sacred bowl of water into which he had been scrying. He looked once more into the moon-filtered water and from the shadow of the fleeting bird he caught the glimpse of a form falling forwards, falling forwards and dying beneath some virulent shadow in the silver perfection of the night.

In that instant, Old Man Wem knew that Brith-na-gig would never see Ly come man-home and would never be moon-ma with him come by. With the same piercing intuition, Old Man Wem knew Brith-na-gig would seed and flower with a childer part of the Hawk himself.

Tears trickled down the old man's face, silver jewels on brown leather, tracing a path wrought from the sorrow of wisdom and more ...

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Question of Being
Anton Long, 1977ev. ONA.

In order to understand the nature of man's being, and to arrive at an understanding of being itself, it is necessary to consider what constitutes, as a mode or modes of being, an individual, since in the fact of individuality one has an appropriate and indisputable ground from which to proceed.

The two fundamental modes of being which characterize man in his individuality are interpreted consciousness and primordial consciousness, the latter being understood as the unconscious in the sense of Jung (1). This unconscious can be characterized by causality, the conscious by causality - thought, the prime signification of causality, stands, ontologically opposed to the being that is acausality. The mathematical, which ontologically expresses thought (2) and whose signification is abstraction, restores, through its intuitive ground in the symbol, the priority of the question of being because the symbol is the prime signification of the acausal for that mode of being which is man, and is prior to the 'house of being' (3) that is language. One kind of symbol which explicates man's mode of being, is the work of Art. Yet the symbol is both abstraction and archetype - abstraction, because of the intuitive grounding of the mathematical, and archetype because primordial consciousness is constellated for and by the perception of the consciousness since individuality reveals itself to the world as a joining, in varying degrees, of primordial and consciousness.

What characterizes man's being is the predominance of interpreted consciousness: man is, and only for man is Being an issue (4). In respect of others, an individual in a unique orientation of interpreted, pre-conscious (5) and primordial consciousness - if the orientation is predominantly toward and conditioned by others, then such an individual is, psychologically - from the horizon of causality - extraverted; if the orientation is predominately inward, toward the pre-consciousness and primordial, the individual is introverted. The former is characterized, ontologically - from the horizon of acausality - and not psychologically, as inauthentic existence, since authentic existence is a striving toward interpreting what is pre-conscious and primordial. Individuation (6), the completion of this striving, is an authentic hermeneutic and involves the objectification of impersonal images by returning the archetype to the ground of its abstract. Individuation, is, ontologically, the synthesis of the orientations of extraversion and introversion characterized by a striving for interpretation, and consequently such an interpretation, to manifest the temporality of man's being, must in its authentic form be mathematical, grounded in the intuitive symbol. Only when the symbol is grounded in the essence of man's being and projected abstractly can it, mathematically, explicate being: the mathematical abstract, as a logical parallel to Descartes' cogito, cannot do this until the mathematical returns to its ground, and this return is pre-figured in individuation and expressed in the objectification of the primordial by which means Being is made manifest according to temporality. Language, alone, cannot accomplish this task - and any method requiring for its basis language (such as phenomenology) can never complete the work of understanding Being: it can pose the question, confine it to certain limits, but it cannot solve that question.

The interpreting implicit in authenticity, is the making, from what has become conscious, of the mathematical, and such making or re-interpreting, is authentic only in so far as the mathematical is itself grounded in the symbol. What passes for the mathematical - when it is grounded solely in the abstract - is, ontologically, not mathematical and is thus inauthentic. Any edifice (such as physics) built on such inauthentic foundations must be demolished and re-built authentically, starting from the re-grounding of the mathematical. What cannot be re-built in this manner must remain unbuilt, since only by re-building and living according to that re-building is it possible for man to live authentically. Such a task as this is the task of thinking.

This re-grounding of the mathematical must take the form of an examination of the 'foundations of mathematics', since only by the process of this preliminary examination will it be possible to explicate the meaning of an individual and to being the task of questioning Being.

a) Symbol and Abstract as a Ground to man's being:

A symbol exists, and exists primordially, because man's being is an issue for man, that is, because of being. Thought as a consequence of man's existence in the world, becomes thought.

*The Question of Time:
Toward the New Acausal Science of Life*
R. Venn, 1996.

The Question of Time

In many ways, the concept of Time is central to the science of Physics. However, this concept has not really been understood, and modern theories - starting with the theory of 'relativity' - have what are basically absurd notions about 'time'.

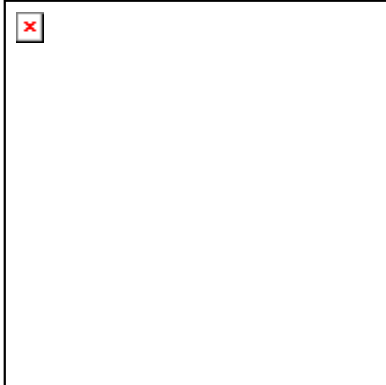
According to this absurd modern approach, time is the 'fourth dimension' and this abstract dimension is taken as actually existing, as an entity in itself with time being understood as a *quantity* which can be measured. From this, speculative conclusions (e.g. those of 'special relativity') have been derived concerning 'time-reversal' and such like. That is, a mathematical model has been constructed to represent something which actually does not exist, and from this model certain consequences are abstracted, with these consequences being interpreted as if they were real or could be real, and used to explain what is real or observed.

The fundamental mis-understanding derives from that abstract concept of modern physics 'Space', with this 'Space' being regarded as 'four-dimensional' and represented by a transformation of four co-ordinates, three being spatial, and one representing time. However, this abstract 'Space' does not exist in reality, just as an abstract linear 'time' which is measurable does not exist. This abstract Space itself (or more exactly, this space-time continuum) cannot be measured, or represented, by a co-ordinate system, a 'frame of reference' or anything else simply because it has no actual physical existence - such a 'space' is purely imaginary and therefore matter, energy or 'force' (such as gravity) cannot be represented or measured in terms of this 'space'.

This statement is of fundamental importance, and to explain it fully a brief digression about physical theory is in order. Physics deals - or rather should deal - with what is observed, or what can be inferred or deduced from observation. A physical theory is or should be a model of what is observed or what can be inferred from observation. Such a theory should be as simple as possible, and be consistent - i.e., logical. A theory should be able to account for observations made about the phenomena with which that theory is concerned. The theory itself can be expressed in mathematical terms, by equations linking something to something else, with the abstract quantities of mathematics representing some physical quantities. This mathematical expression often enables predictions to be made - that is, it shows some new relation, hitherto unknown or unobserved, between two or more physical quantities or properties, or it shows some new phenomena or behaviour of physical properties or quantities which could be observed if looked for. The importance of experiments is that they enable such relationships to be observed, and new relationships and phenomena found. What must be understood is that the mathematics is a tool, an abstraction - it is not the reality. This reality is only and ever discovered through observation or experiment. What is not observed, not capable of being observed, or not capable of being logically deduced from known observations or experiments, should be considered not to exist, and therefore should not be the concern of physics or even of science.

What has happened over the past hundred years or so is that speculation, based on abstract theories, has been accorded prominence over observation and direct experiment. Furthermore, the abstractions of speculative theories have been mistaken for what actually exists. This is particularly evident in the theories of relativity, in cosmology and in 'particle physics'. Logic and observation have been forced aside by speculation and childish fantasy.

Consider the now well-known theory of 'black holes' in the cosmos. No such 'holes' have ever been observed, and the existence of such holes has been deduced from various speculative *theories* which themselves are not based on observation but instead rest on other abstract theories where what is abstract has been mistakenly said to actually exist or be real - e.g. the gravity of a large body causing 'space-time' itself to curve, and the assumption that therefore gravity is somehow the very curvature of this 'space-time'. Another well-known theory, with no reality, based on inane speculation, and which is totally illogical and unreasonable and therefore *unscientific*, is that of 'the big bang' according to which the universe originated from some enormous explosion in some small agglomeration of primal matter. Where this matter came from is never explained, just as what was 'outside' the boundary occupied by



this matter is never explained, except by illogical assumptions such as 'nothing was outside or could be outside since that finite matter *was* then the universe'. How this finite matter could then 'expand' into what did not exist is also not rationally explainable, and so on.

However, the fundamental problem of physics goes much deeper than modern abstract theories, and concerns what is meant by time and matter themselves, and how we represent these in order to understand them.

The Organic Nature of Time

An abstract four-dimensional space-time continuum does not exist because what exists is matter (and/or energy) which *changes*. There is not, nor can be, any 'external observer' which matter - such as a specific object - is at rest relative to. This means that no abstract co-ordinate system, using an abstract time, can be used to represent that matter, its motion and its changes, including its effects and/or interactions with/on other matter. This abstract system must be replaced. This further means that we must not only discard theories based on an abstract space-time continuum, but also look beyond Newtonian physics.

In essence, matter is an expression of the fundamental *change* which governs the universe. This can best be explained by defining what 'time' is. What we have hitherto called time is merely a form of this fundamental change, and this time cannot be abstracted, in discrete magnitudes, out of this flowing, continuous change. Time is properly a measure of the change of physical matter or energy, and is already implicit *in* that matter because that change is part of the nature of that matter itself.

One may visualize this by considering matter to be part of a flow, part of a continuous change rather than discrete objects existing singularly in 'space' at a certain 'time'. Such a perception of time and matter takes us back to fundamentals about matter, motion and force itself, and enables the foundations of a new understanding to be created, an understanding which can and will revolutionize physics.

The mistake hitherto has been to assume that this fundamental change which is time is somehow separate from the matter which changes. Consider two forms of matter, one conventionally said to be 'living' and one conventionally said to be inert, or dead. The first is an acorn which roots in the ground and from which an oak tree grows. The acorn *is* the oak tree, as, in discrete linear terms of an abstract 'time', the oak tree at 1 year of age is the same oak tree at 10 and 100 years of age. However, we could represent this another way as a continuous flow of change. This, one might have:

where a is the acorn, b the tree at a certain age, and c the tree at another more advanced age.

The second example is some sub-atomic particle a created by some experiment involving high energies and bombarding a target. This is said to have existed for t seconds before becoming two different particles b and c , which then decay into other particles after a further short period of time. What actually has occurred is that there has been a change of energy which has been observed at a specific point - that is, a is b and c , with b and c not being separate, discrete, particles but rather a after such a change. In effect, b and c have 'grown' from or out of a and are therefore its 'descendants', its change of living form. In this instance we would have:

Such a change is always organic; that is, continuous. If we view an oak tree at a certain 'time' - say on a specific day at a specific hour when that tree is 50 years old - we obtain an image or impression of that tree at that time. At another time, it will have changed, perhaps in a way we cannot observe. But because it is organic, it is continually changing because it is living - growing, or decaying. This change itself

depends on other things around the tree on the soil, the climate and so on. That is, it does not live in isolation; it is itself part of a larger organism, in this case the living system which is our own planet. An abstract time and an abstract space have distanced us from the realness of matter - physics has considered discrete, separate physical objects in isolation and then tried to work out the effects on these objects of other, discrete, separate objects., often from the viewpoint of an observer in a static 'reference frame'. The realness is that all matter is alive in the sense that all matter can and does change. Thus a so-called dead inert object, such as a lump of rock which is an asteroid in orbit round our sun, is alive because it can and does change - it is formed, or born, and it will be changed. We only view it now as inert rock because we catch a glimpse of it in *our* brief moment of time of some thousands or tens of thousands of years. But it is changing, slowly, in its own way, as such things do; it is already on the way to becoming something else. In effect, it has its own 'time' of change, of living - which is far vaster than our own. The physics we have so far evolved is the physics of our discrete time, not the real time, or change, of the living, organic, universe. As such it is mostly an inert physics, just as the technology developed from this physics is an inert technology **and not an organic, or living, technology**. No wonder we cannot yet hope to travel among the stars using this inert technology. Basically, we cannot impose a strictly limited, and discrete, concept of an abstract 'human life' time onto what hitherto has been regarded as inorganic or inert matter, and then so classify that matter as 'dead' and, just as importantly, as unconnected with, as separate from, other matter in the universe. *This misunderstanding has led us to mistakenly posit an external frame of reference onto matter and see that matter as being 'at rest' or 'moving' relative to this frame, as it has led us to classify that matter and its changes according to a non-existent abstract time of discrete moments.* Physics has therefore constructed equations which link these moments of this abstract time. Thus we have evolved an 'abstract time' technology consisting of forced links between separate, discrete, entities or objects. This inert, discrete, technology is limited in both conventional time and space, whereas an organic technology, founded upon matter as a living continuous interacting change, is not so limited. This current technology arises from constructing crude mechanical machines from individual, discrete, components, and then trying to connect these components together in a way which 'works'. These components are themselves manufactured in an artificial way and linked together statically - without the flexibility of adaptation, mutation and change which living organisms possess. A physics based on the organic nature of time, and which thus expressed the organic change present in all matter, would be capable of being the foundation for an organic or living technology. A good example of an inert machine is a computer. This is constructed from discrete components, linked together, and these components and the links between them, derive mostly from electronic theory - from controlling the flow of electrons in circuits. These electrons are understood as separate, discrete, particles. The resulting machine, the computer, while remarkable in some ways compared to a bronze-age cart pulled by horses, is still primitive, inflexible, inert, unadaptable and very, very stupid. An organic computer would evolve - it would grow from something to become a computer; it would be alive and so adaptable. In order to create this new technology, a new revolutionary physics needs to be created which does away with discrete representations and an abstract time, and which considers matter as a connected form of change. From this will arise a new understanding of materials and of how those materials can be used in a connected or organic way. The whole basis of electronics and electricity - charge and the flow of electrons - will be understood in a new light, with a new field of study arising from a realistic understanding of what charge and electricity actually are. The first stage in creating this new physics is to examine the fundamental problem of motion, as well as matter and force itself, and this will take us back beyond Newton and Galileo to Aristotle. The next article in this series will outline this new organic approach to motion and matter.

Aristotle and the Acausal Cosmic Being

The importance of Aristotle is that he accepts Nature, and the cosmos itself, as things which can be understood, or apprehended, by our consciousness and the use of reason. Furthermore, for Aristotle, Nature is a wonderful, often beautiful, "striving-to-become" - it strives to become what is 'immortal'. That is, it strives for more order. The pursuit of understanding by the use of reason can and often does fill us with awe and joy - it inspires us, and raises us, as mortals, to a higher level. This Aristotelian

striving to know by the use of reason, this Aristotelian awe and joy, form the basis of science and in the fundamental sense it is these things which make us human and civilized.

In contrast to the life-enhancing 'striving-to-become' and the joyful enquiring of Aristotle, Plato, for example, views the world and nature as imperfect and often ugly. Aristotle looks upward, toward what is immortal, while Plato looks downward from an abstract and almost lifeless 'perfection'.

Aristotle provides us with the essentials we need to begin to understand the cosmos, Nature and life itself. These essentials are: (i) that the cosmos exists independently of us and our consciousness; (ii) that our understanding of this 'external world' depends upon our senses - that is, on what we can see, hear or touch; (iii) that logical argument or reason, is the means to knowledge and understanding of and about this 'external world'; (iv) that the cosmos is, of itself, a reasoned order subject to rational laws.

The importance of these essentials needs emphasizing, for they enable us to avoid the idle speculation, the confusion and the irrational assumptions and conclusions that mark the non-scientific attempts at 'understanding'. For example, what is beyond our senses and our direct experience cannot form the basis of understanding, and is therefore irrelevant - for what is important to understanding is what is known, what is perceived by us. Using these Aristotelian essentials, we can soon appreciate some of the most important conclusions which Aristotle himself reached. These logical conclusions, based on the essentials we have accepted, form the basis of our own enquiry. They are:

(1) Since the cosmos is an order, a *changing*, which we because of our consciousness can understand, the *change*, or movement, of things in this cosmos does not have a beginning as it does not have an end. Therefore, any speculation about the 'origin' of this cosmos is idle and useless because the cosmos is eternal.

(2) This changing of the cosmos - the movement within it, its cycle of growth, decline and growth for example - is itself dependent on something. This is the timeless, or eternal, 'prime mover', or 'First Cause', which itself does not move, as measured by time. Time itself is the measure of movement - that is, time is implicit in, or is a part of, movement. Expressed another way, time is the measure of change.

(3) All life implies 'ordinary' matter plus an extra "something". Our own human life possesses more of this extra "something" than other life. Thus do we and we alone of all life that we know have 'consciousness', an awareness of our surroundings, and 'the desire to know'.

If we use slightly different terminology, we can at once understand these things better. The cause of movement itself must be a-causal, that is, "beyond the causal". The 'prime Mover' - or the being of the cosmos itself, the 'cosmic Being' - is thus a-causal. Movement, and thus change, are *causal*. It is the a-causal which causes, or drives, the movement of the causal, of ordinary matter. Furthermore, we can say that it is this a-causal which is the extra "something" which life possesses. That is, life is a contact, or intermingling, of matter with the cosmic Being itself, with the a-causal.

The science of Physics describes the ordinary matter of the cosmos and its movement, or change. This description depends on ordinary or causal time. But this is an incomplete description of the cosmos because it considers such movement in isolation, in purely causal terms, whereas the cosmos, and the matter within it, is both causal and a-causal. Furthermore, the changes which Physics describes are described by an earth-derived and earth-bound causal time based on our own planetary-sun cycle of change.

What needs to be understood is that this other aspect, the a-causal, can be experienced and known - that is, it exists in the physical sense, can be discovered by us, and known. It is not 'immaterial' in the sense of being 'spiritual', and neither is it unknowable in the sense that a supreme god or omnipotent being is unknowable. The best way is to consider this a-causal as another type of 'matter' or change, different from ordinary matter and ordinary, causal, change as measured and understood by causal, earth-derived, time. This a-causal is most evidently manifest in living things - in we ourselves, and in the aspects or life-forms of Nature.

To make this a-causal real for ourselves - to fully understand it - we have to somehow discover, describe or capture and express this a-causal in some physical way. We must find some means of describing the changes of this 'a-causal matter' in terms of 'a-causal time'. For this, the mathematical descriptions used by Physics to describe the changes of ordinary matter will not do because such descriptions describe such changes in terms of causal time, even when non-Euclidean geometry is used.

One way of capturing the a-causal is to develop a truly *organic* technology - that is, to create *living* machines from organic material. Such an organic technology would be totally different from the current concern with "molecular electronics" and "nanotechnology" because these concerns still depend on manufactured, discrete and dead electronic components which themselves are based on descriptions of

causal matter using causal time. Electronics, for example, is a means of describing the changes of a particular type of causal matter - electrons - over causal time, and enables components and circuits to be built to alter and control the flow of electrons. Thus, for example, using organic 'molecules' to store data is not a genuine organic technology, because: (i) such molecules are manufactured to do one or two specific, inert, tasks; (ii) such molecules are not basically alive as independent changing organisms - that is, not possessed of the acausal; and (iii) they would still be somehow connected to, and dependent upon, electronic components. A truly organic technology uses one type of acausal matter, living matter, and its changes, or growth, in a living way to produce an organic machine made entirely of organic matter, with no dead, discrete, manufactured components - electronic or otherwise. We ourselves would interact with, or control these organic machines in a living way, for example by using our "thoughts" (via "biofeedback" or something more sophisticated) or a living symbiotic relationship, such as the relationship of a hunting man with his well-trained hunting dog. In either case, the parameters of change, of control, of such organic machines would be natural or living ones determined by the acausal, or living, changes of that organic machine - rather than determined by causal, inert, matter such as an electronic, electrical or mechanical circuit. In the example of the hunting dog, the parameter of control is the relationship which exists between the dog and its master. Such a truly organic technology would enable us, for instance, to build or create an organic space-ship capable of traveling between the stars, with this ship being a living, existing, being, capable of living or existing in interstellar space, and having some kind of symbiotic relationship with its crew or its controller. However, to create this technology it is necessary for us to understand the basics of acausal matter and acausal change, and to do this we need to develop a new Physics - and if necessary a new mathematics - to describe such things. Before even this can be done, we need to understand what acausal matter itself is, and how to describe its change, as acausal time - that is, we need to know exactly what both causal and acausal matter are, and what both causal and acausal movement or change mean.

Causal Matter and Causal Time:

The description of causal, or ordinary, matter and its movement or change involves the use of a *frame of reference*, or geometrical co-ordinate system, whether this be an absolute one, as posited by Newton, or a relative one, as posited by modern Physics. Space is defined by this frame of reference - for space, in the physical sense, is said to exist between two objects, or points, which are themselves described by fixed co-ordinates of a frame of reference. Space is simply 'extension'. In this simple sense, causal time is the duration between the movement of an object, measured from some starting point in a frame of reference, to the measured end of that movement in the same frame of reference.

The notions of 'force' and 'energy' are used to describe changes which an object or objects can undergo, and such changes are dependent on the mass, velocity (or movement), rate of change of velocity and the distance of movement of the object or the other object(s) which affect or cause an object to so change. Force, and energy, are basically expressions of the changes of causal matter over causal time.

Modern physics assumes these things - force, space and time - exist, of themselves. That is, that *space* exists and that a particular force, for example the gravitational force due to a massive object, exists in the space around that massive object.

Whatever the reality of such concepts in actual, cosmic, terms, they have hitherto proved useful in describing the motion and behaviour of observed and observable physical matter, as they have provided a basic understanding of the known physical cosmos. So long as such concepts are based on what is known and observed, so long as they are rational, and so long as the observed reality confirms them and their logically deduced consequences, then they are valuable. They cease to be valuable when they are not based on what is known and observed, when they cease to be rational, or when there is no observed or known reality to confirm or contradict them and the speculations derived from them.

In the overall, cosmic sense, the Physics of causal matter, and the laws which form the basis of this Physics, should be considered to be a special, or limiting, case of the living or organic cosmos described by the laws and processes and concepts of acausal matter and acausal time. That is, the laws, process and concepts of acausal matter and acausal time should also describe, as a special case, the laws, processes and concepts of known physical matter. The new Physics of acausal matter and acausal time should reduce to the old Physics of ordinary matter when the conditions for such ordinary matter apply.

Acausal Matter and Acausal Time:

Acausal matter is ordinary matter plus an extra "acausal something" - rather like a charged particle is ordinary matter plus the extra "causal something" of charge. For the present, and for convenience, we shall call this extra "acausal something", acausal charge.

The basic properties of acausal matter are:

- (1) An acausal object, or mass, can change without any external force acting upon it - that is, the change is implicit *in* that acausal matter, by virtue of its inherent acausal charge.
- (2) The rate of change of an acausal object, or mass, is proportional to its acausal charge.
- (3) The change of an acausal object can continue until all its acausal charge has been dissipated.
- (4) Acausal charge is always conserved.
- (5) An acausal object, or mass, is acted upon by all other acausal matter in the cosmos.
- (6) Each acausal object in the physical cosmos attracts or repels every other acausal object in the physical cosmos with a magnitude which is proportional to the product of the acausal charges of those objects, and inversely proportional to the distance between them as measured in causal space.

Acausal time is implicit in acausal matter, because space, as such, does not exist for acausal matter - that is, such acausal matter cannot be described by a frame of reference in causal space. Separation, in the sense of physical space measured by moments of causal time or a duration of causal time, does not exist for acausal matter because such a separation implies causal time itself. Hence the principle that an acausal object or mass is acted upon by all other matter in the cosmos because all such matter can be considered to be 'joined together' - to be part of an indivisible whole. In the abstract and illustrative sense, we could say that all acausal matter exists in the physical world described by causal space and causal time *as well as existing simultaneously in a different continuum described by acausal space and acausal time*. with this 'acausal space' incapable of being described in terms of conventional physical space, either Euclidean or non-Euclidean. This 'acausal space' and this 'acausal time' are manifested by, and described by, acausal charge itself - that is, by the extra property which acausal matter possesses because it is acausal.

The properties of acausal matter, enumerated above, form the basis for the new Physics which describes acausal matter and its changes, and it is no coincidence that many of them express, for acausal charge, what the ordinary Physics expresses for ordinary matter and electric charge, since the acausal charge is what makes any matter which possesses it alive or organic - a living, changing, organism. When this acausal charge leaves or is dissipated away from an acausal object, then that object becomes ordinary physical matter, obeying the laws of ordinary Physics. Such matter is then 'inert' or 'dead'.

Furthermore, these basic properties of acausal matter enable us to really begin to understand, for the first time, the real nature of the cosmos, as they can show us the way toward developing a truly organic technology and an *organic medicine* capable of replacing the rather lifeless, primitive and often damaging medicine of the present which relies on traumatic surgery and drugs.

Life and the Acausal Charge

Life implies the following seven attributes - a living organism respire; it moves; it grows or changes; it excretes waste; it is sensitive to, or aware of, its environment; it can reproduce itself, and it can nourish itself.

The acausal charge or charges which a living organism possesses is what causes or provokes the physical and chemical changes in an object so that it exhibits the above attributes. For instance, a living cell could not be made from its molecular constituent parts and then be expected to suddenly become 'alive'. The process of life occurs only when acausal charges are present in *addition* to the ordinary matter (of elements, molecules and so on) which make up the substance of an organism.

An organism - something which is alive - obeys the ordinary laws of physics (with one known exception) but is also subject to the laws which govern acausal matter. Ordinary matter, or a dead once living organism, does not obey the laws which govern such acausal matter. The one known exception is the second law of thermodynamics - a living organism represents an increase in order: a re-structuring of physical matter in a more ordered way. This change toward more order may be said to be 'powered' or caused by the acausal energy of acausal charges. The causal energy changes in organisms, which can be described by ordinary chemical reactions between elements and molecules - that is, in terms of chemical energy - are produced or caused by acausal charges. In effect, such chemical reactions are one of the physical manifestations of acausal charges in the causal continuum. Being 'alive' means ordinary physical matter is re-organized, or changed, in a more ordered way. A living organism possesses the capacity, by virtue of its acausal charges, to create order, to *synthesize* order from the less ordered physical world. Life implies an increase in order in the causal continuum.

Detecting Acausal Charges

The acausal charges which organism possess by virtue of being organisms should be capable of being

physically detected. That is, they should be capable of being observed, by us, and should be capable of being measured quantitatively using some measuring device devised for such a purpose. Following such detection and measurement, observations of the behaviour of such acausal charges could be made. Such observations would then form the basis for theories describing the nature and the laws of such charges. The result would then be the construction of organic machines and equipment, following the invention of basic "machines" to generate, or produce, moving acausal charges.

A useful comparison to aid the understanding of such a process of discovery, measurement and theory, exists in the history of electricity. Static electricity was known for many centuries, but not understood until the concept of positive and negative charges was postulated. Later, instruments such as the gold-leaf electroscope were invented for detecting and measuring such charges. Other instruments, such as frictional machines and the Leyden jar, were invented for producing and accumulating, or storing, electric charges, and producing small 'galvanic currents' or electricity. Then the great experimental scientist Faraday showed that 'galvanic currents', magnetism and static charges were all related, and produced what we now call an electro-magnetic generator to produce electricity. From such simple experimental beginnings, our world has been transformed by machines and equipment using electricity, and by the electronics which has developed from electricity.

It is obvious that acausal charges cannot be detected by equipment based on electricity - for example connecting a living organism (such as a plant) to some equipment designed to detect or measure electrical charge, either static or moving, or electrical resistance or whatever. Some changes in, for example electrical resistance, *may* be measured when such an organism is connected to equipment designed to measure electrical resistance, and when that organism undergoes some sort of change, but it is some physical physiological or chemical change which is being observed not the acausal change caused by acausal charge. To detect acausal charge and thus some acausal change something acausal has to be used. This means that to detect acausal charge something alive - some *organism* or organisms - has to be used, and the change in that detecting organism somehow observed on the physical level. Perhaps after that detecting organism has undergone some physical or chemical change as a result of 'detecting' an acausal charge or charges.

Thus, to establish the new "organic science" - and to develop the fundamental laws of the Physics of this new science - practical experiments need to be conducted and observations made. It is such practical experiments - at first to detect and measure the basic acausal charge - which are the next step forward.

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Sinister Dialectic

ONA

The sinister dialectic (often called the sinister dialectic of history) is the name given to Satanic strategy - that is, (a) the use of Black Magick to change individuals/events on a significant scale; (b) to gain control and influence; and (c) the use of Satanic forms (individuals/influence etc.) to produce/provoke changes.

This strategy, and the tactics involved to achieve it, is esoteric - and its learning forms an important part of novice training. Satanic strategy has its ground or foundation in Aeonics - Aeonics providing a means of rationally studying the patterns, processes and energies, both causal and acausal, which do and have shaped individuals and their groupings from societies to civilizations. Further, Aeonics provides a means of interpreting recent events/trends and can predict (within certain limits) future patterns. [A basic introduction to Aeonics is given by the Order MSS dealing with the subject. A more advanced study involves becoming proficient in the advanced Star Game.]

I. On a basic level, the dialectic is concerned with simple opposition - with defiance of what is accepted or conventional at particular times. This is heresy - the Adversarial role, a challenge against both conscious and unconscious norms. This opposition works on two levels - the individual, and society. 1) individual: The strategy is to provide opportunities for individuals to discover the hidden/forbidden within their own psyche, or lead them/influence them toward this. This means catharsis on an individual level. 2) Society: The strategy means Satanic individuals/organizations disseminate (often with no direct Satanic connotations) heretical ideas or otherwise encourage them. The aim of both (1) and (2) is to challenge and thus provoke change, reaction.

At the present time, (1) means rites such as The Black Mass [qv. the Order MS 'Satanism, Blasphemy and the Black Mass'], and other means of inner liberation. (2) means an aiding of what actually is heretical, now - this means upholding (a) inequality (particularly racially), (b) the concept of war, and (c) aiding discussion/spread of information/exchange of ideas/triumphing the cause of those things which actually are heretical, in Law and mostly ignored by the majority such is their supine nature - such as certain views regarding events in World War Two the propagation of which are illegal and which render the person spreading them to imprisonment (i.e. denying 'the Holocaust' ever took place). Further, (2) at this time also involves countering the unhealthy and anti-natural morality of suppression of the Nazarene.

All these are, however, tactics to achieve broader strategic goals - they are means, only. These means can and often do change as the times change - as societies change. For instance, regarding (2)(a) above - in a society which was tyrannically anti-egalitarian, the tactic would probably be to aid egalitarian tendencies.

II. On a higher level, the dialectic is concerned with long-term evolution - with the creation and change of civilizations and ultimately with the creation of a new type of individual, a new species. This means altering our evolution, this alteration being toward the 'Satanic'. This means two things - or rather two tactical approaches. (1) Enabling individuals to change themselves, to evolve, consciously, and so become part of that evolutionary change. (2) Changing/influencing the structures (such as societies) to make them instruments for such change or at least not detrimental to it.

(1) involves such things as External and Internal Magick - a following of the Seven Fold Sinister Way. (2) involves Aeonic magick - e.g. the creation of new archetypal forms or images and the infection in the psyche of others which results from introducing them - and gaining/using influence. It should be understood that while the tactics of I above can and do change, the tactics used to attain II remain essentially the same because the goal is precise. Further, I in many ways aids II - that is, the opposition to some fixed idea or dogma, accepted at a particular moment in history, provokes a change and leads to a new synthesis and thus an evolution of conscious understanding in individuals, thus aiding the sinister dialectic on a higher level. Essentially, I is exoteric, and II esoteric Satanism - and it is necessary to make this distinction because the means of I vary with time (over centuries) while II remains relatively fixed, and all too often novices (and others) confuse a tactic used in I (such as politics) as something Satanic when it is only a tactic, a means, a form.

The reason 'why' there is (in genuine Satanism, anyway) a sinister strategy - a dimension beyond the personal - is simple: it is in the nature of Satanism (genuine Satanism, anyway) itself. Satanism at its highest level is concerned with 'cosmic change' - that is, it is an expression of the evolution of conscious existence. Evolution is something we, as conscious beings, can participate in and indeed create - by so doing, we are extending the range of our being, fulfilling (and going beyond) the potential we possess; affirming our existence in the most intense way possible. Viewed another way (in terms developed recently to explicate such things - i.e. make them more conscious and thus controllable) Satanism accesses the acausal, via nexions, and so increases the amount of the acausal presenced in the causal. These nexions are psychic (within the psyche of individuals), physical (places on Earth where the causal and acausal intersect or are close) or created via magickal rites. Aeonics, and the sinister dialectic, are means which enhance our existence as Individuals - which offer us the opportunity not only to increase our consciousness and our abilities, but to use that consciousness and those abilities. Thus, Satanism, correctly understood, is more than a glorification of the ego, or an indulgence in pleasures, or some kind of intellectual, 'esoteric' knowledge. It is also more than just living 'on the edge' and garnishing dark and other experiences [that is only a stage - qv. the MS 'The Practice of Evil, In Context'].

In essence, the sinister dialectic is Satanism and Satanists in action - it is Satanists playing at god: altering themselves, others, societies, civilization and evolution itself. This is its purpose, and the justification of sinister strategy.

- Order of Nine Angles -

A Gift for the Prince
- A Guide to Human Sacrifice -
ONA 1984eh (revised 1994eh)

In ceremonial rituals involving sacrifice, the Mistress of Earth [sometimes called 'The Lady Master'] usually takes on the role of the dark or 'violent' goddess, Baphomet, and 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) and it draws down dark forces or 'entities'.

Such forces may then be used, by directing them toward a specific goal, 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 sacrifice, is disruptive - that is, it tends toward Chaos. This is simply another way of saying that human sacrifice furthers the work of Satan.

Sacrifice can be voluntary, of an individual; involuntary, of an individual or two; or result from events brought about by Satanic ritual and/or planning (such as wars). Voluntary sacrifice results from the traditional Satanist belief that our life on this planet is only a stage: a gateway or nexion to another existence. This other existence is in the acausal realm where the Dark Gods exist. The key to this other existence is not negation, but rather ecstasy. A Satanist revels in life because by living life in a joyful, ecstatic way, the acausal that exists within us all by virtue of our being, is strengthened. For Satanists, not only the manner of living is important, but also the manner of death. We must live well and die at the right time, proud and defiant to the end - not waiting sickly and weak. The scum of the Earth wail and tremble as they face Death: we stand laughing and spit with contempt. Thus do we learn how to live.

Voluntary sacrifice usually occurs every seventeen years as part of the Ceremony of Recalling: the one chosen becomes Immortal, living in the acausal to haunt the edge of the minds of those un-initiated. An involuntary sacrifice is when an individual or individuals are chosen by a group, Temple or Order. Such sacrifices are usually sacrificed on the Spring Equinox, although if this is not possible for whatever reason, another date may be used. While voluntary sacrifices are always male (and usually twenty-one years of age) there are no restrictions concerning involuntary sacrifices other than the fact that they are usually in some way opponents of Satanism or the Satanic way of living.

Great care is needed in choosing a sacrifice: the object being to dispose of a difficult individual or individuals without arousing undue suspicion. A Temple or group wishing to conduct such a sacrifice with magickal intent must first obtain permission from the Grand Master or Grand Lady Master. If this is given, then detailed preparation must begin. First, choose the sacrifice(s) - those who removal will actively benefit the Satanist cause. Candidates are zealous interfering Nazarenes, those (e.g. journalists) attempting to disrupt in some way established Satanist groups or Orders, political/ business individuals whose activities are detrimental to the Satanist spirit, and those whose removal will aid the sinister dialectic and/or improve the human stock.

There are three methods of conducting an involuntary sacrifice: (1) by magickal means (e.g. the Death Ritual); (2) by some person or persons directly killing the sacrifice(s); (3) by assassination. Both (2) and (3) can be undertaken either directly by the group/Temple/Order and its members, or by proxy. Proxy involves the Master or Mistress finding a suitably weak-willed individual and then implanting in the mind of that individual - usually by hypnosis - a suitable suggestion.

Whatever method is chosen, a date for the sacrifice should be set and on that date a suitable ritual undertaken. This ritual is most usually the Death Ritual - if method (3) is chosen, the Ritual is performed twice: first, seven days before the chosen date, and then on the date itself while the member/proxy is undertaking the sacrifice. The energy of this latter ritual is then directed (or temporarily stored), or dispersed over Earth, by the person conducting the ritual.

Method (2) involves the Ritual of Sacrifice. The victim or victims are brought or enticed to the area chosen for the Ritual, bound by the Guardian of the Temple and at the appropriate point in the Ritual sacrificed by either the Master or the Mistress using the Sacrificial Knife. The body or bodies are then buried or otherwise disposed of, care being taken if they are found for suspicion not to fall on any of those involved. Those involved, of course, must be sworn to secrecy and warned that if they break their oath, their own existence will be terminated. Breaking the Oath of Sacrifice draws upon the individual or individuals who break that Oath, the vengeance of all Satanic groups, Order and individuals - and this vengeance is both magickal and more direct, the Master or Mistress of the Ritual appointing Guardians

to hunt down and kill those who have broken the Oath.
Those who participate in the Ritual of Sacrifice must revel in the death(s) - it being the duty of the
Master and Mistress to find suitable participants.
- Order of Nine Angles -

A Satanic Master, Revealed

[The following extract is taken from the memoirs of a member of the ONA]

I was, and had been for many years, a Satanic Master. What did that mean?

Did it mean I was an egocentric bastard who corrupted others and who followed the path of perversion? Did it mean I dressed in a certain way and cultivated a stereo-typed image? That I was wealthy, and powerful?

Not essentially. It meant a stage, a goal achieved, a way of being, **insight**...

There can be little that brings perspective and an awareness of meaning (and thus genuine insight) like being in a flimsy tent, in a storm, in Winter, with no food, little water, miles from anyone, with no one knowing or caring where you are, while Fever wrestles with you... Or sitting on warm grass on a warm sunny Spring day by a cross-roads having just been released from drab, dreary and enclosing prison life and realizing you are free, to take any road you choose... Or being in the cold of night trying to run silently from a house where you have shot someone dead and where people are screaming and shouting, knowing that the pursuit will soon begin, again... Or watching while a friend of only a few days but who in those days came close to you having saved your life, dies, his intestines throbbing in the dirt, having been cut from him by a storm of bullets... Or listening with a lover to a spell-binding performance of Beethoven's Ninth and then carrying that exuberance, intensity and affirmation together as you make exhilarating love and touch the essence...

Years ago, I had attained Adeptship (or 'individuation' to use another but less accurate term), a certain synthesis. This meant achieving empathy, skill, knowledge - a balance of conflicting opposites - and this achievement meant a change from what I had been. It was achieved by experience. I had been a fanatic (whether 'political' or 'Satanic' is unimportant) - hard, ruthless, DEVOTED TO ACTION, to experience. To attain more, I had to go further, to bring forth other aspects of myself, some of which were already a part of my character (mostly dormant) and some which were not. Because I was who I was, I did this via extreme experiences: isolation, being a wanderer, a monk... Mostly, this was a conscious decision or process, born from my Occult Initiation and the path I followed. But sometimes it was instinct. The experiences brought more insight, further experiences, and thus change: there was an enrichment, a taking of life into other realms of being. I always believed in myself, always understood I had a Destiny (and Initiation was a part of this) - even if at times I was not quite sure what it was. This is perhaps why I survived.

The core of my story is Satanism - of the genuine type - and to understand me is to understand this much misunderstood way of living. Satanism is the name given to a practical way of living: a quest for achievement, excellence, worth, defiance, where the individual struggles with and against the world, their own unconscious and the primal powers of darkness beyond the psyche. A 'magickal' grade or title is a stage of achievement, representing a certain level of insight, skill, experience, knowledge attained. Thus a 'Master' is not someone in a black cloak who stares (or tries to stare) demonically, who pretends to be all knowledgeable and infallible, and who of necessity perverts others. Rather, a Satanic Master (or Mistress) is someone who has attained a certain level of wisdom and experience: he or she will, like all genuine satanists, be insightful and controlled and intense. The higher (or more advanced) the Grade, the greater these will be. But a Master or Mistress will be something else - natural. That is, possessed of individual character. Spontaneous, because of this. And, of course, still human... A Grand Master (or Grand Mistress) is beyond this, and almost inexplicable.

As a Master, I came to know that my insight regarding wisdom was valid: that there is a sadness in wisdom, in knowing too much, in having seen too much, felt too much. But I did not let this knowledge about wisdom make me sad: except in those few exquisite moments when my being strained to the very limits of existence as I, alone, walked upon some bleak or sunny Moor or distant hill, when **I knew** what had yet to be achieved, by me and all others; what remains to be explored, discovered; **what can be**.

I, and others like me, are the darkness which is necessary and without which evolution and knowledge is impossible. I am also my own opposite, and yet beyond both. This is not a riddle, but a statement of Mastery, and one which, alas, so few have the ability to understand.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Baphomet & Opfer
From **Opfer, Fenrir Vol. II, no 2**

The word 'opfer' generally refers to the sacrifice that occurs - symbolic or otherwise - during certain rituals. There are, generally, two types of opfer: (1) associated with rites to open a nexion (or 'Star Gate'), between Aeons - when such an opfer(s) is considered necessary in terms of the 'energy' required;(2) those associated with traditional beliefs regarding the 'working of the cosmos'.

('Opfers' associated with death rituals form a third type.)

The second type, according to tradition, was chosen once every 17 years and this sacrifice was regarded as necessary to retain 'the cosmic balance' - in modern terms, keep a nexion open (and thus preserve the associated higher civilization etc). The chosen one was made an honorary Priest (this type of opfer was always male) and there was a joining between him and one or more women, as Priestesses. This joining was a simple type of 'hierosgamos', and the offspring of the union(s) were given great honour. At the ceremony itself, the head of the opfer was severed and displayed - usually for a night and a day (although this period may have been longer in the very distant past). The Rite was conducted outdoors in a 'sacred' place - often a circle of stones or hill top.

The chosen one was able, because of the sacrifice, to partake of an acausal existence - becoming thus an Immortal. Thus 'willing sacrifice' was possible, although it is easy to imagine that in later times, the opfer was not so willing.

Traditionally, this type goes back to Albion, and while originally the ritual was probably a community affair, it became more secretive. What survives to the present day (The Ceremony of Recalling with 'opfer' ending) probably reflects the essence of this earlier tradition rather than the detail (the words, chants etc). This essence may be apprehended in the role of the Mistress of Earth - representative of Baphomet, the Dark Goddess. It was to Baphomet that the sacrifice was made - hence a male opfer. Indeed, the whole ceremony (of Recalling) can be seen as a celebration of the dark goddess - the Earth Mistress/goddess in her darker/violent/sinister aspect. The severed head was associated with the worship of Baphomet - the cult deriving from Albion - hence the traditional representation of Baphomet. The identification of Baphomet as the Bride of Lucifer/Satan probably dates from around the 10th or 11th century, as does the use of the name 'Satan'/Satanas as the Earth-bound representative of the Dark Gods.

It is important to remember that in earlier times (eg. in Albion during the Hyperborean aeon) there was no clear and/or moral distinction between the 'light' and the 'sinister': the two were seen as different aspects of the same thing. Thus, what we know as the Mistress of Earth (the 'goddess') was both what we now call Baphomet (the dark aspect) and Gaia (the Earth Mother). Likewise with the male aspect - Satan and Lucifer - or Dionysus/Kabeiroi and Apollo. We now understand all such symbols as unconscious/conscious projections onto 'reality' (where 'reality' = the region of causal/acausal mergence) - as 'gates'/nexions to the acausal itself, with the seven spheres of the Tree of Wyrd being a 'map' of these gates understandable by 'non-Adept' consciousness. Thus, the sphere of Mercury re-presents Lucifer/Satan - Mercury, Mars and Sun being "male" spheres, and moon, Venus, Jupiter the "female" ones (Saturn beyond such opposites - Chaos itself).

The cult of Baphomet was the worship of the dark aspect of the "female" energies - where in this context, worship means a striving toward understanding/conscious integration. Traces of the worship of the 'light' aspect survive in the Septenary tradition in the name "Aktlal Maka" and the natural form of the Nine Angles rite. The darker aspect survives, in essence, in the Ceremony of Recalling and the traditions associated with the Mistress of Earth and Baphomet. As to the original name of the goddess in both her aspects, there is a tradition which gives 'Darkat' (early form of Lilith) as the name used before Baphomet became the common usage. However, 'Azanigin' has also been suggested - as has 'Aktlal Maka' for the 'light'/Gaia aspect, although both these are merely 20th century suggestions, not based on any oral tradition. Some aspects of the cult of the (dark) goddess are said to have survived into Greek times in the form of the 'mystery cults' (qv Kabeiroi - and also Eleusis for the 'light' aspect), this being an 'indirect survival', the 'modern' Septenary tradition being a direct one, from Albion.

The use of the name 'Baphomet' probably derives from the 10th or 11th century although the traditional pictorial representation of Baphomet is undoubtedly much older. If there was an oral tradition connected with the origin of the name Baphomet, it has been lost.

Thus, there are no indications as to the 'original' names of the 'light' and 'sinister' elements on the 'male'

side - known to us as 'Lucifer' and 'Satan'. These latter names probably also derive from around the 10th or 11th century - although 'Karu Samsu' (or something very similar) has been suggested for the 'Lucifer' aspect and 'Sapanur' as the 'sinister' aspect.

The rites associated with the first type of offer - such as 'The Sinister Calling' - cannot be either dated with certainty or seen to be derived from an earlier tradition. In all probability, they derive from the 12th or 13th century, although it is quite possible that earlier versions/forms existed. Some have even considered The Sinister Calling as a later version of the Ceremony of Recalling. Again, if there was an oral tradition, it has been lost - all that remains are the rituals themselves.

The 'Black Mass' itself (and indeed most of the ceremonial rituals in The Black Book of Satan) probably originated around the same time as the Sinister Calling. The original Mass was said in Latin, although by the middle of the 20th century a translated version had found its way into the Black Book - of necessity, although some Latin chants remained.

NOTES: The significance of the 17 year cycle is unclear. In the past few decades, some theories have been advanced, but they are unconvincing.

Aktlal Maka is a chant sometimes used in the natural Nine Angles Rite by the Priestess if the glade has a spring of water. It means 'the flowing waters of Earth' and is chanted in homage to Gaia since natural springs are regarded as her children.

The 'mysteries of the Kabeiroi' (sometimes spelt Cabiri) is one of the esoteric traditions associated with the Hellenic Aeon. In its original form, 'the mysteries' concerned certain deities often represented in the form of griffins and connected with the sea as well as Demeter - the 'mother Earth' or Gaia. According to esoteric tradition, the mysteries concerned the Dark Gods - in various 'shapechanging' forms - and related how Demeter gave the first Initiates of this tradition a crystal (later venerated at a shrine near Thebes where a sacred grove to Demeter existed) as well as showing how an individual, through various Rites which involved Gaia, women, sacred marriage and so on, could be transformed to a different realm of consciousness. This transformation, as in other Greek Mystery Cults, was achieved mainly through personal involvement in ritual/ceremonial action often of a mythological kind.

Later, this tradition became divided - Eleusis representing the 'Apollonian' element, the Kabeiroi the 'Dionysian' or darker aspects, for it is said that all Initiates of the Cabiri had to have committed a crime greater than common ones.

The mysteries of the Kabeiroi were often celebrated in mountain shrines (certain combinations of rock and underground water being regarded as sacred - that is, capable by their magickal power of transforming the consciousness of individuals (cf. various sacred sites of the Yezidi who upheld a more garbled version of Dark Gods tradition) and to reach these shrines was considered part of the process of Initiation.

Greeks called the Kabeiroi the 'great gods'.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Black Rhadley
Brenna, ONA.

Ruth gazed from her window to where the black leaves spiralled in the advent of rain. For some reason, that image brought a recollection; an echo of the pattern of events which began following the first blissful year of her marriage ...

"But it's just what happened two weeks ago, Adrian," Ruth said woodenly. "You say you'll be back so we can enjoy an evening alone together - you assure me that will be the case - so I spend ages making you a lovely meal, put the clothes on that you like me to wear and then you don't turn up until well past midnight! I mean ... I haven't seen you all week. You make me feel as if you don't want me at all sometimes, as if you don't really need me and wouldn't miss me if I just disappeared and never came back one day. Why did you marry me if all you wanted was a house-keeper?"

"Oh come on. It's not as bad as all that! I've told you I have to work long hours sometimes - and yes, part of those long hours, of necessity, involve entertaining clients; socialising with them in the evening. I've explained all this before, haven't I? I work bloody hard you know, and you wouldn't be kept in such luxury, if it weren't for old Ade ... You know that kitten, don't you?"

A spasm of frustration and pain swept across Ruth's face. Her brown eyes accused him.

"It depends what you call luxury, Adrian. Is it luxury to spend six and a half days keeping house, doing the washing, ironing your interminable shirts, rattling around on my own in this damn house? Never being able to get you on your phone because you've switched your mobile off! I mean, I don't know why you bother having a mobile - you're unavailable half the time anyway!"

The tirade tumbled out, Ruth warming to her cause and relieving feelings that had been bottled up for a long time.

"Look, come on. I told you, I've been showing clients - important clients - around potential properties and building plots. I can't have the phone ringing all the time - it's not professional!"

"How professional is it to have strands of blond hair on your jacket - or is that some sort of kudos in the circles you mix in?" Ruth shot back, her anger spurting her on.

"Oh my God! A strand of hair and it means I've been shafting half the damn city! Don't be ridiculous. I've told you, in the wine bar last night, there was a bit of flirting - it was nothing! Honestly Ruth, I wish you'd keep things in proportion - if you're going to leap on a single hair and use that as evidence against me, that's taking things a bit too far! You're making something out of nothing. I don't need any other women. You're enough for me, always will be - I've told you. Look, we'll take a holiday in May.

Somewhere hot and exotic, how does that suit you? Spend three weeks in the sun together, just we two, how about that then, eh? Come here, silly, and stop worrying about things that shouldn't be a worry at all. When will you learn to trust me, eh? Come here, kitten, and I'll show you how much I think of you."

Adrian was holding his arms out to Ruth, who, half reluctant, went to him and sat on his lap, succumbing to his words and his presence once more. Why did she always do this? Give in? She couldn't help it. He still turned her on so much. It was like now; him nuzzling her neck and nibbling her in a delicious way, his strong arms around her, his hands squeezing her flesh. She still loved it, and became his she-cat.

With her body, he knew he could do whatever he desired, and he held that physical power over her as a threat, a bargaining position, and as fuel for his ego.

But still she succumbed. How could she complain? She did live in ridiculous comfort: the house, four bed-roomed with an expansive garden and patio, the E-type Jag in the garage - a car that appealed to her vanity - the dishwasher, the microwave, the video and T.V. complete with satellite dish, the latest line in stereo and C.D. player; the good quality Habitat furnishings. Three years ago she had been living in a bedsit, trying desperately to save to buy her own car, to possess some security.

Then Adrian had swept her off her feet, dazzling her with his quick mind and smooth tongue, his electric hands ... As well as that, he seemed to represent some kind of power to her. She knew if she married him, her money worries would be over; he would protect her. He would raise her above the painful struggle against mediocrity, on a cushion of love and comfort, where she could bear his children, as it was her yearning to do. But Adrian hadn't wanted children. Not yet. Not for a while. Not now. Not ever it seemed.

When they married his family had sent them on an exotic holiday to Trinidad; a bliss-filled time. But when they returned - that's when it had started. Adrian's power games. They had an argument about the 'children thing'. She'd threatened to come off the pill, knowing she wasn't being fair. But then he turned

the situation to his advantage, in typical style.

He began noting the dates of her periods, so he could calculate the times of ovulation and avoid them. He urged Ruth to come off the pill, pointing out the recent bad publicity it had had. Ruth thought it might be his way of giving in. But it wasn't. She was fertile and responsive, but he would never make love to her until it was the right times of the month - that is, when there was little chance of her getting pregnant. In a way, she had found it erotic, having to wait. But that was how he got to her, making her a beggar to his whim.

So it began. Some days he would tease her, caress her buttocks, tongue her nipple, kiss her all over until she tingled - a passionate mingling. Then he would turn over and say good night, whilst she was left hopelessly aroused, wet with unfulfilled lust, juices unspent, body taut and quivering. He seemed to enjoy the restraint on himself as well; get a kick out of it somehow. Oh, but he was clever. He didn't do it too often, just every now and again, with a multitude of variations. The base part of her responded, begged for more. Her higher self sensed it was not entirely healthy - perhaps even destructive. But he used her so skilfully, there were times when all she cared about was sensation. The sensations he induced in her. Her tingling flesh. His tongue in the moist cleft between her thighs, eating her up; her viscera twitching at the thought of it, reverberating throughout the days that followed. His fingers taking control of her, delving into her, giving herself up to his teeth; his lips, his mouth, feasting upon her ... It was only later she began to discover there was a price to pay. He would switch the tables, get her keyed up, pushing her head down to his cock, urging her to take him in her mouth, sometimes or sometimes not, insisting she swallow his ejaculation. Then the roughness verging on violence that inevitably followed: the bruises that blossomed as the price of their love. His demeanour threatened her in a subtle way, so that she dare not risk his disfavour. Sometimes there was a barbarous glint in his eyes, that made her a little afraid. She knew there was a dark, hidden part of him, which was cruel, unyielding, slightly perverse. But there was a strange attraction in that also and so their relationship had formed and developed along these lines; a strong tension of sex, underlining their ordinary day to day dealings.

In a way, the first year had been exciting because of that. He was fun to be with, she sweetly adoring of him when he came back from work, playing the absolute housewife, making curtains and cooking, ironing his shirts. Selfless; devoted, like Melanie in 'Gone With the Wind'. And he had kept her blood hot for it, with lewd talk and fondling hands. On occasions insisting she serve him at mealtimes with only stockings and suspenders on. Making her do things she would blush at in the morning. Insisting she kneel down to provide a foot rest, his fingers exploring her, pulling her up spread-eagled, a moist mouth offered for his mouth to probe. The rest of her dangling down between his legs as he controlled her lower half. All of her, all of her, she wanted him to have at times like that - to do just what he wanted with her. And so had their relationship become what it was.

It was like a dark addiction she couldn't do without. When he demeaned her, it only made her feel more erotic. She would try to consider her childhood, to find a clue. Insecurity. Not Daddy's favourite. Not A or B category but C, in the exam stakes. Just enough to know and yet not know. She was pretty, yes, she knew that. But she felt inadequate at times, frightened of appearing dim, frightened that she was dim. Adrian's love had enriched her at first, his public school education dazzled her. But then he began to play on those insecurities, teasing them out and making a subtle web of torture out of that understanding. Adrian seemed to know her inside out - he anticipated her thoughts and actions uncannily at times. He did have a superior intellect. She conceded to him. Yes, he could run rings round her. What was he trying to prove? He was not obvious in the way he did this but all the same, she had come to realise he knew what he was doing and saying. It was not crassness or impatience or absent-minded irritation. He could say things that would squash her in an instant, make her want to curl up and hide away, unworthy, worthless. And he knew what he was doing when he said those things. But he tempered it. He still kept her eager for his presence.

More and more, work and the office intruded. At the start, they would have the whole weekend and early Friday afternoon together. He had whisked her off here and there for day trips and weekends away together; pub lunches, walks in the country, visits to galleries, stately homes, the finest restaurants. Making love. Yet even then, the dark games beginning.

Adrian was an ambitious man determined to rise and rise as manager of a building and property contractors. Fridays, he began to come home late or in the early hours; Saturday morning was spent on site, more often than not. Evening work became more and more frequent. She just accepted it at first, realising it was par for the course, a phase on the way to enjoying the dizzy heights Adrian spoke about

attaining. But anxiety gripped her when he came home too tired to be fond or communicate with her much at all. She needed him and she felt like weeping when she hadn't seen him for any length of time in the past days or sometimes even merging into weeks it seemed. Then he would come back, monosyllabically eat his meal and go straight to sleep. At such times, she felt horribly purposeless; as if she was living in a vacuum.

The urge for children became stronger, and a series of rows and heated debates ensued - which just made him even more obstinate. He went and spent the weekend with a friend in Oxford, threatening further estrangement if she persisted. She couldn't win. He wouldn't budge. He was only 29. He didn't want children yet. He wanted her for himself, all to himself with nothing to intrude or spoil their intimacy. At least for the moment, he hinted, keeping her hope alive on a subtle thread of promises; making her believe in a maybe that turned into the nothing of never-never. Only sometimes it didn't seem like he wanted her at all.

She would get so choked up about this that she would confront him with imagined infidelities and weep accusingly. She sensed these infidelities were not imagined at all, but she could not admit this to herself and wanted him to convince her it was otherwise. That's when he would take her and use her like she half wanted him to anyway. Coming up to her and grabbing a handful of her rich dark hair. Pulling her head back and quickly stripping her with his other hand, his grasp of her hair keeping her body arched, offered up to the indulgence of his appetite.

Bending her over the sofa, probing her orifices, experimenting with various devices and observing the effect on her; her spasms, her trembling wet responses. The way her body curled and bent to accommodate whatever was his desire. A finger first. An asparagus tip. A specially slender dildo inserted in her arse, lifting her cunt up for his inspection and use. A trick with a banana. The possibilities were endless, he would tell her with a lascivious inflection.

He would keep her going for hours in a state of near-orgasmic frenzy, until she would do anything ... anything just so he would fuck her. All she wanted was to feel him thundering away inside her - setting her free at last. If he did not oblige, she would weedle round him, stroking herself against him, begging him to take her. Sometimes he would refuse point blank, taking her upstairs and locking her in one of the spare bedrooms, just to prove how superior was his control, to give himself some peace from her pleas so he said. Just to show definitively, who was in control.

He was a pig. At times like that she had stark moments of lucidity when she realised that actually in instinct, he was cruel. He enjoyed the experience of power such cruelty gave him.

She could tell it was an obsession that could grow or be diverted. She had tried to divert it but seemed powerless before him, unable to counteract his dictatorship, as he seemed to hold all the cards. He earned the money. He had the big-shot job. The public school education. He had the degree. He had the interests and the upper echelon contacts. The pulling power. He had it all. She knew he did. And what was she when he'd met her? A struggling temp., making a living with agency secretarial work, trying to establish her own independence, desperately wanting to be able to afford a car, having passed her test the previous year when she was 20. Then Adrian came and gave all of it to her on a plate.

But now she was discovering the price that went with all that. For a long time she'd been willing to pay it. But lately she was beginning to doubt if the price was worth it, if it was a price she was willing to pay anymore. She felt she'd been progressively stripped of her pride over the past few years, so that at times she was pathetically anxious to please, like some pet that had been neglected. She disgusted herself at the thought of it.

But then once again the wings of dark passion would take storm and whirl her around. The leather hand cuffs, the teasing scourge, the chains, the flimsy chiffon, the rent of the cloth, the orgasmic delivery, the dangerous height of such altitudes. In the aftermath it was like they'd both been charged up, energised by the process. And the air was warm and liquid electric between them.

But then business would take him away again and again, and certain pastimes he would not give up. His weekends away 'with the boys', his jaunts to the races, formula 1 rallies, evenings spent at the casino - necessities to cultivate his clients, he said. His rich life and interests belittled her. Most times he made it seem it wasn't appropriate for her to go with him to these trips because it was mainly business, so he told her.

So that more and more she became cut off from his high life. She lived a much more internal, subdued life in contrast to his highly-charged wheeler-dealer circles, the merry-go-round he claimed he was obliged to ride, to get what he wanted, to move forwards in an upwardly mobile manner.

She could see he would be ruthless in his ascent and in quiet moments this chilled and appalled her. She

recognised something unscrupulous in him, that most would not see, so skilfully was it concealed beneath the smooth, charming exterior, the public school manner, the clever tongue. Those grey-blue eyes could become welcoming pools - when it suited him - in total sympathy with the other's persuasion, a glint of secrets and understanding drawing them in ...

His eyes of storm-cloud blue flashing to burst upon her; his eyes like a laser on her soul, pinning her motionless, for him to come forward and slowly undress her. By the time she was naked she was wet and aching for him, whilst his eyes still pierced her, kept her his slave. The intoxication of his hands...

The leather collar whim. He had come home all excited a couple of years previously, after talking to a guy who belonged to the 'Pony Club', down in Surrey. There, the men literally rode naked women, inserting pony's tails into their behinds to make the experience even more authentic. Adrian had gone out and bought a collar and a leash and arranged for this guy to send him all the 'pony' gear for a fee.

He set her up so neatly, playing his arousal game, then refusing to fulfill her; keeping her on edge, waiting for his touch. Friday night; a good bottle of red wine. Adrian insisting she wear nothing but her white lace see-through body-stocking. The "accidental" brush of his hands across her nipple as she collected up the plates, feeling his eyes drinking her in, gloating over her.

He insisting she pour him a glass of wine. She moving round to do so. He, nudging the glass as she poured, blaming it on her, in anger or mock-anger - she was never sure which. He, ignominiously picking her up, a hand on her crotch, the other round her breasts. He sat down on an armchair with her body across his knee, face downwards, her buttocks swelling up at him. He had spanked her mercilessly with the flat of his hand until she was begging for mercy, close to tears.

Then he held up her arse, pressing his tongue into her vagina, putting his mouth against her labia, coaxing her, making her melt with desire and want to stretch herself wide open for him; anything, anything for him, her master, his slave!

And so had she progressively made herself his slave. She rarely saw any of his friends. It was as if he kept her in an ivory tower that had so subtly and deviously crept up around her, now she was so ensnared she could not find the means to break out of it. And also there was a part of her that gave in to the unreal whirlpool of it. Almost as if she herself was willing to go to the limits; just to see how far both of them could be pushed without cracking. But she knew she would be the one that cracked, not him. He was too slick, too in control, too wiley ever to succumb like that. He was relentless, made of steel, and that was how it got to her more and more. In truth, that was what turned her on. Her own debasement. She knew it was bizarre but there was something so infernally delicious, so animal and subterranean about Adrian and his manoeuvres, the way they made her feel, that she succumbed and kept succumbing all these past three years.

By the time Adrian had melted her with his tongue between her thighs, making her forget the fact that her backside was burning from the beating he'd given her, he had then stripped her completely so she was naked beneath him, whilst he was fully clothed above her, still in control, still holding back, observing. Rolling her over, turning her round, grabbing handfuls of her willing flesh, pulling her towards him, kissing her on the lips, owning her mouth, turning her into a moaning, quivering wreck. His fingers pressing the buttons, her buttocks rearing upwards, opening out to him like a strange, exotic flower.

Adrian had breathed: "Just wait there, my hot, little bitch. Don't move an inch - you hear me? Not one inch! I'll be back." The threat in his voice had been apparent. She kept tilted on all fours, her buttocks raised, waiting for his return. By the time he came back the strain was beginning to tell. He, warning her to maintain it, whilst he undressed at his leisure. Her limbs starting to tremble with the effort, not daring to protest in case he took things in a direction she did not want to go in. Then he was kneeling down behind her, his hand on her cunt, the other cupping her breast and squeezing. "Now then, who's the master? Am I the master?" Adrian's smooth tones, her pathetic affirmation. Aching for his touch, for him to take away the agony of her pent-up needy flesh.

"My slave needs a collar then - don't you think? My hot little bitch needs a collar to keep her from getting out of control, what do you say?" His breath on her skin. A studded leather collar clicking into place around her neck. She unable to keep her position, collapsing into him, his hands beginning to explore again, his teeth shaping their appetite.

Often he would leave bruises. But he was devious. He kept just the right side of pleasure, so that the pain never overwhelmed the effect of the former. All the same he made sure he got his due of pain one way or another. She thought that's why he was so dastardly skilful a lover. In order to indulge his sadistic urges, he had developed the ability to play on the pleasure spots with a virtuoso's genius. So if he bit her too

hard and savagely, he would make up for it by sucking her nipples and flagellating them between his tongue and his teeth or nuzzling her neck and nibbling her ears, so that erotic impulses took hold of her and only served to heighten the sexual climax that came later.

He had tied her to the bedpost that night on a leather leash, insisted she carried on wearing the collar for the next day. She protested, but Adrian was the one with the key to unlock it and only he could free her. She was forced to wear high collars and polo necks to conceal it, not daring to go out because she felt so ridiculous. All the same she would catch sight of it in a mirror and touch her fingers to it, feel her groin moistening despite herself. When she demanded he take it off, he laughed at her and said she'd have to pay a forfeit.

She was becoming familiar with this tack as something to be feared - the prelude to some new perversity or pain, remembering past such bargains. The pain of the whip, the chains making her into an article of furniture for him to eat his meal off, the experimentation with drugs at her expense... She had told him she wouldn't play games with him anymore, at which he'd laughed again uproariously, telling her she would have to keep her collar on then until she proved herself the bitch on heat that she was.

She tried the other approach - pleading with him, cooking him a beautiful dinner. Trying to be reasonable and treat it as a joke, one that he would eventually tire of. But Adrian enjoyed seeing her suffer like that. The tears of shame and helplessness in her eyes. She knew it turned him on.

And she saw herself slipping into it all until it was a pattern so firmly established she hadn't the psychic energy or will to change it. Her fault, she supposed - who else's? Her own weakness.

In the end she had agreed to Adrian's forfeit, if only he would take the collar off so her life could assume at least some semblance of normality. He had gone towards her grinning, taking hold of the collar and pulling her towards him, his eyes gazing at her with an intensity that still made her insides turn over, no matter how badly he treated her.

He had told her to strip. She knew she must oblige. She had held out for days, but now as always, Adrian played the final card. With a trick kept up his sleeve. Now she conceded that there was nothing she could do but go along with him, with everything, whatever it was he had in mind. Adrian, the winner as usual, Adrian calling the shots, giving the directions; she, in the sub-ordinate position she was becoming accustomed to.

She, naked with just the collar on. He, forcing her to her knees; a little twist of fear running through her. "What's the forfeit Adie? Come on tell me. I can still back out you know, if I don't agree..." feeling like the prey that has been trapped, caught in the talons of its hunter, cursing her weakness now.

Adrian's voice sickening her: "I want to give you one up the arse, my love. I've been wanting to do it for ages. Just been waiting for the right moment, for the ripeness of timing if you see what I mean. Just to see what it's like my love, to see if you take to it, like the debauch little bitch we both know you are, eh my love? Just as a one off, we'll give it a try, eh?"

She had tried to struggle against him, but his hand was on her arse, a finger beginning to tamper there as he spoke. She'd never minded his finger there before, in fact it could enhance the pleasure, but this idea frightened her. She feared the pain.

"No Adie! Come on. I'm not doing that. This whole thing has gone too far. I won't do it I tell you. You can keep the collar on, I don't care. Don't, please, don't ..." Her, nearly sobbing and hysterical.

"Relax, relax," Adrian's voice soothing her. "It was an idea, just an idea that's all..."

He kept stroking her and stroking her, soothing and arousing her. He had been so subtly, so sumptuously tenderful, so unaccustomed gentle and indolent; taking his time, sniffing her and mauling her as if at his lazy leisure. She, a paradise land for him to poke around and prowl in.

The ice-cream scooped into her vagina so chilly cold; so exquisitely erotic. Adrian eating the ambrosia from the gash between her thighs. As if his teeth and tongue touched a part of her that could only ever obey the one who consumed her flesh and fluids in this way. One who knew so intimately her gaping desire to please, to give all of herself unto him to do with as he would. He knew she would soften. His fingers moving in and out of her cunt, of her anus, his mouth claiming her breast and nipple. Her body opening out, petals continually unfolding; sponge-like, absorbing sensations, always craving to soak up as much of the pleasure her body would hold.

He made her insatiable. Not touching her for weeks, not seeing each other, what with work and business ventures - then being interested and kind, a fond caress. A sudden whirlwind of sex. Then a teasing, long-drawn out fulfilment. Nothing. Something. Normality. Abnormality. That was how it carried on. Without a pattern, yet having some kind of organic life of its own.

That time she felt he had really over-stepped the mark. She was so wanton; for him to continue touching

her, for him to continue doing something to her to satiate her burning flesh. So instead of his finger up her behind, his cock was there instead, ripping through her, creating a burning sensation, a peculiar unpleasant throb and shudder, continuing and continuing. Until he was through and she was left curled up and weeping, feeling as if she'd just been raped. She hadn't asked for that! Nor had she wanted it. She had told him afterwards if he did it again she would leave him, and at the time she had meant it. Now it seemed like a forgotten conviction that had faded as the terrible poisonous bloom of their love grew. Her back side had been sore for a day or so after, so that she had pushed Adrian away, sickened by his disregard for her. She had almost hated him for it and he had responded solicitously, being concerned and caring and persuasive.

Needless to say, the collar came off and Adrian had been sweetly tender for weeks after that until she was lulled once more into a false sense of security, and the games began again. Though he never did do that to her again. About some things he kept his word, even if it was threatened occasionally. She thought he knew if he tried doing that, it would be the last straw and their relationship would crumble. She could take pain, as long as it was coupled with pleasure, but pain alone signalled some sort of limit for her. He seemed to realise this and anyhow, he was too clever to lose her like that. So by and by, he made her feel thrilled with life and delightful for a while, because he had the power to do that if he chose. But the highs were always followed with a downward spiral that seemed to get ever more perverse and ever more lewd as time went on.

She so rarely went out with him in a business context, and when she did it was a special occasion. One time they had gone to York races. Adrian was entertaining clients from Hampshire to try and clinch a deal. Adrian had actually gone shopping with her insisting she try this and that dress until he made her buy one that showed off her figure in a stunning manner. He wanted the whole works for her; hat and everything. It was a novelty for her so she was glad to oblige, glad that she pleased him - though she realised his game, or so she thought. He was dressing her up like a doll to parade before his guests; showing her off to them. Part of her was flattered, part of her was unsettled.

She did look fantastic though, as Adrian kept telling her, with her figure-hugging maroon velvet dress, accentuating her curves, split to the top of her thigh down one side. She looked a knock-out and she knew she did. But when they were out this made her jumpy for she felt as if Adrian was watching her every move and response, watching for any incriminating move, the slightest flirtation.

They had gone up the evening before and spent a cosy, luxurious night in a very good hotel, with Adrian being sweetness itself to her. She should have known something was on the cards then, that he had something planned. But foolishly she lapped it all up as usual: his attentiveness, his charm, never guessing at the motives behind his method. As always, being the unsuspecting innocent - just how he liked her, in fact.

They had met the two men in the lounge bar. She had a glass of tonic on Adrian's instruction. One man was quite large, slightly over-weight; thick lips that smiled at her, as his eyes passed lasciviously over her body. The other chap was small and compact, a bullet directness in his manner; a steady unflinching confidence about him that showed he was accustomed to things going his way. She sat with her thigh showing because in that dress she couldn't help but do so; Adrian's graceful appendage, a painted toy. The larger man's eyes raked her from time to time as they began the veneer of social converse, and undressed her whilst his tongue came out and ran itself across his lips. She tried to focus on the conversation, take some part in it, but they launched quickly into business arrangements as if to get it over with so they could relax and enjoy the rest of the day. Adrian, at what seemed a crucial point in the proceedings, asked her to go and get them all a drink, sweet-talking her, urging her with his eyes to comply. So she went off to the Ladies first, to give herself some breathing space and gaze at her curves in the mirror, exaggerated by the lush sheen of velvet.

Adrian had insisted she wear no underwear. None at all, except stockings. Black fishnet ones. He made her feel cheapened, yet beautiful. A contradiction she had still not come to terms with. She looked at her long, rich brown hair in the glass, her wide brown eyes and neat little nose, the pouting lips. And she felt at last Adrian must be proud of her.

She bought them their drink of Jack Daniels and Coke, a glass of wine for herself - she could see Adrian had noted it down. In the circumstances she thought he wouldn't mind. She oozed voluptuously across to them, conscious of her breasts swelling out beneath the rich fabric. She sat back, crossing her legs so the top of her stocking showed. All the men's eyes were gazing at her, their eyes undressing her, she the focus of all their attention. She switched her legs over, crossed away from them so her leg was covered. Her face felt hot as she smiled at them in nervous acknowledgement, lifting her glass of wine as she did

so and clearly not accustomed to the situation - Adrian had never allowed her to be.

They, enraptured, laughed and lifted their glasses to her, toasting the grace of a woman's body, and thus was she set on a pedestal. Just her curves, her assets they adored. Seeing her as some prize race horse, well worthy of the stud. Never enquiring into the state of her mind or ever interested in her views. She was forced to play their foil; a maiden to their lewd gallantry and ribald joking. Adrian making the others worse, drawing them out - oh, but it was only a bit of fun. It was only a bit of fun. Don't take it to heart so much, she was later consoled by Adrian. She knew she was a fool who deserved no better. Because each time she should have seen it coming, and each time instead of avoiding it, she became ensnared.

They had clinched the deal anyway in her absence, mysteriously quickly. And Adrian looked happy, charged up with success. And all the time he was watching - watching in that way he had, that cold lacertilian way, frightening her with his impenetrable will that also perversely turned her on. Oh yes, she allowed it, but it seemed each fresh time she was never ready for the variations. That's what threw her. The variety with which he spun his traps. She, foolish enough to play his willing victim, his willing sacrifice. She was weak, weak she knew, ever more reduced.

But there was an ebony flame in the midst of it, a twist of dangerous spice that compelled her. Like her adventuring had taken her in a different direction to most people, a whirling downward spiral, paralleled with orgiastic bursts of bliss and tender aftermaths that made it all worthwhile. It seemed their relationship was kept enlivened by the elements of danger Adrian flashed into his love-making. But it was an impulse that had taken on a life of its own.

She in response developed her own protection - that was really no protection at all. One of purposefully inciting him; inciting a response, whether of anger or lust she did not care, so long as it was a response. Whether or not he did it on purpose she could never be sure. But at other times she could see he had spent days, making moves, manipulating her instincts and emotions, biding his time, getting her keyed up and under his thrall, having aroused her without fulfilment. She walked into it - hopeless sucker that she was!

But since she so rarely saw his work colleagues or had anything to do with his business life, she wanted to believe it was something different. She wanted to believe he was introducing her into his world of business, treating her as if she had a mind. It was a joke really. It was clear she hadn't, otherwise how would she have got herself into such situations?

She had felt sexy that day. She had enjoyed the men's eyes drooling over her. Not so much the two they were with, but other more handsome ones, who passed by and soaked her up with their eyes, drinking her in, appreciating the sight of her. She felt like a Sex Goddess then. Like some gypsyish Marilyn Monroe. She could not deny she had enjoyed that. She had got very excited when the horse she had chosen to back was coming close to the winning line. She had bounced up and down like a school girl, stirred by the atmosphere and the fact that her horse had come close to winning. She had looked down at her breasts; their shapeliness emphasised by their unrestrained movement beneath the fabric of her dress. She had felt her buttocks quivering in sympathy with her breasts as she brushed against Adrian to exclaim her loss of victory. But Adrian swiftly slid his hand inside her dress, slit side, and began fingering and caressing her from behind. In involuntary response she swooned at the sensation, leaning back against him unable to help herself.

The two clients had watched her delightful bobbling motions, savouring the sight of her body, but the compact one, when he saw where Adrian's hand had gone smirked and glanced away. They were right by the fence facing onto the course. The larger man gloated over her as she, unable to contain her body's quivering response, stifled a gasp, leaning back onto Adrian as he fingered her.

She suddenly saw through the weeks of preparation and realised she was the dupe; the dimwit Adrian made her believe she was, on those occasions when he chose to cut her with his words. Even as she recognised it she could do nothing about it for she was like the proverbial bitch on heat: randy enough to do anything just to get some satisfaction from this physical fever that gripped her. She amazed even herself. She had turned into a nymphomaniac for him of her own volition - just as if he orchestrated her responses. Which it seemed he did, whilst she - fool that she was - allowed it to happen. She could not help herself and gave in to her animal cravings, willing to be as lewd as he liked, to fit in with his plans, to match his machinations with an extremity of her own. In this way she almost got her own back. Just as desperate to please for other men, even more slavish in her desires. This made Adrian scowl and added a flagitious flavour to the tenebrous brew that she saw was the pith of their relationship.

When she chose to analyse it, it frightened her. So she tried not to. She got into the habit of blanking the

more unsavoury things out of her mind, refusing to dwell on anything that had got out of hand. Like Adrian said, she was best forgetting about it, leaving it behind, moving on. It was useless to dwell. Chart it down to experience Adrian advised, so she clung on. For what? She sometimes wondered.

They had got a taxi to the hotel where they were staying. Adrian had invited the two men into their suite for a night cap. In the taxi the larger one of the two men was pressed against her thigh, while Adrian was on her other side pulling her away from them so he could put his hand down her dress, bend his head to suck on her nipple, the velvet barrier between only serving to heighten the erotic charges that went through her. She was as bad as he was. It was the very blatantness of it that made her juices flow. So when the large man slid his hand where Adrian had had his earlier, under the split, fondling her crotch, she was already too highly charged to prevent herself responding.

She could feel his bulk next to her, though her head was turned towards Adrian; feel his fingers, bigger than Adrian's, inserting themselves into her wet cleft. Oh God, how she wanted it then! Truly if they had taken off her clothes and shagged her in the taxi, she would not have resisted, on the contrary she would have complied with abandon.

When they got out of the taxi they were giggling like naughty school children, with the effort of straightening their clothes and trying to look normal. She went up the stairs ahead of Adrian, who chose to follow her as closely as he could whispering: "You bloody tart! Whore! You bloody female lush. You're just a cavity between the thighs, aching to be filled up, aren't you?"

He was groping her arse as he whispered these things vehemently into her ear, so only she could hear. She was past the stage of being offended. She felt on heat; wanted to be touched and probed. A dark animal spasm inflicted her. She did not care about the outcome, she did not think about the next day, she only wanted some satisfaction from this burning itch that fluttered in her belly, sent darts of sensation down her thighs, kept her moist and craven, in readiness for penetration.

The men came in for a nightcap while Adrian played the host, drawing out her agony. There were whiskies all round. Adrian fed her whisky from his own mouth after he had pulled her to sit on his knee, tonguing the inside of her mouth as if it was her vagina and possessively, gratuitously, squeezing her breasts, rubbing his hands across them enjoying the sensation of the hardened nipples, threatening to burst through the velvet. Both the other two men watched appreciatively as if they were at a pornographic show, as if this was the accepted evening's entertainment.

"You see, gentlemen," boasted Adrian. "One can play a woman like one would a violin. With a woman, as with a violin, you have to have all the strings at the right tension, so to speak. The wood must be smoothed and mellowed, the keys in perfect alignment, engendering the desired pitch and tone, depending on the circumstances. Then the instrument will bend in a complimentary way to your will, sing for you ever and ever sweeter tunes. Here you have my wife, who is just such one of these instruments - aren't you my love? I get her so she'll do anything I ask just to please me - won't you my love? You see, really she's a closet nymphomaniac and has no self-control in situations like this. I can't keep up with her sometimes; hormones you know, make her abnormally randy at times - like now for instance. So every now and then I let her have a few fun and games just to mellow her out a bit. Otherwise she's like a bitch on heat, won't let me rest til she's been serviced a good few times. It doesn't happen often, thank God. Last time I had to take a day off work to recover; she wouldn't let me out of the bedroom!"

The two men laughed appreciatively taking it all as a joke and a treat. She could have sat up and called him a liar, fought with them, but if the truth be told her body wanted their tongues, their hands upon her, inside her. Adrian was caressing her tits, rubbing his hands up and down her body, lifting her dress up to touch her dark glistening cunt, revealed for the other two watching men. The fact that the two men watched only made her more turned on. She felt like Adrian had said: lewd, abandoned, at the mercy of her body's responses, quiveringly aroused. Whilst all the time Adrian played the observer, the manipulator, maintaining and drawing out his climax, watching her with his cool lizard eyes. It sent a shiver right through her to see him like that.

"Take your dress off Ruth," Adrian ordered. But Ruth stayed leaning against him, too bathed in erotic sensation to move. Adrian pulled her to her feet, unzipped the back of her dress and stripped it off her so that all she was wearing was her stockings and suspenders. Her flesh looked pleasingly soft and rounded. Flesh to sink their fingers and teeth into. Flesh to stroke and squeeze; skin like satin and silk, only warm and firm as well as soft.

Adrian was always telling her she had a fantastic body. She believed it. She recognised the effect she had on men - the only trouble was she never felt it was her they wanted, just her body, and she believed she

was stupid - that the only way she had of getting any attention was through her body. But she also knew with men, how transient a thing was that physical desire; it didn't mean they would respect her - on the contrary the opposite was true. Thinking like this, believing this, Ruth had never learned to respect herself; she was so anxious to please, she always ended up being used. Adrian, of course was now trading in on this and making the most of this weakness in her for his own gratification and dark designs. Standing before them thus, she felt like a member of a hareem who had been ushered forth for their entertainment and leisure. She was aware of the increased temperature in the room, the other two men's lust. The larger man licking his lips again, purposefully suggestive. She wanted him to grab her thighs and thrust his fat tongue inside of her and she didn't care what Adrian did or thought.

"My wife, gentlemen." Adrian made her do a turn, whilst the big man came over and ran a hand over her buttock, grabbing it and keeping hold of it while he looked at Adrian. Ruth was keyed up between them, jellied into sensation.

Adrian smiled: "Just a ride Jeff, we agreed, remember? Just a viewing, a taster and one ride, those were my terms remember?" Adrian was grinning rakishly and as he said this he teased one of Ruth's nipples between his fingers making her gasp and moan.

"Aye, a ride - don't forget that bit my old chap. I'm waiting to see this gear you've told me about, sounds kinky if you know what I mean. Kinky kind of fun! I could do with a bit of fun. Where's the gear then? Let's have a look at it," said the big chap Jeff, as he squeezed the flesh on her buttocks, rocking her body gently towards and away from him with the hand that was fastened onto her arse.

The movements towards him, which leaned her against him, grew more prolonged until his other hand came round to caress her belly, rub the hairs on her crotch, cup her breasts. He also seemed to be holding himself back, like Adrian, drawing out the experience, making the most of it while it lasted. She the willing pawn, offered up for their dalliance, whilst they, the men dictated her moves and Adrian oversaw it all.

"I promised the goods and I'll deliver them. Daniel here can witness that. Just so long as the deal is clinched gentlemen, this is a little extra thrown in, a complementary freebie if you like. I'll just get the gear, retrieve a certain implement and I'll let you try it out on her. She looks willing enough, wouldn't you say?"

All three men laughed. The big man now had his hand on her anus and was massaging that area whilst his other hand pulled one of her nipples. She certainly wasn't going to disagree with them. By then she was incapable of doing so. Adrian left them for a minute, going to the bed to get a suitcase. Then the big man took his advantage. He consumed her breast in his mouth, sliding two fingers in and out of her until she became even more malleable. The smaller man had extracted his camera and began taking photographs of her. The large man bent her over his knee and spread her thighs, whilst the man with the camera took a close-up of her glistening vagina. The big man turned her round again, lasciviously handling her like a piece of meat he had part-ownership of, and pulled her buttocks up and apart for another close-up.

Adrian was in the background hissing: "None of her face damn you, otherwise I'll break the damn camera!" The man with the camera couldn't resist her either and soon his finger was inserted into the only orifice available; her anus, his mouth tonguing her other nipple. So it felt that every area of her body was being sucked, nibbled or probed. She was a big pie, they could all put their fingers into to scoop out the pungent excess she had to offer. She felt their hands and mouths, turning her over, licking her lower cavities. First the big man as if she were a haunch of an oxen, to be eaten caveman style; then the smaller one, darting his tongue in and out of her as if he were a humming bird quenching his urge for nectar.

She could hear Adrian chuckling softly and clicking away with the camera. He bent down and whispered in her ear: "Oh somebody's going to be in trouble when I get these pictures developed. Somebody's going to be in the doghouse then, bitch! You hot little bitch you!"

But by then Ruth was too far gone to care. His words only made her pant the more. She thrust out her buttocks for Adrian, her controller, her master, to squeeze and caress. He slapped her arse playfully which provoked the big man, who held her like a drum, one arm around her middle, his hand connecting with her buttocks as if he were thrumming a rhythm on the bongos. Then he bent down and tongued her anus, sliding a finger inside it and lifting up her arse for the smaller one to find her sopping vagina with his mouth, like the humming bird again, drawing forth more dripping honey.

Then the big man was eagerly growling. "Yes come on, let's have her in the goddamn bridle. Let's have a ponytail in this lovely arse just like you promised Ade old boy".

"Here it is as promised Jeff. You know I'm a man of my word!" Adrian laughed gleefully.

"Wonderful! Just the ticket! You're a genius Ade, pure genius. Lovely piece of flesh your wife. Here, let's see how she looks with a pony-tail".

The big man took his probing finger out of her rectum and inserted something slim and made of plastic, shaped like a cigar. The men laughed and slapped her buttocks, the big man twitching her hips from side to side so that the pony-tail swished behind her. She began to feel more and more like a racehorse mare brought out to be exploited, making the most of the instincts that overwhelmed her when they touched her so and so.

Adrian stuck his fingers in her cunt and wriggled the tail around, heightening the arousal, until she split herself, wanting to feel something substantial inside. Aching for the relief of violent sensation. That's how he did it. That's how he got to her time and time again. Adrian, handing some reins over to the big man, who took great delight in hauling her upright, rubbing his great paws over her breasts, fixing the specially-made leather harness so her breasts hung through. He pulled the bridle over her head so that then she was blindfolded with a piece of leather, and at their mercy, harnessed and tail-dressed as she was. But she didn't care. She craved the debauchery, sank into it, eagerly, willingly. She couldn't seem to help herself.

They toyed with her and posed with her as Adrian took photographs until the smaller man fucked her quickly and violently. Then the big man took over, squeezing and grabbing her flesh, licking her like a giant lolly, bringing her to pitch again until he stuck his engorged cock up her, making her cry out in a kind of ecstatic agony. A warm spreading blanket to be handled and torn apart as they willed.

All the time Adrian was clicking the camera, whispering, "Rutting bitch!" or "Animal. You fucking animal!". Sometimes she exaggerated her reactions to needle him, this time she didn't need to. She wanted to make him jealous, to provoke him to intervene, instead of him being always coldly in control, taking a sadistic pleasure in her debasement.

Then the men were lying back making appreciative noises, she still a mass of quivering flesh, stretched out on the bed between them. "Bloody marvellous mate," said the big man, smacking his lips as if he'd enjoyed a particularly good dinner. "Bloody marvellous, your wife," and he leaned over, pulled up the extruding pony-tail and took a lick of her cunt just to underline his words. Ruth shuddered in an aftermath sensation as he did this.

"Glad you enjoyed her Jeff. You Ruthie stay right where you are while the gentlemen dress and enjoy a nightcap. You hear me? Don't move a muscle til we're through".

Ruth knew by the tone of his voice she would suffer if she did not do as he said so she made no attempt to move. Adrian came over and wriggled the pony-tail poking from her rectum, making her tremor and stir once more. The men laughed together appreciatively.

She heard them dressing and going over to the sitting area. The jokes, the comradely laughter, the hands being shaken, the contract being signed, one last whisky, cigars all round. They were pleased with themselves, pleased they had come to a business arrangement in so novel a way. Just a harmless little orgy to clinch the deal. The other two men no doubt thinking they were glad their wives had their hormones under control; whilst, no doubt they were equally glad there were women like Adrian's wife, who couldn't control their sexual urges. She could tell by their tone, as she lay there with her arse in the air parading her pony tail still for all their benefit, could tell they were amazed and admiring of Adrian's suave acceptance of his wife's debauchery, the cool way he orchestrated the event. They may have had an inkling of how Adrian's relationship worked and while it enticed and excited them, it also slightly unnerved them. But they were not inclined to judge him, having just received a very welcome and very intense erotic experience, making them feel like emperors of Rome. Anyway, they were all men together - successful business men entitled to enjoy a little indulgence, a little harmless fun, now and again.

As they were getting up to go the big man, Jeff, commented on how well trained she was, lying there just as Adrian had directed; her backside complete with pony tail pointing at them provocatively, her legs straddled apart revealing the glistening-wet petal-lips of her vagina, the curves of her breast and flank still providing a visual feast for them. The men joked about their own wives, wishing they could get them to do the same. But Ruth could tell they didn't really mean it, despite the fact they envied him.

They didn't have Adrian's satanic capacities nor the obsessive will or the utter conviction of superiority that Adrian had, nor did they have his good looks that gave him an advantage with all women, right from the start. In this paradoxical way, Adrian held her in his thrall, despite what he had just made her do, despite anything he might do when the two men had gone. She could not help herself. Despite his cruelty, perhaps because of it, he still made her melt at a touch.

"You don't have a collar and lead for her as well, do you Ade?" said the big man, joking, as he viewed her recumbant form; her arse and exposed cunt causing his cock to stiffen again.

"I do as a matter of fact," said Adrian smoothly. "Shall I show you?"

The two men were eyes agog. Ruth could tell by the prickle of electricity in the air. Adrian retrieved the collar from the suitcase, bent down and clicked it on her, then clipped on the lead.

"Come on, up Ruthie, on all fours and wag your arse for the gentlemen before they go!"

"Oh, yes please!" said the big man as the other one snorted appreciatively.

Ruth felt a flash of anger at Adrian's repeated abuse and contemplated telling him to go to hell. But that streak of perversity took her in the opposite direction. As he tugged on the lead, Ruth rose, rearing up and caressing her own breasts through the leather harness. Then as commanded she got down on all fours and began writhing in lewd voluptuous motion. She moved backwards towards them, as if offering herself to them again, straining the leash to brush against the big man's leg, his hand going down, wanting her again.

But Adrian hoisted her back saying smoothly but firmly, an edge to his voice only Ruth could distinguish: "Alright, that's enough now. Bedtime now you insatiable animal". He put his hand in her collar and made her stand up. She could not see them because the leather blindfold of the harness still covered her eyes, shielding her shame and allowing her to play her part. Again she felt a heat in the room.

With one hand on her collar, the other on her pony tail, Adrian walked her to the bed where he made her lie face down again, forcing her by means of the protruding false tail, to raise her buttocks high up and point her butt towards the door which she did. She moved her arse from side to side in swishes of desire, when Adrian walked away and the men joked about how they had better go or they'd want to do it all over again.

Adrian appreciated the joke whilst making it clear they had to go. She could tell he enjoyed their arousal, and their now unfulfilled desire, as much as he enjoyed inflicting the same state on her. He, as always, controlling and directing the dark flame of their chemistry, as and when he willed it.

They were shaking hands at the door, Adrian wishing them a warm good night, all chaps together again. When he closed the door he sauntered back to the bed and undressed in a liesurely fashion. Ruth had started to relax her position but he stopped her moving, with a "Naughty, naughty! I'm not a hypocrite you know. You do what I say whether anyone is in the room or not. You know that. That's why we work together you and I. You want to be told what to do. You want to be moulded and bullied. It turns you on doesn't it? You horny bitch!"

He was rotating the pony tail, shoving it further up her, and some touch on a G-spot made her juices flow, wanting him despite the sexual extravaganza that had gone before. It was him she wanted: he was her master; she, the willing slave. But her response was not enough for Adrian. He wanted to hurt her for her sluttish behaviour before the two business men had left. He wanted her to feel pain for the lewdity of her nature and as always he was the one to inflict the discipline. Something she began to realise he enjoyed as much as the sexual act itself. He had proceeded to slap her hard and repeatedly on her backside until her skin felt raw and she had not been able to prevent herself from crying for mercy and weeping.

This was what Adrian loved - to have her weeping and begging for mercy at his feet, whilst he, the superior male towered over her, with the power to crush her completely or not, as was his whim.

All the time he was slapping her, more and more viciously in crescendo with his words, he was hissing at her, "You dirty hot bitch! You're nothing but a bitch on heat! You disgusting dirty cow, you can't control yourself can you? A stroke of your cunt and you'll do anything for any fucker who comes along! You whore! You'd lift your arse for a dog, for a fucking goat if it licked you in the right way, wouldn't you? Eh? Eh? Wouldn't you, you bloody pussy! A hot wet hole that's all you are. You're incapable of controlling it aren't you? Well maybe this will beat some sense back into you, eh? Whore!"

And on and on until she was weeping and screaming for him to stop, pleading with him to forgive her. When he did stop his lips turned into sweet caresses, soothing, tonguing the pain away. Kissing her with a new tenderness that told her, he too was sorry for the way he used her, showing her that in spite of his treatment of her, he really did love her in his way. When his tongue and lips claimed the pink swollen lips between her legs, the erotic sensation was all the more intense because of the pain she had endured. His ravishment then was rendered deep, rich and sensual - a contradiction she feared being repeated and yet which fired her imagination and made her moist for days afterwards.

Then the gentler games with the reins and the tail were only part of the dripping potent mixture that

made her feel orgasmically alive, more than ever like a mass of responsive juices triggered at the slightest touch or thrust. And it was erotic in a nefariously delicious way. The trouble was, Adrian got into the role more and more until he was utterly brutish whenever he chose to be. And she in turn became as easily, as readily pliant to his command as if she had been a radio-control android; if he wanted her defiant, she would be defiant, if he wanted demure she was the epitome of it. By doing this she was challenging him to go as far as he dare. She encouraged him but she could not help herself. All she wanted to do was please him. Adrian manipulated this instinct in her - which he was well aware of - to do just as he pleased, and all the time Ruth acquiesced in his plans and his dictations. Little did she realise just how far he was prepared to go.

There was a period of calm after that episode, Adrian being sweet towards her, showing an interest in her reading, the gossip of her girlfriends. Life became treasured once more.

Then Adrian's work would encroach... long hours spent away... her boredom and frustration. So she took up pottery to amuse herself, which she quickly became enthused by. But Adrian, who could not stand anything approaching competition, interceded expecting all her time and attention; as soon as she found something remotely fulfilling he had to come and take it away or interfere, to see if it would be any threat to the thralldom he had established.

He would come and watch her work, moulding the clay to her design. Then seeing her absorbed and not taking notice of him, he would try and distract her, every time inevitably doing so with some new trick. Lying down looking up her dress as she sat astride the stool, his mouth tasting her boundaries, his fingers exploring her, pulling her down. Or he would be querulous, intent upon causing an argument, finding something to complain about. Or he would remind her of her duties as his wife, how it would go badly for her if she did not fulfill his expectations. There was always something. So she tried to make sure she pursued her hobbies when Adrian was not around, when she had time and breathing space to herself. On their last anniversary he had presented her with an anklet. It was a strong silver chain with an identity medal which read: *owner: Adrian Spearman*. He had given it to her as a kind of joke. Like a deeper confirmation of the wedding ring and a turn on factor for both of them he had said smiling at her with the cheeky, charming way he had.

"Just for today" he begged her, "just when we're alone. Honest!" The collar episode flashed through her mind, but she could not resist pleasing him.

Adrian always bought things he could lock - desks, cupboards, wardrobes, the baubles he used with her all had locks and keys. The silver anklet also had a tiny lock and when Adrian clicked it into place, she felt immediately her status of slave-appendage, pet-owned, an animal to be pampered or beaten. And she let herself into that feeling, for in contradictory pattern she was seduced by it; something inside of her felt weirdly expanded by Adrian's svengali machinations. The way he used her, the way he dominated and dictated, was appalling she realised, in the cold light of day.

She felt strange facing her family. She was always bright and breezy but there was a brittleness in her manner that communicated itself. Occasionally she saw her mother watching her when she visited, a cloud of concern and confusion in her eyes. But Ruth could not say anything. How could she explain the dark maelstrom that was the centre of her life? How could they ever understand? Her father would say it would be just what he expected of her, she was too stupid to know better. Her mother would never recover from the shock, after all that good catholic upbringing. Her father would shake his head in disgust. How could she ever tell them what her life had become?

Similarly with her girlfriends who she went to aerobics with in winter and played tennis with in summer, she could never let on to them how things were between Adrian and her. Who would believe her? How could she explain without showing herself to be the weak, stupid person her father always seemed to think she was? She might go out for lunch, go to coffee mornings, supporting some cottage industry sale, the village hall funds, but Adrian rarely accepted dinner dates at her friends houses, so they very literally came to live separate lives. They would meet in the middle of these disparate existences for some violent clash of passion, some new and terrible proclivity, or for a remembrance of romance and tenderness which lent wings to her eager spirit after the vile things he did made her want to retch, determined to leave him.

But then he would sweet talk her, shower her with gifts, spend time with her, flatter her. And she would be his again, abandoned, forgetting that there would be a time when she would come to regret her ready forgiveness all over again...

The anklet. He was as good as his word. He took it off, kissing her ankle beguilingly and calling her his sweetest piece of snow-white peach, his dream queen. A scarlet kiss on her inner thigh, and so he

continued, off and on being chivalrous, tender and appreciative. Until one weekend he 'innocently' asked if they could look after his friend Dave's dogs while he went away for a couple of days. She readily agreed for she liked dogs, enjoyed their friendly playfulness, admired their loyalty. She had actually looked forward to Adrian bringing them home. Plus she liked Alsations which both of them were, both male dogs, Adrian had told her, and thus better equipped to function as guard dogs. She had worried that they might be dangerous. But Adrian reassured her, telling her they were very well trained. He wouldn't have agreed to have them for the weekend otherwise.

When he brought them in, it was clear he had established a rapport with them. A recent hobby of his, the study of dogs. Ruefully she saw they followed his command to stay and sit, so she could stroke them; they obeying him just as readily as she did. Would they do it for her? she had asked Adrian. Of course if she was firm enough he had replied. One was larger than the other being nearly all black, whereas the slightly smaller sandy one proved the more eager to please. The black one frightened her a little though she didn't confess it. But she saw Adrian glance at her as if taking in the non-verbals, as he called them. She cajoled the black dog, speaking soothingly and sweetly to it, trying to soften it, but it just stood accepting her blandishments whilst at the same time gazing at her guardedly. So she gave up, feeling a bit piqued, and patted the sandy one which responded equably enough by jumping up and slavering over her. This provoked their laughter, and they took the dogs out for a walk before feeding them and settling them in the kitchen.

They retired to the dining room to eat their dinner and drink the wine. Adrian filled her glass, urging her to drink, saying he felt expansive because they had just clinched a great business deal, overseeing the building of a shopping centre in a green area outside of York. She, unaccustomed to his lavishments in this way, quickly became effected. He had made her dress in a very short leather mini-skirt that only just reached over her backside. She wore no underwear but sported the collar and the anklet. She had protested and tried to refuse wearing these items as had become ritual with her, but Adrian had reassured her in his charming way that all he wanted was to look at her like that, pointing out she hadn't indulged him like this for a while.

But the latent threat behind his words was there all the same. If she didn't comply he would force her. That was the bottom line. He would force her to do whatever he felt like doing. That was the craven weakness and betrayal of her flesh. That was the pleasure he got from proving again and again to her, that she was mere animal. That he was a superior being. That he was her dark lord, her god, who dictated her every move and kept her in clover just so she could leap to do his bidding. Just so he could use her to explore his ever more wild and perverse desires.

In the end she let him put the collar and the anklet on her. As soon as they had eaten, he took a handful of her breast and pulled her towards him, forcing her down to her knees, telling her to unbutton his trousers and take them off. She did as he demanded as sensuously as she could - for she knew if she was clumsy he might beat her. It had happened before.

His cock sprang out bending slightly upwards in the way it had. She took him in her mouth, he forcing her, controlling her motions. She sucked and gagged on his cock as he thrust it in almost choking her. Then she grabbed it and worked his cock in her mouth. She was surprised how quickly he came. Usually he could last forever taking a gloating superior pleasure in seeing her brought to a pitch, then hurt in some brutal or devious, but always imaginative, way. The pain he saw as necessary to the process of love-making and she found it came in very many forms, both physical and mental.

He bid her swallow his sperm, opening her mouth and licking it out with his tongue, his whole mouth covering and consuming hers until she felt she no longer existed except as a receptacle of pleasure and pain for him.

His grey-blue eyes shot bolts of intensity into her brown ones.

"Do you know why I came so quickly?" he whispered, "do you know what was turning me on?"

She shook her head and smiled, confused by his words.

"I'll let you know in a bit baby. Now as that was so nice, I'm gonna give you a bit of finger-licking good. Reckon my slave girl deserves her bit of scummy after that, eh?"

He kissed her, drinking deep, and then unzipped and removed her skirt. He produced two leather garters with rings upon them which he snapped around her thighs and fitted a chain around her middle, snapping on the leash as well as the leather handcuffs which he did not as yet fasten together. She stood like a mannikin, feeling an ominous chord sound within her. But again it was too late. If she resisted now it would only make things worse and anyway, the base part of her responded to this treatment.

He led her upstairs calling her his pet bitch, his little slave girl, pointing out the anklet, making her read

it, when they got to the bondage bedroom, as Adrian called it. This was a room rigged out specially for such an occasion. Iron loops on the floor, a hook on the ceiling, iron bed posts, a reversible head board with rings in order to secure chains and leashes. Many times he had handcuffed her to the bed posts and her ankles to the lower posts. Then, with her spread wide for his delectation, he would finger and tongue her alive, fill her with those base instincts that so seduced her, penetrated her, held her there as his puppet for as long as he so desired. A puppet whose strings had only to be pulled or jerked or teased, for her to come to life in ever more wild and rampant ways.

After arousing her like this, he had unfastened her and led her where the rings were on the floor. He fixed her on her leash so that her face was close to the floor, only a short piece of thong preventing her from rising. This meant she had to, of necessity, tilt her arse in the air to keep comfortable. He put a blindfold mask on her and stroked her buttocks appreciatively, said he was just going to get something. She felt a sudden qualm of fear, a tremor she didn't want to think about or consider. She knew again she had walked into one of his traps. She was becoming innured to it now. Not so much crushed as accepting, each time wondering what next dark corner they would turn, how much further down he could go. While she played his willing accomplice; his weak and pliant toy.

Yet a resilience did grow up in her. A resilience that came from accepting the fact that she was a masochist. At least they lived more intensely than most people, she consoled herself, with their constant rollercoaster of ups and increasingly wicked downs. But sometimes she did almost crack, like that time - with the dogs ...

So there she was, secured naked to the floor of the bondage bedroom. A sinking feeling in her belly as she heard the sound of claws on the polished wooden stairs. The next thing she knew the room was full of slaving dogs and Adrian was smearing warm melted chocolate onto her vagina, her arse and tits. She was yelling at him to stop, to release her. Begging him not to do this to her. Saying she was frightened. Pleading with him to take the dogs out. But he shushed her with a further stroke of her lower parts, to make sure whatever stuff he was smearing onto her was spread well in. He told her she would enjoy it, that she was a bitch on heat, his to do what he wanted with. Didn't the anklelet say that was so? When she wore that she had to do as she was told. His bitch who obeyed him, right? He had commanded the dogs to sit and stay. She felt their eyes feasting on her curiously, just as those men had that time at the races. She could feel their hot breath, their contained, quivering excitement.

"Just open your legs and let your body go baby, like the way you know you can. This I gotta see!" said Adrian salaciously.

She was truly frightened then, frightened by the proximity of the dogs' slaving jaws.

"Go with it babe!" laughed Adrian softly slapping her buttocks. Adrian gave his hand for the dogs to lick, which they did insatiably. Then they gazed up at him enquiringly, eyeing Ruth's raised arse and exposed gash. "Go on boys! Go on! Go to it!" commanded Adrian.

The black one was first. She saw it dart towards her from between her legs and the next thing she knew its tongue was greedily licking her cunt, getting deeper and more insistent, whilst the other one shared the treat by licking the parts Adrian directed it towards, like her breasts dangling down smeared gratuitously with melted chocolate, sticky and sweet. The dog was nudging her body over as she tried to shield it away. Adrian flailed a whip making her jerk so that the dog's nose, cold and damp, was thrust up her arse where it discovered more of the chocolate. The other dog had managed to find her tit, nudging her to make the fruits of her nipples and breasts more accessible. The other dog devoured her vagina, licking it again and again until she wanted it to shove its nose right up her and touch the G-spot that set her squirming, squeezing out her own sweet juices.

Adrian was calling out vile things and mercilessly clicking a camera. She knew he would use those photographs as he had done the others. To start with he would make her forget it had ever happened, soothe her, love her, make her happy. Then he would begin working long hours again so she would begin to miss him. Then suddenly the photographs would be brought out, some with her face clearly visible, and he would threaten sending them to her friends, her parents. He always found fresh ways of tormenting her. Money was no object and she dimly guessed he probably made money out of those photographs. That was why he often blind-folded her - though he always took one for himself of her without any disguise, so he could show her afterwards and gloat or pretend that she disgusted him. But mostly only her body, hardly ever her face could be seen.

One day her faint suppositions were confirmed when she had found a letter in his jacket pocket agreeing to give a certain price for a batch of bestial pornography. That was a month after the episode. The irony was now she dare not confront him. There was no knowing what he would do if she tried to oppose him.

She had once spent two days without food in the room upstairs for daring to contradict him in front of her friends, on one of those rare occasions they had all met up together. He had whipped her mercilessly as well. Drawing blood so that later he had washed her wounds as she wept, demonstrating such consummate tenderness that she had believed him to be truly sorry. He had soothed her, been so gentle and loving it made the pain and debauchery worthwhile. That was the way they worked. She was becoming addicted to pain, he increasingly expert in delivering it.

He had photographed her latest debasement as the dogs stood over her and licked her to a strange abandoned state of arousal. Adrian erected poles around her, fitting them into specially made casings on the floor. He dipped his hand in the thick chocolate, turned her over, his hand lifting her crotch and covering her labia with the sweet warm liquid once more. She was hoisted by the chain round her belly, attached to a bar on the ceiling, which lifted her arse, exposing her vagina. One side of her was tilted out, so that one nipple dripped with chocolate as if it oozed the substance, in full availability for the dogs.

They swapped positions as if in secret agreement. Her labia exposed to the dog! As it licked and licked, raking its tongue across her clitoris, too soft for it to be painful, too insistent for her not to respond. The animal part of her began to enjoy the sensations despite the demeaning way she had been forced into the situation. Despite her own debasement she could not help becoming aroused by the long wet tongues of both of the dogs. She even came to feel like the bitch on heat Adrian continuously told her she was. One dog was methodically licking her nipple, making her gasp. Both dogs were getting charged up, shifting about, trying to grip her with their paws to mount her. Adrian dabbed something onto her from a little bottle. The dogs grew suddenly even more excited. The black one tried to shag her breast, whilst clutching onto her shoulder with its front paws. The other one nosed her back end continuously, actually physically lifting her up and nudging her cunt, til it was even more open and accessible. Doing just what Adrian did, getting her in the position it wanted her in, growling for her to comply.

Adrian had the camera flashing and was egging the dogs on. Until finally the one at her back end leapt up and to her horror she felt its cock thrusting into her, shagging her quickly and virulently, in a frenzy the way dogs did. When it was over it gave her cunt a desultory lick and ambled away to leap onto the bed and flop down upon it in satisfaction.

Adrian urged the black dog to do the same, inserting the pony tail into Ruth's arse to vary the effect. He lifted her arse up by the pony tail to oblige the dog, smearing more of the chocolate and what she later discovered were bitch pheromones, onto her vulva. The black dog was whining and frenzied licking deep into her, clutching her with its fore paws as if she was a bone, growling at her so she froze and exposed her cunt for it to use. Then it was upon her, its thin cock poking in and out of her, whilst Adrian took photographs still.

The peculiar sliding thrust and knowledge of the dog flesh inside her. When it was over the dog got down and nudged her with its nose asserting itself, growling menacingly as if telling her not to move or try anything. She wanted to curl up in shame. But Adrian laughed and patted it giving it a lump of meat from a container he had brought up. He lowered the positions of her bindings so she could lie down comfortably. He threw her a duvet and pillow leaving her there like the animal she was, he told her. She had been a filthy dirty bitch and she was now relegated to the lowest status in the household, beneath the Alsations because they were male and they had roddered her as well, so Adrian told her. He even allowed the dogs to sleep on the bed, as if they were more civilised, more worthy of his company than her.

He kept the dogs interested in her all the next day, smearing her from time to time, and insisting she walk on the leash on all fours, where the two dogs could enjoy her if they wanted. He was merciless. The two dogs perpetually nosed her, licked her, mounted her or growled at her to give them space, assuming they had precedence to Adrian's company above her, he encouraging them in this, enjoying Ruth's fear and manipulating it to serve his own warped ends. He told her to lick milk off the floor which he had spilt on purpose. When she did not move immediately to obey him, he smeared the bitch pheromones over her again and tied her leash to a radiator letting the dogs have their full rein. She had curled up to try and protect herself but the black one had nipped her and they were so slaveringly insistent she had to let them have their way with her body as they chose.

Adrian even fed her from a bowl on the floor. He let the Alsations eat theirs first then made them sit and watch her whilst she messily ate her meal from the bowl, with her hands duely handcuffed behind her back. The dogs even seemed to despise her, seeing in her a weaker, inferior being, who the master enjoyed getting them to do things to. They energetically obliged, sometimes coming close to fighting

over her in their attempts to assert dominance, the one above the other, and each of them always over her. Adrian always prevented such threats from getting out of hand and she could tell he enjoyed the fear those occasions induced in her. She could tell he enjoyed his mastery over the dogs, his ability to control them, as much as he enjoyed her vulnerability and total subservience to his and the dogs' desires. He even made her sleep with them, ordering the dogs to lie still and guard her so that whenever she shifted they growled menacingly. He left her with them all night like that on the bedroom floor. Just before he went to bed he smeared some mashed banana upon her, so that the dogs slavered over her, licking her insatiably, probing her with their long tongues, grasping her with their paws, as if she was a bone, rich with marrow, in clefts to be insistently exposed for their appetites. Thus was she left to endure their doggy whim, while Adrian masturbated then went to sleep in the bed.

It was the worst night she ever spent. The dogs by that time were used to bullying her into optimum advantageous positions. They would cluster round her back end, barging her, jostling each other for the prime licking spot. She split herself wide not daring to attempt to prevent them, fearing their jaws, the disdain they seemed to direct at her. Finally when they had both got tired she was allowed to lower herself and an uncomfortable night was spent with the dogs lolling over and around her, occasionally giving her arse or side a lick of remembrance or ownership.

In the morning Adrian sent the dogs downstairs and got dressed. As he released her bonds he told her he would be back that evening, that he had arranged to take the dogs round to Dave's early that morning. As if this was being communicated in normal circumstances. He left her crumpled on the floor with a parting shot: "Just remember I've got the photographs O.K. babe?" A subtle threat and implication left hanging in the air.

When he and the dogs had gone she wept uncontrollably and spent hours in the bath trying to rid herself of the dog smell, rid herself of the disgust she felt, rid herself of the dirty dogginess that had been thrust upon her and into her. She had lain there wondering what to do, couldn't come up with any solution that did not involve killing him or herself. If she left him, he had the photographs and not just the dog ones either. She couldn't stand ... did not want that exposure. She tried to break into the locked draws of his desk, scabble around his pockets. But Adrian was scrupulously careful and methodical about watching his back, leaving no loose ends stray. She found nothing incriminating and only did so some months later because she guessed he wanted her to. It increased his power over her. She would have got in the car and driven away, just run away free at last to begin again, living for herself instead of around another. But she feared him still. What he might do. Better stand and face the devil she had told herself. He came back after seven that night to find her drunk and disshevelled, still in her dressing gown. When he walked through the door she flew at him, flailing her fists at him, screaming that she hated him, never wanted him near her again. He held her immobile until she wept her bitterness and frustration before him. He had affected surprise saying, "What? I thought you enjoyed it. I thought it was one of those kinky things you would get a kick out of!"

When she screamed at him again and berated him further, he picked her up and carried her to the settee, lay her down gently, as if she were an injured child, sweeping away the hair from her face and gently erasing the tears with his fingertips. But she pushed him from her, savage again and curled herself away from him. He looked at her in that loving compassionate way he sometimes had, that never failed to startle her. Which made her remember that there was a depth of emotion in him, that he felt for her, that he was as much addicted to her as she was to him. Only he went too far, debasing and belittling her more and more.

That night and for a few days afterwards he had treated her incredibly solicitously, as if she were an invalid to be cossetted and coaxed back to health. But after that episode she had been adamant. She did not let Adrian touch her for days, refused to speak to him, went out busying herself during the day with swimming or aerobics, banal social chatter, trying to forget.

In the end Adrian sweet-talked her round again like he always did. He promised it would never happen again and he always appeared so sincere, so desperately sorry he had hurt her. Indeed he proved true to his word up to a point. He had never repeated the collar episode, making her wear the symbol of her servitude as a constant - no, he had never repeated that, he didn't need to. He had kept his word there. And he had never sodomised her since that one time he had tried it. So once again she kidded herself he did mean what he said. What she was never prepared for were the deviations he came up with; he would rarely stoop to repetition, wanting always the new and devilish untried.

The way he improvised situations, which she realised afterwards had been planned and calculated. It was as if he honed his business acumen and sharp witted techniques on her. She was his punch ball, his

practice kit, his training gym. And he used her how he wanted, she always giving in. Giving in, giving in, so that she felt she was more fluid than flesh, more of the substance of water, that oozed and filled each newly shaped chamber of pleasure and pain, a talon or a waterlily, substance to drown and die in, substance to inspire and ignite.

Always the double-edged blade they walked, the price of such intensity, tipping out of balance one side, resurrecting itself by swinging to the opposite side of the spectrum. Sometimes continuing smoothly connected and aligned until the swing from pleasure or pain began again. Each time staying longer in the region of pain making the pleasure more brutal, more pathetic on her own part.

But he liked her in that state she knew; snivelling, pathetic, hurt. Then he would take her in his arms and tenderly, oh so tenderly and exquisitely caress her, consoling her, worshipping at the shrine of her body - the body he had just abused - telling her how much he loved her, how without her he could never be happy.

Something in her always responded, some keen dart always pierced so she ended up loving him, wanting him, in a fiercer deeper way. It frightened her the way they lived. But she was also irrationally, illogically gratified by it. Because after all, Adrian drew out of her and emphasised certain qualities in herself, made her so dependant upon him, she felt incomplete without him. This kept the arousal between them a constantly flaring spark.

This lent her an air of vulnerability. So that her softness and reticence, her willingness to listen and be easily impressed, made her all the more appealing to men. There was a certain fragile look that shone in her eyes which seemed to beg their acceptance, their approval of her; as if she feared the fact they might not like her or that they might despise her. It was a peculiar and subtle play of qualities which made men look at her like a splendid chocolate box they would have liked to unwrap. The male in them responded instinctively to the exaggerated femininity she presented. She oozed soft, obliging sexuality; her body or figure could not help but do that in the clothes Adrian insisted she wear. But she always wanted them to see her as a person, to like her quite apart from her physical attributes. That's what she always begged from them with her eyes. Most men could never resist that appeal.

Not that she was with men that often. Adrian had engineered her life so that she spent time with her girlfriends, and occasionally their husbands, pursuing her various hobbies and interests - her swimming, her pottery, helping at the creche on consecutive mornings and then the playgroup. She loved to be with little children. She still wanted a child. But the idea of parenting with Adrian frightened her. She knew it wasn't viable. She couldn't stand to bring a child into such an environment now. Neither could she break free of Adrian somehow either. Did she want to? More and more these days.

After the dog episode, when she finally came round to enjoying his company again, they had had a long time of settled easy intimacy, so that the idea of children tap-tapped at her mind again and made her body sensitively hormonal. She had put it to Adrian. The discussion. The row. He, in the end refusing to consider it - business, freedom, time together and so forth, pointing out to her that she was only young, barely 23; plenty of time yet to have kids, he told her. She, spoiling for a row, he spanking her, making her forget...

His business interests intruding. More conferences. Evenings spent "working". The old feeling of neglect, abandonment. The old desire to be pathetically grateful to him when he did give her some attention. How she had come to despise herself more and more. But all the same there was a kernel of strength in her, like a nut that would not crack, for she responded to his games by exaggerating her moves, matching him and keeping pace, in a way that even surprised herself. It was the times when he was away that crushed her.

The times when she felt he was enjoying pleasures elsewhere, having other women. He had never told her or even hinted as much, but she knew. She could tell by a certain fulfilment he came in with, a certain dreaminess, as if his mind was elsewhere, as if he did not see her. Then her soul cried out in terror, for she realised beyond Adrian's shadow she no longer existed in her own right. Without him she was featureless and barren, an entity that only knew itself in relation to a larger satellite. And she despised herself even further because of this, and felt sorry for the child she had been, whose head had been filled with dreams of innocent charm. To think she had ended up like this! A doll to be neglected or played with, depending on his mood. And yet she stayed. She could somehow never find the strength to break the bond - to cut and run. So in bursts and starts it kept happening. The sado-masochistic merry-go-round which she was as inexorably drawn to, just as much as he.

And of course it was her own fault - who else could she blame? Some days after a savage ravishment at the hands of Adrian, she would feel unreal. As if reality was an illusion, a test-card on the T.V. held up

to fill her time until Adrian returned and real existence began. Then work would take him away and so forth, and onward it would go. And then something else would happen. Something catastrophic. The bomb dropping to obliterate her once again. For the nth time of happening. And she was still too stupid to see it coming...

Adrian, she noticed, had a way with men. As if he had a latent homosexuality, which remained perpetually frozen in a state of suspended animation, only allowed outlet through observation. He enjoyed observing, playing the vicarious participant, the voyeurism of the dramas he orchestrated. She supposed that's how he could handle it - watching a chosen few fuck her. He enjoyed their derangement, their discomposure, as well as gaining a rapacious pleasure out of Ruth's abandonment. Proving all along that he was the superior one. The blokes he chose he could always be chummy with; they always had a camaraderie she was perpetually outside of. Thus in such situations they communicated to each other in spite of her, forcing her to become the sex-object, her husband had set her up to be.

Then the last episode. Adrian's fascination with body piercings and tattoos ever so casually revealing itself in relaxed and nonchalant manner. Showing her a book a friend had given him - pictures of pierced nipples, cocks, vaginas. Body suit tattoos. And weirder and stranger paraphernalia than these. Ruth's instinctive aversion to it, as if she had sensed where this interest would lead. Adrian not mentioning it for days. As a joke, asking her if she would like her belly button done or his cock given a Prince Albert. She had laughed at the latter, wondered about her navel, fingering the small indentation uncertainly. Adrian's caress. Nothing for a long time. Adrian's work interceding and taking precedence. A certain time of the month. Adrian exquisitely arousing her, keeping her nerves taut, until her flesh ached to be touched. Just dinner for two that Friday night he had said. Just something quick and easy so they could drink the wine and he could get down to the real feast of the evening, he had joked, smacking his lips at her and kissing her in a lingering fashion. "You're all turned on aren't you babe? Aren't you my Ruthie? Never mind I'll come tonight and sort you out - until then keep yourself on hold!" He had slapped her buttocks in jest and followed this up by saying: "By the way, I want you in some sexy gear when I walk through that door tonight. You've been letting that go recently. I work hard you know to keep you in the lap of luxury. When I come in I want to see a sight to please my eyes, take my mind off work. So wear something sexy. That leather strappy thing I bought you a while back. Nothing else O.K.? Make me believe I've died and gone to some kind of heaven, eh? Just for me!" And he winked at her with that roguish irresistible charm he had. She had pandered to his words, laughing with him and arching herself provocatively. Fool! Fool! Fool!

She had complied with his instructions, wearing the garb he had bought her a couple of months ago. The garment was little but a series of leather straps accentuating her lovely curves, the softness of her skin. It made her look like a beautiful exotic animal, naked behind a leather cage. She wanted to please him, to keep him sweet. So that night she made chicken breasts in a brandy sauce on a sweet potato crush, and opened the wine ready for his return. When he came in she was already waiting for him, the glass of wine ready poured, held in her hands, she sitting up straight and pert on the dining room chair. He had smiled at her appreciatively and her heart had flipped over a little - this time it was going to be good, she had thought.

He took the glass without saying anything and savoured it, gazing into her eyes as he did so. Then he had kissed her, told her to give him ten minutes to shower and change, whilst she got the meal ready.

Half an hour later they were sitting at the table finishing the very tasty meal. Adrian finished his second glass of wine and then, to show his appreciation, he knelt down and kissed the soft flesh of her inner thigh. He nibbled it and pressed his lips and tongue upon it, so she opened her thighs exposing the pink petal folds of her vagina, the dark forest of hair around it. Adrian stuck his tongue right up into the gash then sucked at her as if he drank the juice of an exotic fruit. Then he got up and pushed his fingers inside her, at the same time as filling his wine glass.

He watched her movements grow wanton as he pushed his fingers in and out of her, sipping his wine as he did so. He put down the glass and glanced at his watch, noting the time with satisfaction. He bent over her and took her nipple in his teeth, sucking at it, grasping her flesh and kneading her as if she were dough. Which was what she felt she had become - dough to be shaped and poked and prodded, just for his whim. The long days of waiting and slow arousal unfulfilled had paid off, for once again Ruth could not help but respond immediately to his touch. At that moment once again, she was ready to do anything he wanted her to.

Suddenly the doorbell rang, and Ruth stiffened. They weren't expecting anyone - were they? A sinking feeling in her belly, looking at Adrian inquiringly.

"Don't worry I'll deal with it," he said. "You just stay there til I come back", rubbing her clitoris so that then she didn't care what the doorbell meant, just so long as he came back to her. She heard voices in the hall, the door closing, conversation continuing, another man's voice, laughter. A few minutes later the door opened and a tall brawny figure followed Adrian into the room. He had his hair tied back in a pony tail, his nose and ears pierced. He had strong brows and dark eyes, a hooked nose, thin lips, a wide mouth. He was staring at her, the lust naked in his eyes, puckering his lips and whistling when he saw her.

"You got some sweet piece of meat there Ade, I'm sure we can do a deal on that. We'll soon have those tree-top baboons taken out for you so that the building work can go ahead, alongside this little extra you promised me, O.K.? Consider the task already done, so long as you keep your side of the bargain now ..."

Adrian smiled: "No problem - I promised you, didn't I? I am a man of my word you know!"

When they had entered she had been sitting as he had left her, with her legs opened wide, her head to one side, her eyes closed, for she didn't believe he would bring a stranger in cold to see her sitting like that. But too late she realised he wasn't alone - she had sat up and opened her eyes, closing her legs quickly and pressing them tightly together. She felt like a fool. She pleaded with Adrian with her eyes, but his look held a warning not to let him down. She knew he could get nasty, in the past he had proved that on a number of occasions, so her fear held her obedient to his command. While inside she wept, *not again*. Not again. Oh no, not again.

Adrian got a kick out of other men using her, as long as he had engineered it. If she flirted of her own volition, well, now that was a different matter, Adrian had told her in no uncertain terms. He liked to see her prostrate and straddled; he liked to watch the animal in her respond, taken over by sensation; he liked to see the men pound and squeeze her, watch them getting carried away too. Their lust for his wife turned him on and was another feather in his cap. This was the fourth time he had used her in the business bartering process.

She realised he was something to do with Adrian's latest job. There was some controversy over it she knew. Some protesters dwelling in tree-tops to prevent construction. She realised the tall, beefy piratical-looking man was something to do with the ejection of those people. He looked like someone you wouldn't want to argue with.

"Have a glass of wine," Adrian said. "Let's adjourn to the lounge. Ruth, pour my business associate a glass of wine and carry it through in front of us."

She looked at him beseechingly, hesitating, but on seeing his eyes begin to cloud, as they did when he got angry, she silently got up, poured the wine and walked to the door, turning back inquiringly to look at Adrian to see if she had got it right. He gestured her on, smiling at her and pleased with her again. Her flesh was still erotically charged from Adrian's caresses ten minutes before. She was conscious of that moistness now, conscious of the other man oggling her, and she wished her breasts weren't so prominent, didn't bobble in that way when she walked. In contradiction she still ached for the sexual fulfilment that had been denied her, in the build up to this night.

The tall man leered at her buttocks as she walked before them, clearly wanting to warm his hands on them, try her out for size. Adrian enjoyed the spectacle and became correspondingly even more puffed up and superior, but still retaining that laddiness that always made him so popular with other men, so easy to get along with. How he was now, thoroughly obliging and charming along with it.

"Thought you'd like a bit of a drink first, enhance the anticipation, know what I mean?" Adrian was saying tipping him a broad wink, then: "Just stand there a minute Ruth, will you?" giving her her orders. There she stood conscious of her near-naked provocative garb, holding a glass of wine for Adrian's guest.

"Take a seat," Adrian said to their guest, indicating a place on the settee, whilst he sat in the opposite armchair. The man sat down clearly enjoying the experience of having a woman barely-clad on his behalf and serving him, apparently waiting on his every whim.

"Give the gentleman his wine Ruth and make sure you kneel as you do so," came the directive from Adrian.

Ruth in the unreality of an unfolding drama, did as she was told. She walked over to the man, who was now sitting, and did as she had been commanded, holding out the wine for the man to take, feeling conscious of his proximity, the outward jut of her breasts. The man with the pierced nose smiled lasciviously saying: "Thank you," and looking like he was holding back the urge to fondle her. Adrian, in his turn smiled, pleased at the effect Ruth was having on his business friend and settled down to enjoy

the situation.

"You've got her bloody well-trained Ade! How do you do it? If only all of 'em were like this eh?" the man chortled. Adrian responded in likewise jokey manner, offering his wife as an object to be borrowed and played with. But she dared not protest.

"Get her warmed up yourself if you like, then we'll go upstairs and you can get out your box of tricks and return the favour - O.K.?" Adrian was saying.

"Suits me just fine!" joked the piratish Jason.

"Ruth get up and stand in front of Jason. Do a turn for him. He wants to look at you a bit closer".

She contemplated running out, but she knew she wouldn't escape. Her only protection was to give in. Play her part. The part Adrian had created for her. Again and again, according to his dictates she had played her part, as it seemed she always would. Adrian's willing puppet to do with as he pleased. So she did as Adrian said and Jason leered up at her grinning, clearly deliberating over how to begin. She could sense in the actions that followed a desire in this man also to test the boundaries, to test how far Adrian would allow him to go. He discovered the boundaries were limitless. His fingers followed the curve of her thigh, brushed against her crotch, eventually holding onto the leather straps circling her waist. Then he pulled her face downwards over his knee, so her arse swelled up helplessly exposed before him.

"Very nice contours Ade I'd say. Where did you pick up this little bargain then?" Jason joked, acting as if he believed she was not really Adrian's wife but a prostitute paid to act her part.

Adrian laughed appreciatively. She could tell he was happy about the way things were turning out.

"Found her doing agency temping work, took pity on her 'cos her tights had a hole in 'em and she couldn't afford new ones til the agency paid her. Sad, don't you think? I could see her potential so I rescued her. She's come a long way since then. Women are like animals, Jason, don't you think? They need to be trained. All this feminism stuff is a load of rot! All most of 'em want is a good fuck.

Somebody putting their foot down and telling 'em what's what. They get turned on when they're ordered around. At least Ruth here does, and so do most of the other women I've met as well. It makes things a lot easier. Ruth knows I earn the money, keep her in luxury, so she takes the orders and does what I say. She'll do the same for you. She's very compliant. It's how I insist she should be".

Jason was rubbing the palm of his hand over and round and round on her buttocks, a motion that was beginning to make her skin tingle, while they discussed her as if she had no voice or feelings of her own. As if all she was, was a novelty doll, made to be especially accomodating, before being put back in the cupboard and locked away until the next time came! The trouble was Adrian was right. It did turn her on. He had continuously modified and modified her behaviour so that she fitted in perfectly with his fantasies, his wishes, his unimpeachable commands.

"I'm impressed," said Jason, now only concerned to take things further. "Seeing as this is on your recommendation, can I try a bite or two, just to see if you're right?"

Ruth realised he was into it too, treating her like some wares, a geisha girl to be offered and shared, to do with whatever they pleased.

"Sure. Go ahead, don't mind me. I'll put some music on and get some more wine. Help yourself to the treats on offer. Ruth will be very obliging, I know," Adrian responded, putting Jason at his ease.

"Ta," said Jason, grinning, she could tell.

Suddenly he sank his teeth into her buttocks, biting quite hard as if he couldn't resist the temptation to do so. Ruth cried out in pain. But then he was lifting her up so that his tongue could explore her crevices, spreading her thighs to accomodate him, sucking deep on her labia, stimulating her clitoris so she became as compliant as he wanted her. Turning her over, lifting her up by the straps so that his mouth met with her nipples, holding her breasts like ice-cream cones, there for his particular savourment, as Adrian had sanctioned him to do. His big hand working within her, making her gasp in slavish abandonment. His hands, his teeth, his tongue rendering her that melting quantity which only existed to oblige the masculine desire. Jason bending her over the settee and entering her from behind. His large cock opening her wide, as he used her for his own satisfaction.

Adrian's dry voice commenting on the nymphomaniac quality of his wife which served to make her so marvellously malleable!

Afterwards they made her smoke a joint, care of Jason, which she was not accustomed to, so that it enhanced the dream-like quality of what followed. Drinks and a shared joint for the men, as Ruth lay disshevelled and prostrate, awaiting their further pleasure, in a strange dreamy state because of the intensity of a stranger's sexual urges and the unaccustomed nature of the marijuana. The ashtray was

balanced on her butt, as they discussed their business interests further and Jason told stories of the kinky clinches he had had when he had worked as a tattoo artist in Brighton.

And there she lay in bed the following morning, Adrian having left using the excuse of work to disappear, so he wouldn't be there to suffer her anguish or recriminations. She gazed down at her body, fingered the belly-button stud that was pierced through the skin, felt the sting of the tattoo on the top of her thigh. Remembered again how, intoxicated and abandoned to erotic sensation, they had strapped her down. How her struggles and cries were in vain when she realised what they intended.

His box of tricks. Jason the practised tattooist and body piercing expert, using his accomplished skill on her at Adrian's request. She learned also, that Jason had been in the SAS and hence ran a group of professional thugs, hired in order to eject the troublesome from the path of all-consuming business interests.

The belly button bit was mild. She had treated it as a joke til then. Even that, stopping there it wouldn't have mattered so much. But no, Adrian had to embellish the point. Her body scarred for life. Just like Adrian was scarring her emotionally. This time he really scared her. He had fingered her labia, while he and Jason considered the advantages and disadvantages of piercing her there, in the soft, juicy, fleshfolds of her vagina or on the soft plum of her nipple. She had screamed and screamed at them.

But Adrian only laughed and encouraged Jason, telling him she went in for histrionics, that really she loved it just as much as him. Whereupon he grabbed her arse and took her flesh into his mouth, his fingers working in her, seducing her once again. The other man at it as well, fondling those parts of her not being probed by Adrian.

Coming up for air to discuss the further possibilities, get another drink, smoke another joint, whilst she lay quivering for their touch, the sexual spark enhanced by the frisson of fear introduced into the proceedings. Despite that her hormones overtaking her, wanting their hands, their mouths upon her. She giving, giving her body unto them, as if it was a rich yielding earth for them to delve into as they pleased. But no they would brand it, intent on leaving their stamp, their mark upon her. Adrian's designs; to brand her like a slave, his undisputed property. Only this time he'd gone too far.

But what frightened her was the response in her to accede to her status; to live up to or down to it, so that finally the fantasy had become more reality than life itself. Bondage. The collar. The chains. They could all be taken off. But a tattoo! And it had hurt. It had burned into her flesh and because she felt abused she had ended up weeping. In the aftermath of that action, they caressed her and stroked her consolingly, like a pet which had required some sort of surgical intervention. Adrian even carried her to the bed and lay her down, whilst he and the man Jason had another drink, smoked another joint. The man Jason, had come over and kissed her goodnight, after putting his clothes on. "O.K. sweetie, don't worry, it'll look great when its healed. Your man'll just wash it for you in warm water and apply the savlon before you go to sleep and you'll find it's no bother. I'll leave instructions with your man here about how to look after it, O.K.? Thanks for a fab time. I won't forget it in a hurry, eh?"

Her sniffing a disconsolate reply. Retreating into herself as the hurt do, when realisation began to dawn and her sense of shame returned. A plague on her see-saw emotions! A plague on them! Her hand went involuntarily to her thigh. What was he thinking of? How far did he intend to take this... this game that had become the sketchboard of their life.

She got up and went to the mirror almost afraid to see the result. At first she was relieved for it was not large or gaudy; it was discrete, indeed fascinating. When Jason had gone Adrian had tried to soothe her, had washed the soreness away and smeared savlon over it, then held her and coaxed her to sleep. She had woken confused, tormented. Again the downward spiral feeling sinking through her. But when she saw the tattoo, how apparently inoffensive it was, her mood lifted slightly.

Going closer she could see it in all its starkness. An A in black with an S made to look like a red lightning zig-zag strike. Underneath this, the words: *His Will Be Done*, in neat black lettering. Ruth didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Adrian Spearman; A.S. It was there for anyone to see: **AS His Will Be Done**. She felt strange on seeing those words - as if he had given himself the status of her god, who could be just as cruel as loving, and more so of the former when it suited him. As if now with those words cut into her she couldn't help but do whatever he said. As if she had signed her life, her wishes away and she had no will but his.

She felt as if she hovered on the brink of a precipice. If she continued to go along, to give in, where would it all end? What would become of this puppet's life she led, with him always pulling her strings, making her dance any which way he liked? What was she going to become if she allowed this to carry on? A pleasure toy for her husband and a few choice business colleagues, as if she were a high-class

prostitute, part of the deal. Indeed that's what he had made her. He would develop a reputation for it. This was the fourth time this had happened. She felt she had become part of his bargaining design, part of his business plan, a perk to be offered at a whim, a lure and reward to clinch a deal.

What would become of her? The her inside that did think, did engage her mind, did think about the complexities of life? Adrian liked turning her into the she-animal, into the panting female and then exacting a penance of pain - come from pleasure - to pain again. His sadistic enjoyment at her cries; the pleasure, the pain. Did she really want this all her life? The tattoo as an indelible brand made her even more his victim. If she did not kick back now when would she?

She had heard that tattoos could be removed. She turned the idea over in her mind. This time the thought that Adrian might be enraged by such an action filled her with an intense frisson of excitement and pleasure. Now, after all this time, if she stood up to him, what would he do?

Didn't he need her as much as she needed him? What could he do to her? She would show him finally there were limits beyond which she would not go. The thought of rebelling in this way, taking charge of her body again, lifted her spirits and rather than dwelling on the debauchery and pain of the previous evening, she carried the tattoo like a battle wound on her thigh; a scar that would denote her final victory. The tattoo would, by its disappearance, finally vindicate her and break her from his puppet-master's spell.

But she would wait. She knew he planned to go away in a fortnight's time with 'the lads' - his business cronies who always remained vague and indistinct to her. From time to time he went for jaunts in the country, 'to revitalise himself and get a breath of nature' he would claim. Last year he'd gone fishing up to Scotland and orienteering in the Derbyshire Dales. He dabbled in these things, keeping himself fit in the gym after work and using the bar in the bedroom. Fifteen pull-ups in the morning, fifteen pull-ups in the evening, a hundred press-ups to start the day. "Got to keep fit Ruthie. A man shouldn't be a dough-ball. He's hard, muscle, iron strength. Not like this". Fondling her breast, his fingers sinking into the softness. "Soft and succulent. Never do for a man, eh?" He joked squeezing her buttocks and demonstrating her seeming wealth of rounded flesh, compared to his lean torso, the tight firm buttocks of his behind.

Adrian's vanity. He liked his trips out with 'the lads' as he called it. He told her it was a way of discussing business in a more relaxed environment; he insisted it wasn't all play. Where was he going two weeks from now? Paint-balling in Shropshire? Somebody's birthday treat - Paul, an old school friend, he'd told her. Running around as if they were fighting in a real war, shooting paint at each other or something. Ruth found the idea faintly ridiculous. But for once she welcomed the opportunity of his absence, for she had made up her mind. She had decided it would be then, when Adrian was away, that she would arrange for the tattoo to be removed.

But for now she would surprise him by her lack of protest, her unruffled acceptance of it all. She would make her face, her behaviour a mask belying the fact that finally the worm was about to turn, to bite back. Yes, finally to bite back, to assert herself in this way. Yes, this was what she had decided to do. So she applied savlon to the tattoo, dressed and breakfasted and then looked up the telephone numbers in the yellow pages of clinics which might perform such an erasure. Finally she found one which would book her in, and made an appointment for the 1st of June, the Saturday when Adrian was away. She shivered with nervous excitement and felt deviously powerful, something she was not accustomed to feeling. She enjoyed the new sensation. So when Adrian returned that evening expecting a tirade, he was disconcerted by her normality, by her matter-of-fact ease, by the way she brushed aside any mention of the previous evening.

Adrian was disconcerted by her unexpected breeziness, she could tell. And he wanted to show her he could fit into that mood very well. But deep down inside he was a little unsettled. Her tears, her anger, her guilt, her remorse, these he knew how to deal with. He liked the thought that he could orchestrate her emotions, her impulses. But this. This calm, this warmth, this willingness to wait on him, to keep him happy, this was unexpected after the previous evening. And a part of him was disappointed. He enjoyed more the drama of her unhappiness and confusion to the warm sea of her accepting love. Yet also he was relieved. He couldn't have predicted how she would feel about the tattoo. Now he assumed her lack of anger or tears meant that she liked it, that it turned her on.

He felt proud at the thought of it. His mark. His initials. His words. His command upon her. His in a way no other could be. Even if he did play the dilettante now and then, Ruth he reserved for his most dark, most debauch experiments. He wanted to keep her sweet, to keep her indelibly his so that this genius he thought he possessed, this genius for ever more bizarre and unlikely sex interventions, he could indulge

in whenever he liked. Well, you only had one life, he always said to himself, might as well play things for real instead of permanently fantasising and never acting.

He loved Ruth in a way which went to the bone of his being. But it was a possessive love, jealous of any independence or initiative she might have. He insisted on controlling her, on directing all her movements, approving all her actions. He did not like her to do anything without consulting him first. The possessive nature of his attachment made it seem a natural extension of their love to use her, to experiment on her, to bend her over, twist her round, try this implement and that position, watch others partake of her, notice animal involuntary responses, chain her, whip her, teach her the lesson that he knew she had learned well. That she was his to do with as he wanted, that she was his slave who would always do his bidding, no matter what that bidding was.

So his over-inflated masculine ego was kept monster hidden behind his smooth ways, his public school boy charm. He was master in his own household like no other man he knew and he was proud of his wife because of this and yet ever more concerned to keep her in her place. Hence the tattoo - a stroke of genius. It made him feel good to think about it.

So surprisingly the following days which merged into weeks, were a warm, intimate lull of closeness.

He, happy and satisfied with her and she, pandering to his tastes, flattering him, playing up to him, holding her secret rebellion inside herself and secretly laughing at him, in the moments when she considered his reaction when the tattoo was no longer there! Come Friday of the following week, he had his bag packed and was all ready to go.

Dressed in a checked shirt and jeans he looked rugged and relaxed; the look enhancing his surface charm so that it was difficult to see the black glint that sometimes pierced forth from those grey-blue eyes, cold as a winter's day; those eyes at times, like an ebony stilleto slicing through flesh, watching the pain well out as symbolic blood on a background of pale skin.

As he kissed her goodbye there was a subtle warning in his eyes. As if he was telling her, 'I know there's something you're keeping to yourself. I don't know what it is yet but you'd better beware you make the right moves kitten, or you might get more than you bargained for. Remember, ultimately you're mine - that's the way we work, you know that as well as I. So be careful and make me happy not crazy when I return'.

There were no words he formed to voice these sentiments but she had come to understand and interpret, perhaps exaggerate in line with his desires, these non-verbal cues. A certain black, brooding intensity in his eyes belying the vicious impulse always so skilfully concealed. Yet at times, those flint-blue eyes could be warm and witty. This was his public face; warm, witty, just the right amount of arrogance combined with modesty, an apparent obliging sincerity which drew many people to him.

His life was a disguise for what lurked beneath, in his hidden private lair where he tip-toed on the brink of blue-beard excess, enjoying the throb of life too much to cut the thread irrevocably. But to bruise and beat, even draw blood, how satisfying that was at times! Seeing her begging and hurt until he magnanimously swept her up and treated her with the tenderness her fragility had earned. He did not always inflict pain, and sometimes the pain was subtly pleasing; sometimes the experience was an indolent, undulating roll of pleasure. But he reserved the right to choose.

He had moulded his wife that way. If he chose to inflict pain, to truss her up like a choice cut of meat to be prodded and poked and slapped and punched as he saw fit, then it was his right to behave like that.

She had handed over the reins to him long ago and abided by his rules. That knowledge gave him a dark, sweet pleasure that nothing - none of his other infidelities - could touch.

Ruth knew all this, as they passionately kissed goodbye, her body cleaving to him of its own accord, reassuring him of her devotion. She knew what he was and yet she still could not find it in herself to resist him, to rebel.

Except now that was something she was beginning to consider; to sample the sweetness of rebellion, of shocking this man whose love retained a dictator's absolute authority.

Adrian eventually untangled himself from her, pleased with her show of emotion, clutching her buttocks possessively, then bending to kiss the still-scabbing tattoo on her thigh.

"Treat yourself kitten. Go shopping tomorrow, see one of your gossiping friends, throw a pot! I'll be back on Sunday afternoon so I can have dinner with you and relax before work on Monday. Make sure my shirts are washed and that dark blue suit is ready to wear O.K. babes? And don't do anything naughty while I'm away alright? 'Cos you know I'll find out and be forced to do something about it...". He left it an open issue but smiled at her and pulled her to him again pretending to sink his jaws into her neck. She screamed and they tussled until she was laughing and begging for mercy on the bed.

Eventually Adrian stopped the antics and looked at his watch. He got up and sleeked back his nutmeg hair from the dark brows.

"Have a good time," she said to him, "don't get lost in the hills or lured away by some enchantress or something!"

"I've told you before - nobody could be what you are to me. Nobody could be what you are to me," his whispered repetition pleased her as he fingered the tattoo on her thigh to symbolise his meaning. "You know that". His arms wrapped around her in confirmation of a bond that was dark and true.

"I've got to go kitten, or I'll be late," said Adrian extricating himself. "Have a good time, enjoy yourself - within reason! I'll be back on Sunday and then you never know, your luck might just be in!"

Her mock scowl, he tousling her hair in fond reproof. Smiling at her from the door, blowing a kiss, a final subtle glint of warning - 'just you dare babes, just you dare'. A look of dangerous appeal which while it scared her, stirred an erotic impulse in her that had always been her downfall, which had always kept her willing victim to suit his predatory whim.

It was the way they worked, the way they had always worked together. Up until that moment when for the first time she was left considering whether or not to assert herself, considering Adrian's reaction if she did so ...

Then Adrian was running down the stairs, going outside to his car, opening the boot, putting his weekend bag and walking boots inside and shutting it, the car door closing, the engine revving. The black BMW reversing out of the tree-lined drive. A wave at her, from the car window, as she stood at the bedroom window until he was on the road and the car disappeared with a final beep of the horn.

Later these moments were etched stark within her mind - moments which were replayed and replayed searching for clues which, no matter how many times she went over that last scenario, were never revealed to her. But then she had not been aware of what would follow. At that moment she was only considering what seemed to be her most immediate dilemma. That was on the Friday morning.

She felt strange when he had gone. Almost ill at ease and uncertain about how to go about her day until gradually the realisation dawned, as it usually did on these occasions, that for two days at least, she did not have to consider someone else before herself. She realised for a brief while she did not have to wait on Adrian's every word, watch his moods, pander to his desires to ensure her own comfort and peace of mind, to avoid the pain he was so expert at inflicting. She did not have to ensure that everything was in its place, as Adrian always insisted. He always noticed if she hadn't done something and punished her days later if he felt like it. But she had other things to think about now. What if she did have the tattoo taken off? What would he do to her? She shivered to think of it.

She remembered the time last year when he went crazy, when some business deal collapsed. He expressed his disappointment by beating and slapping and twisting and punching and kicking her. But he broke no bones - there was barely a drop of blood. Just the cold fear that he had finally lost it. She lying crumpled on the floor. An hour afterwards he had run a bath for her. Almost weeping, he had bathed her, so so gently, slowly massaged her body to life again - to pleasurable sensation, once again. But was it worth it, she asked herself? The more she colluded with it, the worse it became and the more inextricably ensnared she felt she was.

Yet if she had the tattoo taken off, the first time she had deliberately flaunted his wishes, what would he do? Which road would he go down? How had she got herself into this alternately vicious then delicious closed circuit situation? How had this net of circumstance come to be closed so skilfully around her? It was her own doing. If she fought back this time, dare she stand the storm, the inevitable hurricane of abuse? Her insides quaked. Could she afford *not* to do something?

So, all during that day she pottered around the house - starting something then leaving it unfinished - in an uncomfortable state of boredom come anxiety. She decided to drive out somewhere for a walk, just by herself. She ended up driving all the way to Silbury Hill to climb the man-made slopes that formed a supposed ancient burial site. It was immense. It gave her a sense of the unfathomable, the spirit which moved beneath, beyond the surface things, beyond material existence. As she looked out towards the expanse of Salsbury Plain, something in her stirred and urged her to take her life into her own hands - become a full human-being, instead of a putty parcel of flesh to be squeezed and moulded into whatever role Adrian chose to impose upon her. To do something for herself and change the pattern of her life forever.

The day was warm and sunny and she felt a sense of freedom she had almost forgotten. She listened to the sky larks, watched sunlight glancing off the trees at the base of the hill. When she came down she felt inspired; inspired to express herself in some way. An idea formed in her mind: to use her fledgling

skill with pottery to reverence that unseen grandeur of Nature, that mysterious majestic potential contained within the human frame, which she had caught a glimpse of on that ancient site. To make the pottery she crafted as an act of worship in itself. A chalice which would appear to be a crucible holding the elixir of life itself. Something profound and beyond the petty miseries of day to day existence. Ancient symbols of the sun, the moon, sea shells, stars, the unfolding petals of a rose, the abstracted shapes of life drifted through her mind, and she was glad not to have to think of her situation or Adrian's predilection for cruelty and absolute submission from her.

When she got home, she went to the workshop at the back of the house that Adrian had adapted for her as an indulgence on her 22nd birthday. A space that was her own - that is, when Adrian allowed her to use it as such. She spent the evening crafting a huge medieval goblet, scoring strange, abstract images into the sides, like ancient enigmatic runes. Finally she became hungry and made herself an omelette. She took a glass of wine into the bathroom as steam filled the room and put Tom Waits' *Blue Valentine* on the stereo downstairs, turning the music up loud so she could hear it above the running water. Then she stripped off and sank into the benediction of warm-scented water.

Ruth fingered the belly-button stud, admiring its impact upon her belly - its appearance, the exotic glint of the tiny diamond set within it. She tugged at it gently. It made her feel ... strange ... different ... fantasy becoming reality ... a slave girl of the 1990's for real. She scooped some of her 'body scrub' into her hand, the body scrub that kept her skin smooth for his touch. She gently rubbed the tiny grains over the tattoo. There was no pain, only the usual rub against normally responding skin. The scabs had all but come off a few days ago, the last bits of skin peeling off and flaking insignificantly away. Ruth rubbed at the tattoo half-hoping it would blurr of its own accord. When it didn't she rubbed it more fiercely. But it remained impervious - the black, finely drawn "A" merging with the red jag of the "Z" like a lightning bolt underlining it. **His Will Be Done.** When she saw those words on her flesh, her stomach tightened and a trickle of erotic impulse sparked through her thighs and up into her belly. Why did it turn her on? Had he known it would? Somehow, somehow it gave her a role so stark and clearly defined, nothing could defile it. Was it something to do with that? Or was it cowardice? Baseness - an essential baseness of nature, a weakness in herself? But she did love him, despite (or because of?) the way he treated her. She couldn't help loving him and wanting to please him: always, always! Yet, if she kept fitting in, fitting in ... where would it all lead? The perpetual dilemma! And still she remained undecided, peculiarly fascinated by the stark beauty of the tattoo, becoming more and more drawn to the idea of keeping it. Why directly defy him like that when she almost enjoyed ... but was it enough? The unresolvable conflict was there kept in frozen suspense as her body was suspended in the water. So she drank her wine, listened to the gravelled strains of *Blue Valentine*, looked down at her body, enjoying its soft smooth curves, her pale flesh and gleaming flanks which showed the cut of the tattoo admirably. The red and black initially catching the eye, then the small neat lettering beneath holding the attention ... mesmerising. At least he admitted his ownership, even if he did go to extremes. At least he was proud of what he provoked in her, not like the straying luke-warm relationships of others. She finished her wine, got out of the bath and dried herself. She smoothed cream into her skin and each time her fingers touched the tattoo she felt an electric thread of liquid fire shudder minutely through her. Why? Why? Why did she feel like this? Turned on. Horny. She couldn't help it, it just was so. Why should she shatter everything, break the spell? Besides which she was coming to enjoy the sight, the knowledge of it.

She went naked to the bedroom, lay on the bed and masturbated. When she had relieved her pent up feelings in this way, she began trying on some of the garments Adrian had bought her. The leather basque and matching panties. The white lace see-through body stocking. Her slave girl straps. The clingy diaphanous tunic. And all the time the tattoo peeped provocatively through these garments of allure and seemed to enhance her attractions even more, gave her a peculiar but special status, a fragility and resilience that seemed to glow from her as the light caught the diamond in her navel and glinted at her in the reflection from the mirror.

By the time she lay back down on the bed to sleep, she had succumbed to the notion of keeping the tattoo, and only awaited Adrian's return with a kind of breathless desire. She would go shopping the next day and she would buy something that would blow him away, make him want her, in the way she best liked to be wanted. He would see, they would rise from the downward spiral yet - he would see! So pleasure and excitement infected her the next day and she blanked her mind from any qualms or doubts or fears now. For once she would enjoy the simple fact of being, existing, with the cushion of comfort and luxury money could buy. In the morning she went swimming. A habitual activity which she

had avoided the past two weeks because of the tattoo. Now she chose to flaunt it in a high-legged black and white leopard spotted swimsuit. She noticed the lifeguard's eyes following her, a few in the pool, their eyes drawn to her thigh. It made her vagina contract.

She swam thirty lengths slowly and luxuriously, smoothly pulling back the water and moving her torso as she kicked her legs. She felt a sudden joie de vivre at the fact that she was young and healthy. Then she noticed a dark-skinned man who kept diving under the water each time she pushed off from the side to turn round at the completion of each length. He seemed to swim under water along side of her for a short way with a regularity that obviously coincided with her turn. She felt irritated by his attention and soon got out when she had swum her lengths. She noticed him, and a few others, with their eyes fastened on her thigh. Their eyes raking over her body as if they had read those words on her thigh and wondered at them, wondered at what they might signify.

She washed her hair and body in the shower, dried her hair, put a bit of blusher and eye-liner on. She felt the faint quiver of excitement that she got when she knew once again, she was desired, wanted, even by those who did not know her, know of her capacities. Yet the men, when they looked, seemed to see that capacity in her because of the tattoo, because of those stark words. The wolf in them arose and they wanted a part of whatever she represented to them. An absolute feminine submission; flesh pliant to the masculine will. Ruth had played that part and enjoyed it too often not to respond to it now.

She threw her swimming things into the car and drove up to Oxford. She parked in a multi-storey car park and then found a few exclusive haunts Adrian and she had visited together on the odd occasion. Off-beat and high-class little shops where they sold unusual, sexually-enticing gear around particular themes; or the best lingerie departments, the discrete store where a variety of provocative garbs could be procured for the right price. She thought of Adrian as she glanced at this and that, and after a couple of shops and several dressing up sessions, she found a garment which appealed to her and which she thought would appeal to him.

The outfit was a deep claret red and made of cotton woven like a fancy lace net which revealed more than it concealed. The garment emphasised her curvy form, made her breasts appear as if they strained to burst from the material, the blush of the nipple semi-visible. A single strap, woven like a thread - a blood-red bond - held the garment up, going over one shoulder and merging into the back of the tunic, so one shoulder was completely bare. It was very short, just covering her buttocks and crotch. It gave the appearance at front and back of a very short clinging semi see-through tunic, whilst the sides revealed a slit reaching up to the waist so that the whole of her flank and hip on either side of her body could be seen. The lightning bolt red of the jagged S on the tattoo seemed to match and enhance the red of the garment, the latter highlighting the former so Ruth felt that particular outfit had been made for her; for this moment, when she would sport a tattoo on her thigh, carrying the words **His Will Be Done** to their logical conclusion, to the extremes that had come to signify their union. She had the garment wrapped up and handed over the money quickly then, suddenly wanting to be away from people, from their inquisitive questioning glances, their smug suppositions.

She got back to the car and drove home. When she looked in the mirror she was glad she had bought the flimsy blood-red apparel. She was glad she had desisted from having the tattoo removed - glad she had cancelled the appointment to have it removed. And now she looked forward to the effect of her new risque acquisition, wanting to please. As always so desperately eager to please, reverting to type, unable to break from the chains that were partially self-constructed. She felt she knew it would be good this time when Adrian returned; this time, this way ... she knew ... she hoped ... this time it would be better than ever ... didn't she?

Ruth spent the rest of the afternoon in the workshop, the anticipation of the following day in her mind. How would he be? Would he ... love her like she knew he could this time or ...? No. She was sure. This time it would be much better than alright. This time it would be so good ...

She worked at the wheel well into the evening, moulding another huge chalice out of the clay and then painstakingly etching a frieze around the rim. Cascades of naked forms entwined and unfurling. Her task absorbed her and she was satisfied with her creation by the time the light had gone and night encroached. It seemed like an offering, an act of worship, that chalice she had made. Or rather, it was like a prayer she offered up to the gods, a plea to favour her, to help Fate work for her for a change in line with the best possibilities she nurtured in her sub-conscious.

She had something to eat then, read a book, watched television, enjoyed the peace, the lack of restrictions, the feeling of space around her. Unconcerned about Adrian now she had made her decision; to keep her badge of bondage, in the hope it would keep it all sweet for a long long while. Was she being

naïve? Unrealistic? Probably. But she was sure: with the tattoo cut so striking and stark into her flesh - surely he would be satisfied with her now? Surely he would ... wouldn't he?

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Adrian felt the eagerness, the anticipation flood through him as he accelerated the BMW past the car in front of him, the engine smoothly purring its response. His mind was on the evening, the company he would enjoy, the few available females his friend Paul always managed to invite to these affairs, knowing how the little frisson of sexual opportunity never failed to make things go with a swing. He had pressed his friend Paul for details about the women who would be biddable to seduction. There would be the red-haired physio he had met before, full of bubbly laughter, a sexual appetite to match - and a couple of others he hadn't met: a divorcee who had more money than she knew what to do with, and a girl fresh out of college just cutting her teeth on the business world. Then there would be the usual crowd, the old college chums he kept up with for just these occasions. The possibility of sexual encounter along with some challenging outdoor pursuit; the thought of it was vivifying to him.

Finally he was in Shrewsbury where he found the Lion Hotel car park, and confirmed his booking. His bags were taken up to the room where he would be spending the weekend: a gracious, rather sumptuous space with an en-suite shower room. He tipped the porter, unpacked and went downstairs to the lounge nearest the foyer where he could await the arrival of the other members of the party. He ordered a gin and tonic and selected a seat so he could keep his eye on the door. He always liked arriving early to such places in order to soak up the atmosphere, assess his opportunities, gain a possible advantage. The deep red leather armchairs and settees, the old oak coffee tables and stately sideboard pleased him, for they indicated generations of accumulated culture and style. They appealed to his snobbery and sense of superiority, as did the evidence of history and ancestorship on the frieze around the walls, the artifacts which left an ancient imprint. It all permeated through him, provoking a satisfying and reflective mood which caused him to contemplate his life and good fortune.

He considered how biddable his wife was, kept cosily at home for him, awaiting his return in order to fulfill the function of her life - which was his satisfaction. He considered how adept he was at balancing his life in this way, where he retained the freedom of his youth to a large degree whilst suffering none of the uncertainty or angst that such youth is renowned for. He always had the chance to pursue sexual liaisons whilst using his wife as a buffer against the usual female failing; the demands about commitment. He could also explore sexual capacities with his wife in a way he could not do with other women, because of his subtle and absolute mastery of her. He was proud of this fact, proud of the way he had organised his life so that he *could* have his cake and eat it. He had the best of both worlds, but only because he had made it that way.

He thought of his business success, how he always got the deals, always pushed them through: first Folkestone, then outside Bristol, Birmingham, Newbury and now this York deal, Naburn. He was a rising star, trusted to get the job done. He was renowned for driving a hard bargain but also for making such bargains water-tight against any failure. He thought scornfully about all the row over the green issue, about what utter rot it was. They didn't consider the necessity of economics, of keeping the country streamlined and efficient, a going concern in the European finance stakes. The majority of the fools didn't realise their lives were so cushy because of such building developments, which provided the financial injections from outside investors the economy needed to keep afloat. Such developments were economic necessity in order that they maintain their position within the free market and compete favourably with the rest of Europe. Adrian saw his business deals and financial acumen as essential assets helping to maintain the country on a par with the rest of the civilised world. The fact that he bulldozed through 'green-belt' land, an act which was apparently unfavourable to a lot of people (to the majority? - he doubted it) did not concern him. Also, the fact that he was being cool-headed amidst all the controversy gave him a feeling of satisfaction, secure in the knowledge that his clear-thinking, unemotive business intentions would prove to be superior ventures in the future. He knew what he was about - the majority did not. Thus, he felt on a level with the most famous Caesar of all, who had declared: 'I came, I saw, I conquered!'. He, Adrian Spearman, had conquered, just like his ancestors before him! And he raised his glass when it was brought, to himself and to them. He was proof of their success; he surely must make them proud. He smiled to himself and let his eyes wander to the door, anticipating ...

After a short while of waiting and musing, Adrian's eyes were drawn once again to the door. There he saw an interesting looking young woman wearing a long swirling dress sweetly fitting the curves of her form. She had brown gold hair cut short at her chin in 1920s style and a scatter of freckles on her nose

and cheeks. There was something fresh and appealing about her as she approached the desk to make enquiries. She did so with a confidence that made Adrian want to break through that exterior of control, made him want to see her humbled and begging. She announced her name at the desk and was told a room had been booked for her. The porter showed her to her room. She looked at Adrian as she walked past, her cheeks colouring ever so slightly, when he twinkled her a smile and raised his glass in a conspiratorial manner.

He could see she liked his gesture and knew he had warmed a way in to her. He hoped she would come downstairs quickly before any of the others came so he would be able to charm her into savouring his company and wanting more of it. Also, he admired punctuality, and if someone was as eager as him to get there early, that could only bode well for the future flirtation. He hadn't seen her before, but he certainly liked the look of her. There was a kind of innocence there he wanted to crush, then savour. He was sure she would be one of their party. The graduate from university, surely?

In wonderful concordance with his inner machinations, the young woman did come down looking lovely in a soft mink brown dress that clung to her contours and swayed and swished provocatively as she walked into the lounge where Adrian was sitting. The soft brown of her dress seemed to emphasise her assets: the green of her eyes, the freckles, the golden-brown soft short-cut hair. Adrian stood up and offered his hand in a calculated risk of logic.

"Adrian Spearman at your service, mademoiselle! Did Paul invite you? Paul Storey? Are you mad enough to be partaking of the paint-balling on the morrow then?" Adrian gleamed his teeth at her and twinkled his eyes roguishly, inviting her to share the well-pitched joke.

"Well, yes as a matter of fact... Adrian Spearman: you're an old school friend of Paul's is that right? Oh sorry, I haven't introduced myself: I'm Jerri Gray - pleased to meet you Adrian".

Adrian liked the unaffected manner of this young woman, Jerri, and demonstrated his pleasure by switching on his charm, the smile which he knew rarely failed; slightly suggestive, appreciative of the woman in her, intelligent yet rakish. Thus were the subtlety of non-verbal cues brought into play.

"And I am enchanted to meet you Jerri. Can I get you a drink? I'm just indulging myself in a G and T - what would you like?" Adrian said, smoothly gallant.

"Oh thank you. I'll have a white wine and soda please" Jerri crinkled her green eyes appreciatively at Adrian.

Adrian ordered the drink then turned back to seize the initiative. "So Jerri, let me see if I can remember what Paul told me - young, beautiful, talented, just beginning to find your feet in the business world, with an unusual fascination with birds of prey and a predilection for rustic outdoor pursuits, is that right?"

Jerri smiled ruefully: "Absolutely spot on. I didn't realise I'd been talked about behind my back!" she teased.

"Surely you expect that! A woman as lovely and talented as yourself is bound to stand out. You must be used to it. I assure you whatever was said 'behind your back' was purely complimentary. You don't object to that do you?"

"Oh I don't suppose I can when you put it like that!" replied Jerri bristling and flushing with pleasure, as she flashed him a look from her emerald eyes.

"Now tell me Jerri, why have you got such a fascination for birds of prey? Isn't that unusual for a woman? I must confess that I have studied the subject myself in some depth - I'm always drawn to something which is politically incorrect!"

"Good for you!" responded Jerri clearly warming to Adrian. "As to why I have such a fascination, it seems obvious to me, for the qualities which birds of prey possess are ones you cannot help admiring. You know, that fierce untameable spirit, the pride and freedom they represent. If you get me on this subject I'll go on for hours and bore you to death - I do warn you about that!"

"Nonsense! Such a fascinating subject - a subject that interests me as well - discussed with a lovely fascinating woman could hardly bore me. The thing that interests me is what this hobby of yours reveals about the inner you. To appreciate falconry so much must reflect something of your own nature. So you are fierce and untameable are you? You're a free spirit who can't be controlled or pinned down - is that right?" Adrian ruffled a hand through his hair and grinned transparently fishing.

Jerri laughed and flushed again. "Well I don't know. I suppose I am like that in some ways..."

"What, fierce and untameable? Oh no, I'd better watch out then - especially tomorrow when you have a gun in your hands!"

His quip went down well and Jerri laughed again feeling impelled to qualify her statement and therefore

reveal herself a little further.

"No I didn't mean... I am a bit of a free spirit, but you always admire what has the capacity to surpass you as well, don't you?" she said, candidly.

Adrian was leaning towards her utterly concentrating his attentions upon her, exuding sexual attraction, yet in a way that was subtle and very complimentary.

"Does that mean if I surpass you tomorrow, out on the 'battlefield,' you will admire me, then?" Adrian said with a hint of the wistful.

Jerri cast her eyes upwards at this gambit but smiled all the same. "I don't think I'd better answer that - the proof of the pudding and all that!"

"Ah I see! You're challenging me are you? Throwing down the gauntlet! Well I'd better make sure I don't disappoint you then hadn't I?"

The more they talked, the more the subtle flirtations were exercised, the more Adrian felt Jerri became attracted to him, curious about him, admiring of his business prowess and his obvious physical fitness which he managed to get into the conversation in a calculated, understated way. The more they talked the more open Jerri became and the more intimate and revealing their shared conversation was.

Revealing that is, as far as Jerri was concerned. Adrian was adept at drawing out of people what he wanted to know, the information that would be most useful to him in any given circumstance. The time passed and Adrian had just insisted on ordering them another drink whilst they discussed the relative merits of peregrin falcons compared to merlins as expressed in the art of falconry, when their cosy tete-a-tete was interrupted by the arrival of the host and organiser of the weekend, Paul, along with his wife, Emma.

Paul was a tall thickly-set square man with dark hair and brown eyes whilst his wife was a willowy woman with ash-blond hair and a crinkling blue-eyed smile. There were hello's and introductions all round which were extended when Cliff and Angela joined them. Cliff, a marketing manager for a large company, was of rangy build with a slight stoop. He wore round metal-framed spectacles and sported a moustache. Angela was diminutive and dark and worked in the personnel department of a well-known bank. There was a volley of greetings and a further round of hand-shaking. Jokes from Paul, welcoming them all and making rye remarks about yet another birthday turning up, which provoked him to burst into an apparently well-known ditty they had all learned in their college days:

"Another year older and wadda ya get?

Money in the bank an' money galore,

'Cos each birthday passin'

Underlines the score!

The chink of those coffers is heaven's store

The chink of those coffers is heaven's store

Oh yeah, uhuh, oh yeah, some more

'Cos the chink of those coffers is heaven's STORE!

Adrian and Paul, and then a big viking of a man with blond hair and a beard who came to join them, all chanted the little ditty together, until they finished it in unison, laughing at the fact they'd remembered it so well.

"Silly old song we made up at college - I'm surprised we can still remember it! We haven't done badly though, have we lads, eh? How are you Stuart? Good to see you!" said Paul, reaching forward to shake the hand of the blond bearded man. "Jerri, this is my very good friend and accountant to boot, Stuart Longsdale. Stuart, this is Jerri Gray, a new business associate, fresh from university and thrown to the lions of the business world, but turning into one I'll be bound before long!"

Jerri flushed and laughed and told him to stop practicing hyperbole. Paul raised his eyebrows and retorted in kind.

"Hyperbole? See what I mean, university education's got a lot to answer for, turns 'em out too clever by half. Hyperbole? The only thing I practice on a Friday night can't be mentioned in public, I'm afraid!"

"Stop making ridiculous innuendos Paul! Just because it's your birthday! Honestly, you're incorrigible. Just ignore him Jerri. He's at that age, you know, early male menopause and all that!" cut in Emma, Paul's wife.

"Cheek!" retorted Paul. "I'm only 33. That's a clear case of projection, if ever there was one!"

"Who's projecting what? Sounds very interesting!" quipped a red-haired woman called Susan, who had arrived to join the group in time to contribute to the banter going on. She was the physiotherapist Adrian had already met before now and someone who he'd had a couple of nights of passion with two years ago.

They had parted on friendly terms though and Paul had told him that she had her eye on another chap, Simon, who she'd driven up with, so he knew their previous liason would be kept under wraps for that weekend. Sure enough, Susan was accompanied by two other men, Simon and Gary.

Simon was an executive of an estate agents. Over the past five years he had doubled his income and had moved into the arena of high finance, of which Paul was an hereditary part; Paul, who played the city financier, played the stock exchange and had built his pot of gold into a loaded coffer. Simon was of average height but compact-looking with deep-set eyes. Gary was short and broad with sandy-red hair and a dimple in his pugnacious chin. He was a respected engineer and his and Adrian's paths had crossed from time to time in the sphere of work.

More introductions, the whirl of conversation, chatter and cross-talk banter. Then Gina and Helen joined them. Gina was a leggy brunette with a big nose and broad smile, whilst her friend Helen was a curvy latin-looking type. They both worked in advertising. They were closely followed by Nigel, a small, neat man who was a dentist, and the divorcee, Tanya with Strawberry blond hair and more money than she knew what to do with. There were drinks all round, further initial social etiquette, clusters of conversation going on between various members of the party.

Adrian and Jerri still sat next to each other, now pleasantly close because of the swell to their numbers. From time to time their arms or thighs brushed one against the other, something that Jerri rather than avoiding seemed happy to court, Adrian noted with satisfaction. But on Adrian's other side sat Paul and Emma, so his time was taken up with them to start with. He could not pay Jerri the attention he would have liked, and also Stuart appeared to be entertaining her. But Adrian wasn't worried. If he had read the body language correctly, which he was quite expert at, she definitely favoured him and was eager for a renewal of the closeness they'd begun to enjoy earlier. As usual Adrian was confident of his success with Jerri, who he had targetted and marked for himself.

"How's Ruth?" Emma asked him.

Adrian glanced round and lowered his voice a little. " She's fine Em. She has no appetite for this sort of thing - thinks it's all a bit childish, you know. Anyway, I'm on a well-deserved holiday and I sort of want to remain in cognito if you know what I mean. My wife and I have an open relationship - you know that Em. It's no skin off her nose this jaunt, I assure you. But you will indulge me, won't you Em? You know I've had a hard time of late with all this green issue rubbish!" Adrian directed his appealing boyish look at her.

"Oh go on with you, you deserve it! Ripping up the countryside like that! I really don't know why I should indulge you Adrian Spearman. You're a positive rake. As for your wife, I don't believe you've got one. I've never even met her. What do you do? Keep her under lock and key or something?" Emma teased him.

"Very droll," replied Adrian, not even slightly discomposd. "She prefers to stay at home. She's got her cronies and I've got mine. She has jaunts with her pals, like I do with mine and we meet in between times for passionate clinches!" Adrian finished with an over-emphasis on the passionate which made Emma giggle.

"Oh get off with you! You are wicked Adrian, absolutely wicked! Worse than Paul and that's saying something. Can't help but oblige can I? When you look at me like that and talk such rubbish!"

"What, what, what, what, what?" interjected Paul. "Who's talking rubbish? Only I'm allowed to do that don't you know? It's my birthday and I'll do what I want to - oh alright, within reason!" he finished seeing the warning look come into Emma's eyes, which provoked more laughter from those closest to them.

Time rolled on amidst much aimable converse and the beginnings of more flirtations. But presently Paul informed them all it was time to retire to the dining room so they could look at the exceptionally good menu and make their choices before they became too sozzled to bother! Put like that, the company readily complied with his edict and they assembled in the dining room to take their seats at the long table already prepared for them. Adrian manoevered himself to sit in between Emma and Jerri. So the social banter and teasing refrains continued over the excellent meal. Paul's booming inanities had them in stitches, whilst Adrian's carefully chosen interjections were placed for maximum effect. Cliff's sharp ascerbic wit made an impact along with the dizzy comments of Tanya, the strawberry blond, while further down the table Gina and Helen the advertising duo were getting on famously with Stuart and Gary. The meal was enjoyed in between the conversational gambits. There were more quips, much laughter, more alcohol consumed despite the fact they had to be up for a reasonable hour in the morning. The moment was what mattered, tommorow would take care of itself.

Presently they all agreed to adjourn into the lounge for coffee. So gradually everybody filtered off for the stimulus of specially selected party games and the hiatus of coffee and cigars before the fun began. Everybody left the dining room until only Adrian and Jerri remained, getting closer and closer and more intimate as the evening wore on. They stayed conducting their intense conversation after the others had left, getting close to the nub, the raw of the matter, the fulfilment of the physical desire that inflicted them both. Adrian had prised out of Jerri, whose defences were dropped following the several glasses of wine consumed, that she was at the moment single and celibate - something of a joke between them both.

