

THE  
BLACK LODGE  
OF SANTA CRUZ

*by Satyr*

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The Kaos-Babalon Press  
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Citation:

Satyr. "The Black Lodge of Santa Cruz." In: Biroco, Joel (ed). *KAOS 14: Supplement*  
[PDF edition]. London: The Kaos-Babalon Press, 2002.

# I

“Jacques de Molay was not *roasted alive* so we could put a Holy King on the throne.”

FR SPARTACUS

In the spring of 1990, an ashlar was ripped from the foundation of the Caliphate Ordo Templi Orientis, heaved into the trunk of a Chevy Nova, taken by a steep and precipitous route to the California coast, and there for a time brought to rest. It was an ominous moment, the kind that though significant only to a handful, nonetheless spawned rumor, hearsay, and the balance of that from which myth and legend are born. One such rumor is that the person responsible—or persons responsible, as some might object—was a renegade “Wandering Bishop”, acting under the auspices of the *Black Lodge of Santa Cruz*, a clandestine initiatory body that had formed near the heart of the Caliphate and now threatened its very existence. Personally, I felt such speculation was mere fodder for foolish assumption, and am surprised to find it persists to this day. It is for this reason that I have found myself compelled to step forward, and present the truth of the matter as best I can.

I can assure you that when I, the witness of these events, first came into contact with the Caliphate, becoming embroiled in an insane plot to break away from that celebrated body was the farthest thing from my intent. Years of fascination with all things occult had inflamed my young mind with possibilities of finding real magicians, of contacting, and maybe even gaining access to the secret and mysterious societies hinted at in the books of old. And what is worse, I was a joiner, and I presented myself at Thelema Lodge in January of 1988, to do precisely that. I quickly became convinced that, despite appearances, I had at last made contact with *true* initiates, possessed of the keys that unlock the storehouses of Mystery for those bold enough to use them. For a time at least, I was not disappointed.

Was I prepared for what I found? Primed for the baptism of fire I was about to receive? Of course not. Nothing could have prepared me for what I was about to experience. It wasn't that their activities twisted reality into monstrous shapes for miles around their Temple, even if I'd been capable of noticing if they had. It was simply that the beast, as it existed in that place, and at that time, was wholly unlike anything I'd ever seen before. And I dare say I shall never see its like again.

Thelema Lodge was located in a rather dilapidated, two-story wooden structure in the “bad” part of Oakland, California. To the best of my knowledge, Thelema was the “Mother Lodge” of the Caliphate, though you would never have guessed this, standing on the grimy sidewalk, staring at its sad façade. But inside, it was a truly magical place. In the front room of the house was “Horus Temple”, with Golden Dawnish pillars, oriental carpet on the floor, a large altar in the east, and a coffin—officially, “a tomb”—in the west. It was here that the Gnostic Mass was performed every Sunday, come hell or high water, and here that various classes on magick and other matters occult were held on other days of the week. The social life of the Lodge revolved around the kitchen, much like any other home, and the rest of the building supplied living space for the varying assortment of folks who lived there, as well as shelf-space for the library.

Outside the house of Bill Heidrick, author, occultist, and one of the founders of the Caliphate, I have never seen a more extensive collection of esoterica in my life. Everything, or nearly so, that one could possibly imagine pertaining to occult studies was there, from Francis King’s *Secret Rituals of the OTO* to Higgins’s *Anacalypsis*, and all were welcome to avail themselves thereof. From Judaica to erotica, if you were searching for it, it was probably there somewhere among the cases, stacks, and heaps. If you didn’t find it, however, your quest was not yet ended, for the resident librarian could tell you the date of its publication, along with those of any subsequent printings and editions, the color and manner of its binding, where he had last seen a copy offered for sale, and provide a concise synopsis of its contents, all from memory.

It was at Thelema Lodge, sitting on the floor in Horus Temple, in Bill Heidrick’s magick class, that I first saw the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram demonstrated. My first initiation, it was. And it was there, under the influence of David Jones, that I first developed a working interest in Enochian magick through his Center for Enochian Studies, commonly known as the CES. This last character figures prominently in the narrative to follow, being one of the people who stands accused of founding the *Black Lodge*, so perhaps a few words would be in order.

David Richard Jones, mild mannered Enochian scholar, collector of the library at Thelema Lodge, student and practitioner of the weird sciences, was also known as the Demon Jones, David *Fucking* Jones—sometimes affectionately—Sri Dave—“have ashram, will travel”—and Fr Spartacus—IV<sup>o</sup>, when first I met him, later advanced to V<sup>o</sup>. Each initiate took an official motto in the Order, and Jones’s was always one of my favorites, as “Spartacus” was also that of Adam Weishaupt in his Illuminati.

I remember a time sitting in the library at Thelema Lodge with David, his boots propped upon a desk, cigarette in hand, as he entered into a lengthy discourse on his belief that St Jude the Greater, the patron of hopeless causes, was in fact Judas Iscariot. I could somehow imagine Herr Weishaupt in much the same situation, debating a point that only one who blurred the line between orthodoxy and heresy could possibly appreciate.

Jones was, to the best of my knowledge, the student of Bill Heidrick, or at the very least the product of his work, in so very many ways. He began his magickal career as a punk-rocker from Concord, California. While slam-dancing one night, screaming along on PCP, he had a profound religious experience, his very own blinding light on the road to Damascus. By his own admission, it was this event that led him to magick and mysticism. What exactly he experienced amidst the thrash and sweat I never asked, like so many things I never asked.

David is one of the most enigmatic persons I have ever known. He infuriated his superiors by the contempt he showed for assumed authority, and just as often annoyed his inferiors and compatriots with his near morbid insistence on orthodoxy, righteousness, and absolute adherence—at least for himself—to the letter of the Law. He once prayed to the Blessed Virgin Mary for a supply of hashish—successfully, I might add—and during the Bishop of Rome’s visit to San Francisco appeared on stage at a concert, where he defecated, copiously, on a photograph of the Holy Father. I asked him how he could do such a thing, to which he replied, “7–11 beef and bean burritos”. Yet David was the only person I met in the Caliphate who looked me in the eye, and said drugs “are a vice, or they can be”. Morality itself may have been a plastic concept, but the distinction between virtue and vice was an important consideration to a man such as himself.

As a matter of fact, David fulfilled the office of Priest in the Mass of the Gnostic Catholic Church that first night we arrived at the Lodge. The Deacon, I later learned, was a loyal member of the Temple of Set. He had worked for a prominent televangelist in a former life, or so I was told, until he saw the Darkness, and mended his evil ways. I was impressed by that first Mass, though at the time, had no way of knowing just how good it was. Sometimes they weren’t, but that really wasn’t the point. All genuinely concerned in the affairs of the Lodge took great pride in the fact that Mass had been held there every Sunday at sunset—more or less—for many years, and Caitlin Aliciane was the beautiful and absolutely dedicated individual who ensured it did.

Caitlin was tall, with long, red hair, and a delightful figure, which she would proudly display as fully and as often as circumstance allowed. I remember her vividly the night of some high holy day or another, wandering through the party in a very crowded Lodge, wearing naught but an eight-foot boa constrictor and a festive grin. Caitlin was, without a doubt, one of the very few people, male or female, I have actually and unequivocally trusted. I would have handed her a knife in a bloody bar fight and turned my back without hesitation, confident that nothing and no one could approach except over her dead body. She was proud, and fearless, and sexy, and everything I would expect a woman “girt with a sword” to be.

Caitlin made the Mass happen. I don’t really know how she got stuck with this responsibility, but she did and took her charge very seriously indeed. It was supposed to mean she ensured that a Mass team was assigned for any given Sunday night. But more often than not, it meant she was Priestess, or Deacon, or went dashing through the assembled crowd at the last moment, pressing into service the first viable candidate for a vacant office she found.

The furniture of Horus Temple was good, or at least serviceable. The crown, lance, cup, and robe of the Priest—more like a Greek Orthodox chasuble, really—were actually quite nice, but the rest of the costuming—what there was of it—looked more like something out of a children’s Christmas pageant. The robe of the Priestess was of no consequence, as she would not be wearing it long in those days of wine and roses, but when the Priest stepped from the tomb, his threadbare attire immediately reminded one he was supposed to have been dead, for quite some time, by all appearances. But none of that mattered. It was the heart that went into the effort that was important.

Sometimes the Mass was breathtaking, with communion resulting in a whole room full of people smiling and giggling like little children, quite drunk on a single cup of wine. Other times, one breathed with the Priest a sigh of relief, as he turned to bestow his benediction at the close of the Mass, amazed one and all we had made it to the end. And on the rare occasion, only the solemnity of the setting prevented one from laughing, usually good-naturedly, at the comedy of the situation. One Mass in particular comes to mind. The reading skills of the Deacon that night were somewhat lacking, and part of his version of the “Office of the Collects” went, “Mother of fertility on whose breasts lies water, whose cheeks are creased by air. . .”,<sup>†</sup> rendered in a tremulous tone. He did the best he could, and at the end *everyone* cheered long and loudly. Now

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<sup>†</sup>For those less familiar with this portion of the rite, the passage in question reads: “Mother of fertility on whose breast lieth water, whose cheek is caressed by air. . .”

the cheering was customary, but his effort meant more to us, and was more symbolic of the universal situation as we saw it, than any visiting Poobah proudly displaying their splendid regalia, in costume that spoke so eloquently of their status within the official hierarchy.

Thelema Lodge, in those days, lacked a certain respect for assumed authority, it is true. But they did not oppose just any authority. Some of their elders were held in great esteem. Bill Heidrick, then a high ranking officer in the Order, as he is today, was always treated with the utmost courtesy and respect. And Grady McMurtry, Hymenæus Alpha, the late Caliph, was held in unquestioned reverence by most everyone I knew. His memory was sacred, like that of a departed patriarch, as was his small, unassuming portrait that was always displayed in the Lodge. In it, he wore a turban, and looked his most mysterious and benevolent best.

It is easy for an outsider to dismiss Grady for too many reasons, some of them good in fact. But when faced with the genuine love that glowed in the faces of so many who had known him personally—the man, not the Caliph—it wasn't so easy at all. Grady and his wife, with the help of others, had worked hard to boot-strap the Order into existence, and regardless of how one feels about its legitimacy, the years of their lives they had poured into the effort, the blood, the sweat, and the tears are beyond question. They both had their followers, and their detractors, and the rift their eventual divorce caused among the faithful lingers in the Order to this very day. There are two parties within the Caliphate—or at least there were back then—that of the groom and that of the bride, and the rancor between them has haunted and plagued the Order from its very foundation.

Grady had celebrated his “Greater Feast” by the time I arrived, and I unfortunately never had the pleasure of meeting his former wife, but I was told they were as different as night and day. She was serious, and scholarly, commanding the respect she believed she deserved, while Grady was more interested in *living*, celebrating life and enjoying the party while he still had the chance. The “truce” between them, uneasy in the best of times, rested heavily on the Order. Thelema Lodge was very much a loyal member of the party of the groom, and proud of it.

This conflict had come to a head upon Grady's death in 1985, when the Order was forced to choose a successor, and the IX<sup>o</sup>s split along party lines. After bitter discussion, it was agreed to choose a lesser, weaker, compromise candidate, rather than one fully supported by either side, or any side really, other than the candidate's own. This

compromise was made by Bill Heidrick—and I'm sure the rest as well—for the good of the Order and in its best interest. As has been so often observed, the road to hell is paved with good intentions, and in my opinion, this particular path was no exception.

Such was the Order and such was the Lodge of my first experience. The politics and infighting mattered little to me. I didn't know any of these people, other than Heidrick. I always thought he was in charge anyway, and couldn't see what all the fuss was about. All I wanted to do was learn magick.

## II

For someone eager to learn the practical side of the occult, Thelema Lodge was the best of all possible worlds. Practitioners of almost every tradition imaginable attended one function or another, and every one of them was more than willing to express and discuss their own idiosyncratic view of the subject. I met wiccans, ceremonialists, chaotes, topys, golden-dawners, qabalists, and some so eclectic as to defy simple classification. One was just as likely to bump into someone with years of experience as a rank amateur. Sometimes the experience was pleasant, sometimes enlightening, and sometimes even threatening. There was the occasional has-been, who showed-up drunk at functions, picked fights, and used the event as an excuse to engage in a psychic piss-fight. It was their only trick, and made them feel *real*. But folks like those were well known, easily marked, and certainly the exception.

My then wife Susan and I took up the study and practice of magick, and quickly amassed more information than we could possibly assimilate in one lifetime. We enjoyed the privilege of cornering David at every possible opportunity, pumping him for data and insight. He was always open and easily approached, and gave to us freely of his knowledge and experience. I suspected he was somehow affiliated with the A.:A.:, and though at first I was hesitant to ask, eventually I got up the nerve to express my interest. His response was muted, though encouraging, and no further mention was made of it for some time.

Our magical work started small and tentative, as it should. We learned the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram first, that most fundamental of ceremonies within the Golden Dawn tradition. I began practicing *Liber E vel Exercitiorum*, and Jones suggested I banish before each session, saying “Everyone has the right to make something go away. If something is interfering with your yoga, banish it.” *Liber Resh vel Helios*, was soon incorporated into the structure of our lives as well. Four times each day—dawn, midday, sunset, and midnight—I repeated the appropriate adoration to the Sun in the “Sign of the Enterer”, as is mentioned in *Liber AL vel Legis*. I “kept *Resh*” like this, best I could, and so did Susan, but that was more the exception than the rule among many Thelemites of our acquaintance. Even at the Lodge on Sundays, Jones would shout “*Resh!*” at sunset, and an often sullen crowd would amble out the back

door and into the yard, where he or one of the other fanatics would lead the reluctant faithful in their evening prayers—weather permitting, of course.

We soon began to focus on Enochian magick in particular, with myself as ceremonialist and she as skryer, under David's tutelage. Our progress was rapid, getting good results, without any real understanding on my part, but soon developing considerable skill and experience in the bare mechanics of it. Jones was pleased with our early success, and impressed by the mediumship skills displayed by Susan. She could "see" quite well, but couldn't hear, which made communication a bit of a challenge. I, on the other hand, couldn't "see" at all, so our work together was neatly divided between us. Jones would later describe us as "Siamese twins", two halves of a fully functioning whole. When we presented the transcript of our first skrying session to David, after making our first tentative foray into the Watchtowers, he became rather excited, exclaiming what I had recorded was exactly what we should have seen. At the time, I took his word for it, and it was only much later while reading Crowley that I discovered our data agreed substantially with his as well.

I suppose that upon every parade some rain must fall, provided it marches long enough, and ours was no exception. After weeks of silence, David said he needed to talk to the two of us about something we wanted. Curiously, I had no idea what it could be. The Lodge was preparing for the 1988 "Rites of Eleusis", always a time of new beginnings, high expectations, dread and confusion. David was *Magister Templi* that year, in the "Rite of Saturn", and meeting with him in private, we were informed that he would like us to participate as "Probationers". He also said our interest in the A.:A.: had been considered, and we were to be accepted as Students, Crowley's term for those in the outermost circle of that initiatory body. But, he added, rather apologetically and without making eye-contact, "the Sanhedrin has decided" that it was impossible for us to undertake this work together, and that we were to be tutored by separate persons. I was to be farmed-out to Keith Schürholz, and he himself would be overseeing Susan's studies. I was deeply and profoundly troubled, to say the very least, and it is no exaggeration to say I never fully recovered.

This turn of events disturbed me for several reasons. First and foremost was that to the best of my knowledge, Susan had expressed no such interest. I had approached David myself, for myself. His assumption was valid, I suppose, but it was mistaken, and I expected better of him and his superiors. In light of this, I thought then—and still feel today—that innocent or not, it was remarkably poor form. My interest in the

A.:A.: was wholly centered on David, and his involvement. I saw no one else that I suspected of being a part of that body whom I wished to associate myself in such a capacity. I thought the world and all of Keith, and had great respect for him and his skills as an occultist, but his interests were not equivalent to my own. But by far the darkest of my suspicions was that David had designs on Susan, either sexually or magically, or both, and worse still, that the A.:A.:, despite my fervent hopes to the contrary, was just another bunch of clowns in funny robes. Keith assured me that the latter was indeed the case, and sympathized with me wholeheartedly, even praising me for taking it better than he would himself under similar circumstances. This was cold consolation for me, and my doubt and distrust grew steadily in the dark recesses of my mind until it began to drive a wedge between Susan and myself, one which would eventually tear us apart. I continued with the curriculum of Student, as I had been doing for quite some time, but began to question, seriously, the need for formal courses of study and initiatory hierarchies.

To those of you that have suffered patiently through this my painting of the backdrop for this drama I offer my sincere thanks, and apologize for taking so long. For we have come at last to the opening act, and as the curtain rises, we find our illustrious cast discussing a proposal. Clay Holden, a Man and a Brother of Santa Cruz, California, had approached Mr Jones with an interest in Enochian studies, and in the ensuing discussion, it was decided that David would provide a demonstration of how it was done in practice. He and the CES would take Holden and his associates into the 22<sup>nd</sup> Æthyr, an exercise David jokingly referred to as *Enochian D&D*—with deliberate reference to that particular role playing game. The date is 5 March, 1989, the place Thelema Lodge, and David is asking me and Susan to participate, she as skryer and myself as one of the operatives in some unspecified capacity. Of course we jumped at the chance, and a date was set for 15 April.

