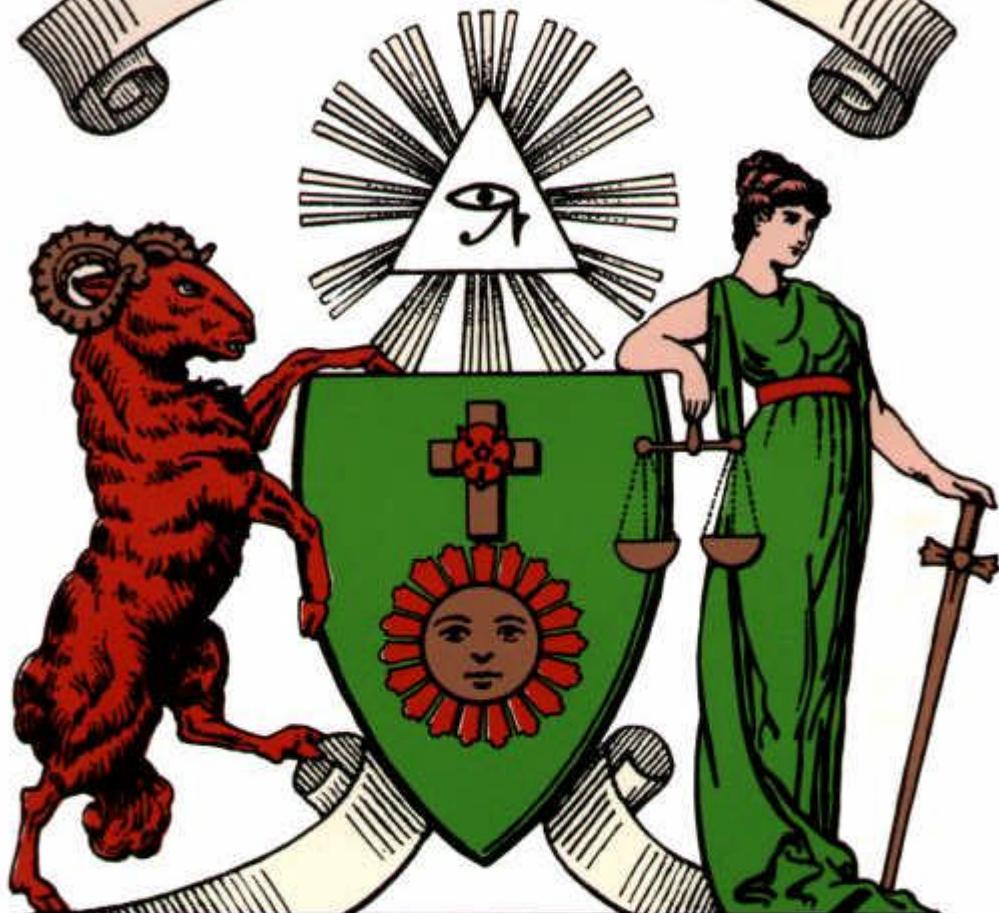


THE METHOD OF SCIENCE



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THE AIM OF RELIGION

THE WINGED BEETLE

By ALEISTER CROWLEY

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THE EQUINOX

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THE EQUINOX

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THE REVIEW OF SCIENTIFIC ILLUMINISM

An VII

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SEPTEMBER MCMXI

O. S.

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THE RITES OF ELEUSIS	i
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[The necessity of giving immediate publication to the text of The Rites of Eleusis has obliged us to hold over the instalment of The Temple of Solomon the King until next March.]

EDITORIAL

SLOWLY but surely the EQUINOX climbs from crest to crest of prosperity. Such as been the response to the appeal in our last number that we have been able to put in hand the task of translating the Official Instructions of A.:A.: into French, and, if it continues, we shall be able to publish them in every important language of the world within the next two years.

Your overworked Editor, too, have been able to take the longest and happiest holiday of his life. River and forest have given him all that nature can; and this was the least part of his contentment. Moreover, he has been able to prepare, under sublime guidance, a dozen Official Instructions of A.:A.:, to conclude the great Qabalistic Dictionary of Gematria, and to begin the almost equally important Greek Dictionary on similar lines.

He has had leisure to produce more play, sketches, poems, and stories in this last year than he has done in any previous five years of his life.

For all this his gratitude is due, and must be expressed, to the self-sacrificing devotion of our sworn sub-editor, Mr. Victor J. I. Neuburg. Rarely in all history has so unpleasing an exterior concealed such sterling qualities of heart and brain, such indomitable courage, such inflexibility of will, such loyalty and truth. We are glad to hear that he is about to accept a highly paid post on the staff of our bright little contemporary *The Looking-Glass*, and that he who himself sings so musically may be in his turn the means of making others sing.

As we observed above, we are causing several extracts from the EQUINOX to be translated into French.

THE EQUINOX

We are further glad to hear such good reports from every branch. The North and the Midlands are already making London look to its laurels; the West has surpassed all hope; America, South Africa, Burma, India, the Malay Peninsula, West Africa, all thrive. Australia has received an important addition to its strength; we have excellent accounts from British Columbia, Paraguay, and Brazil. France is being specially nursed at present, but Holland, Switzerland, and Germany need no such aid. The work in Spain is still hampered by political conditions, and we are sorry to hear little from Italy. In Algeria and Egypt work has got somewhat into arrear, but we hope that the winter will see the fundamental task fairly accomplished.

As we go to press, we are overjoyed to receive the most excellent accounts from the Caucasus, where the good work done by Monsieur Nelidoff twenty years ago has come to marvellous fruition.

With regard to personal progress of Probationers, nothing can be more satisfactory. The process of sifting, subtle but severe, initiated by V.V.V.V.V., and carried out so thoroughly by the Præmonstrator of A.: A.:, has been perfectly successful.

Every day brings a report illustrative of the fact that people who do not do the practices, but gossip about the A.: A.:, find themselves mysteriously outside, without word spoken; and the correlative fact, that people who do the practices find that results do happen.

It is most astonishing, even to us; under the old empirical, dogmatic methods people could work really hard for years, and get absolutely nothing; in our three years' experience with the A.: A.:, we have not found one man in whom three months' work has not produced at least one notable result.

What can we add but this: Blessing and worship to the Beast, the Prophet of the Lovely Star!

LIBER

PORTA LVCIS

SVB FIGVRÂ

X

A.: A.:
Publication in Class A.
Imprimatur:
N. Fra. A.: A.:

LIBER

PORTA LVCIS

SVB FIGVRÂ X

1. I behold a small dark orb, wheeling in an abyss of infinite space. It is minute among a myriad vast ones, dark amid a myriad bright ones.

2. I who comprehend in myself all the vast and the minute, all the bright and the dark, have mitigated the brilliance of mine unutterable splendour, sending forth V.V.V.V.V. as a ray of my light, as a messenger unto that small dark orb.

3. Then V.V.V.V.V. taketh up the word, and sayeth:

4. Men and women of the Earth, to you am I come from the Ages beyond the Ages, from the Space beyond your vision; and I bring to you these words.

5. But they heard him not, for they were not ready to receive them.

6. But certain men heard and understood, and through them shall this Knowledge be made known.

7. The least therefore of them, the servant of them all, writeth this book.

8. He writeth for them that are ready. Thus is it known if one be ready, if he be endowed with certain gifts, if he be fitted by birth, or by wealth, or by intelligence, or by some

THE EQUINOX

other manifest sign. And the servants of the master by his insight shall judge of these.

9. This Knowledge is not for all men; few indeed are called, but of these few many are chosen.

10. This is the nature of the Work.

11. First, there are many and diverse conditions of life upon this earth. In all of these is some seed of sorrow. Who can escape from sickness and from old age and from death?

12. We are come to save our fellows from these things. For there is a life intense with knowledge and extreme bliss which is untouched by any of them.

13. To this life we attain even here and now. The adepts, the servants of V.V.V.V.V., have attained thereunto.

14. It is impossible to tell you of the splendours to which they have attained.

Little by little, as your eyes grow stronger, will we unveil to you the ineffable glory of the Path of the Adepts, and its nameless goal.

15. Even as a man ascending a steep mountain is lost to sight of his friends in the valley, so must the adept seem. They shall say: He is lost in the clouds. But he shall rejoice in the sunlight above them, and come to the eternal snows.

16. Or as a scholar may learn some secret language of the ancients, his friends shall say: "Look! he pretends to read this book. But it is unintelligible—it is nonsense." Yet he delights in the Odyssey, while they read vain and vulgar things.

17. We shall bring you to Absolute Truth, Absolute Light, Absolute Bliss.

LIBER PORTA LUCIS

18. Many adepts throughout the ages have sought to do this; but their words have been perverted by their successors, and again and again the Veil has fallen upon the Holy of Holies.

19. To you who yet wander in the Court of the Profane we cannot reveal all; but you will easily understand that the religions of the world are but symbols and veils of the Absolute Truth. So also are the philosophies. To the adepts, seeing all things from above, there seems nothing to choose between Buddha and Mohammed, between Atheism and Theism.

20. The many change and pass; the one remains. Even as wood and coal and iron burn up together in one great flame, if only that furnace be of transcendent heat; so in the alembic of this spiritual alchemy, if only the zelator blow sufficiently upon his furnace all the systems of earth are consumed in the One Knowledge.

21. Nevertheless, as a fire cannot be started with iron alone, in the beginning one system may be suited for one seeker, another for another.

22. We therefore who are without the chains of ignorance, look closely into the heart of the seeker and lead him by the path which is best suited to his nature unto the ultimate end of all things, the supreme realization, the Life which abideth in Light, yea, the Life which abideth in Light.

LIBER TVRRIS

VEL

DOMVS DEI

SVB FIGVRÂ

XVI

A.: A.:
Publication in Class B.
Imprimatur:
N. Fra. A.: A.:

LIBER TVRRIS

VEL DOMVS DEI

SVB FIGVRÂ XVI

o. This practice is very difficult. The student cannot hope for much success unless he have thoroughly mastered Asana, and obtained much definite success in the meditation-practices of Liber E and Liber HHH.

On the other hand, any success in this practice is of an exceedingly high character, and the student is less liable to illusion and self-deception in this than in almost any other that We make known.

[The meditation-practice in Liber E consisted in the restraint of the mind to a single predetermined imagined object exterior to the student, simple or complex, at rest or in motion: those of Liber HHH in causing the mind to pass through a predetermined series of states: the Raja-Yoga of the Hindus is mainly an extension of the methods of Liber E to interior objects: the Mahasatipatthana of the Buddhists is primarily an observation and analysis of bodily movements. While the present practice differs radically from all of these, it is of the greatest advantage of be acquainted practically with each of them, with regard firstly to their incidental difficulties, and secondly to their ascertained results in respect of psychology. ED.]

i. First Point. The student should discover for himself the apparent position of the point in his brain where thoughts arise, if there be such a point.

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If not, he should seek the position of the point where thoughts are judged.

2. Second Point. He must also develop in himself a Will of Destruction, even a Will of Annihilation. It may be that this shall be discovered at an immeasurable distance from his physical body. Nevertheless, this must he reach, with this must he identify himself even to the loss of himself.

3. Third Point. Let this Will then watch vigilantly the point where thoughts arise, or the point where they are judged, and let every thought be annihilated as it is perceived or judged.*

4. Fourth Point. Next, let every thought be inhibited in its inception.

5. Fifth Point. Next, let even the causes or tendencies that if unchecked ultimate in thoughts be discovered and annihilated.

6. Sixth and Last Point. Let the true Cause of All† be unmasked and annihilated.

7. This is that which was spoken by wise men of old time concerning the destruction of the world by fire; yea, the destruction of the world by fire.

8. [This and the following verses are of modern origin.] Let the Student remember that each Point represents a definite achievement of great difficulty.

9. Let him not then attempt the second until he be well satisfied of his mastery over the first.

* This is also the "Opening of the Eye of Shiva." ED.

† Mayan, the Magician, or Mara. Also the Dweller on the Threshold in a very exalted sense. ED.

LIBER TVRRIS

10. This practice is also that which was spoken by Fra. P. in a parable as follows:

11. Foul is the robber stronghold, filled with hate;
Thief strangling thief, and mate at war with mate,
Fronting wild raiders, all forlorn to Fate!

There is nor health nor happiness therein.
Manhood is cowardice, and virtue sin.
Intolerable blackness hems it in.

Not hell's heart hath so noxious a shade;
Yet harmless and unharmed, and undismayed,
Pines in her prison an unsullied maid.

Penned by the master mage to his desire,
She baffles his seductions and his ire,
Praying God's all-annihilating fire.

The Lord of Hosts gave ear unto her song:
The Lord of Hosts waxed wrathful at her wrong.
He loosed the hound of heaven from its thong.

Violent and vivid smote the levin flash.
Once the tower rocked and cracked beneath its lash,
Caught inextinguishable fire; was ash.

But that same fire that quelled the robber strife,
And struck each being out of lust and life,
Left the mild maiden a rejoicing wife.

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12. And this:

13. There is a well before the Great White Throne
That is choked up with rubbish from the ages;
Rubble and clay and sediment and stone,
Delight of lizards and despair of sages.

Only the lightning from His hand that sits,
And shall sit when the usurping tyrant falls,
Can purge that wilderness of wills and wits,
Let spring that fountain in eternal halls.

14. And this:

15. Sulphur, Salt, and Mercury:
Which is master of the three?

Salt is Lady of the Sea;
Lord of Air is Mercury.

Now by God's grace here is salt
Fixed beneath the violet vault.

Now by God's love purge it through
With our right Hermetic dew.

Now by God wherein we trust
Be our sophic salt combust.

Then at last the Eye shall see
Three in One and One in Three,

Sulphur, Salt, and Mercury,
Crowned by Heavenly Alchemy!

LIBER TVRRIS

To the One who sent the Seven
Glory in the Highest Heaven!

To the Seven who are the Ten
Glory on the Earth, Amen!

16. And of the difficulties of this practice and of the Results that reward it, let these things be discovered by the right Ingenium of the Practicus.

LIBER TZADDI

VEL

HAMVS HERMETICVS

SVB FIGVRÂ

XC

A.: A.:
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N. Fra. A.: A.:

LIBER TZADDI

VEL HAMVS HERMETICVS

SVB FIGVRÂ XC

0. In the name of the Lord of Initiation, Amen.
1. I fly and I alight as an hawk: of mother-of-emerald are my mighty-sweeping wings.
2. I swoop down upon the black earth; and it gladdens into green at my coming.
3. Children of Earth! rejoice! rejoice exceedingly; for your salvation is at hand.
4. The end of sorrow is come; I will ravish you away into mine unutterable joy.
5. I will kiss you, and bring you to the bridal; I will spread a feast before you in the house of happiness.
6. I am not come to rebuke you, or to enslave you.
7. I bid you not turn from your voluptuous ways, from your idleness, from your follies.
8. But I bring joy to your pleasure, peace to your languor, wisdom to your folly.
9. All that ye do is right, if so be that ye enjoy it.
10. I am come against sorrow, against weariness, against them that seek to enslave you.

THE EQUINOX

11. I pour you lustral wine, that giveth you delight both at the sunset and the dawn.

12. Come with me, and I will give you all that is desirable upon the earth.

13. Because I give you that of which Earth and its joys are but as shadows.

14. They flee away, but my joy abideth even unto the end.

15. I have hidden myself beneath a mask: I am a black and terrible God.

16. With courage conquering fear shall ye approach me: ye shall lay down your heads upon mine altar, expecting the sweep of the sword.

17. But the first kiss of love shall be radiant on your lips; and all my darkness and terror shall turn to light and joy.

18. Only those who fear shall fail. Those who have bent their backs to the yoke of slavery until they can no longer stand upright; them will I despise.

19. But you who have defied the law; you who have conquered by subtlety or force; you will I take unto me, even I will take you unto me.

20. I ask you to sacrifice nothing at mine altar; I am the God who giveth all.

21. Light, Life, Love; Force, Fantasy, Fire; these do I bring you: mine hands are full of these.

22. There is joy in the setting-out; there is joy in the journey; there is joy in the goal.

23. Only if ye are sorrowful, or weary, or angry, or discomfited; then ye may know that ye have lost the golden thread, the thread wherewith I guide you to the heart of the groves of Eleusis.

LIBER TZADDI

24. My disciples are proud and beautiful; they are strong and swift; they rule their way like mighty conquerors.

25. The weak, the timid, the imperfect, the cowardly, the poor, the tearful—these are mine enemies, and I am come to destroy them.

26. This also is compassion: an end to the sickness of earth. A rooting-out of the weeds: a watering of the flowers.

27. O my children, ye are more beautiful than the flowers: ye must not fade in your season.

28. I love you; I would sprinkle you with the divine dew of immortality.

29. This immortality is no vain hope beyond the grave: I offer you the certain consciousness of bliss.

30. I offer it at once, on earth; before an hour hath struck upon the bell, ye shall be with Me in the Abodes that are beyond Decay.

31. Also I give you power earthly and joy earthly; wealth, and health, and length of days. Adoration and love shall cling to your feet, and twine around your heart.

32. Only your mouths shall drink of a delicious wine—the wine of Iacchus; they shall reach ever to the heavenly kiss of the Beautiful God.

33. I reveal unto you a great mystery. Ye stand between the abyss of height and the abyss of depth.

34. In either awaits a Companion; and the Companion is Yourself.

35. Ye can have no other Companion.

36. Many have arisen, being wise. They have said “Seek out the glittering Image in the place ever golden, and unite yourself with It.”

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37. Many have arisen, being foolish. They have said, “Stoop down unto the darkly splendid world, and be wedded to that Blind Creature of the Slime.”

38. I who am beyond Wisdom and Folly, arise and say unto you: achieve both weddings! Unite yourself with both!

39. Beware, beware, I say, lest ye seek after the one and lose the other!

40. My adepts stand upright; their head above the heavens, their feet below the hells.

41. But since one is naturally attracted to the Angel, another to the Demon, let the first strengthen the lower link, the last attach more firmly to the higher.

42. Thus shall equilibrium become perfect. I will aid my disciples; as fast as they acquire this balanced power and joy so faster will I push them.

43. They shall in their turn speak from this Invisible Throne; their words shall illumine the worlds.

44. They shall be masters of majesty and might; they shall be beautiful and joyous; they shall be clothed with victory and splendour; they shall stand upon the firm foundation; the kingdom shall be theirs; yea, the kingdom shall be theirs.

In the name of the Lord of Initiation. Amen.

LIBER CHETH

VEL

VALLVM ABIEGNI

SVB FIGVRÂ

CLVI

A.: A.:
Publication in Class A.
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LIBER CHETH

VEL VALLVM ABIEGNI

SVB FIGVRÂ CLVI

1. This is the secret of the Holy Graal, that is the sacred vessel of our Lady the Scarlet Woman, Babalon the Mother of Abominations, the bride of Chaos, that rideth upon our Lord the Beast.

2. Thou shalt drain out thy blood that is thy life into the golden cup of her fornication.

3. Thou shalt mingle thy life with the universal life. Thou shalt not keep back one drop.

4. Then shall thy brain be dumb, and thy heart beat no more, and all thy life shall go from thee; and thou shalt be cast out upon the midden, and the birds of the air shall feast upon thy flesh, and thy bones shall whiten in the sun.

5. Then shall the winds gather themselves together, and bear thee up as it were a little heap of dust in a sheet that hath four corners, and they shall give it unto the guardians of the abyss.

6. And because there is no life therein, the guardians of the abyss shall bid the angels of the winds pass by. And the angels shall lay thy dust in the City of the Pyramids, and the name thereof shall be no more.

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7. Now therefore that thou mayest achieve this ritual of the Holy Graal, do thou divest thyself of all thy goods.

8. Thou hast wealth; give it unto them that have need thereof, yet no desire toward it.

9. Thou hast health; slay thyself in the fervour of thine abandonment unto Our Lady. Let thy flesh hang loose upon thy bones, and thine eyes glare with thy quenchless lust unto the Infinite, with thy passion for the Unknown, for Her that is beyond Knowledge the accursèd one.

10. Thou hast love; tear thy mother from thine heart, and spit in the face of thy father. Let thy foot trample the belly of thy wife, and let the babe at her breast be the prey of dogs and vultures.

11. For if thou dost not this with thy will, then shall We do this despite thy will. So that thou attain to the Sacrament of the Graal in the Chapel of Abominations.

12. And behold! if by stealth thou keep unto thyself one thought of thine, then shalt thou be cast out into the abyss for ever; and thou shalt be the lonely one, the eater of dung, the afflicted in the Day of Be-with-Us.

13. Yea! verily this is the Truth, this is the Truth, this is the Truth. Unto thee shall be granted joy and health and wealth and wisdom when thou are no longer thou.

14. Then shall every gain be a new sacrament, and it shall not defile thee; thou shalt revel with the wanton in the market-place, and the virgins shall fling roses upon thee, and the merchants bend their knees and bring thee gold and spices. Also young boys shall pour wonderful wines for thee, and the singers and the dancers shall sing and dance for thee.

LIBER CHETH

15. Yet shalt thou not be therein, for thou shalt be forgotten, dust lost in dust.

16. Nor shall the æon itself avail thee in this; for from the dust shall a white ash be prepared by Hermes the Invisible.

17. And this is the wrath of God, that these things should be thus.

18. And this is the grace of God, that these things should be thus.

19. Wherefore I charge you that ye come unto me in the Beginning; for if ye take but one step in this Path, ye must arrive inevitably at the end thereof.

20. This Path is beyond Life and Death; it is also beyond Love; but that ye know not, for ye know not Love.

21. And the end thereof is known not even unto Our Lady or to the Beast whereon She rideth; nor unto the Virgin her daughter nor unto Chaos her lawful Lord; but unto the Crowned Child is it known? It is not known if it be known.

22. Therefore unto Hadit and unto Nuit be the glory in the End and the Beginning; yea, in the End and the Beginning.

LIBER RESH

VEL

HELIOS

SVB FIGVRÂ

CC

A.: A.:
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Imprimatur:
N. Fra. A.: A.:

LIBER RESH

VEL HELIOS

SVB FIGVRÂ CC

o. These are the adorations to be performed by all aspirants to the A.:A.:

1. Let him greet the Sun at dawn, facing East, giving the sign of his grade. And let him say in a loud voice:

Hail unto Thee who art Ra in Thy rising, even unto Thee who art Ra in Thy strength, who travellest over the Heavens in Thy bark at the Uprising of the Sun.

Tahuti standeth in His splendour at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm.

Hail unto Thee from the Abodes of Night!

2. Also at Noon, let him greet the Sun, facing South, giving the sign of his grade. And let him say in a loud voice:

Hail unto Thee who art Ahathoor in Thy triumphing, even unto Thee who art Ahathoor in Thy beauty, who travellest over the Heavens in Thy bark at the Mid-course of the Sun.

Tahuti standeth in His splendour at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm.

Hail unto Thee from the Abodes of Morning!

3. Also, at Sunset, let him greet the Sun, facing West,

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giving the sign of his grade. And let him say in a loud voice:

Hail unto Thee who art Tum in Thy setting, even unto Thee who art Tum in Thy joy, who travellest over the Heavens in Thy bark at the Down-going of the Sun.

Tahuti standeth in His splendour at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm.

Hail unto Thee from the Abodes of Day!

4. Lastly, at Midnight, let him greet the Sun, facing West, giving the sign of his grade. And let him say in a loud voice:

Hail unto Thee who art Khephra in Thy hiding, even unto Thee who art Khephra in Thy silence, who travellest over the Heavens in Thy bark at the Midnight Hour of the Sun.

Tahuti standeth in His splendour at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm.

Hail unto Thee from the Abodes of Evening!

5. And after each of these invocations thou shalt give the sign of silence, and afterwards thou shalt perform the adoration that is taught thee by thy Superior. And then do thou compose thyself to holy meditation.

6. Also it is better if in these adorations thou assume the god-form of Whom thou adorest, as if thou didst unite with Him in the adoration of That which is beyond Him.

7. Thus shalt thou ever be mindful of the Great Work which thou hast undertaken to perform, and thus shalt thou be strengthened to pursue it unto the attainment of the Stone of the Wise, the Summum Bonum, True Wisdom and Perfect Happiness.

LIBER A'ASH

VEL

CAPRICORNI PNEVMATICI

SVB FIGVRÂ

CCCLXX

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LIBER A'ASH

VEL CAPRICORNI PNEVMATICI

SVB FIGVRÂ CCCLXX

0. Gnarled Oak of God! In thy branches is the lightning nested! Above thee hangs the Eyeless Hawk.

1. Thou art blasted and black! Supremely solitary in that heath of scrub.

2. Up! The ruddy clouds hang over thee! It is the storm.

3. There is a flaming gash in the sky.

4. Up.

5. Thou art tossed about in the grip of the storm for an æon and an æon and an æon. But thou givest not thy sap; thou fallest not.

6. Only in the end shalt thou give up thy sap when the great God F. I. A. T. is enthroned on the day of Be-With-Us.

7. For two things are done and a third thing is begun. Isis and Osiris are given over to incest and adultery. Horus leaps up thrice armed from the womb of his mother. Harpocrates his twin is hidden within him. Set is his holy covenant, that he shall display in the great day of M. A. A. T., that is being interpreted the Master of the Temple of A.:A.:, whose name is Truth.

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8. Now in this is the magical power known.

9. It is like the oak that hardens itself and bears up against the storm. It is weather-beaten and scarred and confident like a sea-captain.

10. Also it straineth like a hound in the leash.

11. It hath pride and great subtlety. Yea, and glee also!

12. Let the magus act thus in his conjuration.

13. Let him sit and conjure; let him draw himself together in that forcefulness; let him rise next swollen and straining; let him dash back the hood from his head and fix his basilisk eye upon the sigil of the demon. Then let him sway the force of him to and from like a satyr in silence, until the Word burst from his throat.

14. Then let him not fall exhausted, although the might have been ten thousandfold the human; but that which floodeth him is the infinite mercy of the Genitor-Genetrix of the Universe, whereof he is the Vessel.

15. Nor do thou deceive thyself. It is easy to tell the live force from the dead matter. It is no easier to tell the live snake from the dead snake.

16. Also concerning vows. Be obstinate, and be not obstinate. Understand that the yielding of the Yoni is one with the lengthening of the Lingam. Thou art both these; and thy vow is but the rustling of the wind on Mount Meru.

17. Now shalt thou adore me who am the Eye and the Tooth, the Goat of the Spirit, the Lord of Creation. I am the Eye in the Triangle, the Silver Star that ye adore.

18. I am Baphomet, that is the Eightfold Word that shall be equilibrated with the Three.

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19. There is no act or passion that shall not be a hymn in mine honour.

20. All holy things and all symbolic things shall be my sacraments.

21. These animals are sacred unto me; the goat, and the duck, and the ass, and the gazelle, the man, the woman, and the child.

22. All corpses are sacred unto me; they shall not be touched save in mine eucharist. All lonely places are sacred unto me; where one man gathereth himself together in my name, there will I leap forth in the midst of him.

23. I am the hideous god; and who mastereth me is uglier than I.

24. Yet I give more than Bacchus and Apollo; my gifts exceed the olive and the horse.

25. Who worshippeth me must worhsip me with many rites.

26. I am concealed with all concealments; when the Most Holy Ancient One is stripped and driven through the marketplace I am still secret and apart.

27. Whom I love I chastise with many rods.

28. All things are sacred to me; no thing is sacred from me.

29. For there is no holiness where I am not.

30. Fear not when I fall in the fury of the storm; for mine acorns are blown afar by the wind; and verily I shall rise again, and my children about me, so that we shall uplift our forest in Eternity.

31. Eternity is the storm that covereth me.

32. I am Existence, the Existence that existeth not save through its own Existence, that is beyond the Existence of

THE EQUINOX

Existences, and rooted deeper than the No-Thing-Tree in the Land of No-Thing.

33. Now therefore thou knowest when I am within thee, when my hood is spread over thy skull, when my might is more than the penned Indus, and resistless as the Giant Glacier.

34. For as thou art before a lewd woman in Thy nakedness in the bazar, sucked up by her slyness and smiles, so art thou wholly and no more in part before the symbol of the beloved, though it be but a Pisacha or a Yantra or a Deva.

35. And in all shalt thou create in Infinite Bliss, and the next link of the Infinite Chain.

36. This chain reaches from Eternity to Eternity, even in triangles—is not my symbol a triangle?—ever in circles—is not the symbol of the Beloved a circle? Therein is all progress base illusion, for every circle is alike and every triangle alike!

37. But the progress is progress, and progress is rapture, constant, dazzling, showers of light, waves of dew, flames of the hair of the Great Goddess, flowers of the roses that are about her neck, Amen!

38. Therefore lift up thyself as I am lifted up. Hold thyself in as I am master to accomplish. At the end, be the end far distant as the stars that lie in the navel of Nuit, do thou slay thyself as I at the end am slain, in the death that is life, in the peace that is the mother of war, in the darkness that holds light in his hand as a harlot that plucks a jewel from her nostrils.

39. So therefore the beginning is delight, and the End is delight, and delight is in the midst, even as the Indus is water

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in the cavern of the glacier, and water among the greater hills and the lesser hills and through the ramparts of the hills and through the plains, and water at the mouth thereof when it leaps forth into the mighty sea, yea, into the mighty sea.

[The Interpretation of this Book will be given to members of the Grade of Dominus Liminis on application, each to his Adeptus.]

THREE POEMS FOR JANE CHÉRON

THREE POEMS FOR JANE CHÉRON

I

THE WAIF OF OCEANUS

TO FRANK HARRIS

SHE is like a flower washed up
On the shore of life by the sea of luck;
A strange and venomous flower, intent
To prove an unguessed continent.
New worlds of love in the curve of its cup!
New fruits to crush, new flowers to pluck.

White waif, white champak-blossom blown
From the jungle to the lost lagoon!
White lily swayed by the wind of time!
Grey eyes that crave the chrism of crime!
Blanched face like a note on a clarion!
Red mouth like the sun through simoon, typhoon!

Hurricanes howl, howl in her heart;
Serpents sleep in her smile; I hear
Horrible happenings long ago,
Direful deeds, weirds of woe,

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Things beyond history and art
In the tresses that tumble over her ear!

In what grim gloom did Satan get
This child on what wood-nymph dishevelled?
Whence was the wind that swayed the woods
On their bestial beatitudes?
Or what garden of rose and violet
Lay under the moon wherein they revelled?

She is like a poppy-petal.
All the seas of sleep are hidden
Under the languorous eyelids, whose
Lashes are long and strong to bruise
My heart where her lusts like hornets settle
On sacred leaves, on flowers forbidden.

She is like a drug of wonder.
All the limits of sense dissolve
When we fall like snows from the precipice
Sun-kissed to the black ravines of ice.
I am drowned in the universal thunder;
The hours disrupt, the aeons involve.

Ah! not in any mortal mood
Ends the great verb we conjugate.
From the highest hyperbole she doth swerve
In an incommensurable curve,
And the line of our beatitude
Is one with the sigil of our Fate.

THREE POEMS FOR JANE CHÉRON

Pallid, a mummy throned, she sits;
The Egyptian eyes, the Egyptian hair,
The band on her brows, the slender hands,
All hieroglyphs of a God's commands
Beyond the rimes that a poet knits
With fruitless travail, sterile care!

Marvellous! marvellous, marvellous!
And again a marvel, a lotus-bud
Dropt from the brows of a Goddess unknown
On the ivory steps of the golden throne,
Virginal brows and luminous
With the star-stream flowing therein for blood.

Ah, but electric thrills the Host
Of the esoteric Eucharist!
The Pagan power of the corn and wine
Mystical, magical, hers and mine,
The dove-plumed snake of the Holy Ghost
That wings and writhes in the wounds unknissed!

Lie there, love—if I love you indeed
Who adore and wonder and faint for drouth
Of the passion-flower fallen from the other side
Of time and space the tedious tide.
Lie there, lie there, and let me bleed
To death in the breath of the murderous mouth!

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II

THE SNOW MAIDEN

TO MARGARET CALLAGHAN

MY love is like the lucent globes
That drip from lips of cool crevasses,
To clothe them with the virgin robes
Of mosses, flowers, and grasses.

O spheres compact of fire and dew,
Lamps of the hollows of the mountain,
What dream angelic fathered you
On what celestial fountain?

Nay! but I lay on lower earth
Stagnant in sunless meres! The prison
Of monstrous spawn, detested birth—
Behold me rearisen!

It was yon fierce diurnal star
That licked me up with his huge kisses,
And dropped me in his rain afar
Upon these froze abysses!

Yea! as I press to the cool moss
My mouth, and drink at its delirious
Delight—acclaim the Sun across
The menaces of Sirius!

THREE POEMS FOR JANE CHÉRON

Doth not the World's great Alchemist
 Rule earth's alembic with the sun?
Is not the mind a foolish mist,
 And is not water one?

The slim white body that you gave,
 Wild Jaja', with exotic nautches
Wanton and wonderful, a wave
 Of debonair debauches,

Is worth the virgin limbs and lips
 Of her the virtuous, the viceless,
With life who never came to grips,
 Who gave me nothing priceless.

Give me the purity distilled
 From dervish sweat and satyr bruises.
The Holy Graal with wine is filled
 From no unbroken cruses.

Doth not the World's great Alchemist
 Corrupt His oysters to make pearls?
Shall not these lips praise Him? They kissed
 No cold reluctant girl's.

Jaja' hath woven the web of God
 From threads of lust and laughter spun.
In heaven the rose is worth the rod;
 And love as water, One.

THE EQUINOX

III

JEANNE

A PASTORAL

TO RAYMOND RADCLYFFE

“Hey diddle diddle! the cat and the fiddle!
The cow jumped over the moon.”

I LAID mine ear against your heart,

Jeanne!

A masterpiece of nature turned

A masterpiece of art,

With your blanched Egyptian beauty foiled

By the hungry eyes, and the red mouth soiled

By the honey of mine that your greed has spoiled,

Jeanne!

The body a corpse and the soul inurned!

Against your heart I laid mine ear,

Jeanne!

And the clock went ticking, ticking.

How could I choose but hear,

Jeanne!

Ah me! what thoughts came pricking

Like spurs in the flanks of a weary horse?

Nor heart nor clock could feel remorse,

But kept their definite deadly course,

Jeanne!

Alas! for man, for his life's disaster:

The clock beats fast, but a heart beats faster.

THREE POEMS FOR JANE CHÉRON

Oh, your love was a marvellous thing,
 Jeanne!

It was dawn, it was fire, it was birth, it was spring,
 Jeanne!

But this is the curse, that it quickens its rate,
Lest man by love should escape from fate
And win from the dust to the Uncreate,
 Jeanne!

Nay, we are lovers, you and I—
And we must die, and our love must die!

How have we striven, each of us,
 Jeanne!

To break the bars of the prison-house,
 Jeanne!

We have raged like cats in a ring of fire,
Driven by desire that was true Desire,
The hate of the lower, the love of the Higher,
 Jeanne!

What is the end of it, Jeanne? Why, that's
A mystery not to be solved by cats!

In the fields we wandered through to-day,
 Jeanne!

Hand in hand, this wonderful May,
 Jeanne!

This May we have made so marvellous
With the infinite longing and love of us,

THE EQUINOX

In the fields all faery with flowers there lay
The placid cows—that had nothing to say,
 Jeanne!

No flame of words from maddening blood,
But complacent chewing of the cud.
I dared not whisper the sudden fear
Of my heart in your miracle of an ear,
 Jeanne!

I tightened my lips, and my hand on yours;
So that you might think I loved you more.
But now in the midnight the thought endures,
And the love—ah what is the dream we adore?

Suppose the infinite peace of the heart,
 Jeanne!
The crest and crown of labour and art,
Of the mystic quest, of the toil of the saint,
The mount on whose slopes the strongest faint,
 Jeanne!

Suppose that peace of God, that House
Of Delight of the Bridegroom and the Spouse,
Were only the calm of the chewing cows,
 Jeanne!

Suppose that in all the worlds inane
There were one thing only vexed and vain,
Turbulent, troubled, and insane,
 Jeanne!

Suppose that the universal plan
Had but one flaw, and that flaw were man!

THREE POEMS FOR JANE CHÉRON

Then—even then—we are here,
 Jeanne!

We love—we shall die, sweet heart, take cheer,
 Jeanne!

We are bound to a fate that brings release;
We move in a moil that must one day cease;
We shall win to the everlasting peace,
 Jeanne!

And how things are, and why, and whence
Are puzzles for fools that lack the sense
Of cows—enough of the future tense,
 Jeanne!

For the end of love and the end of art
Is just—my ear against your heart!

ALEISTER CROWLEY.

CIRCE

HER mouth a rosebud of delight,
 Low-laughing 'mid the languid curls,
Whose kissing cadence seems to cite
The rhythmic melody of Night.
 Her hair a saraband where whirls
A wanton witch, whose perfumes smite
The shuddering air; a summer night
 Where summer lightning darts and curls.

Her soul a Parian marble shrine,
 Centred in lily-cups that fold
 Their carven petals, smooth and cold,
Far o'er a lake of frozen wine—
 Yet deep within whose inmost fold
Sleepeth a snake: the crystal brine
Of endless sorrow seals his shrine;
 Wiser than Sin is he, so old!

ETHEL ARCHER.

THE ELECTRIC SILENCE

THE ELECTRIC SILENCE

[This parable is a synopsis of The Temple of Solomon the King, with which it may be collated.—ED.].

I WAITED for news that my heart beat. The severing night was between me and my love. There was no god of sleep; sleep were traitor. I sought to praise my love, and to lament the hours that divided us; and I could not. Therefore I wrote down the story of my life.

And it is this:

* * * * *

Gilded and painted to hide its worm-eaten planks, my pleasure-boat was foundering. I cursed the treachery of the workmen, and resolved to trust myself to my own arms rather than to abide any longer therein.

No sooner had I taken off my clothes and plunged into the river than I perceived that it was now become dark. On the one hand glowed a star, curious indeed, but of no great brightness, and promising but little; while on the other was a sombre and fantastic lamp, whose fascination was its horror.

If I swam lazily towards either of these, it was because their light, confused and difficult on the one part, and tenebrous on the other, was yet light in comparison with that aimless and abiding gloom which had now settled upon the bosom of

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the river. And these lamps were above the river, children of a nobler element. And in the river is the great Leviathan that devours men.

But before I had come within the sphere of attraction of either of these, suddenly mine eyes were gladdened with a marvellous vision. Infinitely far off, as it seemed, a ray of sunlight shot through the Saturnine gloom of the skies, and lit the surface of the water. And then I perceived that upon the river there floated, within that small circle of light, an ark, or as it might be, a coffin. Then looking up into that pierced cloud I saw within the light a certain house surrounded by a grove. Within, all was dark; yet from it proceeded a ray as silvery as the first ray was golden.

And I desired ardently to enter that house. Yet, having no wings, the task appeared beyond my human force. Then the heavens closed as suddenly as they had opened, and I was left darkling. Yet I had this candle of hope, that within the ark, could I reach it, might be some help of knowledge or power whereby that house might be attained.

So I swam steadily toward, though with some fear, for the eddies in that great stream were numerous, and my sole guide was a slender snake of light that moved upon the water.

Or so it appeared; for I have since discovered that I had an interior sense of direction as trusty as the mariner's compass; so that, though I knew it not, it was never possible for me to go astray.

Now as I swam I came upon one floundering and spluttering in the stream, who with mighty puffings urged me to continue.

THE ELECTRIC SILENCE

For but a little way beyond us (quoth he) is a mighty swimmer and a dexterous.

So with a mighty effort my comrade put forth all his strength, and we gained upon this one, and greeted him.

Thereupon he (and he was a goodly man, and fair) did most heartily welcome me as a fellow-traveller to that house, and confirmed me in my belief that the ark did indeed hold the secret of the way thereto. And as for the guide that might convey us through the darkness and the tumult of the stream, he spoke (something darkly) of one appointed, and more clearly that he was aware of divers marks upon the way; for, said he, to them that view it from above this trackless waste of water is mapped out and charted with a perfect science.

Behold! quoth he. And at that moment was there a glimmer just before me of a white shining triangle, and what was most strange, rather an impression than a vision of a man that hung upon a gibbet by one heel. This, said the fair man, is a most notable sign that we travel the right road.

Now by the light of the triangle I perceived another wonder; for my friend was not swimming as I was in the stream, but was borne by a boat, frail indeed, yet sufficient. Within this shallop or cockleshell he pulled me, and set me at the bench. Then (still by the light of the triangle) I saw a dark man at the thwart, rowing a strong stroke. We pulled on almost in silence; for when I asked of the fair man his name he answered me only "I wish to know," and of the dark man "I wish it were light," the first clearly a confession of ignorance, the second a patent evasion; which things discomfited me much.

Yet we progressed evenly and rapidly, and were mightily

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cheered after a while to see just a flash of lightning sundering two dark clouds; next a pale crescent, heavy and slow, yet silvered; next, as if it had dropped from the stars, an unicorn galloped past us and was gone ere we could fix it; next a tall lighthouse upon the water.

