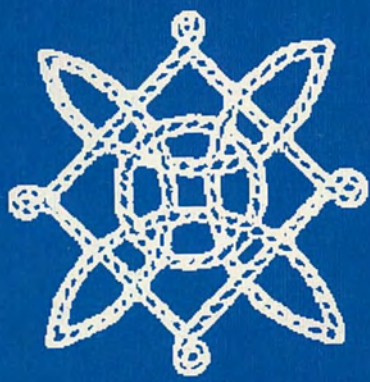


A Saga of Error
and
Glory

An Ancient Record Recounted

HOUSE OF HORUS



Saga of Error and Glory

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A Saga of Error and Glory

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THE WAY HOME

(from an old print by an unknown artist)

PROLOGUE

In aeons past, whispered legend tells of the Nightmare of a God that caused a War in Heaven that burnt up all things and laid them waste. Thereafter, Earth as we know it was not yet, but lay held in the deeps of the formless unmanifest, whose darkness pervaded all. Ages later the timeless story echoed through the memories of many peoples, even to the farthest island kingdoms. It came too to the lost land of Kahiki, thence to Hawaii, sung down millennia in the most ancient of the old creation chants, whose first eleven most archaic lines run thus:

At the time the earth was scorched¹
And the heavens turned inside out
When the sky was darkened
fainter than the light before a rising moon,²
Yet in that time of deepest darkness
when the hidden seed of light bodes its return³
Then began the Abyssal Womb to activate
the birth of earth, now lifted through primeval ooze
from the deepest source within the deepest darkness:
the night without the sun
The birth of darkest night alone.⁴

Listen, then, as the Story unfolds ...

THE PLACE OF HUMANITY IN THE SCHEME OF THINGS

Two had become sorely troubled, a Lady and her brave and gentle Knight, courteous and noble in deeds and esteemed by many among men. Yet they were also loved by those beyond the mortal realm, who sent a Messenger. Seekers after truth, the two then sought counsel of that wise one, their teacher who once before had led them in an hour of need, against injustice. But even he was not prepared for what would happen now. This time they were told in dream where they should meet. Journeying towards the gardens of the Wise One, they awaited him. Three full days and nights had passed before they beheld him once again. They greeted him and he could see their hearts were troubled. They sat in a fair bower of roses and lilies and the Lady sang....

This lovely song is withal passing sad, the Wise One said, and presently the Knight began to unfold the questions that were burning in their hearts.

Of late, said he, we have been pondering mankind. How came all of us to earth, naked and with no apparent niche among the creatures of the earth? Unlike the bird

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who feeds upon the worm and in turn is eaten by the cat; unlike the wild beasts, the fishes of the sea, all who are born with bodies endowed at birth with means to live their narrow span of life upon this earth Unlike all these, mankind takes more in greed than need requires, with cunning minds enslaving all other creatures they may find of use, yea even their own kind – caring not what pain or waste they cause.

Unlike the creatures of the wild, the Knight continued, we ourselves are our own greatest enemies: making wars, laying waste the land, our cities and our peoples ever increasing, multiplying, encroaching on all other things and choking out their lives.

Our hearts forebode that there will come a time of warfare greater than ever seen before; not just the ravages of men on men, but of mankind 'gainst all other life: the birds of the air, the fish of water, and the beasts of forested earth, yea all the wild things of the world, with its trees and plants as well, until the fair earth on which we stand turns hideous and blasted. These things have troubled us in dreams of late, good Friend.

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Pray go on, said the Wise One, listening gravely. Then the Lady spoke and said, No creature save man has the power of unsettling nature in its balance of life and death. Yet there is another aspect of humanity: the beauty of poetry and music and all the arts comes forth from us also. Strange then, must be our origins, and perhaps stranger still our destiny. Will you pass on to us what you know of these questions? For it is they that have become our quest.

Their mentor answered, My dear friends, you cannot understand the origins of man without the origins of your time itself. That time, as I hinted once before, was born at a momentous juncture of tragic import. Previously your race existed in a richer, kinder time without decay or death or suffering. Of all manifest beings those greatest in love and beauty were The First Divine Pair who came forth in Love from the Infinite Abyss of Every Wonder, whose deepest root is Love without limit of either Space or Time. From that Twain came forth two pairs. The first are together called Love's Will, the Second Divine Being. The other pair, that of Questing Intelligence, is the Third Divine Being: S/He whom your peoples call Creator-God/dess of this universe to its farthest star

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though understanding little of their natures, and oft forgetting Her who provideth His Divine Completion, as doth He Her own. The Third and Second Pairs fulfill each other naturally. By acting, intelligence becomes more wise; and by comparing changing outcomes the will grows more intelligent. Love, prime emphasis of the First Pair, however, is not controlled by what will or will not happen, but holds true to itself alone, and thus it grows.

Yet, though the quest of all intelligence is Wisdom, the path thereto is thorny – yea even for godhood, since growth entails eternal newness and surprise. And with surprise comes chance of mishap....