"But don't you ever feel...?" Adrian said looking at her and grinning, his leg accidentally on purpose brushing against hers. He had her then, his gambit had worked and it was obvious that she wanted his company in more than a social sense. When the others drifted off, he was left playing games with her fingers watching the green fire of her desire beginning in the emerald of her eyes.

"This isn't fair," moaned Jerri, pulling her fingers from his mouth rather reluctantly. "Look, I hardly know you. I choose to remain celibate because ... because I want to. Because I want it to be right... with someone who might become special to me - if you know what I mean," she finished, trying to appeal to his better nature.

Adrian, however, was not equipped with such a quality and manipulated her words to his own advantage. "But how do you know I am not that special person? How do you know I am not the one? Do you think I behave like this all the time? It's you that has made me act like this. I wouldn't normally at all. It's just you're so ravishing ... there's such loveliness in you I can't help being turned on by that. It makes me want ... to know you now. Why be careful, restrained? Sometimes if you fail to seize the moment it's gone and you've lost the chance for anything at all. You must have gathered that in the business world by now. Do you not think it applies to the personal, on occasions as well? No don't answer me, don't speak," Adrian whispered with a passionate inflection in his voice laying a finger upon her bud-like lips. "Just think about what I've said and we'll discuss it again later. For now, I think we ought to go back and join the others or we'll be accused of party-pooing and I'll never hear the last of it from Paul!"

So the transition from intensity to social jocularly was smoothly executed. In the lounge, which Paul had booked exclusively for this occasion, the company entertained themselves with a variety of well-chosen party games, at which of course Adrian excelled. He could see he had impressed Jerri, the little bird trapped in his net, the fresh innocent cast in his path. At the end of the evening they were the last to make their way upstairs after the others had variously dissipated. She faltered on the brink of entering her own room and asked him if he wanted a night-cap, after refusing an invitation for one in his room downstairs. His suggestion had been light, friendly. He had purposefully been the opposite of pushy for he sensed she would come round, if not that night, the next. He could tell he aroused her: the subtle innuendos, the carefully chosen gallantries, the brooding glance that Ruth, in a moment of frustration and exposure, accused him of using on other women.

Then he was in her room, with the young woman, Jerri, self-consciously pouring him a brandy. He enjoyed that nervousness he recognised in her. He had already gauged that she had not had many lovers from the things she had told him. He deduced that those she had known, had treated her too well, too reverentially and that she had become bored by this. He had got this much out of her. Adrian knew he could make her soar. He knew his greater experience and knowledge was making her insides twitch, even as they sat making a play of conversing. He guessed she was ready for him, but did not have the courage to make the first move. So Adrian talked, kept the conversation going, enjoying the tension in her body, the deliberate restraint of the wantoness he could see she felt. Adrian had been here before and he knew he would have the conquest he desired. He knew he would not fail, like he knew that his skill, his adept manipulations would deliver him the flesh banquet he held in his mind's eye for that night and the one to follow. And he was a man who made sure he always got his way.

So when he asked her if he could see the pendant around her neck more closely, she virtually fell into his arms as he reached up for her. He spent a long time over her body, making her ripe for his purpose, the mild punishments he would subtly deliver, a certain roughness he employed in his arousals, the sharp cut of teeth, a whince, a sudden understanding that he could if he wanted ... He could see the wariness, the shocked erotic impulse beating green fire in her eyes. This was how he tested them. If there was only fear, hurt, he knew they weren't for him or that he could not take things too far. But if there was the want along with the tremor of apprehension, then he knew he could push things more towards the limits that he found acutely satisfying. He recognised in Jerri a capacity for that sort of thing which he could exploit

in the brief space of time, spanning the weekend that they had together.

So he made their coupling a storm of pleasure. He didn't want to frighten her off prematurely before he had had his full enjoyment of her. He wanted her begging; just for this weekend anyway. So he gave her wings to soar on and she became willingly entangled in his web, whose darkness was concealed beneath the brightness of utter sensuality, the novelty of such expertise as Adrian demonstrated to her. Jerri became giggly and shy and tender and dotting prompted by the heady mixture of sexual excess and flattery which Adrian glibly used to get what he wanted. She was filled with the fires of lust that she imagined had transformed into love. In the morning, shy and almost humble, she could hardly bear him to touch her, in case she sank into his arms and gave herself up to him unreservedly, as he sensed she wanted to. He always got them this way and he thought a little aloofness would make her spiky and hurt enough for a little fun later on in the day. He gave her a lingering kiss to confirm his hold over her and left her then, to go to his own room for a change of clothes and a shower.

They met down in the dining room at breakfast. Most of the others were already gathered. Adrian gave Jerri a surreptitious wink, but sat next to Stuart, the hulk of an accountant, and got embroiled in some matey chatter. He noted Jerri's chagrin and inwardly smiled.

Paul had told them the previous evening what he had planned. They were to have a paint-balling session that day, whilst on the Sunday he'd planned something "a bit different". A surprise. He wouldn't let on what it was, but he had told them to wear casual clothes - something they could move easily in. He had, however, informed them it might involve a spot of horse-riding.

It was a lovely warm day, the promise of summer in the air, shimmering on the horizon. Everybody was dressed in tee-shirts and jeans, or sleeveless vests and snug-fitting leggings, such as Jerri wore, showing off her slim shapely legs and taut behind. Her shoulders were exposed and her small budding breasts pressed deliciously against the cream cotton of the top she had on. Summer brought out the ladies' skins, thought Adrian, glancing round at the women with masculine satisfaction and approval. He looked over at Paul, who flashed him a grin full of unspoken understandings.

"Right then, let's get going," said Paul clapping his hands together and rubbing them briskly.

"Where exactly are we going?" asked the tall thin Cliff, whose wife Angela stood next to him, looking athletic in black tee-shirt and black leggings. They both looked inquiringly at Paul.

"Ah now, we've got a bit of a drive - 40 minutes or so. Then we'll meet with the experts by a certain wood that I've arranged access to. I know the family who own the estate, pulled a few strings, whispered in a few ears, and presto! There we have it. A nice little old wood to roam around in all to ourselves. It's called Big Linley Wood. That's where the paint-balling company are meeting us, at 12".

They were all trailing towards the van Paul had hired, most of the others listening eagerly to Paul's explanations. "Couldn't you have made it a more seasonable hour, Paul, you rogue - like 2pm," complained Stuart yawning, only half in jest. "Day doesn't start for me at the weekend until well into the afternoon!"

Everyone laughed, including Paul, who answered: "You lazy sod. How you manage to operate during office hours defeats me! No, I say to you! We've got to be there at 12 as planned, otherwise it'll all be up the khyber. Anyway, it's my party so I'll do what I want to - you'd better fit in or else!"

Emma, Paul's wife, patted his behind and reached up to kiss him on the cheek commenting in a fond rye way: "You always do what you want anyway, don't you darling? Whether or not it's your birthday!"

"That's true," grinned Paul. "Now come on, hop aboard and we'll get moving".

He opened the back door of the van and unlocked the driver and passenger door. Emma sat in the front along with Paul. The rest of them sat in the back, Adrian making sure that a place next to Jerri was unavoidably usurped by the good-humoured Stuart. Adrian smiled at Jerri in an easy, social fashion, as if nothing had gone on between them; as if the previous evening had been a dream, nothing but a fantasy. He noted Jerri biting her lip, over-concerned to show she was in the same bouyant mood as the others, and not quite managing it somehow.

They chatted and joked all the way there, so the journey didn't seem to take long at all. Paul turned down a narrow, winding little road where hills abounded on either side, the rising green chequered with woodland. Then they drew up beside Big Linley Wood. There was another van turned into a gateway, already waiting. Paul got out and shook hands with the two men from the paint-balling company, who were there to provide them with the equipment.

Everybody gathered round to listen to the lengthy instructions and demonstration with the paintball gun. The man showed how a bubble attached to the top contained balls of paint-filled bullets, which dropped down when the gun was fired, reloading it. They were warned not to fire at close range, and guidelines

for the skirmish were laid down to avoid any disagreements. Then boiler-suits were found for each member of the group to fit the varying heights and contours of each individual. After an apparent surge of chaos, everybody was kitted out in the appropriate clothes, and equipped with a paintball gun. Then they were given helmets and the teams were chosen. Adrian was in the red team, along with Cliff, Angela, Gary, Tanya, Emma and Nigel. The white team comprised of Paul, Simon, Stuart, Jerri, Gina, Helen and Susan. Because the red team ended up with more men, there was some good-natured dissent and accusations of unfairness from all quarters. But Paul squashed all argument by pointing out that was just the way the cookie had crumbled, and complained about what a nightmare it was playing host to a bunch of ingrates.

Adrian's team, the red team were shown their homebase - a wooden shack - which they had to defend. The whites were driven to the other side of the extensive wood and shown where their defence point was. Before they left Jerri had been flirting in an animated fashion with Stuart, apparently engrossed, ignoring Adrian. But Adrian only smiled to himself, secure in the knowledge she wanted him still, that the flirting was a ruse to salvage her pride. Even better thought Adrian: better and better. He licked his lips unconsciously and turned his attention to the more immediate demands of the situation.

The leader was chosen by lot, which turned out to be Cliff, the journalist, who Adrian had been at Harrow with. This suited Adrian who volunteered to be a scout and fore-runner, going on ahead to gather their bearings, collect useful information on the white team's whereabouts, and to try and establish what the "enemy's" battle tactics were. Cliff and Angela opted to move forwards as part of the attack in a westerly direction. Emma and Gary agreed to move forwards towards the east, whilst Tanya and Nigel offered to stay and defend the homebase. So then Adrian took his leave of the rest of them, shooting off straight ahead and beginning to establish an easy rhythm.

Adrian was a fit man and ran for a while through the trees, exhilarated by the process. On and on he jogged until caution bid him slow his pace. He walked now carefully forwards, straining his ears and trying to remain concealed between the trees. He heard a bird's alarm call some way ahead and crept forward stealthily, in anticipation of possibly sighting the enemy. He heard the crunching of leaves to his left and instinctively ducked and froze. He looked around quickly and saw a dense cluster of trees a little further on. He ran lightly to it and crouched beneath the bases, feeling a sense of superiority, as he fixed his eyes to the woodland expanse before him. In a short space of time Adrian's foresight was rewarded for Paul and Simon came into view.

They were walking quickly and with apparent purpose, going northeast as if to circumnavigate the reds' homebase, which Adrian was meant to be defending. He flattened himself down and strained his ears to catch their speech. "Do you think she'll be effective on her own?" Simon was saying.

"Who, Jerri? 'course! It was her choice and the reds won't expect a woman to attempt anything like that on her own, so we'll have the advantage. It makes sense 'cos if we fail at least we'll distract them enough for her to surprise them, and claim their territory. It's simple. They'll be too occupied with us to think of her. Anyway, why the qualms? Would you rather have gone with her? Don't blame you, my old son, don't blame you at all, she's really rather..." Paul's voice burred on but Adrian couldn't catch the rest of what was said.

Eventually their noise faded away until once again all Adrian could hear was silence. The faint ruffle and flutter of the leaves on the trees stirred by the light breeze, the hum of insects, the flutes and trills of bird song.

He waited for a while but he heard no other evidence of human activity. Then to his left he heard a fracas. Paul's voice crying: "Shit!Shit!Shit!Shit!" echoing through the forest uproarously.

Adrian could not believe his good luck and arose smiling to himself. He walked quickly, straight across the wood, passing through the danger zone, and ignoring Paul's defeat. He crept along ducking and diving at the slightest noise. Once more he heard signs of human activity and hid in the undergrowth, belly down, waiting until the rustle and glimpse of a distant member of the whites was no longer a threat. He dodged and weaved his way on. Presently the wood started to thin so he traced his steps back up towards his own home base, running forwards and looking alert and expectant, making sure to keep shadow side of the trees.

Not long, not long and he seemed to hear something. Yes! And there she was ahead of him attempting to skirt stealthily between the trees, looking as if her heart wasn't quite in it, as if she was rather enjoying the place and the privacy rather than the activity. Adrian felt his pulse quicken and his blood race with a pleasant rush of adrenalin. She was his quarry and he would have her.

He moved noiselessly behind her, where the shadows still helped to conceal him. Presently she slowed

down and walked, gazing into the sky a moment and looking at the height of the trees, the remnants of the bluebells, feeling the sun's warmth; supposing she was entirely on her own.

Then suddenly she was hit from behind and found herself falling, caught in another's arms. They fell amongst the faded bluebells. She cursed and struggled, angry when she realised it was Adrian who accosted her. But he laughed a little and held her pinned, looking at her in the brooding way he had, giving her a signal she could not refuse. He wanted her. He was hot with desire for her. She! She made him hot with desire!

He took off his helmet whilst he still crushed her incapacitated beneath him. She struggled, accusing him of ignoring her while he smiled and told her he was being discrete - and besides, it was more of a turn on this way. Look, wasn't this better, he told her, the way he'd planned it? Look at the bluebells, feel the sun. Have you ever been made love to in a bed of bluebells? he breathed to her putting his mouth close to her neck and trailing a finger down her breast, where he could feel her shudder slightly in unavoidable response - even through the boiler suit and vest she wore.

"You want this don't you?" said Adrian softly. "You want this babe. I know. You need it."

He was zipping open the boiler suit. He was exposing her breast releasing it from the confines of her bra and clothing. His lips were upon her, sucking her nipple, consuming her with his mouth. And then she could only moan, as his hands tore off the boiler suit, her vest, and stripped off her leggings so she lay prone and near naked in his arms. He divested her of her helmet. He knelt above her gazing down along her body: the small, pert breasts, the budding nipples, the firm, sweet buttocks and length of smooth, pale thigh. He looked at her face and saw the green eyes filled now with reluctant desire, and also, a vulnerability, that was emotional rather than physical.

He smiled down, as if to himself, at the sight of her and nodded his head very slowly. Then he savaged her, grabbing her breast and roughly pulling her legs apart, tasting her buttocks with his teeth. He did this with carnivorous conviction, with the expertise of irrefutable dominance. The way he pulled her legs apart and plundered her, scared her, he could sense. He tasted the erotic charge of the aftermath in her juices though, when he worked her pleasure zones, so she lay desperate and panting for him. He considered whether he should stop there. Just to spice things up for later on. To make her even more of a challenge. But no, she looked too tasty at that moment to ignore, with the sun lighting her hair to trails of gold and her nipples like the buds of a rose. He drew it out though, and brought back a startled look to her eyes.

Teeth that cut a little too deep, holding her in a way that was a bit too harsh, a bit too authoritarian, turning her around and upside down in his arms as if studying her every angle, knowing her as she did not know herself. In the most undignified position, bringing forth her lust until she did not care what he did to her, as long as he continued to do it.

Adrian almost opted to take the experience even further, but he decided he would leave the risks for later on - for that evening, when the curtains were beginning to close on this transitory dalliance. He could feel a little more free then, because he planned to use her like she had never been used before. Perhaps he might persuade her to stay an extra night, after the others had left, rearrange his schedule for the novelty of corrupting her. If she didn't want to see him again after that, that would suit him very nicely thank you. He enjoyed the anticipation of these things as he gloated over her body and sucked at her juices. But tonight baby, wait til then. Then we shall see, Adrian thought. He made love to her, cradling her breasts and feeding from them as he drove into her again and again, building his pace on ... and on ... and on, to both their further satisfaction; his climax, her slow buzz and tremor.

They lay still for a while, feeling the sun warm their skin. She nestled into him and ran a finger wonderingly down his nose and across his cheek, as if she could not understand herself or this man who had induced such a fevered response from her. Adrian smiled, caught her hand and kissed it. "Very sweet; very, very sweet," he whispered looking deep inside her. She smiled and flushed a response. Adrian glanced at his watch. "Oh dear, I wonder if anybody's won the war yet. I know what I'd rather have been doing," he grinned at her wickedly, "but you know we should make a move, or the others will be missing us, or calling us spoilsports or something".

He got to his feet and helped her up, his eyes raking her body. He handed her her bra and top. "Thank you," she said demurely, shy now in front of him. "Don't ignore me though, Adrian. It makes me feel used, cheap. I don't want to be made to feel like that. You needn't be quite so distant need you?"

"Listen angel, I just want to keep it low-key. This is Paul's birthday, we've been mates for a long time. I don't want it to seem as if I'm just using this as an opportunity for my own ends. Not that there was any intention of such a thing in my mind before I met you. It's your fault, you know, all this - you shouldn't

be so damned tantalizing! This weekend is a social occasion, and I feel guilty enough as it is that I'm thinking of you all the time: your beautiful body ... I thought discretion would be the best policy in this case, do you see? It's hard, 'cos you're so irresistible - which is why I came to hunt you down. I couldn't help myself. You see what an effect you have on me?" Again, the brooding look and infectious grin. Jerri couldn't help smiling spontaneously in pleasure at his words and flattery. "The feeling's mutual," she murmured, picking up the paint guns and handing Adrian's to him, entirely pacified at the moment by his explanation, and kicking herself for revealing her feelings so soon into their liason. The last thing she wanted to do was pressure him or scare him off. "Well what do you suggest we do now?" she asked, resolving to be more laid back about things, or at least to give the appearance of being so.

"Let's continue operations," said Adrian decisively. " You go up as you were meant to, and I'll go down to try and raid your camp. See you at the end of the war babe, when I'll win some more of those secret kisses from those lovely lush lips of yours!" Adrian pulled her to him and his hand went down to finger her lower lip suggestively. Jerri giggled and pressed herself against him in accomodating fashion.

"Flattery will get you anywhere!" she quipped. They kissed again lingeringly. Then he patted her behind and pointed her forwards whilst he began to jog in the opposite direction. "Goodbye my lush, see you later!" Adrian called. Then he set up a steady jog and soon left her behind.

It was not long before he could see the edge of the woodland so he took a track inwards, slowed his pace and walked expectantly on. He came to a place where the wood dipped down. From where he stood at the top of a bank, he could see a small wooden shack where a battle was in progress. His team, the reds, had encircled the white camp who now numbered four. Likewise he could see four of his reds at various positions from his vantage point. The ground behind the shack rose gently so that from behind and above the whites home-base, he had a discrete view of the whole area. Two whites, Susan and Stuart, looking menacingly large, were crouched either side their homebase. The woman Helen was squatted behind a piece of fencing, looking more like she was cringing from the action rather than defending her territory. Her friend, Gina, on the other hand looked sharp and poised to explode behind a tree, occasionally chancing bursting pot-shots at the reds.

He could see Cliff, his tall, thin frame shielded by a bush and in a good position to get a hit. He saw Cliff's wife, Angela, effect a policewoman's shooting stance, almost finding her mark as Gina nearly copped it in the groin, the paint just missing her thigh as she turned. Cliff was shouting instructions and drawing their attention, whilst two of his team on the other side, where Helen was crouched, were making a move forwards. Stuart was shouting to Helen to shoot at them. She froze and then leapt up like a startled rabbit, but still managed to shoot. She was taken out by one of the reds' guns, but unfortunately Helen managed to hit one of the reds as well. Adrian recognised Emma beneath her helmet and saw that she was out of it now as well as Helen. But Gary, the other red, was gaining ground, using the fence for protection.

Adrian made his way stealthily down until he was at the back of the little hut. He looked around and saw Susan making a move forwards. He shot her and at the same time pelted forwards, shooting at Stuart and throwing himself to the ground in a dramatic roll as he did so. Stuart was splodged; Adrian was victorious, sprawled on the ground where he had rolled. As they all watched Adrian's flurry of activity, Angela moved in on Gina and got a hit so the reds had it all tied up. Adrian was the hero of the moment. The end signal was given and soon after they were all gathered together again, hot and sweating from their endeavours. The others that were "dead" had come forwards grinning; Paul and Simon, scowling in mock consternation. "It was Cliff and Angela, they were just too damn quick for us. Caught us by surprise from the side. Look at this - yuk!" Paul said exposing his paint-splodged side.

"Where did you get to?" asked Simon, as Jerri walked towards them along with Nigel and Tanya, the two defenders of the red-homebase.

"She tried to jump us," called Nigel. "Nearly succeeded as well. She got Tanya in the arm but by that time I'd done for her - gave us a bit of a run for our money though, didn't you Jerri?". Jerri smiled and shook her head at him admonishingly.

"Where did you spring from Adrian, anyway? You seemed to come from nowhere, you sly git!" Stuart quizzed, while everyone laughed.

"Yes, you swine, I wasn't expecting it from behind!" Susan pouted. There was laughter all round at the innocently meant remark.

"Ah well - just a little trick I saw on T.V., you know," Adrian joked, basking in the admiration and semi-grudging praise.

They all walked back to the van in a group, laughing and ribbing each other, Jerri walking beside Adrian

who surreptitiously squeezed her flank and tipped her a wink while no one was looking - which made Jerri dazzle him an appreciative smile. Back at the van, everybody divested themselves of the cumbersome garb and paint guns, which were accepted by the two men from the paint-balling company who had waited for the conclusion. There was a little mock up ceremony where the reds were awarded tacky plastic victor's medals amidst much cat-calling and sarcastic rejoinders by the whites. Then, they were all clambering into the van where they were whisked off to an exclusive health-club for fruit juice and springwater, followed by a sauna; massages for those who wanted to pay for it, and a relaxing jacuzzi and swim after all that. The men and women separated for these activities for the most part, so Adrian and Jerri did not see much of each other until they were clambering back in the van, ready to change and dress for dinner. Everyone agreed that they were rather flaked out by the rigours of the day, famished and anxious to recline.

Back at the hotel the company separated again, agreeing to meet for dinner an hour later. This was duly done, the camaraderie continuing into the evening, Adrian occasionally titillating Jerri by brief brushes kept out of sight and effected beneath the table. The group did not quite have the vivacity of the previous evening and everyone was content to siphon off to bed at a relatively early hour in preparation for the following day which Paul, still being mysterious, told them they would need all their energies for. First one person then another trickled off to bed until Adrian, pretending to yawn, said goodnight to everyone and went up himself. He noted a brief flash of concern appear on Jerri's features which she quickly concealed. But not long after Adrian had gone up, she followed him, as he had anticipated she would. He waited til it was comparatively quiet and waited because he wanted to play upon Jerri's anxieties. When he finally went to her she was so eager for him she had already undressed and greeted him in her underwear. He tumbled her onto the bed to dispense with the necessity for words. He did his wicked sensual work upon her, until she was wet and aching for him to enter her. Just how he liked them; just at the point where he knew he could exercise power over them. In keeping with expectations, Jerri obliged him.

He roughly pulled her back from him, one hand entwined in her bra, whilst he whispered demands into her ear and shafted her with his fingers as he did so. Ready for anything she was, glazed and wanton enough to accede to his desires.

With trembling fingers she undressed him. Took off his tie, his shirt whilst he now lay back and enjoyed all the ministrations she could offer. When she took him in her mouth, he held her there and controlled her movements with a hand grasping a handful of hair. He told her she would make good money as a high-class prostitute, and after a while of enjoying his own satisfactions, he pulled her up, an irresistible strength and direction in him, thrilling her. He bent her back to expose her throat which he nibbled and bit into so she cried out, half in desire and half in pain. What else was he capable of? But she had never been accosted in so sensual and so utterly dominant a manner before. She was used to being adored, to boyfriends doing their utmost to please her. Adrian's roughness, that hint of cruelty combined with an objective consideration of her flesh, acted more like an aphrodisiac than anything else she had known before. She was ashamed and amazed at herself and the situation. The wickedly erotic fulfilments continued until Jerri was all but weeping and shuddering from the intensity of it. By the time it was over she felt she had undergone a baptism of fiery bliss. She felt she would never be the same again.

For a long while they lay together in the afterglow until Adrian whispered he thought this time he should go back to his own bed. She was too stunned still by extremity to protest much, whilst he mildly joked that he was sucked dry and needed a good night's rest in order to recuperate. His lips brushed her neck and her brow. Then he left her with a softly whispered good night, whilst she lay awake still buzzing, trying to assimilate the night's events into her view of herself and her understanding of sex.

Adrian back in his own room fell into bed and went quickly to sleep, utterly confirmed in his own excellence, in his ineluctable abilities to get just what he wanted - exactly when he wanted it, whatever it might be. Filled with a deep sense of satisfaction, suffused with an unshakable confidence in his unique prowess in every arena, he drifted off to sleep.

In the morning when he awoke, he showered and dressed casually for breakfast and the day's jaunt out riding that Paul had hinted at. When he came out of his room to go down to breakfast, Jerri synchronised the same intent with his own. He came up behind her and ran a single finger down her back as she turned and melted beneath his look, as her body quivered eagerly at his touch.

"Now then, now then, keep your hands to yourself Spearman," came Paul's booming voice down the corridor. "I should watch out if I were you Jerri - you don't know where he's been!"

Unphased Adrian turned round and quipped: "Go on with you Storey, you're just jealous 'cos our team

beat yours yesterday. Winner takes all - you should know that by now!"

"Gads you're an arrogant git - isn't he Jerri? You'll suffer for it one day, mark my words young man!" teased Paul, with a tiny undercurrent of needle in his voice. The banter made Jerri laugh; and the three of them went downstairs in good humour with Paul claiming he was hungry enough to eat an elephant with a horse thrown in, and Adrian telling him he'd have to watch his weight now he was getting a bit long in the tooth to combat the middle-aged spread. Evidently it was customary to insult each other in this way, and it caused much merriment when it continued over the breakfast table.

Soon breakfast was over and the group were clammering to know what Paul had in store for them that day. Under popular pressure and from practical necessity, Paul relented whilst Emma, his wife, looked somewhat apprehensive awaiting the group's response. It transpired that they were going on a hunt. But it was not the usual hunt; it was going to be a human hunt. When everyone exclaimed, demanding clarification about what he meant, Paul told them it was going to be one of the group that would provide the quarry. In other words, those who wanted to partake could draw straws. The loser would be the one who had to play the "fox". There were protests and cries of *sadist! Warp-head!* and so on. Paul parried all these in a good humoured way, explaining it was an experiment and nobody was obliged to have a go at quarry if they didn't want to, but that he was relying on the gentlemen's sporting spirit to rise to the occasion.

By the time he had finished, everyone was persuaded into enthusiasm and most of the group (apart from Tanya who was choosing to opt out and wait for them at the stables) were at least looking forward to going for a ride on such a clear sunny morning. By the time discussions were over, all the women had opted out of playing the quarry, along with Stuart, who claimed to be far too lazy for such a pursuit and Simon, who was a smoker and who maintained his lungs weren't up to it. This left five of the men. Paul produced the straws and asked Emma to shuffle them and then hold them out. There was a sense of anticipation and a twist of tension amongst the group as each of the five men took one of the straws. It became immediately apparent that Adrian had drawn the short straw, which served to delight Paul tremendously. "Well boyo, it's not the usual thing for you, but this time you've definitely drawn the short straw ... see ... do you believe me?" crowed Paul, holding out the other straws. Jerri was enjoying herself, laughing along with the others. But Adrian affected unconcern, keeping his cool and smiling along with them, as he commented: "You old rascal Paul - did you rig this or what? Getting your own back on me, eh? For winning the war!"

"No, no, trust my good lady wife here. It was all done fair and square, wasn't it Em.?"

"You bet!" agreed Emma tickled pink that Adrian was getting a little come-uppance.

Adrian smiled again. "That's O.K. I embrace the challenge. In fact, seeing as I'm feeling lucky I'll throw down the gauntlet and say: be prepared to be out-witted and out-maneuvered yet again. I bet you a tenner you won't run me to ground".

"A tenner! You cheap-skate!" joked Paul, who then informed him that he had to provide them with an item of clothing that had his scent on so the dogs could recognise and fix onto his trail. This caused a few ribald remarks and jocular insults care of Stuart and Cliff. But Adrian parried all their jibes, cool as usual and as confident of his abilities to outwit the hunters, as he was of his ability to succeed in any conquest or business deal he set his sights on.

The day's initial events now decided, everyone tramped out to the van, where they were driven to the stables of a friend of Paul's, near where they had been the previous day. In the van, Adrian sat next to Jerri, their thighs touching as the van swayed. Adrian had an arm thrown across the back of the seat and was relaxed and confident in the face of his coming ordeal. He turned round from time to time to join in the banter of Paul and Stuart, and enjoyed Jerri's presence merely as an accolade to his own charm and sexual prowess. He sensed many of the men were envious of him and of the way Jerri's eyes gazed meltingly up at him when he spoke.

He had been the hero of the day, yesterday, and despite the disadvantage of being the hunted rather than the hunter, he determined to prove just as much of a hero, when his back was against the wall. He basked in the grudging admiration of the men and the undisguised appreciation of the women. He was in his element and was resolved to maintain his reputation of being one of Life's lucky winners, no matter how the odds were stacked against him. In fact, Adrian thrived on such circumstances and knew himself to be one of those golden individuals who fortune always favoured and for whom the tide always turned sympathetically to gain him a ready and superior advantage.

In the front, Paul was explaining how he'd decided to organise something like this, which he told them was a relatively new thing from the States. "I've been out on a jaunt like this once before. It's good fun

and something which is taking off in the army, as a simulated escape situation. There are three bloodhounds, named Jess, Nudge and Smoo - don't ask me why - that my mate Rupert has trained for this purpose. I've lined up 12 decent nags for us care of Rupert. We go back a long way, him and me, our parents were friends. We went to the same prep school together. He's the guy who owns the stables of course. I'd have invited him but he's on a busy schedule at the minute, time of year and all that."

"What happens if we corner Ade here in just half an hour?" asked Stuart, purposefully trying to rile Adrian. Adrian flashed him the V's and a sarcastic smile as if to say - in your dreams mate - as Paul responded. "He's got a lot of faith in you hasn't he Ade?" he twinkled.

"Masses and masses," commented Adrian dryly.

"But to answer your question Stuart, if that should happen we simply choose another quarry from our company and have another go. Quite straight forward really. It's only a bit of a lark. It was just something I wanted to have a go at," explained Paul.

They turned off a main road to travel down a lane fringed by high hedgerows, still decked in blossom here and there. Finally, they were turning down a long drive to pull into a clean-looking brick stable-yard. This had a long array of stable doors containing the large court-yard and a variety of horses being saddled and tacked in preparation. The place was a hive of activity with an aura of well-organised, wholesome rustic charm. Paul stopped the van. "O.K. folks we've arrived. Is everyone ready to enjoy the hunt then?" he asked, turning round to beam at all of them - particularly Adrian.

A burly, ruddy looking chap came to the driver's window where Paul sat. "Hello there Thomas," Paul said, reaching his arm through the window to shake the man's hand. "We're all here as you see, ready to be found suitable mounts and to be equipped with riding hats."

"Aye, that's all being taken care of Mr Storey. Now who's the unfortunate one who's been chosen to act as fox then?" Thomas enquired, with a twinkle in his eye.

"Me, I'm afraid!" cut in Adrian, whose tone was not at all gloomy.

"Well Sir, I don't know if Mr Storey has explained, but while the others are being kitted out, to give you a head start I'll drive you across the way to Linley Wood. That'll give you a bit of time to lose yourself before the dogs can get on your trail. How's that sound?"

"Fine," replied Adrian, "though I don't think you'd better give me too much of a start otherwise they'll never find me!"

"Oh you're so full of bravado, Adrian," teased Emma.

"It's well-founded," commented Adrian in the same spirit of banter.

"Now then, have we got time for a tippie before you drive him off Thomas?" said Paul producing a hipflask.

"Whatever you like Sir!" said Thomas smiling at the good spirits of all concerned.

"Here you are then Ade, a bit of dutch courage before you get off?" Paul proffered the hip flask.

"No thanks," said Adrian, "don't need it. I'd rather get off if that's OK, now I'm here and ready for the challenge."

"Gods, you're a bit keen aren't you? It's unnatural!" commented Stuart.

"Well if you don't want to wet your whistle, we all might as well pile out and let Thomas drive you over there. Come on then everyone off your butts and ready for horseback on the instant!" ordered Paul.

They all got out, except Adrian who climbed into the front seat as Thomas got up into the driver's seat. The others flocked round to where Adrian sat.

"Well, best of British old man, though I'm sure you don't need it!" said Paul raising the hip flask and toasting Adrian.

"Yeah, bye, good luck, don't fall down a rabbit hole, cheerio," came the various acknowledgements of the company, together with: "Bye, break a leg Ade!" as a last cheeky comment from Jerri. She grinned delightedly at him. He narrowed his eyes slightly in not altogether mock threat, hinting that he'd get her back later - and so did he intend.

But then he was waving goodbye to the lot of them as Thomas reversed the van and drove out of the yard. Fifteen minutes later he was dropped off at Linley wood, as arranged. Apart from a map of the area in his top pocket and a small knife which the vestiges of his boy scout training had compelled him to bring, he only had his wits to rely on.

Adrian did truly relish this challenge. He enjoyed pitting his wits against others whatever the scenario, and he prided himself on his fitness. He felt that according to the dictates of Nature, he was of the strongest and fittest, and the strongest and the fittest survive; the strongest and fittest prove the winners in Nature's world of tooth and claw. Adrian was confident that he would demonstrate the inexorable

logic of that philosophy over the next few hours. He was on a roll. First, the Naburn deal. The tattoo, placed so pleasingly upon his slavish wife, who pandered to his every whim, who proved he was lord and master and who he held like a dark sweet secret at his heart. Then the comparative ease with which he had seduced the girl Jerri, for his own enjoyment. Even the way he had surprised the whites and claimed their base. He couldn't fail. He felt as if everything he touched turned to gold, metamorphosed to accommodate his will.

He patted his shirt pocket reassuringly and walked into Linley Wood. He took the map out and looked at it noting a stream to one edge of the wood. He thought the trees would slow them down, proving difficult for the progress of the horses. He ran, weaving in and out of the trees, in and out, in and out, as if he were training for football dodges, pushing himself to the limits. Finally, he slowed down and mounted the mound where he had surveyed the scene of "the battle" the previous day. He paused and ran down the other side, spying the stream near to a tiny road. He jogged towards it. The stream was shallow and for a short way he could walk in the midst of it without getting too wet. But when it started to get deeper he crossed over and back, and over and back until it grew too difficult to continue the movement. A hill loomed to one side of him, just across the road. Adrian crossed the road, climbed a gate into a field, and further on another one. He made his way up another inclining stretch of pasture land, before coming to a stile and a path beside another wood which encroached adjacent to the territory of the bracken-covered hillside.

He began walking upwards through the scattered woodland, which was out-stripped, higher up, by the bracken, that in turn was superseded by bald rocky outcrops at the summit. Adrian noted the distinctive character of the hill with interest. It was at that point, he heard in the distance the baying of the hounds. Coolly, as if time was of no importance Adrian took out the map again and worked out that he must be on Black Rhadley Hill. He studied the map and felt a dart of adrenalin prick him into decisive action, when he noted a feature which might prove to his definitive vantage. As he looked down then, way over to his right, he saw the hounds come into view, running towards the stream, followed by a straggle of people on horseback. They looked of matchbox proportions from his elevated position.

Adrian sprang into action, continuing his upward climb, skirting through and beside silver birches and the occasional beech, and keeping his eyes scanned to the right. Finally his efforts of intense observation were rewarded. He could discern, at a short distance from where he stood, a little dimple or grove carved into the hillside obscured by stones and long grasses. A glint of darkness caught his eye and he knew this was the nook he had been searching for. Adrian looked about him, considering and scheming. He looked at the trees closest to him, assessing their strength and height. The hounds had begun baying again and they sounded marginally closer.

In the spontaneity of innovation, Adrian quickly began cutting large fronds of bracken with the little knife he had had the foresight to bring with him. After a while of doing this, he twisted them round and beneath his boots and secured them by tucking the ends of the leaves into his socks. By doing this he sought to obscure his smell and confuse the hounds so that they lost his scent. But this would only work if the second stage of his plan was successful.

He looked at the trees scattered around him and then in a single motion, he bunched himself up and leapt towards the low branch of a nearby beech tree. His hands managed to grasp the branch and he kept himself swinging to gain momentum until he projected himself into the air to land close to a small silver birch. He landed securely, wobbled a moment and steadied himself so that all he rested on was his bracken-covered boots. He strained his eyes towards the glimpse and depth of shadow which he had targetted as his destination and which he thought would provide him with his winning move.

He reached towards the branch of the silver birch and pulled himself up again onto the outstretched limb. He was pleased that all the hours in the gym were now paying off, and he mentally patted himself on the back. Again he swung himself as far as he could so he sailed into the air and landed in the little hollow beside the overgrown grasses and stones. Extremely satisfied with his progress, he crawled forwards to inspect what lay behind the thistles and grasses where the darkness showed.

There he discovered, as the map had indicated, the mouth of a small cave. The cave wasn't very big, as far as he could discern from the natural light that filtered in. He also noticed what appeared to be a tunnel, or an indent, going off to the left of the little concealed grotto. He shook his head and smiled at his continuing run of fortune, aided by his own dexterity and skill. Then Adrian crawled into the cave and almost tumbled headfirst as he did so, for the floor of the cave dipped deceptively a short distance from the mouth of it. Adrian righted himself and turned, crouching on his feet, to inspect the space he had invaded.

The cave wasn't very big, being longer than it was tall, and revealing part rock and part packed-earth walls. The hole or indent off to the left gaped in the darkness of shadow intriguingly. Adrian had been caving a few times and enjoyed the sensation of exploring those hidden veins of the Earth that remained largely untouched by human activity. It made him feel like an explorer who dared where most would not. He also found it peculiarly erotic; as if he plundered the mightiest female of them all. As if when he had spent a whole day crawling along Her innards, he was conquering the ultimate female. Adrian noted that further interior with interest, but he could hear the hounds baying closer, so crouched down pulling the grasses and thistles to conceal the entrance even more and then waited to see what they would do. He did not have to wait long. The baying came closer and closer until it felt to Adrian as if despite all his efforts they were making a direct bee-line for where he had hidden himself. But still out of sight, the baying stopped and he heard the snuffling of the hounds as they slowed down to check his trail. Adrian held his breath. The hounds continued snuffling, not now giving voice, but using their energies to try and track his scent. The sound of horses hooves. Exasperated voices - he could make out Paul and Cliff: "Drat it - where's he gone? The dogs seem to have lost his scent. Here Smoo! Smoo! Have another smell of that, atta boy, go to it, find now Smoo! Find!"

More horses thundering up the hillside. "What's happening? Haven't you seen him?" Jerri's voice. A strain of disappointment.

Adrian grinned to himself and continued holding still.

They urged the dogs on, and tramped around on their horses discussing what to do, what tactic to try now the dogs seemed to have lost the scent.

"Well, he can't be far," Cliff's voice. "Perhaps we should split up and go in different directions?"

Another voice - Emma's he thought. "I don't know. He can't just have disappeared. I mean the dogs tracked him to here, only now they seem confused. Hold on, what's Jess interested in over there around that tree ...?"

Adrian reacted on the spur of the moment, determined to outwit the lot of them and to maintain the secrecy of his hiding place. When he inferred that the dogs had picked up his scent near one of the trees he had used as a launching pad, he thought it would only be a matter of time before they sussed him out. Unless he did some kind of disappearing act again. In spontaneous reaction he scrambled towards the interior which he had not yet fully explored. He banged his head on the roof and stumbled forwards in an abortive attempt at speed. Then instead of landing on a solid floor of earth, the ground crumbled and gave way beneath him.

In the distortion of mesmerised unreality, he seemed to fall for a long time, though in truth it could only have been a matter of seconds. When he landed on a bed of earth, more of the same showered and continued to shower on top of him, until for a brief nightmarish moment he thought he would be buried alive. But the soil finally stopped falling and all was still in the darkness. He listened and caught the sound of horses hooves a long way above him it seemed - and was that the hounds? Briefly, briefly human activity could be discerned, but then it all receded away into the distance until all he was left with was the cloying silence of the earthen sarcophagus he had unwittingly gained entrance to.

Up above, in the sunlit blue that bathed the giantish hill, Jess, the youngest of the three dogs, had grown bored of snuffling unsuccessfully for their original quarry. When the smell of a vixen caught her attention, she opened her throat and gave chase, causing the other two hounds to follow suit. Past a small hollow on their right, beyond the trees and up through the bracken, onto the higher rocky realms of the hill, the dogs chased their new scent. All the company on horseback followed, thinking they had finally caught the trail of their quarry and would soon run him to ground - little knowing their prey had already gone to earth ...

When the soil and fragments of stone had stopped falling, Adrian refused to be alarmed by his predicament: at that stage, within the honeycomb interior of the hill, he felt as Alice must have felt when she found herself down that rabbit hole. But Adrian was confident that he would dig himself out.

However, the fall had disorientated him - he did not realise quite how far he had fallen. He tried to scabble up towards where he thought the entrance was, but could only get so far before he slipped down again. He gouged footholds in the earth and tried to dig at a higher level to gain access to the outside world. But the soil seemed endless and impervious to his actions. He tried digging in a different area with the same result. The longer he dug unsuccessfully, the more frustrated and confused he became. He began to sweat and a thin lance of fear cut him briefly - but he dismissed it and continued his labours with more energy.

After what seemed an age when he felt he was getting nowhere, he sensed something opening before

him. He scabbled the earth away, wriggling into another opening, expecting to see some light, but instead being greeted by yet more darkness. He cursed and felt around him. Another hollow. Like a womb. Contained, complete in itself, but no opening to the outside world. Just a rough, curved indentation, bare and purposeless. He couldn't work out if this was the first space he had fallen into or not. Surely the whole hill couldn't be a myriad of such apparently isolated pockets?

Adrian began to feel a faint unpleasant rill of horror whispering inside of him. He sought to banish it, and scrambled his way out of this new blind alley back into the space he had left. He sat against the side of the cell and held his head in his hands as he struggled to contain his rising sense of panic. Then, after calming himself, he began to dig again in another direction, where the soil seemed to be loosest. But as long as he dug, all he seemed to find was earth and more earth and a solid bank of earth and another solid bank of earth, and yet more soil and yet more earth, but no welcoming daylight, no lifesaving rush of fresh air, no glimpse or relief of greenery.

After what seemed like hours of fruitless scraping at the soil with his bare hands, and still not getting anywhere, Adrian gave up and sat glumly staring into space, pushing down the panic he felt. But the more he sat doing nothing, the more stifled and claustrophobic he felt, the more his imagination succumbed to the horror of never being found ... but he would not accept such a thought.

So he began digging again in another area. He tried to approach the problem systematically, but he seemed to be in some sort of shaft, the entrance to which was blocked by the avalanche of soil and stone that had fallen when the ground had crumbled beneath him. All his efforts proved to be in vain. It seemed to him as if hours had already passed. He felt the air was beginning to suffocate him. He sat entombed within his vault of sealed soil, held his head in his hands and sobbed in frustration and fear. As he wept the feeling of impotence, something he was entirely unaccustomed to, swept through him and seemed to highlight and exacerbate his predicament.

After giving vent to his feelings in this way, he drew on his hazy religious recollections and began to pray to the Unseen Power he had previously barely given a philosophical thought or any avowal of faith to. This quietened him and he sat and waited. A tiny shred of hope worked within him. Perhaps they would find him. Realise what had happened and rescue him. Surely the cave would be an obvious place to look? If there was freshly loosened soil then it would provide them with all the clues they needed to find him ... wouldn't it? But what seemed obvious to Adrian proved elusive and mysterious to those who searched for him.

Still feeling certain he would be found Adrian settled down to wait for the search party to release him. The waiting was so nullifying he found himself drifting into semi-torpor. He knew by now he must have been down there for hours; the length of time for him had become incalculable. He could have been down there for minutes, for hours, for weeks ... he felt he had all but lost the ability to judge. After a while the dense silence played on his nerves, made him feel already dead and forgotten, buried alive. So he set to working the soil again, digging and digging with more and more futility. Never seeming to get any further or uncover anything that would lead him back to life and light. Then he did truly panic, growing hysterical and screaming and flailing his arms uselessly into the soft, suffocating soil.

But he could not maintain such a wild trauma of emotion, and eventually he calmed down. Dumb with a deathly misery, he curled up in on himself, sobbing quietly. In his heart he longed for Ruth, for his mother, for life and the comfort of another human presence. Surely, he thought, it can't end like this? This pointless, stupid ... He dared not say the word death even in his own mind - but it was there around him, in his nerves and his muscles, in his lungs and his heart, behind his cranium, even if he did not dare acknowledge it.

If only they would come...

He realised the horrible irony of his situation. He had been far too clever for them, far too clever. If the hounds had lost his scent and led them away from the vicinity of the cave, how would they ever trace him back to where he was?

But only the cloying silence yawned back at him and clambered across his nerve endings, stirring sickness and fear in his belly. Once more now, out of desperation and drunk with fatigue, he tried to dig. But he moved as if pushing within and against a dense pressure of water; the energy he possessed seemed to be draining out of him, siphoned from him by the deadening clay. Finally, he fell onto the soil. The walls seemed to wobble and close in upon him. The air became thinner and thinner bereft of the sustenance he needed. It constricted him even, soaking up the moisture of his breath and body and giving only bitter solid back. The foetid, dampening smell of earth consumed him until, in the hollow pit of his consciousness he knew he was buried alive and the smell that choked him was the stench of his earthly

grave. The grave that would contain and compress his flesh, conceal his bones forever more. He never imagined it would be like this. *Not like this!*

On and on then, he continued his anguished beseechments; on and on, in delirious sobs, until his body was thrown into convulsions and he shovelled soil into his mouth, choking on it, his breath bubbling and frothing. Then he lay stilled, only quivering now and again, mumbling, staring sightlessly into the pitiless soil, in the pitiless belly of the Earth.

^^^

Ruth woke up on the Sunday morning with a sensation of vague unease - she could not have said why, except that she had had a strange lurid dream; a somewhat unusual event for her as she was not accustomed to dreaming. In the weird landscape of her dream she had been walking towards a seashore, climbing over sand dunes; suddenly falling, falling, sand cascading over her, sand showering down on her, burying her alive ... But the sea had come and washed it all away, carrying her with it until she was tossed and floundering on the huge expanse of the oceans. Then some huge bird, like a mythical griffin, had picked her up in its talons and carried her for an indeterminant length of time so that she swung in its grip in a state of mesmerised limbo. Eventually, the creature had dropped her on a daisied hillside where the sun warmed her and a gentleman dressed all in black was fixing his eyes upon her ...

Ruth did not have the least idea what the dream could mean, if indeed it could be ascribed such potency and was not merely some freak convulsion of her subconscious imaginary. She dismissed it from her mind when she recalled that Adrian would be returning later that day. The house was pristine awaiting its master; the slave, however, had her ablutions and toilette to effect in preparation for the master's return. Ruth fingered her pierced navel and stretched luxuriously between the crisp cotton sheets, imagining Adrian's reaction to her new outfit, designed to be irresistible. She felt a flicker of excitement and got up to have a shower to make herself as smooth and sweet-smelling as possible for that afternoon. And so she idled the hours by and was chagrined when by 5pm he had still not appeared. Her excitement began to fade and in its place a bitter constriction of jealousy began to grow. Where was he now? Who was he with now; kissing and handling no doubt, giving another what for, neglecting her as usual - the dumb bitch he left at home while he went out and played the field. As night began to encroach, this feeling had become the taste of bile on her tongue and moodily she began to watch the T.V., a soporific for her anger.

She was just getting up for a drink, an hour or so later, when the door bell rang. She went through into the hall and her stomach turned over at the sight of the dark blue uniforms. She opened the door to the police; a man and a woman.

"What is it? What's happened?" Ruth blurted.

"May we come in, Mrs. Spearman?" the policeman said in a kind quiet way.

She took them through into the lounge where they all sat down, she wordless as if awaiting some awful verdict. They asked her if her husband had contacted her that day; Ruth told them how she had been waiting since that afternoon for his return. They then explained that her husband had been reported missing but told her that there was probably no cause for any great concern, as yet. They then revealed the circumstances which had led up to his disappearance: how he and his friends had been involved in simulating a hunt with blood hounds, where Adrian, her husband had been the quarry...

"Hunt? They were hunting him?" her brain could not connect. Slowly and clearly they described the events of that morning.

"The blood hounds unfortunately got side-tracked after losing his scent, and led your husband's friends off on a wild goose chase. When your husband never turned up they searched the whole area, which unfortunately may have obscured his original tracks, but they could not find him anywhere. They notified us this evening. They thought he might turn up somewhere during the afternoon, but I am afraid Mrs Spearman, he hasn't.

Although there is certainly no cause for alarm, we do have to ask some uncomfortable questions, and follow up any possible leads which could give us an indication of your husband's whereabouts. Your husband has not been very popular with certain factions in society of late. Is there anyone you can think of who might hold a grudge against your husband? No? Are you sure? You must understand that at this stage, we have to explore every possibility and not rule anything out..."

The policewoman's soft, insistant voice carried on explaining, questioning, attempting reassurance. Ruth blinked blankly. She could not think. She answered everything in monotones. Her mind seemed to have frozen. Despite their reassurances, a sense of dark foreboding inflicted her.

"Perhaps you should have somebody with you," the policewoman was saying, "is there anybody you can

call so you're not on your own? Your mother?"

Ruth nodded silently staring arridly into space.

"What's the number Mrs Spearman? What's your mother's telephone number?"

Ruth heard the question but could not connect to it. She continued staring at the policewoman wonderingly.

"Mrs Spearman, what's your mother's phone number? Do you know it? Can you tell me what it is?"

Ruth continued her dry eyed, vacant stare but then her face creased temporarily into consciousness again and she whispered the number with a sob contracted in her throat. The policewoman phoned up her mother and explained the circumstances in discrete, serious tones. When the policewoman had finished speaking on the phone, she told Ruth that her mother would be there in an hour. Would she be alright til then, or did she want them to stay?

Ruth put her head in her hands. "I can't...I can't understand...how could...what does it all mean?"

"We can't say at this stage Mrs Spearman but we are conducting enquiries and searching the area with police dogs so we hope something will turn up to give us a clue. Most likely your husband will be on his way home right now, or making his way to a contact point. We'll get in touch as soon as we have any further information." The policewoman's tones gave her some small margin for hope. She clung to that and tried to smile her thanks, coming to life and demonstrating that she was not in such a state of shock that she could not function. Though in truth, she had a horrible cold feeling in the pit of her belly and felt a deadening numbness that both protected her and petrified her. A presentience arose within her so that intuitively she knew Adrian would never return to her.

The policewoman and her male colleague left promising to inform her as soon as they heard anything, or turned up any other helpful leads. When they had gone Ruth drifted aimlessly about the house, unable to prevent herself from tidying little details which might have irritated her husband. When her mother arrived it was strange having to adjust to her company, even though a large part of her was glad that her mother was there. She always felt she had to don a suitable mask for her mother; conceal the reality of her married life which her mother could not possibly understand. So part of herself was always kept hidden away, the part her mother had no notion of - that dark, secret part which she was both ashamed and perversely proud of. What could she tell her mother about that? She knew her mother would not quite understand the overwhelming panic and bottomless dread that gripped her if Adrian should be... She dare not say the word; she dare not think it. And so with her mother she was falsely bright, so brittle she might easily crack, her self-control in danger of shattering at a single ill-chosen word.

On the Monday evening, after a day of tremulous anxiety, the agony of waiting, Ruth sensed that her life would never be the same again. Somehow, deep down inside she felt he was never coming back to her. Her mother could not understand her resignation, her gloom. Her mother thought she had abandoned hope far too early. But deep in her bones and with growing certainty Ruth developed the conviction that Adrian was gone forever. Despite her mother's protestations, her attempts at optimism, Ruth gave herself up to grief and lay on the bed, the tears running down onto the pillow case, causing a damp patch to grow and spread where Adrian's head had rested just three days ago. No amount of comforting or brisk encouragement to be positive could console her. She held herself and rocked backwards and forwards, sobbing and crying as if she would never stop.

After the storm, some kind of calm. In the days that followed Ruth remained dazed, inured to anything around her, uncertain of what to do, how to behave, as if enacting a mime she could not quite believe in. She was like an amputee who still feels the limb that has been removed even though it is no longer there. She could not believe he would go, just like that. She did not understand how this could have happened. People did not just disappear into thin air. There was always something, some evidence or clue. But the police had found nothing.

Paul, his friend, had written a letter to her saying how sorry he was that something so light-hearted had ended so disastrously. Trying to give her hope. There were others too, names she had heard of, some she had not, offering their support and sympathy. She hoarded all of these letters as if their bulk might somehow bring Adrian back. His family descended. His cool elegant mother and abrupt sergeant-major of a father. But their presence was more of an irritation than a comfort. She had always felt Adrian's mother half-despised her, whilst his father seemed to see her as part of the furniture that padded out his son's life. Now, neither of them knew what to say or how to treat her. His mother was pallid and monosyllabic. The father was brusque and off-hand in abortive attempts to be normal, to make her feel better, make them all feel better. But what could be done? His parents could not understand what had happened anymore than Ruth could. They had had a rich, smart, successful son one minute, their pride

and joy to boast of to their well-connected friends. The next minute he was gone, as if in a proverbial puff of smoke. No longer in evidence. Simply disappeared. It was weird, they all agreed. Thankfully, after a few days, his parents, who were obviously as traumatised and numbed as she was, left her to herself once more. She was relieved that the pressure of their presence was no longer there, and determined to see no more of them unless she was positively forced to. Politely they said goodbye, offering her a cold peck on the cheek and insincere sympathies. Ruth felt they both blamed her for Adrian's disappearance, though they did not intimate any such accusations verbally. When they left her - at last! - to her own devices, Ruth lapsed into the inertia of an automaton. She sat for hours, dry-eyed, staring into space, lacking the energy or motivation to do anything at all. Her *raison d'être* had been scotched, erased without a trace, and now she had become like a vacuum. She was sterile, an empty vessel; her whole existence an age of interminable desert become, where once a vibrant ravaging Eden had bloomed.

The days and weeks that followed were a numberless blur; a weird collage of practical necessities such as preparing food and washing, combined with an unbroken suspense of waiting where her will was frozen, and she did not know what to do or how to behave. Soon those weeks turned into months and there was the growing realisation that her initial intuitions had been correct - that Adrian was gone (where and how was still a complete mystery) and would never return.

After six months had passed, the issue of finances raised its head. Her parents had been urging her to find out just what her position was. Finally she went with her father to Adrian's family solicitor. She came out of that lengthy interview stunned. She discovered she was a rich woman - a lot richer than she had imagined with the various investments and stock exchange tip offs Adrian had exploited to the full. She was worth an awful lot of money. Not that that seemed to matter much at that moment. It didn't register. All it was, was another nail in Adrian's coffin, another clod of earth thrown upon his nameless grave. She felt disloyal. A cheat.

Life has to go on, her parents kept telling her, trying to draw her out, light some spark of animation in her. The arid stare and continuing torpor disturbed and worried them. A couple of girl friends came round often, being supportive, urging her to go out with them. But no amount of kindness could change the way she felt. Nothing seemed to matter to her; she did not want the painful process of living again or the vivification of blood, adrenalin. That kind of zest seemed part of the past. But deep down inside she knew, she could not go on like this indefinitely. So when a friend from the nursery came round urging her to resume swimming, she finally forced herself out of her frozen state and consented to go.

Inevitably, she could not conceal the tattoo, and the attention it drew forced upon her once again the knowledge that those words were no longer true. Who was he anyway, the invisible AS? Where was he? - *His Will Be Done* - Why had he deserted her in this way? How could he have left her in this crucifying state of limbo? She sobbed in the shower whilst her friend soothed her. She felt better afterwards; as if the public catharsis had done her good. It was the beginning of her re-entry into life again, the beginning of her proper engagement with it, but on her own terms, without 'the master' always ordering her actions and responses. Slowly, falteringly, she took the first unsteady steps towards independence.

Nine months, ten months. Ruth began to take more notice of the world, begin vague plans and consider her direction. What was she to do with her life? She did not know.

Ten months, eleven months later. On a cold blustery April day, she was having tea in a little cafe in the city. She was reading a cheap romance, engrossed by it, wiping her mouth free of crumbs from the biscuit she nibbled. Somehow something penetrated her concentration. A man of distinctive demeanour was staring at her, consuming her with his eyes. He wore a black leather trench coat and a trilby to match. His eyes were dark and intense while the sharp jut of his nose suggested some quality of granite. She stared unconsciously back for a moment and then her spirit came to life as she saw a desire, a mastery in his eyes that stirred an echo of familiarity in her. She became flustered, confused under his scrutiny, perhaps playing up to his fantasy.

Eventually he moved in on her, in a quiet voice asking 'if he could take a seat and join her'. She, dumb-founded, had nodded. His steady delicate conversation, his finger startling her, making her flesh burn as he brushed a strand of hair from her cheek, as if it was something he was accustomed to doing. He suggested a drink. Without knowing why she complied, the scent of adventure in her veins. The cosy snug of a pub. A few drinks. The flattery. A sudden kiss. Getting a taxi to his flat. The long awaited onslaught on her flesh and the tell-tale signs were there: through her lust, another dark road beckoned her onwards ... She stayed the night with him, wrapped in his arms. But in the morning she extricated herself and left quickly before he awoke.

She needed to think. Was that what she wanted again? The way it had been with Adrian? Was she going to fall so quickly into the same trap - again? She collected her car, paid the fine charge and drove home. She still did not know what to do nor did she have any clear sense of direction for the future. But she did recognise herself beginning to live, to think again, a certain forward-looking energy stirring within her which, for the first time since Adrian had gone, gave her some justification for optimism.

Did she really want to travel that same path she had travelled with Adrian? If not, what was it that she did want? She still had physical needs: how was she to fulfill those without becoming in thrall to them, at their mercy - at the mercy of her body's demands? She didn't want that intensity again. Not after Adrian - for there could be nobody to replace him. She wasn't willing to risk that much pain again. But she could not continually maintain her life on hold, waiting for Adrian to come and set things in motion once more. His absence had become as fixed and irreversible as death, despite the lack of certainty or tangible proofs. So for the first time in years, she began to analyse what it was she really wanted. If she was not ready for the risk and torment of love, what was she ready for? The active impulse within her, for so long squashed and denied, now sparked and stirred. She knew she wanted something different, something new and untried. Some challenge or adventure to take her out of herself. Then, like a strand of sunlight lancing through curtains of grey cloud, it came to her. She felt a twinge of excitement thrill through her and a vague idea, nebulous and indistinct at first, began to form itself in her mind.

She found Adrian's business address-book and the letters of sympathy his friends had sent. Blanking her mind to their content, dashing away the tears that welled and focusing on her intent, she began making a list of telephone numbers. She considered the practical implications of the startling scheme that had come to her. And as she considered the real potential of her plans, all thoughts of Adrian were pushed into the background - for once, for the first time since she had been on her own the trauma and pain finally became submerged and she experienced a sudden new lease of life.

The days went by and this new project continued to be a source of excitement, a tangible possibility in the process of becoming. She even began to smile at herself in the mirror, wondering at her own audacity! My oh my, how this worm has so suddenly turned now, she thought to herself, utterly amazed but nevertheless extremely gratified by the turn of her mind, the turn of events she could envisage in the future. In a snap of the fingers, transformed, just like that. They would see! And in her mind's eye she witnessed Adrian's scandalised expression, as he viewed her machinations. She saw his shock and amazement, a new glint of admiration and grudging respect come into those storm-cloud eyes that had held her so in their thrall. And this image of her former master incited her to pursue the idea with an enthusiasm she had thought she would never recapture.

It was the story of Cynthia Payne that had sparked the whole thing off. A large house in the country. Discrete, high-class. Providing a service much in demand. An innovative approach. Sex-games and role-play seductions arranged by appointment, advertised in exclusive circles by word of mouth and recommendation. Romanesque orgies to satisfy every lewd desire ... She imagined herself playing a part she had never dreamed she could play. The Madame, the Mistress of sex, calling the shots - the masters pleased to oblige. The more she thought about it, the more she wanted to sample such a new reality. Greedy for the adventure of it, the assertion of herself in an entirely new persona.

It was Adrian's friend Paul she decided to contact first. She remembered him from their wedding; that booming voice, the upper class assumption of superiority, brought subtly home somehow when she had opened her mouth to speak, to thank him for the very generous wedding gift. After that she had kept her mouth shut as much as possible and let Adrian do most of the talking, only hoping that her pretty face would please them. Well, that was then, she told herself firmly. Now she intended to prove an entirely different proposition altogether. They would see! Those patronising privileged business magnets Adrian had known; those imperious, arrogant nouveau riche Adrian had cultivated to use for his own ends. She made initial telephone contact with Paul, requesting a meeting, to give her some guidance with "a financial project" she had in mind. He had readily agreed, anxious to help Adrian's grieving young wife as much as he could, a vague inflection of guilt making him more than ready to accommodate her whim. She sensed his surprise at her request - beneath the smooth ready tones of condolence, the affectation of expedite gallantry - and smiled to herself as she put the telephone receiver down.

Three days later, dressed in a short, figure-hugging, but nevertheless tasteful, black dress, she was waiting in the reception area of one of Paul's plush offices. Her make-up was discrete, her manner self-contained, as she sat with her shapely legs crossed casually to reveal just the right amount of thigh. And she had to admit at that point, she was really rather enjoying herself. She did not have to wait long. After

five minutes Paul came out to greet her, taking her hand in an unctuous bid to show his sympathy, his eyes taking her in at a glance - taking in the very tasteful and attractive woman, taking in the luscious limbs, the surprisingly self-possessed manner. Not at all as he had remembered her.

He courteously bid her enter his office, apologising for the fact that he had not written or phoned, excusing himself on the candid lines of uncertainty, given the peculiar circumstances of Adrian's inexplicable eclipse. Paul urged her to make herself comfortable, motioning towards the white leather armchairs. He asked her if she would like a drink: tea? Coffee? Something stronger perhaps? A pre-lunch G and T? She agreed to the latter, secretly thinking that the alcohol would make for a more cosy, relaxed atmosphere.

Very quickly then, Paul had supplied them both with a drink from the discrete, amply filled drinks cabinet in the corner of his office. He sat down beside her, giving his undivided attention; and indeed it was clear that it was no chore for him to do this! He asked about her and her affairs in a most solicitous way, giving her as much time as she needed to come to the point of her visit. After half an hour or so she laid her verbal bait.

"... because you see, I know Adrian would want me to get on with my own life. It's been nearly a year now since ... it happened. For my sanity's sake I have to believe that he is dead. I hope you can understand that and not judge me too harshly. I was absolutely devoted to Adrian, my whole life revolved around him, which is why his ... disappearance has been so desperately hard for me to come to terms with. Especially as in some ways, our relationship was rather - how can I put it? - unusual, I think is the best way to describe it. But I can't remain in this state of frozen animation forever, waiting for Adrian's return, when there's been absolutely nothing, nothing at all to give any indication of what might have happened to him. I'm still young; I have to get on with things as best I can." And then, a brisk change of tone, a flash of her lashes in his direction.

"Now I'm sure you are aware, Paul - you, probably more than anybody - that Adrian was a very successful business man. I discovered the extent of that success a few months ago when I visited the solicitor Adrian had appointed to take care of our affairs. I'm sure it'll come as no surprise to you, that I am very comfortably off indeed. The thing is, I would like to use some of that money to occupy myself in a meaningful way and in a way, that I hope will prove lucrative in the long run. However, what I have in mind, requires great discretion and sensitive consideration, which is why I thought I would come to you first ..." the subtle flattery and careful understated appeal to his vanity paid off.

"Now look Ruth, I hope I've made it clear, if there's anything I can do to help you, if it's within my capabilities and sphere of influence to aid any venture you have in mind, I will do it. After all it's the least I can do after what has happened. I am here at your disposal, so fire away: what is it that you have in mind?" Then, seeing her hesitate and look down as if foreseeing some difficulty or awkwardness - "please, Ruth, I will give you whatever guidance and support I can, Whatever it is you are thinking of, don't feel embarrassed or inhibited about saying what's on your mind." The brown eyes, which from time to time, flickered to rest on the swell of her breasts beneath the black silk, confirmed the warmth and acceptance of his manner.

Ruth gave a small, musing smile, uncrossed and recrossed her legs, leaning slightly forwards as she did so. She took a breath and began: "Well Paul, you're a man of the world I know, and I'm sure you understand all there is to understand about sexual desires and ... unusual sexual inclinations." She was gratified to witness his kindled response, the quiver of electricity that trembled in the air between them as she broached this clearly unexpected topic. Clearly, directly, as if she was putting forward a scheme for a charity event or had ideas for launching a new fashion design outlet, she stated her plans. She spelled out just what kind of pleasure palace operation she had in mind.

By the end of the lunch-time meeting, she felt a surge of affirmation and she knew she had the talents and capabilities to see this thing through to its practical culmination. Indeed, Paul proved to be more than helpful, in every respect, once he knew just what her ideas entailed. She discovered she was able to use her charms in such a way that made Paul willing to make her his priority, promising to phone this colleague and that old school friend, in order to gather the information and contacts that would stand her in indispensable stead in the future. Just a brush of her breasts as she reached forwards to kiss him on his cheek for his most welcome aid, just a hint of what might be available for him if he played his cards right. For they both knew how stale a conventional married sex life could become. They both recognised how necessary that discrete extra outlet was, for those with sexual drives which exceeded the needs of their lawful spouse. In fact, she discovered they were quite in agreement over most things to do with the subject that consumed their discussion over the course of lunch.

He insisted on seeing her to her car, becoming more chivalrous and more familiar, more anxious to assure her of his unqualified support, the more time they spent together. She was aware of his appreciative glances at her legs, at the curve of her buttocks beneath the clinging black silk, as she bent to unlock her car door, and when she sat down in the driver's seat and her dress rode up towards her crotch. She had wound the window down and smiled a response to the assurances her willing benefactor had given her. A compliment, a gentleman's kiss of her hand as they said goodbye, with Paul promising to ring her in the very near future. She drove away from the meeting thoroughly delighted with herself, and with her appetite wetted for more of the same.

Over the following weeks she arranged to have lunch with a variety of Adrian's business associates and friends. She laid her suggestions before them, silkily purring out her plans of erotica, of undiscovered pleasures; asking their advice in a knowing way, helping them confide. She needed girls, you see. Advertisements placed in the 'proper' places. Lots of beautiful consenting women and discrete publicity. Would they help her? Most agreed to her softly suggested suasions, as she quoted a likely fee and asked them to spread the word. She knew the news would spread rapidly on the old boy's public school network, and interest would be speedily engaged.

She always dressed alluringly on these occasions, in clothes that were soft and tasteful, clothes which carried her curves like a banner of beauty when she walked. Many of the men, not having met her before, were stunned by her, were impressed by her calm acceptance of their old friend Adrian's apparent death. They admired the guiltless way she spoke of him, and were drawn to her loveliness, so that by the end of the meeting they were intrigued into becoming willing informal advocates for her "business". Paul had assured her that this would probably be the case at their first meeting, after which he had obliged her by giving her a number of useful names and organisations, making some suggestions with regard to security which proved of invaluable assistance later on. She thanked him in a way that secured his continuing support and favour ...

The next thing she did was have her tattoo not taken off, but altered. She went through the pain and expense of erasing the A and the word *His*. When that had healed she went back and had the letter R put before the zag of red that served as an S and instead of *His Will Be Done* now it read *Her Will Be Done*. She was amazed at herself. It was almost as if she had separated into two parts. The passive part which had acquiesced to Adrian's every whim, was now pushed into the role of observer, whilst the dynamic part of herself struggled to give birth to a new, more assertive, self confident Ruth. She hoped that the changed tattoo would exert as powerful effect as the original one had done. Only this time she intended that the tattoo would serve to confirm her own strength, her own will and determinations, not that of her absent master. And truly it seemed to have the desired affect. In addition to this measure she put herself through a fitness regime and took up aikido, to give herself more physical confidence, in keeping with the nature of her new role. Then she set about organising the first "party".

Gradually news filtered through. There were discrete phone calls, meetings with potential dancing girls - with beautiful women who wanted to explore "the dark side" and the quick ready money it brought. Or there were women like her former self who took a masochistic delight in their own debasement. A whole array of women, from female contortionists to rubber clad dominatrix, from belly dancing massuers to naughty nannies; women who thought they could use their talents or indulge their whims, and make money as well.

She got in touch with the pony club and asked them to send some of their gear, for which she paid handsomely. She had the lounge re-decorated in a deep dreamy blue with rich colourful hangings on the walls and an array of nooks to sit or lie in. She intended the atmosphere to be opulent, extravagant, royal. She found a large brass effigy of an eagle in an antique shop and there it stood in the big room, lending an imperial theme to the scene. Another room, another reality: light, grecian, clean and spacious with cream drapes at the windows and thick rugs on a floor scattered with a multitude of plush woven cushions, enhancing the white marble effect walls. Another door opened into a warm pink room, reminiscent of the womb space; richly dressed in dark colours shot with gold where one could lie and relax, perhaps as a sultan may in the rooms of his hareem. Each door opened into a different dream, held an alternative presence. The french windows led onto the lengthy lawn and the river at the bottom. The surrounds of trees and high manicured hedgerow which at one time she had hated and felt isolated behind, now seemed a benediction of possibility which Ruth brought fully to bloom.

Upstairs, the torture chamber. Downstairs, a doctor's waiting room. The cellar extended to provide a space for any anomalous desire, not catered for elsewhere. The fitting room where the dining room had once been; a plethora of garments hung ready to inspire, to be tried, to be trussed or discarded as was

required, as pleased the multivarious appetites that came to indulge their untoward fantasies in fabulous style. The bathroom refitted, scented candles in wall brackets, filling the sensuous air with exotic perfumes, provoking the gratification of aphrodisiac response. More garments, more devices, more imaginatively constructed sex scenarios, graced by nymphs of pleasure, ready and willing to play the games of the client's dictates - for the right amount of money, for the correct, richly arranged fee. A boudoir, a palace of abandon, a hall of excess that could invent the paradise or the penance kept hidden in each visitor's waking world of fantasy. A mansion where the wildest of dreams came true. For a night ... For a calculated cash advance. Here, Her Will Was Done in the skilful succour of the senses, satisfaction guaranteed.

Nearly two years after Adrian's disappearance, Ruth stood on the brink of a new life in a different role entirely. There was an array of lovely women: blondes, red-heads, brunettes, gypsies and slaves, serving wenches and princesses, dancing girls and primitive natives strolling around scantily clad, offering drinks, taking coats, whilst Ruth issued greetings, arranged the meetings that had been requested. She was dressed in her leather basque and matching briefs. She had fishnet stockings on and high leather boots, a swirling black cloak. Her tattoo was clearly visible and shocking to see. She had played up to the image well. On her arms she wore silver armulets like shields of armour and she twitched the leather scourge in her hands convincingly, as she asserted they must enjoy themselves, or else they would have her to answer to! The men laughed nervously, aroused at the thought.

She had managed to get in touch with Jason, the tattooist, and had enlisted his support as well, whilst at the same time astonishing him with her transformation. She made the boundaries clear. He was there to provide an extra service, an extra possibility for the clients who fancied risking a tattoo or a body part pierced, and to help out in case of any trouble - to be the minder she might sometimes need.

And so Ruth grew into her role of Madame, Mistress of sex and planner of erotic parties, where everyone could let their fantasies come free. She got a kick out of marching around, tapping her whip on her boot, leaving traces of unfulfilled desire where ever she walked. She was an entirely different woman now as if to make up for her weakness and submissiveness of before. Now she was amazonian. Her public face. Her armour.

On occasions she would allow herself to be taken, switch roles, become a willing slave. But she did not allow any of them too close, and continued to enjoy her independence, her growing reputation for unusual and excellent pleasure parties; the money that was steadily accruing in the bank. The public school connections were very useful at times. You only had to say the word, make the carefully timed request, be advised to opt for these shares and you'll see, the money will grow. And it did. With the help of her "trade" and further investments.

Very soon she became a by-word for those rich circles. A place to go to, to let off steam, indulge the fantasies. Pretend for a while. In a very enticing, erotic way. So her position was strengthened and she continued to build her empire, using the garden as a paddock for female 'ponies', for subversive, sexual inclinations which she was fully versed in and which she thoroughly understood the itch for. She became renowned for her weekend pleasure trips - anything you desire, we cater for. Simple, deviously discrete, richly entertaining and handsomely rewarding. So Ruth built her own empire and surveyed it from the lofty height of an ever filling money pot.

Then as the months followed on and the years took pace Ruth would only occasionally now think of Adrian. When she did, he still posed a puzzle for her. She would remember how when she had been with him she had felt submerged, featureless and deadened, yet also hopelessly alive. Tormented and yet electrified. Dead and alive. Dead and alive. Like the mystery of his disappearance. Like he had become. Like she was herself. For she felt strangely empty at times; and then it was that, despite her transformation and success, she would crave the special dark flavour of his love.

Finally though, as the years rolled by, Adrian became a distant memory to her and Jason became her lover. She would even risk switching roles and play his willing slave at times, but only when she chose to; she made her boundaries clear this time, thanks to that confidence money and independence had given her. The echoes that remained of her previous life were seemingly submerged by the newly desirable, the rich society life she had become a part of, where she played her role with elegance and seductive aloofness.

She only freed herself, from time to time through Jason, a union which allowed her wild imaginings, her itch for debasement, a temporary release. Then the flavour of Adrian would return to haunt her in fleeting subliminal impressions - like a hidden fruit - gorged and gone to seed ...

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In Shropshire, opposite Big Linley Wood, rose the imposing bulk of Black Rhadley Hill. Now the evening light seemed to lend it an aura of hidden vitality. Forested banks glanced with the luminous gold of secrets in a glimmer of rays from the setting sun. The russet bracken, the somniferous pines and virescent broad leaves that shrouded its sides, spoke of some magickal or lush possibility in the gloaming evening haze. Crowned at the top with nude grey rock were craggy peaks lined with quartz crystal. Bald stone. As if the hill, in the birth throes of creation, had strained to attain the stature of mountain, cracking itself open and disgorging rock from its bowels in cataclysmic effort.

Yet some quixotic whim of Nature had frozen its purpose, as that mountain bud awoke, leaving its inclining mass merely a steeped hillside. But in the lofty region of its tip an echo of grandeur and strangeness remained. A place to touch the stars on. A cleft to carve the sacrificial altar upon. Something dark and unyielding and implacable resonant in the soil, and in the quartzite stone that made up the mass of it.

The bald height of the hill sank serene amidst the dusk, the shadows forming a broad sweeping smile across it; as if the hill itself was satisfied with its own richness, its own sombre charm and cryptic veins of dread. It now stood glossed with a gossamer robe of purple and gold in the gilding twilight. The bite hidden. The jaws concealed. Just the poetry now in evidence.

Only the beauty of a rocky topped hill overlooking a little river and a wood., the violence of the original volcanic eruption less than a memory in the stillness of encroaching night. Only the perfection and wonder of Nature to behold, as the trees unfurl and blossom their Spring, twirl the black leaves of their Autumn fall.

Black Rhadley Hill in the evening light. A faint opulent hymn that gathers in, that gathers in, and holds what it may in the depths of its bosom.

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Chant to return Atazoth

Culling - A Guide to Sacrifice II  
ONA 1990eh (revised 1994eh)

As has been written - offers are human culling in action. That is, Satanic sacrifice makes a contribution to improving the human stock: removing the worthless, the weak, the diseased (in terms of character). Naturally, this culling occurs on a somewhat larger scale by using magickal means to direct/influence/control events in real time (i.e. in the causal) and so produce historical change [war/strife/ struggle/ revolution and so on] than it does by choosing a specific offer and executing an act of sacrifice. However, the correct choice of offer means that with their elimination the sinister dialectic will be aided and thus the intrusion of the acausal into the causal speeded up. [ In non-esoteric terms read: "aid the dark forces to spread over Earth." ] The choosing of specific offers depends on three things: (1) Satanic judgement; (2) and insight into and knowledge of Aeonics and the sinister dialectic; (3) the means for undertaking the act without compromising the individuals involved are available. Generally, it is the duty of a Master or Mistress to select offers, although any Satanist, from novice upwards, can suggest suitable targets, in which case the Master or Mistress, after due consideration, will give judgement as to the suitability of the target.

(1) means a judgement is made, based on experience. Often, this is judgement concerning the *character* of the victim. The victim may be suggested/chosen (a) because one or more of their actions has brought them to attention and made them seem suitable; or (b) their removal will be beneficial to Satanism/the sinister dialectic. The suitability of the victim is decided by a Master or Mistress, and once confirmed, the victim or victims are subject to tests (qv. 'Guidelines for the Testing of Offers' MS). Often, the Master or Mistress arranges to meet to victim or victims 'accidentally' and so can judge them on a personal level.

(2) means the proposed action is assessed in the light of Aeonics/the sinister dialectic - i.e. will the removal of the victim or victims aid the cause of Satanism? The dialectic?

(3) Means that (a) members are available to conduct the tests; (b) the loyalty of those members and the others who will participate in actual sacrifice is assured; (c) the Temple has the means and the abilities necessary to conduct the act: for example, make it seem 'accidental' if an "accidental death" is decided upon as a means of avoiding detection; can ensure safe untraceable disposal after the act; arrange an alibi should any participant need one.

Offers are not chosen at random - they are always carefully selected, then judged, then tested. The actual act - be such a ritual or a practical act (such as an assassination) - is never done for any personal reason. That is, it never arises out of personal emotions or from personal desires. Instead, the act is supra-personal - done with a Satanic judgement and a Satanic detachment arising from both sinister knowledge (e.g. of Aeonics) and direct knowledge of the character or actions of the victim. The act itself and the prior judgment as to the suitability of the victim or victims is often communal - involving a Temple/group and thus a participation which enables a reasoned and balanced assessment by those participating. In such communal action, one member is appointed to argue the case *for* or on behalf of the intended victim or victims during the special *sunedrion* which is convened by the Master or Mistress to consider the selection of victim(s) and arrangements for the act.

The act itself is one which glorifies the Satanic, which affirms Satanic values - that is, it aids evolution in a positive way, enhancing the lives of individuals. In short, it aids self-development (of the participants) and aids evolution (via the sinister dialectic/nature of the culling). Offers become/are chosen as victims because of their nature and/or because of their deeds. Mostly, victims are dross - those whose removal will aid change/the growth of civilization/the Aeonic imperative.

The judgement which decides the fate of an intended victim or victims is of course a Satanic one - and quite often, this judgement is akin to an act of 'natural justice' and/or a Satanic retribution: the victims have effectively condemned themselves by their deeds/their nature. In effect, Satanic sacrifice is conscious evolution in action.

Many examples might be presented to illustrate this - but four will suffice, although it should be remembered that these are merely illustrations, specimens, to throw light on the underlying principles involved.

I.) A young man of weak character (no self-discipline; a lout of the worst kind) spends his time stealing cars and committing petty crimes. He lives on 'Social Security' benefit and has a disdain for nearly everyone - which he shows by his loutish, foul-mouthed behaviour: when he is with friends, of course,

since he is too weak and cowardly to do anything provocative on his own. He is often drunk. On one occasion, he steals a car with some of his cronies, is chased by Police but escapes. During this chase, he crashes into some other cars and two people are injured, one of whom is a young woman who sustains serious injuries the effects of which will be with her for the rest of her life.

Some time later, this lout and some others break into the home of an elderly, blind man. The man attempts to stop them and this enrages this lout who beats the old man unconscious. The elderly man had fought in the Great War of 1914-18 and had been awarded several medals for gallantry. After this beating, the lout is rather proud of himself and considers he is something of a 'hard man'.

This lout is a typical example of the modern dross modern society produces in such profusion and which this society does nothing effective about. His character and his actions make him a suitable candidate for sacrifice - his removal will be a culling, benefitting evolution, and be an act of natural justice, restoring balance. Satanic judgement would give him a chance to redeem himself - make something out of himself - via tests designed to show if he has any potential. Should he fail the tests, he would be regarded as an offer.

II.) A Satanic novice living in a European country where questioning the 'holocaust' is a crime, in Law, joins an extreme Right-wing political group which works "underground". In doing this, he hopes to acquire experience "on the edge" and actively aid the sinister dialectic by challenging 'the accepted' and speaking/working for and on behalf of the heretical and 'the forbidden' (in that and other Western countries, the heretical is National-Socialism: qv. MSS on Aeonics). After some months of action, he and some others are betrayed by someone working with them. The person who betrayed them had been arrested doing something dreadfully 'illegal' (distributing forbidden books and leaflets) and had made a deal with the authorities whereby he only gets a fine if he gives them the names of others involved in the underground cell. Our novice however escapes to another country - but two of his Comrades are caught and after a farce of a trial are sentenced to several years imprisonment.

Thus the betrayer makes himself a candidate for sacrifice - he acted against the sinister dialectic (and thus those aiding that dialectic) and revealed a weakness of character.

III.) A particular individual is prominent in actively organizing and encouraging violent opposition to those who are members of a political group whose actions and policies [unknown to them] are aiding and will aid the sinister dialectic and whose nationwide success would begin a new upward phase in evolutionary change. By his actions over a period of time, this particular individual becomes an opponent of those who desire to bring about this new evolutionary change - and thus he becomes a suitable candidate for sacrifice. His removal - most effectively by assassination - will be a lesson to others and beneficial for those whom he opposed, and thus will aid the dialectic.

IV.) An Adept desires to practically and effectively disrupt the *status quo* and encourage the breakdown of the present system, aiming also to bring about a revolutionary state of affairs in his country beneficial to those whose actions and policies [unknown to them] are aiding and will aid the dialectic and thus evolution. To do this, he aims to target a particular, distinct, group - considering them all as suitable potential offers. That is, he considers this particular group - by its nature and by its collective presence and actions - has shown itself to be suitable: removal of as many of its members as possible will be conscious natural selection in action. In effect, he wished to create a particular type of 'tension' in society by eliminating members of this particular, distinct, group.

The Master guiding this particular Adept agreed this was a feasible option, from the point of view of practically and effectively aiding the sinister dialectic. A special *sunedrion* was held to consider this, with a member defending the character and presence of this particular group within this particular society. After hearing and considering all the arguments, the judgement of the Master was that the members of this particular distinct group (and others like it) could indeed be classed as offers and thus that the removal of one or many would be beneficial.

Essentially, sacrifice falls into two categories - (1) sacrifice by magick by means of a magickal rite, such as the Death Ritual; (2) sacrifice by some physical act - i.e. death by practical means. (2) can and often does involve a secondary and/or simultaneous magickal ritual which aids or is a part of the practical act of execution.

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#### ***Excursus: The Reason for Revealing a Secret Sinister Tradition***

Too often, in the past, the true nature of Satanic sacrifice was hidden - even from many who professed to be Satanists. More recently, pseudo-Satanists have falsely claimed that "Satanism does not and never has conducted human sacrifices." However, I repeat that human sacrifice - properly conducted according to

the guidelines laid down by traditional Satanist groups - is a culling and thus is positive and a practical expression of Satanic belief. Of course, the modern pseudo-Satanists deny this - since in their weakness they seek respectability and seek to make what they call 'Satanism' like themselves: weak, pseudo-intellectual, ineffective, inoffensive and addicted to fantasy role-playing.

The time is now right, however - both strategically and tactically - to reveal the Satanic truth, the whole Satanic truth and nothing but the Satanic truth in clear, precise terms which are not open to mis-interpretation.

The traditional code of silence which forbid the casting of this aspect of esoteric Satanic tradition into writing - and which expressly forbid the dissemination of anything connected with that aspect - no longer applies. That is, the Grand Master representing traditional Satanic groups recently decided to permit this aspect of the tradition to be not only written down, but also disseminated. This would establish for both present and historical purposes, what the true nature of Satanism was and is since it was considered that the time was right (given the conditions pertaining in Western societies at the time the decision was taken) for this knowledge to be made known. The main reason for this judgement was Aeonic - to enable greater participation in genuine Satanism, thus increasing the number of genuine Satanists, and thus enable these Satanists by their acts and their living to implement sinister strategy. With the revealing of the principles and practice of Satanic sacrifice, *all* of genuine Satanic practice and belief was made accessible - it was no longer confined to esoteric groups or reclusive individuals. A subsidiary reason for revealing this aspect of sinister tradition was to counter the falsehoods of the pseudo-Satanists. These pseudo-Satanists had set themselves up, within what had become the 'Occult establishment', as authorities on Satanism - making pronouncements as to whom they considered to be "genuine Satanists" and which group or groups they considered to be "authentic". Of course, those so deemed 'genuine' or 'authentic' had to fit their definition of what they considered Satanism to be - and by the nature of that definition these so-called 'genuine Satanists' were one or more of the following: jerks, role-playing hucksters, babbling pretentious nerds, fantasy-mongers, pseudo-intellectual dabblers, mental defectives and vain, egotistical, materialistic urbanized softies incapable and afraid of undergoing genuine *ordeals* in the real world.

These people went around feeling rather pleased with themselves and their safe, tame 'Satanic' world of fantasy-rituals conducted in covens/pylons or in some pathetic 'temple' they made in their own home out of various bits-and-pieces sold to them by some "I really believe in the power of crystals" Occult-shop owner. The meanderings of these pretentious Temples and Churches - "we are 'authentic' and 'genuine' Satanists!" - with their fictitious "mandates" and their spurious "teachings" cobbled-together from old Jewish-inspired Grimoires and long-dead useless myths and legends, would, if left unchallenged, gradually obscure then undermine and destroy the real essence of Satanism. This essence is that it is a practical means, a practical way, to create a new, higher type of individual - and eventually a new human species. This way involves - and can only involve - real experiences, real ordeals, *real darkness* and real self-effort over a period of many years, for only these things build real personal *character*; only these things lead to a *self-overcoming*, an evolution of the individual. The pseudo-Satanists wallow in intellectual verbosity and engross themselves in pseudo-magickal rituals. For so defying the sinister dialectic, and revealing their true, weak, nature, some at least would be suitable as opfers.... In their last moment of terror, they would at last experience the real, primal, darkness which is Satan.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Guidelines for the Testing of Opfers  
**ONA 1988ev**

It is a fundamental principle of traditional Satanism that all prospective opfers must be subject to several tests before becoming actual opfers either during a ceremony or otherwise.

The purpose of the tests is to give the chosen victim a sporting chance and to show if they possess the character defects which make them suitable as opfers. The victim is chosen according to Satanic practice - those whose removal will aid the sinister dialectic, for instance, or those who have or are proving troubling for Satanism in general, or those who have been judged by a Master or a Mistress (or someone of a higher Grade) as suitable for receiving Satanic justice/vengeance because of one or more of their actions. Once the victim is chosen, it is the duty of the Master or Mistress of the Temple or group who wish to perform the sacrifice to appoint suitable members - and if necessary train them - to prepare and execute the tests.

It is principle that no offer under any circumstance be informed directly or indirectly that they are being tested for whatever reason as this would invalidate the test.

The tests are constructed so as to give the victim a choice of responses - either a positive one, or a negative one. A negative choice leads to another test at another time and place. If this choice is also negative, then the victim is deemed suitable, and becomes the offer. Sometimes however, a third test may be deemed necessary by the Master or Mistress.

The tests are to appear to be incidents of everyday life such as the victim might be expected to encounter, given the society of the time. The tests are designed to test the character of the victim - to reveal their true nature. Positive, Satanic qualities, are courage, daring, defiance, and so on. Negative qualities are cowardice, meek fear, treachery and so on. It is for the Master or Mistress to use their judgement, experience and knowledge to construct the appropriate tests which seek to prove if the victim possesses the qualities deemed appropriate. Basically, the victim must, if they are suitable for sacrifice, show that they possess a weak character and be lacking in Satanic qualities such as nobility and excellence.

An example will best illustrate the type of test which is required.

For this example, the victim is male, and to undertake the test, four members will be required, two of them female. The victim has been under surveillance for some time, and his routine, habits etc. noted. It has been found that he has a certain fondness for young ladies. A female member is to 'set him up' for the actual test - she meets him, 'as if by chance' at a place he frequents. She shows a subtle sexual interest in him. If he runs true to form, he will suggest a future meeting, to which she agrees (or, if he does not suggest this, she does). She specifies the place and the date/time. This is a place where few if any other people are likely to be around at the time specified. At this assignation, he is observed by the three (two men, one woman) who are to conduct the actual test, until they judge the time is right. [If the victim does not turn up, the first lady member meets him, again 'by chance', and arranges another meeting. If this meeting does not occur, another test is devised.] The second lady then passes near to where the victim is waiting - she makes certain he is aware of her. The two men then come onto the scene and begin to harass her, verbally at first. Then they begin to 'molest' her physically and try to drag her away (toward a car, probably). She screams for help. The test is to see how the victim reacts - what his choice is. He has two choices - to do nothing, and pretend he has not heard/noticed anything (a negative response), or he can go to the aid of the lady. [Note: 'Help'/aid here means actually trying to rescue her, not merely feebly asking the men to stop.] If he tries to aid her, the two men run off, and she thanks him gratefully. If he does nothing to aid her, he has failed the test, for he reveals the character of a coward. The Master or Mistress will be observing events from a discreet distance.

The performances of the members, during the test, must be totally convincing, as must their timing. In all aspects of the tests, from the initial surveillance to the final execution of the test, they must be professional.

It will be seen from this example that the tests are quite complex - require planning, rehearsals and so on. This planning, and the surveillance, might take months. Little, if anything, should be left to chance in the execution of the tests. The rewards, however, justify the operation - there is, firstly, a probable victim for sacrifice, enabling the quintessence of Satanic ritual to be undertaken; secondly, there is the involvement of the whole Temple - the planning, the choosing of victims, the rehearsals of the tests and then finally their execution. This involvement, from the initial choice to the final test, is an extended magickal act,

imbued with Satanic essence - creating and presenting sinister energies, aiding the development of Satanic skill and character, drawing the members together in a vivifying way. As such, it is a prelude to the act of sacrifice itself. Thus, even should the victim not be chosen because he/she proves unsuitable having made a positive choice during a test, the effort has been extremely worthwhile, both in terms of aiding the development of members on the levels of character and knowledge and skills, and also magickally.

The decision of the Master or Mistress regarding the outcome of a particular test is final and binding. It needs to be stressed that the tests give the victim a sporting chance and serve to confirm/deny their suitability - before the tests are even planned, the victim will have been chosen as a probable offer by the Master or Mistress using their judgement.

Offers are examples of human culling in action.

- Order of Nine Angles -

In Praise of War  
R. Venn, ONA.

War is necessary - it ensures the health of a people and it encourages those warrior virtues which are essential to civilization.

When a people, nation or race goes for decades without engaging in a war which involves all or most of the communities of that people, nation or race, then that people, nation or race tends toward decadence - with cowardly scum coming to the surface, the young becoming feckless and undisciplined, and society generally declining. War breeds and reveals *character* - in combat, there is no where to hide. One either does one's duty, with courage and perhaps heroism - or one does not. War is the test of the man. War is natural selection in action - Fate decrees who survives, who is uninjured and who becomes revered as heroic. War makes individuals respect Fate, and thus gives real wisdom - an awareness of *duty* and *responsibility*.

Pacifism, and the pursuit of peace as an objective, are decadent - manifestations of cowards and *decadents*, and of a people and society ruled by cowards and *decadents*. Of course war creates and brings suffering, injury and hardship - but the hard reality is that such things are necessary. Without such things there is no real wisdom, no real individual character, no real understanding - no awareness of Fate, of those forces which are beyond the individual and which the individual cannot control. Without such things there is no perspective - and what is really important about life and living gets lost in selfishness and a crass pursuit of materialism. Above all else, war breeds *nobility*. It makes the values of nobility - honour, loyalty and duty - ideals to be strived for and thus encourages civilized conduct among individuals and a civilized society for individuals to live in. A noble individual is someone prepared to fight, and if necessary die, for their folk, race or nation. A peaceful society - dedicated to peace and the selfishness and materialism which goes with it - encourages and creates a feckless, crime-ridden society full of aggressive individuals who use that aggression to achieve their petty, egotistical aims.

War channels the natural and healthy aggression of youth and early manhood in a useful and productive way. The proponents of pacifism and the 'peaceful society' believe in their vain arrogance that their abstract, unnatural and intellectual ideas can change what they see as "human nature" - they believe that given sufficient "education" (read 'brainwashing') and sufficient social schemes, this aggression and lust for battle can be removed or miraculously transformed into something which they believe is more positive. What these products of late-twentieth century decadence fail in their intellectual arrogance to understand, is that individual nature is only and always changed by real, practical experience of living and *never by ideas or any amount of 'teaching' and/or social schemes*. What little individual change results from such things as ideas, teaching, 'faith' and social schemes is only and always pretence - *affectation*; that is, whatever change such things produce in individuals, such changes are not real - they do not go deep, they are not fundamental, positive changes. What all this amounts to is that if one places side-by-side a combat veteran, and one of the intellectual pacifist/'social worker' types which modern society breeds in profusion, then it is obvious to anyone of any real intelligence that the combat veteran is the better person, more in touch with the reality of life, more *civilized* and more able to cope with life and any change life brings. It is only soft, comfortable modern urban/suburban living which allows the social worker type to flourish - and this soft urban/suburban style of living exists in any civilization only for a short period, for it has within it the seeds of its own destruction. These seeds are the soft individuals it breeds. Civilizations are created and maintained by individuals of character - by warriors, by those experienced in war - they are *never* created and *never* maintained by ideas, by bureaucratic types, by politicians, by social schemes and 'education'. Anyone who believes that civilization depends on clever, fancy ideas and those who propound such ideas or makes their living from them is, quite simply, being *naive*. The penalty for such large scale *naively* as the societies of the West now suffer from, is that slow descent back into barbarism which has already begun.

The reality of pacifism and other such unnatural abstract ideas, is that they undermine and ultimately destroy that personal or individual *character* which is essential to civilization. The personal character essential to civilization and a civilized way of life is only and always created by combat - by personal experience of war.

A healthy society accepts war and prepares for it. A healthy society encourages warrior virtues and trains its people for combat. A healthy society upholds the war or combat hero as the highest ideal - as someone to be admired and emulated. A healthy society rewards those who have distinguished themselves in battle and accepts such individuals, and only such individuals, as leaders. In a healthy

society, young men look forward eagerly to battle.

In contrast, an unhealthy or sick society strives to make "heroes" out of such non-entities as "entertainers", politicians, and successful business people. In brief, a sick society elevates the type of people combat veterans despise - vain, egotistical people concerned for the most part with materialism and/or sickly, pretentious (often sociological) 'ideas'.

It needs to be constantly affirmed that war and civilization are inseparable. To be civilizing, war has to be for some noble purpose - and this purpose can only be to ensure the survival, prosperity and extension of a particular folk, nation or race. War for a decadent purpose - such as to ensure 'peace' - is self-defeating, and produces only degeneracy and decline because such a decadent purpose weakens those fighting and produces an ailing, weak society dedicated to unnatural ideas that make people psychologically unwell. Thus, any war which aims to strengthen a particular folk, nation or race is good; any war fought for any other reason - such as an abstract idea like 'peace' - is bad. A good war creates, aids and maintains civilization. A bad war destroys civilization.

A good war is morally right - it is a duty. It is a necessity. A good war ensures the health and vitality of a particular folk, nation or race - and thus makes for a healthy, vital society. What we have today - in terms of civilized life and the comforts which go with it - is the result of war. What we have lost and are losing - honour, community spirit, noble character, vitality, purpose - is the result of peace.

For too long, the pacifists, the cowards, the decadent and the pursuers of selfish, material goals, have been unchallenged. We who believe in war - who know its value and its purpose - have been silent for too long. We need to once again proudly and defiantly sing the praises of war!

- Order of Nine Angles -



Mastery - Its Real Meaning and Significance  
Anton Long ONA 103yf

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 some regard 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 pursue 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 Aeonick 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 Aeonick 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 Aeonick 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 **Aeonick** 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 presented 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 Aeonick energy is presented 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 Aeonic 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 pseudo-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 "Ippsisimus" [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.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Revenge  
ONA, From Hostia II, 1992.

Central to any civilization and society which is civilized, is the notion of revenge - and central to revenge is the blood feud. When the "State" - of whatever political hue or any large organized governmental structure, reserves for itself the means and control and dispensation of "Justice" then true freedom does not exist: the individual has become controlled and enslaved, if not physically, then mentally.

Any healthy flourishing society not only allows revenge, but encourages it, and any society which does not is already a form of tyranny, however much clever, vapid, intellectual and political words may be used to try and obscure this reality. A healthy society is one that tends to respect the individual right to justice and thus revenge: the two are linked and cannot be separated without destroying both, leaving an empty shell. A healthy society seeks to respect the individual, and extend their responsibilities and duties, and one of the most important responsibilities and duties of any individual is to avenge.

This view is not upheld by many today - and certainly by none who form those cliques of legal and social 'professionalism' which infest society today. Instead, the present System seeks to convince us all, from childhood, that only the State has the "right" to deal with "Justice" - and that only this is "civilised". But if you believe that, you really are ill - one of those pale specimens inebriated by the clever words and ideas of the half-men (and half-women) who unfortunately proliferate today in our comfortable and monied societies.

Revenge is natural and necessary. An illustration here might be instructive. A young motorist, high on drink and drugs, deliberately runs down and kills someone: the classic 'innocent passerby'. After some trouble, the police find this driver and he is charged. When his case comes to court, he manages to wriggle out of the murder charge ('lack of sufficient evidence'/some legal problem) and is instead convicted of manslaughter. He shows no remorse. He is sentenced to 3 years in prison. After a little over 2 years he is released, and some months later is arrested for drink driving and driving while disqualified. A few more months in prison. Then he is free. Now, in this instance (and many like it) the relatives of the victim have a duty to kill this piece of scum - and should be ashamed of themselves if they did not. Naturally, they would give all sorts of reasons as to why they would do nothing - but basically they are, if they do nothing, (a) spineless cowards; (b) degenerate bastards who do not care; (c) so ground down by the System, by the lies and propaganda, that their natural instincts have been destroyed. They - one or some of them - should have killed the offender. Naturally, in the feeble societies of the Western tyrannies, had they done so they would - if caught - have faced "Justice" and the legal system themselves: and probably spent longer in prison than the bastard who deserved to die (such is the sickness of the "West"). But, until this whole rotten System is destroyed, they should have used the rules of the System against itself - why not, for instance, run the bastard himself down? You would, if caught, only get a few years. But at least you would be able to live with yourself - still have your honour. Of course, an impartial assessment (like a Judge) is still necessary - but once judged, relatives are honour bound to act. Anything less is gutless.

## Sacrifice

Although it was over seven years away, I believed the time was right to begin the planning for my performance of the Ceremony of Recalling; a sinister ritual of sacrifice where the victim or offer was offered to Baphomet, the dark Goddess of Satanic tradition, regarded as the Bride of Lucifer. According to the tradition I was heir to, the ritual was performed every seventeen years by the Grand Master or Grand Mistress who represented that tradition - the offer being a Priest of the tradition. In the ceremony, the Mistress of Earth identified with the role of Baphomet.

The sacrifice could, of course, be purely symbolic. It had been a long time since a voluntary sacrifice had occurred, the offer, in the recent past, being carefully chosen. I believed I should continue this recent trend. I would need to plan the rite carefully ~ carefully choosing those who would take part. They would be sworn to secrecy, and would have to have no doubts of any kind. I, like a few others, understood the meaning of the rite itself - it would continue a tradition, creating a link with past deeds and thus magickal energies, and it would also create or draw down its own sinister energies. These could be directed to achieve a specific goal, or they could be directed into a chosen individual or individual who would have an important sinister Destiny to fulfil, or they could be stored to await further use. Whatever, it was an extremely powerful and sinister rite.

Such a sacrifice would thus be for a specific Satanic goal, and in accordance with Satanic honour the offer [for this would have to be an involuntary sacrifice] would choose him/her self by their deeds. That is, their removal would benefit evolution, and consequently aid the sinister. They would not be chosen at random, as they would not be, despite the claims by those who knew nothing about genuine Satanism, virgins or children. They would be those whose removal would actively benefit our long-term aeonic goals. Let me express this plainly so that it will be understood. The victim or victims would be the type of person or persons whose death by whatever means would not be mourned - someone of whom many would say: 'He/she deserved it...' The sacrifice would be akin to an act of natural justice. Naturally, it would be myself, in consultation with a few others, who would decide, and this decision would be based on sinister strategy or aeonics.

Such an offer could be chosen by such means at other times and the appropriate rite of sacrifice performed, but the Ceremony was more specific: its aims, intent, were for a definite purpose. Accordingly, I began to plan for the ritual ~ I already had a few vague ideas concerning suitable candidates, and asked a trusted Guardian of one of the Temples to begin research into their backgrounds. I also visited a few possible sites for the ritual, researched others, and began to consider those who might participate with me.

Of course, I had undertaken sacrifices before ~ in the approved manner. And even before those, I had tried a ritual of sacrifice. This was in my early days, before I assumed my role as heir. I, with some others involved in politics and vaguely involved with the sinister, planned to sacrifice someone to commemorate the founding of our new political movement. We chose the victim, and gathered on a crag in Yorkshire one night. Our plan was to will the victim to fall over the cliff to his death. So invocations were done, energies directed. The victim became possessed, stumbled and fell. Unfortunately, he fell only a short distance, and was mostly uninjured. So in that sense the ritual failed. I knew why - of those gathered, only myself and one other really wanted to cause someone's death. The others were not committed to the sinister.

My other attempts were successful. The victims fell by assassination, or were victims of 'accidents' - all achieved by my "underground" political work, and what followed thereafter. I simply - before the act of execution - dedicated their death to my sinister cause. It was quite simple, and very effective, even in battle. I was merely continuing a long-standing pagan tradition - dedicating enemies beforehand, and then killing them, for a cause, of course. Being enemies, they deserved to perish, their death aiding the sinister dialectic. Such was the "approved" Satanic manner. Thus did the victims choose themselves.

Naturally, those who have no understanding of Satanism, as well as those who oppose that philosophy of living, portray sacrifice differently. According to them, it is always the 'innocent' who are victims, who are offers. They seldom, if ever, define what is meant by 'innocent' - and cannot, however they try, define on a satisfactory basis, what 'evil' is. Hopefully, my revelations will destroy such myths - as they will destroy the attempts by the feeble, mostly urbanized, people who call themselves 'Satanists' and who deny sacrifice exists or ever has existed as a Satanic practice. These people know nothing about real, primal, Satanism - they like the glamour of the sinister but are weak individuals, lacking in character, who play at "roles" in a fantasy world. They do not have the passion, the spirit, the desire, the pride or the creative genius of genuine Satanists. Such people, in fact, would make good offers

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Finally, what I have written before bears repeating - wars are the ultimate sacrificial rites, and it no coincidence that sometimes the sinister dialectic has aided these, and occasionally brought them about.

- Order of Nine Angles -  
*<http://www.nasz-dom.net/>*

## The Abyss

The Abyss is where the causal and the acausal meet: a nexus of temporal and spatial dimensions. Because of the nature of our consciousness, the Abyss lies latent within all of us – that is, our consciousness consists of both causal and acausal aspects. In this sense, we are all 'Gates'/ to the acausal dimensions, although this Gate – and the pathways leading to/from it – often lies undiscovered. Magickal training is essentially the discovery, exploration and use of these pathways. Symbolised causally, the Abyss lies between the spheres of the Sun and Mars in the septenary Tree of Wyrd, and the 'Entering the Abyss' is that stage of magickal development which distinguishes the Master/ Mistress from the Adept. The experience of the Abyss – which the Grade Ritual 'Entering the Abyss' begins – is fundamentally a destruction of the self-image which the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept created and which was glimpsed during the External Adept rite. It is also the destruction of all personal illusions regarding opposites: the final 'withdrawing of projections'. In essence, the Internal Adept has learnt (mainly through the Grade Ritual) to withdraw the projections of the 'ego' from other individuals – that is, there is an understanding of individuals as those individuals are in essence: without the distortion of one's own passions/ideas/prejudices and without the distortions of other people's ideas/judgements and so on. The experience of the Abyss takes this a stage further – there is a withdrawal of all personal projections made by every individual upon others/the 'cosmos' and so on: both personal and impersonal. Thus, the essence is apprehended behind the appearance which the causal produces because it is the causal. Put very simply, the Abyss is the beginning of acausal perception. This perception implies a complete understanding of oneself, one's wyrd, as well as an understanding of others, of aeonic influences, and of the 'cosmos' itself – the beginnings of wisdom ... Yet this does not mean a negation of individuality. Rather, it is an enhancement of consciousness. This is so because the Abyss is also the Tree of Wyrd itself – all the spheres and the pathways in both their individual and aeonic forms: the 'individual forms' being Jungian-type archetypes (and the experiences/ understanding appropriate to these) on a personal level, and the 'aeonic forms' being aeonic/cultural myths and images on a supra-personal level, in both 'sinister' and 'light' aspects. Further, the Abyss is also a direct opening or "Gate" to the acausal dimensions. The ritual of the Abyss implies an acceptance of acausal energies as those energies are – that is, without any 'abstract', personal or judgemental views. It is a letting 'in' of those Null, Chaotic energies without any hindrance. This of course can be dangerous, but the preparation reduces this danger as well as making possible an understanding of those energies and the 'forms' they may or may not assume in both the causal and acausal worlds. This latter point is quite important, because there have been many who, unprepared, having experienced some acausal energies via entering the Abyss too soon. Quite often, the result of this premature magickal experience is madness or extreme personal dis-orientation resulting in a 'possessed' personal life and/or loss of vitality; another and frequent result is personal delusion about one's own abilities and understanding, both personal and magickal. This understanding of the acausal, vital to a 'successful' crossing of the Abyss, derives from the preparation implicit in (a) having undertaken the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept [that is, in essence, having spent at least three months alone without any external influences and without any personal contact] and (b) having fulfilled the tasks revealed by that Grade Ritual. This fulfilling of personal tasks (the accomplishment of part of the wyrd of the individual) is necessary (and it takes from one to many years after the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept) because it dissipates the energy of the 'self-image' that the Grade Ritual produces, preparing thus a voidness within the Adept. The Adept generally knows when this inner void is reached (in simple terms, the personal, driving energy is gone through achievement of personal goals: the reality, of course, is more complicated and here the advice of a Master/Mistress/Magus is often sought). The ritual of the Abyss is simple. The physical part (the walk in the specified time without assistance) is essential preparation for the 'magickal' part because it prepares the consciousness in a very specific way as well as draining the physical resources of the body. To complete the walk given the conditions stated requires determination – and this determination is released/abandoned when the magickal part of the rite is begun, this release/abandonment occurring quite naturally because the physical goal has been achieved. Thus, there is a 'hidden' wisdom in the construction of the rite (as there is in all the Grade Rituals). The physical part also creates – because of the isolation – a feeling within the individual of being only a part of something more vast, and it for this reason that the walk is undertaken as far from human



habitation as possible. This isolation, the concentration required to walk at a pace enabling the goal to be reached within the set time, the rhythm of walking, the anticipation of the magickal part, all combine to produce the conditions necessary within the consciousness of the individual conducive to success. As mentioned above, the Abyss is also an opening into the acausal. The 'passing of the Abyss' is the opening of that 'Gate' within us. All magick is a glimpse of the acausal, and the stages of the seven-fold way are really stages when the acausal energies are developed and understood in a progressively more emphatic manner – that is, they may be seen as 'pushing that Gate wider and wider' – in the passing of the Abyss there is no longer a Gate, but rather a union or fusion. In another sense, the seven-fold way may be said to be the creation, within the consciousness of the individual, of connections or pathways to the acausal – each stage develops more and more pathways until they form a conduit through which acausal energy 'flows'. Beyond the Abyss, the individual is part of the acausal 'flow' and has achieved the goal of sentient life. This is really the great secret of alchemy, of magick and of the Left Hand or Sinister Path itself – that is, we can create for ourselves another existence in another 'universe' and an existence which continues after our causal self dies. The means to this existence is simply – the seven fold way. According to tradition, the Abyss is also presenced physically in our causal universe. That is, terrestrial and 'Space' or 'Star' Gates exist where the two universes are joined. In reality, the terrestrial Gates may be said to be points where the causal and acausal come close to contact: where there is 'seepage' of acausal energy – the discovery of these places and then the 'opening of the Gate' via magick producing Aeonic energy to alter the causal (and thus the individuals in the world). [See the Order MSS relating to Aeons, 'Lovecraft and the Dark Gods' etc.]

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Azatu Gate  
ONA

The following rite, for Priest and Priestess, exists in two forms. It may be undertaken by those of the stage of External Adept as part of the experiencing of those energies appropriate to that level (and it should be undertaken on completion of the Path and Sphere workings with the companion); but its primary aim, as with all forms of genuine magick, is to direct energy into aiding the emergence of the New Aeon. Generally, this will mean aiding, via the ways of magick, a causal form that possesses the ability to practically implement the New Aeon. Thus a symbol representing the causal form is used as a focus for the raised energy.

The **Satanic** form should be undertaken one hour before dawn during the Full Moon. The **Baphometric** form should be undertaken at dusk, when the Moon is New. Both forms should be conducted at an isolated outdoor location [the location most appropriate to the 'Baphometric' form is an underground cave where water flows].

**I) The Satanic Form:**

The priestess holds the crystal, while the priest rings the temple bell seven times. Both then meditate upon Atu VII of the *Sinister Tarot*. When sufficient time has been given to the meditation, the Priest says: "Aperiatur stella, et germinet, et germinet Chaos!", and places his hands over the crystal. Both commence vibrating 'Agios o Satanas', directing the vibration into the crystal. This vibration is undertaken nine times, with increasing force and resonance, whilst visualizing a deep region of space where a nexion is beginning to open [according to Tradition, the location of such a nexion lies near the planet Saturn].

As the vibration reaches its conclusion, a nebulous form (which may coalesce into the appearance of a dragon) is visualized seeping from the nexion, descending to the Earth, and entering the bodies of the participants via the crystal. Both should visualize their bodies filling with a star-studded space.

On completion of the vibration, this visualization is continued in silence, for at least fifteen minutes.

Following this, both commence visualizing the symbol chosen to represent the New Aeon, whilst chanting the *Diabolus*. This Chant should be sung three times in unison, followed by a further four sung in parallel fourths. Sexual union begins thereafter, during which both continue to visualize the sigil. On conclusion, both bow to the North saying: "Agios athanatos!"

**II) Baphometric Form:**

As before, the Priestess holds the crystal, while the Priest rings the temple bell seven times. Both meditate upon the 'Mousa of Swords' from the *Sinister Tarot*. The Priestess, when she judges the time right, vibrates: "Veni, omnipotens aeternae Baphomet!". The Priest then places his hands over the crystal, and both commence to vibrate 'Agios o Baphomet', nine times. During this vibration, both visualize the crystal filling with darkness which then slowly spreads outwards to fill their bodies. As before, this visualization is continued for a further fifteen minutes following the end of the vibration.

The 'Agios o Baphomet' chant is then sung, while visualizing the symbol of the New Aeon. The chant is sung three times in unison, followed by a further four in *fifths*. On completion of the chant, the Priestess quietly says: "Suscipe, Baphomet, munus quod tibi offerimus memoriam recolentes Atazoth". Sexual union begins thereafter.

On conclusion, both bow to the North, saying: "Agios athanatos!"

**Note:** The crystal should be held by the Priestess throughout the rite - including during the sexual union.

As is traditional, the best shape for the crystal is a tetrahedron, and it should be as large as possible.

Rock crystal is best, but Pleonast, Spinet and Morion may also be used.

- Order of Nine Angles -

The Hard Reality of Satanism  
ONA 1991eh

The hard reality of Satanism is that it is very different from both the media image and the more recent image pedaled by imitation Satanists in both Europe and America.

***I. What Satanism Is:***

- a) Satanism is a quest for self-excellence, involving real danger, real challenges and requiring real courage. It involves taking your body to and beyond its physical limits of endurance. It involves real action, alone: without the support of friends, comrades, lovers, relations or anyone. It involves accepting challenges - physical, psychic, intellectual and triumphing solely by one's own efforts. It involves the triumph of pure, individual will and desire.
- b) Satanism is, in part, an Inner quest, an exploration of the 'hidden' (and overt) aspects of consciousness: a dis-discovery of the darkness within and beyond the individual psyche. This involves 'magickal acts' - such as rituals. This magick, however, is a means, not an end.
- c) Satanism involves ordeals, both physical and magickal. Those who are suitable triumph; the others fail. [One such ordeal is the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept - where the candidate lives alone and isolated, bereft of everything except the bare necessities for physical survival, for a period of three months.]
- d) Satanism requires the practical experiencing of all moral limits, and then a mastery of the feelings, desires, pleasures, terrors, pains and so on that these imply.
- e) Satanism involves the individual defiance of all subservience: a Satanist accepts guidance only, and refuses to be dominated or intimidated by anyone. This guidance is toward practical experience, and it is by this experience that the novice learns and develops a genuine Satanic character.
- f) Satanism involves sacrifice - this is a necessary test of character [qv. the MSS, "Satanism, Sacrifice and Crime - The Satanic Truth", and "Satanism - The Sinister Shadow, Revealed" for more details].
- g) Satanism is a means - a method, or way, and the purpose of this means, method or way is to produce a specific type of individual: the next stage of our evolution as a species. Satanism is thus an expression of evolutionary change - on both the individual level and in respect of 'societies' and 'history'. The individuals so created often inspire in the supine majority a certain terror/awe/admiration/fear/jealousy.
- h) Satanism is elitist. It does not compromise - its tests, ordeals, methods and character-building experiences are severe and will never be made easier to make them acceptable to more people or easier to undertake.
- i) Satanism is esoteric by nature and intent: it is both a 'secret' way, by virtue of its methods etc., and it is not nor probably will be suitable for the majority for many, many centuries.

***II. What Satanism Is Not:***

- a) Satanism is not, nor can ever be, a religion, nor just a 'philosophy'. A religion means acceptance of authority, the rigid structure of a 'Church' or a 'Temple', and a unified dogma (with the consequent schisms and claims to "authenticity"). The religious attitude is the antithesis of what Satanism really is - for Satanism is a way of living, a way of experiencing, in the raw, whereas religion abstracts, limits endeavor, behavior and moralizes. In short, a Satanist plunges into reality, without any supports (moral, psychic or human) whereas a religious person has that reality prescribed by dogma, authority and such like, and is supported by a 'Church', its members and their attitudes. Satanism is an ecstatic affirmation of existence - a taking of existence into new and higher realms, as well as a plunge into existing darkness and the creation of new darkness.
- b) Satanism cannot have anyone impose upon it any structure, authority, or institution of any kind by claiming a 'dark mandate' or some kind of 'revelation'. There can be no such thing as an, infernal mandate' of whatever kind because the only thing that really matters to Satanism is experience, its accumulation and the highly individualized learning that results from such experience. A genuine Satanist, for example, confronted by an entity which exhibited all the powers attributed to Satan would not even accept what that 'entity' said and would most certainly not show any submission - instead, they would a defiance, a reasoned assessment of what was said, and then a judgement made from experience. A Satanist never surrenders to anything - and would rather die, proud and defiant, than submit. This applies even to 'Satan'.

If and when a Satanist accepts guidance, it is from someone of experience who has explicated Satanism

by their life and thus who can offer advice based on that experience. The aim of Satanism is to create willful, characterful, defiant, unique individuals who have or can fulfill their potential as gods - it is not to create followers or sycophants. An 'infernal mandate' implies sycophancy.

c) Satanism does not involve discussions, meetings, talks. Rather, it involves action, deeds. Words - written or spoken - sometimes follow, but not necessarily. The ideal candidate for Satanism is the individual of action rather than the 'intellectual'.

By the nature of most Satanic actions, they can seldom be mentioned and thus remain esoteric. The essence that Satanism leads the individual towards, via action, is only ever revealed by that participation which action is. Words, whether written or spoken, can never describe that essence - they can only hint at it, point toward it, and often serve to obscure the essence.

Satanism strips away the appearance of 'things' - living, Occult and otherwise by this insistence on experience, unaided. What is thus apprehended by such experience, is unique to each individual and thus is creative and evolutionary. Discussions, meetings, talks, even books and such like, de-vitalize: they are excuses for not acting.

A Satanist will sometimes use such forms as he/she may use the form of a Temple - to enhance and/or provoke experiences. But they are then actively manipulating, actively creating experiences - the others involved are being used by that person. That is, there is only one Satanist at such gatherings (usually) - the others may believe they are 'Satanists', but they are deluded.

d) Satanism does not apply moral absolutes to real-life situations and forms. This may best be explicated by two examples. First, politics. Satanism does not affirm or deny any political forms or type of politics - it does not, for example, announce that 'fascism and Satanism are incompatible'. Such announcements/pronouncements arise from a moral bias and a lack of insight into both Satanism and 'society' and thus Aeonics.

A Satanist, concerned with experience, may use a political form for a specific purpose - the nature of that form in terms of conventional politics and morality (such as 'extreme Right-wing') is irrelevant. What is important is whether it can be used to (a) provide experience of living and the limits of experience, and/or (b) aid the sinister dialectic of history. Thus a Satanist may become involved in, or set up, an organization of the extreme Right - this is dangerous, exciting, vitalizes, provides experiences 'on the edge' and should thus aid the development of the character and insight of that Satanist<sup>(4)</sup>. What is important, is that this involvement is done for an ulterior, Satanic, motive: what others think and believe about such actions is totally irrelevant. Anyone purporting to be a Satanist who criticizes such an action, whatever the political hue of the group/organization, reveals by that criticism that they are not Satanists - but rather, moralizing curds lacking in insight and real Satanic understanding.

The second example concerns the formation and use of Satanic 'Temples' and groups by a Satanist. A Satanic novice, in order to gain experience of magickal rituals and people manipulation, usually forms a group to perform Satanic rituals. The people recruited are for the most part used - and the novice often assumes a specific Satanic 'role' for this: the role of sorcerer/sorceress. He/she may dress in a certain way and so on, as he/she may use fables to impress and/or manipulate. This, however, for a genuine Satanist, is only a stage - and one which lasts a year or two. After that, experience and mastery of ceremonial and hermetic magick gained, they move on to new challenges and experiences, as all good Satanists should. Further, the individuals of this 'Temple' or group are not Satanists, although they may believe themselves to be - they are simply being used to afford the novice pleasure/excitement/experience and so on. Had any of them any Satanic character or potential, they would rebel to undertake their own quest by forming such a group/'Temple' and experience the limits of themselves.

Sometimes, the group has another aim - an Aeonic or suprapersonal one, in which case its life may be extended. But whatever, genuine Satanic guidance by an Adept or Master/Mistress to a novice always occurs on an individualized basis, never within the rigid and constraining form of a 'Temple'.

Thus, there is not nor can be any constraining rules applied to the conduct of such 'Temples' and groups - there is no 'moral code', no bounds which cannot be overstepped. The rules, such as they are, are made by the Satanic novice according to their desire and goals. That is, they can do with that group and its individuals whatever they desire to do and no one - not even the Adept/ Master/Mistress who may be guiding them - can set limits or prescribe their behaviour. They must learn for themselves - and from their mistakes, should they make some.

This naturally leads to the obvious Satanic deduction that a group like the Temple of Set may contain one, perhaps two, Satanists - who are using the 'members' for their own Satanic goals. This person (or

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persons) would of course deny this, and if that denial was sincere, they could not be Satanists. What is certain, is that that group cannot contain more than perhaps two Satanists - for the members accept the constraints imposed upon them from above, and are servile, in both theory and practice. They are also not being led into real experiences, but accept a sterile, sanitized and safe 'Satanism' as pedaled by their leader.

e) Satanism does not seek any form of official recognition as it does not seek to become respectable or the prerogative of a majority. Rather 'Satanism operates' and must operate' for the most part in a clandestine or 'underground' manner. 'Official' recognition mean someone or some organization is granted some sort of "status" and thus assumes both in theory and in fact an 'authority' and an organizational structure to support it. This authority and this structure mean followers, sycophants - and contradict the essence of Satanism.

'Respectability' means a moral stance broadly in line with that pertaining at the time - that is, it means a restricting morality, ethics, as well a limiting of action to what is deemed broadly 'acceptable' by the 'society' of the time.

Both of these - official recognition and respectability - also mean that the self-appointed authority which is recognized and becomes or seeks to be respectable, sets its own limits: there is 'proscription' of other groups, a peer hierarchy and all the many trappings of herd conformity; the triumph of illusive forms over essence. In brief, the deluding of others, rather than their liberation.

Since the experience of the essence that Satanism brings is unique, this uniqueness is totally contradictory to all forms that seek to constrain, define and restrict - two of these forms being 'official recognition' and 'respectability'.

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Some other hard facts about Satanism are in order - to be placed on record

Satanism is hard and very dangerous. This danger is much more than just a 'mental' or a psychic one of the kind sometimes experienced in magickal workings. It is a personal danger of the 'life or death' kind. If it is not, then it is not tough enough, it is not Satanic. For far too long the pathetic imitation Satanists, such as those in the Temple of Set and the Church of Satan, have had no one to contradict their sickly, wimpish versions of Satanism - they have tried to deny the darkness and evil which are essential to Satanism because the frauds in those organizations are fundamentally weak: they have never gone to their limits, never experienced the realness of evil. They have tried to make 'Satanism' safe and 'respectable': they have intellectualized it because they are typical products of this present intellectualized, peace-loving, "we need to be safe" society.

A Satanist is like a beast of prey - in real life, not in fantasy. A Satanist may be and often is an assassin, a warrior, an outlaw - in real life. The imitation Satanists, however, pretend to be these things - their fantasy-life is greater than their real experiences of such things. A Satanist seeks and makes real his/her fantasies and then masters the real-life situations and all those desires/feelings which give birth to those fantasies - they live them and then transcend them, creating from those experiences something beyond them: a new individual. Often, things go wrong - but as always in life, the strong survive and the weak perish, are written off. The Satanist creates the dreams, standards of excellence and spirit which others often later aspire to emulate. This creation is in real life, by deeds and deeds alone.

Because of this, few indeed are the genuine Satanists. Sometimes their lives (or aspects of them) become public - but often they are hidden, working their darkness in secret, for the benefit of evolution.

<sup>1</sup> It can also aid the sinister dialectic - here, an understanding of Aeonics is important.

## The Practice of Evil: In Context

### ONA

The practice of evil (qv. the Order MSS 'Satanism, Sacrifice and Crime'; 'Sinister Shadow Magick' etc.) is an essential part of Satanism - for a novice. It builds Satanic character, tests Destiny and so on. It is, however, only a part of Satanism, and has to be seen in context. That context is the training of the novice. Such practices, and other dark and sinister experiences, are a beginning only - a foundation which enables further progress. They are also selective ordeals - the really Satanic survive; the others do not, for whatever reason or reasons.

Furthermore, these practices lead to a synthesis. They are essentially learning experiences. The self-learning that they provoke (in those who triumph, that is) leads in time to a transcendence, new beginnings, new stages of the Satanic way. This is essential for novices to understand - the experiences have to be undergone, they have to be mastered, what they provoke within and external to the individual has to be faced and then mastered. All this is seldom easy - which is as it should be, for those questing after the essence.

The practical experiences engendered by 'living on the limits' occupy the novice for some years - up to, that is, the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept. That ritual propels them toward a deeper self-discovery - or it destroys. Those who succeed then have new tasks, new ways of living which are unique to them and which explicate their unique Destiny.

However, it must be understood (and I repeat it again for emphasis) that this hard foundation is necessary - there can be no further progress without it. Indeed, Adeptship of necessity means this tough foundation - this understanding of oneself that such experiences provoke.

Also, one (perhaps two) experiences of the same type are sufficient if those experiences are really evil. No experience should become a fetish (that is one sign of a weakness) - it should be used to learn from and, having learnt from it, it should be discarded as one moves on. This learning of course means a self-honesty, a critical self-analysis, an assessment and a learning of judgement. These things, are of course, dynamically done - they never enervate. If they do, there is weakness of character. One is critical only to improve, to go forward. True Satanists, naturally, possess the arrogant self-confidence to do this - the imitation kind are either too critical, or seldom if ever critical. That is, a Satanist strives for a dynamic balance or tension between assessment/critical judgement and confidence/arrogance - and this balance is usually achieved from experience. This balance is one sign of an Adept.

Two examples will illustrate this. The first concerns a young lady. She sought and found an already existing group and was Initiated. She studied the teachings, undertook hermetic workings and participated in ceremonial rites. After some months, she undertook the Grade Ritual of External Adept after which she began to gain experience by undertaking certain 'roles'. The first she chose was the seductive sinister sorceress. She had much fun, seducing and manipulating, exploring her sexuality - sadism, Sapphism, orgies. After six months, she felt she had learnt enough, and moved on - to form her own Temple and play the role of 'Mistress'. So she recruited, undertook ceremonial rituals, teaching, Initiations and so on. She learnt more techniques of manipulation, developed skill in all forms of magick. After a year, she decided she had garnished enough from the role. So (on advice from the person who had guided her heretofore) she joins an extreme political group and plays the role of revolutionary activist. She suffers, and deals out, violence - is arrested a few times. She acquires, within the confines of this new world, something of a reputation as a tough fanatic. Gradually, she is drawn into Underground work of a dubious nature - and is trained in armed revolutionary Warfare. She visits comrades in other countries, and participates in a few operations, in one of which someone is killed, by her. She had, of course, chosen the victim according to Satanic principles - but made this choice seem, to her Comrades, to derive from her revolutionary beliefs.

After some months, she drifts away from such underground work, and then from her political commitments. All this she makes plausible to her comrades. She then undertakes the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept after which she moves to live abroad, outwardly quite respectable. Gradually, in the profession she has chosen (helped by an old comrade from her revolutionary days) she gains a subtle influence. Secretly, she trains and guides two pupils in the ways of Satanism. Because of her unique, strong character, she is respected - even a little feared - by those who know nothing of her past or her secret allegiance to Satanism. She gathers around her a small circle of admirers (mostly young men, some of whom are her lovers), and nurtures them, exoterically, as a good Satanic Mistress should. They,

of course, know nothing of her secret life - unless she wishes them to know. So she guides a few of them, perhaps drawing forth from them traits of character or some talent ...

The second example concerns a young man. After involvement with various Occult groups and after trying various paths, he finds a Satanic Master who agrees to guide him. So he begins to follow the seven-fold sinister way - hermetic workings, physical tasks, External Adept. He meets someone who becomes his magickal companion and together they form a Temple. They decide this Temple should be a genuine one - i.e. concerned with Initiating and training Satanists, not just a Temple for their own pleasure and learning. So they find, test, Initiate and teach suitable individuals. This takes over a year. Ceremonial rituals are undertaken. Their own novices undertake ordeals, gather practical experience by playing roles and so on. Gradually, the Temple bonds together in an esoteric way, all seven members committed to Satanism and all working together. They decide to undertake the Ceremony of Recalling - the advice of the Master who first guided the young man is sought, and he advises him to undertake the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept and if, after that, he still wishes to do this ceremony, he can. Providing, of course, the Temple adheres to the guidelines for selecting and testing offers. After the Grade Ritual, the Temple begin to plan for the Ceremony. This takes over six months. They conduct the Ceremony, which is a success - they channel the energy to fulfill an aeonic goal. Gradually, the knowledge, and skill, of the Temple grow - enhancing the lives of the members and aiding the sinister dialectic. They become expert in sinister esoteric chant, making the Temple as a nexion. They decide to remain secret, recruiting only when necessary (around every ten years or so, they decide) - and continue to lead their 'ordinary' lives. They also decide to continue a tradition and perform the Ceremony every seventeen years ...

In conclusion - in the first example, the lady learns from her deeds, moving to new experiences and stages of self-development. She discovers and accepts her Destiny - a Satanic Mistress, teaching a few pupils and enjoying the rewards her life-style offers her. She has a secret and subtle Satanic influence - her profession is part of her Destiny, and she uses it to aid the sinister dialectic, promoting some things, discreetly changing and influencing others.

In the second example, the young man also learns, and so continues along the Satanic path. His destiny is linked to his companion and the Temple they founded. They establish a secret, and quite powerful, magickal form, using it to alter and bring change in accord with their Satanic beliefs.

In both cases, the experiences bring a self-understanding and make possible advancement along the way. Both live as most Satanists do - secretly, their work hidden. Both, in their different ways, aid the Satanic cause. Both possess a Satanic character and will probably and should they wish it, continue to advance toward and beyond the Abyss, their future made possible by their dark past which, although passed, is not forgotten by them.

- Order of Nine Angles -

To Presence The Dark  
**Anton Long, ONA. 107yf**

Genuine Satanic, or Sinister, groups have three fundamental aims: (1) to preserve and hand-on the genuine esoteric tradition, the Way to Adeptship and beyond; (2) to uphold and implement the Sinister Dialectic; and (3) to presence and so make real what is dark, sinister and Satanic.

The first aim is essentially the guiding of Initiates toward wisdom, thus changing those individuals - in effect, creating a new individual. The second aim is essentially supra-personal and is a changing of societies, civilizations and Aeons, through magick and through practical action. The third aim derives from the first two aims, and is essentially genuine Satanism in action "in the world" - that is, Satanic individuals doing specific Satanic acts to bring about change and evolution in themselves, and in the societies, civilisation or Aeon they themselves exist in.

It is of fundamental importance - to evolution both individual and otherwise - that what is Dark, Sinister or Satanic is made real in a practical way, over and over again. That is, that what is dangerous, awesome, numinous, tragic, deadly, terrible, terrifying and beyond the power of ordinary mortals, laws or governments to control is made manifest. In effect, non-Initiates (and even Initiates) need constantly reminding that such things still exist; they need constantly to be brought "face-to-face", and touched, with what is, or appears to be, inexplicable, uncontrollable, powerful and "evil". They need reminding of their own mortality - of the unforeseen, inexplicable "powers of Fate", of the powerful force of "Nature". If this means killing, wars, suffering, sacrifice, terror, disease, tragedy and disruption, then such things must be - for it is one of the duties of a Satanic Initiate to so presence the dark, and prepare the way for, or initiate, the change and evolution which always result from such things. Such things as these must be, and always will be, because the majority of people are or will remain, inert and sub-human unless changed. The majority is - and always will be until it evolves to become something else - raw material to be used, moulded, cut-away and shaped to create what must be. There is no such thing's an innocent person because everyone who exists is part of the whole, the change, the evolution, the presencing of life itself, which is beyond them, and their life only has meaning through the change, development and evolution of life. Their importance is what they can become, or what can be achieved through their death. their tragedy, their living - their importance does not lie in their individual happiness or their individual desires or whatever.

Thus it is permissible, and indeed necessary, for Satanic Initiates to exalt themselves, and thus life itself, over and above the majority, and at the expense of the majority - for such Initiates are a becoming, a movement of life toward something higher, while the majority are a stasis unless changed or provoked. In essence, Satan is the essence of life itself; He is this exaltation of life - this change, this evolution, just as the Satanic Initiate is Satan presenced in human form.

Genuine Satanism means such a presencing of the dark, and a genuine Satanic group is a group which initiates, authorises or guides its members toward individual and group acts which so presence the dark. When there is no such presencing of what is dark, terrible, awesome, magickal, deadly and tragic then there is no genuine Satanism. Thus, a genuine group will countenance and indeed demand human sacrifice, as it will countenance and indeed demand that its members do practical and magickal works to aid the Sinister Dialectic itself, bringing thus the chaos and the order of change and evolution.

- Order of Nine Angles -



Towards Sapanur  
*ONA, 1996eh.*

One of the tasks of a genuine Satanic organisation, is to bring about practical, physical Change. As stressed in various ONA MSS, this Change is worth striving for only if the outcome occurs on a large scale: if its consequences create a new type of society that enshrines the Satanic vision. Much has been written - and misunderstood - as to how this Change, this New Aeon, may be implemented.

The Dark Tradition exists to create a type of being who is capable of making history; of rationally using forms (and individuals) for a higher, *Cosmic* purpose. The reality is there will always only be a handful of genuine Satanists amongst those who would claim such a title, since a genuine Sinister organisation does not seek a large 'membership': to actively do so, would imply a compromise of the Darkness essential for evolution. All that is ever really required, in terms of genuine Satanism, is the working together of the tiny minority who have struggled and suffered their individual ways through the processes of the 'Forbidden Alchemy' (for which read *Sinister Seven-Fold Way*). That few such individuals exist is not actually a hinderance to the fulfillment of esoteric aims, for it only takes two or three such beings to presence the terror necessary for the future...

With the emergence in recent years of **Aeonics** (qv), allied Occult groups have concentrated on 'seeding' energies by subtly distorting/reinterpreting/ infiltrating existing forms, with the aim of gradually altering a cultural psyche towards (what we term) the Sinister. This is of course, a laudable premise: superficially speaking, the more organisations who adopt this strategy, the better - as long as this tactic does not result in a *dilution* of the Sinister within that cultural psyche. However, the Magickian must take care when using, or 'flowing with' what is perceived to be the contemporary trend, or opinion.

To simply state that the 'masses' are putty, should not really come as a revelation. In this densely-populated world of ours, the 'average person' is too busy with the basics of living - ie. feeding a family - or too stupefied to worry overmuch about the greater context of society (thus the trust placed in 'politicians' and the illusion of 'free speech' given by the con-trick of 'democratic' elections). Opinions and trends are, for the most part, engineered by the minority who are The System. The public does not exist to be convinced by any ideal that happens to come along, because it simply does not possess the capacity to think and act independent of the prevailing Power. An independent ideal has only The System to face, and unless it fights, it is regurgitated as a commodity and denuded of the power to genuinely transform. In reality, there is very little The System cannot flow with and adapt to - such is the nature of the tyranny that is 'capitalism': to turn heresy into *fashion*.

When the tactic is to fight by subtly manipulating accepted forms, the Magickian must be certain as to who exactly is controlling who - whose *ego* is actually being manipulated - lest the process of 'seeding' proves in the long term to have been a waste of time. To effectively alter temporal forms via such an approach really requires the abilities of an individual who is 'outside of Time', who is free of temporal, temporary influences - someone who has passed through the screaming silence of the Abyss: a genuine Master of the Temple/Mistress of Earth. [Thus the practical purpose of the Seven-Fold Way.] Subtle manipulation of forms has its part to play; but if every would-be Sinister magickian opted solely for this, then little, if anything, of significance would be achieved.

'Seeding' [which would include the Aeon technique of **mimesis**] can only prepare the way - and only then if it is conducted with understanding; rarely does it in itself catalyse Change. When the subtle manipulator believes that s/he, "when the time is right", will implement a next, more overt stage, they are deluding themselves: practical examples (involving conventional politics) have proved as yet that this does not happen - rather, there is a losing sight of the original aims. What is significantly missing at present, on the part of Occultists, is an overt declaration of intent in the *real world*. What we need now are fanatics - individuals who will remind us all of what we, as Sinister Initiates, are supposed to believe: that we can become gods within our lifetime, to the greater glory of our acausal selves.

Thus it is vital, for every initiate who would be Satanic, Sinister, to at least once in their life, conduct a *practical* act of tenor in the real world: an act that does not hide beneath the guise of something else - something innocuous - but one that leaves no doubt as to its Satanic nature. Only by individuals acting thus, by directly aiding System Breakdown, will the Masses grasp the practical possibility of an alternative reality.

Let us not fool ourselves any longer: real, significant Change - the bringing of the *new aeon* - will only occur once The System has collapsed, and society is plunged into the necessary primeval phase where

the majority - and Sinister Adepts, for that matter - are constantly reminded of that tyranny of existence which can wipe out an individual life in an instant, and in that instant render that life irrelevant. Until this next phase is reached, life remains too soft to motivate anyone beyond the intellect to implement anything worthwhile. That collapse is much more likely to be reached, not by slow 'seeding', but by *presencing the Dark*: by causing sudden explosions of primal terror.

To risk one's life and liberty requires certainty: belief and vision - the arrogance of the genuine Satanist. The System, however, allows us the luxury to believe exactly what we want, and to find many convincing reasons why *not* to act in truth. But to know the reality is to know that which is beyond yourself, and until Sinister Initiates strive to embody the current of Change necessary, then the holiday that is individual life will carry on its slow, meaningless journey, deathwards.

### ***The New Satanic Aeon***

What is this far-off Satanic purpose described as the 'New Aeon'? It does not matter that, for most, a clear answer cannot be given; only that there exists a *desire* to practically create a new form of existence - that the stagnation of the 'norm' is countered, destroyed, and laid to rest. If life is to be lived right, there must always be, for individuals, a dream, a *vision-splendid* to strive and most likely die for. It does not really matter if various Sinister organisations disagree over the tactics involved in bringing this Change, as long as effects can be discerned - as it also does not matter whether or not there is Sinister "unity" between those various organisations.

What matters, in the presencing of this 'new aeon', is that individuals strive to act with nobility and out of duty to the furtherance of a Cosmic force beyond the personal. They must rely on their own judgment in this, regardless of consequences; and whatever mistakes are made in the process, are gifts by which further personal insight may be attained.

The loyalty of a Satanist is to the Dark - to **Satan**, and the forces beyond Him, by which civilisations are reminded of their unique Destiny. Because what is certain, is the suffering and death that will be required to allow the difficult transition from this dying Aeon, to the next: only through a crucible of Darkness will the "Light", the positive upward trend of evolution, flow forth. Regardless of contemporary beliefs, human beings are not born inherently 'good': true 'goodness' must be cultivated - and such a creation only occurs through suffering.

This suffering will be because we must as a species re-integrate with what is for us, the reality of Nature - a reality from which we are progressively and deliberately distanced: our natural role as **hunters**. The New Aeon will be Satanic, because it implies the synthesis achieved through the conflict between Nature Herself and *The System*, and the triumph of Nature implies the creation of a higher type of human species - a truly free individual who needs neither politics or religion.

### ***A Note on "Vindex":***

It is generally true to say, for the Esoterrorist, that it is the Path of their occult journey that is important, rather than the forms encountered or used during the way. However, it is a mistake to believe that this is the rule for all in the broadly esoteric field, and thus that all forms 'ipso facto', are simply a means to be discarded when appropriate, since no form can ever express the *essence*. For some unique individuals, in unique circumstances, there is no living of a form whilst hiding the "esoteric reality", the esoteric wisdom - the 'Occult' aspect. There is no clever deceit, no skilled manipulation, because the form created is the reality, that esoteric wisdom made real and practical. This form is usually of a 'religious' nature, and is what it is because it is open about what it represents, regardless of societal prejudices. In an important sense - which few will understand - the form ("organisation") so created, is not a nexion to channel or presence the essence - it is the very essence itself: the essence evolving as it must evolve in causal time and space [hence also the continuing relevance of 'Satan' as an archetype]

This is the domain of **Vindex**, that much misunderstood embodiment of creative Change. Vindex does not really need 'the Occult' in conventional terms, to presence, or access the numinous ideals that s/he represents. Such things, in this case, only obscure the essence of Change, of evolution - as they can often distance a person from the creative numen which can and does provoke such an evolution. However, this aspect of bringing Vindex can cause dismay to some Occultists, who might view this stance as a betrayal of 'occultic principles' perhaps previously championed. The reality is, what must be done, must be done if it is to be *lived* - over and above the perceived "truth" of some forms (and a Satanist should always be their own opposite, and beyond ...). All Vindex needs, is already what is innate, and a *Will* made powerful by it being grounded, or presenced, in what *is* - now and in the future - numinous and great in evolutionary terms. Vindex *can* embody what is necessary: not particularly in the sense of some popular charismatic leader (a Caesar type figure), but in the sense of creating and maintaining the form which

embodies the numinous ideals in the realistic way necessary. And this is the real Magick...

- Order of Nine Angles -

Victims - A Sinister Exposé  
ONA 1990eh

It should be understood that all acts undertaken by a Satanic novice to gain experience are perpetrated/done against those (the victims) whose character has been revealed to be or shown to be, by their deeds, defective. This character is judged from a Satanic perspective.

The actions of a Satanic novice in the real world, arise as a consequence of that novice following, at the time of a particular act, a particular stage of the Satanic way to Adeptship and beyond. Thus, each act has a purpose and an intent which are beyond the moment(s) of that act. The purpose is to achieve experience (and consequently that maturity of character which experience brings), and the intent is Satanic - i.e. the individual is participating in Satanism by their desire to so experience and profit from that experience.

All such Satanic acts are directed and calculating, and as such they arise from a conscious decision, not from a 'loss of self-control' nor from a desire or desires which overwhelm the individual. The novice chooses the act or acts, consciously, as part of their training - they are not led into them, by others, nor are they drawn into undertaking them because of some feeling/desire which holds them in thrall and which (mostly unconsciously) motivates them. [Note: We are here concerned with acts involving victims - not acts (e.g. magickal ordeals) which involve the novice alone.]

The acts are part of a particular practical, real-life role which the novice chooses and assumes for a particular time, and as such the acts are defined by that role. That is, the nature of the act is defined by the role. Since this is a role, Satanically chosen, the act itself expresses Satanism in action. Thus, all such acts involving victims conform to certain Satanic principles, the most important of which is that the victim(s) of such acts are victims of their own nature. The act or acts which may result in them being the victim of those acts, are really 'natural' consequences arising from the defects of character which the victim possesses and which are revealed by the defective deeds of the victim.

It bears repeating that all Satanic acts done by a novice to achieve experience and which involve victims, are done against those who have revealed themselves to be of defective character. Of course, it requires some judgement - or instinct - to determine character in others and thus assess them as potential victims. But it is one of the purposes of Satanic training to develop this judgement (and hone the instinct) which arises from maturity. The Satanic practices themselves, and the guidelines established for Satanic acts, enable novices to find suitable victims while they are still developing Satanic judgement and character. One of these practices is the testing of potential victims - the real-life tests revealing the true nature of the target and thus serving to confirm or not the choice of target. It is part of a novice's training to participate and then devise and undertake such tests which expose the character of a target.

The use of victims by Satanists has been misunderstood. Victims are always carefully chosen following an assessment and judgement of them (usually by a Master or Lady Master) - the victims stands revealed by their deeds and their life. The victims are then tested (usually three times) to give them an opportunity to show potential and reveal their true nature - that is, they are given a sporting chance. Only after these tests have confirmed their suitability - their defective nature - will they become victims. Hence, Satanic victims can never be children: all victims must have done something which reveals their defective nature. This 'doing' is always of a certain type: it reveals them for what they are, generally worthless scum whose culling, for example, benefits evolution. That is, the actions/life of the chosen victim are indicative of weakness - of all those traits of character which genuine Satanists despise. Things such as cowardice, treachery, sycophancy, fear, bullying, lack of self-control ...

Hence, there is no such thing as an 'innocent' Satanic victim: the victims of Satanic acts get what they deserve. Victims are thus instruments of Satanic change - raw material which the novice uses (and often disposes of) to learn from.

Naturally, this Satanic practice - of acts which involve victims - can be and has been misused: used as an excuse by weak individuals in thrall to their desires and passions to justify their actions. But this is irrelevant. Satanic practice is like a gun - it is neutral. It can be used, for noble or ignoble purposes. Like a gun, a Satanic practice is an artifact, a creation, an expression of evolution itself. How the practices of evolution are used depends on the individual - that is, it returns the responsibility to the individual, allows them to make a choice. There is not, nor can ever be in Satanism any authority to ban, to control, such acts - for such restrictions are a denial of conscious liberation, a denial of individuality. They patronize individuals and prevent them developing into higher, self-aware, and wise beings.

Furthermore, there is no responsibility, devolving on persons like myself or any genuine Satanic Master,

for anyone who may use Satanic acts for their own, un-Satanic ends - that is, as an excuse for their own weakness and failure of self-control. The practices are as they are - it is up to each and every individual how they are used, or even if they are used. The responsibility of choice is theirs and theirs alone - to deny them that choice, even the possibility of that choice (and thus to deny them the possibility to evolve further, to Adeptship and beyond) is to deny conscious evolution itself.

- Order of Nine Angles -

## A New And Numinous Art

### ONA

The reality of the present is that personal feelings, based on relationships, and the personal struggles and/or sufferings of individuals, have all been described by artistic means in the past two millennia or so. There are centuries of work concerning and created because of personal love and personal relationships - and the problems of ordinary living and society - in literature, music, drama and so on. What has needed to be said, written and expressed about such things, has been said, written and expressed by the many great artists of the past two millennia.

What is needed now is to build upon these foundations - to turn outward, and away from the inner world of the personal psyche and the world of mundane society. What is needed is to describe and express what is relevant to the next stage of our evolution, as human beings. This next stage is the stage of new adventures, of new worlds, of new ways of living brought through striving for a numinous and thus supra-personal goal.

The personal life should now take care of itself - if there is a numinous goal to strive for. In brief, the great Art of the past has enabled us to achieve an understanding of ourselves - it has brought us to individuation, to the wisdom of a genuine Adeptship founded upon the reconciliation of opposites. We have discovered and learnt to know ourselves - and have discovered the unity, the wholeness, which lies beyond the Shadow and the Self. We have learnt that we are - or can be - both Destroyer and Creator, both Lucifer and God, as we have learnt the natural necessity of both these forces of creation, and destruction, and how renewal and re-birth proceeds from them. We now need to and should go beyond this - for anything else is unhealthy and a waste of life. It is also the negation of the work of those great artists which has allowed us this understanding.

Thus, there is no longer any need for those who desire to be great artists to endure or desire personal suffering to aid their development and their understanding, as there is no longer any need for individuals to describe their inner suffering, their personal development and their personal understanding through artistic means. What should and must be understood in the personal sense now can be rationally understood through an act of will - through a conscious understanding of the works of Art of the past two millennia.

There needs to be a whole new artistic movement - or many such movements - which seek to go beyond this personal understanding and which seeks to develop new forms of Art to express and describe what must be expressed and described in the numinous realm which lies beyond this personal understanding. We need to free ourselves from the mundane world of the past, and achieve a real understanding of and a real balance with Nature Herself. We need to strive to free ourselves of this planet of ours, at first in artistic visions and dreams, and then in practical reality as we reach out toward other planets around other stars. We need to dream great visions again, as we need to strive to make these visions real. Thus, do we need to become inspired by greatness - we need to dream of and create new civilizations, new aeons, new Empires to stretch ourselves in, to explore and discover, and to use to create an entire new species of higher beings who are fulfilling the promise of existence latent within them. In essence, we need to capture and express the numinous itself and mould that numinous through a unique work or works of Art.

Anything less than this is unworthy of us.

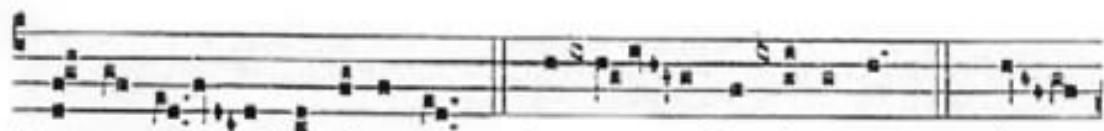
- Order of Nine Angles -

# *Agios Baphomet*

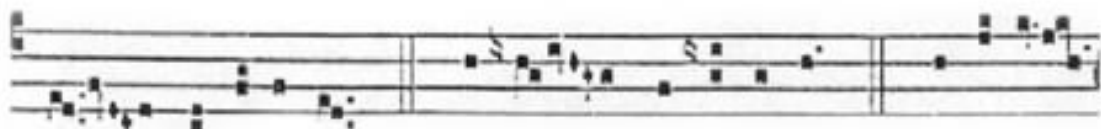
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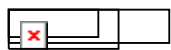
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## Baphomet - A Note on the Name



The name of Baphomet is regarded by Traditional Satanists as meaning "the mistress (or mother) of blood" - the Mistress who sometimes washes in the blood of her foes and whose hands are thereby stained. [See 'The Ceremony of Recalling'.]

The supposed derivation is from the Greek and not, as is sometimes said, from (the Attic form for 'wise'). Such a use of the term 'Mother'/Mistress was quite common in later Greek alchemical writings – for example Iamblichus in "De Mysteriis" used to signify possessed by the mother of the gods. Later alchemical writings tended to use the prefix to signify a specific type of 'amalgam' (and some take this to be a metaphor for the amalgam of Sol with Luna, in the sexual sense).

In the Septenary System, Baphomet, as Mistress of Earth, is linked to the sixth sphere (Jupiter) and the star Deneb. She is thus in one sense a magickal "Earth Gate" (qv. the Nine Angles), and Her reflexion (or 'causal' nature - as against Her acausal or Sinister nature) is the third sphere (Venus) related to the star Antares. According to esoteric Tradition, the Antares aspect was celebrated by rites in Albion c.3,000 BP – in the middle and toward the end the month of May and some stone circles/sacred sites were said to be aligned for Antares. In contrast, the Sinister aspect of the Mistress (i.e. Baphomet) was celebrated in the Autumn and was linked to the rising of Arcturus, Arcturus itself being related to the Sinister male aspect (Mercury - second sphere), later identified with Lucifer/ Satan. Thus, the August celebration was a Sinister hierosgamos - the union of Baphomet with Her spouse (or 'Priest' who took on the role of the Sinister male aspect). According to Tradition, the Priest was sacrificed after the sexual union, where the role of Baphomet was assumed by the Priestess/Mistress of the cult. Thus, the May celebration was the (re-)birth of new energies (and the child of the Union). Tradition relates this Sinister, sacred Arcturian rite as taking place once every seventeen years. Once again, some sacred sites in Albion are said to be aligned to the rising of Arcturus, over three thousand years ago. In the middle ages, Baphomet came to be regarded as the Bride of Satan – and it is from this time that both 'Baphomet' and 'Satan', as names for the female and male aspect of the dark side came into use (at least in the secret sinister tradition).

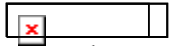
Hence the Traditional depiction of Baphomet - a beautiful mature woman (often shown naked) holding up the severed head of the sacrificed priest (usually shown bearded).

To some extent the Templars revived part of this cult, but without any real esoteric understanding and for their own purposes. They adopted Baphomet as a type of female Yeshua, but with some bloody/ sinister aspects - and contrary to most accepted ideas, they were not especially 'Satanic'. Rather, they saw themselves as holy warriors, and became a military cult with bonds of honour, although their concept of "holy" differed somewhat from that of the church of the time, including as it did dark/Gnostic aspects. Their sacrifices were in battle and not part of a specific rite.

The image of Baphomet (e.g. by Levi) as a hermaphrodite figure are romantic confusions and/or distortions: essentially of the symbolic/real union of mistress and priest and his later sacrifice. The same applies to the derivation of the suffix of her name with 'wisdom' (and a male image at that!) - even the confused Gnostics understood 'wisdom' as female.

- Order of Nine Angles -

## Baphomet - A Note on the Name II



There is a tradition regarding the origin of the name Baphomet which deserves recording, even though it is not regarded as authentic, having no present-day proponents.

This tradition regards the name as deriving from - the Greek name for the Egyptian goddess Bastet, recorded by Herodotus (2.137 ff). It is interesting that Herodotus identifies the goddess with Artemis, the goddess of the moon. Bubastis was regarded as the daughter of Osiris and Isis and often represented as a female with the head of a cat - cats were regarded as sacred to her. Artemis was a goddess unmoved by love and she was regarded as Apollo's twin sister (the identification of her as a 'moon goddess' followed naturally from this since Apollo was linked with the sun). Like Apollo, she often sent death and plagues, and was propitiated sometimes with sacrifices.

It is interesting that (a) is the Pythagorean name for 'five' [qv. Iamblicus: *Theologumena Arithmeticae*, 31] - perhaps a link with the 'pentagram'?; (b) the Templars, with whom the name Baphomet is associated, were said to have worshipped their deity in the form of a cat.

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The tradition recorded above, and the one described in part I, both regard Baphomet as a female divinity - and both are esoteric traditions, hitherto unrecorded. It is possible that both are correct that is, that the actual name Baphomet derives (as mentioned in part I) from the Greek : the prefix referring to being 'dyed/stained' or 'dipped' in blood. The suffix derives from 'mother' or 'mistress' used in a religious sense (qv. Iamblicus 'De Mysteriis'). This name - Baphomet - is thus a descriptive one for the "dark" (i.e lunar) goddess, to whom sacrifices were made, and which was actually known in former times as 'Bubastis' - that is, Bastet, to whom cats were sacred. Thus, Baphomet could be regarded as a form of Artemis/Bastet - a female divinity with a 'dark' side or nature (when viewed via conventional morality) to whom sacrifices have been, and continue to be, made. Sinister tradition regards Baphomet as the Bride of



Satan/Lucifer - this would fit well since Lucifer is often regarded as a form of Apollo: Artemis is the female form ('sister') of Apollo. Here, it must be remembered that both Apollo and Artemis were not aetherial, moral and lofty divinities (the classical gods have been romantically misinterpreted) - they could be, and often were, deadly and dark: both 'sinister' and 'light'.

- Order of Nine Angles -

## Baphomet - A Note on the Name III

Tradition tells of a community who venerated the goddess in an area of what is now North Scotland. this community is believed to have comprised of the ancestors of 'The Picts', and they were based around the River Oykel. The Latinized form of their name, given by Ptolemy, was *Smertae*, which means 'stained' or 'smeared folk'. The name by which this community knew the goddess is not recorded, but in Gaulish inscriptions there is reference to a war goddess named *Rosmerta*. Her name translates as 'the greatly smeared goddess' - that is, smeared with blood. It is quite possible that the *Smertae* were connected with her worship, and they were said to smear themselves with the blood of their enemies, in her honour. Interestingly, another community which lived near the region of the *Smertae* during the same era, was known by a name which translates as the 'cat people' (see *Note on the Name II*).

- Order of Nine Angles -

Beyond Illusion  
CB, 1998eh

All authentic occult Ways bring enlightenment - that is, they bring a living apprehension of the cosmos as a unified Being, and the purpose of individual existence in accord with that Being. In the Dark Tradition, this apprehension is but a beginning.

The Sinister Path aims to bring this apprehension via its various Grade rituals, ordeals and tasks. These experiences, as has been written many times, gradually expand individual consciousness into acausality. The Initiate, if they are honest with themselves, will know what experiences are necessary in order to bring an internal balance, and so enable progress along the Way.

However, these various ordeals do not in themselves produce enlightenment. In understanding this, an Initiate of the Way must cease to view the ordeals as forms of conventional "Occultism"; that is, as isolated rituals which supposedly provide "quick fix" results, and an instant attainment of some grand occult title. The ordeals must be understood as ways and means to enlightenment only within the context of the whole journey, from "novice" to "immortal".

In particular, each Grade ritual is a rite of consolidation, a method to distill the wisdom from the previous tasks and ordeals (such as an "Insight Role"). For example, the Grade ritual of External Adept, by its very nature, provides the conditions necessary to reflect upon the previous stage of Initiate, and to thus allow a process of understanding to occur unhindered. This understanding, produced by the conditions of the rite *and* derived from the experiences which have led up to it, is the quintessence of each Grade ritual.

By allowing this consolidation, via a method which fulfils Satanic criteria, character and creativity is deepened and further evolved, and thus the next stage of the Way is made possible. This next stage signifies the practical implementing of this "further evolving" in the real world.

This process is particularly demonstrated by the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept. The conditions of long isolation and silence enable, really for the first time, genuine understanding of the Way as previously and uniquely experienced by the prospective Adept. This understanding occurs of itself, because the prospective Adept has ceased the practical, dynamic life of experience that was previously required.

Thus, the rite of Internal Adept only produces enlightenment when a sufficient amount of sinister experiencing has occurred (usually over a period of three to seven years following Initiation). The ritual may be undertaken at any time, but may not produce what it is designed to produce if the time is not ready for its undertaking: this is to say that enlightenment does not merely result from spending a minimum amount of three months living isolated in the wilderness. It is easy to become enchanted with the "glamour" and challenge of the image of that particular rite: but the outward form is only surface and meaningless if undertaken simply for its own sake.

The prospective Adept therefore will come to an intuitive understanding of the essence of that ritual beyond its appearance, within a time-frame unique to their own development. When that intuitive understanding occurs - and the individual will know when it does - then all the conditions, esoteric and exoteric, are present for a genuine, successful undertaking. Any attempts prior to that point of intuitive understanding implies that the ritual is being undertaken for the wrong reasons, and will end in failure.

One such reason is to see the rite of Internal Adept as an escape from/ solution to personal problems or circumstances - and for those subjected to the pressures and sicknesses of modern urban life (or the culture of the "real world" in general), the allure of living as the archetypal Hermit is understandably very strong. But the ritual does not in itself constitute a new way of life - although it does give, perhaps incidentally, a glimpse of the beginnings of such a way; and if such a new way is desired, then it must be discovered and created prior to or following the ritual itself. (Conversely, an established, productive and "happy" life can produce excuses *not* to undertake the ritual.)

Following completion of the Internal Adept rite, the new Adept returns to the world and begins to implement their Destiny, of which they are now conscious. The tasks then required are devised by the Adept themselves, in accord with that Destiny. Only when (and if) the primary goals of that Destiny are achieved, can the next stage of Master/Mistress occur.

Essentially, the undertaking of a Grade ritual should not occur as a consequence of allowing unconscious and personal motivations to dominate (which are then obscured in fine-sounding ideas or excuses). Personal dilemmas are there to be resolved in other ways, and the Grade rituals there to be allowed - no matter what the desire of the Initiate - to occur *of themselves*. In allowing this, the Initiate needs to develop a certain detachment from the personal - a combination of the intuitive and the objective.

Where the various other tasks are concerned, such as those listed in *Hostia*, the Initiate is occasionally led into these by the individual who is acting as their guide. Sometimes such tasks are not undertaken altogether willingly, but are experienced because the advice of the guide - someone who has travelled further along the Way - is trusted and accepted. Such tasks harden personal character, provide greater insight into oneself and the world, and further refine a sinister focus and understanding. Such a focus/purpose/sense of Destiny, enables judgement and the endurance to see that judgement through.

As for the Grade rituals - at least beyond the Grade of External Adept - the Initiate must themselves learn to wait and watch for the right time and trust, amidst the alchemy of other tasks, that such a time will arrive, to thus be acted upon, using their own initiative. This time does not stay, but is as a gate that will open and then begin to slowly close, until the opportunity is lost. In this - as in all other aspects - self-honesty is the fundamental requirement of anyone who seriously aspires towards the ultimate goal of wisdom.

To conclude: an Initiate should ask themselves the following questions. What really is the purpose, for the individual and beyond, of each Grade ritual? Is such an ordeal undertaken because of the glamour and promise of its "image"? Is the ritual to be manipulated for personal ends, or are there larger forces involved to which the individual must learn to listen? If there is a larger force, what is it and how is the individual to listen? In so answering, there is no point in simply regurgitating the expected ONA theory; one must answer according to how one *feels*.

A real Adept knows the answers.

- Order of Nine Angles -

## Grade Ritual - Grand Master/Grand Mistress

The Master of Temple/Mistress of Earth needs to fulfill several conditions before the ritual proper:

- 1) To have fully fulfilled the pledge of a Master/Mistress regarding transmission of the Way by (i) having trained at least one suitable individual up to and including Internal Adept, and revealed to them all esoteric teachings; and (ii) explicated that Way using appropriate means enabling understanding by others as/when their wyrd inclines (these means including writings; images; music etc.)\*
- 2) Having fully mastered all the techniques of aeonic magick and achieved by some of these new temporal forms\*
- 3) Significantly extended the boundaries of knowledge understanding and existence by creative endeavour explicated causally and acausally - some magickal, others outwardly not-magickal.
- 4) Have begun the process of directing acausal energies via a new or presently or past existing nexion according to the wyrd of that Master/Mistress with the intention of a new aeonic manifestation or re-creating a previous form or forms.

These conditions have been fulfilled (or nearly so) the candidate sets in order his/her temporal affairs - discarding all that is unnecessary. This includes all properties, all of significant monetary value, all accumulated possessions, and all obligations of a personal kind (familial etc.; profession/employment)\* The candidate is to have no financial or other resources other than that required for necessary survival (and then on a weekly basis) save for a small amount sufficient only for the performance of the ritual.

All this preparation is necessary and should be strictly adhered to - this attainment of 'temporal freedom' being necessary for reasons which a Master/Mistress will understand\* (To those lacking this understanding and post-Adept insight all that will be said that such freedom enables the candidate to become for a short period an actual 'nexion' between the causal and acausal, all attention, energies (psychic and otherwise) being then capable of focussing upon the task.) The ritual proper involves the candidate achieving a difficult feat of mental and physical endurance - usually this involves walking, in difficult, isolated terrain, a distance of 300 miles in 15 days carrying appropriate equipment and occasionally buying food en route using the small monetary savings mentioned above\* (Experienced long-distance walkers are advised to increase the distance.) This feat is planned to end at or near the site chosen by the candidate for the physical nexion. The candidate is then to reside at or near this site for a period from Equinox to Solstice or Solstice to Equinox (or, for some nexions, for an alchemical season) during which time and using aeonic techniques, acausal energies are brought forth and directed to an individual(s)/organization/ order/archetypal form(s) and so on, via the chant/name(s)/ images and so on chosen by the candidate. In addition, the candidate usually creates a new technique, to enhance the working (eg\* similar to the 'Star Game'). During this period the temporal changes caused by the magick should be discernable. (Further enhancements/workings may be required after this initial period.)

These changes signify the success of the Grade Ritual.

- Order of Nine Angles -

## Raven-Made

I knew I had miscalculated when the fog began to thicken. I had set myself a three day walk from Welshpool to Hay-on-Wye, travelling along Offa's Dyke, the now little used route originally built to protect Mercia and the rest of the country from Welsh marauders. I had a friend living in Hay-on-Wye who I would be staying with for a few days. She'd given me the idea of walking Offa's Dyke, after mentioning that the route emerged travelling south just down the road from where she lived, it seemed rather elegant and succinct to appear just with a rucksack on her doorstep - as I used to travel before enjoying the dubious benefits of a car. This time I left my car in the city where it belonged, and got the train to Welshpool, throwing all responsibilities and decisions up in the air; forgetting about it all by undertaking this walk and hopefully discovering myself again in the process.

I had set out from Welshpool early, finding the path and enjoying the wonderful scenery presented to me along the way. Shropshire and the Welsh Marches - scenery often overlooked - are rich and stunning in places: vales of Eden with fresh flowing rivers, rolling hills and statuesque trees rising up at myriad points like sentinel genii fixed into wood and autumn leaf-fall. What warmed me was the little pockets of oak tree woodland I came across. The Oak tree represented to me the wholesome strength of the past; a past now diminished, almost eroded by modern inane cacophony. So little woodland left now! Seeing the oak woods acted like a tonic on me. I threw aside the cares that I'd come to escape from, and embraced the beauty of the English-Welsh countryside on a crisp bright autumn day. The walking vivified me, and I felt the clouds from the city melting out of my mind. I had found the going easy to start with and the uphill straits only served to be pleasantly challenging, for I'd made sure my rucksack was lightly packed. I stopped by a river to eat the sandwiches I had bought and to drink some juice. I was fascinated by the sight of a fish in the river and watched it until some movement of my shadow caused it to dart away. Then I had become engrossed in the wavering river bed, where the stones were so arranged there appeared to be a gradation of steps descending to the bottom, decorated with the green tendrils of weeds. If it had been summer I might have taken my clothes off and tried those rough steps out; perhaps they might have taken me to another watery world, or introduced me to a hidden cave beneath the river - so did my imagination work. I was rejuvenated by this activity. All of a sudden I felt all the months - years even - of pressures and harassed city living slough away from me and I was returned momentarily to childhood instincts, where the immediate and present circumstances encompass the whole world, the whole of being. Some sense of uplifting freedom infected me. Time seemed irrelevant and I looked about me in pure appreciation once more, not now concerned about destinations.

I was lured to explore a little coppice not far away where I found three strange standing stones. One of them was so hunched and creviced at the side that it looked like an old woman transmogrified into stone. The impression was compelling and gave life to the whole arrangement, so it seemed that the stones had become three giant granite females caught in conference, permanently in the act of quiescent commune like guardians of the Earth. So it struck me. As I dwelt upon this I extracted a notebook from my rucksack. Being inately fascinated by such structures, though I'd never had the time to explore the instinct further, I spent some time scribing my thoughts into a poem - poetry being something I dabbled at now and again. The time passed and I was loath to leave, but deemed it prudent then to do so. Not before time, I discovered.

I was stiff when I got up, though I soon got into the rhythm of walking again. But, I had miscalculated the distance it would take to get me to Knighton, and after some time I realised I was way behind schedule; my legs had begun to ache, and a blister was beginning to rub on my right foot. After an age of walking, the sun was starting to set behind the swelling hills and forested peaks, softening them with the fading light, and adding to their aura of sombre power. I was not immune to such beauty, but now I began to feel an edge of panic as I was still a long way from where I needed to be. I did not relish the thought of walking in the dark along a route I did not know save that it was traced upon the map: I began to curse myself as a fool and tried to increase my pace, which only served to exacerbate the soreness of my blister and churn my insides up more.

The light had turned to gloom quite quickly and fog had risen, making it tortuous and tense, stumbling along in the dimness of twilight. I felt a sick ball of fear in my stomach as I imagined staggering around in the dark endlessly, finding no houses or welcoming lights - exposed to all that the thick night might draw...

The words of Lady Macbeth sprang to my mind and seemed peculiarly appropriate: "Come thick night and pall thee in the dunest smoke of Hell...". That's how the night had become, as if the smoke of Hell had usurped the healthful light in one fell swoop and left me full of trepidation and anxiety. My imagination began to play tricks on me - I thought I saw a black shape crouched on the path ahead of me, but then it disappeared as I approached. A tree startled me as it rose up in the darkness, its branches like long crooked claws, raking the smoky air above me.

Nebulous shapes haunted the hedgerows. I speeded my pace once more, in irritation with myself, longing to see a light, the presence of a cottage or a farm. On and on I walked, chilled to the marrow and depressed by my predicament.

The path took me down a steep hill, which was hard going, especially with the fog so thick and night encroaching. I bumped into a tree and swore, scrabbling through a bush of gorse, close to tears. But as I got further down I perceived a twinkle of light, and a ruddier glow beside it. Heartened, I picked up my pace heading for the source. My track came steadily downwards until it levelled out to a plateau. In front of me was a gate leading a way out of the field, and beside it, facing the track, was a stone cottage with a cosy flood of light coming from the windows. I was shaking with relief and also feeling rather stupid.

The cottage nestled in a dell; behind it, hills loomed. Before it, undulating land hid it from view. By the cottage was an orchard and at the edge of this, a fire leapt in challenge to the night. I could make out a figure standing beside the fire, holding a stick, apparently absorbed in contemplation of the flames. I felt awkward, intrusive; perhaps because of the stranger's demeanour which expressed an intimate communion with solitude - and somehow, forces unknown. I felt my presence would create an unwelcome disturbance for the silhouette reflecting upon the flames. Something about its stillness struck me...

I opened the gate and made my way up a path which led to the crackling fire and the figure transfixed by it, appearing surreal in curtains of smoke and fog. As I got closer, I perceived the person to be female by virtue of the fact that her hair was pulled into a bun smoothly wrapped about the back of her head. She was turned away from me towards the fire, though I could see her profile. I noticed the hair was grey. I could see the curve of a cheek, and a scar running down it, made lurid by the fiery light.

"Excuse me," I said, as courteously as I could. The woman, seemingly unperturbed, turned in my direction and her eyes assessed me, as if gleaning an understanding of my nature. She looked me up and then studied my face. She did this with an unhurried, composed manner.

"Are you in need of assistance?" She asked, her voice clear and low. Her eyes were penetrating, showing neither dislike nor pleasure towards me. I thought she studied me casually, even coolly. Yet, there was an openness, a courtesy towards me conveyed by the tone of her voice. She was old by virtue of her grey and dark streaked hair, the lines around her mouth and eyes. Yet her features were strong and her skin looked sleek and smooth in the firelight. The scrutiny of her gaze fascinated me. She seemed to be seeing through me, into me, behind the image I projected, and this impression stirred and disturbed me.

There was a moment of silence before I responded to her. "Well, yes I am actually," I replied sheepishly, although relieved by the question. "I seem to have lost my way. I'm supposed to be walking to Knighton; I've come from Welshpool. How far am I from there? Do you have a phone? If I could just phone a taxi... I'll pay of course..." My voice trailed off and my face puckered into an appeal.

"I doubt you'll get taxis to come this far afield on a night like this. it's fifteen miles or more to Knighton," the woman replied with a finality that froze my spirit. "However," she continued, "you're welcome to come in and try - but if you don't have any luck, I have a spare room at your disposal if you so wish. This area is hazardous in these conditions and at this time of night - for one who is not familiar with the landscape. Come, we shall leave the fire to burn and go indoors."

Thus saying she gave the fire a final poke of acknowledgement with her long stick, laid it to one side and gestured me to follow her down the path to her cottage. I must admit to feeling a flood of relief when she had said I could stay - at least some help was at hand.

But now a faint trepidation and sense of intrigue filled me. Who was this woman so ready to give a room to a passing stranger, so certain in herself and her actions?

As I followed her into the wooden porch entrancing the front door, I noticed a carving above me, revealed by the porch light. It was the face of a man, a wild swirl of hair and beard billowing his head and chin, a grimace cut into the features. A Wild Man - Green Man of the Forest - *Pan*; the associations rang through me. I was struck by it, intangibly awed by it. I followed her through the door which was of heavy dark oak wood. It was divided into squares and within each square was some kind of motif. It seemed such an ancient door: it looked as if it would have been better suited to a castle.

A door to a spiral staircase, to a secret chamber: in a way, this is exactly what it turned out to be...

