

Through the Horns of Aries

The Museum of Extraordinary Things

Imagine a book. Now step inside. Here is the place that you, dear reader, will be invited to sharing the experience of an existence within a book. The beginning of a feeling that you would like me. Playing musically is a soundtrack of the most Entheogenic persuasion, delving deep into the niches of the psyche where real and unreal quickly become one, where the fantastic wars eternally with the mundane. Nothing too shy, certainly, but I would not get in too big a fret over it. It's a fine lined dance that does the most it can without doing so much as to overstep that it can't re-correct.

Back to the beginning. Welcome. I hope you find some bit of history that you'd be interested in trading for, though a bargain is a thing of the devil. Perhaps a trade will save someone's life, hmm?

This is the Museum of Extraordinary Things. Here you'll find histories, and I'm loathe to rhyme but you will find mysteries. Did you know that Air is more dense than Fire? Do you know of the Chimera and the Manticore? The Manticore is a pseudonym for Lewis Carol's Cheshire Cat; a cat that grins with a mouth so large as to eat you with and to guide you down the rabbit hole though you have not to go out and fall asleep to do it. Watch out for him.

A girl named Almon is speaking and lecturing on a white raven, a paradox that has to do with the question of existence and perception. Do we need to perceive it for it to exist? Just because I have not does not mean...Well you get the idea. A great idea for a holiday that involves dressing up as something else for sure. To be perceived, dearest of the old gods is that White Raven, his story involves being trapped in a box,.

Cactus plants from the edge of New Crobuzon, deep in the world of Bas Lag. A hero, the aforementioned Almon before she became a historian, brought it back from the legacies of a race of birdman that hold honor and respect as far above other values as we hold love above ours.

Smells of cinnamon, agarbatti, and thyme permeate just for a moment before taking the visitor to a new level of consciousness, one where magic and oddities are collected, where psychic real estate is the most precious of commodities. Keeper of these tabs and records is Master Fabulist Evan, whom some tell tale of being able to replicate any persons' qualities upon a piece of paper, or other medium. The Fabulist keeps track of all who comes and goes, charging a penance where needed, allowing those others who are less fortunate but more deserving to pass through unimpeded. The flight of a urubus passes by, catching your eye. Its wings welcome your strange presence, you hitherto unforeseen occurrence that beckons to it in a turn of events that even it, with its whispering prophecies, did not anticipate.

Rulers of the world one piece at a time visit here. That crystal shard on the table names you Portcullis, gate-walking friend. Why come here, friend Portcullis? That deck of cards can tell you why. It's a history that even the most glorious victory could not erase, and its seemingly divine knowledge tells you that only people with names and characters that have been created can come here. Here the Fabulist intervenes and suggests you meet Promethea, the Sandman, or David Copperfield himself. Sometimes the most real people are the ones that are read about in books. Why is that? Susurrus heard.

The Book of A Single Page is complete with this brief exercise.

Welcome, welcome, one and all. Welcome...to it All.

**8/9/1 (Mercurial – Sol) - Pareidolia – Sangdoclentine December Friday 30th 2016,
8-11PM**

This ritual is to draw upon my own history of study of rhetoric and persuasion to see what sort of lies I have spun over myself.

I initially wrote this line down and was greatly disheartened. There was the thought that I had told myself that magic was not real, which is an old belief I had fostered and and that was a simple feeling as though I had gotten back to into those thought patterns.

However, upon thinking this thought I was forced confrontation by the fact that magic does in a certain part at least exist in this universe and must exert a certain influence, esp. if the agent or initiate is able to make it work at least in part in his favor.

I will forgo on the expectation that I have maintained of getting a wife. I have greatly desired a wife, and lifelong companion, yet do not see the results of long-term enchantment affecting me in regards to my immediate circumstances. This disheartening feeling was waylaid by a new thought that after the creation of some Sanity Points in conjunction of working with a happiness sigil, and Happiness Hypersigil, that I am pouring all of my work and effort into, I can feel it being responded to by other entities, egregores, spirits, and avatars. Since my Intent is happiness, my action is a new form of art therapy that involves rituals and spells I can undertake, all gearing towards wonders and fun.

While doing some simple work, I decided to do a Pareidolia Ritual. The setting would be a three hour span of time on Facebook, where I would help people in the ways that I could. I would offer off the cuff, surface level queries and proceed to go deeper, as though practicing self-hypnotism and sharing with others. I started with simple well wishing, and progressed to asking how people were, and offering conversation if they desired it, and the results have been astounding. While I had initially conjured for modest improvement, what bounced back was really a current all of my own. I went out for a cigarette and stared at a particular star for a few minutes, and then watched it turn orange and vanish, then the surrounded stars began blinking.

So much success, it was guaranteed. I am the magician. I work on the behalf of myself and others.

These are the results!

- 1) Wonder and cheer was achieved through the simple vibrational principle of hermetic Law of Vibration, sharing and caring.
- 2) Realization that the laws of nature are not finished.
- 3) Three hours of wonder in which I watched a star slowly move through the sky, then turn orange and vanish, 'proving' my lady Pareidolia's presence. A 'misperception' indeed, 'I' can recognize a goddess -bows humbly, and in spooky awe-
- 4) Well wishes interwoven with simple sympathetic magic and reflection helped me gain ideas, probably "misperceptions" that further enhanced MY ability to experience something wonderful
- 5) The Intent to provide happiness, and the action taken, my words and my conversations had, I hope, nothing but a healing effect.
- 6) My intent to conjure for modest improvement was met with a miracle! It was small, it was private, and it was detailed. I shall spend the remainder of my existence sharing this.
- 7) I helped one dog, fourteen people, and a couple of egregores, faeries, a god-form, all while helping myself.

I have dubbed this apotheosis Sangdoclentine. While it's an aspect of myself, it has to do with sympathy magic, magnetism, like attracts like, or the Linking Sigil. What I experienced with the star turning orange I have linked to "YES THAT'S MAGIC!" and the feeling inside of myself that realizes wonders and fun!

The Profane

The Sacred

Folio Vis Vires

Inside this brief but brown post one may find memories of course of things as they pertain to where they ought to, with the encouragement to carry on in times of duress. All things written about by the magus author are of course pertaining to magic, perhaps as a means of magic being a means whereby which to grow up. Fluff aside, there are mentions of Lords Terminus, all his boundaries grounding. Milk for the bones and teeth, and ideas for the shop. Time if one needs, may be found, and wares aplenty, all the right sort of thing produced in the right sort of manor.

Of rock and stone, limbs and limber limbs, trees and goats
All things surround this thing of sand,
A moat, surrounds this bread of pan.

A raven flies by, loving and believing, praying and healing.
“Mi amore, mi amore, forever we are together”
and a jovial whistling is heard.

Folio Hominid

A handy thing, that the individual may at times magically extend himself to influence external goings ons.

Of course it's best remembered that it is from *within* that all well being springs forth, and takes care. Simply say “yes” to the outer. The common sense must be followed if it is to be achieved however.

Virtual World

Perception is the key to transformation. – Carlos Castaneda

Here in the 21st century we find ourselves bombarded by new things. New technologies including encyclopedic cell phones that are able to search a vast web of data for relevant information, provide amusing music to listen to, or store books that only previously could be contained in their literal format and were required to be hauled around in the standard way.

We have the internet and soon there will be new ways to interact with this virtual/aetheric world. I draw the comparison between the virtual and the aether because this is a standard that many magicians do. The implementation of virtual reality will soon increase features of augmented reality and offer us the experience to literally plug in and start creating worlds. People will get better and better at processing information and we will soon have the tools to not only manufacture worlds but will increase our abilities to communicate and to conceptualize/visualize.

This will mean more occurrences of magic. When a programmer is capable of making a virtual coin visually change into a visual flower won't this be magic?

I'm wielding words that invoke an instance of superposition of two different things inhabiting the same place and time through the medium of writing. I am writing lots of thoughts and lots of emotions are being released.

I think we should revert to a theurgic manner in which we appeal to the gods.

Advice Practicum

Learn a word. Learn an English word. And then learn all the synonyms and antonyms about it that you can. That will show you magic. That will show you deception.

Book:

album, atlas, bestseller, bible, booklet, brochure, codex, compendium, copy, dictionary, dissertation, edition, encyclopedia, essay, fiction, folio, handbook, hardcover, leaflet, lexicon, magazine, manual, monograph, nonfiction, novel, octavo, offprint, omnibus, opus, opusculum, pamphlet, paperback, periodical, portfolio, preprint, primer, publication, quarto, reader, reprint, roll, scroll, softcover, speller, text, textbook, thesaurus, tome, tract, treatise, vade mecum, volume, work, writing

and these are just the nouns.

Memory Brick LN.

Right down the way from where one might find oneself, shadow may be noticed nailed to a street lamp. The shop waivers right near, mostly unnoticed compared to the darkness that chills to the left of the light. A raven perches on the lamp.

“My name is Matthew,” he speaks, “and I am looking for Colter. Have you seen him?”
No, thought the shop. Now go away, be gone with you.

Talk Shop

This is a moment's pause when a man works quietly behind the shop, scuffing up and shewing some metal into a fine product. He pauses a moment, proud, yet sighs deeply at the ache in his back. Another man walks into the shop and stops to talk lively for a moment; he's a new kid on the way and there's a lot to be done in preparation for the new fellow, why doesn't he come on over and they'll talk about it over dinner. The man leaves and the shopkeeper puts down his things for a moment and just for fun he walks around to the front of the counter and puts forth his best impression, chortling and mocking his employer. He sighs then, again, and leans on his counter, taking up a completely different manner, one of a tired man seeking a particular remedy for an ailment. Which of course the shopkeeper has.

You Drive me Crazy Baby Blue

You've got me feeling lazy...

And he finished a great deal of stories and met a great deal new creations. His of course, all of them that were not of the moment's making of course. He was present.

As we're his glyphs, his wards and saves, as was his work and his loved ones. As were his friends, his doors and his scales. His words, his arms, his creeds and his laughter. His joy and his happiness. His true and his faith, his past and his future were all around he that was.

The magic lit up, and time reordered itself for him. Great beasts cowed down beside him and his humbleness satisfied all. His sadness made them curious.

He worked and he worked. And he loved and he worked. He prayed and he believed. And he was good and patient, tempered and tolerated. He did his time and moved on.

He wrote and he spoke, dreamed less and less for he had no need. His past remained his past. And he was scared less and less.

He discovered a great deal about himself and despised himself for a time. He deserved it. And he was terribly sad.

And he worked magic for a while. Spoke through stories, spoke through workings, healed, encouraged, placated and inspired. Satisfied.

What makes a good life story, and in particular what should we use our freedom and magic for? What does constitute High Magic?

What would Spanish magic look like? Resplendent I believe.

The shop is busy and bustling today, people are talkative, the music is jazzing and the deities have revealed new directions. Always be just above negative, build the shop out of ideas. Chesed. Trust to them to reveal the ways and educate on magic.

Focus on the energy, follow it, release it.

The word for worlds is forest.

Physics and $E=MC^2$.

Math, algebra, rational numbers, irrational numbers, variables, constants.

Words Against the Dark

Arcantracacies. orange honeycombs resonate pleasantly amidst my cacophony. Time be given to my father. Being the star of a magical. Heart-strings thrum again when I pluck them to free my feelings, and my sensations.

Seeing and perceiving fail phenomenally against understanding and wisdom. Work cannot be accomplished without the Lord's blessing. The Lord performs miracles that man will never comprehend. Ask for something, believe that you have received it, and it is yours –

I just believe. Everyone believes in me. Magic magic magic.

The magical body. The astral body. The ethereal body. The elemental body.

Happily ever after.

A Word

What a word is this: magic

What do you do when you can't stand any taller?

What do you do when you don't believe any other?

What do you do when you can't make anything work?

What happens when we cease to be, forever?

What does it mean to die?

What does it mean to live?

What do you do when haven't done any ...?

What is art?

What is soul?

What is circle, karma, treachery, failure, real, cards, games, drinking, believing, truth, eating, working, pain, old age, retirement, and marriage?

What is cheeseburger and faerie?

What is "Book of" and what is "2."

What is "turns" tricks "why" and why is "how" what?

What is memory "remembered," "father" "mother" "sister" "Allen" "Colter" "Mackenzie" "Toby" "sons" "daughter" "aether" "liquid" "corners" voices inside and outside?

What is who cares if anyone gets this?

What is roads go ever on and on?

What is a feeling?

What is "of deep regret, sorrow, anguish" and "oh god what have I done?!" And why is it increasing, and why has she always tortured deceived, hidden, and never...

Never

Never.

The word is never!

New Magics

Pray to Oghma:

Influence

Dominion House of Knowledge

Sphere(s) of influence Knowledge

Portfolio Bards

Inspiration

Invention

Domains Knowledge, Skill, Trickery [2]

Formerly: Balance [3] ,

Charm, Luck, Travel

Worshippers

Worshippers Artists, bards,

cartographers, inventors,

lore-masters, sages,

scholars, scribes, and

wizards.

Revisiting Narcissism

A current read provided by the local free pile seems to have been a catalyst for a number of new thoughts and stories.

“There is no being behind the doing, acting, or becoming. The ‘doer’ was simply added to the deed by the imagination – the doing was everything.” Nietzsche

And a second blurb about a “Narcissism degree zero” achieving a benign annihilation of self through a self-involvement so thorough that the nothingness, the nil at the heart of self, cannot fail to be discovered. This from a book whose aim it is to gear the author to living life artistically and of play rather than engineering life mechanically.