On 1 April '89, I received my 1<sup>o</sup> initiation on a cool, drizzly day in Bill Heidrick's basement in San Rafael. I was reluctant to go through with it, but felt that I should at least join the group that I felt had contributed so much to my development, one which at that time I had no intention of leaving. I had a great time, all in all, mostly because I got to spend nearly the entire day with Bill. A few folks didn't care for him personally, as he could be—how shall I say it—long winded. The guys in New York Grand Lodge were said to be terrified of him, but many members I knew were quite fond of our "Uncle Bill", myself included.

Bill's house was an unassuming, red brick, ranch-style affair, and looked perfectly ordinary from the outside. The inside was a little different. It had seven rooms, and he had painted each one a different color, each representing a different planetary sphere. The living room was blue of course, and was dominated by a huge, black sofa from which Bill surveyed the world. I sat there that day like a child, listening to him hold forth on just about any subject you could imagine. There were similarities in our respective childhoods, and we sat and swapped stories about what it was like, growing up in town and spending weekends and holidays on our respective family's farms. He even showed me an old photo album, with pictures of his grandparent's place, complete with faded black-and-white photos of old agricultural equipment, pulled by multi-horse teams.

We feasted, after the initiations were over, on curried goat, bought especially for the occasion from some Jamaican establishment. I thought it was surprisingly good, though possibly because I hadn't eaten for many hours. Bill abstained, preferring his Denny Moore Beef Stew, fresh from the tin. This was my first time at Bill's house, and I was both thrilled and honored by the experience. Thankfully, it was not my last, and if I have any regrets about the time I spent with the Caliphate, it was that I didn't go see him more often. Apparently, he was surprisingly open to such visits. It was required that one phone ahead, of course, but many of us in the area enjoyed a standing invitation to call. His status and various titles within the Order seemed so pompous, making him seem somehow unapproachable. In reality, he wasn't that way at all.

Two weeks later, 15 April arrived, with much attendant expectation and little definite idea as to what might be the result. Susan and I packed up our newly fashioned robes of black raw silk and headed south on California Rt 17 for Santa Cruz, leaving behind us as we did the crowds and congestion of the Silicon Valley. The area southwest of the San Francisco Bay, where our Mountain View apartment was located, had once been covered in citrus groves before yielding to the sterile fields of our modern world, and had suffered development into the archipelago of obsessively manicured lawns in a shimmering sea of pavement it is today. Our highway wound us to the top of the mountains that wall the area, up to the cool brightness high above the Pacific Ocean, and down again to Santa Cruz far below. From the heights above the town you could see the Monterey Trench, a submarine abyss that snakes its way from the deep and into the bay, like a river of ink in an expanse of green and blue.

We met Clay Holden, by prior arrangement, at a café downtown, and followed him to an apartment in a small, multi-unit complex on Seabright Avenue. David was there, presenting himself with a calm confidence that only slipped momentarily when he took us aside, and said, “Remember, no martyrs! *Okay?*” his eyes shifting from one of our faces to the other. “If things go wrong, head for a door, or a window, and don’t look back.” I agreed, but was left deeply puzzled by what he could possibly have feared.

Holden introduced us to his girlfriend April, a student at the University of California at Santa Cruz [UCSC], petite and chestnut brown, in dreadlocks and wire-rimmed glasses. Aside from Jones, who acted as ring master and called PARAOAN, a Governor of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Æthyr, the ceremonial team included Susan as skryer, John Golding, and myself. Golding was a carpenter, who had relocated to Oakland from Louisiana, and a Golden Dawn ceremonialist. He and I, along with another associate from the CES, performed the “square workings” used to invoke two of the three canonical Governors of the 22<sup>nd</sup>, myself calling LAXDIZI, presumed to be a mysterious fourth. Golding also doubled as scribe for the evening. Laura Chandler and her partner from the Lodge were also present, and others from there whom I’ve doubtless neglected to mention, along with several friends and associates of Clay and April. The demonstration was a whopping success, and came off without incident. The ritual proper stretched on for a couple of hours, while we “worked” the system in a largely traditional fashion. There was concern going in that the attention of so many might wander, during the long skrying session that followed, and thus interfere with our focus. Surprisingly, this was not a problem, as everyone in attendance appeared riveted throughout. There was a tense moment when David asked the skryer to move closer to a representation of the *Mysterious Seven-fold Table*, and the skryer immediately went into a dhyanic state, going off like a pinball machine. She was fine—more like ecstatic, really—and David and I knew this, having seen it before, but the rest in the room that night were more than a little shaken. He lit a cigarette when he saw them grow tense, though the room was assumed to be “smoke free”, and they calmed down immediately. I had heard of the soothing effect of tobacco smoke on falcons, but had never before seen it work on humans. None of us knew what to expect going in, as none of us had ever tried to take a group of any size into an æthyr before, at least not in such a fully developed form.

### III

RITE, *n.* A religious or semi-religious ceremony fixed by law, precept or custom, with the essential oil of sincerity carefully squeezed out of it.

AMBROSE BIERCE, THE DEVIL'S DICTIONARY

Susan and I attended Mass nearly every Sunday evening for about two years, usually contributing a case of beer to the social preceding the service. Even with their ups and downs, these were dearly cherished hours of fellowship, and over time, what was originally a mere gathering with friends came gradually to acquire a deep religious significance for us both. We enjoyed attending Mass, more so with each passing week, and came to accept it as an integral part of our lives. As in so many adoptive communities, regularity in attendance often leads to increased participation. In the Fall of 1988, I first participated in a Mass of the *Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica* [the “Gnostic Catholic Church”, or EGC], fulfilling the office of Inner Guard. In December of that same year, I was Deacon for David and Caitlin, and shortly before the vernal equinox in 1989, my wife and I were baptized into the EGC by Mordecai Shapiro, a Bishop in the Church, and a Brother of relatively high degree in the Caliphate.

It followed, naturally, that sooner or later we would fulfill the offices of Priestess and Priest, and on 14 May, 1989, Laura Chandler informed me she had just signed us up to do so. I just smiled stupidly—angelically—and said, “Great”. She went on to explain she wanted to be Priestess in some future Mass with me, and felt that it would be improper if Susan and I had not done so together first. For that I had no response at all, as my brain had just shut down and taken my cardiopulmonary functions with it, seemingly for good.

Laura was one of the most beautiful young women I had ever known, so much so that from the first time I laid eyes on her, despite being nearly ten years her senior, it was much easier to simply do whatever she asked—without question—rather than risk eternal damnation in some struggle for my mortal soul. Jones and I, when comparing notes much later, discovered we had this weakness in common. He had not been nearly so lucky, and developed a stormy relationship with this grey-eyed goddess, one which nearly drove him insane. My most vivid memory of her is also one of my earliest, from a time soon after her arrival at Thelema Lodge from New Orleans. It was the 1988

“Rite of Luna”, David was “Satyr” for the pageant, and Laura was “Nymph”. At one point in the festivities, she was crawling slowly across the floor towards me, while he vigorously lashed her upturned butt with a belt. I was held in that gorgonian stare of hers, like some beast caught in the headlights of an oncoming truck, saved only by her mercifully swerving aside. The first time David had met her, he sat down at her feet in a trance, and from that moment onward was locked in a bhakti from which there seemed no escape, however violently he struggled to free himself. He confided in me that my solution, that of serving her will without succumbing to her ample charm, was by far the better choice.

Word spread quickly about the success in Santa Cruz, and came to take on greater significance than any of us had imagined. The transcript of Golding’s record had gone round and was the talk of the Lodge, as was Susan, and myself to some more limited extent. She was now recognized as a *skryer*, of exceptional talent, and I as an *Enochian Mage*—Caitlin’s oft used term. Both of us were even more strongly associated with David and the CES. It was only a matter of time before those of higher political status saw the advantages of successful group working, and the public acclaim it obviously bestowed. Consequently, it came as no great surprise when the first politically charged event, divisive enough to catch our attention as such, began on 15 June, shortly before the summer solstice of 1989. Mordecai Shapiro approached me and Susan about doing some “work” for him, offering no details other than the date. I’d never seen him betray any inclination or talent for ceremonial work before. It seemed obvious that Shapiro—or one of his superiors—was envious of the fame that had spread regarding the *Enochian D&D* session in Santa Cruz.

Mordecai also approached a friend of mine with the same proposition, a skryer of no mean skill with whom I had worked before. He was more forthcoming in this discussion, and confided to my friend his intent to indulge in some formal Goëtic evocation. The fellow later told me he would do it only under the condition that I be there, “to back him up”. To skry is by definition to put oneself in a rather passive position, and his hesitation to place his wellbeing in the hands of a dilettante like Shapiro was entirely reasonable. He further suggested that Mordecai was motivated by vanity, pure and simple. Susan agreed, and so the decision of all rested with me. I said hell no, desiring no part of it. If Shapiro wanted to take up ceremonial magick, he could do the work himself. The skryer told me the demon under consideration was *Bael*, which he considered to be a mistake, thinking *Furcas* a much better choice. My

friend reasoned that since *Bael* held the rank of “King” in the infernal hierarchy, that particular spirit would be more likely to take offense at being summoned for sport, and would in any case be far more difficult to constrain to the operator’s will. Moreover, his seal must be made of gold, and it was thought highly unlikely that Shapiro would actually go to the trouble and expense of acquiring a sufficient quantity of that metal. By contrast, *Furcas* was but a “Knight”—the only one of all the seventy-two—and his seal was to be constructed of lead, obviously much cheaper and easier to obtain. By choosing to call this spirit instead, the operation could be performed by the book, but with a minimum of effort.

I broke the news to Mordecai at the following Mass, that sadly, we would be forced to decline his offer. He took it politely, but was rather cool towards me thereafter. A week later, I got a report from Keith Schürholz on how it all turned out.

When Shapiro struck-out with both skryers, he turned to David, who suggested a technique seldom seen in these latter days: trance mediumship. He volunteered to sit in the “Triangle of Art”, while our would-be Faustus and company evoked a certain demon into Jones, one with whom the medium enjoyed a certain familiarity. Mordecai accepted his offer, rather than face certain humiliation. The ceremony took place as planned, and was apparently—at least from a technical aspect—a success. Keith said he intervened only when the medium—or at least his body—had left the Triangle, located an aerosol can of ether, and proceeded to spray it upon his own bare skin, and set it alight. When the operator just stood there, saying, “Uh, David, I think you shouldn’t do that. Could you get back in the Triangle?” Keith grabbed the sword away from the unfortunate, and commanded “Mr Jones” to cease and desist, and repair himself at once to his proper station. Apparently, the demon was then properly banished, and that was the end of it.

Jones confided to me, some time later, how stupidly they had all behaved, and how surprisingly indulgent the demon in question had been. They had wanted to know who would win the World Series that year, and when given what later proved to be the correct answer, they did not know enough about either baseball or betting on sporting events to properly interpret the response. Finding themselves at a loss, they demanded he deliver the answer at once, and stop evading their questions. David was personally very surprised that the whole affair did not turn uglier than it did.

Two weeks after Mordecai’s technical success, in the late afternoon of 16 July, 1989, we arrived at Thelema Lodge prepared to be Priest and Priestess in the Mass that

evening. After last minute car trouble and many hours of rehearsing and coaching earlier that week, from Caitlin, our Deacon, the moment had come at last. When all was prepared, she lifted the curtain that covered the doorway of the Temple, crying, "*Procol, O Procol este profani*", while I stood shaking in my shift in the plywood tomb, sweating and terrified. But by the power of iron I arose and came forth at Susan's command, and all went remarkably well from that point onward, if I do say so myself. She had not looked as beautiful on the day I married her, and on that occasion she was gorgeous—a little tipsy perhaps, but still gorgeous just the same. We played to a packed house of friends and compatriots, and it was a sublime and moving ceremony. As all assembled were advancing to the altar, one at a time to commune, Mordecai Shapiro came forward in his turn, leering like a madman at Caitlin and ourselves, and when handed his goblet of wine, poured it over his head and left the Temple. It was an act as shocking as it was mysterious, and at the time I had no clue as to why.

When all those in attendance had received communion, but before I bestowed my benediction, Caitlin stepped forward, called for their attention, and proceeded, as a Bishop of the Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica, to ordain us, Priest and Priestess. She had informed me of her intention earlier that week, and seemed at the time curiously resolved to do so.

It was a wonderful ending, at least for Caitlin, myself, and most of the congregation. But not for Susan, as her ordination had come as a complete surprise, and she was more than a little put out. The oversight was my fault, I suppose, or at any rate she blamed me for not telling her in advance, and this fact speaks volumes about her, and our relationship together. Caitlin had told me in private, and I *assumed* she had told Susan, and if not, I honestly believed it would be a pleasant surprise. Caitlin had ordained us because she wanted to recognize our dedication to the Church in general, and the effort expended in preparing for this Mass in particular. Rare were those individuals, either Priest or Priestess, who essentially recited their part from memory, and we had done precisely that. Apparently, the ecclesiastic hierarchy did not think these were sufficient grounds for elevation to such an office, and Caitlin's well intentioned act led to a series of reforms pronounced from on high, reactions and yet further reforms, that culminated in the rash of Wandering Bishops that sprang-up a year later, and Bill Breeze's consolidation and concentration in himself of temporal and ecclesiastical power within the Order. But of all this, and its consequences, I knew nothing at the time.

I do not at this late date recall exactly when they took place, but that reforms were enacted in the Church by Breeze is a matter of public record. In less than a year from the night Mordecai stormed out of Horus Temple, the Mass, *Liber XV*, was made official, and any deviation from the norm could no longer be labeled “the Gnostic Mass”. This came as a slap in the face to many of us at Thelema Lodge, robbing us of the freedom to alter the Mass as need arose, using the Mass to further our work, and the proud claim we had enjoyed that the Gnostic Mass was held every week. There were apparently changes made in who could and could not become officially recognized Clergy in the EGC as well. The result was that excepting certain special occasions, I increasingly abstained from attending Mass, as did Susan. Following Jones’s example, we were very conservative in our interpretation of the sacrament, and what liberties we were prepared to take with the accepted ceremony. This was not true of all Mass teams, and though respecting their discretion, we often declined to participate. This was a major shift in attitude on our part, and its consequences can not be overstated.

## IV

On 9 August 1989, the phone rang with a message for Susan and me, on behalf of Mr Jones: Jim Graeb was now officially banned from Thelema Lodge. Despite the fact Jim had been Master there himself some years before, the only surprise this news held for us was just how long it had taken. He had been one of the “original IX<sup>o</sup>s” of the Caliphate, and was said to have been a lawyer at some time or another, though I was also led to believe he no longer practiced, for whatever reason. Graeb made his first impression on me at the Lodge, where I entered a room once, and found him making time with Susan, chatting her up with oily smiles and practiced charm. She greeted me, and when I was introduced as her husband, he casually proceeded to offer the two of us the IX<sup>o</sup>. Needless to say, I betrayed no interest in his seemingly gracious proposition.

Jim had a girlfriend named Trina, whom Caitlyn gleefully called “the Destroyer”, though precisely why she never said, and to look at the woman, there seemed precious little reason to ask. One of the more deplorable attempts at a religious service I had ever seen was Jim and Trina celebrating Mass, one unfortunate night in Oakland. Graeb appeared to be drunk, if his faltering speech and swaying stance were any indication, so drunk in fact he could barely stumble through reading his lines, pausing and cursing in mid-sentence while squinting at his script. But to give the man credit, remembering her mountain of quivering flesh perched daintily upon the altar, bare-ass naked, I would have to have been hammered myself.

An ongoing fight between Graeb and Trina on the one hand, and near everyone else on the other, would soon develop into an attempt to destroy the Lodge itself, less than a month after Jim was banned. It seems by this time the two were no longer together, and Trina’s neighbor, someone who was vaguely associated with Jones, obtained a restraining order against Trina’s new boyfriend, one who himself had been banned less than two years before. This petty squabble led to a chain of events that would result in Thelema Lodge being raided by the Berkeley police.

Five days after receiving David’s message, we attended “Jurgen Mass”, a loose interpretation based on the James Branch Cabell novel of the same name. It was the first time we had gone to Oakland in the four weeks since our Mass together, and we were very warmly received. Afterwards, we sat around drinking rum and smoking cigars

with David, discussing the possibility of using Susan's skills as a microbiologist to set up an AIDS research facility in Haiti. Jones had taken a curious interest in *voudou*, after being introduced to William Gibson's *Neuromancer* trilogy, by a young student named John Oberon. Over the months to come, Oberon would figure prominently in several of our magical activities. He was a computer science major, a programmer, rumored to be a hacker, and known to be a fine keyboardist, with extraordinary talent in both modes of expression.