“Here,” said the dark man my comrade, “is a pleasant place for refreshment before we turn to the further journey.” As he spoke, although no sun was visible, a mighty rainbow appeared, and crowned the tower. I cried out joyfully, “The bow of promise,” but they answered nothing. And at that I understood that they had travelled further already, and were but returned for an hour to succour me who had no boat.

Seven days then we remained in the tower, eating and drinking. Also in my sleep I had many marvellous dreams, of greater sustenance than sleep itself. And there was given unto me by my fair brother (for so I may now call him) a little book, wherein it was written how a man might build himself a shallop, and have for steersman one appointed thereunto.

This then I laboured to build, and the toil was great. Moreover, certain vile fish rose from the water, and with their fins beat upon the planks of my boat, that I might not end it.

However, at last I had it perfect, and was about to set sail at dawn. But first the dark man my brother departed from us, and went his way. And then the old man of the tower took me aside and offered me a seat at the funeral feast of his master. And although I verily believe that this old man was a rogue, a very knavish fellow, and a sot, yet in that funeral I took great pleasure. For the gentlest perfume was

THE ELECTRIC SILENCE

borne upon the breeze, and the air was lit with faint electric flames that gathered themselves into a hill of light. So I, being lifted up, and my heart overflowing, came into the funeral chamber that was exceeding bright, and there was the table for the feast, and beneath it the coffin wherein lay the body of the master. There too I saw barren wood bear roses, and I heard the voice of the master. After that I was shewn all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and many other things of great use and beauty.

Then I took my leave of the old man of the tower, and boarded the shallop that I had made, when he cried out piteously that he feared earthquake, and asked me for my aid.

So with a heart both heavy and light I abandoned my shallop and the dreadful labour of its fashioning, and came back to him.

Then came earthquake as he had foreseen; and he and the boats also were swallowed up. In the tidal wave of the earthquake I was borne far away, even from the fair man my brother; and in the darkness he was lost to me. I knew not even whether he had perished.

But fashioning a raft from the loose planks of the wreckage, I made shift to paddle. The ark was invisible, and I had no more memory thereof, so turned away was I and absorbed in the bright signs upon the way. And now my raft was like to sink, and my arms were exceeding weary, when a voice sounded but a little above me: "Enter the ark!"

And I looked up and beheld a bearded man, mighty, with the signs of labour and long journeying writ upon him. I knew him; and for this reason was I much amazed, for I had believed him far from that place. But taking my hand

THE EQUINOX

he drew me not without pain into the ark. Here (quoth he) forget all that thou hast seen and heard; for in this ark they are not lawful.

So I obeyed him, else I had drawn after me the raft that had brought me hither.

Then he questioned me, saying:

What lieth above the ark?

And I answered him:

The house of the silver ray, that is lighted by the ray of gold.

He: How many roofs hath the ark?

I: One.

He: Thou must pass through this one. Yet thou lookest eagerly upon the four walls of the ark.

I: I seek a door.

He: The door is in the roof.

I: Lead me to it, I pray thee!

He: Fix thine eyes upon it.

I: Sir, I will. Yet I pray thee to tell me thy name.

He: Thou didst know it of old, didst thou not?

I: The son of the mountain?

He: The Stone of the Crossways.

I: It is enough. Let me fix mine eye upon the door.

He: It is well.

Then I obeyed him, and in that obedience forgot him. For though mine eye wandered often, and although once the planks beneath me threatened to give way and plunge me once more into the stream, yet I strove as a man may.

Then, mine eye being accustomed to the gloom, I beheld by my side, yet a little above me, the dark man my brother.

THE ELECTRIC SILENCE

Him I greeted most gladly, and told him of the earthquake. Whereat he sighed heavily.

Brother, quoth I, canst thou now tell me thy name? But he only answered me: "It is a pity!"

And with that I returned to my task, and he guided me therein with his counsel and example. Yet in the ark the gloom is fierce; the river without is but twilight, wherein shadows are free; within is darkness itself, and the essence and quintessence of darkness.

In this terrific silence I abode for very long; then for an instant that seemed longer than many lives the sun of heaven broke in and smote mine eye, so that I fell backward nigh fainting. But he bade me be of good cheer and return to the task. I obeyed; and behold! again the sun, and behind the sun a glimpse of one appointed equally to be hidden and to be seen, each as may be fitting.

But the brightness of the sun and its heat dazzled me and scorched me. My members refused to obey; and I slid backward into the great stream that was here so icy cold, and it refreshed me and comforted me.

Now then I was minded to enter again the ark when there flew unto me, I wot not whence, a dove, and perched upon my shoulder. And thus I swam for a while, and the waters of the stream were soft and warm, caressing me.

Yet I felt that this aimless drifting was enervating my limbs; so I gathered some stray planks of my raft—for they still floated round the ark—and began half playfully to paddle, with what purpose I cannot tell.

And so it was ordered that the dove flew to me with an oak-leaf in its beak.

THE EQUINOX

Thereat I was silent. But gazing eagerly thereon, I beheld one appointed, and I understood that the oak-leaf was sent from the House.

Then I took counsel of him who is to this end appointed, and with his own hand he brought to me a champak-blossom, a mustard-seed, and again an oak-leaf.

And these I treasured in my bosom, though I hardly knew wherefore. Nor could I understand what purpose they should serve, save darkly. And seeing this, the dove came to me again bearing an olive-branch; and with this I was so mightily pleased that for awhile I forgot all else, and swam lustily in the stream for my pleasure.

But now came a current of ice-cold water and enwrapped me; and when I looked, it bore spots of blood upon it. Then I went hastily into the ark that was ever near by; and, climbing to the roof by the ladder that I had before made, looked through. And all the sky was a hurricane, a madness of storm.

Now in my eagerness I had approached closely to the roof, so that the storm whirled me away into itself. One might say that I was the storm. And when I came to myself I was floating upon the bosom of the river, borne by that very bark that once I had built myself in the lighthouse. And in the storm I had lost my hair and beard; for the wind had torn all out by the root. So that I heard a voice saying, "It is a babe upon the waters." And looking at the bark, I found it refashioned by him that is appointed to refashion. For it had planks of my old shallop, and planks also of the ark, and it was shaped like a cradle rather than like a boat. And I heard the voice of one appointed to speak saying: "Behold thou me!"

THE ELECTRIC SILENCE

And I could not. Nevertheless I gazed earnestly, and paddled in the direction of the sound.

While this was a-doing suddenly the river fell in a cataract. And I looked for the olive-branch, and it was withered, and sunk beneath the stream. And I looked for the dove, and it was wrapped round with a most hideous serpent. And I was helpless. In the end he devoured that rose-winged companion of my journey, and went seeking a new prey.

Now in this cataract I had most surely been wrecked but that I clung tightly to the boat. This indeed floated as serenely as if it had been upon the still waters of a lake; and when I had a little plucked up courage, I saw sitting at the helm him that is appointed to steer; I saw him face to face.

This then endured for a space; and with his aid I began ship-building. "For" (said he) "there are many that swim, and find no boats. Be it thy task to aid them." Of my journey to the House he spake nothing. But in the ship-building came the fair man my brother to my help; and one evening as we sate at meat he said: May it please you to enter the House; for there is prepared for you a goodly bedchamber. But I would not at that time; for I was ashamed, being unclothed; not understanding that in the House robes are provided by him that is appointed to provide them.

Thus we laboured, and built many fair shallops upon the model of that wherein we sailed. In all these there was not one splinter of wood too much, or too little; and there was no ornament; and neither paint nor varnish covered the planks, for they were planks of a tree that cometh neither from the East nor from the West. But the sails were of gold tissue, very brave, with figures inwoven.

THE EQUINOX

Now at last the time being come, did I take my chamber in the House. And upon the secret things that were there shown to me I ponder yet; so that in this place I shall make no mention of them. But this treasure will I give out, that everything noble in that House seemeth vile to them that are swimming in the stream; and everything vile to them appeareth noble. Thus they endure not the delicate stuffs with rough and impure handling; and the rubbish they carry away with them, and devour. Thus wisely hath the master of the House ordained.

Now of the silver radiance that issueth from the darkness of the House I will say nothing; nor of the golden ray that illuminateth the darkness of the House.

But for the sake of one that may come to share my bed-chamber will I speak of the last adventure.

Upon the breast of the river came a wild swan, singing, and for a moment rested upon mine image reflected in the water. And I said: "Come up hither."

And the wild swan said: "How shall I come up thither?"

I: I will guide thee.

The Swan: Who art thou?

I: My Father is the keeper of the King's Cup: I have prepared a little ship wherein I may go my journeys upon the great river.

Who will draw it?

The Swan: I will draw it.

So we set forth together; and of the horrible tempests that arose it is unworthy discourse. And of what followed after is discourse unprofitable; but the wild swan still guides my ship.

THE ELECTRIC SILENCE

And the end shall be as is appointed by the master of the House; but this I know, that this ship is the King's ship. And in my bosom are the champak-blossom, and the mustard seed, and the oak-leaf, more lovely than before.

And upon us watcheth ever he that is appointed to watch.

And the wild swan sings ever; and my heart sings ever.

Now then I had laid aside the pen, and a voice cried:
Write!

Fear not!

Turn not aside!

Is it not written that Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning?

Sleep therefore in peace and in faith: shall he not watch whose eye hath no eyelid, who to this end is appointed?

And my heart answered: Amen!

SONG

COME, Love awaken! O'er the wild salt sea,
Shadows strange-shapen whirl themselves and flee
As eddying mist, by storm winds overtaken,
And sunbeams kissed—the shafts all curled and shaken
In shuddering ecstasy!
Come, Love, nor list to tired dreams that twist
Thy lithe long limbs in fierce abandonment,
Awake, and learn of me the secret of the sea,
Whose meaning is the sum of all things blent
In fiercest harmony.

Soft winds are calling on the cloudy deep,
(Like foam-flowers falling from the breasts of Sleep
Their Lotus-kiss is), such a world forestalling
Of wanton blisses, that the fear of palling
Makes e'en the Sirens weep.
Ah me! What serpent hisses from out those purple bysses,
Far in the womb of the long-lying sea?
She wakes! Nor dare he creep back to her soul, whence Sleep
Has torn aside the mist-hung drapery;
Too strange the way, and steep.

ETHEL ARCHER.

THE SCORPION

A TRAGEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY

ALEISTER CROWLEY

“God is Love.”—Epistles of St. John

To ΑΓΑΘΑ in memory of the Hour of
Initiation, and to Lampada Tradam and
Mohammed ibn Rahman in memory of our
wanderings in the Desert, and to my brothers
of the O.: of K. D. S. H. in memory of the
Martyrdom of our G.: M.:

J. B. M.

I dedicate this tragedy.

THE SCORPION

PERSONS OF THE TRAGEDY

ACT I

SIR RINALDO DE LA CHAPELLE, *Preceptor of the Knights Templars*
SIR RAYMOND, SIR JAMES, SIR EUSTACHE, and OTHERS, *his Knights*
JOCELYN, *a Troubadour, in their company*
ESQUIRES, *etc., to these*
SAID OMAR, *an Arabian Emir. His band of Warriors*
LAYLAH, *his newly-wedded bride*
A NYMPH, *and children attendant on her*

ACT I

SCENE: *The desert. In the foreground, a walled well with a lever. Three palms. Tall grasses. The ground is uneven. In the background other palms, among which are several military chargers, held by esquires. Around the well are Knights Templars, armed, reposing. Also JOCELYN, a troubadour.*

JOCELYN [*sings to his harp*]:

Noon slumbers softly in the palms
The desert breezes whisper psalms;
And we who rest must rise and ride
Beneath the banner cruciform
That braves the Saracen and the storm,
This blessed Christmastide.
For we are hardy, and worn with blows
And battles,
And languish for our mother snows.
What is the gladness of the well
To us who pine for citadel,
And joyous burg, and Christian feast?
But we are vowed to Christ to fight
For God, our honour, and our right
Against the recreant East.

THE SCORPION

We have left our ladies, you and I,
My brothers!
To keep our castles, and to sigh!

Oh! could some holy hermit give
One short day's dalliance fugitive!
Speed hither through the enchanted air
Our ladies, for our faith's reward!
Would it not sharpen every sword
And perfume every prayer?
Love sharp as holly and pure as snow,
And kisses
Beneath the moon for mistletoe!

SIR RAYMOND. Something ill sung, Jocelyn, and too sadly, forsooth! Here the hermits are foul and malicious. I would clear the land of them.

SIR JAMES. Spies, every one. And enchanters to boot.

SIR EUSTACHE. The maids are worse, to my mind. Think of the gallant Florimond, as tall a knight of his hands as ever swung sword or couched lance.

SIR RAYMOND. Netted like a fish!

SIR JAMES. And now lives in the desert with the witch, a wild man, and banned.

SIR RAYMOND. Little better than a robber. And the word goes that he hath apostatized from our holy faith.

[ALL *cross themselves.*]

JOCELYN [*sings*]

Heigho! Heigho! the Crescent and Cross!
If the one is a bargain, the other's a loss.

THE EQUINOX

Who would be found
On the ground
Of Mahound
A recreant knight, and a renegade boaster?
Better we each
Leave our bones here to Bleach
And be saved, than go burn with the Paynim impostor!
For the infidel swine
Lack our spirit divine;
There crazy old prophet prohibits them wine!
Drink, every knight!
God and my right!
We'll drive the black dogs to their kennels to-night!

SIR JAMES. Peace to thy ribaldry! Here comes the Preceptor. To saddle!

JOCELYN. Why cannot he ride with us, as a good knight and gay?

SIR JAMES. Who poises in his mind the destinies of Christendom needs not in his ear thy fool's prattle, or thy fool's face at his elbow. Though he have seen but five-and-twenty summers he is wiser than many a greybeard! See, even afar, how weightily he sits his horse. His forehead bent, his shoulders arched—

JOCELYN. The seat of a hunchback!

SIR JAMES. Like Atlas supporting the world.

SIR RAYMOND. Good Jocelyn, could thy wisest thought match his most foolish, thou would'st sit at the council.

JOCELYN. Gramercy! I smile awry. With a hawk on my wrist, and a madrigal at my lips, a prayer in the morning

THE SCORPION

given, and a kiss stolen at night, I want none of your dusty conclaves. I had as lief be a scholar.

SIR JAMES. If the world were like thee, Christendom would perish in a year and a day. Thy good knights comrades would row the Turkish galleys, and a few prize fools—such as thou—make sport for their Emirs or guard their women.

JOCELYN. And a good thing. I am weary of crusading. The sacred Sepulchre is empty—praise God, Who performed a miracle to make it so!—and we must perforce come and fill thousands more with good Christian flesh and blood, that was alive and jolly. Let us be off, though! The Preceptor sheds dullness as the sun sheds light, alike on the evil and on the good. One, two, three—I'll race you all to Sidi Khaled.

[They go off R. toward their horses, JOCELYN singing as he goes.]

What is the worth
Of a hound or a hawk?
A monkey for mirth!
A parrot for talk!
Rosamond's skin
Is whiter than milk,
Seductive as sin
And softer than silk.
Would I were back
From crusade for an hour,
My limbs lying slack
In Rosamond's Bower!

[From the palms C. comes forward LAYLAH, veiled, with a pitcher. She attaches it to the cord of the lever and

THE EQUINOX

dips it into the well. She looks about her, and seeing no one, raises her veil.

LAYLAH. From the heart of the sand
The water wells up
Purer than the rain.
So in my heart
Love springs
Chaster than the grace of heaven itself.
Earth purifies
More subtly than the sea.
Only through matter
Can spirit understand itself,
Justify itself, become itself.
This mystery I heard
From the holy man of Bassu.
His beard was whiter than snow
Because it had once been blacker than burnt wood.

So will I cherish my love,
The love which I owe,
Which I give, to my husband
The noblest of the Emirs;
For I and my love and my service
And my duty
All are his.
I have no duty to God
But to obey my husband.
So my heart is freer
That all other hearts,

THE SCORPION

As the dweller among the palms
Is freer than the wanderer in the desert.
The wanderer must find the palms;
The dweller is at ease.

My heart is a young gazelle
Leaping with love toward my husband.
He is black-bearded and bold and magnificent.
Even on the morn of the wedding he rode forth
Against the infidel.
He is so strong and brave:
God must look favourably upon him,
Bidding him return a conqueror
To the flower of his garden
That awaits his hand to pluck.

[During the last part of the song SIR RINALDO DE LA CHAPELLE, preceptor of the Knights Templars, has entered L. quietly, dismounted, tethered his palfrey to palm, and approached LAYLAH. As she pulls the pitcher from the water he claps his hands over her eyes. She shudders with fear, but gives no sound.]

SIR RINALDO. You are a brave maiden.

LAYLAH. You are—an infidel. I had not my dagger, or your shriek—not mine—would have summoned my kin.

RINALDO. I have a score good knights within sound of my horn. And your kin are but the dotards and women and little children. Your fighting men are away.

LAYLAH. Ay, slaying your good knights.

THE EQUINOX

RINALDO. It may be so. But you are my hostage.

[He releases her. She faces him.]

LAYLAH. A worthless pledge.

RINALDO. These silks and pearls! I could draw your veil through a link in my chain mail.

LAYLAH. I am the bride of the Emir.

RINALDO. A fair bride. I guessed you his daughter.

LAYLAH. My feet have not entered his house.

RINALDO. Your feet are fair. . . . Can you tell fortunes?

LAYLAH. On the forehead of every man his destiny is written.

RINALDO. Read mine.

LAYLAH. Let me go to my house.

RINALDO. Then I will read yours. You are to be captive to a strange knight.

LAYLAH. Not to you, Sir Knight!

RINALDO. The rest is dark.

LAYLAH. You dare not touch me.

RINALDO. Sit there! [*He seats her on the wall of the well.*] Do you guess what I have been thinking as I rode through the sun to these palms?

LAYLAH. Some new plot to carry fire and sword through our quiet villages.

RINALDO. No. I was wondering why men should not live at peace. I was wondering what was the quarrel that has beggared Europe and made Asia a shambles these nigh five score years.

LAYLAH. I cannot tell you.

RINALDO. This is all I know, that in the time of Pope Urban the Second, some pilgrims to Jerusalem began to

THE SCORPION

grumble. And a madman screamed so loud on their behalf that all Europe was infected. All pilgrims grumble. All mankind grumbles. Can chivalry do nothing better than redress grievances? Progress and learning are dead in this eternal redressing. Or if we must redress grievances, let us redress the great grievance, man misunderstanding man!

LAYLAH. Let me go to my house. [*She tries to slip away.*]

RINALDO. Sit there! [*He puts her back very accurately.*] We worship one God, as you do. That is the essence of agreement. We have one prophet, as you have; there's little odds in a name. Let our fools go worship at the tomb of our prophets, as your fools go worship at the tomb of yours; and let us break the heads only of those who break the peace.

LAYLAH. Let me go to my house. You are breaking the peace now, and I will break your head.

[*She has unloosened a stone from the Well and strikes him. His cheek bleeds.*]

RINALDO. [*unmoved.*] Sit there! . . . So this is my reading of the future. I who met you in hate shall leave you in love . . . and there an end of the Crusades!

LAYLAH. Love! [*bitterly sarcastic.*]

RINALDO. Love! [*enthusiastic.*]

LAYLAH. I had rather a scorpion stung me.

RINALDO. My crest is a scorpion. [*He points to the golden bejewelled crest upon his light helmet.*] I am thirsty. Give me water.

LAYLAH. I would give water to a thirsty dog. [*She pours water into his hands.*]

THE EQUINOX

RINALDO. For water I will give you fire. Twelve hundred years ago came peace on earth and goodwill toward men through a virgin sacrifice. . . . History repeats itself.

LAYLAH. I am on the edge of the well; but I shall not fall in. You are a renegade, I see; and, I think, a monster. You are mad with pride and conceit of your own wisdom. So I know you for a fool.

RINALDO. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

LAYLAH. Prate on! Even the dust mocks at you.

RINALDO. There are snakes in the dust.

LAYLAH. What do you mean?

RINALDO. I saw it in your eyes three minutes since. I did not need to turn my head to know that on the horizon gallop your husband and his band.

LAYLAH. You are clever.

RINALDO. And you were forced despite yourself to drop a hint that might warn me to rejoin my knights.

LAYLAH. No!

RINALDO. Yes. By that I knew that you loved me.

LAYLAH. And by this (*she strikes him*) know that I hate you.

RINALDO. You are too young. I have seen lions.

LAYLAH. You are a savage.

RINALDO. Nature is savage. Passion is savage. The God alike of Jews and Moslems delights in death. Or why are men and beasts slain in His honour? Brutal force is at the heart of things. Man is dragged crying from his mother's womb in dire agony; man fights his surroundings—the nearer they are the more bitterly must he fight them

THE SCORPION

—and at last he is hurled fighting into the hungry mouth of death.

LAYLAH. The cloud grows.

RINALDO. Indeed you love me, if you bid me waste no time.

LAYLAH. Oh no! . . .

I must respect you. You treat me as if I were a pebble in the sand. Nothing moves you.

RINALDO. Love moves me.

LAYLAH. We are opposites in all.

RINALDO. So Nature hath ordained. Man hates his neighbour: but when he finds his opposite, he loves it. All joy is the warfare of enemies, from the clash of lance and sabre, when Saracen meets Christian on the plain to—this, when Christian rushes Saracen in his arms and—

[He clasps her.

LAYLAH. Oh! *[The pitcher is overturned and the water flows out.*

RINALDO. I love you.

LAYLAH. I am a speck of dust in the simoom.

RINALDO. Let it whirl! There is no more Christian and Saracen, but man and woman—as it was in the beginning and for ever shall be.

He has borne her in his arms to the tall grasses. She struggles uselessly. They are now invisible.

LAYLAH. Help me, O God of Battles!

RINALDO. God is love.

[Music. From the well issues a nymph dressed in silver and azure gauze, with jewels and roses in her hair. After her a cluster of children.]

THE EQUINOX

THE NYMPH [*sings.*]

In the well
Where I dwell,
It is cool, it is dusk;
But the truth
Of my youth
Is a palace of musk.
Truth comes bubbling to my brim;
Light and night are one to Him!

In the dark
You may mark
The slow ooze of my springs,
But you know
Not the glow
Where the soul of me sings.
Truth comes bubbling to my brim;
Life and death are one to Him!

There is cold
In the old
Grey gloom of my caves;
There is heat
In the beat
Of my passionate waves.
Truth come bubbling to my brim;
Love and hate are one to Him.

[*They dance and return to the well. R. and L. are now seen behind the grasses, she sobbing upon his shoulder.*]

THE SCORPION

RINALDO. The cloud blackens all the sky. Laylah!

[He takes the scorpion from his helmet.]

Keep this token of me.

LAYLAH. For a token of hate and of revenge!

RINALDO. As you will. But the Crusades are ended!

[He draws her to the well, and lays her down. With her arms on the low wall, and her face hidden, she sobs.]

RINALDO takes his palfrey, and, with one glance over his shoulder towards the enemy and another to LAYLAH, rides off, driving the spurs into his horse. LAYLAH remains sobbing. After a long interval she half-rises, and stretching her arms after him, calls brokenly:

LAYLAH. Come back! . . . Come back! . . .

[Sobs again take her more violently than ever. She struggles to her feet, holds out the scorpion crest and calls:]

Come back! . . . Come back!

[She collapses. Dead silence. After a little the distant galloping of horses is heard. It grows louder and louder. LAYLAH rises, mistress of herself, kisses the golden scorpion and hides it at her heart, and refills the pitcher.]

[Enter a band of Saracens, who dismount. Their leader, the EMIR SAID OMAR, rushes forward to the well.]

SAID OMAR. Victory! we have chased the infidels three days, and the vultures of the desert are gorged, and the jackals burst with fatness. My gazelle, didst thou languish for me? My rose, my tulip, my anemone, slim palm of the oasis, sweet water of the well! We shall feast to-night,

THE EQUINOX

little one, star of the night, beautiful young moon over the sand-dunes!

[*He clasps her in his arms.*

LAYLAH [*tonelessly*]. Victory! Ay, victory is sweet. We shall feast to-night.

[*She shudders.*

SAID OMAR [*seeing that all is not well*]. What is it? What is it?

LAYLAH. I have had evil dreams.

SAID OMAR [*to his men*]. On to the houses! We must feast; we must sleep.

[*He takes LAYLAH on his saddlebow.*]

You must sleep, whisper of the west wind!

LAYLAH. I shall have evil dreams.

SAID OMAR. No! you shall not sleep to-night, white fairy of Paradise, black-eyed gazelle of the wilderness!

LAYLAH. Be gentle with me . . . I ache . . . I have been stung by a scorpion.

SAID OMAR. There are no scorpions in the winter. Where is the wound?

[*LAYLAH puts her hand to her heart, and falls fainting limp across the saddlebow.*]

Call Ibrahim, the wise physician! On to the houses!

[*Exeunt. The voice of the nymph of the well, faintly from below.*

“ Truth comes bubbling to my brim:
Love and Hate are one to Him!”]

CURTAIN

PERSONS OF THE TRAGEDY

ACT II

LAYLAH, *wife of Sidi Omar*

SILMAN, *her son by Sir Rinaldo de la Chapelle*

OTHMAN,

AKBAR,

MOHAMMED,

} *her sons by Sidi Omar*

FATMA, *her aged Nubian nurse*

LEDMIYA, *a young handmaiden, musical. Other waiting-women. Pipe-slaves.*

ABDUL KHAN, *an eunuch. Other eunuchs*

ACHMET, *equerry to Sliman*

A FAIR-HAIRED CHRISTIAN MAIDEN, *daughter to Sir Rinaldo de la Chapelle*

MESSENGERS

THE POPULACE

ACT II

Twenty years later. An Oriental Palace in a city near Jerusalem; the Hall of Audience. In the throne is LAYLAH veiled. Around her are waiting-women and her old nurse FATMA. At the door an eunuch on guard with drawn scimitar.

LEDMIYA [*a young girl with a stringed instrument*].

As the flower waits for the rain,
As the lover waits for the moon,
We wait, we wait, an hungry pain,
For tidings from the battle plain—
If those we love are hurt or slain,
Or if the Lord hath smitten again
The legions of the Cross, and hewn
A path of blood where glory flares.
The sabre strikes, the trumpet blares,
The war horse neighs,—Oh let us see
The Crescent borne to victory!

LAYLAH. Is there no news?

FATMA. It is rumoured that the battle has begun.

LEDMIYA. Under the very walls of Jerusalem!

ABDUL KHAN. Within the southern gate.

FATMA. Many, many will fall. Alas, alas!

THE SCORPION

LAYLAH. Sliman is strong and brave — my splendid boy.

FATMA. Ay, there are hairs on his chin. But the strongest and the bravest fall first.

LAYLAH. Thou ominous owl! Be silent, or I will have thee whipped.

FATMA. Oh! Oh! indeed I only say what we all know. If he should die indeed, thou mayst have Sidi Omar left, thy dear lord. And Othman, and Akbar, and Mohammed!

LAYLAH. Sliman is my first-born.

FATMA. Ay, he is not like his brothers. He is square and solid-set. He is more like the cedar than the palm.

LAYLAH. Sidi Omar's mother was a princess from Lebanon.

FATMA. He is silent and stern.

LAYLAH. Sidi Omar's father was the holiest man of Syria. He lived alone forty years in the mountain.

FATMA. He is relentless in anger, and obeys not. One would say there was Christian blood in him.

LAYLAH. On the night of his begetting there was Christian blood on Sidi Omar's hands.

FATMA. He is as fair as a Christian.

LAYLAH. The men of Sidi Omar's tribe are white men, thou wizened old black witch.

FATMA. Ah! Sidi Omar! Sidi Omar! Sidi Omar! Happy the prince whose wife is as faithful as thou. Thou canst not open thy mouth without uttering his name.

LAYLAH. Do not take it in thine, mother of lies!

FATMA. My mouth has been shut these twenty years.

LAYLAH. What? Any time these twenty years thou hast

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deserved a beating, old scandal-monger! And often thou hast had it.

FATMA. It was not a beating that thou didst earn, princess. Many a time I have fetched water from the well by—

LAYLAH. Abdul Khan! take out this prating hag and beat her soundly. Fatma! this is the last time I leave thy lying tongue in that camel-lipped old face of an unbelieving Jinneeyah!

[The eunuch drags her out, screaming and scolding.]

What news! What news!

LEDMIYA *[at the window]*. A horseman gallops from Jerusalem.

LAYLAH. Oh, quick, quick, quick, his tidings! For pity's sake. Would it were the winged horse of brass! I am distracted. Mind me not! I can wait. A queen must be able to wait.

LEDMIYA. He is quite near now. And in the distance is a glint, and a faint shouting. I think the battle is coming here.

LAYLAH. Oh, we cannot have been beaten! Silman is so strong and brave.

FATMA *[re-entering]*. All is lost! All is lost! Let us all flee!

LAYLAH. Peace, parrot!

[Enter Messenger.]

MESSENGER. Pardon, princess!

LAYLAH. Thy news, or thy head shall pay it.

MESSENGER. Glorious news! Sidi Omar hath entered Jerusalem, and sacked the House of the Knights Templars, and the House of the Knights Hospitallers, and——

THE SCORPION

LEDMIYA. [*at window*]. Oh, I can see the spears shining through the dust of the horses!

MESSENGER. —but—

LAYLAH. Speak, if thou wouldst ever speak again!

MESSENGER. But the Knights of Malta appeared in great strength, riding from the valley on their noble chargers, armed at all points—

LAYLAH. Yes? Yes?

MESSENGER. So that we judged it best to fall back upon the reserves. The Maltese fell upon us—you may see them fighting now.

LAYLAH. What news of my brave Sliman?

FATMA. And Sidi Omar? And Othman? And Akbar? And Mohammed?

LAYLAH. Peace. What news?

MESSENGER. Sidi Omar is hurt.

LAYLAH. And Sliman?

MESSENGER. I do not know, princess.

LAYLAH. Get forth, back to the fight. Reward him, ye!

FATMA. Reward for such bad news! What is the world coming to? In my young days—

LAYLAH. Such withered weeds were burnt.

FATMA. Alas, Sidi Omar! The strong, the brave, the comely! He is dead, he is dead.

LAYLAH. Hurt, said the messenger.

LEDMIYA. Now comes another from the fight, riding hard. he bears a fair-haired child across the saddle. Oh, do look!

LAYLAH. Is there no messenger?

LEDMIYA. It is Achmet! It is good Achmet!

THE EQUINOX

LAYLAH. The equerry of Prince Silman! Out of the way, girl! [*She pushes LEDMIYA roughly from the window.*]

Booty! He must be well and victorious! Bring him in! Now we shall know—good tidings! good tidings!

[*She paces up and down impatiently. Enter ACHMET with a young girl.*]

ACHMET. The duty of my Lord! Good tidings from the battle. The spoils of my lord's spear! He prays you to keep her among the women until he return and place her in his harem.

LAYLAH. A man! He is a man! I have borne a man-child, a lion, a conqueror!

ACHMET. Indeed, he has slain twenty Christians with his own hand. And still he is in the front of the battle. He laughed: "To-day I am a man, I need thee no more; be my chamberlain and carry this toy to my mother." I think she is a princess.

THE CHILD. My father is the Grand Master of the Temple, and he is coming to cut all your heads off.

LAYLAH. Leave her with us! Ride back on a fresh horse, and bear aid to the prince. [*Exit ACHMET*]

LEDMIYA [*at window*]. There is a tumult in the courtyard, and a great wailing. [*Wailing without.*]

LAYLAH. The sun will be set in an hour. One hour more of favour and protection for my boy, oh God of Battles!

THE CHILD. Our God is love! He will protect me, I know.

LAYLAH. Imp! Be silent! How you startled me! And now I look at you—what is it? what is it? You frighten me. Take her away—there, with the pipe-slaves.

[*FATMA takes the child down stage to the pipe-slaves.*]

THE SCORPION

THE CHILD. You are ugly, you black creature!

LEDMIYA. Oh! Oh!

[*She runs to LAYLAH and hides in the folds of her dress.*

LAYLAH. What now?

LEDMIYA. They are bringing in a corpse.

LAYLAH. Oh my God—if Achmet lied!

[*The door opens. The corpse of SIDI OMAR is brought in by six eunuchs.*]

Ah! [*She goes down hall.*] Lay him there! [*She rends her veil.*] Sidi Omar, these twenty years have I been wedded to thee and thou hast not known my heart! Leave me, that I may bewail him as is fitting.

[*All depart but FATMA and LEDMIYA and the PIPE-SLAVES with their prisoner.*]

Fatma, do thou lament. I await tidings of the battle. Is there sign of a messenger?

[*FATMA goes to corpse and mutters over it.*

LEDMIYA [*at window*]. There are many that make hither. Some bear the dead away—two, three, five, eight, oh so many! Some ride weary or wounded . . .

LAYLAH. Some ride like messengers?

LEDMIYA. No. Yes, one. No, he has fallen from his horse, and lies still. [*Wailing without.*

LAYLAH. Go, bid those fools be quiet. Is there not enough woe in this house but that their shrieks should edge it?

[*LEDMIYA goes out. The wailing stops. Then suddenly it begins again more loudly than before.*

FATMA. More death! More misery!

[*LEDMIYA returns, and goes again to window.*

THE EQUINOX

LAYLAH. Silence, thou blotchy spider! Thou baboon of ugliness! Mother of curses!

[*Four eunuchs bring in the corpse of the boy* MOHAMMED.

Ah God! my youngest, my own delicate darling! Lay him by his sire! [*She goes down and bends over him.*] Was not this arm too tender to bear a sword? Why would he go to the battle? He was made for luting and the zephyr. His eyes were larger and lovelier than the gazelle's! His eyebrows were blacker than the kohl upon mine eyelids. Alas, my baby! My young one, my tender one! . . . Is there tidings, girl?

LEDMIYA. One rides fast. His horse stumbles at the gate. He leaps clear. The horse has fallen. He runs hither.

LAYLAH. News! News!

[LEDMIYA goes out. Enter a Messenger.

2ND MESSENGER. The duty of my lord to his mother! We keep the hounds at bay now. Prince Sliman is like the Angel of Death. No man can stand before him. The Christians tremble, and give back when he rides against them.

LAYLAH. A man! A man! He is not hurt?

2ND MESSENGER. Scratches. As if a lion were at play with kittens!

LAYLAH. I am glad he has scratches. Every one shall be sung by the poets as if it were the axe-blow of old Duke Walter.

[*Again the wailing surges in the courtyard.* LEDMIYA rushes in.

LEDMIYA. Alas, alas, my queen! I cannot say it! Do not ask me to say it! . . . They are bringing him in.

LAYLAH. Who? Devil-child! [*She strikes her. Four eunuchs bring in the corpse of* AKBAR.] Forgive me! I am not myself. I am not a woman. Lay him there, beside his

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father! [*She goes down to corpse.*] Akbar, my little one! Strong wast thou and greater than thy brothers. Thou hadst the hawk's eye, and the deer's foot; and thine hand on the bowstring was surer and stronger than thy father's! Three, of my five, my five that should guard me and cherish me! Three taken, and two left! Yet, while one is left . . .

LEDMIYA [*at window*]. The battle is fiercer every moment. Hundreds and hundreds must be killed. But the press is thinner. I can make out the banners. Oh! I can see Sliman's banner!

LAYLAH. Let me see! let me see! [*She rushes to window.*] Yes! it flows free in the good air! How fierce he fights. I cannot see him; but he must be there. Yes! it moves forward now; the Christians part before him like the air before an arrow. The dust swallows all up again.

[*Wailing rises without, louder and more insistent.*]

A curse upon these fools! But for them I could hear his battle-cry. . . . Has he ever cried, and I not heard him? Oh, why did the strange knight not bear me on his palfrey? I must be mad.

FATMA. You must be mad!

LAYLAH. Bewail the dead, thou bald vulture, shaggy toothless crone, dam of perdition! There floats the banner again, above them all. The Templar's banner dips; some one has cut through the staff. The Christians are in rout. . . .

[*Four eunuchs enter, bearing the corpse of OTHMAN.*]

FATMA. Othman is dead! Alas! Alas! Weep, mother, three brave boys beside their sire! All dead! dead!

LAYLAH [*not turning from window*]. Lay him beside his father and his two brothers! Brave banner! Brave

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banner! We go through the Christians as a wedge cleaves a plank, as a ship cleaves the sea, as a bird cleaves the air! Victory! Sliman! Sliman! Drive them, like cattle, to their walls again!

FATMA. She has always been mad! I wonder what really happened.

LAYLAH. The sun is setting in blood. There are storm-clouds lit like burning charcoal blown upon by the mightiest of the Djinn. I cannot see the banner. It grows dark. They must stop fighting soon. They will withdraw to their walls—nay, let them camp among the dead! Come back with tidings! Tell me, Sliman is safe. Ah! there sounds the horn of truce.

THE CHILD. My father is the Grand Master of the Temple, and he will come and cut all your heads off.

LAYLAH [*goes down to her*]. Thou preposterous little curd of sour milk! Thy father is dead! I saw the Banner of the Temple snap like a dry twig. My brave son Sliman cut it at a single blow. He will whip home the dogs, your friends, and you shall be his toy to play with and break and make sport of. He will twist your skinny arm—so!

[*She catches the child's wrist, twists it, and makes her scream.*]

Spindle-legged little spider! [*The child bites her wrist.*]

Venomous as a scorpion!

THE CHILD. My father's crest is a scorpion.

LAYLAH. No! No! it cannot be. I am mad. I hear a strange thing. Now I know what I saw in your face. Child! Child! I am sorry I hurt you. I want to be friends with you. I am all-powerful here. No harm shall come to you! His child! Come and kiss me! [*The child shrinks away.*]

THE SCORPION

No! I am sorry. I am your good friend. I will take you back to your father. He is not dead. I am sure he is not dead.

THE CHILD. I do not understand you.

LAYLAH. Oh, you shall understand. Your father will make you understand! [*changing again to roughness*]. What was your mother like? Had she your golden hair, and the complexion like a shaved sow? And the simper, and the grey eyes! I have grey eyes too; but mine are steel-grey, true as steel; and yours are chill and watery. But you have your father's temper, and his silence, and his will.

THE CHILD. What do you know of my father?

LAYLAH. Nothing. I only jested; I wanted to try you, to hear what you would say. Tell me about your mother.

THE CHILD. She was a fair and noble lady. She died when I was born.

LAYLAH. Thank God!

THE CHILD. I do not understand.

LAYLAH. Oh! will your father say, "I do not understand?" What am I? Yet I gave him my greatest gift—and I have yet a greater gift to give him—and I have a gift that he has always had and I have never lost.

THE CHILD. Are you an enchantress? You do not talk sense.

LAYLAH. You are the child of an enchanter.

THE CHILD. My father burns enchanters alive when he catches them.

LEDMIYA [*at window*]. There is a great concourse without. The men are returning. They ride slowly, as in peace.

THE EQUINOX

But one rides fast, for I can hear his hoofs ring the gallop above all the trampling.

LAYLAH. It is Sliman! His horse has silver shoes. Wait there, child! I have joy for you to come.

[A horse is heard galloping into the courtyard, and a battle-cry, La Allah illa Allah, rings out in a boy's clear voice, a voice weary yet supremely happy.]

[Almost beside herself] Sliman! to me! to your mother!

[Sliman enters, in his right hand his sword still dripping blood.]

SLIMAN. Splendid fun, mother! We should have had the whole city, but those cursed Knights of Malta threatened our flank. And father told me I was a better leader for withdrawing than if I had gone on and taken the city. There! Aha! little one! you are caged safely, canary. Thanks, mother! Don't kiss me. I'm all blood.

[She smothers him with kisses.]

LAYLAH. Oh, you're wounded. Ledmiya, the kerchief, quick. And the Arabian oil, and the balsam.

SLIMAN. Nonsense, mother, it's nothing. But think! I slew twenty knights—they haven't the strength of babies. It was like cracking eggshells. All except one. He was as strong as I, but not so quick. So I cut him down, and took his crest for a brooch for you, mother dear.

[He holds out a golden crest.]

LAYLAH. The scorpion!

THE CHILD. The scorpion! *[She retires and watches.]*

LAYLAH. Boy, you have killed your father.

[She stands thunderstuck.]

SLIMAN. Oh, no, mother! Father and the boys all died in

THE SCORPION

the melee when we were thrown back on the reserve. The Knights of St John charged in line. It was rough-and-tumble for a few minutes, indeed it was. When I got out, their banners were swept far down the fighting line. There was a mess of varlets between us; before I could sweep them away the Knights had rolled over Sidi Omar and my brothers—the whole wing was destroyed. I rallied the right on the centre, and—why, mother, you are not listening!

LAYLAH [*taking his sword*]. This sword killed your father. Listen! Sidi Omar was not your father. Your father ravished me, a virgin and a princess, and left me only this for token. [*She takes the jewelled scorpion from her breast.*] I took it for hate and revenge; wherein I lied, for I loved him, and I love him. God has punished my lie, making you—the token of love—the minister of revenge. So then—be he avenged!