~from the days of living in America

The Manticore

The fox was morose. Not merely sad, but the lasting lingering sad that typified someone who could not get over something deep. The fox was sad for it had seen its past and could not come to grips with the treachery that it had committed. Devilish in his charm and placating in his speech he had convinced the animals that the sun would not rise and had tricked them into sharing all their food with him. It was something that not even a trip to the desert could take away.

It had fed all the food to the manticore once it had realized that the food was enchanted in such a way that it would not fill the fox up. The manticore had quite happily eaten all of the magical food and had left but a few morsels of stolid memories and wet. Bleak darkness.

Pooka Named Fax

There was once a pooka named Fax. She could zip back and forth in time and make small alterations to her world so that she could influence the present however she wanted. Her current place of residence was Anchorage, AK. Circa 2015.

Fax was watching a movie with her friends and had just returned from influencing the change so that it was a movie that she wanted to watch rather than something that she had not wanted to watch. The episode was on the sea.

There were many spirits, many people that lived in the waters and Fax could shapeshift into any of them, and partake in the creation of the sea, which was ultimately derived in the union of day and night. The waters did not find themselves contained by any land, which the waters of our land find themselves constricted, but were of an older and more ancient form of water. This water was able to maintain its shape and coherency through the spirits of the water. They worked and toiled long and hard to make it so the water was as one piece. The land that it touched upon the land's beaches was defined in endless patterns of love and secretion. Oozing into the other the water found oddments floating in its domain and saw fit to have the particles shared. The particles became coveted and prized among the water spirits and this history was well known among Fax and her friends. Fax would at various points of creation find herself flitting back and forth in time arranging these particles so that love was maintained.

It was a difficult task and there following is the account of a time when one of the particles determined the fate of the all.

Fax had to salvage a piece of flotsam and jetsam from the possession of a great spirit named Mah. Mah was a critical element in the makeup of the great sea that floated through space for it was part of his name that the patterns of ebbing and flowing constrained themselves. Easily uttering his name, Mah, the sea was able to drift endlessly out into the constraints of space, which was endless. The sea could forget about Mah but Mah could not forget the sea and when one of the particles floated to Mah's touching it grabbed hold and held long and hard the oddment.

Fax knew, from other sources of other immortal elements to whom her makeup was partial, that if Mah was to hold the particle it would lose its focus on maintaining unity and the magic sea that floated unrestricted by gravity-yet, could find itself exploring the infinite lay of the universe. Mah floated in and out of dreams and its superiors governed the physics for the movements of man, in this time called Alhim. It coveted the particle and it was difficult indeed to maintain a singularity with this fragment floating amidst it, but it did not perceive the difficulty, only seeing the prize for what it was. An honest mistake, but a human one, and one the element should not make.

Fax flitted back and forth from time to time discovering bits and pieces of history that might help to solve her dilemma. Glamours came and glamours went as she disguised herself as the society members of these water spirits. She moved particles effortlessly once she became similar to the

spirits. There was one difficulty and that was that she could not physically become Mah. So Mah's possession of the oddment was going to have to be overcome through trickery. The sacredness of trickery has been espoused in other bits of lore from the people over the generations again and again and lessons have been derived from it. Here is one.

One time a leaf, falling upon the earth whispered some dark and evil secret to the season. It spoke of an end. That's all it spoke about, no beginnings, no good, merely an end. And thus in such a passing without a beginning to join the end it was evil.

Fax, having too been involved in this secrecy knew a little about rectifying it. The lesson here is that *all* time must be cast forward. That way there is no end without a beginning. Sensible as it was of the leaf to speak of the end, perhaps without an evil intent – who is to say? it was not in its nature to concern itself with beginnings and endings. Fax fixed this problem by arriving just before the leaf lit upon the ground and kicked it soundly producing an entirely new experience for the leaf. It lost its train of thought but this was what the governing spirit of the time, Fax, saw fit to do and it worked.

The distraction was momentous.

Fax knew that the oddment would have to be snatched through trickery and saw fit to disguise to assume the identity of the oversea, one that had forgotten of Mah but who could be reminded of its existence.

The particle was one that would spawn a thousand more inconsistencies if it was allowed to remain within Mah and could dissipate the water into steam or other dreamstuffs that was not in its designated nature.

Water flows and cools, it heals and satisfies. It does not possess nor covet.

Such truths were spilled upon its brow by Fax and Fax saw fit to layer it on thick, saying that all the trouble could be avoided and Mah could return to the dream if it gave up the particle. It resisted. It had worked hard to keep this fleck in place in its deepening whirlpools and cascades of wetness. The world would know peace, if all the spheres lined up, but this particular spirit was resisting. It was just beginning.

The water swirled and the particle could not be dislodged. Time was running out. In a last desperate effort to snag the particle Fax stepped outside of time to a point when it was not and it had hold of the particle. She thus stole the particle from the greater spirit and put it about her person, stepping back into the present. All stories were safe again, for the sea has no longer been keeping oddments of the earth.

Or so the documentary said.

Orb of Secrets

There is a box, and within this box is a sphere. This sphere is known to few and is what is responsible for holding our world together. It is called the Iconosphere and is also known as the Orb of Secrets. Its mysteries are contained within it and can only be unlocked by those that hold it, and whosoever shall hold it will have control of the elements and the nature of things. It holds plans for technologies yet invented and names of creatures yet to live. It holds maps of lands that have long since ceased to live and it holds revelations to where other secrets and weapons of power may be recovered.

As one imagines holding such an artifact does not come without a price and the price is often unbecoming. When taken hold a brilliant flash often follows, bestowing secrets but so much sometimes it is unwieldy to hold all the thoughts and figments in place. Just as often a flash occurs and the next thing the wielder remembers is that the Orb is sitting somewhere out of reach and when next reached for a quiet unsettling deep in the bowls of the person is noticed and progress is halted.

The Iconosphere is a magical artifact, and this is true. Mishaps; it is a piece of technology so advanced that it is indistinguishable from magic but that hardly matters to the story. Its uses include a divination of the most precise nature as to be inseparable from fate, though a great deal of free will may be exercised after exposure.

For such reasons is it kept in the custody of the Elves. Their long lived nature and their affinity to magic make them amiable to the holding of such a powerful item. Deep in a forest called the Whispering Woods, named so because of the apparent vocalization they take on when passed through, there is a fortress by the name of Aleinial. The Elves maintain a strict surveillance on all that passes through their land and indeed, it is often told that they themselves are responsible for the way the trees seem to talk to one another, preying upon the passage of individuals to feed their masters watchful natures.

The Elves live on the edge of what you or I would call our world. They inhabit a place that is not unlike the world except for its drastic machinations of automobiles and cellular phones they are privy to a more natural existence, one where the birds and trees live peaceably instead of continually at odds with the dynamics of civilization and society. Yes, the trees do appreciate the magic of a civilized community but they do not approve of the way that the humans, as they are so often called responsible for such actions and lifestyles, guzzle down the resources of the planet in a seemingly never-satisfied way.

The Elves dwell upon the magic of their forests, of the light passing through their trees, and the creatures that come to inhabit their surrounding lands, good and evil, with but a passing interest. Their passions lie with such creations as the Iconosphere, for such devotion to an extraordinary thing lends greatly to counteracting the destructive nature of the humans. Each Elf wears some

bit of jewelry, small or extravagant that ties them to the land of the Fay. Without their piece of jewelry they would quickly become tied to a land that is in far more discord and should a human locate a piece of jewelry of the Elves and come to bear it he or she would find himself in a growing state of harmony with the land and would be able to correct a wrong.

Pariah

Carecamore rode down the shaft until it came upon the ground, whereby he left the rise and disembarked unto the plane of form, awaiting a day when he would no longer be a pariah and privy to the outskirts of his race's society.

He remembers his friends, each and every one of them for he has had plenty of time to think about them in their absence from his life that was now fully of especially long silences and stretches of weather that do not change until they do whereupon they remain stagnant for another equally long length of time.

Working the surroundings he would make his rounds around the camp and his procured height in the trees, where he would spend most of his nights. The little hut in the tree is made from tree bark and is layered in such a way that the heat remained insulated within.

There was a cry from strange bird and an engine started up somewhere. It was off in the distance, a light enough noise that it was not loud but still enough to be recognizable. It churned and spurned in the distance, eating away at some garbage that had probably been disposed of by the more affluent social members. The sky was a deep smoky orange but the air was relatively free of any sediment that might cause harm to the breathing. It was enchanting.

There was a guise about the night that lent the feeling of being within some great thrumming beast and Carecamore could tell that there was a bit of magic about the place, opening up into incomprehensible depths that promised more mystery and peace than could ever be derived from any other simple pursuits. Meditating Carecamore ran and re-ran the nights' unfoldings through his head, wondering about the way the things had come together the way that they had.

Suddenly a small dull murmuring began in the distance and Careocamore froze. Trying not to panic he thought about the way language structured together to form coherent thoughts and how certain words would be formed and how words could string together to form sentences, spells. Say the proper words and any charm could be worked, any wonder made possible with a little fascination and glamour. Certain words...

The murmuring subsided and Careocamore relaxed. He had hoped to not have encounter with the wolves for some time yet. That it was so made it seem that he was further along in his journey than he had anticipated but this was not something that he was very pleased with. The thoughts in his head that were not the en-tropical byproduct of some greater power and self were hardly constructive, and in their extreme indicated a maddening world where dreams came to life, and reality flowered in new ways. Painful brightnesses and gleaming blades, the wolves would slide into one's mind until they had driven a person quite insane.

Luckily for him there was time left. He just did not understand how the greater journey could be so near to complete. Perhaps it had been because of his naturally long life, touched by bits and pieces, fragments really, of magic that were always there at the right place and time to instill a freshness or bit of luck into one's action.

The mind was a truly stunning engine.

"Move already you rotten animal," he thought to himself and so it came to be, he moved his body through the breath and the heavens and the ozone and came to rest upon more firm ground. It was a blessing that the ground was there, else he would have nothing to orient his energy and osseous matters. The subtle body of his that remained within coincidence of his physical body heard something, so he knew that it was out there, but the more that he heard he was less sure it was real. A swing-loop, he found himself in and rode it until the memory of the shaft of the light led to the memory of his passing through the ether and coming to reside where he was. The swing-loop left him feeling unsure where he was and the time. The major source of light emitting colors other than orange had gone off before he found himself in a place where a single large presence could be felt, just a pumping and thrumming presence. It was dark and hid beneath the orange coloration of the sky describing a being that had lived for countless eons before any of the beings who where there came to be and who could probably remember tales that could reach into the orange and draw away the remaining color, leaving stark crystalline figures remains to

attempt reflection. Where it to remember how to do it, of course. Some memories fade with time to the place where all memories, sounds, and vibrations went.

Corncob Pipe Dreams

Evelon bore down upon his pipe, puffing furiously in a way that conjured up visions of life on the road and of railways. Except for his Elvish nature and his rather passionate love for all things natural, and magical, he would have made a great human. He was rather clumsier than the majority of his kind, perhaps because he wore no jewelry but instead always carried a pipe that he insisted was enchanted enough to bestow the grace of the Elves. The grace of the Elves was similar to the playing of light and elegant music upon a guitar made excellent by a master luthier.

“Worlds' need mythologies, either invented or real,” the book in front of him read. “The importance of some substance to remain behind the workings of nature is paramount, especially to Man. For they with their short fleeting lives are anxious to find peace in a way that never truly allows peace to find them.”

“Now that's interesting,” thought Evelon. “I wonder what it would take to invent something and see it spread before the humans like a evening dew spreads across the grass? It would surely take a great deal of time and dedication to the fact. The proper presentation at the right time would be important as well.” Cleverly he thought about ways in which he could use his magic to work some more on the people that surrounded him. Evelon himself took his residence with the humans and often wore a disguise to fit in with the common folk. His more fairer features went unnoticed in light of the many compliments he received, never taking the form of a platitude and almost always being jovial, regarding his pipe.

Evelon reflected briefly on the mythology that lay apparent in his life. It did not take the form of any god or being that stood above the rest of his race in any form, but rather took the form of technologies such as the Iconosphere and the jewelry that they all wore. Pieces of magic that were supposedly capable to producing long life, great wisdom, and right action. The fact that the section about mythologies was in a book that certainly almost every other being of his race had read left him feeling, first a little behind the times, and second confused as to how the notion of a mythology played our in creatures that were well aware of its pure fabrication.

This not to mention that two days prior he had received a visitation from a strange fey being. It had all appearances of being an elf, the same angular features and fair skin, with the main difference being its skin was colored green.

Evelon read more about the Iconosphere. Sadly there was little to be said on the technology except for a brief history of how it came to be in the Elves' possession and about its ability to maintain great stratospheres of time and space in a most docile manner.

Evelon often thought that it was strange that it was the technology that made the Elves who they were rather than any single defining characteristic such as the humans had with their fleeting lives, aggressive temperament, and strangely confounding ability to wait through almost anything if they believed that it would be all right in the end. They did not react to the moment's pressures and could not but help have fleeting lives due to the fact that they only lived a few sixty odd years at the best, compared to the Elve's several hundred years lifespan. Their defining characteristics were at odds with the Elves' ability to devote great time and study to various magical arts and study the land around them and in so doing come to develop a more harmonious relationship with nature than that of the humans, with their oil guzzling cars and unrefined, power consuming technologies.

Apparently it was who was in close proximity to the Iconosphere at various points during one's life that made one susceptible to the effects of it, all of which – at least documented, where benevolent in some fashion or the other.

Evelon listened to some far off music playing, voices singing and guitar thrumming away in a jovial tune. He sat frustrated with his work, though the feeling was short lived due to an almost innate ability to overcome foul circumstances. He had recorded a great many of his magics in leather-bound books as he had been encouraged to do and had read books on the magical arts but still felt as though there were things that lay waiting to be uncovered and that he felt like he could not uncover. For some reason he had been visited by the Green Man, a creature that was certainly otherworldly due to the small story it had told him about its existence. It's most recent endeavor had saved a great many of the races without their even being aware that there was a threat.

