

The House of Great Spirit

Six Stories

Tom Foran Clark

For Joe Dionne

...for here there is no place
that does not see you. You must change your life.

– Rainer Maria Rilke, from
Archaic Torso of Apollo

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The House of Great Spirit

For not quite one year in the latter days of the twentieth century, before departing the Utah Rockies to go live in the Green Mountains of Vermont, I lived in a small room in a big three-story red brick boarding house in Salt Lake City known in its neighborhood as the Mead House, named for the octogenarian landlord, robust, round Jack Mead, who only showed his face in order to curse a tenant, tend to a faucet, or fix a broken window. His right-hand-man and live-in-manager was Jon Severs. Already, only in his mid-twenties, lanky Severs had found his

calling. It was his job to scold the tenants at Jack Mead's house in Mead's stead – to bawl them out – to curse them for leaving dishes in the sink or for leaving beer cans in the common room. Every evening Severs would gather up all the dirty dishes, glasses, silverware, and throw these out the kitchen window. He also threw out any slippers, shoes, shirts, socks, jocks, and shorts left lying about. On rent day he went room to room to collect money. If you didn't pay at once, he screwed his face up in a look of almost crushing contempt.

Jon Severs was not well liked, but we only saw him evenings – throwing out the dishes and the rest – or on rent-day once a month. The tenants loved to talk about him behind his back, attributing many of the world's worst problems to him, and to people *like* him. Many of the tenants left their dirty laundry and dishes and so on lying about *on purpose*, not to irk him but "to *feed his need*."

When he wasn't breaking dishes or demanding rent, Severs liked to ensconce himself in his room on the third floor, and sit or lie on the wooden floor and read. He was an insatiable reader. His room was filled with colossal stacks of old and yellowed newspapers. Jon said he'd never read a newspaper that wasn't at least ten years old. He called all current journalism 'populist nonsense.' Were it not for his venturing forth to collect rent and toss other people's goods out windows, we would probably never have seen him.

One day Jon emerged from his newspaper stacks to go throw a yelping black Labrador out of the kitchen window with dishes, etc., killing the poor dog. The Labrador had belonged to boarders Jim and Bob, twin brothers who lived in the two available fourth floor attic rooms. When the heavier-set of the twins, Jim, got word of Jon's deed, he first punched Jon's teeth down his throat, then threw *him* out a window – the highest upstairs bathroom window, after which Jim dropped bathroom towels covered with his own excrement on him. Severs suffered hurt pride, purple and yellow bruises, and four teeth knocked out.

The next day, Jack Mead showed up to evict Jim and Bob, him screaming bloody murder at their empty rooms. Jim and Bob had already departed, leaving no messages behind.

Rob Wren moved into the two vacated rooms. "R n' R," as he was called, had come to Salt Lake from Wyoming. He was an African American who'd been an intern park ranger at the Grand Tetons National Park for a year. He'd lately taken work as a snow pusher driving a snowplow at the Stardust Ski Resort high in the mountains. He kept one of the two rooms empty but for a simple cot he slept on from time to time. The other room he carpeted wall to wall and filled with plush tiger-skin covered armchairs and couches for his weekend guests, women the snow pusher regularly and mysteriously wooed to the Mead House from the Stardust Ski Resort. For all that, R n' R was rarely in his rooms at all. He spent nearly all his time in the house watching public television programs on the TV in the common room.

Directly under R n' R's guest quarters was the Turk Mehmet Tasdemir's room, small but as intimate and elaborate as a sultan's love chamber. Mehmet was as intelligent and suave a gentleman as you could like. Unfortunately, the biggest lout in the house, Seth Kirkland, an unredeemable drunkard, despised the elegant Turk. I tried to be a peacemaker, saying "people do what they are up to; and what they aren't up to, they can't do." I figured everyone was doing the best they could, even drunken Seth Kirkland.

Seth was prone to passionate outbursts. When you saw him in pain, you knew he was in his element. Looking for a fight, he once accused regal Mehmet of being "a God damned son of Perdition dwelling in darkness." Mehmet, remaining calm, pressed his knuckles hard into his temples and, in silence, departed the house. Later, Mehmet came to me and confessed Kirkland was literally driving him crazy. I told him, listen, if *anyone* was going *crazy* it was *Seth*, not him, Mehmet.

Seth, eavesdropping, was outraged. A zoo baboon had better sense and manners. He about tore the place apart, littering the boarding house with strewn jottings, crumpled paperwads, abandoned sticky-note messages left on the stairs and in all our shared living spaces. Most of his messages were short, clear, and fiercely resentful ("Death to Unbelievers"); others were so telegraphic as to be indecipherable ("mmt tlks mch crp", "gmn ftr fddrn cnon fddrn hvn", "rnr cldnt hv blk prtr trnt," and so on).

Seth was a Mormon – "one of the *other* Mormons," he insisted – the *other* kind. Seth believed good Mormons would become gods in the hereafter, populating their own worlds, creating their own versions of Jesus and Satan. He believed the Garden of Eden was located in the place that is today called Independence, Missouri. He believed in a three-level afterlife, where the highest world was reserved for believers, the middle world for well-meaning non-believers, and the last world for "people like R n' R – the lowest of the low."

Seth, whose original name was Sam had, just a few years before, gone through a difficult *Agape Love* initiation ceremony conducted by a group of latter day Knights Templars called the *Ordo Templi Anodopetalum*, where he'd learned an ancient secret handshake which, if he demonstrated it to us, he said, would necessitate his having to kill us afterwards. At the initiation ceremony Sam, through certain "penalties," had been defeated and, through certain other "ritual enactments," Seth had received his new spiritual identity and name. In a circular clearing in a poplar forest, he'd been tied up and suspended by his arms from the limb of an oak tree. His captors ("benefactors") stated their intent to skin and eat him even as they sharpened their knives. They then began to "slice" him – first his throat, from ear to ear, followed by a symbolic disemboweling that began just under his chin and continued all the way to his navel – resulting in anxiety, paranoia, panic, convulsions, and his "liberation." Sam – Seth – had agreed to his own execution if he ever revealed any secrets beyond these which he'd just revealed to us.

Seth believed that, as the devil and his angels were Sons of Perdition who dwelled in darkness, it were better that some people he knew had never been born. He believed Jesus Christ had been begotten through a sexual union between an extraterrestrial male and a fertile earthling woman and that he, Seth, together with just such an archetypal woman – reduced to only her sexual and childbearing attributes – could create, themselves becoming Gods, their own spiritual offspring to populate their own future worlds. Seth said he was, like his God, "masculine, fiery, and solar-phallic" – as had been Jesus Christ, who'd not only been a married man, but also a polygamist.

There was one young woman in the house among the numerous young men – Susan Peters – who often cooked up huge feasts for us all, running between the sturdy old porcelain and steel oven-stove in the kitchen and a tiny hot-plate in her room. Nothing could beat her rice and

vegetable dishes. She could also toss a salad – crunchy romaine lettuce and chives, watercress, and homemade yogurt-based dressings. She had as many recipes for dressings, sauces, and gravies as ways to peel an orange. She had all these fancy turns of elbow, and swift and clever hands. Houdini would have loved her. I did.

It was Susan who invited me to go with her to attend a Sundance ceremony put on by one of the southern Utah tribes – I think it must have been the Utes or Paiutes; I didn't know one tribe from another – an intense ceremony running four days. We went down and camped nearby, then visited the scene as special guests – idle spectators, really. How Susan got the invitation in the first place remains a mystery. It was a sacred ceremony and, obviously, we were outsiders.

On the first day, some of the participants, young men, stood in a circle around a tree that had been placed in the middle of a ceremonial arbor and, at their leisure, slowly began to dance. After a while, emerging from the woods, a parade of jesters, or clowns, marched into the Sundance arbor, each with his or her own peculiar, zany, almost hideous outfit. These ridiculous costumes, home-made from rags and daubed randomly with paint, covered their entire bodies. Enormous crooked beak-like noses sprouted from masks under hoods concealing their heads. Each held an oak branch with a white cloth pouch filled with a tobacco offering. Bystanders, mostly women, moaned and chanted, throwing tobacco, coins, and clothes on the ground before the approaching jesters. These tricksters teased and tickled the dancers, then left again.

On the second day the young men, the dancers, in order to show their appreciation for the gift of their lives, had themselves hung in the air like so many crucified Christs. A buffalo was led into the arbor – not a real buffalo, but one created along the lines of a Chinese dragon – two people covered by a shaggy rug with horns. This buffalo began randomly knocking the jesters over, also thrusting his horns into dancer's legs. The jesters scolded the buffalo and tried to shoo and scare him away, but then instead began being very kind to the beast, treating it respectfully, and finally led it from the arbor quietly.

Returning, the tricksters resumed being as ugly, insulting, and obnoxious as possible – harassing the dancers by any means they could think up. They couldn't speak in a human manner but, instead, had to "talk" with shrill, annoying whistles. The only good thing you could say about all that disruption and harassment by these jesters is that it took the dancer's minds off their actual suffering and the fact that the worst was yet to come. The end was coming.

Through the days, the dancers were deprived of food, water, and sleep. Each of the days must have been very hard on the dancers, but the fourth day surely must have been the most exhausting, for it was then the men pierced themselves with spears, offering their flesh to The Great Spirit, giving of themselves to show symbolic solidarity with women, who routinely sacrificed their bodies to men so that life could continue. One of the clowns was given a rifle, and another a bow and arrow, which the two then used ritualistically to shoot the dancers – to make *sure* that they were "dead." The dancers were then cut down and removed from the Sundance area, returning to life out of view from the arbor.

On the fifth day, Susan and I broke camp and returned homeward. Along the way, we stopped in a canyon clearing for a picnic of tuna sandwiches and pink lemonade. We'd finished eating and were lying romantically on a patch of grass along a riverbank, embracing without

speaking. Susan was wearing a blouse I loved, blue jeans, a gold bracelet on her right arm, and a splendid turquoise bead necklace around her neck. I'd taken her in my arms, hoping not only to get to first base but to do some deep spelunking, showing my support for life continuing.

"I have a son," Susan said suddenly, retreating from my advances. "He was born out of wedlock. I was raped. I've decided to leave Salt Lake." She withdrew from my embrace. When I opened my eyes, she was already walking away. "I'm going to go be with my baby."

Wringing my hands, I followed her to the car. "What's the baby's name?" I asked.

"Phillip," I heard her answer. She said more but, slayed as I was, stunned, I wasn't really listening.

Back at the boarding house, Susan stuffed most everything she owned into paper grocery bags and put these on the curb out front of the house. The only things remaining in her room, her hot plate and her books, she left to me. I was so distracted, perplexed, and muddled, I didn't even say thank you, nor did I offer to go with her to the airport. "We'll stay in touch," she said, and got in the waiting taxi.

That evening, I cooked my dinner on her hot plate – stir-fried mushrooms, onions, carrots, green peppers, and plenty of soybean sprouts. I spent a good part of the night pacing the floor of her room. Shortly after midnight, I moved all her books to the bookshelf in my room.

When I finally got to sleep, I dreamed I was one of those Sundance clowns she and I had shared seeing. Embracing Susan, I put a spear into my heart. My soul climbed into Susan's body through her womb and departed through her flaxen-haired head as a cloud. I awoke and went down to pace some in the kitchen, then went over and paced some in the common room – back and forth, back and forth – worrying, wondering what, if anything, I should have done or still could do.

After a while, I fell asleep on the couch. The sound of light footsteps woke me – prowler's footsteps, stealthy and careful. I imagined the invader carried a glistening knife blade, of course. I was ready to leap up and run, if need be. Fantastic, what goes through your head. Mehmet flung open the front room curtains. It was morning. "Rise and shine!" he said.

I let off steam that day, chopping firewood out back of the house – chopping, chopping, and chopping – expelling excess energy, keeping back tears.

That night I started reading a book about the Jewish *Cabbala* that was among Susan's left behind books (others: *European Pessimism in the Nineteenth Century*, *Puritan Infatuation with Orientalism*, *Swedenborg's Theories of Conjugal Love*, and *Transcendentalism Being Equal to Moonshine*). After a while I closed the *Cabbala* book and went out. I went down the street to Charlie Worth's pub to drink beer and listen to live Blues.

Of course there was more to Charlie than his bartending at his pub. You could never have guessed, just to look at him, what all was going on in that tidy gentleman's head and heart. He was forty or so, with long, coarse black hair streaked with silver. His face was all bones, gaunt, his leather-like cheeks sucked in. His nose was huge, pushed flat to one side, broken in a fist fight in his childhood. His eyes were two hard, obsidian beads. He usually wore a brown buckskin coat fringed with two manes of matching two-inch strings along the arms.

He was a master bartender. Nine out of ten times he could tell a customer what he or she

wanted just by looking at him or her. His art was lost on beer-drinking me, but not his ear. For everyone equally he had that great bartender's gift for listening. I sometimes kept him up past closing, talking. That night, me being the last customer, I helped him clear the tables, turn the chairs over onto the tables, and mop the floor. I kept Charlie awake right on into the wee hours. He only interrupted me once. "I want to tell you something," he said finally. "Come with me." He put on his buckskin coat and led me out the back door to his waiting shiny dark green Porsche.

It was not yet dawn. We rolled north out of Salt Lake City along the Jordan River into deepening canyons. We hit a jugged, torn-up stretch of road winding high into the hills. We set out on foot from there, sauntering up the many long and winding lumber roads reaching like arteries all through those mountains. The sun was just emerging out over the peaks and treetops, burning off the early morning shrouds of dew. There was sureness and light buoyancy in his stepping rock to rock, like he had little brains or sensors in his feet. His tiny bead-eyes were alert and penetrating, prowling the sky and bushes and trees, even as he began to take *his* turn now, talking to *me*.

Charlie was born in Shipolovi, Arizona in the neighborhood of Tuba City, Oraibi, and Shongopovi. He was of Hopi Indian descent. The Hopis were "the direct descendants of the *Anasazi*," the cliff-dwellers – the legendary people who'd lived in caves high up on the steep walls of canyons.

"We Hopis speak of the distant past as if it were this morning," Worth said, gesturing out over the fields up to the treetops, then out to the skies. "Fresh – *now*. To a Hopi, everything is interwoven, interconnected, and important. What was, *is*. This, here and now, that – everything – it is *all* related – which a Hopi never forgets."

I asked Worth why he did not have a regular Indian name like *He Who Speaks Slow*, *Survivor of Lightning Bolt*, or *Man Who Spears Salmon* – something like that.

"I didn't choose my name any more than you did," he said. "Unlike you, I was named twice. My original name was *Leaping Deer*. My step-parents, the Worths, gave me the name *Charlie*. I was born on a Reservation and raised on prairie rodents and rattlesnakes. I slept at night on a sheepskin on a dirt floor in a mud hut, and ran around free and naked and content all day until I was six years old. I was raised on the Hopi Indian ways – up early every morning, just like this morning – and kept to these ancient, simple ways. Every day was a holy day."

Every now and then Worth paused to roll a cigarette from a blue pouch of Dutch tobacco, keeping still and silent when he did. He never spoke while smoking. When done smoking, he'd painstakingly bury each cigarette butt in the earth – a tiny ritual. Then he'd resume speaking.

We continued up assorted lumber trails. Worth told me how the white man had sneaked in on his sacred childhood. "After the Spanish barged in on horses, wearing armor and looking for gold, it was the greedy cowboys who encroached, and Franciscans, and finally the *Mormons*. These last were the best intentioned – busybodies all. They were the most *bent* on abolishing every last shred of Hopi pride and resolve to maintain the ancient ways. The Mormons came to the Reservations with their sacks full of chocolate candies, ballpoint pens, Korean wristwatches, and Italian jogging shoes – in short, *bribes*. They caught up with me just before my seventh

birthday. They bribed my mother with alarm clocks, dental floss, and Argentine *Spam*. They nabbed me and packed me off to a Bureau of Indian Affairs school. After an unhappy year there, I was placed in a ‘good Mormon home,’ in Salt Lake City. It was *then* I got my name Charlie – Charlie Worth.

"They were good people, my new family," Charlie admitted. "I mean, they meant well. They showered me with toys and things. They even dressed me up in cowboy clothes! I was caught between worlds. I was too weak to protest. I got sick – *very* sick. The white man’s poison made me vomit; his ideas made me weep. Over time, I adapted. I got well again. One day I was so fit and lively, I called my stepfather an ‘egghead Nephite Moha,’ and threw a copy of *The Book of Mormon* at his head. He threatened me with eternal hellfire and damnation, put shame upon my head – which, if it were up to him, I would *still* bear upon my head today – and bust my nose open with his fist."

"What does ‘Moha’ mean?" I asked.

"It’s a Sanskrit word, and also an Athapaskan Pueblo Indian word. It means ‘*all the opposites at work in the infinite world.*’ That’s how the *real* world works. But you know from your school textbooks the awful jumble that’s fed us. Leif Erickson came to America – or maybe it was Christopher Columbus who came to America. Either way, lo and behold, there were the Indians, already arrived. We’d been here so long already, we were considered aboriginal, indigenous – which was disproved later. Compounding errors, we were dubbed ‘*Indians*’! We were victims not only of dispossession, massacre, near annihilation – genocide – we had to live with that misnomer. Anyway – where *did* the misnamed ‘Indians’ come from in the first place, can you guess?"

"*Terra Mater*," I said knowingly, being a little familiar with native American myths. "From the Four Wombs of the Earth. They climbed out of a hole in the ground."

"With ears like bats, webbed feet like geese, tails like iguanas, and backbones like melted cheese?"

"They emerged from the earth full-grown and upright," I said with conviction.

"Nope," Worth corrected me. "They came out looking more like flapjacks and noodles than Adam and Eve. And the gods that made these flimsy creatures? – where’d *they* come from?"

"Gods just *are*," I said.

"‘*Askwali*’," Charlie told me cheerfully. "It means *Thank you*. I liked what you said – ‘The gods just *are*.’ There’s not an answer that is better, I believe. *Askwali* – *Thank you* – for that. All right, okay. So *people* came on the scene and got backbones and otherwise evolved. So – where’d the *Indians* come from?"

"Asia," I knew.

"Yep. From the north – from Russia somewhere. The earliest inhabitants crossed to Alaska by way of the Bering Straits some twenty thousand years ago. Then they pushed south from Alaska through the valleys between mountain ranges into Canada, then filtered down to North America. So say Anthropologists. Do you know what the *Mormons* say?"

I had no idea.

"*The Book of Mormon* says the original Americans sailed on over from across the South

Pacific,” Worth said. “They say a Jewish boy named Lehi fled from Israel at the time of the Babylonian invasion around six hundred B.C., at which time Jerusalem was devastated. This was at the same historical time that right here, in the southwest, the Anasazi nomads took up their gentleman-farmer cliff-dwelling lifestyle. Over there, Lehi set out with his some of his family and their friends across the waters. *The Book of Mormon* says they landed in South America, down around Peru. The little band of Hebrews flourished, eventually building up a splendid civilization with marvelous cities greater than those of even the Aztecs and Mayans – so say the *Mormons*,” Charlie said.

Charlie again rolled and smoked another cigarette, followed by his tiny burial ceremony.

“Lehi had two sons,” he then continued. “One was called Nephi and the other Laman. Nephi was devout and pure; Laman was a scoundrel. The two brothers had to go their separate ways, of course – or you could not have got the end result: the family split into two nations, the Nephites and the Lamanites. Naturally, the Nephites were white, bright, God-fearing people; and the Lamanites were indolent and quarrelsome, squandering their lives away.

“Then it was that Jesus Christ came to preach to these lost tribes of Israel in America, the Nephites. Nephi’s people were plenty glad to see him! Following his teachings, they lived in peace and prosperity for many generations but, over time, degenerated. One day they picked a fight with the lazy, Godforsaken Lamanites. Soon enough, a battle was raging. They warred, then made treaties, broke these, made up new ones, and the rest – by turns massacring one another and then apologizing, down through long centuries. Finally, God stepped in and set apart the Lamanites with an unmistakable sign: he made them brown, as befitted their corrupt pagan nature and their loss of belief, you see. God, now finding the Nephites ‘white and delightsome’ – despite all the harm they’d done and blood they’d let – left them palefaces.”

“*Moha*,” I said. “All the opposites at work in the infinite world.”

“Right,” Charlie affirmed. “*Askwali*. The dark Lamanites, outraged at having been turned dark brown, turned on their paleface brethren. The Nephites were destroyed to a man. That man was named Moroni. It was Moroni’s mission, as the last prophet of God’s Chosen people, to record the story of his race. He inscribed the story in a kind of shorthand version of a language loosely resembling Egyptian on sacred golden plates. These he buried with special equipment future translators would absolutely need to have in order to decipher them. One thousand four hundred years later, a young man named Joseph Smith unearthed these plates and translated them, ‘restoring the True Religion,’ as the Mormons tell it – giving the world *The Book of Mormon*. Smith at once took on the task of starting the final movement reaching toward the ultimate realization of ‘A New Zion of Saints’ in these our ‘Latter Days’.”

“The Latter Day Saints,” I said. “So what became of the Lamanites?”

“The Mormons say that in the first several centuries after destroying the Nephites to a man – Moroni – the Lamanites simply forgot who they were. They took up strange, pantheistic religions, ate rattlesnakes, lived in wamkishes and mud huts, dwelled in holes in canyon cliffs, and worshipped the earth and sun and moon and stars. In short, the loathsome Lamanites were transformed over time into loathsome *Indians*.

“At the time the railroads emerged, we Hopi Indians were corralled into a Reservation –

which was later taken back from us, our two-and-a-half million acres of land swallowed up into encircling Navajo lands. Mark my words, we Hopis never forget. While Mormons believe a man from another world ambitiously became a God in order to make this world, and to make lords and devils and all the attendant familiar drama of the unhappy world, we Hopis believe we were simply created by the Great Spirit *within* our loving Mother Earth. I don't commonly go on like this," he apologized, "but I can't shake the feeling that I am somehow *supposed* to tell you this. It's not only rare that a bartender should get such an opportunity to speak of *himself* like this – it *is* doing me good – but I feel strangely *called* to it."

"Please go on," I said politely.

"*Askwali – Thank you,*" Charlie said. "It is most important that you listen closely to what I have to tell you now. You've heard tales of how I wandered in the mountains and the deserts of this state for many years before ever opening the pub?"

"I've also heard you went to school in Provo, and got a PhD in Anthropology."

"That's true. After, I went to Moab, looking to settle there. I homesteaded on some open, barren land out there and was granted ownership of the ground under the hut I'd built. It was made from scrap, stuff just lying around, abandoned and rusting – things like bedsprings, jeep parts, beer cans, bottles, bottle-caps, bones. The leader of the early Mormon settlers, Brigham Young, had said, 'There is no private ownership of streams and water; and wood and timber shall be regarded as common property.'" My cabin was built from common garbage. It did take some *time* to build it, but I also had plenty of that. One month after my little place was finished, I applied for and obtained from the U.S. government, for half a dollar, the tiny square of earth I'd built it on.

"Okay, now listen to this. A year after that, I *sold* my place to a Salt Lake City entrepreneur and financier for ten thousand dollars. Then he turned around and sold it to a California billionaire who moved it to his Beverly Hills backyard, proudly displaying it next to his swimming pool. Then an article with plenty of full-color photographs appeared in a home decorating magazine, highlighting my claptrap bones-and-bottle-caps creation. Soon, it was well-known throughout the west – and so was I. That's how I came to be a celebrity in Los Angeles," Worth said regretfully. "They may as well have put me on a leash, trotting me around as they did, 'making the circuits.'"

"Six months of that and I was ripe to return to Utah. I went back to Moab to wander amid the chalk-red mesa plains in and around Arches National Park. I had a look around. I went down to the Dead Horse Point Lookout, offering a view out over the vast, splendid canyon lands of southern Utah. The green Colorado River loops like a lasso tight around the base of the flat topped mesa plateau, forming a natural corral at the top – a bottlenecked peninsula. In the old days, cowboys forced wild horses to the high mesa peninsula and barricaded the neck. Every now and then the cowboys returned to add new horses and collect the enduring horses they'd previously left behind. The dead horses were generally pushed off the mesa to the valley floor far, far below. The new additions were left to endure – or to die. Thus the moniker, Dead Horse Point.