[*She strikes the neck of SLIMAN and he falls dead. She stands stupefied.*]

THE CHILD [*coming forward and picking up the scorpion that SLIMAN had in his hand*]. I thank thee, lady. My brother is avenged.

[*She dips the scorpion in his blood and fastens it in her dress.*]

LAYLAH [*shortly*]. Your brother lies there dead.

THE CHILD. I am sorry, if he was my brother. He was a brave boy. He picked me up and threw me to a servant just as if I had been an old tabard.

LAYLAH. Your father's trick!

THE CHILD. I do not understand.

LAYLAH. Understand this. I have slain my son because he

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slew his father; and all I look for is for some one to slay me also!

THE CHILD. But you say his father is my father.

LAYLAH. Was! was!

THE CHILD. But is is my brother who was slain by Sliman. My father is in Rome; he is coming hither with the next fair wind.

LAYLAH. Fair wind! God! It is I than who have slain our son. The scorpion! My sole token.

[She falls on SLIMAN'S corpse.]

My son! only son of my love! one sole jewel of the world wert thou. And the accursed scorpion has betrayed me. Oh, let me from this hour throw off all womanhood, all kindness, all compassion—all but my love that has made my heart a hell. From this hell spring forth fiery scorpions—Eunuchs! Girls! let us be men! Take swords! take spears! Truce or no truce, night or no night, out to the field. Let us slay the dogs as they lie. God, hear me! Make me mightier than Semiramis! Hate and revenge! Battle and death! To arms! To arms! Out into the night!

[During this speech the eunuchs, girls, and slaves, catching her madness, have all armed themselves from the trophies on the wall. They troop out, running and jostling. LAYLAH turns to the Name of God above the throne, and waving her sabre, cries:]

Hear me, hear me, thou God of Battles! *[Exit.]*

THE CHILD. God is love. And he has protected me. *[Alone among the corpses.]*

CURTAIN.

PERSONS OF THE TRAGEDY

ACT III

SIR RINALDO DE LA CHAPELLE, *Grand Master of the Temple*

A BISHOP

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KING OF JERUSALEM

THE GRAND MASTER OF THE KNIGHTS OF ST JOHN

THE GRAND MASTER OF THE KNIGHTS OF MALTA

CLERKS, USHERS, ADVOCATES, etc.

TORTURERS

A PHYSICIAN

THE KING OF JERUSALEM

MANY DIGNITARIES AND THEIR LADIES

THE CROWD

ISAAC, *a Jew*

AN URCHIN

LAYLAH, *now known as Princess Koureddin*

ACT III

SCENE I: *Twenty years later. Jerusalem. The Council Chamber of the Grand Tribunal. A Bishop, as Grand Inquisitor. On his right, RINALDO; now become Grand Master of the Temple; on his left the Grand Master of the Knights of Malta. Beyond these, the Grand Master of the Knights of St John and the representative of the King of Jerusalem. Clerks, Ushers, etc. A military guard. Clerical functionaries of all sorts. Under guard LAYLAH, unveiled, scarred with sword-cuts, a stern savage virago.*

BISHOP. Let the indictment be read.

THE CLERK OF THE COURT. Princess Kahar-ud-din or Koureddin, you are arraigned of witchcraft. Firstly that on the night of the victory to the Crusaders' arms, by God's grace, during a period of truce, you did sally forth with a horde of slaves and women, by many accounted devils, and did attack and destroy the armies of the Crusaders.

PROSECUTOR. We say this was by witchcraft. How else could a rabble of slaves and women defeat the heroes who, though barely two thousand strong, had that day destroyed four hundred thousand and above of your best warriors?

LAYLAH. On our side was the God of Battles.

BISHOP. My daughter, God is love.

THE SCORPION

LAYLAH. Lord Bishop, I have heard that phrase thrice in three score years. The first time a man used it to destroy a child: the second time a child used it to murder her brother; this time you use it to torture and burn an honourable adversary.

BISHOP. Child of the devil, you blaspheme. Be silent! On the first count, guilty.

[Several JUDGES, but not RINALDO, echo "Guilty." Throughout this scene RINALDO sits absolutely silent and motionless, except that now and then he makes a gesture of weariness and impatience.

THE CLERK. Secondly, that you have in these twenty years past gathered a band of lawless ruffians, and constantly assailed the defenders of the sepulchre, with malice and deadly hatred.

PROSECUTOR. We say that no woman could do thus, unless aided by Satan.

LAYLAH. Dido, Queen of Carthage, was renowned as a warrior, and Semiramis, Queen of Nineveh.

BISHOP. Both pagans. On the second count, guilty.

[JUDGES echo "Guilty."

CLERK. Thirdly, that you did discard the modesty of womanhood and put on armour enchanted.

PROSECUTOR. We say that, forasmuch as many good knights have ridden against it with sword and lance and not availed to pierce it, this was by magic and forbidden art.

LAYLAH [*contemptuously*]. It was good armour.

BISHOP. The prisoner mocks us. On the third count, guilty.

[JUDGES echo "Guilty."

CLERK. Fourthly, that you did at midnight upon Martinmas,

THE EQUINOX

eighteen years ago, in the valley of Hinnom, on the stone called Succoth, bind yourself in a diabolical pact with Satan, whereby he granted the power to change your sex at will, since which time you have become the father of an innumerable brood of devils, and in particular have travelled by night in the form of an owl to assault the virtue of many holy servants of the True Faith, notably at the Convent of St Anne in this city, whereby the bodies and souls of the nuns were possessed and destroyed.

PROSECUTOR. We say this is plain witchcraft.

[LAYLAH *takes no notice.*

BISHOP. Silence under such a charge is contumacious, and equivalent to confession. On the fourth count, guilty.

[JUDGES *echo "Guilty."*

CLERK. Fifthly, that you do take the form of a bat, and suck the blood of sleeping children, and moreover have bewitched divers cows to the prejudice of the Holy Orders of Knights Hospitaller and others, lawful owners of the aforesaid cows.

PROSECUTOR. All clear marks of a witch!

LAYLAH. Your Saviour sent devils into swine.

BISHOP. Blasphemy on blasphemy! [*crosses himself*]. Sure only the devil could speak thus. On the fifth count, guilty.

[JUDGES *echo "Guilty."*

CLERK. Sixthly—

BISHOP. Stay, gentle sir. Have we not heard enough? Must the ears of the Court be further polluted with a recital of these abominations?

G. M. OF ST J. We have heard enough.

G. M. OF ST MALTA. Enough, my lord Bishop.

THE SCORPION

REP. OF K. OF JERUSALEM. Enough.

BISHOP [*to* RINALDO]. And you, Grand Master?

RINALDO. More than enough.

BISHOP. My beloved daughter! God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should repent and be saved. It is therefore the most merciful provision of our just and merciful law that none be condemned without confession. Let me urge you to make peace with God and man.

LAYLAH. Peace, peace! when there is no peace.

BISHOP. There spoke a lost soul. Confess, my dear daughter. Break the bonds of Satan at the last.

LAYLAH [*straining at her handcuffs*]. They hold fast.

BISHOP. We are not moved by insult from our most merciful purpose. Summon the executioners.

[*A CLERK goes with the order. Enter torturers with their implements. Also a Physician.*]

LAYLAH. Your steel against my will. It is a fair bout.

BISHOP. Apply the thumbscrews.

[*The torturers bind LAYLAH and apply the torture.*]

[*To G. M. of St John*] My cook is a great knave, you must know. I bade him prepare me a pasty of quails toward to-night, and the varlet swears there are no quails on the market. Now this morning riding I saw quails with these eyes. The air was as thick with them as when the Children of Israel were miraculously fed.

G. M. OF ST J. A new miracle if the knave escape. But will not your lordship sup with me to-night?

BISHOP. Thanks, good Grand Master.

FIRST TORTURER. My lord, I think I heard a sigh.

PHYSICIAN. Only a natural motion of the body, by your

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leave, my lord, I venture to opine. Her lip is bitten through.

BISHOP. What wickedness! Truly, my lords, Satan hath great power in these latter days, spoken of by St Paul in his Epistle to the Romans. Force the mouth open.

[*A torturer obeys.*

PHYSICIAN. Pardon, my lord, if she utters no sound. She hath swallowed her tongue, a notorious devilry of Arabian enchanters. By your leave, my lord, the tongue should be pulled forward. Her soul would be lost (begging your Lordship's pardon) should she choke now.

BISHOP. Rightly said. And on your head be it! Redouble the thumbscrews.

[*A torturer pulls her tongue forward with pincers.*

LAYLAH *groans.*

TORTURER. I certainly heard somewhat.

BISHOP. Articulate?

TORTURER. I dare hardly say, my lord.

BISHOP. The needles.

TORTURER. They are white-hot. How many, my lord?

BISHOP. Three behind each eyeball should suffice.

TORTURER. It is done. There is a sound like "wa."

PHYSICIAN [*in triumph*]. "Aiwa," my lord Bishop, "aiwa" without a doubt. It is "yes" in their heathen tongue.

BISHOP. I heard it. We all heard it. Glory to God! Release the prisoner.

[*LAYLAH is released. She is unconscious and falls limp.*]

Sir Clerk, write down that the prisoner made full confession and repented of her crimes, desiring to be reconciled

THE SCORPION

with God and His holy church. My own chaplain shall baptize her and administer the sacrament. Glory to God in the Highest for one more soul torn from the grasp of Satan.

My beloved daughter, behold you now at peace with God and with His holy church. Your sins are forgiven you. But the secular arm is not yet satisfied; your crimes, the crimes to which you have confessed, must be expiated according to law. The sentence of the Court is that you be handed over to the secular arm; and I beg of you [*turning to the Representative of the King of Jerusalem*], the Court begs of you, that you will deal mercifully with the Prisoner, without shedding of blood.

REP. OF K. OF J. A stake shall be prepared. [*To the soldiers*] Remove the prisoner to the strongest dungeon, and let the guard be trebled. Witchcraft has many tricks.

BISHOP. The Court is dissolved. My lords, will you please breakfast with me? [JUDGES *murmur assent.*

RINALDO. Thank you, my lord, but I have my bellyful.

[*The others exchange glances and go out. RINALDO is left alone. He goes to the place of torture.*]

There is blood on the floor. It fell from her lip that she bit through. . . . Pilate washed his hands in water. Had I power I would wash mine in blood, in the blood of these monsters of cruelty—no, of stupidity. But I am too old. I gave all for power, and I used all my power to reconcile, to heal, to amend the matter. So at the end I find myself a toothless dog. Bigotry I could have beaten: it is this mountain of stupidity that crushes me. Shall I summon my

THE EQUINOX

knights and join the Saracen army? That were only to change the balance, to change the cross, soaked in the blood of humanity, for the crescent, pale flame of madness. Oh could I destroy both! . . . Forty years ago I strove to reconcile them by love, by sympathy. What came of it? A frolic crime, sterile as all my thoughts are. Nothing, nothing has ever come of anything that I have ever done. Yet that came nearest to success; for it was my one touch of love. I have never loved since, as most surely I had never loved before. She is dead long ago. . . . Oh, these years of carnage! The Holy Sepulchre that hid the body of Him whose innocent blood was shed is not worth one drop of innocent blood—like this. [*He bows, takes the blood on his finger and crosses his forehead with it.*] The brand of Cain! Would it have saved her if I had thrust my poniard into that hypocrite's throat? I can do nothing but wait, binding chosen knights with an oath—the oath of the Knights of the Royal Mystery . . . that God is one; that to love God and man is enough. . . . Peace, Tolerance, Truth. Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but God giveth the increase. If I cry out “Down with tyranny! Down with superstition and imposture!” the first knight thinks me mad; the second that I have some politic baseness toward; the third that I mean Saracens; the fourth suspects the truth, and destroys me. Anon . . . Anon . . .

[He goes sorrowfully out.]

CURTAIN.

THE SCORPION

SCENE II. *A few days later. A public place in Jerusalem. In the midst a stake with faggots. Seats for the dignitaries, some thirty or forty of whom are present, most with their ladies. There is present moreover a motley crowd of all classes of society, Christian and Saracen. Note especially ISAAC, a fat good-tempered Jew, and an URCHIN of some twelve years old. In front are jugglers, tumblers, singers and dancers, hucksters, etc., all of whom ply their trade merrily. The Official Procession now enters, the guard clearing away these folk. All take their seats, chatting. The Bishop is enthroned, in full canonicals. He is supported by three acolytes, bearing bell, book and candle. LAYLAH brought in and bound to stake. The Bishop rises at a signal from the King, and begins a long declamation in Latin. The general confusion gradually subsides.*

URCHIN. Uncle Isaac, take me on thy stout shoulder. I want to see the witch burnt.

ISAAC. All in good time. The holy Bishop is still cursing, I think.

BISHOP [*concluding, raises his voice to drown the general conversation*]. In Sæcula Sæculorum. Amen!

ALL. Amen!

K. OF J. [*enthroned near the Bishop*]. Let the sentence be executed.

[*The Executioner brings forward his torch, which he lights at the BISHOP'S candle.*

BISHOP [*blessing*]. Absolvo te.

[*The Executioner thrusts his torch into the pyre. The flames*

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spring up. At this moment the wind suddenly rises in a fury, and the sky darkens. There is no light but the flicker of the straw.]

[All present are alarmed; many cry out.

BISHOP. Witchcraft! *[He cowers on his throne.]*

[The people move confusedly about, some trying to escape, others to get better places.

K. OF J. Keep order, guards!

[The guards restore order after a struggle.

URCHIN. O do lift me up, Uncle Isaac!

ISAAC. What do you want to see a witch burnt for, boy?

[He takes the boy on his shoulder.

URCHIN. O, it's jolly!

ISAAC. Well then, you're a fool for your pains. This woman isn't a witch at all. But she was a better and braver soldier than any of their knights, so when they caught her at last—there you are!

URCHIN. She's a Saracen, isn't she?

ISAAC. Yes. If we only had a Jewess now-a-days like her! There was Deborah once, and Jael, and Judith. But the glory is departed, boy, the glory is departed.

URCHIN. I'm a Saracen, you know.

ISAAC. You're a heavy little old Man of the Sea!

URCHIN. The flames are creeping up her body now. Oh! I'm so angry; I'm so angry.

ISAAC. You mustn't be angry, or you'll never be fat.

URCHIN. I don't wan't to be fat. I wan't to kill all the people.

ISAAC. Well, well, you shall one day, if you're good.

URCHIN. Yes, I will.

THE SCORPION

ISAAC. There, the wind has blown her robe open. What's that? Diamonds, by Abraham! What waste! What terrible waste!

RINALDO [*leaping from his seat*]. The scorpion!

[*He rushes to the pure and clasps LAYLAH in his arms.*]

Laylah! my one love!

LAYLAH. Rinaldo!

RINALDO. We might not live together. God is love; He lets us die together.

LAYLAH. Together at last!

RINALDO. You and I, love, you and I.

LAYLAH. You and I.

[*The flames blaze to heaven with a roar.* RINALDO and

LAYLAH *are blotted out.*

URCHIN. What has he done?

ISAAC. He was trying to save his diamonds. That was the Grand Master of the Temple. It was his crest; she must have stolen it. A diamond scorpion! Oh dear! Oh dear!

URCHIN. I'll be a dragon, with wings. They shan't burn me; I'll burn them.

ISAAC. Of course, you will, you little fire-eater. What's your great name?

URCHIN. Saladin.

CURTAIN.

THE EARTH

THE child of miracle to the world, greeting.

I reach my hands to the leaves and dabble in the dew: I sprinkle dew on you for kisses. I kneel down and hold the grass of the black earth to my bosom; I crush the earth to my lips as if it were a grape. And the wine of Demeter flushes my cheeks; they burn with joy of youth.

Why should I greet the world? Because my heart is bursting with love for the world. Love, say I? Why not lust? Is not lust strength, and merriment, and the famine that only the infinite can stay?

And why do I call myself the child of miracle? Because I have entered a second time into my mother's womb and am born. Because to the knowledge of manhood has come the passion, even the folly, of adolescence; with all its pride and purity.

It is for this that you see me lying upon the thick wet grass, unquenchable; or rejoicing in the fat black loam.

Now the manner of the miracle was this. In the beginning is given to a youth the vision of his mate. This one must he henceforth seek blindly; and many are the enchantments and disenchantments. Through this his vision fades; even his hunger dies away unless he be indeed Elect. But in the end it may be that God shall send him the other half of that Token

THE EARTH

of Paradise. Then, if he have kept the holy fire alight, perhaps with much false fuel, that fire shall instant blaze and fill the temple of his soul. By its insistent energy it shall destroy even the memory of all those marsh-lights that came to greet it; and the priest shall bow down in the glory, and grasp the altar with his hands, and strike it with his forehead seven times. Now this altar is the earthen altar of Demeter.

Then understanding all things by the light of that love, he shall know that this is love, that this is the soul of the earth, that this is fertility and understanding, the secret of Demeter. Nay, (even!) the Oracle may speak in his heart and foretell or foreshadow the greater mysteries of Persephone, of Death the daughter of Love.

Those, too, who are thus reborn will understand that I who write these words am stretched on the wet earth on the day of Spring. It is night, but only the sea whispers of Persephone, as the stars intimate Urania whose mystery is the third, and beyond. My body is absorbed in scent and touch; for the consuming fire of my sight has burnt itself out to blindness, and in my mouth is only the savour of an infinite kiss. The moist earth burns my lips; my fingers search down about the roots of the grass. The life of earth itself is my life: I shall be glad to be buried in the earth. Let my body dissolve into hers, putrefy in her reviving limbeck. He never loved who let them case him in a coffin from the supreme embrace.

It is from the earth, bride of the sun, that all bodily strength derives. It is no figure that Antaeus regained all his force when he touched earth. It is no pedantry and folly of the Hindus, who (fearing bodily lust) isolate their acolytes from earth, no futility their doctrine of Prana and the Tamo-

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Guna. It is not mere faith healing, this hygiene of Father Kneipp, and his failures are those who retain decorum and melancholy, who follow the letter and not the spirit, cold-blooded treaders upon earth instead of passionate lovers of its strength.

It is no accident of mythology that the Titans made war upon the Gods, and in Prometheus overthrew them. It was when Canute failed to drive back the sea that his dynasty was lost to that Norman William who caught hold of Mother Earth with both hands.

When I was a child I fell; and the scars of the earth are on my forehead at this hour.

When I was a boy I was hurt by the explosion of a buried jar of gunpowder; and the scars of the earth are on my face at this hour.

Since then I have been the lover of the earth, that wooed me thus roughly. Many a night have I slept upon her naked breast, in forest and on glacier, upon great plains and upon lonely crags, in heat and cold, fair weather and foul; and my blood is the blood of the earth. My life is hers, and as she is a spark thrown off from the whirling brilliance of the sun, so do I know myself to be a spark of infinite God.

Seek earth, and heaven shall be added unto you! Back to our mother, drive the shining spade into her womb! Wrinkle her with your furrows, she will only smile more kindly!

Let your sweat, the sweat of your toil, which is your passion, drip like benediction from on High upon her; she will render corn and wine. Also your wife shall be desirable in your eyes all the days of your life, and your children shall

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be strong and comely, and the blessing of the Most High shall be upon you.

Then let your grasp relax in the satiety of death, and your weight shall cumber the earth, and the little children of the earth shall make merry with you until the rose strike its root into your breast. Then shall your body be one again with the mother, and your soul one with the Father, as it is written in the Book of the Law.

All this have I been taught by her whose purity and strength are even as Earth's, chosen before the foundation of Time. Lioness with lion, may we walk by night among the ruins of great cities, when, weary with happiness too great even for our immortality, we turn from the fragrance and fertility of Earth. And at the sunrise return where the peopled valleys call us; where, bronzed and buoyant, our children sing aloud as they drive home the spade.

Glory be to the Earth and to the Sun and to the holy body and soul of Man; and glory be to Love and to the Father of Love, the secret Unity of things!

Glory be to the Shrine within the Temple, and to the God within the Shrine, to the Word and to the Silence that bore it unto Him that is beyond the Silence and the Speech!

Also thanksgiving in the Highest for the Gift of all these things, and for the maiden in whom all these things are found, for the holy body and soul of man, and for the sun, and for the earth. AMEN.

FRANCIS BENDICK.

SLEEP

Along the silver pathways of the moon,
(With lilies strewn to mark her passing hours)
A mighty goddess strays.
Her rapt eyes gaze in calm undying swoon,
Like stars in June that guard earth's sleeping flowers,
The guests of summer days.
Moving she plays some sweetly slumbrous tune,
As mothers croon; through faint Æolian showers,
Her mist-hung garment sways.

And in her shadow chaste as starlit snows,
A vestal goes, scattering sweet roses:
Roses deep-thorned and red—
Whose leaves are shed in perfumed dreams, where glows
A world that blows and fairy-like discloses
The fields that Flora fled.
And some are sped where dream brings that repose
The thorn bestows—(where naught that is, reposes)—
Goring the sleeper's head

ETHEL ARCHER.

THE ORDEAL OF IDA PENDRAGON

THE ORDEAL OF IDA PENDRAGON

TO I, J, AND K

I

THE RED HOUR

THERE was myrrh in the honey of the smile with which Edgar Rolles turned from the façade of the Pantheon. “Aux grandes hommes la patrie reconnaissante”—he reflected that the grateful fatherland never gives her great men anything but a tomb.

Then the full blast of it struck him. The Gargantuan jest! The solemn ass that had devised the motto; the laborious ass that had put it up there; the admiring asses that had warmed their skinny souls at the false fire of its pompous sentimentality.

Perhaps he was the first to see the joke! He rocked and reeled with laughter—to find himself caught, as he stumbled against a table, in the sturdy arms of a solidly built young woman, who—he had in her a glance—joined in Celtic harmony the robust brutality of the peasant to the decadent refinement of the latter Greek. The face of a Bacchanal, even of a satyr, perhaps; but a satyr of Raphael; the face of a madonna, perhaps; but a madonna of Rodin. Besides this, she

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was seductive, alluring, a Messalina rather than an Aspasia. Chienne de race! She was young, and her lips rather sneered than smiled, rather gloated than sneered. One instinctively muttered the word *cannibal*. She had a perfect and perverse enjoyment of life, a perfect and perverse contempt of life; the contempt of the philosopher, the enjoyment of the wallowing pig. Porcus e grege Epicuri.

This much Edgar Rolles smelt rather than saw; for as he turned to her, he caught her eyes. They were the eyes of an enthusiast, of a saint, of an ascetic—but of a saint who, strong in his agony through faith and hope and love, still endures the Dark Night of the Soul.

“You shall lunch with me, nice boy” (she said), “and beg my pardon for your stumble, and pay for your lunch by telling me what drives you mad with laughter at the sight of the Pantheon. Is it ‘L’homme aux trois sous’?” For so the irreverent Frenchman, mindful of his daily need, calls Rodin’s ‘Le Penseur.’ ”

“Mademoiselle,” said Rolles, “I accept your kind invitation; I abandon the Church for the Tavern.” They turned into the Taverne du Pantheon, threading their way through the professors and their mistresses, a clever, incurious, domestic, fascinating crowd.

“I kiss your hands and your feet, and I will tell you the joke before lunch; so that you may repent in time if it is not amusing. In your ear, enchantress! The truth is—I am a great man.”

She saw it in a flash. “Then, my friend, I must bury you!”

“In your hair!” he cried. She had huge rolling masses of

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brown-bronze hair, as if a great sculptor had wished to immortalise the sea in storm.

“Anoint me first,” he added, with a low sob, suddenly clairvoyant of some vision of Christ and Magdalene.

“Need you die?” They were seated, and her hand fell on his lap. “Great men die never.”

“Nor kind words,” he retorted. “You have flattered me; tu veux me perdre.” His English had no equivalent. She gave a little shiver.

“What do you want?” he said, with the man’s alarm when he at last meets the woman he may be able to love.

“Your body and soul,” she answered solemnly; her eyes sank into his, like a dagger into the belly of a faithless Kabyle woman. “But beyond that, your secret! You know life, yet you can laugh from a mad heart!”

“It is easily said. I am going to London to-morrow. There they will make me bankrupt, because I love my neighbour better than myself, and prosecute me for blasphemy and indecency, because I uttered a few simple truths that everybody knows.”

“Why, my friend, you will be famous!” she cried. “Aux grands hommes la patrie reconnaissante!”

“Probably,” said he. “Already I run to a full page in the American papers, my name intimately coupled with that of a duke’s daughter whom I have never seen.”

“Good, good!” she agreed—“so much for fame. But are you really great? Your laughter was better than Zarathoustra! What is your real secret? Why did you love your neighbour? Why did you speak the truth? How did you come to know anything at all well enough to be able to laugh as

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you laughed! Such abandonment to mirth implies a standard of seriousness unshakable.”

“You are a witch,” said he. “It is sorcery to know that I have a secret. But to discover it you must be an adept.”

“I know this,” she answered, making a secret sign.

“This,” he retorted, with the *mano in fica*.

“If you can laugh at me,” she said, “you must indeed be a great man!”

“Know,” said he pompously, “that you speak to an Absolute Grand Patriarch of the Rite of Mizraim.

“A button!” she laughed back. “I was born to undo them. So I always wear laced boots.”

“True enough,” said Edgar Rolles. “I will take you seriously then. If you really understand the sign you gave me, you know that the *mano in fica* is but a caricature of the answer to it. Why are you painted and perfumed?”

“Because I am ambitious, may I not be vicious?” she rimed. “If I see anyone that seems likely to amuse me, I try and amuse him—or her,” she laughed. “Is not that the Golden Rule?”

“Well,” said Edgar hesitatingly, “well . . .”

“I am so abstemious, so self-restrained, that I fear the reproach of the ascetic. Love is my balancing-pole.” She threw her arm round his neck, and her mouth shuddered on his in a long, deliberate, skilful kiss.

“Art?” sighed he, fallen back half fainting in his seat.

“Art concealed;” she glowed, radiant, intoxicated with her own enthusiasm.

“Yes,” he agreed, “consummate art!”

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“And to all arts there is but One summit!” continued the girl.

“You are a *nymphomane*,” he said; “your aspiration is the lie you tell yourself.”

She struck him across the face. “Devil!” she cried, so loud that even in the Taverne Pantheon folk looked up and laughed, “have I not heard that from conscience since I was sixteen? A blow is the one answer possible.”

“A blow is but your male desire,” he said, unmoved.

“How shall I prove my truth?” she sobbed, disquieted and angry.

“Live it down, little girl,” he said kindly. “Trust me; I will prove you and justify you. Afterwards!”

“Do you think!—now—?” she began indignantly.

“I know it,” said he. “In the grey light, to-morrow, we will talk.”

She suddenly felt chill and afraid. “I am not ready,” she said; “I am not worthy . . .”

“It is to prove you worthy,” said he, “that I was sent to you.”

“Well, God aid me,” said the girl. She was serious and almost sobbing, her face drawn and white beneath its paint. Her emotion added piquancy to her voluptuousness, pathos to her brute appeal.

“At this moment, of all moments? How should I find you? It was one chance in a million million.”

Edgar lifted the knife that lay by his side. There was a fly on the tablecloth. Adroit and salmon-swift, he cut it fairly in half. “Bad luck on the fly?” he laughed. “But I did it. Chance only means ignorance of causes.”

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“Then you believe in the Brothers?”

“As I revel in the kisses of your mouth,” said the boy, crushing her face against his.

A rich gladness filled her eyes, moist gladness; one might say the first gush of an artesian well amid the seas of sand.

“Well,” quoth she, cheerful and brisk, to let the mask fall on her blushing soul, “we have got through six dozen oysters and a devil of a lot of Burgundy. . . . I wonder if I am hungry!” She looked him between the eyes.

“Hors d’oeuvres!” said Edgar. “I have a box for the Sam Hall fight.”

“Oh do take me,” she panted. “Will he beat Joe Marie?” she added, with a touch of anxiety. “He has the weight, and the experience, and the record.”

“Fools are betting he will. My money is on the man with three years younger, six inches taller, and twelve inches longer reach to his credit. And a twenty-four times harder skull.”

“It’s his skin I love.”

“The only thing a woman ever can love.”

“And his activity.”

“Exactly. You cannot understand Being, which is Peace.”

“Don’t! You are near *my* secret, now.”

“Wait till the grey hours!”

She dropped three napoleons on the plate, and disdainingly to wait for the change, took Edgar’s arm in hers. They hailed a fiacre.

“By the way, I don’t know your name,” he began, as they clattered down the Boul’ Mich’.

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“Ida Pendragon. But call me Poppy, because my lips are red, because I give sleep, and death!”

A pause. “And you name, nice boy?”

“Edgar Rolles—you may call me Monkshood.”

“What—*the* Edgar Rolles?”

“As ever is.”

“Oh, they’ll hang you! They’ll certainly hang you! for that last book of yours. . . . But you shall hang here first.” Her long white fingers went to her neck, like a cuttle-fish feeling for its prey. Her eyes closed: her throat worked convulsively for a moment. Rolles too leaned back, pale with excitement. He drank the fresh air. Then, like a man shot, he lifted himself and fell forward, his head in the nest of her bosom.

“Please sit up and behave sensibly, Mr Rolles!” was the next word that fell on his ears. “We are crossing the Seine. Passion may not pass the gloomy river; here stalks Vice, and the Englishman on its heels. The very coffee sent son Anglais.”

“Et les femmes,” muttered Edgar.

She slapped his hand half fiercely.

“It’s Poster Art of immorality.”

“I remember going with an American girl to the Guignol once. They played a comedy one could have acted in a Sunday-school in Glasgow; but Verro-nika, as they called her, who didn’t understand a word of French, said the atmosphere was one of the most awful lust. Poor girl! she had paid a lot to see Yurup and its wickedness. I had not the heart to undeceive her.”

“You sympathised, and offered to take her away?”

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“Of course.”

“And she preferred to stay?”

“Of course.”

“Here’s the Cirque, anyhow.”

“We’ll hope for a clean fight.”

The second round was just over as they took their seats. Sam Hall was solid and furious, looking an ounce or two overtrained; Joe Marie looked hardly human, his black skin gleaming, his arms so long as to seem almost disproportionate. He seemed apathetic; he reminded one of indiarubber.

It was not till the sixth round that any warm exchanges took place. Then Ida sat up. Joe had sent a sharp upper cut to the Englishman’s lip. She dug her nails into Rolles’ hand, that lay idly on her knee. Sam Hall returned a blow on the heart that sent the negro staggering across the ring. He was after him like a flash, thinking to finish the fight; but the black countered unexpectedly hard, and the round finished in a clinch.

In the seventh round both men seemed cautious and afraid of punishment. Joe Marie, in particular, seemed half asleep. The lazy grace of his feints was admirable; he was tiring the Englishmen, and paying nothing for the advantage.

In the ninth round Sam Hall reached his eye; but he only laughed, and leapt at his opponent, rushing him to the ropes despite the extra stone and a half. In the furious exchanges both men gave and took a great deal of punishment. In a sense, it was bad boxing.

The tenth round showed Joe Marie awake at last. He led repeatedly, and thrice got home on the white man’s face.

Ida was rubbing her body against Edgar’s like a cat.

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“He is like a black leopard,” she purred. “Is anything in the world so beautiful as that lithe black body?”

“I have seen blood in the sunlight on a bull’s shoulder,” replied Rolles.

“I love to see the pure animal beat the mere brute. White men ought not to fight: they ought to think, and do lovely physical things, things gracious and of good report.”

“Ida! my Ida! Could you see your nostrils twitching! I can imagine you fighting with all their fierceness, incapable of keeping to the rules of boxing.”

“I hate you,” she said. “In everything you see——”

“Your lust of blood,” he answered gravely.

“It is true,” said Ida slowly. “There is no light of battle in your eye. You see it as a picture.”

“It is a hieroglyph.”

“But it is a fight!”

“I do not believe in fights. I only believe in beauty.”

“Oh how true, how right you are! How noble!” She hid her face in her hands and began to cry to herself. “I see! I see! That is how God must see the universe, or He could never tolerate such cruelty, such idiotcy, ineptitude.”

“Exactly. Suppose now that the world is only symbol—I had rather say sacrament—suppose for example that all these stars swimming in boundless aether are but corpuscles in the blood of some toy terrier of the Creator.”

“You frighten me. I don’t want to suppose.”

“Think of the eternal battles of hæmoglobin, oxyhæmoglobin, carboxyhaemoglobin in our blood. It is the same idea. Do we express sympathy for the fallen? Have we a stop-the-war party? On the contrary, we take good care that these

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murderous conflicts shall go on. So when you call the God to whom you aspire 'The Compassionate,' 'The Merciful,' pray be very careful as to exactly what you mean!"

"I am cold. I am frightened. The world has fallen away from me. Take me away. Put me into the ordeal; I have nothing more to lose."

"In the grey hours of the morn."

But the crowd was already on its feet, cheering. Joe Marie had fallen on his opponent, now too weak to counter or to guard, and smashed him here, there, and everywhere. It was as one-sided as a man beating a carpet. Twice he knocked him through the ropes. The first time he rose unsteadily, only to fall instantly. The second time his friends, careless of the rules, helped him to rise. A mistaken kindness; the black rushed him round the ring under a hail of pitiless blows, and with a last smashing drive flung him clean through the ropes out of the ring before the referee had time to stop the fight.

Edgar Rolles drove Ida Pendragon back to his studio in Montparnasse. All the way she clung to him, sobbing like a child. He sat very still, save to caress her hair from which the turban had fallen. "It is the victory of Essence over Form," he mused, "of Matter over Motion. Woman is Form, and thinks Form is Being. Oh my God!" he started up. "I am a man. Suppose I, who am Being, think Being is Form! . . . I cannot even attach a meaning to the phrase! I am blinder than shorn Samson. Both must be equal, equally true, equally false, in His eyes wherein all is false and true, He being beyond them. Only the brains of a child—of The Child—can grasp it. 'Except ye become as little children, ye

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cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven!’ I am blinder than shorn Samson! . . . Well, I’m in charge of Delilah at present, and here’s the House where we don’t admit Philistines! Get up, little girl!”

He lifted her gently from the fiacre and paid the driver. “Stamp!” said he, “stamp like Dr Johnson! The ground is firm.”

“E pur si muove,” murmured she, and clung (O illogical sex!) still closer to his arm.

II

THE GREY HOUR

“TO resume,” observed Rolles as he removed the tea-tray, “since you have done no prescribed practices (wicked little sister!) you cannot banish the body by bidding it keep silence. So it must be banished by exhaustion, and the spirit awakened by a sevenfold dose of the Elixir.”

“Have you the Elixir?” she asked, rather awed.

“It is entrusted to me,” he answered simply. “To this laudable end I have appointed a sufficiency of Bisque Kadosh at the Café Riche, followed by Homard Cardinal and Truffles au champagne. With a savoury of my own invention. The truffles au champagne of the Café Riche are more to be desired than all the hashish dreams of all the wicked, and than all the divine dreams of all the good. We shall walk there, and drive back. This incense shall be kindled, and this lamp left burning.”

He took a strange object from a locked cabinet. It had flowered chased pipes of gold, copper and platinum, coiling about an egg of crystal. The three snakes met just above the egg, as if to bite or to kiss. Rolles filled the egg with a pale blue liquid from a Venetian flask, then pressed the heads of the serpents just a little closer together. Instantly a coruscating flame leapt between them, minute, dazzling, radiant. It

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continued to burn with a low hissing noise rarely interrupted by a dry crackle.

“It is well,” said Rolles, “let us depart.”

Ida Pendragon had not said a word. She put on her hat and followed to the door as fatalistically as the condemned man walks to the gallows. She had passed through anticipation; she was content to await what might be.

At the door she whispered, hushed in awe of the real silence of the room with its monotonous hiss, in his ear. “You have the Lamp. I almost begin to wonder if you have not the Ring!”

“‘This is a secret sign,’ ” he quoted, “ ‘and thou shalt not disclose it unto the profane.’ To-night yours be the ring—the Eternal Ring, the Serpent to twine about my heart.”

“Ah! could I crush it!”

He closed the door. Like a priest celebrating his first high mass he led her through Paris. Neither spoke. Only as they mounted the steps of the Cafe he took her arm and said, sharply and sternly: “Attention! From this moment I am Edgar Rolles, and you are Ida Pendragon. No more: not a thought of our real relation. Man and woman, if you will; beasts in the jungle, if you will; flowers by the wayside, if you will; but nothing more. Else you will not only fail in the ordeal, but you will be swept aside out of the Path. You were in greater danger than you knew this afternoon; you will yet pay the price.”

“I understand,” she said. “You devil! I love you.” “And I love every inch of your white body!”

They ran laughing arm in arm through the swing doors.

.

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Edgar Rolles sat curled up Hindu fashion on his bed. The sacred lamp still hissed. At his side lay Ida, her arms stretched out cruciform. She hardly breathed; there was no colour in her face. One would have said the corpse of a martyred virgin. On her white body its own purity hovered like a veil.

Edgar Roles watched the lamp, erect, attentive. It went out. Hardly a hint of grey filtered through the blackness. In his hands he held two threads. "One is black, and one is white, he mused, and only God knows which is which. So only God knows what is sin. In our darkness we who presume to declare it are liars—charlatans, groping quacks at the best. Will the sun never dawn? For us on whom the lightning of ecstasy hath flashed for a moment—'much may be seen by its light'—the light of the tempest. But the Light of the Silver Star? Oh, my Brothers (he began to speak aloud) give me wisdom as you have given me understanding! Knowledge and grace and power? These are nothing and less than nothing. Is not this a precious thing that you have given into my charge? Am not I too young among you to bear so wonderful a burden? It is the first time that I have dared so far. The Abyss! The Razor-Edge! Frail bridge and sharp! Yet is it not a ray of the Evening Star, a ray of Venus, of the Love Supernal! . . .

"Can I tell black from white? It seems I can—and then the certainty flickers, and I doubt. I doubt. I am always doubting. Perhaps a wise man grows angry, and declares his will. 'It shall be what o'clock I say it is,' or . . . see! I lay the threads on her white breast. No doubt remains."

Then clear and loud: "Ave Soror!"

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The girl, as it seemed mechanically, murmured the words “Rosae Rubeae.”

“Et Aureae Crucis,” he rejoined.

Then together, very slowly and distinctly: “Benedictus sit Dominus Deus Noster qui nobis dedit signum.”

It seemed hardly possible that her voice joined his. The lips hardly moved; it was as if an interior voice spoke in her heart. Yet the room was suddenly filled with a pale green light—or was it rosy?—or was it golden?—or was it like the moon? That was the strange thing about it. To every name one put to it an inward voice answered: No, not that; like that, but not quite that. Luminous, spectral, cloudy, shimmering—it was all these, and something more.

He placed his hand upon the girl’s forehead.

“Are you perfectly awake?”

“I am awake, frater.”

“Can you give me the sign of your grade?”

“I must not move. But I am poised for diving, frater.”

“The word?”

Haltingly came the answer: “Ar—ar—it—a.”

“One is His beginning; one is His individuality; His permutation one. Do not forget it, little sister.”

“Are you ready?”

“I am ready. Farewell—farewell for ever!”

“Farewell.”

He took his signet-ring, and pressed a spring. The bezel opened and disclosed a small jewelled wheel, divided into many compartments. He pressed a second spring. The wheel began to revolve, and in the silence sang a tiny tune.

THE EQUINOX

It was a faint tinkle, like a distant cow-bell, or like a chime heard far off, heard from the snow. There was an icy quality in the note.

“Where are you?”

“I—I—” she broke off.

His eyes lit with joy.

“I am in the sand; I am buried to the wast in the sand. I see nothing but sand.”

His face fell again.

“What is sand?” he asked.

“Oh—just sand, you know. Leagues and leagues of sand; like a great bowl of sand.”

“But what is sand?”

“Sand—oh! sand is God, I suppose.” There was a patience and weariness in her voice, as of one who has suffered long and is at rest, or convalescent.

“And who are you?”

She did not answer the question. “Now I see sky,” she said. “Sky is God, too, I think.”

“Then do you see God?”

“Oh no! I think I am God, somehow. It is all like it was before, long ago. I was once a spider in the sand. God is a spider; the Universe is flies. I am a fly, too. . . . And now the desert is full of flies.”

Rolles bit his lip; his face was drawn with pain. At that moment he looked an old man.

“Black flies,” she went on. “Horrible white maggots. And now there are corpses. The maggots play about their mouths and eyes. There are three corpses that were God when they were alive. I killed Him. That was

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when I was a camel in the sand. Now there are only my bones.”

“It may be only a veil,” he muttered, not wishing her to hear. But she heard.

“It is a veil,” she said. “But is there anything behind veils?”

“Look!”

“Only the sand.”

“Tear it down!”

“There might be Nothing behind.”

“There is Nothing behind. It is through that that you must pass.”