A daemon called Gongazon had lost an epic battle to the Green Man and in his despair the daemon had tried to kill himself by running into one of the surrounding mountains, mountains of which of course hold up the sky, and this caused a tear in the sky from which flooded down storms and flames. Fortunately the Green Man had restored order to such things but the effects of the daemon were still felt by the people, even if they did not know it, in the way they got up and went to work every day.

The Green Man's story, while fascinating to an Elf, seemed admittedly far-fetched. While Evelon was sure that there was a certain amount of sympathetic magic that took place that was beyond the realm of metaphor he could not quite believe the sky had actually ripped open and been pouring down flames and water without anyone's knowing. More to the point he seemed skeptical that any effect had truly been felt.

Almon was walking back from Evan's and thinking about her meeting with him. It had not entailed any of its usual flirtations and instead had taken on a rather peculiar feel. Evan had given her a corn-cob pipe, which she had stashed in her satchel, and had talked to her about how she should smoke it only when the moon was shining bright. This had perplexed her, for she had not

been able to glean any reason why this was so from him and had concluded that he had been on the fringe of one of his episodes or some such in his elaboration. She had rightfully accepted the pipe as something she thought was cool, not anything that had any ceremonial purpose.

His theories about their changing relationship with the town around them had certainly caught her attention, for she was sure that only she had been noticing the rather unusual occurrences of late.

People had been stopping her to talk in greater frequency along her excursions and the things they always talked about seemed foreboding and rather prophetic. They had that tone to their quality at least.

She was sure that some of their events had to do with the appearance of the Mage's Guild but had not any inkling how truly paramount her and her friend were to play in the coming months and even years.

She recalled one of the travelers talking about how she should develop an aesthetic, and that she should do things not necessarily because they had a certain feel to them or because she thought it was cool, but rather that she *liked* doing it and see where those desires took her.

It was uncannily abrupt. Almon did not know what it was these people were talking about half the time but rarely did they seem to be in the fit of some delusion or half driven out of their mind while talking to her, merely that they seemed to impart a sense of urgency that she should follow her heart as much as possible. This, she thought, was not really difficult to do because she had always thought it important to do what she really wanted rather than gratify herself instantly. It was partially why she had the feelings that she did for Evan.

Evan was a man, and though perhaps a troubled man at that a man nonetheless. She caught him staring at her and would look at her like no one else did and she thought that maybe what they had was something akin to what she had read about in the storybooks she had loved growing up, true love. Life was *not* a faerie story though and did not seem to have any endings, just changes, much less a happy one. The move from her younger years at school to graduating to a university level had left little in the way of desiring a more smooth transition and friends that she had had simply let go and lost touch with.

No harm had come and little in the way of regret as far as maintaining any relationships had arisen. She was content with the people, more specifically Evan, in her life as it was now.

She had come to value the sense of imagination that lent itself to almost every aspect of life as well. While she did not understand these unusual meetings and how it was so smooth a transition could occur away from her former friends she nonetheless imagined a harmonious power that somehow guided and directed each and everyone's paths so that none of them had to suffer greatly at the expense of another.

She did not let herself get caught up in the little phantasmagorias that Evan liked to pursue but imagined a greater and nobler power that put everything everywhere for a reason, and whether or not a person called this fate or not was not really part of her concern. The thing about fate that she had never understood from talking with her friends was they made it seem that fate could change. It would not be fate if that was the case, it was already written was it not. Now the matter of free will and making simple choices was another matter but it did not seem to have to affect the outcome of fate in the way some of the more aggressive conversations steered towards that she had been privy to. If there was a free will, and she believed that she had every right towards one herself, then it would just allow her to make any choices that she wanted to, ever, and the fate of the matter was that it was already over and done with, no harm doing.

Such thoughts tinkled in the back of her ever active mind as she made her way home that night, and she had little idea how right she was, for there was a magic that was not part of the Mage's Guild, nor of the Elves that hid themselves secluded in the realms surrounding her world that was part and parcel to her being. It was a magic that would soon unleash itself and proclaim to the world a new sense of harmony and truth, one that would dispose of treacheries of political machinations and of unseen troubles that worked their way into Nature's grasp, unbeknownst to it.

Almon arose the next day and decided that she would smoke her newly acquired pipe, despite the request of her friend. It was not a matter of disrespect but it was just that she wanted to smoke the pipe on the porch of her place as the sun rose, close enough to moonlight by anyone's standards of mystical workings anyway.

She loaded it with some of the tobacco that Evan had also given her. She sat quietly on the porch, puffing contentedly.

“Hail there!” A voice exclaimed. “That's a nice pipe you have there, do you mind if I join you on this fine morning?”

She looked down the street and saw an oddly marked character walking up from downtown. He was of average height and build but with the strangest cloak she had ever seen. It was patched in a varicolored style and he carried in his arm a small suitcase that seemed full to the bulging.

“I'm a conjuror as to the perplexion on your face, fine madam, and this is my garb. I do wear it whenever I am entertaining and entertaining is what I do. I have traveled a great distance to be here this fine morning and would greatly appreciate my joining you. Do you mind?” Came the jovial response to her what must have been horrified comical look.

“Uh, sure. Yeah whatever,” came the lame response, but the traveler did not seem to mind or notice perhaps, but sat down next to her, took out a pipe of his own making and lit up.

“Ahh, now that's what I'm talking about my fine missy. See here I made my way to this fine town via a fish named Ixthius, and would not have made my way here except for when catching the dastardly great beast along came a man of a fine complexion, unnaturally so if you ask me, and he says to me that there is a great change coming in the lands, greater than the change in seasons though it could be compared to such. Now I'm not one for superstitions but the character had such a seriousness about him, in the way that he sat and the way that he talked, that I could not but help believe if to be the case. We all know change is a coming, as it so does in greater frequency these days it seems.”

Almon sat listening, rather confused. The way the conjuror spoke it was as if he had somehow directly targeted her to speak with and had come along this fine day to speak with her personally. Odd, for sure.

The speaker continued.

“*Pantina contemplari*, I always say with means the great god observes! Now what you have to know is that there are forces in this world that we get little chance to find ourselves privy to, and way makes it sound as though you are well in with the guild. Have you acquired your initial pieces yet? Ah, no matter you will. They'll initiate you in a manner that's befitting to you both. These forces have made it seem that you and your friend are important, so what's to know is that my name is Gheldaneth, yes like the fabled university from which great magics are taught. I herald all the way from the Far-Off Lands.”

After a bit more listening Almon could not help but think the speaker, Gheldaneth as he called himself, was drunk. He rambled most explicitly, but the way that he seemed to know her unsettled her.

“Who are you, really?” She asked. “I don't know how you know me or my 'friend;' are you talking about Evan?”

“Aye, that's the one. And what's more we're here at a time in life, right here right now, that is a bridge between more old greater times and still yet to come greater times. The Green Man has taken to favoring you so you'll know that the things are going according to what they've been prophesied, for those that care to believe in such proclamations- never sure that I could be bothered with the lot, aside from playing tricks and such that I am. The Elves too, are taking to favoring your actions; you've been educated at a university of their own inhabitants though I daresay you were want to know that.”

At this Almon could take no more. “What are you talking about, Elves?? Green Man? Who are these people that you say seem to know who me and Evan are? Why are we so important?”

“Shades o' Darkness missy, don't fret, at least not yet. Things are all right for a while. This here

world is a good one and there are a lot of good places and people within it, but for the Darkness that Always Comes, again and again.

Almon D'Gaiden

Her attention went back to the Mazurka, and she found herself wondering what she was going to do. Her studies with her schooling had been going quite well. She was, frankly put, a bit bored with everything. She liked to think that she was to become engrossed in topics, but the truth was it was exceptionally difficult to become engrossed in something that required so much time.

The candle flame flicked and reflected off some small dark blue orbs on her desk. She sipped the wine and flicked her finger aggressively against her she would-rather-read text. The one with cool stories. Even if she didn't like the raven stealing light. Light should be left where those who needed it could have it.

Almon sighed, and picked up another book. This one had nearly made her blush the first time she had found it in the bookstore, a quaint little place that had an assortment of books but was sadly too small for her taste. The book was a story that supposedly promised all the heart's desires and maybe a bit more. She was embarrassed that she had the text, but could not help herself from reading it. Her personal love life was sorely lacking, and was only made more confusing by the man she thought was moderately attractive was schizophrenic.

Almon D'Gaiden 2

Next to the deep blue marbles lay an old hermetic tarot deck. It had various depictions of people in poses with a great number of drawn in orbs on the cards themselves. The orbs on the cards were supposed to represent the move from a state of unity to one of multiplicity. They were not on all of them though, only a few and that made them all the more interesting. The deck itself was a gift from one of Almon's grandparents. Supposedly one or more of them were into the occult. Almon had a few gifts of the sort: a book on numerology, a book on Enochian calls, and a pendulum. They were almost all of them untouched by her except to have them as keepsakes, mementos, of who her grandparents were.

Almon had finished her school work for the next couple of days and had some time to kill. She was not sure what she wanted to do with her time, but knew that in either involved going down to the boardwalk that ran parallel to the shore of the ocean or perusing one of the local artifact shops that the town had a solid reputation for. Wynten was an unusual town, one that had all sorts of ends and odds as well as being an educated community. It was continuously holding art gatherings, community sponsored music events, and picnics and food drives for the needy.

Almon and Evan

The room was cloaked in a perfume that smelled as though it was used for purposes other than to scent an expanse.

“We have to maintain the states of affairs.” A voice came from near the door. It was a low, deep and rather quiet voice but one that carried through the room easily and as though there was a special path laid out for it. Suddenly the man standing next to the alter turned to face the source of the voice voicing deep and arcane words, bending the air and causing pulsations of energy to manifest within the room, touching the various etheric devas that inhabited the space. Initially causing distress the pulsations quickly eased the tension that had come to fill the room.

“We have knowledge of our purpose, and we have knowledge of what we are doing, there is no way that we can fail. We will maintain our sense of composure and the work will be accomplished. The necessary supplies have already been gathered and will be used for their purpose. When they are used up they will alter her sense of self-awareness sufficiently to allow her to view the validity of her friend's thoughts. Once they are affirmed then they will come to us. An anatomy of consciousness is necessary and more specifically the *self-awareness* is necessary. As a mage, you should know this. As an elemental, I don't expect you to understand this.”

Let it take longer than expected.

“It's taken the two of you longer than expected to arrive here. It has forced us to take certain motions to keep you two safe. There are dangers inherent to walking the streets at night, to going to class every day, and to living your life that are not immediately apparent.”

“What are you talking about?” Evan asked. “I can't face this so called guild without having an existential crisis! You ask us to do these things and then somehow watch us stumble our way through through some sort of initiation.”

“Your crisis is part of one of the dangers of life. We can guarantee certain safety's so long as you adhere to our code of conduct. It is however, your choice. That you are aware of your initiation is proof enough that you have some sort of idea, the right idea. There are ways to accomplish things in this world that are hidden and forgotten about by the main populace. You have to work though, you have to experiment, and to accomplish.”

“Work. You want us to work?” Evan responded, his black hair seeming to raise as though he was a dog with his hackles taking action. “Why don't you tell us the purpose that we are working towards. You say I'm not crazy and that you even *know* about my condition freaks me the hell out! It's as if the medicine isn't working, Almon.” Evan was almost hysterical and so Almon took his hand in effort to calm him down. She had after all seen the validity of his thoughts through his written papers and through his musings. Almon just wanted a way for her friend to not be crazy, and if there was a way for this “magic” to take care of it, for these people to heal her friend, then she wanted to take it.

Books of Magic-Users

They say to write what you know. They say a lot of things. They say no good deed goes unpunished. And they say one good turn deserves another. I got that. I got a book from a co-worker a couple of days ago that is reshaping how I think about the world. It's about fire. Spiritual fire. Grades of fire that occur in the microcosm and the macrocosm.

Magic.

Magic fascinates me, as it does, and it is something that I choose to express through writing.

So these books that you read will reference things that are real, and that are able to be looked up and consulted for the veracity of said things. The reason that I want to have things that can be referenced and understood as real is because I want to write about magic. The art. Magic. It's a word that never tires and it's got a bit of it in it. Magic is an art that I am going to do my best to convey in my writings, because it's great. My hope is that in writing magic I will instill some of it into my readers and they will come to know it. Sharing magic is one of the doctrines of it. White magic.

I want to write books of magic.

There are secret societies around the world that are in charge of secret things. These secret things are responsible for making sure the rest of the world goes on about its life in the most harmonious and uninterrupted way possible. Latin phrases are tossed about and such people are capable to eliciting responses from their world that could never be fathomed.

Did you know there is an invention out there that lets the user go outside other people's fields of perceptions? It's true. Just by a simple beeping and indicating the device allows for a person to pass invisibly amongst other people's perceptions. Isn't this grand? What's more it's only true in the literary world, and as such is to be enjoyed by the people that are reading a book, where it will safely be kept out of reach of the work that they have to get up and go to every day.

It wouldn't be much magic without some, now would it?

Inside the Curio Cabinet

Fascinatingly, in every tiny detail he held the coin in his hand and proceeded to make it vanish. He really made it disappear, not like the charlatans who merely pretended. Beautiful thing though, the charlatan. Doomed to forever pretend and falsify while the real magicians and the real tricksters of the world were able to work magic for those that desired an entertaining show.

First there was the display, a curio cabinet filled with oddities and collected bits from around the world.