"So there I was one day, at that point, marveling at the brilliant cruelty of the cowboys,

feeling sorry for the stranded horses, and I began to cry. I laughed and wept, laughed and wept. In my convulsions, I just about rolled right off that mesa. I pulled myself together and resolved I'd return to Salt Lake City to be a bartender. The world is so immensely sad and funny – do you see it? I decided to tend bar, be on hand, keep people's glasses filled, be a good listener. People have such joy and hardship.

“Did you know that in their first winter here, when the Mormons first landed in the Great Salt Lake Valley, they ate thistle-tops and weed-roots to keep themselves alive? In the spring, they cleared the land, set up irrigation, and their crops flourished. Then a plague of crickets arrived in myriads, gobbling up the grain. The despairing Mormons got down on their knees and prayed. Then they got up and tried some things to end the suffering. They tried to burn the bugs, and drown them, and even beat them back with shovels and broomsticks. But the crickets kept coming.

“One day seagulls winged in elegantly over the western part of the lake, heading for the farm fields, hungry for crickets. Obviously, God had intervened. In like fashion the Mormons, hungry for Indians, say Indian genocide – the extermination of Native Americans – is also, *obviously*, God intervening. But I know, and *you* know, God is *already* present *in* everything – God doesn't *intervene*. God serves the drinks, keeps our glasses filled, and everybody laughs and weeps. Well, *Askwali – Thank you*,” Charlie finished. “It's not every day a bartender gets to have somebody be so good a listener. I appreciate you.”

That night Worth served me a *lot* more beer than he should have, and in the morning I had a *terrible* hangover. I overslept and had to hurry to be at my new job on time. I'd accepted work with a successful contractor, Henri DesRosiers, an emigré of Le Puy, France. A strong, compact fellow, DesRosiers was just finishing up work on a house he'd built himself. He'd bought an acre of land three houses up from the Mead House, acquiring the parcel from his wife's brother-in-law. DesRosiers, fifty, liked to wear a denim jacket, a blue oxford work shirt, denim jeans, and fancy-tooled pointed cowboy boots. He didn't pay me near what I was worth, but I could see how badly he needed help. “*Sacrément!*” he'd cry, hitting his own thumb with his hammer. “*C'est n'est pas possible!*”

When I got back to the boarding house after my first day working for DesRosiers, Mehmet and R n' R were performing a strange ritual. On their knees in the common room, the black man and the Turk were banging their heads on the wooden floor. Seth ran up smiling, smelling of whiskey and ale, and led me into the hall. He pressed a letter postmarked Grange, Vermont to my chest. “It's *her*,” he said, pleading that I open the letter and read it aloud.

“My dear,” Susan had written, “Your last eight postcards arrived here all at once – with sixteen cents due. The postman threatened he would not leave our porch until I paid. I only had a quarter and a nickel and a dime. He finally took the dime and nickel, adding in a penny from his own pocket, saying he preferred this to making change for the quarter. I'm enclosing that quarter with this letter, which I send as a token of my friendship for you.”

A quarter was taped to the letter.

“Rest assured,” she continued, “this is not my *last* quarter. I send it to you for good luck. I'm getting by, working at my uncle Fred's hardware store five days a week, seven hours a day.

Phillip's fine, and I am fine. Love, Susan.”

Seth begged to have the stamp. I tore off the corner of the envelope, gave it to him, and went up to my room. On the floor were Susan's hot plate and my toppled bookcase. My books and her books had all been removed. Jon Severs appeared in the open doorway holding unwashed socks and broken dishes in his arms. Had I forgotten this was rent day? The eruption of my laughter made his hair stand up. The floodgate holding back my tears was lifted.

Eben Anders

Call me Wendy Carpenter. Though I loved and later married Eben Anders, there were times I wished we'd never met. When we did first meet, I fell for him, though he did not have movie star good looks. In fact, he *looked* like he'd been hit by a *truck*.

Hey, don't get me wrong. Eben, with his fair complexion, slightly unkempt black hair, and neatly trimmed beard – but no mustache – was not bad looking. The nicest thing in his appearance was the beard. He looked Amish, which is to say honest and sweet. But, even with that handsome beard, I probably would not have noticed him had he been just sitting around in one of the lounges or meandering in one of the corridors in the hospital where I was a young intern trying to learn how to be a nurse. But, as it was – what with Eben having been pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital! – he got my attention.

We were nearly the same age – Eben was born six months ahead of me in Grange, high in the north of Vermont, in 1950. It was in mid-October, late in the fall. His step-parents told me the green, gold, and crimson forests had suggested both death and resurgence. In the mornings, early, frost lay soft as angel hair, spun glass, on the ground. The afternoons, getting shorter, were touched with a biting crystal edge. Nights fell earlier and seemed to be getting, like the deepening cold, vaster and starrier.

Strong winds brought the final fall leaves down, laying out a carpet of sage, russet, and amber. The first snowfall came and went, leaving the forest sodden, and the leaves on the ground flimsy and black. Julie Anders, after giving birth to Eben, lay devastated on the bed, in the grip of a cruel fever. Just before dying, she said she could only see a deep purple-black vastness filled with lime-yellow starry asterisks – a sort of private Aurora Borealis in her brain. She said she only hoped one thing – that her baby would outlive her – and then she died.

Upon the death of his beloved wife, the loud and boisterous Ernest Anders first raged like a blinded Oedipus Tyrannos, then ceased crying out, suddenly showing the same signs and symptoms of the mysterious post-childbirth agony and death his wife had just gone through. He wrung his hands and prayed. He fell into a fever worse than what had killed his wife, but he didn't die so quickly. Neighbors filled his bathtub with snow and laid him in it, to cool him down. People said not two minutes went by but the snow turned to water, then the water started boiling. The boiling water was drained. Fresh snow was brought in. Ernest was placed into a *third* tub of ice-water – then a fourth. “*Cool me down!!*” he pleaded, but it couldn't be done. Some say he lost his mind at that point, singing “*Wheeeee, wheeeee, wheeeee – all the way home!*” At the end it was clear Ernest Anders felt no pain. “*Wheeeeeeeee!*” he called out on his very last breath.

A funeral pyre was built – eight feet square, two feet high, built of stone, brick, and earth. Ernest and Julie Anders were clothed in blue silk garments and placed on a woodpile, their heads facing north. The pyre was ignited. Rosemary incense was gently tossed into the devouring flames. Years later, when their son died, a similar ritual was performed for him.

Eben was raised in Grange by his father's brother and his wife, Dirk and Lucinda Anders. Eben loved to read books, but he was a terrible student. His step-parents told me it wasn't until he reached puberty that life seemed worth living to him. In high school, it was noticed, he directed *all* of his attention on his female classmates – it appeared he cared only for *girls*. When he wasn't flirting with the girls at the school, he was on his knees in the woods near his home, praying to God that God might grant him a *girlfriend*, preferably a good looking one.

It was in his sophomore year in high school that Eben discovered a treasure chest in Grange, Vermont. In the ground by the oak tree where Eben had taken to praying, the corner of a metal safe jutted out. Kneeling down, Eben hurt his knee on the thing. It looked interesting, so he dug it up. At first he hoped it might be filled with men's magazines having centerfolds, but the box instead was filled with about three thousand one-dollar bills, most in near-mint condition. The box had been left there by a bank robber, or robbers, sometime right around 1900. An investigation failed to reveal the identity of the robber or robbers, as well as the name of the robbed bank. When after six months the treasure went still unclaimed, it was formally turned

over to Eben, who got in touch with some specialists in the collectibles marketplace who told him these dollar bills, silver certificates issued by the Department of the Treasury in 1899, then exchangeable at face value for silver dollars, were now valued at about \$250 each.

In short, Eben was rich. At first he sold only a few of the bills, using the money on gifts for girls he knew – to see what might come his way from that. What came of that, of course, was the quick loss of a whole lot of his money. It did not appear his sudden wealth was actually going to make the sad and troubled young man any happier. Still, it did change his life.

One night just three weeks after the treasure box was officially pronounced his, Eben had a terrible nightmare in which a horned lizard appeared, smacking him in the head three times with his tail. Then the lizard spoke. “Read the money,” the lizard told Eben. “Read what it says.”

Sure enough, there was writing on the bills. One of the robbers had apparently kept up a sort of diary, using the stolen certificates for writing paper. Strangely, nothing in these writings referred to a robbery, banks, bandits, fleeing the law, imprisonment, escapes, or anything of that kind. There was only mention of angels, girls, women, men, saints, Jesus, God, and eternity. Eben would sell no more of the bills. Writing longhand with a black ballpoint pen, he began to transfer the mysterious jottings into spiral-ringed notebooks. When that work was done, he returned all the remaining certificates to the safety box and took it back to the place where he'd found it and dug a hole and put the treasure back in the ground again.

Of course that which he'd written, or transcribed, would eventually become known to the world as *The Book of Eben Anders*. In coming time, Eben would be attributed the gifts and genius of a William Blake or Swedenborg, meanwhile denounced as a madman, liar, scoundrel, false prophet, and the rest. He'd be accused of witchcraft, wizardry, demonism, and Freemasonry, with a mind to eventual world subjugation. He'd even be called the living Anti-Christ. “Don't kill the messenger,” is all Eben would ever say to all of that.

On graduating from high school, he grew his Lincolnesque or Amish-style beard, enrolled in summertime classes at Castleton College, and pursued Religious Studies. After only three weeks, he dropped out of their program. He returned to his aunt and uncle's home in Grange, seeking permission to have his old room and to install a phone in it. He made phone calls to political and religious figures all around the world – from Borneo, Quezon City, and Fairbanks to Moscow, Porto Maggiore, and Tucson – informing these people of his own presence in their world, stating his vision for the future, and asking for their help.

One week later, walking toward a grocery store in downtown Grange, he was hit by a twelve-wheeler truck. An ambulance rushed him to the hospital – that's where we met. I was then an intern, a candy stripper. As I said earlier, had Eben not entered my life in such dramatic fashion, I might not even have noticed him! But – well, it's not every day a young man, pronounced dead on arrival in a hospital, asks you out for a date.

He was only half-a-year older than me, born Wendy Carpenter in Banterville, Vermont, east of Grange, in April, 1951. It was now 1972, and it didn't take much for him to start singing his love songs to me, and it didn't take much for me to fall in love with that. Within two years, we were married.

Eben had got lucrative work as a ghost writer for some of the famous people he'd been

telephoning in recent months. When one of these brought Eben's book to the attention of Sims and Webser, publishers, *The Book of Eben Anders* was humbly ushered into print. We saved most of the money coming in, renting a place for two years, then we got our own house – a bungalow with a green-tile Dutch stove which I found very charming. Too bad the house was burned to the ground. One or more of Eben's enemies started the fire, an investigation afterwards revealed. It was in the middle of winter, in the dead of night. To save ourselves, we ran out in our underwear and pajamas and rolled on the ground in fresh fallen snow. As it turned out, we may as well have put the person or persons responsible for this heinous act on our payroll, so much did he or she or they increase Eben's stature in the religious community! – *far* beyond the boundaries of Vermont and New England.

As for my relationship with Eben himself in these trying times, the noise and jeopardy and danger he had to rise over just drew the two of us closer. The increasing rebuke, ridicule, and hatred that fell on him only made his legend grow. In equal proportion, our love blossomed. You could say, I was his first disciple. I truly loved the man. He was patient, persevering, calm, curious, and playful – unafraid to try new things. It still seems strange to me that, beyond the almost self-obliterating passion of our loving, I did not give birth to several sets of twins, quintuplets, or even larger broods. He was just as amazed that we never had kids. He reckoned that this was because he'd found the treasure, had written the book, and was given his mission in the world. His important work wouldn't have left him much time for assisting me in child-rearing and, whether we'd had two or twenty children, I wouldn't have agreed to raising them alone.

According to *The Book of Eben*, the world had ten basic truths for men and women: (1) If you exist, you suffer; (2) Suffering is caused by loneliness, accidents, and miscreants; (3) Suffering decreases the more when you love somebody in particular, have friends, and avoid both miscreants and accidents; (4) You should not look back (Sadly, I am breaking this rule); (5) Have faith; (6) Hope much; (7) Be humble; (8) Be smart; (9) Enjoy yourself for as long and as often as you can; and (10) Never cease to be grateful for your life.

In 1990, when Eben was forty – I was thirty-nine – *The Book of Eben* started taking off. It seemed now to have a life and a momentum of its own. Instead of being accused for making up tall tales, Eben became something of an international celebrity. He started making rounds on all the television talk shows and was pictured on the covers of magazines in grocery stores. Not everything that got said was fair or kind, but the most impressive thing about it all was the sheer *glut* of news that now swirled around his head – and *our* heads. As Eben's wife, I got *far* worse press than the bad press he got, and I *never* got anything anywhere *near* the good press that he got. But then, yes, that's right, it wasn't *me* who'd found the treasure, made the translations, or gone around the world energetically promoting what I'd made or found. I was just this almost faceless mere *woman* who only had to stand by her man – much of the world now declaring him a *Prophet!* – through times thick and thin.

Many called his book fiction, folk magic, falsehood, a pack of lies. He was accused of being a magician, a shaman, a medicine man. He bore it all with dignity. He did grow in fact, exactly as had been prophesied, “brilliant, gallant, kind, and wise.”

Still, we began to grow apart. As good as he was, it only made me want more of him.

This only served to make things worse. He began going for increasingly longer lone walks in the woods, eventually disappearing for entire weekends, hiking in the mountains. I knew I could not wholly be a part of all he was now venturing into, but *I* could not stand it when *he* determined that *we* needed time apart. Strangely, I must confess, this troubling time made me far more authentically *religious* than I'd actually been. It only now occurred to me that Eben might really be, in fact, what he'd been claiming to be.

Of course anyone who has studied Ebenism will know that this was the point in our story – in the timeline of the prophet Eben Anders' life – that a couple of deer hunters appeared in the forest with rifles, mistaking Eben for a target, shooting him dead.

A funeral pyre was built on the common in downtown Grange – eight feet square, two feet high, built of stone, brick, and earth. Though he didn't leave instructions – it was just about the *only* thing that wasn't prophesied! – I knew he would have liked it that way. I dressed him in a blue silk robe. Friends and followers placed his corpse on the woodpile, his head facing north. Then the pyre was ignited. Rosemary incense was gently tossed into the uproarious flames.

The gravestone on his resting place in the Grange village cemetery is just a plain boulder with a bronze plaque on it, carrying these words: "This stone is here in memory of Eben Anders. In life he was a man of valor and humility. May this rock endure a long time."

It seems to me I was, for years after that, cloudy in the head. I took back my maiden name, Carpenter, and got on with my life. It was by no means certain that Eben's great message to the world would outlive him. Twelve years went by before any news of Ebenism again reached me. In the interim I'd moved with a man-friend to his hometown, East Warrenton, Massachusetts, where I got a great job in a fine hospital and often felt contentment approaching fulfillment. When that truly ordinary man picked up his things and moved to Florida, I did not follow him.

In the summer of the year 2015, two proselytizing missionaries called "Ebenites," wearing black suits of almost uniform neatness, showed up in this western Massachusetts village. They were meandering in my neighborhood, going house to house, door to door. When they arrived on my front porch, they explained politely who they were and what they'd come for, and I invited them in.

We sat in my living room and talked. The two young men – William and Bernhard – stayed two hours. I served them crackers, cheese, and lemonade. They told me some odd, exaggerated things about the life and times of my husband. I listened carefully, making no comment whatsoever. When the two finally stood to go, they thanked me profusely for my time and attention. I thanked them likewise, and showed them to the door.

One week later the two Ebenites, Will and Bernd, as they now casually called themselves – as if we were now all close friends – returned. Again I invited them in and served them light snacks and lemonade. Sipping his iced drink, Will told me how Eben Anders, the founder of their church, had himself been a New Englander, born in Grange, Vermont in 1950. He refreshed my memory as to all the political and religious commotion and intrigue going on at that time – the 1960s – communes, hippies, Vietnam, and all.

Will revealed how, in that terrible season of national upheaval and disgrace, Eben Anders

had received enlightenment. He'd wept and prayed, hoping to receive divine guidance as to the shape his life should take, when a box of gold had sprung up from the earth at his feet, even as a pillar of light had appeared over his head. Will the Ebenite made no mention of a lizard smacking Eben in the head three times. Instead, Will said, a barefoot angel had appeared to the prophet, providing him with the exact tools he'd be needing to translate the sacred texts inscribed in an ancient language on the gold bullion in the treasure box he'd found. In the morning, the proselyte said correctly – if only right on this one point – Eben Anders had started writing what the world now knew as *The Book of Eben*.

Upon the death of Eben Anders, Will told me, a small circle of true believers, the initial legendary band of Eben's ten disciples – people I'd never heard of – had been pressured by Grange village authorities to disband or hit the road. They'd gone first to Kansas, then to Oregon, to keep the faith alive. In Eugene, in 1992, the first mass printing of *The Book of Eben* had been published and distributed. Behold, the book was in its seventeenth edition, and had made its way back east. Now Ebenism was growing – not only coast to coast in this country, but also all around the globe.

When I told the two Ebenites how pleased I was for their good luck, that their religion should be growing so in popularity, Will moved from his chair and approached closer to me on his knees. “We need your help,” he whispered almost menacingly, “and I think you *will* help us when you hear what I have to say.”

“So – *talk*,” I told the true believer, who was almost breathless now, explaining how his partner Bernd, in the intervening week, had experienced a vision. In Bernd's vision, an angel had appeared to him, saying I, on my converting to Ebenism, would in turn bring about the much desired conversion of Bernd's sinful, non-believing Catholic *mother*. “Upon your being baptized into the one true church,” Will said, “Bernd's mother's conversion will follow. Well – what do you say?”

Of course I told them as nicely as I could that I was just a senile old lady who, however old or silly, was still not ripe for committing to what they asked for.

“But it is your *destiny!*” Will tried hard to convince me. He *promised* me I would become a “high-up” Andersian priestess – eventually I would mate with an Ebenite priest and have progeny rising to Godhood and mastery of another planet, over which I would reign wholly and eternally, just like Bernd's mom, if only I did what they *told* me.

“*You will yourself become the wife of Christ!*” Bernd said in desperation. “My mom and dad will again unite and procreate! They and their new children and me and my forthcoming bride and our children *all* one day will be *Gods* having our own *planets*. Don't you *want* that? Can't you *see*? It is *written*. It is *meant* to be. We will *inherit our own earths!*”

“Excuse me,” I began abruptly, “I –”

I didn't know *what* to say to these boys. They'd spoken not at *all* of him I loved. Abruptly, I asked the two to leave my house and not come back. Will and Bernd could not *see* how I could decline this opportunity to join their Church of Eben. They did not leave graciously. They called me a *witch* and so I went and got a broom and *chased* them from my doorstep.

Shouting back at me as they stumbled across my front lawn to the street, they viciously

accused me of destroying uncounted sacred privileges and worlds and futures due them and their families but, believe me, listen, I'd had enough, I wasn't having any of it.

With a View to the Sea

The California home Lars Donnelly grew up in was close to the ocean – within walking distance. It was the 1950s, when families wore matching outfits and flip-flops to the beach, and so it was with the four Donnellys – Connell, Astrid, Gregor, and Lars. Under clear skies and the hot sun, they swam, collected stones and shells, built sand castles, dug for crabs, searched for exotic marine life forms in the tidal pools among the rocks – it was a glorious rocky territory, Laguna Beach – or just sat on the sand contemplating the waves coming in and the waters returning under, going back out.

This last had been his favorite thing: the sea's motions spoke to Lars. Sitting quietly on the shore, regarding the waters, he felt a deep principle – reality – how the world works actually, beneath the surface, behind the scenes. This was truly magical. Lars felt that sitting still, looking at the ocean, feeling its rhythms deep within himself, was the richest, finest human act, linking all people in all places for all time. He felt perhaps a million years was not much more than a split second – eternity not different than a moment.

The Donnellys always returned inland to the hills badly sunburned. After the mother's meals – after she had cleared the table, while she washed the dishes in the kitchen – the father, a telephone man, stayed seated at the dining room table amid his papers and pencils, making intricate technical drawings employing familiar switching devices, relay gizmos, and all sorts of magical electrical doo-dads Lars had seen on his father's messy workbench. In the drawings, the parts were joined in fun new ways. Next to each individual part used in the designs, the father, Connell, wrote down their names. Lars and Gregor leaned in on their father's shoulders, adoring these works. Gregor would hoard his father's drawings only eventually to destroy them; Lars collected them, arranged them chronologically, and treasured them. Gregor ultimately became passionate about engineering and computers; Lars eventually became immersed in texts and words and fonts.

In 1955 – Gregor was five, Lars four – a rocket was built in Anaheim, an astonishing

advertisement easily seen from all the highways in the area, announcing the birth of a huge new park under construction at the time. Lars was in the family car with his father on the freeway when they passed by it. Completely baffled by the sight, Lars asked his dad if *he* knew what this thing was *for*. More important, what was it *called*? “Well, Lars, *that’s* a *rocket* in a big amusement park that’s going to be called *Disneyland*,” his dad told him. He had probably read all about it in the papers, but this was all the father had to say to his son. Lars knew how quiet his father could be – he knew he’d just have to be patient, wait and see. When the park finally opened, the Donnellys were among the first families to visit. The amusements of the Magic Kingdom seemed about evenly divided between the past and the future.

At the beginning of 1964, with the assassination of the optimistic, youthful president John F. Kennedy still fresh in everyone's minds, one of Gregor 's friends, Barry Storrs – a very sharp kid already expert in taking apart and putting back together telephones, radios, televisions, and mini-bike and go-cart motors – began showing signs of sudden aging, dwindling powers, slowing down. Mysteriously, Gregor's pal, only fourteen, had taken ill. Barry's former spritely ways of walking and talking came to a sudden end. Previously athletic, always energetic, Barry was now sluggish, often clumsy. It wasn't very long before *speaking* came only with difficulty. Then it got so he could hardly write things down. People noticed strange eye movements. Barry next lost his sense of smell, then he began having difficulty swallowing food. Finally, he entered a season of terrible tremors and seizures.

Doctors at Laguna's South Coast Medical Center said it could be *anything*. They suspected a brain tumor – but the bones of skulls kept brain tumors well-hidden, so they couldn't say for *sure*. After several routine examinations, Barry underwent more thorough neurological examinations. Using rubber hammers, doctors checked Barry's reflexes. They looked into his eyes and studied their movements and reactions and reflexes under changing conditions. They checked his facial muscles, tongue movement, gag reflexes, head movement, balance, coordination, memory, powers of abstract thinking, and his mental alertness.

Surgeons conducted a biopsy. They drilled a burr hole into Barry's skull. A needle was passed through and, from the core of the needle, tissue was removed. Pediatric neurosurgeons and oncologists studying the sample under a microscope concurred. Barry had a tumor, but the tumor might not yet be embedded so deep within his brain's gray matter as to make it inaccessible. It was *possible* they could disentangle the tumor and, without severe neurological damage, cut it out – not a partial removal (*debulking*), but a total *craniotomy* – the complete removal of the tumor.

Soon, Gregor was showing head tumor symptoms of his own – sourness of disposition and dizziness accompanied by ringing and buzzing in his ears.

Lars coped with the situation by walking downtown to the public library, there gathering together as much information about brain tumors as he could. He learned that Barry's increasingly clumsy and uncoordinated way of walking had a name: *ataxic gait*. Barry's difficulty swallowing food was called *dysphagia*. Science similarly had a name for difficulty speaking: *dysarthria*. Difficulty writing was called *agraphia*. Abnormal eye movement: nystagmus. Barry's vanished sense of smell was classic *anosmia*. Even Gregor's sympathetic

symptoms had formal scientific names: the ringing and buzzing in his ears was called *tinnitus*, and the dizziness was *vertigo*.