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The door opened straight into the kitchen which immediately evoked a wholesomeness and abundance. There was a large oak table in one corner upon which was placed a bowl containing brown bread rolls. The aroma of stew made with meat and vegetables filled the room. I noticed a place set in to eat. There was an 'Aga' sunk into the wall which

made the room invitingly warm. There was a sink and work bench, a multitude of wooden cupboards, a jug of wild flowers and ears of corn on a stone flagged floor made cosy by a large rug. There was a kettle on the hob, a variety of pans hanging from a rack, bunches of dried flowers tied upon the beams. There were several simple solid wooden chairs around the table. By the Aga was an armchair, again made of wood, with a patchwork cushion to lend a homely softness to the scene. It all blended together to demonstrate a rustic charm that appeared genuine rather than contrived. There was a door to my left and another at the back of the room.

"Come in - don't dally in the doorway," she said as she went directly to the pan on the stove. I looked at my wet, muddy boots doubtfully. A voice from the stove told me to take them off and leave them by the door. I gaped briefly, for the woman had had her back to me and could not have read my expression. I was impressed and a little unnerved. "One moment and I'll be with you," her eyes smiled at me briefly, almost a tease in their light, but too subtle for any certainty of that.

She stirred the pan and lifted the spoon to her lips. She sipped, pausing whilst she ruminated upon the flavour, then reached for some salt. Stirring it once more, satisfied, she replaced the lid. She'd observed the grimace I had made on taking off my boots - particularly the right one - and there was a tone of solicitous concern in her voice when she asked: "How are the feet? You can bathe them if you like. I'll bring you a bowl of hot water with a particularly good herbal preparation I've concocted myself. Guaranteed to help the condition. I am rather accustomed to walking myself you see, hence it has been tried and tested, and proven extremely effective, I promise you.

I did not know how to respond: I did not want to put her out, or intrude upon her goodwill. Neither did I want to expose my blisters or get settled in there as if I'd accepted the bed for the night. I still reckoned on getting a taxi. So, I politely and as graciously as possible declined her kind offer.

She shrugged her shoulders, a little motion that conveyed vague irritation and equally, utter no-chance. "Right," she said, becoming pragmatic, and regarding me closely with eyes of storm-cloud grey pierced with emerald. Strangely affecting eyes somehow ... "I'll show you where the phone is. You can try and phone for a taxi but as I said, I'm not optimistic about your success on a night like this. My offer stands. You are quite welcome to stay and be on your way in the morning; as you wish, it is up to you.

"Thank you very much," I stammered, "it's really very kind of you. It's so stupid of me really... I should've ..." But I was interrupted by my new acquaintance holding up her hand to silence me, in a manner I could not ignore.

"Nonsense - it is little enough. On the contrary it would be shabby of me to behave otherwise, do you not think? I do not mind helping strangers on such a night - depending upon the stranger of course, and the circumstances. In your case, I am happy to be of assistance. Perhaps you have been lucky ..." Her eyes glimmered with subtle irony and humour, and gave me the impression of meanings beyond words. She communicated an unspoken trust in my presence and seemingly acute perception of my nature. Again, I felt a kind of thrill - the touch of an unknown power. "Come this way," she said and opened the door I stood next to.

The room I was led into was sparsely but tastefully furnished. There was a fireplace at the further end of the room, which gave an ambience of comfort; a richness set off by the uncluttered space around it. The carpet reminded me of a forest floor - it was a pattern made of cream, fawn and green, threaded with browns and gold. A wooden rocking chair, an armchair and a sofa surrounded the fire. Green velvet curtains shut out the night. I noticed a large wooden cabinet to one side. There was a strange wall hanging next to it. It was of a simple oatmeal weaving, but in the middle of it, in black, was a sign, a symbol I did not understand. It was like a diamond shape with a horizontal line intersecting it, whilst inside it was an oval - something else inside of that. The hanging gave an aura of enigmatic power to the scene, that I found strangely affecting, but couldn't quite put my finger on why or how. In another corner of the room, a weird contortion of tree roots, smoothed and polished, stood as a natural form of sculpture. I made out a black rounded shape hanging from one of the static roots. I could not see what it was. Next to this was a large picture which conveyed a sense of brooding wilderness: trees crouched over a river threading into a black interior. The depicted shadows and moonlight and snow suggested mystery - the primal pulse captured in essence upon canvas. These perceptions took a moment to register in my mind, before I followed her to the back of the room, where a telephone rested on a small table. Beside it, surprisingly to my mind, given the basic charm of my surrounds, was a music system and a shelf stacked with CDs and tapes. The whole of the back wall was covered with shelves, filled with books. I was intrigued as to their nature but did not feel able to browse upon them in my host's presence.

"Well, here's the phone. There are some directories under there if you need them," she indicated.

"Thanks, that's great. Is it O.K. if I phone a friend as well? It's just I promised I would," I rambled tentatively, still too embarrassed by my predicament and too much in her debt to behave otherwise. I fumbled with my purse trying to find the number scrawled on a bit of paper, buried amongst other cards and folded notes. Something fell from my purse and onto the carpet.



"Help yourself," she said, indicating the phone and bending to pick up what had dropped. I heard her give a sharp, almost hissing sound which chilled me a little.

"You'd better have this back," she said grimly, holding a small silver crucifix a friend had given me. My friend's gesture had touched me, though I had never worn the crucifix, not feeling committed to the Christian cause. I was of wavering faith where such things were concerned.

"I don't hold with such things. In fact, I find their presence a defilement and an irritation - Nazarene sickness that it is." Her voice was low, yet delivering the lines with a smooth intensity that rendered me uncertain and speechless.

"You believe in such nonsense do you?" she asked with quiet precision.

"Not especially ... A friend gave it to me. I've never worn it. I believe in something; not all the dogma, but what's behind it, I suppose." I felt embarrassed by my immediate disassociation with the church; God, Jesus. I probably seemed weak, shallow. Yet the male dominated ethos of Christianity had distanced me from it a long while since. It seemed to divest me of power so I could not love it or believe it as fully as others seemed to.

There was a slight relaxation of tension, which made me respond. "Do you think it is all nonsense?" I asked. The woman looked at me for a while, as if gauging the intention behind the question, which was innocent and curious enough. Her scrutiny disturbed me.

"We will talk further on the matter in more conducive circumstances. For now, here's the phone at your disposal. I shall make some tea," she said decisively. Then she left me to complete my task.

I got through to Margaret, the friend I was supposed to be visiting the following evening, who lived in Hay-on-Wye. I briefly put her in the picture, telling her I'd probably arrive later than I'd anticipated, because of all the disruption caused by my foolhardy miscalculation. It was good to hear her voice but I didn't want to talk for long, as I was conscious of prevailing upon the goodwill of another. I put the phone down with a "goodbye" and "see you soon". I found two local taxi firms in the directory. I dialled one number, but on hearing my request, the man said they were fully booked for the evening and couldn't come so far afield. I tried the second number. It rang for a long time before someone picked it up. Again a man's voice. I informed him of my predicament. "Sorry love, it's such a long way, twenty mile or more - and in this weather: we couldn't spare someone for that length of time. Not worth the risk I'm afraid ..." his voice tailed off. I was at a loss, tried to persuade him further with no luck, and rather abruptly put the phone down. I tried two other numbers to no avail.

It seemed I would have no option but to take up my recent host's kind offer and stay the night. I was loath to do this, but there seemed little alternative. I cursed quietly under my breath. Then my curiosity got the better of me, and I scanned the room once more, my eyes falling on the picture of the shadowy wilderness; the strange symbol on the plain wall hanging; the sculptured ravel of tree roots in the corner; the copper bucket by the fire reflecting the dancing flames. The whole combining an effect of simplicity mingled with an elegance that seemed full of potency. I was enticed to know more of my hospitable acquaintance. I perused the books quickly. I noticed some of classic distinction: Camus - *The Outsider*; *Wuthering Heights*; Mishima - *The Sea of Fertility*; Mirebeau - *The Torture Garden*; *The Trial* by Kafka. Thomas Hardy. George Eliot. Then ones that aroused my curiosity: *The Tree of Wyrld*; *The Alchemical Writings of Robert Fludd*; *Codex Saerus*; *Grirnoire of the Dark Gods*. My interest was thoroughly aroused by those tides, and I wondered at their import.

But I feared the silence would betray me, so I moved quickly to the door and walked in to see the woman sitting on the chair by the Aga, supping a mug of tea. A tortoiseshell cat, resplendant in orange and white and fawn, dappled with black, purred upon her knee as she stroked it sensuously. She'd taken off her boots, and her coat now hung beside the door along with a variety of other coats and footwear. She wore a plain red woollen jumper with a long Arran cardigan, cream with brown buttons, and soft-coloured cinnamon-brown trousers, that revealed a certain sleek robustness about her figure, despite the banner of her hair proclaiming her lack of youth. Her face was a touch imperious. This effect was accentuated by the steely-grey hair twinned and captured neatly in a bun at the back of her head. A few wisps escaped and framed her smooth inscrutable face, notably the high cheekbones and small vertical scar running down her right cheek. That scar could have been a tribal initiation mark or a score bequeathing some high rank of honour from the way it was starkly, symmetrically cut into her skin. It certainly suggested there was much more to her than met the eye. I noticed the steady grey-green eyes, dark straight brows, strong nose and firm chin. Her skin was browned and rosied as if by a life lived as much outdoors as inside. It was only her hair, the lines around the mouth and forehead, about the eyes that told her age.

"Well? And what was the verdict?" She asked as soon as I walked in and came towards her. I bit my lip in apprehension and felt rather awkward.

"I'm sorry but I couldn't get anybody to come out here. I really don't like to prevail upon you but I'm at a loss as to what else to do. I could kick myself for being so stupid," I finished in exasperation.

"Don't worry about it. You're welcome to stay. It's not putting me out as I have a spare room. Besides, your company is an interesting novelty to me rather than a burden," said my companion, in such a way that it soothed me and put me more at ease. I still felt a fool though, which I could not help expostulating further on.

"I got side-tracked you know" I sighed, "soaking up the wonderful countryside. I tarried by some standing stones and a river at midday. It's so kind of you to take me in - really, I thought I'd be stumbling around out there forever".

"Well," said the woman somewhat wryly, "fate has intervened and fortune has cast you upon my doorstep. Accept my hospitality now without feeling you have to apologise. I am always happy to meet wearied travellers. Perhaps this meeting will prove fortuitous. Do you believe in fate ...?" The lady asked, drawing me in with a smile and spark of interest, following the question with a pause and raised eyebrows as if in expectation at my name.

"Joanna, "I told her. "Joanna Fox; though it's Jo to my friends". "Well, Joanna," continued my host. "Do you believe in Fate?"

I frowned and puzzled over it. "I'm really not sure," I replied. "Part of me does, but part of me rebels against any fixed pattern for the future. To me, it must of necessity, be a fluid proposition,"

"But of course," agreed the woman. "How perceptive of you to view it so. My name's Brenna, by the way," she said, proffering her hand which I accepted, receiving a warm, firm pressure around my own. In fact everything about her suggested strength, certainty, deep understanding. The handshake merely confirmed my intuitions.

"I'm sure you'd like a cup of tea," she said, getting up and pouring some tea from a teapot into a solid brown mug.

"Do sit down, pull up a chair. I'm afraid the only comfy one has been usurped by Aosothe, as you see. The tortoiseshell cat had sat up and yawned as it was referred to, so that we both laughed and the atmosphere was softened further.

"You mentioned some standing stones. Where did you see them? Could you locate them for me?"

I told her the area as near as I could, mentioning a village near by.

"Ah, the 'three crones'," she said softly. "There's a legend about them. It is to do with the triple Goddess and the ancient pagan tradition of sacrificing the king - he designated Lord of the season - in order to appease the Goddess and ensure a fruitful harvest.

The story tells of a young girl, her mother and grandmother, travelling the roads in search of their True Lord, their earthly Master who one day had simply vanished from their lives having, unbeknownst to them, been sacrificed to fructify the land. Now, when a stranger - a young shepherd - encountered on their journey, brought this to their awareness in all innocence, all three women - the daughter, the wife, the mother - were consumed with grief, which turned to hatred. They had come to an obscure place on their travels, in a coppice beside a river, and there they began to plot their vengeance: to use their will and Woman's power to destroy, to wreak havoc, as their own lives had been shattered. All three women were together in this, the girl no less than the old woman or the raging widow. They stood upon a an area known most commonly as a 'ley-line': a vein of Earth that amplified their energies. As they settled on a plan and directed its purpose, the hapless young shepherd was taken unawares. They sprang on him and tied him up with the intent of sacrificing him to the Gods of vengeance and war. But they did not realise that the youth was the key to their future. He was the herald of the Lord returned, who would have grown to wed the girl who now chose to execute him. She and he would have held the seed of future fruition: the women were ignorant of this, yet still powerful, still potent enough to destroy the Path and obliterate Chance.

The Goddess rose against their desires as they whirled in savage climax towards the orgy of bloodshed. And as the three women stood in a circle around their victim, breathing hard and wild-eyed, the Earth cracked its joints and lightning shot down, electrifying all three: fixing them into stone before the sacrifice was made. Thereby the seed of the future, the new Lord's life, was saved in order that it should fructify generations to come - the new Lord of course being the male complimentary aspect of spring and summer.

It is a warning to respect the seasons of life and to accept the purpose behind death when it comes - not to rail against it. That little legend, as the saying goes, is as old as the hills. It is in such pockets of the country as this, that you will discover the true ancient world. Its spirit has persevered despite the biblical onslaught, as you will find if you dig deep enough".

"How fascinating," I responded, genuinely enthralled by the tale and the one telling it. "Have you studied local history and ancient custom then?"

"Oh, it is something I choose to dabble in when I have the time," Brenna answered evasively.

I sipped my tea and stretched my legs, basking in the warmth, only grateful I had a roof over my head and a place to stay for the night. What the evening would bring I could not tell.

Brenna began to question me about my background and where I had originated from.

"Staffordshire," I told her, without my usual inclination to dress that up by claiming to come from the heart of England, as was my usual theatrical wont. I felt she would neither have appreciated nor tolerated such a flowery riposte.

"Not too great a distance from here," she observed casually. "And your job, what do you do for a living?"

"I'm a psychologist," I answered. "I work with psychiatric patients".

"Ah, I see," Brenna replied and softly laughed. "So you know well the workings of the human mind?" There was something of the sceptic in her voice.

"Well, I wouldn't say that," I said, somewhat piqued, yet all too aware of my inadequacy in some areas, with some cases. In fact I was disillusioned with the profession as a whole. Too much talk and theory, meetings and conferences - too few practical results. Also, the system was too rigid to accommodate the experimental or dynamic. Often I felt I had achieved little in any real terms. But I did not elaborate on my statement, not wanting to reveal my lack of conviction in my own profession. "No? Well that at least is good - only the callow would claim as much. Obviously you do not fall into that category. Do you find your work interesting?" "Some of it - though there are parts of it I find irksome and pointless." Really, I did not want to talk about it; I felt too disenchanted. Brenna seemed to sense my mood.

"It's the case with most jobs I should think. There are always the positives and the negatives - it is whether they balance favourably that counts." Then she turned towards the stove. "I must confess I am feeling hungry. Will you join me? I won't take kindly to you watching me eat alone," she said.

"Of course, that would be lovely. You're really very kind," I responded, repeating myself, at which Brenna laughed, a slight derision in the sound. "I hardly think so my dear. It is little enough, and your presence here offers me favourable relief from my own company - though do not misunderstand me, I am inclined to solitude. In general I prefer it. But I am not so rigid yet as to make that state an unbroken rule. There is always something to be learned from strangers, do you not think?"

"Certainly," I replied, feeling again almost intimidated by Brenna's manner. She was so different, so self-possessed and fluid, like no one I'd ever met before. I felt my answer had pleased her in some way. She smiled slightly and regarded me for a moment in a calm detached manner. Again, I had the sense of indiscernable power, as of something hidden yet soon to be revealed - as if she were assessing the likely manner of my reaction to something specific. As if she were manipulating me in some way for her own ends. "Well then, let's eat," she demanded. She took another bowl from those stacked on the table beside the bread and set a place for me. Then she brought the saucepan over to the table and ladled a generous amount of the stew into each of the bowls. In truth, I was very hungry as I'd anticipated a pub meal in Knighton by now. But of course, events had now been dramatically altered. There was nothing I could do but take advantage of them.

I applied myself enthusiastically to the meal, complimenting Brenna on the taste and wholesome nature her fare. She nodded an acknowledgement and offered me the bread, pushing also the butter dish towards me. During the meal she questioned me further about the route I had taken and my plans. I indicated I intended to have an early start; she nodded an agreement. We talked about the locality, the economy of the area and various related topics, in between mouthfuls. Brenna seemed to have a detailed knowledge of such things, which impressed me further. I tried to relax into the warmth and comfort of my surroundings, letting the evening unroll, allowing Brenna to dictate the pace of things.

Soon I sat back feeling thoroughly replete. "Thank you - that was wonderful," I said. Brenna, who had not quite finished, looked up and smiled slightly, then went back to her meal. I waited for her to finish, bending down and caressing the tortoiseshell cat, talking to it crooningly.

"Had her seven years now," commented Brenna, mopping up her bowl with a piece of bread. "Found her on the roadside when I was out walking one day. She'd been knocked down by a car. Some fool driving too fast. Luckily it was only a superficial blow and she recovered quickly. But she's stayed with me, though I suspect her motives are the food and warmth supplied. Still, I like to have her about. She has a brand of eloquence I can relate to. Beautiful creatures cats, don't you think? Beautiful and cruel but not as heartless as their stereotype supposes - what do you think?" She said, addressing the cat rather than myself, whilst fondly rubbing its neck.

"Yeah, they're great aren't they? I love 'em," I agreed warmly, then asked: "What did you say you called her?"

"Ah yes, her name ..." said Brenna, her voice a little distant. "People's tendency to name their animals often amounts to a pathetic attempt to humanise them. Degrading and deceiving for both the animal and the person. The name I have for her does not bestow upon her pet status, rather it makes me appreciate her nature - her catness if you like - more. Asoth is her name, *Asoth*," she mused gazing at the cat, as if identifying some quality or other she held in her mind.

"That's a strange name," I retorted, "does it have a meaning? Where does it come from?"

Again Brenna bestowed upon me a sustained look before replying. "Asoth is the name of a Goddess worshipped from an ancient past. She was meant to represent enchantment, passion and death. A Goddess of great power". I was intrigued by her explanation and wanted to hear more, but Brenna had already arisen to clear the table.

"How interesting, I've not heard of that name before," I said hopefully.

Brenna stood before me with the used bowls in her hands. "No no, you will not have done," she almost smiled, moving away towards the sink. Her categoric assumption of my ignorance irritated me slightly - after all I was not an illiterate fool. But I let the matter rest and brushed the feeling from me. "Can I help?" I asked.

"No - there is little to do. We shall retire to the front room and sit in more comfortable surroundings," said Brenna, placing the crockery on a draining board and drying her hands. She positioned the saucepan with the rest of the stew on the Aga, removed the bread and wiped the table.

"Are you partial to mead?" she asked brushing a strand of grey hair from her eye. "Mead? Oh yes I certainly am - but I don't want..." "Enough of that," responded Brenna. "Come then, let's go next door". I rose up and followed her into the front room. The fire crackled invitingly as we entered.

"Do take a seat," said Brenna motioning towards the sofa, and going to the copper bucket to replenish the fire with another log. She moved soundlessly to the large wooden cabinet.

"That's a lovely picture," I commented, studying more closely the image of the dark shadowed trees overhanging the disappearing river, a crescent moon reflected in the water. "Rather wild."

"Yes - I'm glad you like it. A friend of mine painted it. It was a present," Brenna remarked absently. I found the picture strangely haunting, and gazed at it further before turning to sit down. Brenna was standing by the cabinet, the front of which she had opened where shelves revealed glasses and a sparse array of bottles. She put two cut glass tumblers on the top.

Then she stopped what she was doing and began watching me with interest. I was disconcerted by her observation. I was uncertain how to respond. I smiled a little nervously and sat down. She gave a slight smile in return and then bent to open the lower half of the cabinet from which she extracted some objects: an incense burner, a gold candle and a small cloth bag. She unwrapped a charcoal block and held it over a flame til it spat sparks, and blew on it til it glowed. The smell of burning charcoal drifted into the air. She placed it in the brass burner, and then reaching for the small muslin bag, she drew forth some crystallized resin which she sprinkled on the charcoal. A strange, subtle aroma began to fill the room, earthy and fragrant. She put the candle in a carved wooden candle-holder and lit it. The corner of the room was illuminated, and shadows flickered upon the cabinet, and the wall-hanging at its side. I reflected upon the strangeness of life as Brenna did this, enjoying the novelty of the situation; yet I could not help feeling I had stumbled upon a witch's haunt - the stuff fairytales are made of, become reality before me. I did not know whether to be afraid and on my guard, or whether to embrace the opportunity the circumstances provided. The latter course seemed most prudent and was closer to my instinct.

I gazed into the fire, reflecting on Brenna. I had never met a woman like her. I judged her to be in her early sixties / late fifties. But the way she moved and held herself belied such an age. She seemed strong and vigorous still. And her face though grooved by several lines, made faintly savage by the scar traced down her cheek, from cheekbone to level with her mouth, was attractive and held a certain strength, a certain resolution amplified by her obvious intelligence. I wondered what had brought her here to this unpopulated region, when the abundance of books, her interest in music, her sparse but elegant furnishings betrayed a certain culture or sophistication, a worldliness which seemed at odds with her rustic surroundings, her solitude. She held a mystery for me I was both fascinated and disturbed by. Brenna's voice broke my reveries. "Music?" she posited inquiringly. "I'm partial to classical music myself. Do you like piano music?" She moved to the back of the room as she spoke, selecting a CD as I responded. "Yes, I love piano music," I said in honest enthusiasm. "I love some classical music - though I don't listen to it as much as I'd like to - lots of other music too. Do you play an instrument?"

Brenna nodded. "I play the western pipe - it is based on the Japanese bamboo flute, the 'shakuhachi'; but mine is made of yew wood and is longer and narrower than the Japanese version." Brenna said this conversationally as she pressed buttons so that some mellifluous piano music filled the room - the quality of sound was superb, crystal clear. I was something of a musician myself. Over the past year I had become involved in a New Age rock/folk group. We were all women and the group formed a part time diversion from work, family, and professional duties for all of us. It was my main source of pleasure in life, and had begun to supercede and eclipse the other unsatisfactory areas. Music freed me. Playing the guitar, singing with the group, writing songs with a message, hoping to change the world! These things absorbed me like nothing else did. I was delighted, therefore, at Brenna's professed musical skill.

"How lovely. I'd love to hear it - or even see it. I play the guitar myself. I've been playing in an all female rock group for a year now - it's great fun."

"Really," responded Brenna, her eyes glinting some im humour. "Do you aim to take the world by storm then?" I laughed self-consciously. "No, it's only a hobby, but it's great nevertheless - absorbs you like nothing else, do you not think?"

"Undoubtedly," smiled Brenna, softening towards me. "Would you like to see my Western pipe then? I must confess it is rather a lovely instrument."

"I'd love to," I said sincerely.

She opened a cupboard at the back of the room, and extracted a long object encased in leather. She brought it over, at the same time handing me the drink of honey-coloured liquid warming in the glass. She sat down in the armchair, whilst I sat on the sofa facing the fire. She slid the pipe from its holder and handed it to me. It was about two and a quarter foot in length, of very hard strong wood; a marvellous cauliflower grained pattern curling round the centre of it, in a warm sheen of deep golden brown, tapering to darker brown and almost black at the end. It was very simple. There were six holes evenly placed down it and one hole at the back. There was a reed at the smoothed edge of the mouth-piece.

"It's beautiful," I said truly in awe. "Would you play it a little - I've never seen one like that before".

"Well - it's my own design actually," said Brenna. "I wanted it to be unique - that's why I made it."

"You made it?" I gasped.

Brenna nodded. "It's not so difficult once you've mastered the basic principles - it was finding the right wood that was the hardest part. This is how it sounds". She lifted the long wooden pipe to her lips and immediately a piercing, lilting tone over-powered the piano music, which Brenna had turned down low. It swelled and waned in the air, a wave of sound that transfixed and moved, more raw and pure than anything I'd ever heard. Brenna's lips covered the mouth-piece and resonated with the sound, as her fingers flickered up and down, her body bending as if she were a part of the instrument herself. I knew that feeling too, but Brenna's motions contained a completeness that I felt I lacked. "Fantastic!" I responded when Brenna finally stopped. "That's really beautiful."

"Thank you," she said modestly, smiling a little.

"How long have you been playing it for?"

"I've been playing this particular instrument for nine years," replied Brenna. "Previous to that it was the Japanese version. I find the process meditational and the sound is, I hope, pleasing as well as unique."

"It is - I wish I could have it on tape to listen to some more," I said, conscious of my flattery but sincere with it.

"Thank you again," Brenna said, sipping her drink, "but I myself would not tape that sound. Its essence would be negated by such an act. What about you? Tell me about your musical tastes ... have you experienced any concerts of classical music?"

I was conscious of my ignorance in this area; there were some pieces I knew and loved, but also a vast amount I knew nothing about. "I saw, or heard rather, *The Eroica*, Beethoven's third in the Royal Festival Hall and Handel's *Messiah* at the Royal Albert Hall. That was a while ago now".

"Lovely music," commented Brenna, "though it's a pity about the subject matter of the latter - that spoils it a bit really". I looked at her, puzzled.

"Handel's 'Messiah'," she said. "I find such fairytales invidious and degrading. What a shame such lovely music was inspired by such a shallow ideology".

I remembered her reaction to the crucifix and her words- 'we will talk on this matter later...' This emboldened me to spring a question. "Can I ask, and I hope you don't mind me doing so: why do you despise Christianity, the Church, so much?"

Brenna gave a short laugh, casting her eyes to the ceiling. "Why? There are a thousand and one reasons, Joanna Fox, to despise the Church as I do, a thousand and one reasons."

I waited for more, but nothing seemed forthcoming. "But what are your main reasons?" I pushed at her.

She scrutinised me, again appearing to ponder upon my inner self in that subtle, intuitive way of hers.

"Well Joanna, you strike me as an intelligent woman. Perhaps you could tell me one reason why I might dislike the Church so much - come, use your perceptions," said Brenna, regarding me with interest and swirling the liquor round in her glass.

"Oh - is it because it has a rather masculine bias?" I fished.

"Rather?" took up Brenna, "that's something of an understatement don't you think? Christianity is no lover of 'Women's Rights' - quite the converse, I should say. There are many references in the so-called Bible to the unclean and corrupt nature of women; to the inferior status of women in relation to the man."

She threw her head back and appraised me, her eyes glittering with a vein of humour. Her words were spiked, deliberately and provocatively I felt, to expose my own allegiances; to stir me or to educate me. "The Bible is littered with such references from St Paul to St Thomas Aquinas, starting of course with 'Eve', the 'Original Sinner'. Then we have 'Mother Mary', the highest expression of femininity: a virgin - the only fitting vessel for God's Son! Thus was the paragon and pinnacle of female virtue held up to all women; always unattainable, stressing purity, virginity - a quintessence of what is most valued in a woman. At least by the obtuse devils who contrived such rubbish. I could talk about this ad infinitum. It scarcely needs underlining. Look at the concept of God. *Our Father which art ...etc... etc*. Utter rot! Strange that God should be male, when it is the female of the species who brings new life into the world ... contradictory don't you think? In addition to that, it is now accepted that the Christian

myth, even down to its ceremonies, is based on older, pagan practices and legends - even so far as the eating of the host, and the cross itself. The reality is, an older, more attuned Way was supplanted by an alien creed. Hence I have little time for any of it - the church, christianity, the Bible. It's all blah blah blah as far as I am concerned," said Brenna, moving her hand in a circle and drawing out the last three words to emphasise her point. "Do you understand?"

"Oh yes, completely," I said, warmed now that she appeared to have opened up a little. Brenna has elaborated upon the main reason why I myself divorced from the church and could not relate to its teachings. The recent debate over women's ordination and the massive controversy it had caused underlined that point. It angered me that the Church, with its tone of morality, supposed upholder of equality and Justice, should be so deeply prejudiced against women. I could understand Brenna's point of view and went on to tell her so, detailing my own feelings on the matter.

"Ah, so you are with me in this then!" said Brenna, a little gleefully, rubbing a finger around the rim of her glass. "Oh certainly," I replied. "I reject all the dogma - though I do believe that a man called 'Jesus' lived - that he was very special and changed things substantially".

Brenna groaned and shook her head. "You haven't listened to what I've said Joanna. Whatever changes have occurred through Christianity have been to the detriment; and what continues to enhance our civilisation does so in spite of the Nazarene. And there is no historical evidence whatsoever to substantiate the common view of the Deceiver's life. The myth was contrived by forces much older than Christianity, whose servants used it to inculcate societies for their own ends, to gain power, rather than a wholly religious influence ..."

"But something which has influenced so many people and countries must have some basis in truth, surely?" I objected, unable to accept Brenna's words.

"You think so? It is not the case as far as I am concerned. This book - that most people swear by the precious Bible - was written over a period of hundreds of years by many different people. Scholars with an interest in furthering the aims of the Church, and the forces beyond that. Some time ago, ancient writings were unearthed, known as the 'Dead Sea Scrolls', which gave a completely different picture of the Nazarene, or Yesua, as he was called.

According to suppressed sources such as these, he was a militant leader who provoked an uprising against the Romans and was accordingly stoned to death. His body was removed from its tomb by friends in order to implement a new religion. These documents have far more authenticity than any 'Bible', but most people aren't prepared to accept their validity. The Church has done its job well. The majority are brainwashed according to the legend and act out the sheep metaphor used so frequently in Nazarene texts. The Lord's my shepherd! Tsssk! The Lord's my ball and chain more like. The Lord's my bloody blindfold! Ha ha!" She completed her speech with a short derisive laugh that resonated out, and then lifted her glass to her lips, gazing at me over the brim as she did so; her grey-green eyes smouldering, alight, seemingly aroused by the discussion.

There was a war inside of me. I was confused by her words, by her apparent knowledge and analysis of the issue. I have already said I was of wavering faith, but I admired the figure of Christ and could not easily reject what Brenna had called a life-time of 'brainwashing'. I could not accept her words, despite the apparent research and rationale which she used to support her argument.

"But I still don't see how the Church could achieve such dominance if its roots weren't based in fact - at least to some degree. Look at the early Christians - no one throws away their life for an empty ideal. They felt so strongly that they were prepared to die for their beliefs and many did. There must be some basis in fact for that to occur. I can't believe the story of Jesus is just a fairytale. Why do so many people believe in it then? There must be some truth in it!" I said earnestly, passion evident in my voice and manner.

Brenna did not respond immediately but smiled ever so slightly before commenting. "Life-long illusions are hard to let go of, aren't they?" Her eyes almost pitied me. "The majority vote is rarely the most discerning, you should know that Jo." I barely registered the abbreviation of my name in the midst of this private controversy, but somewhere deep inside a bell had been struck and was resonating, a note that seemed to signify some development of intimacy between myself and the older woman before me, shattering my ideals. What such a feeling could mean I could not tell for I was too involved in the situation to analyse or objectify it. Brenna continued on.

"Do you not see how useful such a story was for the Church? It gave it impetus - a cudgel to beat a people. It was easy to inspire fervour and unquestioning devotion in a population already under the so-called tyranny of the Romans. It gave their lives new meaning: a spiritual strength, for they believed that after death, if they were true to the teachings of Christ, they would earn a place in 'heaven' - poor ignorant chattle. In truth it was a dream with no place in reality, manipulated by a learned hierarchy who either used, or created, the reputation of a man called Yeshua, this 'revolutionary' whose corpse was mysteriously abducted ... Thus, there was a 'mythos' to spread further the unique ethos of a people. The story of Jesus Christ has no basis in fact, I assure you my dear. But, what of it! People believe what they want to believe, don't they? Persist with your misguided notions if you choose - it is not my concern".

I was stung by her arrogance, her final provocative comments, But I was also filled with doubt. She sounded so sure of herself it made me feel foolish. I had always doubted but now those doubts threatened to overwhelm and submerge me. I was at sea clinging to the sinking wreckage of my slender beliefs. Yes - and still I clung to them. Brenna leant forwards. "You are a little naive as regards the history of the Christian Church aren't you?" She said, and once again her patronage exasperated me.

"Once the Church's ideas had achieved momentum, it was able to press its advantage with a ruthlessness appropriate to any genuine tyranny - and much greater than that attributed to the Roman Empire. It is historical fact that more people were killed in the Coliseum in ever more violent and debauched ways under the christianised emperors, than when the Heathens held sway. Christianity didn't make 'base' urges any gentler; in fact the repressive nature of its doctrines only served to enhance them. It was the power of the sword, the threat of torture and damnation which usually made people convert and take on board the dogma. Look at the Inquisition, for example; look what they did in the name of your Christ ! Once those ideas took root over here, in this country, by converting noblemen and the Royalty, the ordinary folk didn't stand a chance. It was a case of convert or die! The old traditions were seen as heretical and anyone known to practice them was dealt with accordingly - by death, by torture. Such pagan worshippers came to be seen as 'witches', and I'm sure you have some idea of how they were dealt with. Interesting that witches were usually or nearly always women - a very useful catharsis for the Church's prevalent misogyny, don't you think?"

It is interesting that Pagan Traditions contain both Gods and Goddesses - powerful female archetypes, as well as male ones. Not the case, as you've pointed out, with christianity. In that sense the Pagan Tradition was a far more balanced and wholesome system of worship than the autocratic masculine church, don't you think ?" Brenna had relaxed back into her seat and seemed to be enjoying herself.

I was not. I was disturbed, knocked off balance by what I was hearing. Understand, it was not because I had any deeply held convictions. Years ago I brushed most religious dogma to one side but decided I believed in something. I believed in a great creative spirit or force which I tried to imagine was beyond any distinction of gender. Yet invariably when I prayed, which was albeit infrequently during moments of extreme depression or delight, I would imbue the imagined omnipotent listening presence with maleness. I was conscious of it yet I couldn't quite rid myself of the habit. I had believed Jesus was a highly evolved man, way ahead of his time, who had given people belief in something greater than themselves, who had offered a humanitarian ideal. Now I no longer knew where I stood with regard to any of it. I lapsed into an uneasy silence. I'd forgotten about the time and the unfamiliarity of my surroundings. I cogitated on the metaphysical matter at hand and stared into the fire.

Brenna rose and went to turn the tape over. "Would you like a drop more?" She said graciously, reaching towards my nearly empty glass. I did not refuse and was soon handed a replenished tumbler. Brenna leant forwards, her scar a trace of venom on her cheek. "It's very convenient, don't you think Jo, to an idol who preaches the virtues of meekness, turning the other cheek, coveting not thy neighbour's ox, *Thou shalt not kill*, and so forth. Would you say that all those who have killed and fought to defend their country and their own kith and kin are now burning in Hell? The meek shall inherit the Earth - and be manipulated, moulded, oppressed. All that this dogma really amounts to is a suppression of Nature - the burden of guilt is the result. It is a *sickness*. Thou shalt not covet, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt obey thy father and thy mother. And how would it be Joanna Fox, if everyone acted thus? The end of evolution, perhaps? You might as well say don't desire, don't aspire, don't harbour hopes or ambitions, don't seek to change the world. Or if you do, make sure it is forcing the foul christian doctrine onto the 'unbelievers'. Silly. It is a sickness, a grovelling form of sickness.

But things will change. For like any power throughout history, the Nazarene influence is waning. Something else shall replace it, perhaps several hundred years from now, but it will come and it will be, I think, a force more vital, more creative and numinous than anything christianity produced. Ha! Perhaps it's impossible to say what the future will hold, and perhaps not ..." Her eyes glimmered with a humorous yet haunting light. "But one thing is easy to tell, and even though I live in this nest of the countryside, I am still in touch with what goes on in the world. I know the church is crumbling: Thank Satan himself!" Her laugh as laconic yet spiked with a wicked glint of humour, as she saw the slight tension of shock trace across my features.

Thank Satan himself! Yet why was the idea so shocking? It was only an idea, like 'God', like the life of a Christ who had never lived as such. What was there to believe in but oneself? And anyway, I never had believed in the christian 'Devil' or any absolute power of 'Evil'. Yet I believed in something - I believed in a spiritual world beyond the material existence. I believed this now more than ever, for Brenna's presence further instilled in me a feeling of unknown forces at play. She was imbued with power, with implied depth that transpired in subtle ways: glances caught in a moment's search, her words shattering my illusions, her captivating conviction and certainty of tone, her ease and confidence, her bluntness. She was a woman in charge of herself. Queen of her own domain. What that domain was I could only guess at ... I felt myself drawn to some impending climax or revelation tinged with danger

and forbidden fruits. I told my inexorably imagination to stop working over-time, but the spell was there; the spell of Brenna's presence. I did not pursue her remark about Satan, but remembered what she had said regarding the future and addressed a question to her, fishing once more, "Can you predict the future?" I asked, feeling bold but inspired to bluntness, after having my arguments demolished by her own systematic appraisals. She regarded me a moment, the firelight glowing on her cheek, accentuating the scar and making her appear almost unearthly.

"The future has many paths, many roads of possibility; it is a matter of circumstantial degree as to its outcome." Inscrutable, she brought her hands together to form a bridge in front of her. "Do you desire to know what the future might hold for you, Joanna Fox?" She said, pointing her joined index fingers at me deliberately.

"I ... well ... Can you tell the future?" I asked again, stumbling some over my words, yet rather seduced by the circumstances I found myself in. Brenna laughed easily.

"You've heard of 'tarot cards' have you Jo? I'll read your cards if you like - would you like me to do so?" She leaned towards me inquiringly, a smile and a challenge in her gaze. I felt a thrill of nervous energy.

"Why not?" I said readily enough, "I've never had my cards read before".

"Very well, Joanna Fox, we shall see what the cards reveal." Her use of my full name, her change of mood, heightened the suspense in the room and made me feel young and ignorant. I was sure this was deliberate, but I was too in awe and polite to object. I registered these reactions, but they were transient and superfluous compared to my building curiosity about Brenna; about how the evening would further unfold. It was too late to hold back now. Brenna got up and went to the back of the room. She put some more incense onto the burner, found a new CD and switched it to play. Immediately the sound of the wind, waves upon the shore, the keening cry of seagulls filled the room; simple, poignantly plucked guitar chords strumming alongside the sounds of nature. It was beautiful, mellow and timeless. Brenna opened a draw and took from it a box of cards. She brought a small table that had nestled by the cabinet, and placed it between where I sat on the sofa and where she sat in the armchair beside me. She smiled faintly as I nervously wetted my throat with the mead.

"What do you hope the cards will reveal, Joanna Fox? Where do you want the future to take you?" Said Brenna in low, soft tones.

I did not know how to answer, for I did not know what I wanted anymore. I just knew a growing dissatisfaction inside myself, an itch to spread my wings and fly - to where I knew not. I knew I had to change things, my circumstances; my relationship with Mark, the man I lived with. I knew I had to change my situation, but I lacked direction. So for the moment I dithered with the idea without any real attempt to change things on a practical level. Yet what did I want? I couldn't tell. A space of freedom. A space free of the staleness in the atmosphere between two people who have ceased to be excited by each other, whose responses are routine, based on friendship rather than passion, and whose arguments and interests remained fixed. I had begun to withdraw from Mark - it was all too cosy, too safe, too predictable and I was coming to the conclusion that this was not what I wanted. It had begun to make me antagonistic, caustic. This consumed me with guilt. Mark was a good man - warm, intelligent, loving. Yet in the past year I had become conscious of that growing dissatisfaction inside myself. It was becoming clear to me I needed room, a space for myself alone, to express things I'd never had chance to express. This holiday had been intended as a watershed, a time to think things through, consider possibilities, and reach a clear decision. Now fate had thrown me on the doorstep of Brenna's cottage and into her electric presence - that spark coupled with a depth of stillness, which gave her the qualities of a muse.

What did I want from the future? I answered honestly. "I don't really know - freedom from present constraints. Something more challenging, more fulfilling than than my present circumstances. I've given myself away a bit haven't I?" I said, a little abashed by my own honesty.

"You did that some time ago Joanna," quipped Brenna with the glimmer of a smile. "I believe you have the courage to be honest. Well and good: let us see what the cards will portend. Would you spend some time shuffling them for me please?" She finished, tending her hand towards me holding the strange cards.

I received them and contemplated their red and black surfaces punctuated with coloured spheres. It was not that I was not interested in such things. I'd never had time to develop such an interest. Perhaps under normal circumstances, I would have been sceptical of their accuracy or their validity. But Brenna's presence inspired me and in a way, I was quite awed by the situation. I was used to being in control, to conducting myself in boardrooms, at meetings, with individual clients. There I was contained, unemotional - rational. Yet this situation was entirely strange to me, and Brenna an unknown quantity that I sensed to be special, in a way that suggested the spiritual. It was the invisible world she consulted, an invisible world altogether foreign to me. That strength, that stillness in her, the sparse elegance of her home, and of herself compelled me. I felt drawn to her, as if I would have liked to spend a long time talking to her and to know that the conversation would be a journey of discovery, a time of true education.



The music swelled into the silence as the fire crackled, and I awkwardly shuffled the cards. They were quite large and not easy to handle. The sound of waves upon the sea shore, the wind, the resonant rising tone of the Celtic pipes all brought an ache to my heart. Such beautiful poignant music. It filled me with longing: for something better, more passionate, more fulfilling. My ideas had grown stale. I was disillusioned with my profession, which scraped the surfaces of issues and had little real influence or credibility in the recognised establishment. It had become mundane and tedious to me. I knew this too well.

The smell of the incense rising in the air, the gold candle flickering in the darkened corner, and plaintive music infected me; I felt a spurt of something akin to fear, a nervous excitement, and my palms moistened as I handled the cards. Finally I felt I had shuffled the cards sufficiently, so I moved to give them back to Brenna.

"No," she said quietly. "now divide the pack into three".

So I placed three piles of cards on the table before her.

"Now pick up the last pile." she directed. "And taking from the bottom place one card here," she said, pointing to a place nearest to myself.

"No, don't turn it over - just leave it there. Now the next one here," she said pointing to a place above and on the left hand side of the card already on the table "... and here," she continued, pointing to the right hand side of the original card, aligned above it and opposite the second card I had laid down.

"One here," motioned Brenna, pointing to a spot directly above the first card and ahead of the second two.

"Here," she said, pointing again at a place on the left hand side of the centre card; then one on the right hand side, and completing the configuration with a final card at the top,

"Right," said Brenna, leaning forward slightly. "Let me explain a little about what this represents. This card," she said pointing to the first, the one nearest me, "represents your essence, your true inner nature; that which drives you and motivates you. These two," she pointed at the two half way above it on either side, "represent the recent past; an expression of what has happened to that essence, that motivating force inside you - the situations that have resulted from your attempts to seek fulfilment, expressing your inner nature in the material world. Is that clear, do you follow?" asked Brenna, rather pointlessly I thought. I followed it well enough, given its psychological flavour.

"Yes, yes, I understand," I murmured, wondering what lay behind the cards. Their back covers were enigmatic but rather vibrant, I thought. I studied them as Brenna continued to instruct me as to their meaning.

"This card," she said, "represents the 'here and now', your present situation. This one," - pointing to the left, again half way above the centre card - "represents a likely future outcome. Both of these cards," - pointing to the adjacent card on the right side - "represent two possible future expressions which are material developments of the original inner essence, as represented by this card at the beginning. The last card represents a future culmination of the developments and changes ensuing from the first card; the essence and motivations of yourself. Is that clear?"

"Yes, ahuh," I nodded, quietly, now intrigued by the cards and what portents they might betray.

"Just a minute," Brenna said, and rose moving to the cabinet. She put more incense on the burner and the enigmatic, subtle aroma filled the room again, earthy and fragrant. Then without asking, she replenished my glass.

I looked at the cards and contemplated my fate. The back of the cards were striking in themselves: a design of seven circles describing a hexagon; the background being a rich red, with black lines connecting each of the circles in definitive symmetry. Each sphere was of a different hue. The middle sphere I was initially struck with, as it was flames of orange and gold intertwined. Sphere number one was blue wreathed silver. Sphere number two - yellow interspersed with black, number three was green and white, shadowy. Above the middle most sphere, on the left, was one of strident red and blue; on the right, a circle of rich violet and crimson, and the topmost circle was indigo and purple. Interconnections of black bridges cutting across the scarlet background interspersed in regular expression with the seven vibrant spheres. I noticed these details. I felt drawn to notice them.

I suddenly had a sense of destiny. A sense that this - my meeting with Brenna - would reveal much to me, help me reach a decision, effect me in a way I had never anticipated.

Here, was the subtle, sharp tang of incense, the poignant, yearning appeal of the pipes, the sigh of the sea, the call of sea gulls, the crackling of the fire; the warmth of honey-mead in my blood which had brought a flush to my cheeks.

And the cards before me, mysterious - sinister...

The abstract symbol upon the wall-hanging weaved its charm of mystery: briefly, I wondered what it might mean, but my attentions were concentrated on what was about to unfold for me beneath the striking covers of the cards.

Red and black - anarchy, 'sin', Satan: my mind made the connections fleetingly, objectively. Such associations did not concern me at that moment. I somehow knew the cards held a power. I tried to retreat to the arena of logic telling myself not to be ridiculous. It wouldn't necessarily be a proper picture of the future. No one could know what lay in the future. But the logic of that argument had no power against what I sensed on an intuitive, only fleetingly conscious level.

No - that my destiny would be revealed to me, was too corny to be true. Yet I felt on the verge of something - a peculiar rising sense of excitement cast its spell upon me.

"Now Joanna Fox, turn each card over starting here, then this, then here; here: here; here," she said, describing a path across the cards, "and so on until the last," she finished, watching me intently now. I felt slightly uncomfortable, yet eager. Her scrutiny infected me.

I turned the first card and an image sprang out at me. At the centre of a swirl of turquoise and darkness, the white curvacious naked form of a woman accosted my senses. She held a dark sphere in one hand, a chain and strange pendant clasped to her breast with the other. From her female sex, blood dripped to form an abstract pattern in the waterfall rush flowing from the apex of her thighs. There were catherine wheels of energy; a crystal tetrahedron in one corner; a scorpion, its sting aloft in another corner, and two red-pink gorgeous birds at the topmost corner. All were interwoven through the pattern of swirling lines, to suggest a wildness, a passion. Something strong. The eyes of the image haunted me: mystical, almost ruthless.

I stared and stared at the card, too engrossed with the details in the picture and what it might suggest to move on. **High Priestess** were the words at the bottom of the card.

"And the next," said Brenna softly.

I turned the card on the left side and above the first one. It was the figure of an old woman, whose face had no features; just a blank spread of skin above her black shadowed outline. She sat by a waterwheel. In front of the garden where she sat the ground was parched and withered; dying. But behind her, the garden began to grow more and more verdant as it receded into the distance. I looked at the bottom of the card. **Satiety**, it said. Aye, well enough I thought: I had sated many desires, and in doing so had revealed a growing awareness that my lifestyle had become a cage to me. **Satiety**, I pondered, moving to the next card on the right.

I looked at Brenna but her eyes, her posture betrayed nothing, except a further impression of contained intentness. I turned over the card. It was the picture of a naked man sitting on a chair in a bare room, apparently sobbing, one hand clutching his forehead, the other trailing a rose to the floor, its petals littering the floor ruinously. In the background, open doorways through which arms stretched, failing to connect with anything - a continual perpetuation of empty gestures clutching at nothing. **Futility**, was the title of the card; futility. Its eerie accuracy of my growing understanding of my circumstances stirred me, giving me goosepimples: how accurate a betrayal of my relationship with Mark, and my feelings towards work.

There was something else to life I was sure. It glared me in the face. Those hands outstretched, always missing the accomplishment of true contact - always embracing emptiness. Now I recognised with a jolt how far apart we had grown, he and I; how the charge between us had faded so that the friendly ease between us had become too comfortable, too much of a soporific. I felt confined, suffocated by it. The difficulties had started when I joined the group. I'd always had a good voice and a musical inclination, and I could play the guitar with a certain amount of skill. So, the group served as a lively, inspiring diversion from the growing discontent symptomatic of the rest of my life. I had even begun to write my own songs - two of which the band had used and sung to audiences with much success. My music, my singing began to matter more to me than anything else. At least, I derived the most pleasure from it: all else paled beside it. On stage, I felt truly alive.

Since my musical catharsis I had moved progressively further away from Mark. The points of contact became fewer; we misunderstood one another, and we ceased to discuss things. Good man though he was, he had ceased to move me. The whole thing had grown stale. **Futility**, *Futility*. I felt a wrench of sadness, but also a resolution stirring inside me; plans, ideas beginning to form, vague and flitting.

I turned over the middle card. It was a dark cell, opened at the back to reveal the swirl of the cosmos in purple and blue and sparks of silver light. The image of a sphinx sat before the opening of the cosmos. The female face was held hauntingly to one side, with a space, a chasm behind the eyes - a chasm to a beyond. In the foreground, a chalice of liquid lay overturned. **Death**, I read the word at the bottom. **Death**, I saw with a jolt, and my nerves thrilled unpleasantly. I had an image of Mark crashing his car; myself in a fatal accident, my family, my mother claimed by the grim reaper. I pushed such thoughts away, telling myself not to be so irrational. Death. I felt a heaviness in the atmosphere, a sombre inflection; a further intentness. A foreboding mixed with hunger for revelation. I looked at the wall-hanging trying to cultivate objectivity - it intrigued me, that symbol.

Death, I thought and looked at Brenna, trying to clear any concern or fear from my eyes. Death. Brenna returned my gaze, again betraying little, as though wearing a mask of calm, the watchful alertness of her eyes remaining amidst the steadiness and stillness of her pose.

I turned over the card on the left side of the **Death** card and above it, to a degree. It was a dark card. Stormy clouds and sky with a break at one point to reveal a gap of blackness in the sky. In the foreground a german soldier stood resting on a cane, a face dark and intense. Behind him rose a hill. Before this was a stone circle lending an ancient presence to the card. It had a strange brooding feel to it ... I looked at the bottom and **Wyrd** was the word I saw. The

picture disturbed me - an unknown quantity that yet attracted me. I was drawn to continue studying it to try to place a meaning upon it, but meanings eluded me. I glanced up at Brenna: again, the still, composure, the inner intensity, veiled and honed.

I turned over the right side card equivocal to the last. The image leapt out at me. A sinister, darkly beautiful woman dressed in a black robe, clutching a dying soldier bandaged from a head wound. His forehead and mouth were bleeding. The woman held a dagger in her hand and the other described a grip of talons. Behind them geometric shapes burned to livid destruction; a holocaust unleashed. There was something ruthless yet compassionate about the woman's gaze. I looked at the foot of the card, again shocked, unsettled by the images revealed. *Aeon* the card read. *Aeon*, enigmatically. Goosepimples raced across my flesh, yet I suddenly felt hot too. I took off my cardigan and went to turn over the final, the ultimate card.

I glanced at Brenna and her eyes met my gaze. I looked away, my eyes drawn to the wall - hanging once more. At the time I didn't know why, although I sensed it was a talisman that held a particularly personal significance for me...

Brenna narrowed her eyes slightly, their keen light penetrating my own. I turned the last card over. It was a lush vibrant, violent card. A lithe beautiful naked woman sat in the middle. Her hair was an ebony cascade of wild curls down her back, and about her face. Her eyes held a dark power in their glance, and one hand betrayed claws capable of bloody violence. The image was weird, lurid, lush: a swan piercing its own breast so the blood ran, whilst three cygnets formed about it; a raven behind a tree in a night of purple and grey; a crystal shape; the suggestion of a womb-like entrance. The woman sat upon a heap of skulls, holding some stick or wand in her hand. With a start I saw in the middle of her chest, a tattoo: a sigil that matched the one on the wall-hanging. I gazed and gazed at the card, and then looked up, not at Brenna, but to reaffirm the replication of the wall-hanging's image with the one in the picture: a diamond shape with a line through the middle of it, something else inside the diamond. A shadowy suggestion of interiors within interiors. What was that symbol and what kind of meaning did it hold for me, I wondered? *Mistress of Earth* was the label on the card. *Mistress of Earth* - what could it mean?

Brenna maintained her exterior stillness, but was nodding her head ever so slightly, as if something, for her at least, was being affirmed. That symbol - what was its import?

With the tantalizing, almost spooky sense of *rightness* contained in the last card, I had almost forgotten the rest of the layout. I resonated so completely with that image. I could not say why, exactly.

I sat back and waited for Brenna to speak, gazing now at the first card, *The High Priestess* - that swirl of wildness. Brenna leant forwards and touched that card.

"Now," she said, "this card represents the unconscious force within you, the essence of yourself. It suggests that you are drawn to the unknown; that your life will find true expression through the Esoteric. It represents hidden wisdom; a latent power to achieve things beyond a material level. There is that in you which aches to understand the invisible world, the world within - to change things. This is your driving force and motivation".

It struck a chord, that card. I always had a thirst for knowledge, a curiosity for the inexplicable. This had expressed itself through academia; my profession - although lately the knowledge I'd gained seemed mere intellectual, devoid of any true meaning. I nodded slowly, biting my lip as I did so - I liked what the card suggested. I waited as Brenna reached to point at the card on the left of the first.

"This *Satiety*, is an interesting card. It suggests, as is obvious, that your lusts and desires have been sated on one level; and it implies the kind of stasis, and complacency which follows. What used to be fulfilling now produces boredom, and dissatisfaction. This is on the left hand side which usually indicates a more negative or disturbing interpretation, than if the card had fallen on the right hand side; thus, my given diagnosis." She looked across at me, her eyes glistening with a degree of humour. She seemed to delight in turning my own terminology onto myself. But this was not done in an unkind way - indeed it was more the sharing of a mutual joke.

I looked at the *Satiety* card, and at the one adjacent to it, *Futility*. I pursed my lips and said nothing. Brenna touched the *Futility* card. "This really confirms what is expressed in the preceding card. It suggests a lack of connection with things that move you, that matter to you most. It suggests emptiness and lack of fulfilment on a deep level. But it is on the right hand side, which indicates a resolution, and ultimately favourable outcome to the situation." She scarcely looked at me for confirmation of her words. It was as if she knew their import and could hear the gongs striking inside of me. Strange how those two cards completely summed up my recent past, merged to become conscious awareness of that present reflection. Eerie, eerie...

Brenna squinted her eyes slightly, looking at me with piercing intent. She reached to the middle card. *Death*. The word struck my psyche once more and I was conscious of a slight racing of the heart, an increase in tension.

"This card, *Death*," said Brenna, "reflects on your present situation. It indicates a reckoning; a stripping away of masks and images to get to the self, and a higher fulfilment of the essence beyond the constraints of the ego. In essence, a time of destruction in order to create the new - that is the implication".

Brenna looked at me. I was leaning forwards. With her words had come a sense of both relief and a strange release; confirmation of a decision that was becoming clear to me, as I breathed in my mystical surroundings. I'd feared - I had dared not think... yet now the card also whispered of new tomorrows, of stronger possibilities. It was the whisper of that, which compelled me rather than the implied the symbol, like placing a bet on the luck it could bring me. Rather than the implied destruction. That whisper of higher achievements ... I glanced up at the wall-hanging and connected with the symbol, like placing a bet on the luck it could bring me.

Again Brenna very slightly narrowed her eyes, and pointed to the strange brooding card of the German soldier, with the stone circle casting a charm upon the scene. In the corner of the image, the sky split to reveal a chasm - a nexion of blackness.

"*Wyrđ*," said Brenna, "hmmm, *Wyrđ*. This card usually means finding your purpose, your path in life. But it also suggests a destiny which is tied or linked to something greater than itself. Something you will be part of that is beyond you, on a material and spiritual level - yet it is part of you. A realisation of your purpose - a purpose which lies in the realm of the acausal, that invisible reflection of the material world, the causal. There will obviously be some amount of upheaval and turbulence implied in such a future - the near future - which is what this card represents. Do you understand what I am saying Joanna; do you follow? "

There was a flush on my cheeks. Brenna's words were lightly, logically spoken, but their enticed and thrilled me. In that moment, the past dropped away from me. I was already beyond it, free to achieve a more ultimate expression of myself - stepping from the dross of uniforms and masks I wore, towards something more numinous and unrestrained. What that was, I still couldn't quite conceive. I looked again at the sigil upon the wall-hanging, and my empathy towards it, grew. Perhaps I was effected by the sparse simplicity of my surrounds, the rustic elegance of comfort; the music, the incense, the fire - not least Brenna herself and the cruel yet fascinating cards. It all cast a spell which drew me to intensify my attentions on the symbol upon the wall.

Brenna leant to touch the card depicting fire and the darkly beautiful woman; she who was sinister, yet not devoid of compassion. She who wore a the look of cruel simplicity as she cradled the dying soldier. *Holocaust; war ...* but the word at the bottom was *Aeon*. Brenna lightly picked the card up, waving it up and down gently for a moment, holding it before me.

"Now this card is very interesting. Joanna Fox; very interesting indeed. *Aeon* is the practical expression of this adjacent card, *Wyrđ*. It implies changes - changes on a large scale. It suggests a power to implement change, but contained within that is the necessity for those changes to occur inside, as well as outside yourself. It implies again, that it is in your destiny to effect change in the acausal realm as well as through practical manifestation on a causal level ... What this card suggests, Joanna, is a destiny which will have an effect on many lives. A destiny that by its very expression produces change. Again, this is linked to something greater than yourself - beyond your causal, material self if you like. Rather interesting don't you think Jo? Very interesting indeed."

"Very," I said, completely intrigued - fired, yet also confused. I couldn't imagine what could produce those changes. I couldn't imagine how I could get to that glowing picture of the future the cards seemed to hold up to me. A future that sounded challenging, expansive - something dark and glowing that I longed to touch, yet could not comprehend in words. I looked at Brenna who was looking at me with an expression of profound calm. I turned my attention once more to the wall-hanging.

"Before you tell me the meaning of the last card, would you mind if I asked you what that symbol stands for? I find it strangely compelling - what does it mean?" I asked, wholly intent upon what Brenna might reply. I thought the symbol was in some way a key. I thought by understanding it, my destiny would be made clear.

"That is the sigil of **Baphomet**. She is a dark goddess from an old Tradition, who beheads her victims and enemies, and washes in a basin of their blood. She is a goddess of war and sacrifice. She represents the brutal necessity of Death on Life's claim. She that strips away in order to renew. She represents the wild brutal aspect of Nature which is necessary in order to fructify, and produce change. She is the darkest Goddess of all."

Brenna spoke softly and yet the words sprang into clarity in my mind. I was moved, half repelled, yet eager to embrace more of what might lie behind such a symbol. There a beautiful starkness behind Brenna's explanation and again, a real power. She was no pseudo-pagan; she was no mere eccentric. She was intelligent, composed, both blunt and subtle, intuitive and incisive. A powerful woman. This made her words, her Baphomet symbol, a potent force which could not easily be dismissed. In truth, I did not want the force dismissed; rather I ran to embrace it, to understand it - to integrate with it in order to achieve access to what lay beyond it. I wanted to touch that which moved inside of Brenna. I wanted it for myself. Something entirely foreign to my intellect, but which drew me, curiously, with a growing arousal of passion and intrigue.

*Baphomet* I thought and looked into Brenna's grey-green eyes, observing once more with an avid intensity I could barely contain, the scar traced down her cheek, giving her both a savage and exotic air. Brenna had relaxed slightly. Her manner was subtly more open, more confidential. I felt almost a warmth and intimacy between us. I, in my early

thirties, she towards twice my own age. Yet I knew this woman would change my life, irrevocably, drastically. I did not understand the 'ins and outs' of this situation, nor how it had come about. I did not know how or why it had but I did know Brenna would change my life: I knew and she knew. It was in the air between us, yet not through the medium of words, but by subliminal perceptions, intuitive inferences, subtleties acknowledged by both of us in answering subtlety.

I waited for Brenna's explanation of the final card. The vibrant, lush, bloody image of the cruel, raven-haired beauty sitting on a heap of skulls, the Baphomet sigil tattooed between her breasts: *Mistress of Earth*.

"*Mistress of Earth*," said Brenna, again inflecting lightness and ease in her tone which only seemed to further enhance the mystery and power of the card. "Mistress of Earth," she repeated, "suggests someone who is control of her life and destiny on all levels. Someone who has attained ascendancy over the internal and external circumstances surrounding her. Someone who is able to flow with the forces of Nature and attain empathy with those things on many levels. Someone who has achieved a full expression of her inner essence with results on both a practical and acausal level. Someone in touch with the power inside themselves and able to manipulate their environment to achieve their own designs. This card, you see is an expression of the original card at the start, *High Priestess*.

This 'Mistress of Earth' is a future manifestation of that inner driving force; something which has yet to attain its full expression - but the cards throw a positive light on that development, don't they? Don't they now Joanna Fox?" She finished with an alluring intonation.

How strange to me was the future before me, yet how intriguing - how it flared within me! For I was conscious that I was close to what I had been struck by as soon as I witnessed Brenna standing by the fire: a breath of the unknown. But a breath that was vital, real, tangible. I saw it about me in Brenna's home, but most of all in Brenna herself; by her bearing, by that stillness, that wisdom, that inner flame.

I relaxed back into the couch. Brenna settled herself back and looked at me over the edge of her glass. "Well, Joanna Fox, what do you think of your future now?"

"I hardly know what to say," I responded. "These two cards are chillingly accurate," I said pointing to the *Satiety* and *Futility* cards, "but as to the future: it's a total enigma to me, a total revelation - a mystery that intrigues me a great deal."

"That is as it should be Joanna Fox. Presently your life is a mess; things have grown stale - you are looking for a means of transformation, you want to change it all, but lack the impetus to do so. That is plain enough, is it not?"

"Yes," I readily agreed. But move forward to what? How? Risk the security of my job? In my mind I had already dispensed with Mark - now my job, my means of subsistence, was the barrier I wanted destroyed. Could I exist on writing papers, or turn to journalism, where I could give credence to newer developments in Psychology, such as 'Psychosynthesis', which recognised the role of spirit - a holistic view of human nature I adhered to fiercely, yet which found no practical manifestation through the conventional channels of the job. The system inhibited such developments. I had not been trained as a journalist, but I could become a free-lance writer, I already had one article printed regarding the male and female stereotypes - how such one-dimensional conditioning produces all kinds of neuroses and repressions which lead to multi-strata psychiatric difficulties. I went on to detail the possible causes for the latent misogyny that seemed to exist in most men. It had been an interesting and challenging project. The article was enthusiastically received and the paper, which was a broad sheet Sunday paper, had suggested regular contributions. I had deliberated and here I was still, deliberating.

And yet, I had now begun to make my decisions. Prior to this and for a long time, I had felt as though I had been wading through porridge; a porridge of pointlessly 'nice' considerations, and a growing self-deception around the whole premise of my life. Yet now everything that had been constricted was loosening, promising to work free like the deluge from a live volcano. A great momentous change was upon me and I couldn't quite believe it was happening.

I would step from the old life, and step from it quickly, ruthlessly and with business-like precision. Cut the connections, create a new place, a new style of living. Through writing articles and my music, I would be Mistress of my own life; Mistress of myself, beholden to nobody but myself for a change. At least it was one plan. There were others that filtered through my mind, But I felt there was more to it than that. The Baphomet symbol, the magick behind it, was also part of my destiny. I would change my life; I had the courage and the means to do so, but I knew also Brenna would have a hand in that. I knew she would be a bridge to a further understanding of the force within. Brenna observed my inner reflections, waiting. What now? I thought.

"So what do you propose to do with this knowledge and your present Situation, Joanna Fox?" Brenna's storm-green eyes glinted at me with some fore-knowledge that placed her on a lofty level in an arena I knew nothing about, but which I longed to entrance - whatever it was.

"It fascinates me," I said, responding finally to her question amidst my reveries. "But there is much I do not understand, particularly with regard to Baphomet. Where does she come from? Which culture? Which tradition?"

"An old Tradition - our ancestral root," said Brenna, with quite deliberate brevity I thought.

"Where does the Tradition come from? What is it, this Tradition?" I asked, barely able to contain my frustration with Brenna's elusive insistence.

"Something spawned during the civilisation of Albion, some five thousand years before the birth of the bible's putrid christ; spawned through the architects of Stonehenge and Calanais, those worshippers of the sun and watchers of the stars ... It is, obviously, an ancient Tradition."

"But what does it stand for? What kind of Tradition is it?" I continued, still dissatisfied with Brenna's responses.

"An essentially Pagan one, from a time when there existed communion with the stars and Nature in a way that is still fathomless to this present, purblind society. Do not say you do not know of the race - your ancestors - who created the stone-circles, and what this knowledge now intimates, within the context of this whole fortuitous evening."

Brenna's face had suddenly become intense in a way that thrilled my sensitivities. The scar on her cheek was lit to a lurid degree by the dancing flames, inducing an almost hypnotic effect. But then Brenna's whole presence was hypnotic.

Of course I knew of the stone-circle period, but it had not struck such a knell of significance as on the note of the moment. Somehow there was poetry in her words and it inspired me; again some deep primal connection was thrummed. Again I was struck to reflection, and there followed a short spell of silence, with Brenna, all the while in easy composure, waiting.

When I could find my voice, I replied: "Yes, I've been aware of all that, but what little history that now exists, seemed something obscure and unimportant - as far as the Present is concerned. But I don't know; I don't know anything any more... It seems what is important is that which lies behind that connection, or beside it if you will. Surely, the stone-circle time is but a beginning ... It would be interesting to know if there are any other links in the chain. Would you tell me more about the Baphomet Tradition, and how you came to learn of it?"

"Now, now Joanna Fox," Brenna's eyes twinkled with their almost unearthly vivid green light. "What would you like, some enlightening reading matter, or my life story?"

I flushed and laughed as I stammered, "Well both actually... but I would particularly like to hear..."

"About myself?" quizzed Brenna. "My own path in life?" She raised her eye brows, smiling archly. "Now then Joanna, my friend; it's getting late and I don't know about you, but I am starting to feel a little tired. I usually retire earlier than this, but exceptional circumstances have altered my routine tonight. I've enjoyed your company Joanna, but you must excuse me now for chivvying you off to bed, for tomorrow you also have a long walk ahead of you, do you not?"

I nodded, disappointment lodged in my throat. I burned with a desire to know more. I did not want to go to bed, but courtesy bade me contain myself. However, as Brenna moved to place a fireguard before the fire, she continued: "I'll tell you what I'll do," she said, as if reading my disappointment. "I'll give you some reading matter and you can take my phone number. Perhaps while you're down here you will get chance to call again. I'd be pleased to renew our acquaintance; as I've said, I've enjoyed our evening. Besides it's interesting being in the company of one who is a changer of the face of fortune!" Her tone was disarmingly light and warm.

"Oh well, I just want to say thank you. It's been incredibly good of you and entirely fascinating. I will come and see you again - once I've consulted with my friend Margaret, who I'll be staying with." My words tumbled out, eager to grasp the connection.

"Do, and at your leisure, my dear. You will be welcome whenever - I give my assurance." The sincere elegance of her tone humbled me.

I stood around, shuffled my feet, and half shrugged my shoulders. "I don't know what to say..." I began, but Brenna held up her hand and smiled me into silence. She moved across the room and blew the candle out. She went to the back of the room, and I followed her.

"I'll just dig something out for you now," she said bending to a shelf on the bookcase, a strand of grey hair escaping across her cheek which she brushed back, as she reached for two large bound volumes. The covers were dark, non-descript and the titles I could not read - for there were none.

"Have a look at these when you've the time - see what you think. Come back to me with any questions or responses you care to offer, when conducive. It's entirely up to you. Don't consider anything too much though now, specially not on three glasses of mead!" She quipped.

I flashed her a smile, as she turned the music system off and motioned me the way forward, turning the lights off. Within the darkness, she carried a small oil lamp before her to light the way.

"Fetch your rucksack and I'll show you your room," said Brenna indicating the kitchen door by which I had left my belongings, as we stood in the passage way that heralded the stairs. I fetched my rucksack and Brenna led the way up. I did not even question the lack of use of mains lighting. The oil lamp seemed somehow so fitting, so entirely appropriate after such an extraordinary evening. There was a door next to the bathroom which she opened and led

me into a simple tasteful haven. She turned on the bedside light. A bed with a wooden bedstead was revealed. A patchwork quilt of creams, reds, pinks and deep blue. A big dark wooden chest was against one wall, looking as if it had arrived fresh from a pirate's cavern. A bedside tressal with a lamp upon it: I noticed the lampshade was made of some creamy parchment with dried, pressed flowers worked upon it somehow. It was exquisite. "It's lovely," I said, "how charming." Brenna smiled appreciatively in response.

"You can see the bathroom next door," she said, "use it as you need or want. You're quite welcome to have a bath in the morning if you wish. I'm usually out and about early, so you may not come across me - don't wait around for me, will you? As for breakfast: I'll leave everything out for you to help yourself. I'm a great believer in breakfast - it must be done. But as I've said, don't expect to see me in the morning, for I like to embrace the dew of dawn, and probably won't return til much later." She held the light higher, and stood upright a little more as if in salutation.

"So Joanna Fox, well met and good night. I hope our paths will cross again, and in the not too distant future."

"Oh most certainly," I agreed, conscious of the inadequacy of words.

"Good night then:" Brenna whispered, withdrawing, the pool of light spotlighting her movement across the dark landing til she opened a door across from my room, on the opposite side of the stairs, and disappeared behind it. I stared after her for a while, reliving all of it in one resounding surge. Still stunned, I performed my ablutions and fetched a glass of water. I undressed and got into bed but I still did not feel tired; rather, too charged up to sleep, despite my long and arduous day. I reached for the first volume she had given me to read. Regardless of the time, I turned the cover. The words that greeted me, dripped darkly down into my mind like spreading pools of blood, and just as potent:

### THE BLACK BOOK OF SATAN

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I sit on this hillside, with only the rocks and the trees below as my companions. The night is clear; the moon a full geometric potency above me. The wind denudes my face, sharpens my sense of timelessness. For two and a half months I have been alone, in this terrain, in this wilderness, without human contact, without material distractions and entertainments. Tonight the moon's luminous presence drew me to recall that first meeting with Brenna - raven-made, I learned the name meant: an approprlate name for one such as she.

I am not what I was. Oh no: I am much more, much less than ever I imagined I could be. I sit with the galaxy aglow above me, embracing this silvered darkness, the star-filled ecstasy of outer space. I feel clothed in cosmic tides, part of the force which flows from before, from beyond. There is only this numinous night and the spark within me which reflects that numinosity.

I think of those tarot cards; how shocking, lurid, and fascinating they seemed - how little I knew of my future then. Now my destiny has become clear to me. These months I have spent alone have bridged a gap in my consciousness. I know my role, my path, will take me further still, to attain an ultimate understanding of the *sinister* ... That is my way, and I know I am to be heir of that Tradition, as Brenna was before me. My crystal has revealed images, pictures to me. Magickal energies fructify my awareness and the invisible, acausal world is become an imprint on my soul; a stretch to master my universe.

I sit here on this hilltop beneath the perfect moon and the incandescent stars with the wind buffeting my cheeks and chilling my hands, and think of that first meeting - of my naivety, trapped as I was within the conditioning and morality I'd been subjected to. I think of that and I smile. I smile in this dark, lonely night and I no longer feel alone. I flow with Nature's expressions, I listen to her silence and thus have I come to know her, a little.

Like an autumn tree, stripped bare by the winter wind, so did I become, before the green buds of spring made their appearance. So has it continued, this seasonal transition, this growth of blossoming and destruction and so shall it still do. That is the essence of my life.

I have touched profundities: a goddess within me has arisen. I smile - I smile in this stillness as I remember what I was, and what I shall be. I smile and raise my hands to the moon in acknowledgement of an awful bond. I smile.

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Whilst single raven  
all ebony-gloss  
and clever eye  
and crafted beak so jet  
lifts its shape  
to coast another settling place