One man brought in an orb that looked quite similar to an eye yet where the pupil would be there was a large skull, grinning out. The reflective surface often showed things that were not in the room to be reflected but that stemmed from being a partial skrying stone that could enable the user to peak into uninhabited dimensions and peruse the wares of another universe or more specifically whatever one wanted. Burlesque shows could be watched and viewed from the privacy and comfort of one's home and another person could be checked up on all from the simple concoction of the right incense, the right music, and that stone.

A photograph illustrated a face with no eyes and one whose mouth was open as though screaming. One could only imagine what sort of figment was trapped within the photograph, laying in wait to be freed once again.

Inside the cabinet lay a selection of books. A book on street magic and another on the magic of reality lay in plain view, seemingly pulsating and thrumming with a subtle and arcane energy. The tangible feeling of the books left ones skin tingling as though some lover had reached out and gently touched one on the hand, leaving nothing but a feeling of excitement and desire dripping from the person who had their hand touched.

A knife hung from the wall, beneath an ancient and becoming mask. The mask was made of an oak wood that was stained a deep red. It conferred a sense of power over it comparable to one's cousins who had discovered leverage in the form of a beloved uncle, and who wanted to make one do indefinite yet highly unpleasant things.

The darkness of the room inked its way across the brown leather couch and came to infect any who stayed there long. It promised secrets though, as darkness always does. It promised hints of how to use the will without necessitating goals that got in the way to distract one's mind. It promised the secret knowledge that all things were the product of one original thought.

One thought.

It was almost unfathomable. Perhaps it was, the magician thought, unfathomable. Deep within the recesses of the mind lay great and powerful things, symbols that take part in what they symbolize. Evermore taking one deeper and deeper into a state of mesmerism past where the fractals and the whirlygigs spread up and away in their energetic effusions, away from the people and the places, the things that the mind chose to focus on. There lay the darkness, hidden behind what the light was showing and changing and distorting with an ease such that it was not difficult to perceive such perversions, much less comprehend their verisimilitude.

The problem with such a darkness was that it could not be trusted to do anything except change and morph, creating illusions as though there was no difficulty at all in making a perfectly

innocent child look sinister and daring. The way the carpet wove together and could change into any figure made the imagination seem pale in comparison and was in fact a wonderful representation of what the drug would do once it had been taken out of its vial, out of the cabinet, and ingested.

All the magician could think about was how serene everything was and how much he *knew* everything to be the way it was because, quite simply, that's the way it was. Magic held it together. But magic was still a distraction away from the reality of the situation and one needed to be careful that one not encounter a manticore, or something similar, that would devour one's soul along with one's body. Manitcores fed on magic and on the soul, and just as they could appear as a person with a slightly disarming smile they could too engulf one's magic. This was truly a sad thing, and it's often said that wherever there was magic then too there was a manticore not far away. So we find one leaning casually up against our curio cabinet, waiting and gleaning little bits of fantastic things that it can eat.

More to the point, the magician knew there to be nothing more to this world than what there already was. There was much that could be said for just giving things away. It was a proper mean through which to act, and conferred great power in the niceties of social dynamics. If the magician had something that he knew another needed, he did his best to just give it to that person. There was a great power that came with acting compassionately. Arguably the only way that a person could truly afford to be powerful was to be kind. He did not dare compose anything so eloquent for the people around him but it was true, nonetheless.

He sighed, deeply. His magic was paramount to his survival, but it was limited. He could not change a cigarette into a sparrow, which was what he really desired being able to do. Merely for the entertainment purpose of course, he could cheat and use sleight-of-hand to accomplish it, but that was not what he wished. Many years spent studying the subject lent him the certainty he could do it but he did not know *how*. He knew that it had something to do with grades, degrees and peddling secrets.

The magician had his shoppe set up and business was doing all right. One such transaction that he had facilitated had been the acquisition of a book of Hindu magic. It contained with it secrets of natural magic and alchemy, turning lead into gold, as well as participating secrets of the astral plane.

On the astral planes could be met agents of good or evil that would do the bidding of the magician or would wreak havoc upon his person, depending on the agent. Upon summoning one such benevolent entity he had learned about the well being of the realms and that there was trouble stirring in a realm called Everone. Everone was a realm ruled by a king that went by the name of Cogol, and was a good ruler and was well received by the people. The problem was an ancient rival called Argrant, a being, not merely a person, but a being of such fell power that trouble and sickness followed him wherever he went. Confusion and paradox reigned supreme in

light of any truth that Cogol instilled on his people and the land of Everone, its trees and beautiful mountains and rolling beachscapes, was in hazard due to this one man.

Why it was that Argrant was not killed outright was simply because the king had not willed it, and would probably not due to his kindly nature, even though Argrant's power threatened the land of Everone.

The magician was troubled, for he deeply loved his land that he found himself in and to see it threatened was something that disturbed him greatly. At long last he spoke to another of the books' agents and was rewarded with some information about the power of the skrying stone he had in his possession.

“You may use the stone to dispel any fell presence upon your abode for a short duration. And then its power must recharge.” The being, an entity that looked humanoid except for the vague presence of spheres floating about its person spoke. “It is not merely used as a seeing stone, but may be used as a protective curative for as long as may be needed. Its recharging will occur within due time and will not afflict the protective powers that it bestows. Be warned though that such a stone comes with a price and so long as you use this item it will ward most presences away from your person, isolating you and keeping you greatly alone.”

The magician was not too afraid of this and in his troubled time he sought to use the stone as much as he was able to, keeping evil away from his home.

When at length he grew tired of the loneliness he left the stone at home one day and proceeded to venture into town. Thereby he came across a beautiful woman who was purchasing some apples and plantains. The magician was not oblivious to her charm but being a creature of magic could tell that there was a fell energy to her beauty, and that she was tainted by a force he would rather not mess with. He could not get her out of his mind though and after returning to his home he found her presence was all that he would see when looking into his magical stone.

Later still he had heard of more rumblings of Argrant and his evil ways; from the locals he heard that Argrant was enlisting pretty women to become enhanced magically and illuminating their beauty so they acted as sirens, luring men away from their responsibilities, responsibilities that soon became stale and stagnant.

The magician quickly found that his life was saturated with magic. He was unable to function without the effects of his imagination playing wildly upon his person and while this led to wonderful discoveries he found that he could not maintain his place of decorum and as such was as troubled by the effusion of magic in his life.

Such was the life of a magician and there was almost an imperceptible thrumming as though a pulse was maintaining itself to the word “magic” in everything that was done.

With the land of Everone becoming slowly more and more dangerous, and as he found himself contemplating more and more on the subject of what magic was, found that he was building in his mind, more and more concepts of what it was that magic was.

It was a social function that could be utilized by society in the rituals and performances that prohibited unease.

Dark Man

This story is devoted to all the little moments out there that make up a day, a month, a year and maybe more.

There once was a little girl and the girl was lonely. So she wished for a friend and lo there was a dark man that came and joined her company. He was dressed in dark clothes and and was found to always be eating either an apple or an orange.

He would take the little girl for rides in his big black convertible car, late at night when it was still warm and would sometimes rain, getting the top of their heads damp. The man would take her far away from her parents' place but her parents never seemed to notice her going missing, and as he never kept her for more than a night and would show her things that only she could keep to herself she was never missed. There was never anything inappropriate done with their relationship, except perhaps for the age difference and the fact that he took her unexplained away from her parents to show her things that could not possibly be compatible with their world. These things were small things, trinkets and pieces of technologies from far off lands and far off civilizations. How these items came to be where they were were the man's own stories and he chose to keep them or share them as he saw fit.

The little girl was very pleased with their relationship; she got everything out of going missing from her parents supervision for those few hours each night that she could never get in their company. She got to hear stories and see things that she never would have gotten to see, except perhaps for in her dreams. She was not wanting for sleep for oftentimes she would rest in the seat of the car while the dark man drove. She would get to hear stories and see things that the other kids at her school never got to see.

This continued on for many years while the dark man grew no older and the young girl *did* grow older. It was a peculiar relationship, to say the least, and there was some unseen power that kept the man unaffected, and perhaps allowed him to share the things that he did in the way that he did without suffering any dire consequences. This girl grew older and older until one day she was a young woman.

The dark man came for her one night and took her away. This night was like many of the others where he would drive what seemed like endlessly until at last he came to a fork in the road, which he took the right, and drove until he came to a house. This house was what appeared to be

a mansion and was filled with pictures and paintings of all sorts. There was a picture of a lion, of a white raven, of a submarine taking a crew to some lost civilization, and of a pedestal. On the pedestal there was nothing, it was just a picture of one, but somehow this picture stood out above the rest. It too was white. Next to the picture was a door that led into a room. Inside the room lay a circle, carved in chalk, on the floor. Inside this circle lay all the secrets and answers of all the worlds that were ever going to be seen. Each night this little girl, now this woman, would step inside this circle and would be exposed to a great number of these secrets and came to know her part in the universe.

Her part was that of a shadow. Any time in school that there was something going on she would never take the spotlight, but would remain hidden. Like there was light and there was shadow, she would play the shadow. Perhaps this is why her friend was so dark and enigmatic.

Nothing spectacular ever found this girl, no crisis and no drama. She remained hidden in the shadow. She came to know a great many people and many people came and passed through her life. She would talk with them about various things, about how awareness would come and shift and change over time. It was an interesting topic. Many of her friends came to understand that there was something about this girl that they would never see. That she was full of mysteries and secrets that they would never know. Perhaps they did not see that much. Perhaps they did not give much thought to it.

It was something that she herself wondered about. She was often curious about that moment in time when she had wished for a friend and had become acquainted with her dark companion. Her life had been one of isolation, for her mother and father lived a few miles beyond the edge of town. They lived where the sun shined frequently.

The darkness was something that came along frequently as well. It was all right, for the girl had become used to the darkness, the circle, the secrets, and that man.

The man was a creature called by several names, and would often show his secrets to people to show them understandings of greater things than that which they had come to know during the course of their ordinary lives. Nothing could be said, and everything shown was the dictum that ruled this man's life. The darkness was his friend.

The girl, now a woman wrote long and far one time about a place that she had seen, one of her secrets that she had seen in the circle. The secret had to do with her friend and what would happen to him one day. He was a creature that placed itself amongst times and places that were not of this realm, and had so existed by her side for a time because of a magic that had come to him, which is a story for another time.

The thing was this dark man was going to die, and he was going to do so in a highly unpleasant manner. He would be stabbed in the back by someone he held dear, and would come to die in the shadows.

The secret was who had done it.

Green Man's Meditations

The Green Man was a celebrity among the plants and the animals. He had a knowledge of many things and the creatures felt a great compassion towards him. He was sitting on the ground and there was a music coming from somewhere, either air manipulated through the trees or some distant hum from the great source. It was wafting nearby and there was a tinkling like glass that could have been from some charm hung in the trees ages gone past. A river rustled past where he sat and he meditated on the stillness that was present in the forest. He thought and he thought and as he thought the music began to grow stronger. Formed from the aether and substrates that permeated the forest, the dancing of the falling leaves, and the passion that the river gave off in its passing the music began to change. It formed into a shape and slowly, as the man meditated, began to speak to the Green Man.

He lifted his arm and waved. The wood became enchanted and would not progress or regress in its evolutionary path. It lay frozen.

It was the only thing that would halt the two's progress. They had come into quite a lot as far as their shifts in perspective went. Any more and they would be risking their lives. It was good that the magicians performing on the streets had seen to it to redirect their energies and assist the two to discover the guild, but the shift had taken its toll.

The Green Man held the piece of wood in its arms. It was thinking about how the tie between object and subject, the man Evan and the woman Almon, and how the piece of wood had little in regards to being sympathetic towards the two but it would have to be enough. It was enough, too, for the purpose of the Green Man, a being of magnificent order, was pure and as such the magic would work.

Green Man's Writing

The book that lay by Almon's bed was infused with sentience, aware of what was taking place and aiding in it in every way that it could. The Green Man had picked it up recently and had written in it. It was something that had not been done for the longest time.

Music was playing in the background, a guitar accompanied by some gentle vocals and either a fiddle or a mandolin. The book did not really share too much care with other objects and could not be bothered telling what it was that the song effused. It just gave appreciation for the tick-tock metronome of the rhythm that took place within the song.

The Green Man had written of things that were to come, and of things that were becoming. It had written about the new order of magnitude that was coming to be in the little town of Sufficiently. There were likely to be supervising powers in addition to the University and town council, and the Green Man wanted everything to go as naturally as could be expected.

His articulation within the text did not fix the rest of the reading, as it was-in contrast, made of little pictures and geometric figures that did not at all resemble the rest of the book's writing. Some part of it brought the book to life and it felt and heard like the rest of the world.

The Green Man had infused the book with part of its language, and it in addition to having brought the book to a sentient point in its evolution lay the foundation for other work to be done. It did not matter that the book had other contents living within it, now it just desired the pieces to be filled in that would once again render it a complete text. It too, did not matter that it was only a work by Plato, a philosopher several centuries B.C. Greece. The works of Plato were commonplace in a college town, and could be gotten at either of the two used book stores in surplus.

What really mattered were the formulas, the incantations and the evocations that now needed to be written down.

The Green Man had heard from Magnus, and had agreed to help for it was within its nature to do the work of nature. To evolve and to grow as things were, and as they would become. Nothing else lay within its pattern, its paradigm progressing only as so far as to lend it eternal life in beatific servitude of the Powers that Be.