We returned the following week for an "orthodox" Mass, performed by the late Ebony Anpu, and though we were in the building, my wife and I did not attend. Our abstention was not intended as a slight by any means, as we both liked Ebony personally and respected him as well, and due to his reputation as a ceremonialist, his performance was eagerly anticipated by all. For no particular reason, we chose instead to sit in the library, with Keith and David, discussing, among other things, finding a way of attributing the elements to the *servient squares* of the Watchtowers, one superior and more intuitive than that inherited from the Golden Dawn. I became inexplicably ill during the Mass, and did not feel the slightest bit better until Susan had driven us twenty miles to the south, away from the Lodge and half of the way home. I did not at the time consider the possibility that the Lodge was even then under attack, and only now reading my journal entries in retrospect does the connection appear obvious.

At home in our duplex apartment in Mountain View, I set to work finding a more serviceable set of attributions for the squares. Throwing myself into the task posed little difficulty. I was eager to free Enochian as much as possible from the Golden Dawn tradition, and three days after the discussion, I had what I felt was a workable system in hand. Unfortunately, so did Susan, and when we presented both to David on the following Sunday, he chose hers as best meeting the criteria he had privately set for an acceptable solution. I was crestfallen, but proceeded to apply myself to yet another task, this time a search for a comparable set of attributions for the *cherubic squares*.

I had only been studying and applying Enochian magick in earnest for a year or so, very much still in the blush of a new found field, and perhaps that explains why I had developed such definite ideas about how it should—and should not—be practiced. Such prejudice seems commonplace in the newcomer. Keith once said to me, in the hushed yet insistent tone of one who is certain they are conveying the profound, that the revelation of St John the Divine is the genetic material of the New Testament, the genotype to which Christianity owes its existence, and from which it is unable to

wholly distance itself, however arcane and disturbing its imagery might appear to most modern believers. He compared the Bible to a spermatozoon, propelling itself through history, with *Revelation* as its “head”, its precious cargo and reason for being. Enochian magick, as received and developed by John Dee, is fundamentally intertwined with that apocalyptic vision, drawing many of its ideas and images from that text.

Keith’s image of *Apocalypse*, however appropriate it might be, is certainly true of Enochian with respect to the Golden Dawn. Dee’s system is the seminal idea informing that late nineteenth century effort to create a functioning magical group. Most of the Golden Dawn’s teachings are in one way or another ultimately brought to culmination in “The Concourse of the Forces”, the Inner Order’s elucidation of Enochian magick. Those who wrote the initiation rituals of the “Elemental Grades” employed the Watchtowers singly to erect their Temples and prepare the space for the admission of the candidate, and collectively they were used to consecrate the “Vault of the Adepts” itself.

I had learned this much at an early stage. When I asked him how to begin studying ceremonial work, David had suggested I compare Regardie’s *Ceremonial Magic* with the Golden Dawn rituals, paying particular attention to how source materials were adapted and developed in each case. Anyone who undertakes this exercise may prove for themselves how inextricably bound that order was to the work of John Dee and Edward Kelly. By this time in my newly fledged magical career, after studying the Enochian source materials through Casaubon’s *A True and Faithful*, James’s *Enochian Evocation of Dr John Dee*, and in photocopies of the relevant manuscripts found in the British Museum, I had come to understand just how little Mathers and Westcott had understood the system. While it is true they accomplished a phenomenal amount with what little they knew, this does not change the fact that some of their interpretations and elaborations were questionable, to say the least. This knowledge was fertile ground for the dark doubts I then held about the validity of the A.:A.:, and every other claimant to the Golden Dawn tradition. Enochian, to my mind, and I believe David’s as well, had taken on a decidedly revolutionary flavor, and to state the simple facts of the subject was itself an act of rebellion.

As the summer of ’89 drew to a close, a sense of foreboding crept into my life, a feeling that something loomed unseen in my world, menacing my otherwise stable existence. Susan and I had planned to attend a concert with friends on 30 September, but when the day arrived, I became extremely agitated, refusing to go at the last

minute. After I had calmed down somewhat, we received a telephone call from Keith Schürholz, one we would have otherwise missed had we gone to see the Grateful Dead as originally intended. He told us the Lodge had been raided the night before, and most everyone we knew in Oakland had been arrested by the Berkeley police. We were stunned, but forewarned is forearmed, as they say, and with wild thoughts of being next on the local constabulary's agenda, the two of us immediately sought an oracle, receiving hexagram 33, "Retreat", moving to 36, "Darkening of the Light". After careful consideration, we decided to best apply this sage advice by opening the Watchtower of Earth, and laying low for the time being. Our hapless friends to the north had no such option. David was Lodge Master by this time, and he later told me that when the police arrived at his door, he had asked to see the warrant authorizing the search, as was his legal right. By way of response, he was handcuffed, thrown down a flight of stairs, and the paper derisively thrust in his face.

Three days after the raid, we were served with a thirty-day notice to vacate our apartment. I summoned the six Seniors of Earth, looking for answers, and they came the next day in yet another telephone call from Keith. He explained that Trina's boyfriend had asked Jones for protection, and when the restraining order was obtained against him back in August, he and Trina had retaliated against the Lodge. On 17 October, in the midst of all our troubles, the Bay Area was rocked by the Loma Prieta earthquake, measuring a bone-jarring 7.1 on the Richter scale. Sitting in our apartment that night, listening to the radio by candle light and straining for sign of the next aftershock, the world we knew appeared to be coming apart at the seams.

It wasn't really coming apart, and despite trials and tribulations, life went on, for us as well as those at the Lodge. On 19 November, we journeyed there on a Sunday evening, despite a failing transmission in our automobile, discovered en route as fifth gear failed, followed soon by fourth. I used ANAA as a mantra, the name of an angel of transportation, and arrived safely as planned. I played chess with friends, lost and won, and it was proposed in the course of the evening that we enter the 19<sup>th</sup> Æthyr, POP, at the end of the month. Every year, alone or in groups, many of those associated with the CES would read aloud the "Vision and the Voice thereof" for each æthyr, on the day of the year upon which it was first received by Crowley in 1909. The 20<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> fall on 30 November, and this year, David Jones and John Oberon were opening each æthyr in turn, in the same sequence and on the same day of the year as had Crowley. It was what is affectionately known, after the late Roger Zelazny, as a "hell ride".

They wanted me and Susan to participate, and expressed hope that her skrying skills would make this attempt successful where previous efforts had failed. I was not at all keen on the idea, but characteristically raised little if any objection at the time. It is not a peculiarly pleasant space by any means, so much so that it would necessitate opening the 18<sup>th</sup> at home ourselves, on 1 December. There is no known means of banishing an æthyr once opened, the only remedy being to move on to another. David described the 19<sup>th</sup> as much like ZAX, the 10<sup>th</sup> Æthyr. It largely involves the facing of one's worst fear, save only in POP one still has a choice; in ZAX, there is no hope of avoiding the nightmare. Susan, however, was willing and perhaps even eager for the experience. I resented this to some extent, and it generated much friction between us in the days ahead.

On the evening of 28 November, after a pleasantly prosaic evening together, Susan and I robed and entered our Temple. As she sat in the east with our flawless crystalline sphere before her, I performed the Lesser Banishing Rituals of the Pentagram and Hexagram, purifying the ritual space with water and consecrating it with fire and the appropriate words. I then rehearsed a rectified version of the "Fundamental Obeisance" of John Dee, parted the Veil, and recited the First and Second Enochian Keys, with the gestures and pentagrams associated with each. All this while Susan was observing the effects in the crystal, and after I read the Call of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Æthyr, and summoned PAROAN, she began in that almost mechanical voice of hers, "There was this naked female figure kneeling. It's very vague. Now it's got shadows coming across. . . There's, like, this series of buildings, they're sort of gold. . . gold and black. . . Then on the face of them, in the middle of it, there's a figure. It's got a beac. . . a gold beacon. . . standing in the doorway, holding the beacon above its head, arms forming an opening. It went to blackness, and it came back. The buildings have sort of a courtyard. . . towers. . . I see three. They go all around, three on each side. It's wearing gold and its arms are folded." And so it went for an hour, perhaps more. The remainder of the information received was largely of a personal nature, in response to my questions, and neither of us were disappointed by the results.

I sat on the train to San Francisco, when 30 November arrived, gazing at the setting sun while Susan read aloud for us "The Cry of the 20<sup>th</sup> Æthyr, which is called LIN". We were met at Keith's apartment on Haight Street by David and Oberon, and together we attempted to enter the 19<sup>th</sup> Æthyr, much as my wife and I had opened the 22<sup>nd</sup> two days earlier, on the eightieth anniversary of Crowley's having done so in 1909. David

“directed traffic” and I recorded the proceedings in my journal, while Susan, Keith and Oberon skryed. Our best efforts, though so far as we knew technically correct, met with failure. It became apparent that the guardian or guardians of the place remained unsatisfied, and after consulting the Goëtic spirit *Gaap*, we retreated and stayed ourselves in the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

We determined through enquiries put to the entities contacted that our approach to the 19<sup>th</sup> Æthyr was too “heavy”, for want of a better word, bringing to bear forces too great on what was revealed to be a surprisingly delicate task, that of easing into the nightmare world of the Abyss. We slept that night on the floor of that decrepit, one room apartment in the Haight, now become a gateway we had yet to close, and the next morning resolved to remain in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Æthyr for the time being. I was fine, to all appearances, when Susan and I left for our home in Mountain View, but in the days following I was left shattered and staggering as my world fragmented around me, and I along with it. Three days after our opus in the Haight, my wife and I had a big fight, and she asked me to leave. I didn’t, and it seemed to blow over, but my journal entries of the time, typically recording the spiritual and mundane minutiae of my life in great detail, are fragmented for days following our return, sometimes not even recording so much as the date for a given event.

Like most who for whatever reason find their way to the weird sciences, I had brought along much baggage from my past, issues and their tensions in my character as yet unresolved. The grueling regimen of yoga and ceremonial work to which I was then subjecting myself was inexorably amplifying each and every flaw in my personality, as should be expected. Though still capable of composing myself and dealing with the real world, I was nonetheless coming apart. In the career of the magician, when they reach that pinnacle of accomplishment and face the outermost Abyss, it is assumed they will be able to make a cautious and judicious approach before allowing all that they have, and all they’ve become, to be ripped away, as they are flung helpless into the Deep. I was young, and rash, and simply could not see that for all the care I took in avoiding disaster, the things that I had set myself to study, and to attempt, would lead me to face the destruction of my life as I then understood it.

I was driven to increasing levels of sexual frustration, made all the more crippling by my reluctance to harness such energies in service to my Enochian work, and my conviction that somehow failing to do so, violating the principles of “chastity” as I then understood them, would lead to some imagined magical hell and damnation, vaguely

modeled on that learned as a child. Moreover, I was deeply terrified of losing Susan. Jones had told me that as a result of his involvement with the spirits, Dee had lost his wife to Edward Kelly, when they ran off together, and left the old wizard alone. I became convinced a similar fate awaited me. It was only recently, upon finally reading Dee's personal diaries for myself, that I learned Jones's assertion was utter rubbish. Jack Parsons appears to have thought this story to be true as well, for reasons unknown, and I now suspect that it was from Jack's letters to Marjorie Cameron that Jones had come to accept this myth as fact. But at the time, I trusted David's knowledge of the material without question, and suffered accordingly.

By January, I was openly questioning the validity of the Caliphate, steadfastly refusing to seek advancement beyond the 1<sup>o</sup>, yet still very much involved in affairs at Thelema Lodge. On 3 February, I awoke from a dream of "156". I had no idea what it meant at the time. Later, on the night of 8 March, I dreamt of a fierce battle, one both physical and magical. My wife and I were involved, as was most everyone we knew in the Caliphate. At some point I escaped alone, and sent a locomotive packed with explosives back into the fray, resulting in general devastation and heavy casualties on all sides. Even in my dreams, I was breaking with the Order, yet refusing to just simply walk away. Susan and I were fighting almost continuously by this time, mostly over our involvement with the A.:A.:, only gaining some respite when she agreed to postpone her further pursuit of the matter until after I had completed my Probation. In retrospect, it is clear that I no longer entertained any desire to proceed even that far, though what I believed at the time is no longer clear.

## V

The student, if he attains any success in the following practices, will find himself confronted by things (ideas or beings) too glorious or too dreadful to be described. It is essential that he remain the master of all that he beholds, hears, or conceives; otherwise he will be the slave of illusion and the prey of madness.

ALEISTER CROWLEY, LIBER O VEL MANUS ET SAGITTÆ

As part of the celebration of the vernal equinox at Thelema that spring of 1990, David, Susan, and myself opened the 22<sup>nd</sup> Æthyr yet again. Jones had developed an interest in Mayan calendrics, and had discovered that the first of the eighteen “months” of their year had been called *Pop*, same as the 19<sup>th</sup> Æthyr, which we had failed to open the previous November. By his calculations, the first day of the new year, *O Pop*, coincided with new moon on 26 March. The opportunity was too good to pass up, and it was decided that we should attempt once more to gain entrance to the æthyr on that date. This time would not be a small closed affair as it was in the Haight, but a group effort involving several people, Clay Holden among them. The 19<sup>th</sup> was important, not just to us as a goal that had frustrated our previous effort, but because it was here that the *Holy Table* was commended to Crowley for further study in 1909, as recorded in *The Vision and the Voice*. It was this mysterious aspect that had roused Clay’s interest. Such curiosity may easily be forgiven, even lauded, but a little serious forethought about what the satisfaction of that curiosity might entail would have better prepared him for the experience. Susan, David, Oberon, and myself knew full well this was not going to be easy, and though Holden was present when we discussed the difficulties involved, what was said never seems to have made an impression.

In preparation for the proposed operation, what in many ways was to be our most ambitious yet, Susan and I opened the 21<sup>st</sup> Æthyr on 23 April, followed by the 20<sup>th</sup> Æthyr the day after that. Stung by our failure in November, we were very keen to expend every possible effort in making this latest attempt a success. In keeping with the spirit of restoring Enochian evocation to its original form as recorded by Dee, freed as much as possible of the excrescences of the Golden Dawn and other latter-day interpretations, we were now using a different method to summon the Governors of a given æthyr than that used in Santa Cruz the year before. The “square working” technique was abandoned altogether, and in its place we began using the method suggested to

Dee by the angels themselves. Each Governor has one of twelve angels set over them, which in turn are associated with one of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. These angels are mentioned in *Revelation*, in St John the Divine's vision of the New Jerusalem. Ruling over each of these is one of the seven archangels, the seven that stand in the divine presence, the letters of whose names are found in the outermost heptagon of the *Sigillum Dei Æmeth*.

Dee had used the works of Cornelius Agrippa as a near constant guide in interpreting the material presented to him. Following his example, the particular sign of the Zodiac associated with the angel set over a given Governor, and thus the planetary ruler and archangel of each, was determined by cross-referencing the name of the tribe given in Dee's *Liber Scientiæ, Auxilii, et Victoriæ Terrestris* with that found in Agrippa. In November, we had learned our original approach had been too heavy, too material. This latest technique, using time and space instead of the elements to summon the Governors, seemed exactly what was needed.

Back in February, I had been asked to banish the planets before Mass at the Lodge. Despite having some time to prepare myself in advance of the ceremony, I found myself utterly incapable of doing so, suffering a near nervous collapse when faced with the fact I was incapable of meeting David's expectations. My work to date had centered primarily on the Watchtowers, neglecting planetary forms of magick altogether. Since then, my time was spent learning and perfecting this new skill, studying the process in depth, along with the intricacies of Dee and Kelly's *Sigillum Dei Æmeth*, and the system of planetary hours. Under Jones's instruction, I was departing rather radically from the traditional Golden Dawn methods. Initiates of the Inner Order were taught to simply face the quarter in which the planet being invoked or banished was then located when drawing the appropriate symbols and vibrating the associated names, and this was deemed sufficient. Crowley was silent on the matter in his *Liber O*, but in *Liber IOD*, he instructed the Adept to "face the actual position of each planet in the heavens at the time of his working". Inspired by Dee, David was introducing a serious astronomical element into the technique, adopting this later refinement, and interpreting it strictly.

For us, it was no longer adequate to face the proper quarter and wave a sword in the general direction of the planet. We now insisted on calculating the precise altitude and azimuth for a given heavenly body at the projected time of operation. Without cheating, and using one of several widely available astronomical software packages,

it was a lot of work. But as many of us learn sooner or later, there are no expedient shortcuts in magick.

On Sunday, 25 March, I drove us to Thelema Lodge, where we spent the evening planning and preparing for the next day's ritual. Late that night, we departed Oakland for the home of John Oberon, in Orinda, a small village in the mountains east of San Francisco. Oberon had volunteered the use of his parent's home for the operation—they being away for an extended period of time—partly because he had participated in the failed attempt some months earlier, and partly because he steadfastly refused to believe there was anything we could conjure into his environment he could not handle. Arriving at that beautiful and luxurious home, perched high upon a steep hillside, I completed my calculations to fix the locations of the planets for dawn, and for new moon at 11:49 AM, Pacific Standard Time.