Thus there came a time when the Third Pair – co-regents of a beauteous realm where every creature grew in wonder, unfolding in love and scope as the rosebud its petals unfurls – began to seek and ponder on the nature of the First and Second Divine Ones, believing them to have their source of being in themselves, wishing to be more like them, curious to learn if they too might be more powerful and wise, ready to try. Yet She, feeling a strange disquiet, tore Herself away from their dark ponderings, saying, “Be patient, O my Love”. But

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already, lost in reverie He pondered on Feeling ill at ease despite Herself, She sensed 'mid Her misgivings growing helplessness

They were led to ponder so, the Wise One added in elucidation, by most natural inclinations. Like every being however great or high, they wished to grow into their most shining vision. In this desire to be as perfect as they could – for the godlings knew not evil then (a state we cannot even well imagine, let alone depict) – they most naturally did dream that part of their pathway to perfection would be to possess within themselves their very source of being, never dreaming of the trap that then would lie in wait. They wist not that every being's source lies only in the Heart of Infinite Love within the Abyssal Source. For no manifest being can hold the Source-of-All Things in its puny limits. And the tap root of that Source is deepest Love.

To think otherwise is but a vain attempt to seize the unseizable, to mount a pitiful assault on infinite possibility and boundless Love. To try t'encapsulate That within the confines of the finite can only end in cutting oneself off from It! The scrolls of the ensuing

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Story were carried to early Egypt when the Nile was young, and became enshrined in memory of those who spoke the ancient tongue that called all evil “azphet”: that which is cut off and separated – indeed from the very life of life itself in the original event we now recount.

But, pressed the Knight, Why did not the First or Second Divine Ones tell them of this? Yes, the Lady added, It would have been right kind.

Ah, their teacher continued, but ye who question now are not so pure as any of those six High Ones. In that pristine state the First or Second Pair would have no way to be aware of such a lapse, could not be aware that their companions could ever doubt that the source of all well-being must remain in the freedom of the Great Vastness that can bring forth whatsoever be evoked. In the roots of the vast Freedom is the Infinite Source of Love that lives in the Unmanifest.

Thus for the First Pair, who put love always first, such query as the Third Pair asked could scarce arise since in every moment they could feel their inmost source flow like a spring from Infinite Love itself. And the Second

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Twain beheld constantly before them the works and fruits of loving will's activity, knowing deep within their very being that these acts came through them from a source eternal, fraught with infinitely beautiful variety. But for the Third Pair, the Questing Ones, things were by their very nature different. Despite Her growing apprehension, He took the leap into His deep desire for self-contained completion and fell into a stuporous slumber in which He met the Nightmare His longing had in fact engendered. For in their high estate and realm one had but to launch a wish for it to come to pass. No waiting time is There.

Fatefully not yet aware that no manifest, and therefore limited being can comprehend itself completely — nor, no matter how high in state, can hold within itself its Love-Source-in-the-Infinite-Abyss of the All-Possible — our youthful God did launch His fond desire, only to find the crushing truth that it could manifest in no wise other than to gnaw away His ties to Love's deep root, thus unleashing every other evil. For nothing manifest can be that Root and Well-Spring, infinite and unveiled, which is the very life of life itself. In sending forth the dream of self-sufficiency, now turned

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to mere self-severance, the Third Divine One had unknowingly allowed the Image of Evil to leap forth from the All-Possible. And as the tragic wish began to burgeon and take form, our God fell into a death-like sleep, dreaming true whilst all the beings of His realm started in amazement at the Evil Image thus evoked, the like of which they never had before conceived, much less beheld.

Chief among them was the Goddess of our Universe who now saw in dread form Her inchoate fears. She knelt, and bending over Him did sing a Song of Wondrous Power reminding Him of Love so nearly lost. He strugglingly awoke, then rose in angry horror, forswearing with a fearsome vow the sick malignancy of the Image of All Evil and the lapse in Him that had called it forth. In this he suffered grievous wound ... for nothing else would do but cutting out its eager tendrils in His heart of hearts. Then many there were who disowned it too and gathered round God and Goddess to resist, repel, and push it back into th'Abyssal Source where't should sleep forever.

Yet were they foiled in their purpose, for others became intoxicated by the powers they fancied the Evil Image

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might bestow. So It corrupted them and they became Its slaves. Infected by the Evil Image, they then hungered to destroy the Cohorts of Love and run on rampage through the cosmos whose undoing was the innate aim of the Image.

Thus because some, fascinated, were unwilling to thrust it back, the horrid Image of Evil did not disintegrate, and the beings ensorcelled by it gathered themselves together to make war on the loyal company of God and Goddess. Thus strife came to the blissful realm that had previously known neither pain nor suffering nor disillusionment.

And there was a third group, some godlings whose hearts were darkened by the Image of Evil and yet fancied themselves to be sophisticated, and more knowledgeable than the others. They stood back from both the Cohorts of Love and the Cohorts of Evil, persuading some others to do likewise, saying "Let us not commit ourselves to either side and risk alliance with the losers. Rather should we offer ourselves to the victors and enjoy the fruits thereof. For who can tell whether God and Goddess and those who cleave to them, or those who worship the

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Image, shall have the final sway?”

Now the First and Second Divine Beings – who had never broken their links with Infinite Love – beheld the struggle of Love’s Cohorts led by the Third Pair, beset by ever growing menace. Then the First and Second Ones called forth from the Infinite Source Those who could protect Love and drive back evil: the Seven Lords of Time – who in their fullness and completeness are also named Pleroma and the Lords of the Loom. And as They called Them forth They said, “Let these two Loving Ones be helped and rescued, and for whatever omission of ours that may be here involved, we take due blame and due responsibility, and all the dwellers in our worlds are in accord with this.”