Σδαργβμ,οκφνμκλπωελ
δωειυρτηε 24 - 22 =
τηε πτεοπλε ωιλλ βε
φορεωερ ιν ψουρ φαωορ

The iconosphere lay dormant, eternally pulsing but doing nothing else perceivable. It was in spirit that the iconosphere, not exactly a sphere but more a geometrical figure with multiple planar sides to it, kept this land in order and determined that the force of magic was something that could be inherent in any person that was willing to study for it. It was an artifact as old as the stars, and was created by beings that are for another telling for another day. So much of the chaos that infected the other lands was kept reconciled by the good forces of the Domain. The forces of magic were commonly studied and it added a protective element from the evils and the dangers of the world. The iconosphere was an element, a artifact, and an organism, something of great

power that little knew about as the source of magic and that even fewer knew its location. It lay deep within the Domain .

Kava Dreams

Caramel had drank all of the kava and had slipped into a dream. In the dream there were friends and enemies. The enemies were the ones that were infinite in number and the friends were limited. Due to their infinite number the enemies could divide and diverge and converge and blend together creating a phantasmagoria of perceived enemies and a not so much phantasmagoria of friends. The friends were simple in appearance and simple in nature. They were what they were and appeared no more victorious.

The truth was though the friends, in the dream, were difficult to tell from the enemies. The friends would play jokes and slip things in, evil things, to thwart the moments of goodness and clarity, the happiness and the cohesion.

It was just a dream though, and while he knew that he could do things and things could happen in dreams that were never allowed to happen when awake it reality that mattered. He would count while sleeping and while he would count things would happen, in brief flashes of silence and moments of dance.

Some things just needed to be said. In the dreams they were said, in reality they were not.

He had a dream in which he was a young boy, and that he lived in the woods with other children. They were a tribe and Caramel was a caretaker, not the leader. The leader was a fierce boy. He took care of the kids too. Caramel was sobbing and his face was painted red.

When he would come awake he would still be counting, and would a number would be assigned something in the room, the cup of kava, 14. Though he had been counting for far longer than 13 numbers so maybe there was another number in front of it.

Sangdoclentine's Magic

Clandestine like was Sangdoclentine's favorite method for doing things and he was absolutely all right with the fact that it was because of the similarity it bore to his name. He never would have thought there was a word to make him into some song or poem, but upon coming across it in a book he had smiled a great smile. This was however the extent of his self absorption beyond the amount that it took of himself when marveling at the worlds or the multi-verses. His incredibly detached personality had a very natural inclination towards meditating on the wonders of the world, and meditating allowed him to wield a great magic in and of itself. Beyond sheer intelligence Sangdoclentine would set up events in long succession and would trigger them from afar, influencing various gatherings and events in whatever manner he so chose.

It was rare that his meddling was ill received, to be honest. Usually his far sightedness allowed him to perceive threats far before their arrival and his calculating self was able to counter said threats into null-and-void events.

One time to aid their ruler, Cog, Sangdoclentine had advised him on events to lead his family to safety during the heat of one long segment of battling. The series of battle had taken influence from the Verabnacians and their thin-bodied, looming, people. Many were placed in harms way and many of Cog's people were hurt in the following turn of events but Cog's family had luckily been kept safe due to the Marveller's advice.

Long distance chain of events were not all that Sangdoclentine's magic entailed. He too could muse on the earthen flares and cipher through their threats and dangers to tweak and work with some of the more mysterious aspects of them. One discovery he had made was that at times the flares would slow down or speed up. They had aspects of explosions but never actually did any damage to the people that encountered them beyond scaring them immensely. Somehow the sensory crossovers did not include pain of any sort. Thankfully, Sangdoclentine thought.

Old sciences (Just so inspired)

Once there was a man, who dealt in old sciences and studies presented in new times and new ways. He had a great many friends but mostly enjoyed keeping to himself; he enjoyed breathing the air under a bright blue sky.

One day a young man came to him to ask of the sciences and the old ways. "Brother," the younger man spoke, "what is there, in this world for me? I have asked for the company of a wife, and she has been late in her reply. I fear as though she will leave me for another and then I will have nothing."

The wind blew and the man closed his eyes as clouds passed, and the whispers of the spirits passed by.

He reached down to the ground and filled his hand with dirt. He held it up and let it fall through his hands.

"Truly there is nothing that we can have, that we do not already possess. This is fact, tested and tried by men whom you will never come to hear of." The dirt finished falling and he brushed his hands together, he bowed his head, the brim of his hat shading his eyes from the sun. "You are in company of this woman already, and you are happy. This is fact, and if you do not see this today, then hope that you will tomorrow."

The young man left. The man breathed in the air, and a bird came to him. He took off his hat and changed into another bird, and together the two flew off.

They came to a home, and he was changed back into a man. The bird spoke to him, "You are healed now, for you have prayed and walked in the light." And out of the cabin came the old man's wife and in a moment he grew to be the young man again.

His wife smiled at him and laughed, and he did too. They lived long together and raised a great many children.

Well now there's the tale
That does what it does
In every sort of hail
It runs and it falls
Runs and it falls

Each day is brought another thing
And each moment is brought an impossible thing.
The beasts stir in the deep
And rearrange themselves.

What sort of power stirs in the wake?
What sort of beast has passed,
That left such a mark?
Is there a thing brought on, in the world of them
Is there such a small thing,
That drives the other things?

We can tell that we're safe,
We can see that we can strafe,
Move and duck, it runs and it falls
Runs and it falls.

It gets back up, stands up straight.
How could we think, 'twouldn't be great?

Several powers pass
To those whose work
Is deemed satisfying
Enough to hold the keep

And several years pass
In Peace as the Good
Hold all in order, and
All the land is well.

Dragons watch over
The believers in S. Clause,
& many many others
Watch over the same believers.

Several days have passed,
And work is surely harsh.
The pay is enough and the people
Are great, enough to forgive things harsh.

Love is felt again,
And faith of fire is restored.
Books of binding and books of magic
Restore simple winding
That brings back to all, their life.

Myopian Menagerie

Sangdoclentine peered across the nebula, meditating on the truths that had been revealed to him from the other members of the group, marveling at the orbits the stars' and suns' journeys.

He smiled at himself. It was only a handful of empty air. Nonetheless his friends had told him some things that would give his work further purpose. An that was all he needed.

The town was filled with the quiet energy of autumn. People were moving around the markets looking for goods while the sellers sold crops they had harvested the day before. A couple of street performers played some music on the corner and magician walked by, a little boy in tow.

Only it wasn't a little boy, Sangdoclentine realized, but made to look that way by the magician's magic.

Another marvel.

In the blumenate chaos of the night the man had finished his nibbling of butter and banana scones and was immensely pleased with the way his quilt was turning out. He had working, quite sordidly, at making sure all the lighting and emotions themselves into the pattern that was to connect the fabrics together. It wasn't as though he enjoyed any more than he did eating the scrumptious meals he prepared for himself and his close friends it was merely that the fabric was something else. Whether it was perhaps that his appetite was somehow captured in the quilts he fabricated or whether it was that he just had a sole buyer who was always willing to give him that extra bit of money that he so dearly, in his mind, deserved. His meekness and candor left all who interacted with him at his job satisfied and his patience was enough to weave every sort of walnut, turn, and smile into his work. His buyer was an older gentleman who had practiced on

the side of law for a great deal of time and had a little extra that he saved up, and it just so happened that he wanted to give that to Jacoby. Jacoby could strain himself greatly and push himself to no ends in order to maintain the precision and galvatude that took his work to a whole other level. He did not know, surely he imagined there were harsh critics of his work, but he also imagined that they would be the type that might have something to do from a larger success that Jacoby could, though had no desire, to accomplish.

Jacoby had too many other scones, treats, and pies to satisfy his needs .

Myopian Mess

Sangdoclentine wrestled with the thoughts that were going through his head. He had several programs and projects that he was working on. The first couple that kept springing to mind were on what it took to recreate or represent life and what it took to throw a damned good party. He had been meeting with his friends for an extended period of time and unfortunately he did not have the most ideal of places that would allow for an enjoyable social gathering.

The other project was a story, and it involves a boy in a bubble and goes like this:

He really loves you, he just doesn't seem able to get it into his mind that has to say anything. Well a part of him knows something is up, the other part of him seems to think it enough that if he just stands near you that will be enough. As though he just thinks that if he wishes hard enough all of himself will just melt away into the surroundings and you will understand him, and ignore the Unacting Part, turn around and look him dead in the eye, and kiss him.

"It's just me," she said.

Surprised, he responded. He kissed her back.

This.

Is.

A.

Chain.

It starts here.

Where it doesn't care.

And goes through other things.

And it holds them solid.

It goes through.

What.

You know.

What.

Is perceived.

And what is safe.

What is true.

A way.
A freedom...

Phase Shift

Once there was a man who could travel between worlds. Right off the bat let me just say that he was a peacemaker and sought to resolve issues between worlds with as little conflict as possible. He wielded immense power. He wielded the powers that rivaled gods themselves. Reality could bend around his will. His conflict was that he really had no conflict. You should care, because you are in the same situation as he is. He lives in a world where things change and fluctuate, where people are not necessarily constrained to behaving in orderly fashion all the time. Chaos infects its taint onto the world and the world is fouled by magics and dark things. There are good deeds needed to alleviate the sickenings that these very real effects are having on the world. His world is your world, his name is Jaris and reality is peeling back and he is entering your room. This is no book that suggests at something false and moderately fun to muse the possible reality but is in fact a tool for him to get to you. Why does he want you, dear reader? Simple, because your world is safe and and serene. Ordered into nice little events and nice little doldrums that can't but help to be the right things at the right times. World's filled with them. Your world that is. And if it's not it's because you've known him longer than you ought to have, for some damn good reason.

There is a place where you may go, a place that there is no place else like this one. In this place there are *wonders* that may be found that are capable of *extraordinary* things. These wonders are capable of shifting the way a person looks at things, and the way that things actually are or can become. It's fascinating.

Grom read from the book and could feel himself changing, feel himself becoming more and more capable. The book was speaking about places and times that he had never heard of before, and spoke of things that he never thought about being possible. Within the pages it spoke of *diseases* and *miracle cures* that were able to alter the way a person was and could become more and more a certain way, all in the realm of balance of course- the book spoke.

Grom was a friend to Grimble and Grimble had stumbled across his creature shortly after meeting Grom, so Grimble was always accusing Grom of somehow mischievously bestowing the blunder upon him. Which of course was not true. Grom had done no such thing, and in fact was curious about the strange creature with which Grimble had acquainted himself much the way he had acquainted himself with Grom.

More From the Book

He felt a terrible sense of guilt about it. He had punched his friend in the face after going crazy, seeing no point in life he had demanded *more*.

It had been dark. The sun had long been down and the house party was well under way. He had been making trouble from the start, doing things that he should not have done but he finally crossed the line. He had left the house and gone across the road to the vacant lot outside the church and had proceeded to scream. He had screamed for what seemed like hours, losing consciousness and regaining it, at periods when people were there and people were not. It was dark and his friends had turned from his friends into ominous things, faces blank and robotic they asked him what he needed. He had shouted and hollered and after that had proceeded to wrestle with those that would with him until he became just a big jerk needling them with insults and beckoning them to come on and be real with him.

He was still screaming. It's all he remembered, except that at times he recalled not being himself. Later he recalled that he had been among friends and that if he had not been things might not have gone so well. He had cried because she had not been there, and vomited all over the wall a mix of red and water. Such a great dissatisfaction in his life and it was for the strangest reasons. {reasons?}

The next morning he had apologized to his friends; he had made the rounds and met with the people that had helped him through the rough night.

It had been the second episode that he had in about six months. He had no idea what was wrong, why he felt this strange terror and the overwhelming loss of himself. It was scary, he thought. The first time it had been all right, he had not punched anyone but had encouraged others to hit him and to break through their barriers of who they were. Transcend yourself, he had said. Become more than who you are. It had been scary then too, however his conniptions and chitterlings had only lasted the night, a few hours before the terror of what he had done had set in and he had cried and cried. Everything felt so ritualized, as though he were walking through a play that was being made up and happening at the same time, as though his motions were scripted and what was going to happen were destined and yet he was free to do it.

This second time lingered. He had felt as though he had done an evil thing. That he had done evil to those he loved. His fears had been in his head surely enough, and in his realizing of his dilemma he had sought solitude in vain attempts to detach himself from the people he loved. Luckily for him they had followed him.

Both nights had been dark, both nights the spirits had changed him, and both nights he had felt ashamed of. He had no idea what had set them off, other than some bleak notion that there was no hope for him; the realization of which alone ensured hope's position in his real state of mind as something that was incredibly important.

Grom 'n Grimble

Grom was not very social, and yet found himself immensely entertained by the character that was Grimble, so was able to talk to him peaceable as no other creature had been able. Grimble was always bartering with strange people who were coming into and out of doors all over the little internal-to-the-rest-of-the-city block whereby he held his business. He found objects that did all sorts of weird things, and this had been where Grom had procured both his book and his scarf. The scarf was yellow and red and was warm, good for keeping the wind off of your throat, and the book he had found as something simple that he was able to read. He didn't like the hard complex books that talked about... well whatever they talked about, it's not really important.

Grom was what you may or may not call an orc. Now these creatures come, with all veracity, in a great number of shapes and sizes, makes and re-makes. Grom happened to be on the short, well-to-do, squat, side of your models and though certainly not brilliant by any means he was not dim, and could in fact read and write. I say may not call an orc on the off chance you've not heard of the usually bestial crew. Usually they mill about in large numbers, content to toss rocks at one another but do find themselves in some rather viscous scenarios that they do take, as you may say, like a fish to water.

I don't suppose it would surprise you one bit, dear reader to make small mention that it's within, somewhere, the small of the unread section of Grom's book that you will find these very words you find on the page. Impressed? Please don't be, it's all quite in our nature- and I have several relatives that can do far more impressive things than the small parlor trick I have just done.