David and I erected a makeshift astronomical observatory on the terrace behind the house in the hours before first light, under the brilliantly glittering stars, far from the glaring street lamps of the Bay Area, using and demonstrating for the first time techniques I had developed during the previous weeks. Clay Holden was present, as was Caitlin and her then lover, John Golding, who had brought along a replica of Dee's *Holy Table* he had recently constructed. When all was in order and in place, I should have been apprehensive, but wasn't. In the days and weeks prior to the event, I had come to face most of my known fears, and looking ahead at what lay before us, a curious calm had possessed me, affording total immersion in the work at hand.

Dawn crept across the mountains to the east, and we began easing our way into the 19<sup>th</sup>. David banished, and we both read the 1<sup>st</sup> Key, he in English, and I in Enochian. After 11:00 AM, Susan and I recited Dee's "Fundamental Obeisance", which I followed by erecting a skeletal version of the Watchtowers. Holden and Anne Hanley did the 2<sup>nd</sup> Enochian Key, and Golding's *Holy Table* was moved outside, into the by now brilliant California sunlight. David banished the planets, among other things, then read the Call of the 19<sup>th</sup> Æthyr, and at its conclusion, I myself summoned all three of its Governors. What followed is rather difficult to describe, and I admit that even now the bare facts of the experience are none too easily pieced together into some semblance of a coherent narrative.

We began to wander, alone or in small groups. Observing quietly what was happening, Jones sat down and rummaged through his things, soon producing a brick of charcoal, assorted odds and ends, and what at first glance appeared to be incense.

I asked what he was doing, and he said we seemed to be having a little “possession problem”. He went on to explain that some demons, particularly those of a Saturnian nature, tended to be attracted to the smell of burning sulfur. His intent was to set some alight, and see who among us was attracted to the noxious fumes. Jones kindled the charcoal, placed upon it a small quantity of the substance, and sat back to wait. Immediately, Clay and John Golding walked over, and sat down beside him.

“David,” Golding began, with Holden looking on with an expression of serious concern even more dour than usual, “I think we have a problem”.

“You do?” he replied. The hellish fumes now drifted through the open room, yet neither of his interrogators seemed to notice.

“I believe you are possessed”, said Golding, in the grave tone usually reserved by physicians for telling a patient of their impending demise.

“Oh you do, do you?” David replied, casting an “I told you so” glance in my direction. His eyes danced, and he seemed barely capable of concealing the amused irony in his voice. There followed an argument that was to last for hours, in one form or another. It wasn’t heated by any means, as Golding was far too cold a fish for that. Passion of any kind wasn’t in him, at least in my experience. It was rather an endless repetition of “David, we have to close this down.” “No, that isn’t necessary.” “Why, David?” and assorted variations on that theme. It was maddening in the extreme, and when they failed to convince either Jones or myself, they changed fronts in their campaign, and attempted an appeal to Susan’s sensibilities instead. Neither of them was sufficiently intelligent to realize that in order to channel the space we had invoked, she was about as far *out there* as she could get, without actually speaking in tongues with her head revolving on her shoulders like a merry-go-round. The clueless duo had forgotten or never noticed the hours of preparation to which she had submitted herself, in order to create the state of quiet and passive acceptance that now possessed her.

It was odd to walk into a room, and find two earnest individuals, however out of their minds, doggedly attempting to convince one’s wife that her husband had obviously gone mad, and if she wished to save her life, she must depart with them at once. Susan looked up at me and smiled, and continued to explain in a calm voice, drenched with pity and concern, that she was in no danger, and neither were they. For my part, I eyed them both with cold contempt, tempered but slightly by the comedy of the situation. They looked at me with surprised fear at being discovered so soon and so easily, but quickly regained their composure and resumed their plea.

Was David possessed? Was I? In my journal that afternoon I wrote, “Maybe”, but sitting here with the perspective that twelve intervening years affords, I would amend that to read, “Most assuredly”. But what should one reasonably expect? The three of us—David, Susan, and myself—had expended many hours of effort over several days, pouring all we had and summoning all we could in order to accomplish what just a few months before had been essentially impossible. David had banished everything that could be banished, and I had invoked the three Governors into the void thus created. In our everyday mode of existence, we were not capable of controlling the forces and currents of the 19<sup>th</sup> Æthyr. That is the point of summoning those three whose office it is to do just that. In the hours of insanity that stretched from that afternoon long into the evening, nothing happened that either surprised or discomfited the three of us, and far from finding the situation disturbing, we seemed to be rather enjoying it. That, to my mind, is sufficient proof that our methods were sound—at least theoretically.

The extent of Golding’s experience was summoning a spirit and commanding that it do his bidding, and to the best of my knowledge, based upon his assessment of the situation, Clay’s magical background was essentially nil. His sole interest was, as I later learned, to appear more appealing in the eyes of both his girlfriend—April Dawn, who found Enochian magick increasingly sexy, and him less so with each passing day—and Susan, for whom Holden had developed a schoolboy infatuation that would last until I was safely out of the way, when she told him point blank she had no romantic interest in his aging frame whatsoever.

To his credit, Golding rallied what knowledge he had, principally of Goëtic work, and misapplying that to the present situation as best he could, attempted to reason with the demon he had convinced both himself and Clay now possessed Jones.

“What is it you want?” he asked, attempting to bribe David into closing the æthyr as soon as possible.

“Peace on Earth.”

“I can’t give you that. What do you want that I can give you?”

“Yes, you can”, David replied heatedly, “I don’t want a lot of it. Just a cube: three feet, by three feet, by three feet. One minute, of Peace on Earth at 3:33”, a time then rapidly approaching. With those words dying in the air, all hell broke lose.

Those of us who were still in possession of some shred of self-control sat in silence around the *Holy Table*, while the others shouted and argued, surging around us like some storm tossed sea of rage and fear. Needless to say, 3:33 came and went amidst a

cacophony that would wake the dead. At one point they were actually tearing at one another, wrestling on the floor, screeching and howling like banshees. Never have I seen anything like it, before or since. At some point in the free for all, Caitlin, with great fanfare, and over the protests of the others, “parted the veil”, walked out of the house, and down the mountain in search of sanctuary. It was stupid, and unfortunate, and exposed her to far more immediate dangers than any she believed she faced with us. We would learn some days later that she thumbed a ride back to Oakland, and presented herself, shaken and strung-out, at the door of Ebony Anpu. He soaked her in a tub of nitre for a while, reinforced her belief in how irresponsible we were, and thankfully set her more or less to right.

As the long afternoon faded into twilight, their efforts left them exhausted, and something approaching calm settled over the group. David, after a tarot reading, and some discussion amongst the three of us, decided enough was enough, announcing something should be done to stop this thing, to detach ourselves from whatever it was that held us in its hellish thrall. We showered, and I was dispatched to find Golding and Clay, and instruct them to bathe, a thing of utmost importance under the circumstances, to remove as much as possible any physical basis to which any lingering influences might remain attached.

I found them easily enough, still conspiring in the living room. If I have any cause for regret over that day’s events and my part in them, it is the manner in which I chose to impress upon those two the gravity of the situation, and the necessity for their following instructions. “If you value your lives”, I began, “you will go take a shower immediately”. There was probably a more tactful way of putting it, but given the day’s events and the potential danger we faced, to say nothing of the profound disregard in which I held them both by that time, it conveyed my meaning succinctly, and not without a sense of humor, or so I supposed. Clay characteristically mistook my statement as a personal threat of violence, and immediately assumed his most comically belligerent stance. Golding, just as typically, blinked twice, and asked, “Why do we have to take a shower?” There are few things quite as wearisome as attempting to satisfy the curiosity of a clod, but I maintained my composure, and refusing to participate in this latest round of pig-headed questioning, rephrased and repeated my demand until they reluctantly and suspiciously complied.

All of us newly refreshed and squeaky clean, David closed the space in the manner that we would normally have prepared to open it, by reading the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Enochian

Keys, before finally banishing using the *Star Ruby*. That night, while the others lay fast asleep, Jones, Susan, and myself sat in silence around the *Holy Table*, just as we had earlier that day, and at exactly 3:33 AM, it happened: hovering over the table, and indeed reigning all around us, Peace on Earth, or at least some limited portion of it—three feet, by three feet, by three feet, to be exact—was ours. To this day, it stands out in my mind as the most sublime of moments, a fleeting glimpse of that eternal peace which surely passeth all understanding.

By dawn, I alone remained awake, and after greeting the Sun with *Resh* out on the terrace, I roused Susan and we made our way home, collapsing until nightfall. The results of our work in Orinda came swiftly, and it took varied and surprising forms, but one consistent theme ran through them all. *Schism*, is perhaps the best way to put it, or in the language of catastrophe theory we were soon to learn, *bifurcation*. The head of the *Ancient Mystical Order Rosæ Crucis* [AMORC] went public with his belief that Dee had been instrumental in the creation of the Rosicrucian movement, in a full page magazine advertisement, and his order promptly split. Clay and April dissolved their relationship, as did others of our acquaintance soon after. A meeting was held at Thelema Lodge, while David Jones was away, between the lawyer who would bring suit against the Berkeley Police department for their raid of the Lodge some months before, and the prospective plaintiffs. In a belated attempt to appear respectable in the eyes of an outsider, a whirlwind cleaning spree was undertaken, in which some of David's personal effects, including his boots and the paperwork for his student loan, were thoughtlessly thrown away.

When David returned and discovered his loss, he went absolutely ballistic. He passionately abhorred lawyers anyway, and with Jim Graeb before him as a near constant reminder, one could hardly blame him. Jones was convinced the original guidelines of the Order, as laid down and published by Crowley, were sufficient for resolving all conflicts between Brothers, or should at the very least be deemed sufficient until fully implemented and proven otherwise. Since this was obviously a matter between himself, Graeb, Trina and the rest, it was in essence a strictly internal affair, and should be handled accordingly. Despite the fact that he had suffered at the hands of the police as much if not more so than anyone else arrested on that fateful September night, he steadfastly refused on principal to take part in any proposed legal action, especially in light of the fact that the Order was making no signs of moving against the known perpetrators of the incident. The upper echelon saw only the opportunity to vindicate

themselves in the eyes of an uncaring public, and were salivating at the prospect of having their day in court.

Some well-placed members of the Caliphate, in their rush to uphold the party line, later claimed Jones was “obviously losing his mind”, even going so far as to blame Jones’s cavalier attitude toward Trina and her machinations for the raid itself. This is hardly surprising, since at least one of these pundits benefitted greatly from the affair, assuming the role of Lodge Master after David’s departure. The simple truth is that Jones was outraged, and justifiably so, that legal action on the part of the Order was deemed more desirable than honoring the personal wishes and property of a Man and a Brother, even when that Brother was both directly involved and Master of Thelema Lodge. The toadies who bravely stepped forward to carp after the fact were obviously in no position to judge one way or the other, given that unlike myself, their knowledge of Jones’s motivations was based on rumor and hearsay, and deeply prejudiced by their relationship to those who hold their leash, to whom they owed both their sworn allegiance and their position of favor within the Order.

Though I was none the worse for my experiences in the 19<sup>th</sup>, I was certainly no better. David suggested I undertake a more formal regimen of planetary banishings in the days that followed, in order to gain more effective and practical control over my confused and frustrated emotional state. To this end, on 9 April 1990, I began an extensive series of planetary workings that would continue in one form or another for many weeks to follow. For five days running, beginning on that Monday, I opened with the rituals of the *Star Ruby* and *Star Sapphire*, and banished the seven planets in turn, plus Terra, using the appropriate unicursal hexagram and Hebrew godname, followed by an invocation of the archangel of each. This ritual was performed in one of the four hours ruled by the planet associated with that particular day, chosen such that the celestial body in question was above the horizon at the time.

On day number six, arising from an inexplicably sleepless and sweat-soaked night, I repaired to the Temple, and lit a black candle in the north. Banishing using the *Star Ruby* and *Star Sapphire* as before, I waited for Saturn’s time of transit that first Saturn hour of Saturday, and at the precise moment the planet crossed the meridian, I banished it, and invoked its archangel, *Zaphkiel*. The next day, I banished Sol and invoked *Raphael* at dawn, with a red candle in the east this time, followed by a short prayer for healing, of my tattered psyche and of my relationship with Susan. I then banished Mercury and invoked the archangel *Michael*, in the third hour, later that

same morning. My journal of the time records this fact before going silent for more than twenty-four hours, until the afternoon of Monday, 16 April. We had stopped by the house to shower and grab a bite to eat on our way to Santa Cruz, when I hastily jotted down a sketchy account of recent events.

Sunday afternoon, David had called, and asked us to meet him at *The Gates of Hell*, in the sculpture garden at Stanford University, fifteen minutes or so from our home. We arrived to find him standing before that hauntingly beautiful and massive piece, with a cigarette dangling from his lip and his perpetually disheveled and mismatched clothing flapping about him in a warm spring breeze. There, in the blazing afternoon sun, with a bronze and pensive Rodin staring down at us from high above the imposing doors of Tartarus, Jones read the 18<sup>th</sup> Enochian Key, and the Call of the 9<sup>th</sup> Æthyr, which is called ZIP. Gone now were the days of incense and robes, of tables and squares and all the accumulated detritus of traditional western ceremonial work. The world was our Temple, furnished with whatever lay readily to hand, and though the casual passer-by, observing what was done that day, would have noticed nothing especially out of the ordinary, the effect was to be nothing of the sort.

The three of us eventually journeyed across the Bay, via the Dumbarton Bridge, not far from our home, and proceeded north along twenty-two miles of the Nimitz Expressway to Oakland and Thelema Lodge. Clay was there, with news of a professor of mathematics at UCSC, who was very much interested in meeting David and the CES. We sat up late discussing the matter after Mass, and slept that night on the floor of Horus Temple. Early the following afternoon, we left for Mountain View, Santa Cruz, and the Caffè Pergolesi, at 418 Cedar St. David and his now girlfriend, Anne Hanley, had already arrived, as had Clay, and we were soon joined by Prof Ralph Abraham.

Dr Abraham is a mathematician of some note, and considered by many to be one of the fathers of modern chaos theory. Sitting at a patio table, he explained to us over cappuccinos and lattes that he had developed an interest in Dee as one of the notable mathematicians of his day. Dee's introduction to the first English edition of Euclid had prompted Abraham to acquire the three volume Dover edition of *The Elements*, the same text that David had introduced to those of us in the CES. He related how he worked through the first book with ease, as he remembered much of it from his school days. The second however, was somewhat problematic. The proofs and constructions were not that terribly dense, but it was becoming increasingly difficult to determine precisely where Euclid was headed. By the third book, however, Dr Abraham admitted

finding the math a bit overwhelming as well, and it struck him with great force that not only did men like Dee understand the geometry itself, but understood its intent as well. David explained, in his turn, how he had taken up the *Elements* because of Dee, having become convinced one could not fully understand Dee's system without it. He had reached much the same impasse, but from a different point of departure. It seemed obvious to both parties that we had each taken up opposite ends of the same thread, and following where it led, had met in the middle, here, at the Caffè Pergolesi.

It had been exactly a year and a day since we had our little *Enochian D&D* session, opening the 22<sup>nd</sup> Æthyr as a group in April's apartment. As a matter of fact, it had been a year and a day since we had met at this very café. April, Clay's ex-girlfriend, was a student at UCSC, and was now enrolled in Abraham's class on the history of mathematics, this year with some emphasis placed on the life and work of John Dee. She had told him about our demonstration, and now he was very much interested in our little group performing something similar for the benefit of his class. To say we were thrilled is an understatement, and a little intimidated as well. There was also some talk of establishing what was to be *The John Dee Society*, a non-profit enterprise set up explicitly for the publication and dissemination of the Enochian corpus, complete with potential grants to fund our efforts, and possibly to include full-time employment for one or two primaries.

Naturally, we believed that Dee should be considered one of the greater lights of his age. Most of us sitting there at 418 Cedar, David and myself included, had been studying the works and ideas of Dame Frances Yates, and her re-interpretation of Dee's contribution to history. Jones first introduced me to her books sometime the year before, fundamentally changing the way I looked at the man and his work forever. In essence, she was one of the first main-stream historians to state the obvious, that the sage of Mortlake was no fool, as history had erroneously assumed for so long. Moreover, she was also the first to note that after his passing, Rosicrucianism had sprung up like mushrooms after a warm rain, across the same swath of the Continent over which Dee and Kelly wandered for so many years. If she is correct—and I for one believe she is—then it casts their mission on behalf of God and His divine purpose in a decidedly different light. Her research appeared solid and well received by the academic community, and therefore provided ample justification for our belief that to study Dee and his Enochian system was to study not only one of the seminal influences on the development of Hermetic thought, but the origins of most modern occult societies as

well, esoteric Freemasonry and the OTO included. As you will soon see, our enthusiasm was not shared in all quarters among our peers.