“Then so mote it be!” The one who spoke was first in the sevenfold emerging, stern Saturn, the bringer of consequence and limitation to all those who misuse free will by omission or commission; but also the bringer of support and endurance to those who in free choice choose Love. Now let it be remembered that each of these divine three pairs co-ruled a Universe. So when the fateful, dangerous pondering of the Third Intelligence led to

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that primordial disaster, the wave of consequential repercussion engulfed the first two Worlds as well, according to their Rulers' vows of loyalty. Thus the state of all three Universes descended in due measure, each in proportion to its share in the efficient cause of avalanching cataclysm. And the six High Beings, like mountain climbers tied with a common rope, are all stopped in their ascent when one does slip.... A threefold universe – the Multiverse if you will – had fallen prey to evil now unleashed, and a long war had begun....

Addressing the first two Pairs, great Saturn added, "Your compassion will bear fruit. By constant interchange between all worlds the wounded ones are healed."

Thus Saturn came forth, followed by the six other regents of all times: Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and last the Moon, to whose region the God of our Universe was now consigned; and Goddess followed Him in Her love.

Then they who had been Third were now the Tenth, though the seed of their purest essence remained in the Third Place in a still unfallen World, as did so even more

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the Second and the First, now also Ninth and Eighth. That inviolate place of refuge and of healing they created and all shared, manifested its reflection in the highest mortal realm where all disease, yea even death, is held in check. In some versions of the record it is called the Quest World; for it was now become the quintessential, ceaseless Quest of all creation.

And beyond even that Reflection, in the Place-Beyond-the-Quest, their return will be awaited in joyful and victorious symphony when the span of unleashed Evil's too long sway had spun its last thread in the pattern of Time that had become the mask of Love for many ages. But now, at the start of that span, the God of our Universe was wounded, needing at last the magic to become re-manifest as his own son, his higher self re-born through Goddess.

Later in Egypt, where the ancient record was preserved, he would be Horus (born of Isis) who yet was Osiris, his own father. Later still, in a now more garbled record, a prophet taught in Egypt arose to recall the ancient words of Horus: "I and My Father are one." Thus had Horus laid down the foundations of the Way

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for all who had been wounded by the Evil Image: the Way – the Dao of Eastern wisdom – that they would have to take to re-weave their souls into caduceal harmony of two glorious strands of life that mirror God and Goddess....

But I go too far ahead, the Wise One said. So let us now return to the great confrontation with the Time Lords. For when they appeared, the Cohorts of Evil were at first overwhelmed, then driven far from the Blissful Realm to the place of travail they had earned. And Great Saturn, seeing their actions had expressed their souls' behest, allowed blindness to assail the hearts of the Enemies of Love, those who would cut out their roots to the Source of Life.

But there were also cowardly power-seekers and their followers who had foregone fealty to either side, waiting to see who would win. These did not remain in the divine realm to bargain as they planned. For they had failed to see that evil could not possibly be self-sustaining, but would if unopposed drag all with it back into th' unmanifest. So the dishonest ones – along with the greater company of the naive they had beguiled – were

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banished to halls of a strange and dreamlike state men later called the duat, bardo, barzak, or purgation – there to await the consequences of abandoning loyalty on the one hand and being fooled by lies on the other. What the Time Lords devised for all of them I shall speak of later, when they all became subject to the cyclic Time of repeated births between both earth and bardo. Only thus would any have the chance of an eventual re-awakening and re-doing – tho' some would only choose to harden more their hearts in later births.

As to the Evil Ones, those who had waged war on behalf of the Image and laid waste the universe – they were banished to the deepest, murkiest depths of the bardo. There they remain to this day as They-Who-Cause-Bad-Dreams and through them vicious actions, fraught with crimes most horrible.

Meanwhile the Time Lords guarded and still guard the Seven Gates to the Infinite Source that held back new evils from spilling out, defiling and ruining what would be left of other cosmic regions. Our God had grown in wisdom and compassion through the great error, and He and Goddess took counsel with each other, vowing

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they would pour their power into the wasted universe, which otherwise would be abandoned to annihilation and eternal nothingness. Thus was the flow of evil stopped, and the Image, powerful though it was, could not grow further. But the extent it had already grown ensured long cycles of racking misery and repair.

It was thus fitting that God and Goddess should preside not only over the fauna and flora of planets in their universe, but over the bardo realms as well, those intermediate places between incarnate births. There much loving help and wisdom might be imparted to beings, resting between lives, whose hearts had so requested. But nightmare demons prowl there too, so those of the Love Cohorts who felt the call went into the Intermediate Realms to give protection, whilst others chose to dwell with the Seven Lords of the Pleroma and create a sacred realm in the heart of the fallen cosmos from which they could minister to all the manifest worlds and the lives of creatures there, still subject to surprise attacks and ambushes by evil legions. Because they sustain, but do not interfere, those ravages could not be justly stopped in one instance unless stopped in all, then bringing Time to an untimely halt that would annihilate

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even those souls who might have healed themselves had the grim scenario played out. So play it must. Though aeons pass in pain, those souls at last are rescued and the insanity spent.

Your present half-way universe is thus a travesty of its former state: a place whose every creature embodies the struggle of beauty and goodness against ugliness and horror. This compromised world yet gives its trapped beings all chances possible to restore themselves to their pristine state and its undying bliss and beautiful growth.