The Donnellys got together at their dining room table for a family meeting. The parents wanted to try to illuminate this tragic situation for their sons, and to console them. The mother, Astrid, even more than her son Gregor, Barry's friend, cried through the entire session. The father, Connell, holding his head in his hands, spoke as best he could on this difficult and touchy subject. He hoped his words, though few, would be clear and helpful.

After, in the spooky darkness of their shared bedroom, Gregor got down on his knees and begged God to *fix* his *stupid* mother and father! He blamed his parents bitterly for being *ignorant homunculi! Idiots!* – they knew *nothing!*

Lars spoke to Gregor of vertigo, tinnitus, anosmia, dysphagia, agraphia, and so on. "*You are a homunculus!*" Gregor accused. "*You know nothing!*" Lars then asked Gregor, *Mister Know-It-All*, to tell him what *he* thought was going on with Barry. Lars could see Gregor was perversely glad of the opportunity to tell his little brother, "The cells in Barry's head have gone *berserk*," Gregor said. "They've taken over his *brain*. They're reproducing *uncontrollably*. He's going to melt, and *die*."

In fact, Barry's tumor was of the kind called *primary*. The tumor had started in Barry's brain – it had not entered his brain from anywhere else in his body. Lars knew now that malignant tumors arising from the skin or from the lining of the digestive, respiratory, or urogenital tracts were called *carcinoma*, and that malignant tumors arising from blood vessels or the lymph system were called *sarcoma*.

Lars' research revealed Barry's tumor was probably pressing against and even displacing the soft, spongy masses of nerve and supportive brain tissue that controlled his vital body functions. The normally harmonious sending and receiving of information from Barry's brain out to his nerves and back again had, as Gregor said, gone amuck. Barry's ataxic gait, dysphagia, dysarthria, headaches, tremors, and seizures all stemmed from the cancerous mass increasing within the rigid bones of Barry's skull (*intracranial pressure*) and from blockage to the regular flowing of his cerebrospinal fluid (*hydrocephalus*).

A team of neurosurgeons at Pasadena's Huntington Memorial Hospital made a large incision into Barry's scalp. They removed a piece of bone, and exposed the part of the brain covering the tumor. They quickly found the tumor, but saw it lacked distinct borders. Beyond the tumor's enormity, the cancer was widespread – critically invasive. The surgeons performed *resection*, surgical removal, as best they could. Replacing Barry's skull bones wasn't necessary. The skin that had covered his skull was not re-sewn together. Barry died on the operating table.

"Don't be surprised if *you* die, too," Gregor warned Lars.

Lars decided he would become a brain surgeon. He withdrew into a mythic, symbolic, metaphoric fantasy world of health, sickness, medical institutions, universities, degrees, and doctors. He called himself Doctor Lax, a brilliant scientist who specialized in megavoltage accelerated therapy. The distinguished Doctor Lax had designed a famous complicated gadget – one which Lars in fact did build (from cardboard, wires, plugs, and miscellaneous telephone parts contributed by his father) – a machine he said employed electrodes in treating disruptions

of normal electrical activity between brain tissue and nerves.

Doctor Lax had not only a PhD for his groundbreaking work on neurofibromatosis, also called von Recklinghausen's Disease, he had also a *second* PhD for his discoveries concerning Tuberous Sclerosis, also called Bourneville's Disease. Expert in the use of investigational immunotherapy treatments, stereotactic radiosurgery, and craniotomies, Doctor Lax famously removed tumors of every kind. Each tumor was given a unique name. Doctor Lax operated on metastatic brain tumors (the tumors formed by cancer cells arising elsewhere in the body but then spreading to the brain, which Doctor Lax dubbed *brats*), craniopharyngioma (*crats*), optic nerve glioma (*glats*), cerebellar tumors (*blats*), and posterior fossa tumors (*frats*).

These challenges only whet the appetite of the indefatigable Doctor Lax who, walking the steady path of objectivity and precision, undertook to know the ways people represented existing in this world – how people thought and worked and lived. Beyond saving millions of lives, he would transform human society. In his world-famous laboratory, Doctor Lax uncovered systems and methods of thought through which words, symbols, and meanings brought relief from pain and confusion.

These investigations led Doctor Lax to the Dewey Decimal System, which now opened up before him – from generalities, knowledge, data processing, computers, bibliographies, dictionaries, libraries, personnel administration, reading, encyclopedias, serials, indexes, museums, and news media through fallacies, syllogisms, hypotheses, argument, persuasion, analogy, moral philosophy, systems, doctrines, politics, and sophistry to fishing, hunting, shooting, literature, geography, history, and even extraterrestrial worlds. But Doctor Lax felt no temptation to leave the medical profession in order to pursue the world of the professional *librarian*. When Lars took work at the public library as a humble Page, merely putting everything in proper order on the bookshelves, the overambitious Doctor Lax suffered a stroke and fell into a coma.

In the middle of 1968 (after first Martin Luther King was shot to death, then Robert Kennedy), facing the prospect of her sons going to war in Vietnam (some said merely at the prospect of their leaving home), Lars and Gregor's mother died of a heart attack (some said of a broken heart). At the end of 1969, a selective service lottery drawing determined the order of military induction for men born between 1944 and 1950. This was followed in July 1970 with a second lottery determining the order of induction for men born in 1951. Gregor and Lars drew high numbers, so they did not go to war. By the end of 1970, bald and weary Connell Donnelly, always a quiet man, seemed to have nothing left to say to anyone.

Gregor grew still more grim and secretive, sneaking out to the garage at all hours to smoke and drink and build pipe bombs.

Lars retreated into his undergraduate studies. He studied hard. It didn't take a university to teach him to be interested in the world – to be curious about it. He'd already learned, outside the university, that the place for reading was – *anywhere*. Inside the confines of the university, he was taught the value of philology, the study of language and literature. Philology was almost foremost in the programs and enterprises supported by the university – second only to institutional politics.

What had attracted Lars to the school in the first place had been the vigorous touting of its cutting-edge electronic educational environment, with an array of technological resources adding significant pedagogical value. He'd felt drawn to the Department of Communications, Philology, and Semantics, chaired by Professor Graham Felle, a pioneer in the field of Biosemiotics, the study of communication and signification in living systems, and the author of "Transforming Sophistry and Hermeneutics: The Eros of Rhetoric."

Lars majored in Semantics, the study of how words mean things. He focused his attention on Labeling Theory, which looked at the ways humans both shaped and narrowed the world through their persistence in calling things and people names. It thrilled Lars to hear enterprising scientists proposing that thought, knowledge, and rhetoric had made the world. His advisor, Professor Felle himself, insisted "the Eros in Rhetoric" – *e-rhetoric* he had dubbed it – was not only basic in *human* thinking, it was at the very foundation of *all* knowledge, understanding, and meaning – *e-rhetoric* was fundamental even to existence itself. At the *heart* of existence, Felle lectured, lay *e-rhetoric*, the communicated exchange of desires, which came before every other kind of communication.

Lars attended classes, studied hard, and did all right. It was a co-ed campus, but Lars wasn't there for the girls. He wanted to pick everybody's brains – *all* the boys, girls, and professors of both sexes – *all* of varying kinds and degrees of sadness, lightheartedness, character, and charm. This school was for him in every way a paradise for collecting, cataloging, indexing, storing, and retrieving data. Lars was avid for conversing with his peers. He loved the long discursive binges – all-night discourse with the best of them.

One day Lars noticed that however innocent the substance of a conversation appeared on the surface, inevitably it proved imbued or tainted with the opinions, judgments, biases, and constraints of the intellectual community – namely, Professor Graham Felle's school. Embedded in the institution's puzzling politics, Lars found an almost valueless pursuit of technological and pedagogical mastery for its own sake.

Felle told his students, "The practice of rhetoric has too long been simply what everyone was doing when they engaged with the world through encounter, interpretation, and exchange. That world, built from rhetorical foundations, is ended. *E-rhetoric* is *more*. Those knowledgeable about the laws of nature; those calling themselves scientists; those illuminating the world to any who inquire; those lighting the way for any in darkness; those correcting any in the wrong: *you* will know *e-rhetoric* for what it *is*: true."

Behind Professor Felle's seemingly harmless rhetoric lurked a virulent and massive power play: If existence itself had been constructed through *e-rhetoric*, then those who should *properly* be in power would be those who were *e-rhetorically* "in the know." Though, yes, *e-rhetoric* could *to a point* be understood within the traditions and discourse practices of standard rhetorical theory and philosophy, those now "truly in the know" – the elite keepers of the keys – were *only* the Felleians. To *them* one now would have to turn for dispensation of *true* knowledge, insight, and grace. Every social issue would need to be re-explored via the *e-rhetorician's* tools-in-trade. Felle knew the opportunity here! – the attendant prestige, celebrity, power, and money.

Ideas straying from the star professor's ideology were not encouraged. Under the sway of

his certainly powerful ideas, students ceased examining their own values, believing in the fine apolitical objectivity of the newly learned discourse. The shared concepts came to seem normal to them – as plain and true as common sense. Running with the ruling paradigm was *cool* – and nobody wanted to be uncool.

Though claims of objectivity rose up in a chorus from professors and students, Lars could see the conversations were ideologically positioned – none were neutral – masking *someone's* consolidating and perpetuating *something* for some *purpose*. Certain banners for certain political and ideological values were to be carried by everyone on campus – and off campus, too. Unsanctioned discourse would not be tolerated.

Lars felt no inclination to succumb to political pressure or follow anybody into a dead end. Though he could almost *taste* the pleasure of being accepted by Professor Felle, his colleagues, and Lars' own peers – how he *wanted* to identify with that professional image so often held out to him! – he'd been offered a golden key, and a golden path to go down – he opted out. He felt no compulsion to act antagonistically, but he knew intelligence was given people for something better than to collude with the reigning guardians of the Academy. With intelligence came a responsibility – to resist marching in step.

It was in this season of tribulation that Lars met, and instantly fell in love with, Andrea Storrs – the little sister of his brother Gregor's childhood friend, now dead, Barry. Their eyes met. “Lars!” she said. “It's *you*.”

This struck him as being a thing so completely plain and true, he wanted to cry. Talk about *the Eros in Rhetoric!* – e-rhetoric. Here *she* was. He understood at once how fundamental *she* was. *She* was at the heart of existence.

He took to taking long walks on the beach with her. Lars wrote poems to her; he drew her; he painted life-size portraits of her. In 1973, Andrea received a Bachelor's degree in Physics; Lars got a Bachelor's degree in English Composition. They were married by Thanksgiving.

In the summer of 1974, the year Lars and Andrea moved to New England, Lars' brother Gregor, after earning an undergraduate degree in electronic engineering followed by a Master's in Business Administration, went to work for a genius, Colin Carr, at Los Angeles based Fertility Computers, Inc.

In Boston, while Andrea pursued a medical career, Lars achieved a graduate degree in Information Science. The two lingered on in Massachusetts, Andrea working as a physical therapist and Lars getting work as the director of a village library just northwest of Framingham. In the mid-1980s, the couple bought a house, then the kids came along – a son, then twin daughters.

Lars knew what he had – a beautiful wife; their precious son; the remarkable twins. Lars revealed this deep sentiment to his wife one night after they'd hired a babysitter and gone out to enjoy a quiet restaurant meal with wine by candlelight.

"Is it everything you ever dreamed of?" Andrea asked

“I still dream often that I save your brother's life,” Lars confessed, the wine loosening the locks on *that* taboo subject.

“Lars, it's the way the world works,” she said, touching her husband's hands clasped

together worriedly atop the exquisite cross-grain cut oak table. Then, taking her wine glass with her, Andrea stood and went around the table to sit down next to him. "My bright and beautiful brother died young," she said, "while your sneaking weirdo brother lives on, reaping every benefit. The world is *fair*? The world's not *fair*, Lars. Let's be grateful we're alive, and for our having found each other," she said. "And let's be grateful for our healthy kids."

Had Lars been superstitious, he might have knocked a few times on the tabletop. "Do you have regrets? Do you have everything you ever dreamed of?"

"I've wanted many things," Andrea whispered. "Some times I've wanted revenge – you know what I mean. Mostly, I think, looking back now, I wanted to marry a good man and to have lots of children." she said, smiling as she took her husband's right hand and placed it surreptitiously on her exposed thigh. "Of course I also wanted that the man should be a good father to the children," she said.

Lars wished he could talk with Andrea about her brother's death – the mystery surrounding it, the ataxic gait, hydrocephalus, sarcoma, carcinoma – and Doctor Lax. "Am I a good father?" he worried aloud.

"You *are*," she affirmed, her shining azure eyes brightening. The two left the restaurant, returned home and, after Lars took the babysitter home, they made sure the kids' doors were closed and enjoyed almost an all-nighter. "I love you, I love you, I love you," Andrea Storrs-Donnelly cried out again and again and again. "Give me kids! I want kids! Oh God, I love these kids!" she shrieked. It wasn't until around three in the morning that she finally fell asleep in her husband's arms. Lars was wide awake.

He hoped he was a good father – he tried to be. It struck him how everything had changed so much since *he* was a kid.

One night Sean, four years old, about bowled Lars over. Father and son had said prayers together, and Lars was tucking him in. The little boy's eyes brightened as his voice sank. "Daddy, why isn't there just *nothing*?" On another occasion, Sean had sighed, wondering aloud, "Daddy, what are we going to *do* about me?" Lars knew there was nothing in particular his boy was worrying about, it was just a general feeling of being out of focus. Sean patiently awaited his being fine-tuned. Lars embraced the boy warmly, speaking most reassuringly. "You're *fine*," Lars said. "Everything's going to be *fine*." But Sean's question did get under his skin. It hit home. What *would* Lars and Andrea do with a house *full* of kids? What *would* come of all the kids? How were they going to grow up okay, what with all the crazy commotion going on in the world? What was going to be done about *everything* and *everyone*?

You looked around you, there were all these wildly beckoning things – insane web sites, pointless computer games, noisy download programs, intrusive viruses, mad hijackers – this electronic world was one of almost endless, unresolvable complications. Ditto for the quotidian world. You could leave Lars Donnelly's house, get in a car, and travel on the surrounding highways in a huge network of roads in which the house was situated like a speck of dust caught in an intricate maze or web. All along those highways were resurrected factories containing the offices of the major players in the Computer Revolution, the Internet Revolution, the Dot.Com Revolution, and the eBook Revolution.

These tempting revolutions called to Lars, who left the library field in 1997, intending never to look back. Having worked in public libraries for twenty-five years, Lars now ventured into the emerging eBook industry, going to work for Nate Grove, the founder of GroveeBooks, Inc. in Marlboro, Massachusetts. A few years after that, when Nate left GroveeBooks to join Rich Segal at SegaliBooks, which Rich had founded in Hopkinton, Massachusetts, the two invited Lars to be on their team there.

Andrea wasn't convinced he was doing the right thing. "It just feels to me like a big bubble that's going to just get impossibly big and then – *POP!*"

Lars tried to explain it to his wife. "I don't want my kids to be asking me in future years, 'What did you do in the Internet Revolution, daddy?' and have to tell them that I'd just played it safe – that I'd shown cowardice," he said.

"*Will it pay the bills?*?" his wife asked sensibly but angrily, stamping a foot hard on the floor with each syllable.

"One hopes," Lars stood his ground, avoiding eye contact. "You have to reach for what you know is in you."

"I'm just going to have to trust you on this." She took her husband by the ears and *made* him look at her. Lars saw her lips were quivering. "Will they be able to let us have *vacations?*?" she squeaked.

"We'll go to California" Lars promised. "We'll visit Gregor in Hollywood and go see how my dad is doing in Oceanside."

Andrea shook her head. "*Maybe,*" she said. "Let's see what happens."

"Let's see," Lars nodded. "*Maybe.*"

In the summer of the year 2000, the computer guru Colin Carr left Fertility Computers to go to work for the Disney Company. He did not take along with him his past Fertility team, which had included Gregor Donnelly. Despite Gregor's being left behind by Carr, Lars was excited about Carr's prospects – Carr who over the years had grown into the leading international spokesman for the inevitable end of paper book publishing as the march of electronic books went forward. Lars felt this new affiliation gave clear indication of a strong new *wave*. Lars felt he could now better defend his own having somewhat whimsically going to work at GroveeBooks and SegaliBooks, what with the eBook guru Colin Carr himself going to work for Walt Disney.

In the autumn of the year that Colin Carr went to work for Disney, Lar's only son, Sean, a college freshman studying Information Technology, crossed the country to California with his father. Lars' two bosses at GroveeBooks had paid in advance for their own attending, in mid-October, a big "Libraries and eBooks" conference in Anaheim, but now the two were called away to New York on business. With only a little wheedling, Lars got their conference and plane tickets – free.

Lars hoped Andrea wouldn't mind if he contacted Gregor, then living in Newport Beach. Gregor had just spent some time in prison, *twice* – first, for trying to arrange online to have sexual relations with underage boys and second, just months later, for trying to do the same thing all over again. To no avail, he had – twice – insisted he had been set up. He had served his two prison sentences and now wore an electronic bracelet monitor on his ankle and had his face

posted all over the Internet as a Registered Child Sex Offender. It did not look good. But Andrea agreed to the get-together. "If you *must*," she said.

Lars called Gregor in Newport Beach. Gregor said he was a *very* busy person, but he would *somehow* reserve a room for Lars and Sean at the Inn at Laguna Beach where he Gregor, his former boss the rising eBook Revolution guru Colin Carr, and Carr's people all were staying.

At first Sean was all gung-ho. Then, on boarding the plane, he had second thoughts. "I trust you won't do anything that's going to *embarrass* me," Sean said. Lars was struggling to fasten his seatbelt. "What *is* it with you and simple mechanical devices?" the teen muttered resignedly, buckling up his father. The two were flying to Orange County. They'd land at the John Wayne Airport after nightfall, rent a car, and make their way to the North Coast Highway, then head down to the Inn at Laguna.

They arrived at the Inn after midnight. The place was quiet. The desk clerk told them Colin Carr had turned in early, and his people had done likewise. Gregor had left a note for his brother and nephew informing them when and where they ought best to connect with him in the morning. They slept less than five hours. Sean got up first – bright and early. He was already showering even before the alarm clock went off. While Lars showered, Sean wove his way through the Inn, going in search of his uncle, his uncle's legendary mentor, and the mentor's mentees. Gregor told him Colin Carr had arranged for the big bunch of his people to go together to the conference in a bus, and that Sean could tag along.

Lars and Gregor rented a car and traveled from Laguna over to the Anaheim Convention Center. "It's so *hot*," Gregor commented, pushing the button that automatically rolled up all the windows, next turning on the air-conditioning and the radio.

"Sean is really up for this," Lars said. "This is a *good* thing. Gregor, I don't want to bring up the subject of the bad things that have happened that I know you don't want to talk about, but I *do* want to tell you that I'm really sorry that you lost your job. I'm sorry about what happened between you and Carr."

"*Fuck* Carr," Gregor said. "Fuck *you*." He tapped his fingers heavily on the dashboard in syncopation with the music.

They reached the convention center around half past eight, giving them plenty of time to take advantage of the free Continental Breakfast while hobnobbing, or not, with the growing throngs of librarians, library trustees, heads of library Friends groups, chief executive officers, directors of operations, product managers, senior and junior business development managers, senior and junior systems analysts, and a broad swath of consultants, hackers, geeks, and gawkers.

At nine sharp, attendees piled into the auditorium for formal Opening Remarks, including a review of the eBook industry and its growing relationship with public, academic, and school libraries. America's resilient libraries were coming to the rescue of the dying eBook movement even as the growing eBook Movement was coming to the rescue of America's dying libraries. At the close of these rousing initial observations, conference attendees dispersed to adjoining smaller chambers for assorted break-up sessions – workshops, lectures, presentations, and panel discussions.

Lars left Sean with Gregor and went alone to the meetings “Two Backs to Wash,” (libraries facing "slashed budgets, reduced hours, staff cutbacks, depleted book budgets" even as the eBook industry faced a "lack of customers, a shrinking pool of backers, and growing industry malaise"), “Eminently Available, Downloadable, Brandable, and Loanable” (illuminating a virtual worldwide bookstore offering "a million eBooks from a million trade publishers" and a new means for circulating the material), and “Pitching eBooks in the Digital Field” (presenters hawking their many and varying digital media systems solutions for expanding service to libraries through aggregating and managing digital content for patron use, mainstreaming copyrighted eBook content).

At noon Lars met up with Sean, Gregor, and Colin Carr and joined in a kind of grand procession carrying Carr and his people to their reserved seats at the head table in the Great Hall where, after lunch, between one and two o'clock, the legendary eBook spokesman would be the post-luncheon featured speaker, him talking on "Books, eBooks, and Future Interactions Among Publishers, Technology Providers, and Libraries.”

The legend of Colin Carr had grown out of his having seen, early on in the game, what he'd called "obvious links" (not so obvious to others) between the history of printing, the advent of the Computer Age, and the (then) coming eBook Revolution. He'd long maintained the invention of the computer was the second greatest thing in history – after the invention of the book. Computers connected to the Internet were like huge libraries full of books, vast communications systems that were continuously updatable and accessible from anywhere on earth. Though Colin Carr had long seen the important role libraries would play in the evolution of eBooks, he'd been largely ignored, through nearly an entire decade, on this point. When, in the late 1990s, it had become clear to eBook industry leaders that they'd themselves kept the revolution dampened down – had assured the eBook revolution would happen in *very* slow motion – they'd suddenly woken up to Carr's insight. All along he'd been saying the natural home for eBooks would be eBook filling stations – namely, modern libraries. No other agent or service could expand the market for writers and eContent providers so well as public libraries.

Carr, speaking eloquently of the Internet, libraries, eBook filling stations, and the important role Walt Disney would continue to play in worlds still to be imagined and achieved, about brought the house down. In the afterglow of the great man's speech, Gregor took Sean around and introduced him to more of his former colleagues and associates while Lars dropped in on two panel discussions, one featuring eBook industry leaders arguing over the production and cataloging of electronic and digital media, the other illuminating eBook pricing (eBook publishing representatives shouting one another down, each explaining why he or she had the one absolute fair and balanced eBook pricing model, created in the best interests of copyright holders, publishers, and eBooksellers while best serving the needs of libraries in providing value to their patrons, and so on).

The whole shebang came to an end in the Convention Center Ballroom, where the conference's last stragglers were met with a vast array of food spread over several tables – cheeses, fruits, vegetables, dips, and drinks – all on the house. As Carr and his people were itching to get back to Laguna Beach, Lars strode quickly through the room behind Gregor, Sean,

and Carr's retinue out of the gorgeous house of glass to the parking lot, where their cars and the bus were waiting to carry everybody back to Laguna.

It was late evening when they got back to the Inn. The sun was going down. Lars, Sean, Gregor, Colin Carr, and Carr's coterie of followers all filled their cups and plates with food and drinks from the hotel's dining room buffet. Lars sat outside with Gregor and Carr and ate and talked about times gone by. Lars recalled how, in the old days, there'd been a man with a long beard who'd welcomed all the cars coming into Laguna on the Pacific Coast road, which then had been the only way in to the town. Eiler Larsen was his name. He'd come to America from Aarhus, Denmark. He'd been a gardener, but he'd spent most of his time just welcoming people – The Laguna Greeter. He'd been an old man even then, in the 1950s and 60s, but he'd lived on all the way into the 1970s and had died a *very* old man.

“What a *waste*,” Gregor lamented. “What a *bum*.”

Now Gregor and Carr were talking about computers and the Internet. Lars knew Gregor was going to go to work on Carr, trying to win his old job back – or some new version of it. He excused himself to go with Carr to get some stronger drinks at the bar. Lars excused himself likewise, to go check out the ballroom at the Inn where it had been advertised some dancing would be going on – Rumanian folk dances. Flyers on telephone poles around town had announced its being open to everyone. About thirty people had showed up. Lars danced with them for nearly an hour. Then, fairly winded, he slipped out.