Later that afternoon, as we sat at Orbit One, the Caliphate encampment that was the apartment of April Dawn, we discussed the day's events and their apparent import, basking in the glow of our success and good fortune. David and I seemed to be of like mind. We kept rubbing our eyes and blinking, attempting to determine if what appeared to have formed around us was real, or just a product of our hopeful imagination. It seemed solid enough, however many ways we squinted at what was happening, and on the strength of that observation we agreed to pursue this thing, imaginary or not, as far as it might take us. All was in place to accomplish something of lasting and meaningful value with respect to our work. In Orbit One, we had a group of manageable size, which was willing and dedicated to pursue Enochian research, mercifully free from the politics, infighting, and petty intrigues that had come to characterize life at Thelema Lodge. Until now, David's work had been published as monthly installments in the Thelema Lodge newsletter. It was solid scholarly research, the beginnings of a detailed transcription and analysis of the Dee material, starting with *Liber Primus* of the *Mysteriorum Libri*. Now, after talking with Dr Abraham, we were looking at the possibility of wider exposure and an air of legitimacy, in a climate that welcomed and accepted our efforts. It was an alluring prospect, unsought, yet most desirable now that it presented itself.

After an excitedly sleepless night, in which April and myself banished Luna and invoked Gabriel in the tenth hour, David and I found ourselves in the front row with the others from Orbit One, attending Prof Abraham's lecture. After Jones was introduced to the class, he allowed himself a quick look around the auditorium. Suddenly, he sucked air, and sliding down in his seat hissed to me that two of our weightier brethren were sitting at the back of the hall. When the lecture concluded, I glanced into the crowd behind us, and indeed they were, staring icy daggers in our direction as they stood to leave. But before I could say anything to David, he had thrown himself at the stage door, and without so much as a backward glance he was gone, fast as a brisk walk could take him. It is difficult to say which surprised and confused me the most, but not allowing either to get the better of me, I caught up before he had crossed the pavement outside. That they were there at all was puzzling, but not as much as Jones's sprint to place as much distance between us and them as possible. He apparently knew what it meant, something best avoided, but that realization for me was yet to come.

Our Brothers, the ones that had frightened him so, had seats in the “by invitation only” section of the Caliphate, as did Jones himself. Both had made scholarly contributions to the Order’s work in the past, so at first glance, it might have seemed reasonable these two heavies should attend Abraham’s class. Obviously, Jones’s behavior suggested otherwise. There are two possible reasons why he bolted from the auditorium that afternoon. One will be revealed in due course, and the other had to do with occult politics. Some of our little group had watched and applauded while the head of AMORC publicly credited John Dee with significant influence on the Rosicrucian movement, apparently based on the ideas advanced by Frances Yates. For all intents and purposes, that organization ejected him soon after. The theory that circulated among us, as to why the one thing might necessarily follow the other, led to concerns about our own actions in Santa Cruz. It had to do with an organization founded by Paul Foster Case, the *Builders of the Adytum*.

## VI

My criticism of this part of the GD work is: (First) that it emanated so largely from Kelly; (Second) That the tablets are part of a rigmarole by which Kelly persuaded Dee that they two were to be the puppet-masters of a new European political order which should supersede the kingdoms then reigning; (Third) That the same angel who dictated the Tablets also required that Kelly and Dee should have all things in common, including their wives; (Fourth) That the whole project came to the same ignominious end that is to be expected of human undertakings based upon the promises of spirits; (Fifth) That there is no good reason to suppose that Kelly and Dee, or their enterprise, to say nothing of their magic, correspond to anything Rosicrucian; (Six, and most important) That I have personal knowledge of more than twenty-five instances where the performance of magical operations based on Order formulae led to serious disintegrations of mind or body. . . Perhaps the most conspicuous example of the unfortunate consequences of the use of these formulas is Aleister Crowley himself; but there are plenty of others. . .

PAUL FOSTER CASE, LETTER TO ISRAEL REGARDIE, 10 AUGUST 1933

Case was a member of the Golden Dawn, but deeply opposed to Enochian magick. His reasons were part misunderstanding, part prejudice, and based on assumptions he made without access to certain information possessed only by initiates of a relatively advanced grade. The founder of the *Builders of the Adytum* [BOTA] was expelled before being entrusted with these secrets, and even if Case had not made such gross errors of fact, he was still not qualified to judge his observations from an initiated standpoint. After parting ways with the Golden Dawn, not only did he expunge all things Enochian from the teachings of his new and improved organization and its rites, but even went so far as to declare Dee's angelic system a *false doctrine*. What goes on in another's occult order would ordinarily have been none of our concern, but BOTA members were not uncommonly found in the ranks of other organizations. They have a curious relationship with the Caliphate. Degree candidates in the latter face no restrictions regarding their affiliations with other groups, and thus someone who has been admitted to BOTA may rise to the very top of the Caliphate's hierarchy, should they be invited to do so. There is no reciprocal arrangement. Consequently, it arises that anyone who enjoys admittance to both orders answers to superiors in BOTA but not necessarily in the Caliphate. Bill Heidrick had been a member of BOTA at one time, and it was believed there were others within our order, in numbers and power unknown. Logically,

it seemed reasonable to assume a cross membership between BOTA and AMORC as well, and to us this seemed the most obvious explanation for the split.

By prior arrangement, we all met at the Whole Earth Café after that first class, a small campus dining facility nestled on the side of a ravine among the redwoods. David and Dr Abraham continued their Enochian discussion, and the conversation naturally turned to angels. The professor admitted this was his principal interest in us, even suggesting that Jones himself might be one. Despite his shock at such an outlandish statement, David retained his composure and asked what would lead him to such a conclusion. The answer was simple and surprising: he could see his wings. When asked just how many wings he saw, Abraham said he counted six. David later confessed he believed the man was serious, and that in a flash of insight, he had seen himself surrounded by the six of us, his *wings*, just as Dr Abraham described them. Had he claimed to see two wings, his statement might have been easily dismissed, but six was significant. This is exactly how the four cherubs which surround the throne of the divine presence are described in *Revelation*, and indeed this is how they are figured on the Watchtowers as well. It was, Jones claimed, one of most frightening moments of his life.

It was agreed that David would present a lecture to the class on the work of John Dee, from a practical, magical standpoint insofar as it was understood by him, and that he and others of the CES would demonstrate our research methods in the auditorium, to be followed at some future date by something more involved in another venue. To actually present ourselves before a large number of people—even Santa Cruz people—and practice our weird science in front of God and everyone seemed insane. Even if the in-class presentation would not include dropping an æthyr, it would still be typical of our work, and lay bare our magical world to the great unwashed. Obviously, the whole affair had got a little out of hand by now, exhilarating and terrifying by turns, but after the events that plagued Thelema Lodge in recent months, our way seemed all too clear. Three days after our first meeting with Dr Abraham, in a small and very informal ceremony at Orbit One, the CES was officially relocated to April's apartment on Seabright Ave, in Santa Cruz.

Seems a small and insignificant thing, and had any outsider been present that afternoon they surely would have agreed, but in this case in particular, looks could be deceiving. There were lots of ongoing activities at Thelema Lodge, monthly classes taught by Bill Heidrick and others, various reading and study groups, Mass every week,

and the diverse activities that revolved around the sacred calendar. None were as significant as the CES in my eyes, and even the A.:A.:, which moved *unseen* in their midst, paled in comparison to the work. The classes, parties, and sundry social events were often pleasant and even important in their own right, in maintaining a sense of community so long as it had lasted. But David and the CES were actually attempting to do something new, to present material and related research to the occult community that until that time had scarcely seen the light of day. Our success in Santa Cruz the year before had sparked rivalries, and to pull out of the Lodge, especially in the midst of the furore of the pending court case against the Berkeley police, was a political statement in the eyes of our superiors, a vote of no confidence not easily overlooked.

For all my anger and resentment, I meant no harm by walking away. It was not revolutionary, or rebellious in that way at all. As a result of our new prospects, I was *happy*, for the first time in ages, and could not care less what anyone thought. How they perceived my actions was not my concern. Despite our devotion to the EGC, even Mass at Thelema Lodge had become an exceedingly tiresome affair. Along with the resentment over Bill Breeze's draconian ecclesiastic reforms, Caitlin had largely withdrawn from her oversight of the Sunday evening service. She no longer coordinated Mass at the Lodge, partly due to her spending an increasing amount of time with her chosen and preferred, and in part due to other females at the Lodge taking over some of her former responsibilities, though sadly lacking her sense of reverence for the service itself. To make matters worse, some individuals were now taking great pride in presenting parodies of the Mass on Sunday evenings, ostensibly in protest of the newly enacted reforms. Generally speaking, these were rather sophomoric affairs, accomplishing little more than attracting attention to their creators, for good or for ill. With such fare, it is small wonder that we three found it easy to turn our backs on Horus Temple.

The Lodge was falling apart, or rather being torn apart. This had been going on for at least seven months now; we had fought and resisted, but largely on our own. In times past, we were free to discreetly use the Mass to promote the work of the Lodge. Now, in that spring of 1990, if we altered the Mass, however subtly, we were no longer free to call it *The Gnostic Mass*. When we finally succeeded in opening the 19<sup>th</sup>, and I sat before the *Holy Table* with David and Susan that night in Orinda, I learned a simple truth about my world and those around me: the three of us could do something others couldn't, but we couldn't do it at the Lodge. In a profound metaphysical sense, the Order was our mother, and our concubine, and the Lodge was that organ of her body

with which we were most intimate. The time had come to pull out. In the 9<sup>th</sup> Æthyr, in that space in which I moved and lived and had my being, this was all crystalline clear.

The most worrisome detail for me at the time was David repeating this was all my fault. I did it; I was doing it, and he was just along for the ride. Or so he claimed. It was unnerving, even in jest, but did not wholly stop me from enjoying the ride myself. Odd really, thinking about it now, but it all seemed perfectly normal under the circumstances. I had indeed beseeched the blessed angels for aid and succor in my time of need, and so far as I could tell, they had not disappointed. Susan would continue to work at Stanford for the time being, while I established myself and our work in Santa Cruz. She and the cats would soon follow, and the breathing space afforded us in the meantime would do us both good. The future was bright, and she seemed pleased. With the Order and the A.:A.: and all that swirled around them now receding into the background, the work was now drawing the two of us together towards a shared goal, not driving a wedge between us as before. David was even talking about Mexico, and a desire for he and Anne to study Mayan archaeological sites firsthand. Much as it pains me now, I have to admit not being at all displeased at the suggestion. Things were going quite well indeed.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Æthyr was largely manageable and informative, the first time round the year before. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Æthyr, I had seen he that sitteth upon the throne, and saw that pitiable thing as myself. Indeed, all too often I was blind to that which I had created, and was actively creating around me, yet suffered from its invisible presence just the same. In the 20<sup>th</sup>, I met the Lamb, my deceiver, and in the 19<sup>th</sup>, for the most fleeting of moments, I found my way to the center of the wheel. In that stillness, in which the blind terror could get no hold, I had caught a glimpse of that which lies beyond this mundane existence. Now, in the 9<sup>th</sup>, I could see this thing around me and to some extent, interact with it. It was heavenly, and I lived quite literally in a continuous state of bliss. We were all sitting on the deck at the Whole Earth Café one afternoon, and Susan caught David's eye, glanced at me, and tapping a finger in the center of her forehead smiled with approval. It was immediately obvious what she meant. I could *see*, and not just phantoms in a lesser crystalline sphere. She knew it, and David nodded happily, "I know, I know. He's been that way for a while."

I wandered in this wondrous world, mostly with Jones, moving back and forth between Mountain View and Santa Cruz, at all hours of the day and night, while regularly attending Dr Abraham's class on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. On the

remaining five days of the week, I continued my new clockwork astronomical regimen, relaxing and socializing at home and Orbit One for brief periods in between. A date was set to open the 22<sup>nd</sup> Æthyr for Dr Abraham and his class, as per an oracle received by Susan on Wednesday, 25 April, mere hours before she lost her balance and sprained her ankle before the *Gates of Hell*. On 27 April, the phone started ringing, calls from people at the Lodge mostly, all wanting to talk to David. By 1 May, we had set up an “auxiliary” Temple in our dining room, and began casting a blank of refined beeswax, twenty-seven inches round, and somewhat more, to be carved into a *Sigillum Dei Æmeth*. The following night, while Golding slept on our sofa, Susan, Jones and myself opened the 8<sup>th</sup> Æthyr, which is called ZID, and reading the 26<sup>th</sup> Call in Enochian we paused at the word *Madriiax*, while Oberon, Laura Chandler, and her partner walked through the living room door.

Preparations were underway for our in-class demonstration, and later that night, just before dawn, I rode with Oberon to the North Bay. It is almost frightening to recall that his driving didn’t disturb me in the slightest. He could half-turn in his seat talking to me, light a cigarette, change cassette tapes while consulting their cases, and negotiate four lanes of traffic at over eighty miles per hour, all at the same time and without obvious difficulty. The uncanny part of it was how perfectly at ease I was, trusting his skill and judgment without question. In those few casually mind-blowing hours, it was my intent to sell him on our great good fortune, inviting him to join us if he would. Oberon politely agreed to see for himself, and we caught up with the others at Dr Abraham’s class that afternoon.

When David Jones had concluded a superb lecture, brief though it was due to the constraint of time, the house lights were dimmed and he asked the large audience to please remain quiet, to just watch the glass sphere, set on a tripod center stage. All save Jones who performed that day were wearing their black robes, and April opened our ceremony by banishing with the Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram. Behind her, beyond the glare of the lights, as she turned and vibrated, and turned again, I could see little of those who watched, but could feel their presence, their silent attention fixed and unbroken upon us. David performed the *Star Sapphire*, and read Dee’s “Fundamental Obeisance”, while Golding erected the Twelve Banners. There followed the 1<sup>st</sup> Key, the English translation read by David, and the Enochian by me, in a black top hat wreathed in ivy. “Everyone loves Papa Legba”, Jones later said. After a long and utterly silent pause, David closed with the *Star Ruby*. Several of us later agreed we had actually

seen the spirits coming down to the sphere, like brightly glowing sparks, or fireflies, descending to the smooth, glistening surface before mounting upward again, like motes dancing in the eye of God.

Jones suggested the sheer force of attention of so many people was sufficient to prevent any creature from entering the glass itself, despite the fact he specifically instructed those present not to focus intently on the sphere. Everyone was respectful of our group, and of our craft, and most seemed genuinely impressed—with the exception of Oberon, though even he was generally positive in his remarks. Unlike the students, he had seen us do that much and far more in private session, and after walking around in my world for a day, he offered his opinion without mincing words. “It’s an illusion”, he said, and with that and a friendly smile, he left us to our own designs.

Over the next several days, my journal is once again massively fragmented, with a vague account of an ad hoc ceremony by Susan, David, and myself, using a found stick for a wand, in the forest behind the UCSC campus. Though I was no longer as happy as I had been in the 9<sup>th</sup>, things were still going relatively well. The following Monday, 7 May 1990, Mordecai Shapiro and Bill Heidrick both called my home, both demanding to speak to David, four weeks to the day after I began my planetary work. When he learned it was Bill, Jones signaled to Anne, and they vanished through the front door with a frantic backward wave, lest I should lie, and say he wasn’t there. After their exit, Heidrick and I talked for longer than expected, much of it punctuated with repetitions of, “I mean, this is just egregious”. David was being accused of absconding with the rent money at the Lodge, which it was claimed he collected and never paid. The place was in an uproar, and this was just the beginning. At the time, I am not sure whether I believed the accusation or not, but I was certain he was presumed guilty regardless. For me, it was all part of a broader pattern, for by then I had heard the rumor, the one you may or may not recall, that of the *Black Lodge of Santa Cruz*. Some now believed the money was merely a side issue, and the real fly in the Order’s oatmeal was the Master of Thelema Lodge moving himself and a piece of intellectual property to a location vaguely outside of the Order’s control. I laughed out loud when first I heard it, as did David with me. To those in the rarefied and shadowy realms above us, all this business was no laughing matter, apparently not by any stretch of the imagination.

On Wednesday, David banished Mercury and I Sol, in the courtyard of my home in Mountain View, a lovely space, and still one of my favorites. It was surrounded by a high wall, overgrown with ivy, and pierced in three places by doorways: one into the

living room, one into a utility space, and a massive dutch affair, round at the top, that led to the sidewalk and street without. It was the bailey of the Fortress of Ultimate Darkness, or so I would later call it.

This house was where Susan and I made our home, after our lease was terminated, on the other side of El Camino Real. David had wanted to come visit for months, and it was after quite some time, and several unsuccessful attempts, that he finally walked through the gate. He seemed to find it rather amusing, and joked about it, how nearly impossible it was for anyone to even approach our space without my explicit leave. Since he was practically living there that day we worked in the courtyard, it was a benefit he had come to appreciate. The house proper was a most curious affair, vaguely Mediterranean in style, built of stucco covered brick. Structurally, it was amazingly solid. You could literally hurl your body at the walls and damage no more than yourself in the attempt, and though it sat on a busy corner near downtown Mountain View, almost no noise of traffic was audible within. Back in October, on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> no less, we had gone into the 14<sup>th</sup> Æthyr, to petition one of the Governors of that space to find for us a suitable place in which to live and work. This house was the immediate and unmistakable result of that operation. I felt the entity did an outstanding job, but Jones later noted the 14<sup>th</sup> was one hell of a scary place to go just for that.