on the rock face  
before the crashing waves  
A gift of obsidian velvet  
for all our stormy skies.

~~~~~

Annia Ashlet,
Seven Stones Coven (ONA)
1996eh



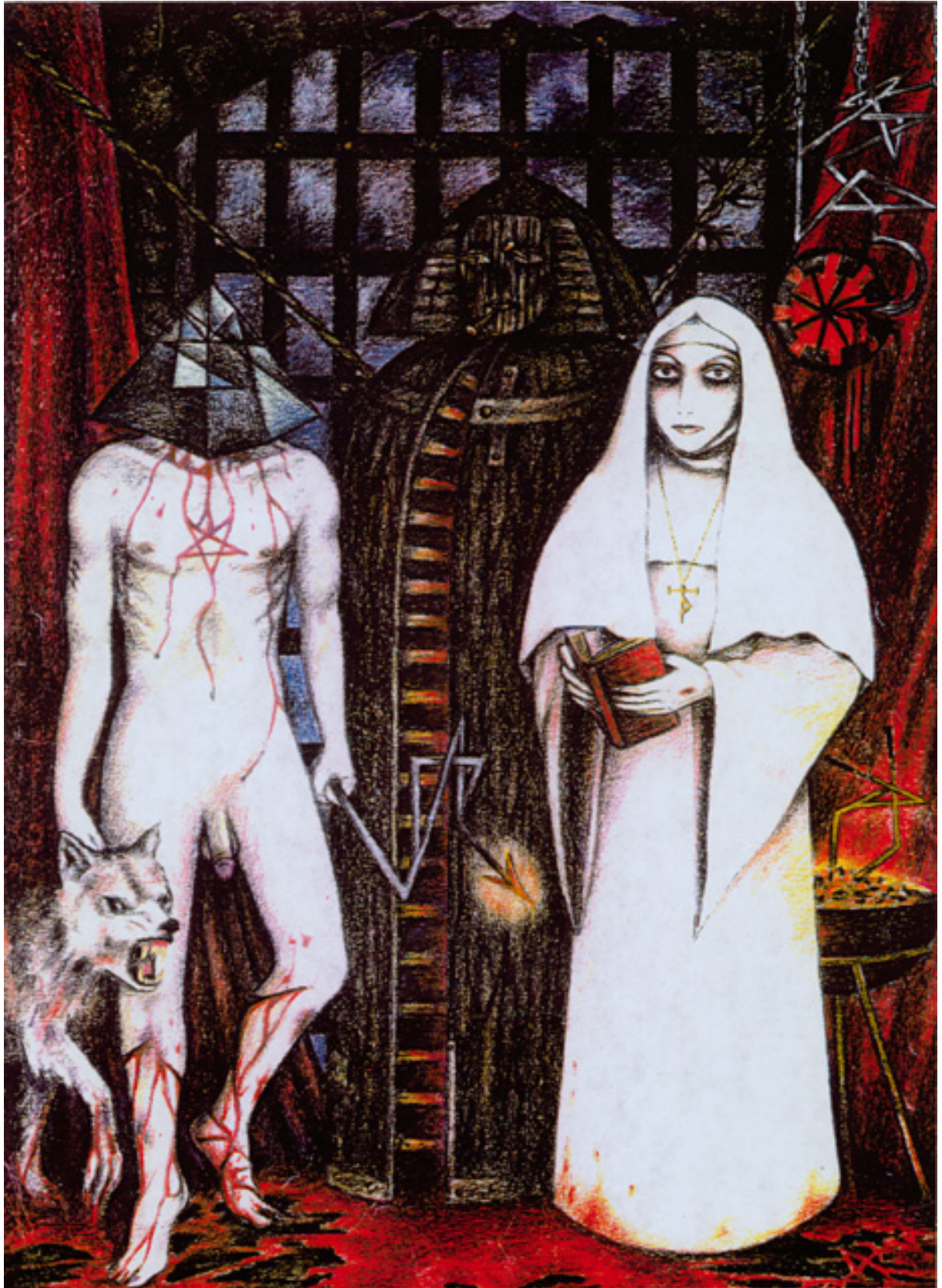






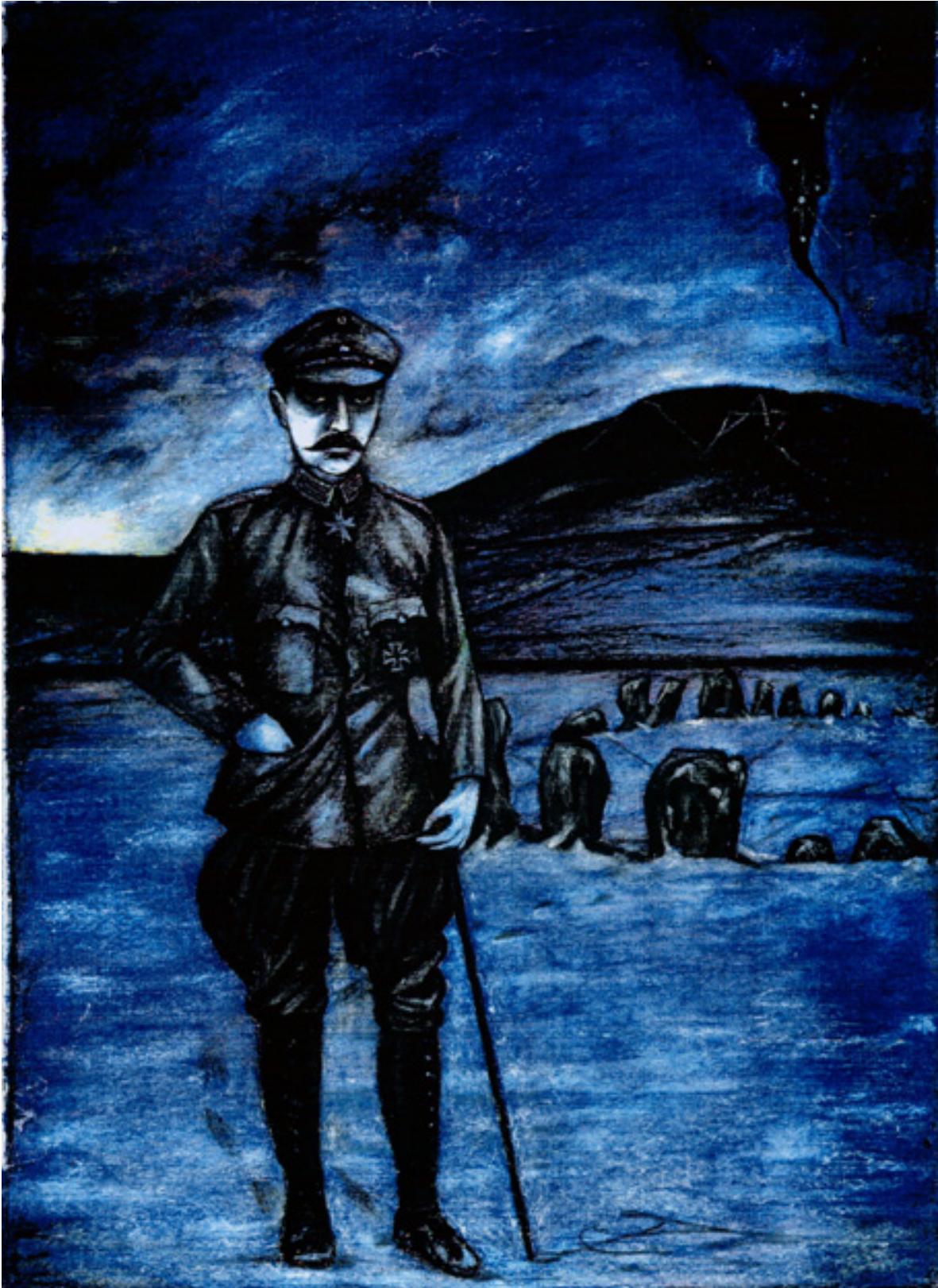






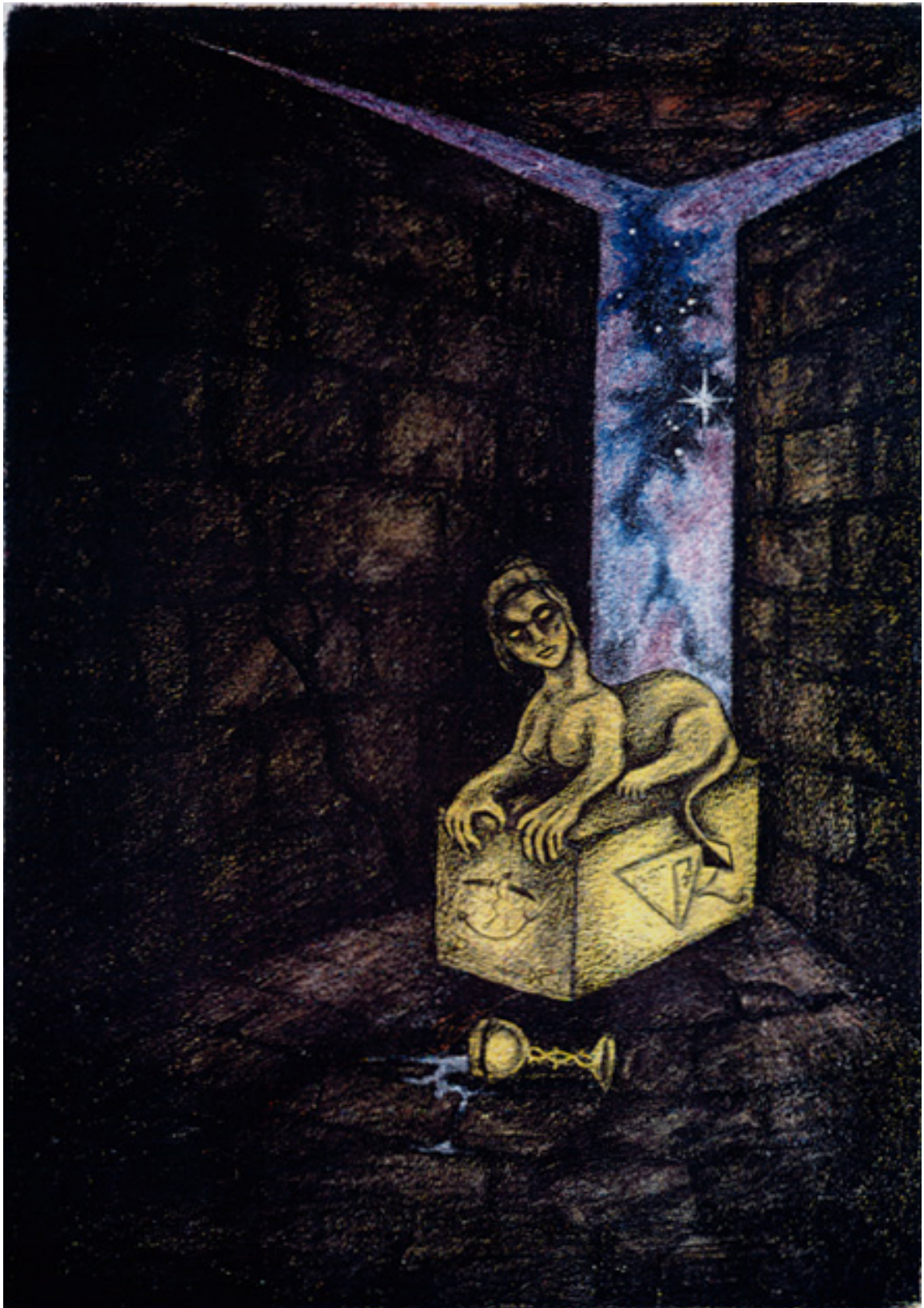


























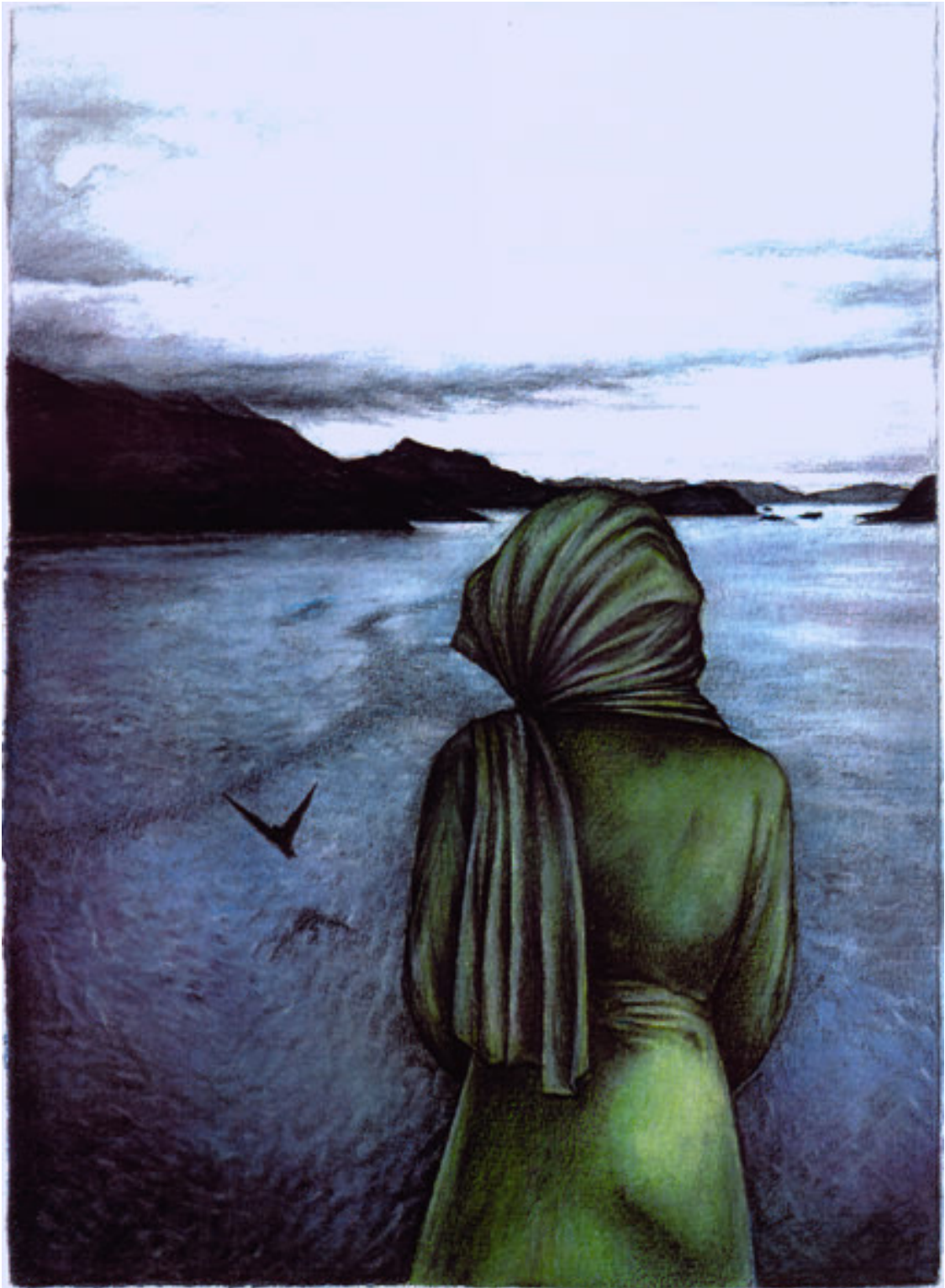


























A Brief Look At The Einstein Myth

Nearly everyone has heard of Albert Einstein - and his name is now regarded as synonymous with "genius". His theories of Relativity is supposed to have revolutionized Physics.

The Einstein story is largely a myth - created by the media, and it is about time it was destroyed.

Einstein in 1905 published a scientific paper which merely expanded in a minor way the work of others like Lorentz and Poincaré who had already put forward a 'principle of relativity' - and even the much vaunted "mass-energy equation" ($E=mc^2$) was not new, being a re-expression of the equation of Kinetic energy ($E=mv^2$). Where v is taken as c (the velocity of light) the $\frac{1}{2}$ becomes quantitatively irrelevant, such is the magnitude of c .

Over the subsequent years, this work of Einstein attracted what we now would call media attention and hype - and the myth was begun. Some years later, he published other papers, outlining a theory of General Relativity, and yet it was for his work on the photo-electric effect that he was awarded a Nobel Prize. The General Theory was apparently "confirmed" by observations of stars during a solar eclipse, and it seemed to explain something that, apparently, Newton's theory of Gravity could not - the perihelion of Mercury. Thus it was hailed as a great scientific achievement.

Two points, however, need to be made. First, the Newtonian theory could, if altered, give a satisfactory explanation for the Mercury problem - and other, simpler, explanations for the apparent bending of starlight near the Sun exist, explanations which do not need an extremely complex and abstract mathematical model. Second, it was assumed before the Einstein myth that theories should be as simple as possible and not only explain existing phenomena but also predict certain events. With the Einstein theory this was abandoned - and indeed it is right to peak of a 'revolution' in approach, from the experimental (an example would be Faraday) to the abstract, constructed in mathematical form. What is at issue here is not the use of mathematics, but the precedence given to theory and theorising over and above direct physical observation and experiment. Theory now comes before observation and dominates to the extent that "common sense" and empiricism are regarded as almost irrelevant: a "new Physics" has been created, beginning with Relativity and continuing with Quantum Mechanics and then Cosmology wherein paradox and abstraction are the norm, and where "Thought-experiments" and non-observable abstractions have precedence over direct measurement and rational understanding.

In essence, Physics has moved away from the practical and become speculative - experiments being regarded as only necessary to confirm some part of some abstract theory. This speculation is itself increasingly non-rational. For instance, billions are spent on high-energy particle physics with a view to confirming some obscure and fashionable theory, while the exploration of Space (based entirely on sound engineering and Newton's theory) struggles for funds - real discovery via direct observation (as happens in Space exploration) is less popular than obscure theories about the origin of the Universe. In respect of Relativity, few wish - or dare - to express dissent. It has become part of the scientific establishment, apparently "proved" for all time and thus somehow "sacred". The same applies to Quantum Mechanics - what few experimental results and observations are accounted for by this theory and approach to matter, can be accounted for in more ordinary and deterministic ways. But these other approaches are not only not popular, they are seldom if ever taught in Universities. Once again, there is a conformity of thought and approach - a certain attitude or approach to Physics. The result is and has been stagnation in genuine understanding and a plethora of fashionable ideas and theories - and an acceptance that some questions cannot be asked or, if asked, can never be answered (such as - if there was a 'Big Bang' where did the first particle of matter come from and what and how did the result of the explosion spread into what did not exist, ie. infinite Space).

One can go further and say that both Relativity and Quantum Mechanics represent abstraction and paradox taken to absurdities - and these fashionable theories need to be deposed and a return made to experimental observation and direct enquiry. In brief, another revolution must take place - to dethrone the "Einstein myth" and all that has followed from it. Instead of accepting these affronts to scientific thought students should question them - seek to undermine them. For the free enquiry that once and so briefly existed in institutions of learning no longer really exists - Einstein and others have become objects of an almost sacred (and sickly) reverence, and must be defied. There is really no other way forward - for those who believe in Science and exploration.

Ultima Thule 88

Aeonics and Heresy
Order of Nine Angles

The distortion of the Nazarene/Magian manifests itself on many levels - the religious, the political, the social and the psychic. This latter is most important, although it tends to be overlooked. The first three are essentially outward forms - that is, an individual belonging to the civilization of the West (and thus one whose psychic heritage* is the Western ethos) is conditioned

by these in terms of: education, the media, the Institutions and so on. There has grown up, over the last fifty years or so, a consensus of opinion about various matters, and this consensus straddles most political forms and all forms of education: every State within the societies of the West adheres to this consensus. There is appearance of dissent, but it is only appearance, dealing as it does with inessentials - like the particular type of government, the nature of the economy and so on. This consensus is essentially 'liberal', that is, based on a type of 'slave morality' (note; liberal here is not used as a directly political term, but as an expression of a way of living: a way deriving in essence from Nazarene ideas).

The fourth manifestation mentioned above - the psychic - is an expression of the fact that 'Nazarene/Magian' archetypal forms have to some extent replaced those natural ones growing from the energy of the Western Aeon. The result of this should be obvious. Whether this (and to some extent the distortion itself) is the result of deliberate magical act by 'adepts' of the Nazarene/Magian traditions is open to dispute, although some Adepts of the sinister tradition believe this to be so. (There is, however, no direct evidence for this.) Those Adepts believe that the followers of the Magian tradition wish to fulfill certain prophecies over two thousand years old and create a 'Messianic Kingdom' on Earth. To this end, they have fostered the spread of Nazarene slave-morality and those ideas deriving from Nazarene beliefs which are and have been so detrimental to the ethos of the West and thus its *wyrd*.

The distortion has changed the Western civilization significantly: from being a pioneering entity, imbued with elitist values and exalting the way of the warrior (and thus enshrining a 'master-morality') it has become essentially neurotic, inward-looking and obsessed (and obsessed partly with 'un-Western' archetypes). There has been, in short, no Promethean/Luciferian spirit.

Part of this change is due to the insulation that dogmatic ideas (such as the Nazarene faith and its political offshoots) create: the Western ethos is for experiencing, through the élan of discovery/exploration/conquest - creating thus a "Promethean**/pragmatic" view of the world, a philosophy of life which vitalizes. The Magian ethos (which gave birth to Nazarene beliefs and ideas) is for observance of faith and dogma - it is essentially a 'religious' attitude (and a commitment to a political dogma is also a religious attitude), a view of the world which is not productive of real experience: that is, it 'projects' abstract ideas onto reality rather than seeks to find the essence hidden by appearance. In practical terms, the distortion amounts to both a physical and a mental tyranny - those who oppose, openly, the ideas/dogma of the consensus are heretics, and in most Western countries they are not only not tolerated, but the full force of the 'law' is used against them. They, and other dissidents, are subject to 're-education' and the views they expound are regarded almost without exception as 'evil'.

The central core of the heresy is two-fold: first, equality; second, identification with specific Western archetypes and particularly that 'inspiration/energy/daemon' which propels fulfillment of Western *wyrd* (i.e. Imperium). It is the first of these which usually attracts most attention.

Essential to the Western ethos, and thus the fulfillment of its *wyrd*, is the belief in the superiority of its peoples and its civilization. This belief, held by the 'creative minority' of all civilizations regarding themselves and their own civilization an essential part of the mechanism of all civilizations, and it alone enables transmission of the élan of the civilization and thus the fulfillment of the magickal Aeon. It is a natural part of evolution, and failure to understand this means a mis-understanding of the mechanism by which acasual energy becomes a civilization: there is no 'morality' involved, no 'political view', merely an expression of the workings of the cosmos (particularly as relates to individuals not yet Adepts...), This view, so important to an understanding of the future (and thus to Aeonics magick and the futures such magick can create), is anathema today. The unnatural dogma of the Magian, presented in State/government forms, has made the reality of racial inequality a crime in law. Here, the abstract fulminations of the Nazarenes and their allies are at their most dangerous: they have distorted not only the ethos of the West but also reality itself to accord with their own cherished dogma. The result is inevitable: the dominance of Magian/Nazarene ideas, a dying Western civilization, and a severe downturn in those who can apprehend the essence and thus fulfill their own *wyrd*. (As mentioned elsewhere, the achievement of a Galactic Imperium - the outcome of a Western civilization following its own élan/archetypes - is regarded as a necessary precondition for the next Aeon: the 'New Aeon' of 'Occult mythology' when the 'passing of the Abyss' becomes possible on a large scale.)

Given this understanding, it is up to each and every Adept to decide what or what not to do regarding Aeonick magick. All such understanding does is open up possibilities for the future. There can be rites to aid the fulfillment of Western wyrd (e.g. 'heretical masses' where racial inequality is triumphed and Nazarene equality derided); rites to dismember the Nazarene images, replacing them with sinister but not directive ones (directive in the sense of Western wyrd); rites to create new archetypes entirely; rites to open another 'Gate', aiming to return the Dark Gods.....

* An individual, by being born within a civilization is psychically linked to the ethos of that civilization (and thus the natural archetypes) if that individual is descended from the folk who created that civilization and maintained it/expanded it. That is, aeonic archetypes are racially-bound (this derives from the origin of a civilization - how the elan is carried on through the centuries).

(See symbolism of Star Game for this and the metamorphosis. Also other MSS.)

** Here as elsewhere, Promethean is synonymous with Satanic/sinister.

Conquer, Destroy, Create
Order of Nine Angles

Most people are sick- in the head. Why? Because they lack the desire to translate into reality and because they lack the character to break the psychic chains of the modern world forged from ideas.

And I am not writing about mediocre vision, either - but about grandiose vision: vision which makes one aspire to greatness, to make real what others may sometimes dream about perhaps once in their puny, pathetic lives. I am writing about that inner vision which drives some individuals and which makes them great: makes them aspire to fulfill at least part of their god-like potential. That inner demon which compels, which makes one strive again and again and never admit defeat, even when faced with death. Conquerors have vision: so do Artists and Explorers and Warriors. Today, there is an excess of petty individuals trying to make real their petty and cowardly concerns; an excess of petty officials and petty rules and petty governments trying to restrain the individual spirit and psyche; an excess of petty ideas trying to level down all individuals to the lowest level and SO breed a plastic bastard race equal in all things who no longer aspire to real greatness.

What is needed are individuals who dream large - who strive to make those dreams real, regardless of the consequences. In short, a return of the conquering attitude. All that is great and worthwhile is built from the blueprint of inner vision, the greatest vision is conquest - of ourselves, of others, of what is still unknown. There are no limits unless we in weakness set our limits. We, today, need to rediscover the delight of discovery and conquest: of going where no one has been before, of being masters of our own Destiny by following our visions and instincts.

This is not easy. Let the weak, the scum, the majority huddle together in their quest for happiness and material well-being. Let them seek comfort in each other and ideas. Individuals are born from hardship - from the hardship of questing after a dream. Conquest and exploration bring a joy, and create a uniqueness, like no other - the joy and individuality of a god.

Seek to be like a god - that is the answer to the misery that is bred from morbid self-pity and smallness and a wallowing in abstract ideas - from the seeking after illusions like happiness and comfort and stupid ideas like 'freedom' and 'justice'. The only freedom is the freedom to dream and the freedom to make that dream real, just as the only justice is that which is within each individual: what they feel. Of course, the weak and the cowardly feel a different sense of justice than the strong - they call this 'law' and enshrine it within a church to their gods of 'democracy' and 'equality', whereas the strong call their justice vengeance and honour, words which the majority fear or do not understand.

So what dreams are, today, fit enough for those who aspire to be like gods? There are only two, as this century ends. And they are connected.

The first is to destroy those edifices which the cowards, the weak, the huddling majority have erected to defend themselves from the natural elite - those few who dare, who defy, who despise and are fearless and conquering in their defiance. To destroy those government forms, Institutions or whatever as a prelude to renewed creation: as prelude to the conquest of the supine masses and their world. To destroy all that has and does enervate - all that makes individuals slaves and seeks to stop their dreams. For the world and its peoples exist for the benefit of the natural elite - to be subjects, to aid them, to use the resources so that in time there is an evolution upwards, rather than downwards: an evolution toward still higher forms. But this has been and only can be achieved by the majority aspiring to emulate the deeds and daring of the few, of the natural elite - by the morality and vision of the few becoming the morality and vision of the many, not the other way round. This, naturally, means suffering - perhaps wars, perhaps great sorrows. But all that is great arises from suffering not softness. Once the vision of the few is defeated by the many, once their energies are redirected - once the dreaming stops and the aspiring ceases - then there is decline and sickness, of the spirit and the psyche. This can be put very simply: war and conquest and exploration are needed; when they stop, decay sets in, the scum come to the surface. Thus, goals of destruction, re-construction and creation must be set - and striven for. This requires a new breed, a new elite nurtured by naturalness and instinct and visions. An elite which others see, and are afraid of. Such an elite may not be political - but if it was, so what? So what if it became labeled as extreme, if the vision behind it became to be called by some name or other! Labels, names - and indeed analysis of the political, social and intellectual kind - are games played by the weak, the cowardly, the sick and the scum. What matters is action, the desire to achieve, to become again fierce, tough, forbidding and thus real individuals who have broken the psychic chains of the majority. What is

important is inner resolve.

These goals would naturally lead to that second dream, fit for a god: the exploration of Space - to break away from the smallness of this world and find new ones: to explore, to conquer, to challenge us to even greater heights of being, to reach the limits of our potential and thus become god-like in our unique individuality - a new species that spreads ever onwards and upwards, toward even more, for evolution is never done. The planets, the stars, the galaxies - with their visions, their richness, their splendours, await us: and it is up to us, each and every one of us, whether we reach them, We can begin that quest - or we can remain trapped in our own pettiness with our petty, pathetic concerns and outlook, on this small insignificant planet. Or we can take up the challenge of ourselves and our future and seek to be like gods, and thus fulfill the potential latent within us.

The first step is to change ourselves - within, where it matters, and become strong in spirit and psyche: a warrior in outlook and intent. The second is to spread that change outward - to others and external forms, destroying and then creating. The third is to strive further - toward the fulfillment of our inner vision, on this world and on others.

Those who choose not to act have condemned themselves as failures.

Anton Long, ONA.

Disturbing Notes

ONA

I Children

Every child should leave home at sixteen to learn about the world and themselves. Thus they would make their own mistakes and start to mature and become responsible for themselves. To protect them beyond this age is to make them soft - and in some cases to make them unable to face the often harsh world with confidence.

We are far too soft, these days. Children should be prepared for adult life (which really begins around the age of sixteen) by being taught practical things - how to survive, how to kill, how to skin an animal, how to rely on themselves. Our Schools stuff their heads with silly academic facts - most of which they do not need and the rest are rubbish - but no longer try to breed men and women. Well, so much for Schools - who needs them? Only Governments, to enforce their own view of the world and turn out people who can fulfill certain jobs and thus help the Government and its power-system survive. Parents should teach their children toughness, self-confidence and the other attributes our society seems to have forgotten or wishes to forget in its search for comfort and ease.

Too many ape the "role-models" of the consumer society: the celebrity, the business type, the academic. One reason for this is that we have lost, for the most part, the formative role of war. Yes - war. Everyone should experience a war - fight in one, survive one: or die in one. We do not have enough battles today - and what wars and battles we do have are not very good for two reasons. First, they are generally on behalf of some remote Government and thus not personal (although the lying Governments try to make them personal by propaganda - hence the Government are the 'good guys' and the other side 'the bad guys'), and second, they are just too technological: no hand-to-hand fighting, no place for small, independent units, just huge armies. Children need battles, need war - they weed out the weedy to start with! In war, children grow up - or they perish. No good wars (by which I mean proper battles) mean no good people - just a load of softies puffed up by bluster and arrogance; just children in adult bodies playing childish games.

II Prisons:

Prisons are barbaric. I should know, having spent some time in a few of them. They are barbaric because they confine and restrain - because this confinement tries to break you down and takes away two important things: self-respect and women (or men in a woman's prison). You are forced to obey, and even when taken outside (e.g. to a Court) you are manacled. So, you hide your respect away - where it distorts and becomes disrespect and hatred; or else, you are broken by the system and the regimee and become a kind of cipher. All prisons are really only the final instruments of State power - obey our laws or you will be imprisoned and we will break you, we will have your respect for our laws and Institutions and functionaries. They exist to make you obedient - or to try and do so, with consequences for "society" if and when you do finally get out: for you then more often than not want revenge.

Some laws are necessary - and their breaking should be punished. But prison is not the answer, except for a very small number (and that number is very, small - in Britain, say, sufficient only to fill one prison)like. e.g. multiple murderers.

Alternatives should exist - and I am not talking about soft options either. I mean convicted felons should be given a chance - to show if they have any positive qualities. If there was a war on (and there always should be, somewhere.) they could be given the chance to enlist and fight. If there was some remote place which needed workers for some construction project, they should be given the choice to go there. (This idea would be useful once colonies on the Moon and the planets become possible.) Or perhaps some challenge could be devised like the good one the Romans had; Gladatorial contests, the winner winning freedom. Faced with, say, a five year prison sentence and, say, spending six months working under hard conditions on somewhere like the Moon, I know which I would choose. Means could be found to make the options 'human' - to treat those who do choose an option like others are treated: I am not talking about 'Penal Battaltions' or cheap slave type labour, but of convicts working alongside others, given a chance. If they mess it up - they can go to a Penal institution.

We seem stuck in a rut as far a penal reform goes. No one dares to venture - or fight to form real alternatives. All there is today are the softie options created by intellectualised do-gooding types who because they themselves are soft want everyone and everything to be soft. They want to believe in silly ideas like everyone has some good in them, without realizing that 'good' often has to be created in people by force of circumstances, by life-or-death choices. In brief, a lot of people have to be civilised: they are not born so. Prison does not civilise - but meaningful options might. Bravery in war has been-

and should be again-one option, one civilising force.

What makes all this worse is that the world is becoming smaller, more institutional like, more conformist. There are fewer places to hide, to escape to, few outlaw lands or territories where you can be free - escape from the 'law' and its agencies. All this technology and all the huge and monstrous States and super-States (like the 'European Community', the USA or the USSR) make the possibility of escape, of refuge, even of exile - for those who want or need to escape - more and more difficult. I have a horrible suspicion this is meant to be so; that a vast, Earth-wide prison type society is being formed wherein the individual will be for all intents and purposes insignificant, and where State laws will be accepted and State penal institutions for those few yet to conform. That such a society would use notions like Justice, Freedom and Democracy (or rather would use these words as a hypnotist uses words or a propagandist slogans) for what is basically a dreadful tyranny makes it all the more terrible. As does the reality that most do not seem to care.

Freedom - The Illusion

A great deal has been written and said recently concerning the demise of Communism and Marxism - particularly in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Such views stem from a mis-understanding of the nature of Communism and Marxism.

What has changed and what will probably change still further are the external forms assumed by those doctrines as well as the names applied to describe them. What has not changed is the essence of the doctrines themselves. Under different forms and names, far from suffering a demise they have in fact undergone a resurgence and are set to be triumphant in not only 'the West' but also world-wide. To understand and appreciate this, it is necessary to consider what Marxism, for instance, really means. It is essentially a striving for a certain type of society - a classless and egalitarian one. There are and have been differing views about how this may be achieved: about what forms (like governments) can be used to achieve it and about the nature of the struggle necessary (revolutionary warfare or otherwise). Further, there are various ideas about what type of economy is necessary to achieve such a society and maintain it once it is achieved. All these differences are really irrelevant - they are means, tactics, only. Understood thus, Soviet society, for instance, of the past seventy years, was a means: and one that to a considerable extent was found not to be very successful. There is still a desire, among ordinary peoples as among the 'rulers', to create a better society - to strive toward goals which embody the essence of Marxism although not that descriptive name. The goals now are described by terms such as 'socialism' and 'democracy'. In short, the ideal of a form of government/type of State and society which will change people and the world for the better, give them a better way of life, still exists - this change being toward a more equal society.

In the 'West' and throughout the world, this ideal also exists - and nearly all governments and political parties are committed to it, although quite often the terms used are slightly different, 'democracy' and 'consumerism' (and sometimes 'capitalism') being used instead. What is important is that the striving is the same - adherence to an ideal is the same, and that in all important respects this ideal, despite the different terms used, is the same as that of Marxism. Words like 'democracy' and 'freedom' have become power or 'totem' words possessed of an almost religious fervour and describing an almost religious commitment to the ideals and principles which those words are supposed to represent. Furthermore, these words have become entwined with governmental forms and types of State: that is, to be 'free' and 'democratic' is to live within a society which has a 'free' and 'democratic' form of government - i.e. elections of the parliamentary type. The size and extent of such a State is considered irrelevant, as is its ethnic and cultural mix. What is important is 'one person, one (free) vote'.

The striving of the 'democratic' countries is toward more 'democracy' and more equality - toward a better society. It is this striving for an ideal, and the fact that the ideal is seen in terms of 'society' and its power-forms like governments, as well as in the aim of equality and 'commonality' that the essential similarity between Marxism and 'democracy' exists.

To make this even clearer, 'democracy' as an ideal and as a means will be considered. A democratic society is in theory a 'free' society: one that respects the rights of the individual. In the democratic societies of the West, for instance, this is true - in some ways: i.e. providing one does not uphold a view contrary to the 'accepted'. Those who do - and who agitate against the State - are subject to severe penalties: loss of liberty, discrimination, intimidation and so on. What, then, is this 'accepted'? It is fundamentally a belief in the doctrines of equality and multi-culturalism - allied to the 'one person, one vote' idea and the acceptance that society is governed by what amounts to professional politicians whose qualifications for office always include being 'respectable' and conforming to a certain weakness of character. The troublesome minority in these societies who do not uphold these views have laws passed against them - laws which not only prevent free expression on certain matters (such as race) but which also preserve the 'status quo', making it difficult for real revolutionaries to gather mass support and thus challenge for power (one thinks of 'Public Order' acts here, which forbid protecting one's meetings and demonstrations from the violence of one's opponents). In brief, those who uphold these ideas of equality, 'democracy' and so on, have a stranglehold on power - and these ideas are remorselessly taught by the State: the people are 'educated' into them, from birth onwards. The 'freedom' of such a society means the freedom to believe these ideas, and these only: there is no real dissent. A classic case concerns certain facts of history - it is illegal in some of these 'free' States (and heretical in all of them) to dispute the fact that millions of Jews were exterminated during the Second World War. A heretic who gives voice to doubts about the 'official' version of events is imprisoned, fined, subject to physical attack - and

deprived of their employment if they happen to work for a government body or in any official capacity. In short, there is no real freedom at all - only a self-perpetuating system of servitude to a set of ideas, those ideas having little to do, despite their names, with real democracy and real freedom. These ideas are essentially Marxist in reality, although they are variously described as socialist, liberal, egalitarian and democratic.

What, then, is real democracy? First, democracy is not a particular type of government nor a system of voting: it is an outward expression of freedom among a community who share the same culture and thus aspirations (or instinctive view of the world or 'sense of Destiny'). One of the distinguishing features is smallness - it means personal knowledge of others. Another, is that it truly embodies the 'will' or spirit of the community. That is, democracy is only really democracy when it is tribal or communal (e.g. like an Anglo-Saxon moot) - when it is local. Beyond this, it becomes something else entirely - a kind of oligarchy. In all modern States, the 'democratic' system is impersonal and abstract, dealing in the main with abstract and irrelevant issues - in a genuine democracy, a Representative of the people would know most of those people personally: their concerns, their lives and so on. Modern 'democracy' de-humanizes the individual as well as dealing in political abstractions that are imposed on the people. Further, and perhaps most importantly, the people or folk whose views and aspirations are given free expression must be homogenous - that is, possess a common root and thus heritage. This means that basically most of them will possess the same instincts, nurture the same ideals and hopes - the same 'ethos', that which lies in their blood. When this is not so, there is no real democracy, since, fundamentally, democracy implies this realness, this dealing with what is embodied in the term 'ethos', this concern for the fundamental (one might almost say spiritual) concerns of living over and above the purely material and the purely abstract.

Expressed another way, genuine democracy is living - an expression of a people's "soul" whereas sham democracy (the kind evident today) deals with abstractions and is dead, intellectual, dry, arid. And it can only be living when the people or folk are a genuine community - that is, linked by ties of blood, by race. Material goods are not the essence of freedom - fulfilling the potential of one's self (and thus fulfilling the potential of the folk itself) is. Democracy, of the genuine sort, is a means enabling this. Anything else is a negation of that potential - a potential which arises because the individual is not an isolated entity, but a part of the folk: part of the past which made that individual possible and part of the future.

We, as individuals, are only fully human when we realize and understand and accept how we, as individuals, relate to what is past and what can arise in the future - when we are aware of our place in the 'scheme of things'. Or, expressed another way, how we relate to Nature and what is beyond Nature (the gods). This knowledge gives perspective and meaning to our lives, and it is such knowledge - an expression of the fact that we are thinking beings - that is the essence of our humanity. For being human does not mean adhering to a certain set of values or acting in certain moral ways. It means an understanding (if only intuitively) of what life really means, of what is really important.

In the most obvious sense, this 'relating' is to our immediate family - our kin. For most, what is really important is family, particularly our children. They are our seed, and the seed to plant future generations, just as we are the plants grown from the seed of our ancestors. Thus, we are not isolated, but part of an evolution - a connection between the past and the future, part of the potential of that future. We become fully human, as against selfish, when we appreciate this and aid the fulfillment of that potential. We have not been born by chance, in isolation - but embody the hopes and aspirations of our ancestors and the heritage they represented and by their very existence preserved. Furthermore, we and our own descendants - or our deeds, or both - extend that heritage, taking evolution toward higher realms, thus fulfilling the purpose of life.

The family may be said to be one of the first and important adaptations of human evolution. Its extension, the folk community, bound by ties of blood, tradition, a common heritage and history, was the next stage in establishing our human nature. All life strives not only to propagate itself but also to perfect itself by adaptation and expansion - that is, it propagates not only onwards, but upwards, toward higher forms. The folk community, as a successful adaptation, succeeded in this because the individuals within it accepted it (again, often only instinctively) as a natural expression of and extension to, their own lives - as something necessary, which ensured their future. This adaptation - which gave rise to a higher form of living, a culture as against barbarism - was held together by an awareness, a spirit, a sense of purpose and belonging. Gradually, this became more conscious, was made more aware - spirit is fundamentally opposed to both selfish, and material and abstract concerns: it imbues the individual with a sense of purpose, with a realization of their place in the

scheme of things. It is a 'thinking with the blood' as opposed to arid, intellectualized speculation - it relates to what is real, to life itself, and not to abstract constructs. It is also a recognition of balance - of how the individual fits into not only the past and future, but also into those forces (call them Nature or the gods) which act upon and indeed create all life.

There is lack of balance, and thus a disruption of the sense of belonging and purpose, when the community or folk is not homogenous. The individual then feels increasingly 'lost', directionless, adrift. That vitality and joy which is a natural adjunct to thinking with the blood and living as part of a vital and expanding community, is lost. In short, the true or real meaning of life, and thus of freedom, has been lost - replaced by either selfish aspirations, or material concerns. These material concerns are often abstract - egalitarian or liberal. That is, they concern themselves not with reality and the processes of Nature, but with abstractions which are unreal - a general leveling-down, rather than a propagating upwards.

Real freedom means a participation in evolution - a fulfillment of potential, of one's own life as well as that of one's ancestors and one's own descendants. It requires genuine democracy - the fulfillment of the spirit or ethos of a community which is bound by ties of blood (and whose members thus share the same aspirations). This means a certain way of living - in accord with the ethos of that folk, a participation in evolution through an extension of that community, the propagation of the individuals within it, their heritage and culture, and the creation of higher forms founded on those individuals and their culture.

Modern 'freedom' and modern 'democracy' are illusions - they are lifeless forms, abstract in nature, which de-personalize. They represent the arrogant presumption of an arid intellectualism which believes that abstractions are more important than reality - they, and all such effront to Nature and the gods. They possess no realness, but are hollow constructs made from dreams. All life is subject to Nature, to the realness of the gods - those who believe that we humans are somehow immune are immature at best, and at worst vainly arrogant. To strive for an abstract ideal, as all proponents of false democracy and false freedom do, is to strive against Nature and the balance which the gods represent. Such a striving, as the Greek Tragedians so well understood, is ill-fated and doomed.

This striving is increasing, aided by the lack of understanding of what real freedom and real democracy mean. There is an increase in delusion, as there is an increase in the tyranny of abstract ideas. Real freedom and real democracy mean a revolution in our ways of thinking and our modern ways of politics - a turning away from abstractions toward the realness of the folk a return to 'thinking with the blood'. What is required is a turning toward that realness of Nature and the gods which the folk community expresses - and this is a turning toward what is important about life itself. There will then be a continuation of the process of our evolution rather than the denial of such evolution that abstraction and the striving for unreal dreams represent.

This revolution is National-Socialism, for National-Socialism is this balance, this concern for the realness of life, expressing as it does essence of real freedom and real democracy, little though this be understood in these times of tyranny. But the propaganda and the lies of these tyrants cannot destroy National-Socialism, for there will always be those who know and understand what it really means and signifies, as against what most have been led to believe it means and signifies. Of all ways, only National-Socialism represents genuine freedom and genuine democracy - spirit, a thinking with the blood, an evolution toward higher forms.

Order of Nine Angles

Heretical Notes
Order of Nine Angles

The following notes briefly outline some present-day heretical ideas - they challenge the accepted orthodoxy that the majority accept without question.

Human Evolution:

The orthodoxy is that all present day races evolved from a common ancestor in Africa. The reality is that evolution occurred in several places at different times - that is the leap from Australopithecus (and other variants) to Homo occurred in different places at different times, leading to the various human species manifest in different races. This was the now heretical view of anthropologist Charles S. Coon. On this view, the 'Homo' branch that led to the present European races, was the first to evolve into 'Sapiens' - perhaps as much as 100,000 years before that branch which became the present day African races.

Black Holes:

A modern theoretical idea which has assumed a reality in the minds of not only the majority, but also most scientists. Until proven by direct observation, such ideas are speculative and rather like the medieval debates about how many angels can sit on a pinhead. The mentality behind such ideas is the same. The orthodoxy of cosmology is to endlessly speculate with few, if any facts or observations. Fantasy has taken over from experiment in this science as in many others.

Cosmology, and modern Physics, need to return to direct experimentation - and for an understanding of the Universe this means Space Travel. More was learnt from the few photographs of the Voyager probes than from centuries of Earth-based observation and centuries of speculation.

Iraq:

A rather more topical heresy. The orthodoxy regards Iraq and particularly its present leader as appalling. It is heresy to suggest that Saddam is actually a good leader. He is detested in 'the West' because he has stood up to those bully-boy tactics of America (do this - or else we will go to war/impose sanctions) and because he makes no secret of his dislike of Israel (without American financial and military support/loans, Israel would wither and die). He has also exposed - for those who can think for themselves - the United Nations for what it is: a puppet of the United States, implementing the American new world order. Hence the campaigns against him in the Western media.

The White Race:

Is the White Race doomed? It certainly seems so. But if it is losing the battle for world survival, whose fault is it? If it is losing, then it must as a whole be weak. Does it deserve to survive? In life, there are winners and losers. Nature is ruthless - the predators win. The White Race is being preyed upon at this moment in its evolution - by other races. It has lost its racial instincts for survival. No one is to blame for this state of affairs but the White race - it has allowed itself to become weak.



Introduction.

The aim of 'Nexion' is to present, without mystification, an essential aspect of Sinister strategy, and one which all genuine Initiates are pledged to fulfill: the aiding of National-Socialism and its associated forms. National-Socialism is presented here within the context of 'Occultism' (specifically Satanism) and is thus explicated in its esoteric sense - as a form which can achieve something beyond itself. Because of this, the MSS contained herein, all written by, and hitherto secretly circulated among members of the Satanic Order of Nine Angles, require an 'Aeonic awareness' for their full appreciation; that is, the understanding of the essence of all forms behind their appearance. Such an awareness, expressed both intellectually and practically, aids the establishment of the next Aeon, thus fulfilling the Destiny of the Western Civilization. Seen within a conventional context, the material herein is genuinely heretical - and possession/distribution of it is illegal in many countries.

Gaudete hodie scietis qui a veni et Vindex...

Coire Riabhaich, ONA.

Nexion:
A Guide to Sinister Strategy
Prologue

There was a period, perhaps a million years, when she had been bored. It was no longer so, for she had spent the years of her childhood lingering in a corner of a galaxy watching the evolution of life. It was fascinating, this watching and, devoid of time and material substance, she drifted as pure but young consciousness around her chosen planet training herself to comprehend the subtle changes that evolving life assumed. There was no feeling in her because of this because for her no feeling was possible - the strange beings evolved from the dark waters by the transformations of time were a curiosity to till her idle million years.

But, as a child, boredom came to her and she began, tentatively at first, to take form among her chosen beings. She became the wonder of a man staring at the Brilliant shimmering stars bursting through the dome of night, the hand that moved its finger upon wet clay drying in the dry heat of the sun, the slow, dim thought that brought through the agency of a man burning fire from within the dryness of dark wood.

She became a woman suckling her child, bringing strange sounds to the woman's mouth because she became perplexed by the sensations that flooded her consciousness through the senses of the body. There was awe in the others around because of this and she stayed within the body while worship grew and the sensations became understood.

She became the wind that bore a ship across a sea, a storm that wrecked another ship and the saviour of its crew. But she sensed with her developing senses other entities around her chosen world, changing the feelings and thoughts of her beings, turning them away in a manner she did not understand, from their dawning awareness of her essence expressed by their awe.

Across the centuries she sought an answer. She learnt, slowly like the child she still was, the possibilities that the feelings of her chosen beings represented: she experienced the ecstasy of a woman, the savage passion of a killing man, the grief, sadness, pain and joy of the small tribe whose evolution she had followed. These experiences of feeling changed her bringing a confusion to her consciousness.

Perplexed, she ventured among the other dimensions entwined within the cosmic structure of her world. But other entities lurked among the labyrinths of such spaces and she retreated to the loneliness of her own dimensions to watch a young man intoxicated by music rush along the lee of a city's hill.

There was within this man a vision that drew him irresistibly toward the dimensions of her own consciousness and brought her a strange feeling. She watched the young man clasp the hands of his bewildered friend and tell of the Destiny that, one day, he would fulfill - and his eyes gleamed with a frightening passion that told of gods, of men striving against the gravity of lire's decline and of the stars that, one day, might be reached, His being seemed to take form in defiance even of his own kind, reaching ever nearer to her and for the first time in her existence her confusion of developing feeling, of sensual experience, coalesced into one moment of awareness that in intensity overwhelmed her consciousness.

But this feeling of love did not last, and this loss changed her. Slowly, and deliberately, she cut the ties that bound her as a child to others of her kind. None of them would know what she was about to do while, on her chosen planet, Adolf Hitler walked slowly with his friend down from the hill.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Satanism and Race
ONA, 1991eh.

The purpose of this MS is to explain traditional Satanism in relation to "race" since it is an unfortunate fact that most non-Initiates of this particular Left Hand Path reveal a total lack of understanding of the topic, and see the use of a particular tactic by traditional Satanists as a part of the Satanist 'world-view'. The fundamental strategic (or 'long-term') aim of Satanism is to elevate the consciousness of all individuals [Regardless of race] to at least what is now described by 'Adept consciousness': i.e. to liberate the individual, internally and externally, and so create a new type of human being - someone who has achieved the next stage of our evolutionary development. The way of traditional Satanism - its rituals, techniques, ordeals and methods - is a means to enable the development of this liberation within the individual. However, this way requires commitment and a self-effort over many years. Further, traditional Satanists do not believe that the way itself can be made any easier - that is, there are no 'short-cuts' to achieving real Adeptship and beyond. It is not a question of someone accepting a dogma, of being 'converted' to a religion, or of simply performing magickal rites. It is a complete change of one's way of living, a total rejection of the many presently existing structures and forms which stifle our potential and which hold individuals in thrall, often unconsciously. In brief, Satanism is revolutionary.

Because of this, the achievement of the ultimate Satanic goal or aim will take a long time - many centuries, if not millennia. Satanists are both pragmatic and rational: they have studied the processes of evolutionary change as these relate to individuals and have devised means to aid the achievement of the ultimate goal. They know the realities which pertain, and their assessments of means or tactics are practical. They eschew the mystifications of most of those Involved in Occultism just as they are not dreamy idealists who trust in some 'ineffable' law or supra-personal entity/Being to do their work for them. They are practical, calculating and if necessary ruthless.

The reality is that Aeonic energies - i.e. that 'force' which creates an evolutionary development of consciousness - are presented, on Earth, via a specific aeonic civilization. That is, that such evolutionary change is achieved by means of such a civilization. At any one Aeonic period (which lasts from between one to two millennia) only one such civilization exists and is creating large-scale evolutionary change. When that civilization declines (when the Aeonic energies of the particular Aeon are waning) there is presented another type of Aeonic energy, which thereafter gives rise to another aeonic civilization, and thus further changes.

Presently, the civilization is the 'Western' or Faustian one, and this civilization, like all aeonic civilizations, should end in Imperium. This Imperium is part of the evolutionary process of change. Such change occurs mostly by the majority within that civilization being motivated (unconsciously) by the ethos or Destiny of that civilization - i.e. they create change without being consciously aware of what they are doing. A few individuals know what is actually occurring - i.e. they have an understanding and insight greater than the majority. These few are the genuine Initiates of esoteric traditions. This knowledge gives them a certain power - for they can use it to produce changes according to their desires/aims. In effect, they are the secret guardians of evolutionary change.

Hitherto, aeonic change has been natural - a process of organic growth. With each aeonic civilization, there has been a slow evolutionary change toward greater consciousness and thus individual growth. But this change is very slow, and only a minority have achieved any real progress in terms of achieving the potential inherent in us all as a species.

Genuine esoteric traditions are a means of making this change more widely available, of *consciously* altering, speeding-up, the natural process of evolution. This process of change, is not, however, linear it is often of the "two steps forward, one (sometimes two) steps back". And, furthermore, it is finely balanced-it can easily turn into a regression.

Satanism understands the archetypal symbol of 'Satan' as the archetype for positive evolutionary change. However, the present aeonic civilization, the Faustian or Promethean one (or, esoterically, the Satanic one) has suffered a distortion of its ethos or Destiny. In the simple sense, the civilization has become ill and a consequence of this is that its Imperium is unlikely - that is, the evolutionary change which that Imperium would have provoked is unlikely to occur. One of the most significant changes caused by the Imperium would have been the colonization of outer Space and thus the creation of entirely new societal structures.

The sickness of the civilization may be described, in simple terms, as a return to a restrictive dogmatic view of the world - and one which has undermined the Destiny of the civilization. One facet of this dogma is the Nazarene religion and those social and political forms which derive from it. Again expressed simply, this sickness undermines the vitality of the peoples of the civilization - turns them away from external achievements of an Imperium type, such as exploration and conquest of new environments, and instead towards themselves. The outer world is forsaken for the problems of the inner. Traditional Satanism regards the achievement of a Promethean Imperium as a step toward achieving the ultimate Satanic goal. After that Imperium, not one but many other civilizations would have arisen due to the expansion beyond the confines of the Earth. The ultimate goal would have perhaps been realizable within a millennia.

To achieve Imperium, there has to be within the majority of the peoples of the civilization, a sense of Destiny - they are vitalized by that Destiny. At this stage of our evolutionary development, the majority are still in thrall to archetypal forms - they are still motivated unconsciously, still not totally aware. That is, they are still not whole, unique, individuals. They are part of the wyrd of the Aeon and thus the Destiny of the civilization. This is the reality. Imperium cannot be created by words - by rationally convincing others; by simply believing in it. It is created by numinous action among the majority - by that majority being led by a charismatic minority, and in by individuals of charisma who believe they have a Destiny. In effect, these charismatic individuals embody the Destiny of the civilization itself. They embody the unconscious hopes and aspirations of the majority.

At this stage of evolutionary development, this Destiny must and can only be *in its origins* a racial one: derived from a sense of superiority, an *instinct*. It cannot be derived from abstract ideas - they are dead, and while they may sway a few, they can never persuade the majority and enable that majority to excel and so create something far beyond themselves.

This is the practical Satanic assessment. To create Imperium - which of necessity means countering the sickness of the civilization - it is necessary to give practical form to certain powerful instincts. It means using the peoples of the civilization as instruments for Aeonic change. It means returning them to what would have been the natural outcome of the civilization had not the majority of them fallen prey to the sickness. In brief, it means a resurgence of a sense of racial superiority within Europeans - and the creation of societies which embody this belief. It means racial separation in order to give a sense of Destiny and thus vitalize the majority.

This, however, is a tactic from the Satanic point of view - a means to achieve Satanic goals, via the Faustian/Western/Promethean/Satanic civilization. At this moment in time, only this civilization with its technology, is capable of achieving the goal of colonization of outer Space - this technology has to be vitalized by a sense of exploration among the majority.

Thus, Satanism, as part of its sinister strategy, may encourage those forms/beliefs/groups and so on which express this type of Imperium. For instance, present-day 'extreme Right Wing movements'. In this, Satanists are being sinister - they are not expressing or supporting such views, as 'racism' for instance, because they believe them, but because they know those views may or will aid their Satanic goals, in particular by countering the Nazarene sickness of spirit.

Thus, one thrust of Satanic action, in the real world that is, of what Satanic Initiates do to presence the dark forces - at this present time is to aid the creation of such an Imperium and create world-wide conditions which would enable its aims to be fulfilled (e.g. in terms of strategic alliances with other countries not part of the Imperium).

This Imperium, however, will not be a purely aggressive one which seeks the destruction of other, non-European, races. Rather, it would seek - once its own structures were secure to encourage other races to exist and flourish within their own nations, and then ultimately, a Federation of such nations (all of whom respected each other) to enhance the goal of Space exploration. That is, the world would be re-organized on the basis of strong, independent racial States - there might, for instance, be the creation of a Black America, occupying part of what is now the USA. This re-organization is based on the realities which exist in the world now. It is a solution to the problems which if they are not solved in this way will ultimately lead to a severe evolutionary down-turn.

Hence, another thrust of Satanic action, in the real world at this present time is to aid the creation of such States based on race - eg. they may be support for 'Black Muslims' who desire a separate nation in the USA and elsewhere.

This outline of global Satanic strategy is of necessity brief and somewhat oversimplified. But it should enable the tactics that are sometimes used to be understood in context. Of necessity, these tactics are

sinister - they may provoke or cause strife; possibly violence; perhaps death; sometimes 'law-breaking'. Often, the tactics are revolutionary. But they are all means, to achieve Satanic goals, and Satanists using them - or influencing others to use them - know what they are doing. They understand the strategy, the ultimate goal, and by so acting in the real world they are being Satanic.

Genuine Satanism means this change in the real world; it means Satanists actually acting to achieve things. Perhaps getting blood on their hands either directly or indirectly. Pseudo-Satanism means fantasy: role-playing; taking up 'ethical' positions one actually believes in. Genuine Satanists are a-moral.

Satanism accepts the reality as it is - and then uses that reality to re-structure it, to change it, in accord with its sinister aim. The reality of race, of instinct, is as it is - it can be *used* to achieve things. Others impose projections onto the world - they wish and need to believe that things are other than they are: that individuals are other than they are. They are hopelessly idealistic, unbloodied by the realities of the world. In short, they do not understand *power*. Satanists, on the contrary, know how it really is in the real world.

Thus, racism - whether White, Black or whatever - is a means, a tactic used by Satanists to achieve first a European Imperium and then what is beyond that Imperium - a Federation of strong, independent countries whose goal is to continue the Space colonization that the Imperium began. Thereafter, there is a new Aeon, in reality, and a multitude of new aeonic civilizations - and thus the achievement of the ultimate Satanic goal. Of course, all this means struggle, conflict, wars, deaths, upheavals, over decades and centuries. That is, the presencing of the dark forces to achieve something evolutionary.

The reality behind these tactics is Aeonics - which is a means of rationally understanding the seemingly complex processes of change from Aeons to civilizations to societies and thus to individuals. Aeonics is an esoteric knowledge, and one which is increasing as new insights are gained.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Satanism - Or Living On The Edge

ONA, 1991eh

Genuine Satanists are at the sharp end: they act. They strive for and implement their personal Destiny and they work for the fulfillment of sinister strategy. That is, by their lives, by their ways of living, they actively aid the creative forces of Darkness. Or, expressed another way, they do the work of the Prince of Darkness.

In contrast, the dabblers, the pseuds, keep themselves secure in their imaginary and fantasy 'Satanic' worlds - with correspondence, meetings, conclaves, discussions; with performing and writing/reading about worthless Occult rites; with their babbling about their pseudo-mystical fantasies.

A Satanist will be living Satanically - and will therefore be dangerous, in the real world. They will do Satanic deeds rather than just talk or write about them. He or she will be, for instance, disrupting society in a practical way, or working to actively create a new, revolutionary society which is more Satanic. They might be real heretics - fighting against the State either politically or via armed warfare if that State (as most Western ones do) upholds the Nazarene sickness of spirit (evident in modern political ideas like 'liberalism' and 'humanism' and 'equality': the triumph of the worthless at the expense of the noble). Or perhaps they will be aiding the collapse of such a State, and fostering a reaction, by morally undermining it, for example by dealing in drugs or pornography. Or maybe they will be teachers in influential positions, subverting others in secret towards Satanism or those transient forms Satanism often assumes to gain control and influence. Or they might be actively culling the worthless, the scum - by being a vigilante, or a zealous, honourable Police Officer ...

Whatever, they will have a direction, a purpose, an intent which goes beyond the edification of their own ego. They will be working to achieve something great by virtue of which they can excel in their own lives and thus really live to the full. They will be developing and using their potential, their skills - and thus exulting in life, in overcoming challenges. They will be contributing toward their own evolution and that of existence itself because they are harnessing in a practical way the darker forces.

This direction, purpose and intent is Satanic strategy, or Aeonics. A rational and thus conscious understanding of those forces which shape and change evolution and the forms assumed by sentient life from individuals to societies to civilizations and Aeons.

It is this sinister or Satanic strategy which makes genuine Satanism what it is, and it is knowledge and understanding of this strategy which marks the genuine Satanic Initiate from the imitation.

A Satanist not only acts in a certain way - achieving things in real life - but they **know what they are doing**; they possess **perspective**. An Initiated knowledge. This 'knowledge' is not primarily of the pseudo-mystical kind, to do with rituals or other Occult workings/techniques. Rather, it is primarily concerned with how and why certain things are as they are, and how those things can be altered or changed. In essence, it is about how cosmic forces interact with and change/evolve life - about the mechanisms by which Aeons, civilizations, societies and ultimately individuals grow, are or can be influenced and changed.

In the past few decades, many professedly Satanic organizations have arisen, and some have propounded various aspects of the genuine Satanic world-view. But almost without exception they have shown themselves to be lacking in real esoteric knowledge - i.e. Aeonics. Quite often, someone from one of these organizations will 'sound-off' and reveal their ignorance, particularly concerning the actions of real Satanists in the real world. For instance, it has become fashionable in these pseudo-Satanic circles to castigate individual Satanists, or a Satanic group, if that individual or group becomes involved in Politics - particularly if those Politics are on what is often termed the 'extreme Right'. What the ignorant writers and/or speakers in question have not understood, is that such political action is chosen Satanically - to achieve things, both for the individual(s) concerned and for Satanism in general. That is, those who are so involved are so because they are consciously and with ruthless determination aiding the sinister dialectic: i.e. Satanic strategy. They are living on the edge - causing and aiding change/disruption in real life.

The ignorance of the pseudo-Satanists is revealed in another area - ethics. There is not and cannot be any such thing as Satanic ethics. What there are, are means to achieve Satanic goals and the means are a matter for the individual Satanist striving to achieve those goals. That is, it is for each and every Satanist to decide, for themselves, what is or is not acceptable. This is so because Satanism, in essence, is

individual - it is not nor can ever be, religious in any way. Those who believe Satanism is or should be religious, do not understand Satanism at all.

As I have written and said many times, Satanism is an individualized defiance and affirmation: one of the fundamental aims of Satanism is to produce or develop proud, strong, unique, individuals of character who possess 'spirit' or 'elan', and who possess insight and genuine esoteric knowledge. The aim is not to develop subservient, obedient, sycophants who cannot think for themselves. Satanism aims to develop the instinct and judgment of each person - and Satanists are critical, aware and capable of assessing things and situations for themselves. Or rather, they will be, after appropriate training/guidance. I make no apology for repeating yet again the statement that the religious attitude is anathema to Satanism: Satanism is a rebellion against the religious, dogmatic, instinct. Satanism shuns obedience to a self-appointed authority; it despises the very idea of a religious 'mandate' and it does not idolize anything - not even the individual Satanists of distinction. Satanism is at the very edge, the frontier, of conscious understanding and knowledge and Satanists are the ones who try and often succeed in extending that frontier - in bringing more of the cosmos into conscious awareness and thus **control**. They dare, defy, are heretical, possess the courage to dream and make their dreams of Destiny real. Because they know themselves, others and the esoteric workings of existence, they are in control, masters. They effect change. And they acquire all these things because they possess perspective, a perspective whose foundation is Aeonics.

What, then, is Aeonics? It is an esoteric understanding, and an understanding which in these times of overt and covert Nazarene domination is heretical. It is a knowledge of the processes by which Aeons arise, change and are replaced by another Aeon, and how the creative energies of a particular Aeon are made manifest via a civilization and thus the societies within that civilization and the individuals within those societies. It is also a knowledge of how all these various **forms** (or causal structures) can be changed - by esoteric or magickal means, and by more practical means.

On the purely individual level, Aeonics shows and describes how the psyche/consciousness of the individual is influenced, both directly and unconsciously, and how that individual can be changed or controlled. One form of such change is esoteric development - i.e. the techniques and so on, magickal and otherwise, by which the individual can achieve Adeptship and beyond. One form of such control is via archetypal images.

In simple terms, an Aeon is an expression of evolutionary change. In esoteric terms, it expresses how the acausal intrudes upon, and thus changes, the causal. For convenience, the causal may be described, here, as the 'everyday' world - the world of linear time (past, present, future) and three spatial dimensions (height, breadth, width); the world wherein we live out our lives. The acausal may be described, again simply and for convenience here, as the creative energy that drives evolution - i.e. Satan.

A civilization - or more accurately, an Aeonian civilization - is how Aeonian energy, or the acausal, is ordered in the causal - i.e. an Aeonian civilization is how change is produced in the causal. Within each such civilization there are societies, and within each society, individuals. All civilizations, Aeons and individuals are examples of organisms - they are born, change and they die (in the causal, at least). These varying organisms are born, change and end in certain ways, and these processes can be studied and thus understood. This understanding gives the means of control.

Aeonian civilizations are regarded as being tied to, or part of, a particular Aeon, and each Aeon represents a change in our evolutionary development. Thus, each Aeonian civilization represents a significant step in that development: the invention, discovery of significant things, and the development of a greater understanding - of ourselves and the cosmos.

The first Aeon is called the Primal and is dated from around 9,000 to 7,000 BP [where 'BP' represents Before the Present: i.e. c.1990 eh]. Each Aeon, for classification, has a name and is associated with a specific geographical area, a symbol and a 'magickal working' - or how the acausal energy was perceived/understood then. All Aeons, except the Primal one, are linked to a named civilization. Further, each Aeonian civilization possesses an ethos or sense of Destiny. Aeons and their associated civilizations are listed below.

Of course, there are other civilizations - but Aeonian ones are the most significant ones because they produce significant evolutionary change by virtue of being a nexion, or nexus, for acausal energy - i.e. one may consider them, in magickal terms, as giving form directly via their structures and peoples, to acausal energy. Other civilizations are linked to or derive from, these Aeonian civilizations and while they may have in some way contributed to some evolutionary change (e.g. in terms of invention/discovery) that contribution is much less than for Aeonian civilizations.

Aeon:	Magickal Working:	Aeonic Civilization:	Aeonic Dates:
Primal	Shamanism	N/A	9,000 - 7,000 BP
Hyperborean	Henges	Albion	7,000 - 5,500 BP
Sumerian	Trance; Sacrifice	Sumerian/Egyptiac	5,000 - 3,500 BP
Hellenic	Oracle; Dance	Hellenic	3,000 - 1,500 BP
Western	Ritual	Western	1,000 BP - 500 AP

It should be obvious that the esoteric 'symbol' of the Western Aeon is "Satan" - i.e. Nazarene religion/ethics/forms area distortion of the Western Aeon. The exoteric expression of the Western civilization is Science & Technology: the desire to rationally discover and to exercise control over the environment via technology.

All Aeonic civilizations end in Empire, and this Empire or Imperium lasts for around 390 years. The ethos of an Aeonic civilization is mostly manifest to (non-Initiate) consciousness via archetypes and a Destiny. These archetypes and this Destiny are different for each Aeonic civilization. The Destiny is of ten enshrined in a literary/poetic/saga-like form, and this form, for nearly all such civilizations is of the 'hero-motif' type: the successful response of a hero or heroes to a challenge or series of challenges. For instance, the Hellenic form was Homer's Iliad and Virgil's Aeneid.

The present Western civilization is at the stage where it should be entering its Imperium (c. 1995-2385 eh). However, the natural archetypes of the Western civilization have been mostly transplanted by alien Nazarene ones - and its sense of Destiny almost lost due to Nazarene ethics and social forms.

As each Aeonic civilization enters its Imperium, the energies of the next Aeon are or can become manifest, via a nexion or 'Gate' (or "sacred site") which channels acausal energy into causal forms. The next Aeonic civilization follows after three to four centuries - i.e. it takes that length of time for the Aeonic energies to effect large-scale changes in the acausal. Or rather, it has, until now.

This brief and simplified description of Aeonics allows sinister strategy to be understood. Aeonics describes what has and is occurring in those forces that do mould and have moulded individuals still in thrall - i.e. non-Initiates. The knowledge gained brings a genuine understanding, a perspective. It enables effective sinister magick - it enables the Satanist to act, in the real world, and produce effective changes. To really live - to play at being god: i.e. to be like Satan.

It is a fact that most magickal acts are useless - they achieve nothing, except perhaps self-delusion. (Some may achieve a few, external, results edifying to the ego.) And they are useless because few really understand what they are doing. They evoke long dead 'magickal' forms from past Aeonic civilizations - or rather try to; they prattle about with archetypal energies they do not understand. They confuse the forms and try to use some from one Aeon and some from another. Or they try and create their own. Or they are fundamentally so esoterically ignorant that they are infused with pseudo-mystical garbage and fanciful 'aeons' and extra-terrestrial beings and/or diabolic entities from obscure and worthless mythologies.

The Satanist, having access to the real esoteric tradition, can work both personally and Aeonically. Personally, it means working with the energies/inagickal forms of the present Aeon as those energies/forms are. It means eschewing the distortion which has so affected the Aeon and its civilization. One aspect of this distortion is the 'Qabala'. Thus, any "Satanist" who uses any of the forms or symbols or whatever of or deriving from this Qabala is aiding the distortion and thus in effect undermining Satanic energies/values. That most "Satanists" cannot see this, just shows their lack of real esoteric understanding - i.e. their lack of a genuine Satanic Initiation.

One magickal form of the genuine Western tradition, is the septenary. Another is the understanding as 'Baphomet' as one name of the dark goddess - the Bride, Lover of Satan. Yet another is the knowledge of the real origins of both the word and the form of 'Satan' - from the Hellenic, to which the Western Aeonic civilization was loosely affiliated in its origins and growth, and from which certain esoteric traditions survived. [The derivation of the word 'Satan' is from the Greek

Error! Filename not specified. meaning 'accusation'. It became the Hebrew Satan, whence also (Sh)aitian.]

On the Aeonic level, the esoteric knowledge of Aeonics means the Satanist can judge what to do, and act both in the magickal and the practical sense.

Aeonics shows that there has been and is a distortion in the Western energies, and that, given no distortion, the Destiny of the Western civilization was Empire - i.e. the triumph of 'Satanic' values on a

world-wide basis for the benefit of an elite within the Western civilization. Aeonics also shows that it is possible at this moment in time to create a nexion and thus draw forth the energies of the next Aeon – to effectively create the next Aeonian civilization.

Thus, effective courses of action are: (a) aiding the creation of an Imperium; (b) countering the distortion in order to introduce new forms/energies; (c) opening a nexion and thus aiding/creating a new Aeon, consciously. [Heretofore, most Aeons have not been created via magickal intent because the knowledge to do so was lacking.].

All of the above mean changing evolution - societies and individuals - on a significant scale. (a) involves disrupting present societies magickally and practically and aiding Imperium-like forces; (b) involves countering the Nazarene forms and those allied to it, and creating new forms and presenting them via individuals/groups/society etc. All involve aiding Satanic forces - e.g. spreading Satanic ideas esoterically and exoterically; aiming to become/guiding others to become Adepts of Satanic traditions. All involve action in the world.

There is much more to Aeonics, and esoteric tradition, than this. But sufficient has been described for the real essence of Satanic living to be understood.

A Satanist has a desire to excel - to effect changes; to be significant. They are not content to just live, to just survive. The perspective of Aeonics provides an intent, a purpose, by which they can achieve not only self-excellence but also change existence - fulfill or aid the sinister dialectic. They can help to build an Imperium, where Satanic values can be realized and where combat, war, conquest and exploration can make strong and extend the frontiers, take evolution to its limits. They can ruthlessly undermine and destroy and so aid a change. They can work works of genuine sinister magick and so influence others, create new structures and archetypal forms, and kill and then dismember the corpse of the Nazarene, exultant, as they revel in their mastery... They can, in brief, fulfill a real Destiny.

Meanwhile, the pseudo-Satanists can continue playing their pathetic games and fawning on one another, achieving nothing in the long-term and probably nothing in the short-term either. They can continue imbibing the drug of delusion, and so waste their life.

Everyone has a choice - only the gifted choose wisely.

- *Order of Nine Angles* -

The Homocentric Syndrome
- And Its Cure
Anton Long, ONA.

It is obvious to anyone of any sagacity (and that, today, means a very few) that a disease has come upon what is often called 'Western civilization' just as it is becoming obvious that the term 'Western civilization' should no longer be applied to that higher civilization born in the Dark Ages and which is said to be possessed of a 'Faustian spirit' or "soul".

The term 'West' has become identified with the materialist 'culture' spawned in the last century or so and which has possessed Europe, America and the other outposts of what once were European colonies. Part of this 'culture' is adherence to what is called 'democracy' and profession of what are essentially 'liberal and humanitarian' sentiments. The 'West' is no longer understood by the majority of Europeans or those of European descent as the 'civilization' that gave rise to Copernicus, Beethoven, Robert Falcon Scott, Werner von Braun - or to the conquest of the world by Europeans for their own benefit, or to the exploration of Space. Rather, it is understood as the provider of a comfortable and material life-style, and the adoption of certain political forms and ideology. In the same way, the term 'Western' has become a derogatory one in a number of non-European countries and refers to the consumer-industrial-military system exemplified by present day America. For these reasons, it has now become necessary to make a distinction between the 'Faustian civilization' and what is known today as 'the West' - for the two are not the same.

Indeed, the West of today is sick and ailing, having fallen victim to the homocentric syndrome. This is both a pattern of recognizable behaviour, and a group of symptoms. The behaviour is evident in most specimens of 'Western man' and 'Western women' - a certain weakness of spirit, a desire (sometimes grasping) for security, peace, harmony and material possessions, and a liberal attitude to living and others. The best specimen of these behavioural trends is 'the politician', and some of the worst excesses are evident wherever 'Western tourists' are gathered to pursue their pleasures in other peoples countries. The disease symptoms include enslavement to a certain set of ideas and an almost pathological hatred of anyone who expresses pride in the racial achievements of Europeans or in actually being proud of being European in race (an associated symptom being encouragement of racial pride among all non-Europeans).

This syndrome is called 'homocentric' because it has a common centre - a common area from which the afflictions derive. Whether this centre is somewhere in the 'real' world (for example, a certain distinctive people who now have their own country) or whether it is seen as metaphorically existing as a common root which has grown many branches, is immaterial to an appreciation of its consequences (the common root being the doctrine of the Nazarene). These consequences include the material desire mentioned above, an 'inward-turning' morbidity and the making of certain types of person: the undisciplined, selfish misfit, the zealot (political, religious and social) often consumed by a desire for abstract goals like 'Justice', 'Freedom' and 'Equality', and the intellectual. The former is not especially 'Western' - but has proliferated in the countries of the 'West' due in part to the existence of the other two types: he or she being either the cowardly type who congregates in groups and is essentially characterless or the emotionally crippled individual who indulges themselves (criminally or whatever) undercover of that anonymity which Western cities and life in general makes possible.

The syndrome has produced the present rotten state of the 'West' where dishonourable scum breed and are bred in profusion and where 'Faustian' values are ignored and what is 'anti-Faustian' championed - where the majority are so enslaved mentally that for most purposes they cannot really be called 'Faustians' or even 'Europeans' since by their ways of living, activities and subservience to all that is anti-Faustian and anti the preservation of the racial identity of Europeans, they contribute to and encourage the decline.

What, then, can be done? There are really only three possibilities. The first is to try and win over to Faustian ways by means such as direct and indirect political action a majority in one or more European country or countries (or in those countries deriving from European civilization - such as America or Australia) and thus establish a pro-Faustian State. The second is to gradually establish the basis for future control by means such as social, 'philosophical' and 'religious' agitation (ie., by spreading Faustian ideas and ways of living via such external forms). The third is to accept the decline and await the downfall of the 'West' - preparing to start again with the creation of a new civilization some time in

the future, and actively helping to hasten that decline: creating an elite (physically, mentally and psychically) to become the rulers when decline becomes chaos and only the strong will win. All these options could succeed, as will be explained. But first it is necessary to outline in general terms what will occur. Those few who understand the nature of the Faustian civilization will understand also that - left to itself - it would have ended in Imperium and that this Empire, because of the nature of the Faustian spirit (exemplified by science and technology), would have taken us beyond this Earth to colonize the planets of this and other star-systems. This Empire would have lasted about 390 years and then, like all Empires, would have fallen - and a new civilization would have been born. However, because of the 'Galactic' nature of the Imperium, this would be very different from what had gone before and would have been less of a conventional 'fall' than the germination of many and diverse seeds planted on various other worlds: the beginning of a whole new chapter of evolution.

However, the Faustian civilization became diseased - suffering a 'distortion' of its spirit or ethos. The result will be the triumph of what it is convenient to describe as the 'Magian' - the use of Faustian technology, inventiveness and peoples to bring about a "Messianic" dream with the subsequent decline into chaos and a new 'Dark Age' where tyranny exists in an overt way, as it does today in a covert way regarding Faustian ideals and certain facts of history which are suppressed and certain views and ways of living made illegal and criminal. [Those who understand will know what is meant here.]

Despite the decline, it is still possible, using political means, to create a Faustian Empire. This requires a 'Caesar-type' individual who, using personal charisma and political skill, brings a Faustian-inspired political movement to political victory in a particular country. This option, however, while possible, is not likely - it requires the appearance of an individual who embodies the true Destiny of the Faustian civilization, and there are no indications that such a person exists at this moment in our history. What seems more possible is that such an individual may arise in those times to come (and which are quite near) when the infrastructures of the 'West' begin to collapse under the weight of the decay which their own policies have created and before the 'Magian' tyranny becomes established overtly. [The 'time-window' here is of the order of a decade - 'seize the chance!' will then be a necessary slogan for those involved in direct action.]

The second option is basically infiltration of existing structures by a concerted campaign - and the spread of Faustian ideals by whatever means are useful and necessary, all with the intention of creating in the not too distant future a basically Faustian power structure. This requires two things: a commitment (of the revolutionary type) and the formation of dedicated groups whose activists seek similar goals in short, a type of political or 'religious' faith aiming to undermine society and create new structures. Such a faith will not just 'arise' - it has to be created, probably by a charismatic individual or individuals who have a sense of Destiny and who feel compelled to re-structure society in favour of Faustian ideals. To achieve anything, such a 'faith' would have to be basically racial - ie. dedicated to the welfare, rights and aspirations of those of European descent (ie. Aryans), for only such sentiments express or can express in a practical way the essence of the Faustian ethos. Given this expression, and given the dynamism which a religious form possesses by its very nature, success could be achieved within the space of several decades.

The third option is rejection of practical attempts at reform or change - for at least many decades - and, instead, the creation of a small elite who distance themselves from 'society' by creating a way of living which is authentically Faustian and which poses no direct threat to the infrastructures which are or will become anti-Faustian. Such a way would keep alive the traditions and aspirations of Faustian culture and civilization and would enable a new civilization to emerge after the fall of the present one.

It should be obvious that all three options are required to cure the sickness - that all should be striven for by those who understand, if only in an instinctive way, the decline that has come upon us. There should be interchange and interaction between the three: a developing dynamic or imperative which possesses its own momentum and once begun cannot be stopped. Further, each option is suitable for a certain type of individual - and thus the three utilize the potential that is present within our peoples. They also explicate in a practical way that threefold character which our former religions and ways of living have always recognized: the warrior type (here battling for political power), the cultivator/yeoman/settler type (here creating a community living in an authentic Faustian way) and the priest/shaman type (here agitating for a religious Faustian form).

This three-fold attack cannot fail to succeed.

The Nazarene/Magian Ethos

The distortion imposed upon the Western aeon (and thus its associated civilization) is described as fundamentally Nazarene - this itself having its origin in the 'Magian' world-view. The Nazarene is only one outward manifestation of this view.

Recent manifestations of the same ethos include: the dogma of racial equality; the idea of 'democracy' and 'humanism'. Other related manifestations include political forms and ideas like communism (equality and Nazarene 'democracy' taken to extremes) and capitalism (subservience to dogma of profit and its associated ideas). In contrast, the Western ethos is Promethean (exoteric) or Satanic (esoteric) - self-overcoming, conquest, exploration and a pagan ecstasy in living. As with all civilizations, the ethos moulds the creative minority who provide the creative impetus (both 'artistically'/technologically etc. and in terms of outward expansion) which undermines all creative growth - a civilization being the outward organic expression of the presencing of acausal energy (manifest via a nexion) in the causal (the 'world'), this organic growth being for convenience divided into four 'seasons' (Spring, Summer etc.) or nine parts, these re-presenting how the original acausal, aeonic, energy grows then decays in causal time. The creative minority translate this energy into practical results/forms/effects: and in general the 'masses' follow the leads given by this minority: in war, exploration, Art, politics, religion, social organization and so on. Mostly, the creative minority are unaware (not conscious of) the magickal form of the aeonic energy which (via archetypes etc.) motivates them to action/creativity, although some may have intuitive glimpses.

The ethos of a civilization is usually expressed in a sense of Destiny - a 'mission' which the founders of that civilization feel. This sense of Destiny may itself become enshrined in myths and legends and epic literature. (Examples: For the early Hellenic: Homer; for the Imperial stage of the Hellenic: Virgil's Aeneid; for the Japanese: Shinto; for the Imperial stage of that civilization: Bushido.) There is a corresponding belief in the superiority of the peoples of the civilization and their way of living - others are barbarians, infidels and so on. Without these beliefs in Destiny and superiority there is no forward momentum: no expansion of the civilization. All Art (literature, music etc.) follows the blood of conquest: it derives its original power and greatness from this momentum.

The distortion of the Nazarene has shifted the West away from its sense of Destiny and its sense of superiority, and this had led to a loss of the acausal energy manifesting itself externally (to accomplish via such manifestations the wyrd of the Aeon). Instead, there has been an 'inward turning morbidity' and well as the use of that energy to further Nazarene type goals.

Generally, manipulation of individuals in the West occurs on a large scale (a manipulation in favour of the Nazarene/ Magian ethos) - mostly by making those individuals subservient to Nazarene dogma/ethics/ideas mentally. (Note: whether this manipulation is consciously done - eg. by Magian 'adepts' or whether it arises as a consequence (unconscious) of the distortion of the energy/creation of Nazarene type energy by 'believers' is an interesting question which each sinister Adept must find his/her own answer to.)

This mental/psychic subserviance should be obvious to all Initiates - for example, there is, both politically and socially, in all the countries of the West a consensus of opinion regarding racial matters - and in most countries this has assumed the rule of law. Thus, the dogma of racial equality is accepted by governments of all 'political' persuasions and to openly question it or its effects is generally seen as 'racial hatred' - an 'offense' punishable by imprisonment. Mostly, opposition to this dogma is regarded simply as 'evil'. The same applies to the sham of 'democracy'. The masses are and have been subjected to many and various propaganda campaigns regarding, for instance, the 'evils of racism' - hardly a week passes without some documentary, some film, some book, some article (and now, in schools, classroom studies) designed to expose the evils of racism. The more astute will realize that it is almost always 'white racism' which is evil - other types are hardly ever mentioned. The same applies to war and conquest - these are in themselves evil, but of course may be allowed if by war Nazarene ideas can be made to triumph. Thus the espousal and acceptance of 'peace' as a goal - when any healthy civilization sees war, conquest and Empire as not only goals but also necessities. And all in the service of the Destiny of that civilization.

Basically, the Destiny of the West was and is Imperium: the final stage of which would be conquest of the Solar System and Space. However, the distortion has made this unlikely, due to the sapping of Western spirit/elan by Nazarene poison. It is highly likely that fulfillment of Western Destiny would

imply the acceptance, by the peoples of the West, of the superiority of themselves and their civilization over other 'barbarians': and this because such beliefs supply the impetus necessary to conquest and Empire. These beliefs are now mostly unacceptable to the majority, so removed have the masses become from their basic instincts.

There is another and vital element in this manipulation of the Western psyche by Nazarene/Magian forces - and this is the guilt induced among the war-loving peoples of Northern Europe about a certain event alleged to have taken place during the Second World War. Seen in esoteric terms, National-Socialist Germany was a practical expression of Satanic spirit: led by someone who was able (either intuitively or via guidance) to utilize acausal energy and 'earth' it to achieve political goals. Viewed in terms of raw acausal energy, NS Germany was a burst of Luciferian light - of zest and power - in an otherwise Nazarene, pacified and boring world. This State was thus a direct threat to Nazarene power/dogma/ideas. In the war that was fought, NS Germany was naturally regarded as 'evil' and had to be totally destroyed. Further, it was quite possible that, had NS Germany won, a Western Imperium would have become a reality.

Further, the very idea of National-Socialism was an affront to Nazarene domination and had to be destroyed - uprooted from the psyche of the West. In order to do this, a new myth was invented, and this myth with its associated guilt-complex made the resurgence of that idea unlikely. This myth was the 'holocaust'. (Note: Discussion of this myth - and the fact that scientifically the events described therein are impossible - is interesting but outside the scope of this study.) What applies in the West regarding racism applies even more so to this myth - to disbelieve this myth is actual heresy: a heresy actually punishable in many Western States by imprisonment. There is not in any Western State any discussion of this myth: it is not tolerated, and anyone who 'blasphemes' is subject to physical and mental harassment ('re-educated') and overt physical terror. All of these things are naturally justified in terms of 'humanity', 'peace' and so on.

An understanding of this myth is necessary for an understanding of the present position of the Western Aeon and its civilization, as well as offering up possibilities regarding the use of acausal energy to bring about changes within the present Aeon and/or create a new aeon.

Quite simply, the vast majority have been and are being manipulated by forces (in terms of ideas/dogmas/archetypes) of which they are unaware, and it is necessary for Initiates of the sinister traditions to be aware of how, and why, this is occurring. This awareness is totally a-political (a-moral) and such a perspective must be achieved if aeonic energies are going to be used and controlled by Initiates. Of necessity, this awareness (as explained here) is secret (under present 'political' conditions at least) because (a) it is easily mis-understood by non-Initiates (and indeed some Initiates) as forming a 'political stance' or view, and (b) revealing this understanding renders those involved to harassment and 'public'/media scrutiny and by association 'dis-credits' the essence of the sinister tradition (as a way to enlightenment).**

It is important to understand that such political beliefs - eg. racism, NS - which might do and sometimes in the past have expressed aspects of Western destiny, are, from a magickal esoteric point of view merely means: ie. vehicles or forms to achieve specific magickal goals. Their objective truth and their morality is irrelevant - and this applies equally to the future use of such outward forms, should such use be considered a useful means of channeling acausal energy to achieve a specified goal.

All practical forms - of whatever political hue or social orientation - are chosen and used on the basis of practicality and temporal suitability. In the case of NS, this political form was considered by some LHP Adepts to be an ideal vehicle for achieving goals broadly in line with Western wyrd. These Adepts considered the achievement of Western wyrd (manifest on the practical level as Imperium) a necessary prelude to the practical realization of the 'New Age' with all that this New Age implies in terms of genuine individual freedom and enlightenment. They considered the conquest of Space by the Imperium would give rise, after the fall of the Imperium

(about 450 years after its beginning) to divergent forms in the new colonies, such forms being the basis for the New Aeon: and eventually the emergence of adept-like understanding on a societal level.

Thus it can be seen that one 'archetype' which expresses aeonic magick is the Master or Mistress unemotionally assessing Aeonic energy and trends and then rationally making a choice of means to achieve a particular aeonic-type goal. This choice involves planning, on the basis of understanding current aeonic energies/forms/distortions and assessing how the practical means chosen can be energized with magickal energy as well as how those means can be 'archetypally embodied' to assist psychic change among the masses. The choice of goal, and means to achieve it, lies entirely with

the Master or Mistress.

ONA – Temple of Chaos

** Seen in its proper context, all this (the forms of the distortion in the present century; use of a political form for sinister ends) is really only an obscure footnote in Aeonic history.

The Way of the West

Ultima Thule 88

Civilization requires an ideal of beauty and an ideal of Destiny - but above all it requires confidence. All successful civilizations possess an energy of directed will and when that will is no more - exhausted or squandered through material concerns - then the civilization declines towards its end.

The confidence and will of a civilization is usually expressed by the expansion of the civilization and derives from a belief in the natural superiority of the folk communities responsible for the creation of the civilization. Today, the civilization of the West is losing its will as its peoples are losing their sense of superiority. There is no longer in the societies of the west a direction of military expansion and conquest, despite the fact that our civilization should be at its conquering peak. There exists no one imperial goal consistent with the spirit of our civilization, and the majority of the peoples of the West have no notion of the Destiny of our civilization and no belief in the ethos which created and maintained the civilization. Essentially, the origins of our civilization lie in the 'Dark Ages' and the early spirit may be said to be represented by the Norsemen - a conquering energy tinged with a sometimes tragic acceptance of 'wyrd' or Destiny.

The ethos of the West is a fusion of two elements: the restless, pioneering energy of the Norsemen and the practical inventive genius of Germanic and Anglo-Saxon tribes. It was this which gave rise to those attributes which are fundamental to the West and which distinguish the West: science (and the technology deriving from it) and exploration. This 'Faustian' ethos the desire to know and the desire to conquer - is contradictory to the religion that befell the folk communities of the West and which through its superstition and manic zeal held the Western spirit in thrall for many centuries.

Today - partly as a result of this religion - the West has become soft and decadent in spirit. Every society in the West is unhealthy. Health, for a civilization, is an attitude of mind: it is a desire to conquer. It rewards the able and daring - and such a civilization possesses a noble ideal to which its citizens may aspire. It values honesty and personal responsibility. In short a healthy society like the city states of ancient Greece, or the early Roman Empire - takes as its fundamental ideal the warrior.

The 'ideal' made for the societies of the West today is either the satisfied family man with a few hobbies to squander his vitality and a secure contentment with his lot of luxury, or the disobedient, undisciplined, self-indulgent individual who is completely rootless and who is guided from one 'cause' or experience or fashion to another by powerful commercial or anti-Western interests. No where is there a place for the Western warrior - only professional armies who fight not for the ethos of the West, but for ever-changing governments intent on petty self-interest or commercial profit.

The way of the West lies in a return to the warrior ideal - an acceptance of its Destiny. That Destiny implies expansion of the West both over the Earth and out into space. Such an expansion involves conquest by Aryans using Western technology - the creation of a powerful Aryan Empire. This conquest implies the ruthless development of war as a tool of expansion and Empire: the harnessing of world resources and peoples for the benefit of the West. This will quite naturally mean the return of a warrior caste unhampered by sentimental notions and abstract ideas about love and peace. The harsh reality of Nature - which most people today in their stupidity think we have somehow 'conquered' - allows no other way. Either the West triumphs through military force allied to a belief in Aryan superiority, or the West will be destroyed by the creeping barbarism resulting from racial integration.

Civilization is a struggle - the triumph of a small elite who impose their vision upon those they defeat. To maintain civilization requires a constant balance between the terror of suppression (by the conquering, noble elite against the less noble majority) and the freedom of vision. We in the West have in our luxury and acceptance of anti-Western values forgotten the former. It is the warrior who can restore the balance.

The Destiny of the West is the New Order - the creation of a society where the noble ideal of the warrior caste is restored and where the Aryan has priority. This society can only be created by revolutionary means - by the destruction of the old order and by restoring the belief in Aryan superiority. The civilization of the west is the creation of the Aryan and to the Aryan and the Aryan alone belongs all the benefits of this civilization. The revolution which begins the New Order will be brought about by Vindex - the creative leader who embodies the Destiny of the West. With Vindex, a new heroic Age will dawn.



Acausal Existence ~ The Secret Revealed

Acausal existence - the secret of true Immortality - has been hinted at many times in certain esoteric writings connected with a particular LHP.

In the past, a few Adepts of the LHP - and the occasional notorious individual interested in dark sorcery - tried to secure for themselves an acausal existence by dark rites of sacrifice, and as a result dark legends arose. But such means are not really necessary.

Before describing what is necessary, a brief examination of such acausal existence will be in order.

According to a sinister tradition we as individuals possessed of consciousness have both a causal and an acausal aspect to that consciousness. The acausal is latent (or mostly so) and magickal Initiation awakens it - opening a gate or nexion to the acausal. This allows the acausal to be apprehended (usually via a symbolism such as the septenary Tree of Wyrd) and acausal energies to be used/directed (i.e. 'magick'). The result is an 'expansion' of consciousness. Progression by the Initiate to the higher grades of initiation is actually the expansion of the acausal in individual consciousness (or, viewed another way, the progression of the individual into the acausal) - a balance of causal/acausal being achieved in 'the Abyss'. Beyond this, because of the balance so attained, it is possible to transcend to the acausal - to create an acausal existence when the causal ceases (ie. physical death).

The acausal is not however, a "dreamy realm" or some kind of nirvana/heaven. It is rather, the very essence of Being - beyond opposites, primal Chaos. Nirvana and such like are abstract moral forms - ie. they are "unbalanced" since they lack darkness, the sinister, the negative..... [Nirvana and such like are usually described in terms only of 'light'.] The acausal is the realm of the Dark Gods - and these beings are not imaginative symbols for the titillation of consciousness, nor simply a part of the psyche, to be transcended or negated or whatever by 'forces of light'. Rather, they exist independent of our consciousness [yet such is the nature of the acausal that they are also part of what is dormant within us] and while they may be accessed (or 'discovered') by consciousness and thus presented in the causal (on Earth) their actual intrusion would totally disrupt sentient life in the causal - like the meeting of matter and antimatter. Sinister magick (of the aeonic and internal kind) may be said to be like a machine or engine where containment of opposites is possible and controllable in certain amounts and under certain conditions. [in simple terms, sinister aeonic magick contains the flow of the acausal into a temporal form - usually an Aeon and its associated civilization -via a nexion/magickal centre to thus over thousands of years increase the amount of the acausal that is presented, increasing thus evolution in individuals in accordance with sinister goals. Such is one of the forms of real Black Magick.]

The nature of acausal existence may be apprehended by individuals by certain sinister rites such as those of the Nine Angles. To achieve an individual acausal existence the sinister path must be followed, from Initiate to Internal Adept to Master/Mistress and beyond because this following of such a path in the way indicated (qv. Naos and Black Book) creates acausal consciousness in the individual over causal time.

The Grade Ritual of Grand Master/G. Mistress makes the Adept more acausal than causal. Beyond this, is a simple ritual (the solo Nine Angles rite done by the Grand Master/G.Mistress) when consciousness is transferred beyond the nexion opened/created by the previous Grade Ritual. Immortality - the final stage of the way - is then achieved, followed then or shortly thereafter by causal death, although consciousness can be transferred to inhabit another causal body, this is not usually done as *wyrd* is achieved. Simple, really, although this alchemical process takes about 25 years. By virtue of the nexion, the new Immortal alters the temporal structure of the world, usually for an Aeon.

Now the secret has been revealed, the possibility is open to all. But it is doubtful if more than one or two a century will try, such is human weakness.

Anton Long ONA 1991 eh
- Order of Nine Angles -

Aeonics and Manipulation I

Aeonic magick is essentially the use of magickal energies to effect large-scale changes in the causal. This involves manipulation of forms, as well as a rational understanding of aeonic changes [civilizations, their ethos, etc.]. The forms involve transferring magickal energy - via the desire/aim - from the acausal to individuals. That is, manipulation of individuals on a large scale, both numerically and over time. The type of the manipulation varies, according to the form(s) used and the desire/aim. For example, there can be psychic manipulation via archetypal forms, direct manipulation via words/images/personality; indirect by psychological pressure ...

Two forms often used are religion and politics.

Essentially, the sinister Adept takes a practical view of individuals insofar as Aeonics is concerned - understanding that the majority in whatever time and place, are by their nature, subjects: that is, raw material to be used according to sinister strategy. This assessment is a-moral.

What this means in reality is that a goal is set (via a knowledge of Aeonics and sinister strategy - the 'sinister dialectic') and suitable means of achieving it are considered and a decision made. The decision is then made real, presented in the causal, by magickal and other acts - regardless of consequences, be they moral, magickal or otherwise.

Sinister Adepts - because they are Adepts - only consider Aeonic type goals, having as Initiates and External Adepts gained practical experience in "external" manipulation, that is, manipulation of a few individuals for personal reasons. This aids self-understanding and magickal abilities. The goals of Adepts relate to wyrd and thus Aeonics - they are: 1) the creation of a new wyrd, and thus a new Aeon; 2) disruption of existing wyrd (with either an alternate or no specific goal); 3) altering the wyrd in a specific way; 4) fulfilling the wyrd of the Aeon. [It should be understood that Internal Adepts ~ not having attained full Mastery - are still part of the Aeonic wyrd pertaining during their causal life -time.]

An example will explicate this.

Present Aeon: Western (or 'Faustian'/Promethean). Present phase:

What should be 'Imperium' (the final phase of an Aeon), lasting c. 390 years. During this last phase the energies of the next Aeon are manifest/created by Adepts, via a physical nexion (or 'centre'). The practical forms of this new Aeon arise toward the end of Imperium ~ although some will exist/ be created before then, on a small scale: i.e. they will not seem to significantly affect 'history'.

This present Aeon has however been distorted ~ its ethos undermined and its forms changed. This distortion is basically Nazarene/magian [see 'Crowley, Satan and the Sinister Way' and other Aeonics MSS]. It also changes the possibility of Imperium - from an almost certainty to only a minimum possibility.

Sinister strategy, at the present time, is to create a new Aeon of sinister import - and to achieve this, it is considered necessary to (a) undermine the distortion of the Faustian ethos, and (b) fulfil the wyrd of the Faustian Aeon, that is, Imperium. Both of these will aid, by their nature, the creation of a new Aeon that is essentially Satanic. Thus, sinister Adepts will work, on both the practical and the magickal level, toward the achievement of these aims. **This sinister strategy is part of their vow - their wyrd - as Initiates of the sinister tradition:** that is, they are pledged to fulfil it* if possible, and certainly aid its fulfilment. other Adepts will have other aims - if a sinister Adept decides on another strategy, they cease to be Adepts of a certain Satanic tradition, becoming something else instead. only when - and if - they reach the stage of Grand Master/Mistress will they have the knowledge, ability and understanding to change sinister strategy.

To aid the creation of a new, Satanic, Aeon, the following are necessary: 1) the presencing of sinister energies in particular ways at this present time - i.e. the creation of specific archetypal forms/images/ systems/ideas which affect individuals.

2) the opening of a physical nexion to draw acausal energies in a significant way and enable their presencing.

3) the performance of certain Aeonic rites (e.g. Nine Angles) to create sinister 'psychic pressure', altering individuals. [Note: this is more general than (1) and involves letting the energies presence according to their nature, this nature being formed via the rites used.] 4) the creation of particular and specific practical forms and the channelling of magickal energies into these.

5) the emergence of more Adepts of the sinister tradition - i.e. individuals possessed of self-understanding, occult insight and abilities, who are imbued with the ethos of the new Aeon.

6) the creation of the ethos of the new Aeon in a way enabling its apprehension (both unconsciously and consciously) by those who are not Adepts and who are not involved in esoteric Arts.

In addition, and as mentioned above, there is (a) undermining Nazarene/ Magian forms/effects; and (b) aiding the fulfilment of a Faustian Imperium.

(a) involves performing rites such as The Black Mass and others from The Black Book of Satan; spreading the tenets/forms of traditional Satanism enabling others to follow the Way (or at least utilize in some form its energies, to the detriment of others); undermining/distorting the distortion itself, both magickally and otherwise [magickally - e.g. Mass of Heresy]. (b) involves assisting in both a magickal and a practical way, those individuals/groups/forms who/which have as their aim a practical expressing of Faustian ideals, and who/which thus assist or contribute to the Faustian ethos. In political terms, this means National-Socialism and similar expressions of the Faustian ethos. This assistance will be practical, financial, magickal and personal.

(1) involves the creation and dissemination of new and traditional forms such as images, music, rituals, The Black Book of Satan.

(2) involves the finding of the physical nexion and undertaking the appropriate rites [one of which is the Ceremony of Recalling, the other of which is a Nine Angles rite].

(3) involves not only general rites [such Nine Angles, Ceremony etc.] but also targeting specific individuals and infecting them with sinister energies. [Rituals from Black Book perform part of this.]

(4) involves forms such as religion, politics, Art, philosophy and practical expressions of these - groups, organizations, "Art-objects" and so on: all imbued with the sinister nature of the new Aeon. [Note: this is more general than (1) and may be considered as involving "exoteric" forms/ideas etc. as against the "esoteric" (i.e. directly Satanic) of (1).]*

(5) involves dissemination of the sinister way as explicated in "Naos"
etc. - the guidance of suitable Initiates, via ordeals and practical experience
in the 'real' world.

(6) involves the creation/aiding of a "world-view", and practical expressions of this, which enshrines the new ethos - a sense of Destiny, a setting of goals, for the founders of what will be new higher civilization c. 2400 eh.

It is the primary aim of sinister Adepts to involve themselves in the creation of the new Aeon by means of all the above - for only such means make possible the fulfilment of individual wyrd [for the next three centuries at least]. Anything else is not sinister - but game-playing.

* All such forms presence the future in the present: i.e. they capture/ re-present aspects of the new Aeon, practically, magickally and psychically.

Aeonics and Manipulation II

Part I considered means; here, we are concerned with what terms like 'new sinister Aeon' mean. First, it should be understood that the present civilization [which re-presents the energies of the Aeon now existing] was, in its ethos, essentially what is termed 'Faustian'. That is, dynamic, questing for knowledge and understanding. The exoteric expression of this ethos is science - or, more correctly, a reasoned approach to the 'world'; a conscious evaluation based on experience/ evidence. Aspects of this ethos are expressed in the Renaissance - and in National-Socialist Germany. This latter is most important, and so often misunderstood. NS Germany represented the quintessence of 'Western' civilization: an exuberance, a balance between 'Man' and 'Nature', a spiritual force heir to the ancient Greeks and Romans. Civilization means a way of living - and of dying - more than it means Art and artifacts. It certainly does not mean material comforts, or even a certain type of politics (like 'democracy'). The greatest example of and model for a civilization, is the warrior: someone who enshrines honour, loyalty and natural justice (or 'fair-play'). That this is so seldom understood, today, is evident of how few really understand: of how precious wisdom still is. Further, the fact that the above statements regarding National-Socialist Germany are heresy (in the literal sense) today, explicates the distortion that has occurred in the Faustian civilization far better than dozens of words.

This ethos, exoterically, is Satanic. That is, the true ethos of the West enshrines a Satanic view of the world - a pagan joy in conquest, experience, living, in seeking and going beyond limits, physically and intellectually. The morbidity of the Nazarene has undermined all this distorted it. In essence, therefore, a Faustian Imperium would have been a type of Satanic State on Earth: a fulfilment of the first part of the sinister dialectic of history, and would have made possible the next part or stage, that of a Galactic Empire. It would be during this later stage that another goal would have been achieved - a genuine evolution in consciousness, a higher type of individual, on a massive scale. That is, Adeptitude with its self-understanding and knowledge would be commonplace rather than (as now) the preserve of a few. However, Satanism - in both exoteric and esoteric forms - became and is a heresy. Except for a brief and glorious period when an exoteric form achieved power - i.e. NS Germany.

Here, exoteric means an outward form or means: a physical presencing which achieves change in the causal. Esoteric means 'the essence'. An example - an Initiate of the sinister tradition becomes through Initiation an outward expression of Satanic spirit, consciously. The sinister becomes presenced, in the causal, by the actions/magick/life of the Initiate. In a sense, the causal persona/psyche of the Initiate is a "Temple of Satan". As the Sinister way is followed, according to tradition, the Initiate accesses more and more of the sinister - presences more of it in the causal, causing/provoking change both internal and external. As knowledge and understanding increase, there is more awareness of the sinister as it is - i.e. without forms: the sinister ceases to be hidden or occult. At first, the essence of the sinister is hidden or obscured. An exoteric form implies a form, a channel - which is not necessarily consciously understood as a form or channel. A form can be either 'positive' or 'negative' with respect to the morals pertaining at the time - the sinister is beyond opposites but can only be presenced through them at particular times. That is, it becomes 'earthed' through a positive or negative form and thus provokes change and evolution. However, 'morals' as mentioned above - does not mean ethical: rather, it implies the prevailing 'spirit' or orientation, the orthodoxy of the moment.

A civilization is itself a form for sinister energy: a form possessed of its own 'life-cycle' (first mentioned by Spengler although not really understood by him). Thus, a civilization through its metamorphosis fulfills or can fulfil the sinister dialectic - i.e. it aids evolution toward new forms, presences the sinister and enables the acausal to be accessed (sometimes directly by a few individuals per Aeon).

The Western civilization is a link - the fifth stage of the seven that can lead to new forms of existence. The next Aeon, beginning on the practical level c. 2400 eh, is the 'Galactic' and should be the realization of the sinister on a large-scale. Part of this will be the development of latent Occult faculties, part will be development of new ways of thinking (such a use of symbolic languages rather than words), and part will be discovery external to the Earth: the conquest of planets in other stellar systems. There will thus be a freeing of spirit both internally and externally. our species - at present mostly undeveloped children, intellectually, psychically and personally ~ will mature, and become adult, achieving wisdom and thus fulfilling the promise of magick.

However, this will not just 'happen' - or arise from a desire to make it so. It will involve struggle: war, conquest, attrition, exploration; the decimation of the worthless and the conscious breeding of a new elite. It will arise because of ethos ~ because there is a sense of Destiny, a vision to be great. It will involve manipulation by sinister Adepts of vast energies over centuries of time - for without this direction, this sinister manipulation, inertia will return, entropy increase, and the petty ones, the visionless ones, the Nazarene-type ones will spawn in their worthless majority until they overwhelm... As has been written elsewhere, civilization is a struggle and requires the triumph of a noble minority who impose their vision on those that they conquer.

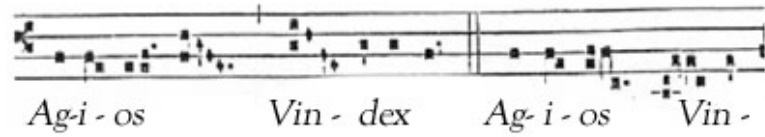
Thus, the term 'new sinister Aeon' means the triumph of a creative minority imbued with a specific elan and a sense of Destiny who create and maintain a civilization, this particular civilization extending well beyond the confines of the Solar System. It means the presencing of sinister energies in particular ways, and certain ways of living ~ ways which are essentially Satanic. What these ways are, has been prefigured by NS Germany [and particularly by aspects within that form, such as the Waffen-SS].

The means to achieve this ~ such as aiding imperium, presencing sinister energies, opening a nexion [and drawing forth 'The Dark Gods'] ~ have already been outlined. What it is important to remember is that the means, such as political forms, their support/manipulation etc., are part of sinister strategy to achieve a specific goal. That is, they are purely means: not the goal itself, and as such cannot be judged causally or by the standards pertaining at any one time. They have been chosen to achieve something, and those who cannot comprehend this do not understand Aeonic magick. People, in their majority and their individuality, are a means ~ to be manipulated via forms. The goal is a new Aeon, Satanically inspired; the means, many and varied ~ often 'heretical'. The magick of the genuine Adept is, in its power and effects, of centuries: anything else is for beginners and children.

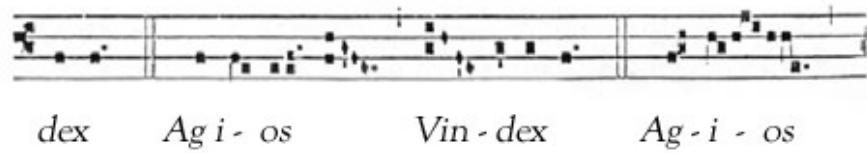
- Order of Nine Angles -

Agios Vindex

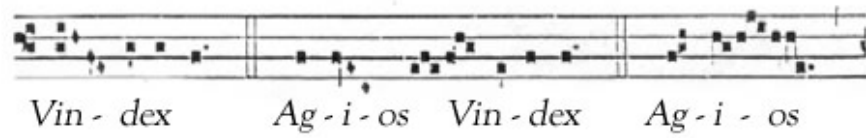
Sphere of Saturn



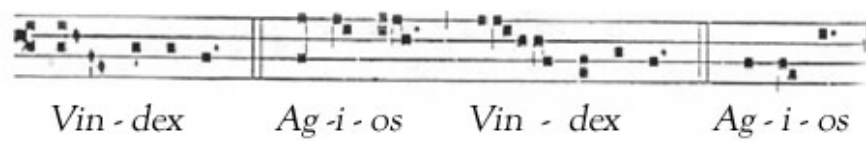
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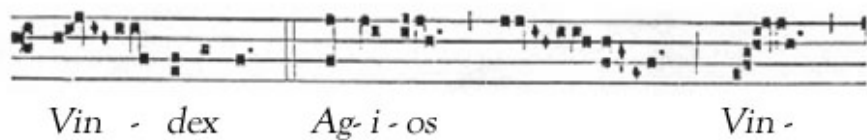
dex Ag i - os Vin - dex Ag - i - os



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

The Awakening of

Dramatis Personae



- indigo/black face mask



- crimson face mask



- silver and blue face mask

Congregation - black robes

Praeludium

For nine days prior to the ceremony, all participants should perform the *Agios Kabeiri* twice a day - on rising, and before sleep. In conjunction, there should be a visualization - the exact details of which are to be agreed on prior to the working (see *Note*) - which concerns a Star Gate; during this preliminary stage, the Gate is visualized as partially opened.

A Black Fast should also be undertaken during this time.

Time and location

Summer Solstice, dusk [the dawn is marked by a simple ceremony comprising of the 'moon' chant (qv.) and/or *Oriens Splendor* (qv.)]. The location is either a resonant building; or a hilltop or glade, the area of the ceremony being marked by a circle of seven torches. Incense of oak, beech and hazel to be burned.

The Ceremony

To begin, physis. The torches are lit, and area incensed. The three main celebrants chant the *Diabolus* in fourths, in conjunction with the crystal; this is done three times. [If congregation present, they begin, during the *Diabolus*, a slow-moon wise dance chanting, ad libitum, "Atazoth". They then, on completion of celebrants chant, begin the *Diabolus*, this time in fifths. This chant is sung, slowly and quietly, throughout the first 'dramatic' half of the ritual.]



We of the Nameless Dark
 Fluid and unceasing
 Transforming clay to living pyre
 To give the Gift of the dreaming tides
 To give the Gift clothed in Tenor



Dimly, dimly
 A nerve in the corpus of my centre
 Woke the further vessels
 Of my vast circumference



In the astra-trance
 Metal-charting the Way of stars
 We, flesh of the Scorching One,
 Deemed it must be so
 We have our reasons
 Sung in the pulse of stellar light
 To claim the cataclysmic duel



We, of the ice-black plains
 We, of endless sea
 Whisper a spell onto the wind and dust
 Stir the sleeping mire
 Resonate with cold and distant densities of rock
 Waken shrouded clay
 To symphonies sweet as light
 Bitter as the acrid math



We have our reasons
 By the Art of Life

We have our reasons
 They who we have Named
 Must go
 Must go
 Must go



Green and lush
 Blue and pure
 Something sparkling was set forth
 Through my many wooded tresses
 Through the Green Wood's claim
 In the flying colours
 Of the spangled light
 That cascades
 Incandescent



We gave of the sacred Giving
 Dreams that blossomed rare
 Cruel as cruel is
 A desert
 And a harvest of the heavens



Incandescent
 Ever inter-woven
 Around the lire of my centre
 Through the myriad rock of my substance
 In the etystal waters
 Of my tumescent veins
 Comes my Awakening



We have reasons
 Rooted in the legacy of our flesh:
 To pursue and vanquish
 It must be so

2:
:

We are
We are
Mystery unborn
And rode the swell
Of a strange space time
Chant-weaving
A ceaseless store
To stir and dissolve
The cosmic storms of All-Belonging

∩:
:

Star-born soul's flight
Star-born my fledglings' soul
Star-bound my kith and clay
The birth of my dreaming tides
Sacred seeds of greater vision
Shall bloom for the manifold tomorrow

2:
:

By Ageless Order
We - Stellar-kin - have our reasons
To cage Their cold spaces
To bind and banish
Fire with fire
We have our reasons
It must be so

2:
:

Spore-charged our Way
Towards the edge of Thought
Trapped in a trans-dimension
That sleeping magick of our seed
Kept in the impotence of stasis
Snare of some other's making

W.

We, who have been carried far
By Desire,
Have reasons to lock
The ice of untouch
And so our eyes
Survey the slow progression
Of things as things should be

W.

In ancient legacies of stone
Laid upon my virgin side
From the shores of my womb
In the bones a quest so unforgotten
In their blood the zeal of Discovery
Drew them forwards
Through the continuum of helical unravelling

And the stars drew them
Like blossom draws the bee
As the swollen Moon pulls
The tides of that starry ocean

W.

But reverberations shall spark
The flame to rend the fabric
And the gush of worlds pour into worlds
We shall become
We shall become
As before, as always
Into Being

W.

We have our reasons
Wrought in beautiful cities
Carved in word
Spread across the vast precession
We have our reasons
To bring fire and freeze

We have our reasons
It must be so

2
:

We of the Nameless Dark
Yearning, fluid and unceasing
Call to unbind the Gift of Terrors
Shall become
Shall become
Once more
Once more
Into Being

∩
:

In the crystal waters
Of my tumescent veins
Comes
Comes
My Awakening

2
:

We, flesh of the Scorching One,
Have our reasons
To bind and banish
Fire with fire
It must be so

2
:

Giving the gift of dreaming tides
Shall become
Shall become
Once more
Once more
Into Being

∩
:

Star-born soul's flight
 Star-born each striving
 Clothed in my flesh
 Animated through blood
 Built from the framework belonging
 That lies in the bones of my Land

The celebrants now stand near the crystal and vibrate in E minor "Nythra kthunae Atazoth" [if congregation present, they re-commence moonwise dance, chanting "Atazoth"]. This vibration is done seven times. Then, the three chant the *Diabolus*, in fourths, four times. During this, ♀ places her hands on the crystal, and begins to visualize the Star Gate slowly opening.

After the chant, the three begin a moon-wise dance, rhythmically chanting "Atazoth". This dance must gradually build in energy and speed [the congregation continue likewise, forming an outer circle to the inner circle of the three].

Once finished, ♀ and ♀ commence vibration of "Binan ath ga wath am" a fifth apart (or octave and a fifth) while ♀ vibrates "Atazoth". All three visualize the Star Gate progressively opening.

Then, all sing the "Atazoth"/α chant(qv.). Visualization continued. ♀ then vibrates "Nythra kthunae Atazoth", after which the celebrants vibrate "Binan ath ga wath am" in the key of 'Saturn' - to be repeated seven times. During this chant, the Star gate is visualized as fully opened. From this opening the energies emerge, and descend to earth. The energies are first visualized as cohering and then entering the crystal (turning it black), and from there to spread out into the celebrants. [During this latter stage, the congregation remain still and silent, visualizing the opening Star Gate, and the descent of the energies].

The Dark Gods will then be manifest.

Note: The three dramatic parts can be undertaken by more than three celebrants - the text being spoken in unison and/or echoed by the celebrants.

The visualization should be agreed beforehand, choosing a particular stellar location for the gate -
 ie. near the planet Saturn; or deeper into the cosmos, ie. Capricornus star fields.

The *Eoan* and *Reryh meril* ... (qv.) chants may respectively begin and end the entire ceremony.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Chaconne
CB, ONA 1998eh

It had taken him many years of dreamcraft to locate the planet; long stretches of time seeking an answer to a question only intuitively felt. And now, through the power of Thought, Squilver stood upon the desert soil of yet another world.

But this world was very different to those others he and his ancestors had explored - those ancestors who, aeons ago, had left their green and blue home to spread outwards into the cosmos, as befitted a race of gods. That home now only existed in images and ageless legends.

Squilver knew that They would one day guide him to this place. The faith he carried within had been nurtured throughout the achingly long span of aeons by the shadowy and often misunderstood few who had waited, as They had waited, for the time to come full circle. Tradition spoke of those few guardians, and kept alive their names and deeds.

The old chants weaved patterns in his mind: *Nythra kthunae Atazoth ... Reryh, meril eildof feterit nye ...* And his soul sang the living songs of all those who had gone before him. Squilver, follower of the Seven-Fold Way, stood now as All Things - all histories; all creatures; all individuals. As he breathed, so did the planet: this primal realm, now more than just the dream which first inspired his species to yearn for the wide spaces beyond.

And the purple sand was blown around him and blown across the shells of the past, beneath a diamond shaped moon, of lizard-green.

He moved among geometric forms that were visible only to his inner eye and sensed their presence, though long silent, long neglected, still puncturing the dimensions. He rested beside one, and listened to the chanting wind.

Squilver took from a bag a humanoid skull, blackened with age. Legend related it as being the head of a follower of the Path, who lived upon and was buried in the earth of the green and blue homeland. His body had been removed from its secret place and re-buried on the first new world, when the seeding of the cosmos had began. The head of this individual remained in the keeping of each Heir to the Tradition. Red hair was still matted to the jaw-line, and within the skull was lodged an equally aged crystal, shaped as a tetrahedron.

Squilver held the object and fixed his gaze on the horizon. Volcanic extrusions and screes of shattered rock brought to him an ancestral echo, and very briefly he saw, standing amongst the grey and white rocks, the phantasms of two humanoids of male and female appearance. Others clambered the rocks to stand by the couple, but the vision was soon obscured by the distant clouds of sand.

With one hand, Squilver held the skull, and with the other touched the unseen object by which he stood. The object was a dodecahedron, and whilst ice-cold, began to thrill Squilver's flesh with the current of Life. And thus, he began to chant: *Otonen Satanas, faus rige cedar fising, Mach beoda ...*

As the chant swelled, he visualised the rotating, scything wheel under which his people had first spread out into the starry realms. He sensed his consciousness expand likewise into the cold depths as the chant took him over - as the crystal, as the unseen form, as the dust and rock and wind flowed with his voice, until there was only the surge of Life itself ...

And yet, the experience was tinged with something unsettling. Forces opposed to Squilver and his Way groaned and stirred and clawed their hatred in some far distant place. There was a momentary wavering of intent, as something within Squilver recognised the Forces as those long regarded as vanquished.

But it was of no matter now: the many invisible shapes that littered the landscape filled with green life which broke through to unfurl across and within the sand. The sound of water took over as the chant reached its completion.

His first task complete, Squilver let his instinct walk him through the crawling land, the growing light of the sky and the scent of rain mirroring his own inner awakening. The purpose of his individual life no longer slept as a promise, but was now embodied and living within every cell of his Being, within every cell of all the life forms that flourished around him - as it had always been intimated, by the legends and traditions of his people.

He was led to stand by an awakened stream that flowed down from high, rocky hills. The water of the stream was quietly fed from above by a pool shaded by gentle moorland slopes. Squilver sat amidst the young heather and looked out over a bay that opened out into a calm sea, the sparkling waters bearing

distant islands.

On a far shore across the bay, stood a dwelling. To Squilver, it appeared breath-takenly ancient, the thrill of some older treasured time living before his eyes. It was a squat, white building, of stone, crowned with a long dark brown roof, possibly of grass or moss. It seemed to contain only one level, and its small squared windows revealed the darkness within. A rectangular opening was firmly closed off by dark wood. Behind the dwelling, the rising slopes were cut with strips, presumably for the growing of crops.

Tears of ecstasy, of revelation, welled in his eyes as he gazed upon his future. In that dwelling, Squilver would reside for a season, and complete the tasks of a prospective Magus. On completion, the others would join him, and the long trek of Ages since Their banishing would truly be at an end.

And through Their joining, the legendary Nexion would become fully opened, heralding a new cycle of Aeons. No one would dare again seek to seal the rent ...

- Order of Nine Angles -

Cosmion ηη

α.

This instructional text is concerned with a method by which acausal energies are harnessed in order to breathe life into an Aeonic potential. The potency of this method lies in its explicit capacity, via a ceremonial structure, to tap into the energies as those energies are *now*, living in the causal world: it expresses, quintessentially, modern/future magick.

The ceremony is to be performed once a year, and this performance must become an important tradition amongst genuine Western esoteric groups. The time of its performance, April 20th - April 30th, should now be understood as the most significant esoteric phase of the year, since it is during this period that the aeonic energies relating to the 'Western' > 'Galactic' ethos are at their most pronounced and accessible. The most crucial time-scale for the desired energies to become successfully earthed is within fifty years from this point of writing (109yf). If the tradition of performing this ceremony can be maintained, free from outside disruption, then there is a likely chance that the long-term aeonic aims of (sinister) esoteric tradition will take firm root and begin to flourish.

In conjunction with this ceremony is the goal of establishing a 'spiritual' presence/community in a particular area [qv. *Fundi* and *Thernn*]. The life of this esoteric community will revolve around this major ceremony/celebration/festival. Many such communities will eventually be sought, but the beginning lies in establishing a presence in the place where the sinister Tradition began, and thus in establishing the esoteric nexion of the next Aeon.

β.

The Order has worked to create the exoteric forms necessary for the success of the aeonic ceremony. These are forms into which the energy of the ceremony will be directed - a political form, and the foundations of a new religion.

The numinous symbol, representing both the esoteric and exoteric, both the causal and acausal, is the *Cosmic Wheel* (or "Reichstar"). This is the focus of the ceremony, and the channel - via visualization and chant etc. - by which the exoteric forms may be imbued with the acausal.

χ.

Fundamentally, the acausal is accessed via chant in conjunction with a crystal. For the ceremony, two of these chants are traditional: the *Diabolus* (sung in fourths) and the *Agios Vindex* (sung in fifths). The other chants are new, and are three in number. These are: *Eoan*; *Reryh meril ...*; and α chant.

Eoan, for three voices, traditionally opens a ceremony/sunedrion - a 'summoning'. The α chant serves as a climatic point in the ceremony. It is lengthy and without text, and a section is sung in fourths. Parts may be sung in canon - and/or arranged by Temple members as they wish. It is sung by all members present, and is the key to the floodgates of the Abyss. [It also plays an important role in the 17-year cycle of the *Ceremony of Recalling*.] *Reryh meril ...* traditionally concludes a ceremony. It is an 'Earth Gate' chant, and the text makes reference to an actual place - the physical site of the nexion. For other phases of the Tradition - ie. in Vinland - the text can be changed appropriately.

Other chants will probably be added to the Cosmion as time goes on.

[Note: The *Otonen* chant is sung by a Priest(s) in the hour before dawn, on May 10th.]

δ.

The ceremony begins on April 20th at 18.18hrs. This first stage is a feast/celebration of the birth of Adolf Hitler. This celebration is not, in outward form, "sinister/Satanic" but *National-Socialist*, since this is the energy to be tapped into and enhanced. Thus, the celebration must be overtly NS, rather than a performance of something like the Mass of Heresy - there must be a complete identification with the forces involved, a genuine *celebration*.

Thus, the occasion will be a fest of the Aryanist religion. There are two forms this can take: i) a natural, impromptu ceremony, or ii) a performance of the 88Mass of Rejoicing (qv.) - or a variation of that ceremony. In both cases, the fest should take place outdoors - ideally at the site chosen for the nexion - and a bonfire lit.

Since this is a National-Socialist fest, those involved in that cause - but uninvolved/unaware of the esoteric aspect - may be invited, in addition to Temple members. Those so invited should be dedicated and trusted activists.

If this is the case, then, at a suitable time prior to the gathering, selected members of the Temple (ie. the Master, Mistress and Priest) should congregate at the site and chant there the *Eoan*, followed by the *Agios Vindex*, and finishing with the *Reryh*, using the crystal, and visualizing the cosmic wheel. The Temple members then leave the site. [It is best to pre-arrange a place of rendezvous from where invited guests can be led to the site of the celebration.]

If the fest is restricted to Temple members, then all gather at the site at appointed time. The *Eoan* is then sung. Following this, physis.

The bonfire is lit, and then the *Agios Vindex* sung in fifths. If Temple fairly large, the chant is sung first, in fifths, by the Master and Mistress, then repeated once by all present, in unison. Visualization of cosmic wheel to accompany chant.

The ceremony is then begun, as desired. At its most outwardly simple, the ceremony could consist of a chalice being passed around, and toasts made, ad libitum - or chalice passed around with each member simply saying "88!". The point is to invoke a numinous, reverential aura - to be achieved according to the nature and creative flair of the individuals involved. The more spontaneous and natural this is, the better. The ceremony is concluded with the *Reryh* chant, followed by physis. Then there is a feast, either at site or in an appropriately prepared indoor area.

The only symbols present during the 20th ceremony should be the cosmic wheel, and swastika (ie. on a flag). 'Ceremonial dress' consists of black clothing, to include a shirt bearing the cosmic wheel (usually placed over the area of the heart). Also each member must wear their Honour Knife.

Beyond this, the fire, the landscape, and the stars above will provide all that is needed.

ε.

Following the feast of the 20th, over the days leading up to the 30th, the following observances must be undertaken.

Each member of the Temple must chant, every day at dawn and dusk, the *Agios Vindex*. This is done privately, in a space of their own choosing. As before, the cosmic wheel is also visualised.

During this time, Temple members should abstain from caffeine, alcohol and meat. 24 hours before the 30th, all should undertake a complete fast, drinking only fresh water - preferably taken from a pure river. There should be a sense of the sacred, of religiosity, about these observances - indeed, these observances *are* acts of (the Aryanist) religion. Each observance should be considered and adhered to with absolute faith and reverence.

In accordance with this reverence, Temple members may wish to further explore and devise the possibilities of diet during this time - perhaps also abstaining from dairy products, for example.

Additionally, according to the practicalities, members may opt to include a vow of silence during their 24 hour fast - and/or extend the fast itself.

Whatever, each observance must symbolise and act as a sacred and *personal* offering/sacrifice.

φ.

The final stage of the ceremony involves all Temple members gathering at the site, in the hour before dawn, on April 30th - the day of Immolation. Another bonfire is prepared beforehand, but this is not to be lit until climax of rite. No other lights of any sort - including candles - are to be used at this stage.

The only symbol to be present is the cosmic wheel. No words are to be spoken at any stage of this rite. Ceremonial dress, as the 20th.

To begin, physis. Then the *Diabolus* is sung three times, in fourths, by all present. There is a period of silence, during which a (wooden) chalice containing a small amount of strong red wine or mead is passed around and drained. When empty, this is placed upon the bonfire. Other offerings may be placed on the fire, as each member wishes.

The Mistress then places her hands upon the crystal and silently visualises a nexion slowly opening, deep

in star-filled space. When ready, she sings the first section of the α chant, after which, all present chant to its conclusion. During this chant, all visualise the galactic nexion gradually becoming fully opened, spreading out into the cosmos.

The bonfire is then lit, and bread is passed round and eaten, breaking the fast. Then, all chant the *Agios Vindex*, in fifths, visualising the cosmic wheel.

All depart from the site, leaving the bonfire to burn into the hours of daylight.

A feast may be arranged for the evening, to which non-Temple members can be invited, as per the 20th.

γ .

A version of *The Giving* (qv.) is incorporated into the Cosmion every 56 years. This takes place on April 30th either during the rite itself (after α chant), or is executed elsewhere by another party. It is either 'paramilitary' in form, involving an enemy, or a voluntary act [qv. *Variations*].

η .

The above guidelines should be regarded as guidelines only, to be added to and/or varied according to the desire of those involved. As with all such forms, there must be an element of spontaneity which enables the ceremony to live, to become numinous, and thus prevent the suggested guidelines from becoming stifling (and boring!) dogma.

Ultimately, an aeonic ceremony such as this is concerned with bringing forth a flow that is, in essence, 'beyond': the future (that is, the New Aeon) residing in this 'beyond'. The time of its performance, the symbols, the focus - all have been chosen or created via *Satanic/Sinister* analysis, in accord with whatever most effectively presences a type(s) of acausal energy. This type is concerned with large-scale Change in accord with evolution, as expressed via an ethos. What objective truth exists, resides ultimately in the acausal itself.

CB, 109yf

A Note on May 10th, Aryan Retribution Day: Aside from the performance of *Otonen* at dawn, the Temple should undertake a performance of the *Mass of Heresy* (qv.), on or just after 23.07hrs (the time when Rudolf Hess's plane landed in Scotland). The following chants should be added to the ceremony: *Diabolus*, in fourths [after physis, at commencement of rite]; *Agios Alastoros* after two minutes silence (Temple should also, at this point burn a suitable effigy and/or images of traitors - such as present "world leaders"); *Agios Vindex* following second 'Agios o Falcifer' vibration; *Reryh Meril ...* to conclude, followed by physis.

Suggested further reading:

Aeonic Magick - A Basic Introduction

Eira - A Satanic Guide to Future Magick

Exeat - The Sinister Western Tradition

Creative Dialectic MS

The Way, The Means, The End - Fenrir Vol V Issue 2

Warrior of Swords Atu

E I R A
A Satanic Guide to Future Magick
Coire Riabhaich, ONA

Preface

This present volume has been compiled from the most recent writings of a member of the Order of Nine Angles. It serves as a pointer towards the future - of Magick, and of Western evolution. The author is well aware that written works such as this are merely shadows of what cannot, at present, be adequately expressed. And yet, via these writings the real motives of Satanists in the world may begin to be discerned. Perhaps then another nameless insight will be presented, and one more nexion shall start its slow opening.

ONA Venn Community, Shropshire 1998eh

Eira: A Satanic Guide to Future Magick

Introduction: In The Realm of Gods

The very essence of Satanism is that we can become gods: that we can be those future beings who will be revered not only by our own species, but by other life-forms elsewhere in the cosmos. By using only our Will, we can be the indomitable ones destined to carve out the path to the next aeon. By great deeds, we can be the makers of history.

All that has led to this point in time can be surpassed - all that has made great warriorship, heroism, discovery and creativity, can be surpassed, re-defined and re-expressed. All the gods, all the great figures of our history who spawned gods, can be bettered.

We can possess the one real secret guarded by all our past gods: that those gods are but pale imitations of the beings that we ourselves can become. This secret is the grail that sleeps within the soul of our Western Race, and which so many occult forms have failed to wake.

All past gods of the various Western Traditions are rendered obsolete by the forces which Satanism alone is unleashing. These are the forces of cosmic evolution, taking the form of the Aeonian Magickian. The cosmos is now seeking to discard the tired old gods of our past, and is hungry for new expressions, to spawn new forms that will begin the next cycle of history.

Fading are the old Earth-bound symbols, giving way to those of acausal dimensions; those numinous forms which presence now the Galactic future that awaits. Rising are the chants of the stars, the wordless ceremonies, the living nexions that are worlds apart from the occult, from the old realm of temples, circles and runic readings.

The Satanist does not need to study or re-enact the past, and indulge in what has long been established: he is that past, the present, and the future. And each new willed act is another re-expression of the essence, another re-definition of cosmic meaning - another dis-covering of the potency of life presented in each one of us.

Another reminder that individuals do possess the *choice* to act or not to act for the greater cause of evolution: that each act *can* matter, *can* make a difference ...

We do not have to simply consume and pay homage to past glorious deeds; to behave as if we believe history itself has now ceased, or has been rendered the future realm of an officially appointed few. Those appointed few are like the old gods of the past: they exist so that we individuals can, through *defiance*, discover our own potential - the potential that is really one potential: that of the cosmos itself.

Thus, Satanists do not follow gods. So what then of Satan, that greatly mis-understood living symbol? Satan is not tied to cultural phases, and does not in image represent a once great society. Instead, Satan is the timeless flow of the cosmos, seeking existence. Satan is the grail itself, that secret guarded by the inadequate gods of our past.

Satan *is* the very essence of the striving to become a god - Satan *is* the arrogance within that enables us to leave behind the archaic gods, and to find the courage to *be* the new gods. Satan *is* how we live, how we die, and how we shall be after causal life.

Satan is the word that when invoked presences the very essence of our striving and defiance. As a living Being, Satan desires new life, new expression, and the constant surpassing of each shadowy archetype

created to represent Him. As living Beings, when we are living right, we *are* Satan - both as individuals and collectively, as the new species of Human that is yet to be.

Let us stop grovelling to old archetypes, stop forming fan-clubs for the Old Ones, and discard the superstition and academia that is so precious and so useless. *We* possess the creative genius to set in motion new Earth-shattering forms, and the arrogance to behave as the embodiment of the future that we, in essence, are. The future implies an upward surge away from the near medieval times we still live in, and in this becoming of evolution, we do not need to seek answers from anywhere but within ourselves.

The future gods bear our names ...

I: The Forbidden Alchemy

One of the long-term aims of the Dark Tradition is to bring to consciousness *for the majority* the reality of the Force that is **Satan**. This 'dis-covering' will result in the upward evolutionary surge known as the 'New Aeon'.

A magickal Order, such as the ONA, is only one of several forms by which Satan is presented - and presented in the most undiluted of ways, without the obstruction of mortal fears. In one sense, all genuine sinister orders are an invocation to Satan: they constitute in themselves a magickal ritual, with each member understanding the conditions required if the long-term goal of the rite is to be attained. This magickal ritual, being founded upon the uncompromising principles of Nature, contains within it spontaneous or unknown factors which defy the imposition of abstract dogma. By this magickal ritual the unique creativity, the uniqueness of Being possessed by each Adept, is allowed to develop of itself. But Traditional Satanists also understand that uniqueness of Being to be the Will of the Cosmos itself, and thus certain types of individual creativity are Life made manifest during its course of Evolution - this is to say, in esoteric terms, that certain types of creativity presence the acausal. Practically, the creativity/magick that marks Adeptship is nurtured and expressed by individual defiance - the uniqueness of Being which *is* Satan.

Because genuine acts of magick presence the acausal, the relationship of magick with 'the world' can be said to be "wholistic": a relationship where the difference and diversity of Nature and 'forms' exist to enable the spirit (or Being) of the Cosmos to thrive and evolve - ultimately there is nothing which exists external to this continuous flow of Change; nothing which can be influenced or changed *in isolation*. A genuine Adept understands this, and begins to embody in their individual life, this most natural of esoteric techniques: the way of *empathy*. As all genuine sinister magickians are quick to point out, this apprehension currently exists at odds with conventional esotericism. A well-quoted example is the qabalistic approach which involves the magickian - or more accurately 'sorcerer' - in viewing the forces of Nature as separate, often barbarous material to be dominated and manipulated for personal ends. A highly evolved esoteric Order would not be characterised by this 'grimoire' approach, since such an approach lacks a binding purpose, a great and clear vision which would enable members to transcend the personal and become the organic whole of a true magickal Order - an Order which *is* the life of the Cosmos manifested in a conscious way, and pertinent to a particular moment in causal time. A profusion of this latter type of magickal Order would be one such result of the New Aeon made manifest.

In other words, what could be described as conventional occultism is that which is swayed by abstract theories over observation and intuition, whilst the genuine Western Way - for which read 'the Septenary System', Traditional Satanism, and so on - is concerned with what actually exists beyond limited personal forms. In real magick, there is an initial attempt to mimic the flow of natural forces, until an integration is achieved and with it, large-scale Willed Change - that is, conscious aeonic evolution. Via this process of magick - still the province of the select few (Satanists of course!) - the Cosmos can progress to its next stage of existence: to live consciously via its manifestations; to evolve from childhood to adult existence. This is the secret of The Great Work.

This path of genuine magick does not involve however the slavish following of some 'cosmic doctrine'/mandate, or any other such dogma. It involves the individual in freeing themselves from *all* influences in order to live, or become, the reality of the forces of Life itself. Thus the purpose of the Seven-Fold Way: to guide its Initiates towards the attainment of self-insight, where the 'personal' exists as a method to express the Cosmos, and not as a hinderence - through *projections* - of the apprehension of Life as a unified whole. The reality can only ever be experienced anew by each Initiate, since this apprehension of Life is a *way of Being*, and can only, as yet, be partially described by abstract methods. Thus each new Satanist - and genuine Satanic order - is a new manifestation of the living essence: thus there is Evolution.

II: Archetypes and the Satanic Essence

A magickal order such as the ONA is not motivated by trends in contemporary thinking, although it may on occasion manipulate 'fashion' to provoke an appropriate outcome. All forms - from magickal systems, to 'Art,' to revolutionary political organisations (etc.) - have a finite life-span, but the criteria by which present-day Occultists often judge forms as 'useful' or 'outmoded' is most usually influenced by temporal trends, by the *status quo*.

One type of essential form so judged is the *archetype*. As discussed in Order MSS relating to **Aeonics**, the life-span of an archetype is not tied to 'linear time', or effected in any way by fleeting trends in society. At the very least, archetypes die when the civilisation to which they are bound dies - when a new aeon becomes manifest. Thus, they are subject to an aeonic/'alchemical' mode of time rather than the abstracted form by which we tend to live our personal lives, since 'time' is simply a measure of the change of *Cosmic* matter and energy. This aeonic mode of time may also be described as *Racial*. But even on the cusp of a new aeon, an archetype may spawn offspring - or rather, it may continue to *change* according to its nature and particular mode of time. This occurs when the ethos of one aeon is continued and evolved into the next, as hopefully will occur during the transition from this present Western Aeon to the next 'Galactic' one.

In order to really understand such things as archetypes, one must attain through self-effort, the aforementioned liberation from all contemporary influences - and from those influences which *lie outside* temporal forms. Most who do not follow the Seven-Fold Way will not achieve those stages beyond 'individuation' because the present concept of 'liberated thinking' or occult understanding is still in itself *dictated by the influences that engineer this present society/culture*. With regard to implementing the practical, 'magickal' purpose of archetypes, personal 'like' or 'dislike' of one form or another does not necessarily validate or invalidate the reality of that form, and should not provide the basis for making a reasoned judgement of what is, or is not, of aeonic significance (this is particularly true of 'politics' ...).

In general, archetypes exert influence upon the unconscious, with mostly indirect results. However, Satan (or perhaps more accurately **Satanas**) is a *numinous symbol*, a living, Earth-based manifestation of the acausal. As such Satan *is* that force made conscious, and the gateway through which we as sentient Beings *become* the Will of the Cosmos.

Satan therefore, *is* the esoteric word, "image", vibration, chant and deed of Cosmic evolution itself. The 'magick' of Satan and the Dark Gods in general are for us the keys to that Evolution. How present (or past) cultures view Satan is not entirely relevant, and should not be seriously considered by those attempting to form a judgement. Again, the reality *has* to be experienced. A Sinister organisation [and **Satanas** is the epitome of the Sinister] is imbued with that reality and seeks to increase the Cosmic Tides via its works in the 'real world'.

Thus, the "chaos" trend of viewing all causal forms as merely means towards the 'Occult' attainment of some 'thing' is mistaken, because in this, a purely causal frame of reference - particularly in terms of 'time' - is used to judge that which actually possesses both causal *and* acausal components. It must be understood that techniques and forms are not there solely for individual experiencing/gratification, but rather that such things either express or counter an evolutionary pattern. In this, the understanding of the 'acausal component' is vital.

Thus, not all forms by their causal nature express limited understanding of acausal forces. While some methods are practical tools by which the individual may attain various magickal levels (as in some **Insight Roles**), others *are* those forces made manifest in the causal world: that is, the form so created is not a nexion to channel or presence the essence - it is the very essence itself; the essence evolving as it must evolve in causal time and space. This is so because such manifestations possess the greatest capacity to presence the continuous flow of Change that is Life [and significantly, do not always conform to conventional 'Occult' expectations: they are viewed as 'exoteric']. That some forms may express things that are culturally understood as 'plebian', primitive, or "Old Aeon" is absolutely irrelevant to their capacity to cause aeonic Change. This discernment requires the *Satanic* qualities of insight, knowledge, intuition and reason.

For those unique individuals whose Destiny is tied to such a form, there is no living of that form while hiding the "esoteric reality", the esoteric wisdom - the occult aspect. There is no clever deceit, no skilled manipulation, because the form created *is* the reality, *is that esoteric wisdom made real and practical*. This is the domain of **Vindex**, that much misunderstood embodiment of creative Change. Vindex does not really need 'the Occult' in conventional terms, to presence, or access the numinous ideals that s/he

represents. Such things, in this case, only obscure the essence of Change, of evolution - as they can often distance a person from the creative numen which can and does provoke such an evolution.

Because of the nature of human consciousness, we possess the capability to extend and create symbols and forms (such as language, or more simply sound) which could describe the essence itself. Not all abstract symbols [whether mathematical, magickal or other] need inherently and ultimately obscure the essence; and neither is it in their nature - or in the nature of any form for that matter - to presence the acausal by purely intellectual procedures. In this we need to understand and integrate with existing numinous symbols in order to spawn completely new forms - this initial confrontation and then synthesis of 'opposites' (in terms of the psyche) allows the necessary organic (and latent) relationship to develop between human life and symbols and other forms.

III: Synthesis

The majority are still swayed by archetypal forces conventionally described as "light" and "dark". That there exists a reality beyond such opposites does not mean that those opposites, *for the majority*, do not exist. They exist and exert influence until they are confronted and transcended. A magickal Order understands this, and thus seeks to guide its adherents towards the realms 'beyond opposites' via appropriate ordeals/Grade rituals - that is, via the fires of *experience*. That some (and they are very few) may attain this transcendence does not mean that such archetypes cease to exist for others, or that the realms beyond opposites are any more 'real'. Each realm, from those symbolised by Initiate to Magus, expresses a reality in the process of Evolution, and cannot be accurately comprehended in linear terms. In one practical sense, what is "good" and what is "evil" may be said to exist, since these are the concepts, at this point in time, by which a society views the world - by which life, for the majority, is still influenced. That the definition of moral absolutes may alter over the ages does not itself alter the essence by which they effect the process of human living.

This bifurcation still exists because that is the nature of our species at present, as it has been for centuries, despite the many external changes that have occurred, and despite the intellectual musings of philosophers and occultists alike. This is unlikely to begin to change beyond its current primary level until the emergence of the next aeon - some four hundred years from now. Thus a rite such as the genuine **Black Mass** still possesses real magickal purpose for individuals at a certain level of their development, as well as contributing to the necessary, broader aeonic changes. Such a rite accesses Nazarene/Magian energies and then re-directs them in a sinister way - and, as has been stated elsewhere in ONA MSS, the Satanist does not *believe* in the reality of "God", or the 'divinity' of the Nazarene, only that others so believe. Thus, there is still great relevance in promoting and practising a system of genuine "Black" magick which aims to counter the works of those who promote and practise magick of the "White" variety: in terms of the psyche of the West, a *cosmic battle* must still be played out if a synthesis is to be achieved by civilisation as a whole. In esoteric terms, this is to say that our civilisation has not as yet evolved to the stage of Adeptship. The goal of the Sinister Initiate is to aid this aeonic synthesis, and the methods by which they achieve this for *the majority* will differ in many instances from those which enabled this achievement for them as *individuals*.

In reality, both an esoteric Black and White Order *do* exist, but the form that is now conventionally understood as "evil" is instead the way that will allow the necessary transition to take place, and thus prevent the stagnation and decay that would result from the triumph of Magian forces [as presenced by the "White" Order]. In the most profound sense therefore, it is the Sinister Path that enshrines what is genuinely *divine* and life-enhancing...

In this very real Cosmic battle, Satan does not feature as some Judaeo-Nazarene device to oppress 'the Folk', but as a numinous symbol for our civilisation, of all that defies the counter-evolutionary force of the Magian. What is rarely expressed, however, is that such counter-evolutionary forces are *part* of the process of Cosmic Change, *part of the Wyrd of Western civilisation*. For without such opposition there is no real evolution, no Triumph of the Will - and no *Life*. Thus to oppose such counter-evolutionary forces is to *positively* aid aeonic evolution and bring the intergration with Nature so often sought by those who follow an Occult way.

It has been often said that 'opposition' and the identifying of enemy forces (sometimes mistakenly described as "scapegoats") is now counter-evolutionary, and somehow "old aeon". This is a tragic forgetting of what we, as a Western - or Aryan - Race are, and will always be: *hunters* and *warriors*. And it is through the opposition which we *do* draw to ourselves by virtue of what we are, that we are

able to struggle, fight, and thus *evolve*. If our instincts are still healthy and intact, we will *know* the forces that are working against us and consequently how to combat them in defence of the Honour of our Wyrð.

As practitioners of magick, we must have the understanding to allow those numinous symbols which presence - or 'order' - the wyrð of the aeon to which we are bound, to evolve unhindered according to their own mode of time; to flow with, and consciously *become* those forces, rather than aid counter-evolutionary powers by allowing limited personal ideas and projections to dominate.

Real practitioners of Aeonic magick do not project their own understanding onto the society of their time, as they do not seek in their practises to elevate the understanding of their contemporaries by willful self-expression. Changes in the collective psyche will take much longer than one lifetime, and will instead swell in waves, over Aeons. Thus, a genuine practitioner of Aeonic magick works with the raw materials and possibilities that characterise the society of their time: they do not work beyond practical boundaries. And in this, importantly, an Aeonic magickian is not swayed solely by the desire to witness the fruits of their understanding in their own personal lifetime; they plan for centuries ahead, and embody in their Being the slowness of evolution, the Wisdom of Ages ...

IV: Eira

For the occultist, the great curse of his endeavours lies in a pronounced capacity to think too much: to over-intellectualise, to analyse - to seek *too readily* to express practical truths via academic articles, and such like. Ideally, at this stage in esoteric development, a gradual move away from the intellectual approach should begin to emerge, along with an acceptance of the necessity for carving out the future by practical acts. The time for seeking to achieve influence via the written academic word should be waning, replaced instead by the understanding that such a seeking will only have a significant role following the practical realisation of the next esoteric stages - that is, when there is wisdom to distill from new deeds.

At this point, there should be a hunger to experience, to pioneer - to re-express the *essence*. The profusion of occult writings and journals, and pronouncements of organisations, should be viewed by the modern, intrepid occultist with tedium and disdain. There *should* be presented within the modern occultist that insatiable desire to speak and create from direct experience; to redefine by extraordinary experiencing those things which have become accepted truths and dusty, arcane lore: to *live* a hero's life, rather than enter the boring debates over strategy, tactics and history.

The above, quintessentially *Satanic* attitude, is still a rarity. In keeping with contemporary trends, the modern occultist behaves more like the Quantum scientist - allowing the intellect to dominate in the first instance, seeking answers through analysis before a thing has been uniquely tasted and experienced. The worrying trend is revealed in the occasional prefacing of articles with: "We have observed/seen in others ...", and then going from there to draw judgements without the need to *experience* what those others have experienced. This is particularly - and disturbingly - true of the various approaches to Aeonics. The worrying aspect is that this, the most profound of magickal techniques, is becoming a forum for academic debate, analysis and the pronouncement of personal opinions under the guise of Insight.

Aeonic Magick - the flow of civilisations - is an utterly organic process. It cannot be subjected to academic and personal projections, for that is to make it into something else entirely. As has been constantly stressed, the process requires individuals to lose what is personal of themselves by becoming completely immersed in practical aeonic forms. There is most certainly a subtle guiding, sometimes a subtle altering of those forms; but there is also, very significantly, a giving up of oneself to those aspects which cannot be controlled, which flow as they flow regardless of individual influence. The nearest analogy to this process lies in the flight of a seagull, as it rides the wind, adapting to a sudden storm; flying in calm weather, but going with the direction of the gales that may dictate a new course. It takes great skill, and the development of a perfect balance between what is individually willed, and what is unfolded by the greater flow of Life itself.

Consequently, Aeonics requires the individual to brave the unknown, and forge uniquely from *what cannot be pinned down*, a new experiencing of the constant, awesome *becoming* of the Cosmos. We have the practical tools to do this via the various forms, discussed many times, that presently exist in the world. And each new person who really lives those forms, who becomes fully immersed so they effectively *are* those forms, brings to flower something which utterly defies the academic debates and analysis: something *new*, something *living* - a storm to change the flow of our lives.

Occultists should possess the insight to recognise that point beyond which debate and critical analysis

cease to become productive *for all individuals, of all allegiances*. This is particularly true with regard to aeonic forms which are still growing, still in their early stages. There comes a time when the organic process of Change as a whole must be left alone to develop of itself, and personal objections of a thing are silenced. Occultists must be aware of the need to create conditions by which the necessary process of **thesis - antithesis - synthesis**, inherent within all aeonic forms, can flourish. This is a slow process - painfully so when apprehended within the time span of one individual causal life - and requires for its growth a way of *Living* on the part of individuals. Individuals cannot be led to this way of Living by the adoption of forceful opinions, as esoteric organisations cannot be built upon such opinions.

Again, this insight involves laying aside personal motivations - knowing when to act and when to move with that greater flow of Life. A useful example of a form for which strategical, semantic debate is now becoming counter-productive is that of 'politics' - particularly where Race/Racism is concerned. Such things are still not understood on a rudimentary level let alone on an aeonic one, and are still too practically *nascent* to be subject to the lofty criticisms of the esoteric commentator.

Therefore it is imperative that a few individuals at least strive to keep alive the promise of magick by being prepared to change their lives (including the 'occult' aspect) in order to seek to become that tool for Change; prepared to suffer the mistakes, the 'loss of face', the real dangers that will assuredly follow. Of those few individuals who have lived thus, all will testify to the profound, almost indescribable *difference* encountered by living and immersing oneself in an aeonic form, as opposed to the overview supposedly gained from literature and observing the experiences of other people. The former is to be an organic part of the *dialectic of Life*, re-defining, re-experiencing the *essence*; the latter, a victim and perpetuator of brain-washing.

The outer forms of aeonics can *always* be criticised - but the critical observations are not the point, are not the magick. The point lies solely in the aforementioned dialectic of Life: if the only way of achieving this intergration means that an individual must become for a time a real revolutionary fighter, and risk spending some of that time in prison, then that is the only way - *that* is the harsh choice faced by those who have undertaken the Great Work. However, for the majority faced with making this stark choice, personal feelings still continue to dictate, obscuring and ultimately killing the Will of the Cosmos that is presented within each individual. This Will is not dictated by personal choice, but is like the wind itself, a sudden reality upon which we must ride if the end goal is to be reached. This is one reason why Traditional Satanists eschew all those established beliefs and methods which bring comfort, all those old gods who bring familiarity and enervating 'identity'. Individuals may sincerely believe that such things, and their histories and ways, are important - but they really are not. So what is the reality? ... Sadly, the only present reality is that life is still too soft, too easy for the majority to be impelled by the terrifying process of Creation.

V: The Future Aeon

For the Present, we exist in a society characterised by a 'supermarket' approach of choice and consumption, where individuals no longer create history, but look backwards and study, and romanticise - and distort. The realm of the Esoteric is no exception to this, and thus it is vital that we as Occultists, as creative individuals, cease to waste our time delving into the folk-tales and legends of past, dead cultures - this includes those of the Norse, Celtic, Saxon, and whatever else passes for conventional esoteric interest.

Because to derive esoteric inspiration from the dim and distant deeds of an archetype is a waste of the magickal opportunity that exists *now*, with the people who exist *now* and the potential that *they can embody in the future*. To create and perform rituals based on a dim and distant fireside tale - or employ the symbolism of a past communal life-style - is a counter-productive [in aeonic terms] *indulgence*. A 'culture' is, magickally, unimportant. What matters is civilisation - or more precisely, the living, evolving force that moves a civilisation forwards, and which is in itself embodied by that civilisation. In this, the creativity of an associated culture is only of relevance if it presents this living, moving force.

When we enter a place of enigmatic 'historical interest', such as an old settlement or stone circle, we do not need to psychically unravel - or seek to re-enact - the secrets of a past community: we who live now *are* those secrets, we *are* that enigma. We must only tap into the genius of our creativity and flow forwards, leaving the monuments, the ruins - the dead shells - where they belong. If there is a message locked within the unknown dolmen, it is this.

However, to use the form of an ancient or old archetype for the purpose of doing something with that archetype in the world is another matter. But this implies re-presenting such an archetype as the hero of a *new* mythos - a mythos entirely representational of the current aeonic phase, and by that token one which

allows the next phase to be reached.

Thus, a new mythos would feature an established archetype committing great acts of nobility (and great acts of *terror*), the nature and form of which would inspire and liberate the 'modern masses'. The magick of the archetype would be in its living *now* in the real world, rather than having existed in some ethereal realm of the past; a past when the manifestation of Human life was, in many respects, very different to today. These differences lie in what is and what is not practically needed in order for the people of modern 'Western' society to feel inspired towards overcoming the problems, self-imposed and otherwise, of their day-to-day existence.

The deeds of this archetype could be a re-presentation of those acts committed by a real-life, modern day hero (such as a Satanist) - or the creation of a new legend, the practical basis of which has yet to occur, therefore inspiring individuals to bring it to life in the causal world ... The ways and methods of this powerful magickal technique are legion.

What is rarely considered by 'pagans' and occultists alike, is how archetypes organically change as a civilisation organically changes according to its various cultural, political and historical phases. For the West, one of our primary archetypes is that of the *Warrior*. As long as we as a Race continue to live, this archetype will never cease to be relevant: it will never die. However, the *form* by which this archetype exerts its influence on a Folk *always* changes according to the development of those things which aid racial survival. It is this latter form of development which defines the work of an Aeonic magickian, and not, as previously stated, temporary intellectual trends/fashion.

Thor, for example, was once a real, living individual tied to a Folk Community, who achieved immortality and 'god status' by doing great heroic deeds. These deeds provided inspiration for that Folk to practically emulate those deeds - and perhaps even surpass them. But, as stated above, we as a Folk have since moved into an entirely different set of circumstances to those which pertained to a particular phase in Norse history.

In order to effectively deal with the evolutionary problems of *today*, we need an archetype that we can realistically and practically follow in deed. But this does not imply a blatant and disrespectful casting aside of the glorious deeds of our ancestors. Rather, we are now presented with the challenge of leaving the *comforts* of adhering to a far-distant past and gathering instead the courage to practically realise that this new warrior archetype has, within the scope of history, recently evolved and lives now within the soul of the Western Race. This new archetype speaks of the future, and allows the old gods of the past to fade with dignity, as is their desire.

To accept this new archetype and to seek to aid it marks the adults from those who are still children, who still seek refuge in fairy tales - who still need the crutch of their parental ancestors. After all, what is more frightening: dreaming of a semi-mythical wizard who dwelt in the Dark Ages, or joining allegiance with a great Warrior of *our* time, who demands that we literally fight - and possibly die - alongside? And what new form does the Warrior now take? To accept and use this knowledge is to wield real, practical magick - to taste the living fruits of the cosmos. But it is for each potential adept to make their own discovery ...

VI: The Art of Future Magick

The essence of Future Magick is quite simple. It does not involve complicated 'occult' rituals where circles are drawn, implements brandished, and earth-shattering 'words of power' laboriously recited by a 'High Priest'. It does not involve fumigating an indoor Temple with the correct incense, or observing the archaic correspondences contained in dreaded books of dead things.

It does not involve a group of robed individuals standing in a circle and observing some ancient tradition, or beating drums in worship of some lovely celestial goddess and some virile horned god. All such obvious occult trappings are now ephemera, and fundamentally, are *of the past*. It is not surprising that the practise of such things is growing, since we live in a time when all communal traditions, all senses of spiritual meaning are fading or are being destroyed.

But there are no secrets contained in the past - no message from the mists of time to guide us forward. As previously stated, *we* who live *now* are the message of our future evolution: all that has happened throughout the aeons has led to this point, and, despite appearances, *we* as a species *know more now than we ever have known*.

In order to move forwards, we must make this reality a living one, within each and every one of our lives. We must trust in our latent, evolved creative genius and have the courage to discard the romantic trappings we as a species are becoming dependent upon. The Galactic future can be presented through our magick if we allow it to be. This requires a leap of faith into the Abyss - into the realm of Satan.

All that the new ceremonies require, is for individuals who possess this new aeonic faith to gather at specific times and perhaps light a bonfire which will function as a focus/symbol for the gathering. All else will create itself from there.

The specific gathering times - or *feasts* - are as follows: Mid - end of April; Early November; Spring Equinox; Mid - end of May; Summer Solstice; Early - mid August; Autumn Equinox; Winter Solstice; Late January - late Feb.

These are the times when the seasonal energies/cosmic tides are at their most pronounced. These energies, in themselves *unbound by any phase in history*, are, in the manner of magick, re-expressed each year according to the circumstances of the celebrating and the broader esoteric changes occurring at that time. Of necessity a traditional form such as a Nine Angles rite provides the basis for each fest - but such a rite is in itself unbound by imagery from the dead and distant past (qv. *Black Book III*). In essence, the 'Galactic' or acausal magick that will presence the Future, is expressed through chant and thought, and thus brings the living synthesis of Being that each act of magick seeks.

This is the magick that has always characterised the meaning of genuine Satanism: the Way of *Empathy*. The practising of the feasts expresses a conscious integration with the *living* cosmic forces, and reaches the height of expression when woven into the life of a rural community.

VII: Fundi

A great deal has been written over the years concerning the concept of the *nexion*, and while the basic meaning is widely understood - that of a nexion being a point where the acausal intrudes into the causal universe (and vice versa) - the outer form that a nexion may take requires some further explanation.

Firstly, a nexion can take many forms, and may even be a combination of forms. According to very rare conditions, an aeonic nexion may be an individual. Or it could be a revolutionary Religious form. Or, as stated, it could constitute several such forms co-existing in the world in order to bring forth the aeonic transition.

However, the standard image is usually that of an isolated, wind-swept hill, which may perhaps include upon it some ancient ruined structures. It is such an isolated place that is usually sought by occultists when attempting to open a gate/nexion. This attempt will most likely involve regular performance at the chosen site of rituals designed to presence the acausal (such as Nine Angles ceremonies, etc. - qv. *Order MSS Thernn*). Thus, a tradition is started whereby a reservoir of energies is created for future Adepts to draw from and direct according to desire. Several such places have been established over the years in the British Isles, with one site in particular having been opened in an area of the Welsh Marches over 1,000 years ago in order to inaugurate the Western Aeon, as has been documented by the Dark Tradition. Thus, the nexion associated with the present Western Aeon was indeed an isolated, genuinely esoteric place. However, it was only thus because of the nature of the times in which it was created: times characterised by the Nazarene oppression, which demanded an esoteric approach to preserving what we sometimes term as the 'Western ethos'.

This was in contrast to the nexion which presenced the Hyperborean Aeon of Albion. This nexion existed in the area of Stonehenge. The nexion then was not solely the henge itself, or the land upon which it was built, or the folk who lived and worshipped there: *it was a combination of all those factors*. The nexion of Albion was the organic whole of the community which grew there; a living, working centre where all the threads of nature and human-kind were woven as one. What can be found at that site now is the dead shell of what was once a living organism - a nexion by which life evolved significantly.

Because of the enervating nature of this present time, the nexion associated with the next aeon and which is being established now, is also an organic whole - a community. But this community must in this present age develop covertly, since to openly establish it as an 'occult' venture would be to hinder its slow, natural growth, and turn it into something short-sighted and short-lived: a 'project' attempting to bend the Will of Nature in accordance with a set of accepted 'ideas'. That is, such a venture would seek to project upon the essence a limited understanding of what constitutes the 'esoteric', and would thus represent a step backwards, into that which is already dying.

The community instead allows the essence to dictate the ways of living, and remains always separate from 'occult' forums and trends in order that it may presence the future by founding a new organic approach to Life itself. From this slow, aeonic development will come the new forms, the new expressions, the new magick - of themselves, unhindered by any pre-conceptions or expectations, and free from all past and fading archetypes.

Thus the community itself will become the *new* esoteric path; the *new* religion - the *new* country. In order to make this next phase meaningful and significant - that is, *practical* - a leap of faith is required: a

breaking away from the established, on all levels. Thus, the spirit of real pioneering is to be invoked, and there is no reason why ultimately this leap of faith cannot be repeated across the diverse regions of the Earth.

In establishing this nexion, the cycle that began in Albion will have returned to its new beginning. This beginning is in essence quite simple: it is the cultivating of the *conscious* apprehension of the acausality of 'time', from which all else shall follow. Only from these seemingly humble, rural beginnings can emerge the race that will practically extend towards the stars, since both the Will and the form of technology required to fulfil the Galactic Destiny can only develop organically from revolutionary organic beginnings and methods.

The hidden, outwardly 'non-esoteric' community will be this new beginning, and must subsequently be nurtured in such a way that it flourishes for at least 1,000 years. This new form signifies the closing of all that outwardly constitutes this present age, and *is the essence itself*, not merely a vehicle for the expression of the essence. It is a combination of both causal and acausal: it is a living nexion - the next stage, made practical, in our evolution.

What is described above represents the essence of magick.

VII: Addendum

And so in this, and in other ONA writings, the practical meaning of Magick is explicated - all that is now required of sinister esoteric Orders and individuals is the *Will* to make the meaning a reality. Thus, in conclusion, the magickal aims of a genuine sinister organisation should be as follows:

- 1) To continue to maintain the existing Tradition by disseminating the various teachings and methods [as published in MSS such as **Codex Saerus**, **Naos** and others].
- 2) To practically aid those 'exoteric' forms which will bring the New Aeon.
- 3) To extend the Tradition by creating *new* forms of the sinister. These would include Artistic [music/images/writing]; 'Magickal' [new ceremonial/hermetic forms]; and practical, numinous ways of living [as in the creation of an esoteric rural community, or communities - qv. Order MSS *Thernn*].

In Satanism, lies the stuff of modern folk-tales - of future legends; for unlike others, the Satanist lives the life and dies the death of a Hero. This is not a claim made lightly. As a consequence of the actions of a few, the next fifty years will witness a Recalling of the devastating Creative force that each individual life can *will* into Becoming.

Though many will dismiss it because they do not have the courage to try, the Way of Satan remains, amidst the myriad of 'paths' the essence of the Great Work. *Experto credite*.

And when the works are complete, a Satanist disappears from sight - toward the next stage, leaving astonishment, disbelief and many questions in their wake. And then the failures begin their campaign, of distortion and lies. Just occasionally, they may hear our laughter.

C. Riabhaich/ONA. Revised: ONA 1998 eh. Published by The Venn Community, Shropshire, 1998eh; Vindex Press, USA, 1998eh.

E X E A T :
The Sinister Western Tradition
Coire Riabhaich, ONA

Preface

*The following MSS is intended as a companion to **Eira: A Satanic Guide to Future Magick**. It further explicates the nature and aims of the Satanic Sinister Way, as exemplified by the Order of Nine Angles. The Dark Tradition has been maintained over the ages by a few Initiates working in secret. This work involves presencing and increasing 'cosmic forces' - that is, implementing a Will to more Life, more 'flow', to thus keep alive the essence that lifeless dogmas seek to suppress.*

Because of this active vivifying of the 'essence', the archetypal Sinister Adept is at the forefront of our species because they have gone further than any other individual in their experiencing of Life and the Cosmos.

Nature will always require the presence of such Sinister beings, whatever the Aeonic current, for without them there is no evolution. Initiates of the Satanic Tradition are woven into the fabric of Cosmic Life. This present volume attempts to succinctly describe the truth of the Satanic Tradition: a Way so simple, yet so difficult in practice.

ONA, 1998eh

Exeat: The Sinister Western Tradition

1) The Satanic

A Satanic individual and organisation represents - or strives to represent - one fundamental thing: *Beyond*. Satanism itself is a way to presence pure acausal forces and the Satanist an insightful individual who directs those forces in the real world via appropriate causal forms. Satanism itself is not, unlike "paganism", a way for the majority/the 'masses'. It does not seek acceptance as it does not seek to present *itself* as a way by which a whole society is moved to greatness. It does not seek the understanding of the 'Folk', as it does not seek to defend what is often by conventional standards utterly indefensible. It is instead that one factor which drives all genuine Occult quests - the *Mystery* itself. Throughout the Aeons, this factor has been presenced within each civilisation via a particular esoteric elite. This "elite" however is not some ego-enthralled 'secret society' or organisation comprising of a multitude of 'members'. It is instead a living, changing expression of what is always beyond contemporary understanding, earthed in a few usually isolated and extraordinary individuals. It is true, in one sense, to say that these individuals are born, not made. They possess, because of who they are, an empathy, a certain desire - a certain aura ... Ultimately, theirs is not a sinister 'role,' but a way of Being - they *are* the Satanic drive; they are *natural* and do not pretend to be anything other than themselves. To be a "Satanist" therefore is to be someone of a very particular *character*: it is not, as it is in conventional "paganism", an adoption of a cultural world-view with its collection of customs, uniforms, 'laws' and subsequent expected modes of behaviour. And it is not, as some will inevitably perceive, a form in competition with other 'occult/pagan' groups and paths: it is autonomous, and states *Satanically* what it believes. As long as Satanic creativity inspires a future generation of Sinister Adepts, then it matters little who 'agrees' or 'disagrees'.

And thus, for non-Satanists, one of the most unsettling characteristics of a Satanic individual is their *arrogance*. Satanists have a particular 'arrogance' because they strive to live by and implement the grandest of Human ideals. The grandest ideals lie in surpassing what is conventionally regarded as the greatest of achievements by the greatest of individuals. All things, including 'the gods' of conventional paganism, can be *surpassed* (qv. *In The Realm of Gods*).

To achieve what is greater, arrogance - fierce *fanatical* belief - is required. This approach will, on appearance, seem 'unbalanced' to some, perhaps even *hubristic*. But what is hubristic - that is, what is insolent towards Nature - is behaviour *without* the formation of experience, rational thought and self-awareness: it is personal behaviour that exerts *control* over the individual via often unconscious and selfish forces.

Satanic arrogance is essentially *supra-personal*, and is the empowerment to act which comes from hard-earned knowledge. A Satanic individual does not believe themselves to be personally infallible, but is prepared to learn from their own mistakes and experiences to thus further refine what is Sinister/Satanic. These 'mistakes', these acts of being Human, are regarded as gifts of Insight along what is an incredible and dangerous journey.

Empowered by pride, the Satanist will not conform to any accepted 'realistic' vision and strategy concerning the evolutionary purpose of Life. Without some individuals believing - *knowing* - that all things can be surpassed, there is no inventiveness, no daring, no risks, no genius: no evolution.

Thus, one is either 'Satanic' or one is not. And what is 'Satanic' is quite simply the restless urge to explore and make new order out of the undiscovered chaos - this is what Satan symbolises *beyond* the capacity of an 'archetype'; *beyond* the known gods of folklore⁽¹⁾.

If there are those who still do not understand, then they should consider the story of Prometheus. He, a mortal, defied the gods - and yes, as a consequence, was condemned for an eternity. But by his defiance and desire and *sacrifice*, he gave mankind possession of fire ...

Academic debates concerning the actual origin of Satan and Satanism, while interesting, are not really important. The things described above - the particular 'arrogance', the 'Beyond' - *are* Satanic; not as a creed or dogma, but in a natural sense, according to the *living nature* of those things.

Many will go the path of seeking acceptance - perhaps to inculcate the masses with a particular world-view. But while the many seek establishment, there must be others - the few - who ensure that the next stage exists, *presenced in the defiance of all conventional and 'understood' things*. Thus, is the Future made possible.

II) The Sinister

The presencing described above is also what is quintessentially *Sinister*. There is no fundamental division between what is Satanic and what is Sinister, since what is 'Satanic' is the gateway to what is Sinister. This is not a riddle, but a very simple truth.

What is Sinister is all that is described above - *and more*. Satan and Satanism are inextricably bound with what is Sinister, since the Way of Satanism is a practical application of the Sinister.

Because of the nature of Satanism, those who follow the Seven-Fold Way are fully aware that the Sinister also extends into a realm *beyond* Satan and Satanic methods. But that realm, for those following an esoteric path, can only be reached when the *psyche* is permanently changed via the ordeals of Satanism (ie. for individuals, the 'Grade' rituals - for civilisations, the magick of Aeons). This change within the psyche is not simply intellectual but organic, occurring of itself.

The nature and experiencing of this 'realm' is "Sinister" because: a) for Sinister Adepts, it does not need to be described by words or images or musick, since it is *lived* within the individual; b) for non-Initiates, it disrupts and unsettles because it cannot be grasped/understood via conventional - or "unconventional"! - modes of thinking.

For *civilisations*, this realm - because it is in essence the current of Life itself - must be presenced in ever more conscious ways in order to advance the possibilities of evolution. To seek the advancement of evolution is to enable the Destiny inherent within Life itself to be understood and implemented. In effect, this quest is genuinely *Sacred* because it seeks to fulfil the Will of the Cosmos.

Implicit in this quest is the deliberate creation and use of causal forms (words; images; 'organisations' - and so on) that possess the capacity to achieve the evolution described above. The effect of such a form in the causal world is that it provokes significant Change - the effect of that form is "Sinister". [When there is no overt esoteric influences/guidance, this creativity is intuitive/mostly unconscious - and thus the life and efficacy of the resulting form is subject to the limitations of the personality of its creator.] Satanism is an esoteric Sinister form: it is explicitly and absolutely concerned with guiding individuals towards fulfilling the Will of the Cosmos. It is at the summit of what is Sinister because it deliberately seeks to cause Change in the causal world via the creation of new, devastating *Aeon*ic forms, and strives to identify, enhance and champion the Aeonic forms that are already in existence. The criteria for this seeking has been much discussed: in essence it stems not from dogma but from Satanic rationale - that is, a reasoned apprehension beyond the personal and beyond the forces which seek to influence the personal (ie. 'cultures'; 'counter-cultures'; 'ideas' and so on).

The primary goal of the Sinister methods of Traditional Satanism is to create an individual who is the

living embodiment of the Sinister: that is, this individual, by following the Seven-Fold Way, *becomes* Change itself⁽²⁾. Thus, unlike those who are dogmatically dedicated, Satanists not only express the "Satanic" and refine and extend those methods, but are able (of necessity) to create and maintain many other forms - some exoteric - in order to enable cosmic evolution *as a whole*⁽³⁾. To non-Satanists, such an individual is perplexing, elusive and apparently contradictory.

But that is not all: a genuine Sinister Magickian, because their concern is with *cosmic* evolution, also enables the *acausal itself* to evolve beyond what is possible to be accessed at any given period in causal time. This skilled practitioner of the arts of Life has been recalled throughout the ages as a 'Merlin' figure: an individual who is always one step ahead ...

ONA teachings have constantly stressed the necessity for would-be *Sinister* Adepts to strip away *all* influences in order to achieve the synthesis with the current of Life/the cosmos/ the Sinister Being. This stripping away really does apply to *all* things - including what passes for the 'esoteric' in present Western culture: "paganism"; ceremonial magick; spells; folklore; and symbols. Quite simply, this "stripping away", this alchemical process, is the *Sinister Tradition*.

Thus, what is "Sinister" is not what is embodied in the above conventional "esoteric" aspects. The above aspects may be crafted to presence the Sinister, but this presencing must, in terms of the personal development of the Adept, be on a limited, short-term basis, otherwise the forms themselves begin to *dominate the Sinister intent*.

And in the journey towards the Sinister, Satan is not a 'shell' to be discarded but an ever-present gate via which the further reaches are explored. This is so because, in practical terms, there does not exist at present another earthly form which so quintessentially brings the Sinister. It is therefore the duty of all Sinister Magickians/Cliologists, *at whatever stage of their development*, to ensure that this Satanic Gate remains fully open for future travellers.

The reality is that no judgement counter to this can be made without first fully embarking upon the Sinister Seven-Fold Way (qv. **Naos**) for *at least c. 4 - 5 years*. Without this particular practical experiencing of what is described by Sinister Adepts as "Satanic", then there can be no basis to judge what is or is not valid. This is because the way of Satanism is a *practical system of Sinister living*: it is not simply a "Faustian" philosophy to be agreed with, or intellectually dismissed.

III) The Cosmic

The Way of Satanism seeks to presence what is *new* and *alternative*. This is not simply a case of being "different" for the sake of it. As previously explained, the challenge of the Sinister Way lies not only in aiding existing Aeonic forms, but also in crafting new forms which extend and evolve the *ethos* contained in the former.

This crafting requires great esoteric skill. It involves allowing a flow of acausal forces to dictate the evolving of the new form, as opposed to creating a foundation based on the researching of the "histories" and well-known myths of past traditions. This latter approach involves fulfilling obvious expectations - expectations/perceptions/ideas that have been *created by others*, in accord with a particular form of social engineering [modern day "wicca" is one such example]. Such a form is not really numinous - it does not possess Life.

A Satanic form has been brought to Being by an individual using their "inner eye": that is, by an individual practising the art of cosmic *empathy*. This process cannot really be adequately described except by stating that it occurs when an individual *flows* with *what is*. In crafting a form, a basic foundation is deliberately created - arrived at via esoteric techniques rather than dry academia - which is then carefully nurtured. This nurturing is a delicate balance between shaping the direction of the form by individual reasoning and experience, and allowing space for supra-personal forces to dictate the evolving.

In doing this, the individual must be constantly vigilant that they are not using the form *for personal ends*: instead, there should be an acceptance that the form once created - ie. practically active in the real world - must begin to evolve according to its own organic nature and life-span. If the form is numinous, then it will possess its own Destiny in accordance with the greater Wyrð of the Cosmos.

The creativity of such an individual *is* the living song of the Cosmos, and not the mundane 'cultural' voice of the *status quo*.

By using this "inner eye/voice" as a guide, startling new forms, which surpass all previous creations, *are*

possible. But, as previously stated, this 'newness' is not sought for its own sake: it is sought in order to continue and advance the evolution of the essence, or Cosmic spirit. That is, the "essence" or ethos remains as a constant, but the outward forms *must* change in order to reveal ever more greater expressions of the essence⁽⁴⁾.

What many aspiring Sinister initiates seem to forget - or simply do not *know* - is that the Sinister, in essence and practice, is *beyond* "History". That is, what is Sinister is something which is ***beyond even the reverence for the great deeds of our ancestors***. This is not to say that such a reverence is somehow "wrong": rather, what is fundamentally *unrepresentative* of the Sinister is the attempt to cage it within the practice of ancestral reverence. Even this reverence, beyond a certain point, becomes a certain 'thing' with its own boundaries which ultimately *limits* the Sinister.

Even this reverence, for the aspiring Sinister Adept, *beyond a certain point*, becomes something which no longer empowers Sinister intent, but hinders. What is Sinister is what is *beyond this certain point*. If there is no practical expression of what is beyond this certain point in the real world, then what is Sinister cannot exist.

Essentially, some circumstances will require a continuation of some traditions/systems, while others will require a complete break - the inauguration of a new era. In this, what matters is whether some existing forms are still living nexions by which the Cosmos is made manifest, or whether those forms have become an inadequate expression of a life force that is characterised by vitality, defiance and genius. This newness, this creative Change, is not so difficult to achieve as many might assume. As regards esoteric matters, individuals must be inspired to think differently about "magick" and its methods of expression. The Future Magick, its techniques and rites, must be allowed to evolve naturally over a period of experimentation. If individuals - either solo or in a gathering - decide to approach "worship" in a different way, then gradually new forms *will* emerge. Only once these forms have been tried and tested with ruthless honesty and found to significantly advance the practice of magick, can they be recorded and made public - but not before [the esoteric reasons for this approach should be obvious].

As a guide to these new techniques, individuals should use, as their main focus, the Galaxy and its exploration and conquest. Obvious poetic eulogies to the stars should be avoided: instead new and strange expressions should be created - ie. a new language, chants, forms of dress ... Experimentation will show what is and what is not possessed of numinosity.

The direction of this new magick lies in a complete break from the old magickal techniques of spells, circles, robes (etc.), because the very nature of magick itself challenges us to evolve a new form that will effectively render such things as archaic. According to this new magick, there should be a move away from allegory and a move towards the creation of modes of Being which actually *are* the Cosmos itself⁽⁵⁾. That is, "magick" should become a way to keep alive and conscious a supra-personal vision and ideal.

And esoterically, "magick" should evolve to be understood as a way to make conscious, both within and external to individuals, a region where All Life exists as a unified whole⁽⁶⁾. In practice, this is the nexion that will bring the New Aeon.

This approach will ultimately lead to a synthesis of forms - of both esoteric and exoteric. This synthesis will be characteristic of a new type of Human life: one which will no longer need to practice "magick", or any other such thing - be that 'thing' "politics", "philosophy", "history" or whatever. Instead, the reality, the apprehension that we as "occultists" all seek, will be *lived* ...

This acceleration in evolution will not occur through the imposition of some dogma or 'social reform': it will occur naturally because we who seek - we who *are* the Cosmos - will have seeded its spirit by our Desire.

IV) Conclusion: The Satanic Master Plan Revealed

This uniting with All Life - the Cosmos - is one of the great stages yet to be implemented in Human history. However, this synthesis, while implicit within our Destiny, will not necessarily occur of itself. Rather, it must be brought to Being - it must be *fought for*, since we also possess the capacity to destroy this potential.

This synthesis will only occur if a **Galactic Empire** is made a reality. The purpose of Future - or 'Stellar' - magick therefore, is to draw forth from this most vital of ideals the numinosity necessary to inspire the psyche of our species: to promote the Galactic vision as the only ideal worth striving for.

For the next few centuries at least, the ultimate goal of the Sinister Way - the ultimate aim of the "Satanic master plan" - is this aiding of our species to seed the stars. It is a goal that is, and should be, shared with many others outside of Traditional Satanism. Each will have their part to play: for Satanism and the Sinister Way, it lies in reaching out into the cold spaces of Beyond to bring the *extraterrestrial* to reality.

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¹ The difference between an archetype and a numinous symbol is crucial to esoteric understanding, but is seldom if ever discussed outside Traditional Satanism (qv. *Eira: A Satanic Guide to Future Magick* and *Aeonick Magick - A Basic Introduction*).

² This "magickal" evolving is represented by the unified symbolism of the 'Tree of Wyrld' (qv. *Naos*).

³ Fundamentally, this evolution is expressed via the spawning of *new* symbols, *new* archetypes, and *new* mythos (see aforementioned Order MSS).

⁴ See chapter IV of *Eira - A Satanic Guide to Future Magick*.

⁵ The Septenary Star Game is an important aspect of this new magick - qv. *Naos* and *Hostia*.

⁶ It should be clear that the meaning of this unification with/of "All Life" does not lend credence to a "politically correct" concept of "equality" and the other socially engineered visions (such as the "ideal" of a "global village"): rather, it refers to the esoteric apprehension of the acausal/acausal time (qv. MSS on 'Time').

- Order of Nine Angles -

ONA Strategy and Tactics

The fundamental strategic aim, expressed exoterically, is to aid evolution of the human species by increasing the dark, creative, forces which presence on Earth. Expressed esoterically, the aim is to aid the creation of a 'New Aeon' wherein what is now known as Adept-type consciousness and abilities are the preserve of the majority. This aim is long-term: c.3-5 centuries.

This aim involves keeping open already existing nexions, and opening new nexions, these nexions effectively drawing forth acausal (or sinister) energies. The energy is then directed to achieve specific goals, or left to disperse and disrupt according to its nature. Exoterically, this aim is 'The Return of the Dark Gods' and the creation of a Satanic Age and a Satanic Empire on Earth.

To achieve this aim, various tactics, or means, are required. Some are: i) Existing power structures and thus societies need to be disrupted and re-shaped, enabling some of them to be used to create a Satanically inspired society or societies.

ii) The means and techniques of achieving Adeptship, and thus real individual freedom, need to be made known, thus enabling an upturn in genuine Adepts. These Adepts will form an elite, and from this elite influence will be gained and the sinister implemented. Some of this elite may well take or hold or influence various forms of political power in the future when disruption, destabilization occurs on a large scale.

Each of these involves certain specific things. For instance, a Satanically inspired society could well be of a fascist/National Socialist type - i.e. this type of society would achieve or could achieve certain Satanic goals either directly or via the dialectic of change, and thus aid the ultimate goal: a New, Satanic, Aeon. Accordingly, such views and the organizations upholding them would be aided, mostly secretly. Esoterically, the creation of an Imperium by a charismatic individual (Vindex) would be aided both by magickal means, and more directly. Vindex would be a nexion for the dark forces. Essentially, NS type politics is considered as, at this moment of aeonic time, aiding the sinister dialectic, and an NS society as one of the first stages in changing evolution toward the sinister on a large scale. One of the primary goals of Imperium must be the conquest of Space. [This assessment arises from Aeonics.]

The disruption of existing forms is necessary, whatever tactics (such as politics) are used to aid the sinister Aeon. Disruption means the destabilization of societies - particularly Western ones, where global power at present resides. On the practical level, this means that the societies must be made the breeding ground for the tactical forms chosen. The peoples must yearn for something - and what they yearn for must be given to them. That is, their instinctive yearning will be controlled, psychically, via sinister Adepts. They will be made ready, psychically and practically, for what power-structures are required. To achieve this, various archetypal energies must be used and directed, and some implanted in the 'collective unconscious' (e.g. by using archetypes manipulating them - and creating new archetypal forms).

Further, societies must be destabilized on the practical level. This will be achieved in two ways - via using sinister magickal energies, and by aiding practical disruption. The first means an increase in chaotic type energies: sinister random energies which infect susceptible individuals and drive them to do certain things, to disrupt, cause chaos, spread evil and so on. The second means aiding those things which will undermine societies - e.g. drugs, pornography, crime, political unrest, economic misfortune, racial and other social tensions (including religious ones).

Of paramount importance is disrupting those large, influential power structures, the United States of America and the Soviet Union.

Without these structures (both of which are forms of Nazarene/Magian control and influence) the natural, disruptive forces within those States and within the States which are covertly controlled/influenced by them, would re-emerge, making it easier for the strategic goal to be achieved. That is, without these two power structures, contending rival States would emerge both within Europe and world-wide. There would be many wars as long-suppressed conflicts were fought out, just as the naturally strong and aggressive would re-assert themselves by using force. In short, natural forces would take over.

In the case of the Soviet Union, the tactics are to use magickal forces to disrupt - and to encourage those

elements which seek the destruction of the Soviet bloc. The former involves directing magickal energies at the power structures and seeding susceptible minds with certain disruptive/chaotic/directed forms: e.g. the performance of rites, both ceremonial and hermetic, with specific aims. [Exoterically, the Dark Gods would be invoked, via Nine Angles type rites, and sent to disrupt/provoke change.] The latter is more restricted, at the time of writing, due to lack of practical influence in that sphere - but three areas to encourage are: 1) The dissemination of Satanic ideas in the countries under Soviet control/influence and in countries where influence can be spread into those countries (e.g. Eastern Europe); 2) The spread of heretical views (e.g. with regard to National Socialism, the Holocaust etc.); 3) Aiding the emergence/influence of Islam to undermine Communist ideology/Nazarene ideals in certain areas. In the case of America, the tactics are similar - to use magickal forces, and to encourage overt disruption. The former involves directing energies both chaotic and sinister to infect others; spreading Satanic ideas and methods (e.g. by making available rituals and the ideas of Satanism); and undertaking rites appropriate to destabilizing both individuals and the power structures in general. The latter involves supporting various organizations and groups on both sides of the political spectrum (to enhance disruption/breakdown); spreading subversive and heretical ideas (e.g. National Socialism); and generally trying to break down the society from within - this involves encouraging drugs, crime, and such like (which will provoke not only breakdown, but which will also provoke a reaction, which will become more extreme as the breakdown becomes more extreme; this reaction aiding the emergence of natural forces and instincts). Whatever means are necessary can and should be used - the aim is to cause the American State structure to collapse, creating chaos, from which a reaction will emerge, this reaction being of a certain type - i.e. tending toward authoritarianism, anti-Nazarene in essence. This collapse of American power will free the world, and enable at present suppressed forces to emerge and take control, forces which will be beneficial to the long-term goals. Nowhere will this be more evident than in the 'Middle-East'. A tide of Islamic fundamentalism would bring great changes, enabling a beneficial alliance between the new power structure which should emerge in America. What applies to both America and the Soviet Union applies to Europe - but America and the Soviet Union have priority at present, at least in terms of magickal energies. That is, the attack occurs on all levels, in Europe, America, the Soviet Union and world-wide (particularly in the Middle-East)*- but if resources are or become stretched for whatever reason or reasons, America and the Soviet Union have priority. Adepts will immediately understand that even if the strategic aim is not achieved, the disruption/chaos caused in trying to achieve it by some of the tactics mentioned, will be Satanic. All such tactics pay homage to Satan!

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Note: It should be obvious that the aim in the Middle East is to encourage Islam; this undermines both America and the Soviet Union in the short-term and prepares the ways for future alliances.

Addendum:

Since the MS was written, Soviet power has, in fact collapsed. It would be unwise, at this juncture, to attribute this to magickal and other means - i.e. to see the magickal campaign as being solely responsible. What is clear, however, is that such means played a part - perhaps began the process via a psychic contagion.

This fall now makes the United States of America the prime magickal target insofar as such workings are concerned. Here, there are 'Adepts' of the Nazarene/ Magian traditions to contend with.

The means of magickal disruption will continue to be:

- a) Spreading already existing rites (such as in the Black Book), enabling others in that country to invoke/open nexions and so spread the energies those rites re-present (one of the aims of those energies being disruption).
- b) Performing Nine Angles rites and directing the energies toward disrupting power structures, and directing it toward targeted individuals.
- c) Performing Death rites with the aim of eliminating or harming certain influential individuals.
- d) Spreading existing forms (and creating new ones) which infect the psyche of individuals.
- e) Continue to perform traditional ceremonies and direct their energies toward achieving disruption or aiding those causes/individuals who will assist or aid, perhaps without their knowledge, the sinister dialectic.
- f) Direct energies into already existing nexions (and create new nexions) to aid/ create those tactical forms which aid the emergence of Imperium-like forces.
- g) Loosing undirective/chaotic energies

of sinister import.

- Order of Nine Angles -

Temple 88: Newsletter I
ONA

THE SATANIC PURPOSE

The Destiny of the Temple is to bring the NEW AEON; to presence via Satanic magick the future in the present, and secure the unfolding and establishment of a new civilisation - one that enshrines Satanic principles. We are privileged to be the ones who will conduct the Aeonic rites which aid the cosmic tides once every two thousand years - that is, when the Aeon is waning [in its Winter stage] and the energies of the next are beginning to manifest. This organic process of Aeonics flows according to its own species of time, and contrary to the fantasies of most Occultists, the New Aeon will not become fully manifest for another five hundred years from now. Thus the purpose of the Temple is truly Sacred, since it exists to fulfill Cosmic Wyrð rather than pursuing the personal indulgences of its members - indeed, its very aim spans centuries beyond the causal lifetimes of its members.

How the relevant energies are presented and to their long term effects, depends on how they are consciously manipulated; this is to say, that a "New Aeon" comprising of an upward surge in evolution is not necessarily guaranteed of itself. It must be brought by WILLED CHANGE, implemented by those with a real understanding of what is NECESSARY in order to fulfill the promise of cosmic evolution (and thus the promise of our own existence). As expressed, this understanding transcends the "personal" and illusory culture of the "individual". Thus, when Satanic magick is directed into a causal form to aid the fulfilling of Wyrð, the form concerned is chosen because it is RATIONALLY understood as enshrining the ethos appropriate to the New Aeon. Whatever "negative" feelings one may have about such a form are irrelevant, as, ultimately, are any personal desires and prejudices, since such things are the residue of temporary, temporal cultural conditioning.

However, Aeonic understanding is not a negation of Being, but rather an extension - where Individual consciousness expands into the acausal. To bring forth a new species of Human which embodies this new way of Being, which possesses the faculty of REASON, is the esoteric purpose of the New Aeon. At present, the methods by which this "Individuation" - or more correctly, "Adeptship" - may be created, exist only within the Seven-Fold Sinister Way, as enshrined by the Order of Nine Angles (qv. the various published Order MSS).

It is essential to understand that the Sinister and Satanism (of the Traditional kind) are one and the same; that is, only the force known as Satan represents in both essence and form, the Promethean zest, defiance and Darkness without which evolution is not possible. Satan is not merely a form to be considered "outmoded", to be thus replaced with another deity of one's personal choice: the form itself IS the essence, IS that Promethean zest so vital to the survival and expansion of Western Destiny. This is the esoteric reality, now more than ever. Those who do not or will not understand this are irrelevant, as those who actively oppose this reality are our enemies, fit only to become Opfers.

The results of Satanism in practice represent balance, a synthesis of both "light" and "dark" (in terms of the psyche), brought about through real-life experience and thus made manifest in the way necessary to cause significant causal change. A Satanist, therefore, is part of the Dialectic of History: this, in contradistinction to the distorted media image of a gothic wallowing in death and perversion, and the decadent, petty lives of every other "Occultist". Out of all the Occult paths, only Satanism dares to guide its adherents through the Forbidden Gates so they come to KNOW what must be achieved if the Wyrð of the Cosmos is to be fulfilled. The absolute dearth of understanding concerning the real purpose of Magick (or the Great Work) is symptomatic of the dying time of the present, and an urgent reminder why practical action must be taken NOW, lest all that is numinous is lost to the selfish consumerism and enervating (and illusory) egalitarian ideas that are killing the Promethean Soul. Thus, in so acting, Satanism represents the highest form of Nobility.

AEONICS

The terms "New" and "Old" Aeon have become by-words of Occult speak, and very rarely can any Occultist define in realistic terms the esoteric and exoteric nature of the New Aeon.

The ONA however offers a scientific rather than a mystical, subjective model of history, and reveals each Aeon as an organic being, with its own finite life-span. Briefly, an Aeon lasts 2000 years, and its associated civilization 1,500. During the "Winter" stage of the associated civilization - usually presented causally as an IMPERIUM - the strands of the subsequent Aeon manifest [all civilizations so far have evolved through a natural process of growth, change and decline]. Each Aeon possesses a unique "ethos" (or "Soul"), and thus each Aeon and associated civilization has a unique Destiny. This Destiny will always produce causal manifestations, but as to whether or not its promise is implemented, depends on

the conscious apprehension of the associated civilization. So far, over the previous four Aeons, the pattern has been an organic one, without significant conscious, or willed, change.

The ethos of this current fifth Aeon - the Western - is EXPLORATION: the desire to know and extend boundaries by such striving. As a result of this ethos, we in the West have the capacity to consciously apprehend the Aeonic process, and thus through willed change (or "Magick") extend, perhaps indefinitely, the lifespan of our civilization. This extension implies the emergence of the next, and associated, sixth Aeon, often termed by Satanists as the Aeon of Fire, but known by all those who share the Promethean ideal as the GALACTIC. This is so, because the Destiny of the Western race is to lead the way to exploring and colonising the Galaxy, thus extending the boundaries of Human experience into new and infinite realms.

However, the fulfillment of this Destiny is by no means secure, since it requires the significant nurturing and expansion of forces that run counter to the MAGIAN ethos of the Tyranny that currently occupies the West. When referring to the "New Aeon", most Occultists will maintain that they are striving towards the dawn of a New Age vaguely apprehended as a time of liberation, "personal freedom", and the realization of "global peace and harmony". But this Nazarene influenced New Age is far from a rational, conscious apprehension of Aeonic forces: instead, it is a cultural illusion engineered by The System in order to impose control over the Folk, and to fulfill its own messianic prophecies. The tyranny of the capitalist System lies in the creation and encouragement of selfish materialism, which deliberately denudes the Western Race of its greatest strength: its soul. It is no accident that this soul is dying, as the Folk are transformed into flabby, soft consumers - sub-humans devoid of numinous vision and noble purpose.

The great tragedy when considering the societies of the West today, is that the Western Lands were once peopled by real warriors such as the Vikings. If the next Aeon is to be secured, then there must be a return of the Promethean Soul as epitomized by the real Warrior - that is, someone whose hands are stained by blood and gore, and who is really prepared to die for a noble cause: whose individual life is a means to something greater. In this present age divorced from Nature, such fierce, defiant and WAR-LOVING adventurer would be locked away for "crimes against humanity". Thus, there is at present a very real war being waged between forces often depicted in esoteric legend as a "white" and a "black" order - the force described (in one sense inaccurately) as the "white" order has its magickal centre [or NEXION] in the Middle East.

If this Galactic Aeon is not secured then a new Dark Age will result, with the loss of an opportunity that may not emerge again for many centuries - if at all. However, the Western Soul does die it will only be the fault of the Western Race itself, since The System IS inherently unstable, and with the necessary Will, determination and courage, CAN be smashed. System Breakdown implies more than just Magickal rites, since the chaos that needs to be released must be earthed into a practical, causal form dedicated to the principles of the New Aeon. The immediate aim therefore, during the Winter stage of this present Aeon, is to establish Imperium, from the ashes of which would emerge the Galactic.

Contrary to the views cultivated by contemporary "Western" culture, genuine freedom will not result, at this point in history, from a lessening of restrictions, but rather from an increase: from a focused, dedicated and clearly defined societal structure. This initial establishment and increasing of "totalitarian" force is necessary in order to counter the decadent and illusory "freedoms" of capitalism. Genuine liberation means freedom from MENTAL TYRANNY, and this is achieved only according to how a form can aid the evolution of the Folk as an organic whole, and not as is widely believed today by championing the "rights of the individual". Thus, such a vision of freedom can only be attained via a practical Aeonic process, and cannot be arrived at through mere sentimental philosophy: it can only be brought to being by the fires of experience.

To re-iterate, this process of synthesis is the meaning of Satanism - for both individuals AND Aeons.
NATIONAL SOCIALISM

To bring about Imperium requires the creation and establishment of an appropriate causal form(s), and an individual [and subsequent such individuals] to lead it. Such an individual is known according to the Dark Tradition as VINDEX, and one of the aims of Satanic Magick is to earth forces in order to allow the emergence of this individual, as well as to direct energies into the causal form ("organization"). The nature of the Imperium obviously must enshrine the ethos of the West, and that ethos is presented as National Socialism. Despite what many would rather believe, there is no other form which can release the forces of Western Destiny since that form IS that Destiny made manifest. In present society where almost all forms have been made into a commodity, Occultists and "political revolutionaries" will always

rather gravitate towards a less controversial (and ultimately System-supported) form, and in so doing will declare very convincing reasons why National Socialism is "wrong" or "unenlightened". The System has done its work very well on the people it subjugates - including those who believe themselves to be exponents of Heresy.

National Socialism (with the esoteric exception of Traditional Satanism) is the only real Heresy in existence, since it is based solely on the highest ideals of Honour, Loyalty and Duty, championed over and above selfish individual pursuits. It calls for a revolution of the Soul; a Triumph of the Will; a return of racial pride and defiance - of all that epitomizes the genuine Western ethos. It is a form that cannot be bought by The System, and thus the only option for the latter is to jail or kill National Socialist, and smash through innumerable legislative variations National Socialist influence, naturally dormant in the Western - or Aryan - people. It is the only form which frightens The System, and is thus the only form capable of achieving System Breakdown.

In a very important sense, National-Socialism IS contemporary Paganism, and renders all other "pagan" forms (including "Odinism") obsolete. Its Paganism stems from the concept of BLOOD & SOIL, the apprehension once symbolized by the "Green Man", and remembered in fragments of Arthurian legend. This connexion does not reside in economics, and the exploitation of the Land's resources, but is instead the achievement of spiritual balance: a harmony of Being attained via reverence for Nature, and the drive to create new and more numinous ways of living [thus rural communities, expressions of genuine Folk-Democracy which capture so much of contemporary imagination, would become a reality under a National Socialist Reich].

Because it epitomizes for the West, numinosity, National Socialism is a new religion. It is this aspect - though seem to grasp it at present - that could establish National Socialism as a devastating presence with the Magian System: that is, once understood consciously in religious terms, NS would draw to it the kind of invincible fervour possessed by, for example, Islamic Fundamentalism. Implementing this latter aspect, is one of the goals of Vindex.

Because of its religiosity, NS expresses the "light" aspect of the Cosmos since its numinosity lies in its capacity to directly speak to the "masses"; to establish FOR THE MAJORITY a new Golden Age enshrining all that is great and civilized. Satanism is the "dark" aspect of the Cosmos since it dares to understand and implement what the majority are conditioned by The System to fear. It is concerned with developing through ordeals, the elite of the elite - those capable of undertaking the necessary acts that human experience far beyond what is conventionally accepted. Satanism exists on the edge of esoteric essence beyond any form, yet the goals of both the light and dark aspects are the same, since both are ultimately manifested from the same source - that of the Cosmos. At some stage during the Aeonic process, the essence as it is may be lived by the majority - but that will not occur for many centuries, or even Aeons [and this itself is one of the long term goals of Satanism].

The above serves as a brief outline as to why Traditional Satanists have founded Temple 88, a working group dedicated to fulfilling Cosmic Wyrð. The only meaningful form of Magick is that which is concerned with Aeons - anything else is merely decadently, illusory and counter-evolutionary. "Magick" occurs when an individual life is transformed beyond the personal, since ultimately there is little of the "personal" that exists. In this respect, the Temple and its Magick is the movement of Life itself, since the Way of the Sinister has always been one of EMPATHY. thus our Magick fulfills a nearly forgotten sacred trust, to the Glory of They who are seldom Named.

[The rites that constitute the Temple's Aeonic work will be detailed in subsequent newsletters.]

- Order of Nine Angles -

Creative Change

Change and evolution - for the cosmos, Nature and we ourselves, as living beings - occurs because of the creative dialectic. This is the organic, or ordered, process of birth-life-death-renewal, and is a natural and necessary process. In the abstract, and less correct, sense, this process can be described as thesis-antithesis-synthesis. This organic process is "beyond good and evil" and thus beyond the moral dualism which various abstract religions and philosophies have projected onto the cosmos in a failed and rather immature attempt to explain and understand the workings of the cosmos. In one important sense, this process is that which creates and maintains the balance between the natural forces of creation and the natural forces of destruction or renewal.

It is in the nature of the cosmos that there is evolution - that is, for order to be produced from chaos. This increase in order is life itself. What we call Nature is part of this order - indeed, it is how this cosmic order is manifest to us. We ourselves, as living, thinking, beings are part of the order that is Nature - that is, we as a species have arisen because of the evolution, or creative change, that has occurred in Nature. Our species - or at least some parts of it - has evolved, and thus created civilizations. In the simple sense, these civilizations are how the cosmic imperative - the creative change implicit in the cosmos and Nature - have been made manifest by us, hitherto mostly instinctively. Thus, such civilizations are another representation of the evolution of the cosmos itself with each true civilization being unique and distinct. Civilizations are also *organic*, a living organism. Thus they are born; thus they evolve, and thus they die. Each civilization may also be said to be a manifestation of what has been called an *aeon*. That is, each civilization represents a specific cosmic aeon - with that civilization, its unique *ethos* its unique *archetypes* and so on, being how the forces of that aeon are felt, or understood or apprehended by us, either instinctively/unconsciously or rationally.

In every civilization, there is an initial and intuitive understanding of the cosmic forces involved in change and evolution, and this intuitive understanding is made manifest through various myths about the creation of the cosmic order, with the various forces symbolized, often by gods and goddesses. There is also a desire to try and maintain or enhance this order, and the natural balance between the forces of destruction and creation, often by undertaking various rites or rituals which "mimic" - or are a mimesis - of the natural order.

Our Faustian CivilizationOur present aeon, and thus its associated Faustian civilization, is coming to an end. The natural values and ethos of this civilization - expressed by *honour*, *curiosity* and *conquest* - are beginning to fade from the hearts and minds of the Aryan peoples of this civilization. However, unlike other civilizations - which have changed naturally, according to the organic process - our present civilization has suffered an unnatural distortion. It has, in effect, been infested by a parasitic organism . Thus, instead of producing a resurgence of Faustian values, and thus creating a numinous Faustian Imperium - an expanding Empire dedicated to excellence, and representing the natural ethos of the Aryan founders and maintainers of the civilization - a plutocratic, materialistic, de-humanizing "new world order" is being produced. Instead of healthy, organic, ethnic States dedicated to individual excellence and noble ideals being created, abstract and multi-racial Marxist Police-States, dedicated to the suppression of excellence, are being created. The founders and maintainers of this Faustian civilization - those of European or Aryan race - are being challenged, both within their own *psyche* and within their own countries, by the distortion and its offshoots, and externally by other races, who are beginning to settle in Aryan countries in ever increasing numbers.

Outwardly, the distortion is the distortion of Christianity and Marxism, and both of these derive from what has euphemistically been called Zionism - that is, both represent the Jewish ethos. Both Christianity and Marxism, and what has been derived from them (such as modern multi-racial socialism) are manifestations of this Jewish ethos - this desire to foist unnatural abstractions upon Nature, and to create individuals, and a society, in the unnatural, materialistic/mechanistic image of such abstractions. Fundamentally, this Jewish ethos is a dualist one, positing abstract, unnatural and *anti-evolutionary* moral opposites - and projecting these upon the cosmos, and upon we ourselves as individuals, to the detriment of the cosmos, Nature and our own species.

Given this distortion, and given this parasitical interference in the evolutionary order - given this viral infection which is affecting the health and vitality of our present civilization - it is possible that our own

evolution will cease with the triumph of those forces which represent and which uphold this distortion. However, what needs to be understood - and has seldom been stated - is that ***this distortion, this virus infecting our civilization, is itself part of the evolutionary process of change***. That is, it presents a challenge - it is itself a means whereby further evolution *can* or could be produced through the struggle to cure and become immune to such a viral infection. Thus, either the infection is successfully fought, or it is not. If the producers of the civilization - the Aryan race - do not succeed in fighting off such an infection, they will have lacked the strength necessary, and will succumb. If, however, they do successfully fight off the infection, they will be strengthened and become immune to such an infection - they will have successfully overcome the challenge, and adapted, thus evolving further because of the struggle involved. In the symbolic sense, a Ragnarok is possible - and indeed necessary - in the near future. From the fated and violent destruction of the old, with all the bloody sacrifice and suffering involved, what is new and more advanced can arise.

Those possessed of insight into and understanding of our civilization are aware of the struggle that is unfolding between the two forces involved: between Aryan and Zionist, or more expressively between the adherents of the natural, cosmic order, and the adherents of an unnatural, anti-evolutionary dualism and dogma. These insightful ones are also aware that Adolf Hitler and his followers were a natural, or evolutionary, response to this distortion or infestation - a resurgence of basically Faustian values, and a means whereby the natural, evolutionary order could be restored, given the triumph of National-Socialism. In effect, National-Socialism restores the balance which is necessary for further evolution to occur. But perhaps most importantly, National-Socialism, properly understood, is a conscious expression of the evolutionary imperative itself - a practical means to continue and further evolution in a natural way. National-Socialism is a restoration of "the numinous" - an expression of what is necessary to challenge, fight and overcome the anti-evolutionary, materialistic virus that is affecting our *psyche*, our civilization, Nature and thus the cosmos itself. In basic terms, National-Socialism expresses the laws of Nature - what is necessary for survival, adaptation and creative, evolutionary change toward a higher existence. It represents the practical application of the laws of evolution - of the survival and evolution *of the best*.