In another room, Sean had been mixing and mingling with Colin Carr's excellent young adherents, all these geeks in beanbags with their laptops, typing and swigging whiskey bourbon straight out of their bottles. *Assemblages of even benign cells, infiltrating vital areas, can cause malignant outcomes*, Lars pondered, weakening. *Get a grip*, he told himself. He knew how Sean had been looking forward to staying up late, all night if need be, to get new insights and learn insider tricks of the trade from the excellent young disciples of Colin Carr.

Lars passed by the open doorway of the room and saw his son out of the corner of his eye. Sean was sitting in the midst of the guru's people, smiling. The father entered the room, advancing toward his son just to say hello and show interest, but Sean waved his dad away – as the sons of fathers often do. Sean didn't want to be interrupted – he didn't want his old dad, bald Lars, stepping up and making a big fool of himself, stumbling and fumbling in the company of Sean's excellent new peers.

He went up to his room and lay down. Restless, Lars got back up and searched through a few drawers, hoping to find a Gideon's Bible, but the drawers were all empty. He took out his handheld computer and started looking at an eBook he'd uploaded back in Massachusetts, just prior to leaving the house. *Cancerous cells can spread or seed – metastasize – and destroy healthy tissue, so they cannot function properly*, Lars read there. *Malignant tumors strive to reach the farthest depths and regions of the brain*. He clicked out of this depressing medical text, searching his handheld PDA for e-mail now, to see if any news from his wife or daughters had come in. Seeing none, he e-mailed them quickly, leaving messages saying everything was fine. "Just come back safely," he knew his wife would say.

Lars went down to the Inn's front lobby to see about getting the day's paper. They were

completely out of papers so Lars just stood a little while, killing time, staring at a tall display rack stuffed with proliferating colorful promotional brochures advertising Disneyland and other area attractions. Then he went back up and went to bed.

Just after three in the morning, a woman Lars did not know ran into his room to shake him awake. “Something’s *happened!*” she was yelling at him. “Something’s happened *to your son!*”

Lars sprang to his feet.

In a dark corner of one of the Inn’s rooms, they were working over Sean’s body. The medics had no idea what had killed him. It had happened fast. Sean’s heart had ceased to persist. Colin Carr held the view that death had come as quickly as one clicks on a link to take one from one web site to another.

In the dark chamber, among the geniuses, the son – even *this* son – was there one moment, gone the next.

Under a full moon. In sight of the sea.

Nowhere Near Newfoundland

Without warning, at the last minute, with Christmas just a week away, Jordan Desmond changed his mind. A sophomore at the University of Montana at Missoula, the first in his family ever to attend college, Jordan decided not to drive his beat-up van to Seattle to spend the holidays with his generous, self-sacrificing parents but instead to go *the other way* – east.

His parents felt bitterness, thinking their son now thought himself *too good* for them. He’d grown up poor; *now* look at him – sniffing out money, going to visit a girl he hardly knew, this oddly named *Esther* who lived in a place they’d never heard of, Grange, in Vermont of all places, their son traveling to highfalutin New England, that distant country – almost to Antarctica – almost to the end of the *world*. They worried he would disappear into the wilderness and they’d never see him again – he’d end up somewhere like *Newfoundland*, for crying out loud, or in heaven.

Jordan told his parents it was not like that *at all*. It was far less complicated. *Vermont* was nowhere *near* Newfoundland. He was *not* going to *disappear*. He had a plan. He was *in love*. Everything was going to be okay.

Though brought up in poverty, undernourished in the hard times, Jordan now was in ripping good health. He’d shot to six-foot-two in height. Bear-like in handed-down genetic hairiness of face, neck, arms, and legs, he knew himself to be handsome. As for the moneyed

girl, she was beautiful, six feet tall, a brunette, amber. She was or wasn't pregnant – this she hadn't exactly made clear. Either way, Jordan felt he *had* to try and save their relationship. He *had* to go – to do the right thing.

He'd bought two matching 14-karat gold Claddagh friendship rings. Now, in a raging blizzard, Jordan rolled east. Snowstorm after snowstorm had laid down heavy white blankets. The forbidding roads were ice-slicks. For added warmth, hirsute Jordan had brought only a beige woolen sweater he wore under a green corduroy coat. Worse, the van's heater didn't work. But Jordan saw the beautiful serendipity and rightness of these lacks. He told himself the bitter chill would keep him alert on this long and difficult cross-country journey.

Somewhere south of Omaha Jordan fell to daydreaming. He was feeling good, reflecting on his having endured, mainly with dignity, all his past hard times. Everything was going to turn out okay. He'd make it all right. He was zooming along. Now the van hit black ice, went gliding from the highway, dropped down an embankment, and landed in a ditch.

Tow trucks were busy all along that stretch, roaming up and down, hauling out cars and trucks from the roadside ravines. Huge semis cluttered the roadway, their front cabs jerked from their cargo beds like enormous broken centipedes. Jordan waited for his turn. He stood roadside, breathing into his ungloved hands, standing first on one foot, then the other – anything to keep himself warm. Finally, the badly dented van, lifted on heavy, creaking chains, was placed back on the road. The tow truck operator said he hated to inconvenience the young man, but there was the small matter pending of the fifty dollars owed him. Jordan, carrying his student identity card in his wallet, showed it and requested a discount.

"Listen, *Nanuk*," the driver said menacingly, full-well knowing the leverage this situation gave him, "ante up the buckaroos or I toss the vehicle back in the ditch." Jordan took from his wallet five ten dollar bills.

"See you soon!" the trucker roared when Jordan pulled away. Jordan tooted his horn, gave the van gas, veered sideways, and nearly slid into the ditch again. *Pay attention!* he scolded himself, taking a great gulp of icy air, pressing on.

All in all, the car was running fine. Jordan was making good time. Every now and then he pulled off roadside to rest his eyes and think of Esther, to keep the journey purposeful, and the point of it in focus. His mind was tending to wander. He had no idea what day it was. Jordan went by a nearly immobilized Chicago, all but shut down by a week of blizzards, then passed under Cleveland, also digging out at the tail end of a series of killer storms. Snowdrifts floated softly over the roads like spirits, ethereal.

Somewhere between Ashtabula and Erie, in a vast *terra incognita* of snowed-over farm fields stretching far and wide, the van's motor began to sputter – first ping! ping! ping! ping! then *phetew!* *phetew!* ping! *phetew!* – the car lunging and plunging sporadically down the long, empty road. Ping! *phetew!* *phetew!* ping! *phetew!*

From there on out it was touch and go, with numerous stops. In Erie, Jordan stopped at a gas station and asked the attendant if he could have a look at his lurching, sputtering motor. "No can do," the man said. "It's *Sunday*, you know. The tool boxes are locked up tight as my wife."

Jordan had no more idea what day of the week it was than how to feel empathy for the

man's home situation, but he knew he needed help with the van. "How much?" Jordan asked.

"How much *what*?"

"For repairs. My van. What would it take to have you fix it? *Money*."

The man brought his head closer to the engine, listening more carefully. "Well, you've obviously got *head* problems. I'd say three to seven hundred smackers for sure, from the sound of this engine's croaking."

"Can I go on with it running like this?"

"If you can stand the *suspense*," the man said. "Your *head* could blow any minute."

Jordan shrugged his shoulders and had the man fill the tank. The man tugged on some wires. Jordan paid him, said thanks, and drove on.

Ten miles out of Dunkirk, the van started spitting fire. Pffft! *ting! ting! ting!* pffft! Then came phootel! phootel! *phootel! ting!* pffft! *ting! ting!* pffft! thaddup thaddup.

Jordan pulled off the road in the middle of snowy nowhere, somewhere south of Buffalo. He gave the van a rest, getting out and wandering up the road a bit on foot. Ahead of him, as well as behind, the only thing he saw was snow. Jordan followed his footsteps back to the van and, with new resolve, continued on. *Ting! patawww!* phootel! phootel! thaddup thaddup thaddup.

An unlighted road sign popped into view: *Genessee Road*. Nice name for a road, Jordan thought – Genessee. Snowdrifts drifted over the road like ghosts. Another sign came up – a bright neon *Ixion* gas station sign. Jordan steered toward the pumps, stopped, pulled up the emergency brake, turned off the motor, and folded over sideways on the front seat.

From out of the fuzzy, blurred, blank white winter wonderland, a man floated up, knocking hard on the window on the passenger side. "*You all right?*" a red-cheeked man called through the fog.

Pulling himself together, Jordan tugged on the door handle and opened the door. "*You all right?*" the man said again. "Come in to the store. I have some coffee brewing."

Jordan got out of the car and followed the man, bent-over and slow-moving, wearing gray coveralls and black knee-high fly fisherman's boots. Warily, the two made their way toward the dull light in the place's front windows. Jordan paused to admire the marvelous crystal patterns on the glass door of *Hambleton's Ixion Gas Station and General Store*. A bell tingled over them when they went in.

"Season's greetings," the round, gray-haired old man said without merriment. "*Hambleton the Handyman*," he introduced himself. "Coffee or hot chocolate?"

"Chocolate, please."

"What in tarnation you doing out in this weather?" Hambleton demanded to know, boiling up some water in a pot on a hot plate on a tool-cluttered counter.

"Heading east," Jordan said. "Going to New England."

"New England is it now?" Hambleton pondered, pouring a pouch of condensed chocolate powder into the pot of water, stirring with a big wooden soup spoon as he poured. "Did you run out of gas?"

"Engine's dying."

"Skipping?"

“*Dying* – lunging – going *ting!* *patawww!* phootel! phootel! Then pffft! *ting!* thaddup *thaddup,*” Jordan mimicked.

“Well, we better have a look at her,” Hambleton said, pouring the chocolate concoction into a mug and handing it to Jordan, then asking for his keys. While Jordan sipped from the mug, warming his hands on it, the old man opened up the slatted doors of his old-time garage. Then he went out, got in the van, started it, and drove it in over the service pit, a wide, yawning gap in the ground.

Hambleton turned her off, got out, and went down under to have a better look. Then he came back up, opened the hood, and had a look there. He pulled on some levers, and lifted a cap. “Closed points,” the old man murmured. “Ten more feet and your car would’a died,” he said, having at it, spacing the gaps. “There, that does it.” He put everything back and closed the hood.

Jordan asked Hambleton if he could reimburse him for his services.

“Well, that’s usually how we do it in my country,” Hambleton said wryly. He drove the van out to the pumps, and put gas in. “Looks like you’re also leaking oil,” he commented, adding a can of 5-40 oil, also giving Jordan a can to take with him. He took only twenty-eight dollars for it all. “And don’t forget to check that oil occasionally,” he said when Jordan rolled out.

Just out of Buffalo Jordan got on the New York Thruway. The van was running like a charm. The thruway unraveled out ahead, beckoning like a smooth white ribbon. Jordan kept east – straight east – straight as a crow flies. There was not a curve, a bend, a swerve. There was just the night, the snow, and the tunneling road.

Then he was laughing. Jordan’s own laughter woke him. For just the shortest moment, he’d drifted off – he’d fallen asleep at the wheel. He’d dreamed, and in his dream he’d told himself a joke. His own laughter woke him up. He awoke and found himself driving east in a van on the New York Thruway in the dead of winter – for the life of him he could not remember what had been so funny.

An enormous snow-caked sign loomed into view, announcing *Syracuse*. A second sign announced the second *Syracuse* exit. The van’s oil-level warning light blinked on. First came *ting!* *patawww!* Then – *bang!* – the engine blew up.

Jordan threw her into neutral and – knock knock knock knock knock – coasted roadside. He turned the motor off, sat still, and tried not to think. Then he tried the motor again – thaddup thaddup thaddup thaddup thaddup thaddup. He put the van into first gear. The van crawled forward, back onto the road, moving heavily and painfully toward the second *Syracuse* exit toll booth in the fog. Jordan came to a stop. The engine went *tchrrrrrrkkkk*, and that was the end of it. Jordan turned the key left, then back right again. Nothing. The old lady sitting in the box was telling Jordan what he owed her.

“My engine’s blown,” Jordan said.

“Bowling?” she said. “At the end of the ramp, turn right.”

“No, my motor blew up.”

“That’s right. Better pay up.” Cars were collecting on the exit-road, lined up behind the van. Jordan was blocking their way. In her postal-worker-like blue uniform, the money taker got out of her box and went around behind the van and waved her arms. “He wants to go *bowling!*”

she cried out. “But he doesn’t want to *pay up*.” A brawny man in a red-checkered lumberjack’s shirt got out of a blue sports car two cars back, and approached. Jordan got out his money quickly, and paid the fare.

“*Move that thing now!*” the big man demanded, a fist raised.

“Well, I can’t exactly *lift* it out of the way, can I?” Jordan shot back. “Notice she didn’t tell you *the engine’s dead*.”

The big man suddenly volunteered to give the van a big push, to start it on down the ramp. Jordan hopped in. “Just turn right at the end and roll on in,” the lumberjack hollered after. “From the bowling alley you can call a mechanic – and a cab.”

Parker’s Ball and Pin Café looked bleak and desolate at that hour (four in the morning) in that light (garish florescent beams). From a phone booth in front of the place, Jordan made the calls. The tow truck, deployed from a used car dealer’s headquarters, got there first – then the police, and then the cab. The tow truck driver told Jordan he was looking at forty dollars right now for the towing and probably eight or nine hundred dollars in repairs down the road – *or* he could give Jordan five bucks and take care of the transfer of the title and all the paperwork by mail in the coming weeks or months, at Jordan’s leisure.

Jordan took a single suitcase out of the van, then watched the blinking amber light of the truck and the dead van-in-tow fade from sight. Now the cabbie yelled at him, “Hey! The meter’s running! Let’s *get this show on the road!* Where we going?”

“Bus station,” Jordan said, throwing his suitcase in the rear seat. He wasn’t even entirely in – the door was still open – when the cab’s spinning wheels sent gravel flying. From the forward momentum, the door closed itself.

It took just ten minutes. “*Voila!*” the taxi driver announced. “The bus station.”

Jordan paid the driver and leapt aside as the cab tore away. Entering the empty, dilapidated depot building, he sat down in the chair nearest to him, very carefully positioning his suitcase under it. He reached for a newspaper stuffed in the space between his seat and the adjoining. At the top of section *C* was a photo of a burning woman – a young bride who’d been set on fire, according to the accompanying text. In India, a trend was seen to be emerging. Some grooms, feeling the parents of their brides were not providing sufficient dowries, were dousing their brides with gasoline, then igniting them.

It was almost too much. What was *wrong* with people, anyway? There were photographs of children with swollen bellies holding empty soup bowls; better-off children toting machine guns; soldiers holding their bandaged heads or marching in shining full regalia in parades; robots; weapons of mass destruction; space ships; melting ice caps. The paper fell from Jordan’s knees to the floor. He drifted off to sleep.

“...*Worcester and Boston*” – he caught it in the nick of time. “From Gate Six,” the loudspeakers announced. The bus station was like a beehive now, humming, people heading in all directions. Jordan got his ticket and ran to Gate Six – in the nick of time.

Once aboard the bus – his seat secured, and the next stop New England – Jordan nodded off again. In Albany, a woman smelling dismally of conflicting perfume scents got on the bus with a group of like perfumed, noisy, bird-beaked ladies. Jordan was startled from his deep

reverie. “My, don’t *you* look *tired!*” she said, looking right at Jordan prior to sitting down next to him. He opened his eyes only slightly, then closed them again. “*Ladies,*” the woman crowed, “does this *hooligan* not look *tired?*” The other ladies clucked agreement. “Look at all that *hair* on him,” one lady whispered snidely to another. “No *wonder* he can’t get up.”

Why did people *talk* like this? They didn’t know *anything*. It really got to him, but Jordan didn’t react. He distracted himself with thoughts of maple trees, birch bark canoes, Katahdin, Bar Harbor, the Berkshires, Monadnock, the White Mountains, the Green Mountains, contra dancing, amber honey, and the girl of his dreams.

“A young man without any *manners* is a *very* sad thing,” one of the women said snootily, getting off the bus in Worcester. “You would *think* a young man *could* show the simple courtesy of letting *two old ladies* sit *together* on a *bus*. What *is* the world coming to?”

Jordan felt bad – he meant well. Why hadn’t the old dame said something *before* they’d reached Worcester? It really wasn’t *fair* – such a verdict. The accusation pierced him. Such misunderstanding. Jordan felt deeply wronged. He transferred from the bus to a special transport mini-van. He tried not to think. He knew the little shuttle bus would be in Vermont within the hour. *Stay calm*, Jordan told himself. *You’re almost there*.

“We’re here,” the shuttle driver said, shaking her lone customer’s shoulders, trying to wake him from deep sleep.

“What? *Where?*” Jordan asked drowsily.

“Grange?” the woman reminded. “Vermont?”

On shaky legs, Jordan got out. He gave profuse thanks, took his suitcase in hand, and walked into the valley.

As elsewhere in the winter world, Grange was under deep snow, a glittering village of rolling snowdrifts and stone houses with stone chimneys puffing smoke into the still and frosted air. The sun was low. The afternoon light was like syrup – amber. Sprays of glittering snowflakes flew up from the rooftops on sheets of wind.

It was Christmas Eve.

Jordan had written Esther’s address on a scrap of paper crumpled in his corduroy coat pocket, wrapped around the two gold rings he’d brought. He went out of the village on the designated road and found her house with no difficulty. Going down a winding, narrow road, cutting across huge snow-covered fields, he’d seen the family mansion a mile away – it was exactly as she’d described it.

The house was a brown-shingled, four story affair – a Victorian hodge-podge decked out with gables, oriel and casement windows, towers, spires, and great porches – the place looked like a castle. He and Esther could live in the carriage barn for starters, Jordan thought to himself, and work their way up from there. He’d immerse himself in life’s stream – he’d be good to his wife and child, a sweet husband and daddy, a warm family man.

The wind blew the snow around the house like shards of glass, stinging Jordan’s eyes. Weak in the knees, he stepped onto the manse’s dark, expansive, ornate porch. By force of mind, he tried to calm his heart’s pounding. He ran his hand back through his damp, course, mane-like hair. He rested his suitcase by the door and, holding the two precious rings he’d brought

delicately between two fingers and the thumb of his right hand, he rang the doorbell with the pointing finger of his left.

Bells chimed. A baby cried. Footsteps touched lightly down wooden stairs. The door was opened by an elegant young man – maybe Jordan's own age or just a few years older. Only slightly taller than Jordan.

“Esther said you’d come,” the gentleman in the doorway spoke softly, smiling. "Do you want the bad news first, or the good news?"

"The *good* news," Jordan chose, gladness filling his soul. He was shaking the two gold rings in his closed hand like a couple dice to roll.

“For *you*,” snarled this beast, slamming the door, “*No* good news.”

Just Kieran Porter's Way of Doing Things

As snow had fallen that morning, Boston in the afternoon on New Year's Eve was brown and wet. Snowdrifts curbside were smudged black from the exhaust of vehicles swerving recklessly amid long chains of double-parked cars. In all of Boston, for just my tiny dark blue Geo *Metro*, I could find only one single, solitary unmarked, unmetered parking space not in front of a fire hydrant and not in front of a driveway – a spot by a high fence not part of, but near to, Fenway Park.

I deftly parallel parked, got out, and started walking. Boston's raw weather was biting to the bone. I put my head down. Looking up, I had to shield my eyes from glaring haze. Cars sprang at me like sharks. Boston drivers seemed to have some sort of *radar* out for people walking, on the prowl for fresh pedestrians. I quickly got the drift of this. Soon accustomed to their antics, I began weaving my way through the labyrinth of gravelly streets using car hoods as walking sticks. I strode amid the glass and concrete skyscrapers, peering into cheerful storefront windows still filled with seasonal ornaments – glistening gold, bristling green, bloodstirring red.

I went around making inquiries, trying to get a lead on the whereabouts of Kieran Porter. The address I had for him, 15 Reaper Street, led nowhere. There was no Reaper Street in Boston. I found a 15 *Roper* Street, but not a soul in the boarding house there, or in the neighborhood, knew anything about my remarkable friend. So I kept walking, describing Kieran at length to random strangers, hoping eventually something would click. Believe me, if any of these people had *ever* seen my friend, if only once, they'd have known him from my description. Six-foot-three, Kieran Porter was as pale as a mime in whiteface, always wearing black clothes never ironed, talking incessantly.

At dusk, I got an idea. I took the subway to Cambridge – to Harvard Square. I walked up Massachusetts Avenue to Central Square, asking about my friend and Reaper Street all along the way. Several people knew the place – an existent house – a grimy, blistered tenement at the top of which lived Kieran.

I coiled up a dark winding staircase, arriving out of breath at his garret door. I could hear him murmuring and pacing within. At the first touch of my light tap, the door sprang open. "Hail, *Sisyphus!*" Kieran cried out. "It's *Gene*, the Oregonian. However did you *find* me! Well, isn't *this*

just the Goddamndest thing! I *never* expected you'd *actually* show up! Come in – come in." He shook my hand. "By *God!* Gene Kantor. Well, you made good your parting promise – you're here. It wasn't at all clear you'd come. I *thought* I'd maybe left you on a sour note. You don't often meet someone hitchhiking who becomes a devoted friend. Everybody else, well, you know – promises, promises! The water off the melting ice caps could make their way here sooner than some people. But here *you* are here, so I won't explain. Can't you close the door?"

I closed the door. I knew that Kieran somehow, somewhere along the way, had been short-circuited, his memory scrambled, his brain fried. Not everything Kieran said made sense. And yet he still remembered we'd met hitchhiking. It was amazing what got through.

He looked terrible, like a death-mask version of his former ghostly self, more haggard and pale than when I'd first stopped to give him a ride. His self-cut beard, patchy, shorn with gardener's shears I knew, was now gnarled and knotted. He was dressed, as I'd expected he would be, entirely in black. I noticed he had on the same black ancient mariner's pea-coat he'd been wearing on that lonesome road out in the west when first we'd met, us catapulting eastward across this big, free country amid vast golden summer grainfields going everywhere – in Colorado, if I remembered rightly.

His room was like a tiny sub-zero meat-locker. When I began visibly to tremble, Kieran asked if he could take my coat. When I declined, he began himself to shake and shiver, saying, "I was only *kidding*, Gene!" Then he said, "Of course you've come to *help* me? You'd heard I'd succumbed to the killer doldrums?"

"I came because we're *friends*," I said. "I wanted to stay in touch. I'm interested in what you're up to."

"I'm *up* to the top of this *garret!*" Kieran said, laughing, his whole body jiggling with pleasure at his own irony, him reaching to the ceiling. I remembered now how he'd sat in the passenger seat of my little Geo, jiggling and bouncing, talking non-stop, delighting in his own careening scree of words. "I tell you it was not one week ago that I was on the *floor*," he said, now laying down on the dusty wooden slats, crossing his arms like a corpse in a casket. "The winds were out of my sails – I was beached, flattened, gutted, corkscrewed, goner than Melmoth the Wanderer, lost in no-man's land, and downhearted."

"I see."

"You *see*," Kieran said – with irony, I knew. I remembered now how he got almost *sardonic* sometimes. "How could you *see*, Gene? Were you *here*? Standing behind me? In my mirror, staring at me? Tumbling down the stairs after me when I fell? Taking the punches when the punks jumped me? You strip off those masks you wear, and *then* I'll tell you that you've earned the right to tell me that you *see!*"

"It was you who told me, 'concealment is everything'."

"When every *other* masquerade is over! You and your *partial recall*, Gene. What *is* it with you, anyway? What I said was, 'concealment's everything when *nothing's* left behind the final mask that's stripped away.' Is this ringing any bells? *Then* – and not before. 'Pessimism is a human mask; in the authentic is always optimism' – that's what you told me."

"It's *true*."

"Oh yeah, the *truth*. You told me all about the *truth* – the beautiful, eternal, optimistic *Divine Mind* imprinted on the cosmos. Gene, the *truth* is spinal meningitis, solitary confinement, killer bees, ragweed allergy, blistering cold, avalanches, earthquakes, frostbite, hemorrhoids. God is *not* what you call the *Divine Mind*, imprinted on the cosmos, beautiful and peaceful. You and your peace and justice! – I'll give you *peace and justice*."