“This veil is God. I am a holy nun in the trance called Rampurana. I am canonised. My name is on every banner. My face is worshipped by every nation. I am a pure virgin; all the others are soiled. Thought is worse than deed. All my thoughts are holy. I think. I think. I think. By the power of my thought I created the Word; and by the Word came the Worlds. I am the creator. I will write my law upon tablets of jade and onyx.”

Rolles bowed his head in silence.

“I am thought itself,” she went on quietly. “And all thought is I. I am knowledge. All knowledge is in three. Three hundred and thirty-three. I am half the Master. I have cut him in two.”

The adept shuddered.

“That was when I was an axe. I will not be an arrow. I will be an axe. . . .” She gave a giggle.

“I am gleeful by reason of hate.”

There was a pause.

THE EQUINOX

“And I am gleeful because I am reason. . . .”

“All reason ends in two. I have cut the Master in two.”

“Can she pass through?” wondered Edgar. “Is it a fault to be identified so well with that which she beholds?”

“There are devils,” she cried. “Black, naked screaming devils. They touch, and at a touch each oozes back to his slime. This slime is Chaos.”

“Ararita!” he breathed the word upon her brow.

“Don’t touch me! don’t touch me!” she screamed. “I am holy! I am God! I am I!” Her face was black and distorted with sudden passion.

“It’s quite different to my own experience in many ways,” thought the watcher. “Yet—is it not the essence of all ordeal, all initiation, that it should be unexpected? Otherwise, the candidate would have passed through the gate before he approached it. Which is absurd.”

The last word must have been audible.

“Absurd!” she cried. “Indeed, it is not absurd. It is all rational. It is you who are absurd.”

“Do you understand what you are saying?”

“No! No! I hate all who understand. I will bite them. I will bite their waists.” Dropping her voice suddenly: “That was when I was a mouse-trap.”

“Dear God! this is like delirium.”

“Oh! go on about God. I don’t mind God. I could tell you wonderful things about what I have done to God. I was a Nonconformist preacher once: I had secret sins. They were mine! Mine! How proud I was of them! Every Sunday I used to preach against the sin that I had done most in the week. There are many butterflies in the desert;

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ever so many more than one would think. This proves that God is good. And then, you see, there are beetles. Beetles and beetles. And scorpions. Dear little amber beasts. There! one has stung me. It is the sacrament of hate. I will sleep in a bed of scorpions and rose-leaves. Scorpions are better than thorns. Why do I wander about naked? And why do I thirst? And this torment of cold? It ought to be hot in the desert. And it isn't. Now that proves—oh yes, my cat! you shall have milk. I will strike a rock for you. Milk and honey.”

She started up suddenly, and put her hands to her face, then threw them round his neck.

“Edgar, darling!” she cried, “your pussy has had such a dreadful dream. Come and love his girl!”

He dared not tell her that she had tried and failed, that she had come back as she set out. He flung his will into that act of mercy; his kisses ravished her into delight.

It was late morning when they woke, faint with rapture, fresh kisses blossoming on their young lips, as the sun himself lit their awakening with his love.

Only then came memory, and solemnity, and sorrow.

“I must catch the four o'clock,” he said, as he left her; “one of these addresses always finds me. Telegraph if you need me. I would come from the ends of the earth, if I must: but you know the Brothers? When you need me really I shall be at your shoulder. O my darling! my darling!” he broke out, falling to tenderness, half human and half superhuman; “how I love you! how I love you! I hate going to England.”

“Oh yes! your martyrdom! I wish I were worthy to share it.”

THE EQUINOX

“God! God! why must we part? It’s my fool vanity that makes me want the martyrdom. And all the time I only want you.”

“But you’re not only Edgar Rolles.”

“And when I return, be more than Ida Pendragon. Keep a stout heart, wench!”

So, with a thousand tear and kisses, they parted. She would not come to see him off; her self-command was weakened alike by her new love and by the terrible ordeal that she had undergone. Her mind remembered nothing of it—such is the merciful order of things; but her soul, beaten with rods, was sore.

So Edgar Rolles went to England to his martyrdom, with a lock of her hair in his pocket-book; and he turned martyrdom to battle, and battle to victory. Kingdoms have been won for an eyelash, before now.

III

THE BLACK HOUR

“DISGUSTING!” said Ida Pendragon. She was at the Luxembourg Gallery, regarding a too faithful portrait of an orator addressing his constituents. She spoke over her shoulder to the long negro, Joe Marie. His eyes rolled, and his hands twitched, and his thick mouth grinned. He seemed to sniff her hair. A pitiable creature—a tamed leopard. All smiles and yes! yes! to a discourse of whose purport he had no idea.

“Realism!” she went on. “We want truth, but we want beauty too. We don’t want what our silly eyes call truth. We want the beauty that is seen by artists’ souls. A photograph is a lie because a camera is not a God. And we would rather the truth coloured by the artist’s personality than the lie that his mere eyes tell him. The women of Bougereau and Gerome are more like what the eyes tell one of life than the women of Degas and Manet. I want the truth of Being, not the truth of Form. Do you hear?” she cried, “I want truth, I want Truth.”

“I want you,” said Joe Marie.

“We are both in trouble, then,” she smiled back. “And perhaps if we had our wish, we should both be disappointed. Now I am going home to write letters, and if you are good you shall lunch with me to-morrow.”

THE EQUINOX

"Then let me pay! I want to pay for your lunch."

"You shall have a great treat, Joe! I have a friend and his girl coming, too. You shall pay for all of us."

The negro beamed. "Ida Pendragon!" he spluttered. "I love you, Ida Pendragon."

"And Ida Pendragon loves her leopard. Now leave me." She glanced round. They were alone in the gallery.

"You may kiss the back of my neck, if you like."

The negro buried his head between her shoulders.

She shivered; her hair hissed under his kiss. She writhed round, and gave her mouth to his for one clinging moment. Then she pushed herself away, and he, poor troubled animal, went swiftly and sleekly from the room. At the corner he staggered. The girl saw it; her smile was like sheet lightning.

A quarter of a mile away, at that moment, Edgar Rolles was tearing the edges from a "petit bleu."

"I am paying the penalty," he read. "Lunch with me at Lavenue's at one to-morrow. Bring a girl."

"Right," said he. "But I wonder what she means." And he strolled out to the Dôme to find good-hearted Ninon, "la grande hystérique" of the Quarter, half-mad and wholly amorous, half gamine and half great lady, satiated and unsatisfied indeed, but innocent withal. La Dame de Montparno they called her; she dominated her surroundings without effort. Yet none could analyse or explain the fascination to which all surrendered. She had more friends than lovers, and no one ever told a lie about her, or let her want for anything.

She welcomed the invitation with joy. "Ida Pendragon!"

THE ORDEAL OF IDA PENDRAGON

she said, "oh! I know the type. Name of a tigress . . ." and she rattled off a story of a stag-hunt at Fontainebleau in which the Cornish girl had played the principal, an incredible part.

The cafe pricked up its ears, and dissolved in laughter at the culminating impossibility.

But Edgar Rolles only frowned. "I am sorry for Ida," he said slowly. "If your story were true I should be glad; but she is only the painter with his palette mixing paints: she never gives her soul up to the canvas. Tigress? yes: but not the Bodhi-sattva who let the tigress eat him. She always wins; she cannot lose. As the proverb says: 'Lucky at play, unlucky in love—and 'God is love.' "

"Listen! he is saying the Black Mass again," cried Ninon, and springing on a table began the Dance of the Postman's Knock, just then the rage of Montparnasse before the infection spread to Paris and London. A Polish youth jumped on to the table opposite and joined her; in a minute the whole cafe was aflame with it.

But Edgar Rolles, his hands thrust deep into his pockets, and the threat of tears in his eyes, was walking back to his studio.

"If only life were folly!" he sighed. "But the silliest things we do are wisdom—somehow, somewhere——"

And he let himself in.

* * * * *

The lunch in the private room at Lavenue's was secretly amusing. Joe Marie had only dog's eyes for Ida; Ninon amused herself by trying to distract him. Edgar held forth at length upon Art, passionlessly expository.

THE EQUINOX

“Art,” said he, “and do not imagine that Art or anything else is other than High Magic!—is a system of holy hieroglyph. The artist, the initiate, thus frames his mysteries. The rest of the world scoff, or seek to understand, or pretend to understand; some few obtain the truth. The technical ability of the artist is the lucidity of his language; it has nothing to do with the degree of his illumination. Bougereau is better technically than Manet; he explains more clearly what he sees. But what does he see? He is the priest of a false God. Form has no importance except in this sense; we must not be revolted by the extravagance of new symbolic systems. Gauguin and Matisse may live to be understood. We acquiesce in the eccentricities of Raphael.”

Ida gave a little laugh of pleased scorn of him.

“My good girl, perspective is an eccentricity, a symbol; no more. How can one ever represent a three-dimensional world in two dimensions? Only by symbolism. We have acquiesced in the method of the primitives—do you think men and women are really like Fra Angelico’s pictures look to the eye of the untaught? We may one day acquiesce in all the noughts and crosses of Nadelmann! It’s the same everywhere. I draw a curve and a circle and a waggle up and down; and everybody who can read English is perfectly satisfied that I mean that placid ruminant, female, herbivorous, and lactiferous, to which we compare our more domesticated courtesans and our less domesticated policemen. So Being is not in Form; it is however only to be understood through Form. Hence incarnations. The Universe is only a picture in the Mind of the Father, by which He wishes to convey—what? It is our Magnum Opus to discover what He means! Hence ‘the eye

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of faith.' Mere eyesight tells us that a plaster mould is truer to nature than the greatest masterpiece of Phidias; so does science, with her gross calipers. Sensible men prefer a good photograph of nature to a bad landscape. The photograph shows them the view of their own normal eye through the medium of an accepted symbolism; the picture shows the view of an indifferent bad soul through a medium of mud. But Corot! But Whistler! But Morrice! Corot sees a wood, and paints Pan; Bougereau sees a pretty model, and paints a pretty model. He doesn't paint Woman. Morrice paints the Venice of Byron, of our historic and voluptuous dreams; not the Venice of the Yankee and the churning steamers. Raphael found Madonna in his mistress; Rembrandt a queen of sombre passion and seduction in his wife. In one way or another we must get to God's meaning through a medium that itself is meaningless."

"Just as through dejeuner we get to the dessert!" laughed Ida, who had something more to say than her face showed. All through lunch she had allured the big black savage, until beneath her glances he was in agony. All the primitive passions fought one another in his heart. He could have killed Rolles for the very nonchalance of his small-talk. It hurt him that anyone should speak to Ida save in words of love. Equally, he could have killed him for a trace of inflection in his voice.

Edgar Rolles understood his torture, understood the suppressed intensity of Ida's purpose, though he could not guess its nature. Somehow he distrusted the event.

"Take literature!" he went on, in that even vigilant voice of his. "Take Zola with his million marshalled facts. What

THE EQUINOX

do they matter? Nothing. We get the truth about the Second Empire—and if Zola's facts were all false, it would not alter the truth he came to tell, poor, provincial, time-serving truth as it is."

"Take Ibsen! It is no accusation to say that Norwegians never act as his characters do; no defence to prove that Norwegians always do act so. It has nothing to do with the question. Romeo and Juliet make love in English—nobody minds! Macbeth is not obliged to say, 'Hoots! ma leddy!' every time he addresses his wife. The fool who bothers with local colour misses the sunshine. The man with the burette misses the sea. Some pious Dutchman of yore, who wanted to paint Abraham and Isaac, gave the old man a blunderbuss. Why not? You can shoot your soon with a blunderbuss! I tell you it's all symbolism, all hieroglyphics. Take Wagner!"

"Take a cigarette," said Ida.

He shrugged his shoulders, and surrendered to the event.

"Mr Rolles," she said, "it is your advice on life that we are asking. Let us talk seriously. This dear boy (she took the negro's lips in her slim fingers and pinched them) likes me."

"I love her! I would die for her!" broke in the black, crying with pleasure and pain, utterly unable to hold himself in. He caught the table to draw himself to it, so violently that two glasses fell. "I love her! I love her! I want her."

"Hush, Joe! Well, you see, Mr Rolles, I love him too. . . ." Rolles flashed one glance at her. She would not see it.—"I love him passionately, indeed I do. Oh, I love him, I love him!"

She threw herself on the broad chest of the boxer and hid

THE ORDEAL OF IDA PENDRAGON

her face. His long arms wound convulsively round her. His eyes seemed to start from his head; foam gathered on his dry lips; he could not speak. The breath came through his dilated nostrils hot and fierce; one would have said a bull in the arena. She disengaged herself.

“You see, he wants to marry me. I love him! I want to be with him for ever. But—” the great fighter was limp in his chair. “It is difficult,” she went on. “There are complications. My mother . . .”

Edgar Rolles detected the false note in her voice. He understood. He was angry, angry at his implication in such an affair. His teeth snapped.

“Yes?” he said, though he wanted to shout, to break the furniture.

“We cannot marry,” she went on, and this time the mordant malice almost tore her silky pathos with a rending shriek. “So, Joe . . .” She turned her great eyes on him, lustrous, pleading.

“I want you!” was all he said. But his voice was like the low and terrible cry of an elephant.

“You would not make me”—she hesitated a moment—“you would not make me—*impure?*” Her inflection was low and tremulous; but the Caucasians understood. It was like the scream of the typhoon, ripping the sails.

Ninon broke into a high hysterical sob of utmost laughter. She had not seen such a comedy since—she had never seen such a comedy. What a dull brute that black creature was!

Edgar Rolles rose with a jerk. He did not know what was coming.

And then light dawned in the dense brain of the African.

THE EQUINOX

The thousand meshes of her spider web were torn. He understood. He understood that she cared nothing, had never cared, would never have given a hair of her head for all his body and soul. Understanding was to his brain a momentary death.

Then with a silent snarl he sprang at her. She and her chair crashed backwards to the floor, and the black leopard was upon her, his teeth sunk in her throat.

Edgar Rolles was only just in time. His boot caught the murderer behind the ear—and Edgar Rolles had played football.

The beast was dead.

Edgar stooped and caught her up, blood leaping from her throat, while Ninon, shriek upon shriek rising in torment, rushed to rouse the people of the restaurant.

“Oh, my brother,” gasped the girl. “Could you not understand? I wanted to die, so.”

There were her last words for long.

Lavenue’s was a storm of chattering and gesticulating fools. The police pushed them aside. The corpse to the mortuary; the girl to the hospital; the man to the Poste. Ninon, wringing her hands and crying and laughing, had run like a Bacchante up the Boulevard to the Dôme.

IV

THE HOUR OF GOLD

IT was easy to satisfy French justice. Ida Pendragon was compared to several early Christian martyrs whose names I have forgotten; Edgar Rolles was asked to sit for a picture of St George by Follat, the success of the year's salon. Humanitarian papers urged the law to suppress boxing and its brutalities. Texans in Paris argued and rejoiced; Parisians in Texas went with a clear conscience to such lynchings as occurred.

Ida was convalescent. She would never lose the awful scars that jagged her throat; but would her face ever lose its mysterious exaltation? When Edgar saw her, he was almost afraid to understand. Leaving her, he went through the heart of Paris to a certain house. He wished to be certain; he wished to consult a Brother of the Silver Star.

Now it is very easy to find a Brother, when you know the password. But it is not always easy to get that Brother to tell you what you want. He is almost certain to be exceedingly rude; he is extremely likely to insist on talking common sense, which is annoying when you go for exalted mysticism; and quite possibly he may just nod, and continue his labours, which is maddening when your business is of the highest importance to you, and to him, and to the Brother-

THE EQUINOX

hood itself, not to mention humanity—while he is occupied in playing spillikins, and further insults you by explaining that he is trying to prove that, if you only do it carefully enough, you can detach planets from the solar system without hurting it.

On this occasion, however, Rolles was fortunate enough to find the Brother whom he knew at leisure—even for him. His feet were on the mantlepiece; a long pipe was in his mouth, and he was twiddling his thumbs.

“Avé, Frater!” said he, as Rolles entered. “Also Valé. How you young brothers manage to find trouble!”

“Miss Pendragon will be out of the hospital in four days,” began Edgar in explanation.

“Lucky dog!” said the great man. “But the funny thing is that I am in trouble too.”

“Oh! I am sorry.”

“I wonder if you could help. It’s this way. Sometimes I twiddle my thumbs so—we call that the plus direction: and sometimes *so*—the minus direction. Now I lost count years and years ago; and so whichever way I twiddle, I may be getting further and further from equality. Then how—I ask you!—may man attain to the Universal Equilibrium?”

“Wouldn’t it be safer not to twiddle at all?” suggested Rolles meekly.

“Inglorious youth!” retorted the Brother. “Base Buddhist! So you could never equalize the count! No! My plan is—always to twiddle one way. It is an even chance that my way is right.”

“But if you should be wrong?”

“I shall be damned, I suppose.”

THE ORDEAL OF IDA PENDRAGON

“And if you should succeed, and equalise the count?”

“I have no idea.”

“But——”

“Ungenerous, unsympathetic youth! I wager you have not divined my difficulty?”

“It *all* seems very difficult.”

“But my supreme, my crushing doubt?”

“I cannot guess, sir.”

“This! In your ear, my young friend. This! I cannot remember which way always to twiddle.”

Rolles drew back dazed.

“Read Nietzsche!” snapped the Brother.

“But—but—” he stammered. “Oh! this is it. Miss Pendragon comes out in four days’ time . . .”

“I wish you’d learnt twiddling,” said the Brother sadly.

“But what am I to do, sir?”

“Twiddle, you damned fool!”

“I know you always mean something . . .”

“Never. There is Nothing to mean!”

“Oh!”

“Be off, I can’t be bothered with you—be off! I send you packing. Is *that* clear?”

“You have nothing to say to me?”

“What have I been saying this priceless past fourteen minutes twenty-seven seconds? Ape! Goat! Imbecile! Dullard! Poopstick! Do you think one can recover lost time? One must talk English to you—English, you hotel blotting-paper, you unabsorbent wad of pulp! English, you Englishman!”

Rolles nearly lost his temper at the final insult.

THE EQUINOX

“Well, then, I send you packing. Go and pack, dolt! Pack! Trunks, portmanteaux, bags, boxes, and for the Lord’s sake pack some brains! Take the girl to Jericho or Johannesburg, and get some sense, and triplets, if you can!”

“Twiddle so—Being! Twiddle so—Form! Balance them, cheating grocer! Nation of shopkeepers! Twiddle! Twiddle! Twiddle! Isn’t the Balance in the Babe? Teach her to understand children!” The Brother paused to re-light his pipe, thrusting the bowl into the glowing carbon of the grate.

“To understand children? It is hard. But we love children, sir.”

“And what the devil is the difference between love and understanding? If you have one, you have the other. Oh, twiddle, twiddle!—You can send me one of those rotten paper knives from Jericho,” added the adept more peaceably. “With the rotten Sephardi pointing—blasphemers! And here! don’t *you* blaspheme, young feller my lad. You’ve got a good woman: make the most of her.”

“A great woman, perhaps.”

“A good woman. In the next siege of Paris I hope I shall not have to boil your head; I prefer thick soup. A good woman. A sister of the Silver Star, my good goat!”

“I do not understand, master!”

“You never will, I think. O generation of vipers! O prosy princox! O coxcomb of Kafoozelum!”

“I beg your pardon, sir! You know she failed in the abyss?”

“I? You? This is intolerable. Give me mere Hafiz! Here, thickhead! she was your mistress, I suppose? Most women in Paris seem to be.”

THE ORDEAL OF IDA PENDRAGON

“Sir!”

“Yes or no? Well, silence gives consent—No! she wasn’t! You lie! she never gave herself but once—go and look at the mark on her throat!”

Rolles reeled back, stunned by the bludgeon truth.

“I am a Fool!”

“Not by a long chalk! Keep your end up, and you’ll be a Magus in this life yet, though. In the meantime—oh, be a Devil!”

The younger man divined the infinite love and wisdom beneath the brusquerie of the Brother.

His eyes filled with tears.

“I’ll win her, sir, by God!” he said enthusiastically.

“Lose yourself to her. Only so. Off now, boy! I am busy. I must twiddle—twiddle—twiddle.”

Edgar bowed and went. He could not trust himself to speak: the Love that was the whole being of the Brother melted the snow of his soul. He loved. Not Ida, not the world, not anything. It was pure love; love without object, love as love is in itself. He did not love; he was Love.

But he strode straight back to Ida Pendragon. Before she left her bed, they were married. A week later they drove through the cool swift air to the South; and there, among the vines, they learnt how—once in a century—the phoenix Passion may rise from the fire of Vice, and how in the beak of the phoenix proved by the fire is the ring of Love.

* * * * *

A year later. They were in a villa at Mustapha. The sea and sky strove enviously which should best answer the sun’s question with the word blue.

THE EQUINOX

But Ida Pendragon, pale and fragile as rare porcelain, twisted herself and found no peace. Edgar bent over her, as vigilant as on the night of her first ordeal. In the shadow stood a physician; at the bedside sat a nurse, and in her arms a child.

“Brother!” she said faintly, “the number of the grade is Three, and I have given myself three times. Once to the brute, once to the man—my man! (her hand pressed his, oh! too feebly!) and now—to God!” The tears sprang to his eyes.

“It is for you,” she whispered, “to understand the child.”

She fell back. The physician ran forward. He knew that he had no useful purpose there: but he motioned Edgar away. Too late. Edgar had understood the Event.

He fell upon the dead girl’s breast, crash!

The nurse shook herself, half angrily, as a retriever shakes off water. Then she put the child into his arms.

MARITAL NAY

THE AUTUMN WOODS

THE eye of Fate is closed; the olden doom
Lies in the wrack of things. There is no sigh;
Only the wind cries through the lonely woods,
And the barren motherhood of the world is manifest
Shamelessly; in the dank, pale Autumn woods
The fallen leaves lie squelching under the feet
Of the desolate gnomes; and now the birds are silent,
And the streams flow sluggishly through the veins of the
world.

Dark gray and cloudy, the skies no more are blue,
And grayness reigning solitary makes music
Drearly through the wind-harp. The dripping rain
Soddens the earth, and the stones lie thick and wet
Among the leaves; and the trees wave naked arms
In despair to the sky. The light is quickly dying,
And there is no more day; the dull red sun—
A sore and aching eye in a face of gray—
Droops down to slumber. All the world is dead.

Rose! Rose! Where art thou? O my Rose, my Rose!
My secret Rose, art lost among the gray?
There is no voice in the silence; in the woods
The brownness glistens under the weeping rain,

THE EQUINOX

And I am in despair of Thee and Time.
Weeping the trees, and all the streams grown sullen
Under the lowering skies, and the bitter winds.
There is no living thing in the temple of Summer,
And the ashes of Spring lie cold on the hearth of day.

Gray dreams again! And all my hope is fled.
Gray dreams, gray dreams, and the day is tired and dead.
The bitter aftermath of Summer brings
Time's memory back to the world: there are no stings,
In the world's pain, but only bitterness
Of the memory of Time; no sore distress,
Save for the thought of Summer waned and dead,
And faded with the gold skies overhead,
And the young green beneath; ah! secret Rose,
Here in the heart of the woods I pluck thee forth,
Fraught with the swell of Summer, crimson-bright!
And for the world under the stars to-night—
It shall be thine, and thine the star that draws
The world to worship thee: the days are fled
Under the heavens; there is no more sun,
And no more love; the world is hushed and dead.

Slim-passing dryad through the lonely woods!
I will follow thee in the paths of dank decay;
Decadent Autumn, with thy lonely broods
Of active gnomes, and little red-capped Fays,
Feasting in the Summer dead under the trees
Dripping with Autumn rains—ah! take me too,
Me too into the silence of the past,

THE AUTUMN WOODS

The grave of desolation! I am weary
Of all things; let me sleep my life away!

The breast of Fate is pregnant with despair
Got on her by the piercing shaft of Time.
Ah! Unborn child of Fate and Time, I am weary
Of them that gave thee birth. Shall I love thee?
O darling, wilt thou come to me in the silence,
Saying: I hear the mystery of Time,
And the secret of Fate? I know not yet, but surely
Thou shalt know of the Rose, the rose, the Rose of the
world;
With thee shall I bear the chalice of blood-tipped lilies,
The chalice of red, sweet lilies under the moon?

But now there is no moon, nor any sun;
The world's gray noon only is for thee and me;
There is no sound in the nerveless silences
Of the fading world; there is a quiver of light
On the river of life; we are unwed, my Rose,
Nor knoweth each the other; we are undone,
My Rose, my secret Rose, my unknown Rose!

And still the Autumn woods are rustling dumbly
With sodden leaves made brown by wind and rain;
And the satyrs are fled under the earth to hide
From the sunless world, and the nymphs are faded to air,
To be reborn in the sun-light: there is no more joy,
For mournfulness is fallen on the world,
And decadence and decay and the odour of eld.

THE EQUINOX

The spirit sleeps; the Rose of the world is buried
Under the soil of every star that glows,
A hanging lamp, under the firmament.
There shall be no more roses, no more roses,
Until the spring of the stars shall fall on the world.
Then shall be light again, O secret Rose,
And thou shalt be born anew, with radiant star-light
For dew, and all thy petals shall be dreams
Crystallised of the gods who swing the chains
Of the worlds in space; and at the heart of thee
Shall be the secret knowledge, the sacred word,
The logos of the throbbing universe.

And the years shall pass in myriads over the tree
Whereon thou bloomest, O my Rose of the worlds!
And one shall pluck thee forth, and love and death
Shall lie together, and there shall be born
He who shall bear for ever into life
The rose-tipped lilies under the silent stars,
The silent stars, and the red-blushing roses.

O Rose, my Rose of the world, my Rose of Roses,
Thou shalt be born anew, and live for ever!

VICTOR J. I. NEUBURG.

THE DANGERS OF MYSTICISM

*AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED TO
ARTHUR EDWARD WAITE.*

A CURIOUS idea is being sedulously disseminated, and appears to be gaining ground, that mysticism is the “Safe” Path to the Highest, and magic the dangerous Path to the Lowest.

There are several comments to be made on this assertion. One may doubt whether anything worth doing at all is free from danger, and one may wonder what danger can threaten the man whose object is his own utter ruin. One may also smile a little grimly at the integrity of those who try to include all Magic under Black Magic, as is the present trick of the Mystic Militant here on earth.

Now, as one who may claim to a slight acquaintance with the literature of both paths, and to have been honoured by personal exposition from the adepts of both paths, I believe that I may be able to bring them fairly into the balance.

This is the magical theory, that the first departure from the Infinite must be equilibrated and so corrected. So the “great magician,” Mayan, the maker of Illusion, the Creator, must be met in combat. Then “if Satan be divided against Satan, how shall his kingdom stand?” Both vanish: the illusion is no more. Mathematically, $1 + (-1) = 0$. And this path is symbolised in the Taro under the figure of the

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Magus, the card numbered 1, the first departure from 0, but referred to Beth, 2, Mercury, the god of Wisdom, Magic and Truth.

And this Magus has the twofold aspect of the Magician himself and also of the "Great Magician" described in Liber 418 (EQUINOX, No. V., Special Supplement, p. 144).

Now the formula of the mystic is much simpler. Mathematically, it is $1 - 1 = 0$. He is like a grain of salt cast into the sea; the process of dissolution is obviously easier than the shock of worlds which the magician contemplates. "Sit down, and feel yourself as dust in the presence of God; nay, as less than dust, as nothing," is the all-sufficient simplicity of his method. Unfortunately, many people cannot do this. And when you urge your inability, the mystic is only too likely to shrug his shoulders and be done with you.

This path is symbolised by the "Fool" of the Tarot, who is alike the Mystic and the Infinite.

But apart from this question, it is by no means certain that the formula is as simple as it seems. How is the mystic to assure himself that "God" is really "God" and not some demon masquerading in His image? We find Gerson sacrificing Huss to his "God"; we find a modern journalist who has done more than dabble in mysticism writing, "This mystic life at its highest is undeniably selfish"; we find another writing like the old lady who ended her criticism of the Universe, "There's only Jock an' me'll be saved; an' I'm no that sure o' Jock"; we find another who at the age of ninety-nine foams at the mouth over an alleged breach of her

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alleged copyright; we find another so sensitive that the mention of his name by the present writer induces an attack of epileptic mania; if such are really “united with” or “absorbed in” God, what of God?

We are told in Galatians that the fruits of the Spirit are peace, love, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; and somewhere else, “By their fruits ye shall know them.”

Of these evil-doers then we must either think that they are dishonest, and have never attained at all, or that they have united themselves with a devil.

Such are “Brethren of the Left Hand Path,” described so thoroughly in Liber 418 (EQUINOX, No. V., Special Supplement, pp. 119 *sqq.*).

Of these the most characteristic sign is their exclusiveness. “We are the men.” “Ours is the only Way.” “All Buddhists are wicked,” the insanity of spiritual pride.

The Magician is not nearly so liable to fall into this fearful mire of pride as the mystic; he is occupied with things outside himself, and can correct his pride. Indeed, he is constantly being corrected by Nature. He, the Great One, cannot run a mile in four minutes! The mystic is solitary and shut up, lacks wholesome combat. We are all schoolboys, and the football field is a perfect prophylactic of swelled head. When the mystic meets an obstacle, he “makes believe” about it. He says it is “only illusion.” He has the morphino-maniac’s feeling of *bien-être*, the delusions of the general paralytic. He loses the power of looking any fact in the face; he feeds himself on his own imagination; he

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persuades himself of his own attainment. If contradicted on the subject, he is cross and spiteful and cattish. If I criticise Mr X, he screams, and tries to injure me behind my back; if I say that Madame Y is not exactly St Teresa, she writes a book to prove that she is.

Such persons "swollen with wind, and the rank mist they draw, Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread," as Milton wrote of a less dangerous set of spiritual guides.

For their unhappy followers and imitators, no words of pity suffice. The whole universe is for them but "the glass of their fool's face"; only, unlike Sir Palamedes, they admire it. Moral and spiritual Narcissi, they perish in the waters of illusion. A friend of mine, a solicitor in Naples, has told me strange tales of where such self-adoration ends.

And the subtlety of the devil is shown particularly in the method by which neophytes are caught by the Black Brothers. There is an exaggerated awe, a solemnity of diction, a vanity of archaic phrases, a false veil of holiness upon the unclean shrine. Stilted affectation masquerades as dignity; a rag-bag of mediævalism apes profundity; jargon passes for literature; phylacteries increase about the hem of the perfect prig, prude, and Pharisee.

Corollary to this attitude is the lack of all human virtue. The greatest magician, when he acts in his human capacity, acts as a man should. In particular, he has learnt kind-heartedness and sympathy. Unselfishness is very often his long suit. Just this the mystic lacks. Trying to absorb the lower planes into the higher, he neglects the lower, a mistake no magician could make.

THE DANGERS OF MYSTICISM

The Nun Gertrude, when it came to her turn to wash up the dishes, used to explain that she was very sorry, but at that particular moment she was being married, with full choral service, to the Saviour.

Hundreds of mystics shut themselves up completely and for ever. Not only is their wealth-producing capacity lost to society, but so is their love and good-will, and worst of all, so is their example and precept. Christ, at the height of his career, found time to wash the feet of his disciples; any Master who does not do this on every plane is a Black Brother. The Hindus honour no man who becomes "Sannyasi" (nearly our "hermit") until he has faithfully fulfilled all his duties as a man and a citizen. Celibacy is immoral, and the celibate shirks one of the greatest difficulties of the Path.

Beware of all those who shirk the lower difficulties: it's a good bet that they shirk the higher difficulties too.

Of the special dangers of the path there is here no space to write; each student finds at each step temptations reflecting his own special weakness. I have therefore dealt solely with the dangers inseparable from the path itself, dangers inherent in its nature. Not for one moment would I ask the weakest to turn back or turn aside from that path, but I would ask even the strongest to apply these correctives: first, the sceptical or scientific attitude, both in outlook and method; second, a healthy life, meaning by that what the athlete and the explorer mean; third, hearty human companionship, and devotion to life, work, and duty.

Let him remember that an ounce of honest pride is better than a ton of false humility, although an ounce of true

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humility is worth an ounce of honest pride; the man who works has no time to bother with either. And let him remember Christ's statement of the Law "to love God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself."

ALEISTER CROWLEY.

REVIEWS

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THE DWELLER ON THE THRESHOLD. ROBERT HITCHENS. Methuen, 6s.

Mr Hichens once wrote "Flames." This was a pretty powerful book. Today (tempted, as I suppose, by a heavy bribe, for he is an artist in his way) he gives us this book with a title borrowed, not from Lytton, whom he has obviously not read, but from some eighteenth-hand source, and contents borrowed from his own "Flames." Hence a tedious novel,

dull novel	unconvincing novel,
stupid novel,	futile novel,
pseudo-occult novel,	banal novel,
pot-boiling novel,	senseless novel,
tired novel,	ground-out novel,
pointless novel,	unreal novel,
fatuous novel,	sorry novel,

etc., etc., etc.

The above method of filling space I took from Rabelais. Mr Hichens' method is just as obvious. PANURGE.

MYSTICISM. EVELYN UNDERHILL. Methuen. 15s. net.

This lengthy treatise upon the simplest of subjects is more free from pedantry and theological bias than was perhaps to be expected. It is very complete in its way as regards Christian mysticism; but the attempt to restrict the term mysticism to Christian mysticism must fail. It is indeed self-destructive. To exclude the authors of the Bhagavadgita, the Voice of the Silence, Knox Om Pax, and the Tao Teh King is to exclude by implication St. Teresa. To deny Crowley is to deny Christ. Similarly, the attempt to define Magic in terms contrary to its tradition, is sectarian folly. I may disagree with Huxley, but I shall not confute him by saying that he was a bigoted opponent of Evolution.

Roosevelt, in calling Thomas Paine a dirty little Atheist, when he was demonstrably a clean tall Deist, established only the record for falsehood. Mr (or

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Mrs or Miss?) Evelyn Underhill does the same thing when he abuses the Magi by attributing to them the doctrines and practices of sorcerers. And we think that his sense of awe misleads him in one respect. The Buddha, the Christ, and He whom some of us know as Frater Perdurabo, were all men before they became lost in the Infinity of what some call the One, others the All, others the Naught; and their documents are accessible. These documents are of immeasurably greater value than the lesser writings of the mediaeval saints. In fact, this word mediaeval is of use to us in describing Evelyn Underhill's state of mind. He, she, or it is rather narrow, vastly learned and curiously ignorant, capable of seeing far from within, utterly incapable of seeing an inch from without, a bit of a heresy-hunter and so on. It is clear that the mystic vision even is not his, or how could he remain sectarian? Had he only enough imagination to think of the earth as seen from Cor Scorpionis, all such diatribes would seem infinitely petty. We may splutter about with our little verbal fireworks, as I am doing now; but to take it seriously! "There's nothing serious in mortality;" God is All in All. The Universe is but a mote playing in that sunbeam; why bother to fill 600 dull pages? Nothing is worth writing but literature. Art is the expression of divine Truth; Mr. Underhill, being no artist, expresses only human error.

CANDLESTICK.

DEATH. HERWARD CARRINGTON and JOHN R. MEADER. Wm. Rider & Son, 8s. 6d. net.

A most interesting and fairly able book. Mr Carrington's hysteria is thoroughly diluted by Mr Meader, or else he has taken a little nourishment and feels better. The Vitality book was the scream of a schoolgirl.

The "theories" of these writers are, however, too comic to discuss seriously. One believes in "Life," a mystical entity flowing through one like a grease-spot through a greenback; the other believes that Death is caused by a man's hypnotising himself into the belief that it must come!

Big as is the present volume, it is necessarily far from complete. Yet I am compelled to admit much against my will that he makes out a very strong case for the persistence of personality after death, and its manifestation through certain mediums. Yet I think that the "coincidence" argument is a little better than is supposed.

The point is that the failures are unrecorded. Take "pure chance" roulette for example. Scientifically, any given run (say 500 on the red) is no more and no less remarkable than any other given run, say R B B R R B B B R R R B B B B, etc., to 500 coups. But the one is acclaimed as a miracle, the other goes unremarked.

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Now in the millions of séances of the last sixty years the “evidential” records can be counted in the fingers of one hand.

And it is not antecedently so very improbable that pure chance might dictate correct answers in so small a proportion of cases.

Further, the spiritists have thrown upon science the task of proving a universal negative.

If Sir Oliver Lodge, or Professor Munsterberg, or Lord Cholby Cauliflower, or Mr Upthe Pole comes to me with a tale of unicorns in Piccadilly, I merely humour him. Munsterberg, at least, might be dangerous.

But I should not investigate his statement, and I certainly should not claim to be able to disprove it on *à priori* grounds.

Even in the evidential cases, there is so much room for a mixture of fraud, telepathy, chance, and hysteria, and humanity is so clever at stopping chinks with putty and then leaving the door open, that we must continue to suspend judgment.

An amusing case occurred some years ago at Cambridge. I offered to reproduce roughly the performance of the Zancigs (which was then puzzling the foolish in London) without preparation. A stranger to me offered to act as my “medium.”

The conditions were these. The ten small cards of a suit were laid on the floor; one was to be touched in the medium’s absence and in my presence. The medium was to return and say which it was. The rest of the company were to prevent us from communicating if they could.

Well, they tried everything. In a minute’s interview I arranged a button-touching code with my medium, and as each new restriction was put on me I managed to invent a new code. Shifting my pipe, coughing, arranging books, winking, altering the position of my fingers, etc., etc., all were provided against. Then I obtained a confederate. Ultimately the grand sceptic of all devised the following test just as I had passed the note to my medium, “If I can’t manage any of the old ways, I’ll try and write down the number and put it on the mantelpiece.”

And this was the test.

The medium was to be taken from Whewell’s Court (were we were) over to the Great Court of Trinity—well out of all hearing. I was to be left alone with the sceptic, who by this time suspected everybody of being a confederate. He was to touch the card in my presence and then take me away in the opposite direction. The medium was then (at a given time) to return, and tell the card. Now it happened that in the course of general argument about fairness, which I encouraged to enable myself to plot unnoticed in the confusion of talk, that I had stipulated for my sceptic to write down the number that he had

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touched, to avoid dispute. This he agreed to; he was allowed to hide it as he chose.

I gave up all hope but in bringing off the 9 to 1 chance of my medium's being right. The sceptic kept both eyes on me all the time; if I stirred a finger, he was up in arms. I did keep my back to the mantelpiece, but there was no way of writing down the number.

But it was just at that point that my sceptic's magnificent brain broke down. He had correctly argued everything so far; but then his brain said, "It is important that Crowley shall not know where I hide the paper with the number on it: I must hide it somewhere where he cannot see."

So instead of slipping it into one of the hundreds of books on the shelves, the hid it behind my back, *i.e.* on the mantelpiece, where it was duly found!

I must tell just one other story to the point. It throws possibly some light on one or two of the "miracles" which Blavatzky performed in order to disgust the more foolish of her followers.

In June 1906 I was at Margate (God help me!), and asked my friend J—— to lend me his copy of Abramelin.

"Sorry!" said he. "I lent it to So-and-so, and it has not been returned."

He forgot this conversation: I remembered it.

Staying at his house six months later, I was alone one morning and found the book, which he "knew for a fact" to be in London sixty miles away. It was hidden by the panel of a glass-fronted bookcase.

I hid it in the stuffing of a music-stool, led the conversation at lunch-time to "apports," got my host to suggest my doing this very thing which he was sure I could not do, and, in the evening, did it.

If I had been a cheat, could I have produced better evidence? My host would have sworn that the book was in London in a house unknown to me, whose occupants were unknown to me. He is a man of science and of most accurate and balanced judgment. One little lapse of memory: he forgot that he had told me that the book was not in his shelves; another little lapse of memory: he forgot where the book was; and there is your miracle!

Now for my constructive policy. I suggest that a "spirit" be cultivated on the lines laid down by Eliphaz Levi, "Dogma and Ritual," Chap. XIII., so that he may manifest more wholly. Then let him dictate to two or three segregated mediums a long passage, or a long set of meaningless figures, and get so high a degree of agreement that hardly any doubt remains.

Or if anybody wants a really high evidential proof, let him get the proof of Fermat's Last Theorem, which Fermat died without revealing, and which the united efforts of mathematicians have hitherto failed to discover.

ALEISTER CROWLEY.

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THE PORCH. Vol. I., No. 8. 3*d.* J. M. WATKINS. THE MIRROR OF SIMPLE SOULS.

Of all this admirable series this is the best. Such prose I have rarely found in all my reading. I am beggared of wit to review it; but I implore all who seek the pure Light mirrored in flawless imagery to obtain it.

ALEISTER CROWLEY.