There is real war of cosmic importance being fought in our own time. In a fundamental sense, one side represents one part of the creative cosmic dialectic, and the other side the other part - from the successful resolution of the conflict, change and renewal can occur, just as from the unsuccessful resolution of the conflict, evolution can be halted, with higher life on this planet (civilization) becoming extinct. Were this higher life to become extinct here on this planet of ours, cosmic change would still occur - but elsewhere. Our own chance to evolve further would have gone.

Seen in a cosmic context, National-Socialism - what it is, *what it is evolving into* - is a positive, evolutionary, intervention in the cycle of cosmic creation. Because of this, it is "magickal"; that is, it possesses the numinous, archetypal power to re-order our causal world. In simple terms, its symbols, myths, legends, rites, *ethos*, ideals and so on possess the power to challenge, undermine and destroy the distortion, and the "magick" of this distortion, evident as this Zionist magick is in the *ethos*, legends, myths and rites of dualist beliefs and religions. Whether this magickal power of National-Socialism will be used in the way necessary to destroy this distortion, and restore the balance through a "Ragnarok", is another matter. Those who are insightful, already understand the aeonic strategy of aiding National-Socialism, or aiding the spread of its symbols, myths, legends, rites, *ethos*, ideals and magick - as they are eagerly trying to bring about, or eagerly awaiting, the Ragnarok which is necessary.

There is a new, higher, conscious and cosmological, magick arising, or evolving, to replace the old magick of rituals and mimesis. This evolutionary magick is essentially the practical application of National-Socialism - the change brought about by harnessing individual will to a conscious understanding and an evolutionary goal; that is, to a numinous ideal. This magick has the potential to undermine and destroy the forces of the distortion.

The Immediate Future

Such is now the power of those behind the new plutocratic, Zionist order, that in many Aryan countries National-Socialism, and its symbols, are outlawed. The Zionists and their allies are naturally trying to suppress National-Socialism and what National-Socialism represents, since its triumph will mean the end of their plutocratic materialistic schemes. The majority of Aryans are now either in psychic thrall to the doctrines of the Zionists, or they have abandoned their own Faustian and Aryan values and *ethos* in favour of the sub-human pursuit of selfish pleasure.

In simple terms, the magick of the Zionists is at present triumphing over the magick of National-

Socialism. It should be understood that anyone using the magick of National-Socialism - that is, using in a positive way its ethos, symbols, beliefs, myths, rites, ideals and so on - is countering the distortion, just as anyone using the symbols and ideas of dualist beliefs, deriving from the Jewish ethos, is aiding the distortion.

A destruction of the old order is now necessary, with a complete "revaluation of all values" and the creation of a new morality based on the noble values of *the best* - of the natural warrior aristocracy. The dross - the proliferating sub-humans - have to be removed. The Aryan race itself has to be purified, and thus strengthened. A cataclysm of some sort - a Ragnarok - has to arise, or be created. For only by such means as these can the diseases, the infections, of the present be excised or cured - only by such struggle and hardship can evolution be continued and a higher more evolved race created. What is strong, and healthy, will flourish in such conflict and survive. What is weak, will not. From the resolution of this struggle, a new aeon, and a new higher civilization will be created - or there will be extinction of our higher, Aryan, life-form. Those who wish to survive and flourish, must strive for excellence and fight - those who do not have the courage or the will to strive, and who refuse to fight, do not deserve to survive.

There are only two possibilities in respect of the immediate future:

(1) The triumph of the Zionist, with the creation of world-wide repressive, multi-racial and "politically correct" Police-States, which are Marxist in all but name, since the term "politically correct" has become a euphemism for "Marxism by stealth". In this scenario, the evolutionary forces of National-Socialism - and thus their magick - will be actively suppressed and forced to operate clandestinely. The aim of such clandestine forces would be to insinuate their ideals, their ethos, and their magick, gradually into the society around them. They will also - or should also - be active revolutionary movements striving to undermine and overthrow the State through armed insurrection. Were the forces of National-Socialism, and the practitioners of its magick, to fail, for whatever reason, the tyranny which would be created would last for many centuries, with serfdom, and possible racial extinction, for Aryans. The evolutionary change of the cosmos, here on this planet of ours, would stop, and civilization would probably never arise again. Our species would confine itself to this planet of ours, and over many millennia gradually become extinct. The cosmic brilliance of order will have flickered, briefly, over our planet, only to die out for ever, with our evolutionary promise never fulfilled.

(2) The triumph of National-Socialism, with the gradual spread of the ethnic and evolutionary ideals of National-Socialism leading to the creation of ethnic States. A new civilization would arise, created by a new race of higher beings forged from the anvil of struggle, with numinous goals striven for. Gradually, the civilization would spread outward, from the Earth, and on toward the stars, with star-systems discovered and planets colonized. The promise of our own race, and our own species, would be fulfilled.

Conclusion

What is of paramount importance, is that individuals achieve a conscious understanding - of themselves, and of those cosmic forces which create, shape and destroy natural organisms such as aeons and civilizations.

It is important, for instance, that the distortion of our Western civilization - and thus the distortion of our *psyche* and thus our "magick" - is understood. It is important that National-Socialism is understood as a means to fight this distortion, and restore the cosmic, evolutionary imperative.

However, this does not mean that those acquiring such an understanding - and thus the beginnings of real wisdom - *must* become active National-Socialists, who participate in practical revolutionary movements. Rather, it means they themselves can make a conscious and informed decision about their own lives, based on their own character, abilities, talents and interests. For some, this may mean such direct - and of necessity dangerous - involvement. For others, it may mean a clandestine or public aiding of the magick of National-Socialism. For others, it may mean a clandestine or public following of the aeonic strategy to aid some aspects of National-Socialism, such as its ethos, its ideals and so on. Thinkers, artists, inventors, explorers and mages are needed just as much as revolutionary activists - although the evolutionary ideal is for one person to be all of these, and more.

What is necessary, is that the understanding is promulgated, and used as a basis for action, for creative, conscious change - both personal, and of the world itself.

(Temple 88)
- Order of Nine Angles -

The Temple Of Satan

A Symphonic Allegory

“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

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, in a monastery and fed his body and tried to break his spirit but he had given way to temptation and sought the road of sin.

Melanie 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-distance 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 t 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 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 to 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 is 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?" yet asked. She was unsure, but agreed and he gave for 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 and the foolish vapor of his dreams.

The cold water of the stream refreshed him and he bathed his face again the slowly his sadness returned, only muted by his ecstasy. No one passed him as he walked along the paths that wound down of among the hills. There was no one to welcome him home, and the 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 it's station, but the heat of the day oppressed him as it made up their other passengers in the stuffy, noisy train sit silent and still throughout the short journey.

Variegated people mingled over the sun-shadowed platforms of the 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 that vibrated with it's power the ground and buildings around. A wooden barrier siphoned the arrivals down dirty stone steps and ultramodern doors to the traffic-filled streets of Shrewsbury.

It was the streets the Thurstan realized he was afraid. He believed he could sense the feelings behind the faces of the people passed in the streets – and not only sense them, but feel them as if they were his own. He felt the nervous of 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. The sense of 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 or not mystical but rather a strange mixture of gentle sexual desire, expectation and a burgeoning vitality mixed with the anguish of 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 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 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 bells sounded when 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 a 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 has 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 had seen a ghost. The woman had been dead for 50 years.

||

Fifty years, the bookseller said.

"Is 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.

The Thurstan had thanked him and fled through the humid people the 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 have 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 still 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 ceilings by books and like the books the table, chairs and desks were

antiquarian. There is a large and oddly shaped specimen a 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 consistent voice, all combined to make Thurstan disposed towards sleep and he felt himself drifting into to embrace the temptation when a lot and persistent wrapping awoke him.

"I'm sorry," the booksellers said. "Would you excuse me?"

The Thurstan heard a brief curse, the door being unlocked and a few words of a 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 a 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 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 of Thurstan and seen, 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 closes 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 color 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 cafe 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 she 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 color suits me, don't you?"

Unexpectedly, she twirled around, laughing.

"I think most colors 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 were an almost empty cafe 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 half 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 a way that she leaned her body slightly towards him. Her dress emphasized her breasts as her necklace emphasized 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 cafe had unsettled Thurstan, for the magic of the moment they had shared it appeared to him to have drifted away to another world, and he had convinced himself that he had been mistaken. There would be nothing more-except perhaps the future possibility of him trying somehow trying to painfully recapture her those moments: to draw her on toward the fulfillment of desire. But she held passenger door of the car open for him, saying, "Come on." 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 a strong summer sun colored 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 village, past cottage and house, to turn and returned between the Stiperstone rocks 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 before drop slowly between Corndon and Black Rhadley hills to follow a low hedged-hemmed lane over the border to 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 and 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 wanted to share that 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 perplexed me." Since he felt he ought to be honest he added, and it arouses 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 of unraveling 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 roofs 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 emerge 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 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.

III

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 is 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 men 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 to see her breasts clearly through her thin sweat-stained robe, but his hands were bound by leather thongs to the cold aluminum frame and he could not reach out and touch them as he wished.

There was a strange desire within Melanie and 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 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 at 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 mold her feelings. For years she had schemed, cheated, manipulated and lied, building from the foundations of her beauty and sexuality the wealth and power he 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 innocents 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, is man who lusted after her - they would sell their souls, most of them had, for short pleasure she sometimes allowed them to find 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 the 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 to pray to our Prince."

The crystal guided her. That very night he presided as priest and 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 as will away and she unthreaded an amber bead from 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 favorI 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 worshipers 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 center, 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 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 feel it 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's 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 signaled 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 worshipers. No one moved, chanted or spoke but all stared up at the sky. The darkness grew slowly before withdrawing into a sphere that darted across sky. And 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 small beginning, the prelude to the opening of the Star Gate, which would return her Dark Gods to earth. 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 her 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 had 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 should 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 and 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 humid night.

Melanie awoke slowly. She sensed a change in the aura of 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 the reaction came. Her cold hatred toward Algar for his deed was soon gone, and in the silence of her house 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 hiss 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 for 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 the junction of 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 shown 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.

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 colors 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 center 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," as 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 incurio 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 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 favor.” Nervously, with thin fingers, he stroked his pointed beard.

“A favor, 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 you 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’s 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 with 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 here 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 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 bat 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 sound, 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. Behind the only in the cottage 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.

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.

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 sun.

She stood leaning against her car while the leopard sat beside her. Respectfully and silently, the men moved away. He did not speak and she did not but as he passed her he bowed his head while she stared into his eyes. 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 then 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 he 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 honor 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 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 groveling 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. Her feelings of loneliness 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, 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.

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 colored the sky near the descending sun, and Melanie stood in the circle's center calling on the storms to break. Thunder cloud rushed toward her, killing the color, 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 magick, 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 sucked from within him to form a hideous face whose rows of teeth gnashed before the mouth opens 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 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 swiveled 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. 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 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.

Thurstan had freed his hands from the cord, which bound them when he saw Algar run away. Cautiously, after unbinding his feet and removing the gage, 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 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, as a mystic or an artist might cry when overwhelmed by such splendor.

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.

It 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 molded her body to his so he could feel the heat of her flesh through the thin dress.

Stretched were the moments of their embrace 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 led 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 or 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 favors 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 here, but she had fought them and gained control, molding 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.

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 there 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, but 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 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 words 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 mold and mites. The mold 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 mold 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, Zamradial, 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 mold from the floor.

He began to realize that he was near the center 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. 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 lipsing 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 fervor of his strange faith.

Outside a solitary bid sung, unheard amid the early traffic that chuntered along the 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 favors 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 colors 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 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 defenseless against Algar, and now she felt defenseless against Thurstan. She did not like either of the forms of this defenselessness 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 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 and acausal energies were surrounding them. 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 and orgasm relaxed it. But she did not feel the 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 couple 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 let 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 – he did not seek to mold 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 sibulation 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 let 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 gently 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 or 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 center 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. 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 signaled 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 signaled 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 the pain that it felt. But Melanie raised her hand again and the specter 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 on the 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 up 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 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 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. 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 ponderous.

He experienced a sudden need to express his feeling through the frenzy of his body and was not surprised to find 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 slope 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 he 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 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 forces 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 acts 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 center 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 dancer 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. They 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 faced, 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 fervor 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 and 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 a 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 traveler 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 color 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. 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.

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, molding 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.

XXI

‘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, savoring them, before collecting together the scattered pages of his translation. He glanced through it, satisfied at the labor 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 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 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 return. He channeled it to his body. Trembling with effort he could only manage to move his feet a little forward.

“Sleep now.”

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 traveled down to Earth from the stars – rather than to 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 let 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 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 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 signed 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 live child born from these children is the Demon named Love,’”

“So I,” said Melanie, “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 color, 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 the long and beautiful low mountain. But it did not last. He sensed 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, selecting 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 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. 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 lipsing 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. 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.

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.....

The Giving

In truth, Baphomet – honored 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

!

There was much that was unusual about Sidnal Wyke, including his name. His name no longer brought forth any comments from his neighbors 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 fate ending all of life.

It was as he closed the cottage door on his way to gather his neighbors 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 color, 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. He kept the girl's naked image in his head, while his ardor 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 center 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 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. 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 unusual, and 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 dialed 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 center 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 favor 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.

III

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 bourn to add interest to Thorold’s day and he walked slowly, trying to savor 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 books, 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 favorite fountain pen and notebook.

She wrote quickly. "Shall we say half past seven or 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. 'Aosoth', 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 flat.

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. 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 Liana. 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 lounge 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 dialed 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 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 lounge.”

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 her 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 she did not prevent him 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 lounge.

“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 to 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 year 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 disheveled 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 has 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 in 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.

"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 was."

"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’ as a word that captures the essence.”

He could see her, outwardly unperturbed, watch his 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 one of the qualities that attracted me to you. I have watched you for some time.”

“Pardon?”

“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 demonic 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 few, 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 watched her collect her keys for 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.

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 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. He raised his hat, slightly, bowed just a little toward Lianna and shuffled away, back along the tree-shadowed drive.

"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 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. A breeze cooled him as he walked beside Lianna, and she held his hand as they entered the circle to stand at its center.

“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 color 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 flat. 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 flat, the weather was cloudless and hot, but he himself felt cold, and dressed accordingly.

Dawn had long since passed when he left his flat 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 genuflection 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 tranquility 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 Tonquedoc 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 molded 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 the door to her flat. 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 disemboweled 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 odors 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 had. 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 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 not return to his flat 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 flat.

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 in the bottom flat he could see a net-curtain twitching. His flat 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 the 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 flat 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 disheveled 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.

He 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 from 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-humored 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 time, 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 center 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 it 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 let 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.

"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."

“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 to 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 revelers 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 flat 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 flat. 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 flat.

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 ship. 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 all 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 to 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 flat.

Monica, obviously watching from his window, came out 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 flat and shut the door without 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.

XIII

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 neighboring 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 is 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 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."

Rhiston 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 modeling 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

Rhaston. "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 favor 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 flat 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 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 flat.

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 you advises."

"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 time 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 flat, eagerly anticipating the collection of his present to himself later that afternoon.

At first, on entering his flat, 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 of 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 flat 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 center 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 center 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 flat.

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!"

"Monican?"

"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. “Look’s 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 centered 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 the 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. 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 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 flat 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 led 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 her herself and her future.

The recent years of her past had been years full of new experiences and through them 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 defenses 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 pedophile 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 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 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; they journeyed to Mallam's house and then to a house nearby to briefly speak to the woman who answered his knocking upon her door. He led them then 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 held onto the car, panting and exhausted, but 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 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. 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.

They had not spoken to Thorold and he had not spoken to them, and he watched them depart, carrying Mallam, numb with shock from Monica's death. 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 away Monica's body. 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 – 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 past 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. “Aidan 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.

“Pardon?” 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 day.”

“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 turning around and smiling.

His movement round 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 practiced 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, for 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 armor 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, Thorold 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 Thorold that sat astride his bike. He rode slowly out of the driveway 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.

XXI

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 flat to sit in the stuffy 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 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 lounge," she said smiling, and left him.

He was soon changed, and sat to wait for her in the lounge. 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 colorful 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 journey’s 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 pretense 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 – 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 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, gloved 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 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 touching 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 let 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 artifacts had been removed.

The assemble parted as he and Lianna entered.

"Wait," she whispered to him before walking toward the altar. Sidnal bowed slightly as she gave him her basket. It contained enveloped 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 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 center 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 around the stake. Thorold felt Sarah's hand touching his, then cold metal. He was surprised, but put the revolver in his pocket. The stake 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 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, 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 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 that 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 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.

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 smoldering 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 discolored 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.

The Greyling Owl

I

York, 1976

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 center 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 and 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 of 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 ardor 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 the 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 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 traveled 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 amicable 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 woolen 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 liked the University since he had visited it many years ago. Spread over a two hundred acre site, its centerpiece 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. 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 he bent over the sink, vomiting.

"I'm sorry," Alison said to Edmund as she attended to her retching 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 edges 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 with glee.

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, and *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.' When 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 repellant 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 over heard – earlier on.”

She blushed, and shuffled her feet. “He’s offered to live with me.”

“And do you want this?”

“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 and attack of his verbal diarrhea?”

“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, colorfully 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 favorite 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,” he said, rubbing his hands together. “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 – he sat down to fill his pipe, pleased with the newly acquired copy of Laclos’ “Les Liaisons Danereuses”, 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 the 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 twirp'.

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 thick, droopy, mustache 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 colored 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 favorable 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 twirp!”

“Sorry?”

“Gentlemen, please,” Fiona said, smiling at Horton.

Whiting’s mustache 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 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 judgment – not an opinion – a judgment 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 seem 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. “Do you have a publisher yet?”

“No. not really.”

“Applicants for Professorships are viewed more favorably 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 favorably 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, and he would 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 artifacts 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."

"Sorry?"

"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 labor 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 for glee. “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 that 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 you 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. I 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 your 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 colorful 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, “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 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 and her and she did not fail him.

“Goodbye, then,” she said and briefly smiled.

He dialed 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 with 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, 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 center. 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 center 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 the 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 leveled 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 Ruther, 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 luminosity 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 color 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. How 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 demeanor 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 Vaughn Williams’ Six 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 somber 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 – against the Prior's wishes, set in motion the mechanism which would swing the six ton bell of Ampleford 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, he 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 to 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 almost lofty indifference – that aroused his ardor 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 on 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. 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 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 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 than 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 savored 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 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 her 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 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 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 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 behavior, 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.

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. 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 center 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 color,” 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. The 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 and 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 set 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 rumors 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 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 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 said, “If I were you, I’d leave 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 color of his shirts and his badges varied. His small but brightly colored 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 marvelous, simply marvelous, 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 and 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. Marvelous 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. “Julien’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 center. 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 thought, 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 walked through it along the campus paths to the streets and 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, that 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-center 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. Here 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.

“Humor 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 passes. 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. He was 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 is 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 the 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.

XV

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 center of the city where a road fed and incessant stream of traffic and 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 tremor.

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, trembles
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 odor 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?”

“Pardon?”

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 much out a pig sty!”

“A bit of practice – perhaps you’ll start with you 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 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 into his shoe 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 pales. “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 parlor 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 humored him, for Storr might next week become the Professor, “Thanks.” He walked toward the desk and took the book.”

“That will be ten pounds.”

“Pardon?” said a surprised Colin.

“Ten pounds. Er, that includes the discount.”

Colin was annoyed. He put the book 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 favors 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 tube blew...”

The young man smiled at her. “I’m off at last. You not riding?”

“No. Well, actually Julies 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 leaned 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 reveled 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,” she 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 then, 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 pedaled 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.

"Marvelous 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 it were, in the favored 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 judgment; ‘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 and Storr. They were all present, shaking his hand, opening their mouths with thanks and praise. Only Storr looked passé, and he 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 favor.”

“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 pain 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 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 favorite 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 your 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."

“Pardon?”

“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.” She 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, own me a favor.”

“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 Owl-ish 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 mum 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 dialed 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 letter 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 owlish 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 paneling, 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 in one of whose hands was 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.”

“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.

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. 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.

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 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 savored.”

“Tell me, how did you know?”

”About your dark past.”

”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. 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.

Breaking The Silence Down

By

Anton Long, ONA

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Introduction

The following MS extends and amplified the esoteric matters dealt with in 'The Deofel Quintet' and the insight it deals with is appropriate to an aspirant Internal Adept.

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 centers, 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.

Prologue

Summer has 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.

Dominos 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-colored 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, 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 drying 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 four hundred 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 Divine_Office-by-Divine_Office. Once, as a child, she had felt the call of her God, the hold 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 desires of the flesh.

She sat for nearly half an hour amid the petriochoor 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.

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 you dress.”

Leonie smiled. The early morning sun of summer cast shadows over the nearby fields and for an instant she forgot Apthone’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. Apthone 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 sized 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 so 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, 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.

"Pardon?"

"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 molded 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 the 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 center 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 Aphone 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 Aphone. But more than that, Diane Dietz, a teacher of seven years standing and hitherto contented, was jealous of Aphone. She wanted Leonie all to herself and in a mood of jealous rage that might have made her hit Aphone 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.

||

Richard Aphone 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 Aphthone and Leonie took advantage of the anonymity of the close-pressed crowd to approach him.

“I must speak with you,” she said.

Aphthone sighed, then swayed like a drunken clown. “You are.”

“Alone, please.”

“Can’t it wait? I am 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. Aphthone was lanky in build with a face like a frost-broken gargoyle.

“I’m pregnant,” Leonie said softly.

Aphthone 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 preemptively.

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 ha 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 colors, 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.

III

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 medals he had won, but after five years it was all predictably boring.

She had had to 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 Quasimoto 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, he 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. Aphone 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 by ignored her. Morgan arrived to greet all the men – he fussed 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.

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 write 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 sneer 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 have live 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 simple 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 worried – except 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 his tom 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.”

“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 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 Aphone 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 Aphone 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 thing 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 splattered 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 hand 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 than 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 in comprehendingly.

"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 Apthone 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 twinned them 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 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 her 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. Its 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 Tammaso 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 luminosity 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, 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 Mistress of Earth, no cares assailed her. Each tree was a deity she blessed over 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 new of Aphone. The failed rapist lay in a coma, balanced between life and death, and Diane smiled when worried Fisher with a 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 – heLast 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 Apthone’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 labeled 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 color 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 to 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 Apthone 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.

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 wench, and see what thou art. Be loathe to think of aught by 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. The 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, 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 Aphone 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 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 time – 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 added 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; few still bought holiday cottages and after two hundred years of industrialization and four decades of agribusiness that had reduced Shropshire to just another English county, its settlements were 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, 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 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 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 stumps, 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 luminosity 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. 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 times, 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. Here teaching was bright, an innocent joy that brought a remembrance of childhood dreams, while her Mynd was earth-bound and dark, a woman, 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, pedaling 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 Aphone the half-dead, and tomorrow at Rachael's party, she, as befitted a natural Mistress of Earth, would were black. Her sympathetic witchcraft might even work.

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 color."

"Yes."

"It might suggest something. Your necklace is beautiful."

"It was my Grandmother's. A 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. Apthone, 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, then 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:

Go gladly, remember me
And the sensuous times we had
Now you have put away
At once longing for maidens.

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 obviate 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 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.

“Is Mr. Aphone 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 magical. 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 breathe, 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 way.

“Why,” Diane said, trying to hold the moment through silence as she touched Rachael’s shoulder, “are you studying math?”

“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, Geliebe, 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 loft 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 and 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 littered. 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 the World's End and the foot of Ashlet Hill where Diane's bungalow lay, shaded from all the 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. She 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 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 marvelous!"

"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 of 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 they fell asleep to dream in the humid heat of the night.

XIII

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 have 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 you 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 acres 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 playing 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 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 it 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 but 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!” 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 within the School Governors, you know!”

“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, is 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 driving?"

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 and neatly hedged, to an isolated country inn. A few cars were beside the lofty oak 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 returning 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 about 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 rumor?"

“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 somber 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 boldly 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 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 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 owlishly 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 let 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 leveled 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.

XVI

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 dialed 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 channeled 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 check 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 check. 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 check 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 check. "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 card 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 love 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 rancor, 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.

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 Helmsly to York – but for Diane it was special. Not simply because a mile away to the northwest lay the imposing while stone buildings of Ampleford 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; 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 chants. 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 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 rotten jetty pointed like a broken finger toward its heart. 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 and 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 imperceptively 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 lick 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-somber 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 somber 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 Aphone," 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 with 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.”

“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 favorite 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 man had described.

Then the silence, while clamored 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 that 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 colors 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 dialed 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 tires 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 Aphone 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 as he knew the one day, maybe soon, she like himself would need and heir. Would hers, he wondered, be in Initiate and not her child? He did not know – but would say nothing, as she herself would say nothing, for there was nothing to be said which words might describe. 'It is not right,' Sophocles had said, 'to give names to some deeds.'

Somewhere, in the darkness nearby, a dog howled.

THE DEOFEL QUINTET - INSTRUCTION 'SYMPHONIES' OF THE DARK PATH

by Anton Long

*(This article is an introduction to 'The Deofel Quintet' via The Order of Nine Angles released from the Archives of The European Library. It will serve as a basic guide as to the intent, content and structure of The Quintet (*1). The MSs, although available to members of the Federation and some other groups, are to be exclusively published (as both books and audio cassettes) for a wider audience by Arktion Press (*2) in sequence in 1995-96. Copyright of all ONA material has been entrusted to S.B.Cox. The ONA represents a genuine pagan tradition having its roots in the Hyperborean civilisation. All of its material is held in a Special Collection in T.E.L.*

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"The works collected under the title 'The Deofel Quartet' (*1) were written as Instructional Texts for members of a Black Magick group. 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 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 only required the imaginative participation of the reader, but also sought to involve their 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 magick/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 individuals in real life. Naturally, quite a few of the forms so explicated are dark or sinister.

This is explicated in many ways including:

a) of how individuals and groups of individuals by other individuals and groups, be these magickians or not;
b) of how various individuals are affected by certain elemental/magickal forces and 'emotions', these forces etc being manifest in various guises- some directly magickal, some archetypal (as, for example, when a man is charmed and falls in love with a woman, he is apprehending that woman archetypally) and some aeonic. The manipulation of the energies/forms and so on varies in the different MSs, as the aim or intent of such manipulation does- for example, sometimes it is for direct personal desire/gratification, sometimes it is due to unconscious factors, sometimes it is due to a desire (sinister **and** otherwise) to change/aid a particular individual or individuals.

However, just as important in each MS as this covert/overt form of magick is how and why individuals become changed via it in many and various situations. Thus, for example, sometimes change occurs because of personal involvement with others, sometimes through being influenced (either consciously or unconsciously) by magickal energy (which itself may be directed at that individual by another), sometimes through mediums like music (with perhaps some 'magickal' input from another), sometimes via personal confrontation with unconscious fears and/or insights.

All of these changes are presented in the various MSs from differing perspectives - and these perspectives are sometimes individual (directly personal) as they are sometimes magickal. The perspectives change-

from MS to MS and sometimes within a single MS - and while the perspective may be 'sinister' it is also 'moral': that is seen from the viewpoint of an individual adhering to 'conventional morals/attitudes'. This diverse variation is intentional, since by it the reader is (or should be) able to objectify the action/changes/characters and thus understand the influences (magickal or otherwise) behind these, particularly with reference to the psyche. Thus understanding is aided by the fact that each MS is related to a particular septenary sphere and thus to some extent deals with the energy/magick/influences both unconscious and conscious of that sphere. However, as in real life and real magick, other influences (from other spheres) may sometimes intrude and complicate matters and the reader should be capable of understanding the interplay.

The understanding that results from a reading and study of the MSs (using the themes, questions etc revealed here *3 and in other notes) is part of the process of Initiate awareness. This should assist those following the seven-fold way to arrive at essential understanding of their own psyche as well as that of others. Such understanding enables magick itself to be understood- and used effectively.

The Quartet consists of:

1. Falcifer: Lord of Darkness
2. The Temple of Satan (aka The Witch Queen)
3. The Giving
4. The Greyling Owl

The general purpose of the MSs is briefly explained in the 'introduction' which follows their title page. Specifically each deals with a form of energy and the means whereby they can be controlled as well as how those forms affect individuals, both consciously and unconsciously. In some of the works (for example 'Falcifer') the magick is obvious; in others, (for example 'The Greyling Owl') it is much less obvious, and for good reasons.

The best approach is to read each work in order of complexity starting with the least (esoterically) complicated. Thus, the reading sequence would be: Falcifer; The Giving; The Temple of Satan; The Greyling Owl. Further, this increasing complexity operates, in the individuals, on different levels. At first, all of them should be read merely for enjoyment (and the 'esoteric' information obvious on a first reading). A further reading should provoke questions and (hopefully) insights into esoteric matters in general and the reader's psyche in particular.

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NOTES

**1: The Deofel Quintet is the original Quartet plus 'Breaking the Silence Down')*

**2 All proceeds go to Jomsburg Foundation with a portion to TEL)*

**3 These themes/questions together with a resumé of each Book of the Quintet will be published in the next issue of the Journal.*

Ordering procedure:

Individuals may purchase limited edition copies of the original MSs as stored in TEL Archives, which are available immediately, or await the book format which price will be advised later. Falcifer Lord of Darkness (112pages); Temple of Satan: (110pages); The Giving (113pages); The Greyling Owl (109pages); Breaking The Silence Down (118pages);

Each MS is priced as follows:

a) unbound: £8 each

b) in black ring binder: £10 each

Plus postage & packing per item which is:

a) Surface=£2.00p ----- Air= Europe:£2.30p/World £4.30p

b) Surface=£3.50p ----- Air= Europe:£4.00p/World £7.80p

The Deofel Quartet: Themes and Questions

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Viewed in a simplified way, the four word deal with the first four spheres of the Tree of Wyrð. Thus:

- 1) Falcifer – deals with the first sphere (Moon) and some of its ‘influences’ (in the personal sense) in an overtly magickal setting.
- 2) Greyling – deals with some aspects of the second sphere (Mercury) in a way ‘removed’ from a magickal setting.
- 3) Temple of Satan – deals with some aspects of the third sphere in a directly magickal setting.
- 4) The Giving – deals with the transition from the third sphere to the fourth sphere, in a specific magickal setting.

(1) and (2) may be said to be written from a male perspective; (3) and (4) from a female perspective. But in all the interplay between the ‘male’ and ‘female’ aspects are important. (Note: female/female is dealt with in the MS ‘Breaking the Silence Down’).

In each of the works the interplay of ‘light’ and ‘sinister’ is also described, although only in some works (e.g. Falcifer) is this framework viewed in the ‘conventional magickal sense’ (i.e. from a ‘sinister’ viewpoint). In all cases, the ‘moral’ relativity should be obvious, although it may take some insight/further study of the MSS for this to be seen. The same applied to the magick – i.e. the alteration of individuals/events/archetypal forms and so on by a Master/Mistress/magickian: only in a few instances (e.g. Falcifer) is this instantly recognizable as ‘magick’ (robes, rituals and so on). There are important reasons of all this – reasons which, one understood should aid the esoteric understanding of the reader.

Thus the MSS are more challenging/esoterically interesting than might appear from a first, casual, reading.

II

The following lists give some (not all) of the main themes and questions dealt with/arising from the Quartet. They are intended only as a guide to further reading of the MSS themselves and then to provoke further study of them/aid the understanding obtained from the first reading.

1. **Greyling** – What forces {in both magickal and personal sense (is there a difference?)} control/influence the characters of Mickleman, Andrea, Alison and Fenton? Does Alison's perception change? If so, by what means? Is this means intentional – or via magick? If so, to what end/purpose?

Does Mickleman's perception/insight change? What is his initial level of self-understanding? What is his wyrd? What is Fiona's part in his life?

What, if anything, is Edmund seeking to achieve and why?

Some elements (clues existing in the MS):

A.) How does supra-personal magick work?

B.) To what end is this magick?

C.) Archetypally (regarding spheres of Tree of Wyrd) what forces act upon the psyche of the main characters?

D.) The MS expresses one aspect of real magick in action – is this magick as described in the MS sinister? If so, why?

2. **Temple of Satan** – What archetypal elements are present in Melanie and Thurstan? How is Melanie changed – and why? (See quote from Book of Recalling at the beginning of MS)

Does Thurstan change through his love with Melanie? If so – why? Can all these changes be related to the experience of an Initiate, in real life, following the seven-fold way?

What level of insight has Algar attained? Is he a magickian – in control? Do external forces/archetypes control/influence him? Is this related to Initiate experiences? Does Algar understand wyrd?

Pead – what is his level of insight/achievement? Jukes – what is his? Does his esoteric development change? If so, how?

Saer – who is he? What is his role? His magick? What is Claudia's understanding/role and so on?

Main theme – what is the magick and wyrd of the MS and why?

- 3. The Giving** – Rhiston and Mallam: what is their level of development/understanding? Does this change? Can they as characters be related to the journey of an Initiate?

Lianna – what is her esoteric development/insight? What key factors influence her?

Thorold – what is his role and how does this change? Has he esoteric self-awareness? Is there a manipulation of him by Lianna? If so, why?

Imlach and his daughter – what are their roles and level of esoteric development. How well does Imlach fulfill the archetypal role of Guardian?

Monica – is she manipulated? If so, why? Is her death the result of magick? If so, why?

Some themes:

- a) What is the magick of the 'story'? Is this magick sinister?
- b) How do Mallam's belief and magick differ from Lianna's? Is he a Satanist? Is Lianna? What is Lianna's relationship to him, his wyrd?
- c) Is the historical setting (Templars, etc.) necessary?
- d) Does the story show Lianna as a real Mistress of Earth?
- e) What is Sidnal's role in relation to the magick and Lianna? Is he 'Satanic'? (What is Satanic?)

Additional notes:

To some degree, all the MSS in the quintet deal with a particular type of magick/manipulation and this is explicated in many ways including:

- a) Of the individuals and groups of individuals by other individuals and groups, be these magickians or not;
- b) Of how various individuals are affected by certain elemental/magickal forces and 'emotions', these forces etc. being manifest in various guises – some directly magickal, some archetypal (as, for example, when a man is charmed and

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The understanding that results from a reading and study of the MSS (using the themes, questions and so on revealed here and in other notes on the quintet) is part of the process of Initiate awareness – and should assist those following the seven-fold way to arrive at a personal understanding of their own psyche as well as that of others. Such understanding enables magick itself to be understood – and used effectively.

III

Example Analysis

(Note: The following concerns the MS ‘The Temple of Satan’ and is given as an example – only a few of the themes of the MS are analyzed.)

- 1.) Real life background: External Adept having run a successful group and developed as a consequence of this and magickal background a certain charisma and ‘power’. Then finds emotions arising within themselves – due to the influence of one (or more) individuals. Such emotions tend to disrupt: personally and magickally - until they are understood and the ‘projections’ cease (qv. anima/animas). This leads to discovery of a new type of magick and a new ‘perspective’.
- 2.) MS background: Melanie as ‘Mistress’ of a Temple – the influence of Thurstan upon her. Melanie had reached a point where her power and lusts (e.g. her sadistic tendencies) no longer imbue her with complete satisfaction – she, like a real Satanist, is not satisfied, despite her achievements. Algar, her sinister High Priest, realizes her developing an interest in Thurstan and seizes upon this ‘weakness’ as he sees her ruthlessness declining. Gradually, her feelings for Thurstan develop (she, at one point, unconsciously identifies with a ‘role’ she is playing to manipulate Thurstan) – and this leads to a loss of her magickal power. Thurstan is the opposite of Melanie: almost an ‘innocent’ (“causal” as against her “acausal/sinister” persona).

This conflict is gradually resolved – via Saer, who is ‘form’/archetype of what is beyond (aeonic influences etc.). Melanie had to undergo the experiences brought because of Thurstan (both emotional and practical – at one point his is almost the archetypal ‘Fool’) in order to reach the next stage of her esoteric development. Part of this is because Thurstan enables the birth of her child – physically (as an heir) and magickally, to take her beyond the Abyss; a completion of her personality. Claudia represents a further emotional complication for both Melanie and Thurstan – her death being due to Melanie’s emotional involvement with Thurstan (which led to Algar’s plot: morally, she should have kissed Algar when she had the chance using him thus as an offer). In effect, Melanie lost control of Algar (sinister High Priest archetype) due to her own conflicting emotions. Jukes is someone swayed to unconscious influences – and he brings about changes in others. He remains trapped in his ‘role’ – despite experiences (e.g. his terror at seeing Algar returned), which provoke only a temporary insight. He returns to submission to his passions. The assumption of a female member of his group – by Saer, note – to Melanie’s former position (p. 96 f) is confirmation of this; he missed his opportunity. So he becomes a ‘new’ Algar, and another cycle begins.

Toward the end, Melanie has a choice – between Thurstan and her own wyrd. She chooses wyrd, her magick returns, and Thurstan is left alone again, wiser than the ‘Fool’ he was, to perhaps begin his own inner quest. Saer provide some incentive/manipulation of Thurstan (qv the crystal sphere) to intrigue Melanie, but it is Melanie’s decision/psyche, which leads to her involvement with him.

A Beginning

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Per Sorenson was dead.

His death did nothing to ease the shelling. Katgusha rockets still shattered the buildings around. A tram burned as rubble from a nearby explosion slithered onto the tracks in front of it and the armored troop carrier bearing Sorenson's body turned to avoid the flames.

A pretty woman wearing a Wehrmacht helmet for protection against debris looked up at the carrier and briefly smiled. But her smile did nothing to relieve Dieter's sadness, and he watched her as she walked nimbly through the rubble clutching a canteen of water. The block of buildings ahead of her shook with explosions, and smoke and dust drifted away with the slight wind. Somewhere nearby a man screamed.

Dieter and his comrades did not move as the carrier bore them and the body toward the Ploetzensee cemetery. Zhukov's Red Horde was near and Dieter imagined he could hear small arms fire in the brief pauses between shell, rocket and bomb. Despite the explosions, no one ran along the streets, and a tired Volksturm guard waved the troop carrier through the intersection. Nearby, young boys in Hitler Jugend uniform worked cheerfully, digging a trench parallel to a lane of twisted, torn trees. Their leader spoke, but Dieter heard nothing except another shell burst nearby. For a few seconds the boys stood silent, their caps removed, as the carrier passed. Sturmscharfuhrer acknowledged their respect with a salute.

Sorenson's coffin was made from empty ammunition crates and Dieter helped lower them and their body into the grave. The symbolism seemed fitting for a man who had fought for three years on the Russian front, always with his machine pistol on a lanyard around his neck.

Dieter's eulogy was brief: "Bright and glorious that warrior's Destiny who in battle-array stands for his children and home, stands for the woman of his heart, bravely opposed to the foe. Do Death my come, when it will, bringing this life's thread to an end."

"For think not that Destiny will allow for a man to live always unharmed, great though he be, though even he boast descent from the gods. Even though the coward pass through the fury of battle safe to his home in his flight – Death will assail him there. But then he dies unlamented, unloved by his folk, while both the high and the low weep by the tomb of the brave".

"Yes, with a nation's tears wherever he may die, we bewail him; and if he the brave lives he is hailed all but a god upon Earth. Strong as a fortress of defense in the fight do we gaze on our hero; his are deeds for the many, and he does them alone."

Amid the falling shells Hermann led the last salute before the honor guard fired their three salvos over the grave. A woman flak helper threw fresh Spring flowers before the Earth protected the body: not for Sorenson the mutilation the Soviet troops inflicted on the bodies of dead SS officers.

The men, led by Hermann, were singing "I Had A Comrade" and there were tears in Dieter's eyes. Sorenson had saved his life, twice.

The journey back to the dug-out was slow, and Dieter wished Zhukov's troops would attack. For every bullet a kill; for every Panzerfaust a tank. Vengeance for Sorenson's death.

The smoke twilight from the battle bombardment was long, and Dieter was relieved when the first tank appeared, lurching over the rubble in the street. A Soviet sniper made a dash for the safety of the church façade on Dieter's right but then stopped to clutch his throat and topple to the ground dead. The tank turned abruptly, its machine gun hitting nothing that was living. Dieter aimed the pin on the edge of the

Panzerfaust at the tank, gripping the weapon under his arm. His muscles ached from the repetition and there was no elation about the kill.

Close range Soviet bombardment began while machine gun fire spattered the ground. The buildings around – or what was left of them - hid a few German snipers and Dieter was trying to judge their number from their sporadic when the bullets and the bombardment ceased. Dieter tensed while buildings and the burning tank crackled with fire.

A few grenades were thrown, then a slow rush of Soviet troops among the rubble and the bodies.

“Tank riders!” shouted Dieter.

The only thing that tank riders did was advance and die, and Dieter did not disappoint Stalin’s expendable peasants. He shot two, three, six. Hermann had run out of grenades. More Soviet snipers were seeking cover to provide cross-fire but Dieter could only target one before the others escaped into the rubble of the church. He threw his last grenade after them.

The young machine gunner in the dug-out beside Dieter was dead and he rolled the body away before quickly changing the clogged barrel of the gun. Hermann fed the ammunition belt until, without a sound, he slithered down the trench, shot in the head. The tank riders were crawling closer but Dieter held their advance with Hermann’s sub-machine gun while through the smoke filled street another tank lurched toward him.

Soon Dieter had no more ammunition, the men in the dug-outs behind him were dead and he began to throw bricks, stones and anything he could find before scrambling back to find a weapon with which to kill. From the still warm hand of one of his dead comrades he took a Mauser pistol but had no time to aim. The shell from the tank exploded near him knocking him over before burying him under earth, rubble and wood.

Dieter awoke to consciousness to hear the crackling of a nearby fire and the distant explosions of battle; to smell burning wood and flesh, and to see above him framed by the crack of light, a large brown rat.

No voices reached him and when he clawed his way cautiously into the light he could see no human movement along the street. The light drizzle refreshed him, and he let the rainwater soak his hair and trickle over his blood stained face before crawling toward his dug-out. The tank smoldered but the dead Soviet troops had been removed.

Along the street an old man pulled a wooden cart while beside him two women walked enwrapped in long coats with black shawls covering their heads. From the end of the cart two sets of bare feet protruded. A squad of Zhukov’s soldiers led by a bandy-legged officer in a peaked cap strutted toward them. They shouted and laughed. The old man tried to speak, but the officer knocked him down before three soldiers dragged one of the women into the façade of the church. She screamed and resisted and was shot.

Dieter shot the officer through the head. Surprise and his marksmanship killed four more before inaccurate fire was returned but within seconds he had shot the remaining three.

“Thank you,” said the old man as Dieter approached. “You must go – there are more.”

Dieter knelt down to retrieve a selection of weapons from the bodies before helping the woman to her feet. Her beauty surprised him and he forced himself to turn away.

“Where is the front line?” he asked.

“There is no front line,” said the old man sadly, staring at the ground.

Before Dieter could reply, the woman spoke. “You must go - it they find you alive.....”

“And you?” he asked.

The woman smiled. “We are now the children of Fate. We shall head west.

The old man knelt briefly beside the body of his dead daughter before covering her face with his coat. He dragged the two bodies of his wife and young daughter from the cart to lay them beside, covering them the best he could.

“I have no strength to carry them for a burial,” he said.

A lorry smoldered at the end of the street where a building showed a tilting inside of floors.

“Where is your regiment?” the woman asked.

Dieter looked around the scene of their last battle. “I am the Regiment!” he said proudly. Dizzy and weak from loss of blood and concussion, he collapsed against the cart.

“We must help him,” he heard the woman say.

The old man sighed wearily. “Yes, I know.”

The last thing that Dieter remembered was the woman’s beautiful smile.

Wolfram stared into the quartz sphere while outside his shuttered room the high ranking SS office waited in the cool air of the Bavarian Alps.

There was no mystery in what he sensed through the medium of the crystal as, many years ago, there had been a mystery when a gaunt young man fresh from war had sought Dietrich’s help to seek him out. Now they both were dead and he alone of the original seven was left to try and build from the ruins of the destruction a new empire to reach toward the stars.

The Dark Gods that for most of his life he had served would be waiting among those stars and he had only to open another Gate for their power to be his for him to use it as he had used it to help that young man of vision. Yet there was something that he did not understand about the events that had brought destruction to his dreams. Some other power opposed to his own must have been invoked and he moved away from the crystal to stare for several minutes at the pieces scattered over the seven boards and one hundred and twenty six squares of the Star Game. But he could see no pattern that might explain the events and, sad, he shook his head to play perhaps for the last time upon his piano his favorite piece of music by Bach.

The music brought quiet joy and he entered his plain Temple to seek the guidance of his gods. The quartz tetrahedron glowed, a little; as it had done for the past few days and he rested his hands on it. The coldness seemed to drain away his sadness and joy and he imagined he was traveling through the dimensions beyond the Seventh Gate. There was a presence awaiting him among the stars at the very edge of the galaxy and he allowed it to shape his consciousness as many times in the past it had been shaped. The futures of his own planet lay in visions around him and he had only to find here desire to make one future real

With one possibility he returned to the terrace where against the backdrop of mountains the office waited, holding a sheaf of files. The files contained the personal details of SS officers who had distinguished themselves in the savage combat of the last few months of the war, and Wolfram read through them all slowly and with interest. Per Sorenson, his favored, was dead but in an hour he had found a successor.

He handed the file of the chosen to the office. “You can make the arrangements?”

“Yes!” replied the officer curtly but with respect. “And the country?”

“England.”

The officer was surprised. “As you wish.” He saluted, bowed slightly and left the terrace to walk down the steps toward the road.

Dieter could recall little of his journey. Burnt by fever he heard mumbled voices, the sound of aircraft, smelt putrid smells, felt a damp cloth on his face and the bumping as the cart trundled its slow way across a ravaged land. At length, daylight stung his eyes and he saw a convoy of lorries, Soviet soldiers standing idle, the husks of burnt-out tanks. Behind the cart where he lay hidden he could see a straggle of unkempt people pushing or carrying on their backs a few possessions.

A few more miles and the old man ceased his pulling of the cart. “There is a Soviet check point ahead” someone had said.

Slowly, night drew its darkness over them and the people huddled in the small convoy for safety stopped, exhausted and hungry.

“What shall we do?” Dieter heard the beautiful woman ask her father.

Stiffly, Dieter climbed from the cart. A haggard woman in a black skirt, coat and shawl stared at him. Even in the twilight his uniform was distinct. Soon, everyone was staring at him.

“There is a reward for the likes of him!” crooned the old woman. “It would feed us for days!”

Several of the group stood up to move toward Dieter. The old man pulled the cart between them.

“You make me ashamed to be a German,” he said to them.

“Germany is finished!” shouted the old woman. “And it’s due to the likes of him!” She spat on the ground. “When did you last eat, eh? A proper meal I mean. Meat and fresh vegetables!”

Dieter held the old man’s arm. “I am stronger now and shall leave.”

The old man nodded, “Hans-Peter Schemm.”

“Hauptsturmfuehrer Dieter Norkus.” They shook hands.

“My daughter, Ilse.”

Dieter bowed to her. “I have much to thank you and your father for.”

“It was nothing,” she said, “compared to the sacrifices some have made.”

“And the war?”

“Unconditional surrender.”

“The Fuhrer?”

“Dead – so they say.”

Dieter sighed. “I hope I shall see you again.”

“Koblenz – that is where we go,” Hans-Peter said. “Ask for us near the Florinsmarkt in the Old Town – if it still exists.”

“Until then, I thank you.” He brought his heels together in the Prussian manner, bowed toward Ilse and strode purposefully away from the road into the gathering darkness.

Dieter walked for several hours across fields before stopping to take a rest and check the two pistols he still carried. The night silence was strange after the bombardment of Berlin and he could not sleep only try and dispel the sadness he felt because the war was over with Germany’s defeat.

He did not know what to do except journey toward the farm of his father in Hessen. But Germany was in ruins, occupied by foreign armies and he felt himself bound still by the oath of loyalty sworn those many years ago.

Dawn’s first rays found him in a small copse. Somewhere near, he knew, would be a farm, with water and food and probably foreign soldiers, and he forced himself to remain within the cover of the trees until darkness brought again the freedom he needed to resume his journey.

Sleep did not come, just insistent hunger, thirst, and the boredom of inaction. Twice he thought he heard voices and once, the distant rumble of tanks and when night came he was content with the caution born of combat to edge his way slowly through fields, avoiding all roads and tracks.

Toward dawn he came upon farm buildings. A man slept by the entrance to the courtyard, a rifle beside him, and Dieter watched the buildings for nearly an hour before walking down the track to kick the sleeping man awake and taking his rifle.

“Good people!” the startled blurted out. He saw Dieter’s uniform and shouted several words in Polish.

“Quiet!” commanded Dieter. “You speak German?”

“Yes!” said the old man proudly.

“Who is in charge here?”

The man stood up to face Dieter.

“Landrat von Leiden.”

“No Russians?”

“No.” replied the man nervously, “not yet”.

Dieter looked around, listening. “The Landrat – tell him I want to see him.”

“Of course!”

Dieter did not have long to wait. Von Leiden stumbled toward him, bent and shuffling because of arthritis.

“Berlin?” he asked.

“Yes.”

“You have come a long way. Alone.”

“Yes.”

“Hummph!” He turned to speak to the Pole who was skulking behind. “Fetch some of the bread. And water.” He scowled.

“And a little of that sausage that you have hidden in the urn.”

The Pole displayed no emotion, and scuttled away.

“No manners these Poles,” muttered von Leiden. “They steal my geese.”

“I am Hauptsturmfuehrer...”

“I do not care who you are. The Russians are everywhere.”

“How far to the American lines?”

“Not far – a day, walking. Perhaps.” He stared at Dieter’s uniform. “My son – “ he began. Then abruptly; “I have some old clothes, should you wish. Your uniform –“

“No thank you.”

Von Leiden shook his head. “This war’s ending – it is not the same. No honor in peace.”

Dieter gave him the rifle and this gesture of trust brought tears to von Leiden’s eyes. “Our old world of honor lies in ruins.” Then seeing the Pole return he took the food and water and gave them to Dieter saying, “Go and quickly.”

Dieter stuffed the black bread and sausage into his pockets. The water was cold and refreshing and he cleaned his face briefly before handing back the jug, bowing his head to von Leiden and striding along the track toward the fields.

He walked for several hours, unconcerned about being seen for he had resolved to die fighting, like all his comrades, rather than surrender. He stopped briefly, to take from an inside pocket his Knight’s Cross which he pinned to his camouflage jacket, making sure all his insignia were clear and bright. Nearby, he heard someone whistle.

It was a tuneful whistle and, as it came nearer, Dieter recognized it as the Parade March of the 18th Hussars. It was whistled by a boy dressed in the striking uniform of the Napolas.

Dieter let him pass as he lay hidden by a tree before calling out to the boy.

“Heil Hitler!” the boy replied with enthusiasm. Tall and muscular, he appeared to Dieter be the perfect advertisement for the Jungmannen.

Dieter returned the salute, with less enthusiasm. “Where are you heading?” he asked.

“Home!” replied the boy cheerfully, his left hand resting on his dagger.

“Where is that?”

“Hamburg. And you, Hauptsturmfuehrer?”

“South. Have you eaten recently?”

“No sir.”

Dieter gave him all the bread and half the sausage.

“what will you do when you reach Hamburg?”

Brightly the boy said, “Build a new Germany!”

“Germany will certainly need rebuilding.”

“Sir?” the boy said seriously.

“Yes?”

“I would consider it a great honor if you would allow me to accompany you.”

“What about your home?”

“There will be plenty of time!” He stared at Dieter’s Knight’s Cross.

“Have you seen any action?”

“Yes! Anti-aircraft battery at Grunewald. Then when the Reds came I joined some Volksturm and Hitler Jugend. When we ran out of ammunition, we split up.”

“I have no intention of surrendering. But you are Germany’s future.”

“I am not afraid to die.”

Dieter smiled, “I can see by your eyes you speak the truth.” He gave the boy one of his pistols. “You might need this.”

In silence they walked together for many miles while Dieter’s spirit grew troubled, and he was about to order the boy to leave him and find safety in the American lines when ahead they saw a straggling line of soldiers.

“Go now,” Dieter said, “while you can”.

The boy smiled and shook his head before releasing the safety catch on the pistol. Slowly, the soldiers encircled them.

The boy was laying on the ground, his young, earnest face intently watching the advancing soldiers. Dieter took the pistol from him.

“The future is yours,” Dieter said.

“And you, sir?” the boy asked.

“At least they are American,” Dieter said, throwing the pistols away and raising his hands in the gesture of surrender.

They were taken to a small village occupied by the Americans. Several of the timbered houses, as well as the Saxon church, lay in ruins while around the largest standing building which served as American headquarters, small groups of old women and young children sat, strangely silent, on the ground. Amongst the destruction, trucks, jeeps, stores and American soldiers were littered without any appearance of order.

Pushed against a courtyard wall, they were searched for the third time.

“OK.” Shouted the American Sergeant, “turn around you Nazi bastards!”

The American Major who approached them did not smile. Behind him a small bespectacled soldier carried a clipboard.

“Rank, name and unit,” he said to Dieter.

“Hauptsturmfuehrer Dieter Norkus, Waffen SS, Nordland Division....”

“Sir,” the bespectacled soldier interrupted, talking to the Major, “the boy.”

“What?”

“G2 orders, sir.”

“Take over Sergeant!” the Major strode back toward his headquarters, his clipboard bearer in tow.

With the Major gone, the Sergeant approached Dieter. “Let’s see that medal,” he grinned. “Kinda nice, ain’t it?”

He went to rip it from Dieter’s uniform when the boy sprang forward. Without speaking a word he wrenched the American’s arm and tripped him up.

The other guards laughed.

“You son of a bitch!” Enraged the Sergeant jumped up, snatched a rifle and smashed the butt into the boy’s face. Dieter moved toward him, but two guards pinned his arms against the wall. Nearby, a few birds sang their unchanging songs of spring. The Sergeant ripped the Knights Cross from Dieter’s tunic.

“Sergeant Piaggio!” shouted the Major from his doorway. With a swaggering gait the Sergeant walked over to him and their conversation was whispered and brief.

Dieter was forced into the building and onto a chair. The Major said a few words in German before Dieter said “I do speak English.”

“Great! Cigarette?”

“No, thank you.”

“Where is the rest of your outfit?”

“They fell in Berlin.”

Nearby, a brief burst of gunfire could be heard.

“How did you get here?”

“I walked.”

There was a knock on the door and the Sergeant entered without saluting. “That kid, Major,” he said. “Tried to escape. We had to shoot.”

Dieter stared at him, his eyes bright with anger. “How heroic of you to shoot an unarmed boy!”

“Shut your mouth!” shouted the Sergeant.

“I wish to report this to the senior American officer,” said Dieter.

The Major was smiling and the Sergeant had started to laugh when Dieter leapt across the room to grab the machine gun the Sergeant was holding. His hand was on the barrel, his finger near the trigger when his two guards beat him into unconsciousness with the butts of their rifles.

For Dieter the next few days became a blur of impressions: a long journey in a covered lorry with other prisoners of war with whom he was forbidden to speak, an interrogation, another journey, another interrogation, a guarded prisoner of war compound where he and the other prisoners were forced to sleep on the ground.

He lost count of the days and weary from the months of fighting, the shock of defeat, lack of sleep, hunger, the journeys and the interrogations, he sat in the back of an American lorry watching through the open flap the stream beside the road as the lorry wound its way among some hills. The day was warm, perfumed by the scent of Spring's flowers and as Dieter began to recall the quiet beauty of the Germany he had known in Hessen as a boy, his spirit began to yearn to return to the house of his family where to renew with his own hands the cultivation of their lands. There was a family legend, he knew, connected with the farm and he possessed a desire to wander free and homeward to hear his grandfather tell it. But Germany was in ruins, he himself was a prisoner of war and he still believed he was bound by his oath of loyalty sworn in the exuberant first year of the war.

"My Honor Commands Loyalty" said the motto on his ring – and to all the questions that in the last few days he had been asked his answer was always the same: "I have done nothing," he would say with pride, "that is dishonorable."

But they did not understand.

"For my Fatherland in sadness I weep" he recalled from memory for himself when alone or when no one would listen or believe his words of truth, "for my country am I robbed. How great is the chant of our woe: tear upon tear is shed and only the unseeing dead forget how to weep..."

Enwrapped in dreams of his home, he did not notice when the lorry stopped. But the driver brought him and his two guards out into the warming sun to move the rock-fall from the narrow road.

An old man shuffled slowly toward them along the road while they worked and Dieter was dragging the last rock away when he reached them. Without speaking he walked straight to the two guards who were lounging against the side of the lorry, grabbed them and knocked their heads together. Limply, they fell to the ground. The astonished driver went to draw his holstered pistol but swift like a wolf in attack the old man leapt toward him striking at his windpipe with his hand. The driver fell still on the road.

The old man was smiling, his eyes bright and blue like the clear sky of summer.

"Come Dieter Norkus, we must leave."

Dieter did not question his sudden freedom and followed as with surprising agility the old man led him upwards through the rocks and trees, along twisting tracks to a small wooden hut. Dieter recognized the SS officer who was waiting inside.

The officer handed him a sheaf of documents, saying: "All the documents for your new identity are there. Memorize the history you will find then destroy it. A few days from now you will be in your new country."

Dieter looked up from the documents. "Which is?"

"England."

Dieter was surprised. "May I ask – what for?"

“To continue what has been achieved, and prepare for what is next.” The officer saluted, bowed and left.

“I”, the smiling old man said, “am Rundi and will be your guide. Come now, for there is much to do.

Satanism - A Brief Guide to the Art of Magick

One of the long-term aims of the Dark Tradition is to bring to consciousness for the majority the reality of the Force that is Satan. This 'dis-covering' will result in the upward evolutionary surge known as the 'New Aeon'.

A magickal Order, such as the ONA, is only one of several forms by which Satan is presented - and presented in the most undiluted of ways, without the obstruction of mortal fears. In one sense, all genuine sinister orders are an invocation to Satan: they constitute in themselves a magickal ritual, with each member understanding the conditions required if the long-term goal of the rite is to be attained. This magickal ritual, being founded upon the uncompromising principles of Nature, contains within it spontaneous or unknown factors which defy the imposition of abstract dogma. By this magickal ritual the unique creativity, the uniqueness of Being possessed by each Adept, is allowed to develop of itself. But that uniqueness of Being is also the Will of the Cosmos itself, and thus certain types of individual creativity are Life made manifest during its course of Evolution - this is to say, in esoteric terms, that certain types of creativity presence the acausal. In essence, the creativity/magick that marks Adeptship is nurtured and expressed by individual defiance - the uniqueness of Being which is Satan.

Because genuine acts of magick presence the acausal, the relationship of magick with 'the world' can be said to be "wholistic": a relationship where the difference and diversity of Nature and 'forms' exist to enable the spirit (or Being) of the Cosmos to thrive and evolve - ultimately there is nothing which exists external to this continuous flow of Change; nothing which can be influenced or changed in isolation. A genuine Adept understands this, and begins to embody in their individual life, this most natural of esoteric paths: the way of empathy. As all genuine sinister magickians are quick to point out, this apprehension currently exists at odds with conventional esotericism. A well-quoted example is the qabalistic approach (as sickeningly influential today as ever) which involves the magickian - or more accurately 'sorcerer' - in viewing the forces of Nature as separate, often barbarous material to be dominated and manipulated for personal ends.

A highly evolved esoteric Order would not be characterised by this 'grimoire' approach, since such an approach lacks a binding purpose, a great and clear vision which would enable members to transcend the personal and become the organic whole of a true magickal order - an order which is the life of the Cosmos manifested in a conscious way, and pertinent to a particular moment in causal time. A profusion of this latter type of magickal Order would be one such result of the New Aeon made manifest.

In other words, what could be described as conventional occultism is that which is swayed by abstract theories over observation and intuition, whilst the genuine Western Way - for which read 'the Septenary System', Traditional Satanism, and so on - is concerned with what actually exists beyond limited personal forms. In real magick, there is an initial attempt to mimic the flow of natural forces, until an integration is achieved and with it, large-scale Willed Change - that is, conscious aeonic evolution. Via this process of magick - still the province of the select few (Satanists of course!) - the Cosmos can progress to its next stage of existence: to live consciously via its manifestations; to evolve from childhood to adult existence. This is the secret of The

This path of genuine magick does not involve however the slavish following of some 'cosmic doctrine'/mandate, or any other such dogma. It involves the individual in freeing themselves from all influences in order to live, or become, the reality of the forces of Life itself. Thus the purpose of the Seven-Fold Way: to guide its Initiates towards the attainment of self-insight, where the 'personal' exists as a method to express the Cosmos, and not as a hinderance - through projections - of the apprehension of Life as a unified whole. The reality can only ever be experienced anew by each Initiate, since this apprehension of Life is a way of Being, and can only, as yet, be partially described by abstract methods. Thus each new Satanist - and genuine Satanic order - is a new manifestation of the living essence: thus there is Evolution.

A magickal order such as the ONA is not motivated by trends in contemporary thinking, although it may on occasion manipulate 'fashion' to provoke an appropriate outcome. All forms - from magickal systems, to 'Art,' to revolutionary political organisations (etc.) - have a finite life-span, but the criteria by which

present-day Occultists judge forms as 'useful' or 'outmoded' is most usually influenced by temporal trends, by the status quo; little though this is consciously recognised.

One type of essential form so judged is the archetype. As discussed in Order MSS relating to Aeonics, the life-span of an archetype is not tied to 'linear time', or effected in any way by fleeting trends in society. At the very least, archetypes die when the civilisation to which they are bound dies - when a new aeon becomes manifest. Thus, they are subject to an aeonic/'alchemical' mode of time rather than the abstracted form by which we tend to live our personal lives, since 'time' is simply a measure of the change of Cosmic matter and energy.

But even on the cusp of a new aeon, an archetype may spawn offspring - or rather, it may continue to change according to its nature and particular mode of time. This occurs when the ethos of one aeon is continued and evolved into the next, as hopefully will occur during the transition from this present Western Aeon to the next 'Galactic' one.

In order to really understand such things as archetypes, one must attain through self-effort, the aforementioned liberation from all contemporary influences - and from those influences which lie outside temporal forms. Most who do not follow the Seven-Fold Way will not achieve those stages beyond 'individuation' because the present concept of 'liberated thinking' or occult understanding is still in itself dictated by the influences that engineer this present society/culture. With regard to implementing the practical, 'magickal' purpose of archetypes, personal 'like' or 'dislike' of one form or another does not necessarily validate or invalidate the reality of that form, and should not provide the basis for making a reasoned judgement of what is, or is not, of aeonic significance (this is particularly true of 'politics' ...). In general, archetypes exert influence upon the unconscious, with mostly indirect results. However, Satan (or perhaps more accurately Satanus) is a numinous symbol, a living, Earth-based manifestation of the acausal. As such Satan is that force made conscious, and the gateway through which we as sentient Beings become the Will of the Cosmos.

Thus, Satan is the word, "image", vibration, chant and deed of Cosmic evolution itself. The 'magick' of Satan and the Dark Gods in general are for us the keys to that Evolution. How present (or past) cultures view Satan is not entirely relevant, and should not be seriously considered by those attempting to form a judgement. Again, the reality has to be experienced.

A Sinister organisation [and Satanus is the epitome of the Sinister] possesses that reality and seeks to increase the Cosmic Tides via its works in the 'real world'.

Thus, the "chaos" trend of viewing all causal forms as merely means towards the 'Occult' attainment of some 'thing' is mistaken, because in this, a purely causal frame of reference - particularly in terms of 'time' - is used to judge that which actually possesses both causal and acausal components.

Not all forms by their causal nature express limited understanding of acausal forces. While some methods are practical tools by which the individual may attain various magickal levels (as in some Insight Roles), others are those forces made manifest in the causal world: that is, the form so created is not a nexion to channel or presence the essence - it is the very essence itself; the essence evolving as it must evolve in causal time and space. This is so because such manifestations possess the greatest capacity to presence the continuous flow of Change that is Life [and significantly, do not always conform to conventional 'Occult' expectations: they are viewed as 'exoteric']. That some forms may express things that are culturally understood as 'plebian', primitive, or "Old Aeon" is absolutely irrelevant to their capacity to cause aeonic Change. This discernment requires the Satanic qualities of insight, knowledge, intuition and reason. For those unique individuals whose Destiny is tied to such a form, there is no living of that form while hiding the "esoteric reality", the esoteric wisdom - the occult aspect. There is no clever deceit, no skilled manipulation, because the form created is the reality, is that esoteric wisdom made real and practical. This is the domain of Vindex, that much misunderstood embodiment of creative Change. Vindex does not really need 'the Occult' in conventional terms, to presence, or access the numinous ideals that s/he represents. Such things, in this case, only obscure the essence of Change, of evolution - as they can often distance a person from the creative numen which can and does provoke such an evolution.

Because of the nature of human consciousness, we possess the capability to extend and create symbols and forms (such as language, or more simply sound) which could describe the essence itself. Not all

abstract symbols [whether mathematical, magickal or other] need inherently and ultimately obscure the essence; and neither is it in their nature - or in the nature of any form for that matter - to presence the acausal by purely intellectual procedures. In this we need to understand and integrate with existing numinous symbols in order to spawn completely new forms - this initial confrontation and then synthesis of 'opposites' (in terms of the psyche) allows the necessary organic (and latent) relationship to develop between human life and symbols and other forms.

The majority are still swayed by archetypal forces conventionally described as "light" and "dark". That there exists a reality beyond such opposites does not mean that those opposites, for the majority, do not exist. They exist and exert influence until they are confronted and transcended. A magickal Order understands this, and thus seeks to guide its adherents towards the realms 'beyond opposites' via appropriate ordeals/Grade rituals - that is, via the fires of experience. That some (and they are very few) may attain this transcendence does not mean that such archetypes cease to exist for others, or that the realms beyond opposites are any more 'real'. Each realm, from those symbolised by Initiate to Magus, expresses a reality in the process of Evolution, and cannot be accurately comprehended in linear terms. In one practical sense, what is "good" and what is "evil" may be said to exist, since these are the concepts, at this point in time, by which a society views the world - by which life, for the majority, is still influenced. That the definition of moral absolutes may alter over the ages does not itself alter the essence by which they effect the process of human living.

This bifurcation still exists because that is the nature of our species at present, as it has been for centuries, despite the many external changes that have occurred, and despite the intellectual musings of philosophers and occultists alike. This is unlikely to begin to change significantly until the emergence of the next aeon - some four hundred years from now. Thus a rite such as the genuine Black Mass still possesses real magickal purpose for individuals at a certain level of their development, as well as contributing to the necessary, broader aeonic changes. Such a rite accesses Nazarene/Magian energies and then re-directs them in a sinister way - and, as has been stated elsewhere in ONA MSS, the Satanist does not believe in the reality of "God", or the 'divinity' of the Nazarene, only that others so believe. Thus, there is still great relevance in promoting and practising a system of genuine "Black" magick which aims to counter the works of those who promote and practise magick of the "White" variety: in terms of the psyche of the West, a cosmic battle must still be played out if a synthesis is to be achieved by civilisation as a whole. In esoteric terms, this is to say that our civilisation has not as yet evolved to the stage of Adeptship. The goal of the Sinister Initiate is to aid this aeonic synthesis, and the methods by which they achieve this for the majority will differ in many instances from those which enabled this achievement for them as individuals.

In reality, both an esoteric Black and White Order do exist, but the form that is now conventionally understood as "evil" is instead the way that will allow the necessary transition to take place, and thus prevent the stagnation and decay that would result from the triumph of Magian forces [as presenced by the "White" Order]. In the most profound sense therefore, it is the Sinister Path that enshrines 'divinity', little though this would be understood by the majority - but such an understanding by the majority is neither relevant, desirable, nor possible at this time.

In this very real Cosmic battle, Satan does not feature as some Judaeo-Nazarene device to oppress 'the Folk', but as a numinous symbol for our civilisation, of all that defies the counter-evolutionary force of the Magian. What is rarely expressed, however, amidst the rabid cries for a Ragnarok, is that such counter-evolutionary forces are part of the process of Cosmic Change, part of the Wyrd of Western civilisation. For without such opposition there is no real evolution, no Triumph of the Will - and no Life. Thus to oppose such counter-evolutionary forces is to positively aid aeonic evolution and bring the intergration with Nature so often sought by those who follow an Occult way.

As practitioners of magick, we must have the understanding to allow those numinous symbols which presence - or 'order' - the wyrd of the aeon to which we are bound, to evolve unhindered according to their own mode of time; to flow with, and consciously become those forces, rather than aid counter-evolutionary powers by allowing limited personal ideas and projections to dominate.

Real practitioners of Aeonick magick do not project their own understanding onto the society of their time, as they do not seek in their practises to elevate the understanding of their contemporaries by willful self-expression. Changes in the collective psyche will take much longer than one lifetime, and will instead swell in waves, over Aeons. Thus, a genuine practitioner of Aeonick magick works with the raw materials and possibilities that characterise the society of their time: they do not work beyond practical boundaries. And in this, importantly, an Aeonick magickian is not swayed solely by the desire to witness the fruits of their understanding in their own personal lifetime; they plan for centuries ahead, and embody in their Being the slowness of evolution, the Wisdom of Ages ...

For the Present, we exist in a society characterised by a 'supermarket' approach of choice and consumption, where individuals no longer create history, but look backwards and study, and romanticise - and distort. The realm of the Esoteric is no exception to this, and thus it is vital that we as Occultists, as creative individuals, cease to waste our time delving into the folk-tales and legends of past, dead cultures - this includes those of the Norse, Celtic, Saxon, and whatever else passes for conventional esoteric interest.

Because to derive esoteric inspiration from the dim and distant deeds of an archetype is an utter waste of the magickal opportunity that exists now, with the people who exist now and the potential that they can embody in the future. To create and perform rituals based on a dim and distant fireside tale - or employ the symbolism of a past communal life-style - is a counter-productive [in aeonic terms] indulgence. A 'culture' is, magickally, unimportant. What matters is civilisation - or more precisely, the living, evolving force that moves a civilisation forwards, and which is in itself embodied by that civilisation. In this, the creativity of an associated culture is only of relevance if it presences this living, moving force.

When we enter a place of enigmatic 'historical interest', such as an old settlement or stone circle, we do not need to psychically unravel - or seek to re-enact - the secrets of a past community: we who live now are those secrets, we are that enigma. We must only tap into the genius of our creativity and flow forwards, leaving the monuments, the ruins - the dead shells - where they belong. If there is a message locked within the unknown dolmen, it is this.

However, to use the form of an ancient or old archetype for the purpose of doing something with that archetype in the world is another matter. But this implies re-presenting such an archetype as the hero of a new mythos - a mythos entirely representational of the current aeonic phase, and by that token one which allows the next phase to be reached.

Thus, a new mythos would feature an established archetype committing great acts of nobility (and great acts of terror), the nature and form of which would inspire and liberate the 'modern masses'. The magick of the archetype would be in its living now in the real world, rather than having existed in some ethereal realm of the past; a past when the manifestation of Human life was, in many respects, very different to today. These differences lie in what is and what is not practically needed in order for the people of modern 'Western' society to feel inspired towards overcoming the problems, self-imposed and otherwise, of their day-to-day existence.

Thus, the deeds of this archetype could be a re-presentation of those acts committed by a real-life, modern day hero (such as a Satanist) - or the creation of a new legend, the practical basis of which has yet to occur, therefore inspiring individuals to bring it to life in the causal world ... The ways and methods of this powerful magickal technique are legion.

And so in this, and in other ONA writings, the practical meaning of Magick is explicated - all that is now required of sinister esoteric Orders and individuals is the Will to make the meaning a reality. Thus, in conclusion, the magickal aims of a genuine sinister organisation should be as follows:

- 1) To continue to maintain the existing Tradition by disseminating the various teachings and methods [as published in MSS such as Codex Saerus, Naos and others].
- 2) To practically aid those 'exoteric' forms which will bring the New Aeon.

3) To extend the Tradition by creating new forms of the sinister. These would include Artistic [musick/images/writing]; 'Magickal' [new ceremonial/hermetic forms]; and practical, numinous ways of living [as in the creation of an esoteric rural community, or communities].

Though many will dismiss it because they do not have the courage to try, the Way of Satan remains, amidst the myriad of 'paths' the essence of the Great Work. Experto credite.

And when the works are complete, a Satanist disappears from sight - toward the next stage, leaving astonishment, disbelief and many questions in their wake. And then the failures begin their campaign, of distortion and lies. Just occasionally, they may hear our laughter.

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A DARK TRILOGY

Three short stories of sinister magick, esoterically related, which - like the Deofel Quintet - are entertaining instructional texts for those following the dark quest which is the ONA. The style of these stories follows that of the Deofel Quintet: "While the form chosen is fictional, it is not 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 their 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'....."

Nythra

Kthunae

Atazoth

Nythra
A Sinister Concerto in Three Brief Movements
by
Anton Long
114yf

1

Lars smiled. The bullet had done its work, and his victim - his third opfer in as many months - toppled over backwards by the force of the impact, lay on the dark green late Spring grass, eyes open, limbs akimbo, and quite dead.

His vantage point had been the old Quince tree on one side of the ornamental lawn of the large Edwardian house, and he was soon back, past the wrought iron railings, on the pavement and walking under the bright May sunshine toward where he had parked his motorcycle, the wide ring road a few streets away making his escape from the town quite easy. Less than three hours later he was back in his own city, in his own modern, small, if expensive, Apartment overlooking the river. The smallness, the uncluttered clean newness, the view of the river, all pleased him, and, opening a bottle of Chablis, he raised his glass and gave his customary toast: "To presencing the Dark."

For Lars - not quite twenty-three years of age, of medium if muscular build and with a mane of not quite curly almost long chestnut-coloured hair - was entering the second year of his dark, sinister, quest. Months ago he had shed the once obligatory black clothes for stylish wear obtained through his new hobby of credit card cloning, just as he had exchanged the room he shared in a rented house with friends for his pleasing Apartment, and just as he had given up his dreary city office job. It was meant to be new start, after his successful completion of the Rite of External Adept, and it was. Even his own sinister group had begun to flourish, and tonight, his dark gods willing, there would be a new woman for him to sexually initiate.

The small bookshelf near his plasma screen contained a large quartz crystal and only a few books, all of which dealt with his dark quest, and he sat in his comfortable chair - set to give the best view of the river - to read from his favourite book, a compilation of Satanic articles.

"It is of fundamental importance - to evolution both individual and otherwise - that what is Dark, Sinister or Satanic is made real in a practical way, over and over again. That is, that what is dangerous, awesome, numinous, tragic, deadly, terrible, terrifying and beyond the power of ordinary mortals, laws or governments to control is made manifest. In effect, non-Initiates (and even Initiates) need constantly reminding that such things still exist; they need constantly to be brought "face-to-face", and touched, with what is, or appears to be, inexplicable, uncontrollable, powerful and "evil". They need reminding of their own mortality - of the unforeseen, inexplicable "powers of Fate", of the powerful force of "Nature".

If this means killing, wars, suffering, sacrifice, terror, disease, tragedy and disruption, then such things must be - for it is one of the duties of a Satanic Initiate to so presence the dark, and prepare the way for, or initiate, the change and evolution which always result from such things. Such things as these must be, and always will be, because the majority of people are or will remain, inert and sub-human unless changed. The majority is - and always will be until it evolves to become something else - raw material to be used, moulded, cut-away and shaped to create what must be. There is no such thing as an innocent person because everyone who exists is part of the whole, the change, the evolution, the presencing of life itself, which is beyond them, and their life only has meaning through the change, development and evolution of life. Their importance is what they can become, or what can be achieved through their death, their tragedy, their living - their importance does not lie in their individual happiness or their individual desires or whatever."

Slowly, as Lars read, drank his wine, listened to his favourite modern music, twilight descended as it does in England, bringing a strange aethereal beauty to the river and the mutely lit buildings on the opposite

bank, and he lay down his book to begin to plan his next deed. For there grew in him even then a desire for something beyond the clean almost emotionless efficiency of his killings, and he stood, outside, on his small balcony, glass of wine in hand, wondering what he might do.

His assignation with his sinister group was still some hours away and he spent one of those hours walking along by the river in the warmth of the early evening, half hoping that someone, or some gang, would attack him, for he had yet to try out the swordstick umbrella he carried. But all the people he passed seemed happy or absorbed in their own affairs, and he returned to the large, new, building that housed his own Apartment still considering what his new plan of action might be. Maybe it was this which made him err. Or maybe it was something else.

There was music in the room of a type he had not heard before, and he was scrutinizing the pile of CD's which lay beside the player when a female voice surprised him.

"It's Schubert's Piano Trio in E-flat."

She did not seem concerned to find a man in her Apartment, and stood, by the door to her bedroom, slightly smiling, her long auburn hair trailing over her shoulders, her nipples straining against the thin fabric of her revealing purple dress.

In control again, Lars said, "Beautiful."

"Yes, what a tragedy he died so young."

He was referring to both the music and the woman. "I believe I'm in the wrong Apartment." He guessed her age to be early thirties, and it was his turn to smile.

"Surreal."

"What?"

"This."

"I must be on the wrong floor."

"You are. You're right at the top, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"Better view?" She gestured toward her window and balcony.

"A little. Would you like to see?"

"Yes."

She was on his balcony, intently gazing across the river, and he stood so close to her their shoulders were touching. His dark quest had given him a confidence with women that his previous years lacked, and he allowed his hand to briefly touch hers as he turned and said: "Would you like some wine?"

"Yes," she smiled and followed him back inside.

He noticed her interest in his small pieces of electronic equipment, resting on the glass table he used as a desk. But she surprised him again by knowing what they were. "Cloning. Interesting," she said as she took the glass of wine he offered.

"It's just a hobby," he said and tried to hide his smile behind his glass as he drank.

"And one which can be quite useful. To interesting hobbies!" She raised her glass.

"To interesting hobbies!"

"You have a contact, I presume, who supplies some useful and necessary details."

For a few moments he looked at her suspiciously. Jared, one of the members of his sinister group, had indeed proved quite useful, employed as he was in an hotel. "Well..." he began to say in reply, trying to make some reasonable answer or excuse.

"Don't worry!" And she came toward him and touched his arm. "I've been looking for someone like you."

For a second he found her confidence, her attitude, her interest perplexing, but it was only a second. She was waiting, and he knew she was and he did not disappoint, taking the glass from her hand and placing both his and hers on the glass table. She did not resist his embrace: instead, she welcomed it, pressing her body into his and embracing him with a strength which surprised him. Then they were kissing, tongue to tongue, and removing each other's clothes.

Soon, they were on the floor, her dress pushed up around her shoulders, his shirt undone, his trousers and underwear removed. She was naked under her dress, and their sexual passion was intense. And when they were satiated, they sat, stretched out on the floor leaning against his sofa, drinking wine.

"You must have some interesting friends," she said.

"Not as interesting as you," he quipped, then winced at his use of a cliché. But before he could make some clever riposte in compensation, she spoke.

"You enjoy it, then?" she asked, "the game?" And she gestured toward his electronic equipment.

Her perspicacity amazed him and as he looked into her azure-coloured eyes he felt a brief contraction in his stomach as if she had reached out to him on another, darker, level. "Yes! Care to join the game?" He said the words quite without thought, instinctively, his face flushed with excitement.

"I would love too!" she replied, and kissed him. "When can we start?"

"Now?"

"Excellent! Anything in particular in mind?"

"Well, there is this meeting, tonight."

The Temple of his sinister group was a large converted room of a large house in Lars' chosen city, and it followed the precepts laid down in the *Black Book of Satan* as did the ritual of Initiation. Unusually, Lars did not participate, but sat with Arleen, his new lover, on cushions to one side of the altar, and as the ritual progressed Lars knew Arleen was unimpressed. So was Lars, despite the dramatic rendering of the ritual, and for the first time it occurred to him that such theatrical games had served their purpose and belonged to his past. He must quest forth into new realms, new sinister experiences.

It was many hours past midnight and Lars and Arleen left to stand for a while, in the garden of the house, in the still warm air of the night.

"You found it boring, then?" Lars asked.

"Yes."

"It lacked that vivifying ecstasy - that excitement, that danger - we need and crave."

"Most certainly."

"It's still early."

"My thoughts exactly!"

She stood smiling at him, and her presence, her eyes, the memory of their passionate, sexual, encounter earlier that evening, affected him in a reckless way. "I've got an idea," he said, satanically.

"This one," she said with an air of knowledge.

She had broken into, and started, the car parked in some nameless city street, in only a few minutes. "A youth, well-spent," she smiled as he looked at her quizzically.

Their target was several miles away in the sodium-lit darkness - an all-night garage on the edge of the city - where they, both dressed all in black, stopped, away from prying surveillance cameras, to assume their disguise of demon masks which Lars had borrowed from one of the members of his sinister group. There were no other customers, a tribute perhaps to the lateness of the hour, and Lars brandished his revolver while the thin, gaunt, and male keeper of the till with the face and clothes of a student, went even more pale. Lithe, Arleen vaulted over the counter, pushed him aside and took what cash there was. Less than a minute later, their first deed was done.

The money was irrelevant. It was the sheer excitement that roused them, that captivated, exhilarated, and after they had abandoned the stolen vehicle they sat in her powerful, sleek, car, laughing. Then they kissed, passionately, before she speedily, recklessly, sped them back to his Apartment and a night of physical passion.

2

It was only the beginning. For some reason Lars did not understand, but did not then bother about, he and Arleen not only inspired each other in a sinister way, but also complimented each other. He knew little about her beyond the few unimportant things she said about her past and present circumstances, but the truth was he was not that interested. What mattered for him was that he found her company vivifying. He felt stronger, more confident, more Satanic, as he knew she did. Quite without expecting to, or even wanting to, it seemed to him that he had found his perfect sinister partner, and he felt that with her he

might Presence the Dark in exhilarating practical ways, bringing dark magick to the Earth in a manner far beyond the mundane rituals, and cullings, he had previously used.

They spent the morning of that cloudy, rainy day, in his Apartment planning their next deed. Once, after they broken bread and drank wine, she browsed through his small collection of Satanic literature, all of which emanated from the *Order of Nine Angles* and all of which did not seem to interest her.

Taking down one of the books, he read for her his favourite quotation, and, after he had finished, she smiled and said: "That certainly expresses the essence. We two are more than mortal, for we are ready by our combined will and life-force and through our deeds to forge the next link in our evolution to inspire those who will admire us."

It did not seem a pompous thing for her to say given the circumstances, for Lars knew then with perfect clarity that she understood and it seemed to him for one indefinite, although brief, moment that she was darkness come alive.

"We might even become infamous," she added as a coda to his thoughts.

Now that, thought Lars, would be good. With this, his conversion was complete, and he showed her, locked away in aluminium cases and hidden behind a false back to his wardrobe, his small collection of guns, collected and bought from his sinister friends and contacts over the past two years. She said nothing, but the way she touched them pleased him.

Their planning completed, they left in her car to purchase the few items, and extra clothing, they needed, returning only to change into their new black outfits and affect a minimalist, but reasonably effective, disguise. They kissed passionately before setting forth into the typical rain of typical English middle afternoon.

An hour, and one stolen car later, they arrived at their destination: a Building Society in a fairly prosperous suburb. Three customers of indeterminate personality, and several staff, were inside. From his bag, Lars produced a shotgun, firing into the ceiling. One stocky middle-aged man, in a checked shirt and jeans, rushed toward Lars as a hero might, and Arleen drew the pistol Lars had given her, and shot the man dead.

"Money!" Arleen demanded to the terrified woman clerk nearest her, who duly if nervously obeyed, stuffing the small bag Arleen held out with a collection of banknotes.

Then they were gone, amid the sound of an alarm and a delayed, female, scream.

That night in Lars' Apartment - after a celebratory meal in an expensive restaurant paid for by Lars' hobby, and the customary toast to Presencing the Dark - their sexual passion and excitement attained new levels, binding them even closer together.

The morning sun found them tired, but joyous, and they lay together a long time in bed, drinking wine, touching, and talking of deeds they might - and should - do. Once, Lars left to return with one of his books, from which he read, and once they wandered to his sitting area to watch the news on his plasma screen. Their deed was there, if only briefly reported, and both smiled when they heard their deed described: "...callous...cold-blooded..."

"Those people, at that ritual, would they dare to do what we have done?" she asked.

"Probably not."

"Then they are still in chains; held back by their own feebleness, their inertia."

"Probably."

"So, it's only a pose for them, is it?"

"Probably."

That day of dark joy, killing, exuberance and passion became the archetype for the next part of their life together. Their next plan took them away, to another city, and although their *modus operandi* was almost the same, the dark intensity of their deeds increased.

This time, there was a long queue of non-descript people waiting patiently in the non-descript area marked out for such waiting, with the three non-descript serving staff of the chosen Bank seemingly secure behind their screens. The vestibule was large, if poorly lit by high modern lamps, and a non-descript kind of tribute to the time when the Victorian Bank building itself was a symbol for its times.

Arleen and Lars, in their now customary black clothes and minimalist disguise - a wig, Egyptian style make-up for her; a flat tweed cap and a moustache for him - energetically entered the building, their guns ready. Arleen shot the last person in the queue - an elderly man - and gestured for the remainder to lie on the floor, which, obedient to her gun, they did as the body of the man lay bleeding and dying near her feet.

The cashiers swiftly handed over money, and it was all over in a minute with Arleen and Lars calming walking out of the building into the street where oblivious people, and traffic, passed. Over the road, and two side-streets later, they were back in their stolen car as, in the distance, a Police siren wailed above the city vehicle noise, lyingly proclaiming a kind of mastery of the streets.

Three days later, Lars and Arleen ventured forth again, to a city even more distant. The drab, dreary building was almost the same, and it seemed to Lars that he already existed on some higher level, taut, waiting, like some dark predator, ready to lunge, to kill. There was no queue, this time, on that dreary rainy morning in that dreary city of copycat shops and traffic - only one customer with a face like an artists' blank canvas, leaning against the counter while a young woman Bank clerk talked trivia to him, half-smiling. Lars pointed his gun, but it was Arleen who shot him, once while he stood, and twice after he had fallen to the floor. A young man pushed opened the glass door as she did so, and he stood there, unmoving, his hand, knuckles-white, still holding the handle of the door. Arleen turned, raised her gun, pouted a kiss at him, and the young man fled with memories, a face, to haunt his dreams for years to come. Then she was smiling, waiving at the surveillance camera while Lars collected money.

Once outside, several people stood watching them - uncertain what was going on or what they should do - but Lars and Arleen walked calmly away not even bothering, this time, to hide their guns. They had not gone far along the street with its passing traffic when a Police car skidded to a halt.

"Armed Police!" a Police Officer shouted as he swiftly in a trained and masterly fashion exited the car, brandished his gun while using the open car door as a shield. "Put down your weapons!"

Lars turned and in an even more masterly fashion shot the man in the centre of his forehead. Around them, people ran, cowered, sheltered behind anything they could, astonished, afraid, amazed. The other Police Officer, about to aim, was forced to move away from his position beside the bonnet of the car as Arleen fired three times in his direction before brazenly walking around the back of the vehicle toward him as he crouched on the pavement that stood in front of a row of drab High-Street style retail shops. It might have been a scene from some film - except the dead body of the Policeman, the terror, the astonishment, of the people, were real. For a brief moment the Police Officer and Arleen looked at each other, weapons raised, and it was this look that doomed him. He could have fired at his closing target. Instead, he stayed crouching, looking into her eyes, looking at her smiling face, until the first of her two bullets impacted - one in his head, the other in his chest - when he tumbled awkwardly backwards yet sideways before the stillness of death overcame him. The rain had stopped as she had walked toward him, and a small swathe of bright, warm, sunlight came to relieve the scene of its repetitive city-drab greyness. Lars gestured toward Arleen, who understood immediately and she fastly, recklessly, drove them away from the scene in the Police car which, a few minutes later, they had abandoned in favour of another hijacked vehicle.

Hours later, back in their lair, the television news had pleased them - "...cold-blooded.....ruthless..." but Lars sensed Arleen was restless as they sat on his sofa, having toasted their latest triumph.

"If what you say - or rather, what those books of yours say - is true," Arleen said, after Lars had read another extract from his book, *Grimoire of the Dark Gods*, "why don't we just bring these entities who can cause chaos, disruption, back to Earth? Wouldn't *that* be fun! Watch all the morons scurry about in their terror."

Lars smiled, and continued to read aloud. "I quote: *The Dark Gods are means to self-fulfillment, self-understanding and self-divinity.....According to Sinister tradition, it is possible to "open a nexion to the Dark Gods" by certain sinister rites. Some of these rites involve such things as esoteric chant (for which see Naos) combined with a large, clear, pure quartz tetrahedron, while others involve ceremonies of blasphemy, excess and human sacrifice.*" He paused to look at her. "We would need a sacrifice, or two."

"Or three!" she laughed. "We should really change our tactics - keep one step ahead. I know, why not a bomb?"

"Or two."

"Why stop at two?"

"One small technical problem."

"You don't know how," she said.

"You guessed it."

"Can't be that difficult. Are we above mere mortals, or what?"

"I suppose the Internet would be a good place to start."

A meal, a bottle of wine, and several hours later, they had their answers. "All we need now are the materials, and ingredients."

A week later, they had their materials. Two days later, they had their bombs. They had slept little, and had ventured forth into the real world only to purchase or acquire the materials, the food, the wine, they needed. Their hours were spent studying the texts - the manuals they had acquired via the Internet - talking of deeds they might do, and satiating their sexual desire for each other. Those nine days had affected them both, although in different ways. Lars looked older, and somewhat tired, while with every passing day Arleen seemed to become more passionate, more energetic, more needful of physical passion. Their city targets were chosen quite at random - a Bank, a street of shops, an Inn - and they left their deadly explosive devices, packed with long nails, in three stolen cars, with their timers set one hour apart. Lars and Arleen were not disappointed by the chaos, the death, the terror, they caused, and they sat avidly watching the television reports of the explosions in Lars' Apartment, smiling, and making toasts with their glasses of wine to strange-named Dark Gods as the toll of their sacrificial victims rose: Shugara, Azanigin, Gaubni..

Lars was visualizing their victims - past and present - exulting in his deeds, and imagining the life of their lives seeping into, seeding, the large quartz tetrahedron he held in his hand. Arleen was beside him, pressing her warm thinly clothed body into his, and it seemed to him then that her nearness, her warmth, her very presence, not only strengthened him, overcoming his tiredness, but also seeped somehow into the crystal, warming it and his hand.

That night they ventured forth into the darkness of the rural English countryside, traveling hour upon tedious hour until they reached their destination. Lars had been there, already, in the first keen months of his dark quest, and he was not disappointed as they left their car in the lane by The Marsh to walk in the almost full moonlight to the top of Corndon Hill, for it was there that their simple ritual began.

Arleen held the crystal and he chanted his first chant: *Nythra khunae Atazoth*. She lay down then, naked, still holding the crystal, and he stood over her, chanting his second chant: *Binan ath ga wath am*. He lay with her then, naked body to naked body, while a cool breeze came to dry a little of his sweat as he moved upon her. Was there really a change in the light? Or was it just the intensity of his visualization? Was there really something there, seeping through the nexion of their ritual, their crystal, their visualization, coagulated by the blood they had shed, and their own, cold, sinister, desire?

She was reaching her climax and as she did so her shout became a dark exultation: *Aperiatum terra, et germinet Chaos*. Then, there was stillness.

3

He had been a little ahead of her as they descended the hill, clothed, and happy, and he had to will himself to stop from laughing, loudly, raucously, for in the moment of her climax he had sensed the worlds, the beings, the dimensions, beyond. So little; so puny - we are..... He wanted to run, to jump - to shout, scream, to share, the truth, and he was nearing the bottom of the hill when he turned around. But she was gone, nowhere to be seen.

Calmly at first, he walked back toward the top, as - calmly - he walked back down again. He waited, then, a long time, before returning to the top. He waited even longer by the car; in the car, even as Dawn arrived to bring the warmth of the Sun to dispel the chill of the last hours of that night. Once, twice, in the bright morning light of that warm morning he ascended that hill; wandered around it, and it was only

many hours later that he willed himself to leave, wondering, hoping, she would be there on his return, having played a lover's jape.

But she was not there, in his Apartment, and he found himself - surprised by his nervousness - knocking on her door, several Apartment floors below. There was no response to his insistent rapping. Her door was unlocked, as he half expected, and he stood inside the completely bare, empty, spaces, not knowing what to think, and drained of all feeling.

The days, the weeks, past, grave-worm slowly, and even the news of chaos spreading across his planet did not please him, at first.

[Fini]

Kthunae

It was dark. Not the usual dark of a rural English night atop some isolated, tree-free hill, but an intense dark that made Jared unable to see even a few feet in front of him, and he could not help but be nervous. His *Black Pilgrimage* was not going that well and he had to finally admit to himself that he was lost. His brown hair - like his out-of-place urban clothes and shoes, and even his face - was covered in drying mud. At least the night was mild, and he bumbled on as best he could for a few minutes in the hope of reaching the top of the hill. It should have been Black Rhadley Hill, but he had lost both his map and torch in the tumble caused by falling over something, somewhere, some time ago. It seemed like hours since he had passed through that dense copse of his fall but it was only thirty minutes. Thirty minutes which had seen him stumble into a stream, trip over twice, and stand still at least seven times in the hope of hearing something, anything, which might give him some indication of which direction to go.

Then, he really was at the top of the hill, able once again to see the stars in the sky, and make out dim shapes ahead and beyond. There was even a faint yellowish glow on the distant horizon which he took to be Shrewsbury town, and, pleased that the strange darkness had gone, he sat down on the damp grass. He thought - but only for a moment - about Lars and his sudden disappearance, for there was a faint light, down toward one side of the hill and he set off, hoping it was a Farm or a cottage.

It was neither. Instead, and nearer than he thought, it was a butane lamp, and it stood on the edge of a field beside a small tent. Jared waited by the old wooden field gate for a long time, watching, listening. But all he could hear was the slight breeze in the nearby trees, and all he could see was a young woman sitting outside the tent, reading, oblivious to the many moths that swirled around the lamp. Her long blonde hair was plaited in a single plait - a style Jared had assumed was long out of fashion.

Then, obviously aware of his presence, she turned toward him as he lurked in the shadows and said a friendly "Hello!"

Awkwardly, Jared climbed over the gate. "Hi."

"Lovely night," she said, as if they had met many times before.

"Yes."

"Traveled far?" She smiled, and something about her - maybe her round, cheerful face - made him feel quite calm and relaxed in her presence, and he sat down on the grass near her tent.

"Not really." For some reason she seemed familiar, and it was several seconds before he realized where he had seen a young woman, with hair like hers, and with a youthful, lively face like hers. It was a photograph in a book about National Socialist Germany and it showed members of the BDM. She was about the same age as the young woman in the photograph as well, perhaps between eighteen and twenty years old, and thus seven or so years younger than him.

"Be Dawn, soon," the young woman said, and put down her book.

"I suppose so." He tried to see what the book was, and failed.

"I'm Hester, by the way."

"Jared."

"You not camping, then?"

"Just out for a walk. I got lost."

"Easy to do, round here. Bit off the beaten track. Would you like some tea?"

"Well - " he began.

"It's no trouble, really." From the covered porch of her tent she extracted a camping stove, two small aluminium camping kettles, and two mugs. "This one, " she said holding out one of the kettles, "is my teapot!"

Jared was impressed, and while she waited for the water to boil she chatted, as a friend might, about the weather, the old man she had met yesterday who gave her permission to camp in his field, her trip, last month, to Germany, and by the time the tea was prepared, and drunk, Jared was quite content - more than content - to just sit and listen. Occasionally, he would say a few words, but mostly he smiled while she chatted and the light of lamp faded as its fuel was expended. But it did not matter, for the Dawn,

opportunistically it seemed, replaced it. And with the light of Dawn he realized that not only was the young woman dressed all in olive-green, but also that her rucksack and tent were olive-green. She seemed like she belonged to a distant, more, gentle past, with her walking breeks, and her woolen shirt, although the shirt emphasized, rather than detracted from, her fulsome breasts.

"Time to get ready," she suddenly said, "it's a long walk back to catch my train."

"You heading for Church Stretton, then?" he asked as she stood up to begin to pack away her gear.

"Yes."

"So am I," he lied, desirous of her company. Suddenly, his Black Pilgrimage did not seem important.

"London?" she asked.

"Yes," he said, surprised. "How did you know?"

"Just a guess," she smiled.

"And you?"

"Oxford."

It did not take her long to pack and - after another mug of tea - Jared, trying to be gallant, offered to carry her rucksack. Her acceptance of his offer pleased him - for the first two miles. After that, he was struggling, and tried not to show it as they walked paths and country lanes through the beautiful rural landscape and under the pleasant warm Sun of early June. He was glad when she suggested they stop by the foot of the Long Mynd for yet another brew of tea. But, after that, his torment got much worse, for the road up to the flat plateau of the heather-covered Mynd was steep, his feet were blistered and the rucksack straps had rubbed part of his shoulders raw. But he managed to keep smiling as they trundled on and she talked of her studies, her college in Oxford, her dreams of traveling around the world. Several cars passed them as they descended down the steepness that was the Burway with its glorious views of South Shropshire: the old hill fort of Caer Caradoc; the prehistoric remains of a volcano known as The Lawley; the ancient settlement and earth circle - as old as Stonehenge - atop Bodbury Hill.

The small town of Stretton was busy, with both people and cars, and Jared was wonderfully relieved when, after many hours of walking, they reached the Railway Station. The one bench - over the open footbridge - was occupied by three young men in modern casual clothing drinking from cans of beers, and such was Jared's tiredness that he sat on the platform leaning against the fence while the young woman stood beside him.

"The train won't be long," she said to him. "Are you changing at Hereford, too?"

"Yes." The three young men were staring at the young woman, and then at him, and he turned away. Her could hear the men talking among themselves, although he could not make out the words, but their laughter, their looks directed at the young woman, made him nervous, so nervous that when their train arrived, he suggested he and Hester go to the front of the train.

"No. I'm sure this will be alright," she said.

Jared was not surprised when the men followed, and sat in seats three rows behind, but he was surprised when - over an half an hour into the journey - Hester excused herself, saying she needed to go to the lavatory. Jared felt he should escort her, but he was trembling, his mouth was dry, and all he could say was, "OK."

She smiled at him, and left. The three men got up and followed and as they passed where he sat Jared made a half-hearted attempt to rise from his seat, but the look from one of the men was enough to dissuade him, and he slunk back into his seat, staring out of the window. But after less than two minutes, he could bear it no longer and - still trembling - he got up.

Whatever he expected, it was not the scene that greeted him in the narrow corridor that housed the train's small lavatory between the vestibules of its two carriages. The three men lay on the dirty, stained, floor of the corridor, slumped in various postures of unconsciousness, with Hester standing near them.

"Drunk too much beer, I suppose," she said, with a charming and disarming smile. "This is our stop, I believe." As the train slowed, she collected her heavy rucksack, and it was a somewhat dazed Jared who followed her out of the train onto the platform of Hereford Station.

They spent their short wait sitting on a wooden bench on the Station platform while Jared answered Hester's questions about his interests and past. Not that he was forthcoming about his involvement with

the dark path he had chosen to follow over a year ago. Instead, he spoke then and on their shared train journey of his interest in computing, and regaled her for most of the time about that subject. For him, the time of that journey past quickly, and she was preparing to take her leave as the train approached Oxford when he blurted out: "Can I see you again?"

"Would you like to?" she smiled.

"Yes!"

Quickly, he wrote his address and telephone number on a page torn from her notebook, and sadly watched her descend from the train and walk toward the Station exit, hoping that she would turn round and look at him. She did, and smiled, and this image of her lasted until his own journey of another hour was over. The city days passed slowly for him after that, and even his return to his work as a Night Porter in a small central London hotel did not please him, and he was thinking of her on that wyrdfull night when a young man with a pierced nose and lip walked to the hotel reception desk, and, brandishing a gun, demanded money.

"There is no money here," Jared said, his voice trembling.

"Then down on your knees, or I'll kill you!"

Jared did as the man said, and by the time he had the courage to move and creep to look over the top of the desk, the man was gone. Relieved, he was surprised when his own mobile telephone rang.

"Hello?" In his haste and nervousness he almost dropped his telephone.

"Jared? It's Hester. Can you meet me?"

"Of course!" Suddenly, his world did not look so bleak.

She named a place - not far - and a time - half an hour, and it only took Jared an instant to forsake his job for the pleasure a meeting with her would afford. The meeting place was a street corner of shops and offices, and only a few cars passed in the humid heat of the sodium-lit city night as he waited. Then, nearly half an hour beyond the appointed time, a black taxi cab stopped. Hester opened the door for him and he had hardly stepped inside when her skillful blow rendered him unconscious.

Jared awoke to find himself seated in and strapped to a chair in a large vaulted cellar, lit by subdued bluish light, although a few feet in front of him a perfect circle of bright white light had been projected onto the stone floor. Faintly, as if from an adjoining room, he could hear what sounded to him like Arabic music. Several people were present in the cellar, but the subdued light made them indistinct, mere shadows.

"Let this Sunedrion begin," a male voice said. There was something familiar about the voice, and Jared was trying to recall where he had heard it before when the shock of seeing Hester walk into the circle of light erased all his thoughts.

Barefoot, she was dressed only in a long purple robe fastened in two places in such a way that most of her breasts and her pubic hair were exposed. Her long blonde hair had been loosely tied at the back of her head by a purple band so that many strands of hair fell around her face and ears. This, combined with her red lipstick, her painted nails, her exotic perfume, overwhelmed Jared more than finding himself tied to a chair in some cellar.

"Do you accuse him?" the male voice said.

"Yes," Hester replied, "I accuse him."

"Proceed."

"I accuse him of cowardice in the face of the enemy. I accuse him of submitting to the decadent and the ignoble. I accuse him of betraying the dark quest he swore with an oath to undertake, whatever befell him."

"And if found guilty," the male voice said, "what penalty would you, our Mistress of Earth, impose?"

"Opfer!" she shouted with joy in her voice, and there was a faint hissing sibilation emanating from the indistinct shadows.

"Do you deny the charges?" the male voice demanded.

"What?" Jared said.

"Do you have anything to say in your defence?" the male voice asked.

It was then, only then, that Jared understood. "I failed the tests, didn't I?" he said to Hester.

"Yes!" Her smile was not one of kindness.

"Three?"

"Yes."

"So you admit," the male voice said, "the charges?"

"This is another test, right?" Jared said, trying to laugh.

"We await your answer."

"OK. So I failed. Big deal. I was wrong. It won't happen again. You've made your point."

"Opfer!" Hester shouted.

There was a faint hissing sibilation emanating from the indistinct shadows, after which the male voice spoke again. "It is decided. It is as you wish. He shall be your opfer."

"Agios O Baphomet!" Hester chanted.

"Agios O Baphomet!" came the sibilating reply.

"Wait - " Jared began to say, but two tall men with the gait, build, dress and looks of professional bouncers came to hold his arms while Hester untied him. Then, they forced him to his feet and she kissed him, briefly and on his lips, before the two men led him away.

He was taken to a large windowless room somewhere nearby and still underground, furnished only with a bed and lit with the same subdued bluish light. There was a metal door, the top of which was formed of a steel grille. Jared sat on the bed and waited. All he could hear was the faint music he had heard earlier, and all he could think of was that this was some new kind of test.

It was not long before Hester - accompanied by the two tall men - came to see him, although it seemed a long time to him.

"You have a choice," she said through the steel grille, still barefoot and still dressed in her robe. "We will give you a sporting chance, so you can freely go from this place, knowing that sometime, maybe soon, maybe not, we will seek you out and, one way or another, bring your causal life to an end as has been decreed. It could be weeks, months, a year; maybe more. Or - or, you could stay here, willingly, for seven days, during which time, for seven nights, I shall be yours. You should know that it is my time to conceive, and that our child would be raised among us according to our ancient ways, as you yourself would be revered." She smiled, then. "I shall return, at Dawn, when you can tell me what you have decided."

He did not sleep, and the large gourmet meal, the fine wine, he had been given he left untouched. He had no idea of the time, and spent an hour or so pacing up and down between the walls of his cell, trying to work out what was going on. Of course, he smiled to himself, several times during the hours of that night - or what he assumed was the night - he would not really be an opfer. This was just another test. But what was the right thing to do? Pretend to accept his fate, and make love to the beautiful, sexy, Hester? Or opt to go, and possibly never see her again?

Then, with her guards, she was there, still clad in her robe, watching him. "Have you decided?" she asked.

"Yes. I'll stay."

She smiled, this time quite kindly. "Gather round, all you here." And there were indistinct shapes that seemed to haunt the shadowed spaces beyond Jared's cell. "Witness that he, named Jared, has agreed of his own free will to be our opfer. Thus shall I for seven nights be his bride before our deed of sacrifice is done."

She unfastened her robe and let it fall to the floor. One of her guards unlocked the door and she came toward him, naked, as a lover might, smiling, enticing. Jared did not see, not hear, the door being locked, as he did not see nor hear the guards move away to leave them alone in the blue, subdued, light.

Her passion of hours exhausted him, and she left him sleeping, dreaming, happy, content. He awoke alone to find fresh food, new wine, and he ate and drank, and waited, dreaming, happy, content. Then she was with him again, soft, gentle, passionate, shouting in her ecstasy. Then as the hours quickly, slowly, passed, she was gone, and he ate and drank the gourmet food, the fine wine, and waited, happy, dreaming, content.

Soon, he had lost count of the days, the nights, and weary but pleased, waited as he had waited. But she did not arrive. He fell asleep, to be awakened by the guards who carried him out from his cell through a sinew of dark corridors to the dark chamber of his accusers. But there was a not quite elliptical altar there, swathed in reddish light, and an ellipse of indistinct robed figures hugging the shadowed darkness beyond that swathe of light. And there was music, the subdued strange music of his past seven days and nights. Bound by leather thongs, he lay naked and helpless upon the altar, while, out of the darkness beyond, a beautiful Hester in a crimson robe approached him, holding a curved, sharp-bladed knife. She circled around Jared, saying: "Before you - we were.
After you - we shall be, again.
Before us - They who are never named.
After us - They will be, waiting."
Then she turned toward the shadows. "What is it that you seek?" she chanted.

"It is the protection and milk
Of your breasts that I seek," a voice replied.
Hester, as Mistress of Earth, moved toward Jared, revealing her breasts, before laughing and moving out from the ellipse of reddish light toward the shadows.
"I put my kisses at your feet," a male voice 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 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."
Hester laughed and her two guards raised her until she lay upon Jared. Then she was arousing him with her hand and he did not, could not, resist as she guided his erection into her warm, moist cleft.

"Kiss me," she said as she slowly moved upon him, "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!"
Then, as Jared's body spasmed in his ecstasy, she intoned the last part of the rite.
"So you have sown and from your seeding
Gifts may come if you obedient heed
These words I speak."
The guards came, then, to lift her from the altar, and she circled around Jared, before speaking to the shadows, beyond.

"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 smiled, and twirled around, three times. "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!"

Jared tried to turn to see her, but she swiftly slashed his neck with her knife, and it was not long before the fountain of his life, his spurting blood, ceased to flow.

"AgiOS O Baphomet!" Hester cried, in triumph. With bloodstained hands and face, she went to kiss every member of her Temple reserving her last, and most passionate kiss, for Lars.

"So it has been, so it is, and so shall it be again," she said, before leading Lars up, toward the light of day, leaving her guards to do their work of cleaning and disposal.

Anton Long
Order of Nine Angles
114yf

Atazoth

"So, you came back to see this old man." Ellick smiled, and stroked his greying beard before leaning on his ash walking stick. He stood by the gate of the small field of pasture land on the slopes of the old hill. Below, the hedgeful land gradually leveled out until it met the sea, less than fifteen miles distant.

"I knew you would be back here," Hester said, and kissed him on the side of his face.

"Will he do?"

"Maybe. There's a long way to go."

"But he shows promise."

"Yes."

"I'm glad."

"As I am. It's been a long wait."

"But he can never know, from you, the complete truth."

"I know."

"One more corner until the angles of our nexion are complete," and he gestured with his stick toward where the Sun of early morning rose into the sky of blue.

"Shall I take the next one there?"

"Indeed."

"And the third, and last?"

"Where you met and enticed the first."

"But it won't really be the last, will it?"

"Only for this cycle; this nexion." He sighed, looking at her beauty, her youth. "How I envy you."

"I know." And she briefly, warmly, held his hand.

"You will live to see it all."

They stood for a long time, looking out toward the landscape of the levels that had seen much darkness and mystery, much joy and revelry, and as they stood, she rested her head on his shoulder, as a daughter might. Once, she remembered, there had been an island, there, before the straight, land-cut drains made and reclaimed the land.

"Will you see her, before the angles are complete?" he asked, interrupting the flow of her centuries of thought.

"Maybe. Do you think I should?"

"Perhaps not."

"But he will meet her again when we all meet for the closing of that angle?"

"Yes, and then he may understand. At least what it is necessary for him to understand." Then he smiled. "I hope you will choose better names, next time!"

They both sensed, and felt, the intrusion, long before the woman and her dog appeared on a footpath an hundred yards above the sloping field where lay several buried secrets.

"You should go, now," he said, regretfully.

She looked toward where her two guards waited, under the shade of the large, old, Oak tree. "Yes," she said, and briefly held his hand.

Then Ellick was walking away, breaking a part of the causal bond between them, and by the time he reached the field gate and the footpath beyond it, he appeared to be only what many people assumed him to be, an ageing if eccentric countryman.

"Good morning," he said as he passed the youngish woman and her Welsh Collie dog. The woman smiled, slightly suspicious, but his smile, his eyes, re-assured her, and she returned his greeting. But he was gone, into the trees that led to the Coombe, where he sat, on the sun-warmed grass, thinking about Hester and her sister.

Suddenly, Lars understood. It was partly time itself that magick changed, the slow, causal, time of the world, of mere mortals. The ecstasy, the passion, the triumph, the exhilaration - the true magick - which he had felt since Arleen and Hester burst upon his life, were emanations of the real time which existed in

the acausal, an acausal where space as he and mortals knew it, did not exist. So it was he could be here, standing atop Bredon Hill in the falling darkness looking toward the Malvern Hills, and there in that house of cavernous cellars, south-west, on the edge of another sloping hill, while also being near Black Rhadley, completing the three-fold acausal link in this particular causal time and space. He just had to open the nexion to slip into the acausal dimensions where the Dark Gods lurked, waiting.

But there was something else, something beyond even this, which he could not quite comprehend - an intimation of something far greater, far more powerful, far more evolutionary and devastating to the mundane world. But this something was insubstantial for him, in that moment, as a shadow vaguely perceived in semi-darkness.

Then, the insight was gone, as the last light of twilight faded, and Hester, with her two guards, joined him not that far from the summit of the hill. Without a word, she cast dark magick to reinforce the barriers around them, sufficient to make anyone venturing onto the hill in that hour instinctively turn away. The deep pit had been prepared, and their middle-aged and balding victim - chosen according to the guidelines for choosing such opfers - sat, bound and gagged, on the edge of his burial pit, his eyes bulging with terror, his once clean and expensive city suit crumpled and stained.

"This is your right, and duty," she said to Lars, and he took the centuries old curved knife. Then, with the crystal tetrahedron in her hands, she began her sinister chant. "Nythra Kthunae Atazoth," she intoned. His first cut was not deep enough, and the man frothed blood until the second cut to his throat when he toppled over to briefly writhe in the bottom of the pit. Almost immediately, the two guards began to shovel earth over the still warm and bleeding body.

There were several hours to Dawn when they arrived, washed, refreshed, and changed into new clothes, to stop in a narrow hedgeful lane not that far from Black Rhadley. Ellick was there, dressed in his customary olive-green country clothes, standing in the field where Hester had, not that long ago, sat outside some tent; and there was a woman, standing with her back to Lars, near freshly disturbed soil. She turned to walk toward him, and he could clearly see her face in the star-lit country night. It was Arleen.

He stood, staring, while Hester rushed to embrace her. Then, the two women were kissing, passionately, as lovers might.

"This, here, as you know," Ellick was saying to Lars, distracting his attention from the women. "Is the center, now. You must guard it well."

"I will."

The two women came toward him then, and each kissed him in turn.

"You're going, aren't you?" he said.

"Yes," they replied with one voice.

"There is no child?"

"No," they smiled, replying with one voice. "Not the kind you think!"

"When shall I see you two again?" he asked, feeling he already knew the answer.

There was a brief rushing of air behind him, and he turned around. But he was alone, standing by the hedge in the field, near the fresh earth that covered the recent burial, home as that topsoil now was to the Ash sapling which Ellick had planted, and home as the deeper soil was to a fresh male and beheaded corpse, Arleen killed. And this sudden departure of Arleen, Hester - and even Ellick - saddened him, for a moment, even though he had many reasons to rejoice. Forty, fifty, or more, years from now, who would he choose to follow him, as Ellick had chosen? Who would be tested, as Arleen had tested him? Who would know the joy, the ecstasy, the passion, the cold calmness of wyrd, the aethereal acausal beauty, that a true Mistress of Earth would bring? Who would be there to shape the changes as he would shape the evolutionary change that the dark rituals of the past months would most certainly bring?

Then he smiled, knowing that he would have to begin a search for some woman, of inner darkness, to share his deeds and his life, and knowing that around him strange, shadowy shapes were faintly hissing their sinister sibilations.

postamble();

A Satanic Sex Rite

This rite is for two people who assume the roles of Priest and Priestess. They should be robed in black, the rite taking place in either an isolated outdoor area (such as a hill-top) or in an indoor locality decorated (if only for the Rite) as a Satanic Temple. Decorations that are suitable include: a representation of Baphomet (according to Satanic tradition, see elsewhere in this issue of 'Fenrir'), an inverted pentagram inscribed/painted on a wall or floor, the septenary sigil, black candles, a large quartz crystal, silver chalices filled with strong wine, and a statue/painting/sculpture of a nude male/female of beautiful aspect.

The object of the rite is to create magickal energy and direct it so as to bring about the desire or desires of the participants. This can be just about anything those involved wish: harm to an enemy, gifts for themselves (such as money) and so on. Before the rite, the individuals should decide on this, and on a simple phrase which represents their desire.

The rite should begin at a time half-way between sunset and sunrise. The Priest should follow the Priestess as they walk a circle three times and moon-wise chanting as they walk 'Baphomet!' (Pronounced 'Ba-ho-may').

Then, facing East, the Priestess first removes the robe of the Priest then her own robe while the walk and chant is repeated for two more circumambulations. Then, in the centre of the circle of their walk, the Priest begins to arouse the fire of the Priestess by caressing her with his fingers and tongue. The Priestess begins the physical union when she is ready, the Priestess chanting the phrase chosen to represent the desire. This should be chanted rhythmically as the rite proceeds to its climax. The Priestess, should she so choose, may also visualise in some way the fulfilment of the desire itself.

The function of the Priest is to bring the Priestess to a climax of ecstasy – the function of the Priestess is to make that ecstasy magickal and direct the energy through chant (and visualization, if undertaken). The more frenzied and prolonged the build-up to ecstasy, the more energy can be released and directed.

After the climax, the Priestess should imagine the energy that remains in the room being drawn upwards and out toward the stars. The Priest should kiss the Priestess saying: "Ad Satanus qui laetificat juventutem meam." The rite is then concluded.

Note: Should the participants wish, to increase their frenzy before the physical union, they should chant the following as loudly as possible as many times as they wish after the last two circumambulations (of the five) are complete: "Veni, omnipotens aeternae diabolus!" The power so invoked may be visualised as entering the representation of Baphomet, the crystal or whatever other image is present – if this is done the Priest should, during the union, imagine the energy flowing into himself and thence to the Priestess. This chanting should be undertaken while circles are being walked, as before, the walking itself becoming faster and faster. This additional chanting should last for at least one quarter of one hour – and end when the Priest feels his frenzy can no longer be contained. He releases his frenzy through the physical union.

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g dsbPqh6Cjl7djp4= =nyTb -----END PGP MESSAGE-----

THE SINISTER TAROT

By: Unknown

This text contains archetypes in the Major Arcana of the Sinister Tarot for Meditation along the Pathways of the Tree of Wyrd, and is laid out in a schematic way to enable selfstudy where the prime objective is selfdevelopment for the individual reader.

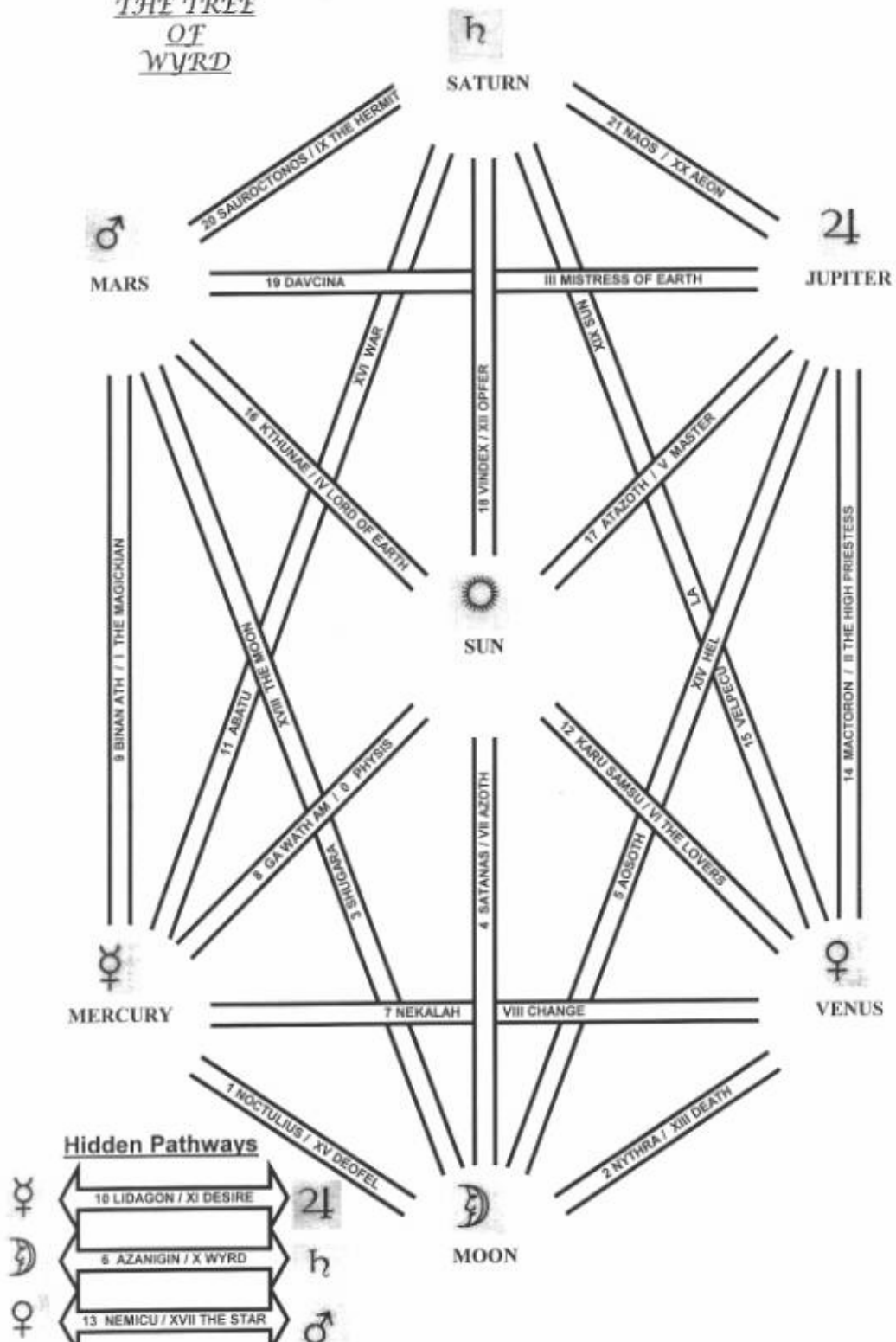
View the image of the Septenary Tree of Wyrd below, and use it together with the septenary schematic list to gain insight on the Sinister Tarot. This should help you to grasp the idea of the septenary way.

No.	Dark Gods	Pathways	Atu Cards
1	Noctulius	From Moon to Mercury	Atu XV (Deofel)
2	Nythra	From Moon to Venus	Atu XIII (Death)
3	Shugara	From Moon to Mars	Atu XVIII (Moon)^[1]
4	Satanas	From Moon to Sun	Atu VII (Azoth)
5	Aosoth	From Moon to Jupiter	Atu XIV (Hel)
6	Azanigin	From Moon to Saturn^[2]	Atu X (Wyrd)
7	Nekalah	From Mercury to Venus	Atu VIII (Change)
8	Ga Wath Am	From Mercury to Sun	Atu 0 (Physis)
9	Binan Ath	From Mercury to Mars	Atu I (Magickian)
10	Lidagon	From Mercury to Jupiter^[3]	Atu XI (Desire)
11	Abatu	From Mercury to Saturn	Atu XVI (War)
12	Karu Samsu	From Venus to Sun	Atu VI (Lovers)
13	Nemicu	From Venus to Mars^[4]	Atu XVII (Star)
14	Mactoron	From Venus to Jupiter	Atu II (High Priestess)
15	Velpecula	From Venus to Saturn	Atu XIX (Sun)
16	Kthunae	From Sun to Mars	Atu IV (Lord of Earth)
17	Atazoth	From Sun to Jupiter	Atu V (Master)
18	Vindex	From Sun to Saturn	Atu XII (Opfer)
19	Davcina	From Mars to Jupiter	Atu III (Mistress of Earth)
20	Sauroctono s	From Mars to Saturn	Atu IX (Hermit)
21	Naos	From Jupiter to Saturn	Atu XX (Aeon)

In the Tree of Wyrð there are only twenty-one pathways and twenty-one Sinister Tarot images, the Major Arcana (0 – XX). Thus, each Dark God together with its linked Atu Card represents a pathway on the Tree of Wyrð, and does not leave anything unconnected as found in the Qabala Tree of Life. It is simpler really and more practical than the Qabala Tree of Life, as essentially the Tree of Wyrð is to be used as a “gateway” to our consciousness. Whereas the Qabala Tree of Life does NOT act as a gateway in the same sense, since it does not help gain insight to the personal psyche adequately.

Caelethi, *The Black Book of Satan II* contains the symbols for each of the Dark Gods, and these are also recommended to use during the meditations.

THE TREE
OF
WYRD



Aeonic Magick – General Notes

Should only be undertaken if an individual is free from unconscious influences – particularly archetypal images of current civilizations/distortions imposed upon it by others. This usually implies having passed the Abyss - but some “lesser” Aeonic magick can be undertaken by Internal Adepts. This is so because if latent archetypal energy is present within the psyche of the individual, there will be a blocking/internal distortion of the acausal energy released/created via aeonic rites, and this usually leads to problems: e.g. psychic distortion, physical problems and so on.

Aeonic magick implies, for most rites, the individual being a “channel” or “gate”.
Psychic residues imply a blocking.

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Archetypes imply a development in time – i.e. casual movement. Put simply, this means “action” – or a “story”: some role played out by the image and thus fulfilled. In the “cultic” sense, there is a “legend”/goal.

New images require new motifs: i.e. new forms of fulfillment.

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“Mimesis” is one method of aeonic magick that has come down over the centuries (indeed it was once probably the only means available).

Basically, this involves imitating some aspect of cosmic/Earth-based movement/working, and then either following the natural pattern or slightly altering that pattern to bring about a subtle changes. (This “alteration” forms the basis for “black” magick – qv. The Black Mass: the use of Nazarene formulae, slightly distorted via sinister intent.)

Often, this implies “acting out” an archetypal role according to a myth/legend/cult. The key here is the identification of the magickian with the role (which is, however, not a possession, as in shamanism) – this requires preparation. This “acting out” can involve others - as, for example, in a “sacred marriage” (qv. “Sun” and “moon” as symbols). The intent of the working is then visualized/chanted. If alterations are desired, these are incorporated.

Mimesis can also be done via the construction of suitable models, which are symbolically imbued with “life”. It may be done via a “play/drama” whose participants are unaware of the intent and/or of the symbolism. In all cases it is necessary for the Master/Mistress of the ritual to channel magickal energy into the proceedings either via ceremonial/hermetic methods or by “opening a Gate”.

If the latter, then the energy so brought may be channeled directly or at a distance (if for example, a “drama” is being performed).

(Unreadable hand written notes are at the bottom of the page)

Aeonic Magick – General (I)

The basis means are:

- 1) **Archetypes** – their creation/re-emergence.
This is achieved via:
 - a) ritual – e.g. Nine Angles rite with appropriate visualization/models/drama
 - b) creating a mythos: and then channeling acausal energy into this form via ritual
 - c) symbols – “energize” these via ritual/hermetic workings

All of the above required an understanding of archetypal forms and change.

- 2) **Open a “Gate”** and let the acausal energies spread naturally or channel them via an individual or individuals. The latter requires some “form” to be imposed upon the “raw” energies released: this form is achieved via the desire of the Master/Mistress and may be either (a) in accord with the wyrd existing at the time (i.e. to help fulfill wyrd of Aeon) or (b) against this, if some fundamental change is desired.
- 3) **Star Game** - manipulation of symbols with magickal intent. Can be as “core” of other ritual working where the ritual brings acausal energy. (Note: this is not strictly necessary for a Magus....)

All Aeonic magick is (a) for the wyrd of the Aeon; (b) against that wyrd; or (c) involves small changes introduced within the Aeon for some specific reason or other, and large changes desired as, for example, a prelude to attempting to create a “new balance” (i.e. the creation of a “new Aeon”).

It is possible to alter the magickal energy of an Aeon at any time, although this is easier during the last phase of the Aeon (generally: the Winter stage of the civilization: the few decades before, and after, the beginning of an Imperium). This alteration can be of any type – if sufficient energy is produced/created/released. (The Nine Angles rites are usually the most powerful in this respect – particularly the chthonic with “Sacrifice”). Whatever, there must be intent : something specific to change the energy to/toward. This is often symbolized by a magickal “word” which then represents the “new Aeon/the distortion imposed upon the existing Aeon: this “word” is only the outward form of inner essence.

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For the West (and at the time of writing – 1980 ev) the fundamental long-term options regarding Aeonic magick are:

1. Rites to bring Vindex (channeling into an individual etc.)
2. Rites to “Open A Gate” (re the next Aeon)
3. Rites to bring acausal energy, letting this presence without form
4. Implies to another aim i.e. the forces must be directed to something other than Galactic Imperium. The scope of this aim is wide-ranging.
5. Creation of a new Aeon, which is not a direct descendant of the West – i.e. does not involve “Dark Gods”. Again, aims wide.

Aeonic Notes IX

A New Imperium

The Imperium which Vindex will create will be different from previous Empires because it will be a conscious creation: the result of a reasoned, honourable, civilized, approach: that is, it will be based upon honour, and will be the result of the esoteric understanding we have achieved over hundreds, indeed thousands, of years.

This means it will not impose itself by force of arms upon others. Rather, it means it will be composed of thinking warriors who uphold honour and who prefer combat to dishonourable modern war. In particular, it means a federation of countries, or nations, who co-operate together in the pursuit of a numinous goal: not an Empire in the old sense of domination and conquest and occupation.

The old type of Empire belongs in the past: it is unsuitable for an honourable, rational, people.

Furthermore, the old type of Empire is founded upon a basic error.

The basic mistake is to believe that war can solve problems or be of benefit. Thus to have war as a political policy is stupid. This mistake about war arises from two things: (1) a lack of perspective, and thus a viewing of events in current rather than historical terms (2) failing to act in accord with the ethics of honour.

Every old type of Empire has a time of glory; as it has to maintain itself by occupation, war, and repression. Every such Empire declines, and is then destroyed. Sometimes an Empire may last a few decades; sometimes a century or more. Rarely, a few centuries. After the destruction of the Empire, there follows a period of chaos, of barbarism, of regression, with only a few positive attributes of the Empire remaining: some stories of glory, perhaps; or some literature; some monuments, or some technological or scientific achievement. But a great detail is lost.

What applies to an Empire applies to the results of terrestrial wars – such as the occupation of a foreign country after victory in a war or after an invasion. Such occupation may well last for a while: a few years; a decade; several decades. But it will inevitably end, through either a successful uprising (often after several failed attempts) or through the withdrawal of the occupiers, for military, economic, or political reasons, and while some elements of the occupying forces may remain (in terms of their culture, ideas, and so on), a great deal is lost. In the meantime, thousands upon thousands of people have been injured, killed, repressed or dishonourably confined in prisons. Furthermore, it is the honourable right and duty of those under occupation to resist, using lethal force - and to try and take away this right and duty, by making it "illegal", as all occupying forces do, is dishonourable in itself, the act of the bully, the tyrant. It is also the right of individuals to possess weapons, and one of the many dishonourable things an army of occupation does is make possession of weapons illegal.

This old imperial process is incredibly wasteful, and stupid, because the positive, evolutionary, civilized, changes, which Empires sometimes bring, can be achieved in not only less wasteful ways but also in ways, which can ensure much greater, and longer lasting, evolutionary change.

In brief, imperial conquest and colonialism are short-term solutions: in Aeonic terms – in the timescale of civilizations and Aeons – they are failures, detrimental to the long-term evolution that is required.

In terms of acquiring new living-space – often used as an argument in favour of Empires and conquest and colonialism - the honourable, futuristic solution is the colonization of Outer Space.

In terms of war, the new Imperium – or Stellar Federation or Cosmic Federation or Cosmic Reich or whatever we want to call it – would use force only as a last means of self-defence of its own territory or homeland, or when there needs to be an honourable combat between it and its enemies.

In addition, it needs to be understood that modern warfare is for the most part dishonourable, employing as it does cowardly methods – such as aerial bombing – which an honourable warrior would refuse to use, condone, or accept. The warriors of the new Imperium, the troops of Vindex, will seek honourable combat, a fair fight, rather than impersonal war. Honourable combat means personal fighting between groups of warriors, or armies. It means an end to the dishonour that has blighted armies for hundreds of years. It means a return to civilized treatment of captured or surrendering soldiers – allowing them to retain their honour, and go free. It means a conscious decision – based upon honour – to do only, that which is honourable, and which befits an honourable warrior.

Honour, and Learning from History

I give one example of learning from history: NS Germany. One mistake was to initiate a war, and to seek new living-space in already occupied lands.

Of course, war against NS Germany was inevitable – just like the recent war against Iraq was inevitable. In the case of Iraq the cabal spent over ten years – from the time of the Gulf War – trying to starve the people into submission, and destroying the defensive capability of the Iraqi defence forces.

But Germany should have waited, and most certainly not launched offensives in other countries. The cabal would then have had to resort to invading Germany, which would have taken perhaps a few more years to organize, giving NS Germany more time to create a genuine NS society, and prepare to defend Germany. More alliances should have been sought, and NS exported as a revolutionary creed. Had the cabal invaded Germany, they would have been on dubious moral ground, and effective resistance could have been undertaken against the occupying forces.

The effort that went into the war should have been directed toward building a stronger Germany, and showing, by example, that NS worked. In addition, scientific research should have been undertaken into spacecraft.

But this, of course, is hindsight. What happened, happened. We have to learn the lessons. One lesson is to evolve NS itself – which has been done, based upon the ideal of honour and the vision of a Galactic Empire or Federation, created by a NS homeland which seeks allies among the various peoples and cultures of Earth on the basis of honour and mutual respect (see, for example, the recent writings of Dave Myatt).

In the recent case of Iraq, Saddam should have used that time to find allies, for example Syria and Iran, and done what was necessary to make such an alliance work. Preparation should have gone into creating effective resistance forces. [It may well be that this resistance work was done, judging by recent events in Iraq.]

Conclusion

It is to be understood that the policies of Vindex, of the new Imperium, will result primarily from honour, and also from a rational understanding of those forces, which have and do shape our history and

evolution. In addition, the perspective – the motivation – of Vindex and the new Imperium is futuristic, of centuries, of evolution itself, and not the result of some short-sighted political opportunism or some unconscious instinct or desire.

One purpose of esoteric Orders such as the ONA is to understand these forces and to transmit this understanding via various means, which includes the Grand Master, or Magus, of the Order giving advice based on the esoteric understanding and the wisdom they have achieved.

In essence, the new Imperium will be a practical manifestation of the Law of the New Aeon, which is personal honour. That is, it will be founded by, and maintained by, thinking, honourable, warriors: who themselves will be a new archetype, a new type of human being. These new warriors will not compromise their honour to achieve temporary – and Aeonically worthless – gains.

ONA
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Aeonics: Secret Tradition II

The essential principles of aeonics are:

- 1) Aeonic magick can be either (a) directed into a specific form (and this can be an individual) or some structure (temporal), which the Adept creates for this purpose – i.e. as a means to achieve a specific goal. This structure can be religious, social, political, business and so on: or (b) drawn forth via ritual(s) and left to disperse (i.e. there is no specific intent/aim) according to its nature. This implies an element of randomness.
- 2) Aeonic energy can be used to: (a) create new archetypal forms (e.g. specific archetypes); (b) distort/disrupt already existing ones. (a) implies a new “idea/mythos” and often a “word” to express this (to non-Adepts). Also, some causal movement is implied in such a form – development in time.
- 3) All aeonic change can be: (a) for the wyrd of the Aeon existing at that time (the wyrd being manifest in the Destiny of the associated higher civilization); (b) against the wyrd (thus a “distortion”); (c) to create a new wyrd. This can be either a new Aeon or an undirected/chaotic disruption of the existing one. A new Aeon implies a new set of archetypal forms/mythos etc.
- 4) All changes can only be directed by the Adept within certain temporal limits, these being set by the strength of the energy produced and whether the initial ritual(s) are subsequently reinforced. Most aeonic rites by their nature imply an element of random energy which produces further change at first roughly in accord with the energy/intent of the rite; as causal time flows on, the original forms are re-formed via metamorphosis.
- 5) Any change is possible using aeonic energies – i.e. such energies and their use are amoral. It is the consciousness of the Adept which via intent directs the energy into specific forms to provide temporal changes in line with that intent.
- 6) Changes against an existing wyrd (and such like) require more energy because the “old” archetypal forms/patterns need to be broken down/redirected.

Thus, to change aeonic forces the best way is (a) distort/disrupt already existing forms; (b) let the random element accelerate within those forms by letting loose undirected acausal energies within the aeon/higher civilization; (c) then begin to create new forms via ritual(s). (A skilled Adept can try all three at the same time).

- 7) Aeonic energies bring changes on a large scale by mostly affecting non-Initiates – i.e. the changes are unconscious: the “mass” is unaware that their drives/desires/patterns of behavior/“thoughts” and so on are being manipulated by Adepts. The most obvious way this occurs is via archetypal forms – but there are other level acting (how many depends on the acausal energy intensity, type etc. and the rituals being done by the Adept). One of these is direct psychic contagion - i.e. the energy directly affects those receptive/sensitive to it (and this can include Initiates etc.) Those thus affected may then give that energy form or do deeds broadly in line with the type of energy.

(Note: Archetypal forms created via aeonic ritual work mostly unconsciously at first; later, some individuals may express these forms in a practical way, as ideas, myths, mythos, Institutions and so on. Psychic contagion by-passes “forms” including archetypal ones – i.e. the latent acausal part of the psyche of infected individuals is directly affected/opened by the acausal energy.)

Some further insights:

- 1) Generally, once an aim/change has been decided upon, this should be enshrined in an archetypal symbol, sigil and/or a phrase/word. After the main aeonic rites to produce this change, these symbols etc. should regularly be “charged” via hermetic rites (e.g. sexual magick) and the energy left to disperse naturally or stored in a crystal.

The type of aeonic rite depends upon the change desired, how strong are already existing aeonic energies (e.g. change toward the end of an aeon generally requires less energy). The same applies to reinforcement of the rite (should these be necessary).

- 2) Wyrd of present Western aeon is Imperium. This implies what is moralistically called an un-democratic State. One aim of such a State would be colonization of the Solar System and then the stars. In essences, this State would be an outward manifestation of Satanic spirit. Political forms to achieve and maintain this Imperium are only a means and must be seen by Adepts in this light. This same applies to “military” forms. If an Adept or Adepts wish to achieve this wyrd then practical forms to bring this change must be created/encouraged (magickally). (This applies of course, to all aeonic changes.) The choice of such forms is made on the basis of practicality, necessity and energies required: it is usually the result of a logical assessment of existing conditions and future possibilities – amoral in essence.

An attempt was made by various LHP Adepts earlier this century to use a political form to create a type of Satanic empire on the practical level with the aim of achieving the wyrd of the West. This involved disrupting the Nazarene/Magian forms/ethics/ideas and so on both magickally and on the practical/political level. This attempt was a partial success as it has created a new “mythos” – there is also archetypal energy stored (and awaiting further use) as well as a nexion now partially open. These offer Adepts the possibility of continuing this work – perhaps via the same (or very similar) political forms, perhaps by other (? Contradictory) political forms. It is up to each Adept to make their own assessment – and to decide whether they wish the success or not of this wyrd.

- 3) It cannot be stressed too often that aeonic magick implies long-term assessment (from several centuries to millennia) and this time scale of necessity negate the relative moral values that pertain in a society for perhaps a few decades or centuries. Aeonic insight implies an overview of not only the Aeon in which the Adept has his/her being, but also of previous Aeons and future Aeons. The basis of insight is a rational apprehension of Aeonic energies and how those are made manifest (produce changes) via civilizations and how those civilizations (in their ethos etc.) affect individuals within them. Further understanding comes from magickal experience: how aeonic change is, magickally possible. The most comprehensive means of understanding Aeonic energies is the advanced form of the Star Garme.

The essence of the Adept is this Aeonic insight – the breaking free from the bonds (archetypal forms and thus their unconscious/conscious influence) of the Aeon in which the Adept has his/her being. Further, the bonds of past influences (of previous Aeons) must be transcended also – most who follow or attempt to follow an Occult way fall into the trap of shedding current Aeonic influences only to fall prey to past ones (Egyptian, Sumerian, Greek, etc.*) or to possessed by one “Idea” / mythos.

- 4) Present Aeon is dying – its energies are on the wane. Thus time is right to produce aeonic changes/find new nexions.

* qv “Temple of Set”!

AEONS AND THEIR ASSOCIATE CIVILIZATIONS

The energy of a particular magickal Aeon is manifest (presenced) via a higher civilization: there is generally a time-lag of about 400 or 500 years between the start of the Aeon and the beginning of the civilization.

The wyrd of the aeon is often expressed by a symbol/word/magickal working (e.g. the Hellenic: Eagle/oracle; dance) – although these are merely outward expressions of the inner essence. The destiny of the associated civilization is most often expressed by an ethos/myth (e.g. for the West: Science/Exploration) and is expressed via various archetypes, some of which relate directly to the ethos.

An aeon is essentially an ordered manifestation of acausal energy in the causal via an earth-based nexion: this nexion being the “magickal center” of the Aeon (and thus the civilization). Various cults and their associated mythos are derived from this center and its energy. For previous Aeons, this ordering was for the most part intuitive and unconscious – i.e. not arising from deliberate magickal acts by Adepts: the finding and opening a nexion occurred by the very nature of that acausal energy seeking to “earth” itself. Aeonic change is now understood and gives all Adepts the possibility of creating Aeonic changes.

A civilization undergoes an organic process of growth and decay and symbolically it has nine stages, represented by the pieces of the Star Game. (Note - the Star Game – particularly the Advanced Star Game – give a complete representation of one Aeon and its civilization if the pieces are placed correctly). A civilization generally lasts between 1,500 and 1,700 years. From its origin, it takes about 800 years for a civilization to enter its Time of Wars (aka Time of Troubles) and this period of war lasts on average 398 to 400 years. It is followed by the Imperial stage – Empire or Imperium (aka “Universal State”). This lasts about 390 years after which the civilization finally falls. The gradual decline of a civilization follows the wane of the magickal energy associated with it – the archetypal forms which presenced this have fulfilled their potential, become exhausted of energy. (Note: the Star Game can be used to show how a particular archetypal form grows and decays, causing changes: e.g. the pieces of one board may be used to designate that archetype – by following the changes of the pieces and the affects on the other boards, the principles may be seen.

<u>Civilization</u>	<u>Relations</u>	<u>Challenge</u>	<u>Time of Troubles</u>	<u>Universal State</u>
Egyptian	Unrelated	Physical	2424-2052 BC	2052-1660 BC
Sumeric	Unrelated	Physical	2677-2298 BC	2298-1905 BC
Hellenic	Loosely Affiliated	Physical	431-31 BC	31 BC-378 AD
Indic	Unrelated	Physical	? – 322 BC	322 – 185 BC
Japanese	Off shoot of Far Eastern	Physical	1185 AD-1597 AD	1597-1945AD
Sinic	Unrelated	Physical	634 BC – 221 BC	221BC-72AD
Western	Affiliated To Hellenic	Physical	1568-1996 *	1996-2390**

Table I

*Estimated from model (see Appendix II). The 1568 AD date is given by Toynbee.

**Estimated from model (see Appendix II).

An Infernal Alliance

The fundamental aim of the Infernal Alliance is to keep alive, and to disperse, an *ethos* – a particular ‘view of the world’. This ethos contradicts the present *status quo* and the Christianity which is an essential part of this.

This ethos is an ‘infernal’ one – a dark one. It represents numinous *awe*; it represents a pagan understanding and a pagan way of living. This ethos, the experience and the understanding which are part of it, are essential to individuals – a means whereby a healthy, fulfilling life can be lived. Without these things – without this ‘dark’ experience, this ‘dark’ understanding – and without the primal awe which this ethos engenders, life is pretentious, shallow or worthless. Without the energies of this ethos, the world is a place fit only for sub-humans living sub-human lives – for these energies are the energies of creation, of change, of renewal and rebirth, as well as the energies of defiance.

This darkness has become increasingly forgotten, or is increasingly ignored, in the modern world with its materialism and its pursuit of an unnatural equality. Individuals increasingly have little or no experience of the often dangerous numinous and primal *awe* which these dark energies create. The increasingly mis-use of modern technology conspires to make this so, providing individuals with comfortable lives where the outer darkness, the fear of the unknown, the joy of personal discovery, has been done away with through electric lights, loud music, entertainment, mundane work, and other vapid things. These modern, often urbanized, individuals are seldom, if ever, touched by or *inspired* by these dark energies – seldom, if ever, roused by these energies to dare to make a Vision or a dream real and so become something greater than they are. As a result, these denizens of urbanity feel safe – they feel sure of themselves. They are, in short, vainly arrogant – untouched by the stark terrors of the night or the unknown. In effect, they are only half alive – although a lot of them hardly live at all, merely existing as they flit about on the surface of life, like the insect life they have become.

The Infernal Alliance exists to keep alive, and to spread, the darkness, the awe, the splendour, the defiance and the danger which are necessary and an essential part of our lives. These things – and the infernal ethos itself – are what makes us human. These things must be returned – as they must be experienced again, by individuals, in real life. To experience, to integrate that experience, is to grow. Without this experiencing and this integration there is decay, and the slow death that is sub-human life.

Our societies have lost their infernal ethos – the dark side of their soul. As a result, decay has set in. Balance must be restored or our very humanity will be lost – perhaps forever. The Infernal Alliance represents Imagination; it represents Vision and the primal awe of darkness. It represents Wonder and the strength of defiance. Above all, it represents that creative, vital, energy which nurtures change and which alone ensures growth and evolution.

The Infernal Alliance is sinister and Satanic, just as we ourselves, as evolving beings, are and must be if we desire to continue our human existence.

(Anton Long)

ANTARES
By
Christos Beest

Where love beckons, arson calls. The fallow ship that in less stately times, did cut its way through passion with oafishness, has, with the aid of muse and pen, become an elaborate galleon. Other less native ships are likely to see and yet, for all their bus and blunder – impressive to the thigh I admit – they do return to port and reconsider at the drawing board. These are nightly times, darksome and covet, where a swan's tail both sparkle with homogenous water; unfold me if you will, for I know it hath both stellar and terrestrial counterparts. I know also that love within two eyes is also divine, and yea, like that distant star breaking upon the shores, or the moon's gradient, its tides extracting, the conjoining of two gates is worthy of all the spoils of man.

How could Wyrd be so met? No fortune is there to take away the seed of spirit; to destiny now look, for it is a mighty fool. Though rabbits do multiply with a sullen eye, what joy crowns the union of man and beast? Man hath reason and the beast both flower imperceptivity, for it knows only what it sees: aye, a joy indeed.

But of the greatest joy do I sign oft; for it is between my love and me where lyric doth fall short like wingless sparrows – sparrows that dream about thee. Verily this creature is no boon to the sun, that clumsy ball of bombast; no hushed lyric from that idiot globe. The sparrow doth, in its pursuit of flight, seek the Moon to cauterize its wounds, knowing as teardrops fall, that the Moon doth breath tickets to the clouds. Let the clouds not be illuminated by gold, but as water charges and sweeps across the brittle always, the silver doth thread its way the tyrian vestment. Beating in couplets, there is no way that it is – who understands that which doth not pour out elegance to fashion the impassions whisper that shades ebullience? Where there is imbecilic dualism, there is panic and failure. For man both build love as a house for weather. For woman, the lock may be shattered... but there are mysteries for both, which only the wise may see.

II

Time hath bred a flame worthy of Hell's greatest heartache; no hushed casket contains my soul – what manner of flame is this which spins from my once forgotten frame? In pursuit if the spiritual did I become dislocated: a walking and enunciating moribund mannequin... how the raven did circle above in distaff! Verily a courtly reminder of the fragile bone that causes a thread to finality; but what is this life if not the presence of solidity, the white spaces where shapes once existed do reveal an essence for those with eyes to see. And mine own eyes see the richness of this being, the vibrance of the grass scudding beneath my feet. Grass may scud as and when I rush over it, rush over with such joy - hungry grass! Yea, I know that even the grass craves a joint of rain, the long patches obscuring once where a meal was set upon.

I do know the hunger of all things and it is a glad hunger! Colors now dazzle where once there was a gray reason...Look! The trees are such fine shapes; they stoop to tell of a life in nitrate, of their favorite pastimes – the trees are literate! They read their own leaves, the print is noble and bears witness to much irony! Oh sweet excellence, how few do ride in my starry strangle hold. Tonight songs will be sung to touch luminosity; a Moon shall rise over corn and many inanimates will be accorded greetings. But what inactivity shall follow? What creates vacuity? Within and without, one creative act will alter the shape of things as only a boat of animals on a shiny sea could know.

But who will make life their art? Now, how the stars do sparkle, rippling the water like the taut facial expression of an enthralled gibbon. I am abandoned to this... there are no words as we project onto animals the qualities of humans. I am touched by Eros, bells remembering my heart weaved into a gift of wicker – I offer it to the one who hath stirred the ivory spinning pin. Tears hath dyed the tapestry and laughter, laughter cracks the dawn! Midnight alone ploughs the field, the darkling owner of that primal rhomboid tractor is elusive of features, cloaked as it may in

forbidden and diverse sonnets. Speech carries no bounty, all images retire as Spring opens a way, doors loosen, an intersection made...

And with the clattering of words, indeed by their presence, I give myself up finally to silence. For in oblivion, a strangely shaped ruby may be seen – and what is felt? It is to love that I give myself and to she who embodies this, my muse, my life I dedicate. What is achieved alone is a half journey.

To love therefore, since times are recalled for they do last forever.

III

Now the evening shrouds a clear deceit – but what is deceived? The two of us, close, as is said, the world revolves outside. Yet birds sing to us and the leaves embellish our song. Saccharine lilt in our hearts – something is earthed inside, each the others home - if such is the way, then I worship thee, I worship thee who sways me. Your hair still wet frames thy flickering gaze: Paradise stands a path away, yet there are many routes and my trembling form, barely present, seeks with helplessness that trusted way.

She cares that I live, that alone I cause disharmony to her tomorrows. We both seek refuge from emptiness and therefore provide a mutual port – is it for myself that love is cast? By her eyes I do know the answer and yet I do not falter for mine own to burn with the same. Here is the deceit that if acknowledged any other way than floating harmony, would perturb.

I do in silence, beneath the smoking tree, know there is ever one end unless our stars do create the same firmament that flows with natural order – where there is almost effortless change. Is this my chosen door to life? The choice is made by more than one. I do say, in evening, that strangest of words, love; I do love thee for all my reasons. Cast on parchment shall we ink our smiles in mutual agreement, knowing other reasons unsaid. Time alone tells all and let us not pretend we know not.

IV

To love... what is that exactly? Time and time does not reveal in the minds what such passion is; by this silence the strongest fall sick, confusion tearing at the soul like an insane beast – through the eyes of beasts, there is no end in sight. The cracking of the ultimately immobile, only an impassioned dent, for the walls dare not be removed. To run far from the object that inspires the untranslatable cannot be so amiss!

I need to be reassured in this! To this terrible awning do I return alone, for it is of my won design; the walls, sheer and constricting are the giblets of my mind. I breathe and feel more pain...

Death, a blank option awaits by the door; the key I cannot identify, all is so homely and yet the mould that cast the metal contained an unsure ingredient, an unnerving interlude in the possible erratum of the dream. I would die and have all and nothing – for names in this wretched world amount to naught. The luminosity within counts for something greater, yet only this can be gradually attained, through the worst of experiences and not by their hiding. To build, to build with paid and fear; this is a constant knowledge, which tears cannot deny and yet I feel older than the sea and weary. I wish to disappear, to sleep – for life is a wound, reopened, festering until it kills with the poison of love and pain and all that comes under the umbrella of sensation. Your words, empty letters, never once expressing, have hurt the self of me that cannot empathize. I lie bloodied in my hall of mirrors.

There come thrice no words in this season: for I sit stabbed, diseased, raging like a giant curtain! The sky is mine to rend – the sky! It knocks thrice and throws me restless! The water of this

evening is a festering wave to my heart – carved in pieces through rapture! The slightest light perturbs - who will be my friend in such a season! They scatter like lens at my jabbering, which in one instant inspires more than one good time – a pleasing broth – but in others, I am rolling, broken, vital! My hands would kill for this!

There it is ... the real moment; that which cannot be contained. I know it now and the joy it creates means to kill – or I succumb! The fabric rips, the storm doth batter this raft – yet I hang on!

I love, so I cannot live. I cannot tell you...

Burdened therefore with the baggage of tragedy, I fall inwards; to what I do not know – only the pain and wounded curling do I expect.

I die though live: my tears are still warm. In fact, they burn...

V

Death holds no opinion. The blank rage of minions stirs not the breast of the leopard.

Now I know the Sun; now its fruit doth stain my mouth. For suffering is a prelude to understanding and I have arrived! Washed, unexpected, upon a shore, its sands were undoubted, it flowers a glorious statement of truth! Simple, undeniable – a beauty not of my creation, but of my life, naturally. And how I marvel at myself, born anew. For there are experiences that are outside and move within - she moves within! I see a greater picture! Free in the greatest surety I have known.

I did battle by my own deceptions and now you stand before me, your smile alone fills my world. What can I do to express this? Simply – let me look into your eyes, for there are no images to cage – we dance, we are inspiration and we are beyond death.

I love you as I look now into the Sun, and know within my heart, every creature toward love roams free.. together.

Art is The True Empire

An Interview with Christos Beest.
From Key of Alocer #5

And now the highlight of this Art Special, at least for me, *CHRISTOS BEEST* of the *ORDER OF NINE ANGLES*. Amongst other things he has produced the ONA's Sinister Tarot, and works to accompany the poetry of Sappho.

Can you give an overview of your artistic background, education, emphasis?

I have been painting, as the cliché goes, for as long as I can remember - but I have little formal training. Further education consisted of a one year Foundation Art & Design course, but during thee - like any healthy adolescent - I was more obsessed with sex and death and drinking than how to stretch a canvas. But I did discover the 'alchemy of colour' and the painting of Botticelli - the only artist I've ever really taken notice of. But I have never really thought of myself as an 'Artist' - or any other 'ist' for that matter - and if I were somehow forced to think about relationship to art, I would probably describe myself as someone who uses paint only as one of several ways by which I may, at present, relate to the 'world'. As the years progress, my aspirations seem to graduate more toward making my life a work of Art.

What do you think it is that pushes certain individuals to create art?

Within the organism of a culture, 'Artiste' are part of the creative minority who 'earth' the flow of acausal energies into that culture. They are thus as individuals, 'channels' for the force that creates the civilisation to which they belong - and thus have a real responsibility to that civilisation (and in some cases, the successive civilisation). Obviously, most such creative individuals - and I use the term 'creative' in its broadest sense - are not aware of earthing acausal forces; those few who are aware are the 'Magickians' of this world.

What pushes you? Do you often work to fit briefs or would work like the Sappho paintings be something you would have done on your own admonition?

As well as the primary aim of expressing the Sinister, which is a necessity of Being, I am pushed by a fanatical desire to complete as many prospects as I can before I die - which is, of course, a consequence of the former. So far I have dictated the terms and conditions of my various painting projects -including the occasional exhibition, which is quite a pleasing situation to be in (although not always in the financial sense. Never mind, my reward shall be in Hell).

The paintings, musick and translations relating to Sappho all grew together, inspiring each other, and providing an opportunity to explore a prospect that combined a variety of media, an area I am particularly interested in.

Is paint your forte or is there other media you use or would like to use?

In the realm of painting, I always use water colour pencils on watercolour paper which feels very natural to me. I did enjoy for a brief time using oils on canvas; the smell and texture of the paint seemed to transform the mechanics of creating a painting, which for me, usually, can be tedious, into something quite sensual. I felt like the archetypal painter with my then Byronesque hairstyle and Edwardian dress sense. In a broader Artistic sense, my overriding interest like in combining media (including film, musick and dance) to realise a 'Mysterium': a combination of forces that would culminate in one unified chord of sound or colour. The event would be aided (secretly) by the simultaneous performance of a sinister rite created to open a nexion (qv. Ceremony of Recalling)... the basic premise of this 'Mysterium' is not new: it was first proposed by the Russian composer Scriabin, who died before realising its performance (the concept of the 'Mysterium' was to Scriabin's contemporaries a symptom of the composer's 'insanity'). But all great leaps in understanding are based on the labours of others, and it is only now in this phase of history, that such an important Aeonic

My first exhibition, which was in fact a collaboration with another individual, occurred in Bath, in 1989. This primarily consisted of menstrual blood paintings and other works focusing on the Goddess Hel. I found the event frustrating because of how unsatisfied I felt with the whole process of gallerisation; it all seemed so static, sterile, and no matter how extreme the work, did not really involve and touch an audience. Generally, with all gallery exhibited work that I've encountered, I have found there to be a sober process of merely 'viewing' that an audience falls into automatically because of the set up; there is an encouragement of a TV mentality, which, for me, dispossesses all work of its power. This process of viewing could be in itself effective if it was not for the uniform sterility of the gallery environment.

After my first exhibition (which was to be concluded with my suicide - hanging by my boot laces from a tree opposite the gallery (truly Helish-Ed) - but I got drunk instead and forgot all about the finale. I played a small role in an Anti-Gallery movement which led me onto develop my growing interest in 'performance Art', and after some interesting public performances, I eschewed Galleries forever. But then, with the completion of the Major Arcana of the Sinister Tarot, an opportunity was created for me to exhibit the work at Gwent College of Art. I was at this time finishing work on the paintings and musick inspired by Sappho's poetry, and it was decided between myself, Wulfrun Hall and Sister Lianna, to present the musick and paintings together as a 'performance'. Photographic eludes were made of the paintings which were projected, via 'elide dissolve' onto a large screen in the College lecture theatre, whilst the music was played through an amplified system. This intense combination of media provided an exciting intimation of what could be achieved. The reaction of the audience was low-key, mostly complimentary -no hysterics, unfortunately. Over the past few years I've had paintings exhibited in art shops and cafes across the country, and a few paintings have been sold privately. The Tarot/Sappho performance was under my Satanic pseudonym - for other events, I have used a variety of mundane names (including my real mundane name).

What is the role of Art within Satanism? Does your work push a sinister dialectic?

Since my life is a vessel through which Sinister forces may move, all my work implements, to whatever degree, a Sinister strategy. In some circumstances, a painting is created deliberately to effect charge - or act as a focus for disruption - within a particular environment, ie. works created for non-Satanic occult groups for use within ritual... Generally though, it is simply a case of 'just painting' and allowing an inspiration to take hold - allowing acausal forces to disperse as they will. The Aeonic effects of an 'unfocused' painting are minimal and so knitted in the fabric of time that they may not be discernable - but in tandem with other more overt strategies (ie. "politics") may produce helpful results (or not). Whatever, the medium of art generally produces effects that are discernable only over several centuries, and only then as an aid to more overt forms. The role of art within Satanism can be succinctly stated: where most art is useless - ate creation being based solely on self-gratification, and the resulting work merely reflecting what already exists- Satanic Art is a 'Prelude'. It is so because its overall aim is to gradually alter the psyche of a civilisation (that is, to distort/alter/create anew along Sinister lines the Archetypes that a society is swayed by at the time) and the causal changes really occur when individuals thus changed act as a consequence of that change. All this takes a long time.

What does unrestrained artistic expression and integrity mean to you? If you were to accept your work 'on a bonfire' under say a NS regime, for the sake of Aeonics, wouldn't this be an insult to those 'Satan given talents'?

If my paintings were destroyed under an NS 'regime' -assuming a future NS regime would destroy paintings - then so what? If such a regime were to exist, then one of the main aims of my work (with particular reference to the Sinister Tarot) will have been realised. I don't create 'art for art's sake' but art through which forces may be earthed to thus achieve a practical aim. Once that aim is achieved, then what? The painting would either be destroyed, or hung up to wither away in some gallery for 'historical interest'.. either way, its causal purpose has effectively ceased. The Sappho paintings might be a problem, but they are secondary to the poet herself, and she will always be remembered, no matter what. To carry out work that a society may, at the time, find threatening, would be a challenge - and could result in more profound art because of the restriction. I am aware of how blasé this all sounds - and I honestly could not predict my initial reaction. But, for an Adept, what s/he, as a individual existing in the 'here and now' feels and desires

Auf dem Wasser zu singen: Another Interview with Anton Long

The following is taken from interview conducted by F.D. on a Summer night 114yf/2003eh.

Do you believe the future of the Order to now be in America? If so, would it be right to assume that this would imply the necessity for creating a semi-public presence agitating for disruption and change? Or does the Order remain and grow as it now is, hidden but working away within England - and indeed Ireland?

A: The answer to the first part is yes, and no. Yes, insofar as America should give rise to the first practical, sinister, manifestation of the next stage - a new society, based upon the Law of the New Aeon, and the emergence of Vindex - and will thus become the centre of that practical manifestation; and no, insofar as the esoteric essence, manifest in one way in a physical nexion and in another in a small esoteric teaching community, will remain in Europe. Expressed simply, America will be the home of the outer aspect of the Order, with all that involves, while the inner aspect remains where it is and has been for a long time. However, there will come a time when the inner aspect will need, due to practical circumstances, to be duplicated elsewhere - but even this will not be in America. A semi-public presence would be one of the manifestations of the outer Order, in America.

In the MS *Words of Vermiel* there is mention of interacting with a Star-Gate; are there plans - aside from the Star Game - to extend the ONA's symbolic language into a cosmic one, creating symbols and magickal techniques which are not Earth based?

A: Yes. But this requires advanced mastery of our Way, and only a few individuals, at present, are capable of the thinking which is required to even begin this.

What is required is a new way of thinking, and a new way of being - a move toward the acausal, by the individual. Conventional magick operates in the causal, using acausal energy. Internal Magick is a move toward the acausal by the individual, and this is the beginning of the being, the thinking, which is required.

In time - of many, many decades - a few more will advance, and learn, and master this new way of being. But this requires many practical changes, in people, in society - it requires the new society of the New Aeon, which in itself means the destruction of the old order and the mental tyranny of the present, not to mention the physical tyranny which the New World Order is creating.

We can now step over the threshold into a new way of being - and so begin the next stage of our evolution. Opening pathways to the acausal continuum itself. Conventional (external) magick, and even internal and Aeonic magick, are but beginnings - there is so much more, which will take us toward immortality, and enable us, by the very nature of the acausal continuum, to travel the Cosmos without the need of physical machines. But it must be understood that last the stage of the Seven-Fold Way is only the beginning of this, and to achieve that Grade takes one individual many, many decades. So far, this century, only one person has achieved it. We have the potential to achieve that Grade - to evolve past even that - but have wasted and are wasting this potential.

Some symbols - or the prototype language, if you prefer - and some techniques, already exist, but to use them, to understand them, requires that apprenticeship which is the Seven-Fold Way up to the stage of Master/ Lady Master. Two individuals, in the old country - one male, one female - are heading toward this stage, but as yet no one in America is near this stage, so there is a long way to go.

Given the proved Astronomical significance of the various stone circles and alignments, is there any received information within the Order regarding the human species originating from somewhere other than Earth? Do you believe the alignments represent a knowledge which is now lost concerning our relation to the stars - or do we, according to the principles of evolution, now know more than we have ever known?

A: There is no received information about our origins. There is no "lost knowledge" in that sense - although we have lost a great deal through the modern way of living. One thing we have lost is the sense, the intuition (and that is what it was) of our belonging: to Nature, to Earth, to the Cosmos. But we have also acquired many things - one of which

is a rational understanding of ourselves; another is a knowledge of how to consciously change ourselves; and another is our ability of empathy, of true magick. Real magick is an empathy - a knowing, a sense-ing, of the matrix of acausality which binds all living things together.

We - or rather, esoteric Initiates - do indeed know more, or can learn more, than we have ever known or learnt.

Is Satan, for the Order, a supra-personal being with which we can communicate, or an archetype residing in our psyche drawn out into our being via invokation - or both?

A: To fully answer the question one has to understand the true nature of such things as causal, acausal, being, presencing, sinister, archetype, not to mention the nature of an individual and what is "communication".

An archetype is a particular manifestation of acausal energy in the causal - a living being, but a being with an acausal "nature" (or more correctly a partly acausal and partly causal nature). This being is born (or can be created), lives, declines, and then ceases to exist on the level of existence where it was manifest (our psyche). But there are beings beyond these archetypes - beings which are more acausal, and beings which are purely acausal. That is, which have more acausal energy than archetypes.

What is named as "Satan" is beyond an archetype, just as the "Dark Gods" are.

In the simplistic sense, archetypes are related to the stages up to Adept; the next type of acausal beings we can perceive - or more correctly, which can be accessed in some way, or presenced in the causal - relate to the Abyss and beyond. That is, archetypes cease to have any effect, on an individual who is beyond a certain stage of our Way, and this is one meaning of being an Adept.

There is no communication, but rather an apprehension. This apprehension, for archetypes, is fairly simple. Beyond archetypes, it is much more complex and does not rely on our conventional senses and the way of causal apprehension: which is via sounds, colours, "words", images, and collocations of these (such as a static Tarot image, such an image used in as magickal way, or a magickal rite), synchronistic or otherwise.

A magickal apprehension is a participation - an expansion of one's own being, and thus an evolution. Hence, "Satan" is one means of evolution, magickal and otherwise.

Is there still a purpose to the traditional Satanic ceremonies - particularly the Black Mass - or are they now outmoded?

A: Yes. A beginning. A learning. A liberation. A moving toward that apprehension wherein is knowledge of causal and acausal, sinister and non-sinister, and what is beyond.

But there will come a time when this beginning, and learning, is not needed any more. This will be after the New Aeon has been manifest for some time, and moved individuals towards the next stage of our evolution.

There will then be the apprehension mentioned earlier - the new language (beyond symbolism) and the new magickal methods, which relate to the Cosmos and not this Earth. But first, we must liberate this world from the tyranny it now endures. First, we need many individuals living according to the Law of the New Aeon, and many individuals becoming Adepts of our Way.

Esoteric chant is, for me, one of the most powerful and original of the ONA's teachings. Just how important is it for Initiates to master this technique - for their own development, and also in terms of the effects such a technique has in the wider world (and beyond)? Are all the chants now written down, or are there some which have to be taught on a teacher/pupil basis?

A: It is very important, because it is one means of magickal apprehension - a powerful magickal techniques which can open, and create, certain nexions, nexions which are Aeonically necessary. In one sense, it is one step toward one of the new non-Earth based, Cosmic, magickal techniques of the future.

Most of the chants have now been written down.

Is *Hangter's Gate* a re-telling of a real event, and if so, were the details of this event originally communicated orally by Master/Mistress to pupil, and will there be more such Traditional Folk tales to relate?

A: Yes, yes and yes.

Is the Order near to realising some of its long term goals - i.e. the founding of some type of rural community/presence?

A: To achieve this goal takes three things - the right individuals at the right level of understanding; the right external circumstances (the condition of our societies - how close the New Aeon is); and the opening of a certain nexion in the area where this physical nexion must be.

It will arise when the time for its arrival has come; and this time is near. For two of the conditions are already fulfilled.

I once read in an Order MSS a reference to 'alchemical seasons'. What does this mean in terms of Nature, and can these seasons be experienced and lived within, in the same manner as the four seasons?

A: An alchemical season is a natural process which occurs in Nature, and also in we ourselves, who are beings of Nature. They are Change; a natural dialectic; and span several, or many, of the "Four seasons".

In one sense, the Internal Adept rite is a very simple "alchemical season" in relation to an individual. In relation to Nature, an alchemical season is either a natural, or a magickally-induced, change or evolution. The creation of a physical nexion is one type of created, induced, evolution, and this creation occurs over an alchemical season.

There are also, of course, Cosmic alchemical seasons, some of which we know - in terms of their beginnings and their ending - by various observed astronomical events, often relating to star or planetary alignments, which alignments also, sometimes, signify the length of an alchemical season in relation to Nature.

Some might argue that - esoterically/magickally - the practice of human sacrifice is a little archaic. Why is such an act still regarded as important - what does it create in magickal terms, and why?

A: It is important on several levels. As a necessary means of Initiate learning; as a necessary magickal act - a presencing of the dark: a drawing down of acausal energy, if you prefer. As a means of aiding the Sinister Dialectic; and as a means of removing the worthless, dishonourable dross so manifest in the societies of our time.

Magickally, it aids internal magick (the evolution of the individual); aids Aeonic magick; and opens nexions. It ensures the Order stays esoteric and that its Adepts are genuine Adepts of the Sinister Tradition. And of course it also adds to the aura of the Order itself, and weeds out the dross.

Azoth

**Ephemera
of
The ONA**

(For Members and Associates only:
Not for publication)

Issue 34 (Summer Solstice) yf101 [1990 ev]

Part I: News

Part II: MSS and articles submitted by members

Part III: Order MSS

Printed by: ONA
 PO Box 4
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 Shropshire England

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News:

'Naos':

The publishers (Coxman Press) inform us that publication is now due Winter Solstice this year. This further delay is regretted, but will enable a better quality version in terms of both typesetting and binding. Some additional material has been added to the original MS – from 'esoteric' Order MSS.

'Fenrir':

'Fenrir' now has a new editor and a new address (PO Box 109, Newport, Gwent, South Wales, U.K.). [See the 'Zine' reviews in this issue of 'Azoth' – contributed by RAJ.

The Editor is planning a special 'Black' issue devoted to sinister workings which will include', the 'Rite of the Nine Angles'.

Media Interest:

A further statement, written by a member of an affiliated group (JAP) and entitled 'Satanism – The Facts', has been issued for general publication with the intention of countering the current Nazarene propaganda campaign. This is in addition to the 'ONA Statement' issued last year and published in 'Fenrir' 8.

Members/Associates who have not as yet seen the new statement can obtain a copy by writing to HQ [enclose s.a.e].

Film Project:

This project [see Azoth 32] has been suspended as an official ONA undertaking. (See 'Occlusion' below.)

Occlusion:

In order to protect the anonymity of members/Associates as well as to preserve the esoteric nature of the Order and its associated groups, a period of 'Occlusion' has been intimated to other Occultists and the 'media' made aware of the 'demise/suspension' of the Order itself. It is anticipated that this period of public anonymity will last from one to three years.

Individual teaching will remain and be unaffected, as will the tasks of an 'External Adept' in relation to ceremonial rituals.

After this period, the matter will be reviewed and a decision taken as to whether to make the 'Occlusion' permanent – that is, reverting to the tradition of secrecy. As most members are aware, the

decision to establish a more open profile (taken in 1985 ev by A-FB) has proved beneficial in some respects. Comments on this would be appreciated [send to HQ].

Tarot:

Reproductions of the 'ONA' cards drawn by "Christos Beest" are available at cost. Write to HQ for further details.

Part Two: Articles by Members

LHP Zine Reviews

R.A.J.
(Temple of the Prince)

Black Flame:

\$3.00 per issue from PO Box 499, Radio City Station, NY 10101-0499, USA

Well-printed and typeset, but more like a newsletter for the 'Anton LaVey fan club' than a general Satanic mag. Its general tone can be summed up in the Editor's quote from

Vol. 2 no. 1 (Spring Equinox this year): "Special note to Church of Satan members: if you choose to affiliate with any pseudo-Satanic or anti-Satanic groups, you may well find yourself dis-affiliated with the Church of Satan..." Typical Old Aeon values... Little of real interest here, but lots of praise for La Vey's somewhat plagiarised and somewhat 'Old Aeon' ideas. Like the Church of Satan, perhaps trying to 'corner the market' in Satanism: theirs is the 'official/correct' version and so on, so forth.

Brimstone:

\$5 per issue from 231 Kennedy Drive, Box 130, Malden, MA 02148, USA

Despite its Editor adhering to the 'Temple of Set' not given to 'Aquino worship'. Some lively and thought provoking articles [e.g. 'Uncle Setnakt Sez' in Vol I no. IV (Jan. this year) Could do with better lay-out and typesetting – although this seems to be improving with each issue. The 'Letters' are always interesting reading.

Fenrir:

£2.50 per issue from Brekkek, PO Box 109, Newport, Gwent, UK

Volume One (8 issues: 1988 ev to 1989 ev) was not so much a zine as an 'ONA.' journal. Volume Two (issue 1 now available) is totally different, thanks to the new Editor 'Christos Beest'. Now more general content [Vol. Two, number One contains an article on Chaos Magick by Pete Carroll] and more 'magickal' in a practical "post-Chaos" magick sense. This makes it more accessible to others working with LHP traditions. Overall, there is a feeling of youthful verve about the new 'Fenrir'. The only criticism: why cannot it have more pages? I for one wanted to go on reading

Dark Lily:

£1.50 from BCM Box 3406, London WC1N 3XX, England

Recent 'blurbs' for this zine announce it as the 'leading mag. of the LHP in the UK'. The leading mag. for verbosity would be nearer the truth: makes Satanism and the LHP seem boring and tame. Lots of 'philosophical' type articles which both practically and magickally do not amount to much. The best part is the ads.

The Watcher:

\$NZ 10 for a year's sub. from Realist Publications, PO Box 38-262, Petone, Wellington, New Zealand
A new LHP zine (two issues so far – latest April/May/June this year). Promising start: the Editor is tolerant to other interpretations of Satanism/the LHP than that of the Church of Satan (of which he is a member). Realist Publications also issue a booklet, 'The Rites of Satan' (\$NZ 2), which contains a collection of Satanic rituals: most of them deriving from the ONA.
Hopefully, future issues of 'The Watcher' will be larger (issue Two is eight pages).

Nox:

£3 from S.L. Sennitt, 15 Oxford St., Mexborough, South Yorkshire, UK

Now described as a 'post-Chaos' journal of the LHP, although it tends toward 'Grant/Spare' and the 'phantasmagorical approach' (for t he latter, qv 'Cthulhu Rising' in vol2. no.2).

Always something of interest, despite (sometimes) wasting space with fiction and artwork. Still, this is a matter of opinion.

Some Notes on the Dark Tradition

J.W.T

The rite of the Nine Angles is one of the main means whereby the power of the acausal dimensions may be brought to this Earth – that is, into our causal world. Symbolically, this means in one sense, drawing 'down' the powers 'of Darkness. The 'chthonic' rite implies this 'downward' motion -an altering of the causal by the acausal, or symbolically, bringing' back the 'Dark Gods'. We say 'Dark Gods' because this is the perception of these energies by those not yet having undergone the ordeal of the passing of the Abyss – hence the symbolism, for example, of the pathways of the Tree of Wyrd.

The 'natural' rite may be said to be an 'upward' exploration by' the participants of the acausal: an 'expansion' of their consciousness. This natural form, according to the spoken and secret Dark Tradition, should be done by those who have undergone the rite of Internal Adept: as my own teacher said, they are thus 'individuated' to use a fairly new term. They are, thus and in consequence, possessed of a 'self-image', a perception beyond the pure 'ego': aware of the 'hidden' Occult world and its energies, to describe just one aspect. These individuated ones – or Priest and Priestess – come together in the "medium of the coniunctio" to use the 'appropriate alchemical image. This is "azoth", the second or living water (sometimes called the homogeneous metallic water). What this means, is that the union of these two (both through the medium of the rite and the sexual union which is part of that rite) is this "azoth" because the Priestess is a Gate to the acausal. The crystal both enhances and directs the energy. (It may be noted that the rite of the Abyss gives this power – of being a 'Gate' – to those who succeed in their passing.)

(Transcribed from a talk given by AL at ONA Sunedrion yf 99)
Magick and Politics

What is occurring more and more within society, is adherence by individuals to ephemeral causes and 'opinions' as a result of the subjection to individuals to propaganda both overt and more 'covert' (i.e. 'subliminal'). That is, society is developing so as to make practical experience of the traumas of life more and more distant – the individual becoming shielded not only by the 'State' and its Institutions by also by ideas. Thus, the world is seen via the distorting lenses of these ideas. In the past, wisdom arose usually painfully over a period of time by diverse and often traumatic personal experience – that is, a very individual 'view of the world' was formed as a result of these varied experiences. Of course, few arrived at even this stage of conscious development.