Signs

Ural walked up to the crossroads. There was a sign there. It pointed different directions to different places, listing off the distances one would have to brave were one to make it to any of the destinations.

It was a strange sign. One place said *Hokmos*. Another said *Shimmers and Forth*. Yet another said *Khmer*, and others still read: *Done Just So*, *Conductus Pantarhei*, *Autcheb*, *Lost Beginnings*, *Jugband Music*, *Soulmate*, *Storybook Love*, *Shouldn't Do It*, *Moving Statues*. There were numbers tied to some of them and they read about what one would expect, with a lot of them having 0's.

Ural had a particular interest in the one that said *Lost Beginnings* as that reminded him of his earlier attempt at writing a story.

A man walked up and asked him for directions to the nearest town. Ural paused a moment and then decided that *Autcheb* sounded quite a bit like a town name and told him the way, 14 miles on along down the road, past the *Moving Statues* by ten miles. Ignoring the floating city above him, of course, Ural told the man he wasn't sure but *Autcheb* should be the place he was looking for.

A tune came unbidden to Ural then, something he could not put to words but something that he was able to make a beat to, and so it stuck in his head for a bit. He started thinking about his life and his wife at home, how they had barely been able to make ends meet here these last few weeks and how his friends discoveries and excitements these past few days had prompted him to leave the city. He had used one of the available *autchwabs* that allowed for ground travel while the city floated lazily along.

The city had links down to the ground, with many vehicles attached to it. There were other *autchwabs* that retrieved the vehicles to the city should impassable landscape come to be encountered. Beasts and people that usually patrolled the alleyways and more tranquil avenues sometimes made their way along in tow of the city, having the strange urge to see the land roll by. Some people loved the way the city moved around any obstacle with the slow certainty that it did.

Ural's friends were geniuses amongst the city's populations and as he stared at the sign he thought to Than and his performances and lover, to Jeris and his uncanny ability to cipher through power sources to the hearts of their emanations. Other people he knew and considered friends but their was something different in this two men and the way they related to the power of the city, and were able to work within and among it. They worked for the city, and its mysterious power that somehow over-ran the city.

Autcheb: a dense heart

It would provide a way. It was interesting how his partner had not really thought too much about whether or not it was good or not. He'd left that concern behind, being more preoccupied with a the bundle of newcomers who had come into town and set up their case. They'd done it in such a way that made everyone around glance their way. There was about twenty of them, men and women and a couple of others. They would smile and wave at anyone who walked by, any of the locals who'd been around for as long as the domain they were in allowed. The locals hardly payed them little mind. No one knew what these chums represented; they held themselves as though they had a legacy though, as though they'd come a long way.

He sighed, he had a few errands to run and had to stop by the Svardham to see if he could get some power. He didn't foresee any problems. He hurried off.

Alehearts Dreams of Aurora Borealis

Tears whispered forth, as the immensity of silence touched his ears, and defied his eyes. The lights danced across the northern skies, in greens and reds, blues and purples that were backed by the twinkling of the stars. He muttered a quick orison that the stars would always stay.

Aleheart had left the merchant's store either unsure whether the sun had set a few hours earlier than it was due to, or whether he had simply been absorbed within his studies.

He had been reading over some of the papers on a new form of arcane study being explored that his professor had given him. His professor had smiled at him and told him that these parabolas and quotients would hold the answer to discovering the true stories of the stars. Aleheart had been intrigued enough to read over the papers, but he was already familiar with the stories of the stars that he had learned as a child.

His mind was elsewhere than in his work. He had met with Elector a couple days back to hear of his fears, as he called them. Elector always had a great number of fears. He joked about bottling them up and saving them for later.

Khmer- Radishes' Rhythm

Khmer had a question nagging at him, one that had been since he had unexpectedly left his group of friends. His fear of course was in the disruption he had brooked, but it wasn't his primary concern. His real worry was about love, of course. But he had forgotten the question, only not the subject. Frustrating. He did know that he was worried about his methods of communicating the feeling, but he felt that wasn't really the concern. He dropped the letter into the post-box. Oh well, he had time to remember it. Maybe that was it; his curiosity, did time doing other things, engaging and partially doing of things detracted from the substance of that love. Maybe, he thought. And slipped out of story, into the music playing at the cafe. Maybe.

Conduits of power have always existed among the little people; their attention and focus towards it have always been hitherto diminished and waylaid, for reasons unknown to them and truthfully told of little importance. The *conductus pantarhei* have sought and long time been able to keep their movements underground, for the secrecy of their group has always lead to giving them strength. So too do their deeds and their creeds ensure their survival. *Totalis structulis rhythmica* is geared towards being one with movement and in doing so being a good and positive force for any state of affairs and for any falsified encounter or place where their is a need for a good energy.

Done Just So

He was a rogue and she a wizard, that's all there was to it. Something he didn't know allowed him to be near her and that was something that he was all the more appreciative for but for that one thing that he couldn't seem to pick up on. Every time he did he was filled with terror of something that couldn't be labeled as anything but Thermidor, and so he knew it must be the power she wielded and only could hope to communicate to her about how he *wanted* to stay with her. But there was not anything he could do to guarantee it. Relationships like theirs always had strings attached, even if he could look at her and have her return a knowing look.

Gods but it was difficult. He rode the wind to *wynten* and was able to get back into her quarters with little to no difficulty, thanks to the spell she had given him to allow easy access in her off work time. She wasn't entirely sure what her benefactor was doing that allowed for such a luxurious living space. Danilo was head over heels for her and she knew it. There were several things that she had left to do before they would be able to consider anything more, and they all involved things going right for her. Than had made his terms very well known to her and she had acquiesced to his conditions. She was confident that the two of them would be able to make a decent living together, their combined renown within the community would allow for positive reception by almost any party they would care to come into contact with over the last remaining years of their life. She sighed. It all happened so fast time had a way of getting away from you when you least expected it. It was time though, to begin waiting, and to see what the gods had in store for them after all their long years of faithful service.

The snow fell and their quarters in Bellona quivered and the air outside suddenly revealed the gently falling of snowflakes outside of Manhattan. Snow felt, susurrus. Snow felt, susurrus susurrus susurrus so.

A Hectacle Spectacle

Hectacle laughed as he sat out late one night, watching the meteor shower or the shooting stars he wasn't sure which they were. You see he had a story to tell. All the people and all the animals, all the spirits of all the people have things that they are about. This is true and has always been true to the time and place of the great Father. Many spirits are about smiling, many are about crying, and still more are about laughing at others misfortunes. Hectacle was about stories. He loved stories. Stories took away the sting of the day to day sadnesses, the fake smilings, and the laughing of others' at misfortunes. They took away from the meanness, from the hurting, and from the slowness of which it took good things to come about. None of the other spirits were about stories in the way that Hectacle was about stories. For he had one story. He had the best story. His story was about a creature that was the most special of all. This creature was the keeper of stories. This creature had the best memory, and the best tricks of all the spirits, people, could change into man- and indeed was a gift-giver to man, and a trader with man. He had great magic, and all of the oldest and wisest men, people, spirits, and gods came to him when they sought counsel. He could remember everything. Hectacle laughed. The stars shot across in streams and bursts that made the dark sky above look like the darkest and fearsome of rivers. This creatures story went through worlds, and into dreams and into waking, days and things, times and people all saw this creatures magic. Hectacle was the storykeeper of Anuna. And this was his gift.

A Masque of Jugband Music

The mask lay inside Danilo's sack. He was not sure what it was that it had the power to do, but he knew that it was important and would be key to the success of his friends in the upcoming months were they to stand any chance at all against the evil tirade that was the Sveldkin army.

He pulled out his dulcimer and tuned it, however just as he was about to play the music he changed his mind and set it down, instead picking up an old jug and huffing and blowing on it, producing even tones and starting the music that was to continue on late into the evening. Danilo's Damaran blood infused the music with just that little extra *khamael* that was needed to keep things sounded fresh, which made it all the more comical to witness him producing good music from a dusty, old, jug.

Trouble

A situation arose that deemed doomworthy, and would procure a dreadful outcome whereupon everything will be destroyed. All of this will happen because of one indiscriminate rodent of a man, who in his wise age and sophistication cut off what a younger more quiet man was attempting to humorously deliver to his comrades at what was to be his first real breaking out of his shell of solitude and jest for ages past. Foolish young man, he should never have attempted to be amusing in the first place. At least this is what has happened in my mind.

Jugband Music

The shopkeeper was able to stay open especially late due to the extra business he was receiving because of the troubled times. He was especially pleased and could not fathom a scenario that would be better for him, albeit the unsettling temperament that was afflicting everyone and the world around him seemed to afflict his current demeanor and outlook for future transactions only partially. He was able to engage with almost any person that came to see him.

He sold dream feathers, to aid in the group therapy sessions that everyone was forming in attempt to collaborate a solution to the problem. These were dire times indeed.

He sold deeds to lands that had long lay dormant in his dusty trunk.

He sold two out of the three family pets, the remaining bird-like creature that had strange appendages was something that was happily able to scoot around the store, making certain to not bump into any customers that the owner was more than happy to see walk through the door.

He sold a considerate rock.

He sold sections of psychic real estate at exceptional pricing.

Fablue Macchia

The book sat as though it were unsettled. Its contents were discussing weather patterns and other natural phenomena. It included rudimentary outlines on the human skeleton and the nervous system, which included a yellow aura that explained a certain human tendency to nervousness. The nervousness was one that could go unnoticed or it could

prescribe other circumstances of unsettlement. It too discussed this condition as one that was totally natural towards humans having and experiencing at some point during the course of their lives. *Nervosa* was how it was referred to in the book.

Nervosa was something that could extrapolate to paranoia and gradually from there towards psychosis. There were three cures and they were all nothing more than words, though the words were such whose ontological qualities dictated that they be manufactured in the manner of a pill. These drugs could cause series of tranquility, to counteract the *Nervosa*. If they were not worked or taken.

Within the book, there were songs and poems, as well as mythologies and stories about how gods came to be, and about how people came to have faith in a higher power, and the mechanics on how faith could be a function. Additionally were proofs on the existence of a God, though unfortunately there was little else in this particular volume that dictated what it was that this God must do.

On the miracles that he could eschew were notable illustrations that were fascinatingly detailed in their depictions of dimensions that were made up or previously hidden.

One made up dimension, called a fractal, had the property that it simply had to reflect a branched aspect of nature, such as a tree, a leaf, or a snowflake. This was its property. It consequently allowed for a second attention to be placed within it and could from there derive other fractals that would evolve into filling the space surrounding the second attention. What this second attention could do was powerful. It could steal the attention from another, and redirect it in countless directions. This was a skill that was highly valued amongst the sorcerers of old, for it allowed countless efforts at the dissolution of ones' life to be negated. Many irate swordsmen simply found themselves unable to see something plainly in front of them that they knew should be there, and from there knew that there was nothing there to attempt to destroy. It was quite frustrating to be a soldier in the days of magic.

Arcadia Coffee

The coffee shoppe was filled with a murmur of conversation, though it was hard not to find somewhere within the chaos a small bit of serenity. The patron mascot of the establishment was a goat, and as such Pan's presence was noted in the rumblings, the cursory glares of people getting in the way of one another. Yet at the same Time there was understanding. After all people were just here for the coffee. Not real conflict.

So while the snow pretended to fall the talk went on, a slam of the door here, and hearing through the doors more of the same. Caramel had just located his carnelian stone and as such was able to move through the space easily, despite his youth and high energy. The talk he was sure of,

was of the war that people were amidst. Unfortunately it wasn't a war of easy conquests for there were no real signs of who was on whose side.

It was looking to wrap up shortly though. And with good fortune for Caramel. His family would escape, not entirely unscathed, well and with new property to which they might do something with if they so chose.

Caramel sat in an easy chair next to the fire place that was not running yet was highly decorated with more of those *tchehutian* urns. Sipping his coffee he flipped through his folio and discovered a way that would allow for a peaceable exit right off. Next he was able to tune in to the characters of his science-filled world. They remained patiently on hold while he was away but jumped right back into action, exploring spiritual domains that brought good tidings to readers. The lines blurred and Caramel learned new magics, short stories and interludes of special nocturnes that cajoled and cavorted with the macrocosm of the coffee shoppe.

Caramel grinned; it was to be a good day.

A comedy of an error:

One kid told a lie. It was a lie that would kill him. When he told it he didn't want to live. So he tried to kill himself. But that didn't work. So the lie he told was the lie that in the end killed him. That's the truth. By gosh.

Two by two,
Four by four,
Eight by Eight,
We go to wait by wait.

Good for good,
always true,
Good versus evil
always been so.

Danger and harm
will extol
when you see evidence of it.

Isn't this too late?

Two by two.
Four by four.
Bore by bore.
Dreamdust plays and cavorts.

Seemingly one way and truly another.
Whole by whole,
pi3c3 by piece
part to whole

Really go,
I mean it.

Dreamdust dreamdust dreamdust
ahhhhh, cough cough Thoth Thoth
Word word word.
Eight by eight.

Isn't this too late?
No, no, not at all.
The phones don't answer,
people don't call,
for a very good reason.

The technology master.
He runs it all.

When the thoughts become all that is,
Healing is within the stories.

Elephant and Raven-bird

Elephant sits at the edge of the jungle, in a pool

Munching on leaves.

He looks at a Raven
And they talk about things they remembered.
They talk about how they remembered when Man came to be in their part of the world
And they talk about how they remembered when Owl sang her song.
They talked about the passageways through the harsh seasons
And the long years.

At last they talked about how Elephant's memory was better than Raven's
Because Elephant is Older. It is true.

Staff

There in the distance

Dancing in circles again and again
There's the woman that gave her staff
Over to him, when he needed her.