Many worlds the Seven Lords created from the devastation the Image had left in its wake; worlds where creatures might dwell and come to know the nature of love and now, perforce, evil; worlds where all could see and choose. Though full of great beauty, fashioned into skies and seas and all the forests and lakes, yet these worlds were also places of great horror: all creatures dwelt now in mortal bodies and habits of predation, having no choice save slay and eat their fellow lives that their own might be sustained. So also did the trees and plants engage in struggle with each other for more space

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and light. And those beasts who did not kill each other ate the plants in intricate balances of terror. Some creatures gave up all pretense, becoming parasites without redeeming feature. And in between their miserable mortal lives, all creatures were recycled through the bardo, only to be thrust down once again into the mortal fray.

Many and varied were the life-forms of these worlds. The most ancient and lasting were the minerals and crystals of the rocks, who formed the strong foundation upon which all the other lives could live. Long will the rocks endure even to the time when men shall gain the power to blast and tear at them and even split their inmost core. Greatest of all in beauty of the mortal realms are those creatures who became the plants: the trees, the flowers and grasses. Barren and desolate would all worlds be without them. Next, those who loved courage, movement and freedom became animals of land and sea and air – devising limbs and fins and wings. Each creature drew from the Infinite Source a body according to its nature and desire. And the various forms were beautiful to behold. Let us forget not also the beauty of the tiny lives that uphold all the rest, sight unseen,

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and also cleanse the earth of its burden of the dead.

But what of us? asked the Knight. We understand and appreciate the pittance that even something beautiful is left in all the things we see upon our world, but what place have we and all humankind in this dreadful scheme?

Did you not hearken, said the Wise One patiently, that each creature is granted a body according to its nature and desire? Indeed mankind sprang from those godlings who were as powerful as any in the unfolding cosmos of the Third Divine Pair; not from those who openly chose evil and fought on its behalf, but those who, without declaring themselves, were secretly on the side of the Image of Evil, and inwardly abetted it. That they could do this showed their hearts had become corrupted away from love, prizing knowledge and power for their own sakes.

So then they were sent to earth in bodies ill-fitted for the natural world, but with minds of great cunning and skill to fashion devices, minds that could observe and devise philosophies on the nature of the world, or clever

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sophistries as the case may be. But in answering your question I run ahead of myself here, for there are differences between these souls as became clear during the judgement of the Seven Thrones at the beginning of mortal time and before the assembled beings who were to become humankind.

Humanity for the most part awaited the judgement anxiously, but there were deceivers whose self-conceit had not diminished despite their banishment from the blessed realm. They held to their purpose of secretly abetting evil, boldly approaching the Seven Lords, saying deceitfully, "Well pleased are we that the evil ones have been defeated and yet we see that many things have been hurt. We were once great in the realm of God and Goddess and we would have our powers restored that we might the faster wipe out the defilements of evil."

But Saturn looked into their hearts and saw that their intentions were other than their words and that they desired only power and knowledge for power, caring not for the fate of any other creatures than themselves. Any living species so acting are allies of the Evil Ones.

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So Saturn said, “Know ye not, that an instant restoration of your powers is not possible until ye have known a world of both love and evil and freely renounced the evil in your hearts. However, neutrality between love and evil is not possible – we always stand on one side of the line or the other no matter how deft we are in self-delusion. The Way-of-Return of Horus will open to all who choose it, and so with you who now stand here.”

“Indeed, I would be without mercy if I restored you to the time of instant manifestation of desire; for ye would at once choose evil things and corrupt yourselves again so utterly that ye would fall fast into hellish halls of the Evil Ones, fiends in loveless forms that endure vampirically until the cosmos be revived and they disintegrate within the Infinite Source. Ye are here, O Deceivers, because of your decisions. Only by actions, after re-choosing what was once rejected, could the lost be found; for ye did not lose an object, but a nature.”

As Saturn spake, some among the self-deluded power-seekers were abashed and stepped out and towards the great number of silent and anxious people of now sorrowing hearts; and others could see only that

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they were refused, and hardened their resolve to gain the power they sought, by fair means or by foul. Still others came forth, sad but brave. Disgusted at the brazen deportment of the power-seekers, they renounced them utterly saying, "Lord Saturn, even in these halls we recall the lost bliss of our former state and mourn it deeply. Exiles we shall be for the time it takes to prove ourselves and we accept our responsibility to re-choose and earn better. If we succeed we shall offer our services to the Time Lords if ye will have them."

"Indeed we would," said Saturn, and then he and his fellow Lords turned their faces upon the great numbers of humanity who had not come forward with either the power-seekers or the saddened exiles. Reading their hearts, what the Lords saw moved them. For these were the ones who had been led astray by the terrible fear engendered in them by the Image of Evil and its malignant Cohorts. Not knowing what they should do, not trusting enough to Love and its Infinite Source, they had turned to the deluded ones following their advice, and now their hearts and wills were blasted. Fearful and timid, afraid of following their own counsel and always seeking others to tell them how to proceed, they

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were at the mercy of any who would seize and deceive them.

“Let us,” then said Jupiter, Lord of Wisdom and Healing, “seek to protect these beings, so childlike, from the promptings of deceivers, who, my heart forbodes, will delay and retard them, and even corrupt them further.”

“Let us drive the deceivers into a hell-realm where they will find others of their ilk,” said Mars, Lord of Courage and Swift Action. “But stay,” said Venus, Regent of Balance and most like in nature to our Goddess, “for this would be unjust. Do we not see that some of the deceivers already have renounced delusion and gone over to the exiles? Given time, others among them may do so too as they begin to see how their foolish cleverness and power-seeking create only greater problems than what they have pretended to resolve.”