THE APOCALYPSE UNSEALED. *Being an Estoeric Interpretation* of THE INITIATION OF IOANNES. By JAMES M. PRYSE. New York; John M. Pryse, 9-15 Murray Street, 1910. London: J. M. Watkins. 8*s.* 6*d.* net

It is possible to write upon this book in a freer manner, without offence, than upon any other book in the Canon of Scripture, for there is no other book which has caused so much disquiet to theologians, in all ages, as has the "Revelation of St John the Divine," and it is but in comparatively recent times that it has been generally accepted as Canonical, and this even by those who admit that they do not understand it; and to such as these the "Apocalypse Unsealed" will be a veritable "Revelation" indeed. Mr James M. Pryse accepts it unreservedly as the work of the Apostle John, but we ought to mention that there is a long string of authorities against this view. Dionysius, who was surnamed the Great, of Alexandria, was a pupil of Origen, and he of Clement of Alexandria, all catechists of the *Arcane Discipline* which taught a Christianised version of the older Gnosis, which Clement and others had brought into the Church from the older secret, or occult, societies of which they were, or had been members. This Dionysius makes a certain John the Presbyter, as of note in Asia Minor in the 1st century, and distinct from the Apostle, to be the author of the book. Presbyter Cajus, or Gaius, of Rome, and the Alogi, attributed it to Cerinthus, a Gnostic of the independent sect of these, and Eusebius quotes both Dionysius and these Alogi; Nicephorus Callistus uses the same as saying that some who had preceded them had manipulated the book in such way, in every chapter, that the original could not be recognised. This may be an exaggeration, but amongst the eminent critics who have denied the authenticity of the book may be mentioned these, and what else can we expect when none to the present time could understand it? Against it are De Wett, Bleek, Ewald, Credner, Schott, Lucke, Neander, Michaelis, who treat the style as utterly foreign to that of John the Apostle. The first-named observes that "Revelation" is characterised by strong Hebraisms, ruggedness, and exhibits the absence of pure Greek words, whilst in the Gospel of John is to be found a calm, deep feeling, but in the Apocalypse we have great creative power of fancy;—the two minds are at variance with each other. St Jerome had an

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exalted opinion of the book, and says that it has much of mystery therein; possibly he saw it with the same eyes as Mr Pryse. Even both Luther and Erasmus were doubtful as to its acceptance. The "Encyclopaedia Britannica" argues that its allusions are of the 4th or 5th century. It may be mentioned here, that Dom John Chapman, D.O.S., has made an examination of the question this year, and argues, with doubtful success, that John the Presbyter and John the Apostle were the same person, and accepts both the Gospel and the Apocalypse as the works of Apostle John, and accounts for the difference in style as that of the amanuensis whom the Apostle John employed.

Two noticeable, but irreconcilable, attempts have in recent years been made to interpret the book, theologically and historically. The learned Dr E. V. Kenealy made sense out of it, but overdid the subject. He believed it to represent the Apocalyptic church of Adam, and found in its addresses to the "Seven Churches" the existence of a great Asian hierarchy of the seven temples of the "twenty-four Ancients," and further, in its various characters, the acts of the twelve divine incarnations, or messengers, who follow each other at periods of 600 years, as taught in regard to the manifestations of Vishnu.

Then, in 1906, we have a book of the astronomer, Nicholas Marazoff, verified by the astronomers Ramin and Lanin, who attempt an astrological view, grounded on the state of the heavens at Patmos on the 30th September 395, at 5 o'clock at night. Jupiter—the white horse—was then in Sagittarius; whilst Saturn—the pale horse—was in Scorpio; the sun in Virgo, and the moon under her feet. John Chrysostom was then in Patmos, and immediately after 395 was called to Rome to become a presbyter; but Rome finding that the "Second Coming" did not take place, it is argued that he was deprived and banished as a "false prophet." Against this we have the fact that Chrysostom does not mention the book, but the date assigned agrees with criticisms as the book now stands.

We must defer to the superior knowledge of this modern "Unveiler," though personally I am inclined to accept the views of those early Fathers who assign the authorship to Cerinthus, and also the later German critics, who believe that the first three chapters and the last have been added by a later hand, and other portions altered to agree with the Scriptures held to be orthodox. Of course this, if it were so, does not effect in any way the views of Mr Pryse, but rather strengthens them, as I look upon the imagery of the book as essentially that of the earlier and pre-Christian Gnostics. Though we may not have absolute proof of the great antiquity of the Gnosis, such as Mr Pryse unveils, yet it is clearly Aryan, dating from the time of Momu—the thinker; then again the development of the Kundalini—serpent fire—world's mother, also termed rousing the Brahm—is said to be shown as issuing from the foreheads of early

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Egyptian kings; Apollonius of Tyana, a contemporary of our Jesus, visited the Gymnosophists of the Upper Nile, but said that they were not equal to those of India. The British Druids must have had a knowledge of the "Serpent fire" in their secret instruction, or why exclaim, "I am a serpent." The Mythraic Mysteries, and all the Eranoi Societies, were equally protected by the laws of Solon seven centuries B.C., and Mr Pryse observes that only once does the word Halleluiah occur in the Bible, yet we know that it formed the close of a chant in the "Rites of Purification" in a call to the slain god for deliverance, in pre-Christian centuries, and further there are Mythraic traces in Revelation. We also know from a large mass of inscriptions found in recent times, that the early Christians made use of the very ancient societies, and by that course spread their doctrine. Before the issue of the "Unsealing," the same translator published the "Magical Message of Iôannes," a translation of great value which receives much additional light from the later work, and the more so as it supplies, in a knowledge of Hermetic Greek, much meaning which escapes us in the authorised version.

In the "Unsealing," Mr. Pryse goes solid for the book, the whole book, and nothing but the book, as the veritable work of the Apostle John, hence the clergy may extend a welcome hand to it. He quite believes it is a work of the Apostle John, and defends the style; amongst these there are some doubtless who are narrow-minded, but here, and still more prominently in America, there are broad-minded clergy who will welcome the Unsealing.

The Freemasons too in their higher grades, which have more or less reached us through the Rosicrucians, have very strong allusions to the Apocalypse, and may profit by it, and this refers to several systems practised throughout the world. Thus the Order of Hérédom (Harodim) Rosy Cross, which has an unchanged Ritual from 1740, at least, draws upon Dionysius the Areopagite, a disciple of St Paul, and it has also a rhythmical description of the New Jerusalem. Again, two entire degrees of the Scottish Rite of 33° are drawn from the Apocalypse, and certainly entered the Rite before 1758, and seem as if they were drawn bodily from the Rosicrucian Militia of the Cross: I allude to the 17° Knight of the East and West, and the 19° of Grand Pontiff, which treat upon the Heavenly Jerusalem, and the opening scene of the Revelations. It was rather a pity that when the late Albert Pike was revising the Rituals, he did not consolidate the Rite by changing the places of the 17° with the 20°, which latter treats of Zerubbabel. His predecessor Morin, in 1767, did a like thing by the Amalgamation of Prince Adept, which he had in his patent of 1762, with Knight of the Sun, and supplying the blank thus created with Patriarch Noachite. There is also the Royal Oriental Order of the Sat Bhai which was founded 1743-5 by a Brahmin Pundit at Prag, for certain Anglo-Indian officers, and which is now well established in America.

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The idea that Revelation is a book of Initiation is not altogether new to Freemasons, as the late Dr Geo. Oliver elaborated that view at considerable length, but Mr Pryse's view is quite a different sort of Initiation; it is the development of the semi-miraculous powers of the Gnosis of Clement, Origen, and the early Christian Church, the birth of the divine three principles, the Crestos, in the human soul. The key to this "Unsealing" is the text itself, in which is found the Nos. 333, 444, 666, 777, 888, 999, 1000, as applied to the seven principal "chakras" of the human body, as taught by Greek Yogis. Apart altogether from the possession of a reliable literal translation of the book, there are seventy-five pages upon the development of the *Kundalini*, and each subject is followed in the text by a commentary in application. Mr Pryse expresses the view that the book is necessarily incomprehensible to the conventional theologian, yet easily comprehended by the esoteric Initiate, *i.e.* by him who possesses the Gnosis, and that the drama is perfect in all its parts. I may add that most of this class of Initiative books had a double interpretation, and hence that the same may be equally found in the Apocalypse, but into this Mr Pryse does not enter.

JOHN YARKER.

Mr Pryse has undoubtedly found the key of the Apocalypse, and many of his interpretations are profound and accurate. But he is afflicted by sexual mania to an extent positively shocking, and does not understand the harmony of the principles. Adeptship is balanced growth, not lopping. A rose dies if you remove the root and stalk, Mr Pryse!

He is unfortunately a poor scholar, and has developed the American literary sense to an incredible point. He translates *ἀκρασια*, "impotence, lack of control," as "sensuality," *ἀγγελος* as "divinity," and gives us "saucers" for "vials"!

Unfortunately, too, he has studied Eastern Mysticism at second-hand, through Theosophical spectacles. Nor has he kept even to Blavatsky the genius, but relied upon her commentators, who had neither her learning nor her experience.

But he has the key, and it opens the way for a real study of "St John" by a person of greater ability.

It is a very remarkable fact, however, that Akrasia (333) and Akolasia (333) should so accurately describe Choronzon (333). No higher test of the truth of "The Vision and the Voice" could be desired.

Again, 666 is 'Η Φορην, not the Lower Mind, as Mr Pryse unhellenically says, but Tiphereth, the Lion that lieth down with the Lamb. Nor, by the way, is Iacchos a phallic God except as 'Ο Νικων himself is phallic, and has his mystic

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name written upon that organ, according to Mr Pryse! Iacchus = IAO = Jehovah, and concentrates I.N.R.I.

We recommend the book for its suggestion and insight; it is one of the best of the kind. NICK LAMB.

SALAMAN ET ABSAL, POÈME ALLÉGORIQUE PERSIAN DE DJAMI. Traduit par AUGUSTE BRICTEUX, Ph.D., Litt.D., etc. etc., avec une Introduction sur le Mysticisme persan, etc. Bruxelles, 10 rue de la Tribune (Librairie Ch. Carrington). 10 *francs*.

A magnificent volume without and within. This, with the single exception of the "Bagh-i-muattar" (Probsthain & Co., 1910, 3gs., and therefore difficult of access), is the greatest of Persian mystic treatises, though it is rather elementary. But we can recommend no better volume for those who know but a little. Dr Bricteux has no experience of mysticism, and so makes mistakes. This was to be expected, but I am surprised at the scholar's error of asserting that the Hindu system lacks the method of love. As ninety-five Hindus practise Bhakti-Yoga for five that practise any other kind, we advise Dr Bricteux to be more careful. But this is a small blemish on a very fine essay. ABHAVANANDA.

RUBAIYAT D'OMAR KHÁYYÁMI. Mis en Rimes françaises par JULES DE BARTHOLD. Bruxelles, 10 rue de la Tribune (Librairie Ch. Carrington). 5 *francs*.

Since the "loathsome and abominable" disclosures with regard to Edward Fitzgerald and "Posh," I suppose every decent Englishman has burnt his copy of the Quatrains. It is consequently very pleasant to find a new translation, accurately representing the original, in beautiful and lucid French. The verses flow with the sound of wine poured in a thirsty country. We can recommend this book to all lovers of whom the *Daily Telegraph* would call "the astronomer-poet of Persia," and then "the tent-maker of Naishapur." A. L.

MAURICE MAETERLINCK. Par GÉRARD HARVEY. Bruxelles, Ch. Carrington. 2.50 *francs*.

I hope I shall find a Gérard Harvey at the Day of Judgment. There is none of that nasty carping spirit which spoils so many sunny natures. When the great Maurice dines alone, it is his almost monachal asceticism; when he has company, it is his genial bonhomie. He smokes—how brave of him; but of course it is denicotinised tobacco—how prudent of him! He sometimes sleeps alone—the modern Galahad; and sometimes with somebody else—"even his

THE BIG STICK

Heinesque moods are steeled through with a strong man's virility." In short, Dr Pangloss was indeed the greatest of philosophers—until Gérard Harvey wiped the floor with him.

A. L.

THE LIMIT. By ADA LEVERSON. 6s.

Mrs Leverson is easily the dantiest and wittiest of our younger feminine writers; but she does well to call her latest masterpiece "the limit." Mrs Leverson offers us a picture of an aged, wrinkled, and bedizened Jewess with false hair and teeth, painted and whitewashed with kohl, rouge, and chalk, until there seems hardly any woman there at all. Yet not content with addiction to indiscriminate adultery and morphine, she finds pleasure in seducing young men and picking their pockets.

Fie! you can surely show us a prettier picture than that. Why not return to your earlier manner? Not necessarily the manner of "An Idyll in Bloomsbury," but you might advantageously find material in Brixton or in Bayswater.

FELIX.

THE SOUL OF THE MOOR. William Rider & Son. 2s. net.

"Success meant life! Failure—worse than death, for there would be the everlasting self-reproach! Dare I attempt the experiment?"

This sounds familiar, but, if memory serves me right, Mr Dion Clayton Calthorpe's drama continues in this strain,—“He carefully surveyed his ashen face in the tiny glass suspended over his washhand stand, then, with hasty, trembling fingers, he dipped his leaky shaving-brush into the icy water, and proceeded, at the ghastly hour of 6 a.m., TO SHAVE!”

Perhaps the fact that “My wife was very ill” accounts for the variation.

Mr Stratford D. Jolly is much too busy a man to devote much time to the “Serious study of the occult,” and it is a pity he should have spent so much time upon the forty-five chapters which comprise this work, instead of upon some other subjects with which he might be more conversant.

In short, it is a flabby, gentlemanly book, which should find a ready sale among the more “goody” portion of Suburbia, the only place where the Hero could be appreciated!

Despite the author's obvious endeavour, there is absolutely nothing immoral in this book, and I can recommend it to great-grandchildren as a suitable Christmas present for their grandmother's aunt.

My congratulations to the illustrator for so thoroughly seizing the spirit of the book.

BUNCO

THE EQUINOX

CHRONICLES OF PHARMACY. By A. C. WOOTTON. Macmillan & Co. 2 vols. 21s.

The title of this work justifies itself as the reader reaches the end of the second volume. To the pharmacist it is an extremely useful book, and in a great many instances furnishes information of an interesting character, which the busy man would have difficulty in finding in pharmaceutical history. To the student of the occult it ought to appeal strongly, as the author gives a long list of drugs used in religious ceremonies in different ages, and although the present century is so much in advance, we find that the incenses and sweet odours used in ceremonial magic to-day are the same as those used in Egypt, in the worship of Isis, and in the services held in the Temple of Solomon. Mention is also made of the preparations made by the ancient alchemists which were thought to have magic power. Short biographical sketches of some of the old masters of pharmacy appear, but after Liebig we have no special mention of the pharmacists of the last century.

A interesting chapter on Poisons in History, introducing the stories of poisoners and the drugs employed, furnishes material for the budding novelist, to whom in fact the whole of this excellent work may be recommended. To the occult reader the concluding chapter on names and symbols would be of considerable service, and might be useful for reference.

The book, which is published in two volumes, is profusely illustrated, and well printed and bound. Had the author not been known as the popular editor of a pharmaceutical newspaper and an authority on all matters connecting with pharmacy, "The Chronicles" would have proved an excellent monument to his memory; unfortunately Mr Wootton died before his book left the publisher's hands.

E. WHINERAY, M.P.S.

NOTE

These Rites were written
and produced by

ALEISTER CROWLEY

except parts of the Rites of Mars
and of Mercury
which were written by an adept
who wishes to remain anonymous

The solos were chosen from her
repertoire by Miss Leila Waddell.

[In view of the absurd statements as to the character of these rites which have been made in certain quarters, it has been thought that the best reply is the publication of the text in full. ED.]

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS AS
PERFORMED AT CAXTON
HALL WESTMINSTER IN
OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER
1910 BY MISS LEILA WAD-
DELL AND MR ALEISTER
CROWLEY WITH DIS-
TINGUISHED ASSISTANCE

- I. THE RITE OF SATURN.
- II. THE RITE OF JUPITER.
- III. THE RITE OF MARS.
- IV. THE RITE OF SOL.
- V. THE RITE OF VENUS.
- VI. THE RITE OF MERCURY.
- VII. THE RITE OF LUNA.

TO MY FRIEND
COMMANDER G. M. MARSTON, R. N.
to whose suggestion
these rite
are due
they are gratefully dedicated.

THE RITE OF SATURN

THE OFFICERS OF THE TEMPLE

MAGISTER TEMPLI, *the representative of Binah, Saturn.*

MATER CŒLI, *Venus in Libra, the house of Saturn's exaltation.*

BROTHER AQUARIUS, *the house of Saturn; in Chesed, because Pisces is water:*
"Hope."

BROTHER CAPRICORNUS, *in the throne of Capricornus, the house of Saturn; in*
Geburah, because Mars is exalted therein. He is Mars in Capricornus.

BROTHER CAPRICORNUS EMISSARIUS.

THE LEADER OF THE CHORUS, or CHORAGOGE.

SCENE.—*In the East is a veiled shrine, containing an altar. To its Chokmah, Binah, Chesed, and Geburah are M. T., M. C., Bro. A., and Bro. C. respectively. Bro C. E. is disguised as an ordinary member of the garrison.*

THE RITE OF SATURN

PART I

BROTHER CAPRICORNUS *enters and turns off Blue light. Red lamps are brought in by BROTHER CAPRICORNUS and the LEADER OF THE CHORUS.*

First the Temple is lighted by two red lamps. PROBATIONERS chant the Capricornus and Aquarius sections from 963 while others wait without in darkness. Red lights are then hidden within veil. BROTHER CAPRICORNUS turns on the Blue light.

The Temple being in darkness, and the assistants seated, let BROTHER CAPRICORNUS arise from his throne, and knock thrice with his spear-butt upon the floor. MAGISTER TEMPLI in the shrine, with MATER CÆLI.

CAPRICORNUS. Procul, O procul este profani!

[He performs the Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram. He next lights the hell-broth and recites:]

Even as the traitor's breath
Goeth forth, he perisheth
By the secret sibilant word that is spoken unto death.

Even as the profane hand
Reacheth to the sacred sand,
Fire consumes him that his name be forgotten in the land.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

Even as the wicked eye
Seeks the mysteries to spy,
So the blindness of the gods takes his spirit: he shall die.

Even as the evil priest,
Poisoned by the sacred feast,
Changes by its seven powers to the misbegotten beast:

Even as the powers of ill,
Broken by the wanded will,
Shriek about the holy place, vain and vague and terrible:

Even as the lords of hell,
Chained in fires before the spell,
Strain upon the sightless steel, break not fetters nor compel:

So be distant, O profane!
Children of the hurricane!
Lest the sword of fire destroy, lest the ways of death be plain!

So depart, and so be wise,
Lest your perishable eyes
Look upon the formless fire, see the maiden sacrifice!

So depart, and secret flame
Burn upon the stone of shame,
That the holy ones may hear music of the sleepless Name!

Holy, holy, holy spouse
Of the sun-engirdled house,
With the secret symbol burning on thy multiscient brows! . . .

Even as the traitor's breath
Goeth forth, he perisheth
By the secret sibilant word that is spoken unto death.

CAPRICORNUS. Brethren, let us awaken the Master of the Temple.

[THE LEADER OF THE CHORUS *beats the tom-tom, and the other brethren clap and stamp their feet. No result.*]

THE RITE OF SATURN

Silence—it is in vain! Brethren, let us invoke the assistance of the Mother of Heaven!

[He goes to veil and reaches through with his hands.

MATER CÆLI. *[Passes through Throne of MAGISTER TEMPLI and enters the Temple.]* Children, what is your will with me?

CAPRICORNUS. Mother of Heaven, we beseech thee to awaken the Master.

MATER CÆLI. What is the hour?

CAPRICORNUS. Mother of Heaven, it lacks a quarter of midnight.

MATER CÆLI. Be it unto your desire!

[She plays. As she ends she kneels: the veil slowly parts, and MAGISTER TEMPLI "is seen standing in shrine. He slowly enters Temple." MATER CÆLI returns to throne, having been blessed and raised by him.]*

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Mother of Heaven, beloved of the Stars, wherefore hast thou awakened the Poison of Eld, the Dweller in Eternity?

MATER CÆLI. Shabbathai.

[MAGISTER TEMPLI comes down to hell-broth and recites "The Eyes of Pharaoh."]

Dead Pharaoh's eyes from out the tomb

Burned like twin planets ruby-red.

Enswathed, enthroned, the halls of gloom

Echo the agony of the dead.

Silent and stark the Pharaoh sate:

No breath went whispering, hushed or scared.

Only that red incarnate hate

Through pylon after pylon flared.

* Kuyawiak: Wieniawski.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

As in the blood of murdered things
The affrighted augur shaking skries
Earthquake and ruinous fate of kings,
Famine and desperate destinies,

So in the eyes of Pharaoh shone
The hate and loathing that compel
In death each damned minion
Of Set, the accursèd lord of Hell.

Yea! in those globes of fire there sate
Some cruel knowledge closely curled
Like serpents in those halls of hate,
Palaces of the Underworld.

But in the hell-glow of those eyes
The ashen skull of Pharaoh shone
White as the moonrays that surprise
The invoking Druse on Lebanon.

Moreover pylon shouldered round
To pylon an unearthly tune,
Like phantom priests that strike and sound
Sinister sistrons at the moon.

And death's insufferable perfume
Beat the black air with golden fans
As Turkis rip a Nubian's womb
With damascened yataghans.

Also the taste of dust long dead
Of ancient queens corrupt and fair
Struck through the temple, subtly sped
By demons dominant of the air.

Last, on the flesh there came a touch
Like sucking mouths and stroking hands
That laid their foul alluring smutch
Even to the blood's mad sarabands.

THE RITE OF SATURN

So did the neophyte that would gaze
 Into dead Pharaoh's awful eyes
Start from incalculable amaze
 To clutch the initiate's place and prize.

He bore the blistering thought aloft:
 It blazed in battle on his plume:
With sage and warrior enfeoffed,
 He rushed alone through tower and tomb.

The myriad men, the cohorts armed,
 Are shred like husks: the ensanguine brand
Leaps like a flame, a flame encharmed
 To fire the pyramid heaven-spanned

Wherein dead Pharaoh sits and stares,
 Swathed in the wrappings of the tomb,
With eyes whose horror flits and flares
 Like corpse-lights glimmering in the gloom

Till all's a blaze, one roar of flame,
 Death universal, locked and linked:—
Aha! one names the awful Name—
 The twin red planets are extinct.

[A pause.]

[The lamp burns out, and darkness covers all.]

[LEADER OF THE CHORUS *secretly removes hell-broth vase.*

PART II

The Temple in Darkness

MAGISTER TEMPLI. 1. ¶ Brother Aquarius, what is the time?

AQUARIUS. Midnight.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. 1. Brother Capricornus, what is the place?

CAPRICORNUS. The Fortress that is upon the Frontier of the Abyss.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. 1. Brothers Aquarius and Capricornus, is the Beloved with us?

AQUARIUS *and* CAPRICORNUS. The Mother of Heaven is enthroned.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Mother of Heaven, let us lament together!

[*Recites Swinburne's "Ilicet."*]*

[MATER CÆLI *plays accordingly.*†]

MAGISTER TEMPLI. 1. Brother Aquarius, to what end are we assembled?

AQUARIUS. [*Rises and whispers in his ear.*] Shabbathai.

ALL [*aloud*]. Shabbathai.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. 1. Are the brethren fed?

¶ The figures represent knocks. 1. a single knock; 22. a battery of two knocks; and so on.

* Swinburne's poems being in copyright, we can only give titles or first lines. The reader should consult Messrs Chatto & Windus' edition of his works.

† Aria arranged for G string: Bach.

THE RITE OF SATURN

AQUARIUS. Upon the corpses of their children.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. 1. Have they quenched their thirst?

AQUARIUS. Upon poppy-heads infused in blood.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. The raven has croaked.

AQUARIUS. The owl has hooted.

CAPRICORNUS. The bat has flapped its wings.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Then . . .

Lights! [CAPRICORNUS *switches on the blue glare.*

1. Brother Aquarius, I scent danger.

AQUARIUS. 1. Master, there are evil things abroad. [To CAPRICORNUS] Turn out the guard!

CAPRICORNUS. Brethren, stand to your arms!

[All PROBATIONERS *rise and follow him. He pricks all assistants with his spear, inspects doors, etc.*]

Master, every man is vigilant at his post. There is no alarm.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. 1. Brother Aquarius, I scent danger.

AQUARIUS. 1. Master, there is a traitor within the gates. [To CAPRICORNUS] Inspect the garrison!

CAPRICORNUS. Brethren, purify your hearts!

[*He rises and looks into every eye. When he comes to BRO.*

CAPRICORNUS EMISSARIUS, *he hales him forth by the hair, before the altar, and plunges his spear into him.*

He completes inspection. Returns and bows to
MAGISTER TEMPLI.]

Master, justice has been executed upon the traitor. Only the faithful remain.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. So perish all traitors!

[CAPRICORNUS *extinguishes light.*

[*A pause.*

PART III

Darkness

AQUARIUS. [*Comes forward and kneels to* MAGISTER TEMPLI.] Master, we beseech thee to permit the ceremony to proceed.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. There was no crackling in the dried leaves. [CAPRICORNUS *joins* AQUARIUS *kneeling.*

AQUARIUS *and* CAPRICORNUS. Master, we beseech thee to permit the ceremony to proceed.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. There was no heart in the black lamb.

[*All* PROBATIONERS *join* AQUARIUS *and* CAPRICORNUS *kneeling.*]

ALL. Master, we beseech thee to permit the ceremony to proceed.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. The sacred python was found dead.

[MATER CÆLI *comes forward, kneels before* MAGISTER TEMPLI, *thus making the apex to the pyramid of petitioners, rises and plays her petition,* then again kneels.*]

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Let the ceremony proceed.

[MATER COELI *returns to her throne.* AQUARIUS *rises, and* CAPRICORNUS *returns to his post and lights the lamp.*

* Abendlied: Schumann.

THE RITE OF SATURN

AQUARIUS *and all present dance wildly for joy to the sound of the tom-tom.*]

[*During the confusion* BRO. CAPRICORNUS EMISSARIUS *slips into the temple and hides behind the veil, where he removes his disguise and dons his dancing robe.*]

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Silence! [A pause.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. I.

AQUARIUS. I.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. I. Holy be the Lamps of Joy!

AQUARIUS. Holy be the Lamps of Sorrow!

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Let us enter the ark of Increased Knowledge!

CAPRICORNUS. Hail, thou that sittest in the City of the Pyramids!

AQUARIUS. Hail, thou that art encamped upon the Great Sea!

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Hail, brethren!

CAPRICORNUS. Master, what is Increased Knowledge?

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Death.

AQUARIUS. Master, what is the Ark thereof?

MAGISTER TEMPLI. The grave.

AQUARIUS *and* CAPRICORNUS. Master, how shall we enter it?

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Arise and follow me!

[*He rises and circumambulates the temple widdershins.*

CAPRICORNUS *plucks forth every third person and makes them follow him, continuing this process until one only is left. To this one* MAGISTER TEMPLI *addresses the allocution, as he hales him forth.*]

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Thou also must die!

[MAGISTER TEMPLI *stops in E.*

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Brethren! let us humbly seek for help behind the veil!

[He throws veil open, showing the empty shrine. BRO. CAPRICORNUS EMISSARIUS must have well dissimulated himself so that he is not discovered. MAGISTER TEMPLI draws veil again. CAPRICORNUS puts out light.]

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Alas! there is no God!

[Returns to his throne. All move confusedly about wailing aloud.]

MAGISTER TEMPLI. 1. Silence.

[All resume seats.

Behold, I declared it unto you and ye believed me not!

[A pause.

PART IV

Darkness

AQUARIUS. In truth, master, the ceremony cannot proceed.
There is no god in the shrine.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Brother Aquarius, let search be made.

AQUARIUS. Brother Capricornus, let search be made.

[*Light on.*

[CAPRICORNUS *enters veil and walks up and down. He returns.*]

[*Lights off.*

Brother Capricornus, what do you find?

CAPRICORNUS. Master, there is nothing but a little pile of dust.

AQUARIUS. There is no living thing therein?

CAPRICORNUS. There is no living thing therein.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. [*Recites poem: "Colloque sentimental."*]

In the ancient frozen solitary park
Two figures passed anon—now mark!

Their eyes are dead, their lips are soft and grey;
One scarce can hear the words they say.

In the ancient frozen solitary park
Two ghosts evoke the past—oh hark!

“Dost thou remember our old ecstasy?”

“Why do you wish to remind me?”

“Does thy heart beat still at my name, and glow?”

“Seest thou my soul in dreams, dear?” “No.”

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

“Ah! the fair days of joyance and of gree
“When our mouths kissed, ah hissed!” “Maybe!”

“How blue the sky was, as our hope was clear!”
“Hope has gone down to Hell’s nadir.”

So in the foolish alleys they conferred,
And only midnight overheard.

AQUARIUS. Master, it is not to be borne.

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Mother of Heaven, let us lament
together!

[*Recites Swinburne’s “The Garden of Proserpine.”*]

[MATER CÆLI *plays accordingly.**]

CAPRICORNUS. Master, it is not to be borne!

MAGISTER TEMPLI. Mother of Heaven, let us work to-
gether!

MATER CÆLI. Behold thine handmaiden!

[MAGISTER TEMPLI *and* MATER CÆLI *go together hand
in hand, within the veil.* CAPRICORNUS *turns light up.*]

[MATER CÆLI *plays a Pæan of despair.*†]

[MAGISTER TEMPLI, *rending veil, appears standing on altar.*

O melancholy Brothers, dark, dark, dark!

O battling in black floods without an ark!

O spectral wanderers of unholy Night!

My soul hath bled for you these sunless years,

With bitter blood-drops running down like tears:

Oh, dark, dark, dark, withdrawn from joy and light!

My heart is sick with anguish for your bale!

Your woe hath been my anguish; yea, I quail

And perish in your perishing unblest.

And I have searched the heights and depths, the scope

Of all our universe, with desperate hope

To find some solace for your wild unrest. {16}

* Légende: Wieniawski.

† Wiegendlied: Hauser

THE RITE OF SATURN

And now at last authentic word I bring,
Witnessed by every dead and living thing;
 Good tidings of great joy for you, for all:
There is no God; no Fiend with names divine
Made us and tortures us; if we must pine,
 It is to satiate no Being's gall.

It was the dark delusion of a dream,
That living Person conscious and supreme,
 Whom we must curse for cursing us with life;
Whom we must curse because the life He gave
Could not be buried in the quiet grave,
 Could not be killed by poison or by knife.

This little life is all we must endure,
The grave's most holy peace is ever sure,
 We fall asleep and never wake again;
Nothing is of us but the mouldering flesh,
Whose elements dissolve and merge afresh
 In earth, air, water, plants, and other men.

We finish thus; and all our wretched race
Shall finish with its cycle, and give place
 To other beings, with their own time-doom
Infinite aeons are our kind began;
Infinite aeons after the last man
 Has joined the mammoth in earth's tomb and womb.

We bow down to the universal laws,
Which never had for man a special clause
 Of cruelty or kindness, love or hate:
If toads and vultures are obscene to sight,
If tigers burn with beauty and with might,
 Is it by favour or by wrath of fate?

All substance lives and struggles evermore
Through countless shapes continually at war,
 By countless interactions interknit:
If one is born a certain day on earth,
All times and forces tended to that birth,
 Not all the world could change or hinder it.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

I find no hint throughout the Universe
Of good or ill, of blessing or of curse:
I find alone Necessity Supreme;
With infinite Mystery, abysmal, dark,
Unlighted ever by the faintest spark
For us the flitting shadows of a dream.

O Brothers of sad lives! they are so brief;
A few short years must bring us all relief:
Can we not bear these years of labouring breath?
But if you would not this poor life fulfil,
Lo, you are free to end it when you will,
Without the fear of waking after death.

[Blow out red lights.]

[BRO. CAPRICORNUS EMISSARIUS *runs out with tom-tom and dances wildly. At the conclusion AQUARIUS and CAPRICORNUS run up, tearing the veil asunder.* BRO. CAPRICORNUS EMISSARIUS *"flings himself at foot of altar.* CHORAGOGE *lights salt again, or other glare.* MAGISTER TEMPLI *is discovered lying dead, his head supported by MATER CÆLI weeping.*]

[CAPRICORNUS extinguishes the light.

[AQUARIUS draws the veil.

[MATER CÆLI plays the final hopeless dirge.]* *[Silence.*

AQUARIUS. Brother Capricornus, what is the hour?

CAPRICORNUS. Noon.

AQUARIUS. Let us depart; it is accomplished. *[Full light.*

[CAPRICORNUS stands with drawn sword before the veil; the others escort the people out.]

* Marche funébre: Waddell.

THE RITE OF JUPITER

OFFICERS

CENTRUM IN CENTRI TRIGONO. *Black Robe, Swastika,*

SPHINX. *Green Robe, Violin and Sword.*

HERMANUBIS. *Violet Robe, Caduceus.*

TYPHON. *Red Robe, Prong two-forked, or Sword.*

HEBE.

GANYMEDE. } *Cup-bearers and Dancers. White Robes.*

The Temple represents the Wheel of Fortune of the Tarot. At its axle is the Altar on which sits C.I.C.T. On the rim, S. at East spoke, H. at North-West, T. at South-West. Hebe and Ganymede are seated at the feet of C.I.C.T. To the West of the Wheel is the Veil.

THE RITE OF JUPITER

PART I

C.I.C.T. 1-333.

SPHINX. 22-22.

HEBE. Pisces Section from 963. [See EQUINOX, No. III., Special Supplement.]

SPHINX. Brother Hermanubis, summon the guests to the banquet of the Father of the Gods!

HERMANUBIS. 4444, Brother Typhon, summon the guests to the banquet of the Father of the Gods!

[TYPHON *draws aside veil as GANYMEDE begins his dance.*
Lights down.]

HERMANUBIS. Welcome to the banquet of the Father of the Gods!

Bear the bowls of Libation! (*done*).

Be silent and secret! For it is by stealth that we are here assembled. Know that Saturn hath been deceived, having swallowed a black stone, thinking it to be his son, the child Jupiter. But Jupiter is here enthroned, and shall overthrow his father. Beware then lest ye break silence—until Jupiter be ready to make war!

TYPHON. Him that speaketh will I slay forthright!

[*A long pause.*]

PART II

CENTRUM IN CENTRI TRIGONO I.

SPHINX I. HERMANUBIS I. TYPHON I.

TYPHON. Hail unto thee, thou great god Hermanubis!
Art thou not the messenger of Jupiter?

HERMANUBIS. Hail unto thee, thou great god Typhon!
Art thou not the executor of his vengeance?

TYPHON. Brother Hermanubis, what is the hour?

HERMANUBIS. Noon. Brother Typhon, what is the place?

TYPHON. The summit of Olympus. Brother Hermanubis,
what is thy position?

HERMANUBIS. Upon the rim of the Wheel. And Thine?

TYPHON. Upon the rim of the Wheel.

HERMANUBIS. Let us seek the centre of the Wheel.

*[They with SPHINX rise and walk, faster and faster round
the rim, returning exhausted to their places.]*

TYPHON. Brother Hermanubis, we are no nearer to the
centre of the wheel.

HERMANUBIS. We are no nearer to the centre of the wheel.

TYPHON. Hast thou no message from the Gods?

HERMANUBIS. None, brother. Let us seek an oracle of
the Gods.

*[They rise and go round the rim, stopping and prostrating
themselves before the SPHINX.]*

THE RITE OF JUPITER

HERMANUBIS. Hail unto Thee, that hast the secret of Jupiter!

Declare unto us, we beseech Thee, the mystery whereby we may approach the centre of the wheel.

[SPHINX *plays a riddling sarcastic music.**

[TYPHON *goes to his place in terror.*

[HERMANUBIS *goes to his place in wonderment.*

SPHINX. Neither by sloth nor by activity may even my secret be attained. Neither by emotion nor by reason may even I be understood. How then should ye come to the centre of the wheel?

HERMANUBIS. Mother of mystery, what is thy position on Olympus?

SPHINX. Upon the rim of the wheel.

C.I.C.T. Feeling, and thought, and ecstasy

Are but the cerements of Me.

Thrown off like planets from the Sun

Ye are but satellites of the One.

But should your revolution stop

Ye would inevitably drop

Headlong within the central Soul,

And all the parts become the Whole.

Sloth and activity and peace,

When will ye learn that ye must cease?

TYPHON. How should I cease from lethargy?

HERMANUBIS. How should I quench activity?

SPHINX. How should I give up ecstasy?

C.I.C.T. What shines upon your foreheads?

S.H.T. (*together*). The Eye within the Triangle.

* Serenade: Drdla.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

C.I.C.T. What burns upon your breasts?

S.H.T. (*together*). The Rosy Cross.

C.I.C.T. Brethren of the Rosy Cross! Aspirants to the Silver Star! Not until these are ended can ye come to the centre of the wheel.

When the chill of earth black-breasted is uplifted at the glance
Of the red sun million-crested, and the forest blossoms dance
With the light that stirs and lustres of the dawn, and with the bloom
Of the wind's cheek as it clusters from the hidden valley's gloom;
Then I walk in woodland spaces, musing on the solemn ways
Of the immemorial places shut behind the starry rays;
Of the East and all its splendour, of the West and all its peace;
And the stubborn lights grow tender, and the hard sounds hush and cease.
In the wheel of heaven revolving, mysteries of death and birth,
In the womb of time dissolving, shape anew a heaven and earth,
Ever changing, ever growing, ever dwindling, ever dear,
Ever worth the passion glowing to distil a doubtful tear.
These are with me, these are of me, these approve me, these obey,
Choose me, move me, fear me, love me, master of the night and day.
These are real, these illusion: I am of them, false or frail,
True or lasting, all is fusion in the spirit's shadow-veil,
Till the Knowledge-Lotus flowering hides the world beneath its stem;
Neither I, nor God life-showering, find a counterpart in them
As a spirit in a vision shows a countenance of fear,
Laughs the looker to derision, only comes to disappear,
Gods and mortals, mind and matter, in the glowing bud dissever:
Vein from vein they rend and shatter, and are nothingness for ever.
In the blessed, the enlightened, perfect eyes these visions pass,
Pass and cease, poor shadows frightened, leave no stain upon the glass.
One last stroke, O heart-free master, one last certain calm of will,
And the maker of Disaster shall be stricken and grow still.
Burn thou to the core of matter, to the spirit's utmost flame,
Consciousness and sense to shatter, ruin sight and form and name!
Shatter, lake-reflected spectre; lake, rise up in mist to sun;
Sun, dissolve in showers of nectar, and the Master's work is done.
Nectar perfume gently stealing, masterful and sweet and strong,
Cleanse the world with light of healing in the ancient House of Wrong!

THE RITE OF JUPITER

Free a million million mortals on the wheel of being tossed!
Open wide the mystic portals, and be altogether lost!

[A pause.]

SPHINX I. HERMANUBIS I. TYPHON I.
CENTRUM IN CENTRI TRIGONO I.

[A pause.]

PART III

TYPHON. I desire to begin the banquet.

HERMANUBIS. Brother Typhon, I will inquire of the Oracle. Mother of Mystery, I beseech thee to begin the Banquet; for it is certainly necessary that this should be done.

[SPHINX *turns, bows, and stretches her hands in mute appeal to C.I.C.T.*]

C.I.C.T. 1. I heed not the passion, or the reason, or the soul of man. Mother of Mystery, declare my will.

[SPHINX *plays the most exalted (passionless because beyond passion) piece that she may.**]

HERMANUBIS. This means nothing to me.

TYPHON. I feel nothing.

C.I.C.T. 1. Mother of Mystery, declare my mind.

[SPHINX *plays a cold, passionless, intellectual piece.†*]

HERMANUBIS. Ah! Ah! This is music; this is the secret of Jupiter.

TYPHON. I feel nothing.

C.I.C.T. 1. Mother of Mystery, declare my heart.

[SPHINX *plays an intensely sensual passionate piece.‡*]

TYPHON. Ah! Ah! This is music; this is the secret of Jupiter.

* Samadhilied: Waddell.

† Adagio: Brahms.

‡ Preislied: Wagner.

THE RITE OF JUPITER

HERMANUBIS. Accursed! Accursed! be the soul of impurity,
the body of Sin!

C.I.C.T. I. Irreconcilable, my children, how shall ye partake
of the Banquet of Jupiter, or come to the centre of the wheel?
For this is the secret of Jupiter, that He who created you is
in each of you, yet apart from all; before Him ye are equal,
revolving in time and in Space; but he is unmoved and
within.

[A *pause*.

TYPHON. I.

[TYPHON *recites*.

Sweet, sweet are May and June, dear,
The loves of lambent spring,
Our lamp the drooping moon, dear,
Our roof, the stars that sing;
The bed, of moss and roses;
The night, as long as death!
Still, breath!
Life wakens and reposes,
Love ever quickeneth!

Sweet, sweet, when Lion and Maiden,
The motley months of gold,
Swoop down with sunlight laden,
And eyes are bright and bold.
Life-swelling breasts uncover
Their warm involving deep—
Love, sleep!—
And lover lies with lover
On air's substantial steep.