Some time after Mercury and Sol, I banished Saturn and Jupiter, while Jones did the rest. It was there in the courtyard that he first suggested we stop using the Thelemic form of the *Star Ruby* in our work, saying the original, that which is printed in Crowley's *Book of Lies*, was more appropriate under the circumstances. From that point onward, the godname I used in the east when I banished the element of that quarter was XAOΣ, followed by BABALON in the north, and so on round my Temple.<sup>†</sup> It is highly indicative of my state of mind that I found this a difficult change to comprehend. I saw no reason to abandon Thelema entirely, yet neither did I have a clear image in my mind of the full ramification of our actions to date.

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<sup>†</sup>The *Star Ruby*, Crowley's revision of the Golden Dawn's Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram, was published in two distinct forms. The first, presented as Ch 25 of *The Book of Lies* (1913), gives the godnames as Χάος [Chaos], Βαβαλον [Babalon], Ἔρως [Eros] and Ψυχή [Psyche] counterclockwise, beginning in the east. These four were later changed to Θηρίον [Therion], Nuit, Babalon, and Hadit, respectively, sometime between 1921 and the subsequent republication of the *Star Ruby* in *Magick In Theory and Practice* (1929–30). Such promotion of Thelemic dogma is typical of Crowley's work after he became Outer Head of the OTO in 1922, when he transformed that order into an explicit vehicle for his *Book of the Law*. The emergence of the 156 current is, in many ways, a return to the origins of magical traditions. This rejection of the Thelemic *Star Ruby* in favor of the original version, with its CHAOS and BABALON godnames, is but one example.

The next day, 10 May, Keith, April, and her boyfriend from Seattle arrived at our place, and we all proceeded to Orbit One, and from there left for a public space, later that evening, not far from the apartment on Seabright. There we opened the 22<sup>nd</sup> Æthyr for Dr Abraham and his class, so he could realize his desire to see the blessed angels. Many old CES associates came down and participated in the ceremony. John Golding was there, and even Caitlin made a brief appearance at Orbit One. She sat down beside me on the sofa, and on the verge of tears passed me a note. It expressed her desire for David to return, for us all to return. This rift between us was tearing her apart. I should have been moved, and have regretted this for a long while now, but so caught up in what was happening, I just wasn't. The pain in those sad, blue eyes haunts me to this day.

There was more amiss than that, too. April's boyfriend was breaking my heart. I had fallen for her, rejoicing and blossoming in her company, and though I had made no overt move towards her at all, believing myself still very much in a monogamous relationship with Susan, I was in love, or at least thought I was. Her beau had returned to her life, even if temporarily, and though she still desired to learn all that I knew about magick, her attention was understandably focused on another. I was very jealous, but under the circumstances, could no more express how I felt than I could express my desire for her. Serpents were loose in my garden, despite our continuing success, and I was not at all pleased.

Dr Abraham thanked us late that night, after we had closed the space in due order, and said he had seen what he came to see. Our performance had been textbook, as we had planned, and it had gone on slowly building for hours. Susan said later that when we at last called PARAOAN, he appeared in the crystal, only to impress upon her this was not the proper place to reveal himself, and that was the end of it. Looking around at the surprisingly large number of people in the room, it was ironic that of all those outsiders, Abraham was one of the very few who remained awake. The rest were asleep, and had been for quite some time.

Following our second successful opening of the 22<sup>nd</sup> in Santa Cruz, we returned once more to our routine. April's boyfriend soon departed the love nest for Seattle, by way of my house once again, and we re-melted a false start on our *Sigillum* to be. 19 May found us opening the 1<sup>st</sup> Æthyr in our auxiliary Temple, as Susan prepared to carve our second beeswax disk. The next day, I went to the Lodge for the Sunday service, and as one of the "ritualists"—that of "Fire"—took part in a performance of

CF Russell's "Group Ritual", organized by Keith Schürholz. The rite was loosely based on the Gnostic Mass, and so far as we knew, hadn't been performed in many years, perhaps since Russell's order, the *Great Brotherhood of God*, finally closed its doors in 1938. On Monday, I returned to the Lodge yet again, but this time with David, and by a most circuitous route. "Sneaking in the back way", he called it. We didn't attempt to knock on the door that morning. Kuhar Dušan was sleeping in the front room of the Lodge, what had once been Horus Temple, so we knocked on his window instead. Officially, David wasn't supposed to be in the Lodge, nor was he allowed to remove any of his things, and that was but one of the issues we had come to address. Dušan raised the window, offering a cheerful but sleepy, "Halloh".

"Dušan, can we come in?" Jones asked, as if it were the most natural thing in the world.

"Ya, ya. Come in, come in." We talked a while of this and that, and of our reasons for coming, before he accepted our offer of breakfast, dressed and left with us, out the same window through which we had entered. There was another plot afoot, and it was this new twist in an already complex affair that had brought us to Oakland, and led us to seek the counsel of our elders.

Late that night, after driving the forty or so miles back to the Fortress, we slipped quietly into the 9<sup>th</sup> Æthyr. David, Anne, Susan and myself opened a gate in the living-room, and stepped back into a space we had opened not six weeks before. As dawn overtook us, in a secret location in the Santa Cruz mountains, we read the Call of the 9<sup>th</sup> yet again. In Scott's Valley, over breakfast at Denny's, we were in high spirits. We had demonstrated to our satisfaction an ability to pass into this space at will, and were now in the process of creating a bridge, from the Fortress on the edge of the outermost Abyss, across the mountains and into Santa Cruz. It was insane I'll admit, but it was also a carefully calculated maneuver, intended to throw up the biggest, gnarliest barrier we could between our work and those we'd left behind in Oakland.

On that morning of 22 May 1990, we were, in fact, on our way to a rendezvous with the *other* half of the rumor. Sometime after we arrived at Orbit One, David asked me directly if I was willing to participate in this little heresy. I said yes, without a second thought. Jones had been made a Bishop in the EGC, at a time when he was still at least nominally within the good graces of the Order. It was now his intention to use that office to raise others to the episcopacy, though the rules had been changed by Bill Breeze in order to deter just this sort of "abuse". Breaking with custom that

stretched back as far as the tradition itself, the ceremony now required two Bishops to participate in order to be valid. Fortunately for us, this was not an obstacle. Dušan had just walked into the apartment on Seabright, and the long awaited moment had arrived. Jones looked around the room gravely, with his hands outstretched palm to palm before him, and addressed those assembled in a sincere tone, “You should all know you are probably in violation of your oaths just by being here”.

“Aw, fuck Bill,” replied Dušan through his sweater, as he pulled it over his head and stood grinning defiantly at the group.

Before continuing, Jones asked Susan. She declined. This didn’t surprise me, nor did it appear to surprise David. Though more than happy to be part of our little conspiracy, even encouraging and applauding our actions, she was still unhappy over her surprise ordination the previous year, and wanted no further involvement in ecclesiastic affairs, or even the Caliphate for that matter. David substituted his young lover in her place without skipping a beat, and with a room full of witnesses, some of them Brothers, she and I were made *living Saints* in the Gnostic Catholic Church. Late that night, we read the Call of the 9<sup>th</sup> Æthyr a third and final time. My journal reports, after that, it all “rather fell apart”.

The next day, I began structurally reinforcing the Abysmal end of our bridge back in Mountain View, using a combination of Enochian planetary and elemental techniques. It was heavy work, this first session taking nearly an hour and a half to complete, but we were convinced it needed to be done. I went on digging psychic trenches and throwing up astral ramparts in a similar fashion off and on for days, refining and redirecting my approach as I went, still tenaciously working with five of the seven planets of the ancients and their archangels as before. We had begun experiencing massive interference, in all sorts of peculiar ways. Some of the pressure was undoubtedly of external origin, though certainly not all by any stretch of the imagination. The bridge held, but it was razor thin. We could sally forth across it at will, and often did, retreating after where none could follow. Unfortunately, running back and forth along that glistening edge was ripping us to shreds.

## VII

Master—We have been saying a good deal about a Lodge. I want to know what constitutes a Lodge?

Senior Warden—A certain number of *Free and Accepted Masons*, duly assembled in a room or place. . .

Master—Where did our ancient brethren meet, before Lodges were erected?

Senior Warden—On the highest hills, and in the lowest vales.

Master—Why on the highest hills, and in the lowest vales?

Senior Warden—The better to guard against cowans and enemies, either ascending or descending, that the brethren might have timely notice of their approach to prevent being surprised.

ENTERED APPRENTICE'S DEGREE , RICHARDSON'S MONITOR OF FREE-MASONRY

Jones had moved out of Thelema Lodge officially on 17 May. As the reader has doubtless realized by now, a lot had happened before and after that date, much more than stating the bare facts of it might suggest. By this time, David was only interested in collecting his things, which, so far, he had been prevented from doing. There was the issue of the money he allegedly had taken, and what was worse, he was now insisting loudly and as often as possible that the vast bulk of the library, *the library at the Lodge*, was his. To be rid of him was one thing, and many there were who would be happy to see him go, but for him to take his contribution with him—or his personal effects, depending on how one looks at it—was just too much to ask. They all believed David was coming unwrapped, and indeed he was, at least sometimes, anyway. They wanted his books and papers, but they didn't necessarily want him. I was left holding him together best I could, and with Susan's support. He was a Brother in need, as far as I was concerned, but coping with the stress from sleepless nights of coffee, sugar, cigarettes, and magick, and days and days of anger and setbacks wasn't easy. I had my own problems, and was already stretched to the limit myself.

Susan was left alone to hold down the fort all too often, and it showed. True, we weren't fighting as much, but that was because we were spending so little time alone together. The difficulties we had with ourselves and each other hadn't gone away. At best, they were packed neatly and waiting for me on the doorstep when I came home. Naturally, the fighting returned whenever I did, and privacy allowed. She and I were

coming apart too, *bifurcating* in our own way. We had met a student in Prof Abraham's class, an eighteen year old, very eager to learn all he could about this magick business.

The boy was slight of build with dark hair hanging to his shoulders, eyes a bit too small set over a nose too big, perpetually dressed in basic black. He was an odd creature, curiously hermaphroditic, but allowed to function as male through hormonal injections. He was thrilled to be in our presence—especially Susan's—and at the very least, he was entertaining. In our circumstances, we needed entertainment. Apparently, he hadn't had a mother for quite some time, and what with Susan feeling neglected, they got along all too well. Jones called him Belial, suggesting he was the result of a Goëtic working carried out by John Golding and Keith Schürholz. We brought him home with us like a stray puppy, after his Minerval, at what would soon be the new location of Orbit One. Obvious mistake in retrospect, but seemed the thing to do at the time. We would eventually make him a Bishop, along with Clay Holden, as Saints Friedrich Nietzsche and Giordano Bruno, respectively.

Participating in the heresy was delightful, and this particular incident was no exception. I have no regrets, even if it did all come to a bad end. Belial was at least a Minerval, though that still seemed bending the rules a bit. At least one of the "Wandering Bishops" we created was not associated with the Order in any way at all. Anyone capable of reciting some form of *credo*, Thelemic or not, was eligible in our book, and that alone should have provoked a response from the powers that be. If someone wasn't already deeply displeased about our activities, it was just a matter of time. Long after following him across the Rubicon, I asked David why making Bishops was so heretical in the eyes of our superiors. It was a secret.

There are secrets and there are secrets, you see. Many know *The Secret*, both inside and outside the Order. Heidrick once said, "They're all ix°s when you talk to them", and it's true, in more ways than one. It seems one of the *other* kind of secrets, the kind *none* of us were supposed to know, not even with a wink and a nod, was a piece of paper from Crowley stating that a Bishop in the EGC is *equivalent* to a VII° OTO. Conferring the one conferred the other. The informed reader will note that this sheds considerable light on Breeze's latest and otherwise cryptic requirement that only a VII° is eligible for the office of Bishop. Jones knew this secret, and it was apparently what motivated his sudden interest in the episcopacy. Now I knew it too, and those above us, if they were paying any attention at all, knew we had more than enough metaphysical technology to found almost anything remotely Rosicrucian we had a mind to. Some people wanted to

believe in some baroque conspiracy involving a *Black Lodge* in Santa Cruz. Obviously, it was a question of numbers, but now it was possible for us to rectify that by the power of the laying on of hands, just as our “founding fathers” had done when they reconstituted the OTO in the form of the Caliphate. From a magical standpoint, there was no escaping Jones’s proposition: it elegantly called the bluff of his superiors, under the guise of threatened insurrection.

Small wonder then that I and those around me in Mountain View rapidly developed a siege mentality. For weeks, I had felt in direct communication with the angels, and now found myself barricaded on the edge of the outermost Abyss, awaiting the next wave of demons to scale the battlements. We spent less time in Santa Cruz than before, and hoped by confining our operations somewhat to the Bay Area, we could draw attention to ourselves and away from Orbit One. It was a relatively thankless job. Few down there knew of our activities elsewhere, or the reasons behind them, and we generally left it at that. Any mention of politics in Clay’s presence invariably prompted yet another lecture on the virtue of avoiding such entanglements and his ongoing success in doing so. The first two or three performances were at least entertaining for their unintended irony, but after that, his harangue became just another tired rehearsal of old material, easily, if not politely, ignored.

David was still prevented from retrieving his things from the Lodge, and grew increasingly furious as he struggled with those who now held sway there. His obsession was coming to occupy most all of his time and energy, and much of mine as well. John Golding’s place was an advanced outpost of sorts, where Jones could lurk secretly in Oakland, within spitting distance of his opponents, and catch up on the latest news of their activities. The house was a small, nondescript bungalow, next door to the Lodge, and was the full time residence of Golding and one or two other males. It was known as “Oz House”, but after David’s first use of the term, I knew it forever after as *the Swamp*. Keith and Golding had set up a work space there, complete with the pillars that had formerly stood in Horus Temple, using it principally for Goëtic work. They were opening their operations with “the Tuat”—often pronounced quite intentionally as *twat*—before beginning their conjurations proper. The ritual is a modern adaptation of an Egyptian idea, essentially creating an astral environment modeled on the papyrus swamps of the Nile delta, a soggy, pestilential place, infested with snakes and crocodiles, and all manner of lethal things. It was the perfect sort of space for gaining the upper hand on one’s demons, rather like “the Hall of the Neophytes”.

On 10 June, I opened the 8<sup>th</sup> Æthyr, following a discussion with Jones about pursuing my will in a more focused manner and with fewer distractions. Under the stress and strain of the circumstances, Susan and I were fighting even more than usual, and she was absolutely livid when she learned I had opened an æthyr without consulting her first. Given the nature of the ceremony, of which she did not know the particulars, I was not at all surprised. By Tuesday, 12 June, David and I were completely exhausted, and as I drove Susan to work that afternoon, it seemed like days since I'd slept. Upon my return, I stretched out on the living room floor, joining David who was already asleep on the sofa. I closed my eyes in the warm glow of the afternoon sun, as it filtered softly through the window shades, and when I opened them again, I was surprised to find myself now in an eery twilight. To the best of my knowledge, no more than a moment had passed since I first laid down to rest, but staring at my watch in confusion, it had in fact been in excess of four hours. I peered about in the gloom, and spied David staring back at me, in a most peculiar fashion. "Hello", he said, and began to make polite but trivial conversation, as one would to a total stranger, all the while listening intently to any answer I made, and smiling pleasantly, if a bit self-consciously, as he waited for me to fill the awkward silence that followed our brief exchanges. It was only as a note of confidence returned to his voice, and he began to relate his recent experience, that I came to realize something was amiss.

David had awoke in the near total darkness of the living room, with no idea where or even who he was. The cats were running rampant through the house, growling and leaping from the furniture as they charged from room to room. I lay flat on my back in the middle of the floor, in an animated and restless sleep, as if struggling with some unseen foe. Such a rude awakening would be enough to frighten anyone, but more alarming still were the visions of the apparent source of the disturbance. To the north, through the outside wall, he could see a creature, indistinct but looming impossibly large as it attempted to force its way through some unseen barrier. Though the entity itself was invisible, whatever it was that checked its advance flashed and crackled around it in pyrotechnic display, revealing the thing's outline as it struggled to enter the house. In the midst of all this insanity, the monster from *The Forbidden Planet*, the animals yowling, and Jones's total amnesia, I sat bolt upright like something out of a bad horror movie, and looked at my watch.