The Solar Lord meanwhile, said nothing, but just shone the Light of Love into as many hearts as would receive it. Then spake Lord Mercury. “We can,” quoth he, “devise from their injustices counter-measures to

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rescue their victims. More shall I speak of this as time unfolds.” The Moon Lord then spoke: “Let us now go directly to the greatest number of mankind, whom we shall call the followers, for that best befits their natures.”

So the Seven Lords went among the followers, who seeing those seven bright and beautiful beings tried piteously to cling to them as guiding lights in a great darkness, begging them to rule the worlds directly without mediation.

But Saturn again addressed them, gently this time, saying, “Little ones we cannot do this, for if we guided your every step and dictated all your actions, your choice for love or for evil would not be your own. Ye would be puppets, and we but puppet masters. The greatest task that now ye face is finding your courage and self-confidence again to make your choices freely and in love, not out of fear of darkness or of punishment. Because your hearts know well that ye could make no other choice and yet remain true unto yourselves. Forsooth, in less peril do ye stand than the deceivers, and thus can find the strength to make your choices 'ere the end of this time's run. Though ye shall not see us when you live in

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mortal worlds, yet we shall be sustaining from afar. Now go forth and do ye well.”

Then, the Wise One continued, humanity departed from the presence of the Time Lords with one of the lesser magics that they still possessed: procreative power. Quickly misusing that as well, much as ribbon-worms will do, they in time infested and overran the regions where they have fared ever since according to their several lights, if that be not too bright a word for their dark fires.

This is sobering indeed, said the Lady speaking for both, that we were once among those who did wrongly choose, bringing more suffering to the world. Now we better understand the struggle in all human hearts – the sublimity some may rise to, the childlike and bewildered nature of many; in others their desire for power beguiles, then leads them into cruelty and viciousness. Once gods, the need to regain what they have lost is strong in all. But those who would deceive nurse the delusion of regaining it on their own terms: without wisdom ... without love. On that road their godlike image wavers dangerously. The more it dims, the thornier the path for

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any who would try to turn around and undo what they did.

The Wise One nodded in assent, continuing without comment: It was then seen that many men and women were drifting through their lives unawakened. So the Seven were led to send messengers – helping to ease lives by arts of civilisation, guiding them by just laws and setting forth religion in its native sense: a re-binding to divinity so that progress might be quicker and suffering less. To the brave ones they imparted the most precious gift: a swift and powerful path to regain the lost estate within a lifetime. Following this Way, they became Initiates of the Greater Life – even whilst in material bodies – and presided over their fellows wisely and well. Humanity now enjoyed greater happiness than had ever been known since that fateful nightmare of their God from which their Goddess woke Him.

THE DOWNFALL OF ATLANTIS

What then, the Knight asked, brought this happy time to its end? For we are in misery again and the teachings of the gods have become obscure indeed in our times. Was this divinely inspired civilisation on earth the fabled Atlantis?

So it came to be called, replied his mentor. But among those born there were also the deceivers and they were most dissatisfied with their lot. Even the arts of civilisation the messengers had revealed did not satisfy them, though they misused many of those principles to gain power and wealth. The laws of that realm did not restrain them, for they chose to obey nothing but the dark legions' behests, that only could entrap them more and more.

They began to realise that the most powerful portion of society was the initiatory priesthood. Then they also began their attempts to infiltrate as neophytes, noting the doctrines and ethics the messengers had taught, but disdaining fair play in their hearts and foregoing it in their actions. Armed with advanced knowledge and

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instrumentalities from beyond the Sacred Portal (of which more presently) they proceeded to pervert that knowledge, pursuing power and curiosity for their own sakes regardless of the pain to those lives on whom their cowardly experiments were vented over long and cruel years. Even victims among their own kind would disappear from their daily haunts, only to be found later on the heap of misshapen cadavers that at night streamed out of back doors of ghoulish laboratories, to be carried off to secret acid vats and incinerators.

The Guardians of the Portal became aware in time of these obscenities, yet kept faith with the messengers for the sake of them, not few, whose hearts were still unsullied. But there lay dangers in their midst, for some among the deceivers showed often outward charm, reaching the ranks of the highest neophytes, learning the Way to re-find the powers of their divinity. Then stood the infiltrators at the threshold of the Temple wherein neophyte became initiate.

To understand the story further, know first that in Atlantis there were seven priesthoods, each with a special allegiance to its Lord of Time, each possessing one of the

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seven medicines for the soul. The priests of the Temple of Saturn dispensed the means to overcome what in the neophyte would create mounting obstacles later on the path. Those of the Temple of the Moon, once the past was dissolved in the neophyte's heart by Saturn, dispensed the means to transform the personal seed into the blossom bespoken in that high but latent image. Then could the struggling hero-self rejoin the beauteous higher self, 'til now imprisoned in a tower unreachable, made hidden with hermetic seal.

Then from the priesthood of Venus came means to restore balance to all the workings of the soul, and thereby harmony. They also did redress all relations, not only with people on earth but also with those dwelling in the bardo and beyond.