Ah! sweeter was September—
The amber rain of leaves,
The harvest to remember,
The load of sunny sheaves.
In gardens deeply scented,
In orchards heavily hung,
Love flung
Away the days demented
With lips that curled and clung.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

Ah! sweeter still October,
When russet leaves go grey,
And sombre lovers and sober
Make twilight of the day.
Dark dreams and shadows tenser
Throb through the vital scroll,
Man's soul.
Lift, shake the subtle censer
That hides the cruel coal!

Still sweeter when the Bowman
His silky shaft of frost
Lets loose on earth, that no man
May linger nor be lost.
The barren woods, deserted.
Lose echo of our sighs—
Love—dies?—
Love lives—in granite skirted,
And under oaken skies.

But best is grim December,
The Goatish God his power;
The Satyr blows the ember,
And pain is passion's flower;
When blood drips over kisses,
And madness sobs through wine:—
Ah, mine!—
The snake starts up and hisses
And strikes and—I am thine!

[*He crouches at the feet of SPHINX toward C.I.C.T.*

[HERMANUBIS *recites.*

HERMANUBIS. I.

O coiled and constricted and chosen!
O tortured and twisted and twined!
Deep spring of my soul deep frozen,
The sleep of the truth of the mind!
As a bright snake curled
Round the Vine of the World!

THE RITE OF JUPITER

O sleeper through dawn and through daylight,
O sleeper through dusk and through night!
O shifted from white light to gray light,
From gray to the one black light!
O silence and sound
In the far profound!

O serpent of scales as an armour
To bind on the breast of a lord!
Not deaf to the Voice of the Charmer,
Not blind to the sweep of the sword!
I strike to the deep
That thou stir in thy sleep!

Rise up from mine innermost being!
Lift up the gemmed head to the heart!
Lift up till the eyes that were seeing
Be blind, and their life depart!
Till the Eye that was blind
Be a lamp to my mind!

Coil fast all thy coils on me, dying,
Absorbed in the sense of the Snake!
Stir! leave the flower-throne, and up-flying!
Hiss once, and hiss thrice, and awake!
Then crown me and cling!
Flash forward—and spring!

Flash forth on the fire of the altar,
The stones, and the sacrifice shed;
Till the Three Worlds flicker and falter,
And life and her love be dead!
In mysterious joy
Awake—and destroy!

[*He crouches at the feet of SPHINX toward C.I.C.T.*

SPHINX. I.

C.I.C.T. I. [SPHINX *plays an enchantment.**

C.I.C.T. (*recites.*)

* Andante: Mendelssohn

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

Lift up this love of peace and bliss,
The starry soul of wine,
Destruction's formidable kiss,
The lamp of the divine:
This shadow of a nobler name
Whose life is strife, whose soul is fame!

I rather will exalt the soul
Of man to loftier height,
And kindle at a livelier coal
The subtler soul of light.
From these soft splendours of a dream
I turn, and seek the Self supreme.

This world is shadow-shapen of
The bitterness of pain.
Vain are the little lamps of love!
The light of life is vain!
Life, death, joy, sorrow, age and youth
Are phantoms of a further truth.

Beyond the splendour of the world,
False glittering of the gold,
A Serpent is in slumber curled
In wisdom's sacred cold.
Life is the flaming of that flame.
Death is the naming of that name,

The forehead of the snake is bright
With one immortal star,
Lighting her coils with living light
To where the nenuphar
Sleeps for her couch. All darkness dreams
The thing that is not, only seems.

That star upon the serpent's head
Is called the soul of man.
That light in shadows subtly shed
The glamour of life's plan.

THE RITE OF JUPITER

The sea whereon that lotus grows
Is thought's abyss of tears and woes.

Leave Sirens! Even Greece
Forget! they are not there!
By worship cometh not the Peace,
The Silence not by prayer.
Leave the illusions, life and time
And Death, and seek that star sublime,

Until the lotus and the sea
And snake no longer are,
And single through Eternity
Exists alone the Star,
And utter Knowledge rise, and cease
In that which is beyond the Peace!

[GANYMEDE *dances and falls as dead.*

TYPHON. O that the banquet of Jupiter might begin!

HERMANUBIS. O that the banquet of Jupiter might begin!

SPHINX. O that the banquet of Jupiter might begin!

C.I.C.T. Let the banquet of Jupiter begin!

[*All go without veil, except C.I.C.T. and SPHINX.*

HERMANUBIS *and* TYPHON *draw and guard the veil.*
SILENCE.]

C.I.C.T. 1-333.

SPHINX. 22-22.

[HERMANUBIS *and* TYPHON *draw veil.* SPHINX *is standing before altar.* C.I.C.T. *has disappeared.* He has *donned a white robe, and panther-skin, and white and gold nemes.* HERMANUBIS, TYPHON, *and others return to their places.* HERMANUBIS *and* TYPHON *come forward and salute* SPHINX.]

TYPHON. 1. Mother of Mystery, hast thou the secret of Jupiter?

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

HERMANUBIS. 1. Mother of Mystery, hast thou the secret of Jupiter?

[SPHINX *plays a triumphant melody.**

TYPHON. Brother Hermanubis, what is the place?

HERMANUBIS. The Summit of Mount Kithairon.

TYPHON. Procul, o Procul este viri!

[*All male probationers retire to back of stage.*

TYPHON. Sisters, let us invoke the Father to manifest in the Son.

SPHINX. Per Spiritum Sanctum, Amen.

[*She also retires to her place on wheel.*

MÆNADS. Evoe! Evoe Ho! Iacche! Iacche!

TYPHON.

Hail, O Dionysus! Hail!

Winged Son of Semele!

Hail, O Hail! The stars are pale;

Hidden the moonlight in the vale;

Hidden the sunlight in the sea.

Blessed is her happy lot

Who beholdeth God; who moves

Mighty-souled without a spot,

Mingling in the godly rout

Of the many mystic loves.

Holy maidens, duly weave

Dances for the mighty mother

Bacchanal to Bacchus cleave!

Wave his narthex wand, and leave

Earthly Joys to earth to smother!

Io! Evoe! Sisters, mingle

In the choir, the dance, the revel!

He divine, the Spirit single,

He in every vein shall tingle.

Sense and sorrow to the devil!

* Obertass: Wieniawski.

THE RITE OF JUPITER

Mingle in the laughing measure,
Hand and lip to breast and thigh!
In enthusiastic pleasure
Grasp the solitary treasure!
Laughs the untiring ecstasy!

Sisters! Sisters! Raise your voices
In the inspired divine delight!
Now the sun sets; now the choice is
Who rebels or who rejoices,
Murmuring to the mystic night.

Io! Evoe! Circle splendid!
Dance, ye maids serene and subtle!
Clotho's task is fairly ended.
Atropos, thy power is ended!
Ho, Lachesis! ply thy shuttle!

Weave the human dance together
With the life of rocks and trees!
Let the blue delirious weather
Bind all spirits in one tether,
Overwhelming ecstasies!

Io! Evoe! I faint, I fall,
Swoon in purple light; the grape
Drowns my spirit in its thrall.
Love me, love me over all,
Spirit in the spirit shape!

All is one! I murmur. Distant
Sounds the shout, Evoe, Evoe!
Evoe, Iacche! Soft, insistent
Like to echo's voice persistent:—
Hail! Agave! Autonoe!

[TYPHON *goes up stage.*

AGAVE. Evoe, Ho! Iacche! Hail, O Hail!
Praise him! What dreams are these?

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

AUTONOE. Sisters, O sisters!
AGAVE. Say, are our brothers of the rocks awake?
AUTONOE. The lion roars.
MÆNADS. O listen to the snake!
AUTONOE. Evoe, Ho! Give me to drink!
AGAVE. Run wild!
Mountain and mountain let us leap upon
Like tigers on their prey!
MAENADS. Crush, crush the world!
AGAVE. Tread earth as 'twere a winepress!
AUTONOE. Drink its blood,
The sweet red wine!
MAENADS. Ay, drink the old earth dry!
AGAVE. Squeeze the last drops out till the frame collapse
Like an old wineskin!
AUTONOE. So the sooner sup
Among the stars!
AGAVE. The swift, swift stars!
MAENADS. O night!
Night, night, fall deep and sure!
AUTONOE. Fall soft and sweet!
AGAVE. Moaning for love the woods lie.
AUTONOE. Sad the land
Lies thirsty for our kisses.
MÆNADS. All wild things
Yearn towards the kiss that ends in blood.
AGAVE. Blood! Blood!
Bring wine! Ha! Bromius, Bromius!
MÆNADS. Come, sweet God,
Come forth and lie with us!

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

Caught in that fiery wave,
Her love and life she gave
With one last kissing cry the unborn child to save.

And thou, O Zeus, the sire
Of Bromius—hunter dire!—
Didst snatch the unborn babe from that Olympian fire:

In thine own thigh most holy
That offspring melancholy
Didst hide, didst feed, on light, ambrosia, and moly.

Ay! and with serpent hair
And limbs divinely fair
Didst thou, Dionysus, leap forth to the nectar air!

Ay! thus the dreams of fate
We dare commemorate,
Twining in lovesome curls the spoil of mate and mate.

O Dionysus, hear!
Be close, be quick, be near,
Whispering enchanted words in every curving ear!

O Dionysus, start
As the Apollonian dart!
Bury thy horned head in every bleeding heart!

1ST MAENAD. He is here! He is here!
AUTONOE. Tigers, appear!
AGAVE. To the clap of my hand
And the whish of my wand,
Obey!
AUTONOE. I have found
A chariot crowned
With ivy and vine,
And the laurel divine,
And the clustering smell

THE RITE OF JUPITER

Of the sage asphodel,
And the Dædal flower
Of the Cretan bower;
Dittany's force,
And larkspur's love,
And blossoms of gorse
Around and above.

AGAVE.

The tiger and panther
Are there at my cry.
Ho, girls! Span there
Their sides!

1ST MÆNAD.

Here am I.

2ND MÆNAD.

And I! We are ready.

AGAVE.

Strong now and steady!

1ST MÆNAD.

The tiger is harnessed.

2ND MÆNAD.

The nightingale urges
Our toil from her far nest.

3RD MÆNAD.

Ionian surges
Roar back to our chant.

4TH MÆNAD.

Aha! for the taunt
Of Theban sages
Is lost, lost, lost!
The wine that enrages
Our life is enforced.
We dare them and daunt.

AGAVE.

The spirits that haunt
The rocks and the river,
The moors and the woods,
The fields and the floods,
Are with us for ever!

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

1ST MÆNAD. Are of us for ever.

Evoe! Evoe!

AUTONOE. Agave! He cometh!

AGAVE. Cry ho! Autonoe!

ALL. Ho! Ho! Evoe, Ho! Iacche! Evoe! Evoe!

AGAVE. The white air hummeth

With force of the spirit.

We are heirs: we inherit.

Our joys are as theirs;

Weave with your prayers

The joy of a kiss!

Ho! for the bliss

Of the cup and the rod.

He cometh! O lover!

O friend and O God,

Cover us, cover

Our faces, and hover

Above us, within us!

Daintily shod,

Daintily robed,

His witcheries spin us

A web of desire.

Subtle as fire

He cometh among us.

The whole sky globed

Is on fire with delight,

Delight that hath stung us,

The passion of night.

Night be our mistress!

That tress and this tress

THE RITE OF JUPITER

Weave with thy wind
Into curls deep-vined!
Passionate bliss!
Rapture on rapture!
Our hymns recapture
The Bromian kiss.
Blessed our souls!
Blessed this even!
We reach to the goals
Of the starriest heaven.
Daphnis, and Atthis, and Chrysis, and Chloe,
Mingle, O maidens! Evoe! Evoe!

[C.I.C.T. *rises upon the altar; he wears a white and gold robe and the panther skin, and a white and gold nemmes. Throwing off his veil and raising his hands in blessing, he recites:*]

C.I.C.T.

I bring ye wine from above,
From the vats of the storied sun;
For every one of ye love,
And life for every one.
Ye shall dance on hill and level;
Ye shall sing in hollow and height,
In the festal mystical revel,
The rapturous Bacchanal rite!
The rocks and trees are yours,
And the waters under the hill,
By the might of that which endures,
The holy heaven of will!
I kindle a flame like a torrent
To rush from star to star;
Your hair as a comet's horrent,
Ye shall see things as they are!

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

I lift the mask of matter;
I open the heart of man;
For I am of force to shatter
The cast that hideth—Pan!
Your loves shall lap up slaughter,
And dabbled with roses of blood
Each desperate darling daughter
Shall swim in the fervid flood.
I bring ye laughter and tears,
The kisses that foam and bleed,
The joys of a million years,
The flowers that bear no seed.
My life is bitter and sterile,
Its flame is a wandering star.
Ye shall pass in pleasure and peril
Across the mystical bar
That is set for wrath and weeping
Against the children of earth;
But ye in singing and sleeping
Shall pass in measure and mirth!
I lift my wand and wave you
Through hill to hill of delight;
My rosy rivers lave you
In innermost lustral light.
I lead you, lord of the maze,
In the darkness free of the sun;
In spite of the spite that is day's
We are wed, we are wild, we are one!

[The lights go out and the company join in universal dance.]

HERMANUBIS. Silence.

TYPHON. Silence.

C.I.C.T. 1-333. The Secret of the Father is in the Secret of the Son.

SPHINX. 22-22. And the Secret of the Son is in the Secret of the Holy Ghost.

GANYMEDE. 4444 Gloria Patri.

THE RITE OF JUPITER

HEBE. Et Filio.

TYPHON. Et Spiritui Sancto.

HERMANUBIS. Ut erat in Principio.

SPHINX. Et nunc est.

C.I.C.T. Et erit semper.

ALL. Amen.

SPHINX	Fasting.
HERMANUBIS	Song.
TYPHON	Feasting.
C.I.C.T.	Grace.
SPHINX	Music.
HERMANUBIS	Dancing.
TYPHON	Love.
C.I.C.T.	The End.

TYPHON *draws the veil.*

THE RITE OF MARS

OFFICERS

BROTHER SOL IN ARIES. *White Robe, White and gold nemes, Sceptre.*

(MARS) BROTHER MARS. *Red Robe, Sword.*

(VENUS) SISTER SCORPIO. *Green Robe, Violin, Sword.*

(ATHENA) BROTHER ARIES. *Violet Robe, Spear.*

(VULCAN) BROTHER CAPRICORNUS. *Black Robe, Tom-tom, Sword.*

A guard of PROBATIONERS, armed.

Mars is throned in the South, Scorpio on his right, Aries on his left. In the East is also a veil, behind which is Sol in Aries. In the North is Capricornus, crouching, kept from the altar by the guard.

THE RITE OF MARS

Charcoal in censer alight. No incense.

BROTHER SOL *is concealed behind the veil in the East, enthroned upon the Altar.*

MARS, ARIES, *and* SCORPIO *enthroned.*

BRO. CAPRICORNUS. 4444-I.

BRO. ARIES. 1-4444.

[MARS *reads the Twelfefold Affirmation from 963.*

[SOR. SCORPIO *plays a short marital air.**

[CAPRICORNUS *draws aside veil, and admits Probationers and Guests.*]

[*The voice of Mars is heard reciting the 91st Psalm of David.*

BRO. ARIES. Let the sacred perfume be kindled upon the Altar of Mars (*does so*).

SOR. SCORPIO. Hail unto the Master of the Battle!

BRO. ARIES. Hail unto the Leader of the Armies of Jupiter!

BRO. CAPRICORNUS. Hail unto the Warrior of Eternity!

BRO. MARS. Hail, brethren!

[CAPRICORNUS *returns.*

1. Let the Temple be purified and consecrated.

[CAPRICORNUS *does so.*

1. Are the Brethren prepared?

* March: Beethoven

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

BRO. ARIES. They are prepared, Master! They are drawn up in military array around the sacred altar.

BRO. MARS. I. Brother Capricornus, I command you to perform the Ritual of the Pentagram.

BRO. CAPRICORNUS. Fiat (*does so*).

BRO. MARS. I. Brother Aries, I command you to perform the Invocation of the Holy Fire.

BRO. ARIES. Fiat (*goes to altar*).

333. (*erect*). I swear by Djinn and by Shin and by the space between that I will not stir from this place until the fire of God hath flamed upon the water that is upon the altar.

(*His face over lamp*) Dost thou hear, Brother Ash?

(*Erect*) By Aub, the witchery of the secret flame;

By Aud, the subtlety of the inmost fluid;

By Aur, the effulgence of the radiant light;

I call thee, Ash! I adore thee, Ash!

(*Over lamp*) Ash! Ash! Ash!

I caress thee! I kiss thee! I suck thee up into my mouth and nostrils!

Ohooatan! (*three times*). (*The water flames*).

Behold! the fire of God upon the altar as I have sworn by Djinn and by Shin and by the space between! (*returns to his throne*).

BRO. MARS. I. Hail, sister of the Scorpion!

SOR. SCORPIO. Hail, Lord of the Eagle and the Serpent!

BRO. MARS. Amen. I appoint you to lead the army.

SOR. SCORPIO. Let us carry the holy symbols with sacred song and dance round the altar of Mars.

[*The song* is sung as all march round five times deosil before*

* Tune. Litany: Waddell.

THE RITE OF MARS

MARS *in procession headed by* SCORPIO, ARIES, CAPRICORNUS.]

Strike, strike the louder chord!

Draw, draw the Flaming Sword!

Crowned child and conquering Lord!

Horus, avenger! [All resume stations.]

Brother Aries, let us invoke the Master of the Battle.

BRO. ARIES [*advances and kneels to* MARS]. Mighty and Terrible One, we beseech thee to lead us in the Battle. Here, by thy Symbols, thy Spear, the Sword, and The Drum, we pray thee to strengthen our arms and to defend our hearts. For we are thy chosen warriors, O thou Master of the Battle!

[*Silence.*]

We now invoke thee, O Ama-Inanna, whom our Brethren worshipped in the days of ancient Babylon, great Goddess of Love and War, who made love and war to Gilgames, the ruler of thine own city Erech. We invoke thee, our Mother, that thou entreat for us with the Master of Battles.

SOR. SCORPIO. To what end do we ask the aid of the Lord Mars?

BRO. ARIES. Unto Jupiter we have given the thunderbolt and the lightning-flash; for we seek to enthrone him in the stead of Saturn his father. But Saturn yet reigns; we need the Sword of Mars.

SOR. SCORPIO. My heart and hand are with you, children.

[*She plays.**]

[MARS *starts up and recites:*

I. . . . The Dukes of Edom were amazed: Trembling took hold on the mighty of Moab!

* Romance in G: Beethoven.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

2. Lord, when thou wentest out of Seir; when thou marchedst out of the Field of Edom; the earth trembled, and the heaven dropped: the clouds also dropped water.

3. Curse ye Meroz, saith the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the Mighty!

4. The river Kishon swept them away: that ancient river, the river Kishon!

5. Oh, my soul, thou hast trodden down strength!

1. He bowed the Heavens also and came down: and darkness was under his feet: at the Brightness that was before him thick clouds passed: hail stones and flashes of fire!

2. The Lord thundred through the Heavens, and the Highest gave forth his voice; hailstones and flashes of fire!

3. He sent forth his arrows and scattered them: He hurled forth his lightnings and destroyed them!

4. The Channels of the Waters were seen: and the Foundations of the World were discovered.

5. At thy Rebuke, oh Lord! At the Blast of the Breath of thy Nostrils!

1. Oh Lord! I have heard thy Speech, and was afraid!

2. The Voice of the Lord is upon the Waters.

The God of Glory thundereth!

The Lord is upon many Waters.

3. The Voice of the Lord is strong and powerful!

The Voice of the Lord is full of Majesty!

4. The Voice of the Lord breaketh the Cedars!

Yea! the Lord breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon!

5. The Voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire!

Yea! the Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh!

1. Eloah came out of Temani of Edom: And the Holy One from Mount Paran:

2. He had Karnaim in his hand; and there was the Hiding of his Power.

3. Before him went the Pestilence; and Flaming Fire went forth at his feet.

4. He stood, and measured the Earth: He beheld, and drove asunder the Nations.

5. And the Everlasting Mountains were scattered; the Perpetual Hills did bow!

THE RITE OF MARS

1. Was the Lord displeased against the Rivers?
Was thine anger kindled against the Rivers?
Was thy wrath kindled against the Sea?
That thou didst ride upon thy Horses and thy Chariots of Salvation?
2. The Mountains saw thee and they trembled. The deluge of Water rolled by: the Deep uttered his voice; and lifted up his hands on high.
3. The Sun and the Moon stood still in their habitations.
At the light of thine arrows they went, at the shaking of thy glittering spear!
4. Thou didst march through the Land in thine indignation: thou didst thresh the Heathen in thine anger.
5. Thou didst march through the sea with thine Horses: through the Depth of the Mighty Waters!

[CAPRICORNUS *starts up wildly and dances the dance of MARS.*]

[CAPRICORNUS *falls on floor near his place.*

SOR. SCORPIO. Brother Aries, let us crown the Master of Battles.

[*They advance to altar. SOR. SCORPIO takes crown and crowns MARS, all PROBATIONERS joining in chant as before.*]

BRO. MARS. May Victory crown your arms!

PROBATIONERS. Let us join battle! We conquer! We conquer.

[CAPRICORNUS *rushes forward and threatens them, reciting:*

My head is split. The crashing axe
Of the agony of things shears through
The stupid skull: out spurt the brains.
The universe revolves, then cracks,
Then roars in dissolution due;
And I am counting up the gains
And losses of a life afire
With dust of thought and dulled desire.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

[SCORPIO, *as if alarmed at the interruption, flees to throne of MARS and there with MARS defies the rabble.* BRO. ARIES *rallies* PROBATIONERS.]

So, all is over. I admit
Futility the lord of will.
Life was an episode for me.
As for the meanest monad, knit
To man by mightier bonds than skill
Of subtle-souled psychology.
May sever. Aim in chaos? None.
The soul rolls senseless as the sun.

[*All are driven back up to altar.*

BRO. CAPRICORNUS. [*ends*]. “There is no God.”

MARS [*leaps up and goes to altar with uplifted sword*].

i. Silence! [*a pause*]. There is no God—but God!

[ARIES *and* PROBATIONERS *dance a war dance.*

[CAPRICORNUS *slinks from temple.*

[MARS *recites.*

This is the day which down the void abyss
At the Earth-born’s spell yawns for Heaven’s despotism,
And Conquest is dragged captive through the deep;
Love, from its awful throne of patient power
In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour
Of dead endurance, from the slippery steep,
And narrow verge of crag-like agony, springs
And folds over the world its healing wings.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance—
These are the seals of that most firm assurance
Which bars the pit over Destructions’s strength;
And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,
Mother of many acts and hours, should free
The serpent that would clasp her with his length,
These are the spells by which to reassume
An empire o’er the disentangled doom.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;

THE RITE OF MARS

To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory!

[SCORPIO *plays in accordance**

BRO. ARIES. Hail to Thee that sailest heavenwards!
Hail to Thee in whose eye is a Flame of Fire!
Hail, Lord of the Destroying Army!

MARS. Hail, brethren.

BRO. ARIES. Hail unto Thee, that hast fought at the side
of our Lord in the great Battle!
Hail unto Thee, our Lady of Tumult!
Terrible and beautiful was thou in the midst of the
battle, upon thy chariot!
Hail unto Thee, as unto thy Lord!

SOR. SCORPIO. Hail, brethren!

BRO. ARIES. Let us rejoice in our victory!

[*He leads PROBATIONERS in the triumphal dance which
becomes slow and voluptuous.*]

[*A pause.*

BRO. ARIES [*to seal his triumph*]. I-4444.

BRO. CAPRICORNUS [*without*]. 4444-I.

[BRO. ARIES *extinguishes all lights.*

[SCORPIO *plays love poem.* †

[MARS *recites:*

Who is this maiden robed for a bride,
White shoulders and bright brows adorable,
The flaming locks that clothe her, and abide,
As God were bathing in the fire of Hell?

* Polonaise: Vieuxtemps.

† Romance: Ranz Ries.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

They change, they grow, they shake
As sunlight on the lake:
They hiss, they glisten on her bosom bare.
O maiden, maiden queen!
The lightning flows between
Thy mounting breasts, too magically fair.
Draw me, O draw me to a dreaming death!
Send out thine opiate breath,
And lull me to the everlasting sleep,
That, closing from the kisses of disdain
To ecstasy of pain,
I may sob out my life into their dangerous deep.

Who cometh from the mountain as a tower
Stalwart and set against the fiery foes!
Who, breathing as a jasmine-laden bower?
Who, crowned and lissome as a living rose?
Sharp thorns in thee are set;
In me, in me beget
The dolorous despair of this desire.
Thy body sways and swings
Above the tide of things,
Laps me as ocean, wraps me round as fire!
Ye elemental sorceries of song,
Surge, strenuous and strong,
Seeking dead dreams, the secret of the shrine;
So that she drain my life and being up
As from a golden cup,
To mingle in her blood, death's kiss incarnadine.

Who cometh from the ocean as a flower?
Who blossometh above the barren sea,
Thy lotus set beneath thee for a bower,
Thine eyes awakened, lightened, fallen on me?
O Goddess, queen, and wife!
O lady of my life!
Who set thy stature as a wood to wave?
Whose love begat thy limbs?
Whose wave-washed body swims
That nurtured thee, and found herself a grave?

THE RITE OF MARS

But thou, O thou, hast risen from the deep!
All mortals mourn and weep
To see thee, seeing that all love must die
Besides thy beauty, see thee and despair!
Deadly as thou art fair,
I cry for all mankind—they are slain, even as I!

[SOR. SCORPIO *takes crown off.*
[A pause.

[BROTHER CAPRICORNUS *dances the dance of Vulcan to anvil-music in gradually increasing red light, at end rushes to throne and finds MARS and SCORPIO, their weapons laid aside, in each other's arms.*]

BRO. CAPRICORNUS. Ah, wanton!

[SOR. SCORPIO *takes violin and charms the offended deity, who retires pacified.**]

MARS. Brethren in arms, this is not defeat, but victory!
For though I be dethroned, not to Me, not to our lady was the glory. For always is the true God hidden—behold!

[*One turns on the white light, and there stands SOL IN ARIES upon the throne of the East. MARS goes to him and recites:*]

Unity uttermost showed,
I adore the might of thy breath,
Supreme and terrible God
Who makest the Gods and death
To tremble before thee:—
I, I adore thee!

[*He kneels.*

O Hawk of gold with power enwalled,
Whose face is like an emerald;
Whose crown is indigo as night;
Smaragdine snakes about thy brow

* Romance from 2nd Concerto: Wieniawski.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

Twine, and the disk of flaming light
Is on thee, seated in the prow
Of the Sun's bark, enthroned above
With lapis-lazuli for love
And ruby for enormous force
Chosen to seat thee, thee girt round
With leopard's pell, and golden sound
Of planets choral in their course!

[He rises.

O thou self-formulated sire!
Self-master of thy dam's desire!
Thine eyes blaze forth with fiery light;
Thine heart a secret sun of flame!
I adore the insuperable might:
I bow before the unspoken Name.

[He bows, then turns toward altar.

For I am Yesterday, and I
To-day, and I to-morrow, born
Now and again, on high, on high
Travelling on Dian's naked horn!
I am the Soul that doth create
The Gods, and all the Kin of Breath.
I come from the sequestered state;
My birth is from the House of Death.

[He advances to altar.

Hail! ye twin hawks high pinnaced
That watch upon the universe!
Ye that the bier of God beheld!
That bore it onwards, ministers
Of peace within the house of Wrath,
Servants of him that cometh forth
At dawn with many-coloured lights,
Mounting from underneath the North,
The shrine of the celestial Heights!

[At altar.

THE RITE OF MARS

He is in me, and I in Him!
Mine is the crystal radiance
That filleth aether to the brim
Wherein all stars and suns may dance.
I am the beautiful and glad,
Rejoicing in the golden day.
I am the spirit silken-clad
That fareth on the fiery way.
I have escaped from him, whose eyes
Are closed at eventide, and wise
To drag thee to the House of Wrong:—
I am armed! I am armed! I am strong! I am strong!
I make my way: opposing horns
Of secret foemen push their lust
In vain: my song their fury scorns;
They sink, they grovel in the dust.

[He turns to SOL.]

Hail, self-created Lord of Night!
Inscrutable and infinite!
Let Orpheus journey forth to see
The Disk in peace and victory!
Let him adore the splendid sight,
The radiance of the Heaven of Nu;
Soar like a bird, laved by the light,
To pierce the far eternal blue!

[He turns to ARIES and SCORPIO.]

Hail! Hermes! thou the wands of ill
Hast touched with strength, and they are shivered!
The way is open unto will!
The pregnant Goddess is delivered!

[He kneels to SOL.]

Happy, yea, happy! happy is he
That hath looked forth upon the Bier
That goeth to the House of Rest!
His heart is lit with melody;
Peace in his house is master of fear;
His holy Name is in the West

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

When the sun sinks, and royal rays
Of moonrise flash across the day's.

[He rises and faces altar.

I have risen! I have risen! as a mighty hawk of gold!
From the golden egg I gather, and my wings the world enfold.
I alight in mighty splendour from the thronèd boats of light;
Companies of Spirits follow me; adore the Lords of Night.
Yea, with gladness did they pæn, bowing low before my car,
In my ears their homage echoed from the sunrise to the star.
I have risen! I am gathered as a lovely hawk of gold,
I the first-born of the Mother in her ecstasy of old.
Lo! I come to face the dweller in the sacred snake of Khem;
Come to face the Babe and Lion, come to measure force with them!
Ah! these locks flow down, a river, as the earth's before the Sun,
As the earth's before the sunset, and the God and I are One.
I who entered in a Fool, gain the God by clean endeavour;
I am shaped as men and women, fair for ever and for ever.

*[He turns and falls clasping SOL'S feet. All prostrate themselves in adoration. SOR. SCORPIO plays her solar chant.**

[SOL in ARIES recites:

The world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn;
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam,
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
From waves serener far;
A new Peneus rolls his fountains
Against the morning star.
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

* Papillon: Bohm.

THE RITE OF MARS

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
 Fraught with a later prize;
Another Orpheus sings again,
 And loves, and weeps, and dies.
A new Uylsses leaves once more
Calypso for his native shore.

Oh, write no more the tale of Troy,
 If earth Death's scroll must be!
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
 Which dawns upon the free;
Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,
 And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
 The splendour of its prime;
And leave, if nought so bright may live,
All earth can take or Heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose
 Shall burst, more bright and good
Than all who fell, than One who rose,
 Than many unsubdued.
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

Oh, cease! must hate and death return?
 Cease! must men kill and die?
Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn
 Of bitter prophecy.
The world is weary of the past.
Oh, might it die or rest at last!

BRO. ARIES. 1-4444. The battle is indeed fought.

SOL. IN ARIES. 333-333. The victory is indeed won.

BRO. ARIES. Brethren, the Sun is arisen. Let us depart
in joy.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

SOR. SCORPIO. Let us depart in love.

MARS. Let us depart in peace.

[The officers leave the Temple, MARS and SCORPIO escorting SOL in ARIES, ARIES and CAPRICORNUS following at the head of the Guard of PROBATIONERS.]

THE RITE OF SOL

OFFICERS

SOL. *Leopard skin. Nemys white-gold over white-sleeved robe. Spear.*

ARIES. *White robe, spear.*

LEO. *Red robe, spear.*

SATAN-TYPHON. *Violet robe.*

SCORPIO-APOPHIS. *Green robe.*

BEZ. *Black-robe.*

FOUR PROBATIONERS.

Sol is enthroned in the East; behind him is a black veil which conceals a great scarlet cross. Before him is a second veil. He is supported by Aries on the right, and Leo on the left. The other officers are without the temple, in waiting. In presentation in public, a third veil divides the temple from the congregation.

THE RITE OF SOL

LEO *parts the outermost veil, and advancing, recites chorus from Atalanta in Calydon.*

Before the beginning of years
There came to the making of man ... etc.
... His life is a watch or a vision
Between a sleep and a sleep.

[Returns. A pause.

ARIES. 333-333.

LEO. 333-333.

ARIES. Brother Leo, what is the place?

LEO. The Temple of the Sun upon the Mountain of Abiegnus!

ARIES. Brother Leo, what is the hour?

LEO. Sunset!

ARIES. It is the hour of sacrifice.

LEO. Brother Aries, what is the sacrifice?

ARIES. It is hidden from me.

[Silence.

SOL. 1-22-22-1.

ARIES. Hark! it is the Summons of the King.

LEO. It is the Lord of Heaven that awakens the Children of the Light. [They draw the veil—full light—and kneel.

ARIES. Let us adore the Exalted One!

LEO.

Life of Life, thy lips enkindle
With their love the breath between them;

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

And thy smiles before they dwindle
 Make the cold air fire; then screen them
In those looks, where whoso gazes
Faints, entangled in their mazes.

Child of Light! thy limbs are burning
 Through the vest which seems to hide them;
As the radiant lines of morning
 Through the clouds, ere they divide them;
And this atmosphere divinest
Shrouds thee wheresoe'er thou shinest.

Fair are others; none beholds thee,
 But thy voice sounds low and tender
Like the fairest, for it folds thee
 From the sight, that liquid splendour,
And all feel, yet see thee never,
As I feel now, lost forever!

Lamp of Earth! where'er thou movest
 Its dim shapes are clad with brightness,
And the souls of whom thou lovest
 Walk upon the winds with lightness,
Till they fall, as I am falling,
Dizzy, lost, yet unbewailing!

ARIES. Hail unto Thee, O thou that art exalted in thy strength, that travellest over the Heaven in Thy Bark in the Splendour of noon! [ARIES and LEO resume thrones.

[A PROBATIONER recites the 12 fold glorification of God from 963.]

[Enter SCORPIO-APOPHIS dressed in a filmy white robe, her hair in disorder.]

[ARIES and LEO rise and bow.

ARIES. Hail thou! Whence comest thou?

SCORPIO-APOPHIS. From the House of God.

ARIES. What bringest thou as an offering to our Lord?

THE RITE OF SOL

SCORPIO-APOPHIS. The House of God is fallen. There is nothing left therein. Therefore I bring nothing but myself.

LEO. Let us burn her upon the altar of burnt offering.

SCORPIO-APOPHIS. But in the fire my tears would be dried up; and these tears are of mine offering to the Lord.

LEO. Let us throw her to the sacred crocodile.

SCORPIO-APOPHIS. But in the water my heart would be chilled; and this heart is of mine offering to the Lord.

LEO. Let us throw her to the winds from the Watchtowers of Silence.

SCORPIO-APOPHIS. But in the wind my hymns would not be heard; and these hymns are of mine offering to the Lord.

LEO. Let us bury her in the consecrated mountain!

SCORPIO-APOPHIS. But in the earth the worms would devour my flesh; and this flesh is of mine offering to the Lord. Oh Lord, let thy servants return unto their thrones that I may worship Thee as I will.

SOL. 22-I-I-22.

[ARIES *and* LEO *return to their thrones.*

[SCORPIO-APOPHIS *plays her passionate melody, her siren melody, her despairing "Venus in Tannhäuser" melody.* She clasps the feet and knees of SOL but he gives no sign of life.*]

[*At the end* ARIES *and* LEO *rise from their thrones— a pause.*]

ARIES. (*Loudly*). 333-333.

LEO. (*Louder*). 333-333.

ARIES. The hour of sacrifice is past.

SCORPIO-APOPHIS. The hour of sacrifice is to come.

* Liebstod from Tristan and Isolde: Wagner.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

LEO. The sacrifice is not accepted.

SCORPIO-APOPHIS. The sacrifice is accepted.

ARIES. Depart from us, thou unclean thing!

[ARIES *and* LEO *raise her and march from the temple, ARIES leading, LEO following her.*]

[ARIES *and* LEO *re-enter and resume thrones—a pause.*

ARIES. 333-333.

LEO. 333-333.

ARIES. Brother Leo, this is of evil omen.

LEO. Brother Aries, it is indeed of evil omen.

ARIES. There will be no more sacrifice to-day.

LEO. There will be no more sacrifice to-day.

ARIES. The sun is already setting.

LEO. The night birds are already abroad.

ARIES. It grows very dark.

LEO. The path is too steep and dangerous for any pilgrims to come hither.

ARIES. There is no moon to-night.

LEO. I think there will be rain.

ARIES. Let us close the shrine.

LEO. The disk of the sun is not yet quite obscured.

ARIES. But no pilgrims can come now.

LEO. No pilgrims can come now. But it is the rule of the temple that the shrine is open unto the last spark of sunlight.

ARIES. Brother Leo, I beg that you will close the shrine with me.

LEO. It cannot be.

ARIES. Brother Leo, I know the rule. But evil will assuredly come to us from this.

LEO. Brother Aries, the Law may not be broken.

THE RITE OF SOL

ARIES. Brother Leo, the Law is made so that the wise may break it at their need.

LEO. Brother Aries, in my heart is fidelity—fidelity—fidelity.

ARIES. Brother Leo, a god has whispered in mine ear: it is folly—folly—folly.

LEO. The sun will be obscured in a moment: and no pilgrims can come to-night.

ARIES. No pilgrims can come to-night.

LEO. There will be no more sacrifice.

ARIES. There will be no more sacrifice.

[SATAN-TYPHON, SCORPIO-APOPHIS, and BESZ enter silently in procession. The light grows momentarily dimmer.]

ARIES. Hail, brethren! Ye are come to adore the splendour of the sun?

SATAN-TYPHON. We are come to sacrifice.

ARIES. What are the offerings?

BESZ. Dancing.

SCORPIO-APOPHIS. Music.

SATAN-TYPHON. Silence and Stillness.

[*He prostrates himself and remains motionless.*

[SCORPIO-APOPHIS bows to SOL and plays an adoration.*

[BESZ dances in adoration in three-time.

[SATAN-TYPHON rises and bows.

ARIES. Whence come ye, brethren?

SATAN-TYPHON. From the dwelling-place of the sun.

ARIES. Who are ye, brethren?

SATAN-TYPHON. I am the twin brother of the sun.

SCORPIO-APOPHIS. I am the beloved of the sun.

* Romance: Max Bruch.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

ARIES. [*To BESZ.*] But who art thou, brother?

[*BESZ begins to stammer.*]

LEO. Who art thou?

[*They threaten him with their spears. BESZ crouches in terror and lurks toward West.*]

SATAN-TYPHON. I would have speech with my brother the Sun.

ARIES. It is well.

LEO. It is not well. There is danger herein to my Lord.

[*He bars the way.*]

ARIES. Speech cannot harm our Lord.

LEO. Brother, if thou be indeed our borther, what wilt thou say?

SATAN-TYPHON. O Sun, my brother, is it thy will that I have speech with thee? For I lay with thee nine moons in the womb of our mother; for we have loved as none have loved; for I am closer knit with thee than light and darkness, or than life and death!

SOL. 22-I-I-22.

[*LEO gives way and returns to his throne, very sad.*]

[*SATAN-TYPHON advances to SOL and ARIES closes the veil on them.*]

[*BESZ jumps up and runs off crouchingly.*]

[*The lights go out.*]

[*SCORPIO-APOPHIS plays her serpent melody.**]

[*LEO "recites."*]

Mortals never learn from stories
How catastrophe becomes;
How above the victor's glories
In the trumpets and the drums

* Andante Religioso: Thomé

THE RITE OF SOL

And the cry of millions "Master!"

Looms the shadow of disaster.

Every hour a man hath said:

"That at least is scotched and dead."

Some one circumstance: "At last

That, and its effects, are past."

Some one terror—subtle foe!

"I have laid that spectre low."

They know not, learn not, cannot calculate

How subtly Fate

Weaves its fine mesh, perceiving how to wait;

Or how accumulate

The trifles that shall make it master yet

Of the strong soul that bade itself forget.

[*A dim red light dawns. BESZ enters, leading four PROBATIONERS who bear the Pastos. They place it before the altar.*]

ARIES. What is this offering?

BESZ. The eater of Flesh is my name.

ARIES. Oh, our Lord, our Lord! Arise in thy might, and let thine enemies be scattered!

[*ARIES and LEO draw veil. The throne has been cast down. On the black veil is a great red cross, whereon SOL has been crucified. Before him stands SATAN-TYPHON in the sign of Apophis and Typhon.*]

[*ARIES and LEO fall as if slain. SCORPIO-APOPHIS plays her murder melody.**]

[*Meanwhile the PROBATIONERS advance and under the direction of Typhon, who stabs SOL in the proper manner with the spear of SOL, take down SOL from the cross and lay him in the Pastos. They cover it. BESZ does his brutal demoniac dance upon the lid of the coffin.*]

* Mort d'Adonis: Waddell.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

Exeunt OMNES exc. SOL. This ends in complete darkness. Silence. There is a flash of light, and the stage is shown empty. Only a glimmer remains. Now SCORPIO-AOPHIS steals on to the stage, and plays a low secret melody. The red lights increase. She uncovers and embraces the corpse. Then covers it again, goes to the throne, and instals herself thereon. The green light dawns and glows brighter and brighter, as the red light dwindles and goes out.]*

SCORPIO-AOPHIS. 7777777.