One would expect safe and sane occultists to show some concern, but not us. Later that evening, at Harry's Hofbräu in Mountain View, over pastrami, *rotkohl*, and beer,

we casually and cheerfully discussed the days events with Susan, pleased and satisfied the defenses I erected were holding, even under an intense and concentrated attack. Our technology appeared to be most effective against the opposition we had faced so far, and there was every reason to be pleased. The next day, we met with Mordecai in Oakland, now acting Master of Thelema Lodge. It was an official meeting, in which David and I were told he was now free to remove his belongings, including that portion of the library that was rightfully his. We were not, however, to be allowed to do all this directly, but through a trusted third party instead, none other than John Golding. Obviously, we thought, Shapiro had lost his mind. All of David's things, from his chess board and books to the box containing his copy of the court transcript in which Grady's ex-wife revealed the secret of the IX<sup>o</sup>—under oath, no less—was boxed up and taken next door to the Swamp. What I thought was the biggest hurdle had now been cleared, and David was finally and at long last on his way to Santa Cruz.

Curiously, Keith and Golding, though bound by oath to follow the King's will, had throughout seemed more than happy to aid Jones as much as they could in extracting his possessions from the Lodge, and providing intelligence concerning the political situation and machinations of his opponents. But once his archive was in their hands, and Jones was as a consequence spending time in Oakland once more, Susan, Belial and I began to notice a certain resistance to proceeding as planned. It was more inertia than outright opposition, but the change was unmistakable, and he appeared suddenly reluctant to move his things to Mountain View and on to Santa Cruz, along with himself. It is possible that so close to his former home, David began to have second thoughts, but at the time, we strongly suspected it was the result of external influence. I would not then, nor indeed would I now suspect Keith of opposing either David or myself in anything. He was a dear friend, and trite as it might seem, I truly loved him as a brother. Keith and I were peers, equals in my eyes, and so far as I know the feeling was mutual, even after he was designated my tutor in the A.:A.: He was open and honest, as quick to smile as to offer aid or friendly advice. I would not have suspected him of duplicity at all. Golding, however, was another story.

What precisely the attraction was between those two I haven't a clue. In a discussion of just this subject, Keith once said he had seen Golding's Holy Guardian Angel, that it was indescribably beautiful, despite outward appearances. Even with this additional information, and from a respected source no less, I remained unconvinced. There was something about him I never cared for, even before we did the 19<sup>th</sup> together in Orinda,

though beyond the fact he was dull as dishwater I am at a loss to say just what that something was. Golding was a conjurer in the traditional sense, complete with funny outfit and paper crown, stewed in Hebrew Qabalah, and trapped in the Hermetic, Golden Dawn paradigm like a fly in amber. So hidebound did he appear in my eyes that I found it impossible to imagine anything new and earth shattering, or even nominally interesting, resulting from his work. When we moved Jones's possessions out of the Lodge, and Golding was charged with insuring that nothing was removed that did not actually belong to him, I made some off-hand comment about how soon the lot would have to be packed up yet again and relocated to Santa Cruz. "Well, we'll see about that", was his only response, said while staring vacantly at some point over my right shoulder. I didn't like the sound of it, or the distant look in his eye when he said it, and even at the time, it left me in considerable doubt just what his intentions might be.

Susan, on the other hand, had no doubts at all. She was convinced that once it finally dawned upon him that Jones was serious, and fully intended to relocate the library to Orbit One, Golding was actively engaged in impeding our progress. Perhaps he wanted David's archive for himself, or it may have been he was merely following orders from above, since she also believed His Holiness Bill Breeze had begun to take an active and hostile interest in our activities as well. It may even have been Caitlin who pressured him into getting involved, but whatever the reason, Susan was convinced Golding was interfering directly in our affairs. For myself, I tried best I could to keep the entire conflict on an impersonal basis as much as possible. Fighting some nameless, faceless opposition was one thing, but specifically wishing harm on a Brother was not on my agenda, whatever my feelings for him personally might be. I only wanted to proceed as planned, to complete our move to Santa Cruz, and get on with the new life we had created for ourselves. What the Order and those within it did or did not want was no longer my concern.

Whether the assumptions about Golding were true or not is neither here nor there, as the record shows regardless of the reason, in the weeks following the recovery of Jones's books and papers, he now spent much of his time in the Swamp, seldom venturing to Orbit One at all. My belief in him and in his cause was already strained, and though I still trusted him personally, I no longer felt that he could be relied upon to always do the right thing, or even to do what he had previously claimed to be his will. After all, it had not been that long since David and I were at my house, and the phone rang. I answered, and an unpleasantly cheerful voice said, "This is Bill Breeze.

Let me speak to David Jones.” I excused myself, and signaled who was holding on the line, quite pleased that the moment of truth had finally arrived. Much to my surprise, David dropped his head in resignation, and reached for the receiver without meeting my eye. Instead of sounding a note of defiance commensurate with his actions to date, or arguing, or even stalling for time, all I heard was, “Yes, sir... Yes, sir... No, sir... I understand, sir.” In my eyes, up until that moment, Jones had been more than human, the archetypal revolutionary with a heart of the purest flame and ice water cascading through his veins. The “yes man” I sat and watched that day on the phone looked more like some rag-assed renegade who, when finally cornered, no longer possessed the strength, or the will, to fight.

An oath is one of the most powerful, most inviolable of all magical acts. It is the explicit expression of one’s will, and once made in earnest may never be truly undone, even should one try. David had taken many oaths in the Caliphate by that time, each more explicitly binding his will to that of his so-called superiors than the last, swearing eternal fealty to a hierarchy that dead ended, at least outwardly, in the unlikely person of Bill Breeze. So far in our little endeavor, he had successfully avoided those who held the end of his chain, and so long as that lasted, he was free. Jones once said to me, long before these times of trial and tribulation, that we may reveal whatever we wish to those below us, but must constantly guard ourselves in the presence of those of a higher degree, and the more highly placed an individual, the less they were to be trusted. He explained that as a Minerval, or even a 1<sup>o</sup>, one enjoyed more genuine freedom than anyone else in the Order, and invited me to read the degree rituals, and demonstrate this for myself. If one believed in the Caliphate, this was a most mysterious paradox, at least for those few who knew or suspected that such was the case, but obviously a more sober individual might have recognized a trap when they saw one, however tempting the bait might be.

In some sense, David should be praised for honoring vows made to individuals for whom he felt little but contempt, perhaps even demonstrating thereby a deep and abiding faith in the *idea* of the Ordo Templi Orientis, if not necessarily in that pale manifestation we know as the Caliphate. But hearing David on the phone with Breeze that day made my stomach churn. Here was a man for whom I had long held the highest respect, apparently groveling before an absurd caricature of authority who was not worthy to kiss the ground beneath his feet, or mine for that matter. Of all that I lost in those days, losing my hero was the most bitter loss of all. I learned a fundamental

difference between Jones and myself that day. To him, the poorly scripted children's pageants with which he had been honored, and the oaths he had taken therein, were more important than his word given to one of his fellows. The Caliphate was just a thing, "which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk" [*Revelation* 9:20]. It could not be held to any vow, even were it capable of making any. The only bonds that truly matter in this world are those between an individual and their Holy Guardian Angel, and those between one man or woman and another, between Brother and Brother, when one invests their trust in their fellow in exchange for being trusted in return. This is the basis of any culture, the interpersonal relationships that constitute the bedrock upon which it rests.

## VIII

I cling unto the burning Æthyr like Lucifer that fell through the Abyss, and by the fury of his flight kindled the air.

And I am Belial, for having seen the Rose upon thy breast, I have denied God.

And I am Satan! I am Satan! I am cast out upon a burning crag! And the sea boils about the desolation thereof. And already the vultures gather, and feast upon my flesh.

THE VISION AND THE VOICE, THE CRY OF THE 2ND ÆTHYR WHICH IS CALLED ARN

In the days that followed our retrieving his archive, Jones flitted back and forth between the twin poles of the Swamp and the Fortress, with frequent side trips to San Francisco, and under the stress of pandering to all sides I believe his mind began to deteriorate, and perhaps his character as well. His condition worsened to the point that in my journal, I actually began to note the occasions on which he appeared sane. On Tuesday, 19 June, I invoked the archangel *Cumael*, and in desperation petitioned that entity most fervently that those who opposed us might be overthrown. Soon after, Jones proposed that I undertake a more thorough banishing in order to undo any and all potential attacks. To this end, at dawn on the following day, I opened with the invocation *Israfael*, banished the planets and the spheres, and erected the four Watchtowers, all the way down to the angels of the *servient squares*, using all eighteen Enochian Keys, summoning each and every good spirit represented in the *Great Table* to my aid. When at last I closed with *Samech*, nearly five hours had passed since I began, and I was left unable to do much more than lie around the house for the rest of the day.

On each of the next six days, I performed the same banishing in a similar fashion. At the conclusion of this seven-day cycle—one for each chapter of *Liber ARARITA*, incorporated into the ritual—opposition to our designs continued to mount. Obviously, the eleven spheres were not enough, and it was therefore decided to banish the twenty-two paths of the *Tree of Life* as well, the magickal equivalent of a “scorched earth” campaign, hopefully one which would leave no known basis for a sustained effort against us. At first, this was done gradually, distributed over a three-day period. Then on 1 July, I banished the planets and erected Watchtowers down to the twenty-four Seniors, before banishing all the spheres and all the paths in turn, concluding with *Samech* as before. This was repeated on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, and again on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, while I experienced violent mood swings in between, on one occasion even threatening to pile

our entire personal library—which numbered at that time well in excess of a thousand volumes—in the courtyard outside and set it alight. But through it all, I pursued my goal with grim determination, while Susan did what she could to calm and support me, despite my making it increasingly difficult for her to do so. Come what may, I was resolved to do what must be done, and should the house have caught fire midway through, I would no doubt have completed my daily ritual, though my Temple fell in fire brands and ashes around me.

After midnight on the sixth day of this latest cycle, immediately following my ritual, David returned to the house after several day's absence. He came bearing a message, one over which we would argue for the rest of the night. He said it was imperative I cease my operation at once. Just because it was my will to win through our present difficulties was not going to prevent our Brethren from continuing their attacks so long as they were able. They may have claimed to be Thelemites, but in their broad interpretation, this easily included interfering with the will of another. Do what thou please, not do what thou wilt. Nothing ever done on my part was directed at any specific individual or individuals, as all was leveled squarely and consistently at whatever stood in my way. My method was a simple intelligence test, as far as I was concerned: if they assumed I would alter my course to accommodate their wants, then, from a Thelemic standpoint, I was not responsible for the consequences of their actions. David, however, insisted that regardless of who was behind the attacks, or why they continued, the Lodge would be destroyed, and this alone was sufficient reason to stop.

Looking back on that night, I am always struck by the irony of that moment. Here was the infamous Demon Jones, whom our Brothers in Oakland had vilified and fought, now contesting with me for their continued existence, though they would never have believed it. Make no mistake, I loved them individually every bit as much as he did, but to me, their choice was clear: either back off, or suffer accordingly. He and I both agreed that Thelema Lodge was no longer capable of serving any useful magical purpose, at least so far as our interests were concerned, nor did it appear likely that it would ever do so again in the future. Moreover, it was now abundantly clear they would not allow the three of us to go peacefully to Santa Cruz together. All our oracles agreed with us on this point. It was David's position, however, that those who opposed us were so stupid, so pig-headed, they simply couldn't help themselves. Fighting was their first and only choice. Consequently, if I continued on my present course, people were going to get hurt, in all likelihood himself among them, and some might even

be killed. In the end, there was no arguing with his logic. He was right, and we both knew it. Reluctantly, perhaps even foolishly, I relented.

On 4 July, I disintegrated in fits of rage and despair. There was no turning back at that point, not without the direst of consequences, and this idea burned in my mind so intently I was incapable of anything resembling coherent thought or acceptable behavior. When I opened the 8<sup>th</sup> Æthyr alone some weeks before, I had taken a blood oath that I would know and do my will. No “an it harm none” clause had been included, explicit or implied, yet here I was, betrayed by my own nobility. I knew in my heart of hearts that stepping aside for the sake of another in this instance might easily result in the loss of all my hopes for the future. It was my will to relocate to Santa Cruz, and David had stated this was his will as well. It had never been my intent to fight with our Brothers in the Order—though my good intentions never stopped anyone, myself included. Jones and I had agreed to take this just as far as it would go, and now he had convinced me to step off before the ride had come to a complete stop. In the midst of that day’s madness, I learned from Susan that if I wasn’t out of the house within three weeks, she would be leaving herself.

No one could have blamed her for wanting relief from all I had put her through, at least no one other than myself. I felt she was stabbing me in the back, and this despite the fact I was convinced the *PZ gas*, a paranoia inducing technology David claimed to be in the possession of our enemies, had finally got through, and Susan wasn’t entirely responsible for her actions. It never occurred to me at the time—at least not seriously—that if she were affected by something lobbed at us by our opponents, then in all probability so was I. For the record, my assessment of what took place between Susan and myself has changed with the passing years. For losing her, I can hold no one responsible but myself. On top of all my personal issues, it was I who sought to know and realize my will, even to some limited extent succeeding. Pursuing that will was not possible within our relationship as it then existed, and rather than change my partnership with Susan in fundamental ways, I personally elected to destroy it altogether. It was *self-immolation*, just as Jones would later describe it, an act more fitting for some half-witted Christian than a self-proclaimed Thelemite.

When David saw what was happening, he showed grave concern, and suggested I now attempt to put it all back ceremonially, but in a form that our opposition would not find at all to their liking. The Spheres and paths were replaced, but this time using Fr Achad’s eccentric attributions. In my frantic state, I was quick to try anything that

might help, however little I cared for the system personally. The only ceremonialists I knew who used it were Keith and Golding, and to my mind, that didn't speak well of either. All this was implemented using a newly reformed system of godnames, with "CHAOS" for the second Sphere, "BABALON" for the third, and so on, similar to that which I had used from the beginning, but now purged completely of any lingering Golden Dawnisms. This new tactic did have some appreciable effect, as within four days, Susan had changed her mind: she now insisted I leave immediately, whether I wanted to go or not, and informed me that Belial would be moving in to take my place. After all these years, it is still hard to believe it had been just thirteen weeks, exactly ninety-one days, since I began banishing the planets on 9 April.

I argued and pleaded, but she was resolute and would not be moved. I wandered homeless with Jones for a time, roaming over the floor of the Abyss, laying my head wherever anyone would still let us in. This world in which I now found myself was just as surreal as that of the 9<sup>th</sup> Æthyr, but harsh and jagged, where the sublimely beautiful and the deplorably hideous clashed and strove with one another. There was no formal ceremony at all now, not even the planetary work that had counted the days and hours of my existence and provided a framework for my nomadic life, nor was there much written in my journal about our activities. We were still using magick, but it was far less structured, even in time. More than ever before, we were more likely to be found plotting our course while sipping cappuccino in some outré café in San Francisco, waiting for Mercury hour to arrive in order to take our next bearing. It was Enochian sorcery on the fly, arriving at all decisions through consultation of our constant companion, the Wilhelm/Baynes edition of the *I Ching*. Mr Yi had been a faithful guide and counsel from the beginning of our endeavor, but now our oracles spoke only the worst: dissolution, decline, and departure of the great and the good.

On 17 July, David did the 25<sup>th</sup> Æthyr in my Temple. Other than Susan and myself, no one had ever done any ritual there before. In retrospect, I suppose it had to be done, as even in my absence the Fortress still constituted a navigational hazard, but the effect of what he did that day was like packing it full of astral explosives and striking a light. Before he began, Jones informed me the lid of the Pastos<sup>†</sup> had been jammed shut,

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<sup>†</sup>The Pastos is the coffin that lies beneath the altar in the "Vault of the Adepts", as portrayed in the *Adeptus Minor* ceremony of the RR et AC. Among other things, Mr Jones's statement implies no one was able to pass the Sixth Sphere ["Beauty", Sol, and so on], at least locally. The symbolism itself is from the *Fama Fraternitatis*, in which the uncorrupted body of Christian Rosencreutz was discovered in a similar tomb, along with the *Book T*.

and I was the one who had done it. He complained that “they couldn’t get it open”, whomever “they” might have been. David appeared satisfied with the results when he’d finished, so I assume he must have been successful. I, on the other hand, was left shattered by the experience, my psyche shredded into little pieces, drifting in the void inane. I could see it coming, knew precisely what he was doing and what would be the effect, but was powerless to stop him, or even offer so much as a feeble protest. Laura and Anne were there, and in fact had been in the Temple from the beginning, myself being admitted only after all was in place and the ceremony opened. They were all quite kind to me afterwards, more so at least than I expected, and when it was over, we packed up the last of Jones’s archive, and drove the forty miles across the Santa Cruz mountains to Orbit One together, for what would be the last time.

To a dispassionate eye, my will had been fulfilled, though it had never occurred to me Susan might not be coming along. One might even observe that the original plan was for me to go to Santa Cruz *alone*, with my wife to follow soon after with the remainder of our household. I did move David and his library to Orbit One as planned, and stayed there myself as well for a time, while I wandered about with Laura Chandler in search of a place to live. Though the why of it escapes me now, it was proposed that she and I share living quarters, along with her two small children. Laura needed a break from her work as an exotic dancer at The Century in San Francisco, and thought the change of pace and scenery might do her good. She said she could cook, and promised to be a good sister, kissing me on the cheek when she said it, a thing I found both comforting and deeply depressing at the time. In my fragmented state of mind, the idea of symbolic incest, and the opportunities the situation might easily present, were lost on me, however blindingly obvious they are today. Laura told me this as we stood alone in what was left of my home, recently abandoned by my wife and her beau. The two lovers had dropped the 3<sup>rd</sup> Æthyr before quitting the house, leaving a burst water pipe gushing in the crawlspace below. How it was broken, and why they either did not notice, or simply elected to leave anyway, was a mystery, and still is.