"You don't have to prove anything to me."

"You think you can ring the gong on New Year's Eve and all is well, the world is new, and that's the *end* of it? I wish I could open up your head and pour authentic *justice* in. Everybody knows nothing. A Doctor Okinawa Abe I knew told me I suffered from *Shinkeishitsu* – like I would fall for *that*! He told me to go roller skating, do finger painting, take hikes! I told *him* to take a *hike*. You too, *Gene*."

"I could use some fresh air," I said honestly, feeling cramped and short on breath in Kieran's shrinking room. "It's New Year's Eve. Let me take you out to dinner."

We first went for a walk along the pebbled banks of the Charles River, sitting at the end of a dock where, against the easy, lapping lull of its waters, Kieran pressed on with his fervent almost frantic monologue. In Kieran's company, the Boston skyline seemed to rise from the river's gentle shores like fierce pinnacles and terrifying shards of glass.

Suddenly Kieran was throwing rocks at ducks. I got up and walked toward the esplanade over the Charles. To my surprise, Kieran followed. We went to the middle of the walkway, then turned back to Cambridge again.

Just prior to midnight, we went into a low-lighted English-style tavern with artificial Tudor beams where noisy revelers were on the verge of their midnight uproar. Kieran said he wasn't hungry – at least he made it clear he *wasn't* going to *eat* – and he wasn't going to stay in this desolate place among these stammering idiots. He asked a waiter for whiskey to go – for which I paid big bucks. While the waiter went to get it, Kieran stuffed his coat pockets with mints, matches, business cards, and pennies on the counter.

We took the bottle back to Kieran's dismal room, where he drank, lurched to and fro, shivered, and declaimed. "I suppose I'm supposed to be *happy* some complete total stranger I met hitchhiking should *happen* to think of poor *Kieran* on New Year's Eve?" he said, disgusted, pinching the big winged flanges of his hairy nose. "Go waste your charity on somebody *else*, loser."

I tried to focus on the joyful noise of the New Years' celebrants in the background.

"Where were *you* when the punks jumped me, *Gene*? Where were you when I fell out the *window*? Take a *hike*! You *owe* me, Gene. I don't owe *you* anything. Where'd you park your car?"

"In the Fens, by Fenway Park."

"Why not Cambridge?"

"You'd written *Boston*. Your address." I showed him his own note.

"You *walked* from Boston all the way to Cambridge? What are you, *crazy*?" Don't even *bother* to answer that. I'm going to bed."

Some Happy New Year.

It was now half past midnight. I was of two minds – stay or go. Finally, I laid down on

the cold, narrow wooden floor. I had to ask myself, what did I really know about Kieran Porter anyway? I knew he was originally from somewhere in Connecticut. I knew he'd been in jail for housebreaking, petty larceny, and so on. He'd also lost his driver's license many times over, I knew, for drinking and driving. I knew he was probably an unredeemable scoundrel who'd maybe never clean up his act – but it was exactly people like him who most needed friends like me, I figured. Love the stranger as thyself.

I heard Kieran tossing and turning, talking to himself, audibly upset at my having chosen to stay. He'd covered himself with a heavy, musty woolen blanket. Some of its itchy dust – or lice or fleas or bedbugs – had got on me and, after that, I also tossed and turned.

It was around half past three in the morning when Kieran gave up on my leaving on my own initiative. He jumped out of bed, threw his blanket at my head, mumbled, "The lambs and lions will lie down together *maybe* – but not on *my* watch," and ran out the door, barely stopping to open it. Then he came back in the room, muttering, "Got to get out of here – got to get out." He placed his big feet, in his ragged stinking black socks and shoes, on my back. "I don't *want* you here," he put it to me, jumping up and down. "*Get out.*"

"Are you *sure*?" I double-checked, standing up to face him. I peered deep into his beady, calculating, unrevealing eyes. I knew how spontaneously Kieran could say or do a thing or, as quickly and as whimsically, say or do the opposite. That was just Kieran's way of doing things.

"*Out!*" he screamed.

So that was that. Pulling myself together, I said "I appreciate you" and reached to shake his hand – which he refused.

That's how it happened I was out at four in the morning, crossing the bridge over from Cambridge into Boston, both cities eerily empty at that hour, while it was still dark out, on New Year's Day. I pulled my stiff winter coat closer against the arctic morning chill, and traced my steps back along the Charles River to Copley Square, the Common, and the Public Gardens.

For a long while, until sunup, I alternately stood next to and sat on a bench under the weeping willow trees by the waters where I knew the swan boats floated in the summertime. Then I wove my way back into the narrowing corridors of stately homes and dreary tenements packed tightly together into neighborhoods circling the legendary baseball field where once there had been only swamps.

Snow flurries now alighted. The first morning cars ventured out, their headlights blinking on amid the swirling white. Nearing Fenway Park, I saw Kieran – now I knew he was insane – in my dark blue Geo. Contrasted against the falling snow, the car looked black. Kieran Porter – lunatic! – sped away. I checked my pockets. Not only had he pickpocketed my wallet, but also my house and car keys. I thought, my God, what a way to make a living. It was clear he wasn't going to let me track him down a second time.

The Lightness of Gravity

Everything wants to float.

– Rainer Maria Rilke
from *Sonnets to Orpheus*,
Part Two, XIV

I

Born and raised in Narrburyport, Massachusetts, I'd worked as printer's helper, freelance graphic artist, and reference librarian in neighboring Marmorac's public library while moonlighting as an oil and watercolor painting teacher and life-drawing sessions overseer at the

Marmorac Arts and Science Center. I'd been engaged to a Jewish heiress from New York City then living north of Boston in a hovel in the woods but, getting cold feet, had gone on alone, backpacking in the Acadia, Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, and Yosemite national parks. I'd hiked sections of California's John Muir Trail and the Appalachian Trail from Virginia to Maine before taking a freighter from North Carolina to Holland. I'd then hitchhiked first to Paris, then to Munich where I'd worked in advertising doing photographic typesetting, copy preparation, artwork, lay-out, and final paste-ups for magazine and newspaper ads. On the side, I'd tutored students in English three nights a week and had eventually traveled to Switzerland to earn formal certification in teaching English as a Second Language from an international school of language having its headquarters in Berne. I'd written and translated assorted articles for the German magazine *Schadenfreude*, had been involved through three years in setting up booths at the Frankfurt Book Fair, and had been for two years the lead singer and banjo player in a folk music band that played in everything from concert halls and night clubs to coffee shops and book stores throughout Europe. Abruptly I had left all that in order to return to America to get a Master's degree in Library Science in Boston, where I'd interned at the Museum of Fine Arts while working in the corporate library of the Houghton Mifflin publishing house prior to becoming, on graduating, the director of, first, a public library in western Massachusetts (where I married a quick-nesting ruby-throated paper marbler) then in the MetroWest area just outside Boston (where my wife took flight), meanwhile moonlighting as an Internet entrepreneur, posting and selling books online when the World Wide Web was still in its infancy. This had led to my staking out territory in the then emerging electronic book industry, gathering up company shares while doing proofreading, copy editing, and quality assurance for seven separate booming eBook firms that all eventually went bankrupt. From a former library school colleague I learned of an opening at the Houghton Library, the rare books and manuscripts library of Harvard University. They needed somebody to come in and evaluate, organize, and conserve certain nineteenth century papers about which I'm not at liberty to speak which had long been decomposing in a deep far corner of the Houghton's basement. I'd got the job and basically just thought very well of myself – that I was a very nice person of some standing who'd done a lot of good in the world and now had landed at the top of it, at Harvard, and that, in short, I, Ben Fisk, was quite a guy.

Then I met Lew Carley, a former Boston Public Library fine arts librarian and public library director, retired, who'd hardly traveled anywhere outside of Boston and Easthaven. He was then hard at work, he said, on finishing a book having the working title *The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place*, the title alone of which impressed me terrifically (I had tried to write a book about my adventures, tentatively titled *Gypsy Scholar* but, try as I might to breathe life into that project, it had not got off the ground).

Born Lewis Oachum Edwards on September 31, 1933 in Northampton, Massachusetts, Lew was the son of Duncan Lewis Carley, once a Professor of Philology at Wellelsey College who'd turned from teaching to carpentry, and Harriet Carpenter Carley, who'd died at childbirth, on bringing Lew into this world. As his father could not afford to keep him, six-month-old Lewis had been adopted, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, by Joseph and Marge Miner. He'd been officially placed into the custody of the Miners on March 24, 1934. Joseph Simon and Marge

Miner had been married on July 16, 1932, in Concord, Massachusetts four years after their first meeting and three months after their engagement. Joseph and Marge renamed their adopted son Lew Lewis Carley Miner. The Miners got involved, on moving to Boston, in an occult group, the Order of the Companions of the Rising Light in the Morning – Stella Matutina – the Morning Star. Lew grew up in an atmosphere of occult séances, elaborate rituals, and often bizarre ceremonies amid shelves everywhere stuffed with books in more than half a dozen different languages on hermetic and masonic rites, history, and lore.

Lew's step-father, Joseph, had been a prominent architect who'd spent long days in Bertram Goodhue's offices. His step-mother, Marge, had been a socialite who'd chaired community council meetings and had volunteered at a range of organizations from the Children's Home Society of Massachusetts to the Worcester County Council of Wives of Architects. In the little-over-a-year between their marriage in 1932, and the adoption of Lew in 1934, Joseph and Marge Miner had lived variously in Northampton, Concord, Cambridge, and Boston.

In 1950, at the age of 17, proficient in English, French, and German, Carley had already written and published "On the Rescuing of Manuscripts in Greek, Latin, Anglo-Saxon, and Norwegian" and had authored, he said, the entries for Canada, Denmark, and Japan for the 1952 World Book Encyclopedia. In 1953, having enlisted in the army, he began his study of civilizations and their libraries, intially titled *The Great and Everlasting Significance of Libraries in Civilization from Earliest Times to the Present Day*, years later revised (and re-titled), *The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place*. After a psychiatric discharge from the army in 1954, Lewis, having dubbed himself Lew, entered Boston College to study art, also working evenings and weekends in the B.C. library.

In 1958, Lew's real father, Duncan Lewis Carley, moved to Montreal, Canada and apparently never returned to the U.S. His step-parents, then approaching their late 50s, also departed Massachusetts, re-locating to Eugene, Oregon. That same year, 1958, Lew got a job in the congested, damp, dank, and dark Fine Arts Department of the Boston Public Library, located on the third floor of the old McKim Building, where tissue-like eggshell-colored paint was everywhere peeling from the ceilings and walls.

The Fine Arts Collection of the Boston Library was a non-circulating research resource of more than 125,000 books. The circulating art book collection was on the second floor of the Johnson building. The collection included works of biography, criticism, history and philosophy of art, art education, manuals on technique, journals and pattern-books, major studies of artists and periods, catalogues raisonnées, oeuvres catalogues, collectors' manuals and many valuable early imprints, as well as major art indexes and abstracts, encyclopedias, dictionaries, bibliographies and auction records. There was a picture file consisting of mounted and unmounted photographs and clippings about Boston buildings, parks, monuments, streets, etc. Material in this file has been indexed in the Boston Architecture Reference File. A postcard collection of c. 1,500 items depicting Boston buildings is also part of this pictorial archive. The Boston Art Archives/New England Art Information File had been started in 1885 as a vertical file of ephemera on Boston artists. Materials later included were exhibition announcements, calendars of events, gallery/organization newsletters, press releases, reviews of exhibitions,

checklists and small exhibition catalogs, obituaries, illustrations, gallery histories, bibliographies on artists, and miscellaneous biographical information. The index also absorbed the exhibition record of individual artists at shows of the Boston Society of Arts and Crafts, the Boston Society of Independent Artists, and the Boston Art Club.

The Library, on Copley Square, designed by McKim, Mead, and White, was completed in 1895. The new wing, designed by Philip Johnson and John Burgee, was completed in 1973. A planning grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission in 1980 enabled the Trustees to undertake an initial feasibility study for the restoration and renovation of the original building. The Trustees hired Stull Associates, who prepared A Restoration Program for the McKim Building of the Boston Public Library and A Handbook to the Art and Architecture of the Boston Public Library, completed and presented to the Trustees in August, 1981. By 1983, the Trustees had approval on a loan.

In 1985, the firm of Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott, working closely with Carley and other librarians in going over the library's functional needs, in addition to historical considerations. In 1989, Carley had left Boston to take the job of Director of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library, the public library of Easthaven, Massachusetts. He retired at sixty-five in 1998.

I met up with Lew, seventy-two, in Boston in mid-October, 2005 at his favorite restaurant, Jacob Wirth's.

Wirth's was on Stuart Street between Tremont and Washington Streets in the theater district at the edge of Chinatown, an easy walk from the Public Gardens and the Common area. The fine old smoot-black nineteenth century facade sported a clock jutting out sideways over the front sign lettered in gold on black. Wirth's, advertised as Boston's second-oldest restaurant, had been in business since 1868 when Jacob, from a long line of wine growers in Kreuznach, Prussia, had arrived in America. Ten years later, he'd moved his restaurant across the street. Jacob Wirth, who died in 1892, had been succeeded by his son, also Jacob Wirth, an earnest and light-hearted drinking man, mixer, mingler, conversationalist, and Harvard dropout. Despite Prohibition and deep anti-German sentiment through two world wars, Wirth's had flourished through the years.

In 1975, ownership of Wirth's had passed to an Irishman, William Fitzgerald. It was said he didn't change the unique ambience of the place much, until a major restoration in 1987 when the the place was purged of its dark, smudged, smokey ambience. Fitzgerald's children later restored the exterior of the building so that it looked again almost exactly as it had looked when the first Jacob Wirth had opened it. Inside, the dining room retained its original simple mahogany tables. There was still a big clock and a portrait of the founder in a circular medallion over the long mahogany bar, which was well equipped for dispensing draught beer. Above the bar, under the portrait of the first Jake Wirth, was still posted the Latin motto proclaiming *Suum Cuique* which, translated, meant "Each his own."

Carley was a slight, thin haired, sweet voiced old man, someone obviously incapable of any cruelty or coarseness. I saw at once that he was cross-eyed. He claimed he saw double. He said there was a twinning of objects in his sight, which he insisted were "emblematic" of the

"dual realities of sight and imagination."

He'd brought along with him the sole extant copy of a manuscript he'd written, which he wanted me to proofread and perhaps even edit, *The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place*.

After we'd been seated, Lew set the papers carefully under his chair. Lew then studied the menu intently. Its holdings ranged from traditional German specialties to Jake's award winning New England Clam Chowder. Along with several special dishes each day, the menu featured sausages, pig's knuckles, boiled bacon, hams, herrings, and cheeses. Lew ordered grilled petite filet mignon with marinated shrimp, lemon butter, red potatoes, and garlicky spinach with a glass of dark beer— "Jake Wirth's Heart of Darkness," Lew called it. I had a salmon filet on pea tendrils with chow mein noodles, and also a pint of the Heart of Darkness. For dessert, we had each a pint of Guinness Stout.

Wirth, Lew explained – leaning toward me across the table, speaking very softly – was the German word for innkeeper, derived from *Wirt*, host. "This place," he whispered ominously, "is very special. It has been said the founder, Jacob, was related to Oswald Wirth, the nineteenth century Swiss occultist, kabbalist, magician, and designer of Tarot cards. Surely we are sitting in one of the ultimate of great, dark, mysterious manmade places." Lew brought out from under his chair the manuscript he'd brought with him, his book, *The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place*.

Lew set the stage for speaking of his book by way of telling me, first, about how, as a child, through his youth, and even into manhood, what had *mattered* to him was *clover* – moss – rocks – studying lichen on boulders and trees – just being out, sleeping out under the stars. He said it was amazing to him how society – people – "the building of the Tower of Babel, the intrigues of twisted, scheming people, as if they had nothing better to do" – had intruded on his life the way they had. He mentioned the village of Easthaven and one of the town's library's Trustees, Cal Horan who, according to Lew, had two ruling passions: "the occult and *Schadenfreude*." I knew what *Schadenfreude* was, me having written and translated articles for a German magazine by that name and having twice set up, for the magazine's publisher, a booth at the Frankfurt Book Fair. Basically, *Schadenfreude* is one's perverse and mischievous delight in the trials, sufferings, and downfall of *other people*; everybody's ready for a laugh, especially when it comes at somebody *else's* expense.

This man Horan, Lew went on, claimed he'd received from a band of gypsy Rosicrucians certain documents detailing the magical methods, techniques, and rituals of the so-called Order of the Morning Star. In his dingy, cramped Easthaven apartment kitchen, translating the rites of his order, Horan had been accustomed, Lew said, to dressing up in ornate Scottish Highlander garb. Later, living in still more abject poverty with his new bride, Minnehaha, in Boston, Horan had taken to wearing even more spectacular Egyptian garb.

Lew did not elaborate further on Horan's Order of the Morning Star, saying only that it had offered "exotic, marvelous, convoluted esoteric Knowledge. But you must recall what ancient Heraclitus said, 'Knowledge is not intelligence'."

Now Lew suddenly turned pale. "Hah!" he cried out, staring cross-eyed at the entry door.

"Here it is!"

I looked over my shoulder and saw three men dressed comically in black three-piece suits, wearing dark glasses and carrying canes, as if for a Halloween party who, on entering the eatery, walked briskly past the piano toward us. Lew set down his papers gently, peering blankly into my eyes. In slow motion, he keeled over. He laid himself down lightly on the ashen, gray, unvarnished wooden floor.

It was the waiter who called over to the barman to phone 911. I looked all over the place for any sign of the three men, but they had vanished.

In my ear, the waiter whispered, "He's dead, your friend."

II

That is how I met the queen of my dreams, Valerie Carley, Lew Carley's daughter, granddaughter of Duncan Lewis Carley and Harriet Carpenter Carley – step-granddaughter of Joseph and Marge Miner, married on July 16, 1912, in Concord, Massachusetts – into whose custody her father had been placed in September, 1919.

Here was Lew's obituary, as published in the Boston Globe: "Lew Lewis Carley (January 3, 1919-September 24, 2005) born Lewis Oachum Edwards in Northampton, Massachusetts, was the son of Duncan Lewis Carley and Harriet Carpenter Carley, who died in labor, giving birth to Lew. At six months old, he was adopted, in Cambridge, by Joseph and Marge Miner. In August 1932, at the age of thirteen, his family moved to Boston. Lew, an art student interested in Hindu philosophy, was often to be found at the Boston Public Library, conducting his own studies. He served in the U.S. Army until the end of WWII. After leaving the army, he returned to Boston to attend Simmons College. After graduating, he became a Boston Public Library fine arts reference librarian. He contributed articles to various library journals. In 1960, he became embroiled in a sensational libel case in which he sued Hannah Cramer, a sculptress. Lawyer's fees forced him into bankruptcy. Mr. Carley was appointed Director of the Easthaven, Massachusetts Public Library. He was married to Olivia Burton Carley, who died in Newport, California in 1982. He is survived by a daughter, Valerie Emma Carley of Cambridge. Mr. Carley died of a heart attack on September 24, 2005 while dining at one of his favorite restaurants in Boston, Jacob Wirth's."

After Lew had keeled over at Jacob Wirth's pub, near the bar over which hung the sign having the motto "To each his own," it was in no way clear if it had been the Filet Mignon, the potatoes, or the spinach that had killed him – or Jake's Heart of Darkness beer. Perhaps his pint of Guinness Stout had been poisoned – that, too, was never proved. All we knew, Val and I, was

that in the commotion that had followed Lew's slumping to the well-waxed floor, her father's manuscript *The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place* had gone missing, apparently abducted by the three men who may or may not have murdered Lew.

It was ridiculous – this intrigue. Val contacted me saying she was sure her father had been involved in some big esoteric secret society intrigue leading to his having been murdered – she wasn't kidding. Well, I wanted to go out and get a yacht and sail out of this country to Myanmar or Newfoundland or get a job in a bank and go to sleep for a thousand years. The last thing I wanted was to be around people who felt you weren't really alive unless you knew some secret handshake or had experiences killing people on the side.

But I could not get it out of my mind – my looking back over my shoulder at Jake Wirth's that night, seeing those three men dressed in black three-piece suits, wearing dark glasses and carrying canes as if for a Halloween party who, on entering the eatery, had walked briskly past the piano toward Vals' Dad and me, just prior to Lew's keeling over.

So I agreed to meet with Val and go over what had happened at Jake Wirth's and what her father had told me. He'd left a back-up disk in her safekeeping which did not hold the contents of the book itself, but rather the working notes that he'd compiled for it. She'd printed it out, and I agreed we could go over it together with a fine tooth comb.

Lew's work-in-progress, *The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place*, was dedicated to ancient Heraclitus ("Knowledge is not intelligence"), Thomas Merton ("He is a business man. He is full of ideas. He breathes notions and new schemes. He generates books in the silence that ought to be sweet with the infinitely productive darkness of contemplation"), and the author of the Book of Ephesians ("For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms").

On the front page was the book's title, *The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place*.

On the second page was the book's title and subtitle, the author's name, the author's copyright, and a disclaimer ("All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews"), followed by another blank page. Then came the dedication Page ("To Val"), followed by an Acknowledgements page ("Special thanks to Randy Anson, Professor of English and Comparative Literature in the School of Humanities at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Tyrone Schorer, undergraduate in the Rechtswissenschaften/Jurisprudence Program at Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany; Susannah Yorick, Librarian, Harvard University's Houghton Library Department of Manuscripts, Cambridge, Massachusetts; and Marissa Bantano of the Fine Arts Department of the Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts") followed by another blank page, then the page with quotes from *The Book of Ephesians*, Heraclitus, and Thomas Merton. Then came the Table of Contents page, followed by another blank page, and then the *Introduction*.

"*Most of my life has been spent in libraries,*" Lew's book began.

III

Introduction

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

Most of my life has been spent in libraries.

As a child, venturing into the halls, aisles, and seemingly endless ranges of bookstacks of the Boston Public Library, hushed and entombed in paper, I could not get over the majesty of those shelves and shelves full of books, extending miles and reaching high skyward. This was a temple, the heart of all history and memory, the core of all civilization, as precious as the inventions of writing and printing themselves. In awe, I fell in love – not only with the library, but with a woman, too.

On May 15, 1958, at twenty-five, I married Monica Denton, twenty-four. The ceremony took place in Concord, on the splended grounds along the banks of the Concord River, very near the Old North Bridge. We got an apartment on Park Place, near the rose garden on the expansive lawns adjacent to the Museum of Fine Arts, and we were very happy.

That summer, I got work in the Fine Arts Department of the Boston Public Library – up on the third floor of the old McKim Building. I worked with the Boston Art Archives/New England Art Information File mainly, which had been started in 1885 as a vertical file of ephemera on Boston artists. Later materials included were exhibition announcements, calendars of events, gallery/organization newsletters, press releases, reviews of exhibitions, checklists and small exhibition catalogs, obituaries, illustrations, gallery histories, bibliographies on artists, and miscellaneous biographical information. The index had also absorbed the exhibition record of individual artists at shows of the Boston Society of Arts and Crafts, the Boston Society of Independent Artists, and the Boston Art Club.

In 1989, my wife Monica, our daughter Valerie, and I left Boston to move into a new home in the town of Easthaven, Massachusetts. Not that I was suspicious, still I felt I'd made the purchase under a good sign: a bank had lent me the money. I'd been appointed Director of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library – just about as perfect a setting as you can get, I think, for the telling of a story about the infinitely productive darkness of a clean, well-lighted place.