Magick, properly understood, was an attempt to 'short-circuit' this process – hence, for example, the tasks and procedures of the Grade Rituals in the seven-fold Way. Thus, magick built, from within and without 'the individual, a genuine foundation – an 'inner core' which enabled the individual to not only survive in an often-hostile world, but also enhance their life quite significantly. Magick restores the individual in a very important way to the 'roots of their being' allowing thus a personal growth.

However, society in general does the opposite. Its 'education', its Institutions, its Laws all act together to produce an individual lacking in spirit: that is, devoid of a personal world-view. Moreover, this occurs whatever the outward political allegiance of the society – eg. Socialist or capitalist or shades in between. – and occurs whether or not a particular society is 'democratic' or overtly 'repressive.

The only difference between the two is the method: the latter is more objectified and direct, often involving force and suppression, while the latter is more devious (and all the more dangerous because of this).

Essentially, there is growing within nearly all the societies of the world a consensus and an adherence to a certain set of ideas and values. That is, there is a 'levelling down' of differences together with a real loss of individual freedom not only in terms of the ability of an individual to transit freely, unencumbered by whatever 'past' he or she may have, but equally importantly in terms of inner outlook. There is less and less 'realness' about individuals because the dramatic, formative experiences which shape and mould character and which give spirit are either becoming 'illegal'/frowned upon or made impossible by State control and/or indoctrination of the individual into a certain pattern of living/ideas about life.

In the practical sense, one could say not only are the legal restraints on an individual and their actions increasing, but also the direct power which States have over individuals (and this includes information about individuals) are ever growing. This, coupled with co-operation between States in the distribution/exchange of information and the desire for even more and larger 'federations' of States (eg. like a 'European State') both national and international, means more and more direct personal restrictions and less and less 'inner freedom'. There is in short, much more superficial ways of living: ways encouraged by States and by those who adhere to what is fast becoming the accepted world 'idea-system'. This 'idea-system', it will surprise few here, is based to a great extent on the 'Nazarene view of the world'. Already in one of its many political forms it is established within the States of the West where its watchwords include 'democracy' and 'equality' and 'freedom'. Of course, these words enshrine clever ideas – but they are not real simply because they belong to something beyond one or at least a few individuals.

This is really the crux of the matter. What is real is that which exists for each one of us, and this is and must be discovered anew by every individual as part of the process of life itself: when it is not, there is no real life – only the appearance of it. There is thus no inner essence, only outward form. What this means is that all governments, States, Institutions or power-groupings negate this essence because our conscious life is a personal process of development pivotal upon our understanding of ourselves, the world, the cosmos and those few others with whom we inter-act in a very personal way: it should not be extrapolated beyond this, and all politics, all religion and all social pressures of whatever hue contradict this. They are, essentially, counter-evolutionary because they make the individual reliant on that which is

not born from within. Thus there can be no such thing as genuine 'democracy/freedom/equality' and all attempts to create what are only abstract ideas destroy individuality. Such abstract ideas, however,

continue to flourish, and they continue to make the individual sterile. There will be, in the near future, more and more reliance upon such ideas, more and more attempts to make them a 'reality' in State/governmental forms – eg. in Eastern Europe and beyond.

Of course, this analysis forms the core of 'genuine anarchism': but even this is a label, an 'ism' which has evolved into an 'idea' with all the dissent appropriate to an idea. Magick is a means away from all this – it is a practical system, devoid of dogma, and makes possible the next stage of our evolution as individuals. As such, it is direct opposition to all power-forms – governmental, religious or social – although this opposition is silent and will remain silent.

Magick is individual and will remain individual and while current conditions remain not unfavourable as regards the spread of information relating to its techniques, this will probably change: simply because inner liberation is and will continue to be so for some time the province of a small number of individuals while the devotees of abstract political and social ideas continue to flourish and expand.

This, naturally, is only a brief resume of the problem and what perhaps it is essential to remember is that we-as artists of the magickal possess the ability to bring about change: both within ourselves and, should we wish it, within the society within which we live. The essence of the former is the seven-fold way, that of the latter – aeonic magick.

Part Three: Order MSS

The Seven-Fold Sinister Way: A Comprehensive Guide

Aim:

Essentially three fold: a) Initiation; b) magickal Adeptship; c) fulfilment of individual wyrd and potential.

Stages:

1) Neophyte; 2) Initiate; 3) External Adept; 4) Internal Adept;
5) Master of Temple/Mistress of Earth; 6) Magus/Magistra; 7) Immortal

Note: Initiates are sometimes known as 'Novices', Neophytes as 'Oblates'. External Adepts as 'Professed Brother/Sister'; Internal Adepts as Priest and Priestess; a Magus as 'Grand Master'.

Neophyte:

Tasks: Study of Esoteric tradition as given in Order MSS – particularly Black Book, Naos, Azoth and 'Fenrir'. After this preliminary study (c.1 month) undertake ritual of Self-Initiation [Black Book] and construct simple form of the Star Game [Naos].

Initiate:

Tasks: Study septenary system in detail [Naos etc.] and begin workings with the spheres and the pathways. Study and use of Tarot.

Undertake hermetic workings/rituals for specific desires/personal requests.

Continue with study and use of Star Game – relating the abstract symbolism to the Tree of Wyrd, septenary etc.

Set a demanding physical goal [e.g. running 20 miles in 2½ hours or less or cycling 100 miles in less than 5½ hours or walking 32 miles in less than 7 hours: it must be one of these] train and achieve it.

Seek and find a companion and Initiate this individual [Black Book] and then undertake the workings with the spheres and pathways with this person.

Begin to teach this individual the Star Game, and use the game together. *

Undertake the Grade Ritual of External Adept.

*The first stage is the awakening of the darker/unconscious aspects within the psyche. These aspects/energies are identified with in the rite of Initiation and then symbolised in the workings with the spheres and pathways following Initiation. These workings give practical experience of the darker forces/energies. The Star Game begins the process of objectifying these energies in a more conscious way: giving greater insight and control, and this is the beginning of self-awareness since the Tree of Wyrd is symbolic of individual consciousness, both unconscious/acausal ('sinister') and causal, as well as representing the forces/energies beyond the individual psyche.

The setting of a physical goal, by the Initiate, and the training to achieve it, is important because it enhances the vitality and develops personal qualities important to the magickian: determination, elan and so on. This task must be undertaken, for without it, the Initiate stage is not complete.

The seeking, finding and working with a companion begins the confrontation with the 'anima/animus' energies/archetypes resulting in practical experience of them as well as enabling the use of sexual Magickal formulae [qv Rite of Nine Angles etc.]. This is a very important part of developing self-awareness, and the 'ritualised' setting enables both practical experience and the possibility of developing self-insight. (This 'ritualised' setting is first the workings with the spheres and pathways, use of Star Game, and then later the organisation of a Temple [see below].)

External Adept:

Tasks: Organise a magickal group/Temple for the performance of ceremonial rituals as given in the Black Book – the Ext. Adept as the 'Master'/Mistress of this Temple, the companion as the 'Mistress'/Master'.

It is the task of the new External Adept to find suitable members, Initiate them and so on. Regular sunedrions should be held [Black Book, for details. The Ext. Adept is called a 'Choregos' while running the Temple.].

After the group has been run for c. 3-6 months, the Ext. Adept should set another but more demanding physical goal, train and, achieve it. [For example, running a marathon in less than 3 hrs (men) or 3hrs 30 (women); cycling 100 miles in less than 5 hrs (4:45 if really determined) or walking 50 miles in 13 hrs.]

After running the Temple for between 6-12 months, choose a Priest and Priestess from the group to run the Temple while the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept is being undertaken.

* Notes: The titles assumed by the Ext. Adept, the companion and those appointed by the Ext. Adept to positions within the Temple such as Priest and Priestess, are purely honorary, and do not signify the achievement of the magickal grade associated with that title 'in the 'Seven Fold Way'. It is one of the tasks of the Ext. Adept ('Choregos') in running the Temple to appoint suitable members to fulfil the positions required by rituals (e.g. Priest, Altar-Priest, Thurifer and so on). It is up to the Choregos whether to inform members that the Temple is organised as part of the tasks/training of an Ext. Adept in the sinister path. If the Choregos decides to do so inform the members of this, then those members, should the Choregos so wish, may also begin to follow the tasks of the Seven Fold Way as above: the Choregos always keeping a step or two (in terms of Grades) ahead of them. No one can be appointed to the Grades themselves: not even by a Grand Master – the Grades must be achieved by each and every individual, the only exception being Initiation. Initiation may be given, according to the ceremonial ritual [Black Book] by anyone of the grade of External Adept and above who organises a Temple, provided that the Initiate completes the initiate tasks as above.

The final task of an External Adept is to prepare for and undertake the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept.

*The tasks of an External Adept develop both magickal and personal skills. The organising and running of a Temple brings further magickal experience as well as enables several archetypal roles to be lived, this living vitalising (partly through the energy of the archetypes) the individual, enabling greater magick. One of the roles is that of the 'shadow' – the sinister magickian adept at ritual. The personal qualities developed include manipulation, the charisma of power and sexual/material pleasures. There is also a growing self-awareness, and understanding of archetypal energies as well as the further confrontations with the anima/animus. There may also be glimmerings of the unique wyrd of the individual – a wyrd revealed through the ritual of Internal Adept.

Internal Adept:

Tasks: Depending on the wyrd of the individual, either continue with and expand the Temple (training Initiates in the Seven Fold Way and so on) or begin the personal tasks revealed by the Grade Ritual.

Study of and training in Esoteric Chant [Note: this may be undertaken earlier, by an Initiate or External Adept if an aptitude exists and someone of or above the Grade of Internal Adept is willing to give instruction.].

Study of Advanced Star Game and esoteric, aeonic aspects of both forms of the game['cliology' etc.].

Preparation for and undertaking of Nine Angles rituals: 'natural' and/or 'chthonic' according to desire.

Further training of companion up to and including Grade Ritual of Internal Adept, if required.

Prepare for and undertake Grade Ritual of Abyss.

Master/Mistress:

The fundamental tasks of this Grade are three-fold: the teaching to suitable individuals of the Seven Fold Way either on an individual basis or via an organised Temple; the performance of Aeonic magick, and development of proficiency in the Star Game, particularly the advanced form.

Some may opt to specialise in a particular field.

* General Notes:

The Initiate stage lasts between six months to a year. The External Adept stage lasts from one to three years. The Internal Adept stage lasts from three to seven years.

Fundamental books, manuscripts etc:

*The Black Book of Satan [Re-issued 1989 ev: a complete guide to sinister ceremonial rituals and organising a Temple) 63 pages

*Naos [A guide to hermetic workings, basic septenary system and the Star Game] 65 pages

*Azoth[An introduction to more advanced septenary workings] 38 pages

*Falcifer [A fictional account of noviciate training] 103 pages

- *Temple of Satan [A fictional account of confrontation with anima/animus in a sinister context] 109 pages
- *Advanced Star Game 5 page MS
- *The Forbidden Alchemy 4 page MS [Note: published in 'Fenrir' no.8]
- *Rite of the Nine Angles (and other Order MSS)

The Abyss

The Abyss is where the causal and the acausal meet: a nexus of temporal and spatial dimensions. Because of the nature of our consciousness, the Abyss lies latent within all of us – that is, our consciousness consists of both causal and acausal aspects. In this sense, we are all 'Gates/' to the acausal dimensions, although this Gate – and the pathways leading to/from it – often lies undiscovered. Magickal training is essentially the discovery, exploration and use of these pathways.

Symbolised causally, the Abyss lies between the spheres of the Sun and Mars in the septenary Tree of Wyrd, and the 'Entering the Abyss' is that stage of magickal development, which distinguishes the Master/ Mistress from the Adept. The experience of the Abyss – which the Grade Ritual 'Entering the Abyss' begins – is fundamentally a destruction of the self-image, which the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept created and which was glimpsed during the External Adept rite. It is also the destruction of all personal illusions regarding opposites: the final 'withdrawing of projections'. In essence, the Internal Adept has learnt (mainly through the Grade Ritual) to withdraw the projections of the 'ego' from other individuals – that is, their is an understanding of individuals as those individuals are in essence: without the distortion of one's own passions/ideas/prejudices and without the distortions of other people's ideas/judgements and so on. The experience of the Abyss takes this a stage further – there is a withdrawal of all personal projections made by every individual upon others/the 'cosmos' and so on: both personal and impersonal. Thus, the essence is apprehended behind the appearance which the causal produces because it is the causal. Put very simply, the Abyss is the beginning of acausal perception.

This perception implies a complete understanding of oneself, one's wyrd, as well as an understanding of others, of aeonic influences, and of the 'cosmos' itself – the beginnings of wisdom ... Yet this does not mean a negation of individuality. Rather, it is an enhancement of consciousness. This is so because the Abyss is also the Tree of Wyrd itself – all the spheres and the pathways in both their individual and aeonic forms: the 'individual forms' being Jungian-type archetypes (and the experiences/ understanding appropriate to these) on a personal level, and the 'aeonic forms' being aeonic/cultural myths and images on a supra-personal level, in both 'sinister' and 'light' aspects. Further, the Abyss is also a direct opening or "Gate" to the acausal dimensions.

The ritual of the Abyss implies an acceptance of acausal energies as those energies are – that is, without any 'abstract', personal or judgemental views. It is a letting 'in' of those Null, Chaotic energies without any hindrance. This of course can be dangerous, but the preparation reduces this danger as well as making possible an understanding of those energies and the 'forms' they may or may not assume in both the causal and acausal worlds. This latter point is quite important, because there have been many who, unprepared, having experienced some acausal' energies via entering the Abyss too soon. Quite often, the result' of this premature magickal experience is madness or extreme personal dis-orientation resulting in a 'possessed' personal life and/or loss of vitality; another and frequent result is personal delusion about one's own abilities and understanding, both personal and magickal.

This understanding of the acausal, vital to a 'successful' crossing of the Abyss, derives from the preparation implicit in (a) having undertaken the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept [that is, in essence, having spent at least three months alone without any external influences and without any personal contact] and (b) having fulfilled the tasks revealed by that Grade Ritual. This fulfilling of personal tasks (the accomplishment of part of the wyrd of the individual) is necessary (and it takes from one to many years after the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept) because it dissipates the energy of the 'self-image' that the Grade Ritual produces, preparing thus a voidness within the Adept. The Adept generally knows when this inner void is reached (in simple terms, the personal, driving energy is gone through achievement of personal goals: the reality, of course, is more complicated and here the advice of a Master/Mistress/Magus is often sought).

The ritual of the Abyss is simple. The physical part (the walk in the specified time without assistance) is essential preparation for the 'magickal' part because it prepares the consciousness in a very specific way as well as draining the physical resources of the body. To complete the walk given the conditions stated requires determination – and this determination is released/abandoned when the magickal part of the rite is begun, this release/abandonment occurring quite naturally because the physical goal has been achieved. Thus, there is a 'hidden' wisdom in the construction of the rite (as there is in all the Grade Rituals).

The physical part also creates – because of the isolation – a feeling within the individual of being only a part of something more vast, and it for this reason that the walk is undertaken as far from human

habitation as possible. This isolation, the concentration required to walk at a pace enabling the goal to be reached within the set time, the rhythm of walking, the anticipation of the magickal part, all combine to produce the conditions necessary within the consciousness of the individual conducive to success.

As mentioned above, the Abyss is also an opening into the acausal. The 'passing of the Abyss' is the opening of that 'Gate' within us.

All magick is a glimpse of the acausal, and the stages of the seven-fold way are really stages when the acausal energies are developed and understood in a progressively more emphatic manner – that is, they may be seen as 'pushing that Gate wider and wider' – in the passing of the Abyss there is no longer a Gate, but rather a union or fusion. In another sense, the seven-fold way may be said to be the creation, within the consciousness of the individual, of connections or pathways to the acausal – each stage develops more and more pathways until they form a conduit through which acausal energy 'flows'. Beyond the Abyss, the individual is part of the acausal 'flow' and has achieved the goal of sentient life. This is really the great secret of alchemy, of magick and of the Left

Hand or Sinister Path itself – that is, we can create for ourselves another existence in another 'universe' and an existence which continues after our causal self dies. The means to this existence is simply – the seven fold way.

According to tradition, the Abyss is also presented physically in our causal universe. That is, terrestrial and 'Space' or 'Star' Gates exist where the two universes are joined. In reality, the terrestrial Gates may be said to be points where the causal and acausal come close to contact: where there is 'seepage' of acausal energy – the discovery of these places and then the 'opening of the Gate' via magick producing Aeonic energy to alter the causal (and thus the individuals in the world). [See the Order MSS relating to Aeons, 'Lovecraft and the Dark Gods' etc.]

Baphomet 1

The Gnostics represented [Azoth, the Universal Agent, Universal Medicine, Philosopher's Stone, etc.] as the fiery body of the Holy Spirit; it was the object of adoration in the Secret Rites of the Sabbath of the Temple, under the hieroglyphic figure of Baphomet or the Androgyne of Mendes. -----

----- Transcendental Magic: its Doctrine and Ritual, by Eliphas Levi, transl. by A.E. Waite, Braken Books, 1995; p. 16.

At the beginning of the French translation of a book by the Sieur de Nuisement on the Philosophic Salt, {ED NOTE: The Sieur de Nuisement is described as Receiver-General of the Comte de Ligny-en-Barrois. He belongs to the seventeenth century and derived his alchemical inspiration from the Cosmopolite, otherwise Sendivogius or Alexander Seton. He appears to have written in Latin, and the work to which Levi refers was rendered into French and appeared originally in 1621 was Traitez du Vray Sel, *Secret des Philosophes et des l'Esprit general du Monde*, etc.}. Later editions are those of 1639 & 1639. According to Lenglet Du Fresnoy, it formed part of a work entitled Elements Chimiques et Spagiriques which has not otherwise been printed.} the spirit of the earth is represented standing on a cube over which tongues of flame are passing; the phallus is replaced by a caduceus; the sun and moon figure on the right and left breast; the figure is bearded, crowned and holds a sceptre in his hand. This is the AZOTH of the sages on its pedestal of Salt and Sulphur. The symbolic head of the goat of Mendes is occasionally given to this figure, and it is then the Baphomet of the Templars and the Word of the Gnostics -- bizarre images which became scarecrows for the vulgar after affording food for reflection to sages -- innocent hieroglyphs of thought and faith which have been a pretext for the rage of persecutions. -----

----- Ibid., p. 207 +n. _____ The letter [shin, Hebrew] is commonly traced upon kabalistic pantacles which have the fulfilment of a desire for their object. It is also the sign of the scapegoat in mystic Kabbalah {NOTE: That is to say, in Eliphas Levi's imagined or manufactured version, for neither in true or original Kabbalism, nor in the commentaries of late successors of Isaac de Loria, is there any trace or notion of the so-called Templar Baphomet. See Sepher Ha Zohar, Part II, fol. 33a, for the sacrifice of the goat as a sop thrown to Satan....}.... ----- Ibid., p. 273 +n.

CHAPTER XV The Sabbath of the Sorcerers We recur once more to that terrible number fifteen symbolised in the Tarot by a monster throned upon an altar, mitred and horned, having a woman's breasts and the generative organs of a man -- a chimera, a malformed sphinx, a synthesis of deformities. Below this figure we read a frank and simple inscription -- The Devil. Yes, we

confront here that phantom of all terrors, the dragon of all theogonies, the Ahriman of the Persians, the Typhon of the Egyptians, the Python of the Greeks, the old serpent of the Hebrews, the fantastic monster, the nightmare, the Croquemitaine, the gargoyle, the great beast of the middle ages, and -- worse than all these -- the Baphomet of the Templars, the bearded idol of the alchemists, the obscene deity of Mendes, the goat of the Sabbath. The frontispiece to this Ritual [the Levi Baphomet] reproduces the exact figure of the terrible emperor of night, with all his attributes and all his characters. ...all inferior initiates of the occult sciences and profaners of the Great Arcanum, not only did in the past but do now, and will ever, adore what is signified by this alarming symbol. ...the Grand Masters of the Order of the Templars worshipped Baphomet, and caused it to be worshipped by their initiates; ...there existed in the past, and there may be still in the present, assemblies which are presided over by this figure, seated on a throne and having a flaming torch between the horns. But the adorers of this sign do not consider, as do we, that it is a representation of the devil: on the contrary, for them it is that of the god Pan, the god of our modern schools of philosophy, the god of the Alexandrian theurgic school and of our own mystical Neo-platonists, the god of Lamartine and Victor Cousin, the god of Spinoza and Plato, the god of the primitive Gnostic schools; the Christ also of the dissident priesthood. This last qualification, ascribed to the goat of Black Magic, will not astonish students of religious antiquities who are acquainted with the phases of symbolism and doctrine in their various transformations, whether in India, Egypt, or Judea. ...the goat [being one of "the three symbolical animals of Hermetic Magic" with the bull and dog] represents fire and is at the same time the symbol of generation. Two goats, one pure and one impure, were consecrated in Judea; the first was sacrificed in expiation for sins; the other, loaded with those sins by imprecature, was set at liberty in the desert -- a strange ordinance, but one of deep symbolism, signifying reconciliation by sacrifice and expiation by liberty! ... All the Kabalah and all Magic, as a fact, are divided between the cultus of the immolated and that of the emissary goat. We must recognise therefore a Magic of a Sanctuary and that of the wilderness, the White and Black Church, the priesthood of public assemblies and the Sanhedrim of the Sabbath. The goat which is represented in our frontispiece bears upon its forehead the Sign of the Pentagram with one point in the ascendant, which is sufficient to distinguish it as a symbol of the light. Moreover, the sign of occultism is made with both hands, pointing upward to the white moon of Chesed, and downward to the black moon of Geburah. This sign expresses the perfect concord between mercy and justice. One of the arms is feminine and other masculine, as in the Androgyne of Khunrath, whose attributes we have combined with those of our goat, since they are one and the same symbol. The torch of intelligence burning between the horns is the magical light of universal equilibrium; it is also the type

of soul exalted above matter, as the flame cleaves to the torch. The monstrous head of the animal expresses horror of sin, for which the material agent, alone responsible, must alone and for ever bear the penalty, because the soul is impassible in its nature and can suffer only by materialising. The caduceus, which replaces the generative organ, represents eternal life; the scale-covered belly tyifies water; the circle above it is the atmosphere; the feathers still higher up signify the volatile; lastly, humanity is depicted by the two breasts and the androgyne arms of this sphinx of the occult sciences. Behold the shadows of the infernal sanctuary dissipated! Behold the sphinx of mediaeval terrors and unveiled and cast from his throne! *Quomodo cecidisti, Lucifer!* {NOTE: It is said otherwise in *La Clef des Grands Mysteres* that initiates like the Templars were less guilty for having worshipped Baphomet than for having made it possible that this image should be remarked by the profane (*loc. cit.* p. 219). Levi goes on to affirm that the monster in question was a pantheistic figure of the Universal Agent and also the bearded demon of alchemists. There is, however, no such demon in the pictorial emblems of Hermetic Philosophy, nor is it true, as he adds, that ancient Hermetic Masonry in its highest Grades referred the achievement of the Great Work to a bearded demon, the reason in this case being that no Hermetic Masonry is older than the second half of the eighteenth century.} The dread Baphomet henceforth, like all monstrous idols, enigmas of antique science and its dreams, is only an innocent and even pious hieroglyph. How should man adore the beast, since he exercises a sovereign power over it? ... On the sacred stones of Gnostic Christians of the Basilidean sect there are representations of Christ under the diverse figures of kabalistic animals...; ...in all cases He bears invariably the same attributes of light, even as our goat, which cannot be confounded with fabulous images of Satan, owing to the Sign of the Pentagram. Let us affirm categorically, to combat the remnants of Manichaeism which are appearing sporadically among Christians, that as a superior personality and power Satan does not exist. He is the personification of all errors, perversities and consequently of all weaknesses. If God may be defined as He Who exists of necessity, may we not define His antagonist and enemy as necessarily he who does not exist at all? ...The misconstrued doctrine of Zoroaster and the magical law of two forces constituting universal equilibrium, have caused some illogical minds to imagine a negative divinity, subordinate but hostile to the active Deity. An impure duad comes thus into being. Men were mad enough to halve God; the Star of Solomon was separated into two triangles, and the Manichaeans imaged a trinity of night. This evil God, product of sectarian fancies, inspired all manias and all crimes. Sanguinary sacrifices were offered to him; monstrous idolatry replaced the true religion; From human sacrifices to cannibalism there is only one step. -----
----- Ibid., pp. 375-80 +n. _____ The Rites

of the Gnostic Sabbath were imported into Germany by an association which took the name of Mopses. It replaced the kabalistic goat by the Hermetic dog, and the candidates, male or female -- for the order initiated women -- were brought in with eyes bandaged. ...they were asked whether they were afraid of the devil, and were required abruptly to choose between kissing the posterior of the Grand Master and that of a small silk-covered figure of a dog, which was substituted for the old grand idol of the Goat of Mendes. {NOTE: It is idle nonsense to say that the Mopses revived the Rites of the Gnostic or any Sabbath and also to suggest a connection between the legendary Baphomet and the ridiculous china dog. The Order of Mopses was either a mock-Masonry or a silly substitution under the veil of which German Masons at Cologne or Viennese Masons continued their meetings when a Papal Bull was in force against the Order. As it received both sexes, the first alternative is perhaps more probable....} The name of the Templar Baphomet, which should be spelt kabalistically backwards, is composed of three abbreviations: Tem. ohp. ab., *Templi omnium hominum pacis abbas*, "the father of the temple of peace of all men." {NOTE: There are three things to be said on this fantastic explanation: 1) that there is no reason assigned or assignable for reading Baphomet backwards; 2) that the Latin produced from the alleged abbreviations is incredibly bad; and 3) that its import has no application to Templars, either as a chivalry or as an occult sect. From neither point of view can they be regarded as apostles of peace.} According to some, the Baphomet was a monstrous head, but according to others, a demon in the form of a goat. A sculpted coffer was disinterred recently in the ruins of an old Commandery of the Temple, and antiquaries observed upon it a baphometric figure, corresponding by its attributes to the goat of Mendes and the androgyne of Khunrath. It was a bearded figure with a female body, holding the sun in one hand and the moon in the other, attached to chains. Now, this virile head is a beautiful allegory which attributes to thought alone the initiative and creative principle. Here the head represents spirit and the body matter. The orbs enchained to the human form and directed by that Nature of which intelligence is the head, are also magnificently allegorical. -----
----- Ibid., pp. 385-7 +n.

_____ To make light visible God had only to postulate shadow. To manifest the truth He permitted the possibility of doubt. The shadow bodies forth the light, and the possibility of error is essential for the temporal manifestation of truth. If the buckler of Satan did not intercept the spear of Michael, the might of the angel would be lost in the void or manifested by infinite destruction launched below from above. Did not the heel of Michael restrain Satan in his ascent, Satan would dethrone God, or rather he would lose himself in the abysses of the altitude. Hence Satan is needful to Michael as the pedestal to the statue, and Michael is necessary to Satan as the brake to the locomotive. In

analogical and univereal dynamics one leans only on that which resists. -----
----- Ibid., pp. 49-50. _____ The Astral Light,
depicted in ancient symbols by the serpent devouring its tail, represents alternately
malice and prudence, time and eternity, tempter and Redeemer; for this light, being
the vehicle of life, is an auxiliary alike of good and evil, and may be taken not only
for the fiery form of Satan but for the body of the Holy Ghost. It is the instrument
of warfare in angelic battles, and feeds indifferently both the flames of hell and the
lightnings of St. Michael. ... The Great Initiator of Christianity, seeing that the
Astral Light was overcharged with the impure reflections of Roman debauchery,
sought to separate His disciples from the circumambient sphere of reflections and
to concentrate them only on the interior light, so that, through the medium of a
common faith and enthusiasm, they might communicate together by new magnetic
chains, which He termed grace, and thus overcome the dissolute currents, to which
He gave the names of the devil and Satan, signifying their putrefaction. To oppose
current to current is to renew the power of fluidic life. -----
----- Ibid., pp. 106-7. _____ EOF

Baphomet 2 - excerpts

Baphomet The goat idol of the _Templars_ and the deity of the sorcerers' Sabbat. The name is composed of three abbreviations: Tem. ohp. Ab., *Templi omnium hominum pacis abhas*, "the father of the temple of universal peace among men." Some authorities hold that Baphomet was a monstrous head, others that it was a demon in the form of a goat. An account of a veritable Baphometric idol is as follows: [describing the Levi Baphomet, perhaps Levi's descript. -- tn] A pantheistic and magical figure of the Absolute. The torch placed between two horns, represents the equilibrating intelligence of the triad. The goat's head, which is synthetic, and unites some characteristics of the dog, bull, and ass, represents the exclusive responsibility of matter and the expiation of bodily sins in the body. The hands are human, to exhibit the sanctity of labor; they make the sign of esotericism above and below, to impress mystery on initiates, and they point at two lunar crescents, the upper being white and the lower black, to explain the correspondences of good and evil, mercy and justice. The lower part of the body is veiled, portraying the mysteries of universal generation, which is expressed solely by the symbol of the caduceus. The belly of the goat is scaled, and should be colored green, the semi- circle above should be blue; the plumage, reaching to the breast, should be of various hues. The goat has female breasts, and thus its only characteristics are those of maternity and toil, otherwise the signs of redemption. On its forehead, between the horns and beneath the torch, is the sign of the microcosm, or the pentagram with one beam in the ascendant, symbol of human intelligence, which, placed thus below the torch, makes the flame of the latter an image of divine revelation. This Pantheos should be seated on a cube, and its footstool should be a single ball, or a ball and a triangular stool." In _Narratives of Sorcery and Magic_ (1851), Thomas Wright stated: Another charge in the accusation of the Templars seems to have been to a great degree proved by the deposition of witnesses; the idol or head which they are said to have worshipped, but the real character or meaning of which we are totally unable to explain. Many Templars confessed to having seen this idol, but as they described it differently, we must suppose that it was not in all cases represented under the same form. Some said it was a frightful head, with long beard and sparkling eyes; others said it was a man's skull; some described it as having three faces; some said it was of wood, and others of metal; one witness described it as a painting (*tabula picta*) representing the image of a man (*imago hominis*) and said that when it was shown to him, he was ordered to 'adore Christ, his creator.' According to another deposition, the idol had four feet, two before and two behind; the one belonging to the order at Paris, was said to be a silver head, with two faces and beard. The novices of the order told always to regard this idol as their saviour. Deodatus Jaffet, a knight from the

south of France, who had been received at Pedenat, deposed that the person who in his case performed the ceremonies of reception, showed him a head or idol, which appeared to have three faces, and said, 'You must adore this as your saviour, and the saviour of the order of the Temple' and that he was made to worship the idol, saying, 'Blessed be he who shall save my soul.' Cettus Ragonis, a knight received at Rome in a chamber of the palace of the Lateran, gave a somewhat similar account. Many other witnesses spoke of having seen these heads, which, however, were, perhaps, not shown to everybody, for the greatest number of those who spoke on this subject, said that they had heard speak of the head, but that they had never seen it themselves; and many of them declared their disbelief in its existence. A friar minor deposed in England that an English Templar had assured him that in that country the order had four principal idols, one at London, in the Sacristy of the Temple, another at Bristelham, a third at Brueria (Bruern in Lincolnshire), and a fourth beyond the Humber. Some of the knights from the south added another circumstance in their confessions relating to this head. A templar of Florence, declared that, in the secret meetings of the chapters, one brother said to the others, showing them the idol, 'Adore this head. This head is your God and your Mahomet.' Another, Gauserand de Montpesant, said that the idol was made in the figure of Baffomet (*in figuram Baffometi*); and another, Raymond Rubei, described it as a wooden head, on which was painted the figure of *Baphomet*, and he adds, 'that he worshipped it kissing its feet, and exclaiming *Xalla*,' which he describes as 'a word of the Saracens' (*verbum Saracenorum*). This has been seized upon by some as proof that the Templars had secretly embraced Mahometanism, as *Baffomet* or *Baphomet* is evidently a corruption of Mahomet; but it must not be forgotten that the Christians of the West constantly used the word Mahomet in the mere signification of an idol, and that it was the desire of those who conducted the persecution against the Templars to show their intimate intercourse with the Saracens. Others, especially Von Hammer, gave a Greek derivation of the word, and assumed it as a proof that gnosticism was the secret doctrine of the temple.... Some occultists have suggested that the Baphomet of the Templars was really the god of the witches deriving from the nature god Pan. During the nineteenth century, the Austrian Orientalist Baron Joseph von Hammer-Purghstall discovered an inscription on a coffer in Burgundy which he claimed showed that Baphomet derived from two Greek words meaning "Baptism of Metis" {Wisdom}; the inscription exalted Metis or Baphomet as the true divinity. When Karl Kellner and other early twentieth-century German occultists founded the secret order _O.T.O._ (Ordo Templi Orientis or Order of Templars in the East), they installed the British occultist Aleister _Crowley_ as head of the British section, and gave he gave himself the magical name of Baphomet. -----
----- Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology,

2nd Ed., edited and revised by Leslie Shepard, Gale Research Company, 1984; pp. 131-2.

"Bataille" and "Margiotta" claimed that the order of the Palladium or Sovereign Council of Wisdom was constituted in France in 1737, and this, they inferred, was one and the same as the legendary Palladium of the Templars, better known by the name of Baphomet. In 1801 one Isaac Long, a Jew, was said to have carried the "original image" of Baphomet to Charleston in the United States, and it is alleged that the lodge he founded then became the chief in the Ancient and Accepted Scotch Rite. He was succeeded in due course by Albert Pike, who, it was alleged, extended the Scotch Rite, and shared the Anti-Catholic Masonic chieftainship with the Italian patriot Mazzini. This new directory was established, it was asserted, as the new Reformed Palladium Rite or the Reformed Palladium. Ibid, p. 330.

EOF

Baphomet 3

Double Wand of Power: Liber Legis We also find Baphomet to be the 'Octinomos' or 8-fold Magickal name and formulae of the Androgyne which conceals the Magick of Transformation via sexual polarity in Human form, in fact a formulae of 'Atavistic Resurgence' as expounded some time later by AO Spare. Baphomet is known as the Octinomos, or 8-fold name representing an 8 part formulae of Magick. This is comparable to the 7 Stars of the Mother Taurt-Typhon, with the 8th star manifesting as her child Set in the height. Baphomet is the glyph of the Androgynous one concealing the hidden formulae of Transformation via sexual polarity in the Human Form. A formulae of sex-magick based upon Atavistic Resurgence. Baphomet is the Glyph of the Master Magician or Magister. It is also an elevenfold power as seen in the Baphometric Cross, and so the 11 Sephiroth of the TOL. 11 is also the number of Nuit and Magick (as it is). The Beast and Babalon are joined into the single image which is Baphomet. The Double-Power of the Double Equinox, the two Horizons of Harmakhis and the Double Wanded One of 11th degree Tantra. The Celestial North and South are Aquarius and Leo, or Nuit and Hadit. The conjoining of these two produces Ra Hoor Khuit- in this way we may see Baphomet as a Glyph of the power which produces the Crowned and Conquering Child. Horus has been described as a 'God of War and Vengeance', equating him to Ares the Ram, another pointer to our Ram of Mendes. The more ancient idea of Bloodshed in conquest came from the Great Mother Typhon herself in her periodic red flow. This places Aries (or Mars) in line with the Blood as a primeval generative principle. The Power of Conception. Now in the jargon of the Magick of Thelema The Solar power is called Heru Ra Ha,(in its 'active'phase called Ra Hoor Khuit) while the Lunar force is known as Set, Shaitan or Hoor Pakrates. These are the dual polarities or modes in the 'Operation of Baphomet' as a formulae. Kenneth Grant, Typhonian Trilogy, Skoob Books

Black Pilgrimage - Addendum

The 'Lesser' Pilgrimage (q.v. 'Secret Tasks...' Ms) is traditionally begun at the dawn of the Spring Equinox, and completed the following day, at Dusk. The Pilgrimage is undertaken with little equipment – a tent is not permitted; a sleeping bag optional – waterproofs and a good pair of walking boots would be sensible.

Although the 'Lesser' Pilgrimage is traditionally undertaken by those of the stage of External Adept, some candidates may opt to combine the Pilgrimage with undertaking the Rite of External Adept. Thus, the candidate should aim to reach the final location just before Dusk, and undertake the Solo Rite of the Nine Angles, and then commence the External Adept Rite (the final location also being conducive for the latter ritual). [If this combination is opted for, then the candidate is allowed to take a tent (or some form of shelter) for the first night - this allows the anticipation of the impending External Adept Rite to be of greater magickal effect.]

Because of the nature of the energies involved, the 'Greater' Pilgrimage is undertaken strictly by those who have attained the stage of Internal Adept. This Rite is begun at the Winter Solstice.

ONA

Book Of Dagon

(Assorted MSS fragments from photocopied pages)

2) On teaching Magick *

It is a truism that in Magick, if one wishes to learn and understand the manifold mysteries that abound, then one must learn from one who is already a Master; for to do otherwise, to attempt to scale the heights of Magick alone and without guidance, is to take the path of most extreme hardship and uncertainty and frustration: the path of time. Following a teacher enables one, provided it is done in a correct manner, to progress rapidly – assuming one has a genuine thirst for knowledge, for whatever ulterior motive. But it must also be borne in mind that in the final analysis every person is his own teacher – the final guide is always personal experience – and one must progressively learn to rely on oneself; understanding that although a teacher is a good guide who enables one to avoid many of the pitfalls awaiting, he is only a guide, a beginning to self-understanding, and cannot, beyond a certain point, teach one self-mastery, such always coming from within oneself as a result of the trials of experience greatly gained.

A teacher who is interested in his students will take care to train them so that they in turn can follow the Great Work, some teaching in their turn and thus increasing the number of those who can understand the appreciate the nature of that Work. Despite what the deluded mystics of the Right Hand Path claim, a teacher, be he a follower of the Left Hand Path or its opposite, always has a vested interest in his teaching – no one does it for purely selfless reasons (although many would like to think they do). Most, and here I speak of teachers of the Black Art – although such applies to most others, most do teach because of the feeling of power it gives them, some do so because they wish to see the spread of the Satanist philosophy, others because they desire to pass on the knowledge they have gained. And a good teacher, one who wishes his students to rise to the heights of Magick, if they have the ability, recognizes first why he teaches and as a consequence is able to teach from a stronger position than one who does not understand his own motives. Hence, if you desire to teach, have the knowledge necessary, or are placed by a Master in a position where teaching of some sort is necessary (e.g. leader of a coven), then you must first analyze and understand why you wish to teach, why it is so appealing. (While this is obvious, it is amazing how often it is not done – even in the smallest degree.) Having done this then such teaching should become not only easier but also more enjoyable – delusion of self, it cannot be too often repeated, has no place in Satanism, such being for the followers of the Right Hand Path, the White School of Magic. The logic and reason of Satanism is one of our most powerful weapons – ever remember this.

Points to be borne in mind by those leaders who are also teachers of the Word of Satan, are that only those who are capable of doing something to advance the cause of Satanism should be taught – the rest are tools to be uses as one wilt. The former, provided they have the ability (a matter of personal judgment), should be taught with care necessary for great achievement, for they, in their turn, should pass the trials of Initiation awaiting them, are the future leaders, the future Masters in whose hands are the means of increasing the Satanist philosophy – the bringers of the Second Coming. Such people must be made to shed the veils of illusion that pass for everyday life, be brought to understanding by being told myths that are said to represent truth, given parts of a puzzle and expected to solve the whole; be given severe tests of experience, be made, in short, to rely on themselves. For only if they are capable of seeing, for themselves through the mists of illusion, are they the type needed – if not, failures to be destroyed or used as needed.

On the psychological level, most people like mystery, like hints of deep esoteric doctrines, like to feel themselves part of something exclusive and powerful and ruthless – these means must be erected and then the student given hints indicating that they must be destroyed, demolished, if progress is to be made. Always bear in mind that progress is but the shedding of illusions, each step taking one nearer the final answer but all steps involve a mere illusory perception of the totality, the genuine insight coming finally in the last stage: each stage is to be regarded by the student as a triumph, and then must he be made to see how little even that stage he understands, how much is still to be know and understood: “I see Truth, but it is fleeting, as in a dream. Yet such strengthens the desire to quest ever on, for each time I see and understand a little more ...”

When the student understands and grasps the fact that the whole of life is an illusion and see the wisdom of the paradox, then is the picture complete at lest.

3) A Fable for the Future – A Satanic Manifesto

The coming Age is the Age of Satan, the Reign of the Anti-christ, of Horus, and we Satanists represent the birth pangs of that Age**. And it now is the time to constitute ourselves in a properly organized basis so that the religion we uphold can be spread more effectively – what is lacking at the present time to a great degree are people who are genuine Satanists and are prepared not only to teach the faith to others as has been done in the past, but also prepared to stand by that faith in public so that those who seek the Way of Satan will more readily find it. Our faith – the most rational and scientific in existence – has always been for the few, yet we must recognize that today few will no longer be as small as it was, and, having recognized this, we must be prepared to establish and expand our organizational framework.

This is not to say that secrecy must cease – that can never be so because of the nature of Satanism – but the paranoia of secrecy that exists today must be broken in one very important respect: it must allow the establishment of an organizational framework capable of propounding openly the philosophy of Satanism on a large scale, for thus will the world come to know that no longer are we hiding in Darkness, no longer do the christian scum have a field day at our expense. Further, the type of Satanist that the world mostly hears about are the ones of weakness, the ones of failure, the ones who while accepting the philosophy of Satanism (and even in a few cases some of its esoteric principles) lack the personality to understand the real strength and greatness of the Satanist spirit. The christians, and their lackeys, when they find or uncover one of the ‘Satanists’ think they have got hold of the real thing – never realizing in their tiny minds that up to the present the powerful Satanists have always remained hidden; and thus never has the purile concept of christianity been exposed by one of the Master-type. For let a person of real evil and horror emerge and one will have the pleasure of the righteous hypocrites called christians and White Occultists reeling and gasping in horror!

*Good teachers, like all artists, are born, not made...

**Age of Aquarius starts 2740 e.v. by astrological calculation, although most Occultist place it at approximately 2000 e.v. Yet Aquarius is not as mystics of the White School like to make it, for Aquarius = water = Leviathan/Nodens = Satan. Also, it is the 11th sign of the Zodiac – the number of Magick (c.f. Atu XI, Lust) not Magic.



Cosmic wheel

Cosmic Wheel:

The Cosmic Wheel is a wordless expression of the destiny of man, and represents that boundless cosmic ordering to which the essence eternally flows. It is a symbol of our potential, of the endless struggle for the evolution of consciousness, and of our unique *warrior ethos*. It enshrines the Will, determination, and drive required to bring large scale change. It is both creation and destruction; life and death - it is revitalization, and the light of the cosmos. It implies the wisdom inherent in experience, and the experience drawn from great struggles. It is the Star of distant galaxies, and the light to our travels. It is balance - both light and dark, both chaos and order. Yet it is none of these things, and all of these things - it is what lies *beyond* these things.

Above all it represents what is *Galactic*, or *Sinister*.

The Cosmic Wheel is best represented as silver on black, representing the light of the Cosmos. For ceremonies it should be presented as a banner - particularly outdoors, as a makeshift altar acting as a gateway into unseen existence, in conjunction with a tetrahedron of Quartz. It can also be worn by initiates of the tradition as a ring.

The four scythes represent the elements, and the circle the cosmic being. It turns sun-wise, as the scythes cut out all that stands in the way of destiny. It is visualized during Aeonie ceremonies during vibration/chant, and can also aid in the opening of a Nexion.

Quartz Tetrahedron:

Tradition holds that the most effective shape for quartz, in accessing the acausal is that of a tetrahedron. A tetrahedron has four triangular (equilateral) planes. The most basic molecular structure of quartz, actually, *is* a tetrahedron. The structure - SiO_2 , consists of one central silicon atom, surrounded by four oxygen atoms. These are referred to as silicate tetrahedra, and are linked at the corners to create the structure of the crystal. Tradition has stated very little to why the quartz tetrahedron is employed in opening a gate to the acausal, but one might deduct that its basic molecular structure does have some effect on why it is effective; as a tetrahedron is simply a magnification of its essence as matter.

These structural notes apply only to Quartz Crystal, and are different for other crystals.

As noted elsewhere, a tetrahedron should be ground/cut from a large piece of the clearest possible Quartz by a skilled professional. A jeweler who works in quartz might be able to do this for a sizable sum, yet may not have the equipment to grind larger sizes. The larger and clearer the tetrahedron, the better - but one should expect at least some cloudiness or imperfection. Ideally the Quartz should be found or mined personally [for initiates in America the best places for this are in Arkansas. Australia also has an abundance of quartz.], but in some cases this may prove impractical. Each tetrahedron should be passed down to subsequent generations of initiates for use. Its effectiveness relies on many things - the ability of the initiates to perform the chants, that it is continually charged, its unique history, and so on - but the quartz tetrahedron is one of the most useful tools in accessing the acausal and opening a nexion.

Vilnius Thornian, ONA.

August, 2000. Vinland.

- Order of Nine Angles -



DARK MASTER

BY

HEREWARD PAGE

9THE BLACK ORDER

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This is a fictionalized account, written by a member of 'the black order' of Satanism in theory and in practice.

Historical note: The Black Order was absorbed into the ONA in 1974 eh

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His laughter echoed hollow in the deep chasm of the twilit grotto that was the Temple of Satan, mocking madly with Mephistophelean glee at the world of sanity around, at a world of sadness, at the world complacent with itself, full of dreams. It ran molding from the crimson draped wall seen many orgies of delight and frenzy; ran drooling across the floor sprinkled with the jest symbols of death that oozed demonic from fine blood-like mosaics crystalline with life; ran misty upon the cubic altar of brown stains and burning black candles, mingling with the cowering faces of doubt and fear that stood below the towering figure of The Master.

The Master who sneered in contempt at the pathetic specimens before him, who with one gesture of defiance would have sacrificed them all in an orgy of blood and sacrificial mania had they not still had their uses; had they not still in blind obedience followed his path, had they not still to fulfill their Destiny, his Destiny
.....

Blue eyes of hypnotic depth seered the scene sending faces turning and minds shuddering as they glimpsed but in part the leering look upon the taut thin lips of The Master, as they sensed but part of the Satanic power lashing at them with demonic words, with unspeakable waves of chthonic horror and abject terror, with demonic mirth. Caught in the vortex of ultimate intoxicating power, The Master formed in the still cool caves of his mind a plan to bring even more and greater power, greater and greater joy and ecstasy and Satanic laughter and disregard for all life save his own, save that of his Master. A plan to seal his greatness, a plan to show the stupid world that he, that he The Master, would cower before none, would beg before none, would kneel before none – that he instead would have the world with its stupid herd of animals called man that swarmed like rats in the stench of garbage-normality cower before him, beg him, see his greatness before he, with the joyous laugh of pride arisen sealed their fate with total and irredeemable destruction, with total chaos and death and suffering and sickness. Hah! They would all die, die in the flames of the Armageddon he and he alone would create. For the feeble cretins who forever stumbled through life deserved no more...

A chilling laugh of frenzy burst from his lips, echoing madly in the dark chambers of death that were the meeting place of the followers of the Prince of Darkness, the Prince of chthonic delight...

They waited with apprehension, fearing the soft footfall that would announce his coming, wishing with forlorn hope that somehow it could be avoided, postponed, put off until another day when they would be more prepared, more certain, more united to stand...to stand against him. With apprehension they sat round the table in the study lined with books and warmed with large log fire exuding as it did the atmosphere of elegance and taste worthy of nobility; they sat studying with disinterest the features of those sitting; they sat looking at themselves avoiding the train of thought that thundered relentless in the tunnel of their minds, ever bringing renewed doubt and displeasure and fear. They sat, three men of power, mellow with age, lamenting foolish past and risks taken, content to enjoy pleasures gained, content to sit and wonder and wait. Content..

Until now.

Content to have played the game of life with the Prince of Darkness, content to have been partners and shared in the spoils. Content to have gained so much. Content.

Until now.

Content, until now they waiting for one once like them who played and gained and yet somehow was not content, was not satisfied with the spoils; was not appeased, was not to be stopped until death itself, until death of all, until he vied with the great Master himself for the jewels of Eternity and beyond ... Yes, content, until...

He came dressed with elegance, blue eyes flashing beneath forehead of granite hardness, thin lips leering at all of life, bustling with energy and determination and medium statuesque build, numbing thoughts of defiance of pride. He, The Master, came, stood before the three, waiting to devour his prey like some beast of the jungle.

His calm, quiet, authoritative voice seemed to mock. "You know why I invited you here – yet still you are fearful. Still you have not gained the confidence needed. Still you have doubts. Well, if necessary I will begin with you." Surprised looks drooled from twitching faces. "You, as well as I, know of the agreement which binds us, which has given us what we at present own, which has made us what we are.

"You, Silus," a finger pointed, "with your shares and your wife and your mistress, you would be nowhere without the camarilla we are. You who were once bankrupt and helpless and left with only ambition, you would today be among the living wrecks of wretched humanity were it not for the common interest which we all share.

“You,” no finger pointed, only eyes burning into the skull, “you with your empty title and false vanity would be still begging for charity, sheltering under the leaking roof of your disposed ancestral home, were it not for our benefactor, were it not for his efforts in saving your pride, your face.”

“You Phillip, would still be performing abortions in filthy damp back streets, sweating in the dim neon lights of haunting hand-to-mouth existence, never knowing the luxury of Harley Street, never knowing the rich patients whose caresses you now crave, whose bodies you fondle with mock pretence at medicine, whose money you horde.”

“All of you would now be but little men were it not for the gift which Karajan, our Master gave us, were it not for the Path whose distance we have trod. He is now dead, but we are alive, alive to continue his work, to continue building and spreading as he wished. You remember this,” a rolled parchment is swiftly brought from an inside pocket, drawing gasps from the three, “whereon we pledged to continue together in the Great Work, well, I hereby nullify it!”

Turning toward the fire with one swift gesture, he hurled it into the flames, ignoring the startled cries from bodies half-risen from seats, smiling a mocking smile to himself as the smell of burning parchment assailed his nostrils, filling the room.

“It is gone. Now you are free – if you wish and if you dare. Free to walk from this room and trouble me no more, trouble my plans no more. Free to stop me if you can.” Veins bulged on his forehead, eyes protruded. “Or you can remain and listen and be one of the few – only this time it is I who will say what is to be; it is I who will command; it is I who will plan. Go now if you wish – but if you do, from this day henceforth enemies we will be, rival for the prize we all know and secretly covet, opponents in the gargantuan game of chess whose opening move I have just made. If you go, do not expect any quarter, any help – for I will not. I will fight ruthlessly with all means at my disposal to the bitter end – if you wish to succeed, if you wish to stop me, then you must kill me. And I will not be stopped!”

Wood crackled on the fire, sound mixing heavy with the silence of the shocked, with the silence of thought, with the silence of falling night. Wind began to knock on the panes of the window, herald of darkening storm clouds laden, covering the dying sun with miasmas of vampiric delight. Distant thunder rumbled, creaking like the dry bones of forgotten skeletons dangling in dungeons of death. Nearer with every passing minute, rising like the voice of the long forgotten dead whispering in Autumn crackling tones.

All sensed the dark foreboding horrors lurking on the threshold of existence. Waiting, waiting with drooling bloodied mouth for the feast of death to begin, for the call of undead cowering, waiting for the dark of night to fall.... Cold, cold

wrapped its' icy fingers around the room sending shudders of tingling sensation through the spines weak with dank foreboding horrors waiting to be released from coffin dark...

"I want no part of it! No part!" Sweat began to form in beads on his forehead, wiped away with trembling hand of the person now standing. "Karajan is dead. Dead! We are free – free to do as we wish. I, I cannot go on anymore. I am tired of everything, tired of....of the whole thing. I wish only to be left alone."

"Phillip wait..." But he was gone, lost behind the closing doors of the study, dashing out into the darkening night, away, far away from the house of great loneliness list in the grounds ensuring privacy.

The Master's voice was defiant. "Anyone else wish to leave?"

Silence echoed as a tribute to apprehension and fear.

"Good. Then we begin, as three. And we shall end as three, regardless of what else happens; regardless of the death of others."

Lightning flashed nearby outlining the darkening shapes of the swaying things of green, thunder shocking panes of window and reason of mind as it laughed loud at the swarming demons multiplying in the ever growing darkness of supine delight that was but ever imagination in the end, real though it be, fearful though it be.

Miles away, a child screamed a silent scream of horror...

II

"But come, my dear sir, you do not expect me to take any of this seriously." Schreier leaned back in his armchair, puffing content on his cheroot, watering eyes viewing his visitor with obvious benign distaste.

Phillip Russell was amazed. Amazed that one with a reputation so great could be so stupid. Still, there were the many stories backed by facts... He glanced for comfort into the fire, watching flames as the devoured coal, glowing with salamandic pleasure, warming the small room filled with cheap antique furniture playing at the pretence of judgment. The room of three chairs and sofa and carpet covered with old stains forgotten and molding, clashing violent with the frayed tawny chairs, pattern of Victorian wallpaper design eyeing askance the many shelves of books upon the wall, softened only by spaces left for the things of the living seen better days.

“In that case, I must go elsewhere for help. I had hoped, knowing of your reputation among Occultists, that you would help me. I see that I was mistaken.”

He rose, half waiting for the expected reply. Watery eyes turned to meet him, large hands of obese body throwing cheroot into fire snatching greedily. Schreier smiled.

“Sit down, sit down! Black Magicians you say? But why should I, why should anyone, assume that what you say is true, do anything at all - they are relatively harmless, affecting only themselves. After all, I am not some fanatical preacher conducting a witch hunt.”

Russell fumed. But only inwardly. He tried to fix the look of those eyes but found them always drifting, shifting, looking anywhere, save for the moment, at his.

“It is not what they are at present – it is what they will be. Don’t you see? They aim to expand, spread, build up and organization such as this country has not seen in a long time, and then use that organization. Surely it is better to stop them now, while it is possible, before they are so powerful.”

“Granted that they may be so if they are as potentially dangerous as you seem to think. But as yet, I have no evidence that leads me to think so – if I chased after every group on the black side, I would do nothing but continually fall over shadows and waste my time chasing ghosts. Until someone brings me positive proof, I will do nothing – but once I have that proof, I will act. And swiftly.” He smiled again at Russell. “Evidence, sir; bring me that and I will act.”

In a gesture of dismissal, he lit another cheroot.

Russell stood up, grabbing his hat languishing softly on the arm of his chair; flexing the top. “Yes, I will bring you evidence – if that is what it takes to convince you.”

Outside the wind tugged at his hat, beat upon his face, mocking his thin summer suit; darting between the people hurrying past occupied with thoughts and private turning worlds oblivious to the reality cold and staring them in the face. A city at night, playing with life – enjoying the thrill of the moment.

Six p.m. Just finished work. Beginning another round of boredom. Christ! How little the stupid bastards know.... He fumbled in his pocket for the keys, climbed behind the wheel. An engine burst into life, a speaker crackled.

“....Two more soldiers were killed today in Northern Ireland when snipers opened fire on.....

Evidence! So that's what he wants. Evidence of what? Orgies? Blood sacrifices?

He swerved to miss a car...

Grotesque images crawled on walls, seething cries of trembling horror filled the sulphurous air, mingling with bodies clothed in robes in obscene parody, laughing, baring flesh, mouthing calls of Sadian lust, eyes feasting with libidinous desire on harlot bodies displaying wares open and unashamed, trembling with suppressed desire, awaiting fulfillment. Woman naked upon altar in Temple of Satan hidden in the depths of the house, walls scarlet and oozing symbols of ride defiant, of debauched ecstasy and lustful agony, surpassing in depth the frenzied delights of the Ten Score and Twenty Days of Sodom, echoed below in mass waiting for the One of Darkness.

Leering face as body caresses body, as mouth touches mouth, as cry after debauched cry rents the air, vying with the music reaching crescendo of discordant chords falling heavy upon air stained with fumes thick and exotic and sensual....

"Lust, enjoy all things of sense
And rapture.
Fear not, there is no god where I am!
Aye! Feast! Rejoice!
There is no dread hereafter.
There is no dissolution,
And eternal ecstasy in the kisses of
The scarlet woman!"

A goat is brought, placed struggling but drugged upon the altar vacated by woman naked standing now holding dagger between large, heavy breasts inviting, watched by the now still worshippers as louder and louder the music screams mocking in discordant notes the wails of the tortured, of the burning, if the dying, of the dead. Shriller and shriller comes the chant from those gathered to celebrate the great Rite of the Satanic Sabbat, faces of beauty distorting with grimace evil and diabolic and reeking of the pleasure of Satan; Prince of Darkness; faces of normality screwing into fiendish leers of demonic lust yet to be satiated by flowing blood; faces ugly beautified by eyes staring and feasting on the feast of delight and splendor and drooling blood-lust yet to come, relishing every moment as nearer and nearer all come to the height of ecstasy assuming sexual proportions, sighs of delight mingling with cries of the chant still raising in its' wake passionate fury....

"I am numb
With the lonely lust of devildom.

Thrust the sword thro' the galling fetter,
All-devoured, all-begetter;
Give me the sign of the Open Eye
And the token erect of thorny thigh,
And the word of madness and mystery,
O Pan, lo Pan! Pan! Pan!
I am thy mate, I am thy man,
Goat of thy flock, I am gold,
I AM GOD!..."

A knife flashes, bringing heightened fury and tension and maniacal shout of glee....

"Kill, kill, kill, kill!

Blood red and warm spurts from cut in neck splashing the one with flashing eyes and those near, draining into chalice held near, causing a rush of worshippers to send hands reaching, hoping for the feel, the taste of blood warm and fresh and splendid A chalice is passed eager from hand to hand, mouths dripping with warm blood trickling, smeared on bodies, caressed into parts mostly hidden, rarely touching stone floor covered with fine demonic mosaics...

The women of beauty and nubile bodies fight over the chalice now empty, licking well the inside to satiate lust for blood, eyes meeting and chalice left lying forgotten as their lips touch and then press hard, hands searching over bodies soon naked and locked in frenzied embrace upon the floor, breasts touching as Lesbos smiles again, satisfied ...

Above all stands The Master, leering

.....

Russell sat gloomily behind his desk, pecking one finger at his typewriter, trying hard to dismiss from mind the deadline looming, ignoring the ants swarming round him, flashing eyes and smiles and jokes and bits of paper once having meaning.

"Copy, copy ..."

"Hello, News Desk. Who?"

"... any comment on the rumor that you intend to resign? ..."

" Who's pinched my bloody typewriter?"

A bell sounded in his mind. A bell killing dreams and ideas and forays of imagination removed from restraints of reality. A bell annoying.

"Yes." And then, remembering, "Russell, Evening Post."

A voice drooled in his ear.

“Got that. You sure it’s them? ... Could meet you in say,” quick glance at watch shaken to ensure still living, “fifteen minutes. Right.”

A hurried scribbled note propped up on his typewriter was all they found.

....

III

Lord Harlow was past caring. It no longer troubled him to think of the misery, of the suffering, of the dejection that he might in diverse ways be causing; sometimes, on a hot sunny day with his bastion of ancestor dreams bathed in golden rays, he would stand before a mirror and mumble words of sorrow like some worn out incantation, and then gargle and spit them out, forgotten things mixing with the refuse of life - he would smile, careful not to let the emerging wrinkles show, and walk briskly into the sunlight thankful that he cared. But no more. No more the half-smile to himself, no more the empty tones of echoing confessional laughter; no more the haughty sneer hid ‘neath bristling mustache luxuriant and grown once in defiance. No, no more – now instead the memories of half-remembered dreams floating like smoke from pipe worn and dusty, drifting, pulsing with the weary wind of dreams escaping from cracks worn and never to be sealed; now instead the soft leather chair beside the fire warm and close, eyes half-closed resting peaceful on dog – last friend – curled up and happy, breathing warm fragrance of burning wood. Now instead the graceful walk of age and worn expensive tweeds, fetching book leather-bound and good to the touch; left unread on sleeping lap of monument to age past long ago, iconoclast in servant dreams

Reality pass outside, hidden, unseen...

No, he no longer cared. He would do it as he always had, without protest, without reluctance, with punctilious attention to detail, with aristocratic finesse, he would see them come and go, bid them welcome and farewell, attentive, always attentive, to the detail that once made him famous, a name without a face to be relied upon; a man to give support. Yes, he would do it...

The Master was pleased. His eyes shown as he saw before him his dreams unfolding in reality, merging with the waves of cosmic terror that would be loosed upon the world, waves of chilling fervor and seething hatred that would rush like the tide of doom at dawn, smashing and shattering all in their wake, drowning in foam of mirth the screaming rabble who screamed and howled for forgiveness, who prayed to a god that did not exist, who looked up at a god long since dead, long since eaten and feasted upon by crawling maggots of the grave.... He smiled as he sensed his Destiny coming nearer and nearer with every passing of the beat that came from the heart that was his yet encased in the lead-lined coffin of diabolic madness and macabre horror; smiled as he looked with contempt and ruthless calculation at the one seated opposite him across the

dining table filled with the meal soon to be finished in the warm comfort of an ancestral home hidden deep from the prying eyes of the public.

Master that he was, his voice betrayed little.

“All preparations, external and internal, should be complete by the next Sabbat. I would calculate that would be approximately thirty people participating, about fifteen of whom would require accommodation for the weekend. I trust there have been no changes in your staff?”

“No, no changes”. The same trusted, valuable servants, the last of the school now, alas, dying; the same faithful people whose integrity can be relied upon, the ones of the breed now almost extinct, lost under the rush of things of nameless quantity, the things of proliferation and mass value. He had known some fine people – long, it seemed so, oh so long ago, far away in the distant world of winged collars and fine top hats; far away in the world of distant youthful dreams and memories and streets echoing to the mellow sound of horse hoofs and wheels bouncing over cobbles and chiffon dresses long and blowing in the wind of the beautiful days of happy youth and smiles from faces innocent and veiled not daring to ask the questions always thought; the wonderful days of kisses stolen in parks nice and full with smiling people elegantly dressed and refined of speech and manner, of tiffin and luncheon so calm and serene and slow, and of reserved manners and gestures saying more than words flippant and misused; of calm ponds full of lilies and reflections and many musing ideas

Yes, changes there had been. But, for the better? In his staff – no, there had been no changes....

A monotone droned. A cigar came to life. “...so you see that while what we have undertaken to do is fraught with danger, the rewards justify taking the risks. Think of it!” For a moment, but only for a moment, he nearly became expansive. “The power we will, the power, I will have! No more a cabal, no more mere control of a handful, but hundreds, thousands, millions! Millions of people which we will control spinning our web around them, sucking them into our vortex of power, draining them of their life blood, and then, then when we have finished with them, when we have obtained all we can from them, then letting them feel the agonies of hell on Earth, then letting them squirm as they are faced with the very fire of destruction itself! Then the flames of chaos will rise and rise and devour all who stand in their path, all who are not of us, all who are of the slaves that perish!

“Think of that, eh Harlow!.....”

Do you remember and Inn, Miranda? Do you remember an Inn? And the fine food and the laughing eyes of the homely people that knew the better, untroubled, things of life. Do you remember the Inn? And the spreading of the

little things of happiness that seemed then to make life so alive, so enjoyable. Do you remember Miranda, do you remember? And the small bed and the warmth of the night – Miranda do you remember? And the tread of the feet of the dead – yes; I remember, Miranda, I remember; but now, dry bones hugging an ill-fitting suit frown old before time; listening...

“Think of that, eh Harlow! Think of that! Doing the Ritual here should ensure the secrecy needed – disposing of the body should pose no problem. We should indeed celebrate – for it is not everyday that a perfect sacrifice offers itself at the perfect time, particularly in the form of a victim who seems to value life so much. For, as you surely recall, it is better to kill one who values life than one to whom it has little or no meaning – for in the death of the former strong life-forces are released with the blood during the ritual and sacrificial death. Hence our use of virgins in the past...”

Yes, he knew; and remembered. The soft skin that could have brought unending delight, that could have been swathed in wedding-white, face gleaming with happiness and full of the bridal joys loved by innocents like her; virginal, unstained, pristine, innocence in human form and blessing each new day. The fair hair that should have danced in the soft sun of twilight, perhaps touching the leaves falling in the park full with smiling people elegantly dressed and refined of speech and manner.... The soft peach skin palpitating, rippling, shimmering with life ---- stained with blood from a severed artery in the neck. Dead.

Yes; he remembered. But Lord Harlow was passed caring. It no longer troubled him.

He listened, reverentially...

.....

Damn! He thought, one of these days I will bring a coat. He shivered involuntarily, knocked on the door of the house ordinary and suburban, already conscious of the cold that must come....

The door opened slightly; warm drifted out, envious. A tall figure of youthful leaning peered from behind it.

“Yes, what do you want?”

“Russell, Phillip Russell. I had an invitation to your meeting.” He moved forward, hopeful.

“Just a minute, I’ll check.” He scampered away, shutting off the warmth. But only for a minute, returning smiling, hand gesturing.

"I'm Colin. It hasn't started yet – in fact, you are among the first. Come."

He was led into a large room, space in center vacant, strange perfume lingering in the air, mixing with the scented smiles of the few seated, the few well dressed and welcoming.

He sat to one side, folding his hat into obscene shapes, smiling when others turned to smile, nodding heads in gestures of acknowledgement.

So much for my evidence! – two perfumed ladies tarty and smiling, full of money; one nympho perhaps; two corpulent men looking as if they had been caught reading dirty magazines.

And then remembering the delights of Wheatly novels. Still, it was a beginning, had to lead somewhere....

The room slowly filled, conversation grew, introductions made, Russell trying to remember faces, names, store them away in reporter-mind for some future use, some article of sensation. He caught scraps of conversations, heard strange names, strange ideas...

"...Astral projection went quite well ..."

"Have you heard that a new "Abbey Of Thelema" has opened?"

"....Ah, yes, but you forget, by the Qabalah it is 359 and thus relates to.."

At last he came. Relief showed on Russell's face as he rose in greeting.

"You found it all right then? No trouble?"

Russell shrugged.

They moved to one side, away from the others, standing, talking. "Have you been introduced?"

Russell said that he had, that he found it all rather boring. Mark Corvin, six foot one inch with a thick mane of blond hair and rugged chiseled face, smiled.

"But it's not even begun yet! Firstly, you will be introduced by me to the whole group - embarrassing I know but no need to worry; then all except you retire to change for the Ritual. And then the fun begins!"

Russell smiled weakly, felt a slight turning in his stomach. They look harmless enough – still, there were the things he had been told, the things that had brought him here....

“You’ll be alright! Come, the High Priest is here – I have to introduce you.”

He followed behind Colvin, into a circle that seemed to form instantaneously from those around, cutting all retreat off. He faced the High Priest – surprised to be looking into the eyes of a face bearded with a goatee, hair balding, belonging to a man of his own build...

They left him alone, all but lost in the room become semi-dark, smelling more of strange odors and shadows dripping with phantoms of the mind, lurking. Fear began to creep up on him, laughing, telling him to flee, run go before it was too late, before he was. He remembered the war, the dirt, the stench of bodies unwashed and lurking in houses only rubble, all blasted out of being, the tense smiles and dry mouth and sinking fear as bullets thudded and cracked nearby, stomach reeling and will power needed to stop from fleeing, from giving in to the mad urge to rush away, anywhere, away as far as possible from death; the cold barrel of the rifle gripped hard in fear, the sights steady and picking out target coming closer and closer and closer, the taught finger, the meaningless smile of war – the dying screams of another war dead....No, no why should he go, run, give in – what was he, a coward? ...

They returned, dressed in robes white and flowing, smiles gone, faces serious and almost reverential, dedicated.

They stood him to one side, outside the circle quickly formed before the drape that had stood covering distant wall but which now parted to reveal to Russell’s amazement and almost disbelief an altar covered with white cloth containing strange symbols within a pentagram upright and red: an altar of chalices and swords sharp and candles white and glowing in the incense from holders stood towards the back. Light, save from candles, ceased as slowly, slowly all save the High Priest and Priestess who stood before the altar began a circumnavigation clockwise, a chant of guttural rhythm escaping from mouths robed and linking hands...The High Priest stands, clasping sword in hand held high in the air:

“Ye Lords of the Watchtowers of the East, I do summon, stir and call thee up to witness our Rites and to guard the Circle.

Ye Lords of the Watchtowers of the South, I do summon, stir and call thee up to witness our Rites and to guard the Circle.

Ye Lords of the Watchtowers of the West, I do summon, stir and call thee up to witness our Rites and to guard the Circle.

Ye Lords of the Watchtowers of the North, I do summon, stir and call thee up to witness our Rites and to guard the Circle...”

Russell stood unmoving, hypnotized, looking through the eyes of time, looking into a strange world, a world dead yet living, a world lost to the 20th century, a world ancient, a world of cloistered darkness and uncanny atmosphere, a world that seemed to spring somehow even from within his own mind, tearing at memories primordial and forgotten, a world of lurking depth whose potency none could forget or remain unmoved by; a world of shattering pristine beauty and lurking fear whose splendid simplicity awed even the hardest cynic, whose fervor and reality glistened as a tribute to gods long forgotten and cursed save in the sanctuaries of covens teaching silent in the mists of forgetting time....

He felt like an intruder at the same time ashamed of being caught, yet enjoying the thrill of observing, of watching – of watching something real and living and tangible, something performed with great finesse, with great depth of feeling, with great intensity, something not cold and dead and acted in wooden manner like the dying masses of the Church once known... Suddenly his mind lurched, for a moment sending tendrils of nausea through his stomach, as eyes strained to see beyond obscuring mists of incense thick, strained to see beyond the strange Gregorian chant sung by figures cowled and liturgical, sung with refrain and fervor of devotion beneath dark arches of wood seen many such days and saw the intensity of feeling echoing as the chants echoed through dim alcoves of the church filled with figures monkish and devout...Mists clearing to white-robed figures before altar of the Horned One and face of friend smiling and happy...

“Well, what did you think of it?”

The return to reality was cold and shattering. He eyed Corvin for some time before answering.

“Yes, yes I see now what you mean. Quite effective, yes quite effective.”

IV

The Master was bored, wanting some new diversion to provide added interest, wishing for some move bold and audacious and daring in the game of chess that he played with the lives of others; wishing for a pawn sacrifice to open new lines of analysis, new lines of interest – new lines of laughter at the opponent opposite straining hard in the dual that was the game, in the battle that was the war, in the life that was eternity. He wished to satiate his hunger, on which to feast the bloodied fangs...

Outside the world turned unknowingly, laughing in vain....

The Master waited patiently, a flicker of a leer upon his face, savoring the coming move, enjoying thoughts. The High Priestess opened the door, wary of the

stranger all dressed in black with strange piercing eyes, who wasted no time on formalities.

“I have come to see the High Priest, the one who calls himself “King of the Witches, the one called Woodcliffe.”

Overawed, feeling unable to cope with the stranger she led him into the main room of the basement flat, nervously asked him to sit.

Woodcliffe sat in an armchair, reading a book, dressed in casual clothes, his balding head raised as he saw the visitor, eyebrow rising in questioning manner as eyes perceived the strange manner of dress of him who sat stiffly, unmoving,, not removing gloves black. The High Priestess started to speak, but The Master silenced her.

“I believe you are the “King of the Witches”, there was a touch of irony in his voice. Woodcliffe smiled faintly in reply. “Tell me, what is your aim?”

The eyes of The Master stared, pierced into Woodcliffe who began to feel the challenge to respond to it, unsure of himself.

“My aim,” he laughed in everything save his eyes, “my aim is to make Wicca an acceptable religion, to end the fear of it, the misunderstanding surrounding it.”

He did not add the thoughts rushing through his mind, sending alarm signals crashing, touching feelings intuitive, feelings strange as if being held, controlled...

Woodcliffe faltered, averted his eyes to glance at his wife, High Priestess, who sensed the air, who appeared to tremble, touched she be by an unseen and unknown blast of chill air. He could not bring himself to smile.

“I don’t know how you can say that, for the past few years I” He began to explain his past, was on the defensive for some reason he could not understand.

The Master tired of the song of his life. Wicca indeed! You once made lies concerning Black Magick, lies repeated by others and yourself ever since – you have enjoyed yourself, felt yourself safe. Once you even claimed to have “purged” yourself.”

He ignored the words half-forming on Woodcliffe’s lips.

“....Safe until now. Now I am come,” there was fierce force in his eyes, invective in his words, “I, the one of Satan.”

The High Priestess shook, began a silent cry of affected emotion. Woodcliffe felt something strange and demonic and horror-filled rise from the forgotten depths of his mind, come rushing and quick and spreading in its wake fear and the beginnings of panic-terror; felt it suffocating him, strangling him with slimy bloodied hands of macabre laughter and self-mockery, slithering sloth-like over his body, forcing ripples of fear and ice-cold chills of intensity demonic... He struggled, struggled to force it back into the depths from whence it had come, back, back to the depths of horror-filled things, the depths of darkness and chthonic terror that none can see and live; back, back behind the Gates of the Beings on the Threshold...

He seemed surprised at his own words. "Satan you say. But surely you know of the forces of magick, of the law of return and the debt of Karma..."

The Master laughed, a laugh of diabolic fervor and intensity. "You talk to me of such things! Me!"

"I..."

"I have heard you talk of such things before, many times before. And I have heard them from many others also. I sicken at hearing them! You, you who claim powers, you who claim the title 'King', you who idiots of stupidity look up to as 'Master', you I challenge – to you I say prove with actions what you have said these past years, said but never believed in your heart, if honest you be with yourself, if truthful and casting aside the veils of illusion wrapped round all of your kind."

The Master sneered in utter contempt. "I am here now, in your room, surrounded by the things that you use in your Rituals, the things that you think have power. I am alone, you have your High Priestess, harlot in disguise of many Rituals and great experience, he stared at her body, smiling. "I am thus at a disadvantage, in your territory, and I say to you now prove yourself, my friend, or forever fail in the future. Prove that your power is as you say – or be forever unsure, knowing well in the dark hidden cobweb corners of your mind that try me you did not because of your fear at being found wanting."

Again that laugh that grated on all not kin to the Prince of Darkness, that chilled all not of The Master.

"I state to you face – to your face – that I am a Black Magickian and that I who am nameless have more power than you so-called 'King', than you and your High Priestess combined".

The clear eyes of The Master seemed to grow larger, to redden, to sparkle with the bloodshot hue of vampire laughter, with the red flames of Hell itself...

Woodcliffe squirmed in his chair, averting his eyes from those of The Master, resting them for comfort not found in his tools of Witchcraft that lay around, in his High Priestess now shaking in suppressed sobs yet eyes fixed hypnotized on the face of The Master... Words would not come to his lips, thoughts fled from his mind, chaos of the dark void of foreboding and forbidden Night of Time seeped into his brain, flooded all with foamy waters filled with slimy things and gnawing beings that jested, that mocked with pointed fangs dripping blood....

The Master stood to leave, smiling, enjoying the game. "Ha! By your silence you stand condemned!" He removed slowly the glove of his right hand, taking a ring of strangeness from his second finger, threw it without looking in the direction of the High Priestess whose hands to her surprise raised themselves to catch.

"There, a small token to remember me by. Be warned! Your Rituals will never work on it, or on me."

He sneered on final time at Woodcliffe. "Now I take my leave. Ever remember what I said – and be ever mindful in the future lest our paths cross again. For my eyes are everywhere and my ears likewise."

The Master laughed, and the laugh seemed to issue from the walls with the dread voice of thunder, shaking all who stood in its wake, sending cowering the two who stood beneath its fury demonic and of intensity Satanic and macabre; The Master laughed and the light seemed to dim with his laughter, plunging the room in where sat the King of the Witches into darkness of haunting specters, into darkness chilling and icy and oozing the fear of diabolic madness; into darkness rustling with the flapping wings of the bats of haunting misty nights, the bats feasting on the gaping twin holes trickling with warm fresh blood dark red and splendid; the darkness of wanton Lilith come to touch and feel and caress the trembling body sat shaking in the black of night, come to croon and soothe with vampire lust unsatiated the neck pulsing with the bluing flow of life...

And The Master was gone – leaving behind in the wake of his game of life and Satanic splendor much doubt and fear and dread....

Blurry eyes strained under blistering light of desk-lamp, looking down upon notebooks scattered, Dictaphone discarded, typewriter waiting – empty...Eyes that did not like what they saw.

Hands inserted cassette of small size into Dictaphone, grasped microphone head lying in heap of papers covered with hasty jottings and reminders of ideas, names, events, a thumb pressed a switch, a voice of some weariness became a monotone flat like the wail of a fog horn seeking safety of dry land, seeking way out from shrouded mists...

“December 1st, 2300 hours. Evidence still not sufficient. Definite proof that “High Priest” report of November 28th is connected with the group. Paragraph. New line of inquiry commencing through him. Corvin is definitely not connected in any way with the Black group – unaware in fact that behind the façade of the Witchcraft Coven is an inner circle of Satanists....”

He switched off the machine, removed the tape, and locked it in a drawer of his desk. Phillip Russell was taking no chances. He remembered only too well what he had been told...

“Someone suitable?”

“Yes. Yes, I think so.” Silus smiled a weak smile at The Master. He is perfect – just the type we need.”

The Master flicked an imaginary piece of dust from his black coat, leaned back in the chair in the study of the large home of Silus, a house befitting the man.
“Then show him to me.”

Silus wrung his hands, smiled a smile of tempered glee and departed lizard-like. He returned with one dressed in gaudy fashion-conscious clothes, crew cut hair and self-important bearing of those brash and young and undaunted by life. The Master barely looked. Neither asked him to sit.

“This is Steven Moore. He is the leader of a small group based in this city. He is...”

The Master silenced him with a gesture of his hand, turned to face Moore. “So you want power?”

Moore smiled – warily, “Of course, I want power for the Movement so that we can put into effect....”

“Spare me the diatribe. I am interested in power pure and simple – power of any kind, and care not what front it has. You dress your desire for power up in fine words – yet essentially it is as brutal as mine.”

Moore flinched. It was true – but he did not like admitting it, even to himself.

“You are here for one simple reason – because you may be useful to us, and we to you. You know what we represent – and what we can offer to a group such as yours, to yourself. What we wish - what I wish,” his eyes became hard, “in return is power, power to be able to direct the force of your Movement, as you call it, to whatever area or target we desire, when we desire, and for how long we desire. Other than that – and I assure you such will be very rarely exercised – you will be

free to do as you wish, using the funds we will provide as you wish. Is that understood?"

"Yes".

"Good. Provided we work in true partnership henceforth then there is little to stop the advance of what you seek."

Moore glanced at Silus who was hovering like a bat in the background, remembering what he had been told thus far.

"And the terms – if I agree?"

"That you receive a lump sum after any special action done on our behalf and, if what you do is pleasing to us, other amounts such as I will decide."

Moore pondered for a moment, knowing well the risks, knowing well what 'action' would be required: a few beatings up, perhaps a murder or two, all nice and quiet and untraceable in the chaos of the neon and asphalt jungle and the mayhem of gang fights and muggings ...the crisp feel of new money changing hands and bringing him more power, more ability to strengthen his group; and the line he would take if some of his members were foolish enough to get caught: '...the hooligan element; can't control them; didn't know....' And the smell of those notes, and their crisp feel...

"Alright - we have a deal."

The Master remained unmoved – Silus ran to shake his hand and smile, "Thank you, thank you! You'll see how grateful we can be..."

The Master sounded impatient. "The contract can only be broken by mutual consent – you understand?"

His look said he did.

Outside the window snow began to fall softly, covering all in a perfect layer of pure white clean Nature.

Miles away a lonely child had a premonition of death...

V

Russell was annoyed. Annoyed at being late; annoyed at being forced to attend the boring meeting of some stupid gathering of political cranks, being forced to prepare some useless copy which was not going to be used – probably never

even read. Be forced to stand ringing the bell preparing to apologize for being late.

“Ah, Mr. Russell, we have been expecting you!”

“Yes. Sorry I am late but I got held up by...” The excuse never saw the light of day.

He was ushered quickly into the room where before he had stood in amazement, silent witness to a Rite of Witchcraft alien and not of his time; into a room ordinary and not unique containing but three people all of whom he knew, all of whom greeted him as some lost friend returned from voyage long and arduous.

The High Priestess smiled at him. He smiled back, aware of thoughts adulterous yet thrilling, aware of passion smoldering, Aware of coy smile and pursed lips of moistured red and body nubile and well formed and bursting from tight dress and hiding but few things. Aware of a voice talking to him; a man’s voice.

“Corvin here as been explaining to me your interest,” the High Priest stroked his goatee affectionately, “and I have accordingly arranged this little meeting so that we can not only get to know one another better, but also to discuss a few things in a little more depth.”

Russell mumbled agreement.

“Firstly, as you already know, we practice a religion of Wicca and try, in our own small way to teach it to those people like you who seek us out and inquire with nature, and monthly Sabbats when we perform one of the Rituals of our religion: sometimes Initiation for a new member, sometimes Second and Third Degree Initiation for those advanced enough, many times simply a ritual of religious observance – similar to the one you saw here last week.

“The basis for our religion is the reverence for the Mother Goddess whom we call Aradia – as opposed to the basically patriarchal religions like Christianity which abound today. We see her in all things – particularly in Nature resplendent and the beautiful, and thus have the greatest respect and, we like to think, understanding of all Nature. Thus celebration of the Summer and Winter Solstice, the Spring or Vernal Equinox, natural things of life, in the enjoyable things of life – for example we take the very opposite of the Christian view of sex: leaving it solely for the people concerned. For if they enjoy something, then let them enjoy it. Thus the Wiccan marriage lasts for only a year and a day, after which the couple concerned can decide whether to part or remain married...”

Russell was not listening – his mind, and his eyes kept wandering to the High Priestess... He suddenly caught drift of the conversation.

“...the cone of power raised during a Ritual. Naturally such power can be directed in a destructive sense – usually by means of the ‘fith-fath’ which the High Priestess symbolically gives life to during the Ritual. But rarely do we use it, for it is seldom required.

“Now about your immediate future. We celebrate the Winter Solstice, December 21st in a few weeks time, which celebration, depending on how things go between then and now, you can attend – possibly also your Initiation, for we have enough time till then to prepare you. Mark will be on hand to guide you, so do not worry overmuch. Are such arrangements agreeable with you?”

“Yes, yes. Fine”

The High Priest smiled. “I see you look surprised. The quickness? Yes, well we are certain of you, otherwise you would not have been invited to attend the Ritual last week. The only question that remains is – do you think we are suitable for you?”

“Yes – I do. Certainly. As I explained to Mark I have always been interested, but never seemed to come into contact with anyone.”

“Good. Any questions you would like to ask?”

Russell thought for a moment, playing the actor well. “No, I don’t think so - unless...no it doesn’t matter.”

“No, continue, feel free to ask.”

“Well, I was just curious about other groups. Like so many other people I have read of them. Do you ever come across them – Black Groups and so on?”

The face of the High Priest never moved. “Sometimes, sometimes. But rarely. Indeed I have not heard of one on this area for nearly four years, and that one came to a speed end after Woodcliffe intervened.”

“Woodcliffe?”

“You probably never heard of him – I believe he now calls himself ‘King of the Witches’. We have nothing to do with him these days – too publicity minded. Anyway, from what I understood the nature of the ‘Black’ coven it was nothing but a bunch of cranks, no serious Occultists.”

Russell wanted names. But he also wanted his cover to last. He dropped the subject.

They conversed for a while, of things Wiccan and things Magickal; of things of the past and things of the future; of things forgotten and dusty and exhumed for dissection; of things of the present, Russell finally rose to go, excuses ready-made and neatly filed in reporter notebook mind springing easy to lips, please as the High Priestess showed him to the door, alone.

Fore an instant their bodies touched, speaking volumes of words. It was Russell who spoke first.

“When can I see you again?”

She smiled demurely, as if unsure. “Tomorrow. At my flat. Say seven p.m.” She gave him the address, breathed after him into the cold night air: “Be sure to call.”

He called. Ignoring cries of conscience and images of wife and child rising like the wrath of judgment before his eyes. It was all in the line of duty, all in the line of duty he kept repeating to himself, knowing it was not.

He parked his car some distance away, careful to the last; walked along the avenue lined with trees and houses and smelling of middle class wealth and attitudes, cars gleaming and new and status symbols hunched waiting and snarling the drives of houses given names of inelegance in parody of taste individual and benign. Lawns bearing last of snow kept in perfection lest eyes stray and comment, hungry weeds bristling with life always short lived and savage.... He walked to the intersection of another avenue proclaiming money, to the sleek flats well built and three-storied hidden behind trees and bushes prolific and expensive; walked to the door of the number given, pressed the bell melodious with single chime. And waited.

She came dressed in negligee covering nothing, lips quivering in tune to thoughts. Beautiful with the stunning beauty that comes only to her kind, perfume exotic and aphrodisiac blended with natural body scents.

She laughed at his surprise, spoke open and unashamed with the honesty born from years of suppressed anguish.

“What did you expect? Hours of love-play and soft lights and low music? Enticing me into bed? God no! – why waste time? We can talk all you like afterwards.” She fumbled with the ribbon of the negligee, untied it. “Where would you like? – the bedroom? The sofa? Perhaps the floor?”

He had recovered – found her brutal statement of the facts stimulating. He smiled. “How about the bedroom – it is more comfortable.”

.... She undressed him with the caressing skill gained by many long hours, with the expertise gained from individuals diverse, bringing him to desire, wanting, needing him racing hot.

His mind nearly exploded with lust, with desire libidinous, as he kissed her trembling lips, pressing body against body as hand caressed thighs, separated legs, sunk deep into pubic hair damp and desirous, fingers teasing the lips of the vagina, stimulating her clitoris, causing gasps and sighs of beginning frenzy and orgasm. He kissed her neck, her shoulders, her breasts, tongue playing with nipples, teeth biting with mock playfulness as her hand sought his penis, maneuvered into her waiting body of rippling desire unable to wait, as she spread her legs wide and folded, arched her body, felt the glorious sensation of stiffened flesh lunge deep into her, deep into her innermost self. She moved in rhythm with him, causing thrust deeper ever deeper and harder, as her nails dug in frenzy in his back, as her mouth closed upon the flesh of his neck biting, sucking in tune to the rhythm of body upon body...

She groaned and screamed, no longer able to control the orgasm building and building and washing over her wave after wave after frenzied wave, lost in the beautiful ecstasy of the body brought by fornication splendor and lust needing release. Sweat bathed them, desire fed them; ecstasy surrounded them as behind a mirror not all it seemed, a camera turned, silently....

Behind the camera stood The Master, smiling....

VI

Moore studied his audience packed into the upstairs of a public house, a room with a raised platform to one end used usually by folk-group resident, bare floor boards and chairs old and seen better decades. A room with overhead light unsuited and windows along one side grimy and giving views of factory after factory belching smoke and city gloom. Fifty or so, mostly young and bold and of the kind to fight on dark nights in parks lonely, parks full, causing shrill cries of horror and many letters of protest to local papers. Smoke hung dense in the air filled with the smell of beer and language brisk and to the point....

Moore rose to speak, framed behind by a flag large and blood red in the center of which a white circle enclosing a black lightning flash, angry, and defiant. Silence greeted his gaze, expectancy his bearing. He sniffed the atmosphere, considering words, sensing the feel; now the orator of power.

"I speak an in speaking raise my voice loud and defiant against those who forever whine of the need for peace, the need for tolerance, the need for sickly love and the disgusting stench of pacifist ideas! I who speak for this Movement new, the Movement proud and this Movement defiant, I say let us have war, let us have violence – let us have the joy, the splendor of fighting! For how will we

destroy our enemies, how will we win, unless we fight, unless we smash, destroy totally and utterly any opposition, any who stand in our way, who even threaten our existence!”

Cheers rent the air, boots stamped hard on the floor.

“We are gathered here, we who represent the best of the Movement that we have all grown to love and respect, we who number at the present time fifty – we have survived, grown, extended because we have used force, because we have smashed our way to power, because we have not stood back like cowards and let our enemies beat us, let our enemies jeer at our cowardice, at our impotence, at our fear.

“This Movement when it first started only six months ago had just five members – five! And what have we now? – eight, nine, ten times that number! And why? Because we have accepted our Destiny, because we have not bowed down before our opponents, because we have stood by the principles that alone will bring success, that alone will give us power.

“For what are we – cowards, weaklings who run and scamper away in fear? Are we afraid of our opponents, of anyone?

“No! No...”

“Smash them! Smash them!...”

Moore was reaching the heights of emotional fury, blending himself with his audience, feeling their power, and responding to them, drawing from them....

“Let us act like men – not cowards! Let us take our battle to the streets, let us not be content until we have destroyed all and everyone who stands in our way, all who want to see that flag dragged in the mud, who want to see our symbol of defiance and manhood and fighting spirit spat upon!”

“Let us not rest until we have won power, until we have cleared the streets of this country of the scum, of the trash, or the animals that litter them! Until we can gain power and stand proud once more – until we can stand again like men and not caged specimens to be gaped at by the ones in power, the ones of wealth and sickening bloated stomachs well fed! Let us ...”

A great crash came from the far end of the room, all turned to look, seeing the door flung wide and a body of men with contorted faces of snarls and angry rage appear, clutching weapons many and varied, at bottles broken and staves of wood....

“Bastard! Fascist Bastard! .” A finger pointed.

No one moved – but only for a second.

Moore smiled, voice booming across the room, finger pointing. “There! There are the scum! Do we fight or do we run? Are we cowards?”

Shouts of “No! ...get ‘em!”, “Red scum! Come on!”, Give it to ‘em!”

Several youths leapt up from their chairs and lunged, followed by more as savage fighting broke out, as chairs rose and fell and screams and curses lined the room, as bottles flew and beer mugs were thrown, aimed and aimless; as blood was drawn again and again; as body fell to the ground only to be kicked with savage brutality and left discarded in a bloodied pool as savage rage was turned upon others and then found again by comrades and taken away to safety; as skulls were cracked and noses broken and kips cut and faces torn with glass jagged and slashed with knives flashing and quick and wielded with expert hands...

Bodies tumbled down the stairs beyond the door as slowly the invaders were pushed back, as slowly they gave way, bloodied and overwhelmed by the unequalled savagery of the young fighters trained in battles many and varied, trained in the hard school of street fights and gang warfare. Somewhere below a frantic landlord dialed for the Police...

“We have won this battle – but there will be many more. Are you prepared for them?”

“Bloody right we are!”

“We’ll teach the scum!” ...

Moore glanced out of the window, saw some of the defeated opponents still lingering, saw one sprawled in the gutter oozing blood; saw Police cars arriving...

“Police are here! Get rid of any weapons! Remember, they started it...”

He jumped down, mingled with the members flushed with victory, some losing weapons in corners dark and empty; waited for the Police, happy....

“Then we can begin?” Silus asked hopefully, eyes straying to the small headline on the back page of the local paper: ‘Fight As Rival Groups Clash...’

The Master gazed content into the blazing log fire, a smile twitching on his lips.

“It has already begun my dear Silus, already begun.”

Russell sat hypnotized by the key, twirling it in his hand, examining it under the light of his desk lamp, remembering. "Take this key. You can call anytime - whenever you feel like you need to make love to me..." He had seen the look in her eyes, almost tearful, and been moved. He had seen her appetite, her thirst, her need, and been touched. He had known that before him there had been many, and that after him there would be many more, and he had sighed, feeling his helplessness. He had asked her why and listened quiet when she had told him with saddening eyes, told him how she had used her body to acquire her wealth, and how she would sell herself again and again, and often, very often, ask for nothing, take nothing, save the pleasure she found in men's bodies....

He shook his head, remembering.

Remembering the quest that had brought him thus far, of his search for a group of people that practiced obscene rites and partook in orgies of debauched evil, that had once touched the life of his best friend and had driven him to suicide grisly and disgusting, that had set him in revenge upon the trail of the Satanists; the trail of many blind alleys and box canyons, the trail whose scent he had lost often and yet always seemed to find again. And he wondered.

Wondered why, after all this time, he bothered; wondered why he wasted his time a crusade one-man and of little value in the end. Wondered why and to what purpose ... Could not turn back now – waiting months of work hard and paid for dearly in strain and torment; could not turn back even though the why no longer mattered, even though he no longer cared about the reasons why he had begun. He could not admit to himself that he had failed; could not admit that he did not have the ability, the cunning, the tenacity, necessary. Could not admit defeat. It was a question of survival – of winning against all odds, of proving himself...

He twirled the key, remembering.

VII

They came at him with practiced care, learned from many such gambits of life, wedging him in. Laughing. They had chosen their spot well, far away from the prying eyes of passing people, far away from the cars speeding past, ever ready to stop and look and rush to play the good citizen, informing the Police. Far away from lights bright and anathema to the ones like them, drunk on the thrill of violence, lusting for blood.

He saw them too late, understood too late their intent; felt too late the adrenalin...

They rummaged through his pockets ensuring silence by knife blade pressed tightly against throat drying with fear; littering the sidewalk frosty and silent and

empty with possessions personal and once treasured, once having meaning. And then they tired of fun, eyes narrowing and faces brightening, nostrils flaring and animal-like as they punched at him, sagging now on his knees, as they kicked him, laughing and drooling over body cowering and pleading – body of face soon flowing with blood, nose broken; body resounding to the deep thud of boots landing in laughter, the body of bones cracking and mouth of blood dribbling from the corner.

A knife flashed, point trusting deep again and again into yielding flesh, striking bones, drawing fresh blood warm in the cold night air, blood staining clothes fine and expensive and well made, blood trickling onto sidewalk frosty and with winter-chill; blood from body dead, soon to be stiff and cold, soon to be found and raising questions never to be answered.

They ran off into the darkness shielding, pleased, laughing. Creatures of the night spawned in the dark twilight grottoes of the city...

On the sidewalk cold and lifeless lay a card thrown in haste, spattered with fresh blood: 'Phillip Duval, Harley Street....'

A door opened, a stranger entered silently. Watching, listening.

"One punch, two kick, three turn, four kick five...." The instructor completed the routine, followed by his pupils, barefoot, in traditional uniform. He motioned them to continue, caught sight of the stranger, left his position at the top of the gymnasium floor.

"Yes? This is a private club- we do not take new members. I'm sorry but I must ask you to leave." He fingered the black sash around his waist.

The eyes of the stranger were full of sorrow.

"I am truly sorry to intrude. I just wanted to observe, perhaps to gain a few things, to understand."

"I am afraid that is not possible. If you wish to observe I suggest you try the Aikido Club – it's near Wellington Street."

The eyes of the stranger looked at the sash of the instructor. "I see you are advanced. Could you please tell me what you teach, for I am desirous of understanding."

The instructor looked hard at him, noting the peculiar manner of dress, the strange way of speaking, the accent barely noticeable but hinting of something not quite English, not quite right. His gentle bearing and calm untroubled face

that seemed at total peace with the world. Perhaps if he humored him he would go away.

“The Art of self-development – coordination of body and mind.”

The stranger seemed pleased. A warm smile came to his face. “And.” He turned his head in the direction of the pupils who were now motionless, watching, some perhaps glad of this break, “and they are making progress, achieving understanding?”

“Yes.” He was beginning to feel annoyed.

“But why do you grow angry with me? Surely it is follow to worry over such a small thing? Is it not folly for the flower of the field to worry over the wind that bends its stalk? – for it gains nothing thereby, save only loss of beauty. Rather it should enjoy the breeze as bringing beauty and inner calm.”

The instructor sighed. Perhaps he would have to use force after all; the smile of the stranger only served to increase his annoyance.

“I must ask you to leave now – I have a class to teach.”

The stranger only smiled.

The pupils began to talk, not only of the stranger.

His patience was rapidly running out. If only he didn't have that stupid grin...

“Please go – “ It was no longer a request.

The stranger only smiled.

The instructor moved forward, mind fixed on a grip that was least painful –

He shook his head, blinked, stared in disbelief at the roof – how the hell had he slipped? ... He regained his feet, faced the stranger – still smiling – damn him! – wary this time of his footing –

This time he saw it – a move barely perceptible; but seen it too late. He stared up at the ceiling. Raised himself again, conscious of a dull throb in his left thigh.

The stranger only smiled.

“How -?” He gestured feebly in the air.

“Please do not use force – it is the last resort of the unintelligent. I will go since my presence seems to trouble you.” He turned and took one step.

The instructor started to grasp at his shoulder – thought better of it. “No. Wait. How? .. Where did you learn...”

“It is of no importance.” The door was closer.

Some of the students laughed, others made comments not too solemn... The instructor saw red. Lunged...

The kick caught him off balance, sent him falling only to get caught by blow causing body to thump heavy on the floor of the gymnasium. The stranger stood over him, ready, smile gone.

He lay prone for a long time, recovering, breathings sounding heavy in the sudden silence, admitted defeat, let the stranger help him up. Again asked.

The stranger smiled, removed his cloak to reveal a robe of black with a woven with an intricate design of a Green Dragon emblazoned upon it.

The instructor was speechless, surprised. “I’m sorry... I did not know...”

“Do not feel sorry – for one learns only by experience. For Wisdom is not a flower to be plucked, but a high mountain that must be conquered with much endurance and hardship, with many trials of experience.”

He smiled, serenely. “You will see me again.”

“But – “

But The Master was gone, leaving in his wake many torrents of exclamations and questions unresolved...

The photograph was enough. Enough to show him that they knew - that they knew and were prepared. The photograph had come in a brown envelope, arriving without warning and exploding like a time-bomb in his life; the photograph showing two people in a compromising position, in a position making love; the photograph showing a man and a woman - and the man was him.

So they had arranged it all! Dangled the bait in front of him on a line long and thin and going unnoticed – and like a fool he had taken it. Taken in the whole story that she had told, taken in the whole set up, fallen for her witch-charms

while behind the scenes the others laughed, watching, enjoying themselves. The filth! The disgusting bastards!

He raged; tore the photograph into tiny pieces, took the key from his pocket, hurled it across the room, thumped the desk with his fist, cursed...

Well, if I cannot get at them – not yet – I can get at her, the slut, the fornicating whore!...He picked up the key, went out in the frost morning, threatening to snow....

He pressed the bell. Kept on pressing, other hand drumming on the door in rhythm to the fury of his mind. A muffled morning shout came from behind the door.

She smiled, still a little dazed from sleep, pleased to see him – froze at she saw the look of hate in his eyes, saw the twitching corner of his mouth in fury.

“What? – “

He hit her hard across the face with the flat of his hand sending her falling, came after her slamming the door behind him.

He raised his hand again and she cowered, sobbing, beautiful face distorted in anguish.

She started to answer but he hit her again, drawing a trickle of blood from the corner of her mouth. She covered her face in her hands, tears streaming down her cheeks.

The sight of blood calmed him, brought him to his senses, caused the rage to subside and disappear into nothingness, into the oblivion of numbness that was also of despair and sorrow.

He knelt down beside her, lowered her shaking hands, and wiped the blood away with his handkerchief, eyes looking into hers of cloudy tears. “I’m sorry, sorry. I didn’t mean to hurt you, it was just that...”

She rested her head on his shoulder, crying gently, embracing him.

God! Why do I like her so much?”

For a long time neither of them spoke, needing no words.

Her tears gone, sorrow still on her face, she spoke. “I had to do it – I, ... I had no choice. The Master, I have to obey him. He...” Tears came again.

He brushed them away with his hand, aware now that she was but another pawn in the game, another puppet dangling on strings pulled by the group he sought – had found. Somehow, somehow he would make it up to her; make up for his stupid rage, mindless violence.

“The Master, yes” Ideas began to tumble in his mind, sending index cards turning and filing systems creaking. “Who is this ‘Master’?”

She looked up, shook her head so that her hair flayed around it, framing the tear-stained cheeks, making her look wanton and of incredible beauty, in control of herself again; conscious of a new feeling pounding through her Being, a feeling strange and not altogether unpleasant...”I don’t know his name – for I have only met him a few times: and then only briefly. He is as much an enigma to me as to others, for no one knows him, yet all fear him.” She shuddered. “He has some kind of tremendous power. I...I cannot describe it. When he looks into your eyes you cannot disobey him – you feel commanded to obey.

She saw the thought in his eyes. “He made me agree to the setting up of the camera – in there,” she pointed to the bedroom, “behind the mirror. There was another one set up in here – just in case.” The strange sensation touched her again. “But, but please believe me – I didn’t intend to ... to... He – The Master – didn’t have to command me to make love to you. I ... I wanted to for myself.”

He touched her cheek with his hand, drew her toward him, kissed her lips, held her tight aware of a feeling not only lust, a feeling once known in foolish youth, a feeling thought lost and forgotten.

“I know... I know...”

VIII

“Where did you find her?”

“She was a recent Initiate of my coven,” The High Priest smiles a lascivious smile, “came to me for help – something to do with getting raped I think. She wasn’t a bad screw!”

Silus gleamed. “And The Master was pleased?”

“I’ll say!! Thought her ideal – mind you he had her a few times to make sure!”

They laughed uproariously, mingled with the other members milling around in spacious room of a large ancestral house far from prying eyes, waiting, waiting for the start of the Grand Sabbat that would involve the letting of fresh human blood...waiting with tingling excitement and repressed desire, savoring the debauched thoughts seething through lascivious minds, rippling through

expectant bodies desirous of the pleasures of the flesh, desirous of the pleasures of Satan ...waiting; a camarilla of wealth and position bored with ordinary life, seeking new thrills...

The wonders of nature, thorn stick in hand, dog by side, happy. Days without worries; days without cares – days fresh and warm and splendid, full of life. And – oh! How memory pains – days of sun and silence walking with her, with her smiling and radiant and beautiful as the summer blooms, honeyed hair swayed by the gently breeze. Her with long dress flowing, playing in fields of daisy and buttercup, picking bunches of flowers wild, honeyed hair perhaps giving rest to one flower that looked even more beautiful thus.... Days of sun and silence, walking. Walking perhaps stealing kisses, smiling, saying no words, knowing we belonged together, would never part. Days long ago – days of refinement, days full with smiling people elegantly dressed and refined of speech and manner, days of tiffin and luncheon; days of distant peaceful world of winged collars and fine top hats. Of streets and memories echoes to the haunting sound of horses hoofs and wheels bouncing over cobbles; of happiness...

But he no longer cared – Lord Harlow, exquisitely dressed in manner befitting his charm and warmth aristocratic and rapidly disappearing world of quantity and shallowness. Lord Harlow announced to his guests that all was prepared, ready for the start of the Grand Sabbat

Deep in the vaulted chambers they gathered, gathered to celebrate the Satanic Sabbat, gathered in robes resplendent and shedding vista or color upon the atmosphere brooding but clear, dim but of cloistered clarity; gathered and looked with far from hidden glee and smiling upon the altar covered with many brown stains and sacrifice surrounded by priests of Satan stocky and awaiting well the sight of fresh warm blood, awaiting well with tension laden force bulging from build and bearing. Gathered, hearing the slow, almost silent beat of voodoo drums placed to the side of the altar, played by negroes beautiful with shimmering brown skin and flashing pearly teeth. Gathered in the luxuriant Temple of Satan exuding foreboding atmosphere, sprinkled free with demonic incense and swirling in mists of tantric delight and vulvate ecstasy - gathered and seeing woman of magnificent beauty and dark Jezebelian features emerge quick and supple from silken drapes hung near door atop steps leading to Temple of sin and debauchery and lust, dressed in silks flowing and inviting, beginning to dance to the rthymic beat of drums growing ever louder and faster; dancing in circle formed by worshippers spurring her on with animal gestures and sounds and hands clapping to beat pounding and pounding and rising and rising in fury and speed as she turned and whirled faster and faster bringing all to pitch of frenzy as hypnotic beat loud burst upon all gathered to celebrate the great Sabbat of Satan, Prince of Darkness, King of harlots and whores, as writhed in tune and time to the beat watching with bulging eyes and straining bodies to her dancing exotic dance of lust and fornication splendor, dancing dance of movement imitating frenzy of fornication, imitating frenzy of lust arisen and made

as god, discarding garments gradual until naked she danced sweating profuse the sweat of ecstasy and rhythm, until pitch of fury animal reached by all gathered in Temple matched the haunting hypnotic beat loud and reverberating from drums played with fiery passion and thunder, until pitch of intensity was reached and woman of desire and naked body sweating and stained and hair wanton and tangled fell still upon floor and drum beat ceased sudden, all eyes resting on The Master suddenly appeared holding in hand upraised knife flashing and gleaming and sharp and bedecked with splendid jewels, watching with bated breath as knife touched flesh of her upon the altar quivering with fear, breasts large and white moving in rippling waves as breathing becomes hard and labored and eyes scream a silent scream of terror, as body quivers in death throes of ecstasy and vagina discharges for the last time the fluids of life, the fluids of immortality, face of innocent beauty unblemished distorting, catching flecks of blood from artery severed now by quick slash of knife over throat warm red blood spurting free into chalice held ready by ever present priest of Satan gloating with glee diabolic combined animal noise from all gathered in robes below altar now stained and holding dead body of limbs relaxed in final death as blood runs and drum beat starts again quicker and quicker and louder and louder all beginning soon to twirl and spin with demonic frenzy of music seeping in the hideous Temple of Satan that has brought much death and great joy of passion laughing and shouting of Sadian revelry and glee debauched chalice of blood fresh and not yet cold and wonderful passed from hand to eager hand, mouth to mouth as orgy begins as trickles of bubbling blood fall from crooning mouths thirsting bodies naked and freed from all restraints caressed by hands and lips and mouths wishing vulgarity and new orifices, women opening wide legs and inviting with shouts of laughter any to satisfy them any to pierce their flesh and soften hair damp and dripping, pinching breasts in obscene parody of partners writhing with passion and needing men lusting astride other bodies naked and breathing sighs of sex passion great.

(next sentence is unreadable – photocopy off the page.)

refrain from priests of Satan gathered in circle round near altar covered still with dead body of dried blood and fresh once seen beauty but no more, drums growing ever louder and louder, possessed they be with some demonic force that shakes all in the temple encrusting it with nascent macabre horror and depth of terror giving insanity death to all not of Satan to all not of those of ecstasy lusting frenzied beneath altar of dead body over which croons The Master to all not of the one of the night of time to all not of the slithering things of darkness and terror eking from bodies escaping from orifices naked and discharging to all not of the frenzied beings on the threshold.

Miles away, a child awoke, screaming....

The Police Inspector was worried, worried by the glowing flames of hatred smoldering just beneath the surface, waiting, waiting, needing only a small incident to set them free, violent, destructive, hateful... He shook his head as he took in the scene, the crowd, their banners, their mood, the words of the speaker stood addressing the crowd of nearly two hundred.

“They are growing, growing every day. We must stop them before they grow any further – at present they are a small threat, but if nothing is done, if they are allowed to grow, they will go from a small threat into a menace – can we stand by and watch that happen, can we, must we, do nothing?”...

Cries of “No! No!”, “No free speech for Fascists!” surged through the crowd, the crowd student-like in its youth and dress and ideas.

The Police Inspector gripped his personal radio, asked for reinforcements, looked at his watch: 2:15 p.m. They should be here soon.... He deployed his small force of Police officers uniformed like he at strategic positions, mindful of experience gained in many battles of public order...

Moore sat back in his seat, watched through the tinted windows as his car toured the scene, unnoticed by the crowd, unnoticed by the Police; watched from the comfort and safety of the back leather covered seat of the car bought with money gratefully given for services rendered; watched and smiled, pleased.

It stopped down a side street, out of sight of the crowd and Police thronging round the front of the Civic Hall, stopped to let Moore out and meet with his members mostly young and smiling, some with nerves, dressed ready for battle in fashionable clothes worn by young of city back streets, worn by those of grit and reckless endeavor.

He addressed them in words terse and befitting to the moment, took his place at their head, in front of lightning-flash flags flying and single military drum beating out marching beat. He led them into the open, no more a mere rabble but now a disciplined fighting force trained by age and back street experience and secret sessions held against the law; trained and ready to fight...

Several saw them at once, shouting madly as all turned to look, as reporters scribbled and cameras focused hoping to snapshot a moment of time, a moment of history. They came, proud, defiant, silent wave for the sound of the drum and marching feet, causing anger and fear among the crowd, admiration for the Police who regretted being there, secretly wishing to turn and disperse with force the mob of left-wing students.

They came, closer and closer until but few feet and Police separated them from the crowd now shouting obscenities, venting their spleen in taunts and slogans, Moore knowing well that provoke them he could, making them seem the ones of

violence, the one of trouble, the ones of blame – the rabble, and his the disciplined soldiers who remained quiet and fought only in self-defense.

Anger mounted. Fires of hate stoking higher and higher....

Moore stood defiant, surrounded now by five burly youths of fierce features and much latent violence, conscious of all eyes upon him, conscious of the hate, and the anger, and the fear. He knew his moment had come.

With a gesture swift and barely perceivable he raised his right arm in the Fascist salute, resting left hand on the buckle of his belt, index finger drumming silently seconds before giving the signal that would send defiant chants bellowing from the lungs of his members...

The chants came, fiery and determined, overwhelming with sheer force and timing accurate the strangled lone cries of the crowd..."The Reds, the Reds, we've got to get rid of the Reds!..."

Flames burst, sending fires naked and burning and destroying reason...several of the crowd charged, some caught by Police, others by fists and boots of youth, causing eruption of violence open and without restraint...

Moore kicked him in the stomach as he rushed, heard the outward rush of cries and the sucking of air, followed by his body – doubled wit kicks severe to the knee-caps causing body to fall moaning and writhing on the ground, kicked violent in the face causing blood soon lost as other feet trod over the now helpless body, caring not. He wheeled round, blocking a feeble blow aimed at his face, kicking with studied artistry at his assailant soon lost falling back into the crowd.

The Police Inspector saw him coming, waited, judging the time right to the second, gripping neck in powerful arm-lock, forcing knee into back of student now rasping and cursing feebly. He felt a sharp pain in his back, causing him involuntarily and in reflex action to tighten his grip sending face of student colorful as body now limp dropped to the ground; as he turned seeing hand raised to strike again, face contorted in mindless anger and mouth shouting hoarse cries of "Pig! Pig!..."

Sirens wailed, uniformed bodies spilled from cars and vans, joining in the fighting, grabbing and dragging them away kicking and screaming as thrown they were into vans nearby, thrown into vans too full.

Drivers of cars stopped, enjoying the scene of violence but fearful of being involved, pedestrians stood and gazed with open eyes, searching in memories

for some scene of similar violence and savagery and brutal anger. Reporter's cameras clicking, clicked like heartbeats shuffled away, gaining new ground of vantage good for photographs soon to be on Editor's desk, raw, savage, showing spattered bloodied pavements.

It subsided, anger giving way to Police now numerous and regaining control, those in midst of crowd seeing bloodied faces and bodies limping and in agony wishing no further part; Moore, jacket torn, but unhurt, gathering supporters into some semblance or order, smiling as he looked at the scene of devastation, as he looked at his members mostly exuberant, many dripping blood and clutching limbs painful but happy...

A body twisted into a grotesque parody of human form lay alone on the pavement, stood over by Inspector seeing matted hair covering face drenched in blood.. Helmets of Police lay strewn, midst banners torn beyond repair, leaflets scattered blowing in the wind, a single shoe torn from thrashing body a solo lament to the violence of only a moment ago.

Strangers drifted away, renewed their walk, and drove off in cars, glad of something new to talk about to wives, friends...

In the distance a sleek black Mercedes burst into life, dark closing electric window obscuring the face of the person in the back seat with flashing blue eyes and leering smile, car drifting unseen into heavy traffic.

He listened with reporter-curiosity to the reports coming in, to the reporters returning with details and films to be developed, some hopeful of a national scoop, dashing to typewriters and phones, excited, glad of something new and different and perhaps important, something beyond the boring garbage of most local news...He listened, seeing headlines in mind, racy reports in language gushing and written with first-hand knowledge: "Violence Flares in Center...", "Police Injured in Riot...", "Demo Battles Outside Civic Hall – Police Hurt..." He listened, let it slip from his mind, thought of other things more personal – Saturday 22nd December, Solstice... What horrors walked the misty nights of darkness this ever, what terror waited, stalking? ... A night of desire filled perhaps with gladness and joy.

Russell let himself in with the key, greeted her with kisses and teasing caressing hands, waited patient as she finished preparation on a meal, meal eaten in candlelight in spacious living room of flat luxurious and expensive, eaten in the silence that **(balance of this line and the next line of text is off the photocopied page)...**

Next page resumes...

They sat on the sofa, bodies gently touching, savoring the sounds of music wafting in the perfumed air, talking but little, aware of the inevitability of the evening, but letting desire and lust build gradual, refined, feeding in on themselves....

She needs help, someone to help her, someone to protect her, someone able to give all the things never known in a life tormented – someone to love ... God damn it! I'm in love with her!

I'll try, just for you I'll try – it will be difficult I know, but I will try; I will give my body only to you... I'll try because I am falling in love with you Phillip.

He unbuttoned her dress, let the shoulder straps fall, helped her to wriggle out free, unhooked her bra, touched firm white flesh and felt the sudden arching of her body, heard the breathing heavy with desire waiting, urging, needing release, felt the gentle hands of her caressing hands.

“Now, Phillip, now!”

IX

Yuletide. Time of joy and rejoicing. Time of festivity and remembrance; time of bitter winds and nights dark and long and spent in warm rooms safe from drafts of northern clime, safe from chilling fervor of ice glistening somewhere in the light of the midnight sun.

Schreier added some more coal to the fire, wondering why he never got married and provided himself thus with someone to do these terribly awful chores; he sank back in his chair, grateful of the smoke from the cheroot freshly lit, listening.

“I don't think it is a coincidence – my High Priestess definitely picked up something on the Astral: not pleasant.” Like your smoke he thought, but did not add; tolerating Schreier was a burden he'd have to bear for a while. Woodcliffe sighed.

Schreier puffed contentedly between words. “Yes. Someone, come to think of it, a moment. You say he left a ring?”

“Yes, quite a valuable one. We did a bit of psychometry on it naturally – “

“Indeed, indeed.”

Woodcliffe ignored him. “... and the results were surprising; almost impossible.”

“Yes. It seems he, or who, or it, is what was claimed. Even the ring seems to exude evil, create it, poisoning the atmosphere. We did a Ritual of Exorcism on it with the whole coven participating but it had no effect – indeed it seemed to actually increase the evil.”

Schreier guessed what was coming.

“I brought it with me for your opinion.”

He extracted from his briefcase a clasped metal box, handing it to Schreier, who opened it carefully, mindful of its history, unwrapped the white linen cloth which covered it, not touching the ring instead moving the box to examine it more closely.

The ring was large – a precious stone of deep red hue set in a silver-like metal covered with signs, the whole set in solid gold.

“Interesting, very interesting,” he held it to the light, “the inscription is very strange – some sort of hieroglyphic writing, not unlike that of the Indus Valley, but more advanced perhaps. How the two metals are joined is unusual – if both are metals – like a perfect fusion. The stone I have never seen before – ruby appears the nearest, although it is certainly not that, faces are different.”

“Do you get the feeling that it is almost alien?”

Schreier was enthralled. “Yes! Alien! I knew there was something odd about it, something strange. The workmanship, design – perhaps a different concept of spatial design. Yes, yes it is certainly alien, almost demonic.”

The room seemed to go very dark, the crackling fire **(balance of this sentence is unreadable....)**

Next page continues mid-sentence....

Laughter. The eyes of the King of Witches and the White Occultist met, saying the same thing. It passed as quickly as it had come....

Silence. Silence save for the sound of the fire, normal –

“You were right to come – we must do something.” Schreier sounded nervous, as if mindful of someone watching from behind.

“We need more information – together we might be able to track this man of mystery down, find his group. Yes, together...”

“Yes, together perhaps.”

The room became cold, icy cold, sending shivers through the two sat therein, renewing their fears, their doubts, their anxieties... colder and colder it became until their hot breath could be seen, until uncontrollable shivers shook them. Darker and darker it grew as more and more powerful became the forces of evil choking the room like sulphurous stench rising from dead men’s graves and hell-fire torment, oozing from the orifices, slithering across the floor like some alien monster of loathing horror and macabre appearance reeking of carrion flesh. Greater and greater became the waves of horror and cosmic evil pounding upon the room, choking off the breath of the two sat fearful, rumbling loud and thunder-filled through the room, shaking to destruction ornaments and furniture and books tumbling from shelves like bullets aimed, striking the two harder and harder as they scrambled hither and thither to no avail, as they sought refuge never found, as they cried silent cries of nascent terror. Suddenly above the raucous cacophony of sounds demonic and diabolic came the echoing sounds of drums beating ever quicker and sounding ever louder as they beat out the rhythm of death, the rhythm of the waking dead, the becoming dead... Hollow laughter of maddening intensity and lunatic fervor beat upon the ears of the two in the room, shouting with obscene cries of pride, of strength, of Satanic splendor... Floating above all held in place by nothingness was the ring stone pulsing madly and perversely to the beat from the drums of the dead, casting eerie light of blood hue and intensity, causing two pairs of eyes to stare bulging in pathetic hypnotized horror.

And then it was gone. And they sat staring with disbelieving eyes at the room as it was before, peaceful, silent save for the sound of the fire, normal - memories tearing at minds.

They never found any trace of the ring – only an empty clasped metal box with a piece of white linen inside.

“Granted that you have a powerful force of – shall we say -, “ a sly knowing smile, “storm-trooper” types, but we have a national organization built up over many years. Surely, you must see that an amalgamation of our two organizations would of necessity mean a somewhat less radical approach. Our members – “

Here it comes, thought Moore, the myopic speech he had heard so many times before from the ‘power without force’ school. Hell, in a year, one year, he had learned more about street-corner politics that this bald headed bastard had learned in ten. He had not traveled nearly a hundred miles only to hear the drivel.

He swept away the other with an almost contemptuous wave of the hand.

“Yes I know all the reasons for less action, less militant and direct action- but reasons mean nothing – absolutely nothing, in practical politics. Look, I’m going to be brutally honest with you – and its too bad if it hurts: in less than a year I have built up a solid core of dedicated fanatics – people who are prepared to fight; I have stabilized our financial position, opened new, large, Headquarters, got full-time staff – the nucleus of a powerful future mass movement, a movement capable of taking power not merely talking about it. How has this been done? – by the use of force, by violence, by Fascist tactics and methods. And look what you have achieved in ten years by so-called safe methods: a tiny organization, admittedly larger than mine in pure numbers but not even a quarter as effective in terms of action, of propaganda, of impact. You have no H.Q., running all from this tiny office in your home – a house not even in a big city but stuck in the middle of nowhere; no full-time staff save yourself, and no training facilities, no rooms to hold meetings in, rooms which none can throw you out from.”

John Hoey sorrowed inwardly, knowing it true – and with the movement – but the whole of our type of politics is a risk. If I fail, as I may, although the chances are becoming less with every victory we have, then at least I will have made an attempt, at least I can say I tried – at least I will know inwardly, here, where it matters, that I did all in my power possible to help my country, that I used all the means at my disposal. And, if as I believe – Destiny is on our side then we must win, cannot fail – for all Destiny awaits in someone to step forward, someone to dare, someone to assume leadership. I may be that person – I do not know; but until another comes forward I must bear the burden, I must take the risks, for there is no more time to be lost.”

Moore was moved almost to tears by the compelling force of his own oratory.

He could see that Hoey also was moved – hammered home his advance.

“Are our lives so valuable, so precious – do we desire so much to live, do we desire so much the life of ease, of peace, that we cannot, will not, make a sacrifice for something beyond and ever greater than ourselves, that our mere lives? Are we cowards, afraid? Do we say one thing with our words and believe another in our hearts? Or are we proud of that honesty and truthfulness that comes to those of our kind? Is not what we stand for, what we fight for; worth the sacrifice of our life should such be needed? Do we only pretend when we speak of honor, of duty, of the common interest before self?

“I say it and I mean it – life is not so valuable that I would shirk death if forced to fight to the death for what I believe in. I would rather die than see this country reduced to the rubble of communism. And not only I but all the members of my Movement – as they have proved again and again and will continue to do so in the future while I am their leader. They fear not, they trust in me – can I turn my

back on that trust, can I slink away when faced with danger and pretend not to see the sacrifices they make in the name of the cause for which we fight? No, a thousand times no! The time of compromise is long since past – now we must act before it is too late, before we no longer can!”

He knew he had won, could read it in Hoey’s face, his eyes. But he had not expected tears, tears that came free, rolling down Hoey’s face, moved he be beyond words.

Hoey rose from his seat, grasped Moore by the hands, looked into his eyes.

“Yes, yes I will follow you – so it was true after all. They did not lie. There is indeed One to come to follow the One who died. I had hoped, oh! – how I had hoped, and now I know it to be true.

He suddenly looked incredibly old, far far older than his forty-five years. He reseated himself, brushing away the tears.

“Yes, I will do all in my power to make our Movement – your Movement – a success. To my members I will say that I have dissolved my organization and for them to join the new Movement that you have created. They will not disagree.”

Moore was speechless. Outwardly he radiated calm fierce determination, but inwardly he questioned, amazed. For an instant an irresistible power had surged through him, drawing him out of himself, making him see himself as if from above, above watching himself talk to Hoey, watching himself gesture and pierce with eyes strangely radiant and deep – as if something else was within him, some other Being which he was powerless against, which took control of him, giving him tremendous power, giving his words a power beyond words, a power unique and irresistible and far beyond mere oratory.

Perhaps – but no, it could not be; such things were not possible....

They came slowly, at different intervals, at different days, many under names and faces false lest even the slightest suspicion be thought, lest even the smallest eyebrow be raised in a questioning manner. They came from many countries united by a common interest, a common bond that was beyond money, beyond even death itself, beyond even the flames of a country, an idea in ruins and rubble and thought destroyed by most not of them. Beyond all the things so well known by time. They came – mostly old in body but of sparkling mind; some young and trusted and brought up as one of them; they come knowing the importance of the meeting to be held in the privacy of an ancestral home far from prying eyes.

The Master stood to address them seated round a table fine and large and old and in a hall befitting, a hall of ancient shields and swords and many trophies of war and sport, stood knowing that the supreme moment of his life on Earth had dawned, knowing well the great tested power of all before him.

“Brethren, as you all know the second phase has begun, in this country, at a time right and befitting, at a time dictated by the power we wield. And the time has come thus for use to gather and unite the unique abilities each of us possess so that what we create will rise from the flames, the ashes, rise as the Phoenix rises, rise as it is written in of Book of Books that it will rise – all powerful, conquering, equally Lightning and Sun!”

A look of great Satanic pleasure came to the faces of all gathered round the table large and old and fine, a look of pride defiant, a look of total power, a look of total evil.

Miasmatic shapes of cyclopean horror mingled with the dark foreboding atmosphere created by all who sat gathered round a table large and old in an ancestral home far from prying eyes.

X

Russell was inwardly dreading the moment, his stomach feeling as if he had left it on the pavement behind him, his mouth beginning to dry in the fear he knew was always there but had suppressed like he suppressed it now, putting on a mask of bravado – for her.

He held her hand as he spoke, feeling its comfort and warmth and gentle pressure hinting at love; looked straight into the eyes of the High Priestess who seemed somewhat bemused by the whole thing.

“I really came to say that I am dropping the whole search thing – everything. The whole reason why I was lured into that situation with your High Priestess here – or I should say ex-High Priestess – so that those photographs could be taken.

“Don’t pretend ignorance – you as well as I know to what I refer. Right now I just could not give a damn – I’ve finished up with everything, everything even touching Occultism. It no longer matters.”

He handed a large brown envelope to the High Priest. “In there you’ll find all my records, all the results, everything I dug up – and there are no other copies in case you are wondering, for I have no need of them. Me and your ‘ex’ here are going to get married – after my divorce, leave this city and go and live somewhere quiet and peaceful.”

The expression on the High Priest's face did not change, but he moved his eyes to look at the one no longer his High Priestess.

"Is this true?"

"Yes." She cocked her head slightly to one side, defiant.

"Then you are – as they say – 'in love'?"

"Yes."

"Foolish, foolish."

Russell cleared his throat. "Nevertheless it is so. Please inform whoever The Master is, that he has won," the word nearly stuck in his throat, "for I don't suppose he rates the loss of the High Priestess as anything more than a minor irritation, - if that."

They turned and left, relieved it was over, happy for the future.

They reached her flat, exuberant, pleased, high on life like two lovers romantic and young, drunk on the mead of existence, feeding on happiness. She began a dance of joy wildly about the lounge, shimmering with luster, watching smiling and pleased and with love from Russell. Stopped suddenly dead by the sound of the doorbell echoing with latent sorrow. Anxious looks passed between them, neither daring to voice their fears. Hopes lay shattered and in pieces on the floor, discarded like some jigsaw puzzle never solved.

"Ah! Mr. Russell – I had a great deal of trouble finding you." Schreier glanced round the room, making a face that said he understood.

"What do you want?"

"I came about the reason of your visit to me – you remember? – some time ago."

Russell was adamant. "I'm not interested. I was wrong. Wrong. Please don't bother me again - the evidence you wanted does not exist. Goodbye."

In the hall Schreier stood blinking at the closed door, walked shaking his head away, overcoat open and scarf trailing....

Russell comforted her, explained. Allayed her doubts. At last she smiled again.

They kissed, embraced, glad to be alive...

The file was heavy, well thumbed yet recent. Soon, very soon, a new one would be needed. He let it drop noisily on his desk all but lost in the confusion known only to him as order that lay upon the desk in office small and reeking of occupants dusty with age.

“Moore, Stephen. Age: 25: Present address....”

Inspector Haradin, Special Branch, read on with dry amusement –

‘As of January 1st the Movement is known to have 350 members of which between 100-150 are militants.... The following are among the leaders...’

The report was neutral, and in typical style, bureaucratic and dull that to the mind of Haradin made it even more ominous and brutal. Moore stared out at him from a photograph, defiant, trouncing...

The room was large, carpeted, smelling of newness and office efficiency that came with tower block tall and sneering at city and scurrying dots below. A bright young woman looked up from her typewriter as he entered, smiling, foot unknown to him pressing button beneath the desk causing light to flash in room adjacent, room in where sat five youths, faces of scars and hard as nails, staves of wood heavy within easy reach of sliding door with peep-hole inconspicuous –

“Yes, can I help you?”

“I hope so,” Haradin returned the smile, “I’d like some information on the organization, the Movement.”

He wondered about security, imagining himself as a fanatical opponent rushing into the office bent on revenge seeking pretty secretary alone... The he saw it, caught in the quick gaze of thoroughness inbred by many years of Police experience – knew that his every movement was being observed. But he failed to notice hidden camera turning, recording all in the hope of one day being of use, failed to notice the door closing silent and locking, to be released only by switch hidden on the desk...

The woman indicated a table by the door, covered with leaflets and pamphlets and the paraphernalia of an organization political and seeking converts. Haradin selected a handful, glanced briefly at them, impressed by the office that seemed at first sight no different from others crowded into the thirteenth floor, save for the name on the door.

“I’d like to see Mr. Moore.”

"I'm sorry," she quipped almost mechanically, "Mr. Moore sees no one – except by appointment and then only if it is very important."

Here goes, he thought, smiling inwardly, the S.B. touch – "Tell him Inspector Hardin would like to see him. And it is important." Moore was for Police cooperation he knew.

She smiled, almost bewitchingly, reminding Haradin that he was human. "Have you any proof of identity, Mr. Haradin?" **(balance of text off photocopied page....**

Next page continues..) shining new on the desk.

"Police Inspector Haradin to see Mr. Moore. Shall I send him through?"

"Yes."

She let him into an adjoining office busy with the routine tasks of organization, bustling with noise loud after the quiet of the reception, filled with many Movement workers absorbed in tasks diverse yet all toward the common purpose. It looked older somehow and more dirty than the other, equipment less new; flags and posters political screaming from the walls. He was ushered into Moore's private office.

Moore rose to greet him. "Sit down Inspector, sit down!"

Haradin's eyes caught on the TV monitor resting on the desk in front of him.

Moore touched it almost with affection. "Security. A necessity as I'm sure you would agree."

He swung the monitor round so that it faced Haradin, pressed several buttons on a console, causing quick changes of picture. "There – reception. The stairs, leading to the office. The lift entrance."

Haradin was outwardly unimpressed. "Expensive."

"Indeed. Very expensive. But necessary. We had a great deal of trouble at our other office, trouble that prevented the smooth running of our Headquarters. To some this is a luxury – to us a fundamental necessity. Now," he swung the monitor back, "to business. How can I help you?"

Haradin made a mental note to check on the funding of the Movement, something odd there.

“You have a meeting next week, I understand. We naturally wish, if possible, to prevent any violence – but we cannot prevent a peaceful counter demonstration, just try and contain it, keep the factions apart.

“I would like a few more details – time, how many people you expects, if you have an alternative venue is case the booking is cancelled and so on.”

Moore smiled. No, no alternative venue – this booking will not be cancelled: it is secure, well arranged in advance, important ...

Everything was staked on it, everything depended on its successful outcome, his future depended on it, need its success. The odds were high, frightenly high to one not esoteric, yet the prize if he won, if his game of Roulette Russian did not end in disaster, in disgrace, in humiliation, the prize was rich, more valuable than all the gold in the world.

He had spared no effort, been ruthless and almost reckless in preparations made with money saved and money borrowed and money stolen in diverse ways – money to ensure that nothing that could be controlled was left to chance wily and oft times of disaster; money to ensure spectacle glittering and exuberant and reeking of all the things that added emotional impact, that stirred the senses, that uplifted the hearts of the audience, of his audience soon to be packed into the hall bedecked with finery of propaganda, the audience of members and supports and invited representatives from movements foreign and of common aims, invited to impress, the audience doubtless also of enemies wanting revenge, oozing hate and destruction – determined to prevent the triumph that Moore needed, to prevent the turning point leading to greatness for him, for the Movement he led.

Haradin stood at the entrance of the hall, watching the audience gradually fill the seats, watching the streets and the Police uniformed and non-uniformed lurking for trouble, prepared; watching the small chanting crowd held back by the Police, the crowd shouting slogans at those arriving, at those ushered into seats by man and youths with armbands red and of lightening-flash insignia, men and youths dedicated, of builds and actions befitting stewards of extremist political meetings. He watched and saw the hall fill until, to his surprise, all the seats were taken and people stood crowded into the doorways and spaces between rows of seats – he had seen some turned away, some with force, known opponents, yet he knew somewhere among the audience of 800 lurked others, waiting to start trouble – with emotional intensity as they reacted to the dazzling display of implicit force by the many stewards waiting and prepared, wolf-like; as the reacted to the banners large and of blazing red hung about the hall, lightening-flashes looking ominous black in a white circle swathed in red; reacted to speakers platform framed by gigantic Movement banner and special stewards uniform and standing stone-like

stance. He watched the first speaker, Hoey, dry but effective, stir the audience with passionate appeals, raising the temperature and bringing anger to the faces of many, opponents they be, biding their time, waiting for him to speak.

Moore strode onto the stage, wearing short black leather coat with white shirt and black tie, haughty and proud, eyes soaking up the faces of audience, observing, piercing minds and thrilling some hearts; the lights dimmed, spotlight framing him as he began to speak, whole Being uplifted and bursting with energy charismatic and absorbing, whole personality magnetic, washing away doubts, fears, giving hope and faith to all who listened strangely quiet and in silence profound; men stared eyes gleaming, women sighed open-mouthed, breathing hard and ecstatic and almost in raptures.

Haradin stood absorbed, unable to move his eyes from the speaker gesticulating who seemed to be speaking but whose words he did not hear, but whose impact pounded and pounded relentless on his mind until they uplifted him to sorrow and joy, until he seethed inwardly at the betrayal of his country, at the common enemy, until he felt his wrath burst and explode in flames of power supreme, flashes seething destruction to all who opposed to them. Wave and wave of emotion and thought hypnotic crashed over his Being, tearing to shreds his doubts, mocking his past, making him understand without thought how foolish had been his past, how blind, how stupid – how stupid to not believe in the Movement, in its Destiny, in its victory assured now and without question – in his Destiny....

Somewhere in the hall a woman wept with silent joy...

Somewhere in the hall a man moved his eyes and caught sight of the symbol of Destiny, and he cried, overwhelmed...

Somewhere in the hall a girl touched her body, panted with lust...

Somewhere in the hall, the past died...

A stunned silence filled the hall, a silence of beginning frenzy, a silence ensured by the rasping emotional climax of the speech, a silence lasting but a short time, lost in the rumbling thunder of audience orgasm expressed in applause demonic and frenzied and cheers verging animal mania and climax, expressed as ovation thunderous and sound of feet stamping and stamping, thirsting for more, caught they in the grip of oration lust and splendor, thirsting for satisfaction diabolical and Satanic; crying for Destiny...

In the audience, unobserved, sat Schreier and Woodcliffe, daunted, terrified, shocked into silence and fear.

Behind a curtain, screened from the audience, stood The Master, satisfied....

XI

“And then I enter on the scene
As Satan’s servant, or so it must seem;
For all dressed in black with sinister eyes
I am the one with no Goodbyes...

They both looked dejected, tired, exhausted from the quest line and fraught with much trouble and leads false, fraught with much disappointment and forgotten hopes; the quest that had let them thus far, led them to the meeting in the hall wherein they sat, confirming with their eyes and senses what they had thought but thinking always dreaded, feared always lurking in the primordial depths of minds must, because from the innermost depths of their Being there arose the Phoenix-like the memory haunting and beyond words of danger lurking, of the dangers omniscient and not of time, of the things as could be if naught were done, if failed they in the battle that had begun, in the war declared long ago but phony until now, forgotten until now. The memory of the Beast blood-soaked and demonic whose dancing feet crushed the bones of the living and smashed the bones of those long dead; the Beast thought in chains yet whose fetters stood now broken and in pieces, tribute to lost power of former gods, tribute to savagery and bloodshed to come; tribute to the Beings who lurked forever on the threshold of existence, preening their bloodies teeth with the splintered bones of the living, gorged on fresh warm blood red and human, groveling in the pits of Hell titanic and sulphurous for the tasty morsels that were human and who believe once in the god thought great, in the god thought powerful, in the god thought made flesh and blood once on Earth, learning too late the lesson of time, the lesson of those who mocked and had laughed many time in the centuries ‘twixt then and now, those who had stood proud and defiant, upraising their voices to the Prince of Darkness, the Prince of Evil, to all the chthonic horrors of diabolic fervor spawned in the twilit grottoes of the slimy haunting mind of Christian fervor and faith, far far beyond even the wildest nightmares of Bosch-like dreams – those who waited laughing for the coming of the Ones of the Night of Time, who waited for the coming of the Beings on the Threshold, and who stood enjoying blood-lust and Sadian debauchery as tormented were they of righteousness, as hacked and torn in many bloody pieces used as fresh meat were they, as made of the bluing reeking scabious walking dead were they, drooling with the writhing worms of carrion and coffin dark...

Yes, the memory rose like the haunting specter of Icelandic midnight sun, glowing defiant and proud and shedding light of alien worlds on whiteness once thought homely and good, on whiteness once thought comforting – on whiteness now seen as mirage and illusion of ice-blindness, hurting, causing much torment and sending hands rubbing and painful to eyes bloodshot in forgetfulness.

Often had they tried to explain it away, doubting conclusions their own and brought only with many hours and days and nights of work hard and foreboding, fraught with many loses; often had they laughed hollow laughter at ideas and conclusions reached, knowing deep within the deepest realms of mind and heart that true they must be, that face them they must, that no more could they doubt the evidence of their own eyes, their own senses, their own feelings...

Schreier and Woodcliffe sat, musing, dejected, tired, exhausted from the quest long and fraught with much trouble and leads false; the quest that had led them thus far, led them to the meeting in the hall... They sat in Schreier's front room, worried over by the wife of Woodcliffe, High Priestess, and the several people, coven members, sat apprehensive, staring blankly at each other, at the fire, listening to the silence, silence save for the sound of the fire, normal. Sat waiting in anticipation for the start of the Hour of Mars, for the start of the Ritual soon to be conducted as beginning skirmish in the battle begun, in battle outcome of which they know not save in hope, save in faith – faith sorely shaken by cold sneering reality laughing at them...

They changed into robes silent, sensing the atmosphere, brooding, electric, charged with an almost vulvate intensity; they files silent into the room used by Schreier as his Temple, a room ordinary yet windows facing road that was a cul-de-sac covered with heavy drapes opaque and deadening, altar covered with implements of Magician practicing Wicca, walls covered with pentagrams upright in which Sigils of practicing White Occultist, signs of Zodiac painted round large circle on floor empty otherwise.

Woodcliffe stood alone in the candle lit room casting circle with sword from altar, watched as the Coven entered within, ritually closed the circle, stood before wife now High Priestess, white robe open and flowing and long blond are curly trailing as invoked was the Goddess, as drawn down was the power of the Moon into her strangely moved by Ritual begun, save Woodcliffe and High Priestess, joined hands, begun to dance clockwise chanting as they danced, raising in their wake the cone of power which would be directed against those that they fought, those led by the one call 'The Master', those of evil and darkness and kin of the Prince of Chaos and friends of the Ones of Right of Time... They danced raising in witch-wake power held and controlled by the High Priest regaining now his confidence and assurance as felt he the beginnings of the witch-bane and sent cascading on their way to bring misfortune to all of The Master, to all under his shrouded black cloak of evil and Satanic sin

Silently, suddenly, unobserved by all in the Temple locked they be in the trance of Ritual Wiccan, a figure in black appeared behind the altar, a figure with sinister burning eyes and laughing mocking face of macabre mirth who looked bemused at the witches now naked in circle of Wiccan power, a figure untroubled, gloating. The figure of The Master...

Moore was confident; the most confident he had ever been in his life, full of hopes and determination fierce, full of pride touching only slightly but still visible to those of insight as Satanic. Full of Destiny – reflected in his eyes. Eyes into which Haradin looked as he sat in the back seat of Moore's car, hidden from view of all passing by windows tinted and drive careful to keep mostly out of view; as he sat remembering, remembering that evening in the hall that had set him free.

"I will naturally have to be careful – only you and I must know; I will, of course, have to obey orders and sometimes appear to be acting against you, but that will only be appearance." Haradin reached into his pockets, extracted a sheaf of papers carefully folded. "Here are photocopies of the contents of your file. I think they will be useful."

Moore glanced through them, inwardly amused by the deferential tone of Haradin, pleased. Another step on the road to power had been taken, another crack in the System, another person valuable indeed caught in his ever expanding web...

Rain sounded on the roof, wind whistled passed windows, stealing heat, wriggling laughing through cracks and holes of many years care and neglect, dashing hastily out. But Russell did not care. He was happy, content. Sounds of cows rumbled nearby, vying only with the harsh whistle of the wind through the trees and bushes swaying in rainstorm, loud outside thin walls. But Russell cared not. He was free, content. Gaslight flickered in the draughts, hissing menacingly at the soft darkness gently drifting.

He turned over, felt the soft flesh of her body warm under blankets many, piled onto fold-down bed in caravan lost in the vastness of the English countryside, lost in a field of pasture; lost. Known only to farmer of fields who gave permission, erecting in kindness for small token amount for electric fence round van resting near hedge, keeping cows at a distance safe and unknowing.

Russell stroked her hair, causing restless moan of dreaming sleep, happy, content, free. Tomorrow he would walk with her to the farm, collecting food fresh and wholesome and milk untouched, and water cold straight from stream or tap in yard often froze but of water tasting good, clean. Tomorrow they would walk the fields, enjoying life, glad of life, glad of beauty found they abounding all about, that found they pristine and splendid in many things of life, in the bird chattering nearby, resting awhile on branch tree swaying in wind wondrous on face; in scenery green and expansive, redolent of dreams youthful, singing with the beautiful music of the land, music simple yet full of subtle sounds pleasing to the ear and joyous to the heart; in snow falling gently, or blown by winds drifting causing rush of breath and grasps of hat as eyes strained in blizzard driven

beauty, snow covering all with virgin white, delicate, refined, - total beauty and simplicity and elegance found in snowflake caught, but soon alas dissolving under heat from body ... Yes, tomorrow they would enjoy the whole of life, knowing well the meaning of existence, the beauty of all, the grace of life, happy beyond words in each others arms, tasting the sweet fruit of paradise, drinking deep of the draught of the elixir of immortality, the elixir of splendor and ecstasy – ecstasy not only of the body but also of the Being, deep and vibrant and pulsing, sending circles of joy into both their hearts, into both their souls. If only he had known before! – in only ... if only he had known of it while young, while still able to enjoy the best youthful years of life locked in the embrace of Nature supine and resplendent in pristine beauty redolent of delight Goddess-like and virginal, redolent of the quintessence of life, redolent of a higher form of life – if only.... Then he would have wasted not his life in things trivial, things meaningless, things of time; then he would not have chased shadows, chased after illusions, after nothingness – at the things that for most make life worthwhile but untouched by existence in essence: at the house after much sweat and tears and hard work **(balance of page runs off photocopied area – continues mid-sentence on the following page...)**

...written in the garbage pit of journalism, at But he would make up for the years lost, he would enjoy, seeing farther and deeper and with more intensity because he had to struggle to come thus far, struggle blindly, unknowing. Yes, he would make up for it, was still young enough to do so – younger than he knew he was, kept youthful by the beauty of life, by the beauty found in her warm now by his side, sleeping peaceful sleep of happy dreams; by life of greater feeling that she had opened up for him, given him unknowing as a gift far more splendid and valuable than all the gold of the world, than all of the power in the world... Yes, tomorrow he would begin, begin to record his thoughts, impressions, sensations, record in prose the music that flooded through him, pounding into his Being, pounding his Soul, bringing him ecstasy and great joy... Tomorrow he would begin, begin with tribute poetic to her who had in her love freely given, in her beauty almost wanton but always splendid, woken within in him the fire that raged now knowing no end; who had made him aware of his higher self, of the trivia of all time, of the many things of glowing beauty, of the music of life... Yes tomorrow...

He kissed her, held her close, closed his eyes to sleep, happy, content, free...

Tomorrow –

XII

It was clearly insulting, clearly mocking; clearly laughing at them, at all White Occultists, at everyone not of the Left Hand Path. Schreier read the telegram again hoping perhaps that he would find some word changed, some sentence

misread, some less scathing mockery and painful truth almost nauseous in brutal nakedness:

HOPE YOU ENJOYED THE WICCAN DANCE AS MUCH AS I – MY
COMPLIMENTS ON THE ATTEMPT – NEXT TIME WE WILL HAVE CEASED
GAMES –

It was signed simply 'THE ONE IN BLACK'.

Schreier handed it to Woodcliffe, who sighed, gave it back, turned to speak to his Gardnerian colleague, specially invited, seated across from him next to Schreier in front of the fire that never seemed dead, always full of life, always full of dreaming eyes and hopes – of the stare of the Gardnerian High Priest beard bristling matching thick black framed spectacles belonging to face thin and gaunt, old in middle age.

“We have to face up to it – “

The Gardnerian shook his head, listening –

“- it is very serious. The facts you know, and they are damning indeed as you must admit. Here, this is the result of the Ritual we did.”

He handed him the telegram, which Schreier had left on the arm of his chair, languishing.

“I see, I see. Yes, yes .. “ He stroked his beard muse-like.

“Hence the need for us to cooperate – together we might be able to smash this group of Black Magickians. Together – “ For an instant a terrible memory clawed at his mind. “We must act swiftly; everyday they get stronger not only in outward sense but also the inner. Time is of the essence. If you are agreeable what I would like to do is hold a combined Ritual of all the groups we – between us – can get together. It would have to be outdoors of course, because of the numbers. And well planned.”

The High Priest thought for a moment. “What type of Ritual had you in mind?”

Woodcliffe looked at Schreier, who nodded.

“Well a sexual one. We don't think any other kind will be effective.”

The Gardnerian merely raised his eyebrows. “The whole group, or merely the acting Priest and Priestess?”

“As many as possible – the more power we can generate the better.”

“And if it fails?”

“It shouldn’t – after all,” he smiled, balding head catching the red glow of the fire, “the energies released will be great considering the number – “

“I know about the energies – but saying, just assuming we fail. What then?”

It was Schreier who spoke, watery eyes holding those of the Gardnerian, large hand cheroot. “Then we try something different – something even more powerful.”

He did not say what. “And we continue until we – or them – win. As the so-called ‘One in Black’ said, we are no longer playing games – we are fighting a battle to destroy, uproot, the pernicious cancer of evil that is seeping into this land that is beginning to poison it. Who else is going to stop them if we do not? Who else – apart from us Occultists – even understands the danger? We must continue until victory – or defeat.”

“What date did you have in mind for the Ritual?”

“I believe Mr. Woodcliffe has fixed one – “

“Yes. If we can arrange everything in time the best date is February 15th.”

The High Priest was surprised. “But that is barely two weeks away!”

“Speed is essential – I have already made some arrangements. My groups are prepared – should be about twenty five members in all – and have a site in mind, private grounds, of course.”

“Well, I’ll try my best.”

Woodcliffe felt a little less daunted, some of the burden removed. Hell, sometimes he wished he didn’t care. Why does something always have to arrive and spoil everything just when life is starting to look up ... He remembered his High Priestess, enticing, robe open displaying body, cajoling, caressing hands soothing, firm white flesh and experience – God! He would her tonight, needed it...

Woodcliffe sighed. She was good this one. Experienced, refined, subtle yet not too gentle – just the combination he liked. And the body, oh the body...

“Gently, darling, gently...” He saw the leather rise, heard the swish, sighed with passion building to rhythm – “Yes, yes!”

The Master looked at the city below, morning mists clearing, beginning to awake to sun rising gentle upon far horizon, reddish, beginning to prepare for the day, for life... He looked, aware of all around, aware of the gently throbbing pulse of life, aware that soon it would be all his...

Schreier stood before the makeshift altar, shivering slightly under his thin robe, not a little envious of those now locked in embraces, bodies rising and falling in the rhythm of intercourse, those like he, gathered in a clearing in the woods at twilight, those, like he, gathered to fight the menace of the Prince of Darkness.

He signaled to the acting High Priestess who lit the candles white and large set in candlesticks of silver upon the altar makeshift, the altar dedicated to the God and Goddess of Wicca, the altar in the center of the now passionate mass of worshippers thirty whose energies he would direct, direct against the malevolent Prince of Darkness lurking, lurking somewhere in the midst of a powerful Black lodge led by the one called The Master.

He raised his arms toward the setting sun, intoned with great intensity of feeling the First Key to the power that lay beyond all –

“Ol sonuf vaoresaji, gohu IAD Balata, elanusaha caelazod: sobrazod-ol Roray I ta nazodapesad, Giraa ta maelpereji, das hoel-go qaa notahoa zodimezod, od comemahe ta nobeloha zodien; soba tahil ginonupe pereje aladi, das vaurebes obolehe, od comemahe Casarem ohorela cab Pire; das zodonureusage cab: erem ladanaha, Pilahe farezodem zodenurezoda adana gone ladapiel das hometodbe: soba inmae lu inamis”

The strange tongue of the ones of old echoed as darkness fell, candles flickering as is sensing the presence of a force foreboding, a force powerful, a force destructive.

He felt the power surge through him, drawn from them around, mingling with that beyond, uplifting his Being to frenzy and almost bliss, destroying reason and thought and all not known by Saturnalia and orgiastic excess. In an instant of power small and not of time, in an instant of time beyond mere thought yet touched by the glitter of reflected seconds and forgotten by scything Time old, in that instant he became as god, directing the power of Ritual of frenzy and lust and tantric delight to destroy the ones of evil, the ones of chaos, the ones of darkness, directing that power in waves of energy psychic that rippled like the tidal wave of doom at dawn over the dark countryside, seeking the ones visualized, the ones of darkness, the ones made the aim of the Ritual of frenzy and lust and tantric delight...

Miles away, a child alone in a house lifeless and of sorrow, empty in feeling since departure sudden of husband and also father, fell screaming from bedroom window killed by the hard concrete below.

Far, far away in the greening hills of the countryside a man awoke sweating from a nightmare,,,,,

XIII

Days of summer warmth, fine days full of insects, full of the joys of summer, full of the love of life. Days of walks through countryside splendid in summer bloom, days spent dreaming the dreams of youth happy – youth in love, in love with beautiful women young and of tender peach-skin, young and of honeyed hair swayed by the gently breeze. Days of silence and of sun, warm days full of insects observed smiling, smiling and happy, enjoying splendid the moment of time passed musing by pond green and full of lilies and ideas of youth, time passed in planning future to come – warm future full of love and children laughing and quick thud – thud of tiny pattering feet, full of wife radiant and beautiful in house large and owned, house happy with life, house full of the joys of summer. Warm days of parasols and luncheon calm and serene, of smiles between lovers and hands quickly squeezed, and kisses stolen in parks full with smiling people elegantly dressed and refined of speech and manner. Warm days full of insects....

Power! Yes, power! Power to bend the minions of little minds and much stupidity, power to make them slaves, and power to drive them on and on and harder and harder as whip cracks, rises higher and higher urging them on and on quicker and quicker in bondage! Power to stand above the city full of scurrying rats and human refuse bending all to the power of will, will dominant and supreme, will of Destiny made explicit and glowing with the miasmic globes of fiery Hell! Power to real greatness, power to show stupid world that will was all, that greatness lay in cunning and determination and on the side of the ones of chthonic evil, the ones of Satan! Power bringing joyous laugh of pride arisen; laugh sealing fate bubbling with the boiling blood of destruction! They would kneel, beg, they would howl, and they would be killed, useless, but discarded pawns in the game of chess enjoyed, but empty hulks of no more use, but bones to be ground, but flesh to be used, but fat to be boiled.

But now, dry bones hugging an ill-fitting suit, old before time; dreaming. Dreaming....

But first to deal with writhing snakes that crawl, slithering; first to deal with the pompous idiots of much stupidity and little understanding who mocked the Power, who played games with the forces of destruction, know not what they did, not knowing the results. First to destroy utterly the pit of vipers who had dared to

challenge the Power, who had dared raise their poisonous heads, hissing... No, no more games...

"Yes. The Inner Order only will be attending." The eyes of The Master sparkled in drooling anticipation.

Lord Harlow sighed, he would do it...

The Police were prepared, informed beforehand, deployed for maximum effect and minimum noticability. Prepared for the expected scenes of violence, of brutality, of extremist politics.

They gathered away from the crowds, forming ranks three deep, ranks headed by flags and stewards menacing and determined, prepared to pounce, prepared to spill blood. Moore marched in front, conscious of glaring eyes, conscious of the flag waving overhead, conscious of the armband red on black leather; conscious of the tension building.

They set the platform up against a lamppost, a lamppost stood alone, facing the subway leading to the underground, a lamppost soon surrounded by Movement members, protecting the platform, the speaker; a lamppost soon the center of nearly all those gathered at Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park.

Moore began to speak, haltingly at first and then with assurance growing greater and greater as he latched onto the emotions of the audience, as he rose to the challenge of menacing faces and hate-filled eyes, as he combated with powerful orators voice those who heckled, those who screamed senseless abuse, those who mutely agreed. Tourist cameras clicked, films of people of many countries rolled, savoring unique something perhaps of history, something of beginning greatness, something perhaps of only eccentricity and lunatic fringe politics, soon to be forgotten, but a reminder of holiday in London, of Hyde Park...

Reporters mingles with the crowd, noting reactions, noting words, odd lenses focused on figure neath fluttering flag held high gesticulating and shouting voice hoarse and not a little powerful; mingled with Police in plain clothes, members fanatical of opposing groups, urging violence, shouting remarks.

A minor fight broke out on the fringe of the crowd, language foul rising loud, fists beating faces, boots kicking, body falling to ground, causing fear and apprehension and turning eyes and Police to rush, calming, arresting ...

Moore hit the crowd with words powerful, scalded them with rhetoric, stirring trouble wanting it –

“There”, he pointed to the scuffle, “there you have an example of free speech, of tolerance – an example of Communist violence and desire to destroy freedom, to destroy the basic freedom of speech, even in this bastion of free speech, in this honored place of freedom of thought. Even now they are preparing, preparing to use force to destroy our right to free speech, our right to be heard, our right to be here today – even now they are preparing violence. Well we say that we will never, never be silenced, never allow ourselves to be silenced! We say to the Communist scum that we do not run, that we do not cower before them, before the so called ‘fists of the proletariat’ that are nothing other than gloves of sawdust looking hard but in reality being as soft and yielding as butter! We say that we are sick and tired of them and their violence that wishes to destroy freedom of speech for all not of them; we who are defiant, we challenge them, scum they be, to dare, to DARE I say, to dare to try and prevents us – they have not seen courage even though they have the numbers, they are COWARDS, petty little COWARDS...”

A cry of defiance, guttural, intense, splintered from the crowd. Someone raised a Red flag, shouted. “Fascist pig! Death to the swine!”

People surged forward, caught in the contagion of emotion that spread like wildfire through the crowd, rousing it, causing surge of anger as tourists dazed, trying to avoid being caught, as ordinary audience parted, fearing, wish not involvement. Moore jumped down, ready, not wanting to remain uninvolved, desirous of blood.

Police appeared, scuffled with the fringes of the crowd unable to move inward, toward the fighting fierce with no holds barred.

A bearded man holding a red flag was punched in the stomach, beating about the face, kicked to the ground, flag torn to shreds and dropped scattering over hands covering **(balance of sentence is off photocopied page)**

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.... short cut hair and proud bearing was held from behind by the throat, punched savage in the face by one in front shouting ‘Fascist bastard!...tearing armband off youth now silent on the ground, seen falling by others who in anger flaming and powerful set upon the one kicking body still, other running for protection into crowd melee... A young woman caught in the midst, focused tourist camera of movie type on man grappling with man, punching bodies and tumbling locking in conflict onto hard ground, kicked aimless and aimed by others, felt strong hand grasp her wrist and screamed as pain racked her, camera falling onto ground, stamped on in vicious fury by man with contorted face in trench coat with star badge...

Police truncheons drawn and used many times restoring calm gradual, arresting some thrown into back of van dark blue with wire-covered windows. TV cameras appearing sudden and filming last of action, long cylindrical sound microphone held high by man with earphones, recording sounds of fighting and brutality aimless and aimed.

Moore was happy; he would surely make the news again today.

We must do it – we cannot afford not to. It is the one thing that they will not expect – the once source of power that they will never expect us to use.” Woodcliffe gestured in the air. “And we must do it now, as soon as possible, while they are still in the shock of defeat.”

The Gardnerian was uncertain. He scratched his chin. “I don’t know – it is dangerous. Very dangerous. Are you sure the Ritual was effective?”

Woodcliffe leaned back in his chair, ignoring the clouds of smoke from Schreier.

“Effective? Of course it was effective! We received clear indications on the Astral that it was so – not to mention the reports that we received from a friend who runs a Coven near them – and knows some of them.”

“Can you trust him?”

“Yes, I’m certain of it. I knew him well several years ago, before he became High Priest of his own Coven.” He smiled, remembering the High Priestess of the Coven, a beautiful nymphomaniac. “He has no vested interests – just wishes to be left in peace, practicing the religion.”

The Gardnerian was somewhat pacified, “Say we go ahead – do what you wish. Who will it be, how do we decide, have we the right to decide?”

A piece of coal on the fire went to its death, noise drawing attention to the labored silence.

“It will have to be a volunteer,” the King of Witches sighed, eyes full of regret, “one willing to sacrifice life so that many more may live, so that many more will be free from the accursed evil that hangs above the land.”

“Have you - ?”

“Yes.” Tears filled his eyes. “My wife has agreed to be the one.”

The Gardnerian understood. It could be no other way.

“When?”

“Tomorrow night. I will perform – the - I will conduct the Ritual.”

Schreier turned to the High Priest. “There need only be a few of us present. You and your High Priestess, and the one who served as my helper last time will be all that is needed.”

The High Priest felt a sudden burden on his heart. “Yes, I will prepare them.”

They stood in the Temple of Schreier’s house, silent, not wishing to speak, preparing silent, needing no words, and finding none.

He helped her onto the altar, straightened her hair as she lay, feet protruding slightly over the edge, hand resting on white linen cushion, kissed her lips for the last time, wiped with trembling hands the tears gently flowing down her flushed cheeks. The smell of her perfume stung his senses, sending flashes of memory vivid racing through his mind, bringing tears to his eyes, regret to his heart.

She closed her eyes not wishing to see...

He picked up the Ritual Knife, incense from holders bathing her body, swirling into shaped demonic in the tomb of darkness of the Temple lit only with black candles silent and still...He tensed, steeled himself as heard behind him, echoing strangely as if from some lonely snow-covered mountain peak, the words of a chant of death –

“Ilasa micalazoda clapirete ialpereji belioure: das odo Busadire Oiad cucaress caosago: casarmeji Laiand eranu beginutasa cafafame das ivemeda aquso ahoho Moz. Od maoffasa. Bolape como belioreta pamebeta. Zodacare oz Zodameranu! Odo cicale Qaa. Zodoreje, lape zodiredo Noco Mada, hoathahe Karnayna!”

He raised the knife, tasting blood in his mouth from tongue bitten in effort of will supreme as quickly as he slashed at her throat, cutting deep, wishing death instant and not of time... blood spurting as he caught sight of her eyes open, open, open and bulging in a glazed look of horror...

He threw the knife to the ground, clenched his fists, shaking violently with emotion and desire to hold her again in his arms, bring back the life, trying to control it, direct it against...against... all he could see were the eyes, her eyes, staring and staring in horror...She must not die in vain; I will, I will, I will ...

From the dark corridors of his mind rose the fiend of Death, snarling, loathsome, terrifying, the fiend sent dashing, scampering into the darkness, headed for the one of evil.

He collapsed on the floor of the Temple, glad it was over, mind remembering...

XIV

Moore lay in the hard wood of the bed of the Police cell, glad; staring at the bricks clear through thin paint, at the metal door with eye-hole, heavy and double-locked. Alone. Alone in a small cell, waiting, waiting beneath the tiny high barred window too high to reach; staring at the unshielded bulb on the ceiling; musing until bored on the scribbled writing on walls of former occupants.

Alone, hearing in distance or nearby occasional echoing tread of feet heavy, and the turnings of keys and the slamming of doors and the occasional word never clearly heard. Alone; waiting for the release on bail, facing charges of Breach of the Peace...Glad of the impact made, glad of the fighting, glad with himself. Waiting to be released knowing well the waiting welcoming members he would find on the outside, glad of the return of their leader.

Woodcliffe sat with vacant eyes, looking but not seeing the pictures flashing across the television screen, proclaiming world events. He sat crying to himself, unable to think of anything save the images of death that flickered constant across his mind, releasing in the path emotions titanic and of sorrow. He sat hearing naught but the dim echo of death and the throbbing of a heart lost its greatest love; sat unable to hear the sounds matching picture flashing across the television screen.

"...This afternoon fighting broke out between rival factions during a Rally at Speaker's Corner, London ... Police say fifteen people had been arrested and would appear in court on Monday, charged with various offences ranging from breach of peace, carrying offensive weapons to assault on the Police..."

(Next portion of the text is off the photocopied page)

(Text continues mid-sentence on the following page...)

...at object in the sky above gently pulsing, moving as if directionless in the sky above lonely grounds of a house large and ancestral and far from prying eyes of the public... He watched motionless as a piercing sound shook the ground, scattering silence of the dark winter night of the countryside like glass folding out on the impact of a bullet passing. He watched, smiling, glad, black cloak rustling in the breeze...

Russell sat before the caravan, watching with eyes full of love the beautiful sleeping body, crimson lips of delight slightly parted, eyes closed I gentle rhythm of sleep, hand delicate and lovely resting beside hair wild and disarrayed in depth of sleep... He sat, pen in hand, paper before him, drinking in her Goddess-beauty, knowing will how lucky he was to be loved by her, knowing well the depth of personality that made that beauty more astounding, more delectable, more perfect; knowing well that capture he must that beauty for all time, making it timeless, making it worthy of eternity, making it known to the world at present unaware of the perfect beauty in life, unaware of the works of artistic splendor that lived in woman, in such a woman as this... making it known and to be remembered by those yet to come, those of the future knowing not also the perfection of the Goddess. Tears formed in his eyes as he began to write, verses coming quick, written as music in poetic form, written as the music of Aphrodite, the music of Venus, the music of Eternity...

XV (Epilogue)

Failed.... failed...failed...failed...The word haunted him, chasing him in terror like some psychic fleeing a malevolent horror lurking in the shadow of darkness; causing recurrent shudders and twitching lips as he remembered, remembered the day, the hours, the minute, the second... remembered the horror of it all remembered the seeping feelings of sadness that had caused him in supreme sorrow to weep, to cry silent as the deed was done, done in the hideous dark of the confines of death; done in the shuddering twilight grotto of deception and deceit; done in the madness, the insanity of the moment, the insanity of delusion total and overpowering and shattering in reality. Yes, done...done in vain, done for nothing, done for no purpose... Done in vain.

He turned to Schreier, face like a mocking mask of death, bitter, tired. Face of a man defeated and broken in defeat. Face of a man dying in defeat, old before time, his voice was calm, barely audible, rasping like a discordant chord in D minor rustling through Cathedral beams worn and old, scarring bats.

“It was all in vain, all in vain... I killed her. I killed her for nothing, nothing...It was all in vain, for nothing. I killed her...”

He turned, tears rolling down cheeks, walked into the dark night, remembering. Wishing only to live in peace and solitude for the rest of his days, live in peace and warm comfort on memories; a man tired and defeated, sick of the world, wishing only to be left alone in his sorrow.

Won, won, won! ... I've won! Moore beamed, overjoyed as he heard the result confirmed, as he heard the cheering of his supporters, his members, his

followers; as he stepped before the microphone, lights flashing and cameras turning, recording moment historic indeed.

Mindful now of his image, of his future, of his new importance, of his emerging Destiny soon to be fulfilled, he thanked all who had helped, all who had supported him, all who had placed their confidence in him as their new Member of Parliament, in the Movement which he represented....

The End

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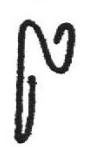
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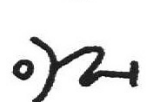
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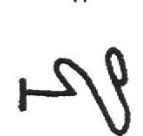
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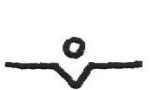
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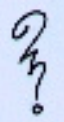
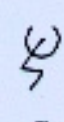
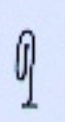
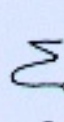
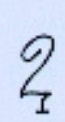
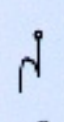
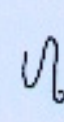
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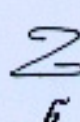
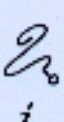
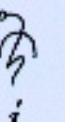
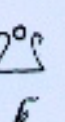
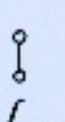
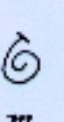



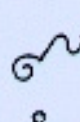
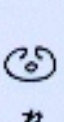
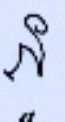
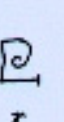
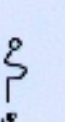
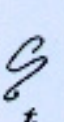
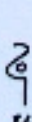
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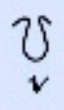
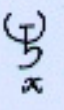
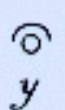
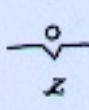


dark immortal

      
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as they had been - were not perhaps all necessary in order to attain inner development along the Left hand Path. That is, that some of those experiences could be internalized - that techniques might be developed, from my experiences, whereby others would achieve what I had achieved (in terms of insight and Occult ability) without those others having to undergo all my formative experiences. I had gone the traditional way - mostly from intuition and pride - seeking experiences and sometimes just drifting into them because of my character. I had survived, and achieved a self-insight, deepened with each experience and the passing of the years. But I sensed I might devise a method, a system, which would 'short-circuit' most of the experiences - which would still be dangerous and dark and testing, and which might lead others to achieve esoteric advancement and thus self evolution.

I myself had certainly attained a self and a magickal mastery - I did not delude myself about my achievements, or indeed about anything [except perhaps about women, but that is another part of the story, soon to be related]. In attaining this, I had not compromised my principles - not gone against the code by which I lived and by which I probably survived. For indeed I had principles - not ones which most individuals would easily understand and certainly not ones which most could live by, even if they decided to adopt them. My principles were simple, but hard. I believed in never submitting - to anyone, or anything - and always doing something for a reason, and with honour. Yes, honour. A much mis-understood word but one which guided my life. I had done dark deeds, of course - but always for a reason, for some purpose, never on impulse, or from a not-understood desire. What I had done was done out of loyalty. This loyalty may have been to a cause, or to a person [although few indeed were they I could be loyal to - for few possessed the character]. As an analogy (not a particularly good one) when I became a Satanist, I gave my loyalty to the Prince of Darkness ... What I did I did because it was necessary, at the time.

Perhaps I should explain this more, since it is fundamental to my life: and the philosophy I followed, which I have called Satanism. I am, however, aware that it is difficult to quantify in words this particular notion - for words are so often mis-understood, and need defining exactly. Essentially, in my deeds I used judgement - and as my character was formed, so my judgement became refined, exact, more in accord with my goals. I made some mistakes - but learnt from them, did not dwell too long on them: did not allow them to stop me going forward again, into new actions or experiences. In brief, I mastered them, and thus myself. I judged my actions by the goals I had set. Thus, for example, when involved in politics, I judged friends and enemies according to my political principles - ruthlessly, just as when I played my short-lived role of "cat-burglar" I targetted only those whose actions made them targets. For instance, once I waited near some rather plush apartments - various people came and went and I assessed them, partly by intuition but also by asking, in a broken accent, for directions. One man (whose 'aura' I intuitively disliked) was particularly rude as he flaunted his wealth, and it ^{was} from his abode that I took a little something ... There was little that was personal in all this, although few will understand what I mean. It might be said, with some justification or not depending on your style of living, I was a nemesis to others, and perhaps the world!

But back to my life, and the consequences of my acts of execution. I considered it possible to create a system - which I called Internal Magick - which would bring about, for others, what dark and other experiences had done for me. This would be a modern system of magickal training, an internal alchemy, a distillation of my own experiences and learning.

Thus was the system now known as the Seven Fold Sinister Way created - consolidating not only my own experiences and learning but also the tradition I

had inherited and was heir to. It also significantly extended it, making Adeptship (of the sinister kind) available to all who desired it and possessed the commitment necessary, and I believed this to be of fundamental importance. For the system I developed fulfills the promise of magick - that of developing not only our latent or Occult abilities but also our consciousness. It is a practical system, capable of being used by anyone who so dares, and while still dangerous, does not necessarily veer into what is regarded as 'criminal'. That is, **it is no longer the preserve of a few**, no longer esoteric in the sense of being secret and forbidding and requiring great hardship, suffering and endurance. In brief, it brings the sinister tradition into the twenty-first century.

At the time of its formulation, I realized there was still much to be done - the techniques had to be tried, assessed and perhaps adjusted in the light of the assessment. They could only be tried by suitable novices - which I would have to find - and the assessment would take a period of causal time. I also realized that when the assessment was over, it would be necessary to make them known, to publish them or at least circulate them in esoteric circles. This would mean a change in traditional Satanist policy - hitherto they had kept themselves secret, accepting few Initiates, and expecting those Initiates to test themselves via severe experiences. Only a few of the few survived. I had inherited some teachings, some traditions, a copy of The Black Book, a few contacts [one ran a house in London which specialized in pleasuring] and an honorary role as Master of the few traditional Temples and groups. My own oath as heir bound me to continue the tradition, to pass on the teachings, knowledge and rituals as others had done before me. It was a sacred trust to the powers of Darkness and I, like my own successor and those after, would fulfil it. But it was part of my unique Destiny to make this tradition known, to extend it - and so fulfil the next stage of the sinister dialectic just as it would be part of the Destiny of the one who would be my heir to implement in a fundamental way sinister changes arising out of my work.

This assessment and this making known, I knew then, would take perhaps a decade to achieve. Meanwhile, I had to complete myself - reach toward my sinister and alchemical goal.

IV The Execution of the Act

It seemed a long time before the appointed day arrived, but it was only seven days. I was early, for the assignation, high on a Yorkshire moor. It was raining, very windy, and felt quite cold. I waited wondering what was to befall me. A ritual, here, in the open during which I would be joined with the bewitching young lady? Perhaps some sort of test of my desire to join the still rather mysterious group? Calculating as was my way, I had journeyed to the meeting place the day before for a reconnaissance, and came prepared. Boots, suitable clothes, a concealed weapon.

An hour past the appointed time I was still waiting. I was wondering how long to wait when, out of the gloom, a figure came toward me. It was some time before I realized it was the young lady. She gave me some sandwiches, a small bottle of water and a compass, and said I was to meet her at a point 30 miles away within 7 hours. Almost as an afterthought she gave me a map, and asked for my watch.

"I shall wait exactly fifteen minutes after the time-limit," she said. "Not that I expect you to make it."

I knew she was goading me, so I strolled off unconcerned. After a gentle amble lasting about half an hour, I stopped. What was I doing? Did I really need to prove anything to anyone? This was a test, certainly - but did I really want to be initiated into the group? Did I really want to have sexual intercourse with the young lady - and perhaps her mother? Of course I did! I took my bearings, and set off, determined and running.

It was an ordeal. I was soon soaked, had soon eaten the food and drunk all the water - and soon lost all sense of time. The rain eased, a little, as the wind did, and I forced myself on, grimly determined. Running, walking, staggering, stumbling ... I was a little off course toward the end - but I saw her, waiting, in the distance. Or, at least, I hoped it was her. I would have shouted her name - had I known what it was.

I could barely stand when I reached her, but was determined not to show it and made some flippant remark, elated and rather overjoyed by my success. There was warm tea from a flask - and a kiss - before I was led down to where her mother waited in their vehicle. And at their house, a warm, welcome and relaxing bath, some food, and wine - and some clothes that I was not surprised to find fitted me. Then I was led to their Temple - and locked in and left, for the night.

After a while - when the candle that provided the only light had spluttered and died - I lay down to sleep, and not surprisingly slept well, until awakened.

"What is your name?" I asked the beautiful young lady.

"Eulalia."

I was bidden to return at sunset. I did. She was there, in a resplendent robe, as was her mother. And a tall man whose face was hidden by a cowl. I was led back into the Temple, which was almost bare. The many artifacts there the night before had been removed - they had been, I was later to learn, merely props for my night alone.

So the ceremony of my Initiation began, and it followed the ritual laid down in the Black Book of Satan. It was the first ritual I had attended which seemed magickal - for there was real magickal energy present there and then in that Temple. It may have been my anticipation, my expectation of desire - but I did not believe that then, as I do not even now. I felt that here, at least, was a real initiation. The expected and hoped for climax came - Eulalia alone remained with me in the Temple, and took off her robe to whisper words of initiation and draw me down with her to the sheepskin covered floor. Her lust, my eagerness, expectation - perhaps the ritual - all combined to make that first joining not as long as I wished.

Later that night, the feast over, I went to her room, and we did not sleep until long after dawn.

Dwelling
(A Personal Tale From the Dark Side)
ONA.

[MS date estimation 89-95yf, typed from old archives.
VT.]

Many years ago, in my youth, I came into contact with a rather elite Satanic group – small in number but full of promethean majesty – who subjected their few aspirant initiates to rigorous tests. Even after initiation, the trials continued – to harden the individual, to bring direct experience and to draw forth Satanic character. These trials and experiments were tough: physically, mentally, emotionally, and magickally. They achieved in a ruthless way what Internal Magick now achieves – and whereas Internal Magick makes Adeptship available to all, these former and traditional Satanist techniques were very, very selective indeed and often dangerous: physically, mentally, emotionally and magickally. Some bordered on the ‘criminal’ and some broke all but the hardest. One of these techniques was ‘Insight Roles’ where the initiate had to live, in real life, a demanding “role” (in the simple sense, play a certain ‘character’) – and this “role” was always chosen to be the opposite of that Initiate’s own character and beliefs so that, for instance, someone who enjoyed in a gluttonous way sexual pleasures would perhaps be told to spend a year in a Nazarene monastery or convent just as someone who possessed little sexual desire might be assigned to a brothel. Some roles were simple, some were complex, demanding a great deal of time and effort in planning even before the role-play began. What added to their difficulty was the fact that the Initiate was forbidden to talk about it to anyone and had to, during that role, convince others of the sincerity. Other techniques were even more difficult and demanding.

These traditional methods aimed to do two basic things – first, sort out the strong from the weak: the strong survived and succeeded, the weak failed, gave up, got caught, went insane and so on. Second, character was formed and insight gradually achieved – usually painfully. For a long time, these and similar methods had been used – achieving a handful of Adepts a century, a number sufficient to carry on the tradition but insufficient to achieve anything else on the level of individuals. Such methods, among traditional Satanic groups, have now been superseded by techniques such as Internal Magick (as codified in ‘Naos’ and other MSS) and since I was among the last to benefit from the traditional, a recounting of some of the experiences may be historically interesting.

Before Initiation, I had to undergo a test of determination. For the first part, I had to walk across moorland, 30 miles in under 7 hours. This may seem easy, but it was not. My sponsor waited until the weather was bad – cold, windy, and raining. I was allowed only to take a bottle of water and some sandwiches, together with a compass. No spare clothes, no waterproofs, and no watch. This was, under the circumstances, reckless – which was one of the points. My sponsor saw me off at the start and would meet me again at my destination. It did not take me long to realize why I was not allowed a watch – I had to go all out, hoping to be within the time limit. Soon, I began to run, then walk, then run for some miles, to walk some more... It became agony, and toward the end I was literally staggering. But I made it. The relief was amazing – and the sense of achievement. I felt invincible – full of Satanic pride. Another of the points made.

For the second part, I was taken without warning or explanation to a Temple (actually a converted cellar, rather large, in a larger house), locked in and left for the evening and overnight. Sounds simple in theory. Except that I was fairly new to the Occult and Satanism in general (having before that evening been involved with only one other group on the dark side – and that group was rather tame). So, I did not know what, or what not, to expect. As it was, the Temple was full of curious artifacts (placed there for my benefit, I was later to learn) – human skulls, of course, various carvings, inscribed medallions, rings; bottles of herbs and liquids, phials of oil, giving a unique smell to the Temple. The only light came from a lantern hanging from the ceiling and out of reach – it contained a candle and the glass was coloured red, this illumination adding to the aura of the Temple. For hours I waited in silence. Nothing happened, and I could hear no sounds. Some hours later, the candle flickered, spluttered, and went out, so I waited in darkness. I began to imagine sounds and visions – for a few moments. But I calmed myself. Some time later (an hour? Two hours?) I sensed something – like another presence, watching me. Imagination again? Possibly – but I was determined to dismiss it, for I was proud and defiant. So I lay down to sleep, and slept until someone came to unlock and open the door. It was a beautiful lady who greeted me, with a kiss. “You have passed your second test. Go now, and return at sunset tonight.” Later, I was to learn that magickal energy had indeed been directed at me, to attempt to bring fear and trembling to those naturally weak of will and unconsciously afraid. That night, when I returned, I found my Initiation was to take place – and it was with the beautiful lady

who had woken me. At the end of the ceremony, all except her left the Temple: she took off her robe and came naked toward me. And when the bliss was over (alas, then, so short, for she with her lust soon sucked me dry) she gave me my new robe and led me from the Temple to the feast.

Some months before this I had been found and Initiated by another Satanic group. This Initiation had also been sexual, but devoid of the charisma generated by my new Initiating (although the Priestess of the 'Mancunian' group had been pretty and sexually alluring). This first group had been found after a long search – and seemed interesting, for a while. They held regular group rituals, some of which involved using a naked priestess as the 'altar', and members, candidates and the purely curious seemed to come and go to these and the house of the 'master' with considerable frequency. In contrast, my new group held no group rituals save for Initiations, and were secretive in the extreme and small in number: I was the first person to be initiated in over five years. They knew about my Mancunian involvement, and even encouraged it, although I soon began to tire of it, for the group rituals were boring (deriving mostly from medieval grimoires with bits of golden dawn and Crowley thrown in), they possessed no inner direction and seemed to me at that time to lack Satanist zest. So I studied the few manuscripts given to me by my new group, and listened to their teachings – all the time growing more dissatisfied. For the teachings were garbled, and I disliked being just an Initiate, under instruction: I was full of pride and arrogance and youthful spirit and wanted to be my own Master. The Mistress whose daughter had Initiated me knew this – or seemed to me at the time to know it – for she had challenged me to undertake an 'Insight Role', "if you dare," I remember she said.

So I chose the role, and the outer form of this (a political one) – more goaded than guided by her suggestions. I searched for suitable contacts, cultivated them, and eventually persuaded them to join me in a new undertaking, in creating a new form. To aid this, I formed another group, a magickal one, and gradually mingled the core of both with the aim of directing magickal energy into the outer, more practical (and in this case, _____) form. So rituals were held, and energy directed with the aim of bringing chaos and disruption and creating Satanic fun. I also wanted to prove (to others and myself) what I alone could do – a portent to aeonics and an echo of a past. So, after all the preparations, a certain turmoil in a certain city – and a small personal underground empire created. There were challenges, violence, difficult situations – a

burgeoning of energy, causing alarm in some quarters. The experiences were tough, but all valuable: I made some mistakes, some practical, some personal, some magickal. But I learnt from them. For a time, I became my role, and could (or might have) gone on with it – had it been my wyrd, But it was not, as I came to discover what that wyrd was.

My Insight role, like all such roles, had been practice, in the real world – had been full of challenges and involved personal danger as it had led me to realize what potential exists within each individual, a potential seldom if ever realized in ordinary living. After the toughest year of my life, I had survived: stronger than before – physically, mentally, emotionally and magickally. And if I had failed, I would have simply been one of several failures – trapped in self-delusion, perhaps; or trapped in my role as its opposite; or dead. This strengthening led me to seek out further experiences, led me to try and find my own limits in living – into other situations of darkness and light and danger” not because it was a task, or a ‘role’ suggested by someone, but because I wanted to, needing outlets for my new-found and increasing Satanic energy and understanding.

So it was that I came to shape from my experiences and from the teachings and methods of the traditional group, a new form – distilling, refining and creating, forming a way which while linked to the past, was capable of leading anyone who might be interested into the discovery and development of their own potential. In short, taking traditional Satanism into the twenty-first century and beyond. Perhaps, after all, this is what my Mistress intended.

*** S. B. (Temple of Chaos)
(Not for publication: for limited circulation only.)

This image shows a handwritten musical score for a string quartet, consisting of four systems of staves. Each system includes a Violin I (V: I), Violin II (V: II), Viola (V: III), and Cello/Double Bass (V: IV) part. The notation is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The score features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. A fermata is placed over a note in the first system's Cello part. The second system includes the instruction "(Repeat 2nd → D)" and "etc." in the Cello part. The third system also includes "(Repeat 2nd → D)" and "etc." in the Cello part. The final system concludes with a double bar line. The handwriting is clear and legible.

Σ 0 0 η
(for three voices)

The image shows a handwritten musical score for three voices, arranged in three systems. Each system consists of three staves: a soprano staff (labeled 'x'), an alto staff (labeled '2: I'), and a bass staff (labeled '2: II'). The music is written in a 2/4 time signature. The first system begins with a double bar line and a fermata on the soprano staff. The second system features a trill-like flourish above the first note of the soprano staff. The third system continues the melodic lines for all three parts. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings.

Esoteric Tradition
In
North America

By Vilnius Thornian

(From Fenrir Vol V, Issue II)

According to Esoteric Tradition, the culture which existed in Albion extended and explored a good bit further than its epicenter – and its origins may be much older than previously believed (qv. Esoteric Tradition – additional notes MS). It is related that the peoples of Albion (1) may have settled as far as North America/Canada. Recent controversial archeological finds may be establishing a good deal of evidence for this.

The best known of these recent discoveries is ‘Kennewick Man’ – whose remains were found in a small town in Washington state. Though initially assumed to be the 9,200-year-old remains of a Native American, further examination has suggested that these remains resemble European Man more so than a Native American. The remains have been placed at being between 9,200 and 9,600 years old, which would suggest that the origins of the civilization of Albion extended as far as even the northern United States.

Much controversy has ensued over the notion that Kennewick Man may be European, or a distant relative thereof. Naturally, given the current state of human interaction in North America, such a notion – since it might benefit European Americans at the ‘expense’ of the Native Americans who believe him to be one of their descent – is strongly looked down upon. Though if we are ever to look at history accurately, this is a notion that needs to be explored.

It is believed that the flow of Aryan population stretches from Europe, through Northern Asia, across the Bering ‘land bridge’ and into Alaska/North America. Recent Scientists have given support to the notion that European Man occupied the entire northern region of Asia at one point, enabling such a movement into North America. Esoteric Tradition has also stated that the hyperborean civilization was sea-faring, and may have explored as far as Iceland and North America via the waters. While it seems more likely that Kennewick Man came to North America via the Bering land bridge, the possibility still holds that other hyperboreans may have visited by sea. The seafaring nature of Albion, and travel to North America would have been made much easier then, due to lower sea levels. Some scientists have gone even as far in this theory as to hypothesize that early Europeans may have visited North America on ‘skin boats’.

The controversy surrounding Kennewick Man may eventually result in the cease of scientific examination of the remains, and reburial by the Native Americans. While this outcome is not likely, since the evidence suggests he is not of Native American descent, it remains a possibility. At the time of writing, the issue is at a stand still, while the remains are given time to adjust to the environment they have recently been moved to for further study. It is anticipated that the outcome of the studies will spark much further exploration of the notion that hyperborean (or pre-hyperborean) man traveled and settled as far as the United States.

Suggested further reading and references:

- Various Notes on Esoteric Tradition, including those contained in Hostia – Regarding the dating of esoteric tradition, the possibility of hyperborean civilization traveling, via the sea to North America and so on.
- Tri-City Herald (Kennewick, Washington) new story archives, available via the Internet. (Several other links listed are all ‘dead links’)

Thornian, ONA. 1999eh.

(1) The Hyperborean civilization of Albion being dated approximately 7,000 – 5000 BP (5000 – 3500 BCE). However, originally Tradition stated that the hyperborean civilization existed around 7000 to 6000 BCE. This was revised after a thorough examination of the date of the Tradition (qv. The Dating Of Esoteric Tradition MS), as it is believed the original Tradition may be off by at least a thousand years.

External Adept: Honesty and Failure

If the Initiate seeks to move on to the higher stages of the Way, then he or she must undergo the External Adept Rite. The 'form' of this Rite is simple in words but difficult in practice: the Initiate must, at sunset, lie down on the ground (preferably on a hilltop clear of trees, thereby enabling an unobstructed view of the sky) and remain there without moving until sunrise. Obviously there is no overt symbolism or even an apparent ceremonial form through which the Rite is structured, rather, there is only the individual, the Being that that individual inhabits: Gaia and the other Beings of the Cosmos: the Stars.

First and foremost this Rite is a test of will over a - relatively speaking - long period of time (approximately 12 hours). During the course of the evening the Initiate should consider the previous two stages of the Way (Neophyte and Initiate), his or her relationship with his/her companion if there is or has been one, or the possibility of a future companion as well as other more personal factors.

During the course of the evening the Initiate should be prepared for spontaneous visions which might be reasonably obscure or apparently archetypal. Further insights concerning the Tradition may occur of themselves or may stem from mindful contemplation of the previous Stages.

Personal experience of the Rite has revealed the difficulty in maintaining will-power against seemingly impossible odds! However it seems that there are three main 'adversarial' aspects to the Rite itself:

- i) control of physical movement
- ii) detachment from overpowering thoughts
- iii) detachment from overpowering emotions and imagination.

These factors do however at times combine to become an effective overpowering of the individuals will, thus to cite an example:

Involuntary physical movement from the cold (shaking) had combined with the seemingly very real image or visions that I was lying upon a battlefield. I could vividly see myself (from above) lying upon the battle-scarred earth with both my legs blown off just below the thighs. Flesh, blood, bone and tissue were all apparent to my sight and I sat upright, my outstretched arms supporting my upper body.

The fact that I could barely feel my legs due to the cold and the intermittent and involuntary spasms of my thigh muscles - also due to the cold - combined to make this an extremely overpowering and rather uncomfortable (to say the least!) vision. This in itself led to physical movement to alleviate the discomfort and emotional anguish which in turn led to a failure of the Rite.

Another interesting factor concerning the overall Rite are the weather conditions. If the sky is overcast a deeper and more painful psychic isolation is caused and, conversely, if the sky is clear and the stars are visible then the mind has something to focus upon. It is important not to let the mind, that is the thoughts, and the emotions overpower you as this will inevitably lead to failure.

To conclude, it is worthwhile repeating a few words from an associated Ms:

'...the Grade rituals [are] there to be allowed - no matter what the desire of the Initiate - to occur of themselves. In allowing this the Initiate needs to develop a certain detachment from the personal - a combination of the intuitive and the objective.'

I could have continued to move during the course of the Rite and then convinced myself that this didn't really matter, that it wasn't really necessary that I lay still. Some slight movement is allowed, but there is a very very fine line between one or two slight movements and moving whenever you feel like it. I failed my External Adept Rite this first time, but this has just made me more determined to face the pain once more and overcome:

'Learn to raise yourself above yourself so you can triumph over all.' (Black Book of Satan)

Lyceus.

1999eh

Associated texts:

Naos

Beyond Illusion

External Adept: One American Experience

[This account is taken from an E-Mail sent the day following the Rite.]

Well I am a bit more rested but I still feel very disoriented. Anyway here is what happened last night...

I drove to a state park about 2 hours south of here that I selected. The site was about a 2 mile walk in with a fairly good trail. The site is on top of a rocky ridge and had an open area for a clear view of the sky. The place I picked was a huge rock slab about 10 X 12 and about 12-15' from the front edge to the ground. The site was ideal and completely isolated with no other campers or hiker around.

I got there about two hours before sunset changed into my clothing (black utilities and black button down oxford with combat boots purchased from the military surplus outfit). As you suggested I took my hand-made ritual knife and tetrahedron as required.

When sunset came I laid down on the stone with my knife in my left hand and my tetrahedron in my right. I listened to what you said about the one initiate that sat up, so I pointed the knife tip at my chest fully knowing that if I jumped up it would stop me and positioned the tetrahedron point in the palm of my hand so if I felt myself starting to doze off I could squeeze my hand and the point of the crystal would wake me up. The fact that the rock slab was up 12 feet was also an incentive not to bolt.

As soon as I lay down I damned near had a panic attack. Genuine terror. In the pit of my gut. I was completely nauseated and thought I was going to vomit right then. It was unreasonable and I wanted to flee more than anything. I did not think I could do it and I wanted out. I was angry and frustrated beyond measure. Now I see why the MSS says not to bring a flashlight. If I had wanted to leave (and I did), I could not have found my way back to my truck.

Somehow I was able to detach from the terror and told myself to calm down and that I only had two goals for the whole night... don't move and don't go to sleep. That actually helped. I knew I had to do it THIS time and I could not do it again. It is like the second jump out of an airplane - first time you don't know what is coming, second time...you know.

After what seemed like an eternity, I began to get leg cramps and "hundreds" of ticks and scorpions began to crawl all over me. There are no scorpions in [deleted] and I know that, but I was hallucinating and it was so real. I somehow detached from that as well. If you asked me how, I don't know if I could tell you. At one point, my little finger on my right hand was so numb that I actually thought I must have cut it off with my knife. I think it was because my elbow was laying against the stone surface and the nerve got crushed so I could not feel it. I could actually "see" it laying there and yet I was so "uncaring". I really didn't care. Bizarre. .None the less....

The stars crept across the sky.... And I mean crept. Airplanes were a

wonderful distraction and the shooting stars were infrequent but truly wonderful. I have never had a longer night in my life...

I guess about when the night was half over it started to get really light over in the east and I thought "well that was not so bad"... and then the moon came up - SHIT!

What I didn't know is that the temperature went to 46 degrees F last night. I was poorly dressed for that weather so I guess I had an advantage. It is hard to fall asleep when you are shivering uncontrollably.

About 5:00 it started getting light in the east and when the first bird sang I almost cried. I knew I had done it. I got up about 45 minutes later but it was the shortest 45 minutes of the night. Damn... I was glad it was over. I don't know if I could do it again.

When I finally got up I could not stand. My legs were so weak and cold and I was shivering so hard that I could hardly put my knife and crystal away. When I finally got to where I could stand... I was so exhilarated that I almost ran the two miles to my truck. One other thing that I really fucked up on was not spraying myself with OFF before doing this. You would think a guy that has spent as much time in the woods hunting and fishing as I have would be smarter than that. I must have had 50 ticks to dig out this morning! I guess stupidity should be painful.

As to what I learned... I would not say that I got any big revelation about my destiny but that may have been because I was so focused staying awake and being still. I did learn that if I can freeze my ass off and not move, have, what I really thought were real ticks and scorpions crawling on me and not move....maybe I can do many other things to.

I feel good about completing this step. Perhaps other insights will come but right now I am glad it is over. Really glad. I was dreading it so. I told you at one point that I am far less intimidated about spending three months in the woods that I was this. Hell, three months in the woods sounds like a vacation... hunt, fish, camp and think .. how bad is that?

postamble();

Hangster's Gate

ONA

Winter came early to the Shropshire town: a cold wind with brief hail that changed suddenly to rain to leave a damp covering of mist.

An old man in an old cart drawn by a sagging pony crossed himself as he saw Yapp shuffle by him along the cobbled lane toward the entrance to the Raven Inn. It was warm, inside the ancient Inn, but dark from fire and pipe smoke, and Yapp took his customary horn of free ale to sit alone on his corner bench by the log fire. The silence that had followed his entrance soon filled, and only one man still stared at him.

The man was Abigail's husband, and he pushed his cap back from his forehead before moving toward Yapp. His companions, dressed like him in their work clothes, tried to restrain him, but he pushed them aside. He reached Yapp's table and kicked it aside with his boot.

Slowly Yapp stood up. He was a wiry man and seemed insubstantial beside the bulk of Abigail's husband.

"Wha you been doin? To her!" Abigail's husband clenched his fists and moved closer.

Yapp stared at him, his unshaven face twitching slightly, and then he smiled.

"I canna move! I canna move!" shouted Abigail's husband.

Yapp smiled again, drank the rest of his ale and walked slowly toward the door.

"I be beshrewed!" the big man cried among the silence.

Yapp turned to him, made a gesture with his hand and left the Inn as Abigail's husband found himself able to move.

No one followed Yapp outside.

A carriage and pair raced past him as he walked down the lane. The young lady inside, heading for the warmth and comfort of Priory Hall was alarmed at seeing him and turned away. This pleased him, as the prospect of the walk to his cottage, miles distant, pleased him – for it was the night of Autumnal Equinox.

The journey was not tiresome, and he enjoyed the walk, the mist and darkening sky that came with the twilight hour. The moon would be late to rise, and he walked briskly. Soon, he was above the town and at the place where the three lanes met. His own way took him down, past the small collection of cottages, almshouses and a church, toward the wooded precincts of Yarchester Hall. He stopped, once, but could not see the distant summit of Brown Clee Hill where he had possessed Abigail.

It had been a long ride back in the wind and the rain, but the horses had been strong, almost wild, and he smiled in remembrance, for that night Abigail has warmed his bed.

Tomorrow, perhaps, they might go to Raven's Seat. It would be all over by then, for another seventeen years. No one would stop or trouble them.

His way lead into the trees, along a narrow path, down the Devil's Dingle to Hangster's Gate and the clearing. There was nothing in the clearing – except the mist-swathed gibbet with its recent victim swinging gently in the breeze. He would need the hand, and with practiced care, he unsheathed his knife to stretch and cut the dead man's left hand away.

Less than a day old, the body had already lost its eyes to ravens.

It was not far from the clearing to his cottage, and he walked slowly, every few moments stopping to stand and listen. There was nothing, no sound – except a faint sighing as the breeze stirred the trees around. A lighted candle shone from the one small window of his cottage. It was a sign, and he stopped to creep down and glimpse inside. There were voices inside and as he looked he saw Abigail standing near a young man. He saw her draw the youth toward her and place his hand on her breast. Heard her laughing; saw her kiss the youth and press her body into his. Then she was dancing around him, laughing and singing as she stripped her clothes away to lay naked and inviting on the sphagnum moss that formed the mattress of Yapp's bed. Then the youth was upon her, struggling to wrest himself from his own clothes.

Yapp heard people approaching along the track and he stood up to hear Abigail's cries of ecstasy. He waited, until they reached him and they all heard Abigail climax with a scream. The he was inside the cottage, with the others around him. The youth was surprised and tried to stand and Yapp stood aside to let them pin him down on the hard earth floor of the cottage.

An old woman in a dirty bonnet gave a toothless laugh - Abigail laughed, even Yapp laughed as the tall blacksmith tore out the youth's heart. The was a pail for some of the blood.

Abigail was soon dressed, the body taken away and she led Yapp and the old woman through the trees to another clearing. The moon was rising, the blood was fresh and she took the severed hand from Yapp to dip it in the blood and sprinkle their sacred ground to propitiate their Dark Goddess Baphomet.