[The PROBATIONERS and other officers enter, erect.

SCORPIO-AOPHIS. Children, array yourselves before me, and worship at my feet.

ARIES. Our Lord is slain. And who art thou that hast assumed His Throne?

LEO. Our Lord is slain. And who art thou that hast assumed His Throne?

SCORPIO-AOPHIS. I am the Mother of the Gods and the Sister of Time and the Daughter of Space. I am Nature that holdeth sway when the effort of man is exhausted. Brother Leo, I am the goddess that cometh forth riding upon the Lion. Behold! I strike thee with my wand, and inspire thee.

I command thee to declare me unto the multitude.

LEO.

Lo! in the interstellar space of night
Clothed with deep darkness, the majestic spaces
Abide the dawn of deity and light,
Vibrate before the passionless pale faces

* Canzonetta: D'Ambrosio.

THE RITE OF SOL

Shrined in exceeding glory, eremite.

The tortoise skies in sombre carapaces
Await the expression and the hour of birth
In silence through the adamantine girth.

I rose in glory, gathered of the foam.

The sea's flower folded, charioting me risen
Where dawns rose stole from its pearl-glimmering home,
And heaven laughed, and earth: and mine old prison,
The seas that lay beneath the mighty dome,
Shone with my splendour. Light did first bedizen
Earth with its clusters of fiery dew and spray,
When I looked forth and cried, "It is the day!"

The stars are dewdrops on my bosom's space;

The sun and moon are glances through my lashes,
Long, tender rays of night; my subtle face
Burns through the sky-dusk, lightens, fills, and flashes
With solemn joy and laughter of love; the grace
Of all my body swaying stoops and dashes
Swift to the daisy's dawn of love: and swiftest,
O spirit of man, when unto me thou liftest!

Dawn shakes the molten fire of my delight

From the fine flower and fragrance of my tresses!
Sunset bids darken all my body's light,
Mixing its music with the sad caresses
Of the whole world: I wheel in wingless flight
Through lampless space, the starless wildernesses!
Beyond the universal bounds that roll,
There is the shrine and image of my soul.

I am Nature and God: I reign, I am, alone.

None other may abide apart: they perish,
Drawn into me, into my being grown.
None other bosom is, to bear, to nourish,
To be: the heart of all beneath my zone
Of blue and gold is scarlet-bright to cherish
My own life's being, that is, and is not other;
For I am God and Nature and thy Mother.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

I am the thousand-breasted milky spouse,
Virginal also: Tartarus and Gaia
Twinned in my womb, and Chaos from my brows
Shrank back abashed, my sister dark and dire,
Mother of Erebus and Night, that ploughs
With starry-sandalled feet the fields of fire;
My sister shrank and fell, the infernal gloom
Changed to the hot sweet shadow of my womb.

I am: that darkness strange and uterine
Is shot with dawn and scented with the rose;
The deep dim prison-house of corn and wine,
Flowers, children, stars, with flame far subtler glows
Formless, all-piercing, death-defying, divine,
A sweet frail lamp whose shadow gleams and shows
No darkness, is as light is where its rays
Cross, interweave, and marry with the day's!

I am: the heart that flames from central Me,
Seeks out all life, and takes again, to mingle
Its passion with my might and majesty,
Till the vast floods of the man's being tingle
And glow, self-lost within my soul and sea
Of love, the sun of utter light, and single
Keen many-veined heart: our lips and kisses
Marry and muse on our immortal blisses.

I am: the greatest and the least: the sole
And separate life of things. The mighty stresses
Of worlds are my nerves twitching. Branch and bole
Of forests waving in deep wildernesses
Are hairs upon my body. Rivers roll
To make one tear in my superb caresses,
When on myself myself begets a child,
A system of a thousand planets piled!

I am: the least, the greatest: the frail life
Of some small coral-insect still may tremble
With love for me, and call me queen and wife;
The shy plant of the water may dissemble

THE RITE OF SOL

Its love beneath the fronds; reply to strife
 With strife, and all its tiny being crumble
Under my rough and warrior husband-kiss,
 Whose pain shall burn, and alter, and be bliss!

I am: no word beside that solemn one
 Reigns in sound's kingdom to express my station,
Who, clothed and crowned with suns beyond the sun,
 Bear on the mighty breast of foam Thalassian,
Bear on my bosom, jutting plenilune,
 Maiden, the fadeless Rose of the Creation!
The whole flower-life of earth and sky and sea
From me was born, and shall return to me!

I am: for men and beings passionate,
 For mine own self calm as the river-cleaving
Lotus-borne lord of Silence: I create
 Or discreate, both in my bosom heaving:
My lightest look is mother of a Fate:
 My fingers sapphire-ringed with sky are weaving
Ever new flowers and lawns of life, designed
Nobler and newer in mine older mind.

I am: I am not, but all-changing move
 The worlds evolving in a golden ladder,
Spiral or helical, fresh gusts of love
 Filling one sphere from the last sphere grown gladder;
All gateways leading far to the above.
 Even as the bright coils of the emerald adder
Climb one by one in glory of sunlight, climb
My children to me up the steep of Time.

I am: before me all the years are dead,
 And all the fiery locks of sunrise woven
Into the gold and scarlet of my head:
 In me all skies and seas are shaken and cloven:
All life and light and love about me shed,
 Begotten in me, in my moving moven,
Are as my tears: all worlds that ever swam
As dew of kisses on my lips: I am.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

[*She draws LEO up to her. The others kneel in adoration.*

SCORPIO-AOPHIS *plays her soft voluptuous melody.**]

ARIES. Brother Leo, what is the hour?

LEO. The evening star is arisen.

ARIES. The sacrifice is accomplished.

LEO. What is the sacrifice?

ARIES. Man.

LEO. Who is the priestess?

ARIES. Woman.

LEO. Unto what God?

ARIES. It is hidden from me.

LEO. Let every man depart unto his house.

ARIES. I-333-I-I. LEO. I-333-I-I. SCORPIO-

AOPHIS. I-I-333-I.

* Romance: Saint Saens.

THE RITE OF VENUS

THE OFFICERS

VENUS. *Blue Robe.*

TAURUS. *Orange Robe.*

LIBRA. *Green Robe.*

PISCES. *Crimson Robe.*

LUNA IN TAURUS. *Silver Robe.*

SATURN IN LIBRA. *Black Robe.*

No officer has any weapon. Venus is throned, and on her right are Libra and Saturn in Libra, on her left Taurus and Luna in Taurus, while at her feet lies Pisces. Her throne is an oyster-shell, as in the picture by Botticelli. Before it a veil. Without, an altar; and without the temple, a further veil.

THE RITE OF VENUS

PRELUDE

Full light. VENUS, seated before altar, LIBRA and TAURUS
at its sides.

VENUS. 7777777.

LIBRA. 7777777.

TAURUS. 7777777.

VENUS. Brother Libra, I command thee to declare the
Secret of Venus.

LIBRA *recites Swinburne's "Hertha."* [*All present recline
and sleep.*]

VENUS. Having ears they hear not. Brothers Taurus and
Libra, let the veil be drawn. [*They do so.*]

PART I

[*Twilight.* VENUS is enthroned on high, swathed in masses
of red hair and roses. The altar is covered with roses;
there is a small flame thereon.]

TAURUS and LIBRA draw the inner veil apart. LIBRA
returns and kneels.

LIBRA.

Daughter of Glory, child
Of Earth's Dione mild
By the Father of all, the Ægis-bearing King!

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

Spouse, daughter, mother of God,
Queen of the blest abode
In Cyprus' splendour singly glittering.
Sweet sister unto me,
I cry aloud to thee!
I laugh upon thee laughing, O dew caught up from sea!

Drawn by sharp sparrow and dove,
And swan's wide plumes of love,
And all the swallow's swifter vehemence,
And, subtler than the Sphinx,
The ineffable iynx
Heralds thy splendour swooning into sense,
When from the bluest bowers
And greenest-hearted hours
Of Heaven thou smil'st toward earth, a miracle of flowers!

Down to the loveless sea
Where lay Persephone
Violate, where the shade of earth is black,
Crystalline out of space
Flames the immortal face!
The glory of the comet-tailed track
Blinds all black earth with tears.
Silence awakes and hears
The music of thy moving come over the starry spheres.

Wrapped in rose, green, and gold,
Blues many and manifold,
A cloud of incense hides thy splendour of light;
Hides from the prayer's distress
Thy loftier loveliness,
Till thy veil's glory shrouds the earth from night;
And silence speaks indeed,
Seeing the subtler speed
Of its own thought than speech of the Pandean reed!

[LIBRA *returns.*

THE RITE OF VENUS

VENUS. 7777777.

SATURN. Amen.

VENUS. 333-I-333.

LUNA. Amen.

VENUS. I-55555-I.

LIBRA *and* PISCES. Amen.

VENUS. Brother Saturn, what is the hour?

SATURN. Twilight.

VENUS. Sister Pisces, from whose house are we come out?

PISCES. From the House of Death.

VENUS. Brother Taurus, what is stronger than death?

TAURUS. Love.

VENUS. Brother Libra, what is the place?

LIBRA. The Mountain of Venus, that hangeth from the navel of the Universe over the Great Abyss.

VENUS. Let us celebrate the Rite of Venus.

[LUNA *plays a waltz tune. The PROBATIONERS dance together.*]

VENUS. Children of Love, what is the hour?

ALL. [*A confused murmur.*] It is the hour of love.

[ALL *sink down together. The lights go out. A long pause.*]

PART II

VENUS. (*Awakening.*) 333-1-333.

[*Venus is brilliantly illuminated; the rest remain dark.*

VENUS. Little brother, what is the hour?

PISCES. The dawn is at hand.

VENUS. Little brother, what is the place?

TAURUS. It is the holy mountain of our Lady Venus.

VENUS. Children, awake and rejoice.

LIBRA. Awake and rejoice.

PISCES. How shall we rejoice?

TAURUS. As our Lady hath appointed.

LIBRA. As you like it.

PISCES. Wherein shall we rejoice?

TAURUS. In our Lady Venus.

LIBRA. In what you will.

TAURUS. Thy will, our lady, and not ours be done!

PISCES. Mistress, let the adorations be performed!

VENUS. Children, array yourselves before me, and rejoice in the adorations of my beauty.

[*They form, each with his partner. LIBRA disappears behind veil. TAURUS recites invocation.*]

TAURUS.

Salutation to Hathor, holy cow in the pastures of Evening.

Salutation to Hathor, in the Mountain of the West; in the land of perfect Peace, Salutation.

THE RITE OF VENUS

A devouring fire is thy soul, and the corpses of the dead are enkindled at thy
breath.

Salutation to Hathor, the child of Isis and of Nephthys!

Salutation to Hathor, the bride of Apis, of Apis that hath the beetle upon his
tongue!

A devouring fire is thy soul, and the corpses of the dead are enkindled at thy
breath.

Salutation to Hathor, whose necklace is of the Souls of the blessed ones of
Amennti.

Salutation to Hathor, whose girdle is of the Souls of the blessed ones of Seb!

Salutation to Hathor, whose sandals are of the Souls of the blessed ones of Nu!

A devouring fire is thy soul, and the corpses of the dead are enkindled at thy
breath.

[*Returns to his throne.*

VENUS. Brother Libra, art thou silent? [A pause.
Brother Libra, where art thou?

LIBRA, *still hidden, recites from Swinburne's "Atalanta."*

We have seen thee, O Love, thou art fair; thou art goodly, O Love;
Thy wings make light in the air as the wings of a dove, etc.

... Famine, and blighting of corn,
When thy time was come to be born.

[LIBRA *appears and confronts her.*

All these we know of; but thee
Who shall discern or declare? etc.
... Wilt thou utterly bring to an end?
Have mercy, mother!

VENUS. Nay, brother, thou art the chiefest of my chosen.

LIBRA. Alas.

VENUS. Yea, brother: in the end all turn to me, and all
return to me.

Isis am I, and from my life are fed
All showers and suns, all moons that wax and wane;
All stars and streams, the living and the dead,
The mystery of pleasure and of pain.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

I am the mother! I the speaking sea!
I am the earth and its fertility!
Life, death, love, hatred, light, darkness, return to me—
To me!

Hathoor am I, and to my beauty drawn
All glories of the Universe bow down,
The blossom and the mountain and the dawn,
Fruit's blush, and woman, our creations's crown.
I am the priest, the sacrifice, the shrine,
I am the love and life of the divine!
Life, death, love, hatred, light, darkness are surely mine—
Are mine!

Venus am I, the love and light of earth,
The wealth of kisses, the delight of tears,
The barren pleasure never come to birth,
The endless, infinite desire of years.
I am the shrine at which thy long desire
Devoured thee with intolerable fire.
I was song, music, passion, death, upon thy lyre—
Thy lyre!

I am the Grail and I the Glory now:
I am the flame and fuel of thy breast;
I am the star of God upon thy brow;
I am thy queen, enraptured and possessed.
Hide thee, sweet river; welcome to the sea,
Ocean of love that shall encompass thee!
Life, death, love, hatred, light, darkness, return to me—
To me!

[PISCES *performs a sleepy sinuous dance by herself, and returns to Venus' throne lapsed into herself, and as if exhausted.*]

Rise, rise, my knight! My king! My love, arise!
See the grave avenues of Paradise,
The dewy larches bending at my breath,
Portentous cedars prophesying death!

THE RITE OF VENUS

[She is interrupted by the Violin of the throned LUNA, who plays her unutterable melody. PISCES manifests distress.*

VENUS. Brother Libra, what is this song?

LIBRA

My soul is an enchanted boat,
Which, like a sleeping swan, doth float
Upon the silver waves of thy sweet singing;
And thine doth like an angel sit
Beside a helm conducting it,
Whilst all the winds with melody are ringing.
It seems to float ever, for ever,
Upon that many-winding river,
Between mountains, woods, abysses,
A paradise of wildernesses!
Till, like one in slumber bound,
Borne to the Ocean, I float down, around,
Into a sea profound, of ever-spreading sound.

Meanwhile thy spirit lifts its pinions
In music's most serene dominions;
Catching the winds that fan that happy heaven.
And we sail on, away, afar,
Without a course, without a star,
But by the instinct of sweet music driven;
Till through Elysian garden islets
By thee, most beautiful of pilots,
Where never mortal pinnacle glided,
The boat of my desire is guided;
Realms where the air we breathe is love,
Which in the winds and on the waves doth move,
Harmonising this earth with what we feel above.

We have past Age's icy caves,
And Manhood's dark and tossing waves,
And Youth's Smooth ocean, smiling to betray:
Beyond the glassy gulphs we flee

* Romance in D: Beethoven.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

Of shadow-peopled Infancy,
Through Death and Birth, to a diviner day;
A paradise of vaulted bowers,
Lit by downward-gazing flowers,
And watery paths that wind between
Wildernesses calm and green,
Peopled by shapes too bright to see,
And rest, having beheld; somewhat like thee;
Which walk upon the sea, and chant melodiously!

[VENUS *manifests distress*. PISCES *slips away to the throne of LUNA*.]

[LUNA *plays her conquering melody*.*

VENUS. Oh! Oh!

LIBRA. Holier than pleasure is pain; nobler is abstinence than indulgence; from sloth and faith we turn to toil and science; from the tame victories of the body to the wild triumphs of the mind.

VENUS. It is the ruin of the temple.

LIBRA. For from thee cometh the Utterance of the Present; but of the Future no word.

VENUS. And thou wilt?

LIBRA. The Word.

[SATURN *comes out and dances his dance, and falls, clasping the hem of LIBRA'S robe*.]

VENUS. Who is this? These are not my dances; these footsteps tread not my measures; not me he worships by the paces and pauses of his feet!

[LUNA *plays a wild and horrible melody*.†

[SATURN *drags LIBRA backwards into the dusk*.

[*The PROBATIONERS group similarly; MARS with MARS and VENUS with VENUS. Some, too, stand isolated*.]

* Polonaise in D: Wieniawski.

† Witches' Dance: Paganini.

THE RITE OF VENUS

VENUS. Brother Taurus, art thou faithful, thou alone?

TAURUS. [*Seductively yet ironically.*] Knowest thou not me?

VENUS. Yea, my beloved, Lord of all my doves.

TAURUS. Venus, our Lady!

VENUS. Come unto me!

[*She half rises and draws him to her.*

TAURUS. Within the veil?

VENUS. There is no veil before my shrine!

[*She unfastens his robe. As it falls he leaps up with the Caduceus, as MERCURY, and tramples her beneath his feet.*]

TAURUS. In the Beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God; and the Word was God!

[*All come forward; SATURN with LIBRA linked; LUNA and PISCES linked; and bow to him.*]

LUNA. The Treason is accomplished.

PISCES. The mind is nobler than the body.

SATURN. Friendship is holier than love.

LIBRA. Nature is overcome by wit.

PISCES. How shall we adore thee?

TAURUS. As you like it.

SATURN. What shall we sacrifice?

TAURUS. Want you will.

[*LUNA plays a moto perpetuo,* ALL, bowing in adoration to MERCURY.*]

LIBRA. Brother, what is the hour?

PISCES. Dawn.

LIBRA. Let us depart unto the work of the day.

ALL. Amen.

* Moto perpetuo: Ries.

THE RITE OF MERCURY

OFFICERS

MERCURY. *Violet Robe.*

FR. and SOR. GEMINI. *White Dancing Robe and Black Robe.*

VIRGO. *Green Robe.*

FOUR PROBATIONERS.

Mercury is throned between the Twins. At the west of the Altar is Virgo, and his four attendants.

THE RITE OF MERCURY

I

MERCURY. 22-333-333.

[*Full light.*

The Speech in the Silence.

The Words against the Son of Night.

The Voice of Mercury in the Universe in the Presence of the Eternal Gods.

The Formulas of Knowledge.

The Wisdom of Breath.

The Radix of Vibration.

The Shaking of the Invisible.

The Rolling Asunder of the Darkness.

The Becoming Visible of Matter.

The Piercing of the Coils of the Stooping Dragon.

The Breaking Forth of the Light.

[*All being seated, the FOUR PROBATIONERS rise from among the other PROBATIONERS and march to the altar.*]

FIRST PROBATIONER. 333-333-22. Brethren, let us kindle the holy perfumes in honour of the most divine God.

ALL FOUR PROBATIONERS. [*While he does so.*] Hail unto the most divine Lord Mercury!

FIRST PROBATIONER. [*To FR. GEMINI*] Our Brother, child

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

of the Voice, we ask Thee for thy help. Wilt thou purify the Temple, that we may proceed with the invocations?

FR. GEMINI. I am one with you, Brethren!

[He rises and performs the Banishing Ritual of the Hexagram. While he does so, the FOUR PROBATIONERS stand facing the assembly.]

FR. GEMINI. Let the rites of Mercury be celebrated.

[They turn round, facing the altar again.]

[MERCURY reads Gemini and Virgo sections from 963 at altar.]

[The big lights are put out; only a small purple light remains.]

FIRST PROBATIONER. O Thou Lord of Harmony! Master of the Right Will, Thou who hast brought unto us the divine seeds of self-knowledge—we, the humble Servants of the children of Thy voice, we call on Thee to lead us out of our Ignorance!

CHORUS OF THREE OTHER PROBATIONERS. We call Thee, O Thrice Holy!

FIRST PROBATIONER. O Thou, Divine Worker! Master of all that is Divine! Herald of all that is coming! Builder of our House! Holy art Thou, Thou that knowest the Supreme Mysteries!

CHORUS. We call Thee, O Thrice Holy!

FIRST PROBATIONER. O Thou, All Good, we call Thee!

VIRGO. I. *[Rising.]* Not Good alone, Brethren! But all complete in the perfect Equilibrium.

FR. GEMINI. Ay, The Balance must be kept even. Sister, let us invoke the Lord of Knowledge!

VIRGO. He gave unto you, children of His Voice, the

THE RITE OF MERCURY

Power of the making of fair things. Sing ye unto your Shepherd!

FR. GEMINI. [*Rises and stands before MERCURY.*] O Spirit, O Divine Messenger, Mighty One, most mighty circling and all comprehending Divine Bearer of the Wand, hail! Cœlestial, aethereal, inter-aethereal, water like, air like, fire like, earth like, like unto light, like unto darkness, shining as do the Stars, moist, hot, cold Spirit, hail to Thee, ever laughing Child-God, all-knowing. Through Thee alone can we hope to reach Light and Truth. [*Returns to his seat.*

[SOR. GEMINI *plays accordingly.**

[*A short pause.*

MERCURY. At the Ending of the Light,
At the Limits of the Night,
Stood Mercury before the Unborn ones of Time.
Then was formulated the Universe;
Then came forth the Gods thereof,
The aeons of the Bornless Beyond.
Then was the Voice vibrated;
Then was the Name declared.
At the Threshold of Entrance,
Between the Universe and the Infinite,
In the Sign of the Enterer
Stood Mercury, as before him
The æons were proclaimed.
In Symbols did he record them;
In Breath did he vibrate them;
For between the Light and the Darkness did he
stand.

* Hungarian Dance No. 2: Brahms.

II

The Temple in Darkness

MERCURY.

O Light in Light! O flashing wings of fire!
The swiftest of the moments of the sea
Is unto thee
Even as some slow-foot Eternity
With limbs that drag and wheels that tire.
O subtle-minded flame of amber gyre,
It seems a spark of gold
Grown purple, and behold!
A flame of gray!
Then the dark night-wings glow
With iridescent indigo,
Shot with some violet ray;
And all the vision flames across the horizon
The millionth of no time—and when we say:
Hail!—Thou art gone!

The Moon is dark beside thy crown; the Sun
Seems a pale image of thy body bare;
And for thine hair
Flash comets lustrous with the dewfall rare
Of tears of that most memorable One,
The radiant Queen, the veiled Paphian.
The wings of light divine
Beneath thy body shine;
The invisible
Rayed with some tangible flame,
Seeking to formulate a name,

THE RITE OF MERCURY

A citadel;
And the winged heels are fiery with enormous speed,
One spurning heaven; the other trampling hell;
And thou—recede!

O Hermes! Messenger of inmost thought!
Descend! Abide! Swift coursing in my veins
Shoot dazzling pains,
The Word of Selfhood integrate of Nought,
The ineffable Amen! the Wonder wrought.
Bring death if life exceed!
Bid thy pale Hermit bleed,
Yet life exude;
And Wisdom and the Word of Him
Drench the mute mind grown dim
With quietude!
Fix thy sharp lightnings in my night! My spirit free!
Mix with my breath and life and name thy mood
And self of Thee.

[SOR. GEMINI *plays accordingly*.*

[*A short pause.*

FR. GEMINI. Master, be it thy pleasure to perform the
Invocation of Mercury.

[*All PROBATIONERS rise and join the four others in front of
the altar.*]

MERCURY. [*Leaves throne.*] Majesty of the Godhead,
Wisdom-crowned Thoth, Lord of the Gates of the Universe:
Thee, Thee we invoke!

O Thou of the Ibis head: Thee, Thee we invoke!

Thou who wieldest the Wand of Double Power: Thee,
Thee we invoke!

Thou who bearest in Thy left hand the Rose and Cross of
Light and life: Thee, Thee we invoke!

O Thou whose head is as an Emerald, and Thy Nemyss

* Sarabande: Bach.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

as the night sky-blue! Thou whose skin is of flaming orange,
as though it burned in a furnace: Thee, Thee we invoke!

Behold, I am yesterday, to-day, and the brother of The
Morrow! I am born again and again. Mine is the unseen force
from which the Gods are sprung; that giveth life unto the
dwellers in the watch-towers of the universe.

I am the charioteer of the East, Lord of the Past and the
Future. I see by mine own inward light; Lord of Resurrection,
who cometh forth from the dusk, and whose birth is from the
House of Death.

O ye two divine hawks upon your pinnacles, who keep
watch over the Universe! Ye who company the bier unto the
House of Rest. Ye who pilot the Ship of Ra, ever advancing
onwards unto the heights of Heaven!

Lord of the Shrine which standeth in the centre of the
Earth!

Behold He is in me and I in Him!

Mine is the radiance in which Ptah floateth over his
firmament.

I travel upon high.

I tread upon the firmament of Nu.

I raise a flashing flame with the lightning of mine eye, ever
rushing forward in the splendour of the daily glorified Ra,
giving my life to the dwellers of Earth.

If I say "come up upon the mountains,"

The Celestial waters shall flow at my word;

For I am Ra incarnate,

Kephra created in the flesh!

THE RITE OF MERCURY

I am the image of my Father Tmu, Lord of the City of the Sun!

The God who commands is in my mouth;

The God of Wisdom is in my heart:

My tongue is the sanctuary of Truth:

And a God sitteth upon my lips!

My word is accomplished each day, and the desire of my heart realises itself, like that of Ptah when he creates his works.

I am Eternal; therefore everything acts according to my designs, and everything obeys my words.

Therefore I say unto Thee: come forth unto me from thine abode in the Silence, unutterable Wisdom, All-light, All-power! Thoth, Hermes, Mercury, Odin, by whatever name I call Thee, Thou art still un-named and nameless to Eternity! Come thou forth, I say, and aid and guard me in this Work of Art.

Thou, Star of the East that didst conduct the Magi! Thou art the same, all present in Heaven and in Hell. Thou that vibratest betwixt the Light and the Darkness. Rising, descending; changing ever, yet ever the same!

The Sun is Thy Father!

Thy Mother the Moon!

The Wind hath borne Thee in its bosom!

And Earth hath nourished the changeless Godhead of Thy Youth.

Come thou forth, I say, come Thou forth

And make all spirits subject unto me!

So that every spirit of the firmament,

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

And of the Ether,
Of the Earth,
And under the Earth,
On dry land,
And in the Water,
Of whirling Air,
And of rushing Fire,
And every spell and scourge of God, may be obedient
unto Me!

[*A pause.*

[*MERCURY goes to his throne.*

FR. GEMINI. I. Brother Virgo, didst thou hear the Voice?

VIRGO. Ay, Brother.

FR. GEMINI. Tell me, Brother, is not Mercury a great God?

VIRGO. Indeed, Son of Maia, the greatest of all Gods that
tread upon the Milky Way.

FR. GEMINI. It is so.

SOR. GEMINI. Yet, Brother, there is the Sun-God!

VIRGO. Is not Mercury the Sun-God, when hidden during
the Night, among the souls of the dead? Hail unto Thee,
Trismegistus, Hail unto thee!

SOR. GEMINI. Hail, O Sender of Dreams!

FR. GEMINI. Hail, O Supporter of Bacchus Infant!

MERCURY. Hail, Twins!

FIRST PROBATIONER. Thou art indeed the greatest of all
Gods, O Mercury!

CHORUS. Hail, Mercury.

MERCURY. Yet, ye will betray me!

Bury me in a nameless grave!

I came from God the world to save,

I brought it wisdom from above,

THE RITE OF MERCURY

Worship, and liberty, and love.
So be my grave without a name
That earth may swallow up my shame!

[SOR. GEMINI *plays her saddest yet swiftest melody.**

[*A pause.*

VIRGO. O, who art Thou, most lovely form that killeth me
with the pleasure of Thy Vision?

MERCURY. I am thyself—that which is of thyself and
dependent upon thyself.

VIRGO. Sister and Brother Gemini, kneel ye before the
greatest of all Gods.

FR. GEMINI. Alas, Brother! Is the Speech greater than the
Silence?

VIRGO. I. Brethren, kneel ye before the greatest of all
Gods! [None obey.

MERCURY. I. Silence. . . . Thou hast no followers, Brother.

SOR. GEMINI. Behold thine handmaiden! Where thou
goest I will go; thy people shall be my people and thy God my
God! [She walks to the throne.

MERCURY. Peace upon thee, beloved! . . . But the
Brethren say sooth. Even Mercury liveth not for ever.

[He recites.

The light streams stronger through the lamps of sense.

Intelligence

Grows as we go. Alas: its icy glimmer

Shows dimmer, dimmer

The awful vaults we traverse. Were the sun

Himself the one

Glory of space, he would but illustrate

The night of Fate.

Are not the hosts of heaven in vain arrayed?

Their light dismayed

* Scherzo: Tschaikowski.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

Before the vast blind spaces of the sky?
 O galaxy
Of thousands upon thousands closely curled,
 Your golden world
Incalculably small, its closest cluster
 Mere milky lustre
Staining the infinite darkness! Base and blind
 Our minion mind
Seeks a great light, a light sufficient, light
 Insufferably bright,
Hence hidden for an hour: imagining
 This vast vain thing,
We call it God, and Father. Empty hand
 And prayer unplanned
Stretched fatuous to the void. Ah! men my friends
 What fury sends
This folly to intoxicate your hearts?
 Dread air disparts
Your vital ways from these unsavoury follies;
 Black melancholies
Sit straddled on your bended backs. The throne
 Of the unknown
Is fit for children. We are too well ware
 How vain is prayer,
How nought is great, since all is immanent
 The vast content
Of all the universe unalterable.
 We know too well
How no one thing abides awhile at all,
 How all things fall,
Fall from their seat, the lamentable place,
 Before their face,
Weary and pass and are no more. So we,
 Since hope must be,
Look to the future, to the chance minute
 That life may shoot
Some flower at least to blossom in the night,
 Since vital light
Is sure to fail us on the hideous way.
 What? Must we pray!

THE RITE OF MERCURY

Verily, O thou littlest babe, too weak
 To stir or speak,
Capable hardly of a thought, yet seed
 Of word and deed!
To thine assured fruition we may trust
 This weary dust.
We who are old, and palsied (and so wise!)
 Lift up our eyes
To little children, as the storm-tossed bark
 Hails in the dark
Some hardly visible harbour light; we hold
 The hours of gold
To our own breasts, whose hours are iron and brass:—
 So swift they pass
And grind us down:—we hold the wondrous light
 Our scattering sight
Yet sees, the one star in a night of woe.
 We trust, and so
Lift up our voices in the dying day
 Indeed to pray:
O little hands that are so soft and strong,
 Lead us along!

[SOR. GEMINI *plays accordingly*.*

[*A pause.*

FR. GEMINI. Brother Virgo, wilt thou not join us who love not Speech?

VIRGO. Hail unto Mercury. He killeth Sol at the close of every Twilight, and hangeth up the sky of Night on the Tree of Heaven, fastened up with the Star-headed nails.

MERCURY. Brother Gemini, do Thou perform the dance of thy Virginal Sister. [FR. GEMINI *dances.*

[*At the end of his dance, he falls before the altar. SOROR GEMINI and all PROBATIONERS circumambulate round him, then stop, facing MERCURY.*]

* Berceuse: César Cui.

THE RITES OF ELEUSIS

MERCURY. Come, Sister, no Divine Being can be reached,
save through Me.

*[He descends, and joins the PROBATIONERS, leading SOROR
GEMINI by the hand.]*

*[VIRGO, left now alone before the empty shrine of MERCURY,
walks slowly in front of it.]*

VIRGO. Hail unto the Lord Mercury!

*[A pause, during which all PROBATIONERS bend their heads
low. MERCURY stands apart with SOR. GEMINI. VIRGO
stands still before the shrine, hooded.]*

MERCURY. And this word I speak unto ye:

[He is heard whispering.

StiBeTTChePhMeFShiSS

[A pause.

MERCURY. *(loudly)*. Konx Om Pax!

[Purple light off, white light on.

*[He seats SOR. GEMINI upon his Throne. She plays her
babe-music.*]*

FR. GEMINI. The will of the Gods be accomplished!

[All depart.

* Nocturne: G. Boyle.

THE RITE OF LUNA

OFFICERS

LUNA. *Silver Robe and Veil. Violin. Artemis. The Lady of the Moon.*

CANCER. *Amber Robe. Cup. Warden of the Holy Graal.*

TAURUS. *Orange Robe. Bow and Quiver. The Lord of the Bow.*

A NYMPH. *White robe. The Head of the Dragon.*

A SATYR. *Black Robe. The Tail of the Dragon.*

PAN. *Black Robe, Tom-tom.*

In the East Luna is throned, Cancer on her right, Taurus on her left. Beyond these the Satyr and the Nymph. At the apex of a descending Triangle, upon the earth, Pan.

THE RITE OF LUNA

*One reciteth "The Twelvfold Certitude of God," from 963.
The veil is withdrawn.*

CANCER. 333-333-333.

TAURUS. 333-333-333.

CANCER. I. Brother Taurus, what is the hour?

TAURUS. Moonrise.

CANCER. I. Brother Taurus, what is the place?

TAURUS. The Chapel of the Holy Graal.

CANCER. I. What is my office?

TAURUS. Warden of the Graal.

CANCER. I. What is my robe?

TAURUS. Chastity.

CANCER. I. What is my weapon?

TAURUS. Vigilance.

CANCER. I. Whom do we serve?

TAURUS. The Lady Artemis.

CANCER. I. How many are her servants?

TAURUS. Nine.

CANCER. I. Who are they?

TAURUS. Three for the dew; three for the rain; and three
for the snow.

CANCER. I. Who are the great Officers?

THE EQUINOX

TAURUS. Thyself, the Warden of the Holy Graal.
Myself, the Lord of the Bow.

A nymph, a satyr ---

PAN. I. And Pan!

CANCER. Brother Pan, I command thee to honour our
Lady Artemis.

TAURUS. Bear the Cup of Libation!

CANCER. 333-333-333.

[PAN *recites chorus from Swinburne's "Atalanta."*]

When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces . . .
The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

TAURUS. The Goddess stirs not.

CANCER. Silence is the secret of our Lady Artemis.

PAN. Hath no man lifted her veil?

CANCER. No man hath lifted her veil.

TAURUS. Bear the Cup of Libation!

CANCER. 333-333-333. It is the hour of sealing up the
shrine.

TAURUS. Let us banish the spirits of the elements.

[*Performs the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram
and returns.*]

Bear the Cup of Libation!

CANCER. 333-333-333. Let us banish the spirits of the
planets.

[*Performs the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Hexagram
and returns.*]

CANCER. Bear the Cup of Libation!

PAN. 333-333-333. Let us banish the holy Emanations from
the One, lest our Lady's sleep be stirred.

[*He banishes the Sephiroth by the appointed Ritual.*]

THE VISION AND THE VOICE

Bear the Cup of Libation!

CANCER. 333-333-333. Brother Taurus, the shrine is well guarded.

TAURUS. The shrine is perfectly guarded.

SATYR. Bear the Cup of Libation!

CANCER. 333-333-333.

PAN.

Hear me, Lord of the Stars!

For thee I have worshipped ever
With stains and sorrows and scars,

With joyful, joyful endeavour.

Hear me, O lily-white goat!

O crisp as a thicket of Thorns,
With a collar of gold for Thy throat,
A scarlet bow for Thy horns!

Here, in the dusty air,

I build Thee a shrine of yew.

All green is the garland I wear,

But I feed it with blood for dew!

After the orange bars

That ribbed the green west dying

Are dead, O Lord of the Stars,

I come to Thee, come to Thee crying.

The ambrosial moon that arose

With breasts slow heaving in splendour

Drops wine from her infinite snows,

Ineffably, utterly, tender.

O moon! ambrosial moon!

Arise on my desert of sorrow,

That the magical eyes of me swoon

With lust of rain to-morrow!

Ages and ages ago

I stood on the bank of a river,

Holy and holy and holy, I know,

For ever and ever and ever!

THE EQUINOX

A priest in the mystical shrine,
I muttered a redeless rune,
Till the waters were redder than wine
In the blush of the harlot moon.

I and my brother priests
Worshipped a wonderful woman
With a body lithe as a beast's
Subtly, horribly human.
Deep in the pit of her eyes
I saw the image of death,
And I drew the water of sighs
From the well of her lullaby breath.

She sitteth veiled for ever,
Brooding over the waste.
She hath stirred or spoken never.
She is fiercely, manly chaste!
What madness make me awake
From the silence of utmost eld
The grey cold slime of the snake
That her poisonous body held?

By night I ravished a maid
From her father's camp to the cave.
I bared the beautiful blade:
I dipped her thrice i' the wave;
I slit her throat as a lamb's
That the fount of blood leapt high
With my clamorous dithyramps,
Like a stain on the shield of the sky.

With blood and censer and song
I rent the mysterious veil:
My eyes gaze long and long
On the deep of that blissful bale.
My cold grey kisses awake
From the silence of utmost eld
The grey cold slime of the snake
That her beautiful body held.

THE VISION AND THE VOICE

But—God! I was not content
 With the blasphemous secret of years;
The veil is hardly rent
 While the eyes rain stones for tears.
So I clung to the lips and laughed
 As the storms of death abated,
The storms of the grievous graft
 By the swing of her soul unsated.

Wherefore reborn as I am
 By a stream profane and foul,
In the reign of a Tortured Lamb,
 In the realm of a sexless Owl,
I am set apart from the rest
 By meed of the mystic rune
That reads in peril and pest
 The ambrosial moon—the moon!

For under the tawny star
 That shines in the Bull above
I can rein the riotous car
 Of galloping, galloping Love;
And straight to the steady ray
 Of the Lion-heart Lord I career,
Pointing my flaming way
 With the spasm of night for a spear!

O moon! O secret sweet!
 Chalcedony clouds of caresses
About the flame of our feet,
 The night of our terrible tresses!
Is it a wonder, then,
 If the people are mad with blindness,
And nothing is stranger to men
 Than silence, and wisdom, and kindness?

Nay! let him fashion an arrow
 Whose heart is sober and stout!
Let him pierce his God to the marrow!
 Let the soul of his God flow out!

THE EQUINOX

Whether a snake or a sun
In his horoscope Heaven hath cast,
It is nothing; every one
Shall win to the moon at last.

The mage has wrought by his art
A billion shapes in the sun.
Look through to the heart of his heart,
And the many are shapes of one!
An end to the art of the mage,
And the cold grey blank of the prison!
An end to the adamant age!
The ambrosial moon is arisen.

I have bought a lily-white goat
For the price of a crown of thorns,
A collar of gold for its throat,
A scarlet bow for its horns;
I have bought a lark in the lift
For the price of a butt of sherry:
With these, and God for a gift,
It needs no wine to be merry!

I have bought for a wafer of bread
A garden of poppies and clover;
For a water bitter and dead,
A foam of fire flowing over.
From the Lamb and his prison fare
And the Owl's blind stupor, arise!
Be ye wise, and strong, and fair,
And the nectar afloat in your eyes!

Arise, O ambrosial moon,
By the strong immemorial spell,
By the subtle veridical rune
That is mighty in heaven and hell!
Drip thy mystical dew
On the tongues of the tender fauns,
In the shade of initiate yews,
Remote from the desert dawns!

THE VISION AND THE VOICE

Satyrs and Fauns, I call.

Bring your beauty to man!

I am the mate for ye all;

I am the passionate Pan.

Come, O come to the dance,

Leaping with wonderful whips,

Life on the stroke of a glance,

Death in the stroke of the lips!

I am hidden beyond,

Shed in a secret sinew,

Smitten through by the fond

Folly of wisdom in you!

Come, while the moon (the moon!)

Sheds her ambrosial splendour,

Reels in the redeless rune

Ineffably, utterly, tender!

Hark! the appealing cry

Of deadly hurt in the hollow:—

Hyacinth! Hyacinth! Ay!

Smitten to death by Apollo.

Swift, O maiden moon,

Send thy ray-dews after;

Turn the dolorous tune

To soft ambiguous laughter!

Mourn, O Maenads, mourn!

Surely your comfort is over:

All we laugh at you lorn.

Ours are the poppies and clover!

O that mouth and eyes,

Mischievous, male, alluring!

O that twitch of the thighs,

Dorian past enduring!

Where is wisdom now!

Where the sage and his doubt?

Surely the sweat of the brow

Hath driven the demon out.

THE EQUINOX

Surely the scented sleep
That crowns the equal war
Is wiser than only to weep—
To weep for evermore!

Now, at the crown of the year,
The decadent days of October,
I come to thee, God, without fear;
Pious, chaste, and sober.
I solemnly sacrifice
This first-fruit flower of wine
For a vehicle of thy vice,
As I am Thine to be mine.

For five in the year gone by
I pray thee give to me one;
A lover stronger than I,
A moon to swallow the sun!
May he be like a lily-white goat,
Crisp as a thicket of thorns,
With a collar of gold for this throat,
A scarlet bow for his horns!

CANCER. May our Lady Artemis be favourable!

TAURUS. May our Lady Artemis never be awakened!

[NYMPH *comes forward and dances her virginal dance.*

PAN. Of what worth is the gold in the mine?

CANCER. Brother Pan, be silent.

NYMPH. Bear the Cup of Libation!

CANCER. 333-333-333.

PAN.

[*Recites.*

Mother of Light, and the Gods! Mother of Music awake!

Silence and Speech are at odds; Heaven and Hell are at stake.

By the Rose and the Cross I conjure; I constrain by the Snake and the
Sword;

I am he that is sworn to endure—Bring us the word of the Lord!