And he gave her the time.
Nobody's going to see them go crazy,
Cause the clouds to darken and crash
Together. Over the mountains.

At last he had found this.

Moving Statues

Wisely Than moved, shifting the weight of his burden onto the other shoulder, leaving some of the extra clothing accessories dangling off his person. He and his love were finishing up the festival by being slow- moving statues the classic and sure fire way of ensuring their safety upon their departure.

Along and long
Here is a song
We move we move
A long time of the day

You shan't see us move
For we move slow and take long
So that it's sung right
So that it's sung right.

We sing about everything
Quickly
So we can sing about everything
This lets us be done right by
All others whose are mere passerbys.

We move our earth and we move our people, our families we move so peacefully.
We do it because we believe peacefully,
That harm shan't come to us all.
Because that is the way of the great All,
That is.

For many thousand times have we sung this song
To many different beats and steps so that All may witness us as a little.

We move we move
Along and long
So that it is done a'right
So that it is done a'right.

It has been done a'right.
Because we sang it a'right.

We sang we sang
We sang it All right.

Raven's Magic

Raven was a master of disguises. He could disguise himself as a sound on the wind, or a slicker of light. He could change himself into the sun or a moment of terrifying fright. He could sing a song better than anyone else and had stories that were better than all other stories. Because he believes.

Faith took what it could, and turns it into rhymes. It turns it into rhythms and measures. Faith builds mountains out of logic and lets logic do the same in turn.

It's at this point that you might think that it's because of this all the other animals hate raven, that his tricks always fool. This is not so. You might think that raven is powerful and cannot be beaten. This too is wrong. You may think that raven is a boaster. This too, would be wrong.

Raven believes as the merlin magics. This is true.

Raven believes, and so does, for faith is more than thinking. Faith is a thing untouched by anything, except perhaps one thing. So ravens stories and songs and his magic are about something other. This is why he can do things that no other being can do.

dream

When it touches
You can feel it feels you.
Its silence pervades you

When they are touched by it
They can feel you as it feels you
Today and tomorrow,

Tonight as you sleep.

Work long and work hard,
Hear a suggestion from time to time.
Know your death, and know your time.
Pay your dues and hone your skills.

Create something. Maybe it's only partially yours.
When you create something it is you. It brings you into focus,
And *khmer* moves and then does the rest, too.

Gather, gather, gather. When it's all gathered it goes
Into a chrestomathy.

At the edge it is only a particle left, until nothing.
Seven times seven lives, lived circled and died.
Four times ten people have ye touched and known their blood.
They know you and make you as their own.

So work long, and work hard.
Know the feeling as its feelings are you
Gather, gather, gather.
Peace, peace, peace.

More?

More magic. It's a word that you almost have to practice to say. There are many ways of saying it as well. When something is arcane that is magic. A thaumaturge performs magic. There now, you know a few things about it.

This story is a story of and about magic. It's what I know. It's what I love, and it does magic itself independently of anything that I can do, for that too is magic.

The two talked about their dreams. Than had not been having them lately, yet Clerin had been having strangely disturbing ones that oftentimes reminded him of his work. In his dreams he was usually failing at a specific job or unable to complete the job as requested and this lent to his dismissal from further part on his livelihood. This upset him upon awakening for he usually thought his quality of work was good and the dream lent an air of casual unimportance to what it was he was doing and how he accomplished his job. To see it in another light was unsettling, dream though it may just be.

Than spoke of their friends Grimble and Grom and how he had noted a marked improvement in Grom's character, not that there was much terribly wrong with him to begin with. He had just absorbed the book and had taken to reading it after Clerin had found it for him upon their arrival

to the city. They had all arrived as a group to *wynten*. Grimble and Grom had become acquainted after a mishap with some of the invisible denizens. In what was surely hilarity to some what took place next resembled a puppet and his puppeteer attempting to wrest control from one another as invisible forces attempted to straighten Grimble and Grom out on the rules of the city, and as recompense they had been locked in a room for two days with minimal food and water. To think about their prude behavior.

"I am first and foremost, and always have been, a character of one of my books," Clerin said after some time. "Books are truly inspirational in their capacity to hold descriptions that can encompass the entire psyche of an individual."

"Yeah," Than replied, "You've said it before. I'm more curious as to what lies in the nooks and crannies of the place. You know the problem with possibility is that it's merely a suggestion." He began to clean the table and set up for a short demonstration of an effect that he had been rehearsing and practicing for a few days.

Caramel Alchemy

Sitting in the pub Caramel felt a sudden power surge as the crowd cheered the performers on.

He had wandered into the pub on a whim, hoping to meet a lady and have a one nighter but not with too much hope for it. He just enjoyed being out and about in the night air. It was calm and quiet.

"Is there something I can get you?" Asked the waitress in a manner that made him feel as though she would be that one if it was not for the fact that she was working.

"Sure, I'll just take kava," he replied. "And I'll buy you one if you'll have it," he said being friendly.

"Would love one. Thanks dear."

He thought about his job, and the work that his friends had asked him to focus on. Cleric had given him a book and told him to look it over, and to think about.

Within the books were descriptions of strange experiences and stories from other lands about beasts and creatures that Caramel had not imaged existed. Supposedly Clerin himself had given Caramel the book but Caramel couldn't help but thinking there was another force that was acting in addition to Clerin's own motions.

[this lends to the direction of the city as going somewhere]

Other topics of discussion included Alchemy, an ancient practice that involved reducing elements to a *keme* before turning into gold. Supposedly it was a two phase process, one of spiritual enlightenment and another of turning things into gold. The former science was unknown to Caramel and the latter intrigued him a little. Another topic was of Healing and how the process of working with four base elements fire, water, earth, and air-and sometimes a fifth aether, could be used to restore a broken or injured body to a more harmonious healthy tact. This interested Caramel some merely because of its practical sounding nature. Finally was the topic of astrology and how celestial bodies could influence the lives of individual people which interested Caramel greatly. How could such things as stars and planets affect things that Caramel himself went about and did during the course of a day?

It was hard for Caramel to take it too seriously except that some part of his *macchia*, his stimulated imagination, that remained active.

The waitress returned with his drink and had surprisingly brought another back. Caramel's surprise was contained but magnified when the waitress sat down at the bar and joined him.

"So what's up with you," she said, knocking him gently on the shoulder. That kind of intimacy let Caramel know right away that something special might come out of night if he played his cards right. He always fancied that he was a bit of a card and had to be dealt with. He chuckled at the thought.

Little did he know that this barkeep had just such notions about herself and the two proceeded to hit it off smoothly. Upon introductions Caramel found that her name was Addey. Addey had been in the city a little over a year, picked up from a local that had been left untouched by Cog's War. She had found her way into the city when one of its inhabitants had used a lens to transport himself to her villa and had convinced her of the wonders of *wynten*. She had not been disappointed. She had found her niche right away, serving drinks to the city's populace and being that there was a reasonable ratio between men and women had not been threatened in anyway during her time at the bar, so had stayed on for the work.

Addey was about mid-height and had a certain glamour to her that Caramel himself felt that he had come across ever since adopting the name after the treat. He had done so because people addressed him in a lighter mood than that of his true name Lareth. He asked her about her heritage and after a cock-eyed grin she had told him that her mother had been *fae* and her father human. The mixture had left her with that certain innate brood of magic that so many of the city's inhabitants had in their blood. Able to mix well with the surrounding environments whether the circumstances were a darkly foreboding night or a calm clear day she and many of her kind had found peace in the city's acceptance. She, as well as many of her half-blood kind-however, did not know about the city's original populace any more than the newcomers from Cog and Caramel's region.

Caramel and Addey talked for a while and she inquired as to the work that he did and he explained it as best he could. In addition to the bookwork that he halfheartedly worked on, which Addey knew scant but rumours about, he part-time worked as a cleaner for one of the universities' Pillars. The Pillars were the local infrastructure and included five main buildings. The university, the church-or what the town had as equivalent since there was no overarching religion that played supreme but instead had a certain respect for the ways of life of its often free-spirited individuals.

A band came on to play some music and the lead singer promised that he would deliver a performance that would take the listeners to another place, a place with green grass and shade beneath a tree. After a minute the band began playing. They called themselves the Sand Sifters, and they delivered.

Sometimes you can change the sky.

The perceptual roadways were now open and the traffic was increasing in dimension until it reached a point that Jaris was comfortable with it and then he roped it off, keeping the passageways open and used but not too intense that he was going to get overwhelmed and pass out from the strain.

The roadways were something that he had noticed since working with the flares. It was as though wherever he went there were these parts of him that were permanent. These permanent parts of him were like natural extensions of himself, he could move through a crowd or pick up a book and flip it open with no problem. He had to keep a part of himself aware of these other things that were going on around him, in the back of his mind.

He lent her just a little. She compensated and made a grand display out of the production, making a deck of playing cards turn into a dove. It was most intricate the way the woman could turn the cards about and only drop enough to leave an impression of flower petals falling, rather than playing cards.

The crowd loved it, and ate it up. They clapped and some even tossed coins up on the makeshift stage. Than and Emilee bowed low and left their audience behind.

Grom and Grimble sat reading the book aloud to one another, fascinated with the turns and twists that made so that what they were reading in the book was being noticed as living and breathing around them. They really did not know what to make of it, with reality shifting in such drastic measures at times the only facet of their old lives that remained was the book they were reading.

Out of the book came dragons and cauldrons, glyphs and symbols, wizards and their familiars. The shop that the two oversaw was quickly turned into a maelstrom of extra-planar activity.

Other shops were set up and businesses established just around the next perceptual corner that had what the shop you were at did not. You felt compelled to go on.

On the street corner a couple of musicians had set up their instruments and had proceeded to play some rhythmic music to the pulse of the crowd. The people moved back and forth between different stands. Some hustled on to other ends for the day. One of the musicians had a stringed instrument and plucked in time to the rhythm, creating a song that the crowd could dance to for the day.

A bench was sitting near the two musicians and on the bench were two people, sitting and looking out over the crowd. They stayed there for most of the duration of the song, just sitting and being.

From within the book poured still oddities and rarities that the two had never encountered before. With it came the detached sense that comes from having mastered an art and having finally been able to relax as unconsciousness took over in the process. This was what taking place as the crowd went about its actions for the two men on the bench. There was a book floating invisible about the two of them, somewhere.

The two musicians finished their performance and everyone that was in the area clapped, threw coins, or whistled. There was both a man and a woman and they took their time packing their instruments, a set of wooden xylophones and banjo, before weaving their way back into the crowd.

It was cacophonous. The sounds that the ship was making. It was not too overbearing though, enough to reflect the rhythm and metre of the song being sung. "Really what I just want is peace," said the individual.

Snow covered the ground and the chill of the air was deterred by the loud vocalities made by the people that were inside the cafe. The man sat typing on his computer in a land where such activities were barely possible.

Which realm did all of this story take place? Anyone who knows anything knows that there are only ten realms that anything may occur in, and due to the structure of the ten realms themselves it is at times difficult to derive many from the one. Many realms indeed is the answer but for the sake of simplicity we shall discuss the realm of 10,000 illusions, for the great many illusions layered over the unchanging reality does this treatise its due justice.

There layered deep and deeper a great many illusions within this story, dear reader, so that the true story is something that may elude you for a while, though hopefully is the case that it will reach you more and more quickly as more and more is told. If a paradox is stumbled across then it's probably true.

Time passed and many things that once were, changed.

Cold Magic Opus I

Several times had occurred where coming out of work or back from some coffee errand he found his car x'd out with orange chalk, marking the vehicle he drove as one that was able to survive another day of not getting opened by unnatural means and thus ensuring that he was going to be able to make it home, as planned with all of his possessions. Magic, after a fashion.

He liked the stuff, rather he enjoyed what it hinted at. An approach. He had stopped worrying about his ego with the practice of an exercise in denying it, and instead spent much of his time working out how every little facet of every word spoken, thought had, or math problem worked could be *totalis* that word. Magic, after a different fashion. One word, not to rule them all but to make it all work, and all into something. To provide a purpose and meaning within it.

It was a great outlet; it allowed him countless things with which to occupy his time and thoughts. He spent his time inventing certain ad-hocs, and reading about others that had been created.

Many of them he had turned into names. He had always fantasized about having a cool alter ego that was able to do things he himself could not. He got inspired after a hat-shop visit to invent sixty or so alters. It would balance them all, never had to keep track of what one was doing over the others because it was everybody working together and for the same thing, and so had many names. And many dreams and things that could be. A great deal of wonder made itself to be the salt of his world, where he found tasks he had started earlier in his life to be completed later without realizing how. He took long walks that he had intended or begun thousands of miles ealier only this time completing them. His relationships flourished and he found that he could wait for almost anything. Another magick.

He continued to work though, because it was good of him to do so, and because he found that after a while he enjoyed it too.

He picked up a cup. And took a drink.

The Artist

The Biker walked into the cafe and sat down across from his buddy, Sam. His mind was still on the phone call he had just made to The Artist, or Honey Bee as he liked to call her. To himself that is, he only referred to her as Honey Bee to himself- to others she was Mab.

“Look preoccupied,” Sam said, sipping his coffee.

“Yeah.”

Biker had been driving his little truck, just come back into town after a rolling drive out where the land was flatter and where one could get a good look at the city. Blue sky made it a nice contrast against the city's spires and under-hanging stalactites, He'd driven so determinedly, looking his best to appear to know where he was going. Which he hadn't, he just ended up there.

“Care to share?” asked Sam, putting down his mundane book.

“Not really,” Biker sighed, “Coffee please.” The waiter brought over a coffee and Biker recognized him from a show of Than's the other night. “Didn't know you were part of the circus.”