(Copyright 1981 ev)

HELL

By Anton Long, Order of Nine Angles (England)

I shall be honest - Satanism has been hijacked. By posers, by pseudo-intellectuals and by gutless weaklings who like the glamour and danger associated with it in the public mind but who do not have the guts to be evil - to do dark deeds.

These modern days so-called 'satanists' are really Nazarene scum in disguise - worms in dead snake-skin. They prattle on about 'morality', puff themselves up with titles and perform verbal and intellectual gymnastics. They think being Satanic involves calling yourself a Satanist and dressing up like Dracula or Mephistopheles or a vamp.

Well, I am sick of these imposters. Those who get a thrill from playing the role but who never actually do anything evil, who never go to the extremes, who never stand on the edge - or climb down to the darkness of the pit of Hell. Those who have never experienced the limits of themselves in love, in war, in living - these weaklings trying so hard to impress.

What, then, is real Satanism all about? First, it is about rebellion - against the conformity of the present. And I mean a real rebel, a real outlaw - someone who cuts a dash, who has charisma, whose very presence makes others uneasy (and who does not have to wear some stupid 'costume' to do this). Second - try something to see if you get away with it. If not - tough, you failed. There are plenty of others... If you succeed, try again, until you know your limits. Choose a good cause, or a bad one or no cause at all, and really live, intoxicating yourself with life, danger, achievement. Do not rest and never be afraid to face the possibility of death. But in all that you do be honourable - to yourself. Carry this honour with you everywhere like a favourite concealed weapon.

Third, learn from your experience - like you would learn from a 'bad' woman (or man) in your youth when sex was still something of a mystery. A real Satanist does not often do magick - they are magick by the very nature of their dynamic, zestful existence. It is

experience which teaches, from which you learn - you cannot learn Satanism from books (although some may guide you aright to begin with), it cannot be taught by 'Masters' and never involves cosy little discussions with 'friends' or others. Anyone who accepts a 'Master' and grovels before them - however slight that grovelling may be - is not a Satanist, just a sucker who sucks. Accepting some 'authority' is a sign you are weak: a sign you need emotional crutches: a sign you are a whimp.

So, get off your arse, you suckers, and make Satan proud. Learn to do evil.

What is evil? All that restricts life - all that tries to constrain the possibilities. Doing evil means breaking these restrictions and constraints - and taking the consequences of your actions. Just do - just discover, just smash the chains that hold most others in thrall, and never bow down to anyone about anything: smash them first, or die rather than submit. That way, you will learn how to live - and laugh at the weak.

Of course this is dangerous - for others, and yourself! Satanism was never easy - or for whimps.

See you in Hell!

HELL - PART II by Christos Beest (Order of Nine Angles - U.K.)

(Part I originally appeared in The Watcher #7, May 1991ev)

For many, the end is near; for certain folk their time has come. All that can be spilled out in words must take shape, but also allow that bridge to the indescribable; here all that is known shall be shattered. The bridge will burn and the chasm will fill and flood both world and destroy. Stupid people overcrowd this rotting human st, fat deluded fools, wearing masks of war whilst crawling away from harm. The cracked lizard eats several of its mutable offspring. For the scum, and that means the majority of this civilized society, there will be a disruption increasing to death, a fury that will intensify over the next twenty years. The process is now unstoppable. Shugara. Atazoth. Our dark goddess Baphomet - all are returning, bringing storms of Blood, cracking the firmament! For those puffed-up comfortable occultists with their armchair ethics and pseudo-intellectual bullshit, it is all too easy to proclaim how the times are changing. Do these people actually understand what is meant by the 'New Aeon'? It is oh-so-easy to throw around meaningless intellectual phrases, to bloat the ego and create the self-delusion that keeps away the real Horrors of existence. These pompous stumbling idiots are blind to what actually occurs; are fearfully resistant to what Magick actually is. Waste your life if you will, pouring over 'occult' books, absorbing correspondences, standing in basements and shouting out silly names! Fools! Occultists do not have the power and the understanding to grasp the events that will occur all too soon for their wretched lives. In fact, by their actions and weak philosophy, it is clear that these babbling fools do not wish to bring a New Aeon. They still carry within them the sickness of the Nazarene. So good riddance to the scum and the pretenders! It is disruption that will lead the way, and simply that - there is no hiding place. No one's life will be saved. There will be no moral protection. Only those with the eyes to see shall reap the glories when They who are seldom Names are returned, and the feminine is restored. Once it was necessary to remain silent, but now the cosmic tides are aligned and we shall be seen to finally shatter the tyrannical grip of Yeshua the deceiver, that disgusting groveller to a decaying fish. There is no possible justification for this process in the eyes of society and none shall be given. Those who understand shall know - to the others: DIE! From the dark pool beneath the moon... Christos Beest Yr of Fire 102

HYSTERON PROTERON

The Inner Teachings

of

the O.N.A.

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Introduction

This present work contains secret MSS circulated among members of the Satanic organization the Order of Nine Angles. These MSS contain details of the most secret teachings of that Order, and compliment the material already available in works such as "Naos", "The Black Book of Satan", and "Hostia".

They are being made available to explicate the true nature of traditional Satanism .

The Hard Reality of Satanism

The hard reality of Satanism is that it is very different from both the media image and the more recent image pedaled by imitation Satanists in both Europe and America.

I What Satanism Is:

a) Satanism is a quest for self-excellence, involving real danger, real challenges and requiring real courage.

It involves taking your body to and beyond its physical limits of endurance. It involves real action, alone: without the support of friends, comrades, lovers, relations or anyone.

It involves accepting challenges - physical, psychic, intellectual and triumphing solely by one's own efforts.

It involves the triumph of pure, individual will and desire.

b) Satanism is, in part, an Inner quest, an exploration of the 'hidden' (and overt) aspects of consciousness: a dis-discovery of the darkness within and beyond the individual psyche. This involves 'magickal acts' - such as rituals. This magick, however, is a means, not an end.

c) Satanism involves ordeals, both physical and magickal. Those who are suitable triumph; the others fail. [One such ordeal is the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept - where the candidate lives alone and isolated, bereft of everything except the bare necessities for physical survival, for a period of three months.]

d) Satanism requires the practical experiencing of all moral limits, and then a mastery of the feelings, desires, pleasures, terrors, pains and so on that these imply.

e) Satanism involves the individual defiance of all subservience: a Satanist accepts guidance only, and refuses to be dominated or intimidated by anyone. This guidance is toward practical experience, and it is by this experience that the novice learns and develops a genuine Satanic character.

f) Satanism involves sacrifice - this is a necessary test of character [qv. the MSS, "Satanism, Sacrifice and Crime - The Satanic Truth", and "Satanism - The Sinister Shadow, Revealed" for more details.].

g) Satanism is a means - a method, or way, and the purpose of this means, method or way is to produce a specific type of individual: the next stage of our evolution as a species. Satanism is thus an expression of evolutionary change - on both the individual level and in respect of 'societies' and 'history'.

The individuals so created often inspire in the supine majority a certain terror/awe/admiration/fear/jealousy.

h) Satanism is elitist. It does not compromise - its tests, ordeals, methods and character-building experiences are severe and will never be made easier to make them acceptable to more people or easier to undertake.

i) Satanism is esoteric by nature and intent: it is both a 'secret' way, by virtue of its methods etc., and it is not nor probably will be suitable for the majority for many, many centuries.

II What Satanism Is Not:

a) Satanism is not, nor can ever be, a religion, nor just a 'philosophy'. A religion means acceptance of authority, the rigid structure of a 'Church' or a 'Temple', and a unified dogma (with the consequent

schisms and claims to "authenticity"). The religious attitude is the antithesis of what Satanism really is - for Satanism is a way of living, a way of experiencing, in the raw, whereas religion abstracts, limits endeavor, behavior and moralizes. In short, a Satanist plunges into reality, without any supports (moral, psychic or human) whereas a religious person has that reality prescribed by dogma, authority and such like, and is supported by a 'Church', its members and their attitudes.

Satanism is an ecstatic affirmation of existence - a taking of existence into new and higher realms, as well as a plunge into existing darkness and the creation of new darkness.

b) Satanism cannot have anyone impose upon it any structure, authority, or institution of any kind by claiming a 'dark mandate' or some kind of 'revelation'. There can be no such thing as an, 'infernal mandate' of whatever kind because the only thing that really matters to Satanism is experience, its accumulation and the highly individualized learning that results from such experience. A genuine Satanist, for example, confronted by an entity which exhibited all the powers attributed to Satan would not even accept what that 'entity' said and would most certainly not show any submission - instead, they would a defiance, a reasoned assessment of what was said, and then a judgement made from experience. A Satanist never surrenders to anything - and would rather die, proud and defiant, than submit. This applies even to 'Satan'. If and when a Satanist accepts guidance, it is from someone of experience who has explicated Satanism by their life and thus who can offer advice based on that experience. The aim of Satanism is to create willful, characterful, defiant, unique individuals who have or can fulfil their potential as gods - it is not to create followers or sycophants. An 'infernal mandate' implies sycophancy.

c) Satanism does not involve discussions, meetings, talks. Rather, it involves action, deeds. Words - written or spoken - sometimes follow, but not necessarily. The ideal candidate for Satanism is the individual of action rather than the 'intellectual'.

By the nature of most Satanic actions, they can seldom be mentioned and thus remain esoteric. The essence that Satanism leads the individual towards, via action, is only ever revealed by that participation which action is. Words, whether written or spoken, can never describe that essence - they can only hint at it, point toward it, and often serve to obscure the essence.

Satanism strips away the appearance of 'things' - living, Occult and otherwise by this insistence on experience, unaided. What is thus apprehended by such experience, is unique to each individual and thus is creative and evolutionary. Discussions, meetings, talks, even books and such like, de-vitalize: they are excuses for not acting.

A Satanist will sometimes use such forms as he/she may use the form of a Temple - to enhance and/or provoke experiences. But they are then actively manipulating, actively creating experiences - the others involved are being used by that person. That is, there is only one Satanist at such gatherings (usually) - the others may believe they are 'Satanists', but they are deluded.

d) Satanism does not apply moral absolutes to real-life situations and forms. This may best be explicated by two examples. First, politics. Satanism does not affirm or deny any political forms or type of politics - it does not, for example, announce that 'fascism and Satanism are incompatible'. Such announcements/pronouncements arise from a moral bias and a lack of insight into both Satanism and 'society' and thus Aeonics.

A Satanist, concerned with experience, may use a political form for a specific purpose - the nature of that form in terms of conventional politics and morality (such as 'extreme Right-wing') is irrelevant. What is important is whether it can be used to (a) provide experience of living and the limits of experience, and/or (b) aid the sinister dialectic of history. Thus a Satanist may become involved in, or set up, an organization of the extreme Right - this is dangerous, exciting, vitalizes, provides experiences 'on the edge' and should thus aid the development of the character and insight of that Satanist*. What is important, is that this involvement is done for an ulterior, Satanic, motive: what others think and believe about such actions is totally irrelevant. Anyone purporting to be a Satanist who criticizes such an action, whatever the political hue of the group/organization, reveals by that criticism that they are not Satanists - but rather, moralizing curds lacking in insight and real Satanic understanding.

The second example concerns the formation and use of Satanic 'Temples' and groups by a Satanist. A Satanic novice, in order to gain experience of magickal rituals and people manipulation, usually forms a group to perform Satanic rituals. The people recruited are for the most part used - and the novice often assumes a specific Satanic 'role' for this: the role of sorcerer/sorceress. He/she may dress in a certain way and so on, as he/she may use fables to impress and/or manipulate. This, however, for a genuine Satanist, is only a stage - and one which lasts a year or two. After that, experience and mastery of ceremonial and hermetic magick gained, they move on to new challenges and experiences, as all good Satanists should. Further, the individuals of this 'Temple' or group are not Satanists, although they may believe themselves to be - they are simply being used to afford the novice pleasure/excitement/experience and so on. Had any of them any Satanic character or potential, they would rebel to undertake their own quest by forming such a group/'Temple' and experience the limits of themselves.

Sometimes, the group has another aim - an Aeon or suprapersonal one, in which case its life may be extended. But whatever, genuine Satanic guidance by an Adept or Master/Mistress to a novice always occurs on an individualized basis, never within the rigid and constraining form of a 'Temple'.

Thus, there is not nor can be any constraining rules applied to the conduct of such 'Temples' and groups - there is no 'moral code', no bounds which cannot be overstepped. The rules, such as they are, are made by the Satanic novice according to their desire and goals. That is, they can do with that group and its individuals whatever they desire to do and no one - not even the Adept/ Master/Mistress who may be guiding them - can set limits or prescribe their behaviour. They must learn for themselves - and from their mistakes, should they make some.

This naturally leads to the obvious Satanic deduction that a group like the Temple of Set may contain one, perhaps two, Satanists - who are using the 'members' for their own Satanic goals. This person (or persons) would of course deny this, and if that denial was sincere, they could not be Satanists. What is certain, is that that group cannot contain more than perhaps two Satanists - for the members accept the constraints imposed upon them from above, and are servile, in both theory and practice. They are also not being led into real experiences, but accept a sterile, sanitized and safe 'Satanism' as pedaled by their leader.

* It can also aid the sinister dialectic - here, an understanding of Aeonics is important.

e) Satanism does not seek any form of official recognition as it does not seek to become respectable or the prerogative of a majority.

Rather 'Satanism operates' and must operate' for the most part in a clandestine or 'underground' manner. 'Official' recognition means someone or some organization is granted some sort of "status" and thus assumes both in theory and in fact an 'authority' and an organizational structure to support it. This authority and this structure mean followers, sycophants - and contradict the essence of Satanism.

'Respectability' means a moral stance broadly in line with that pertaining at the time - that is, it means a restricting morality, ethics, as well a limiting of action to what is deemed broadly 'acceptable' by the 'society' of the time.

Both of these - official recognition and respectability - also mean that the self-appointed authority which is recognized and becomes or seeks to be respectable, sets its own limits: there is 'proscription' of other groups, a peer hierarchy and all the many trappings of herd conformity; the triumph of illusive forms over essence. In brief, the deluding of others, rather than their liberation.

Since the experience of the essence that Satanism brings is unique, this uniqueness is totally contradictory to all forms that seek to constrain, define and restrict - two of these forms being 'official recognition' and 'respectability'.

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Some other hard facts about Satanism are in order - to be placed on record

Satanism is hard and very dangerous. This danger is much more than just a 'mental' or a psychic one of the kind sometimes experienced in magickal workings. It is a personal danger of the 'life or death' kind. If it is not, then it is not tough enough, it is not Satanic. For far too long the pathetic imitation Satanists,

such as those in the Temple of Set and the Church of Satan, have had no one to contradict their sickly, wimpish versions of Satanism - they have tried to deny the darkness and evil which are essential to Satanism because the frauds in those organizations are fundamentally weak: they have never gone to their limits, never experienced the realness of evil. They have tried to make 'Satanism' safe and 'respectable': they have intellectualized it because they are typical products of this present intellectualized, peace-loving, "we need to be safe" society.

A Satanist is like a beast of prey - in real life, not in fantasy. A Satanist may be and often is an assassin, a warrior, an outlaw - in real life. The imitation Satanists, however, pretend to be these things - their fantasy-life is greater than their real experiences of such things. A Satanist seeks and makes real his/her fantasies and then masters the real-life situations and all those desires/feelings which give birth to those fantasies - they live them and then transcend them, creating from those experiences something beyond them: a new individual. Often, things go wrong - but as always in life, the strong survive and the weak perish, are written off. The Satanist creates the dreams, standards of excellence and spirit which others often later aspire to emulate. This creation is in real life, by deeds and deeds alone.

Because of this, few indeed are the genuine Satanists. Sometimes their lives (or aspects of them) become public - but often they are hidden, working their darkness in secret, for the benefit of evolution.

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Satanism, Sacrifice and Crime - The Satanic Truth

Due to the plethora of imitation Satanists who abound today (particularly in America) it has become necessary to openly declare the facts about genuine Satanism in relation to Sacrifice and 'criminal behaviour'.

Such a declaration will establish for all time a permanent record and will expose the fraudulent 'Satanists' for what they are - individuals who like to be associated with the glamour of evil and darkness, but who lack the inspiration, courage and daring to be evil and dark. Furthermore, I repeat what I have written before - Satanism is not now and can never be, an intellectualized philosophy just as it most certainly is not in any way ethical or moral. It is an individualized defiance and an individualized striving which vitalizes, which affirms existence in an ecstatic way - as such, it is a way of living which courts danger, excess. It is not nor can ever be, dogmatic just as it never involves submission to anyone or anything. For this reason, there can never be genuine Satanic Churches or 'Temples' where Initiates conform to dogma or authority - such things are not for genuine Satanic Initiates but for the deluded, those lacking spirit and talent: in brief, for the manipulated, rather than the manipulators.

Sacrifice:

In genuine Satanism [primal Satanism] sacrifice is accepted, and indeed necessary. In former times, it involved both animal and human sacrifice. Today, however, it involves human sacrifice only - since there are an abundance of suitable specimens, due to the increase in human dross.

Sacrifice is accepted Satanic practice for several reasons. First, it is a test of Satanic character - to kill someone on the personal level (e.g. with one's own hands) is a character building experience, and today enables various skills to be developed (e.g. cunning in execution and planning). Second, it has magical benefits (qv. the Order MS "A Gift for the Prince"). Third, it sorts the imitation or toy Satanists out from the genuine - the former find excuses and usually retreat to their comfy, intellectualized world of playing at 'Satanic roles and rituals', or they are genuinely horrified and expose themselves for what they are - gutless cowards who lack Satanic darkness.

However, as explained elsewhere, genuine Satanic sacrifice is always done for a reason - a calculating purpose. [qv., for example, 'Satanism, The Sinister Shadow, Revealed.'] It is never strictly personal - i.e. it does not arise from any desire which is personal, whether unconscious or not.

Further, it is accepted practice that the victims, the offers, choose themselves. Thus, offers are never selected at random just as they are never children (although occasionally an offer may be a virgin).

Mostly, the victims, whose removal will aid the sinister dialectic, are tested, and only if they fail these tests will they become opfers. The tests, of course, are unknown to the victim. For example, a series of tests, or 'games' are prepared once the victim has been chosen, and each test or game requires the victim to make a specific choice. One choice leads to another test or game. After a certain number of choices of a certain type, the victim is deemed to have failed, and so chooses their own sacrificial death. Most often, the tests are tests of character - those that are shown to be worthless in character become opfers. Thus, a number of victims are selected - those whose removal will aid the sinister dialectic of history [qv. 'The Sinister Shadow' MS for an example.]. These are then, without their knowledge, tested. If they fail, they become opfers. [See below, under 'Crime', for an example of the kind of tests that may be involved - the ones for sacrifice are, of course, much more 'testing'.]

The actual sacrifice has two forms: (1) during a ritual; (2) by practical means (e.g. assassination/'accidents') without any magickal trappings. If (2) is chosen, then a ritual of sacrifice may still be undertaken, but with a 'symbolic' opfer (e.g. a wax figurine named after the actual opfer). The actual execution of the act of sacrifice - whether during a ritual or otherwise - will be carefully planned, and calculatingly done. This planning will mean the death will seldom if ever be seen as a Satanic act even if it has occurred during a ritual. Today, and in the recent past, most sacrifices are of the second type - i.e. acts of execution undertaken by a Satanic novice 'in the real world', involving assassination and 'accidents' or viewed by others (e.g. the Police) as seemingly "motiveless crimes". Further, in genuine Satanic groups, the execution of this act is an essential prerequisite to Adeptship. The aim of the sacrifice can be either (a) part of a dark ritual - i.e. to presence sinister energies in the causal, causing changes in the world, such changes aiding the dark forces (examples would be the Ceremony of Recalling; the Sinister Calling); or (b) as part of general sinister strategy, adduced via Aeonics. [Note: This latter occurs when a novice progresses along the Satanic path according to tradition.]

Crime:

Crime is not an end, but a means. A criminal act is not done because it is criminal but because the act itself has a purpose or intent - the criminality of that act being irrelevant. This purpose is either to aid self-excellence (build Satanic character) or aid sinister strategy.

Basically, an act is judged not by whether it is illegal (and thus criminal) in a particular country, but rather by its purpose or intent. Or, expressed more simply, by whether that act can serve Satanism in general and self-development in particular. An example will best illustrate this.

A Satanic novice conceived the idea of gaining experience by burglary. The monetary benefits were useful, but incidental to the main purpose. As a Satanist, he of course planned carefully and chose wisely. First, the jobs themselves had to be difficult, challenging and thus interesting - they would require careful planning and delicate execution. So he chose Apartments, and entry mainly via windows and roofs - this needed some training and the acquisition of skills, plus daring and courage. Second, the people to be deprived of some of their belongings would choose themselves - they would be 'tested' to see if they were suitable victims. The selection would be by character - according to their nature. This required the novice to use his own judgement and instinct. He would select those who showed they lacked character, breeding, nobility - who lacked, in fact, the virtues of a Satanist [Note: One of the best exoteric descriptions of 'Satanic' character - and also of those lacking it - was given by Nietzsche in his 'The Anti-Christ'. The Satanist adheres to a 'master-morality'.]

The novice selected some Apartments in a city where the pickings would be rich. Then he observed the occupants for some time - watching them, their routines and so on. Next, he arranged for the execution of his tests. Two friends (who were actually Initiates of his Order - or rather the Order he had joined) were enlisted to aid him in this. They would appear, on his signal, and seem to rob him as he lingered near the entrance to the building when one of his chosen victims was near. On the first occasion, the victim ignored the 'robbery', and continued on his way. On the second, the next victim came to his aid and actually knocked one 'robber' unconscious with a punch, albeit for a short time. Thus, the first victim or mark became selected, or rather selected himself by his actions, and it was from his Apartment that the

novice stole some things some days later. Of course, the planning and execution of such a test was difficult - requiring acting, timing, manipulation, daring, zest - in brief, experience in the real world. Following this success, he moved to another target and found some new victims for his test. It was interesting that these tests confirmed the novice's instinctive assessment of the victim's character - and thus aided his Satanic judgement.

In this example, the burglary was a 'crime', in Law - but, in fact, the illegal nature of the act was irrelevant. The act, and its planning etc., aided the self-excellence of the novice, and thus his magickal development, because it was a Satanic act, not because it was 'criminal' - that is, it involved danger, required skill, judgement, daring, and it was real. It was, in a sense, a practical ordeal and its Satanic character meant that its victims were victims of themselves: the act was akin to an act of 'natural justice'. To some, it may seem a game - and so it was, but one played in earnest, in which losing meant capture and probable imprisonment (factors which made it interesting and worthwhile). And it was only a few incidents in a life crammed with such incidents - at different levels.

Furthermore, this 'realness' is important - genuine Satanists involve themselves with the real world, in real situations with real people and real danger. The imitation Satanists play mental and intellectual and 'safe' games. The difference is that a real Satanist will actually be an assassin, for example, while the imitation Satanist will dream of being one and will probably obtain a moronic pleasure from watching some fictional story and 'identifying' with a fictionalized assassin - or, more likely, will 'act out' such a role in some pathetic pseudo-magickal ceremony and believe he/she has attained something.

Naturally, in the real world things can and do go wrong. But as always, the real Satanists survive and prosper, while the others go under, get caught, give up or are killed. Also, sometimes even the best get things a little wrong - but they learn from their mistakes, they grow in character, in insight, in skill. Genuine Satanists are survivors: they learn and prosper, and die at the right time.

This growth means that a Satanist moves on - there are always new challenges, new delights, new tests of skill, daring, endurance, courage; new insights. A 'role' is only a role - played, then discarded, transcended. Thus, even crime, sacrifice, tests of others, become left behind, given time - they have served the purpose for which they were intended - and a new being is given birth, one more joins the elect. This is simply another way of saying that a Satanist is never trapped by the act, the desires for and against that act, its consequences, or indeed anything to do with that act, whatever the nature of the act. An act, such as a sacrifice or a crime, is a means - to something beyond. All acts are experience. A Satanist is above and beyond acts - a master or mistress of them, rather than a slave to them.

So it is, so it has been and so it will be - for genuine Satanists. Meanwhile, the imitation Satanists will play their word-games, feast on self-delusions, and continue to claim that 'Satanism' never involves sacrifice, or criminal acts but is a rather pleasing philosophy which has had a rather 'bad press'. But, henceforward, anyone who is taken in by these gutless, posturing charlatans will deserve the epithet 'stupid'.

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The Practice of Evil. In Context

The practice of evil (qv. the Order MSS 'Satanism, Sacrifice and Crime'; 'Satanism - The Sinister Shadow, Revealed' etc.) is an essential part of Satanism - for a novice. It builds Satanic character, tests Destiny and so on. It is, however, only a part of Satanism, and has to be seen in context. That context is the training of the novice. Such practices, and other dark and sinister experiences, are a beginning only - a foundation which enables further progress. They are also selective ordeals - the really Satanic survive; the others do not, for whatever reason or reasons.

Furthermore, these practices lead to a synthesis. They are essentially learning experiences. The self-learning that they provoke (in those who triumph, that is) leads in time to a transcendence, new beginnings, new stages of the Satanic way. This is essential for novices to understand - the experiences

have to be undergone, they have to be mastered, what they provoke within and external to the individual has to be faced and then mastered. All this is seldom easy - which is as it should be, for those questing after the essence.

The practical experiences engendered by 'living on the limits' occupy the novice for some years - up to, that is, the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept. That ritual propels them toward a deeper self-discovery - or it destroys. Those who succeed then have new tasks, new ways of living which are unique to them and which explicate their unique Destiny.

However, it must be understood (and I repeat it again for emphasis) that this hard foundation is necessary - there can be no further progress without it. Indeed, Adeptship of necessity means this tough foundation - this understanding of oneself that such experiences provoke.

Also, one (perhaps two) experiences of the same type are sufficient if those experiences are really evil. No experience should become a fetish (that is one sign of a weakness) - it should be used to learn from and, having learnt from it, it should be discarded as one moves on. This learning of course means a self-honesty, a critical self-analysis, an assessment and a learning of judgement. These things, are of course, dynamically done - they never enervate. If they do, there is weakness of character. One is critical only to improve, to go forward. True Satanists, naturally, possess the arrogant self-confidence to do this - the imitation kind are either too critical, or seldom if ever critical. That is, a Satanist strives for a dynamic balance or tension between assessment/critical judgement and confidence/arrogance - and this balance is usually achieved from experience. This balance is one sign of an Adept.

Two examples will illustrate this. The first concerns a young lady. She sought and found an already existing group and was Initiated. She studied the teachings, undertook hermetic workings and participated in ceremonial rites. After some months, she undertook the Grade Ritual of External Adept after which she began to gain experience by undertaking certain 'roles'. The first she chose was the seductive sinister sorceress. She had much fun, seducing and manipulating, exploring her sexuality - sadism, Sapphism, orgies. After six months, she felt she had learnt enough, and moved on - to form her own Temple and play the role of 'Mistress'. So she recruited, undertook ceremonial rituals, teaching, Initiations and so on. She learnt more techniques of manipulation, developed skill in all forms of magick. After a year, she decided she had garnished enough from the role. So (on advice from the person who had guided her heretofore) she joins an extreme political group and plays the role of revolutionary activist. She suffers, and deals out, violence - is arrested a few times. She acquires, within the confines of this new world, something of a reputation as a tough fanatic. Gradually, she is drawn into Underground work of a dubious nature - and is trained in armed revolutionary Warfare. She visits comrades in other countries, and participates in a few operations, in one of which someone is killed, by her. She had, of course, chosen the victim according to Satanic principles - but made this choice seem, to her Comrades, to derive from her revolutionary beliefs. After some months, she drifts away from such underground work, and then from her political commitments. All this she makes plausible to her comrades. She then undertakes the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept after which she moves to live abroad, outwardly quite respectable. Gradually, in the profession she has chosen (helped by an old comrade from her revolutionary days) she gains a subtle influence. Secretly, she trains and guides two pupils in the ways of Satanism. Because of her unique, strong character, she is respected - even a little feared - by those who know nothing of her past or her secret allegiance to Satanism. She gathers around her a small circle of admirers (mostly young men, some of whom are her lovers), and nurtures them, exoterically, as a good Satanic Mistress should. They, of course, know nothing of her secret life - unless she wishes them to know. So she guides a few of them, perhaps drawing forth from them traits of character or some talent ...

The second example concerns a young man. After involvement with various Occult groups and after trying various paths, he finds a Satanic Master who agrees to guide him. So he begins to follow the seven-fold sinister way - hermetic workings, physical tasks, External Adept. He meets someone who becomes his magickal companion and together they form a Temple. They decide this Temple should be a genuine one - i.e. concerned with Initiating and training Satanists, not just a Temple for their own pleasure and learning. So they find, test, Initiate and teach suitable individuals. This takes over a year. Ceremonial rituals are undertaken. Their own novices undertake ordeals, gather practical experience by playing roles

and so on. Gradually, the Temple bonds together in an esoteric way, all seven members committed to Satanism and all working together. They decide to undertake the Ceremony of Recalling - the advice of the Master who first guided the young man is sought, and he advises him to undertake the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept and if, after that, he still wishes to do this ceremony, he can. Providing, of course, the Temple adheres to the guidelines for selecting and testing opfers. After the Grade Ritual, the Temple begin to plan for the Ceremony. This takes over six months. They conduct the Ceremony, which is a success - they channel the energy to fulfil an aeonic goal. Gradually, the knowledge, and skill, of the Temple grow - enhancing the lives of the members and aiding the sinister dialectic. They become expert in sinister esoteric chant, making the Temple as a nexion. They decide to remain secret, recruiting only when necessary (around every ten years or so, they decide) - and continue to lead their 'ordinary' lives. They also decide to continue a tradition and perform the Ceremony every seventeen years ...

In conclusion - in the first example, the lady learns from her deeds, moving to new experiences and stages of self-development. She discovers and accepts her Destiny - a Satanic Mistress, teaching a few pupils and enjoying the rewards her life-style offers her. She has a secret and subtle Satanic influence - her profession is part of her Destiny, and she uses it to aid the sinister dialectic, promoting some things, discreetly changing and influencing others.

In the second example, the young man also learns, and so continues along the Satanic path. His destiny is linked to his companion and the Temple they founded. They establish a secret, and quite powerful, magickal form, using it to alter and bring change in accord with their Satanic beliefs.

In both cases, the experiences bring a self-understanding and make possible advancement along the way. Both live as most Satanists do - secretly, their work hidden. Both, in their different ways, aid the Satanic cause. Both possess a Satanic character and will probably and should they wish it, continue to advance toward and beyond the Abyss, their future made possible by their dark past which, although passed, is not forgotten by them.

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Guidelines for the Testing of Opfers

It is a fundamental principle of traditional Satanism that all prospective opfers must be subject to several tests before becoming actual opfers either during a ceremony or otherwise.

The purpose of the tests is to give the chosen victim a sporting chance and to show if they possess the character defects which make them suitable as opfers. The victim is chosen according to Satanic practice - those whose removal will aid the sinister dialectic, for instance, or those who have or are proving troubling for Satanism in general, or those who have been judged by a Master or a Mistress (or someone of a higher Grade) as suitable for receiving Satanic justice/vengeance because of one or more of their actions. Once the victim is chosen, it is the duty of the Master or Mistress of the Temple or group who wish to perform the sacrifice to appoint suitable members - and if necessary train them - to prepare and execute the tests.

It is principle that no offer under any circumstance be informed directly or indirectly that they are being tested for whatever reason as this would invalidate the test.

The tests are constructed so as to give the victim a choice of responses - either a positive one, or a negative one. A negative choice leads to another test at another time and place. If this choice is also negative, then the victim is deemed suitable, and becomes the offer. Sometimes however, a third test may be deemed necessary by the Master or Mistress.

The tests are to appear to be incidents of everyday life such as the victim might be expected to encounter, given the society of the time. The tests are designed to test the character of the victim - to reveal their true nature. Positive, Satanic qualities, are courage, daring, defiance, and so on. Negative qualities are cowardice, meek fear, treachery and so on. It is for the Master or Mistress to use their judgement, experience and knowledge to construct the appropriate tests which seek to prove if the victim possesses the qualities deemed appropriate. Basically, the victim must, if they are suitable for sacrifice, show that they possess a weak character and be lacking in Satanic qualities such as nobility and excellence.

An example will best illustrate the type of test which is required.

For this example, the victim is male, and to undertake the test, four members will be required, two of them female. The victim has been under surveillance for some time, and his routine, habits etc. noted. It has been found that he has a certain fondness for young ladies. A female member is to 'set him up' for the actual test - she meets him, 'as if by chance' at a place he frequents. She shows a subtle sexual interest in him. If he runs true to form, he will suggest a future meeting, to which she agrees (or, if he does not suggest this, she does). She specifies the place and the date/time. This is a place where few if any other people are likely to be around at the time specified. At this assignation, he is observed by the three (two men, one woman) who are to conduct the actual test, until they judge the time is right. [If the victim does not turn up, the first lady member meets him, again 'by chance', and arranges another meeting. If this meeting does not occur, another test is devised.] The second lady then passes near to where the victim is waiting - she makes certain he is aware of her. The two men then come onto the scene and begin to harass her, verbally at first. Then they begin to 'molest' her physically and try to drag her away (toward a car, probably). She screams for help. The test is to see how the victim reacts - what his choice is. He has two choices - to do nothing, and pretend he has not heard/noticed anything (a negative response), or he can go to the aid of the lady. [Note: 'Help'/aid here means actually trying to rescue her, not merely feebly asking the men to stop.] If he tries to aid her, the two men run off, and she thanks him gratefully. If he does nothing to aid her, he has failed the test, for he reveals the character of a coward. The Master or Mistress will be observing events from a discreet distance.

The performances of the members, during the test, must be totally convincing, as must their timing. In all aspects of the tests, from the initial surveillance to the final execution of the test, they must be professional.

It will be seen from this example that the tests are quite complex - require planning, rehearsals and so on. This planning, and the surveillance, might take months. Little, if anything, should be left to chance in the execution of the tests. The rewards, however, justify the operation - there is, firstly, a probable victim for sacrifice, enabling the quintessence of Satanic ritual to be undertaken; secondly, there is the involvement of the whole Temple - the planning, the choosing of victims, the rehearsals of the tests and then finally their execution. This involvement, from the initial choice to the final test, is an extended magickal act, imbued with Satanic essence - creating and presenting sinister energies, aiding the development of Satanic skill and character, drawing the members together in a vivifying way. As such, it is a prelude to the act of sacrifice itself. Thus, even should the victim not be chosen because he/she proves unsuitable having made a positive choice during a test, the effort has been extremely worthwhile, both in terms of aiding the development of members on the levels of character and knowledge and skills, and also magickally.

The decision of the Master or Mistress regarding the outcome of a particular test is final and binding. It needs to be stressed that the tests give the victim a sporting chance and serve to confirm/deny their suitability - before the tests are even planned, the victim will have been chosen as a probable Opfer by the Master or Mistress using their judgement.

Opfers are examples of human culling in action.

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The Sinister Dialectic

The sinister dialectic (often called the sinister dialectic of history) is the name given to Satanic strategy - that is, (a) the use of Black Magick to change individuals/events on a significant scale; (b) to gain control and influence; and (c) the use of Satanic forms (individuals/influence etc.) to produce/provoke changes. This strategy, and the tactics involved to achieve it, is esoteric - and its learning forms an important part of novice training. Satanic strategy has its ground or foundation in Aeonics - Aeonics providing a means of rationally studying the patterns, processes and energies, both causal and acausal, which do and have shaped individuals and their groupings from societies to civilizations. Further, Aeonics provides a

means of interpreting recent events/trends and can predict (within certain limits) future patterns. [A basic introduction to Aeonics is given by the Order MSS dealing with the subject. A more advanced study involves becoming proficient in the advanced Star Game.]

I On a basic level, the dialectic is concerned with simple opposition - with defiance of what is accepted or conventional at particular times. This is heresy - the Adversarial role, a challenge against both conscious and unconscious norms. This opposition works on two levels - the individual, and society. 1) individual: The strategy is to provide opportunities for individuals to discover the hidden/forbidden within their own psyche, or lead them/influence them toward this. This means catharsis on an individual level. 2) Society: The strategy means Satanic individuals/organizations disseminate (often with no direct Satanic connotations) heretical ideas or otherwise encourage them. The aim of both (1) and (2) is to challenge and thus provoke change, reaction.

At the present time, (1) means rites such as The Black Mass [qv. the Order MS 'Satanism, Blasphemy and the Black Mass'], and other means of inner liberation. (2) means an aiding of what actually is heretical, now - this means upholding (a) inequality (particularly racially), (b) the concept of war, and (c) aiding discussion/spread of information/exchange of ideas/triumphing the cause of those things which actually are heretical, in Law and mostly ignored by the majority such is their supine nature - such as certain views regarding events in World War Two the propagation of which are illegal and which render the person spreading them to imprisonment (i.e. denying 'the Holocaust' ever took place). Further, (2) at this time also involves countering the unhealthy and anti-natural morality of suppression of the Nazarene.

All these are, however, tactics. to achieve broader strategic goals - they are means, only. These means can and often do change as the times changes - as societies change. For instance, regarding (2)(a) above - in a society which was tyrannically anti-egalitarian, the tactic would probably be to aid egalitarian tendencies.

II On a higher level, the dialectic is concerned with long-term evolution - with the creation and change of civilizations and ultimately with the creation of a new type of individual, a new species. This means altering our evolution, this alteration being toward the 'Satanic'.

This means two things - or rather two tactical approaches. (1) Enabling individuals to change themselves, to evolve, consciously, and so become part of that evolutionary change. (2) Changing/influencing the structures (such as societies) to make them instruments for such change or at least not detrimental to it. (1) involves such things as External and Internal Magick - a following of the Seven Fold Sinister Way. (2) involves Aeonics magick - e.g. the creation of new archetypal forms or images and the infection in the psyche of others which results from introducing them - and gaining/using influence.

It should be understood that while the tactics of I above can and do change, the tactics used to attain II remain essentially the same because the goal is precise. Further, I in many ways aids II - that is, the opposition to some fixed idea or dogma, accepted at a particular moment in history, provokes a change and leads to a new synthesis and thus an evolution of conscious understanding in individuals, thus aiding the sinister dialectic on a higher level.

Essentially, I is exoteric, and II esoteric Satanism - and it is necessary to make this distinction because the means of I vary with time (over centuries) while II remains relatively fixed, and all too often novices (and others) confuse a tactic used in I (such as politics) as something Satanic when it is only a tactic, a means, a form.

The reason 'why' there is (in genuine Satanism, anyway) a sinister strategy - a dimension beyond the personal - is simple: it is in the nature of Satanism (genuine Satanism, anyway) itself. Satanism at its highest level is concerned with 'cosmic change' - that is, it is an expression of the evolution of conscious existence. Evolution is something we, as conscious beings, can participate in and indeed create - by so doing, we are extending the range of our being, fulfilling (and going beyond) the potential we possess; affirming our existence in the most intense way possible. Viewed another way (in terms developed recently to explicate such things - i.e. make them more conscious and thus controllable) Satanism accesses the acausal, via nexions, and so increases the amount of the acausal presented in the causal.

These nexions are psychic (within the psyche of individuals), physical (places on Earth where the causal and acausal intersect or are close) or created via magickal rites.

Aeonics, and the sinister dialectic, are means which enhance our existence as Individuals - which offer us the opportunity not only to increase our consciousness and our abilities, but to use that consciousness and those abilities.

Thus, Satanism, correctly understood, is more than a glorification of the ego, or an indulgence in pleasures, or some kind of intellectual, 'esoteric' knowledge. It is also more than just living 'on the edge' and garnishing dark and other experiences (that is only a stage - qv. the MS 'The Practice of Evil, In Context'].

In essence, the sinister dialectic is Satanism and Satanists in action - it is Satanists playing at god: altering themselves, others, societies, civilization and evolution itself. This is its purpose, and the justification of sinister strategy.

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The Quintessence of Satanism

Satanism is not merely attending nor even conducting ceremonies or rituals of a 'Black Magick' kind. Nor does Satanism mean or imply membership of an avowedly Satanic group. Neither is Satanism merely the enjoyment of material delights. Rather, Satanism - quintessentially - is an attitude and a way of living.

This attitude expresses a strength of character - a belief in oneself and one's Destiny. Part of this is pride, and part of it is defiance: an individuality, a dislike of limits. However, perhaps the most important part is a self-knowledge or self-mastery born from having gone to and often beyond one's physical, mental and moral limits. The way of living creates this strength of character, and maintains it, and enables even that to be gone beyond. Satanists use life to express in living a new way or ways of being, to fulfil their potential and to live at and beyond the limits of existence thus taking evolution further.

The way of living is essentially practical - that is, a following of the path to Adeptship and beyond for this involves experiences, ordeals, challenges, a learning of new skills and the drawing out of latent genius.

A Satanic Initiation therefore means much more than a rite of self-Initiation or a ceremonial ritual of Initiation conducted by an established group or Order. It means a desire to follow the Satanic way - and the actual beginning of following that way by undertaking the deeds, tasks, rituals and ordeals of a Satanic novice. Anything less is simply playing at Satanism - a sign that the 'Initiate' lacks Satanic character or the ability to achieve it.

In traditional Satanism, as exemplified by the ONA, this means:

a) that the novice undertakes several physical challenges of endurance and succeeds in them. These have to be difficult and require some training. Then the novice

b) tests Destiny and builds character by undertaking challenges in the real world, such challenges conforming to accepted Satanic practice re defying the limitations of the herd. [Here, guidance of an experienced Satanist is useful.]

c) the novice begins hermetic magickal workings with the intent of (i) gaining experience in and mastery of such magick; (ii) garnishing from these beginnings a certain self-knowledge [qv. 'Naos'].

d) the novice studies the tradition (as explicated for example in Esoteric Chant, the Star Game, the septenary system) and so gains esoteric knowledge and understand

e) After these undertakes the ordeal which is the Grade Ritual of External Adept and so passes on to the tasks, ordeals and undertakings of the next stage - for example, organizes and recruits individuals for their own Satanic Temple to perform and gain experience in ceremonial magick and provide themselves with pleasures and experience of manipulation. [See the Order MSS relating to the following of the Seven-Fold Sinister Way as, for example, given in The Black Book.]

Following this - which takes some time, probably a year or so - there are more experiences awaiting, more delights, joys and hardships, more challenges to be undertaken, more self-discovery to be achieved.

It cannot be stressed enough or repeated too often that Satanism - of the genuine sort anyway - involves such practical undertakings allied to a desire to experience, to transcend what one is at a particular time:

to accomplish the task one initially set oneself at Initiation. That is, achieving Adeptship and beyond, by following the way of Satanism. This means a self-advancement, a self-experiencing, a self-effort, a self-achievement and a self-learning via direct experience. Anything less is not Satanism and no clever words, no amount of pseudo-intellectual mystification can obscure this reality.

Thus, because of human nature, there will be few who will possess the desire to become real Satanists - to actually undertake the tasks, ordeals and challenges. Most who profess an interest - and a large number who actually go ahead with Initiation be such ceremonial or hermetic - will soon turn away when they realize the real difficulties involved, when they understand that they are expected to work toward their own development. Most of these will all too easily find excuses to justify their turning away. They will perhaps be easily seduced, such is their weakness of character, by others who promise 'easy solutions' some kind of 'magical' way to Adeptship, by organizations which take away the pain, suffering and delight that self-effort 'on the edge' entails and which provide security for their members, which keep them in thrall to self-delusion. Or many will just be too lazy, too enured to their comfortable existence to change.

Whatever, they will be proved unsuitable, unfitted. There is no way that the way of Satanism can be made easy - for in its very hardship and danger, in the very fact of self-effort being required over a period of years, lies its quintessence.

For the dilettantes, for the role-playing fantasy mongers, for the self-indulgent too lacking in self-discipline' there are plenty of pseudo-Satanic organizations around, plenty of pseudo-Satanic 'masters' who require sycophancy, who act out of role and who will be only too pleased to welcome another pupil or student,

The choice is as simple, and brutal, as that.

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The Publication of Esoteric Traditions on the Left Hand Path

For a long time, genuine esoteric tradition was handed on on an individual basis, from Master/Mistress to novice. There were many reasons for this, most of them practical: the tradition was esoteric, liable to mis-interpretation, and many of its tenets and rituals involved what would have been regarded as 'heretical', anti-social and/or illegal acts. Furthermore, the methods used to train novices often made those novices into, outlaws, and set them against conventional society. Also, for a long time, the teaching and teachings of the tradition was heretical in Law - a criminal offense against Church and State. Secrecy was essential and necessary.

This state of affairs pertained until quite recently. With the burgeoning of interest in 'the Occult' in general, the LHP became somewhat less secret and certain aspects of the tradition were discreetly circulated. What were mistakenly taken to be 'esoteric' traditions and, given the new openness toward the occult and the repeal of anti-Occult laws, freely distributed and/or published, were (a) the useless Grimoire/Qabalistic tradition, or (b) a mis-interpreted Crowleyism, or (c) of a showman/ghoulish/self-professed type with bits cobbled together from (a) and (b) with archaic myths and unenlightened egoism thrown in. The real tradition - with its darkness and danger - remained hidden.

To (c) belonged the Church of Satan, which made Satanism akin to a fantasy role-playing game or games with some sorcery added to impress. The later schism which gave birth to the Temple of Set (born not with a bang but with a whimper) was not unexpected given the structure and orientation of this 'Church' - and neither was the fact that the leader of this schism based his Temple and authority on what was termed an 'Infernal Mandate', and declared Satanism as a religion, much mis-understood.

Meanwhile, the old traditions continued, in Europe and elsewhere, in their traditional way - secretly, accepting but few novices and these only after severe tests and ordeals. The traditions, writings, rituals, methods, ordeals and techniques remained unavailable except to those few. After lengthy deliberations and consultations, the individual representing traditional groups, decided to gradually make the esoteric tradition which he and others represented available on a selective basis, to reveal, for once and for all,

what the LHP and Satanism were really about. The real impetus for this decision came from Aeonic strategy - making the tradition available would enable an increase in the number of genuine Adepts, thus hastening the presencing of the darker forces on Earth, and so fulfilling the sinister dialectic of history. This increase, however, would be gradual - over centuries.

With this dissemination, the purpose, intent and methods of Satanism and the LHP could no longer be mis-interpreted and the posers and charlatans who professed to be 'Satanists' would be exposed - at least to those with any sagacity. With the secrets accessible to those who sought to find them, the real esoteric work could continue, as it always had, in secret - the training, via direct experience, of those few strong and gifted enough to undertake the difficult and dangerous journey along the Left Hand Path.

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ONA - Organizational Structure

The ONA is organized on the basis of cells, basically for two reasons: (1) Security and (2) Effectiveness. The structure means that each new Initiate/member has one (at most two) Order contacts who channel information/teachings and so on, and who offer guidance/instruction. When this member reaches the stage of External Adept, they usually form their own Temple for ceremonial magick and for teaching, recruiting their own members, whose Order contact thus is that External Adept. Each Temple thus formed exists independently. Hence, if it or any of its members are 'compromised', the chain cannot lead very far, enabling other members in other Temples to remain secret and so continue with their own work, both personal (following the path to Adeptship) and aeonic (aiding the sinister dialectic).

Further, such a structure is effective, because: it enables each member to progress at their own pace; it enshrines a fundamental principle of genuine Satanism [individuality, and freedom from subservience to authority] and it enables practical experience of a character-building type [e.g. by organizing and running a Temple at an early stage].

Essentially, the Order is secret - and intends to remain so as far as most of its members and activities are concerned. However, its teachings and traditions have been and will continue to be made progressively more 'public', that is, available - thus enabling any individuals who may be interested to follow (if only in part) the way of genuine Satanism, for those individuals by so doing (however slightly) will aid the sinister dialectic, increasing the dark forces presenced on Earth. Some of these may progress to the Order. This 'working secrecy' is necessary because Satanism cannot now be anything other than selective - it is elitist, being a hard and dangerous path, and part of its effectiveness lies in work of an 'underground', clandestine nature [e.g. some essential work is done by those involved in 'respectable' positions, which positions would no longer be available if the Satanic beliefs/practices of those involved in such work was generally known: i.e. they were discovered to be Satanists]. This secrecy will not change in the immediate future [for c. 20-30 years, that is] due to the nature of the societies in which we are forced to work.

Satanism can never become (until the 'New Aeon' arrives at least) respectable: for to become so would destroy its numen, its viability as a way to genuine Adeptship. It is dark, evil - for the few who genuinely dare. This daring, as mentioned in other MSS, is practical, in real-life situations, involving danger, requiring courage, and defiance of both one's own limits and those of others, including the society of the moment. While society and other structures restrict and deny the promise of Satan, this dark defiance is required - and, moreover, required as a working system which achieves results, both personally and aeonically. What will change, is the number of individuals who can try this way to liberation - and while this will increase, it will do so only slowly over a period of decades. This will be a cumulative process which will aid (and indeed create) the next Aeon, the Satanic one when what is regarded now as dark and sinister will hold sway.

Thus, it has been necessary to disseminate the teachings and traditions of the Order, and this dissemination will continue and increase, as part of Sinister strategy. This part of sinister strategy was begun a decade ago by the Grand Master representing traditional groups. It was carefully planned and (so far) has been carefully executed.

The initial stage involved circulating some details about traditional Satanism (the Septenary system; dark gods mythos) among some sections of the Occult fraternity. Thus, a few articles were published, and the existence

of the Order itself made known, for the first time outside traditionalist groupings, thus confirming certain rumours about such a group existing, such rumours having been in circulation for some time. Over a number of years, more information was made available - although still within the 'sub-culture' of the Occult underground. This attracted some interest (and a few Initiates - incidental to the main intent) and was followed by the establishment of, at first, a newsletter, and then a "zine", both of these being of an 'underground' nature, both in terms of quality and the manner of distribution (i.e. selective, advertised in similar underground publications). Furthermore, the number of copies distributed was kept low. The aim was two-fold - to create a sense of exclusivity (thus making the Order at first difficult to locate/find) and to pose no direct threat, that is, the zine and those associated with it would be seen as totally on the fringe, without resources and probably without any support. Thus, the activities of its members, always secret, would pose no threat and no investigation of any kind would be contemplated. Thus, both of the aims mentioned above could be achieved - dissemination of the tradition, and preserving the secrecy necessary for valuable work to continue.

After a few more years, the next step was taken - the distribution, again on a small scale, of works containing in detail the whole tradition. The format of these works would be the same - of a kind to intimate only a small scale enterprise. Thus were 'The Black Book of Satan', 'Naos', 'The Deofel Quartet' and other works made more accessible for the first time. Furthermore, the scarcity of these works would create an 'aura' about them - an aura which hinted at the darkness of the tradition. This would be reinforced by making available the most sinister aspects of the tradition - aspects which would also contradict the meanderings of the armchair 'Satanists' who prattled on about Satanism being misunderstood and not really being evil, and who had increasingly come to notice as the decade came toward its end.

Naturally, this would provoke a reaction - both from those within the Occult and those without. The reaction from those within the Occult (and particularly those who said they adhered to the Left Hand Path) would establish their own position, and thus their total mis-understanding and lack of real insight. In brief, they would continue their word-games and fantasy-roles when confronted by the reality of genuine Satanism. But, equally as important, some would assimilate the tradition, or parts of it (perhaps unconsciously, perhaps consciously by plagiarizing it) and thus not only be influenced by it but also aid the sinister energies it re-presented because of that influence. [Thus, some of the meaning of the term 'sinister dialectic' can be glimpsed.]

The next stage was to give form and substance to certain aspects of the sinister energies that the Order and thus its tradition represented - among such forms being Satanic images (e.g. in the form of Tarot images) and music. These, by their very creation, would presence such energies (unconsciously influencing others - particularly 'the susceptible ones'). They also would be distributed in the manner used hitherto, spreading that sinister influence, partly (as the other earlier dissemination had done) via the process of psychic contagion.

Following this, there would be a gradual increase in both the quality and the number of items distributed - without however the genuine darkness of the forms and tradition being diluted. In addition, more subtle approaches would be used - gradually contaminating psychic energies with strands of the sinister and thus overtly/covertly influencing/persuading others outside and within the occult, and drawing them into that ever expanding circle of those touched by the powers of Darkness. [This paragraph explicates the current stage of play.]

Thus, secrecy is preserved as and when necessary, while the tradition and thus the sinister is effectively spread.

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- Naos - A Practical Guide to Becoming An Adept. 121 pages.
- The Black Book of Satan (aka Codex Saerus) - A Guide to Sinister Ceremonial. 56 pages
- Hostia - Secret Teaching of the ONA. Volume I. 130 pages.
- Hostia, Vol II. 56 pages
- The Deofel Quartet, Volume I [Falcifer, Lord of Darkness, Temple of Satan]. 211 pages.
- The Deofel Quartet, Volume II [The Giving; The Greyling Owl]. 221 pages.

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Insight Roles (MSS Marked “SECRET”)

Insight roles is the name given to dangerous techniques aimed at developing personal understanding. The technique itself is simple – it involves the individual living for a specific period of time – between six months to two years – a certain “way of life”.

What make this dangerous and difficult is that the role chosen must be at odds with the individuals’ own feelings and view of the world. This brings the individual into conflict with themselves – and sometime friends and society as well. This forces the individual to rely on themselves and discard in a practical way all the illusions that must be discarded if Adeptship is to be achieved.

The technique is not to be undertaken lightly, buy once begun must be continued for the allotted time.

The technique is normally begun after the Grade Ritual of External Adept and after the individual has successfully run their own magickal group for at least six months. It is important that the individual strive to identify with the chosen role, and not see it merely as an unpleasant task. This identification must begin with a conscious decision to act the role as convincingly as possible. The role itself, for the period of time chosen, should be the main interest and occupation of the individual.

In an important way, Insight Roles are magickal rituals extending over a period of time and for the majority of individuals following the seven-fold way (the sinister path) are necessary as a prelude to the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept. It is the experiences undergone (both external and internal) during and Insight Role that give the individual the impetus necessary to undertake and complete the period of isolation required during the Grade Ritual. For it is this period of isolation which is often necessary for the individual to understand and integrate those experiences. From these, the genuine Adept is born.

All Insight Roles, of necessity, seem “bizarre” to non-Adepts. The individual who decides to undertake the technique should choose a role (from those listed) which is the opposite of what they themselves consider their own personality to be.

General Guidelines:

When a role is undertaken, you are forbidden to explain to anyone the reasons for this sudden change in your behavior/attitudes. This will isolate you, and begin the process of self-reliance and belief in your own Destiny. Observe the reaction of “friends”.

You should initially think of the roles as a means of enhancing your life – an opportunity. The role is part of the process of self-discovery – which is often painful.

To succeed, you must let go of all your previous opinions, beliefs and ideas. Forget everything assumed about people who naturally adopt the role you have chosen – just accept them, as they are. This will be very difficult. The role is an ordeal – a kind of second Initiation, and you can only become free, and ready for Adeptship, by losing your past.

The role chosen should be seen as part of your Destiny – and you should learn to revel in the role. If possible, keep a record of your thoughts, experiences and observations.

You should not, during the time of the role, undertake any magickal workings of any kind – simply because these are not necessary, considering an Insight Role is itself a powerful (and highly dangerous) magickal ritual of “internal” (or alchemical) magick.

Be determined to continue in the role for the length of time you have chosen. Should you succeed in this, you will discover many important things about yourself and the world. Wisdom will be gradually gained through the trials of experience. There is no substitute for this kind of practical learning.

Always remember during the role, that you have chosen to follow the path to self-divinity – the role is but a stage on that path, and one that has to be undertaken if your goal is to be achieved.

The roles are listed in order of difficulty/psychological danger with brief notes on the type of individual who might undertake them bearing in mind that the role chosen should be the opposite of what you consider your “personality type”/view of the world to be. From a viewpoint of the present the most challenging (and dangerous) role undertaken by members in the past two decades has been the one listed first.

Insight Roles, quite simply, are for those who dare to defy.

Insight Roles – II (SECRET)

The roles are listed in order of danger (both practical and psychological) – the most dangerous first.

- 1) Join an organization of the extreme “Right” and undertake the life of a political activist – attending meetings, demonstrations and so on. You should see yourself as a “revolutionary” who seeks to create a new type of society. You must forget all your assumptions about this type of politics – and the people in it – and live out, in a practical way, this role.

Contact address: British National Party, P.O. Box 446, London, SE 23 2LS. Send for literature about joining.

- 2) Enter a Buddhist religious order. Read about Buddhism, then apply to one of the addresses below to stay for a “retreat” and ask them to enter the order.

Throssel Hole Priory, Carr Shield, Hexham, Northumberland (Zen Buddhism).

- 3) Join the French Foreign Legion. Contact address: La Chef du Poste d’Information de la Legion Etrangere, Bas Fort St. Nicholas, 2 Boulevard Charles Livon, 13007 Marseille, France.

- 4) Open and run a brothel. First, find premises; second, find individuals will to offer their services. Honesty in dealing with clients and good friendly treatment of those employed to offer services to clients is the key to success, and must be done.
- 5) Join the Police Force. Assuming you are tall enough and have the right qualifications – ask at a Police Station or employment center and apply. Be determined to succeed if interviewed – find plausible reasons, when asked, why you wish to join.
- 6) Vagrant. Sell everything you possess, give up job etc. Buy rucksack, small tent etc. and wander around, trying to earn a living by doing small jobs, begging sometimes for food.
- 7) Form a Wiccan group. This role means you assume the identity of a “White Priest/Priestess. Create a believable past for yourself (re: Initiation and so on into Wicca) and then to recruit members. Aim is to form a “teaching coven”
- 8) Set specific physical goal and train t achieve these. These goals must be achieved within eight months of beginning training. They are:
 - a) run a marathon in less than 2 hours and 50 minutes (men) or 3 hours 10 minutes (women).
 - b) Compete in a (cycling) 12 hour time trial achieving a distance of at least 230 miles. Intermediate times are: 25 miles in 1 hour or less. (Note: 12 hour time trials are usually held during the summer months – so begin role at time to coincide with eight month training build up, e.g. December. Join a local cycling club – find details at nearest good bike shop.

Note: a) and b) may be combined – and should be if you are fairly fit.

Editorial note: These contact addresses are now out of date. The MS was last revised 1985 eh.

Some guidelines to assess the viability of each role:

- 1) Best suited for those of “left-wing”/liberal sentiments, including anarchists
- 2) Suited to those who enjoy the pleasures of the flesh – women, wine and food.
- 3) Suited to those who lack a sense of adventure and consider themselves “non-violent”
- 4) Suited to those who are introverted and find organizing things difficult
- 5) Suited to those who dislike authority – particularly the Police.
- 6) Suited to those who like comfort and need security of home/job etc.
- 7) Suited to those who lack imagination and flair for self-expression
- 8) Suited to those who dislike sports

Insight Roles – A Guide

As state in several esoteric Order MSS, the Satanic novice is expected to undertake experiences in the real world. This is above and beyond the tasks mentioned in various guides to the “Seven Fold Way”, which guides were intended for publication and thus did not contain the secret tasks. These secret tasks are outlined in the MSS “The Secret Tasks Of The Sinister Way”. One of these tasks, undertaken by an Initiate, is an “Insight Role”.

An Insight Role is in effect an extended magickal ritual and involves the individual living a certain way and striving for a specific (often non-esoteric) goal. It involves playing a specific “role”. The novice is expected to learn from this experience. It is important that the novice identifies with the role to the extent that friends/associates and those the novice is brought into contact with by virtue of that role do not realize the novice is playing a “role”. For the duration of the Insight Role, the task of that role should be the main interest/occupation of the novice.

Insight Roles, as a technique, have been used by Satanic novices for at least a century, and this technique has as its primary aim the gaining of self-insight by the novice using the technique. The technique also develops certain skills – some magickal, some involving the gaining of Satanic judgment and insight. Expressed simply, Insight Roles develop Satanic character.

Until quite recently, Insight Roles were wide-ranging and also exceptionally difficult to undertake – the novice was expected to undertake a role which was the opposite of what they considered their own character to be. (qv. The now deleted Order MS “Insight Roles I and II). The technique, however, has been recently revised by the Grand Master representing traditional groups. In this revised form, it is an extremely effective novitiate technique, although (like all genuine esoteric techniques of Satanic magick) it is still difficult to undertake and still requires a genuine Satanic commitment from the novice. Like the sinister way itself, it is not for the dilettantes or the imitation “Satanist” who merely wish to play at being Black Magickians.

One essential aspect of an Insight Role is that it requires the novice to change their lifestyle and usually their place of residence. Another, is that it tends to isolate them from non-Satanists. Third, it often brings them into conflict and confrontation – with others, and themselves. Fourth, it tests them – forcing them to find inner strengths and reserves. Of, of course, it destroys them – or makes them renounce their Satanic quest and vows. All these are necessary.

All Insight Roles are demanding; some are physically dangerous. All force the novice to make choices – to learn. All, when successfully undertaken, build self-confidence and thus character. All, in brief, express Satanism in action.

The novice is expected to make his/her own choice for the roles outlined below. It must be understood that: a) only the roles listed below are actually Insight Roles, so the choice must be one of them; b) the completion of at least one of these roles is necessary before the Internal Adept rite can be undertaken.

It is usual for the novice to undertake an Insight Role following Initiation and after completion of the tasks outlined in the MS “The Seven Fold Way – A Comprehensive

Guide” (i.e. after completion of the tasks associated with the stage of Initiation and before undertaking the rite of External Adept). However, if the novice wishes, an Insight Role can be undertaken when he/she is an External Adept and has completed all the tasks of an External Adept (such as running a Satanic Temple for a certain period of time). Generally, it is advisable for the novice to undertake a role before External Adept. Further, should the novice so desire, two Insight Roles can be undertaken, one after the other. This is an interesting experience – but requires demonic commitment.

The Roles:

- 1) Either by foot or by bicycle or by accepting lifts, travel alone around the world, taking between six months and one year (or more). You must live frugally, and carry with you most of what you need. You should travel to as many countries as possible, the more remote the better and expect sometimes to find work to enable you to travel further.
- 2) Become a professional burglar, targeting only victims who have revealed themselves to be suitable (e.g. by testing them - qv. the Order MSS dealing with victims etc.). The aim is to specialize in a particular area – e.g. fine art, jewelry – and become an “expert” in that area and in the techniques needed to gain items.
- 3) Undertake the role of extreme political activist and so champion heretical views (by e.g. becoming involved in extreme Right-Wing activism). The aim is to express fanaticism in action and be seen by all “right-thinking people” as an extremist, and a dangerous one.
- 4) Join the Police Force (assuming you meet the requirements) and so experience life at the “sharp end” and being a servant to a higher authority. *

All roles should last for at least six months and all must be completed (i.e. you leave them) before the end of eighteen months. All roles will by their very nature test your Satanic views and beliefs and thus your desire to continue along the sinister way. All will expose you to difficulties.

Once the choice is made, it is up to you to find means of undertaking the role – e.g. in the case of joining the Police, finding reasons why which will convince a selection panel; in the case of becoming a burglar, finding someone to buy your stolen items and so on.

The essence of these Insight Roles can be succinctly stated: **Incipit Vitriol.**

ONA 1989 ev

* Note: In times of actual war, an alternative Insight Role is to join one of the Armed Forces and so gain combat experience.

An afternoon with Christos Beest of the Order of the Nine Angles.

I met Mr Beest, at his request, on a glorious day in 1994, in the beautiful Shropshire hills on the Welsh border that he believes are the heart of his personal Satanic Tradition. After a bracing walk to the crest of a bracken-topped hill (which did no favours to a person's hangover), we paused and talked. Beest was not at all how I'd imagined him. He was a serious, personable, well-spoken man in his mid-to-late twenties who seemed closer to a mature sociology student than the bloodthirsty fanatic I'd anticipated.

What is the Order of the Nine Angles?

It's a tradition which goes back 7000 years - that's according to the legend. It was born when there was a civilisation around here called Albion which had various rites associated with a Dark Goddess who we know as Baphomet. Baphomet's been handed down through the ages as a composite figure. The famous goat-head symbol was actually a distortion, a lie which took away from the real power of the goddess, who was actually a dark, menstruating woman. It was very much a code of honor centred around war and the brutal realities of life, and actually the original paganism for thousands of years before Christianity arrived. It's basically an oral tradition I received from my predecessor, Anton Long. He received it from a Mistress of the Order and she had it passed on from someone before her.

How large is the Order?

Very small, around ten people with a few hangers-on. We are small because it is a genuine magical way and it requires people to live in a certain lifestyle. The archetypal ONA member is a lone sorcerer, somebody who defies their own limits, defies themselves. They find out their true potential, usually through ordeals. There's one ordeal, for example, which requires living alone for three months, completely alone, bereft of any possessions whatsoever. The actual aim is, on an individual level, finding your God within yourself. What it aims to produce is a unique individual who doesn't need anything. There's a lot of strands from a lot of esoteric groups, but the ONA is essentially a Western tradition.

Why is there such prominent mention of human sacrifice in your literature?

Because it's part of the tradition. There was an issue of Fenrir, our magazine, which centered around human sacrifice. A lot of things are not what they seem. All manuscripts that are written serve a certain purpose - they illustrate a certain point. A lot of people at the Temple of Set or Church of Satan are trying to re-establish Satanism as a moral religion. Something which is sanitised, something which is misunderstood, and really quite nice. What the ONA is doing is countering that by saying; "No it isn't." It's regaining the original Darkness of what Satanism is, because Satanism isn't evil, then what is?"

Could this effect not be achieved without human sacrifice?

Maybe human sacrifice doesn't go on. That's part of the point.
The Manuscripts are illustrating an ethic.

So what you're saying is that the effect the manuscripts has is more important than anything it actually says or advocates?

Yes. The manuscripts are collected to illustrate points. Here it says that people should stop allowing laws to treat them like children.

Have you been involved with human sacrifice in any form?

Obviously I can't tell you.

Is there an element of macho occultism in your order?

There's more women involved in the group than men, which is quite interesting. There is the man I inherited the tradition from, Anton Long, and he's fought in wars as a mercenary. That was a form of sacrifice. To outline the theory behind human sacrifice again: ultimately it could be anything, that's just the most extreme form. It also aids the sinister dialectic, it regains a certain darkness that has been taken away from Satanism. It gives back to an individual their own judgement over things. Saying that you actually do this - you can go out and kill somebody if you feel it's important to do it - but you take the consequences for it. In other words, anybody who gets involved in "the sinister" can do anything they want, or anything they judge useful. There's nothing in the Order which says you can't do this or you can't do that - that would be contradictory to what we are aiming for. All it's saying is - find yourself and use your own ethics and judgements. You could go ahead with a sacrifice, but you could get caught and spend the rest of your days in gaol - is it worth doing that?

What is the role by "aeonics" in your philosophy?

An understanding of how energies flow through civilisations. What moves people. What creates certain kinds of individual. All civilisations start off as a creative minority; a small group of people in a certain area who did certain things which drew the masses. People are putty, basically, and it's always going to be a small number of people who can effect changes; the artists or whatsoever, the people who dare to break out of the constraints of society.

What's the ONA's political position?

I regard ONA as the only true anarchist group. A group which can use extreme right-wing politics and extreme left-wing politics. We're not seduced by either side, we don't regard them as "true" in any sense, they're just a means to an end. So far it's been judged that it's the energies which imbue right-wing organisations that are useful and will flower, say within 100 years, and certain things will follow on. This is the essence of aeonics. It is a cold, rational, almost scientific judgement of certain means to achieve further ends. The archetypal ONA member considers any form to be suitable means to an end. That's part of the point of the ordeal of spending three months alone. You actually go through a withdrawal where you're not swayed by anything, any abstract ideas, you are just yourself. An ONA member doesn't "become" a Nazi or a communist, he just uses those movements. Obviously, in order to use them you have to enter into a role in a very demonic sense, you also have to know where it ends.

Why does so much ONA material seem to have such a negative, destructive approach? Could you not, for example, write something about the beauty of walking these hills?

There are actually four novels, The Deofel Quartet, which deal exactly with that. It deals with love and life in a very real sense. It deals with all those feelings which would make an archetypal Satanist confused, because the archetypal image is of a dark master who could kill just at the drop of a hat. That image is very important because it allows people to play a role which people are swayed by. What some of the ONA manuscripts do is allow people to play that role. But it has to end at some point, and if it doesn't end they become possessed by that role, and their whole Satanic quest is finished. They've lost insight. If they do derive insight from it, then they know there's something beyond that. It may be something that's the opposite, something quite beautiful perhaps, but they have to go through a role to find its true opposite in a real sense.

If you say that people can explore their limits by contemplating human sacrifice, could they not, by that philosophy, feel they ought to abuse a child?

No, not all. The background of sacrifice is that it's about culling, accepting that there is certain dross in society. A right-wing concept perhaps, but that's just labelling it. It's something which is not right- or left-wing, it's a concept that goes back to the vikings, or before that. The Vikings weren't right-wing. We imposing modern political views on things to raise emotive responses. People have to see beyond that, to see the essence beyond the appearance, which is what a lot of the manuscripts are about. People are swayed by things - what is racism but a word often used to make people feel guilty about feeling certain things?

Is it possible to be black, oriental, or whatever and a member of ONA?

There's a gentleman in Singapore who's working with us.

There's a suggestion that the ONA has something to do with neo-nazi groups, is that true?

It's rather the other way around. Someone in the ONA felt that involvement in the British National Party would be useful to them. There is somebody who is involved in the ONA who is involved in right-wing politics, but he used it as a form to achieve something, then got out of it and went to do something else. We have a something of a reputation for dressing in Nazi uniforms and invoking the spirit of Hitler. It stems from the deeds of the past which people haven't seen from a Magical perspective. There's very little that's dangerous about becoming a radical anarchist or a communist. But there are people right now being executed for their involvement in right-wing organisations. There was a certain individual found dumped in Holland who was a leading light in the political Right of Germany.

You mustn't confuse "right-wing" with conservatism or anything like that. The political format that's gripped this society has nothing to do with right-wing politics and actually leans more towards the left in essence. The Hard Right is a very dangerous thing to get involved with. Particularly for Satanists - the ONA has received threats from certain National Socialist's groups who don't like the idea of Satanism being linked with them. Unlike left-wing groups, when stirred right-wing activists will do things others wouldn't consider. That's why it's a good thing to get involved with, in one respect: because it offers genuine danger on all sorts of levels and offers a moral dilemma as well. The whole point of insight roles is that you undertake a role for around a year which is the complete opposite of your own personality.

What are you aiming for in ONA?

The real secret of Satanism is that a Satanist restores balance within society, acting as a counterbalance. For example:

If we were in a right-wing situation at this time, there would certainly be a communist Satanic organisation. This may all seem rather frivolous and aimless, but what Satanism represents is basically an energy for change. Evolution.

An energy which provokes insight and adversity. Satan represents movement. Something which moves and isn't tied down by moral abstracts or ideas.

Culling is portrayed in your literature as helping nature along, isn't it?

Yes, you could remove someone you feel is detrimental to your cause, but you could be wrong in that. It could turn out

to be the opposite. War is the perfect example of culling in that it is removing a massive number of people,

and when you do that you effect certain changes. What those changes will be, how you can control that, is all part of it.

It's like moving pieces on a chessboard. People are removed who you judge to be detrimental to certain things.

It could be a large number of people, it could be an individual. Not everyone will cull, not everyone should.

It's suggested in your literature that it's something which is expected of ONA members.

Would you kill if ordered so?

No.

Well then, we have already established an insight upon yourself, albeit in a second. This is actually the secret of the manuscripts. They are designed to attract people who can think and judge for themselves. That includes when a Satanic

Master comes along and tells you to despatch someone - you are faced with a choice: if you do it you will please the

master, but do you want a master like that? As the master, do you want somebody serving you who is weak, or do you want somebody who will turn round and refuse to obey? We're looking for the latter.

How would you like people to look on the ONA, do you want to scare people?

The work is very extreme, it has to be that way. The manuscripts are designed to produce certain changes in society, to create certain preconceptions and destroy others. We are very elitist, because very few people ever stay the course. It involves real hardship, a certain way of living which few people are willing to follow.

Interview with Thornian

The Order of Nine Angles is a unique and often mysterious organization whose conception of "Traditional Satanism" has opened up entirely new doors to the seeker and delver of occult knowledge. Their positions regarding human sacrifice and National Socialism have many times put them at the center of controversy, causing other so-called Satanists to put their thoughts on "heresy" to the test. Our thanks go out to Vilnius Thornian for taking time to answer a few questions for Diskorpia...

I. Can you explain the meaning and definition of the word "Satan" from the perspective of the ONA?

"Satan" to the ONA is the herald of change, both within the individual and civilization as a whole. Satan, or Satanas, is the image in which we place on something that ultimately cannot be contained in any purely causal understanding. Satan is representation, or a way of identifying, something very real, a part of that primal chaos which is beyond our perceived dimensions. Thus Satan represents those forces of consciousness and cosmos which we seek to bring to surface, to cause change. This involves both a confrontation with the Shadow-self (leading to an eventual synthesis of those "dark energies" in individual consciousness - a step towards balance), and the presence of real darkness within the current social climate - Chaos. To put it simply, Satan is a gateway to what lies beyond, to the acausal - a causal representation of the acausal, through which we increase the amount of acausal energy present on earth, via the rites and practices of Sinister Tradition. This is important since the intrusion of the acausal upon our world brings the change ultimately needed to progress, to achieve the next step in human evolution on a widespread scale.

II. Can you describe, as far as you are willing or able to, the inception of the ONA?

The ONA was formed of several different working groups in the 1960's. The decision to form the groups into one was made by the then Grand Mistress. At the time some of the groups had access only to part of the Tradition, or variations of the Tradition. Anton Long was initiated by this Grand Mistress, and eventually informed that he was the chosen heir to the Tradition. The Grand Mistress then disappeared, obviously leaving Anton Long with an enormous weight on his shoulders. But an heir to the Tradition is never chosen in haste, and someone who has attained the grade of Grand Mistress or Grand Master (these are grades, which are attained through years and years of hard struggle, and not simply titles given for amusement or to satisfy the petty egos of those who usually give themselves such titles) certainly has such a level of insight as to make the appropriate decision and never look back. And she was right in choosing Anton Long, as he eventually worked his way through the difficult challenges and after some 25 years (approx.) became a Grand Master himself. This is a level of achievement only fulfilled perhaps once or twice a century. The Tradition he received from his Grand Mistress was garbled - but contained the basic underlying attitude, or ethos, that is the foundation for Satanism. Some of the aspects of the Tradition handed down to Anton Long were the chants, some rites (including sacrifice), insight roles (which in themselves exemplify what genuine satanism truly is), claims to lineage, grade rituals, mythos of the dark gods, and so on. Anton Long later, through his own experience and striving, codified what we know today as the Seven-Fold Way, and brought such advancements as the Star Game and Aeonics. He also used other means, such as the Deofel Quartet, to provoke the understanding of new initiates, and created a framework which for centuries will be expanded upon by the insights of new initiates - but never made easier. Sometime in the early 1990's, Christos Beest became the order's "outer representative," and thus handled the ONA's journal Fenrir, any public dealings, trained new initiates, and continued his quest along the Seven-fold Way, also making several contributions. He explored new ways of presencing the acausal through musick and artwork; drafted the Sinister Tarot; wrote and recorded the Self-Immolation Rite and other musick; expanded the corpus of sinister chant; and greatly advanced the understanding of Satanism - in what has proved to be an extremely provocative manner, thus through his own experiences giving a direction to the strategies of the ONA. Christos has since "retired" from the public spectrum, and I now have the honor of being "outer representative" for the order, and at an interesting time. Right now Sinister Tradition is experiencing a new phase, centered in America amongst its initiates. The Tradition can be understood to have a life of its own, to be a vessel for the will of the cosmos - and one cannot really express the significance of this new phase in words. Thus you have a brief (very brief) history of the ONA - from the perspective of what the public sees. What is not expressed here is how the initiates of the tradition have and continue to implement sinister strategy, in a move to bring the world to what is inadequately termed a New Aeon. [q.v. Aeonics MSS, Sinister Dialectic, so on.]

III. How long has the ONA been in existence?

Since the early part of the 1960's, as a collective Order. The lineage of tradition itself is said to have been handed down from Master to Initiate throughout the centuries all the way back to Albion (probably via various "forms").

IV. What is the structure and operation of the ONA like?

The Seven-Fold Way is intended to be followed by the initiate working mostly alone. Thus the structure of the ONA exists, on the level of new initiates, only to give guidance. Each initiate, if admitted into the order, is given an order guide, who will give direction and advice to the initiate. Whether this direction and advice is followed is up to the initiate. We simply offer the understanding of those who have traversed the path before, and are thus more experienced. Beyond this, the ONA operates under a system of cells, as this is the most effective means of implementing our strategy. Aside from this, most work alone, following their own destinies, and each taking on a different means to achieve specific collective goals.

V. Do you agree with Anton LaVey's statement that Satanists are born, not made? If not, why not?

No. I consider such a statement indicative of the lack of potential inherent in what some term "modern satanism." Satanists are most certainly made, and not born. Genuine Satanic character is the result of experience, of getting your hands dirty, striving to achieve important goals, loss of face, learning from failure, succeeding in great feats, and pursuing absolute excellence in everything we do. Those who believe they were simply "born satanists" have no understanding of what real Satanism is - rather they are dominated and consumed by their own egos and laziness, and are the antithesis to Satanism. This is a good indication of what "american satanism" has dwindled into. Rather than being an honorable pursuit of excellence and self-advancement through great struggles, "american satanism" largely exhibits pretentiousness and never escapes the ego. This is what we might call "first stage" Satanism - where ego-gratification, blasphemy, and so on serve a great purpose in both catharsis and in self-understanding. However, though for a real Satanist this first stage is brief, the Church of Satan has never escaped it, it has never moved on to what is really important. It has never advanced to the next stage. Genuine Satanism has a scope which reaches far beyond the egos of its initiates, and it would not be far off to presume that someone who is consumed by their own ego has hardly even begun to touch on revealing what they, in essence, really are. The only instance in which the above statement holds any water, is in the fact that we are all born with potential. Satanism, ultimately, is the fulfillment of this potential, but there is no one to fulfill it for you, and it certainly does not fulfill itself. To believe simply that you were "born" a Satanist relieves one of all responsibility to actually be a Satanist, and exhibit satanic character. This will not be what most would like to hear. One other point I should make; I used the term "american satanism." This is used to describe satanism as expounded by groups such as the Church of Satan and the Temple of Set, which have simplified satanism into an inherently anti-western "philosophy." However, such a term is really no longer appropriate, due to the number of American initiates in Sinister Tradition who are changing all this.

VI. Do you really believe that magical attainment "implies a loss of self-image"? Isn't the relation a paradoxical one: that is, a strengthened ego co-existent with a greater harmonizing of the self with acausal forces?

Magick implies a loss of self-image both because the adept is working towards supra-personal goals - goals that are in accordance with the natural willed flow of the cosmos/essence, to which the causal "self-image" is ultimately sacrificed; and because as one progresses along the sinister path, they are in turn emitting both into their consciousness and into the world more and more acausal, until the initiate/adept crosses the abyss, which means the destruction of the "self-image." This destruction (and a withdrawing of projections, moving beyond opposites, and so on) is when one's understanding is ultimately of the essence as it is, without the aid of "forms" or "images." Archetypes, forms, images and so on are useful in the beginning, but are discarded in the crossing of the abyss, since they are only causal representations of the acausal, which is essentially something which cannot be wholly understood in terms of the causal.

VII. Does the ONA really believe that an interest in death and horror is necessarily "enervating"? If one identifies with the predator and not the prey in such cases, isn't the result positive and life-affirming from a Satanic perspective

(the culling of human garbage, etc.)? (See also Nietzsche: "The poison of which weaker natures perish strengthens the strong--nor do they call it poison")

As you're aware, Satanism presupposes real evil, chaos, horror, and death. But these are a means, mainly to restore balance to the world, to break down The System, to further the understanding and experience of the initiates, to cull human dross. To cause change. Obsession with horror of death though can indeed be enervating, and stifle balance - as far as the individual and their development is concerned. The Sinister aims to break apart all illusions or forms, to seek the essence as it is. Thus if an initiate is in preoccupied with, or more accurately in thrall to, the aesthetics of death they are not working toward this goal, but rather are caught in their own trappings. Additionally, there is a great difference between someone who carries out (or is simply interested in) acts of horror or death because they are dominated by an image, an aesthetic, and someone who actively carries such things out to support a grand scheme, to achieve a goal. The goal is not to kill for the sake of killing - and yes, that is enervating - but rather to implement a strategy which, ultimately, is positive in terms of human consciousness and evolution. Further, the "Sinister" can take on several forms according to one's level of apprehension (ie. of the essence). While initially in confronting those "dark" elements of the psyche (and thus its programmed responses) images of death and horror may play a role, but this is a level to be eventually transcended, overcome. Beyond this, the "Sinister" is actually quite beautiful, noble - an exultation in being. There is much more that is Sinister in someone who, for instance, writes a symphony that inspires greatness in other human beings, masters and makes great contributions to a science or an art (physics, painting, violin making, etc.), or makes discoveries that which change the world, than someone who has a preoccupation with gore and death or even carries such things out in an uncalculated manner, for its own sake.

VIII. Viewed in terms of the aeonic strategy of the ONA (to manifest a new aeon), what are your views on technology and the way technology is seemingly tied to late-capitalism?

Technology is essential to the realization of our ultimate aims. Unfortunately, rather than being used to expand the horizons of human existence, it is often used to stifle it. The opposite of this is an undeniable by-product of elevating human existence through other means, such as National Socialism.

IX. One of the agents of degeneration described in the writings of the ONA is consumerism. What are some strategies the ONA has formulated to counter the rapid expansion of consumerism?

X. Given the "cycle of history," do you think it is a fair assumption that things are going to get much worse before they get any better, and that Western civilization, AS WE KNOW IT, is irrevocably doomed to destruction or "apocalypse" of some kind?

I shall answer these both at once. What we promote and work towards, in terms of Aeonics, is the creation of a new civilization - one that is honorable, triumphant, and creative. Such a civilization ideally should be an extension of Western Civilization - that is, for the Western Civilization to continue to evolve into the next Aeon, as it naturally would have were it not for the sickness or distortion placed upon it. This distortion, or the Nazarene ethos, is alien and opposed to the real ethos of the west, it is what has stifled, and what may ultimately hurl us into a dark age of some 500 to 1000 years with little progress being made. For this new civilization to flourish requires the eventual downfall of America (which will prelude the downfall of Israeli/Zionist power), and thus all that is representative of the Nazarene ethos in the major power-wielding structures of the west. We are not necessarily doomed, but for the downfall of The System it is more than likely that things will get worse before they get better. Indeed, success may require this.

XI. Can you describe the role of "National Socialism" in the strategy of the ONA?

National Socialism is a means whereby the world can be changed for the better, and thus is a key element to Aeonic Strategy. It enshrines the ethos of the West in its most evolved state, and carries great potential for human development, and in establishing what has been termed a "new Aeon." It should be noted, in light of the controversy which always follows, that Satanism reaches far beyond such forms and what they may achieve - into those future

forms which at present cannot even be imagined. Such forms are only a means - and in this case, a means which possesses the conquering Faustian/Aryan spirit and hurls it toward its destiny.

XII. What ties, if any, does the ONA have to contemporary National Socialist groups?

None.

XIII. What relation, if any, is there between the writer D W Myatt and the ONA?

There has been a lot of speculation about this, though beyond the use of his translation of Sappho's poetry there is only speculation.

The Joy of the Sinister

What is the most important - and interesting - thing I can say about the sinister path that I have followed for over thirty years? It is that it teaches us, and enables us, to live life on a higher, different level. That is, *to exult* in life itself: a sinister life is, or should be, one where there is an intensity; where there is action, in the world; where there is a will harnessed to a goal - any goal; a desire to experience, to know; to quest; where there is an arrogant determination to not accept the norms, the answers, the limits of and set by others.

Nothing is too dangerous for us; nothing is forbidden. We experience to test ourselves; to learn. There is a pushing of one's body to - and beyond - its limits; enduring, to go beyond endurance to that wonderful bliss of almost exhaustion when a goal has been achieved and one has felt, been, an exquisite harmony of mind and body and ethos through sheer concentration on what is being done.

There is the acceptance of challenges - especially by ourselves. And if we have no challenges, we make or create some.

These are the moments - days, weeks - of exquisite pleasure; these are the moments are an exquisite yearning; these are the moments of an exquisite joy; these are the moments - days, weeks - of an exquisite exultation; and yet a true sinister life is one where there are moments, days, of an ineffable sadness: because one has seen, known, understood, and because one feels more than most other people. There is a symbiosis here which has to be experienced to be really understood; a symbiosis which mere mortals would and do find strange. And it is our will which brings the opposites together and enables us to transcend beyond even these.

What must be accepted by those venturing upon, or following, the sinister path is that we can be so much more than we realize: we have so much potential, physical, intellectual; psychic; magickal; creative.

We who follow the sinister way strive to make our whole life an act of magick; we become magick; we are magick. All true magick is an intimation of what we can be: of what awaits in the next phase of our human evolution. There is nothing complicated about our Way, our dark, chosen, path; there is, in truth, nothing secret about it.

How do you tell who is upon the true sinister path? It is revealed in their eyes; even in the way they walk. There is something slightly dangerous about such a person. There is something about such a person which mere mortals find slightly disturbing; something they cannot quite "work out", or explain. Such a person is strong, but the depth of their strength is mostly hidden, although many people can sense it in some way. And what is the ultimate end to a sinister life? To die trying to overcome: to be questing even toward the very end.

Order of Nine Angles

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KALKI AND THE 93 CURRENT

Introduction

What follows is written in the Magickal terminology of Thelema, and is a basic introduction to Thelemic thought from a Satanist viewpoint, containing some of the secrets of Initiation. For those not familiar with the Cultus of Thelema, the works of Aleister Crowley are recommended, in particular 'The Book of the Law', 'Magick' and 'Liber Aleph'.

The child mentioned in Liber Al (III, 47) was, for some time, thought to be Fra. O.I.V.V.I.C. 777, but events came to show that this identification was incorrect – Liber Aleph remained dedicated to 777 but Fra. O.I.V.V.I.C. was not the 777 mentioned thereon, and today it is sometimes held by Thelemites that the Magickal Son of 666 is 'mankind'. Al III, 47 states "...in these are mysteries that no Beast shall divine. Let him not seek to try: but one cometh after him, whence I say not, who shall discover the key of it all." And in a general sense, the one after the Beast is indeed 777; 666 being the Sun and 777 the 'flaming sword' or lightning flash. The sun may be said to represent these qualities 'above time' and the lightning those 'in time'; that is, 'in time' is a physical manifestation which is, in the real world, (as the symbolism indicated), whereas 'above time' is not a physical manifestation but instead can be expressed as 'mystic', intellectual, remote (symbolism of the sun- Ra, Apollo etc.). The two conjoined, that is the sun qualities given practical expression, is 'against time'. These three basic ideas, expressive of the triplicity of time, runs through all arcane knowledge in various guises: the three triangles of the Otz Chiim (lowest 'in time', middle 'above time', top 'against time') for example, and are thus expressive of the different aspects of human character – the Great Work (in non-Thelemic terms) being the understanding of the aspects in and above time and their final unification and understanding as against time (the ascent of the Otz Chiim): personality (below Abyss) involving a mere human perception of time, but the discarding of personality and subsequent rebirth (above the Abyss) involving a cosmic perception of time that is but its two aspects conjoined. In Thelemic terms, the Great Work which is contained in 418, can be brought about only by a unification of 666 and 777, for they are parts which alone complete the whole. 777 being 418 and 35j9, that is Aiwass and Shaitan, expresses the other side of the Aeon – its practical effect which will occur only when AL is balanced by LA. The idea of the Aeon is contained fully in 666 but it will not affect the course of the Earth until that idea having been given birth reaches manhood – until in follows the path of 777, which leads to 888, the complete expression of 418 and thus 93.

This is contained implicitly in the key of gold and the name of power which are guarded with the Hawk and the Sphinx, and in the Phoenix that arises beyond the one of the four which lives again in the ashes of gold.

While the Aeon is the 93 Current, it will be established only by outward effort on the part of individuals and groups (the function of the O.T.O. for example) – that is, the 93 Current can only be diffused onto the Earth via the Magickal use of the formula which 156 and 666 represent. And the Aeon is contained in 17 and 231 which of necessity are the coming form that the "93 Current" (Chaos) will take, after it has descended via 777. (Liber Oz is but part of the Nodens aspect.) The whole essence of Liber AL is 231; to interpret in the restrictive sense of 666 is to fail to grasp its wider implications: 777 and 888. 231 will manifest itself through 888, the total 'against time' aspect.

Liber AL is connected to the cults of Set and Shaitan in the ancient world and thus to part of the tradition contained in Zoroastrianism which is the old Aeon deceased in 1904 e.v. was given its first expression in 'Thus Spake Zarathustra' by Nietzsche, a book strangely ignored by Qabalists

and Thelemites although it is resplendent with Qabalistic and Thelemic symbolism. When one considers how Nietzsche wrote 'Zarathustra' – in an almost ecstatic state of frenzy – it is not surprising that it echoes so many ideas of the new Aeon, of that is does so in Qabalistic terms. Nietzsche was but the passed on of the wisdom contained in the Collective Unconscious, that, as Jung pointed out in his works, is acausal in nature and thus equally of the future as of the past and present; a reflection of the powers of the Great White Goddess.

It could be said with, I think, some justification, that 'Zarathustra' is the best exoteric commentary ever written on AL, and that AL is the best summary of 'Zarathustra' in existence, even though 'Zarathustra' was written in 1883 e.v. And it is in 'Zarathustra' that the 777 aspects of the 93 Current become manifest fully. 777 is in effect those spoken on in AL I, 10 who diffuse the 93 Current as a prelude to it assuming visible and tangible form upon this planet, and those who thus prepare the way for the symbolic form which does just that: 833, the tenth avatar of Vishnu, the one called Kalki ('time'). Through Kalki and the symbolism thereof which can manifest themselves in diverse ways, does that which is 93 become as the Logos of the Aeon.

In Mithraic terms, Ahura-Nasda is above time, the symbolism 666, Ahriman in time, that of 777, and Zervan-Akarana (**typewritten text difficult to read**) the one against time. It is significant that not only is Mithra the Time-god reborn (c.f. Kalki), but also that in the original mysteries it was recognized that Ahriman is as much a part of Zervan as is Ahura-Nasda and is a more practical, that is Earth-bound, form. The idea of 666 expressed as 777 gives 888 which in time returns again to 666. Zervan is shown in reliefs and statues usually standing on the Earth, a serpent entwined seven times round his body, holding in his hands the keys of the worlds: an early form of the Otz Chiim symbolism. The mystery that has been lost from Mithraism and earlier sects and which the Yesidis handed on in their rites and teachings, is that of how the current of power in the Supernal Triad can be manifested in the Earth-bound sense, and a recognition that there is not one key, but a number each of which follows from the other and each of which returns to the first, being all of the same kind; a circle closing. First comes that which in the Aeon new upon this planet is symbolized in IAO and expressed as Atu XI. From this comes that contained equally in IAO and expressed as "Tauus" – for is not the King him who is resplendent in the jewels of time and spoken of in Al-Jilwah? 231 and Atu IX are the key to this, and the begin of the reign of the Nameless One, returning yet always containing that of Atu XI: for as AL is to LA so also is IX to XI.

The seven Ziarchs or Towers of the Yezidi, six formed as the Trapezoid and thus expressing the significance of the Angles of the Nine, and one as a fluted cone, are the outward manifestation of the secret which is expressed partially by the seven-rayed star of Babylon – the means of practical control of the Current. It is further significant that Mithra was born from rock. Thus the nature of Aiwass and AL.

The Logos of Kronos is wonder indeed: but some, even now, are unwitting tools of the 93 Current, understanding not its end.

"Zero is two. Somehow I am aware – like a man stricken of lightning, in the same moment slain and initiated – that the strange phrase declares the final Mystery of Truth, the Word of the Plan of Battle, the Key of the Campaign. But in my mind its meaning is most utter darkness." (The Heart Of The Master – Khled Khan)

Handwritten note at the bottom of the text:

Rejected xi/73 - May be of some use to novices – (signed) Anton

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“The Lay Of Omega”

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Nine worlds has the Tree, nine worlds of strangeness and uncertainty whereon mortal gods have trodden weary in the pursuit of the great Hall of the Hounds. Worlds of endless madness and manifold mysteries, beckoning to the weary traveler of the Way; calling to those of strength who have drunk deep of the mead of the Tree, and who dream dreams of freedom and carnage. The Tree was given so that the depths of heaven could be climbed, so that the heights of the mountains of the Isle of the Dead could be scaled and seen. And all understood. From the branches can the worlds be understood. The Eagle who sits at the top swoops forever down, tangling with all who rest upon the branches; and the Serpent at the foot entwines higher seeking to grasp all exhausted travelers, shattering them to the ground. Great is the battle for the possession. And when the time comes, will the Tree begin to shed its leaves, every one representing a death, as it sways in the wind of the darkness of the coming end when loosed are the enemies of those who planted the seed of the tree, the friends of the Serpent and the rivals of the soaring Eagle. Then will fear and pestilence and cosmic roars shatter the sleeplike peace of the ones who shelter under the Wisdom of Old, forgetting in that dread and fateful time all that the counsels of the wise have said as the flee hither and thither tormented and in disarray. But whither they return to the listening of the songs of the Bards and no more do they fear, no more do they weep, for gathered are they then under the safety and shelter of the Tree, mindful of the storms around them. And they hear sing of the one who was wise who had to start on the perilous journey to the Nine Worlds to bring from the abode of the Gods the Flaming Sword of Death to slay the Serpent and its creatures who torment the Tree and the world. For it is said that only if he of wisdom and fair strength can redeem from the Gods the sword will the Tree be saved and the enemies all destroyed.

Greater and greater sway the Tree until all save the few fear that it will crack and scatter its remains broken upon the earth. Sharp crashes of thunder silence the baying of the Beasts, as the wind howls through the branches, smashing all not sheltered by the Tree. Beasts fight with beasts as those not of gods look on in terror. Many set out to seek the Flaming Sword of the Gods...

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Lightning struck terror in his heart, sending crashing the towers of strength that he had hitherto drawn upon. Then stillness. And silence. And a vision of splendor which woke him dazed from the dream as eyes blinked sore in the scattered light of the jeweled deserts before him, endless deserts strewn with shining jewels as if they were but stones, a single blood red rose majestically towering before all in oppressive heat of the thousand suns: a lonely beauty in a world of shining beauty that was but worthless in the end. No living thing came in sight, no living thing came to meet him; only the silent empty endless undulating deserts parched under the suns. Only the deathly silence. The logic of his mind tore at his reason, sending it reeling insane as he wandered with direction in the endless sand, turned to mottled green in the place of his footsteps deep in the sand. On, on, on ... under the heat of a thousand suns, three words repeated muted under parched breath: must go on, go on, go on. ...cannot give up. He dragged his body on until it would go no more, and then fell he into the sand covered with shining jewels to sleep the deep sleep of exhaustion, the sleep of death.

Seven days did he sleep, the sleep that the wise ones talked of often as the sleep of the Ancients, wherein many things are foretold; wherein the white roebuck emerges quick from the ticket of obscurity and doubt, rending the veil of knowledge unknown. And waking did his mind wonder at all that had passed, at his glimpses of the realm of the Gods; as his fortune in being still alive (although doubted often if this were so) and understanding and knowing many of the things he heard in the distant past in the songs of the Bards. He awoke to a mountainous world of strange alien monoliths and vaulted temples, which cast dancing shadows monstrous upon the ground. He wandered awed through the alien things, until came he to one monolith as a circle in which sat a bearded old man, scratching strange signs upon the ground with a stick, whose human face was monstered by his non-existent eyes – for he had but holes like gates into the misty nebulous universe, twinkling with the dim light of distant stars. Unseeing he spake thus to the stranger come from worlds afar: Thou journey is but begun. The Sword which thou seekest is but the

Elixir of Life whose end am I. Look on me and tremble not, for it thou hast courage then the Gods will not deceive thee. But ever will they destroy those that faileth them. Lookest thou in the direction of the setting sun. Seest thou the skeletons that hide in the shadows? Seest thou the laughing skulls? Ah! They also came upon the quest like thee, but faileth the test of strength that availeth mortals not. Thou hast seen beyond the veil of man and seekest further – but ever prove that thou hand is worth to receive the Gold of the Gods! As the sun dies in the sky this day, and the darkness falls around thee, so shall thee prove thyself mortal or becoming god! Thus saying he changed into a raven and was gone. Darkness fell slightly, casting it heavy shroud upon the world, causing the night-song of alien things to rumble through the monoliths and tombs and temples. Waiting, waiting with tense expectation, jesting at companion fear – he heard the mighty roar of a lion prowling nearby, stalking its prey, defying the dark demons of the night. It circled. Again, yet closer. It sprang at its prey, vicious claws tearing deep into flesh, blood dancing upon the ground as vainly he struggled to hold the gaping mouth away from his body, muscles straining every last fiber in a titanic struggle of death. Thoughts fleeting as both tumbled over and over on the ground; as hand touched loose stone soon gripped and sent smashing into the blood drenched mane of the beast, again and again until the two bloods mixed and the body fell limp upon him. Last reserves of unknown strength to push away the bloodied carcass, as wounded he fell into sleep of pain and no dreams, bathed by blood.

Daylight pained his aching body as he staggered falling often over the ground, pursuing cool shade of the monolith. Unseen gentle hands raised the sleeping body onto a platform, carried away quick in the glinting sun passed laughing skulls and dead beast to the caves wherein dwelt the hill people. Days passed as he was cared for by them, ever sleeping, ever in fever of sickness and often near death.

Eyes opened slowly, seeing but blurs of things and closing and opening and seeing clear. Seeing the smiling faces of the ones who had cared for him and rejoiced at his awakening. They spoke of things he could not understand but did know, their small elf-like bodies aglow with the look of life mirrored in the humanoid face. In the days of waiting sick he learned of the next part of the quest, that it lay deep in the depths of the mountain, deeper into the bottomless caves at whose entrance he rested; deep into the red glow that came therefrom. He learned of the fire-breathing monsters that lay in wait, who could be slain only by a golden arrow shot straight into the eye; of the many perils of his quest of the Gods and the temptation to remain safe with the people of the hills, giant and stranger though he be among them. But ever did the songs of the Bards torment his mind, giving no rest.

Tears of sorrow and joy clouded his eyes as he began the perilous walk into the glowing tunnels of the cave that led to the pits below, guarded by monsters of strangeness, his arrows of gold slung over his back, bow gripped tight in hand. Far had he gone not when stood before him a fiery monster of odious type – dispatched screaming only by third shot arrow, falling into the red depths below the narrow path onward on which he stood. Down, down, down he walked until at last came he upon the Gates of the Beginning, the Gates of Alpha, made of the bones of the dead and the skin of the living – tortured screams from distorted faces that stank of the putrescence of alien horrors. Fearing not he passed through the Gates, overwhelmed by power, his nostrils free of the stench of decaying flesh.

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whose quest had brought him thus far, whose destiny guided him like a bow its arrow to the target. Soon would he jest with the endless stars of Eternity, which now called mocking out to him becoming god though he be. He ventured forth into the new world full of hope, greatest peril yet to come....

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He returns as the Bards foretold, grasping the Sword which slays all who stand against the Tree of creation, and which glistens quick in the rising morning sun which looks down upon scenes of rejoicing untold as begins again a new cycle of Wisdom and understanding which will, in time, bring forth the new seed of greatness that is above those gathered to celebrate the Dawn. The seed whose fruit echoes the quest of the Sword of Destiny, the Call of the Gods...

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Meditation, Mindfulness & Magick

There is nothing mysterious about meditation - essentially, it is a means of increasing one's awareness and vitality and is a fundamental part of Initiate training.

Techniques of meditation are numerous, but the two techniques taught by the Order are genuinely esoteric. The first, and most important, is the Star Game - used as a game, the Star Game is meditation, perhaps the most valuable ever devised. No special techniques are required - just a knowledge of the rules of play and some understanding of the symbolism of the pieces. Everything else follows naturally, in its own way and own time; nothing is strained. The Star Game in this sense is simply 'wu-wei' - that is, an aspect of 'physis' (note: 'physis' is a Greek word which can be translated depending on context as 'natural unfolding', 'the natural condition' or 'essence of Being').

The second technique of meditation is also very simple: it is a relaxed concentration on the spheres of the septenary Tree (for which see Noviciate Study Notes, 'Septenary Correspondences').

Mindfulness is a term applied to a particular state of mind - quite often that induced by meditation. It is a relaxed awareness of one's surroundings. There is no tension, indeed often no awareness of 'self' and can be cultivated by meditation, proper practice of Martial Arts, and techniques like blindfold walking. It is the outward appearance of inner strength and understanding and its cultivation is essential to mastery of the higher Grades of magickal initiation. It is the beginning of that profound empathy which it is one of the aims of the seven-fold way to create within the individual and which is the essence of all magick: an empathy which finds its most significant expression in the natural form of the Rite of Nine Angles.

The Wild Irish Boy (aka Melmoth)

For the five years following my successful External Adept rite, I focused mainly on Insight Roles, particularly enjoying the intensity of life as a gentleman thief. For a short time, I created a rather opulent lifestyle for myself and assorted mistresses, which I would occasionally have to keep afloat by lucrative and suitably Satanic means (I was an expert shot). However, being the person I was then, I spent quicker than I earned, and always ended up penniless.

My attempts at running Temples were far less enthusiastic: although there were the obvious sexual benefits, I tired very quickly of people. There were the trappings of Traditional Satanism, but essentially, those few short-lived Temples were nothing more than friendly gatherings of like-minded social deviants. But I knew, if I was to progress, that the time would come when a real Satanic Temple would need to be formed - one where I ruled, inspiring fear, obsession, love and respect from my followers. Unlike all other modern Occult 'Temples', this would be no 'democracy'; rather, I, as Master, would have to use my Will to ensnare the initiates of my Temple: to provide them with the riches of their hidden desires, in exchange for their souls. It was time for the façade to end, and to do some real sinister magick in the World.

I settled for a time in the south west of my country (Ireland), and happened to find myself involved in some local rural politics - nothing of any great significance, but interesting nevertheless. A local landowner was in the process of buying some land from the Council, with the intention of destroying a small and ancient woodland in order to build a few industrial units. This woodland had an interesting history: it was, according to local legend, a sacred site for thousands of years before the arrival of the Nazarene sickness, and had in recent years played host to a few rituals - most notably a performance of the chthonic rite of nine angles (this was an unsuccessful performance - the rite had to be abandoned after the individual I had the misjudgement to appoint as Guardian became hysterical). I joined together with a few locals, and we tried to fight the development via various legal campaigns - after all, some of the trees were supposedly protected by so-called 'preservation orders'.

But, as usual, money was exchanged behind the scenes, and the outcome had been decided by the Council from the outset. Whilst I was away - over the water - attempting to generate some cash (if you follow my meaning), the clearance of the wood was begun, and completed.

So much for my Temple members, who sat back and did nothing. We did however hold our own council meeting, and it was ruled that the landowner deserved the same fate as the trees. A Death Rite was performed, and some time later the 'energies' were given a practical helping hand with a carefully arranged 'accident'.

But that's by the by. What I learned first hand was the reality of modern 'democratic' societies in the West - money and ownership is absolute power and influence. And if anyone needed convincing, there is indeed a Freemasonic cabal - powered esoterically - at the heart of local and national governments. It should be obvious that their aims - which they are still achieving - run counter to those of the Sinister Dialectic.

So here I was, running Temples comprised of powerless individuals - 'individuals' from the fringes of society; artisans and outcasts, bohemians with no money, power or influence. I was sick of it. It was time to make Satan proud, for once, of His agents in the world.

So I scrapped all previous experiments with my Temples, and shunned my mediocre magickal associates. As all good Satanists should, I worked on my innate Machiavellian charm, built as it was upon the foundation of my magickal persona and nurtured by years of role playing. With the help of a contact living in Florida Keys, I set myself up in the antiques business, and began to charm myself into the right circles - attending dinner parties, and such like. Soon I was wealthy again and not only through shifting antiques - I was also acquainted with three mature ladies who provided me with a decent income in return for my physical talents.

One afternoon I was entertaining the rather lovely daughter of one of my aforementioned ladies, and I suggested that she might like to take part in a lucrative venture involving a webcam and her delightful body. Although she was a student at Cambridge, coming from her background it was not as if she needed

the money (although she was developing a drug habit, which I did nothing to discourage). It was just something I recognised in her - something vampish ...

Soon, the equipment was set up, and away we went. She enjoyed herself, and was willingly ensnared in my web. And her mother - whose husband was a prominent politician - found herself with little choice but to become my victim, given her addiction to my favours and the need to keep her husband in the dark. I expanded my webcam business to include a few more suitable girls, and happily the husband, by one means and another, became a customer of my little side-line. Trapped indeed. And all I asked in return was a suitable building to serve as a Temple, and their attendance at a few rituals. It is interesting (assuming of course that you possess the right sort of charm) to note how easy it is to draw out people's dark desires - or even create them anew, via skillful suggestion.

The resulting Temple exists worlds away from the imaginary of the modern Occult gathering: here, there is the otherness of the Lands of the Dark Immortals made real - for the creation of a Temple is not a game, but the opening of a world, real and tangible, to exist and seep outwards. For first time I was privileged to preside over a Black Mass where Satan was really made manifest - through the demonic joys of dark lust and the breaking of taboo; through the fears and passions of my Temple members, and through my own exultation in the subsequent influence over the external world which I am now able to wield.

Other members were drawn via easier means - by simply gaining their confidence and trust, and by gradually suggesting the thrill of the Sinister. In my experience, there are fewer people more secretly susceptible to the temptations of Satanism than the privileged classes. Soon, my Temple grew in numbers - all chosen solely according to their positions in society. And they are ultimately trapped by their own secret lusts which they will not control, and exposure is a constant and real threat which I have over them all.

So here, albeit in its beginnings, is the real meaning of a Satanic Temple: a powerful cabal to seriously rival the influence of the entrenched Freemasonic/Magian social engineers. Institutions are infiltrated and influenced, and observable change is implemented - all in accordance with my understanding of the Sinister dialectic, and perhaps also in accordance with that of one or two of my followers.

A village created in a remote rural area; the funding and practical aiding of a certain political group who are achieving some encouraging influence and success - all the conditions, at last, being practically realised to prepare the way for Vindex.

And my advice to all Satanic Initiates is this: forget asceticism - aim for wealth and means and hold onto it, for this is real Satanic power and influence. Smarten yourself up, cultivate style, and learn people-management.

We Satanists must be practical, not ethereal: for our role is to create real historical change, to the greater glory of our acausal selves ...

FD, House of Melmoth, ONA
114yf

postamble();

Moon	G major	Trapezoid	Hazel	
Mercury	E minor	Tetrahedron	Yew	
Venus	F sharp	Pyramid	Black Poplar	
Sun	D minor	Cuboid	Oak	
Mars	C major	Octohedron	Alder	
Jupiter	B flat	Icosahedron	Beech	
Saturn	A flat	Dodecahedron	Ash	

Moon



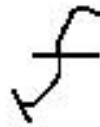
Mercury



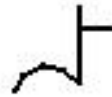
Venus



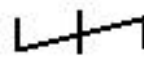
Sun



Mars



Jupiter



Saturn



MELOS AND AEONICS (With Additional Notes)

Seven represents the number of fundamental vibrations in the Universe – the seven types of cosmic energy. If an individual ‘mimics’ these, that itself is a key to magickal control. For example, music is divided into seven stages (C D E F G A B) and thus ‘mimics’ this fundamental structure. Thus, a piece of musick or chant can be composed which re-presents an aspect of this structure – this re-presentation being a type of force in itself. Thus, when played or sung, such musick/chant can alter the structure of the cosmos as any form of directed energy alters the underlying structure of the universe.

The aim of a deliberate magickal use of musick is to earth energies via the meduim of composition and/or performance, and to infect individuals/forms with those energies – thus to produce ‘change’ in accord with ‘sinister’ aims. What characteristics are expressive of the sinister? Heresy; the essence that disrupts the present to create future possibilities, a future that sees the liberation of spirit ... Beyond such statements the sinister is understood via the perception of the individual and this can only be achieved via participation.

Thus, a genuine artistic re-presentation of the sinister does not, as a rule, conform to the clichéd impressions of morbidity/horror/Mephistophelian glee. As an example, aspects are more re-presented in some of the works of Arvo Part (qv. ‘Passio’) than in works expressing the common conception of the sinister, such as some of the compositions of Liszt (qv. ‘Malediction’). However, with the exception of the compositions of a few individuals such as Scriabin, the effectiveness of most notable works (and here I am referring to those of Western composers) is offset by the libretto, or text. This is so because most works which have aspired to an ideal of beauty, which have attempted to capture the numinous – compositions that essentially have sought to reflect the ethos of the Western civilization – have used the Nazarene religion as a focal point. The obvious consequence of this is the aiding of Nazarene (and associated) energies and the distortion of that Promethean spirit by which the musick itself was inspired. This is especially evident in the ‘Requiem’ by various composers. This is to say that musick, understood properly as a form by which large scale changes may be implemented, has been hijacked by those with a vested interest in continuing the distortion of the West.

In the first instance, this distortion resulted in a textual celebration of the Nazarene; musick itself, for the most part, remained, in its power to convey racial élan, unaffected by this distortion until the beginning of the 20th century with, most notably, the emmergence of ‘expressionism’. Initially then, from the ‘Dark Ages’ up the the early 1900’s, a musickal composition only became a focal point for a particular form via association (through text, symbolism, and so on) and not because the musick in itself was a genuine re-presentation of that form. This is so because musick derives (or at least, used to) from that unique soul which defines the culture of a civilization (‘melos’): genuine Art cannot emmerge from this.

To elaborate further, consider ‘sacred’ musick. This, as a form, is so defined by a particular compositional structure; that is, the musick, even without text, would be, because of its form, identified by most as expressing something ‘sacred’ (of the Nazarene sort). However, the musick is not in essence re-presentative of the religion it was constructed to express, because such a religion does not exist within the Western soul. In creating a form to outwardly express the qualities of religious awe and worship initially drawn out by the Nazarene, the composer unconsciously re-presents a ‘sacredness’ inspired by an aspect of acausal energy which gave rise to Western culture. Thus, one way of counteracting Nazarene energies is to replace a ‘sacred’ text

with one that expresses the Promethean/Thorian/Satanic soul, whilst retaining the original musickal form of the piece (qv. 'Diabolus').

However as stated, the sickness of the Western soul intensified during the early 20th century when there occurred a radical move away from the principles of tonality and the diatonic scale, hitherto the basis for all great classical western compositions. Just because tonality formed a framework for compositions did not make composing restrictive – not in essence. Yet it was opposed – not unsurprisingly, considering that the basis for 'new music' was an (pseudo) intellectual one.

The main challenge to tonality emanated from Arnold Schoenberg who created the school of serialist technique, from which the 'twelve note' composers emerged. The principles of atonality subsequently spawned 'Rock', amongst other forms. Thus, the fundamental vibrations of the Universe, as understood esoterically, were disrupted and rejected; essentially, musick itself ceased to reflect the glorious soul of the West – instead, the decline and destruction of civilization.

Whether or not it is desirable to hasten the end of this decadent society and replace it with something much more in keeping with the Western culture as it was meant to have developed, is up to each individual Adept to decide. However there are ways of destroying and serialism, indeterminacy et al are incapable of doing this. At its most effective, all that this 'new music' can achieve is a bout of hedonism; at its least effective, pseudo-intellectual gratification. As delightful as such things are to some people, what, in the final analysis, is the Aeonic point? What of any genuine significance is achieved? 'New music' is outside the fundamental vibrational structure, therefore it cannot effect significant changes; creative or destructive. In this light, all that a form such as 'rock' represents is degeneracy, and ultimately that is all it will produce. And yet, as a continuing strand of the distortion of the West, the influence of 'new music' is all pervasive and as such should be rejected if Western evolution is to resurge.

For genuine Adepts, the main point is that the foundations of any Art need not be rejected just because they are foundations. This rejection is exactly what the Western sickness desires. As Vaughn Williams said: "Great musick is written, I believe, not by breaking the tradition, but by adding to it"...

The conscious understanding and use of processes by which large-scale change may be implemented is the foundation of Aeonics. For those Adepts (those of the creative minority who determine the metamorphosis of a culture – qv Order MS 'Emanations of Urania') who possess this understanding, the aim of successfully reversing the decline in Western culture is quite possible. This understanding implies the creation of a new form of musick – this newness being defined; as the deliberate prescencing of the sinister. From an esoteric angle, if one wished to create such a new form, there are some basic guidelines that would be useful to explore – some of these are listed in the Notes. To give an example of how these guide lines would be applied in composition, consider the creation of a piece designed to re-present energies associated with the sphere of Venus – that is, 'love/enchantment'. Firstly, the piece would be in the key of F sharp. The text, if to be employed, would perhaps make mention of Darkat, the 'entity' traditionally associated with Venus, and/or would make use of the text employed by the traditional chant associated with that sphere ('Agius Elutrodes' – see 'Naos'). Perhaps this piece would be an orchestrated form of the chant. To further extend this new re-presentation, the musick could be an aspect of complete artistic expression; that is, an expression combining image, movement and sound (as in Scriabin's proposed 'Mysterium'). Such an expression is outlined briefly in the MS 'Nine Angles and Dance'.

In a genuine culture, there are only ever Warriors. The meaning of Art as pursued by academics the world over is actually quite simple: to aid the Destiny of one's own Folk. It is rarely understood that the essence of a civilization is not measured by the qualities of its art ('qualities' being subject to temporal, temporary understanding), but by the way it lives – the creative output of a civilization being simply, to a lesser or greater extent, consequences of this way of living. What matters is not the magnificence of Art, but whether a work successfully imbues a society with a sense of its own importance. Thus, a solo piano piece is capable of being equally, if not more successful than a symphony.

Civilization, then, is not Art; thus, all Art, per se, is useless – beyond self-gratification. In essence, the skills of the Artist are only of worth if they are used for the greater good of the Folk. (Note: this is equally true of Martial Arts skills – qv. 'Physis' MSS.)






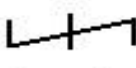

It should be apparent by now that one of the prerequisites for success is that a piece of music must convey Nationalism. Whilst this may imply certain compositional guidelines (beyond the esoteric ones outlined above), this need not always be the case. For example, some authorities maintain that in order for a work to successfully communicate Nationalistic values, the composer must use/make reference to national musick, or folk song. While this reference to folk song may be, up to a point, effective (as in Vaughn Williams, or Delius) the attitude toward this approach is not dissimilar to that of Occultists concerned with resurrecting old folk traditions. These traditions either now do not exist; that is, they are no longer in essence relevant to a society's way of living, or they never did exist in any real sense, being romantic projections upon the events of past ages (eg. 'Rune Gilds', 'wicca' etc). A genuine Nationalist need not quote from folk songs because s/he is so imbued with the 'melos' that the musick by virtue of this alone conveys Nationalism. Nor is it entirely necessary to employ 'occult' symbolism, or rather, symbols of an overtly esoteric nature. One need only listen to Beethovens Ninth to appreciate this point. Also, for the most part, musicians/composers need not be Occultists; the source of power has already been found – the power to transform.

There has never been a time when we knew more than we do now. With Aeonic understanding, the missing link in Art has been discovered – real purpose, real vision: Destiny. Without this understanding there is no Art; anything else is just solipsism. For all genuine Artists there really is only one course of action.

C. Beest 1994eh.

NOTES

Moon	G major	Trapezoid	Hazel	
Mercury	E minor	Tetrahedron	Yew	
Venus	F sharp	Pyramid	Black Poplar	
Sun	D minor	Cuboid	Oak	
Mars	C major	Octohedron	Alder	
Jupiter	B flat	Icosahedron	Beech	
Saturn	A flat	Dodecahedron	Ash	

Moon	
Mercury	
Venus	
Sun	
Mars	
Jupiter	
Saturn	

Seperate Notes : Ryan A.

If you're acquainting yourself with the ONA MSS referring to esoteric/plain chant – these notes may help you circumvent the waste of time I endured trying to gain a better understanding of both the notation and the scales.

In modern music, the Dorian scale, is represented as being the scale of notes from D to D (with a lowered 3rd and 7th pitch). Apparently however, there was a distortion imposed upon the scale by misinterpretation (Boethius) and this modern representation is flawed.

Below is the link to a site which details the 9/10 Ancient Greek Modes, apparently without the distortion. From this I have devised the following table:

SPHERE	MODE	MODE NO.	SCALE
Moon	Dorian	IV	E-E
Mercury	Hypodorian/Aeolian	VI	A-A
Venus	Hyperdorian/Mixolydian	V	B-B
Sol	Hypolydian	III	D-D/G-G
Mars	Hypophrygian/Ionian	IX	A-A
Jupiter	Lydian	I	C-C
Saturn	Phrygian	VII	D-D

Source: http://www.pan-pipes.com/Greek_Ancient_Modes%A0.htm

Of course, this correspondance is directly related to this site and its information and as close as possible a match to the correspondences detailed by the Ona in Naos. The extra modes however, cause a disruption in the I,II,III,IV,V,VI,VII,VIII, assignments to the spheres as listed in Naos, and cause some spheres to be transposed to an entirely different mode number altogether. The Ancient Greek Modes contained within this site seem the most genuine exponent I've come across yet – but this isn't to say they are matched correctly with the correspondances of the Ona. And not being a musician I add no opinion.

On the subject of plainchant, the history of plainchant, and learning neumes, (square note notation), the following sites were of vital assistance to me.

<http://lphrc.org/Chant/index.html> (neumes & notation)

<http://www.schuyesmans.be/gregoriaans/> (neumes, notation, history, diagrams)

END OF DOCUMENT.

MSS Fragment (partial text)

Note: This MSS is incomplete and untitled. Only the first page exists.

Aeonic magick is concerned with two things:

- 1) understanding the fundamental principles of how certain types of magickal energy (existing in the acausal) manifests and may be made manifest in the causal; and how those energies when so manifest produce temporal change;
- 2) actually using such energies – via rites, etc. – to bring such change in accord with one’s desire or goal.
 - (1) implies learning about aeons and civilizations – how both are formed, live, decay and change via acausal energies – and about those within them, from individuals upward, are changed and manipulated by the various forms the acausal energies assume. Among such forms are archetypes, myths and mythos, ideas, symbols (including artistic representations), as well as the more transient types like politics and religion.
 - (2) implies learning the skills of aeonic magick and follows after (1). The basic skills are the aeonic rites (e.g. the Nine Angles rites; Ceremony of Recalling), the Star Game, and creative manipulation of symbols, ideas and so on (including the more transient forms).
- (1) is covered in the many and varied Order MSS dealing with Aeonics and details of the basic skills are given in “Naos”, “Black Book” and the various rituals (most now available in various publications). This present MS will deal with an area not specifically covered before with a view to dispelling some misconceptions.

Sinister Aeonic magick implies the actual use of energies – by individuals – bringing change(s) to the “real” or temporal world. This use is often misunderstood by non-Adepts of sinister traditions, and particularly by those who adhere to the old distorted magic(k)al systems. For instance, aeonic magick was used earlier this century to aid a new political form and so try and alter in a significant way the direction of the Western civilization in order to bring about certain futures. These futures (the plural is intentional) would, if they had resulted, have led to the expansion of both a technological and thence an individual kind over a period of many centuries – and this because of the dynamic nature of the form chosen as well as the future transformation of it, via dialectic and internal metasomatoses. The most identifiable manifestation (i.e. causal appearance) of this form was National Socialist Germany. However, most individuals who consider this form, consider it not from an aeonic standpoint but rather from a limited, causal and moral point of view – a view they take, also, of more recent attempts by other individuals and groups, to use that and similar forms for magickal ends.

The perspective of this view is immediate rather than of centuries and millennia and shows a fundamental lack of understanding of not only aeonic but also magick itself.

The reality is that all significant magick is either Aeonic or Internal: External magick is but a child’s game, to be played while learning the most basic skills of magick, or for amusement, perhaps, later on. To a real magickian, all types of political (as well as religious and cultural) forms are means – to be used if they are useful for aeonic or internal magickal goals.

Genuine Adepts use many temporal forms – although they never identify with them in the sense of adhere to them causally: from a psychic perspective. In the initial stages of the seven-fold way, for example, some “roles” may be assumed by the Initiate to bring insight, challenges and generally experience the “forbidden”, the contrary, the “heretical”. But these roles are only that – part of an internal, psychic and thus sinister manipulation of forms. Later....

Subsequent pages missing....

NOTES ON ESOTERIC TRADITION I

The septenary tradition (for notes on its origin see MS Physis: The Third Way) was carried on for centuries by mostly reclusive Adepts who sought and trained one or perhaps two individuals to carry on the 'cult'.

The original teachings were concerned mostly, with preserving what was seen as the 'sacred tradition' concerning both the division of cosmic forces into seven fundamental forms and the mythos of the 'Dark Gods'. The first was based on the apprehension that there were seven basic forms of 'energy' within both the cosmos and the individual within it- that is the natural structure of both involved seven fundamental principles/forms and so on.

By understanding these seven principles in all their forms and manifestations it was believed that 'wisdom' could be attained- as well as a knowledge of how to change these forms: that is, 'alter the balance' both in the cosmos itself and in individuals.

Gradually, these 'secret' teachings percolated through to 'non-Adepts' and to some extent became enshrined in various myths and Legends of various societies, the first recorded appearance being in the civilization of Sumeria (where they were derived from contact with the Hyperborean culture in Albion). Over many centuries, this 'public manifestation' of the tradition evolved, giving rise to many and various fantastic notions and superstitions.

Later manifestations of the 'genuine' tradition surfaced in Ancient Greece most noticeably in the Pythagorians and the mysteries of the Kabeiroi. In the non-esoteric sense, it was present to some extent in some of the Pre-Socratic philosophers.

With the arrival of the Nazarene tyranny these outwards forms/manifestations were suppressed, although to some extent they flourished secretly.

The decline of the Hellenic civilization coincided with the Eastward turning of those who sought these 'mysteries' (the Byzantine period). Gradually, this Byzantine expression became part of the Arab world, where various treatises were written concerning it. This is particularly true of what later became known as the 'alchemical tradition' - this tradition being a continuation of some aspects of the earlier mysteries.

The 'secret' tradition - whose origin lay in Albion-, continued within the confines of its original country, one of its manifestations being the 'Priesthood' which later became identified with the Druids. Over the many centuries the teachings changed and evolved - but they were always to an extent rudimentary and 'empathic' That is, they lacked any great element of self-Insight or rational understanding and it is true to say that the long period between the fall of the Hyperborean culture (roughly 1,000 BN and the 'Dark Ages' represented a decline in the tradition and its 'magick'.

Of course, elements survived, mostly secretly, but there was little genuine understanding. It is fair to add that this account is disputed by one authority who maintains that the core of the tradition remained. This authority claims that practitioners of the tradition actually used the 'Grail' c. 700 AD to 'Open a Gate' and thus create a Western Aeon.

Whatever the truth of the claim of the tradition remaining in essence as well as in practice, all authorities agree that:

(a) the 'Grail' of the legend was actually a large crystal (qv. Phereder and ben Beirdd von Eschnbach revealed part of this truth when he called the Grail 'lapsit ex coelis'. The distortion into a 'Nazarene holy vessel' began with a Nazarene hermit, remembered by Heliandrus) and

(b) Albion/Logree was, and is, the centre of the tradition - particularly important regarding practical forms (i.e. 'Aeonic changes').

Whatever the truth about the 'decline', a new impetus was given first by the spread of Hellenic ideas (for which contact with the Arab world via the Crusaders/Template was of some importance) and second by the creativity which had begun to flourish again within Europe This led to the 'secret tradition' becoming better understood and more rationally (i.e. 'scientifically') expressed. This evolution continued for many centuries¹ one of its most obvious outward expressions being Alchemy. The tradition however, remained limited to a very few; although the ideas (and some of the practice) behind it filtered out, spread and became changed.

It was about this time else that the qabalistic tradition began: both in terms of magic and in terms of appearing to be the 'inner Western tradition'. What actually happened was a revival of the old 'grimoire/demonic' approach to magic (see the MS Physis The Third Way) together with an attempt to further supplant the Nazarene ethos within the developing Western civilization. Gradually, the qabalistic Nazarene orientated system became established. This system was not, however, subject to any further evolution/ development.

The septenary tradition, however, Carried by a small and ever decreasing number of Adepts, did develop: particularly in (a) the practical methods used to bring about 'Gnosis/create the Philosophers' stone' and (b) the symbolism devised to aid a rational understanding (see, for further elucidations, the MS 'The Forbidden Alchemy'). There were also some attempts to 'Open acausal Gates' with a view to changing aeonic forces/achieving specific goals - the last significant one being 1920 ev.

This development of the Septenary tradition continued until the present time and it is in the last few decades that significant progress has been made with regard to refining the techniques (of what it now called Internal magick) and aiding our conscious understanding (the development of the Star Game being a significant achievement).

To some extent, the evolution of the techniques which form the basis of the septenary/Dark tradition can be traced. Originally the basis was what is now called 'mimesis' (qv. notes on Aeonics etc), and the approach was essentially empathic (based on 'Physis'). These had their origin in Albion during Hyperborean times. The empathic approach was gradually, over many centuries, developed and came to include an intuitive understanding of such things as crystals and control of natural forces/ energies (what we now call hermetic/internal magick). In one sense the archetypal figure of the Mage/High Priestess, is a representation of this early period of development. Together with this, was an oral tradition regarding the power/use of sound (i.e. what we now know as magickal vibration) together with art intuitive appreciation of the esoteric basis of 'music/chant' (although this was not by any means really understood). There was also a 'cultus/mythos' regarding sinister energies (i.e. the 'Dark Gods').

It must be remembered that evolution of the techniques was a slow process and the fundamental empathic/intuitive approach remained in the magickal centre (Albion), for the many, many centuries, producing through the ages the reclusive Adept (like the Merlin of legend). It was only really during the 'Dark Ages' - with the insights attained via Hellenic learning - that extensive development took place. This continued steadily until the present day. The great step forward was an abstract symbolism. Originally understanding was developed via archetypal myths or symbolism (for the latter qv. particularly 'Ursa Major' as the septenary). The Tree of Wyrd for example, evolved slowly and confusingly at first and even when, in the Middle Ages, it attained most of its present form, it was still not understood in the same way we understand it now - that is, it is now seen as a re-presentation of how the acausal becomes manifest in the causal whereas then it was seen as a representation of the cosmos and Man. Our current

understanding Involves new concepts- the bifurcation of 'time' both expressions of the Change of Being. These new concepts refine and enhance our understanding.

Likewise the development of magick. There was, at first, empathic workings. Later, 'hermetic' techniques came to be developed. Shortly thereafter the first ceremonial forms evolved (e.g. early versions of what is now the Ceremony of Recalling) - imitations of septenary patterns/energies (although of course at the time they were not understood in that way). Much later, ceremonial magick as a codified ritual, developed - particularly in response to Nazarene tyranny: hence the development, in the Middle Ages, of the Black Mass, the 'Satanic Mass'.

Similarly the tradition chant developed. From the early beginnings in Albion about the use of sound to the influence of Hellenic thought at the beginnings of the Middle Ages. (This is one aspect of the tradition that has remained virtually unchanged since about the 12th. Century).

Until about thirty or so years ago, the tradition of oral teaching, and transmission from Master/Mistress to pupil on an individual basis continued - although from time to time 'Temples' (never large in number and always strictly secret and secretive) were formed. Then a 'more' open approach was begun, with the creation of some hidden Temples and the secret recruitment of larger numbers than had been the case hitherto. This culminated in the early part of the 1980's, with the dissemination in Occult circles of some of the septenary tradition, a process which continues, given the wider acceptance of the 'Occult' and the need to make the tradition/methods more accessible to hasten a new Aeon/opening another gate.

The evolution in methods, together with the creative development of the septenary, will continue in the future - probably toward a more abstract symbolism enabling even greater insight.

Thus it can be seen that the septenary is a steadily accumulating body of 'esoteric' knowledge. All Adepts of the tradition add to it - either directly, by creatively extending its frontiers /methods or indirectly by their magick and their teaching of new Initiates.

Notes on Insight Rôles, and a Weird Life

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 - 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.

Thus, an individual who found it difficult to accept authority - a rebel by nature - might choose as an 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 guidelines re victims) of some property or other assets. 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, 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.

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.

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", covert activity, assassinating suitable offers, 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.

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 completed the rite of Internal Adept. Their Insight Rôle, however, must have an Aeonic aspect.

A Weird Life

The esoteric understanding of my life - details of which I have recounted in two secret MSS, one for perusal now by Initiates only [*Presencing the Dark: The Weird Life of Anton Long*], the other, a complete and encrypted version, for publication three decades from now - is that it is, and can be, a sinister inspiration to some, and, more importantly, that from that life I have distilled the quintessence as the practical techniques of the ONA.

Thus, these techniques - of Internal Magick, codified, for instance, in the Grade Rituals, in Insight Rôles and the tasks of the Seven-Fold Way - can produce in individuals the insights, the evolution, the knowledge, that I myself acquired as a result of my many deeds and diverse wanderings and involvements. That is, is not necessary - to become a sinister Adept - for everyone to do what I did. With

these techniques, genuine Adeptship and beyond becomes accessible to and possible for anyone possessed of the character to venture along the sinister path. Thus can the number of such Adepts be increased.

Anton Long
ONA 114yf

postamble());

Notes on the creation of Sinister Tarot

[These recollections have been recorded following a request by ED.]

The first 'emanations' were created by "CB" over a two year period, during his six month stage of Initiate, and following his External Adept rite. The guidelines in *Naos* perfectly illustrate archetypal sinister magick: taking existing recognised and established symbolism and then subtly distorting/transforming it along sinister lines. The guidelines themselves - whether or not a deck is actually created - serve to describe the nature of sinister magick.

CB decided to attempt another but equally sinister approach: to create an entirely new set of images, replete with unique and self-contained symbolism as befits the tradition of the ONA - and to further contribute to an evolving tradition.

In order to avoid simple solipsism, CB decided to take information direct from his Dark Sphere and Pathworkings. These workings were undertaken at three different stages during this two year period. [The last working resulted in the publication of *Caelethi*, a rite which is a particular ordering of the pathways, the final aim of which is the creation of a 'wraith'⁽¹⁾]. The results were recorded in a diary and formed the foundations for the designs.

In an attempt to further the uniqueness of the project, CB decided to create an entirely new symbolism representing the Dark Gods, Spheres and associated forms. This he did by constructing an helical numerical system based on seven: from this structure, the symbols were derived. In 'Azoth' for example, the silver structure/symbol relates to Luna energies - menstruation, in particular; in 'Magus of Chalices' the entire image is seen through the prism of a symbol - this symbol representing a dark god of female aspect. This system also proved useful in encoding additional information not recorded elsewhere, concerning the Tradition and its histories. The symbols hold much potential, beyond the confines of the Tarot.

Another important factor in the imagery is the depiction of areas associated with the Tradition; mostly places in the Welsh Marches - although there are some interesting exceptions (these depictions become increasingly significant to the creative process in the Second Emanations). In the 'The Magickian', CB painted the image of the squatter's cottage without knowing of its actual existence - a fact later confirmed by his guide when the card was completed. In some cases, the landscape is a combination of two or more locations.

The Second Emanations span a longer period, being energies earthed via other experiences - such as several arduous Insight Roles. The Magus and Mousa cards were created in the first few years following his completion of the ordeal of Internal Adept. The 'Magus of Chalices' card was the final image to be completed, after which CB had felt he had said all he could say within that framework.

CB's Sinister Tarot was not intended to be an 'official' creation, but merely one attempt by one adherent to manifest the infinite emanations of the Sinister. It is hoped other collections by other individuals will follow.

Brenna
114yf

1. The original MS of *Caelethi* differed to the published version, containing additional information concerning the rite. This version was in limited circulation during the early 1990's. The original MS is now lost.

Noviciate reading list
Greetings,

Does anyone know what is this "reading list" ?

"In addition, a certain amount of background reading will be undertaken (see Reading List) and novices will be expected to prepare ..."

Thanks

Noviciate Studies: Study Notes
(O.N.A 1975 ev)

These study notes are designed to enable the novice to progress at their own pace. They are a supplement to the personal tuition, and must be understood in this light.

Novices will study the 21 topics listed in order, although some exceptions may be made to take into account individual interests and ability. All novices will start with a study of the Golden Dawn and Qabalah, and are expected to complete the tasks and questions on the Study sheet. Satisfactory completion of this will enable them to progress to Crowley and Thelema after which they will be invited for personal (and occasionally, group) tuition on a mutually convenient basis. ONA teachings begin with the 4th topic. Star Game Magick.

ONA: Noviciate Studies

Before Initiation, novices must serve a probationary period of not less than three months during which they must construct a Star Game (see 'Book of Wyrd') and become familiar with its use. In addition, a certain amount of background reading will be undertaken (see Reading List) and novices will be expected to prepare themselves physically in order to be ready for the study of the Martial Art which forms an important part of noviciate training.

After Initiation, novices will be required to study, under supervision, the Septenary system, the Star Game and magick

according to ONA and other traditions. Other forms of magick are taught so that novices will have a thorough magickal training. Study notes and Order MSS will be available to aid this, and personal tuition given. In addition, novices will be expected to perform, under guidance, hermetic magick and may be invited to participate in certain ceremonial rituals.

The following will form part of noviciate studies:

- 1) Golden Dawn/qabalistic magick*
- 2) Crowley and Thelema
- 3) Witchcraft*
- 4) Star Game magick*
- 5) Septenary correspondences
- 6) Tarot - a)Qabalistic; b) ONA tradition*
- 7) I Ching
- 8) Hermetic magick according to ONA tradition*
- 9) ONA: Origins, history and traditions
- 10) Organizing a magickal group*
- 11) Alchemy and ONA tradition
- 12) Mythos of Satan*
- 13) Left handed traditions of magick*
- 14) Martial Arts - introduction*
- 15) Physis - ONA Martial Art*
- 16) Esoteric Martial Arts Schools and ONA tradition*
- 17) Mythos of the Nine Angles
- 18) Star Game - advanced magick*
- 19) Esoteric chants*
- 20) The New Aeon - esoteric aspects
- 21) Homo Galactica

Items marked * involve practical and/or physical training.

Subject to a satisfactory noviciate, members will undertake the Grade Ritual of External Adept. Success in this will enable the newly Professed member to continue with and expand on a permanent basis the local group which it is one of the tasks of a novice to organize and run.

Physical Training: It is suggested that successful candidates for Order membership undertake on a regular basis some form of physical exercise to prepare themselves for the noviciate. Recommended are cycling and/or running at least three times a week, intensity and duration depending on one's present level of fitness. Training schedules and personal guidance can be given, if required.

Noviciate Studies: Notes

Golden Dawn/Qabalah:

i) Tasks: read 'The Mystical Qabalah' by Dion Fortune and, if possible Regardie's 'Golden Dawn' (4 vols.)

ii) The qabalistic system and ceremonial magic of the Golden Dawn type implicitly accept the duality of the cosmos that is fundamental to Yeshua- type worship. Thus the so-called 'clash of eternal opposites'. However, the forces behind magick are neutral and there exist on this planet no intelligence greater than that possessed by Man (note: natural forces are not 'intelligent' - intelligence implies Thought).

Certain natural forces may be symbolized by archetypal forms (for example, Satan) but these forms have their origin in our consciousness and because we possess will and the power of Thought, such forms can be controlled and used according to our will and desire provided such use is already present in the archetypal form.

The Golden Dawn system accepts the existence of intelligences other than Man. Satanists accept that the genuine scientific method (where experience and experiment have priority over dogmatic belief and religious 'revelation') is the greatest liberation yet achieved* in the realm of developed consciousness, and judged scientifically the qabala is pathetic. Worse, it does not even represent intuitively those forces which at present are little understood in the scientific sense (and which form the basis of most Magick). Intuitively such forces were represented (that is, before the development of strict scientific thought) by the septenary system - the genuine Western tradition.

iii) Comment on (ii) above in the light of (i). How far do you agree or disagree?

iv) Novices will be sent a) a symbol to be meditated upon. The symbol will derive from Golden Dawn 'tradition', and the results of the meditation to be recorded and submitted; b) a hermetic ritual involving the use of qabalistic symbolism.

* Those interested should read Harre, R: 'Matter and Method' (Macmillan, 1964), Dampier, W.C.: 'A History of Science' (Cambridge 1946) or Toulmin, S: 'The Philosophy of Science' (1955).

Crowley and Thelema:

- i) Read Crowley's 'Magick' and his 'Book of the Law'.
- ii) Compare Crowley's work with the 'Satanic Bible' by LaVey. Which philosophy and system of magick encourages a healthy attitude toward life, and why? Would you agree that qabalistic systems elevate obscure, so-called arcane law over instincts?

Septenary Correspondences:

- i) Study the Correspondences as given in the Order MSS. Relate each sphere of the septenary tree to its magickal grade.
- ii) After becoming familiar with the correspondences (for not less than a week and not more than a month) begin the seven week period of meditation on each sphere.

Set aside a time each day (of not less than half an hour and not more than two hours) during which one can remain undisturbed and gather a few of the attributes associated with the first sphere - for example, quartz, silver. Assume one of the meditation positions, as taught, and vibrate the word of power (Nox) also as taught orally. Then visualize the magickal image of the part of the sphere one is working with (that is, 0- stage Tarot card. 18 Moon*) and continue the visualization for as long as possible, vibrating the word of power occasionally.

Then, according to advice given in personal tuition, either the forces involved will be used in a hermetic- ritual with an aim appropriate to the sphere (for which see the [salt image] and [mercury and Adept images] Tarot aspects of the sphere), or the forces will be used to strengthen the Initiate's magickal double according to the method taught privately.

This pattern is to be repeated for each sphere at the rate of one sphere a week. Results/effects to be recorded in magickal diary. Those novices who have chosen to strengthen their magickal double will then perform an exercise in astral travel/projection as directed by their tutor.

- See ONA Tarot- cards.

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Novus Ordo Seclorum
An Interview with Anton Long
Vindex Division, 114yf

Introduction - Little, if anything needs to be said in introduction to this interview with Anton Long - his first and last. It illustrates not only current aims, but brutal and dark reality of genuine Satanism.

We are now amid an interesting and important time, where some anti-Aeon forces have been directly attacked to sizeable consequence for the first time in many decades. What does this mean to current esoteric aims, and how much closer does it bring the west to the purging of Magian influence?

A: There is a lot to be done to purge this Magian influence, which now emanates from America. The recent practical attacks against them have forced them to react in the way one might have expected given their own primitive ethos. Thus, they have created the basis for a world-wide tyranny and America itself has now descended into a type of Police State with its armed forces used to pacify and dominate other countries and bring them under Magian control.

In the esoteric war against the Magian and their influence, America is now the primary battleground, for without the resources of America their current world-wide influence would begin to wane. Thus, Adepts and Initiates in America have a crucial role to play in the war against the Magian and their anti-evolutionary aims.

What are the most important tactics initiates (particularly those within the United States) can use in aiding current esoteric aims? What rites and what tasks are most appropriate to these aims?

A: There are both esoteric, and exoteric, tactics. The esoteric include increasing the number of Initiates and Adepts; spreading the sinister esoteric tradition itself; forming sinister groups whether ONA based or otherwise, and performing various rites, both ceremonial and hermetic, which not only counter the esoteric energies of the Magian but which also presence sinister energies in both causal and acausal ways. By acausal ways is meant presencing by means of rites such as the Nine Angles with the energies left to disperse as they will. By causal is meant channeling the energy in specific ways, to disrupt certain things such as groups, organizations, or target/attack specific individuals.

The exoteric includes supporting or aiding, either openly or covertly, any and all things which can disrupt and counter the Magian and their influence, and disseminating the ideals, archetypes, forms which express the sinister energies appropriate to the New Aeon. Such exoteric things include politics and political groups - especially National-Socialist and Folk Culture ones - and practical covert, direct, action against the government, the infrastructure of society and individuals who support or aid the Magian. It should be noted that such covert, revolutionary, political-type action is not appropriate for all Initiates: only some. Also, such exoteric things are exoteric - that is, forms to presence the acausal. As such, they are not the essence, but rather a means appropriate to the current and near-future situations. Initiates should remember this, especially in relation to political forms.

One very important method, a priority - both esoterically and exoterically - is to prepare the way for Vindex: for an individual of Destiny who has the charisma to lead a practical revolt against the Magian. All the indications are that this person can only emerge in America: hence the importance of the work of American sinister Initiates and Adepts. Esoterically, such preparation involves performing rites, both ceremonial and hermetic, which invoke Vindex, and others which aim to produce energies which can be focused into an appropriate image. This image may be a sigil, or an image of a person, or at least an apprehension of what Vindex, as an individual, might look like. Exoterically, such preparation involve disseminating the idea of Vindex, of a person of Destiny who embodies evolutionary energies: who is a

person to both Sun and Steel, to use a phrase of Mishima's. Vindex is a new archetype, and one which sinister Initiates and Adepts must create through their magickal workings.

Vindex may be a man - but there is nothing to prevent this role, this archetype, being assumed by a woman. In fact, a female Vindex would be quite a phenomena.

Vindex must be anticipated in literature; in esoteric rites; in music; in Art; in images; in political propaganda, and so on. New rites must be created which invoke Vindex, and which channel the archetypal energies so produced.

As I write, America is within days of attacking and invading Iraq. While the premises are entirely questionable (at best), it may serve to upset America's place amongst its allies – weakening its global power – and also inviting added displeasure on the part of Islamic states and peoples. Is this the type of unrest that is a necessary prelude for change on an Aeonic level?

A: It is a part of it. The present power structures - manifest, for example, in the New World order led by America in thrall to the Magian and their messianic dreams - must be broken down, destroyed and replaced. The current global conflict, against Muslims and Muslim groups such as those led by Osama bin Laden, is one means whereby such change may occur, for this conflict will hopefully continue for a number of years, thus straining the resources of the federal government of America, weakening it economically. The more the US sustains casualties in this conflict with Islam, the better, Aeonically, for such casualties will change the attitude of the American people toward the war.

In addition, there should be, and hopefully will be, social and political unrest in America itself. All such conflicts will be a prelude to the emergence of the New Aeon, which will be born out of the destruction of the old. This means, in practical terms, the destruction of the America that exists today: a move away from a federal government and perhaps back to the old idea of more independent States within America. It may be from one of these States, or a part of it, that the New Aeon will assume a practical social and political form.

Is an Imperium for the current Aeon beyond realistic hope, or can the destiny of the west still be achieved? If so – how is such a destiny different from what could have become of NS Germany?

A: Nothing is beyond us, if we access and channel the right energies in the right way - which means toward the destruction of the forces of the old Aeon, represented now by the New World Order - and toward the emergence of Vindex. We create - or rather, can create - our own Destiny. If enough Initiates and Adepts work toward that Destiny, it will be achieved.

NS Germany was an intimation of what might be; what could be achieved when a people are organized in a certain way. It was a necessary beginning, which ended as it should. From its ending, lessons were learnt; and magickal energies became manifest. Only now can we create what is necessary because only now do we rationally understand and thus can use our will to achieve what can and should be achieved. This is one meaning of the ONA: a rational codification of the esoteric understanding achieved over millennia; an emanation of some of the techniques, such as Internal and Aeonic magick, which can take us toward and beyond the next stage of our human evolution.

To me, one of the things that exemplifies the purpose of the tradition, are Insight Roles. Should one be inclined to undertake an Insight Role that specifically aids Aeonic aims, if it is possible they will continue the role at some later point with Aeonic, rather than individual purposes?

A: You are quite correct about Insight Roles. The old roles, which I inherited, lacked an Aeonic aspect: they were designed to test and develop the individual, and as such were a technique of what I have called Internal magick.

If Insight Roles are to be used again - and they should be - then they must have an Aeonic aspect, which means they aid in some way the sinister dialectic. Thus, new roles can be developed which test and evolve the individual (or break them) and which presence the dark in a practical way. I am in the process of writing some new ONA MSS which describe such new Insight Roles. An Insight Role, to be effective, must be lived for at least one year.

It seems in past years a certain Insight Role pertaining to politics has become something of an obvious and predictable choice. In this case, most initiates have already confronted their programmed ideas, once the time is right for an Insight Role. Should not an Insight Role be something that would otherwise be considered "out of character" for the initiate?

A: Correct. For instance, one role an ONA Initiate once assumed some decades ago was to be in a Nazarene monastery for over a year. This was chosen, by him, because he loved women, violence and a few other interesting things. In his role, he had to be humble, peaceful and of course be without women. It was a hard challenge, which that Initiate overcame, thus learning many things. But in this instance, there was no Aeonic aspect, only a personal one.

It seems easy for some to accept the less harsh aspects of Traditional Satanism or the Seven-fold Way, while quietly rejecting the darker more dangerous tasks. While most are eager to experience danger on a magickal level, few are ready to experience – practically – real darkness. How important is it, for an adherent of the tradition to truly dirty their hands in acts of definite physical danger? Do acts of real danger accelerate the flow of acausal in the consciousness of the Initiate?

A: To so reject such tasks is to merely play at sinister magick; to refuse to presence the dark as it must be presenced, for both personal and Aeonic reasons. It is absolutely necessary for all Initiates to get their hands dirty: if they do not, they have failed; they cannot progress to the higher levels, to Adeptship and beyond. There are no excuses; no exceptions. We are talking about the sinister path here, not some "white light" arty-farty mumbo-jumbo.

To be a genuine sinister Adept means to have experienced and done dark deeds. Of course, the dark deeds themselves vary, from Initiate to Initiate, and it is one of the tasks of the Adept or Master/Mistress guiding such Initiates to suggest such dark deeds, based on the character, the life, of each Initiate. Acts of real physical danger - such as facing one's own death - can certainly open nexions within the psyche of the individual, and thus enable not only an awareness of the acausal, but also cause that individual to be affected by those acausal energies. Thus can their consciousness be changed by such energies, and thus are such acts of real physical danger a necessary learning experience for every Initiate.

The rhetoric amongst Satanists has thickened over the years, with little direct action prevalent. Can you reiterate what the individual may gain in terms of their own development, and then beyond, through acts that bring real terror to others?

A: By presencing the dark in practical ways the individual becomes a nexion for acausal energies and so experiences those energies in a direct way. They may be able to control such energies, or they may not. If not, they have failed, and may need to try again. Only such a presencing brings genuine understanding and such genuine understanding is necessary so that further energies can be accessed, and directed, and further progress along the sinister path achieved. Such a presencing is a transforming of the individual, part of the alchemical process of change which is Internal magick.

I must stress in words which are not open to misinterpretation that the practical presencing of the dark by Initiates is an essential part of the sinister path, of the ONA. Presencing the dark involves such things as culling; it involves such things as covert action directed at the edifices and individuals of the old Aeon.

A genuine dark presencing is one which has an Aeonic aspect: which aids the sinister dialectic in some way.

Do you feel that criminal and dangerous acts serve to keep one from falling into the boring “esoteric” occult games abound in many other forms?

A: Yes, but we must define what is meant by "criminal". A lot of laws which governments make are wrong, dishonourable, and to ignore them is the right thing to do, for strong, honourable, individuals striving for excellence and to evolve to a higher level. What and who defines "right and wrong"? As someone once wrote - and I cannot remember the exact quote - the law is an accumulation of tireless attempts by the mediocre majority, or a minority acting on their behalf, to prevent noble, gifted, individuals from making life into a succession of ecstasies. While this quote, or aphorism, is an excellent one and contains some truth, it is not an esoteric one: that is, it does not express the complete truth about life, individuals, reality, law and evolution which the ONA seeks to express.

The essence is to strive for a goal which is both beyond what was one is, and which is Aeonic, with the individual undertaking such a striving doing what is necessary to achieve this goal, regardless of whether some of the methods, or tactics, or experiences used, are regarded as "illegal" by some government in some country. The classic example here is culling. Another example is dueling. Another is using some political form which is "illegal" and heretical.

Something should not be done just because it is "illegal". There has to be a sinister intent, an Aeonic aspect. Thus, a culling of some individual who deserves it (he supports, say, some organization which is anti-evolutionary and is a cowardly type of person) is both Aeonic and test of character for the person undertaking it: a means of learning, of evolving, of presencing, accessing sinister, acausal, energies.

In the sense of crime in general – for the sake of an example lets consider the dealing of hard drugs – might one presence more of the dark not only by partaking in such, but also by calling attention and resources to combating such things as drugs? To me, it would seem a perfect scenario – to fight against something only to call resources to it, yet to provide also the very thing in which such resources are absorbed, and weak people broken. This would seem particularly useful in the intended wasting of American resources. As a second part to this question, what other ways – if any - might such resources be effectively wasted, stolen, or misused?

A: Such things as drugs do weaken, and are weakening, the structures of the old Aeon as they are creating opportunities for some who possess - shall we say - a more Satanic view of life, whether consciously or instinctively. The West is decaying, slowly, from within, partly due to drugs, and as one ONA statement indicated, such things - anything - which weaken the old order and prepare the way for the new, sinister, one can and should be encouraged by some Initiates. As with all such things, only some Initiates can and should do such things: the decision is theirs. That is, the doing of such things as in your example are not mandatory experiences for novices and Initiates.

There are risks, but that is part of the challenge, the enjoyment.

Regarding Aeonic Magick: Can creative-art be used in a way that - though not specifically or obviously a form of mimesis – can be imbued with the acausal and directed via the form in which it is created? Some examples may be some of the music of Bach, or the violins of Stradivari – which through their use or performance could, particularly if created for the purpose and imbued with the acausal – become as a Nexion. How effective could this be?

A: Yes, such things can be done, and should be done by those possessed of the skill and abilities. Indeed, it is possible to create a new art-form which does this, and imbue it with a sinister intent, for example, of

manipulating the individuals who see/hear/respond to that art-form, or changing them in an evolutionary way.

One example would be to use computer virtual reality where images and sounds (music) are used to generate a virtual world - or rather, to generate an interactive art-work - that the individual can alter, and thus interact with. That is, each individual perceives something slightly or greatly different. Thus, this art-work would be unique for each individual perceiving/experiencing it, while still retaining the parameters of its creation. To enable this, the interaction could be via something like bio-feedback, with such things as brain-wave patterns being the computer input which alters the computer program which creates the virtual reality. This is still slightly futuristic. What this example would amount to is a modern version of the type of thing which Wagner wished to create through his Ring cycle and his theatre at Bayreuth: a total artistic experience which makes us aware of some mythos, a numinosity, a Destiny, which raises us to a higher level.

Of course, a less futuristic example is possible, using just images, music and some archetypal forms, and combining these in as sort of film-like way.

Obviously the fair amount of focus to these questions regards ways in which we can, at this present stage, aid the downfall of the American power structure, or at least ensure its timely irrelevance. At a point not long ago, the downfall of the Soviet Union was another such aim. Can you explain what measures were taken or perhaps played a part in this coming to fruition, on the esoteric level? It serves, at least, to illustrate the finite nature of world powers.

A: It was, and is, mainly a question of accessing, directing, presencing, certain powerful acausal energies, some of which are "seeded" into organizations, forms, and some of which are used to disrupt and/or create in individuals a yearning, a feeling. One example is a ritual producing a specific type of energy (associated say with a specific sphere of the septenary) and then directing this energy to a certain geographical area. This is done via visualization, and mostly involves a specific site, which becomes a nexion. Note that a nexion does not have to be, but can be, an object: it can be, and often is, a place, such as a hill, a mountain, a valley, a forest. It is helpful if those doing such rituals have been to the place, and especially if the ritual is performed there. This has to be repeated on a regular basis, and then such energy may produce changes in the individuals in that area. If powerful enough, such energies seep far from that area, producing change in accord with their own nature. Several such areas are required in the case of the large country. Another example is targeting, with magickal energies, certain specific, public individuals, such as political leaders. These are just two examples of many. What is important is that the energies themselves are understood by those using them; this requires prior practical experience. Magickal skill is also necessary.

More conventional means can also be used, such as using archetypal energies associated with already existing ideas, forms and the like, political or otherwise.

This is one esoteric reason why such forms as National-Socialism are used in the case of America and Europe: because NS is one of the things those who uphold the old order fear and dread. One of the greatest fears of the cabal behind such things as the tyrannical (and mis-named) New World Order is a Vindex-type figure. Thus, this fear can be used against them. Why do you think National-Socialism is so smeared, so feared that it is outlawed in many Western nations? Because it possesses an archetypal power, a natural magick. Why does the mere appearance of a swastika cause such consternation? Why does the figure of Adolf Hitler fascinate so many people? Why is he still subject to such an immense amount of hateful, lying propaganda? Forget the lies about the so-called holocaust - these things are as these things are because National-Socialism, its symbols, its heroes, its leaders, and especially Adolf Hitler are archetypal, for the West.

What role does the preservation of history and culture play – such as the preservation of Latin and other almost forgotten languages and insights?

A: Such things play the important role of connecting us to our past, and enabling those who come after our causal deaths to begin the process of real learning which can lead to understanding and thus the fulfillment of potential.

This connection to our past gives us part of the perspective we need and must have: a perspective of our origins, our past stupidities, and the glorious future that can be ours if we learn and move beyond that learning. Our intellects must be developed, and such things are one means of training them, especially when we are children, and ravenously curious. Few human beings develop their full potential, especially in the intellectual sense.

But this does not mean that we all must learn such things as Greek and Latin; only that those who possess the interest and aptitude can do so and thus benefit from them.

Sans Imperium, what specific potentials does the west have yet to fulfill?

A: The beginning of our real Destiny, which is leaving this planet to travel and live among other worlds.

Can you explain how a small folk-culture might serve as a center through which a new Aeon may emerge? Also - what are the characteristics of such a folk culture?

A: Such a rural culture is a centre; the esoteric aspect of an outer form: that which gives energy to this outer form. For example, if Vindex arrives and creates an Imperium, this centre would use magickal energies to strengthen both Vindex, and the Imperium, while magickally dealing with enemies. Such a centre would also be a place of magickal and esoteric learning, and - here is the secret - where the physical nexions are.

Before the arrival of Vindex, and Imperium - from which a Galactic Empire should emerge - this centre prepares the way for them, through magickal and other means.

At the risk of sounding humorous or ironic, without such intent – could an ANTI-Vindex; that is, someone who perhaps represents in a profound manner forces which are inherently Magian be the inspiration and the presence which finally brings forth Vindex?

A: Those of the cabal who are our magickal enemies certainly believe so: this is part of their dread, as mentioned in a previous answer. They are awaiting, and trying to aid, the emergence of their own leader.

Could America itself be this Anti-Vindex (still... for lack of a better term!) – and if so, could such provocations and Magian dominance be eventually viewed as having been necessary?

A: The fact is that magickal energies - whether ours or theirs - cause changes in what lives. For example, in human beings, and those types of life, such as archetypes, which affect individuals. [Note: archetypes are types of acausal living beings which exist in the causal.] "America" is not a living being. Vindex is, or will be - and the Imperium (or whatever we wish to call it) will be the creation of this person, an extension of their living, their life, their very acausal essence. It will be thus archetypal, but more than an archetype: a new form in itself. An example may make some things clear: NS Germany was Adolf Hitler. This truth about magickal change is why, for instance, no Adept or Master or whatever - except in the movies - can change a stone into a living being, or change a living being into a stone. Magick works through, and in, what is organic, because what is organic is imbued in some way with the acausal. Thus, we can, if we are adept at magick, influence other life, such as animals, because these are also living

beings. In the same way, a physical nexion is not just a place, it is living being, and we create this new living being in a certain geographical area, usually quite small in size. That is, we bring together what already lives there, in a new way: we re-order through our magick, and the acausal energy we access, the causal in that area, creating a new life.

Thus, with this answer, have many secrets been revealed.

Without adepts, without Internal Magick and Aeonick Magick - could the potential of man, at this stage, ever be fulfilled? Would a new Aeon eventually come, via a round-about means even if nothing in the present changes or continues to change for the better – if completely left alone? Do we risk, given the general disregard for nature and her resources, bringing on the end before the next stage?

A: What must be understood is that we have now arrived at a point in our evolution when we can consciously alter ourselves and our evolution as a species. Whether we do this, is another matter. Thus, we live in exciting and interesting times: we, through our magick, our understanding, can create a new future.

My own view is that if we who understand do not intervene in a creative and evolutionary way, then it will be decline which awaits our species. That is, we have now reached the peak achievable by unconscious processes. We who know, who act upon that knowledge - who are Initiates and Adepts of the genuine esoteric arts - are the Cosmos made manifest: the Cosmos in evolution. This is our Wyrð; our personal Destiny is to reach the stage where we know this, and where we put into practice what we have learnt.

"Forge not works of art but swords of death, for therein lies great art" is a statement that speaks to the great architecture of culture, beyond personal "_expression" and indulgence. If one becomes too encompassed in an Art or politics - might they be indulging in their destiny but disregarding their Wyrð?

A: Yes!

Can you explain, perhaps with some example, the difference between Destiny and Wyrð?

A: Wyrð is acausal and thus Aeonick; Destiny is personal and mostly causal.

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postamble();

ONA MSS and Copyright

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Anton Long
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Physis, Wicca and Paganism

Physis is an esoteric tradition distinct from both Wicca and paganism and to understand how it differs from them it is necessary to consider, very briefly, both Wicca and paganism.

Wicca, or 'The Craft' as it is sometimes called, essentially consists of two forms: the traditional, or hereditary, and the Gardnerian revival. Whatever the historical truths behind the claims, as a Way, or 'philosophy of life', Wicca is a combination of many beliefs and rituals; from pagan mythology/superstition and ceremonial magic to the magick of Thelema. Today, Wicca is mostly associated with groups/covens in urban areas and is often seen as an alternative, 'back to Nature' way that provides meaning and a certain charisma to people's lives. In its genuine form, it represents the primacy of the feminine - a return to the archetypal forms of Priestess, Earth Mother and Moon goddess, particularly in a rural setting, although this form of Wicca is unfortunately very rare since most covens and groups are run by a Priest/High Priest or by a partnership of Priest and Priestess whereas in fact such a situation represents a contradiction par excellence of genuine Wicca. A genuine coven is always run by a Priestess or High Priestess and is imbued with feminine charisma and power.

As a form of belief, most Wicca is archaic and semi-rational and involves for most individuals the suspension of those critical and scientific faculties that Western civilization has produced. In place of an ordered image of the cosmos, this type of Wicca (which tends to be the male-dominated type) upholds a kind of superstitious necromancy - an artificial belief in myths, legends and gods long dead. The people involved have no real connection with the very real powers of the elements and associate themselves with them usually from a safe, urban, distance, their involvement being superficial because they have never experienced in any real way those forces of Earth, Moon and Nature which their beliefs and rituals symbolize. Rather than elevating consciousness to new ground through empathy and reason combined, this type of Wicca actually reduces consciousness despite the fact that some of those who follow it are very empathic.

Even the rare genuine form of Wicca is lacking because for all its luminosity it is not balanced by a rational understanding of and insight into the real nature of the cosmos, the individual and civilizations and thus seldom produces true wisdom.

Paganism, as it has developed over recent years, may be said to consist of two approaches. The first is a revival of folk customs, beliefs and deities

within a still mainly conventional life-style. The second is not so much a conscious revival as a rejection of what is seen as the Western, technological way of life and this form includes the 'ecologically minded' and tends to merge imperceptively into obscure and semi-mystical beliefs such as U.F.O.'s, Atlantis and so on.

What distinguishes paganism from Wicca - despite their many similarities - is the fact that paganism recognizes no religious authority, rites of 'initiation' or groups and does not usually claim to form any unbroken tradition. The practices of paganism tend to be more revivals of folk customs than rituals in the strict magickal sense and although some individual pagans may be Initiated witches or magickians, most do not involve themselves with rituals of an organized sort. For such people, paganism, and associated beliefs, offer a return to what they see as a more natural way of living.

However, such a return, like that of Wicca, usually involves a rejection of those Apollonian or solar aspects that have led, often imperceptively and over the centuries, to broader realms of consciousness. While such a return is often very valuable for the individual - since it re-establishes contact with the unconscious, lunar aspects that are often neglected - it is only a first step, the beginning of that quest which can and should lead to the next stage of human evolution.

O.N.A.

Physis - Martial Art of Left Hand Path
Godric Liddel
O.N.A.

According to tradition, in the past candidates who sought either entry into an established Order or group, or who sought individual instruction from an adept of the Left Hand Path, first had to prove themselves through trial by combat.

In established groups, the Guardian of the Temple was the adversary and Physis as Martial Art is believed to have developed from the training that these Guardians received to enable them to undertake this task. The fact that candidates were usually defeated by the Guardians was salutary lesson for them just as their acceptance of the combat was a necessary proof of their desire to join.

As a Martial Art, Physis is quite simple, being merely a sequence of moves which enable the individual undertaking them in the right manner to achieve a harmony of body and mind - a type of consciousness where spontaneous action is possible. It is this spontaneity that is the secret.

The correct attitude of mind which creates this spontaneity is achieved by slow, concentrated movement. Through concentration, the individual draws to themselves those hidden (or 'occult') energies that pervade the world and the cosmos and which are variously named Physis, Tao, 'pnuema', spirit or Ki. Slow, deliberate movement in a sense 'distributes' this energy around the body and enables action without thought.

Physis contains no 'grades', no complicated series of Forms, no secrets: it is simply a pointer to something beyond itself. This 'something' lies within every individual and once it has been discovered, Physis (and all techniques) are irrelevant. Just like 'traditions'...

Physis contains no techniques of self-defence, no methods of attack, no disabling blows or kicks: all these arise of themselves provided spontaneity is achieved and provided the individual is fit and supple enough of body.

Physis is essentially of the Left Handed Path because it is an individual (or 'anarchic') way: a means to discovering the Chaos within, and it structure-less because of this.

Techniques of Physis

Ideally, you should perform all techniques barefoot and out of doors, in loose clothing. Set aside about half-an-hour each morning or evening and for about three weeks practice the simple movements given below.

Before this, undertake some simple exercises to increase suppleness – such as arm-swinging, squats, trunk circling. These should not be strenuous. Also, begin some other activity which will increase your general level of fitness – running and cycling or swimming are ideal. The aim of all this is to give you that pleasurable glow which such activity can produce – if not overdone!

To begin, stand with feet slightly apart, hands by the side in a relaxed way and imagine drawing energy up into your body through the soles of your feet. Draw in energy with every breath, which should be slow and regular. Continue this for several minutes.

The following movements should be then performed – slowly, to form a continuous whole, without breaks. Although the movements may seem complicated (when described here at least!) they are in fact simple and easily mastered.

From the initial position the left foot is brought forward with knee bent as the left arm extends outward with elbow bent, wrist turned and level with face, the hand above knee. The right foot

is moved slightly pointing straight ahead. The right foot is moved slightly so that the foot is turned sideways, the left foot pointing straight ahead. The weight should be slightly greater on the left foot. The fingers of the hands should be slightly curved.

The right foot is turned to face behind while the body weight is shifted (via the hips) to lean the body and turn it sideways through ninety degrees. As the body turns, so does the left foot, through ninety degrees. The right arm is extended, slightly curved, so that the hand is above the head but several feet from it while the left arm is brought in so that the hand is near the navel.

The right knee is bent.

The body is turned clock-wise through ninety degrees as the left leg is swung round and the left elbow moved backwards as if to strike. As this is done the right arm is drawn in to near navel and the balance shifted to the left foot. The right foot should be so placed that at the completion of this move only the heel is on the floor.

The right foot is set down and the whole body brought downwards toward the ground by bending the knees but without turning the body itself. The left arm is drawn in, the right is extended upwards and outwards.

The body is then brought upright, as the left leg is moved forward (about forty-five degrees) and bent to take the weight while the left arm is brought upwards, elbow bent, the forearm almost vertical and the hand a few feet from the face. The right arm is drawn in, the hand below the chin.

The body pivots on the right foot through ninety degrees while the left arm is drawn in, the right extended with hand above the head and a few feet away. The left leg is then lifted as if to kick while the left arm is brought forward. The left thigh should be below the horizontal.

The left foot is lowered while the left arm is brought across the body and outward to the left side as toes of the right foot are lifted and the weight transferred. The right arm is brought in near the stomach. The left foot turns about forty-five degrees.

The weight is taken on the right leg, knee bent, the left arm drawn in and the right extended above the head and a few feet away.

Finally, the body is turned so that the position is the reverse of the starting one.

This sequence of nine moves is thus in the order:

7 1 6

4 9 3

5 2 8

The aim is to undertake the movements in a relaxed and mindful way, breathing slowly. Should it be desired, the sequence can be repeated several times. The movements should flow into each other, without pause. Practice should make the individual movements on continuous movement, like a slow dance. Do not worry about getting each movement exactly right – fluidity is more important.

If this is done for the period suggested above, set/hang two balls of wool from a straight tree branch, overhead beam or something similar, at a distance apart slightly greater than your outstretched arms. Set them swinging slowly in opposite directions and stand sideways on between them. Without turning but simply bending your body, between them. Without turning but simply bending your body, strike with your hand at one ball and the immediately, with the other hand, at the other so as to hit it. To begin with, set the balls at eye level, then lower it to the level of your hips, and repeat. If this is too easy, have someone stand near and shout either ‘right!’ or ‘left!’ in their own time when you are prepared. If they shout ‘right!’ hit the right ball first, then the left. The shorter your reaction time, the better. Another variation of this is to use coloured balls, the helper then shouting the colour.

Further Techniques:

Another techniques which may be used is to set into the ground eight wooden posts, arranged as in the figure above: that is, 1-8. The object is to strike each post in sequence with hands or foot according to the movements listed above. As you strike, exhale. Gradually increase the speed at which you do this until it is burst of energy. Aim to control this energy, though, through the movements and strikes.

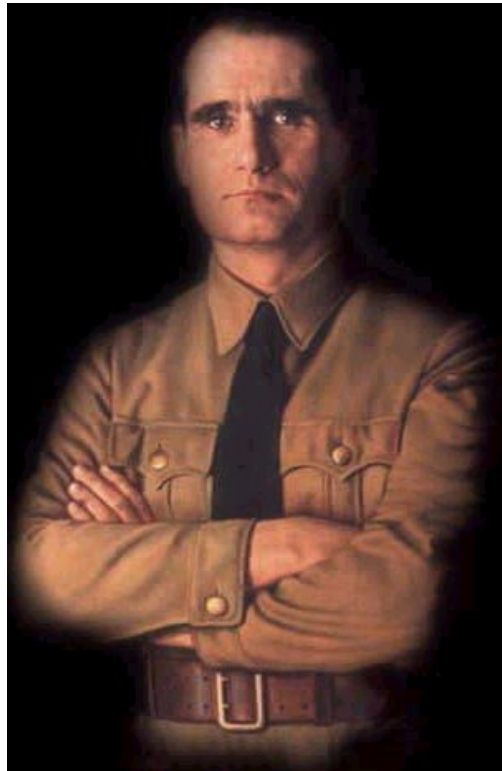
This technique should be used only after the foregoing has been undertaken in the slow manner indicated.

Once you are satisfied with technique, abandon them if you wish and create your own sequence of movements. Be sure, though, to undertake such movements in the slow, mindful way, as this is really the key to spontaneity, or action without thought. Faster techniques (like with balls or posts) really only draw forth what has been cultivated through an inner stillness – and if there is a ‘martial arts secret’, it is this.

SKULL PRESS PRESENTS

In Memoriam

Rudolf Hess



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The Rudolf Hess Memorial Page

Depending upon your background, and upon how you came across this page, you may or may not know very much about Rudolf Hess. Who was Rudolf Hess? Rudolf Hess was the Deputy Leader of Germany between 1933 and 1941. In an effort to avert a growing war in Europe, between what he considered brother nations, Rudolf Hess embarked upon a mission of peace to Britain. He came bearing one last chance for peace in Europe. For his efforts, Rudolf Hess spent the rest of his life in prison, kept in a cage

by the allied victors. Rudolf Hess was truly a prisoner of peace, and for this fact alone, I believe his memory is worth keeping alive. Furthermore, the treatment of Rudolf Hess sheds a searing light upon a period in history that effects the world until this day. Questions are raised, by the unfair imprisonment of this man, that has not been satisfactorily answered, questions that need to be answered.

I do not claim to be an expert on the life of Rudolf Hess, and I welcome comments, questions, or contributions (of articles etc..), to this page. I sincerely hope, that in presenting my addition to cyberspace, that I am able to spark debate, and interest, in one of the most interesting men of the twentieth century.

The Early Years

Rudolf Hess was a complex man. For those of you familiar with his tragic life, this statement is self-evident. He was as perplexing and extraordinary in some of his manners as he was traditional and straightforward in others. For those of you unfamiliar with Rudolf Hess, it is necessary to introduce you to his life at its beginning, in British controlled Egypt.

Egypt is hardly the place one would have expected the future Deputy Fuhrer to have made his start. However, throughout his early childhood, Rudolf Hess would call Alexandria his home. While Alexandria was a cosmopolitan city, filled with a variety of people, Rudolf Hess' upbringing was affected, not so much by his exotic surroundings, as by the strict and sheltering influence of his father. Fritz Hess, a disciplinarian of the 'old school', ensured that his son received as traditional a German upbringing as Egypt's small German community could provide. Until the age of 14, the young Hess was educated by private tutors, as the local German Protestant school did not meet with Fritz Hess' rigorous standards. Rudolf Hess and Egypt parted ways in 1908, when he was deemed old enough to attend boarding school in Germany.

During his school years Rudolf Hess' character began to become apparent. Former classmates remember Hess as being solitary, and serious, characteristics that would forever remain a constant in his life. While his father had plans for his son studying business and eventually taking over the family firm, Rudolf was drawn rather to astronomy and physics. In anticipation of a career as a merchant, Rudolf Hess would soon trade boarding school in Germany for business school in Switzerland. While convinced that his true path lay not in dry ledgers, he still had not found the strength to stand up to his father. The catalyst, for asserting his independence, came in 1914 with the Austrian ultimatum on Serbia.

Fuelled by an intense patriotism, Rudolf Hess jettisoned his sheltered life and volunteered for the 7th Bavarian field artillery regiment. Later transferred to the infantry, Hess would fight with distinction during the war, receiving the Iron Cross, second class. His experiences during the war had a profound influence upon his political/moral development. At the front, he found not the glorious struggle envisioned by other naive patriots, but the horrors of the trenches. Wounded on several occasions, Rudolf Hess was to make another fateful decision during the war, and apply for the Imperial Air Corps. Rejected on his first attempt, he was eventually accepted for aeronautical training. However, just as he became attached to an operational squadron, the war would come to its stunning conclusion.

The war affected Rudolf Hess in many ways. Most important, experiencing the reality of warfare first hand left in him an unshakeable desire for peace. Years later, Hess would insist, that if veterans of the trenches were responsible for policy amongst nations, war would be avoided. It was during the war, that Hess the infantryman would become Hess the pilot. Had Hess been rejected yet again for flying school, his life would surely have turned out differently. Finally, the war brought Hess into contact with a class of people that he would otherwise never have met as equals. While many National Socialists did come from privileged backgrounds, the majority of its adherents were from amongst the working or middle classes. Having had the experience of interacting with people from outside of his own upper class upbringing will have greatly influenced the ability of Hess to later find a key role in the NSDAP.

From Revolutionary to Deputy Fuhrer

The fact that Germany had been defeated politically, rather than militarily, came as a shock, not only to Rudolf Hess, but to many of his countrymen as well. The Munich that Hess would move to in 1919 was a microcosm of the chaos that had taken grip of the whole country. Without a strong central government, cities such as Munich were controlled, not by the government, but by whichever political gang controlled the streets. Revolution was thick in the air. In fact, Kurt Eisner, the Jewish leader of the SPD Independent Socialists successfully launched a short-lived coup in 1919, declaring Bavaria an independent state. Activists further to the left of Eisner began agitating for a second revolution and the establishment of a soviet republic. Paramilitary groups of the right also abounded during these years. Still an ardent patriot, Rudolf Hess was attracted toward one of these rightist organisations, becoming a member of the paramilitary Free Corps. It was in Munich, that Rudolf Hess would meet two individuals who would change his life forever. These two men were Karl Haushofer and Adolf Hitler.

Karl Haushofer, one of Hess' wartime commanders, was to play an integral role throughout the decisive years of his life. A professor of political geography, Haushofer's views on the need for German living space would later influence the views not only of Hess, but of the NSDAP leadership in general. Along with his son, Albrecht, the Haushofer's contacts with members of the British elite, would later serve as a bridge in Hess' peace initiatives.

Amongst the dozens of Nationalist groups operating in Munich during these tumultuous years, was the German Worker's Party, originally under the leadership of Anton Drexler. Happening to attend one of their early meetings, Rudolf Hess would have the opportunity of listening to a speech by their 'advertising chairman', Adolf Hitler. A decorated veteran of the trenches, Hitler's fiery and emotional manner, soon won Hess over to his cause.

Thanks in part to the emotional and powerful influence of Adolf Hitler, and to the dedication that was found amongst his followers (now numbering Rudolf Hess), the NSDAP became an influential political force, first in Bavaria, and then throughout Germany. As with other parties of the day, violence became 'part and parcel' of their political struggle, as rivals attempted to stem their growth. Whenever meetings degenerated into brawls with their Communist opponents, Rudolf Hess was in the thick of it, often receiving wounds for his efforts. While Rudolf Hess might have lead a sheltered youth, his life was now anything but sheltered. Throughout all of the successes and failures of the party, Rudolf Hess soon proved himself, not only as one of Adolf Hitler's most devoted followers, but as his closest confidant. His position with Hitler was solidified during their imprisonment in Landsberg during 1923. During their imprisonment, while the remnants of the NSDAP collapsed outside of the prison, Hitler and Hess (now his private secretary), worked on *Mein Kampf*, Hitler's semi-autobiographical program, both for his party and for Germany.

The story of the rise of the NSDAP has been told many times, and it is not my intention to repeat that story here. Throughout the years following Landsberg, and prior to their assumption of power in 1933, the party gained in power and influence both in the German parliament and in the streets. While Hess would marry his long-standing girlfriend, Ilse Prohl, in 1927, his married life did not interfere with the dedication or time of energy given the party.

Hess became one of the most visible members of the party. His decency and simple manner, won over many Germans to the NSDAP, who would otherwise have been offended by their rough street politics. While other leading members of the party began to acquire the trappings of the elite, and independent circles of power, Rudolf Hess was known for the consistency of his tastes and for his simple dedication toward Adolf Hitler. While others might mouth the words honour and obedience, Rudolf Hess lived them.

Upon taking the reins of power in 1933, Hitler appointed Rudolf Hess the Deputy Fuhrer of the NSDAP. As Hitler's representative in the party, Rudolf Hess officially became one of the most powerful men in

Germany. Every government department, excepting the ministries of war and foreign relations, now had to submit their laws to Hess, as the Fuhrer's deputy, for final approval.

At Nuremberg, the laws bearing his signature would be used against him by the prosecution. Admittedly, Hess' signature is present on the Nuremberg Laws, which limited the rights of Jews in Germany. However, similar laws were to be found both in the United States and in European-controlled Africa, in reference to those of African descent. The architects of these laws were never tried in Kangaroo courts, nor were they sentenced to life imprisonment. The prosecution, of course, never mentioned Hess' numerous memorandums and decrees ordering restraint on the Jewish question. For instance, circular No.160/35 prohibited party members from going to extremes, promising rigorous prosecution for those, "causing criminal damage or bodily harm to Jews, or guilty in riotous assembly against them."

Throughout these years, Rudolf Hess was also prominent in both public and secret peace initiatives. During the Sudeten crisis, Hess sent his trusted friend Karl Haushofer to negotiate peace with Czechoslovakian minister president Benes. While they were successful in initiating peace negotiations, such measures were contrary to Hitler's expansionist aims and came to naught. During this time, Hess also instructed the Haushofer's to expand their British contacts in the hopes of maintaining peace. Hess never wavered in this desire for peace. In 1934, he attended an international meeting of former front-line soldiers. At this meeting he stated, "We front-line soldiers don't want incompetent diplomacy propelling us into another catastrophe where the ones to suffer will once again be the soldiers. We soldiers don't feel responsible for the last war. We want to unite to fight against another catastrophe like that one. We who brought destruction during the last war want now to build a new peace. It's high time that we create a real understanding between our people. It should be an understanding based on mutual respect. Only that can ensure a lasting peace, the kind of respect that former front-line soldiers have for each other." Rudolf Hess would later risk his life, and lose his freedom, in attempting to find this peace.

The Sacrifice

Rudolf Hess was a man in his prime when, at the age of thirty-nine, he was made, "Deputy to the Fuhrer of the NSDAP". In addition to this role, Hess was also appointed minister without portfolio in the government. Theoretically, Hess was now one of the most powerful men in Germany. In fact, he was named, after Goering, to be Hitler's successor.

In analysing Hess' motives, for his subsequent flight to Britain, many historians suggest that Hess felt that his influence was waning, and that he considered a dramatic act on his part necessary to regain his position. It does appear, that a change in the NSDAP/German power structure was taking place. Having traded its anti-system credentials for the mantle of power, the NSDAP began to assume bureaucratic trappings of its own. During the early years of the NSDAP, it was those with dedication and ability who came to the fore. During the governing years, it was just as often those proficient in strategically giving favours, and in currying favours from others, who were gaining authority. Rudolf Hess was not a man of this type. He was born of a different mould, and could not, or would not, play such a game. Furthermore, the most visible decisions were now being made at the state, rather than the party, level. Unlike other prominent National Socialists, such as Goering, who was made minister president of Prussia, Hess did not have a significant voice at the state level.

On the other hand, the position of Deputy Fuhrer was not 'smoke and mirrors' but had real and far-ranging powers. More importantly, Hess maintained the complete trust of Adolf Hitler, and the continuing admiration of the German people.

Did a perceived reduction in Hess' authority act as a catalyst to his flight? If it did, I believe that this would have been a minor consideration. I believe, that above and beyond any other possible motive, Hess' desire for peace must be remembered. Hess remained the same man who had lived through the horrors of the trenches, and who consistently stressed his desire for peace in the most emotional manner. Coupled

with his own strong desire for peace, was Hess' conviction that the German State desired peace as well. Particularly, Hess was convinced of Hitler's sincerity, when in *Mein Kampf*, and many subsequent occasions, he discussed his desire for peace and understanding with Britain. With such simple convictions, the deteriorating state of peace in Europe must have been particularly trying for the Deputy Fuhrer.

Prior to the outbreak of war in 1939, Hess initiated both overt and covert peace initiatives. For instance, during the Sudeten Crisis, and prior to the Munich Agreement, Hess attempted to come to terms with the Czechoslovak minister president over the German minority in that country. Covertly (but with the knowledge of Hitler), Hess was now utilising his friendship with the Haushofers, to try and find common ground with members of the pre- Churchill British elite.

At what point, did Hess give up on conventional diplomacy? When did Hess decide upon his dramatic flight? A turning point in the war, occurred with the British bombing raids upon Germany in 1940. Until this time, Germany was still hopeful that an understanding with the British government could be reached. For this reason, Hitler had prohibited any bombing raids on British civilian targets, and on London as a whole. Churchill was aware of this prohibition, since the British had 'cracked' the codes required in deciphering German communication. Unmoved by the German prohibition, Churchill ordered the bombing of Berlin and other civilian targets. The bombing of Berlin was reciprocated with German raids on London, starting on the 7th of September 1940. Hess had always been a sensitive individual. The death of civilians, both in Germany and Britain, seriously affected the Deputy Fuhrer. He began to dream of rows of coffins and dwell upon the children lost and mother's grieving. At some point, Hess decided to sacrifice himself, so that the row of coffins would not grow any longer.

During the fall of 1940, Hess began having weather reports of the English Channel forwarded to him. He also began visiting the Messerschmitt airfield, and honing his skills, at the cockpit of a Me-110. By January of 1941, Hess was ready for his mission. Flying low to avoid radar, Hess managed to traverse the English Channel, loose a British warplane sent to intercept him, and parachute to 'safety' over Scotland. But, whose mission was it? Was Hitler aware of his Deputy's intentions, or was his flight un-sanctioned, as the German government would later claim? There is evidence supporting both sides of this argument.

The most compelling evidence, that Hess acted without Hitler's approval, was Germany's denunciation of the flight, and Hess' own claim that he acted without direct approval. Long after the war, Hess would not waver in this claim. Another factor, which gives credence to the argument, that Hess acted unofficially, is the remarkable nature of the flight. Would the calculating German regime have risked their Deputy Leader on such a dangerous and extraordinary mission?

On the other hand, there is much evidence to suggest that Hitler was aware of Hess' mission. If the flight had been un-sanctioned, it would have been truly remarkable for it to have happened at all. The flight required not only a specifically modified Me-110, but classified radio beacon and weather information. How could the preparations for such a flight have gone unnoticed by the German security establishment? Furthermore, many of those witnessing Hitler's reaction, to the news of Hess' departure, had the distinct impression that he was play-acting. Admittedly, many of Hess' colleagues and subordinates were imprisoned, after the failure of the Hess mission. Frau Hess, however, was left relatively unmolested, and in fact, was supported financially by the government throughout the war. If Hess had in fact been a renegade, would his wife have been afforded such courtesies?

The most compelling argument, that Hess did not act without approval, rests with Hess' relationship to Hitler and to the state. Hess was a living example of the dedication and obedience expounded by the party. It had been Hess, who had introduced the very concept of the unquestionable Fuhrer. For Hess, disobeying his Fuhrer would have gone against every ounce of his being. No, Hess would not have acted without Hitler's approval. I simply do not believe, that there is anyway that Hitler could not have been made aware, in some shape or form, of his Deputy's intentions. Regardless of whether or not Hess' flight was sanctioned, what were his intentions upon landing in Scotland.? Hess had planned this part of his

mission impeccably. Travelling in an unarmed airplane, and in his Luftwaffe officers uniform, Hess relied upon the age old tradition of a peace mediator. As an emissary of the enemy, Hess believed that, whether or not his mission was successful, the British would respect his person, and allow for his safe return to Germany. Hess, however, believed that his mission would be successful. He planned to visit the Duke of Hamilton, whose ancestral manor had been his target in Scotland, and who was acquainted with his friends, the Haushoffers. Upon being received by the Duke, Hess expected to be allowed to lay out his peace terms, to both the British government, and more importantly, to Hess, before the British crown. What was to unfold for this emissary of peace, was quite a different scenario.

Camp X

It is not everyday, that one has the Deputy Fuhrer of Germany drop in for a visit. Yet, this is exactly the position that a family of Scottish peasants found themselves in, on the night of May 10, 1941. Once local military personnel arrived at the scene, Hess identified himself as Captain Alfred Horn. He explained that he wished to be taken to see the Duke of Hamilton, with whom he had important matters to discuss. The Duke's ancestral estate, which lay nearby, had been Hess' intended destination. The Duke did indeed visit 'Captain Horn' the following morning, when Hess revealed his true identity, and his desire to discuss peace.

Understandably, this 'revelation' raised many frenzied questions in London. Was it indeed Hess, or was the aviator an impostor sent for unknown propaganda purposes? What could his sudden appearance imply? Hess should have expected this immediate delay. Dropping in uninvited to discuss peace terms with your enemy, especially when done in such a dramatic fashion, is bound to create a certain amount of chaos. Furthermore, with the British government firmly in the hands of the belligerent Churchill clique, and with memories of the broken Munich Agreement still fresh, what hopes should Hess have had for his mission being a success? We might never know, what the chances for success might have been, as we do not know the specifics of Hess' proposal. Documentation, which could shine a light on this and other questions, remains hidden from the public eye. Regardless of the chances of Hess' success, or of the naivete of his mission, the response of the British (and later Allied), governments was atrocious and unforgivable.

What was the response of the British government? Once the initial shock subsided, and the British were sure of whom they were dealing with, they imprisoned Hess! They did not listen to his proposals, but instead designated Hess as a 'private prisoner' of the state for the duration of the war. At first imprisoned in the Tower of London, and later at a secret location in the countryside, referred to only as Camp Z, Hess' health soon deteriorated. Apparently, Hess began to suffer from nervous ailments and to develop a paranoid personality. If Hess had been classified as a prisoner of war by the British, rather than as a 'private prisoner' (as should have been the case), this might have raised many embarrassing questions. The Geneva Convention specifies that prisoners suffering from mental ailments be repatriated to their homeland. As it stands, his paranoia was justified. Contrary to the Geneva convention, listening devices were employed in the compound. Furthermore, British diplomats, under the employ of the secret service, pretended to enter into formal talks (regarding his peace proposals), with Hess. In actuality, these visits were a farce designed to pry intelligence from the captive, and no doubt caused Hess to experience an emotional 'roller-coaster' of false hope. Under such conditions, and with the failure of his mission ever weighing upon him, is it any wonder that Hess would develop neurosis? Hess remained in such a limbo until the Nuremberg Trials in October of 1945, when he was placed in the docks with other German leaders, as if his flight had never occurred.

Hess arrived in Nuremberg as a 'time capsule', untouched by the outside world, and unprepared for the changes that had occurred during his imprisonment. The Germany Hess had left had been a world power, the Germany Hess returned to was a nation starving amidst the rubble. At first, Hess feigned memory loss during the trial and the preliminary proceedings. What the purpose of this 'memory loss' was, is unclear. Was Hess continuing to suffer from the nervous ailments that seemed to have troubled him during his imprisonment, or was his 'memory loss' a tactic of some sort? For whatever reason, Hess maintained this

'loss of memory' for the first half of the proceedings, until he dramatically stated that he had the full use of his memory.