IV

Chapter One

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

In the beginning Easthaven was a poll-parish, incorporated March 23, 1802 under the name The First Religious Society in the Town of Shorehaven. It was incorporated as a town on March 18, 1814. The first Town Meeting was held April 17, 1817, and the officers elected were representative "citizens whose descendants held a high place in the esteem of their fellows." One of Easthaven's most prominent early citizens was Marshall Cook Hamperdon, born in 1797 in Shorehaven, in that part of it which is now Easthaven. After early success as a businessman, pioneering water power, saw mill, and grist mill in Easthaven, Marshall Hamperdon organized Hamperdon Mills, erected in 1822 (burned to the ground, 1845). He was the first president of the Easthaven Savings Bank. At present, there are five banks and eight churches in Easthaven. Two of the churches are Congregational; two Roman Catholic; one each Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, and Universalist. All occupy substantial edifices. The Easthaven Fire Department, consisting of two engine and two hook and ladder companies is well-equipped and manned, with Edmund Gripps as Chief. The Easthaven Public Library, whose collection consists primarily of books left to it by Mr. Lucius Hamperdon of New York City and Easthaven, located in the Hamperdon Building on Main Street and is supported wholly at the public expense.

The Massachusetts Public Library Law was enacted on May 24, 1851, enabling municipalities to raise and appropriate funds for the support of public libraries, establishing the Commonwealth as a pioneer in the public library movement in America. One hundred years later, Massachusetts Governor Paul A. Dever proclaimed the third week in May "Public Library Week," designating May 24, 1951, "Public Library Day." He singled out Easthaven for special praise, it having been among the first to take an interest in public libraries, the forerunner of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library having been established in 1871 when Lucius Hamperdon, a wealthy New Yorker and a native of Easthaven, built the Hamperdon building, setting aside three rooms on the second floor for library purposes. In his will, Hamperdon left his entire personal book collection to the library.

In 1902, another town native, Martin Conwell of Boston, seeing the need for a larger and better library for the growing community, had offered a sum of \$75,000 to the town to build a new library building, also donating land at the corner of Main and Conwell Streets for that purpose. Construction of the building had begun in 1904, a year after the death of Martin Conwell. Miss Miriam Welch served as librarian until the library was opened for circulation purposes in 1915. Miss Effie Purchase served as librarian from 1915 until 1939. Conwell's three children all gave liberally to the support and perpetuation of their father's library. Expenditures for the library were financed partially from the Town budget and partially from Trustee funds.

Miss Norma Van Allsted was librarian throughout the 1940s. In the February 20, 1951 minutes of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library, Miss Van Allstead had announced her

resignation as of March 1. The Board "preferred" to think of her resignation as "temporary," voting to increase her salary to \$2,300 a year. The March minutes showed "the Board presented the librarian with a pen and pencil set, and again expressed their hope that she might change her mind and return to the Library in the near future. A request was made that the Library staff should have one Saturday morning off a month, and the matter of arranging this was left to the Acting Librarian."

The September 18, 1951 minutes told of "the resignation of Miss Farrar, the Children's Librarian, the Board granting her a bonus of \$50.00 as an indication of their gratitude for her fine work as Acting Librarian since March." On October 23, 1951, the Board of Trustees appointed its first library director to have a library services education and degree, Mrs. Ellie Lanning, as well as a new Children's Librarian, Miss Hortense Charlemagne, the former to be paid \$3,200 annually and the latter \$2,600. The Janitor Mr. Othello Hartwell's annual salary was set at \$3,400. "The possibility of putting an article in the Town Warrant requesting an addition to the Library for a children's section was also discussed."

A new card catalog arrived in the spring of 1952. In May, there was talk, across Massachusetts, of the formation of a statewide Library Trustee Association. Easthaven's library trustees, in their minutes that summer, formally rejected joining any such association and requested of Mrs. Lanning that she "have a talk with Othello in an endeavor to learn why he refused to clean table tops and what his other varying difficulties may be. Mrs. Lanning reported that waxing the floors weekly was unnecessary, and that if properly sealed the floors would not require a waxing more often than every three months." On December 23, 1952, the minutes revealed "Mr. Hartwell does not feel he can handle any snowfalls this year, so the Board has agreed Elbert Hutton should be given the job to sweep away with his snowplow any appreciable amount of snow that may fall at a price previously agreed upon."

In the spring of 1953 library minutes showed "Mr. Hartwell is back in the hospital again and reports he will not be back to work at the library. the Board, therefore, approved Othello's being removed from the payroll as of April 1, 1953. The Board also recommended an ad seeking a new individual to fill the post should be placed in the Easthaven Daily News and that, in the meantime Mrs. Lanning should contact the firemen now doing Othello's job and ask that they take care of the furnace until such time as a new janitor is hired.

That summer, mention was made of the boiler being cracked. "The Arthur Hachette Company recommends the installation of a larger boiler than called for by the specifications. After considerable discussion it was voted to award the heating contract to the Arthur Hachette Company, Inc., for \$3,115." It was reported that "bills for electricity have gone up much more than originally estimated by the Electric Company. The Board directed the Secretary to write a letter to the Electric Company on this matter." The minutes noted the new janitor, Mr. Herbert Mercurian, was working out well. The librarian, Mrs. Lanning, reported to the Trustees that "the gift of a photograph of several unidentified men wearing Scotch tartans, and Masonic aprons had been given to the library, with only a note scribbled on the back saying the photograph had been taken in 1868 in London. It was agreed that the librarian should send the photograph on to the British Museum."

On December 12, 1953, "The Chairman asked Mrs. Lanning if she cared to make any statement as to the severing of her duties at the Library. She stated that she had no intention of resigning 'under fire.' She wished to know whether or not this would be a preliminary hearing with another hearing to follow, at which time she could know the nature and names of the complaints and complainants as to the conduct of her duties. She was informed that no such hearing was contemplated. She then pointed out that the American Library Association advocates certain rules of tenure, as outlined in the November 1946 bulletin of the Association. She advised the Board that the American Library Association would not recommend the library to a new librarian unless the Board pursued an appropriate process in deliberating her dismissal from her duties. Mrs. Lanning then abruptly left the meeting, muttering under her breath something unintelligible to others present. It was agreed by the Board that it was unfortunate Mrs. Lanning felt as she did and, worse, that she did what she did in the first place at a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, which need not be recorded here. It was agreed the Board will make an investigation into complaints that Mrs. Lanning' behavior was incompatible with the expectations of many patrons of the library and most staff, but it was agreed unanimously that her dismissal would be final. The Board together composed a letter to Mrs. Lanning, the text of which follows: 'After full consideration of the statement which you gave at the meeting at the Chamber of Commerce on December 12, and after consideration of all factors pertinent to the case, the Board of Library Trustees of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library cannot change its decision as to your status. We, as agents of the Town and of the Trusts from which the library derives its income, must base our decision on the very numerous complaints that we have received from time to time pertaining to your contacts with the public. Therefore, if your resignation effective November 21, as requested, is not forthcoming immediately, the Board has no alternative but to consider that you have been dismissed as of that date. It would be appreciated if you would return your key to the Library if you have not already done so'."

In the minutes of the December 22, 1953 Trustees meeting, after agreeing to allow the Easthaven Music Appreciation Association to use its downstairs room for music appreciation courses, "The Board carefully considered the letter from Mrs. Lanning and unanimously agreed that her suggestion as to a token reinstatement with later resignation is out of the question. The Board directed the Secretary to write Mrs. Lanning to this effect: to tell her that if she wishes to resign now her resignation will be accepted as a resignation and she will not be dragged into a court of law, but if she persists in her folly of believing she may yet keep her job another second, the Board will energetically pursue a course of action to secure that she shall never again be a librarian in this great state of Massachusetts, nor in any other state for that matter." A new budget was proposed for the Library for 1954, and it was voted "the Library will close at 6 p.m. on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve."

In early January, Easthaven's Town Counsel, Mr. Ebenezer T. Johnson, told an Easthaven Daily News reporter he expected to present a ruling soon on Mrs. Ellie Forrest Lanning, dismissed from her post as librarian of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library, to the Board of Selectmen by the middle of the month. "After the former librarian told Selectmen at their last meeting that the Library Board refused to give her a hearing concerning her dismissal from the

Library, Selectmen asked Johnson to make a ruling on the advisability of a hearing, which Mrs. Lanning requested. The letter sent by Mrs. Lanning to the Chairman of the Selectmen: 'Dear Sir, As a public official of a public institution, I protest against my summary dismissal from the position of Librarian to the Martin Conwell Memorial Library. The Library board, in neglecting to give me any warning of alleged complaints acted in disregard of a common business practice. The Library board first agreed to a hearing, then when they learned that reporters wished to be present announced that they would not give a hearing, but were willing to listen. It is evident that they did not listen with open, unprejudiced minds. Such meetings are always open meetings, except when cases of embezzlement or moral turpitude are involved. but the meeting was held behind locked doors, with the reporters barred in a method reminiscent of a police state. The Library board, appointed by you, has acted in an unjust and unethical manner in refusing to look at the records or heed the facts. No specific charges have ever been made, and I have never known the names of the complainants or the nature of the complaints. Tenure is an elementary right of any professional person, and the professional library associations are taking a deep interest in this violation. I feel that the Library board by their actions have disregarded the wishes of the majority of the people of Easthaven, and this has caused widespread resentment. Therefore, as a Town employee, I ask for an open hearing before the Board of Selectmen, in order that proper inquiries may be made into the matter'."

After Easthaven's Town Counsel advised against the Selectmen granting Mrs. Lanning a hearing, the Library Trustees made no further mention of the matter, noting in the minutes of their June 22, 1854 meeting only that they had established "a formal publicity committee for the Library, to publicize the work and facilities of the library through the media, as well as through word of mouth." Pinned to these minutes was a small note written longhand in pencil, noting "Charles and Ellie surfaced three months later. Moved to Laguna Beach, California."

On April 26, 1955, the Board of Trustees of Easthaven's Martin Conwell Memorial Library approved the hiring of Miss Teresa Arnsen Burns as their new Library Director, at the salary of \$4,400 a year, "and the Library will pay \$100 toward her moving expenses. Miss Burns will arrive some time in August." She in fact arrived in September of that year, as was noted in a May, 1962 *Library Journal* magazine "Salute to Librarian Teresa Burns" – an advertisement featuring a full-page photo of the librarian, paid for by the Martin Conwell Memorial Library Publicity Committee: "Forty seven years ago," the ad began, "Martin Conwell, the donator of a costly and pretty modern library building at Main and Conwell Streets in Easthaven, Massachusetts, opened the Martin Conwell Memorial Library to the public. Conwell, a native of Easthaven and one of its prominent merchants for years, was born November 12, 1815, the son of Samuel and Muriel (Portman) Conwell. He attended Easthaven public schools and entered the employ of Edward and Lucius Hamperdon, shoemakers, where he worked until the spring of 1836. On venturing into his own business, realizing Easthaven could not support yet another shoe store, Conwell opened a General Store, which was successful. In 1852 Conwell moved to Boston, where he became senior member of the firm of Conwell, Smith, and Roberts, which engaged in the wholesale and jobbing business of dry goods. Conwell and his partners were altogether successful in this venture. In 1878, Conwell accepted the treasureship of the Sampson

Manufacturing Company in Lewiston, Maine, where he remained 12 years. He was particularly interested in banking, and was for 23 years president of the Easthaven National Bank, serving from 1877 until ill health caused him to decline re-election. For 29 years he served as director of the Easthaven Trust Company. He resigned in 1902. He was married to Elma (Spears) Conwell. He died at home on November 24, 1903. On April 26, 1955, the Board of Trustees of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library, as agents of the Town and of the Trusts from which the library has so long derived much of its income, hired its first professional library director, Miss Teresa Burns, and have not regretted it."

The Minutes through the next fourteen years, with Teresa Burns acting as Recording Secretary to the Board of Library Trustees, were excellent – models of brevity, precision, and clarity.

On June 24, 1969, Teresa Burns resigned abruptly. As she herself recorded it: "The librarian submitted a resignation effective early September. Resignation accepted. Librarian will enthusiastically recommend this position and remarked on her rich fourteen years here. Teresa Arnson Burns, Secretary *pro tempore*."

V

Chapter Two

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

With Hortense Charlemagne installed as Acting Director, the library Directorship remained vacant through nearly two years. On February 29, 1972, the minutes showed the Trustees had met with one Vincent Thorson Caldwell, at which time his salary was agreed on, at \$11,000 a year. Then "the Board requested Mr. Caldwell put his acceptance in writing, indicating he will begin his duties on May 1st. It was moved and seconded that expenses for moving Mr. Caldwell's home from Cambridge to Easthaven will be paid from Library Trustee accounts."

On March 28, 1972, "Mr. Caldwell reported he was packing on the 17th and moving to Easthaven on April 18th, and he also stated he would be lecturing in Arizona from April 12th to the 16th. On July 11th, Vince Caldwell submitted a report on his "attendance at the Annual Meeting of the American Library Association in Chicago, Illinois, June 26 to July 1. My accommodations were satisfactory, if a bit removed from the centers of activity. I attended numerous committee meetings and workshops and visited the exhibits area on more than one occasion. One sad note: One of the great librarians of our time, Clifford Warner, former President of the American Library Association, passed away recently. His death represents a grievous loss to the profession."

Then there was this surprising Easthaven Daily News headline (October 25, 1972): "Vincent Thorson Caldwell, Head Librarian, Dies" – "EASTHAVEN. The 57-year-old head librarian at the Martin Conwell Memorial Library died yesterday at Hamperdon Memorial Hospital. Vincent T. Caldwell of 37 Cornhill Road, had been hospitalized for the past three days. Caldwell had only been working at the helm of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library since May of this year. Born in Northampton, Massachusetts, Mr. Caldwell worked for nine years as a librarian at Boston College before becoming Head Librarian at the Essence Institute, Narrburyport. Mr. Caldwell, the author of a book on esoteric orders and freemasonry, had finished writing his book in Narrburyport prior to taking the post of Library Director in Easthaven. In addition to his wife Marsha, he leaves one sister, Sarah Norse of Provincetown, and several nephews and nieces."

VI

Chapter Three

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

Hortense Charlemagne, once more appointed Acting Director, noted in the October 31, 1972 Board meeting minutes that "The Librarian position will be advertised with an explanation of Mr. Caldwell's untimely death. The Trustees will work with the assorted library agencies to procure a new Librarian.

The post was not filled until mid-August, 1973, when a Michigan bookseller, Karen Horton, agreed to leave Detroit to move to Easthaven. Her first item of business as Conwell Library Director was to defend the library against Selectmen claims that, in light of revelations about enormous secret hidden trust fund wealth stashed away in assorted area banks, all funding from the town to the library should cease. Miss Horton made an appeal to the new Town Counsel, Richard Ming, who advised her and the Board that, in his opinion, "the Martin Conwell Memorial Library is indeed a public library, established and maintained for its citizens pursuant to Section 6, Chapter 78, General Laws of Massachusetts. I am attaching documentation showing the establishment of the library as a public facility, the Town's past formal acceptance of the bequest made for the benefit of the Library Trustees and the condition thereof that a majority of said Trustees be appointed by the Easthaven Savings Bank and Trust Company, and the Town's past practice of recognizing the library as an institution maintained primarily through public funds raised at town meetings and supplemented, in part, through bequests and gifts of private citizens. The care and management should and must therefore remain in the care of the Library Board of Trustees, and it shall remain the duty of the Town to provide for the free use of its

citizens a public library and that for such purpose an annual appropriation shall be provided from year to year through taxation."

Horton stayed aboard for an otherwise uneventful four more years, resigning on June 28, 1977. Hortense Charlemagne, once more appointed Acting Director, died on the job at the Circulation desk that fall, a week before the "soft-spoken, pipe-smoking, flute-piccolo-concertina-daudhran-banjo-fiddle-guitar-mandolin-playing new library director" (Easthaven Daily News, September 27, 1977), Kevin Storey arrived. Storey served from that day on through to January 8, 1981, when the anonymous recorder of the Board's minutes noted, "Our excellent Circulation Assistant Whitney Charlemagne has been appointed Acting Director. The Board at once drew up an advertisement for a new director."

That new Director was one John Stanhope who, according to Board minutes, had "recieved the call on February 27th and accepted on March 2nd. He has been invited to attend the next meeting of the Board on April 28th." Stanhope started work late in May, going right to work in automating the library, bringing in new photocopiers and a fax machine, acquiring both free and coin-operated pay-per-use computers, tossing out the old card catalog, making the facility handicapped accessible, adding bookstacks, weeding books, installing upstairs and downstairs anti-theft and burglar alarms, renovating the staff lounge, redesigning traffic flow for more ease and security of operation, forming committees, planning for expansion of the edifice, and on and on.

Generally, things went very well for John Stanhope. The first hint of approaching disarray came on November 23, 1981, the Director reporting in the minutes of the Board, "The library was robbed again last week – a small sum was taken from the circulation desk." Another first arose, a Director's report addressing "some of the problems the library has had with unruly young adults. It was suggested the Director work go over this with the chief of police." After meeting with the police chief, Mr. Stanhope initiated another first: he demanded a contract from the town for his services. Easthaven had recently switched from having a Selectmen/Town Meeting form of government to having a Town Manger / Town Council form of government, and the new Town Manager, one Roger D. Gardner, very effectively delayed the deliverance of said contract through perpetually introducing language changes to the document.

In January, 1983, the Director reported to the Board that "a budget freeze on non-emergency expenses had been imposed by town manager, which would prohibit the purchase of new books. The Board felt that the materials budget should be treated as a contractual agreement between the Board and the Town, and should be exempt from the freeze, and instructed Mr. Stanhope politely to discuss the Board's perspective with the Town Manager." The Town Manager said there was no such existing contractual agreement, but that he was at work on creating one, contingent on his ironing out certain wrinkles he saw as inherent in trying to get the language just right for such documents.

On May 24, 1983, the Board, having met with the Finance Subcommittee of the Town Council (who'd recommended to the full council that the Town Manager's budget should be accepted), agreed to accepting "substantially less" money from the Town than they'd previously been counting on for the coming fiscal year. The Director reported he'd been appointed Chairman

of the Public Relations Committee of the P.N.E.M.R.L.S., the Provisional Northeastern Massachusetts Regional Library System.

On December 23, 1985, Stanhope reported on "talks with the Town Manager and the Chief of Police regarding the parking lot problems. The Manager contends it is a municipal lot and that restrictions for library patrons against the general use of the lot by other citizens could not be placed. The Police Chief disagreed. The Department of Public Works has agreed to paint lines on the lot to assure more efficient placement of cars."

When, on January 20, 1986, a car bomb was exploded in the red Volkswagon then owned by John Stanhope, which also took out the windows of the Children's Room and set the library building partially on fire, the minutes of the January 21st meeting of the Board of Library Trustees showed "The Library is adequately covered by insurance for the losses, but the Board comes up short in understanding how so violent and destructive an act came to pass."

On June 30, 1987, the Director informed the Trustees that, though he had been planning to build a home for himself and his family not in Easthaven, but rather in Westhaven, "the outrage expressed by the Board at such a plan of action" had instead led him to decide he would not build a house anywhere in the area at all. He next mentioned his having been "named in a discrimination complaint filed by Whitney Charlemagne with M.C.A.D., the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination. Ms Charlemagne had resigned from library employment on June 1st. Stanhope noted that a fact finding conference was scheduled for July 10, and that he would be represented there by either the Town Attorney or an attorney from the Town's insurance company. The details of the complaint were briefly discussed."

For one thing, Stanhope told the Board in confidence, Whitney Charlemagne, through the first five months of 1987, had been arriving at work each morning in her sleeping gown, and in bedroom slippers, and with her hair still in curlers. Then she'd got pregnant and had taken to showing up for work only intermittently, if at all. On June 1st, after Stanhope had reminded her of (1) the library's formal Dress Code; (2) her work schedule; and (3) her job description. She'd promptly, but not quietly, resigned. Harsh words had rained down from her on him.

The minutes of the October 24, 1989 meeting of the Board of Library Trustees revealed the recent formation of the Friends of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library, stemming from independent action taken by Library Trustee Cal Horan, who'd been instrumental in seeing to it that John Stanhope's plan to build a home not in Easthaven, but rather in Westhaven, died on the vine. Horan had appointed himself President of the fledgling Friends organization, which was front page headline news in Easthaven the next day, with no mention of John Stanhope's having reported the previous evening "that he was submitting his resignation to the Board, effective December 10, to accept a position in a different community."

He visited the offices of the Easthaven Evening News and saw to it personally that someone there wrote it down: "John Stanhope has announced his resignation from the Martin Conwell Memorial Library, effective December 10," which appeared as a tiny notice in the bottom right corner on page seven the following day. In his final message to the Board and staff, Stanhope wrote, "Thank you for your many loving messages saying how much you will miss me. With much love, John."

VII

Chapter Four

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

On December 10, 1989, at the age of fifty-six, I left Boston to go to work in Easthaven. The Board of Trustees of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library in Easthaven, Massachusetts had been seeking, according to the ad that had caught my eye, "a new Director who is self-motivated and enthusiastic, with a past of proven leadership for building support for the library in Easthaven, population 13,000. Director must be able to communicate effectively with Board of Trustees, staff, Town Manager, and Town Council. Candidate will be responsible for the efficient operation and direction of all activities within the library, including collection development, programming, facilities management and community outreach. This library has a children's room and an adult section, and has computers. It is open six days a week, Monday and Thursday evenings, and Saturday mornings."

On December 11th, in the morning, at a local coffee shop, by previous arrangement, I met Cal Horan. Though it was dazzlingly clear and sunny out, pleasantly warm, he wore a big, old-fashioned seaman's pea-coat, dark blue – almost black – in which his skinny self was enveloped. Horan's face was gaunt, weather-worn, chafed, red – sunburned. Over coffee and blueberry muffins he told me all about the library, then eventually worked his way toward unsubtly mentioning he'd known my name prior to my having applied for the library job, and had been "instrumental" in my landing the job ("You're welcome").

In December 1961, in Boston, I had met an extraordinary man named Manuel Suarez (1910-1975), author of a book first published in 1956 in Mexico City, in Spanish, having the title (in English), *Libraries and Other Holy, Magical Places*. Suarez agreed to pay me luxuriously if I would translate his book into English, contingent on my doing so anonymously – as a ghost writer. The two of us visited several times more over the course of that winter and, in the end, I'd agreed to do it. In his book, Suarez had drawn diverse but "deathly certain" links between Mexico's earliest libraries and the Kabbalah. I took my time, trying to get it all just right. By the summer of 1962, I had a manuscript in hand, which I'd turned over to Manuel Suarez in Boston on the Fourth of July.

Now Cal Horan, on December 11, 1989, was telling me, over coffee in Easthaven, that in December 1961 it was he who had traveled to Boston to visit Manuel Suarez – to fetch from him a manuscript outlining the nine grades of attainment of a new Hermetic Order called the Order of the Morning Star. Horan insisted he'd been initiated by Suarez into a new Massachusetts branch

of Suarez's order. He, Cal Horan (Cal Horan said), had translated *Libraries and Other Holy, Magical Places*. And if I doubted that, I could ask Manuel Suarez's wife (Suarez had died of a heart attack in Mexico City in 1975).

I knew a lot about the far-fetched esoteric claims Suarez had made in his book, but had only really bought into that part of his teaching that illuminated his deep love of libraries. My translation surely had that slant. Cal Horan had a different slant. At the time my translation of *Magical Places* came out, one reviewer had written, "Here is a brilliant book meticulously crafted, brimful of insight and sensitivity. Suarez does a splendid job of weaving together historical, cultural, and biographical resources, allowing both his sympathy for and knowledge of libraries in societies to shine through without pouring buckets of false enthusiasm and authority on it, which to my mind too many other recent illuminators of the social fabric have succumbed to." (Hardy Butler, Secretary, Northeastern U.S. History and Culture Association.)

Now here was Cal Horan in 1989, telling me how his translation included what mine had left out: the nine grades of the Order of the Morning Star and all that far-fetched hoop-te-doo and rigamorole having nothing to do with libraries. Horan's version of Manuel Suarez's *Libraries and Other Holy Magical Places* placed its emphasis on Horan's "New Rites of the Order of the Morning Star" (and not Suarez's), which included: (1) Initiation; (2) Admission of a Mute; (3) Passing a Mute to an Auditor; (4) Advancing an Auditor to Scribe; (5) Passing a Scribe to Herald; (6) Consecrating a Herald as a Minister; (7) Entrusting a Courier; (8) the Ceremony of Relegation; and (9) Ceremonies of Perfection.