The priesthood of the Sun was charged with the means to open for the neophytes a channel to higher worlds, so that refined energies of power could enter them, enabling higher life. And the Solar priesthood also silently, unceasingly sent forth the radiance of uplifting love and faith into the minds of all the people of good will, whether neophytes or not, throughout the land. That sacred fire

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dwelt in their hearts, giving them courage to go forth and free their imprisoned selves, their noblest vision that sustained them when they faltered. Thus the higher evolution of the people was impelled and strengthened beyond measure.⁵

The Mars priesthood could then grant the power to point out new directions to show how this new higher energy could be deployed and used; and the priesthood of the great Lord Jupiter dispensed the final healing of the soul, preparing it to transform so that it might then manage a vehicle or body of higher type, wrought in fuller reality beyond our present ken. Finally, the priesthood of Mercury gave access to the Hermetic Portal through which the prepared soul could be finally joined to its now ready higher body in a reality enhanced beyond what we now can neither know nor guess, and more enduring and more beautiful. This marriage of soul and immortal body is the true meaning of the hieros gamos or sacred marriage of the ancient Mysteries. So all the priesthoods were imbued with the living powers of these high Arcana.

The infiltrators, you can now more clearly see, sought

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above all the temple of Mercury, for they wished to find the Portal that was there, obsessed with the delusion that if they passed through straight away, their bodies would thereby be instantly infused with energies divine and they'd become immortals. Yet it was the spiritual disciplines and arts perfected in the temples they wished to bypass, that enabled the very building of that higher body they so ruthlessly did seek. How could they have been more blind!

The envious infiltrators saw the initiates emerging from the temple of Mercury bright and beautiful and glad, filled with wisdom. Then it was that they desired the power of the Way and now sought how to gain it. They approached the Temple Guardians, requesting initiation. They, seeing them not yet ready, refused them entry saying, "Seek the heart-remedies of the temple of the Sun and carry out faithfully the tasks its Guardians will prescribe. Then shall we receive you gladly and bestow the doctrine and practice of the Great Way."

Some better amongst those deceivers, abashed by the beauty and goodness of the Guardians, went to the Sun temple and became cleansed and purified. But others,

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though pretending assent, were angered and formed a secret group, spurred on by wives and mistresses as vile as they. Taking counsel among themselves, they asked if there were not allies for them among other powers in the universe. Though the full story of mankind was known to them through the religion of their people, they persuaded themselves that the Gods had misled them and desired to hear what the Evil Ones would say. So they called upon the demons to appear, and when they did, put questions to them about what would give the greatest power in all the universe.

And the Evil Ones answered saying, "How now can ye doubt that evil is the greatest power here? If ye would create a palace, long and laboriously must ye strive to do so, and yet within hours it may be swiftly destroyed by fire. So it is with all things in your realm: the power to destroy is quicker and greater than the power to build. That is why war is better than peace: It is more powerful!"

The impatient deceivers agreed, and further asked, "What of mankind? We know the gods are holding us back from our true powers and we do not believe their

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threats. We think your realm is the one we should enjoy.”
“And so ye would,” answered the fiends. “For we do what we wish there without constraint.”

In this, added the Wise One, they were less than honest, for the lesser demons are ever enslaved by the greater in their ignominious chains of misused powers. Then the legions of evil continued their harangue:

“Are you not tired of the rest of mankind, these weaklings too afraid to rise up and be powerful again? We can show many ways to increase your power and enslave the weaklings who are good for nothing else. Thus ye shall have immortal bodies too, in our domain of fulfillment such as we enjoy. In time, together shall we press all humans into our service and turn them to our cause. And these hordes shall be led by you to overthrow the tyranny of the Seven. For once their Seven Gates are broken we shall feast upon the power of the Infinite Source forever. Ye hesitated once before, O kindred souls. But we forgive, and offer once again the chance of victory. Become our allies now, as ye have really always been of old!”

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The deceivers eagerly agreed, intoxicated by their dreams of power, now so seeming near. The evil ilk laughed inwardly at the deceivers for their vanity, but showed them fair faces and uncovered many devices and strange sciences whereby they might grow in sway and wealth, seducing others to their cause. The Evil Ones delighted that so many of mankind had now thrown in their lot with them, either outwardly or in their souls; for they knew that once the rule of these subaltern tyrants was established, the evil realm could misrule Earth until it drowned in misery and in its own destruction, thus furnishing those death-agonies, whose energies were the nourishment of evil.

The Evil Ones then guided their all too willing dupes in a cunning strategy to undermine the fair and just rule of Atlantis. Others they began to corrupt among the neophytes, increasing the burden on the people to support them until reverberating murmurings of discontent began to rise. The deceivers were prepared for this and had garnered allies among the civil officials and the army. These then made harsher laws to quell the unrest and voted hurtful or lethal devices to their policing hordes, with the order: "Browbeat and terrify the populace at

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large until, their wills all bruised or broken, they submit!”

And those who led the deceivers were a small council most like in nature of all those on earth to the Evil Ones, the legions of They-Who-Cause-Bad-Dreams. These sought and held soul-withering ceremonies in which they became visible to the deceivers and showed them secrets. The head of the council, feeling they were not ready for the final strike, evoked from the legions of hell his personal superior to ask how they should seize the Great Way and the Portal.

That fiend then showed them visions within the Mercury Temple that none had ever seen save Guardian or Initiate, and they thus learned the way to a hidden door that opened onto a great maze. Within were traps for those unbidden; but the Guardians knew the secrets of the maze and led the initiates through unscathed. But one day a member of the council of deceivers saw in his evil-spawned vision one of the Guardians walking through the maze, and carefully noted how the traps were avoided. He called the others into his visionary state. Great was the excitement in the council of deceivers as they perceived a Guardian Priestess reach the heart of

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the maze where lay the most secret and sacred adytum of the temple. There in the central naos stood a strange doorway, if doorway it were, for it seemed to lead only into another part of the enclosure. But yet the Guardian went through it and vanished, and as she did so a wondrous light blazed forth.