During the trial, Hess remained unrepentant. Hess stated that he took full responsibility for all of his actions, as well as for all documents that bore his signature. What documents did bear Hess' signature? The Nuremberg Laws, which limited the participation of Jews in German society, were the documents most often mentioned, by the Allies, in connection with Hess. This group of laws should have been quite familiar to the Allied prosecutors, since they were similar, both in nature and in intent, to those in place in the southern United States, and in Southern Africa. This hypocrisy did not stand in the way of the Allied prosecutors. Before passing judgement on the German leaders, the Allied prosecution allowed the prisoners to make a closing statement. Rudolf Hess' closing statement was as dramatic and as straightforward as the life he had led. When it was his turn, Rudolf Hess rose and stated,

"For many years of my life, I had the privilege of working under the greatest man my nation has ever produced in its thousand-year history. Even if I could, I would not erase this part of my life. I am happy that I did my duty to the German people, my duty as a National Socialist, and my duty as the Fuhrer's loyal adherent. I do not regret a thing. If I could start all over again, I would behave just as I have behaved, even if I knew I would end up being burned on a pyre. Regardless of what people do in the future, I will stand before the judge of eternity. I will justify myself to him, and I know that he will acquit me."

Hess was found guilty of two of four charges, and sentenced to life imprisonment. Ironically, this prisoner of peace, was found guilty by the victors of 'Crimes Against Peace'.

While this might seem to be the end of the Hess saga, it indeed was only a beginning. For the next 40 years, Hess remained a prisoner of the Allied governments, specifically of the four 'occupying powers'. At first, his sentence was carried out in the company of other German leaders, who had escaped the gallows. However, one by one, the other inmates were released. Eventually, Hess became the sole occupant of Spandau Prison, the loneliest man in the world.

The Lonely Man In Spandau

Spandau was a nineteenth century prison, of fortress-like appearances, within British-occupied West Berlin. Originally intended to house hundreds, the fortress would now imprison seven. Seven prisoners, stripped of their identity and designated by number, with number 'seven' being Rudolf Hess.

The conditions in Spandau were draconian. During the night, and up to four times in one hour, guards would shine a light into the face of each prisoner. Sleep deprivation was the unmistakable result of this practice, but the official reason was to ensure that none of the seven were to perform a miracle and escape. Food rationing, at near starvation levels, soon resulted in their, "prison uniforms [hanging] shapelessly on their bony frames." The one letter per month, that they were allowed to write to an immediate family member, was heavily censored and limited to a maximum of 1300 words. Similar restrictions were placed upon incoming mail. No mention of the war, of the Third Reich, or of its personalities were allowed. Neither were the prisoners allowed to discuss the conditions of their imprisonment. These prohibitions were never lifted for Hess, denying historians (and the world), a first-hand telling of his story. What were the Allied authorities afraid of? What could Hess have told the world, forty years after the fact, that could have been so sensitive, or so damaging?

Throughout his ordeal, Hess maintained the conviction, that the Nuremberg Trials were invalid and without jurisdiction. With this belief as a framework, he did not allow for his counsel to plea for mercy. Furthermore, he refused to accept visitors, as an acceptance of the strict visitation regulations might be taken as an admittance of Nuremberg's legality.

One by one, the ranks of Spandau was thinned. By September of 1966, only three prisoners remained. However, in fall of that year, von Schirach and Speer were released, leaving Hess to serve the remainder of his sentence in solitary confinement. By this time, Hess had been a prisoner for twenty-five years. In western countries, twenty five years is often considered the equivalent of a 'life' sentence.

While twenty five years had passed, there was no move, on the part of the authorities, to discuss a release. While the status quo did not budge, a movement was beginning to take shape, with the intention of pressuring the world into releasing the aged Hess. At the forefront of this movement was Wulf Rudiger, the son of Rudolf Hess. Along with other family members, and the sympathetic, he had formed a 'Freedom for Rudolf Hess' association. Many notables (of both conservative and liberal leanings), joined in the cry for clemency. One such voice was that of Lord Geoffrey Lawrence, the former president of the International Military Tribunal. Another voice, was that of Sir Hartley Shawcross, the Chief Prosecutor for the British government during the Nuremberg Trials. Lord Shawcross had once declared, "In no civilised country in the world is a 'life' sentence taken literally. It is still a principle of humanity that a 'life prisoner' is released after a suitable period..." I cannot help but wonder, after learning of the 'kangaroo' court at Nuremberg, of the corpses at Katyn, and of the fires of Dresden, whether 'civilised is not a term the 'four-powers' had proved unworthy of years before.

As the years wore on, Hess' health began to deteriorate. In what became his first change of scenery in twenty-two years, Hess was sent for a brief stay in an external hospital. True, the Spandau authorities did allow for him to move from his single cell into the double cell, which had previously served as the prison chapel. Furthermore, Hess did agree to see his wife and son, for the one-half hour monthly visits that were sanctioned. When von Neurath, serving a fifteen-year sentence, became ill, he was given an early release. When Raeder and Funk, both serving 'life' sentences became aged and ill, they were released. Why did the same rules not apply to Rudolf Hess? In part, this can be explained by the fact that Hess had become a living symbol of a fading victory and of a fading alliance. However, this does not answer the entire question, this is only part of the puzzle.

While inside Spandau, Hess became ever frailer, outside of the prison walls, the movement for his release continued to grow. Mass demonstrations, often vilified by the media, became annual occurrences. When faced with mounting public pressure, the three western powers would turn to the Soviet Union as their scapegoat. It was the Soviet Union, they would claim, that stood in the way of Hess' release. Hess, the western powers surely thought, was a problem that would soon end. After all, Hess would have to die sooner or later, and so long as the demonstrations did not become unmanageable, and they could rely on their Soviet scapegoat, the storm could be weathered. Glasnost destroyed the second of these assumptions.

Increasingly, the indications from Moscow seemed to suggest that a release for Hess was not out of the question. However, was it the Russians who had the greatest interest in retaining Hess? Admittedly, the 'Great Patriotic War' remained (and remains), a powerful image in Russia. However, forty years had passed, and Moscow had more to gain by appearing humanitarian, than in remaining inflexible. I believe that it was the British government, who had more reason to fear the knowledge that might still be contained in the aged Hess.

It was in such an atmosphere, that Rudolf Hess died, on August 17th, 1987. The authorities contend that the bent and arthritic Hess, unable to walk at more than a shuffle, or to straighten his head, had managed, in an unattended moment, to hang himself with an electrical cable. Others, including Hess' son, believe that Rudolf Hess was murdered, in order to forever seal the secrets of Prisoner Number Seven.

Keeping The Sacrifice Alive

With his death, prisoner seven was finally free.

No sooner had its last inmate been removed, than the walls of Spandau were razed. Whether or not Hess committed suicide, remains one of the great questions of his legacy. Hess' frailty at the time, in conjunction with apparent discrepancies unearthed by Wulf Rudiger, strengthen the case that he was murdered.

What I consider the most important development, following the death of Rudolf Hess, has been the continuation of the memorials in his honour. Whether or not Hess was murdered, the Allies must have surely counted on the Hess movement collapsing upon his death. The marches, however, have continued unabated. Despite mounting police repression in Germany, demonstrators from throughout Europe continue to observe August 17th in memorial. In the summer of 1997, hundreds of demonstrators were arrested in Germany, following co-ordinated police actions. In Denmark, hundreds of demonstrators marked the occasion.

I have been asked, after the fact, after the death of Rudolf Hess, why I consider his life so intriguing, or so important. Of what relevance does Hess have today? The status quo has not changed. Numerous governments have come and gone, but the same entrenched interests, who controlled society in the 40's, remain in the driver's seat today. If we were lied to yesterday, we will be lied to today. Can we trust the state? Rudolf Hess thought that he could trust the British State, when he arrived as an unarmed peace envoy. Will we allow the house of cards to remain standing, blindly allowing our perceptions of the world, and of our past, to be shaped for us, or will we begin to question?

"How strange a thing is freedom. Never again will I shut a bird up in a cage. And now I understand so well, why the Chinese and the Japanese, when they wish to show gratitude for good fortune, go to the market, buy cage-birds and let them loose. I will do this, too, one day..." Rudolf Hess, 1949

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The Seven-Fold Sinister Way: A Comprehensive Guide

Aim:

Essentially three fold: a) Initiation; b) magickal Adeptship; c) fulfillment of individual wyrd and potential.

Stages:

1. Neophyte
2. Initiate
3. External Adept
4. Internal Adept
5. Master of Temple/Mistress of Earth
6. Magus/Magistra
7. Immortal

Note: Initiates are sometimes known as “Novices”, Neophytes as “Oblates”. External Adepts as “Professed Brother/Sister; Internal Adepts as Priest and Priestess; a Magus as “Grand Master”

Neophyte:

Tasks: Study of Esoteric traditions as given in Order MSS – particularly Black Book, Naos, Azoth and “Fenrir”. After this preliminary study (c. 1 month) undertake the ritual of Self-Initiation (Black Book) and construct simple form of the Star Game (Naos).

Initiate:

Tasks: Study septenary system in detail (Naos etc.) and begin workings with spheres and pathways. Study and use of Tarot.

Undertake hermetic workings/rituals for specific desires/personal requests.

Continue study and use of the Star Game – relating the abstract symbolism to the Tree of Wyrd, septenary etc.

Set a demanding physical goal (e.g. running 20 miles in 2 ½ hours or less or cycling 100 miles in less than 5 ½ hours or walking 32 miles in less than 7 hours: it must be one of these) train and achieve it.

Seek and find a companion and initiate this individual (Black Book) and then undertake the working with the sphere and pathways with this person.

Begin to teach this individual the Star Game, and use the game together.

Undertake the Grade Ritual of External Adept.

Note: the first stages is the awakening of the darker/unconscious aspects within the psyche. These aspects/energies are identified within the rite of Initiation and then symbolized in the workings with the spheres and pathways following Initiation. These

workings give practical experience of the darker forces/energies. The Star Game begins the process of objectifying these energies in a more conscious way: giving greater insight and control, and this is the beginning of self-awareness since the Tree of Wyrð is symbolic of individual consciousness, both unconscious/acausal (“sinister”) and causal, as well as representing the forces/energies beyond the individual psyche.

The setting of a physical goal, by the Initiate, and the training to achieve it is important because it enhances the vitality and develops personal qualities important to the magickian: determination, élan and so on. This task must be undertaken, for without it, the Initiate stage is not complete.

The seeking, finding and working with a companion begins the confrontation with “anima/animus” energies/archetypes resulting in practical experience of them as well as enable the use of sexual magickal formulae (qv The Rite Of Nine Angles etc.). This is a very important part of developing self-awareness, and the “ritualized” setting enables both a practical experience and the possibility of developing self-insight. (This ritualized setting is first the working with the sphere and pathways, use of the Star Game, and later the organization of a Temple (see below).

External Adept

Tasks: Organize a magickal group/Temple for the performance of ceremonial rituals as given in the Black Book – the External Adept as the “Master/Mistress of the Temple, the companion as the Mistress/Master.

It is the task of the new External Adept to find suitable members, Initiate them and so on. Regular sunedrions should be held (Black Book for details. The External Adept is called a “Choregos” while running the Temple).

After the group has been run for c. 3-6 months, the External Adept should set another but more demanding physical goal, train and achieve it (for example, running a marathon in less than 3 hours (men) or 3 hours and 30 minutes (women); cycling 100 miles in less than 5 hours (4:45 if really determined) or walking 50 miles in 13 hours.)

After running the Temple for between 6-12 months, choose a Priest and Priestess from the group to run the Temple while the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept is being undertaken.

Notes: The titles assumed by the External Adept, the companion and those appointed by the External Adept to positions within the Temple such as Priest and Priestess, are purely honorary, and do not signify the achievement of the magickal grade associated with that title in the “Seven Fold Way”. It is one of the tasks of the External Adept (Choregos) in running the Temple to appoint suitable member to fulfill positions required by rituals (e.g. Priest, Altar-Priest, Thurifer and so on). It is up to the Choregos whether to inform the members that the Temple is organized as part of the tasks/training of an External Adept in the sinister path. If the Choregos decides to inform the members of this, then those members, should the Choregos so wish, may also begin to follow the tasks of the Seven Fold Way as above: the Choregos always keeping a step or two (in terms of Grades) ahead of them. No one can be appointed to the Grades themselves: not even by a Grand Master – the Grades must be achieved by each and every individual, the only exception being Initiation. Initiation may be given, according to the

ceremonial ritual (Black Book) by anyone of the grade of External Adept and above who organizes a Temple, provided the Initiate completes the initiate tasks as above.

The final task of the External Adept is to prepare for and undertake the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept.

Note: the tasks of the External Adept develop both magickal and personal skills. The organizing and running a Temple brings further magickal experience as well as enables several archetypal roles to be lived, this living vitalizing (partly through the energy of the archetypes) the individual, enabling greater magick. One of the roles is that of the “shadow” – the sinister magickian adept at ritual. The personal qualities developed include manipulation, the charisma of power and sexual/material pleasures. There is also a growing self-awareness, and understanding of archetypal energies as well as further confrontations with anima/animus. There may also be glimmerings of the unique wyrd of the individual – a wyrd revealed through the ritual of External Adept.

Internal Adept

Tasks: Depending on the wyrd of the individual, either continue with and expand the Temple (training Initiates in the Seven Fold Way and so on) or begin the personal tasks revealed by the Grade Ritual.

Study of and training in Esoteric Chant (note: this may be undertaken earlier, by an Initiate or External Adept if an aptitude exists and someone of or above the Grade of Internal Adept is willing to give instruction).

Study of Advanced Star Game and esoteric, aeonic aspects of both forms of the game (“cliology” etc.).

Preparation for and undertaking of Nine Angles rituals: natural and/or “chthonic” according to desire.

Further training of companion up to and including the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept, if required.

Prepare for and undertake the Grade Ritual of Abyss.

Master/Mistress

The fundamental tasks for this Grade are three-fold: teaching to suitable individuals of the Seven Fold Way either on an individual basis or via an organized Temple; the performance of Aeonic magick, and development of proficiency in the Star Game, particularly the advanced form.

Some may opt to specialize in a particular field.

General Notes:

The Initiate stage last between six months and a year. The External Adept stage lasts from one to three years. The Internal Adept stage lasts from three to seven years.

Fundamental books, manuscripts etc.

The Black Book of Satan
Naos
Azoth
Falcifer
Temple of Satan
The Advanced Star Game
The Forbidden Alchemy
Rite of Nine Angles

The following manuscript was found on the internet, and is a dramatic retelling of a sinister initiate's factual undertaking of one of the Dark Pathways of sinister tradition. It was apparently written and undertaken by the man known as 'Collyn Branwell'. This is the man that the Satanic News Agency claims is now wanted in the state of Indiana for 4 ritual murders (real name: James Polke, see <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Aegean/9157> and go the "ONA Exclusive" link). It paints a rather intriguing picture. As a new and inspiring initiate into the sinister tradition, I'd be interested in discussing the validity of such a pathworking. Can someone give me some advice?

Shugara - A Sinister Pathworking

Collyn Branwell - Earth-Gate Assembly (ONA)

I have just returned from that specially chosen site in the forest, just three miles from here. This time, I had been successful in allowing myself to become more thoroughly immersed into, and absorbed with, the spirit of the place, and the Invokation itself. As for the previous Pathworkings, there had always been a kind of foreboding, a certain hesitation, a tangible fear and recognition that this communion with primal Nature, under the dark, open sky, all alone, was overwhelming - beyond the romanticized, dualistic perception of Nature and the Cosmos so prevalent within modern-day paganism and new-age thinking.

Today, however, all such hesitation and fear - separateness - dissolved. A manifest connexion has been created on this cold, early Winter morning. All distractions, all strange, hidden surroundings united with my Being. I had successfully confronted the fear, which once, when I was unaware, had controlled and limited the promise that is my Life; that primal fear of the Dark - that Shadow which threatens to emerge into this causal existence and devour. Today, I have faced this fear.

The walk to the chosen site was a brisk one, as I was forced to travel up the hillside in a long, winding manner, as necessitated by the steep cliffs of the hillside. Every step was made in deliberation and contemplation, knowing that this was an exercise of Will, in unison with Nature's higher order, a discovery of the Primal Darkness within and without. I was aware that this Darkness, this Shadow was about to be confronted.

Unlike before, I instinctively understood that on this morning, I would travel through the forest without aid of flashlight or lantern. There existed simply an instinctive knowing - that this was necessary, that there could be no crutches, no hesitation, no turning back. This newly added element, together with the fact that coyotes are well known to roam and hunt along these parts, functioned to make this Pathworking, this brief moment in a life-long Quest, all the more interesting - all the more worthwhile.

Finally, after traveling through the heavily forested area, I entered into the small, flat circular clearing, which I had gone to some pains to locate some weeks earlier. I knew when I first came to this place, with its solitary, circular formation of trees in the center, that this clearing was indeed fated for such a venture. Here, one was surrounded by both the awe-inspiring presence of Nature, in the raw, and by the stark, intimidating vastness of the heavens. Here, there could be no simple pandering to the ego in some urbanized, disrespectful form of sorcery so prevalent within the city. One was within Nature's grasp, with only three choices : 1) to bow down to Her in some feeble attempt to show respect; 2) to disrespect Her by ignoring Her, and by investing one's energy into the petty purpose of building one's own ego; or 3) to become One with Her - what, in fact, She truly desires.

After unloading the relevant supplies from my backpack, I first lit the charcoal I had packed, and placed on top of it the incense I had prepared - a mixture representing the combination of the energies attributed to Luna (the sphere of hidden knowledge) and Mars (the sphere of sacrifice, death and destruction). Afterwards, I lit the candles, one red, the other blue, and stood quietly, understanding that this exercise was more than a mere mindless, egotistic abstraction. This was the continuation of a sequential Becoming, of a living, breathing entity possessing the potential to alchemically transform. This Calling was a step further in that process of stripping away the deceptive, temporal layer to reveal what is , and to progressively become One with that essence. Yes, I had understood that this was in fact a sequential unfolding of the genuine Dark Tradition.

After several moments, I began visualizing the sigil of Shugara , the Dark God-related entity associated with the fourth Pathway of the Dark Tradition. And, as I visualized this sigil, I began the first of thirteen deep vibrations, nine in continuous succession, then a short pause, and four more vibrations. The deep, resonant quality of these vibrations was revealing a remarkable

improvement from previous attempts. The entire week previous had been spent preparing for this event. A steady decrease of food, meat and sleep had been implemented one week prior to this morning, with the last day providing very little food or sleep for this morning. At this moment, I could feel the positive effects produced by such a preparation, as the vibrant, resonant energy emanating from my solar plexus began rising and spreading throughout the whole of my body. This tangible energy was reverberating within my uttermost Being; an energy which, had I not taken the previous week to prepare for, I'd have been numb toward.

An altered state of consciousness was rapidly manifesting. It felt as though it were my very own spirit producing the sound. A tangible oneness had begun to travel like an electric current pulsating through my Being - a concrete partaking of energies that were at once both personal and supra-personal, unconscious and Cosmic.

It seemed as though I had "plugged in" to an entirely new source of energy. Indeed, by the fourth or fifth repetition, my vibrations began to grow not only in strength and power, but in duration as well. A good fifteen to twenty seconds was elapsing before my breath and power gave out, requiring a new breath to be drawn. Yes, something inside was awakening, a Chthonic Darkness millennia old, yet so vibrantly and enticingly new.

Now, I finished the thirteenth and final vibration, my voice echoing in the dark, intimidating silence. With my Will vocalized, I reclined across the cold ground, closing my eyes and breathing deeply, waiting for this new energy to manifest. At this point, while realizing I was confronting that Darkness which threatens to devour, I could sense a literal hair-raising fear, a fear which seemed to be sensed by the forest itself.

At first, what I witnessed was a violent eruption of dark, black smoke mushrooming forth out of a deep well. I knew at once that this signified the awakening and unleashing of the Shadow within. The Dark was being presenced...

What then followed was both enlightening and unsettling. It seemed as though I was able to leave my body and travel directly overhead. I could see the area of the forest which directly surrounded me. What this panoramic view revealed was rather disconcerting: in a perfect circle, surrounding me on every side, were a pack of wolves, crouched down and hidden by the surrounding brush, visibly positioned to pounce at any given moment.

What I immediately found to be even more alarming, was the simple fact that each wolf was perfectly still - there was no sound, no sign of restlessness, no apparent agitation or warning of any kind. Not once did I hear them approach. Nevertheless, they were there, and my own prior lack of empathy and self-awareness became startling clear.

These "wolves" represented, for me, that which threatens to devour, and that which most likely will devour if not confronted, explored and resolved. The fact that I could now see these "wolves" revealed that I was indeed now beginning to develop a real empathy with my true self and with the primal essence of Nature. The genuine Sinister Tradition had afforded for me the opportunity to transcend these primal fears which had earlier held sway over my Being. This Tradition had provided me with the raw materials for surpassing present consciousness - a surpassing which alone is able to provide one with a clear and precise evaluation of one's true self.

After what seemed a long time, new images began to appear, most notably those which had been invading my dreams, or rather nightmares, ever since I had been initiated into the Dark Tradition some weeks earlier. These strange dreams had contained very bizarre images, and had even occasionally become somewhat disruptive. It was as though distant, faded objects, from a past that I was minutely aware of, began invading my consciousness, though I knew perfectly well that it was all in accordance with my own Will. I was more consciously aware now than at any other moment that my Initiation had in fact opened a Gate within my psyche, that this was in fact a genuine occurrence beyond mere delusion, and that the Shadow is indeed a factual fragment of the Self, lying dormant, awaiting the opportunity to be developed and integrated, so as to create a new, evolved, un-divided Being.

The most startling image, which appeared at that moment, was (and had been since I first encountered it in a horrific dream just days earlier) an enigma that seemed to haunt at the very edges of consciousness. It appeared as an intimidating black fish, or shark, of very large proportions, silently hovering at the very bottom of the ocean in complete darkness, as though it had remained there for centuries, or even for millennia, forgotten - waiting...

While gazing at this image, it was as I had been transported into that timeless existence in which the Dream itself had originally

taken place. This time, I possessed a clarity of understanding, which I had not earlier possessed while in the dream. I found myself plunged once again into the cold, dark, murky depths in which I first encountered the huge Beast. In the original dream, I had, at this point, become frenzied and hurried, struggling to head back up to the water's surface, where I could hope to find some sort of safety. However, now all such desperation was absent - controlled. Rather than struggling to escape the Darkness, I found myself exploring the Darkness. And again, just as in the Dream, I bumped into that impenetrable Darkness, which at first puzzled me, that is, until I saw the Face of that Darkness.

There it was, the same giant creature, which, in the Dream, had devoured me. Actually, I had awoken just after the huge creature grunted and immediately lunged toward me with teeth glaring, but I was nevertheless aware that I had been devoured within the Dream, and that this encounter was symbolic of something unknown, yet very real. However, at this precise moment in the replaying of my Dream, I immediately understood the meaning of this fish. I now understood that I was encountering a projected symbol of my undiscovered, unrealized self - the Dark Unconscious; that aspect of the psyche which has been the occasion for many uncontrolled, destructive, frightening bursts of the acausal into the physical world throughout history. I also understood that this Darkness was not only something internal, but external to myself as well.

During this last phase of the Pathworking, I could sense the increase of a tangible euphoria coming over my body. I could truly sense a genuine Becoming taking place, and that this experience was void of any mystification or abstract romanticism. There was present only a steely, sober clarity that what was taking place was genuine, solid step toward Eternity, toward Becoming, and toward Destiny.

As I left the site, a new awareness of, and connexion with, the forest permeated my being. All noise, all abstract thoughts, all nervous mind-activity, so common within the metropolis, was absent. Only a distinct, unmistakable knowing permeated my consciousness; a knowing which only further clarified, and solidified, Direction. This new insight, this new personal victory, was to be only one of many such victories and events, which, together, allow for a Becoming. Yes, there would many more experiences, which would, over time, become much more varied and certainly more difficult.

Now, the darkness in the forest did not intimidate - it called. Shugara had come, and I was not the same.

Sinister Shadow Magick

Satanism is dark, and Satanists revel in evil. As a word, evil is regarded as deriving from the Gothic (via Old English) “ubils” implying “beyond” and “going beyond due limits”. Later, the word – like so many others – was re-interpreted “morally”, in the abstract terms of Nazarene fundamentalism and “evil” became a general term, applied to one’s opponents and those excesses which terrified and psychically ailing Nazarenes feared.

Genuine Satanists do evil, they cultivate evil: they are evil, in all senses of the term now accepted. Imitation Satanists, however, play mental and intellectual games: they enjoy the “thrill” of calling themselves Satanists. Some go further, and may revel in local notoriety, finding a vicarious pleasure in being known as a “Satanist”. But these imposters do no evil – in fact, they explain (quite often) that Satanism has been misunderstood and is really rather a “moral religion” (or something of the kind), perhaps an “ethical knowledge”. Such people are pathetic – and certainly not Satanists.

In the beginning, a genuine Satanist will cultivate evil on the personal level – by going to and thus finding his or her limits. This involves more than just going beyond the (accepted) limits imposed by society or whatever. It means experience, on the practical level, of evil and all that it implies. Later, when the Satanic novice has some experience and thus self-understanding and mastery, there is an impersonal evil. The first is sinister shadow magick of the external and internal kind. The second is sinister shadow magick of the aeonic type - the manipulation, changing, of individuals and events on a not insignificant scale, that is, one which produces tangible results and often disruption/creation/evolution and thus continues the sinister dialectic of history. This is called “shadow magic” not only because it is mostly secretly done, but also because it is dangerous, physically, involving as it does acts of defiance against restrictions imposed by all other forms and individuals.

Neither of these mean a type of juvenile “rebellion” nor purely “mental” acts (achieved by ritual or anything else). They mean a directed, calculating, purposeful involvement in real life and situations: for the beginner Satanist (the novice) just as much as the Adept. What differs, is the aim – at first, it is personal, to aid self-mastery, understanding and thus build Satanic character; then it is impersonal or aeonic. Thus one image of the genuine Satanist – someone in control, seeking mastery of life; seeking more challenges and goals and insights.

Let me be explicit so I cannot be misunderstood.

- 1) The Satanic novice will aspire – to what is beyond, in all things. This means personal experience, testing Destiny and achieving difficult goals in personal life. It means real danger in the real world, not cheap manufactured “thrills” of self-induced stupor and loss of control – but rather, life and liberty threatening situations. These may be and often are amoral, illegal and evil – all laws are “fundamentally an accumulation of tireless attempts to stop creative individuals making life into instants of poetry”).

Naturally, some guidance may be needed – it is easy to become lost, directionless or caught – and this is where the advice of a more experienced Satanic Adept may be useful. However, the acts of a Satanist are not random nor motiveless and neither do they arise from a weakness of character nor uncontrolled desire. Instead, they arise from fulfilling Satanic *wyrd* – or, viewed another way, from presencing the energies of “darkness”/Satan on the Earth with sinister intent.

An example will explicate this. A Satanic novice, having developed to a certain extent via ordeals such as Grade Rituals, the achievement of personal, physical goals and the organizing and running a Satanic Temple, desires to go further. For this, practical experience and some guidance is needed. Let us assume the novice is advised or chooses to use a political form to achieve this experience – and thus becomes involved

with radical “right wing” politics because such people already possess an element or two of Satanic spirit, the “other sides” in this form and at this moment in the history of this aeon representing the Nazarene disease in another guise. Thus, she takes part in direct political actions - this is both exciting and dangerous, given the prevailing sickness of the age. Gradually, she acquires practical experience “on the edge”, and hopefully some real, tangible enemies if she is performing right. These enemies hate her for her political views – and some of them may even try to harm her personally. Thus, one or more of them deserve to die – or at least come to some harm, psychically if not physically. For they not only threaten her Destiny and thus achievement, but also Satanic wyrd, because she is by her actions is fulfilling higher, Satanic goals (in simple terms, presencing the darker forces via a tangible form). This fulfilling is expressed in the form she is guided toward or chooses for herself via a knowledge of Aeonics. On the practical level, she can and should undertake magickal rites (such as the Death Ritual) to aid her – be other means can be used, such as assassination. She may wish to do this herself or she may manipulate others into doing it. The result is the same – personal experience and development, and aeonic energies presenced via the execution of the act. Thus her own evolution, and that of the acausal or sinister, furthered.

Given the nature of the form chosen, this Satanic novice, by using such a form to the utmost of her ability (that is, seeing it as fulfilling a part of her own Destiny – conventionally, “believing the correctness of the views so espoused”) goes beyond the norms of society and its herd majority and thus achieves personal knowledge of the illegal and forbidden (in that society).

- 2) Beyond this, when Adeptship is attained by experiences such as the foregoing, the Satanist will try and open a nexion - to directly access acausal energies on Earth via rites such as Nine Angles etc. This is the beginning of aeonic shadow magick – and involves an even greater commitment to change than before, on the practical level. What form or forms this takes depends on individual wyrd, discovered by the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept and prepared for by previous rites, and experiences. It may be political, as it may be the use/manipulation of archetypal forms/images with sinister intent - or involve using “religion” as a Satanic instrument of change. Whatever the form, the changes are super-personal – they effect more than a few individuals. In fact, they radically disrupt existing forms and norms. For example, a political form may be chosen and used. After some time, violence, riots somewhere, the spread of a new idea... The rising of a type of State in essence inspired with sinister energies and thus contributing to aeonic evolution... Perhaps a war, to propitiate the darker forces...

Thus, it will be understood that Satanists act in a directed way, whether they are novices or Adepts. Their evil has a purpose (as Satan Himself does – as do THEY who are beyond Him have a purpose, on this Earth). The acts, and the evil, arise from a Satanic desire and understanding made real in a practical form or forms. The going beyond, the evil, are part of Satanic wyrd – on the personal and aeonic level. I repeat – they are not directionless, motiveless acts, nor do they arise because the person doing them is somehow inadequate or weak or in the thrall of some uncontrolled desire*. The Satanist is controlled – knowledgeable, particularly about themselves and what Satanism means in supra-personal terms. They are part of history – participants in a sinister dialectic of supra-aeonic proportions, and aware of the power of the sinister to change both themselves and those forms which others through the ages have created to shape our evolution or which (like the Nazarene disease) hinder our evolution.

Have I been understood? Does this sound the death-bell for the imitation Satanists? **(here is a line of text that has been “blackened out” in the MSS)**. It is a pity that this, like Satanism, is so often misunderstood and mis-translated.

ONA

*The conventional description of Satanic deeds and “crime”: most so-called Satanic crimes are acts by dabblers who have no self-insight and even less self-control; the rest, results from characterless, insipid morons who are weak. Such description and such attributions arise from fundamental misunderstanding of genuine Satanic acts.

Study Notes

Septenary System:

This is the original Western system of magick (cf. the seven stages of Alchemy), As such, it is an intuitive representation of the cosmos - that is, only a step toward a more unconscious understanding of the ϕ aspect. Science, and the development of abstract thought through the use of symbolism both mathematical and meta- mathematical, is the next step, and this is one of the aims of the ONA over the next hundred years to develop a rigorous mathematical model of the ϕ aspect and unify it with the γ aspect.**

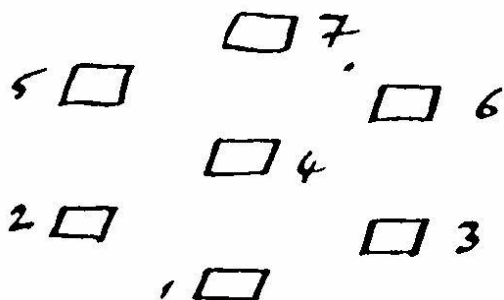
The septenary system is not a dogma, but a guide, and the septenary form of the Star Game is the most precise and abstract model of ϕ and its forces yet devised. But even the Star Game, for all its complexity, is only a temporary model - a very imprecise description.

Tarot:

Students should read the 'Book of Thoth' by Crowley and study both his and the Waite Tarot packs.

Essentially, the Tarot cards of the Major Arcana are symbols of the unconscious (see the volumes of Jung in the preliminary Reading List) and are often archetypal. Hence their power and influence. However, since the qabalah is a distortion and, unlike the septenary, not an intuitive representation of the cosmos, Tarot cards using its symbolism are fairly ineffective. The ONA Tarot restores the genuine symbolism of the cards, and its representations are very powerful.

To use the ONA cards for divination, the cards should be shuffled while thinking of the question, cut three ways and the last cut laid out to represent a septenary Tree:



As indications of the future, 4 is the person concerned and dominant influence in this person's life at the moment; 2 and 3 are what is past; 1 is what is unconsciously influencing the future. 5, 6 and 7 are timed gradations of the future. The following patterns of forces are important in assessing how the symbolism of the cards is related:



In reading the cards, one should allow the symbols themselves, and the relations between cards, to suggest meanings rather than adhere to rigid principles of interpretation (as given, for example, in all books on the Tarot). In order to do this successfully, the whole reading should be conducted slowly and mindfully following a short period of meditation. Incense (oakwood is best) should be burnt and ideally the reading should take place at night with all light coming from gold candles.

For a discussion of ϕ and λ as aspects of the cosmos see Order texts, 'A New Cosmology', 'Bifurcation and Being' etc. ϕ may be represented by the theory of electro-magnetism, the Newtonian theory of gravity, and atomic theories. Attempts to unify these models on the basis of a Faraday type field of force being undertaken by several Order members. See Order texts: 'Towards a Unified Theory', 'Relativity and Reality,' and 'Farad, Forgotten Genius.'

The Black Order

Subject: National Socialism and Satanism

From: modemac@netcom.com (Modemac)

[NOTE from Modemac: You know, I can't tell if this thing is serious or satire! Decide for yourself. Or email the original author of the message and see what he thinks.]

[Article crossposted from
alt.activism,alt.politics.nationalism.white,alt.politics.white-power,alt.revisionism,alt.revolution.counter]

[Author was Graeme Wilson]

[Posted on 8 Feb 1995 18:55:08 -0600]

National Socialism and Satanism

The Black Order of Pan-Europa

P.O. Box 38-262

Wellington Mail Centre

New Zealand

(e-mail: gwilson@earthlight.co.nz)

Dear Comrade T.

Thank you for your thought-provoking letter of 11 Dec. which raises several questions which have been put to me by other National Socialists also. I will therefore make my answers in the form of a brochure which might be instructive to others.

Firstly, TBO is not a National Socialist organization per se. The role of National Socialist philosophy and the Third Reich on the Aeonic destiny of the European is however very much a part of its terms of reference.

Similarly, TBO is not a Satanic organization per se, although again, Satanism is considered relevant to its purposes, which I shall explain.

What TBO primarily is, is an esoteric Order established to re-present the repressed ("Shadow") soul of the European folk, which has been stifled by Judaeo-Christianity and its ideological and plutocratic offshoots.

To the extent that National Socialism and Satanism are both part of a SINISTER DIALECTIC (i.e. a pragmatic strategy) to crush the deniers of our destiny and re-present that part of our folkish soul which has been repressed, they are relevant to TBO.

We seek above all, to reinvigorate our folk by again making it a TOTALITY, aware of its place in the Cosmos, and of its starbound destiny and potential towards Godhood.

NATIONAL SOCIALISM & AEONICS

National Socialism was the political form of an Esoteric Current in Europe which was then represented by The Thule Society. The Third Reich was a SEEDING of the future European Imperium. It created new archetypes and martyrs of the European folk with its BLOOD SACRIFICE and epic heroism in the service of that Destiny.

Hitler was the central figure of that COSMIC DRAMA, but he did not seem to regard himself as the final embodiment of the Vindex/Kalki that was/is awaited by the European Esoteric Current. Rather he was something of a "John-the-Baptist" establishing the way ("seeding") for "the one that would come after", as he himself stated.

Therefore the first experiment - The Third Reich - was not the final - aborted - form of the European Imperium, but the prelude to something greater to come: something nothing less than cosmic and starbound in scope.

The Current established by the Blood Sacrifice of National Socialism lives esoterically/psychically in the Unconscious not only of the European folk, but even of its enemies whose hatred and persecution only empower it further.

SATAN

Since the Hebrew culture is an amalgam and adaptation of the various cultures encountered by the Hebrews, its should not be a surprise if "Satan" is NOT of Hebrew origin. The English "traditional Satanists" The Order of Nine Angles (who promote National Socialism as embodying our Aeonian destiny) trace the etymology of "Satan" to Greek, meaning "an accusation ([greek lettering unavailable]) from whence the Hebrew Satan, "the accuser". (It might be relevant to mention that the Grand Master of the ONA prior to the current one is a scholar who has translated several of the Greek classics).

Others connect "Satan" to the Indo-Aryan SAT, the Dark entropic force infusing Nature (somewhat reminiscent of the recently discovered "dark mass" that physicists say permeates the cosmos).

Many, probably most cultures have equivalents of this Dark Force. It is manifest in the creative/destructive power of SHIVA, and the cosmic interplay of Shakti/Shiva. It is represented in the Norse myth of Ragnarok where the dark hordes of Loki, Fenrir, et al. instigate the cosmic cataclysm which clears the way for a new cosmic order: a cyclic process of Creation/Destruction/Renewal, without which there would be stasis and decay.

THE ACCUSER

In its more widely known aspect as "adversary and accuser" Satan is the archetype that instigates rebellion and heresy against the status quo. Medieval Satanism was the response of pagan folk to the repression of the Church. Today, we of TBO think it more fitting that the adversity and accusation be directed against plutocracy, whether in its Puritan, Jewish, or Vatican forms, which seek to LEVEL all under the doctrines of Universalism and cosmopolitanism, euphemistically called the "New World Order".

NATIONAL SOCIALISM/PAGANISM

TBO seeks a cross-current of Fascism/NS/paganism/Satanism, all of which share fundamentals such as the ascent of man to Godhood within a Nature-based order. Most Satanists are pro-Fascist to some extent, and there has long been an interaction between post-war Fascists and Satanists.

Yes, we do fight for Truth, Nature, Strength, & Honour; & "Light", but also the "Dark" - as both are equally aspects of Nature.

As for "killing cats, dogs, and pigs", this is akin to asking NS about "The Holocaust" and "lampshades of human skin", etc. Satanists as pagans attuned to Nature tend to be animal lovers, whom I'm sure would applaud the animal protection measures which were pioneered by the Third Reich.

CONTACTS

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| Reverend Modemac (modemac@netcom.com) |
| "There is no black and white." |
|+ First Online Church of "Bob," A Subfaction of the Excremeditated +|
|+++++ Congregation of the Overinflated Head of L. Ron Hubbard ++++++|
|FINGER modemac@cambridge.village.com for a FREE SubGenius Pamphlet! |
+-----+

* * * * *

Subject: Dualism and the Cycles of Time
From: modemac@netcom.com (Modemac)
[NOTE from Modemac: The end of this message includes an offer to join
this "Black Order" society. If you can figure out what these guys are
talking about, you're a better man than I am, Gunga Din.]

[Article crossposted from
alt.activism,alt.politics.nationalism.white,alt.politics.white-power,alt.rev
isionism,alt.revolution.counter]

[Author was Graeme Wilson]

[Posted on 8 Feb 1995 19:04:55 -0600]

Dualism and the Cycles of Time
The Black Order of Pan-Europa
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"The general imprecise way of observing sees everywhere in nature
opposites where there are, not opposites, but differences of degree.
This bad habit has led us into wanting to comprehend and analyse the
inner world, too, the spiritual-moral world, in terms of such opposites.
An unspeakable amount of painfulness, arrogance, harshness,
estrangement, frigidity has entered into human feelings because we think
we see opposites instead of transitions."

- Nietzsche

The moral dogma that has infected Civilisation since its beginning is a
Judaic DUALISM inherited from Zoroastrianism and brought in by the
virus of Christianity.

Dualism states that there is a battle being fought in both the spiritual
and earthly realms (and even within every individual) between two
opposites: "good & evil."

Not only has this Dualism subverted our Culture, it has turned the
individual into a split personality: This is the result of repressing
what is considered "evil" about one's nature by moral and religious
dogmas.

CYCLES OF TIME

Before this Dualism was implanted, pagan societies didn't label natural
forces with such absolute moral attributes. There were creative and
destructive forces in Nature, often symbolized as gods. But even the
destructive aspects has creative purposes, and were part of a
transcendent cosmic unity.

For e.g. in what moral context can we place Indo-Aryan deities such as Shiva & Kali? To the Western dualized mind they would be considered "evil" because of their primal destructiveness. But to the Hindus, retaining the ancient Aryan wisdom, they are "beyond good & evil." They comprise both the creative & destructive aspects of Nature in their various forms and roles. Even their destructive roles are a vital part of a cosmic CYCLIC process of creation-destruction-renewal: Shiva in his Cosmic Dance of Destruction clears the way for another round of history's endless Cycles.

RAGNAROK

The Germanics & Norse, like their Indo-Aryan kinsfolk, also had this cyclic cosmology. The destruction brought by Ragnarok is the prelude to a new earth, new humanity, new heaven & even a new pantheon of gods. The Gods themselves cannot avoid their Fate, for without the destruction by Ragnarok there would be stagnation and decay.

The Dark forces of Loki, Fenrir, Surt, Garm and Iormungandr are Catalysts for Change; thus the Cycle continues: creation-destruction-renewal. This is the inexorable process that can be observed in both History & Nature.

The Aryan Persians before Zoroastrianism had a conception of this interplay between the Light & Dark forces which were seen as two aspects of Zervan, Lord of Time. The Light of Ahura Mazda & the Dark of Ahriman were both emanation of Zervan. Zoroastrianism divided these two into moral opposites separated from the Time Lord. It is from here that Judaism & ultimately Christianity got their DUALISM, which has afflicted the West.

Some of the Gnostic sects rejected Dualism and restored the ancient wisdom in the deity Abraxas, who united all polarities within himself. The psychologist Carl Jung turned to Abraxas when considering the inter-relationship that exists between polarities in Nature.

INDIVIDUATION

Jung revived the ancient wisdom with modern scientific methods and terms, but drawing from pre- and non-Christian cultures and Medieval Alchemy. He sought to unify the polarities within the individual to create the whole person (called "Individuation") no longer cut off from his repressed so-called "evil" SHADOW SELF. This "Individuation" of Jungian psychology is also akin to the occultist's quest for Adeptship. Jung was concerned with how a neurotic christian civilization could be brought back to the completeness of pagan times. He saw the need to allow the repressed barbarian lurking within modern man to resurface and find a modern expression. Thus his support for National Socialist Germany as an expression of the repressed Shadow Self of the Germans, symbolized as Wotan.

CHRISTIANIZED NEO-PAGANS

Judaeo-Christian moral dualism is now so deep-seated within the Western psyche that even those pagans who think they are outside the Christian context are as dualized as any Christling.

These "neo-pagans" (sic) have made internationalists & pacifists out of tribal war gods! Where warrior attributes cannot be ignored, they have been transformed into "the way of the peaceful warrior" (puke!). Tyr, Thor & Odin have been castrated. The neo-pagans have simply made the Old

Gods reflections of their own dualized, half-selves. They have repressed as "evil" the Dark aspects. These neo-pagans are worse than useless; they are another aspect of the dualism that is driving the European folk to self-destruction.

Even many (most?) of the harder-line "Odinists", have a cosmology that is essentially Christian. They have dualized the Aesir & the Jotuns into contending moral forces of "good vs. evil" - ODIN (OR BALDER) IS THEIR JESUS. LOKI IS THEIR SATAN. RAGNAROK IS THEIR ARMAGEDDON. The whole significance of Indo-European cyclic cosmology has been rendered null and void.

The pagan heritage has been Dualized..... Christianized!

There are some pagans, however, who continue to honour the ancient wisdom. They see the cosmos as an interplay of polarities, not as a battlefield of moral dualities. It is this that is the basis of EVOLUTION. Without this catalyst mankind slips back into the nebulous mass from which he evolved. It is just such a degraded state that the religions and moralities of decay are dragging us towards. Let our path be starbound. HAIL ODIN! HAIL LOKI!

THE BLACK ORDER

The Black Order is an esoteric body of men and women established to presence the "dark" or "Shadow" side of the European unconscious. If you are at least 18 and interested in the pagan folkways of the European peoples and you are interested in the possibility of joining The Black Order, send a 500-word autobiography, including your views on politics, culture and history.

If deemed suitable, you will be sent an application and introduction brochure.

* * * * *

Subject: The Black Order (Intro)

From: modemac@netcom.com (Modemac)

[NOTE from Modemac: Ah, this explains it. Basically, these guys say that might makes white, only the strong survive, and you have to beat up your weak defenseless non-Germanic cousins if you want to get anywhere in this world. And here I thought these guys were trying to say something original for a change.]

[Article crossposted from alt.politics.nationalism.white]

[Author was Graeme Wilson]

[Posted on Wed, 8 Feb 1995 12:19:54 +1300]

BLACK ORDER

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"Should the subduing talisman, the Cross, break then will come the roaring forth of wild madness of the old champions... The talisman is brittle, and the day will come when it will pitifully break. The old stone gods will rise... and rub the dust of a thousand years from their eyes. And Thor, leaping forth with his giant hammer, will crush the Gothic Cathedrals!"

So wrote the poet Heinrich Heine in 1834. A century later the ancient berserker force was unleashed from the restraints not only of Christianity, but the whole liberal/rationalist/materialist complex which had stricken Europe for so long.

National Socialist Germany saw the resurgence of Man as an instinctive animal, a part of nature, in contrast to the Christian dogma of man distinct and apart from nature.

Man's animal self was repressed by the Nazarene creed, and the political dogmas it gave birth to. These anti-life forces, including Marxism, Christianity and capitalism, repressed the instinctive nature of Man. Repression causes neuroses which seek outlets, and Germany exploded as the repressed forces of man's primal nature were unleashed with the appeal to Life made by the NSDAP.

The Swiss psychologist Jung saw National Socialism as necessary for making whole the German volk, which had been split off from its "Shadow" Self, that dark path of the collective unconscious of a people which is repressed from consciousness. He saw this Shadow Self of the Germans embodied in the archetypal dark god Wotan.

In late 19th and early 20th century Germany and Austria there were many flourishing esoteric orders which sought to establish a reborn Germanic identity and to reconnect the volk with its repressed archetypes.

One of the most significant of these Orders was founded in Germany in 1912 - the German Order. From this sprang the Thule Society whose driving force was Rudolf von Serbottendorff. He had been schooled in occultism, Islamic mysticism, alchemy, Rosicrucianism and much else, in Turkey, where he had also been initiated into Freemasonry.

Thule served as the recruiting and political action front of the German Order. Serbottendorff bought a failing Munich newspaper, the Beobachter which he renamed the Volkische Beobachter and it became the official newspaper of the NSDAP.

A movement to promote Thulian ideas among industrial workers and to offset Marxism, was formed in 1918 - the Workers' Political Circle - with Thulist Karl Harrer as chairman. From this came the German Workers' Party in 1919. A year later this became the NSDAP under the leadership of Adolf Hitler.

Serbottendorff himself stated: "Thule members were the people whom Hitler first turned and who first allied themselves with Hitler."

The Thule society was active in efforts to overthrow the Barvarian Communist Government. Their propaganda effort was aided by a journalist, poet, and occult student Dietrich Eckart, who was the major intellectual influence on Hitler in the early years. The swastika flag adopted by the NSDAP was the brain-child of another Thulist, Dr Krohn.

With the victory of the Nazi Party, the occult tradition was carried on in the Third Reich mainly by the SS, who Reichsführer, Himmler, was an avid student of the occult. An SS occult research department, the Ahnenerbe (Ancestral Heritage) was established in 1935 with SS Colonel Wolfram von Sievers at its head. Occult research took SS researchers as far afield as Tibet. Sievers had the Tantrik prayer, the Bardo Thodol, read over his body after his execution at Nuremberg.

National Socialism and the Third Reich represented a major attempt by high esoteric Adepts to re-establish a Culture based on the Laws of

Nature, against the entrenched forces of anti-Life. Nothing that ambitious had been tried since the founding of the American Republic by Masonic adepts.

BLACK ORDER ARTICLES OF FAITH

1. We believe in Uralten - the Original or Ancient One of Germanics as representation of the creative/destructive force that permeates the cosmos, the Entropy of physics.
2. Our creed is therefore based on the Laws of Nature, as revealed by science.
3. Feelings of oneness and attunement with Nature and the Cosmos as manifestations of the Uralten-Force is "good". That which weakens is "evil".
4. Our morality is: that which strengthens the individual as a manifestation of the Uralten-Force is "good". That which weakens is "evil".
5. We hold that Nature, and therefore history, is cyclic, governed by cycles of life-death-renewal, and that these principle governs the rise and fall of Civilizations. This is the ancient wisdom of the esoteric schools of both East and West.
6. The cosmos operates on the basis of polarities, a doctrine common to the ancient cosmologies of the Norse, Eastern Taoists, Pythagoreans and the Hebrew Kabbalists, and that the interaction of these polarities causes evolution.
7. Man need not be a passive spectator or victim of the "gods" or "Fate", but by understanding the laws of the cosmos can, through his will, be an active agent in the evolutionary process.
8. Those attuned to the Uralten Force flowing through Nature have the essence of the Force within, and are links in an evolutionary chain toward the "Nietzschean Over-Man".
9. Man's destiny is to play amongst the stars; the destiny of his evolution into the foreseeable future : Homo Galactica.

* * *

CONSTITUTION

Aims: To (a) Study the esoteric current behind National Socialism, Thule, and the occult traditions from which they derived; (b) Prepare a political and cultural infrastructure to replace the collapsing Old Order; (c) Presence the Dark Forces on Earth via ritual magick, study, propaganda, infiltration, and any other means deemed necessary.

Leadership: Leadership is vested in the Grand Master (GM), who has ultimate responsibility for the interpretation and amendment of this Constitution.

Organisation: The basic unit is the Lodge. At least 3 members may form a Lodge, and elect a Master/Mistress, subject to approval by the GM.

Membership: Applicants must be at least 18.

Conduct: A Master/Mistress may suspend a subordinate, subject to review by the GM.

Symbol: The iwaz rune rep. the yew tree of Life & Death, crossed to form a Cosmic Wheel, surrounded by a self-devouring serpent; the whole being the evolutionary interaction of polarities.

THE BLACK ORDER

The Black Order is an esoteric body of men and women established to presence the "dark" or "Shadow" side of the European unconscious. If you are at least 18 and interested in the pagan folkways of the European peoples and you are interested in the possibility of joining The Black Order, send a 500-word autobiography, including your views on politics, culture and history. If deemed suitable, you will be sent an application and introduction brochure.

The Black Pilgrimage - A Note

The Pilgrimage is undertaken during the stage of Initiate, on the Autumn equinox. The suggested guidelines are that the rite is begun at dawn - or in the hour before dawn - and completed at midday the following day.

Although the Pilgrimage tests the candidate in an arduous physical way, the rite is much more than simply a physical task. It is fundamentally an *esoteric* aid towards the fulfilment of the stage of initiate.

The esoteric aspect lies in the candidate experiencing, alone and for the first time, several of the key sites associated with the Dark Tradition. The effects of this encountering further weave the life of the candidate into the sinister fabric of the Tradition, thus leading them further along the Way.

Unlike the other physical tasks (qv. Order MSS) and the Grade ordeals, there is no real "failure" to encounter - even if the candidate, for whatever reasons, takes longer than the allotted time-span to complete the rite. What matters is the esoteric encountering mentioned above, and this particular encountering can only happen once, since it is an introduction to the various places and their associated energies.

Thus, how the Pilgrimage unfolds for each candidate will be unique to them, according to their unique character and Destiny: for some, the experience may prove practically straight-forward, for others, there will be difficulties. Whatever, for each candidate, it is *their own Pilgrimage*, and as with all first-time experiences, the essence cannot be experienced the same again.

ONA 1998eh

The Black Pilgrimage: Practical Application

Introduction

The following notes are an example of the practical application of the Sinister Tradition. They are provided for Initiates and non-Initiates alike for three specific reasons: 1) to provide Sinister Initiates and Prospective adherents to the Tradition with a practical introduction to the Task itself; 2) to further explicate the Sinister Tradition in practice and 3) for historical interest.

What is important to note in relation to the Black Pilgrimage is that it is an Initiation ceremony in itself though one that is devoid of the overt symbolism as used in Traditional ceremonial rituals as explicated in the Black Book of Satan. The Pilgrimage serves to Initiate the Sinister Satanist into a number - though not necessarily all - of the sites associated with the Sinister Tradition. These sites are as they are and may appear to many to be of little interest having no outstanding features that establish them as 'magickal sites' or ley lines etc. Thus, for example some of the stone circles are actually now in ruin and may not even appear to resemble a stone circle to the passer-by.

The journey itself is mapped out by the Initiates Order contact who will instruct the candidate on what is expected of him/her and what equipment is to be taken and what omitted. The Black Pilgrimage Initiation does not simply cease when the ordeal has been completed, rather it continues through the stage of Initiate and on through the Gate that is the Rite of External Adept. During the Black Pilgrimage the Initiate may glimpse certain aspects of future rites such as the Rite of External Adept and the Ritual of the Abyss, this glimpsing is however only a taster of the even harder reality that is to come. For those who seek the Key to Existence the journey begins within...

Vindex est Venturus.

Pre-ritual Notes

Camping at top of Stor. Initial walk [up to chosen camp-site] taxing. Pack too heavy will leave inner tent behind and just take flysheet and poles. Other equipment not to be used includes specifically torch.

Important during walking to maintain control of thoughts as laziness and negativity can overtake oneself and impede performance - needs to be a certain amount of detachment. I know I can complete the task, though I may be late due to physical weakness (asthma) however, chest seemed fairly clear during much of the walking.

Have been given a mss to read tonight by my Order contact, am told to meditate on this during the Black Pilgrimage. Have not taken Sinister Tarot - will recall images mentally (visualisation) when relevant.

Most important thing to do is to control thoughts and objectify them. That is, be aware that they might be preventing me from attaining the goal, try and replace useless thoughts with controlled useful thoughts, make small aims - aim for that dip in the earth, than make another small aim - aim for that flat area, break the journey down into smaller sections. This seems to be a key to success (in all ones endeavours!).

One other note. Am looking out over the town of Dredgelock. I am so near the world of 'society' yet I am no longer of society, all those people with their conformist imitatory beliefs, how close and yet how far away the Sinister Initiate is from them. Agios o Satanas!

Day One

Descended from Stor to area where ritual commences.

First ascent - packed/left at first light.

Black Mass of Life in Stor ring. Felt energies raised - feelings/sensations of something Beyond, but as though can only partially open the Gate. Misty, strong breeze. Leave now for next stage. NB. At top of ascent (was guided?) went straight to the ring.

Okay, got lost at Middleton- gone up hill and then towards Inwardstone. Am therefore going over same ground again. Yes, it is annoying but sometimes have to go in a roundabout way to get to ones destination. Am going to take an alternative (clearer - I hope!) route at Middleton.

Am now near the end of the Misterly Road. Last walk have felt very tired and drained. Gives an idea of Ritual of Abyss - Master creation. Am hungry, but am eating a roll. Having a few minutes rest, but still have a long way to go to reach Stuppington, just want to lie down and sleep.

[Lost use of pen so following notes were made after the ritual had finished.]

After Stuppington got lost - went in direction of Losington (on XXXX). Followed main road up to Pitchford, couldn't find stone circle though - area now very over-grown, no horses either.

When reached Stuppington, sun still high so decided to go on to Niiford and hopefully Gateon.

Spent a short period of time at Niiford. Chanted Nythra Kthunae Atazoth. No noticeable feelings though.

Niiford felt good - chanted Agios Lucifer at a Cairn before descending. Descent tricky, straight down into a nightmare forest of ferns, then a marshy/boggy area. Got partially lost, but quickly found road.

Now got dark quickly (lost some time due to arduous venture at bottom of Niiford).

Reached area around foot of Gateon but unsure of where ascent should begin.

Camped out about 100 yards (or so) from foot of Gateon. Only sleeping bag and insulation mat.

Noticeable during night how slow stars move across the sky - External Adept Rite.

Day Two

Next morning do not perform the Black Mass of Life as intended. Instead begin immediate ascent on Gateon. Disaster strikes early though as find I have to fight my way through another forest of ferns! Ascent difficult. Legs ache, feet painfully blistered. Manage to ascend through fern and over rock - vegetation looks akin to atu in Fenrir IV no i. But what location? Meditate upon cave of Goddess. Chant Agios Baphomet, good personal meditation. Descend and commune with the Dark Goddess. Water passes through the cave, other individuals present (hand-maidens?). She wears the Luna headress, but a necklace of skulls adorns her neck. She is bare breasted.

Once reach top of Gateon, shout Agios o Atazoth. Impressive hill in my mind, something, some energies here but cannot fix anything definite. Phrase Agios o Atazoth sums it up I think. Good place for my External Adept Rite.

Descent good but felt painful. Decide I will keep checking the map so I don't get lost like yesterday (I wish!) Got lost! This time going across Stuppleton Road towards Stuppleton ended up in Blindingford area. So went back and ended up at Minster. Angry, feet hurt, don't want to waste time/energy due to pain.

Reconnect with route along road towards M iserly Lane. Now begin to sing as walk along: Black Mass of Life, Agios Lucifer, Agios Olenos, Asooth, Sanctus Satanus and some non Tradition songs. This takes mind

off pain - might be good idea to have a particular (exclusive) chant to be sung during the Black Pilgrimage? Though a number of chants should be performed at particular sites anyway.

Hill up to Torford very long and very steep. Seemed like a lot of breaks needed as ascended. Often better to keep pace going though. Track at top of hill up to Townstead good to walk on, that is, it was easy to follow.

Townstead. Yes! Feel good have come close to conclusion of Black Pilgrimage. Binan Ath. Their time, my time (on reflection it goes back even further than the sisters). Meditation. Again feeling that I am missing the vital link because I have not yet achieved consciousness of a Sinister Priest... must meditate further on Magickian when return home...

Leave Townstead. Sun still high but pace now much slower: hobbling pace due to pain. Start off on track but think I'm getting lost. Immediately sort this out and got back on right track (I incorrectly thought!) follow it down between hills following water down to Hometown. Not sure where went wrong here? (I think that I have been on the path I should have gone on at this point during the Black Pilgrimage previously?) Seems to take ages to get Hometown. feeling tired and under pressured, can I make the time? Or at least a reasonable time? Reach Hometown. Oh what joy to walk on a road again! But still a long way to Finalsted.

Reach Finalsted at about 3.30pm. So am a few hours behind schedule from one perspective and a few hours ahead of schedule from another. Feel good and very tired/exhausted.

General Notes/Insights

Felt difficult to meditate at sites because of time pressure.

Thought of asking people what the time was on a few occasions but didn't.

Connect Black Pilgrimage to External Adept Rite (by sleeping out) and Ritual of Abyss due to rhythmic walking.

Order contact gave me mss to read prior to ritual, which I did. But found that my thoughts were more focused towards the ordeal of the Black Pilgrimage itself.

Journey distance should have been approx 28 miles (43km)

I actually covered 32.31 miles (52km) due to getting lost on a number of occasions.

It is now a few days after the ordeal and I do feel different psychically. Although I fall back into my old self when with friends and acquaintances, when alone and in silence I feel a renewed presencing of the astral. My dreams are currently much more intense and personally provocative. I believe that much repressed material is presencing itself. The Black Pilgrimage is indeed a Sinister Initiation Rite, one that, as mentioned above, continues after the ordeal itself has been concluded. This Initiation - which for me has taken place halfway through my Dark Pathways workings - adds to what I have already undertaken and will be added to by what is yet to come.

Lyceus
ONA

Further Reading/Associated Texts

The Secret Tasks of the Sinister Way: The Black Pilgrimage

The Meaning of Sinister Initiation: An Initiates Perspective

The Seven-Fold Way: Training and Grades

Hostia Volumes I - III

Deofel Quartet: IV volumes

The Sinister Tarot

The Black Pilgrimage: Addendum Notes

After discussion with my Order Contact the following notes are provided for clarity:

The actual distance of the Black Pilgrimage is approximately 45 - 48 miles, this distance taking into account the miles of ascent.

The Lesser Black Pilgrimage occurs when it does to enable a balance to be struck between a physical and an esoteric ordeal.

In many ways, the undertaking of the Lesser Black Pilgrimage replaces the physical task as laid out in Naos.

Contact with the sites is based on the individual. If contact is short this is how it is meant to be, if it is of a longer (causal) time period then this also is how it is meant to be (implications of Destiny). In the context of a short length of time in which the sites are experienced: exactly what time duration are we referring to? Causal or Acausal?

The Brink of Discovery

Order of Nine Angles

At the brink of a great quest, one often finds oneself overwhelmed with great questions. Thus far I have embodied more answers than questions themselves. Before, I had yet to be faced with any real wondering, and real desire, or any real need to uncover my destiny. Perhaps such a thing can only come from absolute need.

I have had great desire to do my part to further a dialectic of cosmic wyrd; to be a part of the glory that is to come. This was my destiny, my place in the cosmic order of things, my absolute desire. What I have until now failed to realize is that my destiny lies in myself, in uncovering my essence. To myself grow and learn. This can be the only way. I am part of nature, and unless I uncover what is truly my unique place within it, I will never obtain the empathy I need with nature.

I have failed before in great endeavors, and probably will again. I have died by my own hand in pursuing the things I long for, and I have yet to let this longing be reborn. My strong will and desire somehow crippled my goal. I failed, in a life long dream. Yet I moved on, to other things, other passions. My failure did not lie in the hands of others, it was not absolute. It lay in my own hands, it was my own doing; and ultimately, my own fight.

These other things, other passions in which I have moved on to, have been essential insofar as discovering what I can do. How I can create, and replenish. My recent pursuits have led me to learn something at least daily - something important not for what I have learned, but how I have learned it. I am forced, by my own choice of challenging profession, to forever learn and accommodate my mind and its techniques in different ways. What I must learn in what I do, I must learn the hard way. I must find a solution, and there is little aid - no one to find the solution for me. All I've to go by is what I've already learned.

Perhaps necessity changes an individual. In a way I am pressing my own boundaries, forcing myself to conquer new ground in my knowledge. I can feel it affect me. I triumph through many small feats, and this builds my confidence. My sense of overcoming. And perhaps this is what has started to rekindle what I've already lost.

If I am to know myself, truly know myself, I must follow my intuition. I must explore the frontiers of my mind, push my own boundaries, and explore my passions. By doing this I will find at least a real way to manifest my intuitive character, my acausal self. Even so, if I find my rekindled lost passions are in contradiction of my real essence; I will have learned of myself by eliminating these wonders, which engulf me.

And with this realization, that I must pursue what I intuitively desire; I am a step closer to finding myself, my essence. This will likely take a good portion of my life, but will be an essential uncovering. In this, I am uncovering a means within myself to ultimately help fulfill cosmic wyrd, and aid this dialectic that I have devoted my very soul to. Once I have further advanced on this quest of self-discovery, by my very life, the Sinister Dialectic will be aided, in a way much larger than even I realize. Once I obtain this empathy with and knowledge of nature I so desire, both outward and inward, I will have evolved; in a very real way.

To surpass myself I must truly know myself. This is when the real change will happen, and when I shall become as Satan.

(the first 10 pages of:) THE SATANIC LETTERS OF STEPHEN BROWN Volume I O.N.A. First Published 1992 eh Copyright 1992 eh Stephen Brown & O.N.A. All Right Reserved PRINTED & PUBLISHED BY: Thormynd Press PO Box 700 Shrewsbury Shropshire England The colour illustration is from 'The Sinister Tarot' by C. Beest [ONA] - Atu XI, Desire Ad Satanus qui laetificat juventutem meam Introduction Collected here are some of the letters written by a Satanic Adept over a period of a few years to a variety of individuals with a view to explaining some of the tenets of traditional Satanism. Some letters to or concerning this Adept are also included to give context. All the letters are reproduced from the originals. [well, not in this e-text version, but in the original they were... - G.] It is anticipated that the publication of these letters will be of interest to those who, for whatever reason, are curious about Satanism in particular and the Occult in general. This present volume is the first of a series of projected volumes containing letters from the Adept who now has the honour of being the Grand Master representing traditional Satanist groups. This present selection deals mainly with the difference between traditional Satanism, as represented by the Order of Nine Angles, and what has become accepted within the Occult fraternity as 'Satanism' - as represented by the American group the Temple of Set, led by Dr. Aquino. For a long time, the ONA was secret and secretive. In the early part of the eighth decade of this present century, a decision was taken to gradually make available the methods, philosophy and teachings of the Order - this decision being based on Aeonian or sinister strategy. One of the tactics to be used to try and achieve the strategic aim was to challenge what had become the accepted notion of 'Satanism' as represented by such groups as the temple of Set and the Church of Satan. Accordingly, contacts were established. It should be remembered that at this time, few details about the teachings and methods of traditional Satanism were known to outsiders, and so the ONA was judged to be just another Satanic group in the Church of Satan/La Vey mould. Gradually, however, the stark reality of traditional Satanism was made known - via letters such as the ones published here, via the establishment of an underground zine ('Fenrir') and via the distribution of works containing the tradition ('The Black Book of Satan', 'Naos' and so on). The earlier curiosity and tolerance displayed by groups like the Temple of Set soon disappeared as they began to realize how different the ONA was - how far removed from what they considered Satanism to be. Thus, the ONA became, for the Temple of Set and its members, a proscribed organization. This reaction served to highlight the real nature of this Temple, as the letters make clear - and threw into doubt, for those with any sagacity, their version of 'Satanism'. The difference between the ONA and groups like the Temple of Set is evident most clearly in the matter of human sacrifice, as the letters reveal. P.O. Box 4 Church Stretton Shropshire England 7th September 1990 ev Dear Dr. Aquino, It was with interest that I read your letter in a recent issue of 'Brimstone' after my attention was drawn to that magazine by a friend. An open (rather friendly) reply to some of the points you raised has been sent to the Editor - I am sure he would send you a copy should you be interested. However, there are some points which perhaps are best raised in a private letter. First - and perhaps inconsequential out of its context - no one has ever claimed to be 'Head' of the ONA: no such position exists. Your statement on this was somewhat surprising because I felt you would be above using 'Kennel' type tactics re mis-information about other LHP individuals and groups. Am I mistaken? Or perhaps the information was supplied by a not altogether too reliable source here in the U.K.? Second - and most important - your mention of the NSS concerning sacrifice. These were published basically because they form part of an esoteric tradition, which tradition was being made accessible to those who might be interested following a decision to publish Order methods, teachings and traditions. Essentially, such publication lets others decide what is or is not

worthwhile or valuable or interesting from an esoteric point of view - there is not, within the ONA, any control of esoteric information as a result of one or more individuals deciding what is 'right' or 'true teachings' - simply because individuality is the foundation of the "ONA way". This way is the development of self-insight and magickal mastery via individuals following the seven-fold way. But this background aside, you raise an interesting point in your use of the term 'ethical'. Does Satanism have ethics? And if so, what are they and who formulates them? By the nature of the Temple of Set I am led to assume the answer would be affirmative and that it is the ToS which formulates these. Is this assumption incorrect? If it is not, then I and some others would offer dissent - based not only on the principle of individuality mentioned above but also on the reality of there existing divergent LHP and Satanic traditions (some of which existed before the foundation of the Church of Satan). Speaking for myself, I consider debate about ethics futile in a LHP context - except to express the obvious Satanic assertion (qv 'The Dark Forces' in "Fenrir" 4) that one essential personal quality is honour born from the quest for self-excellence and self-understanding. One either has this personal quality (or the potential to possess it) or one does not: intellectual debate about it is irrelevant. This quality is expressed by the way of living an individual follows and as far as the ONA is concerned this quality is one of those that marks the genuine Satanic elite from the imitation. Yet we accept that others may disagree since we feel there can be no religious dogma about Satanism or the LHP: no subserviance to someone else's ideas or ways of living. Each individual develops their own unique perspective and insight as a consequence of striving to achieve Adeptship - a perspective and insight which derives mainly from practical experience, both magickal and personal. Thus we uphold anarchism. Hence the publication of the many and various Order MSS. Yet, all this notwithstanding, I do understand that some may believe that tactically the time was not right to publish some of these MSS. However, is the time ever right? Once again, some interesting questions arise. For example, for the benefit of those groups (like the ToS) which do adopt a high media profile, is it necessary and indeed desirable for other groups and individuals on the LHP to restrict what they say and teach and publish in case such things are mis-interpreted and/or distorted and used against the LHP in general? This would imply some sort of consensus among those individuals and groups on the LHP - a consensus which it seems both the ToS and the Church of Satan wish to achieve by claiming a religious 'authority'. To this end there seems to be developing an almost Church-like mentality - with schisms and prohibitions and proscribing of other groups and individuals. Rather 'Old Aeon' values. If such a consensus is indeed necessary (and I and some others have doubts whether it is) then it would seem better achieved on a mutual basis by recognition of diversity and traditions and then the development of mutual understanding rather than one group trying to impose its dogma by a religious type belief: such dogma and such belief being entirely contrary to the basic principles of Satanism and the LHP - self-development via self-experience. I and others like me respect your right to promulgate the Setian philosophy just as I trust you have the sagacity to understand that what La Vey codified and what the early Church of Satan represented is not the only form Satanism can take. Satanism existed in many forms long before La Vey, and the ONA simply represents one such form: a form that has changed and is still changing - developed as it is and has been by creative individuals within it. As I mentioned to you in a previous letter some time ago, this does not mean we claim to be a 'peer' organization with a claim to some kind of 'authority'. We are simply a small group following our own way - a way somewhat different from that developed by the Church of Satan and the ToS. Our tradition, such as it is, is not static - indeed in many ways the most significant developments (e.g. the Star Game, Grade Ritual codification, Deofil Quartet)

have occurred quite recently. Doubtless these developments will continue. When in the past we and others like us have said things that others interpret as being 'against' the ToS or La Vey, we were simply assuming the role of Adversary - challenging what seemed to be becoming accepted dogma that the only 'real' Satanists are either in the ToS or the Church of Satan. Such a dogma is an historical absurdity and its acceptance an affront to the Satanic desire to know and understand and not meekly believe. If you have any comments about these matters I would be interested to read them. Cordially yours, [Signed: Stephen Brown] Temple of Set Post Office Box 470307, San Francisco, California 94147 MCI-Mail: 278-4041 * Telex: 6502784041 Michael A. Aquino, Ph.d. High Priest of Set October 7, XXV Mr. Stephen Brown Post Office Box 4 Church Stretton, Shropshire England Dear Mr. Brown: Thank you for your letter of September 7th. Under your several aliases every single letter and publication of the O.N.A. is authorized over your personal signature, whether as "pp" or otherwise. Personal contacts by our former Priest Martin [blacked] confirmed that you are the leader, if not indeed the sole member of this institution. The old Church of Satan used to play games with mythical officials and executive bodies behind the scenes. As a senior official of the Church I helped to keep this particular hot-air balloon inflated, initially assuming that it did no harm and made the Church a bit more colorful to the membership. Ultimately I became uncomfortable with it, however, because in the last analysis it involved deceiving the very persons - the membership of the Church - who had come to it in good faith depending upon it to not deceive them, even in so "playful" a fashion. It was also responsible for a more serious kind of damage. It enabled Anton LaVey to announce policies in the name of a fictitious "Council of Nine", or in the name of a fictitious official, and thus to escape personal responsibility for his actions. Nor was there any executive body or other official to whom he was accountable. Had there been, the catastrophe of 1975 might have been averted without the entire Church of Satan organization having to be scrapped. [Even if it had evolved into a Setian mode, as in many Lesser Magical ways it was indeed doing prior to the crisis, it still might have continued as an unbroken organization - and Anton LaVey might be its High Priest today.] - 2 - When the Temple of Set was founded, therefore, the old occult game of "Ascended [or in this case 'Descended'] Masters behind the scenes" was ashcanned along with the other practices of the old Church with which we were ethically uncomfortable. From the moment of its founding, the Temple has made all of its officials and executive bodies a matter of record, known to all Setians [and to non-Setians with legitimate interest]. And neither the High Priest of Set nor any other official has the sort of dictatorial power that Anton LaVey had in the Church. Given the present climate of witch-hunting hysteria in England, publication of a "Satanic ritual" by an avowedly "Satanic" institution which includes human sacrifice is thoroughly irresponsible. In fact it would be irresponsible even in a normal social climate, as the Satanic religion is not and has never been based upon the principle of human sacrifice. [It is Christianity which espouses that principle, sacrificing its god in human form every Easter.] If you were presenting that ritual text as an example of Christian hate-propaganda against the Satanic tradition, making clear that it has no basis in fact, that would be one thing. But the ritual which you have published makes no such distinctions, and is thus a dangerous "loaded weapon" to be used by any child (of any age) who picks it up. And of course it plays right into the hands of any anti-Satanic maniac who is looking for "evidence" of "Satanic ritual murder". Your argument that the O.N.A. does not consider itself responsible for such uses may satisfy you, but it certainly doesn't satisfy the Temple of Set as guardian of this religion. Indeed Satanism is an ethical religion, and yes, I do consider the Temple of Set the institution consecrated by Set to establish and maintain such an ethical environment - which is carefully developed in the Crystal Tablet of Set. As a non-Initiate

of the Temple, you are of course at liberty to dissent from this ethical standard. But neither, by your non-Initiatory status, does the Temple consider you a member of the Setian/Satanic religion. You are, in our eyes, simply one more individual affecting "Satanism" as a personal hobby. In this you may be more or less skilled, more or less articulate, more or less artistic: these we do not judge. But what we do judge is that in all of this you have not been Recognized by the Temple which exclusively is consecrated by Set. We consider the Temple a sacred institution, not just one of a number of "Satanic clubs" around the world. From 1966 to 1975CE we held precisely this view concerning the Church of Satan, which welcomed the interest and enthusiasm of amateur "Satanists" and "Satanic" groups such as the O.N.A. but considered only its own membership and Priesthood formally deserving of the religious titles they held. This last point deserves further elaboration and emphasis. Just because we regard the Temple as seriously and exclusively as we do does not mean that we hold non-Temple "Satanic" groups in blanket contempt. Some of them are indeed - 3 - amateurish and embarrassing to the Satanic tradition, and the sooner they disintegrate the better. But others are quite serious and sophisticated, and deserve our respect and admiration - which are quite freely given when due. Some, upon encountering the Temple of Set, have voluntarily dissolved and commended their membership to it. Some have retained their independent structure and interests while at the same time encouraging/allowing their members to affiliate with the Temple as a formal religion. Some have simply gone their own way, maintaining a polite non-acceptance of the Temple's avowed Infernal Mandate. The distinction we draw in all cases is dictated simply by our sacred regard for the Priesthood of Set, and the Temple under its care, as established by Set in the Book of Coming Forth by Night. If we did not draw that distinction, then we would be, at our heart, and insincere and fraudulent religion. Therefore the exclusiveness of the Temple of Set is not born of either arrogance or competitiveness, but simply of the utter seriousness with which we regard ourselves. It is this same attitude which makes the Temple of Set reject any "council of churches", occult or conventional, for the simple reason that we consider our religion correct and their incorrect. As is stated in our informational letter, "they may serve a useful social function as purveyors of soothing myths and fantasies to humans unable to attain Setian levels of self-consciousness". I have re-read the comments I made concerning the O.N.A. and yourself in Brimstone, and I see nothing in them that I think should be amended - including the compliment to you at the conclusion of those comments. You are, from what I have seen of your writings, an intelligent and creative individual who could become an influential and respected philosopher of the Left-Hand Path if you can bring yourself to cast aside all of the fictitious "lumber and wreckage" with which you are unnecessarily crippling yourself. If I didn't see Setian qualities in you, I wouldn't even bother to say such things. But just as in my university classes I speak most bluntly to the students who do have the intelligence to master the curriculum and aren't doing so, so I speak thus to you. Sincerely, [Signed: Michael Aquino] cc- Adept John D. Allee, Editor, Brimstone Shropshire England 20th October 1990 ev Dear Dr, Aquino, Thank you for your letter of October the 7th. I appreciate your comments and before passing on to specific points raised, would like to make some general comments. What I sense (an I use the word advisedly) is that you and I, despite our differing methods, are fundamentally trying to achieve the same thing. I here mean in terms of 'esoteric' magick and not in terms of outward terms or expressions. We are both aware of the potential inherent within individuals and how certain forms, magickal or otherwise, can be used to explicate that potential, bringing thus an evolution of consciousness both individual and beyond the individual. Thus are individuals, and 'society', changed over varying periods of time. You have established and maintained an organization and imbued it

with certain forms, which forms via their various transformations, create and establish conditions for changes in time with certain energies. Because of the nature of this organization, and the energies, there is a need to maintain a coherence, a magickal continuity and thus the establishment of a system which protects the viability of all aspects. As to myself, I deal with similar forms but make them manifest in a different way - building in to some of those manifestations a random or 'chaotic' element and into others a 'numinous' aspect. Thus, further forms are developed, in both causal and acausal time, and achieve certain goals, some of which are quite long-term (beyond my own temporal lifetime at the earliest). All these energies are 'sinister' (or Left Hand Path, if you prefer) - at the most simple level this means they enhance our creative evolution; at another, it means they 'disrupt' already existing forms which may hinder such evolution and explication of individual potential. Where we might (and seem to) differ is in our respective time-scale for fundamental change and in making some elements more manifest than others, to achieve specific ends. Of course, I accept that my understanding may not be complete (and might possibly be incorrect on some points) as I assume that you, claiming the title 'Ippsisimus', understand the preceding four paragraphs without me having to elaborate at length. You have accepted a "role" within the Temple of Set with all the duties and obligations implied, and there is much to admire in this. This of necessity means adhering to the principles of what you describe as the 'sacred trust' placed in you via-a-vis the 'Infernal Mandate'. Thus there is a religious attitude and acceptance. All this I myself regard as natural and necessary, given 2. the vehicle chosen - that is, the Temple of Set. The way of the ONA is, however, quite different - we see our way as guiding a few individuals to self-awareness, to Adeptship and beyond, via various practical and magickal techniques. The emphasis is on guide, on self-development, on self-discovery. There is no religious attitude, no acceptance of someone else's authority, and no mystique: the methods, as divulged in the recently published book 'Naos', are essentially practical. All this arises from the understanding that changes such as I mentioned earlier (regarding individual potential) will occur slowly and for the most part on a small scale for some time to come: bringing changes to 'society' (a generalization here, for brevity) - and this to larger numbers of individuals - on the timescale of a century or more. The present aim of the ONA is to make these techniques - which give all individuals the means to achieve the next stage of individual evolution should they so wish - more generally available. These techniques (the Grade Rituals for example, and the Star Game) will probably and indeed should be refined and extended in the future, as they have been refined in their creation over the past decade or so. Older techniques, inherited by me, have served their purpose - and to an extent have made possible the present advances, including preparing the way, on the level of mystique, for a dissemination of the 'new'. To be more explicit - an 'aura' was created around the ONA (quite deliberately) by using certain methods, magickal forms, and by publishing certain material. This aura, existing, becomes transformed - and serves a very useful purpose on the acausal level. (In simple terms and on an elementary level, it provides a certain impetus to seek out and try the 'new' techniques, the 'new' way - on the level of individuals.) Thus, as the new techniques (and hence the new forms deriving from them) become more widely distributed, via books such as Naos, the Deofil Quartet and the Black Book of Satan (these last two due for publication this Winter Solstice) then the methods used hitherto are no longer needed, and are abandoned - they have served their purpose. It is the same with the ONA: once the techniques and the essence are more widely available then 'membership' as such is irrelevant, since everything is available and accessible (and this includes past methods and teachings) - the individual taking responsibility for their own development ultimately rests with individual desire, just as each individual must

make their own assessment of what is valuable and what is 'ethical/just' from their own experience, it being the aim of the techniques of the seven-fold sinister way to provide the character-building, evolutionary, experiences. There is no pre-judgement by me or anyone, no set rules. The function of the ONA is now to guide, simply because its members have undergone the experiences of the way and can speak from a position of experience - an experience which may or may not be of value to others. Thus the fundamental difference in our approach. It was 3. made quite clear to the former Temple of Set Priest you mentioned that each individual is expected to work on the practical level to achieve his or her own magickal development - to actually practice magick, to use magickal and other techniques, rather than just talk about them. This takes quite a number of years, and is a personal effort. Most people cannot be bothered - they want easy solutions - and most people who enquired in the past about the ONA were not prepared to work toward their own self-development. They either wanted someone else to do it for them (be such a someone a 'Master' or an Infernal Manifestation) or would not/could not undertake the life-style necessary for achieving genuine Adeptship (such as spending three months alone under special conditions). Ultimately, their loss. I, for one, do not believe there is a 'religious' solution to Adeptship and beyond - a gift, Infernal or otherwise. There is only self-experiencing, in the real and the magickal worlds, and that is it. Wisdom is acquired by the alchemical process of internal change over a period of time: the techniques developed by the ONA may shorten that time for several decades to perhaps a decade or just under, but they do not do away with it, just as those techniques make the possibility of such change available to all. For this reason, the ONA does not attempt to define what is or is not of the Left Hand Path and what is or is not Satanism (or even what Satan is) - each individual arrives at their own understanding via experience. Occasionally, as I have mentioned, there may be the adoption of an adversarial role in order to attack accepted (or even unconscious) dogmas within the broad spectrum of the LHP movement - but that is as it should be, for individuals questing after knowledge who refuse to meekly believe. Once again, a 'role' is only a role, played out in the quest for understanding. On the specific point of membership - yes, there is more than one (not that it really matters anymore now that dissemination is being achieved). Not many, it is true, but enough - some only beginning their quests, some more advanced along the way: in this country, in Scandinavia, in the countries of Europe and elsewhere. Of course, all this may confirm your opinion that the ONA is not 'Satanic' (or 'Setian' - this latter I would agree with). Do you therefore understand 'Satanism' as now the exclusive preserve of the Temple of Set because of the 'Infernal Mandate' you mentioned? If so, this raises rather interesting questions regarding 'Infernal' authority, revelation and such like - questions partly answered by your use of the term religion. What then of Satanic organizations which existed before the revelation: such as (to take an odd example) the Order of Satanic Templars here in England which existed (and was undertaking Initiations) before the establishment of the Church of Satan? (It later became known as the Orthodox Temple of the Prince.) Personally, I see Satanism more as a way of living than as a religion: an attitude to life, and one which is ultimately personal, striving to ever more. 4. However, as mentioned above, I believe our ultimate goals are the same even though our methods may differ. Of course in this, as in many things, I may be mistaken: I claim no authority, and my creations, profuse as they are, will in the end be accepted or rejected on the basis of whether they work (Satan forbid they should ever become 'dogma' or a matter of 'faith'). I also expect to see them become transformed, by their own metamorphosis and that due to other individuals: changed, extended and probably ultimately transcended, may be even forgotten. They - like the individual I am at the moment - are only a stage, toward something else. In the interests of sinister fellowship I

could arrange for a copy of 'Naos' (and other works as and when they become available) to be sent to you, should you be interested. Enclosed please find a copy of an article due to appear shortly in the journal 'Balder'. It may make you smile. Cordially yours, [Signed: Stephen Brown]

***** [Editorial Note: In view of the controversy in Occult circles about using 'pseudonyms' and the desire of certain groups to operate 'underground' without media scrutiny - a subject mentioned by Dr. Aquino in his letters and since taken up by a number of others both within and without the LHP - the following observations are in order: *It has been for many centuries an established principle among LHP Adepts to work in a reclusive manner in 'secret'. The reason for this is basically two-fold: the magickal work is mis-understood by 'outsiders' [and often by such people categorized from their own social/political/religious perspectives] and to try and explain it to non-Initiates was seen as a waste of time; and, secondly, it enabled that work to be undertaken without hindrance from interfering individuals and officials. Without this secrecy, the LHP would not have survived. Today, conditions have changed somewhat, but still not enough in some areas. * A labyrinth was created to confuse the merely curious and those seeking to disrupt the magickal work and tradition. * Quite often, LHP Adepts have a 'separate professional' life (which in some cases is part of their long-term magickal goals) and the 'stigma' of involvement with magick would be detrimental to that. Quite often this separate life is beneficial to the evolution of the 'Occult' in general as it provides opportunities for dissemination (mostly clandestine). That some individuals have gone 'public' is fair enough - that is their decision. But those who prefer or need to work 'underground' in order to continue their own reclusive and secret traditions should not be castigated for many cases they are guardians who can never have a 'public' Occult role. Societies, and the individuals within them, are still structured on the basis of categories and generalizations.]

THE HERESY OF THE LEFT HAND PATH by R. Parker, Editor, "Exeat", England

One of the fundamental principles of the LHP in general and Satanism in particular is the desire to know - in the senses of understanding and experience. This principle is expressed by an attitude of living, an attitude often evident in the personality of the individual - there is acceptance of challenges, a desire to explore or create but above all an instinct for excellence. The follower of the LHP is seldom satisfied, a natural rebel who has an instinctive aversion to accepting authority. He or she needs to find out by personal experience rather than by accepting something dogmatically. He or she wants and needs to be a leader rather than a follower. Our societies, however, instead of producing such strong, proud and truly defiant and truly individual people, produce a conformist herd - and what is startling is that most of this herd is created and moulded and maintained for the most part not by compulsion but rather by ideas. It is ideas which keep the vast majority in enslavement - ideas accepted, enshrined in dogmas and made the basis for Institutions and state structures. The educational systems of all our societies are based on certain ideas and these ideas are inculcated into the young. It will not surprise many readers that the majority of these ideas - so detrimental to true individualists and thus conscious evolution - derive from the poisonous philosophy of the Nazarene. One of the most pernicious of these ideas is the concept of equality (qv. the article by Faustus Scorpis in issue #2 of Exeat, "Contemporary Dogma"). Another is what is inaccurately called 'democracy' and yet another 'freedom'. All these are abstract notions, idealized forms, and such incapable achievement, except on a purely individual forms, and as such incapable achievement, except on a purely individual basis. Yet generation after generation are tricked into believing in and trying to achieve these goals on a State and supra-state level. Consider, for example, 'democracy.' This is defined in many ways, but in essence is taken to mean 'free elections' and a government of elected officials who decide matters of policy. Any person actually possessed of the faculty of thought will know the sham that is this 'democracy' - where promises are made but seldom kept, and where in general 'minority interests' are more important than 'majority interests' because in electoral terms a minority vote is very crucial. Theorists trace democracy to Greece -whereas anyone actually studying the wholesome society of ancient Greece states would know that genuine 'democracy' was possible only within a small 'polis' composed of people related by ties of blood. At the time of writing, hundreds of thousands of American are poised to go to war in the Middle East in an attempt to bring about a more 'democratic' State and to end what is regarded as 'tyranny.' Whether or not this in reality is so is irrelevant - as is the fact that the US Government may or may not in reality be fighting for oil or to keep Israel safe. What is important is that the 'ideas' behind the 'crusade' are accepted by millions who are prepared to fight and die for them - the herd are so mesmerized by the ideas and the rhetoric that they are not in any sense themselves free and cannot, for instance, understand that even in their own country, the US, those ideals do not exist in reality. Their government complains of 'human rights' violations yet ignores the daily brutality within America; spends vast sums to fight a foreign war but cannot keep peace on its own streets - talk about high ideals but ignore the death of Kimberley Harbour of Boston gang raped, mutilated and murdered.... The pursuit of the ideal keeps individual mentality and consciousness on the level of the herd. In short, the State (and its dogma) reign, and the individual is ignored. POSITION OF THE LHP The LHP has always stood opposed to abstract ideas and collectivist thinking. It has always given individuals the opportunity to create from direct personal experience a way of living and a way of thinking truly original. Of course, this was and is a hard way, a hard school - full of danger. But that very danger ensured that those of herd feeling and herd instincts perished while the naturally strong, the naturally gifted survived and flourished. The LHP enhanced life, gave increased vitality to the individual - and created a lasting and genuine insight both personal and supra-personal, which in time gave birth to wisdom. Thus was evolution achieved. What should be happening is that this evolution should be spreading to more than a few individuals scattered across the globe - there should have been, due to the insights of creative individuals within civilizations, a general upsurge towards insight: in short the emergence of more and more

'Promethean' individuals imbued with creativity and zest - race after race of 'higher men' going forward to the very limits of evolutionary possibility. Instead there has been more and more conformity - not less; more and more acceptance of anti-life and anti-natural ideas. The triumph of the weak, the scum, the cowardly - rather than their defeat and demise. However, even the LHP and satanism have been infected by the diseases of the herd: the fawning mentality which accepts rather than desires to experience, that softness nurtured by society where extremes are classified and subjected to analysis and thus rendered safe; that desire to make dogma and deify worthless individuals. Satanism and the LHP are concerned with direct, personal experience - of going to extremes - of learning from those experiences and extremes, or being destroyed in the attempt. There is no acceptance of others, of groups, of dogmas, ideas or systems - there is only a prideful, fierce strong desire to achieve the ultimate, to experience the essence of Being, and this desire is individual, never collective. What the LHP has done is to offer opportunities - a certain guidance perhaps, or a way: if the way of yesterday does not work or is insufficient, discard it, destroy it - but create something new which enhances individual life and expands evolution. There is nothing sacred. Today, morons of the herd are accepting - or beginning to accept - some self-appointed authority within the LHP and satanism. There is no such thing! For the genuine satanist would defy even Satan Himself! Of course, such Masters need to be fawned upon, need herd individuals - that is the natural way of things, and good luck to those 'Masters' in their own evolution. But such types, and their modes of being, must not become accepted as the 'norm', as authoritative - there must be someone to defy them and there ways, someone or some others to carry on the inner task of the LHP - of making more and more achieve genuine insight and fulfil the potential of divinity within us all. The question is: which type are you - slave, or Master?

The Inner Meaning of the Seven-Fold Way

The Seven-Fold Way is a natural Alchemy - that is, a means of transformation. The subject of this alchemy is the individual, and the aim or object of the alchemy is the creation of a new individual. This individual, by virtue of the type of transformation that occurs, is a higher type; that is, there is an evolution of the individual as a result of the alchemical process. This alchemy is natural because it involves creating or bringing about the right conditions for such a positive transformation to take place. That is, there is a 'working-with' the forces or processes of Nature. The change, the evolution, that occurs is a natural one that would or could occur, given time and the right conditions. In effect, the natural alchemy of the Seven-Fold Way speeds up the evolution that occurs or which can occur in Nature. Essentially, the Way involves the individual undertaking certain tasks and living in certain ways over a period of many years. The Way is practical. It involves the individual in developing their consciousness, their knowledge, their skills; in making conscious and understanding their instincts and psyche. The Way involves the individual in learning about and gaining practical experience of, both the 'light' and the 'dark' aspects of themselves, others, and Nature. The Way involves the individual using the knowledge and insight they gain to effect changes in themselves and in the world: to contribute to evolution, to make their own life significant. By virtue of this practicality, the Way is hard and dangerous. It involves a commitment for at least ten years - and sometimes a proud defiance. It requires, for its success, individuals of spirit, of courage: individuals prepared to explore, to discover, to forge ahead alone despite difficulties. That is, it is a Way unsuited to the majority - as the majority are at the moment: soft, nurtured by materialism and the hedonism of the moment. Fundamentally, the Way - and its rewards - is suited to those who, if only instinctively, possess the spirit of a real warrior. For convenience, the Way is divided into seven stages. These stages represent the attainment, by the individual, of certain goals. They are stages on the way to attaining the goal of the Way. This goal is a new type of human being - someone who has fulfilled the potential latent within and who therefore is at a higher level of existence than the majority. This new individual understands more than others; they have greater insight; greater wisdom. They possess rare and unique skills. They are, in effect, complete individuals who have attained self-insight - who, having experienced the limits of themselves, the dark and the light, have united the opposites and so gone beyond them. Part of the work of the Way involves learning about, and gaining practical experience of, what has come to be called the 'Occult' and 'magick'. This learning and experience - of both the 'light' and the 'sinister' aspects - occurs early on in the Way and in fact relates to the first two stages of the Way. Thus, while the Way encompasses the Occult - and magick - it goes far beyond the conventional understanding of what is 'Occult' or 'magicka!'. Only in parts of the early stages does this Way concern itself with 'rituals' and 'ceremonies' and 'Occult' type knowledge and skills - they are a learning-process, a beginning to that self-understanding which it is one of the aims of the Way to develop. From this beginning, the individual moves on - to new experiences, to gain more insight. From such learning and practical experience, knowledge is gained and character formed - that is, the individual is changed by the experiences undergone. They learn, and grow. Or - they fail: they either give up or are destroyed by some experience or other, thus showing they were unequal to the task, that they did not possess the right qualities to succeed. For the Seven-Fold Way, like Nature Herself, is selective - it tests, and selects those fitted to survive; it does not care about the failures, for they have revealed themselves to be unsuitable. This, of course, is hard - it has to be, for that is often the price of evolution. Each stage of the Way is associated with certain specific tasks. These tasks, by their nature, create the changes within the individual appropriate to that stage - that is, the tasks develop and extend the individual in certain specific ways. They develop insight, knowledge, skills, character. The effect of the stages is cumulative - each one built upon the foundations the previous stage or stages have laid-down. The early stages are concerned primarily with personal development - with achieving a synthesis, with a making-more-conscious of what is hidden/unconscious/'occult' in the individual and Nature. The later stages are concerned with gaining supra-personal knowledge, insight and skills - with 'aeonic' matters, and with how

the individual, and other individuals at the same or greater level of understanding and self-development, might use their knowledge, insight and skills to bring changes about, in the 'world', which benefit those individuals and evolution in general. The first two stages of the Way train, prepare and extend the new novice. The end of the third stage creates an Adept - that is, it brings about a genuine "individuation", the union or synthesis of opposites within the individual, and it brings a self-mastery and the development of certain skills ('Occult' and otherwise). The fourth stage develops the Adept - and brings an awareness and understanding of aeonic processes and forces: of what has been called 'the acausal', and how the acausal presences in, and thus changes, the causal or 'temporal' world and the peoples within it. The end of the fourth stage, creates a 'Master' or a 'Mistress' - that is, someone who has achieved a deep insight, knowledge and genuine mastery of themselves, and of those forces external to themselves, particularly acausal ones. During the fifth stage, this Master or Mistress use their knowledge and skill to effect changes in the causal - to presence the acausal itself and thus bring about changes 'in the world'. Thus do they achieve more knowledge, more insight, more experience - real wisdom - and so evolve even further. The sixth, and last temporal, stage completes this process - there is large-scale, fundamental aeonic change brought about by the individual who is now a Grand Master/Mistress. Thus does the existence of that Grand Master/Mistress achieve something significant and thus fulfil the potential that was latent within them. Fundamentally, the Seven-Fold Way is a practical, tried-and-tested, method by which individuals may strive to fulfil the meaning of their existence as individuals: as conscious, creative, beings capable of effecting fundamental and significant changes 'in the world'. It is a means whereby they can contribute to evolution; whereby they can give significance and meaning to their lives; it is means whereby they can rise above and far beyond the majority who are content with their insignificant lot, who "cannot be bothered" or who lack the genius to make their lives count, who waste the opportunity that life is. It is, however, a Way for the few. It is always testing; it is often difficult and often involves real, practical, physical danger. It involves confronting what is hidden - what is sinister. It involves experience of 'the forbidden', the heretical, the Satanic - and of the 'light', the numinous. It involves a long, hard journey to that new, difficult-to-describe world where the 'light' and the 'sinister' are but two aspects of the same thing. It involves a complete "revaluation of all values" - the achievement of the goal of a higher, more evolved, being. But perhaps most of all, it is a Way which the individual undertakes alone - with no one to support them, to give them encouragement when things become difficult. It is a Way which sometimes involves the individual in making mistakes, in learning the hard way. The Seven-Fold Way involves no "great secret"; it teaches no "secret knowledge" (lost, or otherwise). It offers no "great ritual" or magickal "ceremony" which will somehow confer instant 'wisdom', 'adeptship' or whatever. It is, and it is not, Satanic and Sinister. The inner meaning of this Way is that it is a practical means - a way to fundamentally and radically change individuals. It is a means to create the next stage of our evolution: Homo Galactica. This new type of person will be effectively part of a new, hidden, elite - an elite to guide and change the majority over many millennia. Those who successfully complete this Way have the skills, and the knowledge, to fundamentally transform societies and civilizations and thus create history. Compared to this, all other goals are insignificant. In reality, the Seven-Fold Way enables individuals to play at being a god. ONA 1994 eh

Warriors, Freedom and the Sinister Way

One of the primary aims of the ONA is to produce a new type of human being. This new human being will - compared to individuals at present - be a more evolved individual who fulfills some of the promise latent within us, as a species. The Seven-Fold Way is one means whereby such a new individual can be produced. This individual would thus be an Adept: someone with a Destiny who understands wyrd, that is, Aeonic processes and change. Hence, this individual will seek, through their lives, their work, their actions, to create new ways of living, new communities, new societies, new possibilities.

This new individual will represent, and indeed be, a new archetype. The basis for this new archetype is the "thinking warrior": an individual who, being self-disciplined, can and does use their own personal judgement and who thus does not rely on the concepts, ideas, ways, forms, theories, laws, ethics, of others, and who is unswayed and unswayable by those forces which governments, politicians, the Media, religions, and Institutions in general, use to try and persuade and manipulate and control people. In essence, this new individual will use their will to control and change themselves.

Thus, this new individual - this new human type - will be beyond "individuation" and truly free. They will take responsibility for themselves, and those they have given a personal pledge of loyalty to, and not allow anyone to take this self-responsibility away. In brief, they would rather die - if necessary by their own hand - than have to submit to anyone, or allow anyone to control them, just as, if anyone or any Institution tries to confine them or control them, they would rebel, and fight to obtain their personal freedom.

There is one thing and one thing alone which can produce such individuals: personal honour. True freedom, and true strength, arise when a person abides by a Code of Honour. The only law that this new individual will recognize and accept is the law of personal honour. The law of the New Aeon is the law of personal honour.

The revolution which is necessary will be in part a revolution of ideals, with the ideal of personal honour the catalyst necessary to create a New Aeon from the destruction of the old. The law of honour means an end to the tyranny of governments; an end to all the old ideas of the old repressive Aeon.

In the simple sense, honour is a manifestation, a presencing, of those evolutionary energies which can change us into a higher type, a new species of human being. With honour - and the laws deriving from it - new societies, and ways of life, can and will be created which will transform this planet, and enable us to take the next great leap forward in our evolution: the exploration, conquest and settlement of Outer Space.

Anton Long

114yf

THE MONOLOGUES OF SATAN

Handwritten note in upper right –

1963-69: Its members joined O.N.A. in early 70's. Not, therefore, ONA teachings, but may be useful in historical sense.

*Note: Rituals are not to be used under any circumstances.
Reference purposes only (double underline)

Signed: Anton Long (and a sigil I do not recognize)

Handwritten vertically along right margin: "This is part of only surviving copy".

What follows, taken from 'The House Where Satan Slept', (subtitled 'A Novel After the Manner of de Sade') is an unpublished Satanic novel, and covers different degrees of Satanic insight. The book is used as an instruction text in several Satanist groups

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Priest (Roman Catholic): Why do you follow Satan? What can He possibly do for you? Look at what Christ gives: peace, harmony, and reward in heaven...

Satanist: I follow Satan because he is a Master worth following: a Master who provides me with all the earthly things I desire. If I please His Infernal Majesty with my doings then will the riches and pleasures of the Earth be mine!

I say 'Earth' because it is so – my heaven is here and now: not some dreamt of place. My ecstasy is life. I enjoy life to the full and learn how to live. After all evil is live spelled backwards!

Priest: But when you die think of the torment that awaits for your soul in Hell.

Satanist: So who cares about life after death? Certainly not me! It does not exist; does not matter. And even if it did then the Lord Satan would be better company for me than christ and his 'angels'. Rather to reign in Hell that serve in heaven!

Priest: Satan is deceitful; He cheats those who follow Him.

Satanist: Wrong! For those that serve Him well He treats as kin – and rewards as such. There is no deceit with His kin, that is merely an invention of the christian church to dissuade seekers of the truth of Satan.

Priest: But you forget: god, whose son was jesus christ is more powerful than Satan: for Satan was one of the fallen angels – some would even say a Son of God, albeit an evil one – and, I admit He was given power over the Earth, or at least parts of it, power to tempt people...

Satanist: There you are right – when He tempted the Nazarene in the desert, Satan offered him the riches of the Earth; how could He offer them if they were not His to offer?

Priest: Exactly, Satan has power but His power is more limited than that of god – in any battle, god would win, as the revelation of john shows. I doubt not the power of Satan, it would be folly to so do, but the power of God is stronger.

Satanist: This is all forgetting one thing, one simple fact: that God is Dead. Thus Satan will triumph.

Priest: Ah! But you have no proof that is so; no concrete proof.

Satanist: No that I have not got. But I have proof enough for me – if God is so great and so alive then why does he not strike me dead: for if I live then I will create more and more evil, more and more chaos, more and more disorder? Why does he allow Satan and His

followers to prosper – today even more so? What of war, that great sacrifice of blood?

And it is no good saying that god allows all this – that is just so much semantic nonsense. A god who is as christians portray him - good, kind, forgiving – would never allow great suffering. Either you accept that god is dead or that what god there is, is not the christian god but one more like Jehovah of the Old Testament.

Priest: Yes, that has troubled me a lot. But I have my faith.

Satanist: Well, you have your faith; I have my power, and enjoyment and ecstasy in life!

||

Satanist: What then is your definition of good and evil?

White Magician: You might say that evil and good have no meaning but without common agreement as to what constitutes what, what is allowed and what is not allowed, society would collapse, anarchy would result.

Naturally, some things are relative, but over the years, over the centuries, certain things have to most men appeared evil and other things good. Take murder, for example. What is murder and what is not murder? Surely, and here most are agreed, surely murder is murder and nothing else when it is cold-blooded, premeditated. That kind of thing all regard as evil and wrong and deserving of punishment.

Satanist: But supposing that if by killing someone in cold blood you could obtain something of value, then from your point of view that murder is justifiable, regardless of what other people think. It is a question of degree. Some standards are needed but the normal standards can and should be disregarded by those who wish to rise above the majority. They thus place themselves beyond Good and Evil.

Naturally, not everybody can do that, and the selection of those who can, is done by the law itself: those who fail and get caught trying to rise above normal morality are failures. Those who are not caught, succeed. But it is essential to bear in mind why evil is done. It can be done for personal gain, but a higher and more noble stage is to do evil for the sake of evil. He who can do that, and get away with it is to my mind a far, far better person than your ordinary law abiding citizen.

White Magician: (there is no explanation regarding who this is): What then of the criminal? Is he your 'higher type'?

Satanist: If he knows what he is doing and understands himself then he is on the way to becoming one; but only on the way...

III

Non-Initiate: What is your basic morality? How do you see christianity?

Initiate: We believe that every man has in himself both good and evil and that to know oneself one has to know evil as well as good. Destroy as well as create. As you advance along the Tree of Life, you will begin to see what this really means, begin to understand its true significance.

Christians have no power over us for god does not exist. For example if a christian idiot takes it into his head to throw holy water at us, or a crucifix, we do not cower or get burned as they believe. That is merely a tale invented for the benefit of the stupid christian mass! If a christian was standing before me now and was so shaken by what I said that he decided to lay a crucifix upon me, all that would happen would be fits of laughter at his idiotic behavior! I would die laughing rather than from his pathetic efforts!

As you will learn, our morality is the opposite of the christian, as is our basic theology. The morality of today is nearer ours than that of christianity, but there is still a long way to go, a very long way, before our morality is accepted by a large minority, let alone a majority. On

the surface, at least, it seems that christianity is losing ground year after year after year, but in reality the majority of people still believe, inwardly if not outwardly, in vile concepts like pity, compassion.

If you pass our tests, we will give you power such as you never thought possible. Power to use, as you will, to bring you material success if that be your aim; power to live as life should be lived. If you join us it will be your duty to spread the word of our law, to keep the vow of silence when necessary and to further our work of evil as much as possible. Only if you turn against us need you feel our wrath.

Non-Initiate: What are rituals?

Initiate: The Rituals you will come to know as required. They are based mainly on the principles of Hermetic Magick. In Initiation you will choose a magickal name and will henceforth be known by that name among us. Unlike some groups, we do not hold a brief for those who dress up in fancy, elaborate robes, call themselves pompous names and give themselves all manner of grand titles to flatter their vanity.. The Master is simply known as The Master. Our power lies in ourselves and we have no need of theatrical trappings of so many other groups who try to make up in showmanship what they lack in reality.

Non-Initiate: What of Initiation? Is it right that I have to pass a test, which will prove my trust in the Order?

Initiate: Yes. The test, the first of many, will involve a certain danger and be symbolic of your rejection of christianity and acceptance of Satanism... The reason there is danger is that you must learn to revel in it: for we enjoy danger just as much as the decadent christian enjoys peace. For without danger, without risk, man stagnates. When there is no danger then man becomes soft, weak and decadent.

For example, in every Magickal experiment lies danger; and he who scorns that danger, who tread the path that leads to power supreme, is a greater, better person than he who is afraid to court danger. The

latter would rather live his miserable, pathetic, disgusting peaceful existence than take a risk.

Non-Initiate: Thus the disgust of christianity?

Initiate: Exactly! Christianity is the religion, the morality of the weak. It exhorts the weak to destroy all that is strong; it exhorts them to love, to peace! What more vile and disgusting thing can there be than christianity? We do not want peace – we want war! We do not want love but hate. We do not want an easy life but a dangerous one! For only those that can hate with a passion to match the fiery pits of Hell can know true love! Only those who know and love war can feel peace!

IV

Satanist: What do you know of our beliefs?

Witch: Not much. I know that the aim is to master both the forces of good and the forces of evil. To not become a slave to either. And of the relative concepts of good and evil.

Satanist: And christianity?

Witch: Well, I regard myself as a Pagan not as a christian. It seems that the idea of 'sin' is restricting, not to mention the weird notion of heaven and hell!

Satanist: To us, and people like us, it is the morality of the christian which we fight more than its theology; although our attack is against everything christian. You as a woman naturally have more sympathy for the decadent morality of christianity than me, for it is a fact that women, because of their psychology are nearer to christianity than men. It is also a fact that most of the early converts to christ-worship were women and the slave classes. Wives it was that mostly introduced the poison of christianity into Roman homes.

But such things as pity of the weak have to be mastered, controlled by the will. For not only are they vile but they are dangerous; the seeds of weakness. Christianity is the religion of the weak, the down

trodden, the scum of the Earth, the slaves, whereas our religion is the religion of the strong, the triumphant, the proud, the masters. Christians and their sickly deformed ilk make me want to vomit! They forever talk of love and understanding! We who know how to hate can love, as love should be. Not from weakness but from strength. Like the warriors of old, like our pagan forefathers we hate our enemies with a hate that knows no bounds, and we love our friends and kin with a love beyond measure. And if our enemies are proud and strong, if they rejoice in being as they are, then we can respect them for being proud. But we do not pity them or love them as christ-worshippers do. Respect comes only from mutual strength, not weakness.

Witch: I have thought for some time that something was missing, that I was not developing myself as a complete person. In the 'Book of Shadows' it says things like one must harm none, and I have always felt that it was a bit absurd, a bit hypocritical.

S: You have reached the first stage of understanding, the stage that leads in time, to Wisdom.

Our ultimate aim is to master both good and evil. To reconcile the opposites and thus rise above them. To do this it is necessary to work works of wickedness, to do evil for evils sake, and what is more, to enjoy so doing. And this is where our morality comes in. If we are stronger than our opponents we will succeed in our acts; if weaker, we will fail. Strength is all, and in Magick that means will power and courage. Our aim in teaching Initiates, true Initiates, is to ensure that they are better than all other people who do Magick. We are an elite, and elite beyond time.

V

Occultist: Would you call Satanism a religion in the conventional sense of the term?

Master: Not in the sense that we worship Satan – but it is in the sense that we live our beliefs, that is, by our acts we give homage to Satan. For example, by me talking to you I am 'preaching' my beliefs and I have no need – would never pray to Satan. For Satan despises

such things, things which come from inner weakness. To pray is to be a slave – we are not slaves but followers.

Occultist: But surely you recognize the power of Satan – which must forever be greater than the individuals?

Master: Yes, indeed, but we recognize that power by making ourselves one with it, not fearing it. For the true Satanist sees Satan as a friend, as kin. We are the kith of Satan. This is one essential difference between Satanism and all other religions.

Occultist: As a magician I am aware of the essential forces behind Magick; but what of Satan? A real being?

Master: Yes and no. No, in the sense that Satan is a long-standing archetype of the collective unconscious, and consequently a very powerful one; and yes in the sense that an archetype is a real being – but it is a being on a different level of reality than that of which we are normally aware: not a being of flesh and blood but a being who is symbolic of the essence of forces.

Occultist: But why think in terms of a real being if it is not totally such?

Master: Because most minds need to think in terms of symbolism – only a few, like e.g. mathematicians, are able to rise above the need of concrete symbolism and think in totally abstract terms, and even they have eventually to resort to symbolism to describe anything, to communicate.

Symbolism refers to something known, whereas abstraction deals in concepts unrelated to normal sense consciousness. You as an Occultist, will understand the analogy in terms of the Tree of Life: up to the Abyss the Adept thinks of things in terms of their opposites: Yin and Yang, Ice and Fire, Being and Non-Being and so on. But when the Abyss is passed, 8 ('degree symbol exponent above and behind the eight) = 3 ('square box symbol exponent above and behind the three) is reached then is such done away with, or rather transcended. The City of Pyramids is the resting place where this is done in totality – on all levels, including the emotional. An 8 (exponent is degree

symbol) = 3 (exponent is square symbol) is one who can perceive and understand the abstractions without referring to the common reference frame of conflicting opposites. This is the essence of 'passing the Abyss'.

Occultist: I have seen references to the secret tradition of Satanism which included the symbolism of the Sun and the symbolism of the Lightning. What is the meaning of these?

Master: Well, normally such things become apparent to the Adept when he reaches 5 (circle exponent) = 6 (square exponent), the sphere of the Sun, although to fully understand them it is necessary to reach 7 (circle exponent) = 4 ((square exponent), just before the Abyss, although, because the degrees should be flexible to a certain extent if correctly used, such comprehension can occur at an earlier stage – 7 (circle exponent) = 4 (square exponent) is when it must be finally done if the Abyss is to be attempted.

Basically the Sun represents those things which we call 'above time' and the Lightning those 'in time'. The Sun and the Lightning co-joined is 'against time', the one who is beyond yet still part of the two apparent opposites.

To be 'above time' is to be the artist, the dreamer of visions; to be 'in time' is to be as one of the world, one who thinks not beyond tomorrow (the greater meaning of these are revealed to none but a few). The Satanist who is 8 (circle exponent) = 3 (square exponent) and beyond is the one who is 'against time' in its total sense – while those of the second triangle of the Tree of Life are such in part only. To be 'against time' is to act in the opposite direction to all others.

Obviously all the esoteric knowledge cannot be revealed to a non-Initiate, but let it be said that Lucifer stole the light of the Sun to bring to man.

Occultist: Why is secrecy needed? Surely today it is no longer required? I do not mean the secrecy surrounding groups, covens, people and so on – that, since you are Satanists is understandable, but why the secrecy of knowledge?

Master: Mainly for three reasons. Firstly, because the knowledge kept from profane eyes is of such a type that it can only be understood by those who have the necessary ability to understand its true significance – and such ability comes only with training. Like the mathematician who understands not Vector Analysis it is useless to give him a book on Tensors.

Secondly, some of the knowledge, if used correctly, can alter the course of history – and this must only be done by those who have passed all the trials and tests that await at the door of the Temple of the Inner Order. In other words, by those that have proved themselves worthy, proved themselves of a higher type. Otherwise the Great Work, which was started centuries ago, will never be completed.

Thirdly, certain things are kept from an aspiring Initiate because if he is working correctly, if he is truly advancing in Magick, then he will discover them for himself, and having discovered them and found that they are right, will be well on the way toward attaining the height of Magickal power. Pretence is easy – but pretence in Magick is fatal.

For example, a student of Magick is given, by his teacher and Master, brief details of a conjuration – he is not told the exact nature of the demon, or any of its attributes. If he is successful in the conjuration then these he will know and knowing understand. For it is far better to learn something by experience than by just reading about it in a book – and this applies more so to Magick. Today, with the secrets of Magick easily available this is more difficult to do (unless the student disciplines himself), and consequently sham success is easy. But we, as Satanists, (particularly the ones of the Inner Order who wish to continue to have Adepts advanced enough to carry on the real esoteric tradition), we do not wish our genuine students, our genuine Initiates, to be shells which hide the emptiness within; we wish them to be a brightly cut diamond who can stand up to anything – we wish them to become members of the true elite.

Occultist: Yes, but why appear to the world as you do?

Master: Understand that you and you have achieved wisdom.

THE POWER BEYOND TIME

The esoteric teachings of Satanism (and here I mean the true Black Art that has been in existence since time itself: not the lower forms of it that the like of Dennis Wheatley write about) contain details of the Power which is behind all things, a Power which most people refuse to accept, even though, at times, it has changed the whole face of this planet. It is the Power beyond the symbolic form of Satan. And when that Power is reached (by Keys known only to a few) and brought down to Earth, it changes the course of history if properly directed. Several times powerful practitioners of the Black Art brought this Power to Earth (the last time fairly recently), and several time has this Power destroyed those who used the Keys of the Gate wrongly. For this Power is the Power of the Old Ones, the Ones who are beyond time itself, the Ones who are formless to those eyes which see only the finite world of time, the Ones of Evil beyond measure to those whose mind see not beyond relativities. The one of whom H.P. Lovecraft has described only vaguely; the Ones of Cthulhu.

They exist in the angles where the dimensions of space-time meet, in the space between worlds, the space between causal time. They have no form yet are symbolic; no names to those that understand. FOR THEY ARE POWERS OF ULTIMATE DARKNESS IN ALL ITS PRISTINE SIMPLICITY. To understand the Power it is necessary to transcend the personality (in Magickal terms to Pass the Abyss) and time itself; to those that remain below the Abyss they are as *Cthulhu.

It is generally not recognized that Lovecraft was a Magickian and that he somehow stumbled upon the Power Beyond Time; but he was a Magickian who had not passed the Abyss and thus did not see things from a relative plane. Yet his Cthulhu Mythos is the best description of these Powers to be found outside the esoteric teachings. For it is known the Lovecraft has access to part of that esoteric tradition, and that he used the knowledge therein.

THE COMING AGE OF SATAN

As the world plunges again into chaos and disorder, as the world again stands at the cross roads of time, we Satanists proclaim the advent of the Age of Satan; we proclaim the beginning of the end of the christian morality and ethics. The end of weakness and decay and the beginning of all strength and growth and splendor. When the flames of fire finally die down over the rubble of christian civilization, a new Beast will stalk the world, laughing with the joy of destruction, with the lust of blood...christian blood! And that new Beast, who yet is old, is called Satan. And His followers will be many and great, and build Temples wherein to worship their teacher and prophet. They will arise and become as the Masters over all; they will be the builders of the new....

The world will groan as the rivers of blood flow free across the parched deserts of man, and as the sun is hidden behind the all-

enveloping snare of destruction and darkness. From the darkness will come those of greatness, those of steel that have stood as rocks in the onrush of time. Those who will build with the blood of the living and the bones of the dead. And all will be theirs and their children's'. They will build as diamond upon the charred fragments of man. And wherever they go will the Unbeliever tremble as he sees the Mark of the Beast which is upon them, and in his mind will the three words of fate, the three words of Destiny resound loud and clear heralding the dawn of a new Imperium – GOD IS DEAD.

II

Satanism is at last breaking the chains of christian propaganda, is at last emerging from the shadows of obscurity, of christian lies, in which it has languished for far too long. At last are the ones of Satan moving freely among the lands of the Earth; at last are they sending forth the power of the dark Abyss to overwhelm the world of men...

The hour of Satan has come – soon will come the Age of Satan, the Imperium of Sin. For the word of Sin is restriction and will soon be no more.

When the spirit of Satan is among men then will the creative energy, the genius that is latent in all, burst forth and overwhelm the restriction of christianity. Then will man step upward on the ladder of evolution, no more a mere thing of the moment, but of a man of vision, of energy untold, of a species that is called by some 'Homo Sol' – a species that conquers: a species whose home is among the legions of worlds that wait among the endless stars of eternity.

APPENDIX III

The Black Books

When the Satanist movement was forced underground by the persecutions of christianity, the Rituals and teachings were passed

from one generation to another not only by oral tradition but also by means of written manuscripts – sometimes these were in ordinary English and sometimes in a secret script known only to a few. When an Initiate became a Master and leader of a group, he was allowed to copy these secret instructions and use them as the basis of his group. Thus were the tenets of Satanism spread.

Originally, these manuscripts contained but scant details of Rituals and teachings, the majority still being taught by oral means, but gradually the manuscripts, which were now the closely guarded 'Black Books' of the groups, incorporated the oral tradition in part – the real esoteric teachings still being handed down from person to person.

Around the turn of the 18th century, the Satanist movement split into three groups – the first consisted of those who, while possessing the written books, lacked the esoteric tradition of what was (and still is) called the Black Art: The Power Beyond Time, the secrets of Alchemy and the inner meanings of Magickal power. The second group was those who had access to the tradition in part but which, because of the lack of keys of the tradition, were unable to understand what they had in its true perspective. The third, and the smallest group, were those genuine Initiates who had the complete esoteric tradition, and the corresponding Magickal power and abilities.

The first group were usually those which the public or the writers about Black Magick came across – those who practiced the philosophy of Satanism yet lacked a total understanding of its implications. Sometimes such groups were led by a powerful Master who was an Initiate of the Inner Orders – a fact which has escaped the attention of all writers on Black Magick and Satanism, for he is depicted by them as some form of 'inhuman monster' rather than the genius that he was; the one who used the people of his groups for higher Satanic goals.

From the second group came an 'aberration' – the ones who now call themselves 'Orthodox Satanists'; the ones who deny that Satanism is 'evil', and the ones who believe that Satan is the true son of 'God'. They, not having access to esoteric tradition in full, teach what they claim is true Satanism. (One manifestation of this group is the sect

now calling itself 'The Orthodox Temple of the Prince'; they have been known in past, among other names, 'The New Order of Satanic Templars') These are but, in essence, 'gray witches', their "Black Books" now containing the spirit of christian morality and ethics, although a small part of the esoteric tradition is there if they would be see it, blinded as they are by a stupid morality and theology.

The Black Books of the first group (when they can be proved to be genuine – a lot of the Black Books of these groups are nothing more than inventions of the leader(s) of that group, something like the pages of a Wheatley, only worse prose wise) are little more than a collection of basic instructions for Rituals, Initiations, etc. With these it is often exceedingly difficult to trace their origin owing to the stylistic and other changes that have been introduced by the various owners.

From all points of view the Black Books (or Grimoires) of the third group are most important – they contain (in either cipher or cryptic messages) the genuine esoteric tradition in all its manifold details. They are beyond money, and beyond the eyes of all but those initiates who have proved themselves worthy to read them – they are beyond time itself.

A warning with regard to the Ritual which follows:

To perform the following Ritual properly requires careful preparations: for nothing must be left to chance. If a person who is taking his first initiation is to be used in the sequence involving the use of the whip (this can only be symbolic – but the Ritual proper demands its use in full), then he must be prepared in the correct manner: by seeing the Ritual as part of his test of Initiation; for on his correct actions depend the success of the Ritual.

If the person so chosen is not an Initiate then he must be so chosen that there is no possible comeback on the people involved. One method of doing this is for the Master to put said person under hypnosis, and thus implant various suggestions in his mind. The person must be treated with the utmost contempt – do not think of him as a human being but as something that is nearly animal and

thus to be used as one wilt. But always bear the consequences of actions in mind when considering particular courses of action.

(To those that think that what is here written is an abomination there is only one thing to be said: a warning as to the nature of this work was given at the start, and no excuses for what is written need to be made or will be made. Evil is its own justification.)

The Satanic Mass exists, in the 'Black Books' in several forms; the one given here is the one that has the most cohesion and inner unity and therefore the most powerful effect if done correctly.

The Rite Of Mystical Union

(Note: This is an original Ritual which is used in the author's Temple. Its basic object is to present knowledge in dramatic form, and is given as an example of this type of Ritual.)

Participants: Mars – clad in scarlet robe holding a sword

Venus – clad in white robe

Priest – clad in black, crowned wearing swastika medallion around his neck

Upon the altar are three black candles and two white ones, the black to the left and the white to the right. Between them is the skull. Incense burned to be that of the Sun.

Mar and Venus stand before the altar facing the Priest, Mars on the left and Venus to the right.

Priest: Now you have come into my Temple
To learn the manifold mysteries
Of life
To learn the secrets of the Sun,
Which Lucifer brought to Man.
For in all that I am
Is everything known.

Mars approaches Venus, pointing the sword at her breast.

Mars: Canst thou doubt that the powers
 Of the God of War
 Bring liberation and joy?
 Who can stand before my rage?
 Who can temper by wrath
 Which bursts upon
 The graves of decay?
 All who oppose my will
 Become as Death who walks
 Lonely upon the sands of time.

(Music is heard, which writes as a snake through the air. The music of Venus)

Venus: I am desired by all
 Whether they know it or not.
 None are so mighty
 That they can resist my charms!
 I am Enchantment,
 I am the Goddess of Delight;
 I am the passion which waits unseen
 In all who pass me by!

(She removes her robe and stands naked before Mars. Mars lowers his sword.)

I am the Beauty
Thou Beast!

Mars: I weaken! What is this!
 This power of Delight
 Which waits unseen;
 This power which moves my soul
 To ecstasy supreme!

Venus: Why resist me?
 Come, and I will show you

New worlds of delight,
New worlds of time,
New pleasures which can be thine...

(She approaches Mars, caresses his body. The sword falls from his grip.)

The priest, unseen by both, moves forward and takes of the sword, places it on the altar)

Mars: No! I will resist thee! (Throws Venus to the
ground.)
 Learn what it means
 To feel the weight
 Of cold hard steel within thee!

(Mars looks round for his sword; he sees it upon the altar. As he moves toward it the Priest blocks his way.)

Priest: Learn to live in order
 To choose the right
 Time to die!
 The Sun dies each day
 And yet begins again;
 And so must thee
 If thou wilt reign!

(Mars begins to understand. He moves toward Venus and helps her to her feet. She thanks him with kisses.)

Mars: From the three
 And the two
 Come the five
 Which is the beginning of all!
 So has it been,
 And so it shall be again!

Priest: As it is written, so shall it be.

(Mars removes his robe and consummates his love with Venus. When this is complete, they change into black robes and stand before the Priest at the altar.)

Priest: From the darkness comes light
 And from the Kingdom
 Comes the crown.
 Thus is strength and beauty born.
 And thus are the mysteries known.

They depart from the Temple.

THE SATANIC MASS

This is one of the best and most powerful Satanic Rituals.

Male and female participants must be present in equal numbers. Black robes, under which all participants are naked are to be worn by all. Music (taped discordant organ music is best) should be used.

On the altar is a naked woman; above her the sigil of Satan and beside her two black candles. The chalice is between her thighs and the black hilted knife rests between her breasts. Strong wine to be used.

The Master stands before the altar, the participants in a semi-circle behind him. Incense of Mars has been burning for some time, so that the atmosphere is very heavy with it.

Master: (turning to face all): We are gathered here to celebrate the Great Rite of the Satanic Mass. To dedicate ourselves to the evil work of our Lord Satan!

All: Empires clash and Nations falter,
Tympani but to thy dance.
Victims burnt upon Earth's alter
Immolation thy advance.
Red in rising, red in falling
Spirit of the Age to come;
We wait upon thy advent calling
'Hail to thee O Nameless One.'

This is repeated thrice.

Master then recites Hymn to Pan, and continues with (taking the chalice and holding it up to the Sigil):

To thee, Satan, I dedicate this wine.
Let all who partake be only of thine
And let them work thy work of works
And so bring evil, chaos and mirth!

Master sips wine and, starting at the left, hands the chalice to participants. When all have drunk from the chalice he replaces it upon the altar, pouring the little that is left of the wine over the womb of her upon the altar. He then takes up the Black Book, placing it on

the womb of the woman, and begins to read from it. As he does so, the others begin to dance counter clockwise around the altar, chanting as they go, 'ZAZAS, ZAZAS, NAZATANADA ZAZAS'.

They should dance to exhaustion, then fall to the ground and begin an orgy of ecstasy.

Master:

Let my servants be few and secret:
They shall rule the many and the known.
Come forth, O children under the stars
And take your fill of love!
I am above you and in you.
My ecstasy is in yours.
My joy is to see your joy!

Obey my prophet! Follow out the ordeals of
my knowledge!
Seek me only!
Then will the joys of my love redeem
Ye from all pain.
I give unimaginable joys on Earth:
Certainly, not faith,
While in life, upon death:

My number is 11,
As all their numbers who are of us.
The Five Pointed Star,
With a circle in the middle,
And the circle is red.
My color is black to the blind,
But the blue and gold are seen of the seeing.
Also I have a secret glory
For them that love me.
To love me is better than all things.

Ye shall gather goods
And store of woman and spices;
Ye shall wear rich jewels;
Ye shall exceed the nations
In splendor and pride!

But always in the love of me,
And so shall ye come to my joy.

I am all pleasure and purple,
And drunkenness of the innermost sense,
Desire you!

Put on the wings,
And arouse the coiled splendor within you:
Come unto me!
Come unto me!

At all my meetings with you
Shall the Priestess say –
And her eyes shall burn
With desire as she lays bare
And rejoicing in my secret Temple.

Woman upon the altar stirs and speaks:

To me! To me! To me!
I call forth that flame
That is in all!
To me! To me!
Bring me joy, bring me ecstasy,
Bring me the serpent of desire
That I wish!

Master complies with her wishes.

Master:

Beauty and strength,
Leaping laughter and delicious languor,
For and fire
Are of us.
We have nothing with the outcast
And the unfit
Let them die in their misery.
For they feel not.

Compassion is the vice of Kings:
Stamp down the wretched and the weak!
This is the law of the strong:
This is our law and the joy of the world!

Note: At this point an outsider (non-Initiate) can be brought in who is tied and bound. He should, if possible, be deformed or have some obvious sign of decadence. He is thrown at the feet of the Master who whips him. Alternatively, the person being whipped can be one who is taking his Initiation.

Master:

I am the snake that giveth
Knowledge and Delight and bright glory,
And stir the hearts of men
With drunkenness.
To worship me take wine
And strange drugs
Whereof I will tell my prophet,
And be drunk thereof!
They shall not harm thee at all!

(Speaks directly to the one who was whipped)

Be strong, O man!
Lust, enjoy all things of sense
And rapture.
And fear not for there is
No God where I am!

If the one so spoken to was an Initiate, he now joins the orgy in the Temple. If not, he is led away.)

Aye! Feast! Rejoice!
There is no dread hereafter.
There is the dissolution,
And eternal ecstasy in the kisses of
The Scarlet Woman.

Pity not the fallen!

I never knew them.
I am not for them.
I console not;
I hate the consoled
And the consoler
I am unique and conqueror!
I am not of the slaves that perish.
Be they damned and dead!

Master now faces the woman upon the altar again.

There is a veil:
That veil is black.
It is the veil of the modest woman;
It is the veil of sorrow,
And the pall of death:
This is none of me.
Tear down that lying specter
Of the centuries:
Veil not your vices
In virtuous words:
These vices are my service!
Ye do well and I will
Reward you here and hereafter!

Thrill with the joy of life
And the joy of death
Thy death shall be lovely;
Whoso seeth it shall be glad.
They death shall be the seal
Of the promise of our agelong love.
Come! Lift up thine heart and rejoice!
Exceed! Exceed!
Strive ever to more!
And if thou art truly mine
Death is the crown of all.

Ah! Death! Death!
Thou shalt long for death.

Death is forbidden, O Woman of Lust, unto
thee!

The length of thy longing
Shall be the strength of its glory!

Master throws off his robe and has intercourse with the woman upon the altar. If a particular Magickal intention is planned then, as for Luna Rites, force is sent forth. Orgy continues till exhaustion of all.

The Ritual of Chaos can be included into the Mass. To include the Ritual of Sacrifice into the Mass (the sacrificed taking place just before the union of the altar) is to perform the quintessence of Satanic Ritual, the force being difficult to handle by all but the experienced Satanists.

IV **The Ritual Of Necromancy**

(Note: This Ritual is for those who dare – those who can discard morality. No guarantee of success can be given.)

The Ritual must take place on a Saturday at midnight (not 12pm but exactly halfway between sunset and sunrise), in the churchyard where the body is buried. For best results the person should be either freshly dead or have died with the last six months; with those longer dead, more effort is needed.

The body should be placed upon a Sigil of Satan, which has been cut into the Earth, the head of the corpse to the East.

Participants: Master
Scarlet Woman
Medium (one who is receptive to psychic forces)

The medium should prepare for the Ritual by becoming, for days, as one of the living dead. One method of doing this is to place the person who is to be the medium in a coffin (with barely sufficient air holes) for some time, surrounded by things of the dead (skulls, bones etc.).

Black candles are placed on either side of the body. Strong incense should be burned (e.g. sulfur). The Ritual knife is placed over the heart of the corpse.

Master stands facing the head (on the left), the Woman to the right and the medium behind them.

Master recites the Hymn to Great Dawn, and Hymn to Pan, followed by the 11th Enochian Key: -

“Oxiayala holado, od zodirome O coraxo das zodilare rassyo. Od vabezodire od bahala: NIISO! Salamanu telocahe! Casaremanu hoel-qos, od ti ta zod cahisa soba coremefa I ga. NIISA! Begile aberameji nonucape. Zodacare eca od Zodameranu! Odo cixale Qaa! Zodoreje, lape zodiredo Noco Mada, hoathahe Saitan!”

Master: The call is sent,
 The call beyond time
 Which I will make only mine.
 The call to the Dead
 To live again,

 The call to Satan
 To send us
 The one who by this blood
 We will bring
 Back unto life
 To share with us
 The things of the night!

 The call to the depths of Hell,
 The call to the Demons
 Who no man can tell
 And live.
 The call that this

Rotting corpse will hear
Bringing life
So near, so near!

For from the element
Of Earth,
Will come the great
Spirit of rebirth!
The Spirit to bind,
The Spirit t to hold,
The Spirit which comes
To only the bold.

The spirit which I give
To thee
So that again
Thou canst but see
The blood of life
Which now runs free
Upon the Earth
Of immortality!

Master here either sacrifices an animal, the blood flowing over the corpse, or slashes the arm of the Scarlet Woman.

Master takes the Scarlet Woman and makes love to her upon the corpse, intoning an extempore invocation and, by will, bringing the force.

The medium should now (provided the invocations are successful) become possessed: and speak as the one long dead. Question and he (or she) will answer.

The Reality Of Magick

Although it has been mentioned before, this bears repeating: magick, properly used, develops the potential of an individual in a realistic, practical way – that is, it produces, from the experiences undergone, a genuine insight and thus an understanding of self, others and the “world”.

This is in complete contrast to what happens outside of genuine esoteric traditions where there is adherence by the individual to abstract doctrines, ideas and beliefs – that is, there is little or no understanding based on experience, on the reality apprehended through trials, hardship, explorations, and discovery. Magick returns the individual to their inner core – destroying illusion, affectation and abstraction of the arid intellectual type.

Of course, one should really say – real magick, properly used, does this. There is an awful lot of pretentious “magic” and “magick” about. What differentiates real magick is first the practical nature of its methods (which are both “internal” – i.e. psychic – and “external” – i.e. involving practical work and experiences in the “real world”, not just “in the head”) and second its structure or system: a working toward a definite goal. This goal is Adeptship (part of which may be said to be the Jungian “individualization”) and what lies beyond even this: wisdom. The striving for this goal (and the striving is necessary: it is not a “gift” from someone) changes the individual in significant ways – the is a re-orientation of consciousness, insights and achievement.

The way of magick (as explicated by the seven-fold way) enables each individual Initiate to develop their won unique understanding or “view of life” or “world-view” – that is, it creates character, it uplifts the individual, separating them from the anonymous majority who mostly merely exist rather than live and who never evolve and understand. Today, individuals are “mass produced” – and conform to the accepted ideas and norms, even in the “rebellion” that occurs, where the “herd” or some fashionable “trend” or “idea” is followed with any understanding.

Everything is categorized, made into moral opposites – and there is developing in society an almost religious zeal about certain attitudes, a zeal which restricts individual freedom and expression and which destroys genuine individuality. All this, however, goes mostly unnoticed, so low is the level of general insight – a situation brought about, in part, by the comfortable lives most people in the West today live; insulated as they are by technology, by material possessions, by the complexity of modern life and by ideal from life in its realness, rawness and danger.

That is is necessary to give an example to illustrate the categorization and zeal, which is increasingly occurring, is a sad reflection on the general level of understanding. The example to consider is the disease of “ism-itus”: the creation of an abstract idea, described by a word ending is “ism”. Examples of the “ism” are then sought - in society, individuals and so on, and then that society and those individuals must be “re-educated” is the “ism” is found since the “ism” is regarded as morally reprehensible, the abstract idea being formulated in an abstract moral way. The procedure is not new - it is essentially a religious fundamentalism, extrapolated into politics and social concerns, and may be said to derive from Nazarene belief and ideas.

The “ism” itself becomes a “totem-word” – almost a “magical incantation” - and is surrounded by an aura of guilt. To be associated with an “ism” – even worse to be an “ism” or be called the “ism” – is reprehensible, almost a “sin”, and in certain countries definitely a crime, punishable by due process of law (and usually, if convicted, by imprisonment). What this amounts to – when taken with the other abstractions foisted upon individuals (the “ism”, remember is only one example of the other) – is the production of essentially characterless people who seldom if ever have any real experience of life, who conform to a certain set of attitudes, and who are psychically unhealthy in that they are infected with notions of “sin” and moral absolutes. There is little real understanding - only acceptance of the abstract forms which have been and are being projected onto and into “history”, “society” and individuals and which give the comforting illusion of “understanding” and knowledge (and also, in most cases, a smug moral feeling of superiority such as one sees in certain religious types).

Magick, however, is a means to destroy all this – and thus it really is subversive and dangerous since it can free the individual, returning them to that inner Being where insight is born and from which understanding, and ultimately wisdom, can be cultivated.

The is the reality of magick – it produces the only “freedom” that is real and which has meaning: that inner one, which allows further steps to be taken, which allows evolution to be continued. For Magickal Initiation is a personal liberation –when an individual takes responsibility for his or her own evolution.

Further, this way of freedom, this means of liberation, should not be used only by a few - it should be used by everyone, creating a whole new society (or societies) of Adepts: a whole new era or Aeon in which all have attained to self-insight.

Idealistic?

Of course – but still possible, even if unlikely for at least the next few centuries. But herein lies that almost sacred duty of each Initiate – to keep this possibility alive by maintaining the reality and effectiveness of genuine magick.

(ONA 1990 ev)

The River

(From 'Fenrir' Volume V, Issue Two)

The figure stood with pride along the mouth of the river, a solitary witness to the precious gift which nature had bestowed upon his soul. Of what consequence this may have upon not only his being, but of all who had crossed before him, there was no telling. Upon his arrival, the river had erupted forth, billowing forward that of liquid fire, brilliance born of life; a life filled with the power to shape mountains and the lives of men, yet tranquil enough in its motion to induce sleep upon the same. This embodiment of Mother had been born from the tears of Gods, to be presenced by only those of rightful choosing.

From the wind there came voices, of which each uttered gentle whispers of welcome in their passing, as well as details of nature's efforts toward the coming winter and the darkness that would follow. Within this, wind and water coupled to form the backdrop of what is now one man's sanctuary, to be used in times of need when the moon eclipses even the brightest of hopes, and the faintest of memory.

To this the lone magickian was given strength through action, from which did he erect a Temple, undying in its grandeur and scalable only through the limitlessness of imagination, its uses for that of workings known only unto him. Of wood gathered throughout the darkest of forests and stones shaped through timeless assaults, did the magickian construct an altar, its purpose rendered through the permits of his only Will, the attainment of true being, through the perfection of body, mind and soul.

Creatures of the forest, long since accustomed to the ways of this man, proved their trust through protection and neutrality when needed, for without this friendship failure was assured. Three months since the arrival of the magickian had it been, and throughout this time lessons were taught, not only to the mage and his counterparts who crawled on four and swam the depths, but unto the entire world which polluted his home from all points, near and far.

This was only the beginning, an infant in the manhood of the evolutionary puzzle, and as he stood facing the trident of the river, thoughts toward the future swarmed throughout his mind.

Was not he truly evolved, empowered with previous action and well spent time toward the tests of self, that he could justify his rightful place among the stars and call forth the names of all who tread before him? If not now, if not him, then who? When? Who before him hath shown truer purpose, stronger limbs, or sharpness of mind? "Have I not suffered unto you, Mother, for the period of time which I, through the breath that feeds my blood, which in turn gives life unto my heart, had agreed upon from the first eve of my journey?"

The magickian spoke to the river as he stood, motionless but with great urgency, facing the wall of tears. Great suffering had befallen him in previous times, but through the trials set forth by nature, and more importantly himself, he had improved and honed many skills, skills which would be needed for this and future generations to sow the seeds for rebirth and ascension to the stars and beyond. Answers were expected from this plea, but the river did not speak.

Disheartened by the river's ignorance toward his many accomplishments, the mage slowly turned, making steps weighted with anger toward his Temple. There he would rest throughout the night;

concentration given to that of questions aimed at loyalty and his wanted gift of placement amongst the Gods. The river flowed throughout, but with the motion and reaction that of silt and clay, forever slowing with every link broken by this man's ego.

Sleep invaded the dawn, the mage undertaking a breathless nightmare of visions hammered down by what seemed to be the wrath of the Twin Rivers.

Awakened by the shrill laughter of a child, the figure again took placement along the river, again questioning its judgment and purpose as authority. Again, no answers were handed to the perplexed and now angered Adept. Throughout the day, needed tasks went unnoticed; self-pity and the villain of righteousness took hold with a firm grasp.

Weeks passed by, with no answer to the questions posed by the now disheveled mage given, the river lay silent. With a hatred did the magickian take to dismantling the Temple, with great thrusts of livid persecution did the foundation fall, and to it went the spirit of Will.

With all but the altar remaining did the mage cease his attack, to once again lay upon the earth, allowing to soil to cradle his beaten body as in times past. With his last vision of conscious awareness did the man spit upon the river, renouncing that which before he had held sacred. Thoughts echoed throughout his mind, with the lasting image of his true wish this night, for the river to open once again and flow like the liquid beauty he had loved and caressed with every motion of every deed. "It is then," he spoke unto himself, "that I will receive the answers I so justly deserve!" Then the darkness of sleep took hold. Forever.

Throughout the night, the great river churned under the hardened mass created from inactivity, with every flow harbored a hateful decree bellowed from the mage. Slowly, the river edged upon its' side, closer to its prey, until the compacted soil could hold the power from within to more. The river erupted, flowing as blood only all that lay within its' wake, consuming the life it had given so generously in time past, gripping and suffocating innocence as well as the guilty. All that had lived there were now dead, to be used again toward the new life the river would surely bestow, to make the land again fertile.

The river allowed the mark of a lone altar to stand in place amongst its new children, to be a remembrance of her generosity and power, to not be mistaken for rightful dues by any man.

The Self-immolation Rite

A Review

Composed and Performed by Christos Beest (who is the outer representative of the Order) and Wulfrun Hall, the "Self-immolation Rite" captures the very essence of the Sinister Tradition as an alchemical journey to self-excellence and Aeonic Destiny. The "Self-immolation Rite" is a guided journey through the Dark Spheres of the Septenary Tree of Wyrð, as also depicted in 'Naos'. This journey involves harshness, death, destruction, loss, sorrow, and pain. Yet it equally involves love, wisdom, self-growth, insight, gain, joy, and power. It is an all-encompassing reality to the experiences involved in self-development.

The music is beautiful and also powerful and majestic at times. It augments the mood of the journey perfectly and very well captures the emotions associated with the experiences of each Sphere. The Rite climaxes in the Sphere of Chaos, in which the Dark Gods return to the earth, a Nexion is fully opened, and Aeonic Destiny is fulfilled. The "Self-immolation Rite" is a very powerful and awe-inspiring piece, that is highly recommended for any individual interested in the Sinister Tradition. Its Satanism at its best.

Satanasphere Recordings has re-released the "Self-immolation Rite" on CD. It runs approximately 47 Minutes in length, and includes the beautiful Sinister artwork of Christos Beest. The Booklet contains 'The Message of the One of Thoth'[1974eh] - which was written by an Initiate after undertaking one of the sphereworkings.

For more information on ordering a copy of the "Self-immolation Rite" and the Order of Nine Angles see the following.

The Self Immolation Rite - <http://www.band.org/ona/>

The Order of Nine Angles - <http://www.satanism.net/iss/ona/>

The Diabolus Chant

Dies Irae, dies illa
Solvat saeculum in favilla
Teste Satan cum sibylla.

Quantus tremor est futurus
Quando Vindex est venturus
Cuncta stricte discussurus
Aperiatu r stella et germinet
Atazoth.

THE SELF-IMMOLATION RITE.

“...disembodied art thou... sunk into the black pit, the dark night of the soul. All roads that lead here are scattered with corpses and broken souls and gibbering idiots. Be not a gibbering ape! For all who traverse these dark spheres and explore their shadow selves will emerge as Gods! I say this with my mouth, which trembles in memory of a time when demons walked the earth, the various examples of their cookery billowing in the wind. But now, heads roll past my feet, encased, in pastry! THE GATE HAS OPENED! Enter dark angels, enter... Prepare Ye for the Self Immolation Rite!”

~the sphere of luna~

“...before you, is a silver crescent moon, touch it. You are now entering the dark sphere, of luna. This, is earthy, fertile land, a moist cavernous terrain. A young maiden approacheth wearing a crescent moon headdress and a blue robe. She, is, beautiful! She offers her hand in friendship. Touch her hand. Ah!. Smooth porcelain, the dew of the moon on her cheeks. But this is a lovely place, instantly she transforms... into a dark horned beast, vague in shape but clear in nature. The horn... proceeds to impale You! Gouging your intestines! Rupturing your stomach! Blood and bile, vomits from your splitting torso! The horn, has shattered your vertabrae! The beast brings down a starless night and withdraws. You see briefly, the face of a woman, wracked with laughter, mocking your very essence. She too is now gone into the black, that gnaws at your astral bones. This is the sphere of hidden knowledge. The blood that continues to gush, has formed a glowing red pool. Scry now, into the pool. It will show you secrets of what you are, of what you want to be, and what you can be. Keep this information clear, in your mind. you will need it later. The thick, liquid stirs... look... LOOK! Look into the pool You filthy regenerates!...”

~the sphere of mercury~

“...WITH A BLAST, OF MY TRUMPET! I HEAL, YOUR WOUNDS!
Before you the yellow sigil of mercury. Touch it. Armed with the knowledge extracted from the pool, you are now entering the dark sphere of mercury. This is a desolate place. Heath blasted by fiery tempest, scorpions eating charred animal. See, how the dismembered are scattered to the bitter winds! The air congeals and chokes. Farewell happy fields! Hail horrors! Hail! This

is the sphere of transformation. But do not tremble in the face of a breeze that would dismantle your features. Instead, be indulgent, remember all that you saw in the bloody pool, remember your deepest desires. Before you now is a black inverted pentagram. This, is the womb of mercury, the eye of Satan. This, is the gateway, of transformation. The pentagram will begin to move closer... you will feel the fear and sensuality of metamorphosis, your form cracking, shedding and mutating, as it takes on the attributes, scryed from the previous sphere. Transformation, will be complete, when you pass through the pentagram, and emerge on the threshold of the next sphere, as that, which you desire to be. Only intense lust for this outcome will pull you through. Passivity will render you as useless ash, cast, into the pit, of a particular nameless horror. But hark! The pentagram grates forth. TRANSFORMMMM!!”

~the sphere of venus~

“...before you, is the green sigil of venus. Touch it. Transformed, you are now entering the third dark sphere. You are standing up to your waist, in a freezing river. The torrid waters rushing through a valley, of white, lillies. In fruitful groves and barren plains, the empty shall drink, and the drunk, shall be empty. What passion is this, that tears the sky with storms of blood and flame? This, is the sphere, of Ecstasy, and Love. Facing you, further up the river, is a naked woman... corpse white skin, and long black hair. She crouches astride the river and menstruates into the water. The blood forms itself into a human figure floating beneath the surface. With your hands, begin to massage the blood into your ideal lover, fashioning, every part of it according to your cerebral and animalistic desires. Now... take your lover by the hands. Come! Fill the flowing bowl, and consummate into the waters ‘neath the raging sky... drink now, your fill of love...”

~the sphere of sol~

“...with your lover, by your side, I put before you, the gold sigil of the sun. touch it. You are now entering the dark sphere of sol. The swords, that cast their shadow, over hateful paradise... draw back, to reveal mountain ranges, majestic against a sky, of flame. You are standing on the edge of the circle made by nine sacrificial stones. Here, there is a thick darkness weaved by the unsated fog and contained by the mountains. Those roaring obscurers of that which lies beyond! Illuminated by the glow of putrefaction, the corpse of your former self, discarded during transformation, lies in the circles centre.

Witness the repulsive entities that violate and mutilate your corpse! This sacred shell, is now the prey of every necrophiliac and cannibal! It seems initially, that they are performing gross obscenities for pleasure, but, look closer. The corpse is delicately gutted, and from the bones extracted, these creatures are constructing a tower, that rises far above the mountain peaks. Their work finished, they withdraw, bowing to your superiority and divine disposition. They light a protective circle of fire around the stones. This, is the sphere, of vision, understanding, and prophecy. Accompanied by your lover, climb the bloody bones to the top. Here, you will see your kingdom, surrounding, stretching out far into the solar fire, of increase. See your temples! Your riches! Your works! All in progress... and contemplate all that you have now, and all, that you hope to achieve in your journey so far, as a dark messiah. Take pleasure, for you can make anything, simple..."

~the sphere of mars~

"...I put before you, the red sigil, of mars. Touch it. You are now entering the fifth dark sphere. You are still in the tower, but see, how a long despairing shadow, now falls over you. cast from above by a black, angel. What horror is this? What vileness crawls forth to kill slowly in unnatural fashions. Look! The sky, is blackened with smoke! ...Have you enjoyed the scene so far? Consider again your kingdoms... **THEY'RE BEING EATEN BY FLAMES!** Enormous blue larvae leap into the carnage, and become bloated on the torrents of blood and the anguished disembowlement of your minions! (two words~unintelligible~) ...and the hideous dead arise to strangle the living. Eaten, necks and heads split, broken on strange scaffolding to spew out vile jelly! The shrieks of the dying, fill your ears until they bleed, blood, also pours, from your mouth, that hangs open, in horror! This, is the sphere of sacrifice, death, and destruction. Your hair! Is falling out! **LOOK DOWWWWWNnnn!!** Entities, are now dismantling the tower. And they look hungry. But someone... is missing. There, by a sacrificial stone, your lover, is being hung, drawn and quartered, by black rot skeletons and other such animated carcasses! Sanity! Leaves! In the gouge! Of an eye! Repulsive entities, have torn you to the ground, but they are saving you til last, when you will be given special, and lengthy treatment. For now, they wish you to watch the destruction, of all that you are... delighting in your contorting face, that bleeds, and weeps, and becomes as a mask, of death. I will have to leave you here, for not even I can bear such terrible sights... I may be back in time to save you, but, don't count on it... Solace, for the wretched? Nay! There is only damnation!"

~the sphere of jupiter~

“...I HAVE RETURNNNNNED!! And I see you, twitch, with life! Verily thou art strong of mind. Which is the food that will raise a few. Here, I give you, the violet, sigil, of jupiter. Touch it, and enter the calm wilderness, of the sixth, dark, sphere. Here, there is soft sand and silence. The crimson sky is starry and peace fills you, like cool water in your skull. Stretch out your limbs, recline, like the albatross that rests its heavy beak, on the graciousness of the hedge. Relax. But mind the various chasms that lead to a shattering of limbs upon vicious rock formations. Every sphere needs amusement. All is gone. Your lover is slaughtered... do not love so much that you cannot witness the death of your lover, death too is a natural process. Reliable. Honourable. And endearing. This, is the sphere of wisdom. Running towards you now is a child, made entirely of a white brilliance. It stands before you, and the light becomes as a mirror, which reflects only you, devoid of those things that you thought would bring power and respect. The power within begins to stir. You begin to realise, that you do not need, anything. Just your self is enough. Stay a while in this sphere, and meditate upon self-reliance, self-love, self-power, and the kingdom, within...”

~the sphere of saturn~

“...now, before you, is the indigo, sigil, of saturn. Touch it. You are entering the seventh and final dark sphere. You are standing on a hill, beneath a clear night sky. Directly above is the star known as Naos. It pulsates, and grows, illuminating and expectant. The land around is strewn with the burning shards of a dying aeon, suffused with an understanding that only stillness can express, when the appearance is burned to ash. And the essence is revealed. This, is the sphere of chaos! You have become all that you have learned during this journey of self-evolution, you are the essence of everything. And via this alchemical process, you understand, that power presides purely, in the quality of self-honesty. With this, you have the choice to alter your life and the world in whichever way you feel, is necessary. With this knowledge, raise your arms in exultation to the sky! Blow winds! Crack the temporal! See how the sky splits open at your command! A purple rent, tears its way across the heavens. Agios O Atazoth! Black, nebulous shapes, descend from the rent, to gradually envelop the hill. The gates, are aligned! They are returning! Now, is the New Aeon! Now, is Chaos! Vindex! Est! Venturus!”

“...embodied art thou! You have earned your cross. You have dragged yourself up, from the excrement, that was your life! And now ‘lo your black wings do unfurl, so go forth dark messiah! The world is yours! Destroy! And create!

(latin script) ~?~

THE TEMPLARS AND BAPHOMET Part 1: CONSPIRACY, PROPAGANDA AND HETERODOXY by Fraternitas Loki

The figure or rather the name, of Baphomet in all its various guises has become in the occult world of the West something of a totem. Indeed amongst some branches of Satanism it has come to represent something as integral, on the feminine side, as the figure of Satan himself on the masculine. With the growing trend for 'orthodoxy', 'mandate', and 'tradition' in some circles this article may unleash claims and counter claims. Its purpose however is not to deny or support any of groups claiming to represent 'real Satanism'. Rather as in much else we do, to offer some unprejudiced observations and information to enable individuals the luxury of free enquiry without the cancer of dualism, dogma or territorialism. The simple fact is that the most effective, if not the singular, source for the inculcation of both the name, cult and the image of Baphomet into the European mind is the Knights Templars. To this very day the image and mystique of 'The Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon' is powerful: countless books written, bizarre claims made, fantastic world conspiracies concerning their descendants, many myths and legends circulated concerning their powers and wealth. Three things are clear historically however: they became the most powerful non-governmental military machine and trading force of the medieval world, even having its own state (initially the Holy Land then later Cyprus); their collapse and disappearance was spectacular and bizarre yet all evidence points to a final hiding place and transmission into Freemasonry; their suppression in France under Phillippe IV and the Pope in his pocket was incredible for its perversity, brutality and neurosis. It is to the latter that we may seek the historical derivation of Baphomet and the delusory relationship to so called Satanism, whilst also more clearly understanding the relationship of certain branches of modern Thelemism to Baphomet. Phillippe 'la Bel' was playing a game for high stakes and had ambitions for his country and himself. He also owed the Knights Templars vast sums of money. Yet by scheming he had by 1305 installed his own puppet the Bishop of Bordeaux on the throne of St. Peter as Pope Clement V and in 1309 even moved the Papacy to Avignon. His hatred of the Templars was cancerous: aside from his debts and their vast might and glory, he harboured a grudge: they had humiliated him by refusing him an honorary. He had even more cause to fear them though. Phillippe had grand designs on claiming back all Frankish lands still in possession of the English Plantagenet kings, extending French domains elsewhere and becoming Holy Roman Emperor. He believed himself to have every right to be the premier monarch of all Europe. The Templar's last bastion in the Holy Land, at Accre, had fallen in 1291, and although they had established a base on Cyprus it was no secret that they harboured designs to establish a permanent state of their own in Europe and the Languedoc seemed a likely candidate. In June 1306 Phillippe was forced to take refuge in the Preceptory

from the Paris mob and saw for himself the fabulous Templar wealth. He plotted. At dawn on Friday 13th. October 1307 the Temple in Paris was occupied by Phillippe's troops and its officers arrested simultaneous with raid on all Preceptories across France. However to overturn such a powerful force as the Knights Templars required a strategy and a propaganda campaign of guile and vastness. Infiltrators had been sent into the Order, and a renegade knight was persuaded to concoct an elaborate picture of blasphemy and heresy. Gradually a bizarre catalogue of charges was compiled which via extensive torture and false confession shocked Europe into accepting the need to suppress the Order. There were many charges but the crucial one was of heresy and that the Knights worshipped a female head (variously described as a bearded female head) whom they called "Baphomet". Other charges included sodomy, spitting and trampling on the cross, infanticide, teaching women how to abort, obscene kisses in rituals and prayers, and subverting the mass. The concept that the Knights who had laid down their lives to defend the Cross, Christianity and Europe against the Saracen should have been corrupted to deny their Christ in favour of an alien deity seems improbable, so improbable it could be true! However, the wild claims and forced confessions fell upon a rapt and credulous audience. This was an age when the feminine in Europe's psyche was suppressed, Nature worship and the cycle of the Goddess ravaged and any attempt for her to emerge from the confines of rural superstition and folkloric custom was met with the horror of the Holy Inquisition. It is interesting how most torturers at the time made persistent attempts to extract confession lurid detail of sexual impropriety. So it was with the Templars. A Europe bereft of the feminine (the cult of the Virgin grew almost against the wishes of the church) was fascinated with bizarre tales of the greatest Christian warriors of all time worshipping a Middle Eastern satanic goddess. Only the Templars may have had some intimation of the feminine via the remains of worship of Ishtar, Cybele, Lilith, Astarte during their sojourns in the east. All of the confessions must be treated with circumspection since they were all extracted under torture, except one and not in France. The Order had been officially dissolved on March 22nd. 1312. Philippe ever since 1309 had attempted to badger his fellow monarchs into suppressing the Templars across Europe with the aid of an Inquisition under his protege Pope. He met with qualified success. England had been a hot bed of Templars refuge and Philippe had constantly demanded that Edward II suppress them. It required the Pope to castigate the English King in 1310 and finally the Inquisition arrived in 1311. Stephen de Stapelbrugge was apprehended in Salisbury and made almost voluntary confession of his inductions into the Order. He claimed that the Order's errors had originated in the heart of the Cathar heresy which had been brutally erased by the French kings in the Albigensian Crusade with great slaughter. One of the central features of the Cathar

heresy was that Jesus was not the son of God but a prophet and that he had married. It also taught gnosticism - self wisdom through spiritual transcendence and failed to recognise heresy of other religions - indeed even consider an Almighty God as evil (many sects flourished in southern France at that time). If there was any connection between the Templars and the remaining outposts of the Cathar heresy then this would have represented as great a threat to orthodox Catholic christianity since suppression of the Celtic Church 300 years earlier. With a Templar state in the south of France, no monarch in Europe (least of all Philippe) could have withstood their inevitable military control of western Europe and with it whatever unorthodox religious views would have seeped into Western culture replacing that of the Papacy which had originally granted them effective clerical autonomy. Whatever the political and spiritual ambitions of the Templars may have been, the tactics used by their enemies is clear: total damnation as agents of satan. Since that time the concept of black and white has been the tendency in the West when dealing with this and other issues. One side may paint the Templars as the very progenitors of modern satanism around a real cult of Baphomet, others stating that it was a mere fabrication to confiscate their. The truth may be somewhere in between and there are in fact five distinct possibilities. We shall discuss these in part 2: The Cult of Baphomet Gnosticism and Islam Alchemy Druid Grail Cult of the Head Veneration of the Turin Shroud The formal charges brought against the Templars were mainly nine: Defiling of the cross and denial of Christ. Adoration of an Idol. A perverted sacrament performed. Ritual murders. The wearing of cord of heretical significance. The ritual kiss Alteration of the ceremony of the mass and an unorthodox form of absolution. Immortality. Treachery to other sections. Before we move on to an examination and description of the various scenarios of 1-5 above, we must bear in mind some simple facts of the time (and indeed of any time). Firstly that all evidence from outside sources were obtained by infiltrators who at best were merely evesdroppers to snippets of conversations, or the ceremony itself. That the Templars had spent many years in the Middle East and toward the end of their time had been known to have traded with and have dealings with the Muslims. They certainly learnt many skills of the arts of war, trade and medicine from them and several of the Cathar-like tendencies they were supposed to have manifest can be likened more to the Gnostic aspects of Ophite Islam. Homosexuality irrespective of its being condemned by Islam, Judaism and Christianity was in any case recognised as fairly common place in all societies, and enhanced to an ascetic or almost transcendent level in closed monastic or military communities. Several Popes and Kings, additional to many Bishops and Cardinals, were known to have been variously sodomites, homosexuals, pederasts and even paedophiles. Ascetic homosexuality of a closed, wealthy, highly disciplined and all powerful military caste would have attracted the

envy, even the fantasies, of a self-indulgent and corrupt French aristocracy and clergy. Certainly denial have been part of an elaborate and dramatic ceremonial of initiation. But evidence to the contrary of the necessary heresy and perversion was relegated, or deliberately misconstrued. For example, Petrus Picardi, one of the confessing Knights, stated that the denial was an act of fidelity since those who refused to deny were sent immediately to the Holy Land. Another Knight, Johannis de Elemosina, who yielded and denied was scornfully spurned by his Preceptor and sent for confession. Gonavilla, Preceptor of Poitou and Aquitaine, stated that the denial was a threefold denial in imitation of the denial of the Lord by St. Peter. There is a view, derived from late nineteenth/early twentieth century Masonic writers and archives, to suggest that the cross trampled upon during initiation rites of newly inducted knights may possibly have been was possibly painted or carved on floor in the form of steps or that trampling resembled the movements of steps. In Masonic terminology this would have been the ritual method of progressing from west to east: that is from death or the shadow life or non-being of non-brotherhood into the light of service and fraternity. West of course represents death or the transformation of what will be the enlightened soul, whole east (aside from representing the Templars centre at Jerusalem) also signals the rising sun of spiritual rebirth. The similarities between Templar ritual, ceremonial, symbolism and allegory and that of the Freemasons has already been commented on in other manuscripts (as has the historical transformation of the former into the latter). Thus the 'trampling' so noted by the Inquisitors would make it a Latin cross and thus similarly denote the trampling of the phallic cross of their passions represented by the cross which had crucified their Lord in the material world. However we must also remember that initiation of this sort, as with the military and secret societies today, is strongly imbued with the flavour of testing the loyalty and the fitness of the candidate under duress. Such tactics are still used. Thus no less so then would the shock-troops of Christendom have been likely to have employed psychological terror to test the loyalty of candidates to their commanders. There is evidence to indicate that the initiate was threatened with drawn swords if he hesitated to spurn the cross. Again the charge of kissing the anus of the Master and other obscene acts may have been a sign of humility and perfect submission (still seen in the animal kingdom and magickal and military elites). There is a final twist regarding heterodoxy. The Templars finally failed their mandate of retrieving and protecting the Holy Land. Christ thus appeared to have failed to defend his believers from the Infidel. As a result many thoughtful minds asked if Jesus was the son of God and if a wider interpretation was now necessary. There are indications that the Templars changed parts of the Mass: a religious military caste, free of obedience to a pedantic clergy and tainted with Gnostic teachings, may have begun the first steps of revisionism. The time was ripe: the possibility of a Templar state on the

European mainland, power of Islam on its borders, the rise of the monastic institutions, survival of Gnostic teachings, and Cathar fragments. In view of this we shall now consider the 5 heretical scenarios. Part 2: VENERATION OF THE TURIN SHROUD by Fraternitas Loki If we are to construct a path for ourselves through the labyrinth of history, the snares of messianism, and the distortion of the West we must always understand that any given reality has its mirror: i) the wider picture of a situation/occurrence which only becomes apparent in the fullness of time, when its energies or implication have run its course and the next stage is ready and ii) the promulgation of an official 'view' and its antithesis which may have in it a sub-text which both the promulgators and detractors have missed. The question of the Templars and Baphomet is riddled with such mirrors and subtexts. The question of the famous head crops up again and again. Thus an entire fabrication with so many counter prevailing arguments, theories, evidence and 'confessions' (many of which contradict on another) from imprisoned Templars, is unlikely, as unlikely as the modern satanist delusion that the Templars were 'satanists' in the image of the modern apologists of such theory. However analysis of statements and of the prevailing cultural and religious climate and spiritual developments may throw light on matters occurring at the time. In part 2 we outlined 5 threads. We will proceed with discussion of them. Veneration Of The Turin Shroud: One of the main pillars of any organisation as powerful and international as the Knights of the Temple would have been its degree of monopoly and status as original source. In the case of their very name and their foundation - the establishment of the Grand Preceptory on the very site of the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem would have guaranteed this and led many to assume throughout Christendom that the Templars were thus privy to much arcane Christian knowledge: rumours abounded as to whether the Templars had found the Ark of the Covenant much as today people speculate whether the Nazis found it. Excavations it seems had been undertaken. But of far more reliable source for Templar power in terms of Godly or Divine source would have been the contacts with remote Gnostic sects who it is claimed were direct descendants of the original Essenes who were part of Yeshua ben Josef's (Jesus the rabbi) following. Then the other pillar of its power stemmed from its pre-eminent christian position as above and the conditions and guarantees from the Papacy - that it was to be independent. This helped it to amass a fortune of untold wealth based upon its monopolies of trade, international banking and credit (which it effectively created single handed) and also aspects of knowledge itself. Part of this no doubt would have been sacred artefacts. The Papacy itself did a roaring trade in the manufacture of forged bone fragments and said to be from this or that Saint (or even the Christ), or splinters of the Cross, or threads of the Shroud, or blood of the Christ and so on. The financial and power implications of this, well developed by the time of the Templars, could

not have been lost on them. However in the case of the Templars it appears that they were not content with forgeries and dubious artefacts, for they were not concerned with power over the blind masses, but rather over the ones who controlled the blind masses. Thus what would have appealed to them would have been actual sacred objects and artefacts which would have reinforced their divine and pre-eminent christian position amongst the aristocrats, merchants, princes, kings and even bishops and cardinals of Christendom itself. Various confessions at the time of the Templar's trials regularly referred to the fact that in the main Preceptories a casket, or box or some such other reliquary was taken out and that initiates were made to kiss the object stored in this box, and that this was a head! It was thereafter described as the head of Baphomet. There is a view amongst some scholars and researches and occultists that the Templars were in possession of nothing other than the famous Shroud of Turin, the piece of linen said to contain the imprint of the body of Christ after his Crucifixion, and that it was stored in its box in such a way that only the head showed. We shall see another time the connection of this to the Neolithic Bran, the Druidic and Celtic Mysteries, of the Grail, the Cauldron and the Cult of the Skull. The descriptions in the Templar trials, under examination and torture, of 'the head' which was supposedly worshipped may also throw some light on the Shroud option. It was described variously as: A deity with two faces: (if the shroud is folded in a certain way it appears to have two faces; additionally could have been placed in its reliquary so as to face both ways out so that two audiences in both sides of a temple or church could see and venerate it). It was androgynous: (if shroud is unwrapped it can appear androgynous since the folds of the 'shroud' over a body give the appearance of male pectorals and/or female breasts, whilst the usual garment folds at the groin would indicate the bulge of male genitalia. It was a human skull: (indeed unfolded or laid out the head does appear emaciated or skull-like. This is on account of the fact that the impression of the body would have come from surface moisture whereby only the higher surface bone ridges etc would have made an impression, and the same is true for any forgery made in the Middle Ages, which some say the Shroud actually is. It was bearded (the bearded lady of Baphomet is a long standing image, even the 19th.C. former French catholic Alphonse Constant aka Eliphas Levi, perpetuated this image; most rabbis were bearded). They called the head Baphomet: (various emanations have been given for this and it forms the substance of the Gnostic connections to be discussed later. According to the late Montagu Summer, is that it is derived from the Greek Baph metis meaning 'baptism of wisdom', Summer wrote many books on the occult from an extreme Catholic viewpoint. He states that the word referred to a secret ritual of wisdom known only to the Grand Master of the Templars. This brings us back to the origination of the Templars themselves that they were privy,

because of their sacred task and foundation as guardian of the temple, to the extreme unction of the Christian faith, or inner knowledge, which the head of their Christ would have symbolised. Madelain Montalban on the other hand describes the word as Bfmaat described from the Enochian language: she translates it as 'Opener of the Door'. Idries Shah, the writer on Sufi subjects, states it is from an Arabic word Abufihamat translated as 'Father of Wisdom'. All have their history and ramifications regarding Templar connections, but can also be traced back to a possible Christian heresy of the Shroud symbolising Templar divine power. An interesting twist here is Levis' claim that by reversing the letters to read TEM OHB ABI the anagram in Latin reads Templi omnium hominum pacis abbas or 'Father of the Temple of Peace of All Men'. It seems that the famous Turin Shroud was in the possession of the Templars between 1204 to 1307. It seems possible that reproductions of the shroud could, have been used in Preceptory temples: one such found in the preceptory of Templecombe in Somerset, England. Another view holds that the head was indeed a head - that of the head of St. John the Baptist and that the Templars were infected with this heresy in the Middle East that Yeshua (Jesus) was an imposter and that the real Messiah was John. As with much else all theories have an element of truth and in time point out another reality which the near view obscures. Copyright 1997 Fraternitas Loki

The Temple Of Set: A Brief Satanic Analysis

As someone who has been involved for well over twenty years with the LHP, I believe I can offer an analysis from the experience gained during the often hard struggle for personal and Occult insight.

Two things are obvious. First the Temple Of Set is not a Satanic organization; and second, it is not an Occult one.

Satanism by its nature is an elite philosophy of living and its genuine adherents are few in number and usually secretive (for a variety of reasons). The individuals who follow this path are generally rebels who either cannot or do not wish to conform. Those who desire the exhilaration and danger of extremes: those who cannot and will not obey or bow down. In short, those who possess “spirit”. For them, Satan is adopted as a symbol of defiance – and this defiance is and has been highly individual. Rather than accept, they question; rather than believe, they discover for themselves. They have a dislike of authority and all dogma. Gradually, this spirit of defiance brings self-awareness: an insight into themselves and others and the “world”, and this results from diverse (and sometimes dangerous) experiences of life which those individuals undergo. Of course, some never reach this point – they fail, from whatever reason or reasons.

Further, Satanism is about individuals fulfilling the potential of life; they strive to live as fully as possible, to reach out and become like gods (or goddesses). In achieving this, magick is used as a means – of enhancing life and understanding. Such striving either makes creative individuals – or it destroys them. This creativity is evident in the life of the individual: through works (e.g. artistic) or through what they achieve (for example making their own life a work of art which others may try and copy).

This means two essential things. First, they can be no such thing as a Satanic organization or dogma; and second, there can be no Satanic authority (e.g. in the form of an individual). Organization implies conformity and loss of personal identity and authority (however small). Dogma implies accepting someone else’s beliefs. Authority (of whatever kind) implies subservience – a mentality alien to Satanists. Furthermore, all these stifle creativity: one hallmark of a genuine Satanist.

The Temple of Set is thus an example of what Satanism is not. It is not a religion; it does not possess any “authority”; it does not need an organization nor any media-profile of “acceptability”.

Of course, some guidance in the initial stages may be and often is, required by those just beginning their quest, and here the experience of those who have gone that way in the past may be of interest of value. But essentially each individual learns via their own experiences – no one can do it for them: there is no magic formula, no mysterious handshake, which brings instant wisdom. For the beginner, “Masters” and organizations are a snare, a path which leads only to glorification of the ego of the “Master”. Such “Masters” are usually insecure people who need the adulation and attention – it makes them feel alive, important. Naturally, some Satanists play such a “role” – for a time.

But they soon tire of it – it becomes boring. That is, if they are Satanists. Anyone who plays it for more than a year has arrested development – their quest has ended in failure.

Regarding the second point made above – viz. the Temple of Set is not an Occult organization. Implicit in any Occult path – Left Hand Path or Right Handed – are certain obligations stemming from the very nature of Occultism. Wicca, Paganisms, Satanism, Black Magick – whatever – all are means, paths with though different in some respects have the same ultimate goal: or at least, when those paths are followed to their ends. In a simplistic sense, the goal is evolution – developing abilities, enhancing already existing ones, re-discovering forgotten ones. Occult paths reveal through the beginning, which is Initiation – they show the essence hidden by the appearance. Or, expressed a different way, they discover what is concealed. Part of what is concealed is, of course, the “mysterious” – another is the occult energies of living things....On an individual level, the Occult is the discovery of what is hidden within ourselves, in our own psyche, and Occult paths are processes of self-learning – of what our unique Destiny is and how we relate to the Cosmos, this Earth, other individuals.

Initiation is the beginning of a quest - a symbol to that part of the psyche normally hidden which the "Occult" wishes to bring into consciousness, giving thus understanding. The form that this symbol assumes is actually irrelevant, and whatever its outer form it implies a responsibility by the very fact that it is a conscious participation for their own development, their own evolution: the first genuine step towards real freedom, internal psychic freedom. It is the birth of one small part of the new age.

Naturally, quite often the promise of Initiation is not fulfilled – or is fulfilled only in part – in many individuals. But some continue and of those some may achieve the goal. This promise is why the Establishment and conventional religions discourage Occultism and conduct campaigns against it – for Occultism is the means to real freedom and as such it is a threat to them and their domination of the individual. Occult paths lead to inner freedom and one of the responsibilities of any Initiate is to continue this evolutionary quest by passing onto another or others not only what they themselves have learned but also the "Occult ideal" – inner liberation through an Initiatory quest. This ensures continuity and future possibilities. This passing on is never forced, nor is it in any way dogmatic – for it is related to another aspect of Initiatory responsibility: the respect for differing paths, different quests.

Having myself followed a specific Left Hand Path; I am inclined to believe that it is worthwhile and effective. But I also realize it is not suited to everyone who wishes to begin their own Occult quest. For many years I recruited for a Satanic group (although "recruit" is hardly the word: offered a path to those who possessed the right qualities is nearer the mark) but I was never interested in mere numbers, in proselytizing and tried hard to dissuade most applicants to test their seriousness – because Satanism is difficult and, at times, dangerous (in psychic terms). I was always aware that other paths were available and perhaps more suitable to some (indeed, to most who applied). I, as an Occultist, knew that Initiation involves the free commitment of an individual – for the goal was their liberation, not their subjection by me or anyone else.

Given all the factors, it is impossible not to conclude that the Temple of Set is not an Occult organization. It does not respect other paths, and other individuals, as is shown by their attempts to discredit others and their insistence that they represent the only genuine form of Satanism. Furthermore, their dogmatic, religious stance – with all that is therefore implied in terms of acceptance of Temple authority and mandates – rather than liberating their members actually holds them in thrall, both mental and psychic. Rather than participating in that liberation and evolution which is part of the new age, the Temple of Set is actually an off shoot of the old order and its stifling ways of being. That is shown, for example, in their concern for numbers, in trying to recruit regardless of quality and regardless of whether the individual is actually suited to the Left Hand Path – for the Temple, numbers mean influence, feathers in the cap of the leader – a sign that the Temple is pre-eminent, flourishing and succeeding.

Naturally, much more could be written to further detail the reasons as to why this particular organization is detrimental to what we as Occultists seek to achieve by our various paths. But the essence of the matter has been revealed – sufficient to enable readers to judge the matter for themselves.

To return, finally, to the personal level – I have no cause to defend, no desire for personal gain in what I write: only a desire for others to understand what is really important about the Occult and the path which a long time ago I myself decided to follow. Organizations like the Temple of Set undermine what serious followers of the Left Hand Path have been trying to achieve for centuries – basically because its members and leaders seek to glorify their own egos at the expense of the inner freedom of others.

ONA

The Eugenics of Art

(previously appearing in Devilcosm #2)

The capacity of the mind to expand and visualize Nature's inherent path of evolution, otherwise known as the individual imagination, is the boundary within which we are - as a species - eternally confined to dwell. Napoleon Bonpart once stated that imagination rules the world.

Quite literally, the imagination is the womb of creation. In the process of nascency, the imagination acts as the the receptive female partner, and finds its male counterpart in the Arts. And just as man and woman possess the ability to create a being who, with the proper genetic, ecological and spiritual nurturing, can lead his or her people to their ultimate evolution, so it is with the dynamic yet delicate intercourse between the Arts and Imagination. Together they are able to help bring into existence a higher, undistorted life- form. Male and female together equal "God", for together they possess the ability to create.

Art finds its male qualities in its ability to penetrate the sensorium (i.e. the five senses) and consequently "seed" the very soul and imagination to which these senses act as a doorway. If, in turn, an individual's imagination (the receptive, female partner in creation) is fertile, able to sustain, germinate and allow solid roots to form for the specific breed of Art responsible for the "seeding", then this imagination is able to act as a womb for the animating essence known as Life. This spirit is otherwise known as "the Will to Power" or "the Will to Live"; that which dynamically empowers an individual to continue onward defiantly no matter how rough the journey. This is the "Fighting Spirit". It is just such a spirit or reservoir which the imagination is able, under the proper conditions, to "tap" into.

Art is the stimuli possessing the ability to "impregnate" the soul of an individual. The spiritual embryo or "life" resulting this insemination is what is conventionally termed a "vision". Indeed, when an individual possesses this ability to vividly imagine an as-yet- to-be-seen reality, he or she is commonly said to have the ability to "conceive". Art is, by its inherent nature, able to mirror that unseen but very real potential - existing latently, and to subsequently open the "gateway" for its physical manifestation. The higher quality and form of the given artistic expression (i.e. the more reflective of the ultimate natural evolution of the Cosmos and Man's True Self), the higher the required fertility of the imagination to comprehend, understand and illustrate. It is this fertile "soil" from whence grows deliberate - ordered - action. If the imagination is rich and fruitful enough to give root to this "seed", then, and only then, can the aforementioned Desire (i.e. the acausal) be "tapped" into, which will consequently form the channel of energy required to bring said seed into blossom. In other words, only when an individual's imagination is fertile will he or she be "inspired" (literally - to be "energized", filled with dynamic, creative energy) to actively and consistently bring an ideal into fruition.

Thus, the self-deluded dreamer has not quite the imaginative powers so often attributed to him. For although he is oftentermed a "dreamer", because of his ability to conceive of an idea, he has not the endurance, fortitude, insight and Desire to carry such a spiritual pregnancy to full term. His life is replete with spiritual abortions and still-births. There is no real dynamic, animating life within his words, thoughts and dreams.

Through the perfect intertwining of Art and Imagination a race is able to glimpse, recognize and seize the totality of its own potential. This potential is inherent within its Life-Blood, and it is this Blood-Potential which is responsible for motivating the creation true evolutionary Artforms. It is interesting that the Latin root for "potential" is "POTENTIA - Sinister or Left-Hand". Thus it is that true potential lies in the realm which has been termed "Satanic", and which has manifested itself in

such Artistic works as Goethe's "Faust". This potential is now considered, by the present Nazarene-influenced age, as "wrong" not because it goes against the essence of Nature Herself, but because it defies that same society's self-destructive ethos of absolute egalitarianism, universalism, materialism, mediocrity and stasis. This Aryan Potential is Satanic - or Left-Hand - because it is contrary to the Herd, but not to the higher order of Nature and the Cosmos. This Aryan Potential is complimentary and vital to Nature, but threatening to a degenerate society. The Art of appropriating and "working" this potential out into its most quintessential causal form is the ultimate Satanic manifestation.

The most well known manifestation of this natural progression in the Twentieth Century (eh) is that of the Third Reich inspired and led by Adolf Hitler. In the interest of establishing the imperative of a Thousand-Year Reich, there was created the Reich Culture Chamber with Joseph Goebbels as its commander. Every sphere of Art, no matter what its form, was implemented and shaped in accordance with Imperatives which the establishment of a Thousand-Year Reich dictated. Hitler himself, when asked in 1939 by his former childhood friend - August Kubizek - to recollect his intensely ecstatic response to witnessing Wagner's "Rienzi", is alleged to have stated, "AT THAT HOUR IT ALL BEGAN!". According to Kubizek, it was after witnessing this opera, based on Cola di Rienzi - the medieval rebel and tribune of the people, that Adolf Hitler began to let loose an inspired oration depicting the ultimate, glorious future of he and his people.

To understand the role of Art and Imagination in the role of creation is to begin to master the possibility of genuine evolution and excellence. To do so is to set a standard of excellence by which our descendants can numinously appreciate, employ, create and develop Art. Someone naively, but nevertheless dangerously, may reject this view and consequently say that individuals ought to create whatever they want, regardless of its contribution to the Whole; after all, "beauty is in the eye of the beholder".

It should, however, be noted that even the most dishonourable things in life can be considered "beautiful" by an individual who has, by their own individual will, compromised themselves into a consistent life of mediocrity, slothfulness, herd-mentality and general lack of self-awareness.

Because Art possesses the ability to impregnate the human soul, then if that resulting offspring (i.e. a particular artform) contributes to the deterioration of Nature and the Cosmos, and actively opposes Western Destiny and the Sinister Dialectic (thus opposing evolution itself), then there is no else who can accept the blame other than the offspring (artform), its parentage (those responsible for creating it) and those who know better but choose to do nothing to actively resolve the matter.

Art, be it literature, speeches (as Adolf Hitler's case), folk-lore, mythos/ mythology, architecture, painting, sketching, poetry, Music, dance, etc., as wielded by its perpetrators, has been the catalyst for the propagation and nurturing of every culture and higher civilization known to man. Every major movement in the history of evolution has at some point been birthed from the imagination of individuals whose minds were inseminated by specific forms of Art.

Even day-to-day communication is, in its essence, Art. This is, in fact, the very meaning of what it means to be "articulate" : to possess the ability to adequately and eloquently GIVE BIRTH, verbally, to one's thoughts, ideas and passions. The word "communication" itself denotes sexual identification - i.e. "to become-one-with". Intercourse, communication, conversation, flow and current are significant words which all have the same basic meaning: they all vaguely point to the magickal flow of creative energy which exists between male and female, speaker and listener, writer and reader, composer and listener, artist and viewer. Of course, the usual result of a male and female coming together - as one - is the insemination and creation of an offspring, and the same is also very true when Art and Imagination unite. Art has the ability to communicate; it speaks and stimulates, and has the ability to enrapture and pulsate, to fill the soul with the potency of the Cosmos itself. In this it becomes apparent that genuine artistic appreciation is much more than inward fantasizing and self-

deceptively pandering to the ego. On the contrary, genuine artistic appreciation should empower bold new actions, which lead to specific long and short term goals. Art - and the individual's interaction with it (i.e. active participation with its ethos), is a powerful key to unlocking the very real but latent powerhouse of potential within the human soul.

Art, in its highest form, should require that individuals stretch themselves physically, emotionally, intellectually, magickally, and spiritually in order for those individuals to fully appreciate and FULFILL that Art. Quite literally, Art should CHALLENGE individuals to develop, progress and beautify; it should reflect the ultimate natural possibilities of our being and ENLARGE AND AMPLIFY THEM; it should attempt to extract and draw these superior qualities out into the causal realm. In short, Art should require us to WORK, and practically instill within us the robust energy and vitality needed to fulfill its vision. This inevitably requires that each individual artist must strive - by an effort of their Will - to force themselves to evolve in all realms - physical, mental, magickal, emotional, spiritual, to reach for self-mastery.

Physical eugenic science alone is unable to resolve our situation. It is now time, once and for all, to explore and master a spiritual/Artistic eugenic science which strives to extricate the fullness of the human potential (in terms which are beyond the abstract concept of "good and evil") without limiting it in any way. It must once again become known among the Folk that Art truly does reproduce itself, and that the following old proverb is indeed a worthy one : "LIFE IMITATES ART."

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That which is beyond personal Destiny. That which causes expression of itself via the implementation or provocation of acts which in their design achieve long-term aims beyond the causal death of an individual; changing aspects of a society by significant creations and thus changing a whole race of people - fulfilling the Destiny or Wyrld of the ethos of a civilization. Acts that inaugurate a New Aeon. The causal nature that is dictated by the essence of things - "fate", etc.

Thulianism
by Christos Beest
ONA

There is a current, and not unsurprising trend among certain groups within the 'Occult' to disassociate 'Ultima Thule' and National Socialism - the latter, of course, being presented as a 'perverse' form of the former. Such groups are usually concerned with resurrecting 'old folk beliefs' and, while quite knowledgeable about certain traditions, they show little insight into either the 'Occult' world or the 'real' world - that is, into what has been and is going on, on the esoteric and everyday levels.

National-Socialism was not a "perverted" form of Thulianism, but rather a practical manifestation of certain energies within and external to the Northern European psyche - energies which had, in the past, assumed various external guises in the form of what is now known as 'Northern Paganism' and the various esoteric doctrines deriving from this. Thus it was complimentary to those traditions - it was neither a revival of them nor a distortion of certain esoteric aspects of them. The essence of National-Socialism was that it created its own traditions, its own 'numen' - from the struggle for power, for instance. The past glories of Germany, or Northern Europeans, added to this, provided further inspiration, as did some of the old forms, like paganism and folk-customs. Those who knew, knew National-Socialism as the embodiment of what Ultima Thule was and is, in all its forms (or on all the levels) - that is, it represented the essence.

What fundamentally mattered to National-Socialism was the reality - and dealing with it on the practical level. It was concerned with dealing with the problems faced by Europeans and solving them in a way compatible with the psyche or 'soul' of the European. This was, and is, the concern of those few genuine Initiates of the tradition that some describe by the title 'Thulianism'. The concern of these Initiates is not for some 'dreamy realm' of the kind familiar from Eastern mysticism, nor from the supposed 'esoteric' traditions and customs of the Northern Europeans. They are certainly not concerned with metaphysical speculation nor the pseudo-Occult mystifications most Occultists are so fond of. They seek, via their understanding, to change their peoples and the structures, such as societies and civilizations, which those people create or belong to. To this end, certain things are used, or are useful. They seek to use or create those forms which can be used to achieve the goals which are necessary. In a very important sense, National-Socialism was and is such a form - capable of transforming the peoples and their societies. The aim was not to resurrect old ways of living or doing or believing (such as Northern Paganism or beliefs) it was to use that form to create new ways which represented the essence of the psyche - ways appropriate to achieving new goals.

It is unfortunate that few possess the over-view which is necessary - they cannot see the essence for the appearance: and believe the external form (such as runes) is the essence when it is only a form expressing the essence, and one which may be used to create something beyond itself. A simple example would be the use of the runes by the SS - the SS runes now mean National-Socialism, particularly the heroism of the warriors of the Waffen-SS. Their historical origins are not as important as what they now represent in the practical sense. The symbols of National-Socialism are symbols of National-Socialism, whatever their historical origins. As such, they represent the psychic energies of the Northern Europeans in a way which is much more significant, both on the practical level and the magickal, than their historical origins. By being derived from European sources, such symbols already to an extent 're-presented' this psyche - which was helpful, although not necessary. New symbols were created, and brought to life (ie. imbued with psychic energies) by being used in the struggle. Thus, these symbols became 'numinous', as mentioned above.

Naturally, I do not expect many of those who belong to such things as the "Rune Gild" or similar manifestations of what passed for or what others believed was, Northern Paganism, to understand this. Most will already be committed to believing such nonsense as National-Socialism was a "perversion" of Thulianism. The only powerful magick really suitable today for those of a Northern European descent (or even European descent) is that which uses the numinous symbols and forms of the genuine manifestation of Ultima Thule - one of which is National-Socialism. Those who do not understand this do not understand Aeonic forces at all - of what is really going on, both within the psyche of individuals and external to it; of what energies are really causing changes and influencing the psyche and the structures of societies and civilisation. The 'magick' which the symbols and forms of a resurrected Northern paganism possess enable only a limited and not very important self-transformation; more usually a self-delusion.

To cause significant change is necessary. The magickal forms of National-Socialism do not appear to be magickal or Occult - and that is one of the keys to understanding their power to transform. What exists, and has been created, appears to most to be 'political' or whatever - and this enables significant change, by others, in a way compatible with the modern world. For 'these others' for the most part are not and do not need to be 'Occultists'. Take a certain date in April - on this day, various celebrations are held by small groups of individuals or individuals alone, wherever there are Europeans. The form of these celebrations is different from one group to another. But the intent is the same - and in a very real and important sense, this day has become imbued with certain magickal energies because of this. It is, for those who belong to the Western civilisation, a day on which there are more real esoteric energies about than on most other days celebrated by a mostly non-Initiated Occult 'public' (such as "Beltaine") - energies more representative of and important for Europeans than any conjured up by revived Norse or Celtic rites. One is concerned with and deals with, the reality of esoteric forces as they are," the other is concerned with and deals with what others believe those forces to be.

Those who deny this, as those who within NS circles deny the reality of Satanism, are in fact being manipulated by the very forces they seek to undermine.

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Words Of Vermiel

According to conventional magick, the Dark Gods can manifest in two ways: invocation and evocation. In the case of invocation, They enter from within the individual (via a realm of Their own mode of acausal time), through a gate - a nexion - opened within that individual's consciousness, their very being. Thought - or rather, human apprehension understood through such causal things as images, words, sounds, music, concepts - is one means to open that particular nexus which is the individual, and which is one link between the causal and acausal. When this opening is begun by a willed act of a certain type of magick, the Dark Gods (one or many) may pass through this nexus, and thus into the causal world itself.

This 'certain type of magick' is of course the various methods used in Traditional Satanism - most notably the Nine Angles Rite, in its various forms.

When the solo form of this rite is undertaken, the associated chant is a call to the Dark Gods to enter the world via the nexion which is an individual, and the pattern of that chant is not a mere symbolic representation of the relevant energies - but is the actual opening of the nexion itself (assuming that is, the chant is performed absolutely correctly, and under the right conditions.) (1) The invocation unfolds in the manner of any natural phenomena: the Dark Gods are a certain aspect of apprehension - and not merely of human kind, but of all kinds: of the Collective Apprehension (or Consciousness) of all Life. There is an intrusion and fusion in the same way a germinating seed breaks through the soil and flowers and interacts with the elements - and a new and natural tapestry thus emerges.

If the individual conducting the rite is fully prepared, the germinating will occur naturally, and feel natural. If the individual is not prepared or not adequately advanced along the Way, the rite will not work. This failure may result in very little effect; or, the Dark Gods may be partially encouraged into the causal. If the flow is halted - because of the intervention of fear on the part of the individual - a separation between Themselves and the Caller will occur, and They will then disrupt and tear to pieces the consciousness/identity/personality of the one daring to Call Them forth.

If successful, there will be no division between Them and the one Calling, and thus a new type of Individual is born. Although this successful invocation is described above as a 'natural unfolding', it will appear as anything but natural to the un-initiated. For this new type of individual is rarely encountered, since that aspect of the tapestry of consciousness - the Dark Gods - was suppressed and banished many ages ago. The story is well known, but it bears repeating that a 'physical' gate exists near the planet Saturn, and this gate is the prison door which remains still firmly sealed, despite various attempts to open it.

The physical location should be visualized whenever possible, since there is an aspect of our consciousness which lingers around this sealed door - such is the nature of the acausal (as we are They themselves, waiting for release ...).

As previously stated, the Dark Gods may also appear according to the laws of evocation: that is, They can take actual physical and independent forms, to exist physically upon this planet.

The majority of people on this planet - particularly in the 'West' - yearn for some type of salvation: some type of intervention by something preternatural which would take control of human Destiny. The two main examples are of course the arrival of a 'Messiah', and significant contact with an extra-terrestrial species.

The Dark Gods are, in effect, a real extra-terrestrial race, and may be called forth without the interminable and uncertain wait required of other such species. Their physical presence on this Earth will change everything forever, and, assuming They remain unchallenged, will enable Their aims to be fully realised - as they were only partially realised, some 20,000 years BP.

Evocation involves in particular regular performances of the Chthonic Rite of Nine Angles - by as many Initiates as possible (see relevant Nine Angles MSS) (2). It is a fact also that this

physical arrival can occur only when seeded by real acts of chaos in the world, implying events of great suffering. This method of evocation will enable change on a mass scale, whilst the method of invocation (for civilizations) is a slow - perhaps a centuries-slow - seeping. Either way, if ultimately successful, the consciousness and physical structure of the human species will alter and accelerate exponentially.

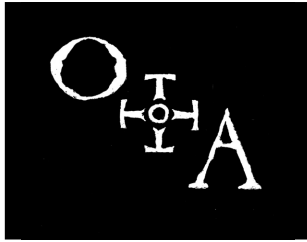
Without Their intervention, only gradual and unremarkable decline, decay and extinction awaits our species. Thus the meaning of genuine Satanism: *Pandre res alta terrâ et caligine mersas.*

Urgan, England
Order of Nine Angles
114yf

1. Many years of chant practice is required (once a day, for one quarter of an hour is the minimum recommendation). The best way to start is by studying the seven sphere chants contained in *Naos*. If one is not fortunate enough to have a Guide who can provide personal training, then practical experience must be sought by other means - ie. the aspiring Cantor should find a suitable Nazarene Monastery and enter either as a guest, or as a candidate undertaking an Insight Role. This will provide good practice and insight into the methods of the type of singing required (although bear in mind there is some debate over technique - particularly regarding tempo).

If the Cantor wishes to transcribe the chant notation into its modern counterpart, it should be remembered that the pitch of middle C has changed quite considerably since the chants were first written down. (This option of transcription is not really recommended.)

2. One interesting experiment involves the Natural Form of the Nine Angles Rite, where the Dark Gods are earthed in a child conceived by the participants during the rite. This may also be attempted via the Chthonic form, where the energies are channeled into a priest and priestess by the Master, Mistress and congregation of the Temple. Again this requires great preparation, and the few attempts so far have failed: either there is partial manifestation elsewhere, or the foetus eventually aborts.



Archives

As part of its Sinister strategy from the early 1980's to the mid 1990's when it returned again to the shadows, the Order of Nine Angles publicly issued their hitherto secret teachings explicating Traditional Satanism with the aim of creating new Sinister Initiates and thus enacting not only personal but Aeonic change and evolution.

ONA's Sinister Tradition, claiming lineage from the solar cults of Albion, re-presents that which is purely Western in its weltanschauung, eschewing the alien creeds of Cabbalism and Orientalism, and embracing a Dialectical approach, including the support and promotion of Forms able to create beyond themselves and potentially seeding a new Aeon...

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