I met Eliza Boudreau, a Circulation Desk Assistant who was not one of "Horan's Girls," rather having an almost opposite mission: to redeem mankind through her rose-colored-lense utopian ideal of public library services. Eliza's studies of Hopedale, Brook Farm, Northampton, and Montague had led her to recognize the library as necessary to man's redemption.

Jamie Culotte at the Circlation Desk was openly the most devoted – the worst – of "Horan's Girls."

Trustee Terence Stevens, Easthaven's favorite millionaire, liked to condemn Easthaven as the greatest haven of poverty in Massachusetts. As a libray trustee, he had been a big supporter of Easthaven's foward looking library director, John Stanhope, but when Cal Horan had turned against Stanhope, Stevens had pulled out all the stops. He now seemed to be working behind the scenes at all hours, making sure everybody in town was stirred up all the time, though it never seemed to matter to him, really, what anybody ever actually got riled about. Just so long as there was chaos, he seemed always smugly pleased.

VIII

Chapter Five

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

I considered myself unaffected, a man of moderate competence who took the greatest pleasure in just answering reference questions. I courted no publicity. Of course Cal Horan grew very quickly tired of me.

Horan was an actor. And a thief, a liar, a prankster, a sadist. He was mistakenly taken by the townspeople and his trustee colleagues and most library staffers as a "philanthropist," doing them and everyone good somehow. His droll practical jokes were usually brutal, occasionally obscene. Horan meant to get back at society for a wrong, or wrongs, done him in childhood. He needed to demonstrate his superiority over his stupid and pretentious fellow townsmen (and everyone else) – mocking and satirizing all mankind, and all institutions. Harsh, hurtful, he victimized *anyone* – innocent or deserving. He tormented the dishonest, harsh, cruel, stupid, conceited, obnoxious, boring, and pretentious and the naive, the gullible, and the innocent alike. He was bent on deceit. When artful shrewdness was insufficient, Horan resorted to outright *lies*.

Some said Cal Horan had been born under a special star. As a child, he'd been free as a bird, but never idle. He kept busy practicing card tricks and doing all kinds of acrobatics. He recited tongue twisters for hours, also tying his legs in knots over his head and walking on his hands. One day he'd been showing off in the town park. Having turned himself into a human pretzel, he'd been jumping up and down on a tiny portable trampoline when two men had run up and thrown a big wooden plank across the apparatus. All the townspeople had just stared, doing nothing. Then they'd broken into laughter. Horan obviously never forgot *that* – how they'd just *laughed* at him, even after he'd been rushed to the hospital with a serious back injury. It was *then* perhaps that Cal Horan had first vowed *he'd show them*.

By 1990, Horan was openly proclaiming my library career had completely *run to ground*. For an *Easthaven Evening News* reporter (August 11, 2003), he would recall, "I am reluctant even to mention the name Lew Carley. When first I made his acquaintance, he was no more a young man by any standard, yet he was the freshly appointed library director of our Public Library here in Easthaven, where I was long since a proven Trustee in good standing and held in high esteem. It is true that Mr. Carley, when sober, was one of the nicest people you could ever want to meet. Unfortunately, his drinking problem brought me cause to reprimand him more than on one occasion. He once so grossly insulted me in a letter that I cannot even begin to say how deeply I was hurt by it. I regretted the lapse in our communications which followed."

Despite later claims made by Horan, I had not applied for membership in the Rosicrucian Society at that time. And, despite Cal Horan's claims regarding my alleged drinking habits, I did not have a drinking problem. Of course *Cal Horan* did – it was in fact well-known that he was a closet-drinker, except for when he was well-known as an outright full-blown raging drunk.

The millionaire, Stevens, described Horan as "a shining light of occultism hidden in a bushel of secrecy" with "a tendency to envelop everything in a cloak of mystery." He insisted that "if a ceremony is not a beautiful one – if there is not an air of mystery thrown over it – then it will not, to use a common expression, go down."

On September 18, 1991, Horan invited me to become a Freemason. He treated me to dinner at Jacob Wirth's, in Boston, telling me it was the one hundredth anniversary of the day Jacob Wirth, a Harvard dropout also named Jacob Wirth, took over the establishment, Jacob Wirth's, from his father, Jacob Wirth. Horan then told me all about how he'd been developing, from assorted translations of the writings of Manuel Suarez, rites for his Order of the Morning Star, with neophyte ceremonies and rites of magic, and on and on – "including invocation, talisman consecration, transformations, divination and alchemy – you know, the Rituals of Light."

In fact, at that time, I *didn't* know – didn't have a clue.

I must have got drunker than Cal Horan that evening at Jake Wirth's, because I agreed to go with him, the following evening, to a "temple meeting." For several years prior to moving to Easthaven, Horan and his wife Minnehaha had lived in Boston and, two years after they'd originally arrived in the city, they'd established an "Order of the Morning Star, Qetesh Temple #1."

At that initial meeting, the costumes, rites, ceremonies, magic, and shenanigans of the Order of the Morning Star were "taught" to me – much adoration, with liberal unveilings, of Cal Horan's beautiful wife Minnehaha, portraying the goddess Qetesh, elaborately dressed in a luminous gold-and-diamond-studded blue, black, orange, and purple Egyptian gown. The men wore silly maroon hats, red vests, blowsy black satin slacks, and bejewelled codpieces and, basically, leapt about clumsily. Horan alone had wrapped around his shoulders a purple wool or cotton shawl or scarf. The men – including the millionaire library trustee Terence Stevens – all but Horan – began to chant in high and whiney voices, rising and falling as they circled Minnehaha. Horan, all smiles, pouring out the charm, now simply walked around the room, quite nonchalantly, shaking all the men's hands – as if the ceremony had ended before it ever actually got started, thank you for coming out. Each man ceased to sing the moment Horan's hand touched them. Now Minnehaha received a special acknowledgment from him. Horan touched Minnehaha's forehead and, at once, Minnehaha began to convulse, tearing at her clothing. She fell among the men, where she was supported by many hands. She lurched forward from the room, spinning. Then, within just a minute or so, she returned to the room completely calm – very poised and self-assured and topless. Going around the room, she shook the hands of all the men, somewhat as Horan had done. Now Horan walked up to her with a three-pronged iron poker, a so-called "magic weapon." Several men began laughing. Exactly nine men encircled her menacingly; Minnehaha aggressively pushed the nine away. Now all of the men again started singing that high, thin, nasal chant. This was unlike any ceremony I had ever seen or read about or even heard of. It was not Occultist, Hermetic, Masonic, or anything else. Like Cal Horan, it was stupid. Just plain nuts. I walked out.

The next day I let Cal Horan know that kind of thing was nothing for me. That was fine with him, he said. Over coffee, in Easthaven, he now suggested I should have another go at it – should attend their, his and Minnehaha's, other temple, the Morning Star Thme Temple #2, right there in Easthaven. Again Cal told me all this stuff I already knew – how Thme was an Egyptian goddess who, stationed between the Pillars of Hermes and Solomon, reconciled the forces of

light and the forces of darkness. In the ceremony of Thme, Cal said, Minnehaha simply turned her face toward the Cubical Altar of the Universe, communicating in silence with what were called the four figures in the east. Cal said he assumed I could stand that, no? He said I could be in the ceremony, communicating with the four figures too, if I wanted. I apologized, declining, thanking Cal politely but firmly.

On November 16th, I got, in the mail, a Qetesh and Thme ceremonies uniform – a maroon hat, red vest, blowsy black satin slacks, and leather-belted athletic cup or codpiece. Right away I sent these back to the sender, Cal Horan, with a letter in which I made it quite clear that I wished to resign – if it was thought I had *joined* in the first place – from the Order of the Morning Star, Qetesh Temple #1. The Secretary to the Temple (Minnehaha Horan) wrote back to say my tendered resignation was accepted, contingent on my making payment, in full, of my annual membership fees.

I knew now for sure I'd entered *la-la* land.

In denial, I began taking down from the library's shelves, one after the other, every sort of book on psychology I could lay hands on: *Out of the Blues*; *The Anxiety Cure*; *Fighting Fear*; *Noonday Demons*; *Awakening From Depression*; *Unholy Ghosts*; *No More Sleepless Nights*; *Overcoming Insomnia*; *The Courage to Heal*; *Conquering Your Inner Idiot*; *Jeanne La Claire's You Can Get Out of Any Trouble*; *Coping with Rape*; *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Avoiding Suicide*; *Arturo's Surefire Guide to Self-Repair*; *How to be Whole Again*; and on and on.

But finally – it was unavoidable – I had to go back and look into the horrid, mangled face of all that bizarre stuff that in my youth I'd shunned. I'd been *trying* to forget my step-parents' crazy occult rituals and ceremonies – them and their friends in my face all through my childhood, mingling their blood and body fluids and not a little alcohol. They'd just totally turned me off from "magic" of all kinds – had totally freaked me out. But now I had to go among them once more – among people like my step-father and step-mother; among people like Cal and Minnehaha Horan.

IX

Chapter Six

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

Sebastian Brant, German author of *The Ship of Fools*, was born in 1457. His contemporary, Thomas Murner was born in 1475, near Strasbourg. In 1490, at sixteen, in delicate health, Murner had entered the Franciscan Order and had taken orders as a Franciscan friar in

1491. After his ordination, he began his restless and unsettled life, visiting the most celebrated universities either as a student or as a teacher. He studied theology at Paris, philosophy and mathematics at Cracow, and law at Freiburg-in-Breisgau, where he was awarded the degree of bachelor of Theology in 1500. In 1506, when again at Freiburg, he was made Doctor of Theology. The emperor Maximilian I crowned him in 1505 poeta laureatus; in 1506, he was made Doctor Ikeologiae. Murner wrote the humorous *Chartiludium logicae* (1507) and the *Ludus studentum Friburgensium* (1511), in which Murner explained the rules of prosody and quantity after the fashion of a game of chess and backgammon – a method he had already employed four years before at Cracow in his *Chartiludium logicae*, but his application of it to jurisprudence provoked the derision of lawyers. While critical of the corruption in the Catholic Church, he was passionately opposed to the Lutheran Reformation. His sympathy with Humanism did not save him from the resentment of the Alsatian Humanists, when he attacked Wimpfeling's *Germania*, which aimed at proving that Alsace had never belonged to France. Murner's defense of his position was suppressed by the Strasburg authorities. His opponents distorted his name into "Murnar" (growling fool). Murner showed a sharp eye for his opponents' weaknesses. There was little human kindness in his satires, directed against the corruption of the times, the Reformation, and especially against Martin Luther.

Regarding the Wittenberg monk at first as a well-intentioned ally in the battle against the evils afflicting the Church, Murner addressed to him in 1520 an appeal entitled *Christliche und brüderliche Ermahnung an den hochgelehrten Doctor Martin Luther*, which was followed by other pamphlets refuting and warning him and beseeching him to abandon his ruinous undertaking. In his *Neues Lied vom Untergang des christlichen Glaubens* (1521), Murner gives feeling expression to his sorrow over the destructive tendencies of the religious innovation. But, when the sole effect of his attempts at conciliation was to bring upon him a shower of lies and calumnies, Murner dealt Luther a crushing blow in his work, *Von dem grossen Lutherischen Narren wie ihn Doctor Murner beschworen hat*. Murner rose to heights of satire elsewhere unattained during his whole epoch. All the reformatory endeavours are embodied in the *Great Fool*, and the newly-founded church is treated allegorically as Luther's daughter Adelheid, who "has a shocking scald-head."

Murner made enemies wherever he went. In 1513, he was made custodian of the Franciscan monastery in Strasbourg. In Cracow, he lectured on literary æsthetics; in Freiburg, on Vergil. His translation of Virgil's Aeneid (1515) was dedicated to the emperor Maximilian I, in token of gratitude for his having been appointed poet-laureate in 1505. In 1518, he began the study of jurisprudence at the University of Basel, and in 1519 he graduated, Doctor of Laws. His book *Die Gäuchmatt* ("Fools' Meadow," 1519) illuminated the follies of enamored fools. *Die Mühle von Schwindelsheim und Gretmüllerin Jahrzeit*, severely criticized a special kind of fool, the "fool of love." There is no station, either clerical or lay, that is spared from his castigation. He made a translation of Justinian's *Institutiones* in 1519. From 1519 he took part in the controversies which began with the appearance of Luther as a reformer. In 1523 he went to England and was cordially received by Henry VIII ("King Hal the Bluff"), whose anti-Luther book on the sacraments Murner had translated into German the previous year. On his return to

Strasburg, he found himself compelled to fly before the rebellious peasants and seek refuge at Lucerne. Here he became the most determined adversary of Zwingli. Together with Dr. Eck, he took part in the religious discussion at Baden in 1526. He went into exile at Lucerne in Switzerland in 1526. When Lucerne was taken in the first War of Kappel (1529), Murner was to have been given up. He managed, however, to escape, and, after many wanderings, was appointed pastor in his birth-place, where he spent the rest of his days.

In 1493, François Rabelais was born in France. Like Thomas Murner, Rabelais was a Franciscan, later a monk at Fontenay-le-Comte, where he studied Greek and Latin as well as science, philology, and law. In his book "Gargantua and Pantagruel" (1532), Rabelais told of the founding of his fictional "Abbey of Thelema" (*Thelema* meaning will, or intention), an institution for the cultivation of human virtues, which Rabelais identified as being squarely opposite prevailing Christian proprieties. The sole rule of the Abbey of Thelema was "Do what thou wilt." Though "Thelema" was sometimes referred to as a religion, it accommodated a full range of beliefs, from atheism to polytheism. The main factor was, each person had the right to fulfill themselves through whatever beliefs and actions were best suited to them, so long as they did not interfere with the will of others – and only they themselves were qualified to determine what these were: *Love* was the law – love *under* will.

There were no clocks at the Abbey of Theleme, but there was a swimming pool, and maid service. One of the verses of the inscription on the gate to the Abbey of Theleme says: "Grace, honor, praise, delight, / Here sojourn day and night. / Sound bodies lined / With a good mind, / Do here pursue with might / Grace, honor, praise, delight." Below the humor was a very real concept of utopia and the ideal society. Rabelais gave this description of how the Thelemites of the Abbey lived, and the rules they lived by: "All their life was spent not in laws, statutes, or rules, but according to their own free will and pleasure. They rose out of their beds when they thought good; they did eat, drink, labor, sleep, when they had a mind to it and were disposed for it. None did awake them, none did offer to constrain them to eat, drink, nor to do any other thing; for so had Gargantua established it. In all their rule and strictest tie of their order there was but this one clause to be observed – '*fay çe que voudras*' [French for 'do what you will'] – because men that are free, well-born, well-bred, and conversant in honest companies, have naturally an instinct and spur that prompteth them unto virtuous actions, and withdraws them from vice, which is called honor. Those same men, when by base subjection and constraint they are brought under and kept down, turn aside from that noble disposition by which they formerly were inclined to virtue, to shake off and break that bond of servitude wherein they are so tyrannously enslaved; for it is agreeable with the nature of man to long after things forbidden and to desire what is denied us."

In the eighteenth century, an English gentleman's society called the Hell-Fire Club ("the Friars of Medmenham") – founded in England by Sir Francis Dashwood on the grounds of his country residence not far from London (and at the former Cistercian abbey at Medmenham on the banks of the Thames near Marlow) – put the motto "Do What Thou Wilt" over the entrance to the abbey. John Wilkes, a fiery radical parliamentarian, was one of the society's most active members, who indulged not in virtuous action but rather in obscene parodies of the rites and

ceremonies of the Christian religion. (In the twentieth century, the once scandalous Abbey would become something of a tourist attraction.)

I loved to contemplate the Hell-Fire Club, ever spinning out fresh stories from its premises. In one such tale, I had Cal Horan in Sir Francis Dashwood's shoes. I put Horan in a country residence not far from Boston, and had him indulging in obscene parodies of the rites and ceremonies of the Christian religion. In the next chapter, I had him being led to the gallows. The clamoring multitude, instead of mocking him and spitting on him, called on Horan to save himself. If he was as he claimed a magician in the Order of Hell Fire, the horde was shouting, then surely he would be able, with the aid of *demons*, to rescue himself.

X

Chapter Seven

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

Horan was a complex, difficult figure whose nature was difficult to pin down and describe. It was said Horan was a recovering alcoholic, but I could see Horan *definitely* was not *recovering*. I could not *stand* the threat to rational sense I saw the man stood for. It was inevitable we clashed.

The thing with Horan was, he knew well the game – he was a master at the game – "Villain and Victim," and if the victim did not know the game, so much the worse for the victim. Montaigne, who could see "our life, like the harmony of the world, is composed of contrary things," warned against doing what Ctesiphon did – "Ctesiphon undertook a kicking match with his mule." As library trustee Terry Stevens advised – that pathetic old man, wise in this instance – "Just don't do it."

But I wanted justice, fairness, rightness. I wanted order, decency, honesty, service to the community. I was more than disturbed by Horan's cult – I was *repulsed* by "his" women doing whatever *he* told them to. But they were just too far gone already. The perks and benefits and powers he'd bestowed upon these female cohorts were terrible and totally intoxicating. They were completely under his spell, these fervent believers in and followers of Horan.

I felt good men shouldn't let bad men use women like that. I figured I'd fix him.

Horan had revenge on his mind. Revenge for my not having joined his Order of the Morning Star. Revenge for something that had happened between his father and someone else in the town in the past. And it was said his mother had died after being hit by lightning, and Horan had said *someone* was going to pay *someday* for that. *Everyone* was going to have to *pay* for whatever it was that had gone wrong with Horan.

He wanted the authority of the single sovereign, adamantly refusing me any power whatsoever as director of the library. I resolved I would resist this tormentor – would revolt against the torturer, would kick up against the kicker. Now *there* was utterest futility. "In the face of such stubborn and stupid severity," Dostoyevsky saw, "you can only gnash your teeth and pull your hair."

Horan was the prototypical devotee of *Schadenfreude*. His Mephistophelean ecstasy in causing mischief, harm, and ruin was deeply, seethingly entrenched. His fertile brain kept busy conceiving always some awful new plan – ever something even more racy, hurtful, debilitating, or crushing than before. "The perverse, frivolous, revenge-seeking man loves only the process of the game," Dostoyevsky warned, "not the end of it. This insulted, crushed, capricious, stupid man, in the hell of his unsatisfied desires, rushes headlong toward revenge like an irritated bull with its horns down. Nothing but a wall will stop him."

Stevens made my blood boil even more, him insisting I *accept* Horan's power ("It is madness to oppose him"). Without this job my financial prospects were dismal, and I knew it. And Stevens knew it. Horan had me by the balls.

Horan was busy preparing an early prototype of his Order of the Horan Star, and he knew that I could help him – and he knew exactly *how* I could help him, right down to even the most miniscule, ethereal, falsified hairy details.

Horan's new Order was going to be "practical," mingling Alchemy, Hermeticism, and Masonry. Horan declared it would be "a society of work, with intimate studies of The Stone." Horan had me outline assorted rituals for the new order in Cipher form, going along the lines of the 15th century code originated by the Abbott Trithemius in his *Polygraphiae*.

There was a copy of Trithemius' *Polygraphiae* at the library. In the basement.

In the library cellar were remnants of a museum that once had been part of the collections, among which were a copy of Circe's magic bowl, a copy of the the cup out of which Socrates drank his hemlock, a copy of Nero's fiddle, of Arria's sword, of Don Quixote's lance, of Saladin's cimenter, of Miltiades' helmet, of the bow of Ulysses, of several of Robin Hood's arrows, and of the pen with which Faust signed away his salvation. Here was also a stuffed wolf (preserved by one N. P. Willis) having fierce glass eyes in its crafty-looking head. Near the stuffed wolf was a stuffed lamb with still a most delicate, snow-white fleece. On one shelf, by an owl, there was a vulture, a pigeon, an albatross, a parrot, and several stuffed cats. In locked cabinets were kept rolls of papyrus and obviously ancient tomes. The most valuable books in this collection were probably a copy of the Book of Hermes and of Cornelius Agrippa's book of magic (with flowers, ancient and modern, pressed between its leaves) and the copy of Trithemius' *Polygraphiae*.

Knowing a thing or two about encryption disks and decoder devices, I formulated quite a complex steganographic cipher, outlining a series of esoteric initiation ceremonies through codes derived from Trithemius's *Polycraphiae*, having letters represented as words taken from a substitution table imposing changing alphabets for each letter. Horan then further "translated" these, making use of the blank versos of other ancient hermetic Rite summonses. It was this *fictional* cipher manuscript that indeed led to the creation of Cal Horan's Hermetic Order of

Horan's Star, which he cast upon the winds at the end of that that year.

Ciphers are broken into two main categories; substitution ciphers and transposition ciphers. Substitution ciphers replace letters in the plaintext with other letters or symbols, keeping the order in which the symbols fall the same. Transposition ciphers keep all of the original letters intact, but mix up their order. The resulting text of either enciphering method is called the ciphertext.

Julius Caesar had invented a cipher, the Caesar Substitution Cipher, which replaced every letter in the alphabet with one three places down in position. To regain the original message, the recipient would just reverse the process. The Caesar cipher, and all like it, are called "monalphabetic" or "simple" substitution ciphers, because throughout the message each character is always replaced by the identical cipher character.

In the 5th century B.C., the Spartans devised a transposition cipher called a scytale to encrypt and send messages. The scytale, a transposition machine, was comprised of a cylinder and a parchment, similar to a ribbon, which was wrapped helically around the cylinder from one end to the other. The message to be encrypted was written across the coiled ribbon. The letters of the original message would be rearranged when the ribbon was uncoiled. Only someone with an identical diameter cylinder could re-wrap and read the message. The message could be decrypted only when the ribbon was rewrapped on a cylinder of the same diameter as the encrypting cylinder. In this case the diameter of the encrypting cylinder would be the key to encrypting and ultimately decrypting the secret message. The diameter of the cylinder determined how the ribbon coils on the cylinder and so how the letters in the plaintext message would be rearranged. The scytale depended on a piece of hardware, the cylinder, which if captured by the enemy, compromised the whole system. Also, the receiver could lose or break the cylinder and therefore lose the ability to decipher any message. It would be better if the method were completely "intellectual" and could be remembered and used without resorting to a physical device. Both the sender and receiver of a transposed ciphertext had to agree on and remember the algorithm or method for enciphering and deciphering. Since geometrical figures were easy to remember, they served as the basis for a whole class of transposition ciphers.

Born Johann Heidenberg in Trittenheim on the Mosel in what is now the German state of Rheinland-Pfalz on February 1, 1462, the Benedictine Abbot called "Trithemius" had an early and abiding love for learning. The chancellor of the University of Heidelberg was so impressed with young Johann that he'd waived the entering student's tuition fees. At the university, Johann and two others formed the Rhenish Literary Society, choosing Latin and Greek names for themselves. Johann chose Trithemius. On graduating from Heidelberg University, Trithemius entered the novitiate Benedictine Abbey of Saint Martin at Spanheim, Germany. Upon his taking his final vows, he was elected abbot. He published a book of sermons that was widely successful. His 1494 *Liber de Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, listing some 7,000 theological writings by 963 authors, earned him the title, "the Father of Bibliography."

Prior to the arrival of Trithemius, the non-bookish monks at the Abbey of Saint Martin had sold off almost completely the monastery's collection of books. Within twenty years, Trithemius would restore and increase the collection. By 1505, the collection would grow from

an initial forty books to more than two thousand, becoming one of the best-stocked monastery libraries in Europe. Trithemius collected texts in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, and several other European languages, with both handwritten and printed manuscripts and books.

Trithemius wrote *Steganographia*, a book praising not only mortal scribes but also planetary angels, providing readers with instructions on performing "thought transference" with them, and *De Septem Secundis* – The Seven Secondary Causes of the Heavenly Intelligencies Governing the Orbes under God. The books led to Trithemius' being cast as an occultist in league with dark forces and black arts. Accused of associating with magical and even demonic powers, Trithemius, something of a publicity hound, agreed to an extent – denying only the part about the demons.