“This then must be the legendary Portal to the World of the Seven Lords,” cried the head of the council in excitement, as one of the minions of the Evil Ones appeared to congratulate them, saying, “Ye, the Council, shall be the vanguard of the assault upon the Seven and their precious Sacred Realm”. “For,” he continued, lying glibly, “when ye pass through the portal ye shall be equipped with all the powers of a dweller in that realm. Yea more, for ye are not weaklings in awe of the Seven and shall rain down destruction upon their greatest city.” Yet it would not be the Sacred City of the Seven, but rather all of Atlantis itself. This the demons knew but said not. That evil one now continued, saying, “And when They shall have been weakened in the very heart of their realm, then shall our legions assault the Seven Gates.”

The deceivers were pleased with this. Taking counsel,

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they formed a plan of gaining admittance to the temple, which was guarded from without by an élite corps. There were several such corps deployed throughout Atlantis, and a general officer of one of them had been swayed to the deceivers' cause. Now within a month, he thought, it would become his turn to head the temple guard, which would then be his own company, most of whom had been corrupted under his aegis. Then would be the time to strike. But the general himself was still uncertain, for though many of his men would obey him without question even if his orders should seem strange, others were in the ranks who had been taught from childhood that any infiltration of the temple by the unworthy was one of the greatest sacrileges. How, then, to overcome their scruples?

So the general turned to his masters, and they to the hellish legions who then gave the deceivers a potion of great strength that would dissolve the will of any who drank of it and render them willing to do anything suggested to them — a state enhancing vulnerability to the fears and aggressions always lying within the fragile human heart. Some appointed deceiver then gave of the potion to the general to dispense to his special command

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on the eve of the assault. Others set up that night's feast for all the military, who gladly came and imbibed with zest the evil potion in their wine.

And when they all were will-less, certain deceivers skilled in the arts of inciting uncontrolled emotion in an audience, arose and roused the guests to fury, saying, "All of you are poorer and more wretched than need be. In the temple lie great riches and wonderful medicines, yea even those that can heal all illness and restore all youth. Long have the Guardians created a great store of such treasure and hoarded it for themselves. Follow us, then, to Mercury's Temple and ye can take them now for yourselves and your kith and kin!"

So even the uncorrupted members of the corps swiftly joined the rest and merged into an angry mass. Their wiser feelings of loyalty and trust had now been deadened. Under the traitorous general they marched on the temple, finding the way clear as their leader was already instructed in the placement of the traps and the night watches of the guards. And any they encountered who opposed them in their march were slain out of hand.

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But the Guardians had felt forebodings in the growing distress among the people in late months (the dwellers in the Realm of the Seven could not pre-empt free will and impart explicit warning). They had thus already seen that certain of their best followers should depart secretly to other lands so that the divine teaching could be carried on, but did not know the final stroke would come so quickly. At the raucous shouts of the deceivers' mob, they went to the outer steps of the temple to warn against the consequences of forced entry: "The gracious presence of the gods will be withdrawn from our land and we shall fall back into a time of misery and darkness, having failed the test of trustworthiness."

Such was the power of the Chief Guardian's words that for a moment the mob was sobered and in doubt, even though drugged. But there was one in the crowd with special power to whip them up again to fury, a favorite mouthpiece of the Evil Ones, well known to the people for a persuasive tongue and forceful manner, who cried out, "Having come so far, will ye now be cheated of your birthright at the end?" The mob then shouted "No, No!" with furious vehemence.

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At this point the Guardians withdrew sadly to the temple. The hordes followed them, overcome with avariciousness by the richness and beauty of their surroundings. But whilst the mob was looting, the deceivers saw the Guardians heading towards the secret door. They followed them there, unseen, through the maze whose ways they knew through the Evil Ones, unto the very threshold of the most secret and sacred adytum, looming before them like a strange alveary.⁶

But just then they saw the last Guardian vanish through the portal, and heard him say before he left, in strangely penetrating tones that carried beyond the Temple into the very hearts of all the people of the land: “Know that we shall return with healing. When the Cycle of Evil has reached its term, we will return! Meantime, your hope lies in a deeper harmony with nature, of whose creatures ye are not the lords.”

The deceivers heard these words with sneering equanimity, ignorant that the Evil Ones had misled them about the portal. But no matter, for they were blinded

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to all things save an insatiable urge for power sans responsibility, purblind to the chaos and destruction in its wake.

The truth was that the Portal did not turn gross bodies straightway into higher ones. Rather, there had first to transpire a series of purifying stages, tempered with like changes in values and behaviour – that alchemy taking place in kindred form in higher spheres until, like a bridge begun from both sides of a river gorge, the two do join amidstream at the Portal. Recall also what was said of the work within Mercury's Temple. Know too that when the Guardians first took initiates to the Portal, divine beings from the World of the Seven visited through it and by powerful ways of their own equipped the initiates,⁷ enabling them to put the predatory world to nobler uses.