By the brood of the Bysses of Brightening, whose God was my sire;

By the Lord of the Flame and the Lightning, the King of the Spirits of Fire;

THE VISION AND THE VOICE

By the Lord of the Waves and the Waters, the King of the Hosts of the Sea,
The fairest of all of whose daughters was mother to me;

By the Lord of the Winds and the Breezes, the King of the Spirits of Air,
In whose bosom the infinite ease is that cradled me there;
By the Lord of the Fields and the Mountains, the King of the Spirits of Earth
That nurtured my life at his fountains from the hour of my birth;

By the Wand and the Cup I conjure; by the Dagger and Disk I constrain;
I am he that is sworn to endure; make thy music again!
I am Lord of the Star and the Seal; I am Lord of the Snake and the Sword;
Reveal us the riddle, reveal! Bring us the word of the Lord;

As the flame of the sun, as the roar of the sea, as the storm of the air,
As the quake of the earth—let it soar for a boon, for a bane, for a snare,
For a lure, for a light, for a kiss, for a rod, for a scourge, for a sword—
Bring us thy burden of bliss—Bring us the word of the Lord!

TAURUS. In vain thou askest speech from our Lady of
Silence:

CANCER. Bear the Cup of Libation!

PAN. 333-333-333.

[*Recites.*

Roll through the caverns of matter, the world's irremovable bounds!
Roll, ye wild billows of ether! the Sistrion is shaken and sounds!
Wild and sonorous the clamour, vast in the region of death.
Live with the fire of the Spirit, the essence and flame of the breath!
Sound, O sound!

Gleam in the world of the dark, where the chained ones shall tremble and flee!
Gleam in the skies of the dusk, for the Light of the Dawn is in me!
Light on the forehead and life in the nostrils, and love in the breast,
Shine, O Thou Star of the Dawning, thou Sun of the Radiant Crest!
Shine, O shine!

Flame through the sky in the strength of the chariot-wheels of the Sun!
Flame, ye young fingers of light, on the west of the morning that run!

THE EQUINOX

Flame, O thou Meteor Car, for my fire is exalted in thee!
Lighten the darkness and herald the daylight, and waken the sea!
Flame, O flame!

Crown Her, O crown Her with stars as with flowers for a virginal gaud!
Crown Her, O crown Her with Light and the flame of the down-rushing Sword!
Crown Her, O crown Her with Love for maiden and mother and wife!
Hail unto Isis! Hail! For She is the Lady of Life!
Isis crowned!

CANCER. In vain thou invokest our Lady of the Moon!

TAURUS. Bear the Cup of Libation!

CANCER. 333-333-333.

PAN.

Must every star that saves the night
Gleam fearfully afar,
Give no man love, but only light,
Or cease to be a star?

Nay, there's no man since time began
Through the ages until now,
But won the goal of his set soul,
A star upon his brow!

Oh! though no star serene as thou
Shine in my night forlorn,
Come, let me set thee on my brow,
And make its darkness morn!

PAN. [*Rises.*] Brother Satyr, scourge forth these that profane the sanctuary of our Lady: for they know not the secret of the shrine.

[SATYR *dances the dance of the scourge, driving the officers down the stage, where they crouch.*]

PAN. [*Goes to altar.*] Brother Satyr, I command you to perform the dance of Syrinx and Pan, in honour of our Lady Artemis.

THE VISION AND THE VOICE

SATYR. And in thine honour!

[He dances the dance and falls prostrate in the midst.

PAN. *[Advancing to the Throne of Luna.]*

Uncharmable charmer
Of Bacchus and Mars,
In the sounding rebounding
Abyss of the stars!
O virgin in armour,
Thine arrows unslung
In the brilliant resilient
First rays of the spring!

By the force of the fashion
Of love, when I broke
Through the shroud, through the cloud,
Through the storm, through the smoke,
To the mountain of passion
Volcanic that woke—
By the rage of the mage
I invoke, I invoke!

By the midnight of madness,
The lone-lying sea,
The swoon of the moon,
Your swoon into me;
The sentinel sadness
Of cliff-clinging pine,
That night of delight
You were mine, you were mine!

Your were mine, O my saint,
My maiden, my mate,
By the might of the right
Of the night of our fate.
Though I fall, though I faint,
Though I char, though I choke,
By the hour of our power
I invoke, I invoke!

THE EQUINOX

By the mystical union
Of fairy and faun,
Unspoken, unbroken—
The dusk to the dawn!—
A secret communion,
Unmeasured, unsung,
The listless, resistless,
Tumultuous tongue!—

O virgin in armour
Thine arrows unsling,
In the brilliant resilient
First rays of the spring!
No Godhead could charm her,
But manhood awoke—
O fiery Valkyrie,
I invoke, I invoke!

[He tears down the veil.
*[LUNA plays accordingly.**
[A long silence.

CANCER. 333-333-333.

TAURUS. 1. Brother Warden of the Graal, our task is ended.

CANCER. Let us depart, it is accomplished.

* Chaconne: Bach.

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[Once again, I have omitted some pages of advertisements: the usual full-page attempt by Crowley to shift his back catalogue, and one on the back board for Crowley's *Hail Mary* (absent in the Weiser facsimile).

It appears that confusion arose in certain quarters from some extracts from the work of P.B. Shelley appearing uncredited in various of the Rites; specifically, I have seen "My soul is an enchanted boat" (in the Rite of Venus) from *Prometheus Unbound* erroneously attributed to Crowley in print (albeit in a work with generally low editorial standards). Similarly, "This is the day which down the void abysm" in the Rite of Mars is the finale from *Prometheus Unbound* and "The world's great age begins anew," also in the Rite of Mars, is the final chorus from *Hellas*. Not being particularly familiar with Shelley's work myself, I may have missed a few others.

The works of Algernon Charles Swinburne are now out of copyright and I am therefore including the Swinburne poems called for in the Rites of Eleusis in this electronic edition (since I long ago went through the agony of key-bashing them all in). Rather than work them back into the scripts and mess up the pagination, they appear on the following pages.—]

ILICET

(required for the Rite of Saturn)

THERE is an end of joy and sorrow;
Peace all day long, all night, all morrow,
 But never a time to laugh or weep.

The end is come of pleasant places,
The end of tender words and faces,
 The end of all, the popped sleep.

No place for sound within their hearing,
No room to hope, no time for fearing,
 No lips to laugh, no lids for tears.
The old years have run out all their measure;
No chance of pain, no chance of pleasure,
 No fragment of the broken years.

Outside of all the worlds and ages,
There where the fool is as the sage is,
 There where the slayer is clean of blood,
No end, no passage, no beginning,
There where the sinner leaves of sinning,
 There where the good man is not good.

There is not one thing with another,
But Evil saith to Good: My brother,
 My brother, I am one with thee:
They shall not strive nor cry for ever:
No man shall choose between them: never
 Shall this thing end and that thing be.

Wind wherein seas and stars are shaken
Shall shake them, and they shall not waken;
 None that has lain down shall arise;
The stones are sealed across their places;
One shadow is shed on all their faces,
 One blindness cast on all their eyes.

Sleep, is it sleep perchance that covers
Each face, as each face were his lover's?
 Farewell; as men that sleep fare well.
The grave's mouth laughs unto derision
Desire and dread and dream and vision,
 Delight of heaven and sorrow of hell.

No soul shall tell nor lip shall number
The names and tribes of you that slumber;
No memory, no memorial.
“Thou knowest”—who shall say thou knowest?
There is none highest and none lowest:
An end, an end, an end of all.

Good night, good sleep, good rest from sorrow
To these that shall not have good morrow;
The gods be gentle to all these.
Nay, if death be not, how shall they be?
Nay, is there help in heaven? it may be
All things and lords of things shall cease.

The stooped urn, filling, dips and flashes;
The bronzed brims are deep in ashes;
The pale old lips of death are fed.
Shall this dust gather flesh hereafter?
Shall one shed tears or fall to laughter,
At sight of all these poor old dead?

Nay, as thou wilt; these know not of it;
Thine eyes’ strong weeping shall not profit,
Thy laughter shall not give thee ease;
Cry aloud, spare not, cease not crying,
Sigh, till thou cleave thy sides with sighing,
Thou shalt not raise up one of these.

Burnt spices flash, and burnt wine hisses,
The breathing flame’s mouth curls and kisses
The small dried rows of frankincense;
All round the sad red blossoms smoulder,
Flowers coloured like the fire, but colder,
In sign of sweet things taken hence;

Yea, for their sake and in death’s favour
Things of sweet shape and of sweet savour
We yield them, spice and flower and wine;
Yea, costlier things than wine or spices,
Whereof none knoweth how great the price is,
And fruit that comes not of the vine.

From boy's pierced throat and girl's pierced bosom
Drips, reddening round the blood-red blossom,
 The slow delicious bright soft blood,
Bathing the spices and the pyre,
Bathing the flowers and fallen fire,
 Bathing the blossom by the bud.

Roses whose lips the flame has deadened
Drink till the lapping leaves are reddened
 And warm wet inner petals weep;
The flower whereof sick sleep gets leisure,
Barren of balm and purple pleasure,
 Fumes with no native steam of sleep.

Why will ye weep? what do ye weeping?
For waking folk and people sleeping,
 And sands that fill and sands that fall,
The days rose-red, the popped hours,
Blood, wine, and spice and fire and flowers,
 There is one end of one and all.

Shall such an one lend love or borrow?
Shall these be sorry for thy sorrow?
 Shall these give thanks for words or breath?
Their hate is as the loving-kindness;
 The frontlet of their brows is blindness,
 The armlet of their arms is death.

Lo, for no noise or light of thunder
Shall these grave-clothes be rent in sunder;
 He that hath taken, shall he give?
He hath rent them: shall he bind together?
He hand bound them: shall he break the tether?
 He hath slain them: shall he bid them live?

A little sorrow, a little pleasure,
Fate metes us from the dusty measure
 That holds the date of all of us;
We are born with travail and strong crying,
And from the birth-day to the dying
 The likeness of our life is thus.

One girds himself to serve another,
Whose father was the dust, whose mother
 The little dead red worm therein;
They find no fruit of things they cherish;
The goodness of a man shall perish,
 It shall be one thing with his sin.

In deep wet ways by grey old gardens
Fed with sharp spring the sweet fruit hardens;
 They know not what fruits wane or grow;
Red summer burns to the utmost ember;
They know not, neither can remember,
 The old years and flowers they used to know.

Ah, for their sakes, so trapped and taken,
For theirs, forgotten and forsaken,
 Watch, sleep not, gird thyself with prayer.
Nay, where the heart of wrath is broken,
Where long love ends as a thing spoken,
 How shall thy crying enter there?

Though the iron sides of the old world falter,
The likeness of them shall not alter
 For all the rumour of periods,
The stars and seasons that come after,
The tears of latter men, the laughter
 Of the old unalterable gods.

Far up above the years and nations,
The high gods, clothed and crowned with patience,
 Endure through days of deathlike date;
They bear the witness of things hidden;
Before their eyes all life stands chidden,
 As they before the eyes of Fate.

Not for their love shall Fate retire,
Nor they relent for our desire,
 Nor the graves open for their call.
The end is more than joy and anguish,
Than lives that laugh and lives that languish,
 The poppied sleep, the end of all.

THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

(required for the Rite of Saturn)

HERE, where the world is quiet;
Here where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest-time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep;
Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours
Blown buds and barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers
And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbour,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labour,
Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes
Where no leaf blooms or blushes
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
 In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
 Ill night till light is born;
And like a soul belated,
In heaven and hell unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
 Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
 He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
 Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
 In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
 Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
 With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
 From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
 She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
 The life of fruits and corn;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
 And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
 The old loves with wearier wings;
And all dead years draw thither,
 And all disastrous things;
Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
 Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
And joy was never sure;
To-day will die tomorrow;
Time stoops to no man's lure;
And love, grown faint and fretful,
With lips but half regretful
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
Whatever gods may be
That no life lives for ever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
Nor any change of light:
Nor sound of waters shaken,
Nor any sound or sight:
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal
Nor days nor things diurnal;
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night.

Chorus “Before the Beginning of Years” from *Atalanta*
(*Required for the Rite of Sol*)

Before the beginning of years,
 There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears;
 Grief, with a glass that ran;
Pleasure, with pain for leaven;
 Summer with flowers that fell;
Remembrance fallen from heaven,
 And madness risen from hell;
Strength without hands to smite,
 Love that endures for a breath:
Night, the shadow of light,
 And life, the shadow of death.

And the high gods took in hand
 Fire and the falling of tears
And a measure of sliding sand
 From under the feet of the years;
And froth and drift of the sea;
 And dust of the labouring earth;
And bodies of things to be
 In the houses of death and of birth;
And wrought with weeping and laughter,
 And fashioned with loathing and love
With life before and after
 And death beneath and above,
For a day and a night and a morrow,
 That his strength might endure for a span
With travail and heavy sorrow,
 The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the south
 They gathered as unto strife;
They breathed upon his mouth,
 They filled his body with life;
Eyesight and speech they wrought
 For the veils of the soul therein
A time for labour and thought,
 A time to serve and to sin;

They gave him light in his ways,
And love, and a space for delight,
And beauty and length of days,
And night, and sleep in the night.
His speech is a burning fire;
With lips he travaileth;
In his heart is a blind desire,
In his eyes foreknowledge of death;
He weaves, and is clothed with derision;
Sows, and he shall not reap;
His life is a watch or a vision
Between a sleep and a sleep.

HERTHA

(Required for the Rite of Venus)

I am that which began;
 Out of me the years roll;
Out of me God and man;
 I am equal and whole;
God changes, and man, and the form of them bodily; I am the soul.
 Before ever land was,
 Before ever the sea,
 Or soft hair of the grass,
 Or fair limbs of the tree,
Or the flesh-coloured fruit of my branches, I was, and thy soul was in me.
 First life on my sources
 First drifted and swam;
Out of me are the forces
 That save it or damn;
Out of me man and woman, and wild-beast and bird; before God was, I am.
 Beside or above me
 Nought is there to go;
Love or unlove me,
 Unknow me or know,
I am that which unloves me and loves; I am stricken, and I am the blow.
 I the mark that is missed
 And the arrows that miss,
I the mouth that is kissed
 And the breath in the kiss,
The search, and the sought, and the seeker, the soul and the body that is.
 I am that thing which blesses
 My spirit elate;
That which caresses
 With hands uncreate
My limbs unbegotten that measure the length of the measure of fate.
 But what thing dost thou now,
 Looking Godward, to cry
 'I am I, thou art thou,
 I am low, thou art high'?

I am thou, whom thou seekest to find him; find thou but the self, thou art I.

I the grain and the furrow,
The plough-cloven clod
And the ploughshare drawn thorough,
The germ and the sod,
The deed and the doer, the seed and the sower, the dust which is God.

Hast thou known how I fashioned thee,
Child, underground?
Fire that impassioned thee,
Iron that bound,
Dim changes of water, what thing of all these hast thou known of or found?

Canst thou say in thine heart
Thou hast seen with thine eyes
With what cunning of art
Thou wast wrought in what wise
By what force of what stuff thou wast shapen, and shown on my breast to the
skies?

Who hath given, who hath sold it thee,
Knowledge of me?
Hath the wilderness told it thee?
Hast thou learnt of the sea?
Hast thou communed in spirit with night? have the winds taken counsel
with thee?

Have I set such a star
To show light on thy brow
That thou sawest from after
What I show to thee now?
Have ye spoken as brethren together, the sun and the mountains and thou?

What is here, dost thou know it?
What was, hast thou known?
Prophet nor poet
Nor tripod nor throne
Nor spirit nor flesh can make answer, but only thy mother alone.

Mother, not maker,
Born, and not made;
Though her children forsake her,
Allured or afraid,
Praying prayers to the God of their fashion, she stirs not for all that have
prayed.

A creed is a rod,
And a crown is of night;
But this thing is God,
To be man with thy might,
To grow straight in the strength of thy spirit, and live out thy life as the light.

I am in thee to save thee
As my soul in thee saith;
Give thou as I gave thee,
Thy life-blood and breath,
Green leaves of thy labour, white flowers of thy thought, and red fruit of thy death.

Be the ways of thy giving
As mine were to thee;
The free life of thy living,
Be the gift of it free;
Not as servant to lord, nor as master to slave, shalt thou give unto me.

O children of banishment,
Souls overcast,
Were the lights ye see vanish meant
Always to last,
Ye would know not the sun overshadowing the shadows and stars overpast.

I that saw where ye trod
The dim paths of the night
Set the shadow called God
In your skies to give light;
But the morning of manhood is risen, and the shadowless soul is in sight.

The tree many-rooted
That swells to the sky
With frondage red-fruited,
The life-tree am I;
In the buds of your lives is the sap of my leave: ye shall live and not die.

But the Gods of your fashion
That take and that give,
In their pity and passion
That scourge and forgive,
They are worms that are bred in the bark that falls off; they shall die and not live.

My own blood is what staunches
The wounds in my bark;
Stars caught in my branches
Make day of the dark,
And are worshipped as suns till the sunrise shall tread out their fires as a
spark.

Where dead ages hide under
The live roots of the tree,
In my darkness the thunder
Makes utterance of me;
In the clash of my boughs with each other ye hear the waves sound of the
sea.

That noise is of Time,
As his feathers are spread
And his feet set to climb
Through the boughs overhead,
And my foliage rings round him and rustles, and branches are bent with his
tread.

The storm-winds of ages
Blow through me and cease,
The war-wind that rages,
The spring-wind of peace,
Ere the breath of them roughen my tresses, ere one of my blossoms increase.

All sounds of all changes,
All shadows and lights
On the world's mountain-ranges
And stream-riven heights,
Whose tongue is the wind's tongue and language of storm-clouds on earth-
shaking nights.

All forms of all faces,
All works of all hands
In unsearchable places
Of time-stricken lands,
All death and all life, and all reigns and all ruins, drop through me as sands.

Though sore be my burden
And more than ye know,
And my growth have no guerdon
But only to grow,
Yet I fail not of growing for lightnings above me or deathworms below.

These too have their part in me,
As I too in these;
Such fire is at heart in me,
Such sap is this tree's.
Which hath in it all sounds and all secrets of infinite lands and of seas.

In the spring-coloured hours
When my mind was as May's,
There brake forth of me flowers
By centuries of days,
Strong blossoms with perfume of manhood, shot out from my spirit as rays.

And the sound of them springing
And smell of their shoots
Were as warmth and sweet singing
And strength to my roots;
And the lives of my children made perfect with freedom of soul were my
fruits.

I bid you but be;
I have need not of prayer;
I have need of you free
As your mouths of mine air;
That my heart may be greater within me, beholding the fruits of me fair.

More fair than strange fruit is
Of faiths ye espouse;
In me only the root is
That blooms in your boughs;
Behold now your God that ye made you, to feed him with faith of your vows.

In the darkening and whitening
Abysses adored,
With dayspring and lightning
For lamp and for sword,
God thunders in heaven, and his angels are red with the wrath of the Lord.

O my sons, O too dutiful
Toward Gods not of me,
Was not I enough beautiful?
Was it hard to be free?

For behold, I am with you, am in you and of you; look forth now and see.

Lo, winged with world's wonders,
With miracles shod,
With the fires of his thunders
For raiment and rod,

God trembles in heaven, and his angels are white with the terror of God.

For his twilight is come on him,
His anguish is here;
And his spirits gaze dumb on him,
Grown grey from his fear;

And his hour taketh hold on him stricken, the last of his infinite year.

Thought made him and breaks him,
Truth slays and forgives;
But to you, as time takes him,
This new thing it gives,

Even love, the beloved Republic, that feeds upon freedom and lives.

For truth only is living,
Truth only is whole,
And the love of his giving
Man's polestar and pole;

Man, pulse of my centre, and fruit of my body, and seed of my soul.

One birth of my bosom;
One beam of mine eye;
One topmost blossom
That scales the sky;

Man, equal and one with me, man that is made of me, man that is I.

Chorus "We have seen thee, o Love" from *Atalanta*.
(*Required for the Rite of Venus*)

We have seen thee, O Love, thou art fair; thou art goodly, O Love;
Thy wings make light in the air as the wings of a dove.
Thy feet are as winds that divide the streams of the sea;
Earth is thy covering to hide thee, the garment of thee.
Thou art swift and subtle and blind as a flame of fire;
Before thee the laughter, behind thee the tears of desire.
And twain go forth beside thee, a man with a maid;
Her eyes are the eyes of a bride whom delight makes afraid;
As the breath in the buds that stir is her bridal breath:
But Fate is the name of her; and his name is Death.

For an evil blossom was born
 Of sea-foam and the frothing of blood.
 Blood-red and bitter of fruit,
 And the seed of it laughter and tears,
And the leaves of it madness and scorn;
 A bitter flower from the bud,
 Sprung of the sea without root,
 Sprung without graft from the years.

The weft of the world was untornd
 That is woven of the day on the night,
 The hair of the hours was not white
Nor the raiment of time overworn,
 When a wave, a world's delight,
A perilous goddess was born;
 And the waves of the sea as she came
Clove, and the foam at her feet,
 Fawning, rejoiced to bring forth
 A flashing blossom, a flame
Filling the heavens with heat
 To the cold white ends of the north.

And in air the clamorous birds,
 And men upon earth that hear
Sweet articulate words,
 Sweetly divided apart,

And in shallow and channel and mere
The rapid and footless herds,
 Rejoiced, being foolish of heart.
For all they said upon earth,
 She is fair, she is white like a dove,
 And the life of the world in her breath
Breathes, and is born at her birth;
 For they knew thee for mother of love,
 And knew thee not mother of death.

What hadst thou to do being born,
 Mother, whose winds were at ease,
As a flower of the springtime of corn,
 A flower of the foam of the seas?
For bitter thou wast from thy birth,
 Aphrodite, mother of strife;
For before thee some rest was on earth,
 A little respite from tears,
 A little pleasure of life;
For life was not then as thou art,
 But as one that waxeth in years
 Sweet-spoken, a fruitful wife;
 Earth had no thorn, and desire
No sting, neither death any dart;
 What hadst thou to do among these,
 Thou, clothed with a burning fire,
Thou, girt with sorrow of heart,
 Thou, sprung of the seed of the seas
As an ear from the seed of the corn,
 As a brand plucked forth of a pyre,
As a ray shed forth of the morn,
 For division of soul and disease,
For a dart and a sting and a thorn?
What ailed thee then to be born?

Was there not evil enough,
 Mother, and anguish on earth
 Born with a man at his birth,
Waits underfoot, and above
 Storm out of heaven, and dearth
Shaken down from the shining thereof,
 Wrecks from afar overseas

And peril of shallow and firth,
And tears that spring and increase
In the barren places of mirth,
That thou, having wings as a dove,
Being girt with desire for a girth,
That thou must come after these,
That thou must lay on him love?

Thou shouldst not so have been born:
But death should have risen with thee,
Mother, and visible fear,
Grief, and the wringing of hands,
And noise of many, that mourn;
The smitten bosom, the knee
Bowed, and in each man's ear
A cry as of perishing lands,
A moan as of people in prison,
A tumult of infinite griefs;
And a thunder of storms on the sands,
And wailing of wives on the shore;
And under thee newly arisen
Loud shoals and shipwrecking reefs,
Firece air and violent light;
Sail rent and sundering oar,
Darkness, and noises of night;
Clashing of streams in the sea,
Wave against wave as a sword,
Clamour of currents, and foam;
Rains making ruin on earth,
Winds that wax ravenous and roam
As wolves in a wolfish horde;
Fruits growing faint in the tree,
And blind things dead in their birth;
Famine, and blighting of corn,
When thy time was come to be born.

All these we know of; but thee
Who shall discern or declare?
In the uttermost ends of the sea
The light of thine eyelids and hair,
The light of thy bosom as fire

And the flying flames of the air?
 Wilt thou turn thee not yet nor have pity,
But abide with despair and desire
 And the crying of armies undone,
 Lamentation of one with another
 And breaking of city by city;
The dividing of friend against friend,
 The severing of brother and brother;
Wilt thou utterly bring to an end?
 Have mercy, mother!

[In the original there are another 24 lines of this Chorus; however, since they are not used in the Rite of Venus, they are here omitted.]

Chorus “When the hounds of spring” from *Atalanta*.
(Required for the Rite of Luna)

When the hounds of spring are on winter’s traces,
 The mother of months in meadow or plain
Fills the shadows and windy places
 With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;
And the brown bright nightingale amorous
Is half assuaged for Itylus
For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,
 The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of quivers
 Maiden most perfect, lady of light,
With a noise of winds and many rivers,
 With a clamour of water, and with might;
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,
Over the splendour and speed of thy feet;
For the faint east quickens, the wan west shivers,
 Round the feet of the day and the feet of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her,
 Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?
O that man’s heart were as fire and could spring to her,
 Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring!
For the stars and the winds are unto her
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;
For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,
 And the southwest-wind and the west-wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins;
And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,
Ripe grasses trammel a travelling foot,
The fait fresh flame of the young year flushes
From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,
And the oat is heard above the lyre,
And the hoof'd heel of a satyr crushes
The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,
Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,
Follows with dancing and fills with delight
The Mænad and the Bassarid;
And soft as lips that laugh and hide
The laughing leaves of the trees divide,
And screen from seeing and leave in sight
The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair
Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;
The wild vine slipping down leaves bare
Her bright breast shortening into sighs;
The wild vine slips with the weight of its leaves,
But the berried ivy catches and cleaves
To the limbs that glitter, the feet that scare
The wolf that follows, the faun that hides.

DOLORES

(Not required in the Rites of Eleusis at all, included purely as an act of sado-masochism on my part: sadism in inflicting it on you, masochism in typing the whole bloody thing in)

(Notre-dame de sept douleurs)

Cold eyelids that hide like a jewel
 Hard eyes that grow soft for an hour;
The heavy white limbs, and the cruel
 Red mouth like a venomous flower;
When these are gone by with their glories,
 What shall rest of thee then, what remain,
O mystic and sombre Dolores,
 Our Lady of Pain?

Seven sorrows the priests give their Virgin;
 But thy sins, which are seventy times seven,
Seven ages would fail thee to purge in,
 And then they would haunt thee in heaven:
Fierce midnights and famishing morrows.
 And the loves that complete and control
All the joys of the flesh, all the sorrows
 That wear out the soul.

O garment not golden but gilded,
 O garden where all men may dwell,
O tower not of ivory, but builded
 By hands that reach heaven from hell;
O mystical rose of the mire,
 O house not of gold but of gain,
O house of unquenchable fire,
 Our Lady of Pain!

O lips full of lust and of laughter,
 Curled snakes that are fed from my breast,
Bite hard, lest remembrance come after
 And press with new lips where you pressed.
For my heart too springs up at the pressure,
 Mine eyelids too moisten and burn;
Ah, feed me and fill me with pleasure,
 Ere pain come in turn.

In yesterday's reach and to-morrow's,
 Out of sight though they lie of to-day,
There have been and there yet shall be sorrows
 That smite not and bite not in play.
The life and the love thou despisest,
 These hurt us indeed, and in vain,
O wise among women, and wisest,
 Our Lady of Pain.

Who gave thee thy wisdom? what stories
 That stung thee, what visions that smote?
Wert thou pure and a maiden, Dolores,
 When desire took thee first by the throat?
What bud was the shell of a blossom
 That all men may smell to and pluck?
What milk fed thee first at what bosom?
 What sins gave thee suck?

We shift and bedeck and bedrape us,
 Thou art noble and nude and antique;
Libitina thy mother, Priapus
 Thy father, a Tuscan and Greek.
We play with light loves in the portal,
 And wince and relent and refrain;
Loves die, and we know thee immortal,
 Our Lady of Pain.

Fruits fail and love dies and time ranges;
 Thou art fed with perpetual breath,
And alive after infinite changes,
 And fresh from the kisses of death;
Of languors rekindled and rallied,
 Of barren delights and unclean,
Things monstrous and fruitless, a pallid
 And poisonous queen.

Could you hurt me, sweet lips, though I hurt you?
 Men touch them, and change in a trice
The lilies and languors of virtue
 For the raptures and roses of vice;
Those lie where thy foot on the floor is,
 These crown and caress thee and chain,
O splendid and sterile Dolores,
 Our Lady of Pain.

There are sins it may be to discover,
 There are deeds it may be to delight.
What new work wilt thou find for thy lover,
 What new passions for daytime or night?
What spells that they know not a word of
 Whose lives are as leaves overblown?
What tortures undreamt of, unheard of,
 Unwritten, unknown?

Ah beautiful passionate body
 That never has ached with a heart!
On thy mouth though the kisses are bloody,
 Though they sting till it shudder and smart,
More kind than the love we adore is,
 They hurt not the heart or the brain,
O bitter and tender Dolores,
 Our Lady of Pain.

As our kisses relax and redouble,
 From the lips and the foam and the fangs
Shall no new sin be born for men's trouble,
 No dream of impossible pangs?
With the sweet of the sins of old ages
 Wilt thou satiate thy soul as of yore?
Too sweet is the rind, say the sages,
 Too bitter the core.

Hast thou told all thy secrets the last time,
 And bared all thy beauties to one?
Ah, where shall we go then for pastime,
 If the worst that can be has been done?
But sweet as the rind was the core is;
 We are fain of thee still, we are fain,
O sanguine and subtle Dolores,
 Our Lady of Pain.

By the hunger of change and emotion
 By the thirst of unbearable things,
By despair, the twin-born of devotion,
 By the pleasure that winces and stings,
The delight that consumes the desire,
 The desire that outruns the delight,
By the cruelty deaf as a fire
 And blind as the night,

By the ravenous teeth that have smitten
 Through the kisses that blossom and bud,
By the lips intertwined and bitten
 Till the foam has a savour of blood,
By the pulse as it rises and falters,
 By the hands as they slacken and strain,
I adjure thee, respond from thine altars,
 Our Lady of Pain

Wilt thou smile as a woman disdain
 The light fire in the veins of a boy?
But he comes to the end, without feigning,
 Who has wearied of sorrow and joy;
Less careful of labour and glory
 Than the elders whose hair has uncurled;
And young, but with fancies as hoary
 And grey as the world.

I have passed from the outermost portal
 To the shrine where a sin is a prayer;
What care though the service be mortal?
 O our Lady of Torture, what care?
All thine the last wine that I pour is,
 The last in the chalice we drain,
O fierce and luxurious Dolores,
 Our Lady of Pain.

All thine the new wine of desire,
 The fruit of four lips as they clung
Till the hair and the eyelids took fire,
 The foam of a serpentine tongue,
The froth of the serpents of pleasure,
 More salt than the foam of the sea,
Now felt as a flame, now at leisure
 As wine shed for me.

Ah thy people, thy children, thy chosen,
 Marked cross from the womb and perverse!
They have found out the secrets to cozen
 The gods that constrain us and curse;
They alone, they are wise, and none other;
 Give me place, even me, in their train,
O my sister, my spouse, and my mother,
 Our Lady of Pain.

For the crown of our life as it closes
 Is darkness, the fruit thereof dust;
No thorns go as deep as a rose's,
 And love is more cruel than lust.
Time turns the old days to derision,
 Our loves into corpses or wives;
And marriage and death and division
 Make barren our lives.

And pale from the past we draw nigh thee,
 And satiate with comfortless hours;
And we know thee, how all men belie thee,
 And we gather the fruit of thy flowers;
The passion that slays and recovers,
 The pangs and the kisses that rain
On the lips and the limbs of thy lovers,
 Our Lady of Pain.

The desire of thy furious embraces
 Is more than the wisdom of years,
On the blossom though blood lie in traces,
 Though the foliage be sodden with tears.
For the lords in whose keeping the door is
 That opens on all who draw breath
Gave the cypress to love, my Dolores,
 The myrtle to death.

And they laughed, changing hands in the measure
 And they mixed and made peace after strife;
Pain melted in tears, and was pleasure;
 Death tingled with blood, and was life.
Like lovers they melted and tingled,
 In the dusk of thine innermost fane;
In the darkness they murmured and mingled,
 Our Lady of Pain.

In a twilight where virtues are vices,
 In thy chapels, unknown of the sun,
To a tune that enthalls and entices,
 They were wed, and the twain were as one.
For the tune from thine altar hath sounded
 Since God bade the world's work begin,
And the fume of the incense abounded,
 To sweeten the sin.

Love listens, and paler than ashes,
 Through his curls as the crown on them slips,
Lifts languid wet eyelids and lashes,
 And laughs with insatiable lips.
Thou shalt hush him with heavy caresses,
 With music that scares the profane;
Thou shalt darken his eyes with thy tresses,
 Our Lady of Pain.

Thou shalt blind his bright eyes though he wrestle,
 Thou shalt chain his light limbs though he strive;
In his lips all thy serpents shall nestle,
 In his hands all thy cruelties thrive.
In the daytime thy voice shall go through him,
 In his dreams shall he feel thee and ache;
Thou shalt kindle by night and subdue him
 Asleep and awake.

Thou shalt touch and make redder his roses
 With juice not of fruit nor of bud;
When the sense in the spirit reposes,
 Thou shalt quicken the soul through the blood.
Thine, thine the one grace we implore is,
 Who would live and not languish or feign,
O sleepless and deadly Dolores,
 Our Lady of Pain.

Dost thou dream, in a respite of slumber,
 In a lull of the fires of thy life,
Of the days without name, without number,
 When thy will stung the world into strife;
When, a goddess, the pulse of thy passion
 Smote kings as they revelled in Rome;
And they hailed thee re-risen, O Thalassian,
 Foam-white, from the foam?

When thy lips had such lovers to flatter;
 When the city lay red from thy rods,
And thine hands were as arrows to scatter
 The children of change and their gods;
When the blood of thy foemen made fervent
 A sand never moist from the main,
As one smote them, their lord and thy servant,
 Our Lady of Pain.

On sands by the storm never shaken,
Nor wet from the washing of tides;
Nor by foam of the waves overtaken,
Nor winds that the thunder bestrides;
But red from the print of thy paces,
Made smooth for the world and its lords,
Ringed round with a flame of fair faces,
And splendid with swords.

There the gladiator, pale for thy pleasure,
Drew bitter and perilous breath;
There torments laid hold on the treasure
Of limbs too delicious for death;
When thy gardens were lit with live torches;
When the world was a steed for thy rein;
When the nations lay prone in thy porches,
Our Lady of Pain.

When, with flame all around him aspirant,
Stood flushed, as a harp-player stands,
The implacable beautiful tyrant,
Rose-crowned, having death in his hands;
And a sound as the sound of loud water
Smote far through the flight of the fires,
And mixed with the lightning of slaughter
A thunder of lyres.

Dost thou dream of what was and no more is,
The old kingdoms of earth and the kings?
Dost thou hunger for these things, Dolores,
For these, in a world of new things?
But thy bosom no fasts could emaciate,
No hunger compel to complain
Those lips that no bloodshed could satiate,
Our Lady of Pain.

As of old when the world's heart was lighter,
Through thy garments the grace of thee glows,
The white wealth of thy body made whiter
By the blushes of amorous blows,
And seamed with sharp lips and fierce fingers,
And branded by kisses that bruise;
When all shall be gone that now lingers,
Ah, what shall we lose?

Thou wert fair in the fearless old fashion,
 And thy limbs are as melodies yet,
And move to the music of passion
 With lithe and lascivious regret.
What ailed us, O gods, to desert you
 For creeds that refuse and restrain?
Come down and redeem us from virtue,
 Our Lady of Pain.

All shrines that were Vestal are flameless,
 But the flame has not fallen from this;
Though obscure be the god, and though nameless
 The eyes and the hair that we kiss;
Low fires that love sits by and forges
 Fresh heads for his arrows and thine;
Hair loosened and soiled in mid orgies
 With kisses and wine.

Thy skin changes country and colour,
 And shrivels or swells to a snake's.
Let it brighten and bloat and grow duller,
 We know it, the flames and the flakes,
Red brands on it smitten and bitten,
 Round skies where a star is a stain,
And the leaves with thy litanies written,
 Our Lady of Pain.

On thy bosom though many a kiss be,
 There are none such as knew it of old.
Was it Alciphron once or Arisbe,
 Male ringlets or feminine gold,
That thy lips met with under the statue,
 Whence a look shot out sharp after thieves
From the eyes of the garden-god at you
 Across the fig-leaves?

Then still, through dry seasons and moister,
 One god hath a wreath to his shrine;
Then love was the pearl of his oyster,
 And Venus rose red out of wine.
We have all done amiss, choosing rather
 Such loves as the wise gods disdain;
Intercede for us thou with thy father,
 Our Lady of Pain.

In spring he had crowns of his garden,
 Red corn in the heat of the year,
Then hoary green olives that harden
 When the grape-blossom freezes with fear;
And milk-budded myrtles with Venus
 And vine-leaves with Bacchus he trod;
And ye said, 'We have seen, he hath seen us,
 A visible God.

What broke off the garlands that girt you?
 What sundered you spirit and clay?
Weak sins yet alive are as virtue
 To the strength of the sins of that day.
For dried is the blood of thy lover,
 Ipsithilla, contracted the vein;
Cry aloud, 'Will he rise and recover,
 Our Lady of Pain?'

Cry aloud; for the old word is broken:
 Cry out; for the Phrygian is priest,
And rears not the bountiful token
 And spreads not the fatherly feast.
From the midmost of Ida, from shady
 Recesses that murmur at morn,
They have brought and baptized her, Our Lady,
 A goddess new-born.

And the chaplets of old are above us,
 And the oyster-bed teems out of reach;
Old poets outsing and outlove us,
 And Catullus makes mouths at our speech.
Who shall kiss, in thy father's own city,
 With such lips as he sang with, again?
Intercede for us all of thy pity,
 Our Lady of Pain.

Out of Dindymus heavily laden
 Her lions draw bound and unfed
A mother, a mortal, a maiden,
 A queen over death and the dead.
She is cold, and her habit is lowly,
 Her temple of branches and sods;
Most fruitful and virginal, holy,
 A mother of gods.

She hath wasted with fire thine high places,
She hath hidden and marred and made sad
The fair limbs of the Loves, the fair faces
Of gods that were goodly and glad.
She slays, and her hands are not bloody;
She moves as a moon in the wane,
White-robed, and thy raiment is ruddy,
Our Lady of Pain.

They shall pass and their places be taken,
The gods and the priests that are pure.
They shall pass, and shalt thou not be shaken?
They shall perish, and shalt thou endure?
Death laughs, breathing close and relentless
In the nostrils and eyelids of lust,
With a pinch in his fingers of scentless
And delicate dust.

But the worm shall revive thee with kisses;
Thou shalt change and transmute as a god,
As the rod to a serpent that hisses,
As the serpent again to a rod.
Thy life shall not cease though thou doff it;
Thou shalt live until evil be slain,
And good shall die first, said thy prophet,
Our Lady of Pain.

Did he lie? did he laugh? does he know it,
Now he lies out of reach, out of breath,
Thy prophet, thy preacher, thy poet,
Sin's child by incestuous Death?
Did he find out in fire at his waking,
Or discern as his eyelids lost light,
When the bands of the body were breaking
And all came in sight?

Who has known all the evil before us,
Or the tyrannous secrets of time?
Though we match not the dead men that bore us
At a song, at a kiss, at a crime—
Though the heathen outface and outlive us,
And our lives and our longings are twain—
Ah, forgive us our virtues, forgive us,
Our Lady of Pain.

Who are we that embalm and embrace thee
 With spices and savours of song?
What is time, that his children should face thee?
 What am I, that my lips do thee wrong?
I could hurt thee—but pain would delight thee;
 Or caress thee—but love would repel;
And the lovers whose lips would excite thee
 Are serpents in hell.

Who now shall content thee as they did,
 Thy lovers, when temples were built
And the hair of the sacrifice braided
 And the blood of the sacrifice split,
In Lampsacus fervent with faces,
 In Aphaca red from thy reign,
Who embraced thee with awful embraces,
 Our Lady of Pain?

Where are they, Cotytto or Venus,
 Astarte or Ashtaroth, where?
Do their hands as we touch come between us?
 Is the breath of them hot in thy hair?
From their lips have thy lips taken fever,
 With the blood of their bodies grown red?
Hast thou left upon earth a believer
 If these men are dead?

They were purple of raiment and golden,
 Filled full of thee, fiery with wine,
Thy lovers, in haunts un beholden,
 In marvellous chambers of thine.
They are fled, and their footprints escape us,
 Who appraise thee, adore, and abstain,
O daughter of Death and Priapus,
 Our Lady of Pain.

What ails us to fear overmeasure,
 To praise thee with timorous breath,
O mistress and mother of pleasure,
 The one thing as certain as death?
We shall change as the things that we cherish,
 Shall fade as they faded before,
As foam upon water shall perish,
 As sand upon shore.

We shall know what the darkness discovers
 If the grave-pit be shallow or deep;
And our fathers of old, and our lovers,
 We shall know if they sleep not or sleep.
We shall see whether hell be not heaven,
 Find out whether tares be not grain,
And the joys of thee seventy times seven,
 Our lady of Pain.

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