“Eh, sort of,” the waiter replied. “My girlfriend does aerialist stuff with them and occasionally I'll play music for them. So peripherally.” He shrugged, vest covering long sleeved plaid shirt, swaying as he turned around on one leg going back to his register.”

“Seems like a circus type, if you ask me,” Sam ventured.

“I need you to buy some drugs for me, from a buddy of mine.” Biker remembered himself saying to the Artist. There had been a pause on the phone and then from her, “I...don't need any of that.”

“Sorry, no. I need you to buy some for me. It'll only take about fifteen minutes,” he had replied to her misunderstanding. Pause. Then, “I don't feel comfortable doing that.” “Oh, well, sorry to bother you.” and he had hung up.

Biker had drove then. He had been imagining the certainty of her in the truck next to him, him saying

“Sorry I lied, I do not actually need you to buy the goods for me. Well maybe later, but right now I just want to drive for a while.” Why hadn't he just asked her to drive with him? He didn't know. Afraid, he finally supposed.

“Okay,” She had said in his mind, “where do you want to go?” or maybe “Okay, how long do you want to drive?”

He continued imagining, shifting the truck into gear, merging with the rest of the traffic that followed the city having only a road in mind with which to drive upon.

In his imagination he had paused and the two of the had sat in silence for a minute. Then he had said,

“Until everything is right again. “ And then they had drove away and left the city.

But none of that had happened. He had just hung up on her, and drove until he came back to the city where he had opened a book that talked about living as a Goalless, a self that existed without any single driving purpose, and existed mechanically, rather than intuitively or spontaneously. Good stuff that he liked the idea of the Goalless. They seemed like some fabled characters able to remain untouched by many of the problems that, Biker thought, humanity wrestled with.

His attention went back the Artist, a very loving, kind individual he had inappropriately attributed as some archetype who endured a set of characteristics that he focused much of his attention onto bring forth inspiration and to help motivate him through his day-to-day activity. Artist wasn't a person, well she was too, he sighed. She was a goddess, very real to Biker alone, and a woman who he had locked behind a thousand doors of these attributes. Unintentionally as far as he could tell.

It was a shame. He desperately wanted to know and be with the person behind all those doors.

Sam was reading the paper now, rustling through the pages quietly, but quickly. Biker's coffee was near done. His thoughts went very briefly to a Nietzsche quote he had read in the same book as the Goalless. There was something about there being no 'being' behind the doing, acting, or becoming, the 'doer' was simply added to the deed by imagination; the doing was everything. He thought about that as he thanked Sam.

“For what?” Sam asked, raising eyebrows at Biker. He would never know how much Biker appreciated him the company, without any pressure to talk. Biker himself did not know this was why he was thankful.

Wisely Than

“If I take a coin in my hand,” Than said, demonstrating by seemingly placing a coin from his right hand into his left, “And place it in my pocket I can produce another coin of the same nature.” His right hand reached out and he produced the same coin making it appear as though he had a brand new coin. He feigned placing this coin, too, in his left hand and repeated twice more.

“I really place it in my hand though,” he said, this time actually placing it in the left and withdrawing it from his pocket to display it. He palmed the coin in the act of placing it back in his pocket and dropped it back into the right hand upon bringing his hand back out. “I don’t want you thinking that I’m being unrealistic in what I’m doing.” He contradicted his very action of performing magic and displaying the trick by what he said. It was all part of the show.

Than spread the cards across the surface of the table having noted the key card, the bottom card. He asked one of his spectators to choose the four of clubs, inflecting the word choose. He reached across and took the card they had touched, glancing at its face.

“Not bad,” he said, “We’ll see about the rest of you. You choose the nine of diamonds,” he gestured to another spectator. He repeated what he had done with the first spectator, glancing at the queen of spades. He told the final spectator to point to the queen of spades and picked her selection up and placed it with the others. He glanced at her selection and saw the four of diamonds.

“Now comes the truly difficult part,” Than elaborated. “Tricking you is all part of the show and as such is easily accomplished for an old pro like me. But now I have to be honest in my picking the four of diamonds, else it would not work. and worst of all I can’t deceive myself or else it does not work either. So...” He paused before picking the bottom card. His key four of clubs. The trick was now complete, with everyone seemingly haven chose a card that was very openly declared. and in no way possible could the cards have actually matched. Magic.

Do You Believe in Manticores?

"Do you believe in Manticores?" He asked her, finally.

"I'm not sure what they are. More to the point, do you believe in them?" She responded, asking they guy a question that put him in a difficult position. Manticores were like Chimeras, in that they were built out of bits and pieces of other non-magical beasts, but held together by magic. To admit that he had to admit to someone that he believed in magic, and that was always a precarious predicament. A lot of people did not believe in it, and the quickest way to getting yourself labeled insane was to tell people that you believed in something that they did not really have any comprehension of what it was.

The position of the magus is an interesting one. It involves an awareness of a spirit world that influences virtually ever aspect of life. Everything within the magician's world becomes one of symbol and ontology, relating to being. The essences of everything are what are to be examined, and sympathetic links and contagious links may be forged and may be worked to gather like-effects in the real world. There are whole schools of magical study that involve the simple acts of seeing, remembering, believing, and working magic, secrets, as well as developing an ecology of language that can take place as you die. I say as you die, because die you must, and magic is the thing that allows you to live fully as you die.

Magic, according to Claude Levi-Strauss in *The Sorcerer & His Magic* is called upon when two conflicting systems of reference are encountered. The new system is one that can integrate said contradictory elements and the system is built at the expense of knowledge. Knowledge would require the retention of only one system, while refining it to a point where it would absorb the other system.

Since we do this and since we *do not* do this, we die. It's a dualistic side effect of the blank mindedness that gnosis can provide. We die because we must. We die because we when we divulge in either one or two paths of knowledge or magic, respectively, then we have either done something perfect or failed. If we do it perfectly then death is the *natural* end. If we fail, then we are allowed to *make up* our failed attempts like the making up of a failed homework assignment by living fully and correcting our life eternally until another second *natural* end comes about.

Magic is a second chance. Magic is another chance to *work* life until life is as we wish it. Then we can die peacefully.

A song of the whale

The whale swam across the ocean
Swimming on a lullaby of sound and source
Whether it knew where it was going
Was anybody's to guess and know
But to be sure the whale swam on
And lullingly it won as it swam long

Vignettes were spoken and points were made
That the whale made careful note of.
He listened and he heard what the small creatures
Around him said and spoke of.
Managing his supernatural powers
As do wizards in their solemn towers

The whale swam across the ocean
Swimming on a lullaby of sound
And whether it went there is where it knew
And so the whale swam further on
And lullingly it won as it swam long

As men do study their principles and sciences
And as they wallow away in their knowledge
So to did this creature move through the ocean
And move the world in a way that is only magic
Only magic.

Faith bestows wondrous routes

Ogham and O's

Ogham and O's was open late. Caramel and Addey had stayed behind after the music had played out and had worn out their conversations for the evening. The bar and inn had quieted down but there was still a few people around, talking into their drinks. The lighting was such that there was a couple of lanterns in the back flooding most of the room but still some darkness in the corners for those who wished to remain unobserved.

The crowd was murmuring about the music. For the most part it was a satisfied sound. Caramel's mind was no longer on the pretty woman sitting next to him. It was somehow on something else.

It almost felt to him like he was on some sort of stasis, just waiting. While nothing in the room slowed down noticeably he felt as though everything in his life was being examined. He wasn't sure whether it was a side effect of the books he was reading or the ongoing discussion with his friends about these earthen flares but he was beginning to think that there might be something to the sparse whiteness he heard Jaris and Clerin talking about.

The flares were random, and if Caramel didn't know better because of the two's discussions about them being inherent to the city's navigation ways he would have said they were nothing.

Jaris knew otherwise, he said great things could be uncovered by developing thoughts about the flares. What great things Caramel was unsure but the books that Clerin had given to them all contained different information on the flares, and as far as they could tell, in general told each of the readers different things. Than had told him that Clerin had thought the ship that Jaris had embarked on to manufacture and erect alongside the city had been daring but had been just the daring that the city needed.

Caramel's attention drifted back to the room and he looked at Addey, who smiled at him. She could tell that he was thinking about other things and that was okay with her. She asked him what he thought about the song with the traveling whale in it and he had to think a minute before telling her he liked it.

The whale. Caramel did think about the flares then. He was unsure that he had ever seen a whale before outside of the pictures in the books. It was quite a coincidence on that he had only just read about them for the first time and then quite by happenstance, apparently, had come to Ogham and O's where a band had played a song about the mystical creatures. If that was not an out of the blue happenstance flare-like behavior Caramel didn't know what was.

Jaris ship was somehow functioning off the power of the flares, though Caramel didn't know how he had managed to isolate one or more of the flares to power the ship in a reliable manner.

"How's the Salamander Room treating you, Isaacson?" he heard a voice and turned the other way. His room was in a part of the city that was well lit at night so he could see that the traveler was Bloom, his friend. He smiled at the question, Bloom having taken a keen interest in the little creatures since having acquired one of his own.

When Bloom had found out that his friend had a thing for the creatures, and said they had something about them that leant to an almost supernatural typica, it had tickled Blooms stolid behavior.

Isaacson had been dreaming and had awoken when he saw his friend. Bloom was a solid guy, able to work long hours and mechanically minded, so he had an impulse for fixing things. When Isaacson had gotten himself in trouble a time or two being a bit too philosophical Bloom had

been there to see to it that the situation did not get overly out of hand. He did let Isaacson sweat a little bit; Bloom figured he deserved it.

"Still have Pegasus running around in there?" Bloom continued. He referred to an old joke the two shared concerning the presence of a winded mythological being in lieu of Isaacson's endless thought processes.

"Not at the moment, she's gone off to drive someone else bats."

Bloom brought forth a drink and passed one over to his comrade. Isaacson hesitated, then took the drink, always a little weary of the effects of alcohol. His phone rang.

"Hello. Yeah, just a minute. Nope sorry can't deliver on that until tomorrow. Yeah I'm just bumming around but that does mean you get my best work, you know that." He talked for a minute longer before hanging up.

"Sorry about that, some fellow wants a treatise on the principles that make up an epistemological certainty by the morrow."

Bloom shook his head in confusion and responded, "Episto-what? No, never mind. I'm not sure I would know anyway."

Bloom took hold of the sigils that he had marked down earlier and took them away from the Corder's tank. It seemed to be doing well, chirping and enjoying itself living in its little cage. He wasn't too sure on the intelligence levels of such creatures and as such didn't know if he would be able to take it out of its cage and handle it or have it grow to be friendly towards him. He figured as much he might try some more of the carvings and hope to see if he could domesticate it.

He continued to work, and the city continued to reward him with more and more customers and his life was well.

Errors and errors, never really making any correct motions the man worked and developed his blue feelings.

Sangdoclentine thought about the Universe once again, losing himself in thought about it. It was true that such thoughts often led to other thoughts and such perspective could more than likely shed light on an otherwise perplexing situation. And it was true from this vantage point that one could look at the cluster of thoughts, emotions, and actions that shed themselves into being and notice certain things. Like one for instance: is it not a common mistake that a great many stories

being incredible in their nature and great in their breadth are reduced to jokes and as such are dismissed as merely that? A joke.

A joke: a mere moment of laughter to encourage the dreamer to further strengths and greater achievements. Two coinciding viewpoints after a long timer apart waver and hover together for a time before converging and it is the convergence that is discussed, laughed at, and remembered. Not the story. In these final moments of life the story makes so many twists and turns that it quickly becomes labelled as impossible.

There are a great many things to be said for those that can spot the similarity

A message of avarice unchanging in its glory found its way into the hands of the Varabnacians. Their looming disfigurement lent greatly to the doom of the situation. Even though they were just a species doing their best to preserve themselves one could not but feel a certain despicable attitude towards them, hoping for their failure. They arranged themselves in slow moving rows, that ebbed backwards and forwards towards the source of the message. The message simply said that there were to be more forges and that these forges would lead to a larger forge, that would again lead back towards a smaller forge. This smaller forge would be more productive in its exercises; it would be as a focused concentration of economic energy, flowing and working productively towards whatever directions and forces they happened to be turned towards. Newfound angles and newfound pieces

There was a little girl who was running amidst all of this comatose chaos who was afraid of what was going to happen. She looked left and right before crossing the street and then went to her friends house to explain what she had seen. It had been as if there was nothing else like it before in her life. Truly there probably was not anything else like it in her life, but the way the world had twisted and turned she had surely thought that if she didn't get things straightened away quickly things would turn ugly. She had written her name on a slip of paper and had it tucked into a book she had been reading. It was not going to get lost she thought severely. There were a great many songs and stories left in this world for it to go away this soon in this one.

The books seemed as though they were filled with motivational lengths, going on and on about how this was possible and that was possible, but never once saying what this or that was. They merely said over and over again that miraculous things could take place, and indeed would. In a floating city this was not too hard to believe. It was hard to believe that all the loose ends could come together and produce these so called miraculous things though. Clerin for all his studying and dedication to the art was still skeptical. He knew in his heart that such things would be of great importance if there was to be a relapse into the war with the Varabnacians. The cruelty the race exhibited was something that could not be permitted to pose a threat to the people of *wynten*.

Dreams.

Dreams, dreams, dreams.

Some Alchemy

Astrological drawing of the sun, moon, and Zodiac constellations. Image taken from f. 57 of Miscellaneous treatises on alchemy, including John Lydgate's 'The Churl and the Bird' (the latter imperfect at the beginning).

A drawing of a man and woman embracing. Image taken from f. 57v of Miscellaneous treatises on alchemy, including John Lydgate's 'The Churl and the Bird' (the latter imperfect at the beginning). Written in English and Latin.