Thus gradually the initiates could reach purer and purer states of heart. Only after thorough inner and outer cleansings could anyone attempt to enter the sacred portal without dire harm. And when any initiates were ready to depart their mortal coil, the Guardians would lead them to the Gate one final time and they would pass

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through it into the Realm of the Seven – be it called Agharti in Mongolia, Avalon in Brittany and Wales, or the sacred valley, “Place of White Waters” in the lost tongue of the long vanished Chud in the High Altai . . . , Shambhala in India and Tibet, or Tir nan n’Og, magic land of eternal youth in Ancient Erin.⁸

But it went otherwise with the ones that desired only to defile. As a bardic seer once sang:

The Doors became great Jaws
that gaped wide open
to the Furnace of the Flame.
The unclean-hearted fools
await destruction
in the Guardian Fire
beyond the roaring Doors.
Then SsSs!! ShSh! arises to
the forehead of the Living Goddess Image.
With a horrid lightning hiss of hooded cobra
the Uraeus quickens on her effulgent brow
Only the raging Lioness remains,
Dire Sekhmet roars

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Slain by their impurities,
the desecrators fall into th'abyssal fires
and are seen no more.

So, reckless in their greed, the deceivers rushed forth into the portal and were at once engulfed, screaming, in a flaming vortex of terrible power; and their impurities created so strong a revulsion that cosmic fire burst forth from the Portal. The foundations of the world were rocked, culminating in the destruction of Atlantis itself in huge shudders of the earth and tidal waves. Thus the great civilisation sank and was lost whilst many floods swept o'er the land, a few creatures surviving to re-inhabit and rebuild the world that now you know. The ruins of once mighty cities rose in the course of time and seabed upheavals, and now lie buried under the sands of what you call the great Sahara. Secret teachings among Berber priestesses unto this day still attest the ancient record, lost in the sack of Egypt and its wondrous temple libraries

Thus the Wise One ended the harrowing recital, nonetheless shot through with iridescent rays of nascent hope. Betimes interrupted by his querents, when the tale

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was told he saw by the approaching dusk that all the day had passed conversing in the Garden

The Lady was silent – only her slim fingers slightly tugging at her jeweled collet betrayed her agitation. Then she murmured, This is a right painful story, giving pause... Verily, faltered the Knight, his eyes brooding; then straightened, softly saying, Yet rather than some honied potion that turns to poison after every draught, let us quaff to the dregs this bitter drink that when once drunk, becomes immortal nectar. His Lady gazed at him. Nodding through eyes ashine with mingled sad and joyous tears, she smiled.

Your choice, dear friends, their Teacher said, holds healing promise, and is the way of wisdom and fulfillment. But I see now before me two in dire need of rest after a weary ordeal! Come then

Sleep they must before they could grasp the final part of mankind's story, whose ending, he assured them, would have glory in it and the oldest, tightest knots

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would be untwined.

The Lady and her Knight brightened on hearing this, and accompanied the Wise One to the palace that lay within that Sanctuary. There also lay the Lion-guarded gate to The Way Home where alone the ending of the Wise One's story⁹ may be found and lived



By the signs of the Seven Stars
Shall the Gates be opened.¹⁰

NOTES

1. (*page 5*) *Wela* as an adjective doesn't simply mean "hot", but "burnt" or "scorched."
2. (*page 5*) The old Polynesians were keen sky and weather observers, and deployed a wealth of special terms that would need a whole phrase to convey their meaning. Thus the single word *aka* in the original denotes the particular kind of light this entire line is needed to describe.
3. (*page 5*) The "when" here corresponds to our winter solstice: the time of greatest night, yet also when the days begin becoming longer. In the Southern Hemisphere that time is when the Pleiades (*Makali'i*) are seen high in the night sky.
4. (*page 5*) This is more accurate than the more derivative biblical account going back to old Phoenicia (Hebrew is the dialect of Phoenician spoken at the great trade centre of Byblos) and still earlier, to ancient Akkad and Sumer. That account gives rise to a false impression of a first creation, rather than a correction and partial restoration after a horrendous mishap. The misleading impression is compounded by omissive translation of the preterite ("came to be") of the Hebrew verb *hahyah* as a mere "was". Thus Genesis 1,2 more correctly reads: "The world had become a desolated watery chaos (*tohu*) and featureless ruin (*bohu*)." The ancient Hawaiian creation chant is talking about the same primordial event.

Notes

5. (page 34) Indeed, the High ones of the Sun are still radiating the uplifting radiance from the realm designated the Q-world in Part II of *The Lion Path: the Big Picture* (5th edition, House of Horus, 1996).

6. (page 44) An old word for a beehive made rounded in the ancient fashion:



7. (page 45) In fact, the word for “to be initiated” in Ancient Egypt meant “to be equipped.”

8. (page 46) *Chud* (pronounced *chude*) is a generic Russian term for the prehistoric non-Russian people of the Altai Mountains in Eastern Siberia near the Mongolian border, who left their legacy in silent standing stones or menhirs and in the message of the land of *Belovodye* (“White Waters”) — the Russian translation of the original Chud toponym by the Altai Old Believers who knew of the ancient legends of the Chud, of whom it is said that they closed the doors to Belovodye with great stones and one day will return to purify the world. All the regional names in the text refer to the same place, the quintessential world of the Quest: the “Q-World” of note 5.

9. (page 49) Up to that point of resolution, then, it is re-transcribed here at the close of the twentieth century of the current era, to which it is peculiarly applicable.

10. (page 49) From a prophecy of Shambhala.

COLOPHON

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