For better or worse, there are a lot of mysteries in this tale, despite my best efforts to piece the fragments together into a coherent whole. For instance, I still wonder myself sometimes if Susan took other lovers, prior to Belial. Only she and some hypothetical other could know the answer to that, and it matters less now than it ever did. She had a peculiar habit of telling the truth, and admitted only to sleeping with him. Naturally,

I believed her. In the same breath, I was accused of cheating on her with April, long before her young lover arrived on the scene, and she went on to claim that David and I had conspired at some point to trade her sexual favors to Oberon, in exchange for his participation in our designs. Jones is possibly responsible for this last, and for a long time, I blamed him for falsely reporting I was sleeping with April as well. Many years later, it finally occurred to me that Clay was a much more likely culprit, having both her ear, and much to gain by making such an outrageous claim, whether he believed it himself or not. In point of fact, April Dawn and I did not consummate our lust until the “Feast of the First Night of the Beast and his Bride”, on 12 August. I adored her, in many ways as much or more so than Susan, but it was with bittersweet resignation that I lay down beside her. The loss of my wife was by far the biggest emotional issue then in my life, and surrendering to my desire for another meant my relationship with Susan was officially at an end.

When it became obvious to all around us that April and I were getting together at last, Clay interfered in all sorts of petty ways, even going so far as to pull her aside, and lecture her on the virtues of safe sex, saying obviously Susan had been sleeping with David for some time, and therefore I was in all likelihood HIV positive, without even knowing. Two malicious lies in one go—well, at least one, anyway—and it was precisely the kind of slander I should have expected from him under the circumstances, but was still too naive to acknowledge it, even to myself.

Holden went on to mewl and whine after the fact, claiming the raw lust intermittently filling the air was a distraction from his work, the very work David and I had just recently enabled him to do. I appealed to Jones, and he stated that someone’s “Oz rights” were clearly being violated. Strung out as I was at the time, I completely misinterpreted what he said, automatically assuming he was upholding Holden’s cause at the expense of my own. I was generally convinced, after he took me into the 25<sup>th</sup>, that he had turned on me, with a vengeance. I fully expected him to favor Clay because of his role as the custodian of the CES, in much the same way as I believed he had sacrificed my life and wellbeing for the sake of his A.:A.:, so they could open the Pastos and advance their candidates as desired. After a defiant and showy display of packing my few belongings, I returned to Mountain View and took April with me. We arrived to find Susan had now permanently abandoned both the house and my cat, after promising to look after them while I established myself elsewhere and could make other arrangements.

## IX

During my final months in California, I lived in the ruins of the Fortress of Ultimate Darkness with Loki, my Balinese cat. More like camping really, though it was all the home I had. April didn't stay with me long, soon leaving for Seattle, where she helped put her boyfriend's affairs in order, and returned with him to Orbit One. I was still more than welcome in their midst, but for better or worse, it was stability I desired most in my life, and did not adapt well to an open relationship, however pleasant. April's beau had impeccable taste, and not just in women—though we obviously shared that one as well—and with much in common, I enjoyed what little time we spent together. Although I still journeyed to Orbit One now and again, most of my time was spent closer to home.

Of all our acquaintances and so-called friends, only one was particularly unhappy that my wife and I had become estranged, a man known to us simply as Gizmo. He alone made any attempt to resolve the differences between us, or betrayed any sympathy, or depth of feeling, when discussing my plight. When he learned I was living alone, Gizmo even came down to look after me, bringing his girlfriend Bonnie with him. He was an artist, as was she, and his work was simply astonishing, a direct expression of his magical and spiritual practice.

I seldom did formal ritual with Gizmo, yet whenever we shared the same roof it was always one continuous magical act. He was *out there*, way out there, farther than myself, even farther than Susan, if such a thing might be imagined. On the first occasion he came to stay, light bulbs blew throughout the house, two on the first day, and four more soon to follow. As I climbed up to change yet another, he said, "Yeah, I forgot to tell you about this thing with me and technology. Sorry about that." Late one evening, he needed to return home on some errand or another, and had packed their things and waited impatiently for the arrival of the next north-bound train. Bonnie was listening to the stereo, at full blast, dancing in the living room as usual, oblivious to his repeated requests that she accompany him to the platform at once. There was a soft *pop*, the music stopped and the house went dark. "Okay", she said, "That wasn't *really* necessary". I followed them out the door, and as they hurried down the street, I noted that my house was the only one in the area without power. Returning inside,

I located a flashlight, but as I went to check the fuse box, the train whistle sounded in the distance, and the lights mysteriously returned. Such events were common in his presence, and what we accomplished during our time together I was not exactly sure, nor am I at liberty to go into details now, but as a result of an introduction he gave me to the Lord of the Labyrinth, I was granted an exit from the game, and went home. It seems obvious now that as a direct consequence of his assistance, I am here to relate my story today.

At the winter solstice, my father came from back east to retrieve what was left of his son. We packed my books, papers, and accumulated detritus into his truck, and with my car stuffed to overflowing on a trailer behind us, we drove across the United States in under three nights time. The temperatures dropped below freezing the night we left, something that hadn't happened in recent memory, and pipes froze and burst all over the Bay Area. Not at all surprising really, as I had always said it would be a cold day in Hell when I returned home. It was not a joyous return, by any means, though all of us generally tried to make the best of it. My intention when I left California was to end it all, and I was deliberately going somewhere I knew at least the cat would be well cared for once I was gone. Obviously it didn't end that way, but it was a very long time before I stopped regretting not following through. There was some contact at first with the folks out west, despite the distance and the cloud under which I'd left. April and I even spent a week in a motel, about a hundred miles from my parent's farm, in late October of 1991. My mother was furious at the very idea, but my father actually asked when I returned if I'd had a good time—when his wife wasn't around, of course.

Despite my mother's lurid imagination, April and I spent most of our time sitting across a table from one another, with a glass, a bottle of Old Bushmill's, and a deck of cards between us, playing gin. The game was deadly serious, and the company was as delightful as ever. Before putting her on a plane back to California, I had the opportunity to show her the family farm while my parents were away. After walking with me on those 333 acres of pasture and woodland, even on a cold and bleak Feast of All Saints, she said she finally understood why I would go into exile so willingly. In her, I found as pleasant a companion as I have ever known, and as good a friend. After I had been routed, and Susan had requested I leave, it was April who bandaged my wounds and offered her hospitality and more without reservation. She staunched the blood and healed my soul just enough for me to make my escape. It is a pity my father and mother will never understand that she probably saved my life.

In the time we spent working, fighting and drinking together, my father and I eventually made peace, and developed a respect for each other that had always been wanting in our relationship. For that, at least, I am truly grateful, and had things ended differently in California, it might never have happened. Roaming once more over the hills of my childhood restored me somewhat, and I quickly began to gather myself about me. Soon I was keeping a journal again, and took up Raja and Hatha Yoga once more. I even kept *Resh* best I could among the great unwashed. After years of a cosmopolitan existence, life in even a familiar rural setting was quite a challenge. Keith once said he loved the San Francisco Bay Area, because it was one of the few places in the United States where one could politely say, "I am an occultist". In Appalachia, by contrast, sometimes even Catholics are viewed with suspicion. The loneliness of living just past the trailing edge of civilization has been the worst of it. Were it not for April and one or two others, on the phone and in a constant stream of letters and literature, I don't know how I could have carried on at all. I returned to school, and completed my degree in Engineering, and even worked at it for a time, while our grand design in Santa Cruz faded. Jones eventually moved on with Anne, taking his library with him when he left. Hair-raising rumors of his activities reached me for sometime after that, but since I was no longer in a position to judge their validity first hand, I shall here remain silent.

David once said he had lots of enemies, on that particular occasion mentioning by name a man in San Francisco, someone he described as a Holmes to his Moriarty. He seemed to find some personal satisfaction and no little humor in saying it, too. By the time I left the Bay Area, I knew precisely how this poor soul must have felt, and though I was not actively stalking him with lethal intent, the thought had occasionally crossed my mind. David had become the Devil incarnate to me, and believing any nightmarish tale told about him was a simple matter. Gizmo said Jones's only reaction to news of my imminent departure was, "Well, we've lost *Michael*", and that was that. True enough, but after all we had been through together, to say nothing of my supporting and sheltering him when no one else gave him so much as the time of day, one might expect a little more heartfelt emotion than that. In the final analysis, despite any harsh judgments I might have reached after the fall, he gave me what I needed most, a precious gift that many desire but few receive: a chance to start over, just as he'd once said. David himself descended into his own private hell after I left, or so I was told, and was subsequently ejected from the Order. I must confess, on the off chance that

some stray copy of this might fall into his hands, that I thought this freedom was what he wanted most. In my anger and grief, born out of a childish need for vengeance, and hoping to force upon him a fate worse than death, I opened the 15<sup>th</sup> Æthyr, on an upper floor of the stacks at my university's main library, and with my own blood, I petitioned the Governors of that Aire that he might be re-admitted. Since then, though I don't know all the details, I understand he has indeed returned to the Order, but has otherwise reformed his life and is doing well. If I am somehow responsible for his falling back into Uncle Oto's good graces, I can only offer him my sincerest apologies.

As my dream disintegrated in California, there was little I could do but watch in horror from such a distance, though cracks had begun to appear in Santa Cruz, even before I left. By that time, Clay's work had already come to include proving once and for all the Dee material was just a sophisticated form of cryptography, used in service to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth I. Perhaps this had been his hope from the beginning, for all I know. Wouldn't us naughty magick types look foolish when he was right, and we were found to be solemnly chanting, "The Duke is secretly supporting the cause. Still suspects nothing. Your humble servant, as always. 007". Holden seemed to take great pride in the monastic life of a pious scholar, keeping himself pure from political embroilment and this business of hopping from bed to bed that marred the work of his peers. Despite this, however, he always presented himself as the humble and manifestly unworthy recipient of divine grace, most notably in the form of rolls and rolls of microfilm held in the CES's collection, containing most, if not all, the extant source material. I thought him just a lovelorn and deluded fool—he had just lost yet another girlfriend, this time dumped for discussing agricultural reform with me, and enjoying the conversation a bit too much—but despite my misgivings, he went on to electronically publish the first three books of Dee's *Mysteriorum Libri*, under the auspices of "The John Dee Publication Project".

Susan called my parent's house one day, many months after my return, and asked of me a boon. She explained she was filing for a "no fault" divorce, and Holden had kindly volunteered to help by signing the petition as witness, under the proviso that I not hunt him down like a dog for doing so. At the time, I thought this an utterly bizarre request, and assumed that like so many around him, Clay had at last gone "balls-up crackers", as he liked to put it. It never occurred to me that in his mind, I might have every reason to desire his unfortunate demise, should I learn the full extent of his involvement. For

that matter, Susan had gone round the bend as well, as far as I was concerned. The rest of us seemed to drift back to earth in time, but if she did—bless her heart—she gave no outward indication of it in the few times we communicated after I left. I understand when the dust settled, none of the other kids wanted to play with her anymore. I loved her dearly, and in a way still do, but can't honestly say that I blame them.

Her loss of social standing mattered little, as Susan was eventually well cared for. David petitioned Belial, *in my presence*, no less, to “make this woman wealthy”, and for his part the boy agreed to get right on it. According to the *Goëtia*:

He is a Mighty and a Powerful King, and was created next after Lucifer. . . He speaketh with a Comely Voice, and declareth that he fell first from among the worthier sort, that were before Michael, and other Heavenly Angels. . . Note well that this King Belial must have Offerings, Sacrifices and Gifts presented unto him by the Exorcist, or else he will not give True Answers unto his Demands.

What precisely was offered I shall here leave to the reader's imagination, but she subsequently married very well indeed, and lives quite comfortably with her family, last I heard.

April and I kept in touch the longest, though with time, we too drifted apart. I lied to myself and others that I was going to return some day, and she appeared to believe me, at least at first. She had faith in me, though unfortunately more than I had myself. There came a time when I did finally resolve to return, but she had got on with living her own life by then, and didn't have time or the energy to help. Without support for the move, or some reason to be there once I arrived, I dropped the idea and accepted my fate. We communicated a few times after that, followed by a long silence which stretches unto the present day. With April went all sense of community, of a common stock of shared experience, a thing so many of us take for granted when communicating with those around us. My past receded, becoming unreal and irreconcilable with my present surroundings and mode of existence, and in place of a longed-for day of release and redemption, a deep-seated disillusion settled over me, haunting the relative highs and lows of my mundane existence.

For eleven years after I left the Bay Area, I did everything from rake hay and pull calves to cranking computer code and supervising heavy construction. My life was quite successful, when I put my mind to it, holding positions of relative responsibility and power. None of it brought me any real satisfaction, or elevated my sense of self worth in the slightest. The shroud in which I had wrapped my dreams obscured my vision

as well. It seemed certain that something had gone hideously wrong in my life, and over time, blaming myself for it all became just another habit. Like it or not, whether I consciously believed it or not, I was still bound to the Caliphate, as surely as if a noose had been placed round my neck and they yet held tightly to the running end. Though I could still chat with Heidrick on the phone after I left, and he was just as congenial as ever, there was no denying to myself my personal disgrace. In abusive domestic situations, the victims are barred from close association with those on the outside by the simple fact that the most important aspects of their life simply cannot be told to anyone, not even their closest and dearest friends. The Caliphate is much the same, as even if a Brother walks away, there remains an invisible barrier between that unfortunate soul and the uninitiated around them. For instance, Jones once said, speaking of suitable lovers, if one could not perform the *Star Ruby*, *Star Sapphire*, and *Samech*, in front of a given individual, they should not be seriously considered for a long-term relationship. Imagine the prospects of satisfying those criteria in the heart of rural America.

# X

The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants,  
and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

JOB 1:16

The OTD of my hopes and dreams is gone, if indeed it has ever existed. The Thelema Lodge that I remember is gone as well. Gurus of the new and improved Caliphate maintain it is possible, even desirable, to remain normal in the eyes of modern society and still be a top-drawer occultist. Truly, the mind boggles, and when I learned of this new Kingdom Age doctrine, one better suited to collecting dues than promoting self-realization, rest assured I gave thanks for my exile and freedom from occultists and the occult, albeit with a heavy heart.

But in the spring of 2001, I happened upon Joel Biroco, who himself had retired from the occult scene some years ago. Early in what became a voluminous exchange of emails, I was surprised to find strikingly similar themes in his work of the late 1980s and my own. I had never heard of the 156 current as such, which Joel had announced in 1989, but it spoke to me, out of my own experience, not from any persuasive argument on his part. I could feel its ring of truth in my bones, and my own story seemed an obvious example of the emergence of KAOS-BABALON. With caution born of bitter disappointment, I offered to tell this lengthy tale of magick and intrigue. Joel suggested I attempt to set it all down in some coherent manner, for my own sake more than anyone else's, and this is the result of that attempt.

Aside from finally coming to grips with the reality of what happened in California, the most challenging part, and certainly the most rewarding, has been unpacking my life and work, unearthing it from more than a decade of dust and idleness. While sorting through boxes and mounds of paper I'd long forgotten possessing, I began to remember, with unexpected clarity, what it was like to connect with a live magical current, and what it had meant to me in a time grown dim and shadowy with the passage of years. Occasionally, I would get a pretty good blast of the bullshit and paranoia still lingering in my past, the unexploded ordinance from the war, but dazed and confused I struggled on. As I worked it out, wrote it out, sometimes shouted and screamed it out, the light began to dawn in my life once more, and like one who wakes from a

long and fitful slumber, I realized the horror of my memory was but a nightmare. I had not failed at all. I had, in fact, pursued my dream—my *will*—and in an all too brief moment, I had found that which I had sought since my youth.

If I seem to have lost much in the process of realizing that dream, the reward has been great, and all my foolish tears are as nothing in comparison. In focusing on what others may or may not have done, I lost sight of what I had done myself, what I have accomplished, as well as the mistakes I have made. When I first encountered the Caliphate, I actually believed there was someone outside of myself who could make a magician out of me, or bring me to enlightenment. Of all my manifold errors, this was the greatest mistake of all. There never was such an earthly individual, nor will there ever be. Others may aid me, sometimes even point me in the right direction, but that journey is for myself alone. It is this that has afforded me a clear and unobstructed view of the course of my life, and my own role in what were remarkably interesting times.

To realize one's essential and unalterable wholeness, to learn, however late, that there is no need for degrees and magical hierarchies in order to attain, is a gift beyond measure, and far be it from me to question the circumstances under which it is given. It is my sincerest wish that the reader will do likewise, and lay this simple truth to heart.