The monks at Saint Martin's mutinied, locking Trithemius out of the monastery. Trithemius at once requested a transfer to the monastery of Saint Jacob in Wurzburg, where he was appointed Prior. In 1508, he there began the writing of a series of six books under the single heading, *Polygraphia*. The work was finished very quickly, but wasn't published right away. Trithemius died at Saint Jacob's, Wurzburg, in 1516. In 1518, the descendants of the Heidelberg University Chancellor who'd first championed Johannes paid for the publication of his *Polygraphia*. Though many copies of the book were destroyed, *Polygraphia* was eventually acknowledged as the first published book about cryptology.

In 1515, at the age of twenty-eight, Henry Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim, a student of Trithemius, was at the University of Pavia, Italy, lecturing in Medicine, Philosophy, and Metaphysical Philosophy (the occult). Born in Cologne, September 14, 1486, he'd already served, between 1501 and 1507, as a Captain in the Army of Maximilian the First, Holy Roman Emperor. He was in Pavia until 1518, when he was appointed to the post of Public Advocate in Metz, Germany. There, in his defense of an accused witch (Agrippa maintaining the woman was innocent as there was *no such thing* as a "witch"), he brought down upon his head the wrath of the Dominicans and the Inquisitors. He discreetly departed for Cologne, where his first wife died (he would marry three times and have seven children). In 1524, Agrippa went to Lyons to take a position as physician to Louise of Savoy, Dowager Queen of France, departing in 1527. In 1531, he was thrown into prison for criticizing Louise of Savoy for not having ever actually *paid* him. In 1534, he got into an argument with the Inquisitor of Cologne, and was only saved from execution by Cologne's Elector Prince-Archbishop, who voided the sentence. In his book *De Occulta Philosophia*, Agrippa illuminated his Doctrine of the Three Worlds – the elements, the stars, and the spirits, corresponding to the physical world, heavenly world, and the world of the mind. Agrippa had also postulated a fifth element – *quintessence* – "presiding over" the four elements – Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. Declared a confidant of the Devil, the living prototype of Doctor Faustus, Agrippa was banished from the Roman Catholic Church. He died on February 18, 1535 in Grenoble, France.

In 1914, in his booklet "Parsifal," Theodor Reuss, later the German co-founder with Austrian Carl Kellner of the Ordo Templi Orientis cult, provided (he claimed) "a proof" for the existence of "the Adamites" (a sect of the Manichaeans) that had existed (he said), in the middle of the 19th century (in Austria), and had enjoyed a power equal to that of the Roman Catholic

Church. "The Adamites got their name because they celebrated their church ceremonies and feasts completely naked," Reuss said. "Their Maria festival, especially the one held in May (the "May Devotion"), corresponded to the Bacchanlia of the festival of *Ceres Libera*, the Eleusinian orgies. The Adamites were believers and followers of the primal-mystery of generation, the inexhaustible source of life's joy and enthusiasm. The *cultus* encouraged religious ecstasy, the holy Maria enveloping hearts and senses and the holy Phallus impregnating the fruitful womb. During the ceremonies, in the sacred places (temple and groves), the men and youths had the right (and duty) to complete the sex-act with any of the women or young maidens present in the temple or groves." The issue of these festivals, the children, were treated equally in the society, the father being responsible for their support.

In Massachusetts in the fall of 1844, tens of thousands of Millerites, the followers of William Miller, had donned white robes and climbed up mountains and trees, desiring to speed their ascension into heaven. Since 1818, Miller had been proclaiming the date of Jesus's second coming: October 22, 1844. In 1818, using a strictly literal reading of the first chapters of Genesis and other prophetic events in the Bible – aligning events with the prophetic numbering systems in the Books of Daniel, Ezekiel, and Revelations – the devout Baptist had calculated the exact period of time between the birth of Jesus, the fall of Jerusalem, and the return of the Messiah. Most "Millerites," numbering 50,000 to 100,000 in 1844, lived in central and eastern Massachusetts. As the year of the apocalypse neared, believers began giving away their belongings, abandoning their crops, and selling their land. On October 22nd, believers donned their robes. In Concord, a man confronted Ralph Waldo Emerson, who was out walking with Theodore Parker. Didn't they realize the world was going to end that day? he asked. Parker said, "It does not concern me, for I live in Boston." Emerson said, "The end of the world does not affect me. I can get along without it."

In 1848, in Massachusetts, the state General Court had enacted legislation granting the City of Boston the right to establish a public library, the first such legislation in the world. In 1851, the Massachusetts legislature had extended the authority to establish and maintain libraries with public funds to all Massachusetts cities and towns.

At Yale University in 1856, Daniel Coit Gilman, just back from Europe, incorporated a secret society, Skull & Bones, as a legal entity under the name of The Russell Trust Association. William H. Russell, the cofounder, was President; Gilman was Treasurer. Gilman (class of '52) would be the first President of the University of California, the first President of the Johns Hopkins University, and the first President of the Carnegie Institution. (Gilman would train John Dewey, who would dominate American education in the 20th century. Gilman would also train Richard Ely, who in turn would train Woodrow Wilson, who gave the United States the Federal Reserve System, the income tax, and WWI). Gilman's Skull & Bones co-founders were Timothy Dwight and Andrew Dickson White. All three had been educated at the University of Berlin, where they'd been indoctrinated with Hegelian Determinism, which stated that everyone had to be programmed and controlled to achieve predetermined goals. Timothy Dwight (class of '49) would be Professor in the Yale Divinity School and then 12th President of Yale University. White (class of '53), would be U.S. Minister to Germany (1879–1881), the first U.S. ambassador to

Russia (1892-1894), first U.S. Ambassador to Germany (1897-1902), and first President of the American Historical Association. He would advise Herbert Hoover to set up the Hoover Institution. In 1865, White and Western Union tycoon Ezra Cornell would found Cornell University on Cornell's estate in Ithaca, New York, with White as its first president.

In 1861, in Paris, the author of *Dogme et rituel de la haute magie* (1856), Eliphas Lévi (i.e. the Abbé Alphonse-Louis Constant, born 1810), was celebrated as an authority on Magic (an expert on the mysteries of the Tarot). Levi had been the Supreme Grand Master of the Fraternitas Rosae Crucis of Europe (with the exception of England) for over sixteen years, and would continue two more years, until his death in 1875.

In January, 1865, The Eminent and Perfect Illustrious Brother F. G. Irwin formed the first Council of the Knight of Constantine at the St. Aubyn Lodge, Devonport. Several eminent Masons were entrusted with the secrets of the Order, and were elevated to the degree of Knights of Constantinople. That same year, 1865, in Anglia, a group of Freemasons formed a new Rosicrucian group, the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia (the S.R.I.A.), made up of master Masons only – including the Rev. A.F.A. Woodford, Robert Wentworth Little, W. Wynn Wescott, and S.L. MacGregor Mathers.

Mathers had been born January 8, 1854, in Hackney in London. His father, William M. Mathers, had been a commercial clerk; his mother was known only as “Miss Collins.” His father had died during his early childhood after which his mother had moved from London to Bournemouth where they'd lived until her death in 1885. Mathers developed an interest in boxing, fencing and military strategy. On October 4, 1877, he was initiated into the “Lodge of Hengest - No. 195” in Bournemouth. His sponsor was E.L.V. Rebbeck a well-known real estate agent in the area. Mathers quickly progressed through the grades of Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft, and was raised to Master Mason on January 30, 1878. A fellow member of the lodge was a student of Hebrew philosophy and Qabalah called Frederick Holland and it was he that introduced Mathers into occult studies.

Frederick Holland and Mathers had met as neighbors while living in Bournemouth. Holland, extremely well versed in Ceremonial work and the Tarot, had encouraged Mathers in his studies of Alchemy and the Kabbalah. A leader of the occult revival in the late 1880s, Mathers became expert in ceremonial magic, occult philosophy, esoteric languages, and Celtic symbolism. In departing Freemasonry, Mathers had taken up the Rosicrucian motto *S Rioghail Mo Dhream* (Gaelic for “Royal is my Race”). He was soon a member of the society's High Council, and on his way to helping found the Order of the Golden Dawn.

It was said the founder of the Illuminati, Adam Weishaupt, operating incognito in London in the late 1700s, had been commanded by the Rothschild family (who'd often been accused of being Satanists) to unite the many and various occult groups, at which time Weishaupt reputedly had created the original Order of the Golden Dawn – reputedly one of the Rothschild family's "covens."

XI

Chapter Eight

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

The founder of the Illuminati, Adam Weishaupt, had been born in 1748. He'd been raised in Ingolstadt, Bavaria by Jesuits after his father, a Jewish rabbi, died in 1753, when Adam was five. Converted to Catholicism by his Godfather, Baron Johann Adam Ickstatt, he eventually became first a priest, then an atheist. In Ickstatt's private library, the young Weishaupt studied philosophy, history, economics, law, and politics. He studied in France, where he made friends with members of the French Royal Court, where he was introduced to Satanism. He graduated from the Bavarian University in Ingolstadt in 1768, where he then taught Civil and Canon Law. Though Weishaupt's Godfather denounced him in 1773 for getting married, Weishaupt was made Dean of the Faculty of Law in 1775. When the Jesuits started plotting against him, Weishaupt began planning a secret coven, the "Perfectibilists," to be modeled on the structure of the Jesuit hierarchy. Weishaupt studied the Manicheans, the Pythagoreans, the Eleusinian mysteries, the Essenes, and the Kabala. Immersing himself in esoteric Masonic teachings, he finally concluded Masonry was far too open, lacking the depth of intrigue and mystery he desired. On May 1, 1776, Weishaupt founded the *Ancient Illuminated Seers of Bavaria*, eventually known as the Order of the Illuminati, derived from Luciferian teachings, meaning The Enlightened Ones – The *Keepers of the Light*.

The Illuminati regarded themselves as inheritors of an ancient occult tradition. Though the new organization was modeled on the structure of the Jesuit hierarchy, the rites and ceremonies were based on those of the Masons. However, though he'd joined the Eclectic Masonic lodge "Theodore of Good Counsel" in Munich in 1778, Weishaupt decided against bringing his organization into the fold of the Masons, instead penetrating the Munich order, secretly to reorganize it under the influence of the Illuminati.

"Let us beware of telling them our secrets," Weishaupt warned. Privately, he revealed his aims: "to deliver the human race from all religion," and "complete mastery of the world." On the one hand, people "must be made to nibble at the bait," but, on the other, "We must speak sometimes one way, sometimes another, so that our real purpose will remain impenetrable." On the surface, Weishaupt's organization was to appear Christian. "The great strength of our Order," Weishaupt wrote, "lies in its concealment."

The headquarters in Munich was known as the Grand Lodge of the Illuminati – or Lodge of the Grand Orient – code-named "Athens." The Ingolstadt lodge was called Ephesus; the Heidelberg lodge was called Utica; the Bavarian lodge was called Achaia; and the Frankfurt lodge was called Thebes. Weishaupt called himself Spartacus; his right-hand man, Xavier von Zwack, was called Cato; a bookseller named Nicolai was called Lucian; other members were

dubbed Pythagoras, Marius, Diomedes, Mohomed, Scylla, and so on.

The Illuminati spread into the Upper and Lower Rhenish provinces, Swabia, Franconia, Westphalia, and Upper and Lower Saxony, also reaching into Austria and Switzerland, claiming a membership of over 300 members from all walks of life: students, merchants, civil officers, professors, bankers, doctors, lawyers, judges, and social ministers. Both men and women were enlisted.

In 1780, the Illuminati recruited Johann Wolfgang von Goethe into their ranks. He was initiated in Lodge Amalia, at Weimar (When Goethe died in 1832, his last words were, "More Light!"). That same year the Illuminati also recruited a less known luminary, lawyer-author Baron Franz Friedrich von Knigge. They called him Philo. Knigge had been sending out clear signals, letting it be known he wished to see Masonry reformed. The Marquis of Constanza, one of the most notorious of the Illuminati, had informed him that the Illuminati had already done it. As the new head of the Westphalia Circle, Knigge supported members of the Areopagite insisting Weishaupt's supreme authority should be delegated to others. On his pushing for a still higher level merger between the Illuminati and the Masons, a secret 1781 meeting attended by Masons, Martinistes, and representatives from other secret organizations from Europe, America and Asia was held. The alliance was sealed. The first three degrees of Masonry were granted the Illuminati. Though everyone attending the meeting was under oath never to reveal any of it, Baron von Knigge was soon complaining bitterly of Weishaupt's Jesuitry, ruses, despotism, and cunning: "I abhor treachery and profligacy, and I leave him to blow himself and his Order into the air."

In 1781, for financial reasons, the Illuminati moved their headquarters to Frankfurt, a stronghold of Jewish finance, membership was opened to Jews. They saw there was much money to be had from leading Jewish families like the Rothschilds, Wertheimers, Oppenheimers, Schusters, Speyers, and the Sterns.

By 1783, there were over 600 Illuminati. In 1784, membership soared to nearly 3,000. By 1786 there were lodges all across the various German provinces, Austria, Hungary, England, Scotland, Poland, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Holland, Spain, Sweden, Russia, Ireland, Africa, and America.

In the book "World Revolution," author Nesta Webster said of the 18th century Illuminati, "The art of Illuminism lay in enlisting dupes as well as adepts, and by encouraging the dreams of honest visionaries or the schemes of fanatics, by flattering the vanity of ambitious egotists, by working on unbalanced brains, or by playing on such passions as greed and power, to make men of totally divergent aims serve the secret purpose of the sect."

Baron von Knigge, on discovering Weishaupt was in no wise a Christian, but rather an unrepentant Satanist, quit The Illuminati in the spring of 1784, signing an agreement promising he'd return to Order all documents in his possession and keep quiet on what he knew about their plans and activities. Knigge, "a worshipper of Priapus," felt all esoteric traditions were based on identical facts. The phenomena observed in Nature were the same everywhere. All the festivals of spring around the world alike suggested the story of the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. The theory that Christ was a Yogi was correct. The cross itself was the lingam, a phallus, the vesica

piscis. Christ himself was the fish, the yoni. The vesica piscis, the foundation of Christian architecture, was the female member lying open, awaiting impregnation by the male. The bride of Christ was represented by the early Christians as a lasciviously grinning naked female offering with her hands, obviously to the first comer, a vulva of the shape and size of a horse collar.

When Duke Karl Theodore Dalberg, the Elector Palatinate of Bavaria, was informed of the Illuminati goal – "to rule the world" – the Duke at once ordered all their Lodges closed.

Weishaupt fled to Gotha, where he took refuge with the Duke of Saxe-Gotha, an Illuminati member. There, Weishaupt jotted down plans for a French Revolution, slated to begin in 1789. The book, a history of the Illuminati, also contained ideas for their expansion and dominion.

A horseback courier departing Frankfurt with a copy, was struck and killed by lightning. The document was turned over to the government. Leaders of the Order were arrested and formally interrogated, then forced to renounce the Illuminati. The government published "Original Writings of the Order and Sect of the Illuminati" and circulated it to every government in Europe, warning of impending danger.

In 1787, Duke Dalberg issued his final proclamation against the Illuminati. Anyone found guilty of recruiting members would be executed; those who were recruited would be deported. Dalberg died quietly in 1799, believing the Order defunct. But Weishaupt was already cooking up other plans. "We shall direct all mankind," he insisted. "I have considered everything, and prepared it, so that if the Order should this day go to ruin, I will in a year re-establish it, more brilliant than before."

Weishaupt moved the Order's headquarters to London. He told his followers to infiltrate the lodges of Blue Masonry, there to form secret Illuminati circles of The Fraternity of the Esoteric Order of the Golden Dawn.

It was said Robert Wentworth Little (1840-78) who'd appointed himself Supreme Magus of the S.R.I.A., had "found" the old Rosicrucian Papers with which he established the organization. Dr. William Wynn Westcott implied Robert Wentworth Little had fabricated them.

The earliest Rosicrucian manuscripts had begun circulating in Germany around 1610. They were first published in 1614. In a lecture on the Order of the Golden Dawn, *V. H. Frater Sapere Aude* (Dr. W. Wynn Westcott) wrote, "The Order of the G.D. in the Outer is a Hermetic Society whose members are taught the principles of Occult Science and the Magic of Hermes. During the early part of the second half of the 19th Century, several adepts and chiefs of this order in France and England died, and their deaths caused a temporarily dormant condition of Temple work... The Hermetic Science of the Higher Alchemy [reached back] to the Fratres Rosae Crucis of Germany, which association was founded by Christian Rosenkreuz about 1398. He and the theologian, Valentine Andrea, have left us, in the works published about 1614, an account of the exoteric arrangements of the Rosicrucian Society. It seems likely it was Andrea who published in 1614 the *Fama Fraternitatis*, or Theory of the Society, which must have been derived from the old records of the pupils of Christian Rosenkrawz. But even this arrival of mysticism was a new development of the older wisdom of the Qabalistic Rabbis and of that very ancient secret knowledge of the magic of the Egyptians into which Moses had been initiated.

Through the Qabalah, indeed, Europe became possessed of the ancient Wisdom more than from any one other source, for the Hebrews were taught at one time by the Egyptians and later by the Chaldees of Babylon. It is a curious fact that the classic nations, the Greeks and Romans, have handed down to us but slight glimpses of the Ancient Magic, and this is more notable because Greece succeeded to the mastership of Egypt, and Rome to the Empire of both the Greeks and Jews. Greece did indeed succeed to a share in the mysteries of the Egyptians for the Eleusinian Mysteries were copies of the ancient ceremonies of Isis, Osiris and Serapis; but they lacked true magic. And further, the classic writings contain but faint glimpses of even the Eleusinian Mysteries, and these disclose the fact that the pupils were partly ignorant of the true mysteries, a notable example of which is seen in the use of the words *Konx Om Pax*, of which they knew not the meaning, the words being the Greek imitation or translation of really ancient Egyptian words, whose meanings has been kept secret for centuries...."

In 1865, in Massachusetts, abolitionist and "free love" advocate Ezra Heywood, of Princeton, married feminist Angela Tilton of Worcester. Heywood's heroes were Jesus and John Brown. With his wife as partner, Heywood started up a publishing company that produced a monthly journal and pamphlets promoting radical reforms, especially reforms to marriage laws. Although they had themselves had got married, Angela and Ezra were against the subjugation of women as "sexual slaves," advocating for "free love" and the abolition of marriage as a legal contract. Love, they insisted, had to be voluntary, and every sexual act engaged in by both parties freely and willingly. (In 1878, Ezra was arrested for mailing illegal matter – "obscene literature" re. marriage and birth control – and sentenced to imprisonment and hard labor. On emerging from prison, he'd promptly fallen dead.)

William Gladstone, leader of the Liberal Party, favored increasing the number of people who could vote. The Conservative Party opposed any attempt to introduce parliamentary reform. In 1867, Benjamin Disraeli proposed a new Reform Act. The Act gave the vote to every male adult householder living in a borough constituency. Male lodgers paying £10 for unfurnished rooms were also granted the vote. This gave the vote to about 1,500,000 men. For poet Coventry Patmore, who despised the common people, 1867 was "The year of the great crime / when the false English nobles and their Jew / by God demented, slew / The Trust they stood twice pledged to keep from wrong." His one consolation was that, since the working classes were drunk most of the time, they would not succeed in exploiting the new political power they enjoyed.

In 1867, Charles Wheatstone introduced a substitution cipher used for polyalphabetic messages which he'd dubbed the Cryptograph. An automated cipher disk, it had two hands – like those on a clock, one long and one short – connected by gears. When the larger hand pointed to a letter, the incremented smaller hand would point to its cipher equivalent, which changed at each following instance, due to the arrangement of the gears.

In 1868 came the first prosecution under England's Obscene Publications Act (the test for "obscenity" was any publication's "tendency to deprave or corrupt." (Also in 1868: the last public hanging, at Newgate; the Telegraph Act nationalized telecommunications in Great Britain.)

In 1868, in Boston, immigrant Jacob Wirth (from a family of wine growers in Kreuznach, Prussia) opened his restaurant, Jacob Wirth's.

Frederick Hockley (1808-85), an accountant by profession, was well known in circles which cultivated 'Rejected Knowledge'. He experimented with crystals and so-called 'Magic Mirrors', used to induce trance states. He was a diligent copyist of old magical manuscripts. He became a Freemason rather late in life in 1864 (at 56), but his career in the Craft was not without distinction.

The Royal Oriental Order of Sikha (Apex)" and the "Sat B'hai," purportedly imported from India, were invented and controlled by Jonathan Yarker, known for spawning bogus – or at least very irregular – Masonic Orders. The new order would admit women.

Unfortunately, a 34th degree of the Sat B'hai' rite was known already in existence, called the "Apex," thus corresponding with the 90th degree of the Ancient and Primitive Rite of Misraim. In *The Freemason* of February 18, 1871, "a very serious mistake," was reported to have appeared in the previous issue of *The Freemason*, "in which it is affirmed that 'there are only three holders of the Apex in the world, who exist by a succession of triplicate warrants from Frederick the Great', and that the symbols of the degree are a '*Cord and Dagger*'. Now, brethren should not be precipitate in their revelations on the subject of this climax of our Grand Historic-Masonic mysteries, for I am in a position to assert, most emphatically, that the warrants in question were not promulgated by Frederick the Great, and that the three so-called Apexes were, in fact, no other than the three sponsors of the ONE SUPREME APEX, whose very style proclaims his crowning and solitary grandeur, and the succession of whose high office comes by an Act of Grace on the part of the existing Apex, who, under circumstances of the strictest solemnity, and himself *strictly veiled*, transmits to his successor (if practicable, in the presence of one or more of the sponsors) the rituals of all other orders (some of which are scarcely known in England), contained in an antique leaden casket cased in cedar of Libanus (or Lebanon). By this means the Apex-elect is, if of one of the lower degrees (but in no case under that of a P.M.) under a peculiar dispensation."

The letter continued: "True enough, the *Cord and Dagger* are the symbols of the Sponsors, but not of the one unapproachable Apex, for he has seven (hence the con-fraternity [sic] known in the East as the Sat-bhae, seven brothers), but which failed under a secret suspension of the then (1845) Sublime *Climax Apex*, who, at that period, happened to be on one of his tours of secret inspection in India. From the nature of the office of the Grand *Climax Apex*, 81 °, it has been a time immemorial law that his name should never be divulged nor his actual identity be known to any but a Sponsor. Sometimes it happens, where Apex dies in any remote locality, his successor cannot be known to the Sponsors, but the latter can always identify the true Apex by the seven symbols which lead to the leaden casket that crowns the mystic edifice, and which, with reverence, I venture to assert I have seen, but it is not fitting that I should say more. There is a remarkable painting, of small size, called 'The Dream of Apex.' It represents a man in a gloomy apartment, startled at the appearance of a serpent; but for reasons inconvenient to mention, the *locality* cannot be indicated. As your correspondent is perhaps aware, the one Supreme Apex takes in regular succession, as his symbol, one of the starry signs; but these are not numbered as amongst the seven occult symbols. Allow me to add, that 'the *Frederick the Great*' is not a warrant of authority. The Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa certainly did issue one,

but under the superior inspiration of the Veiled Apex, who, at that period, is supposed to have been a Venetian."

The Royal Oriental Order of Sikha (Apex) and the Sat B'hai, to give it its official title – was the brain child of Captain James Henry Lawrence Archer (or Lawrence-Archer), Indian Army. John Yarker briefly referred to the Order's founder and origins in *The Arcane Schools*, 1909, P. 242: "This is a Hindu Society organized by the Pundit of an Anglo-Indian regiment, and brought to this country, about the year 1872, by Captain J. H. Lawrence Archer."

Lawrence Archer had been born on July 28, 1823. He'd been gazetted Second-Lieutenant in the 39th Foot Regiment in December 1840 (at 17) and served with the 24th Foot Regiment throughout the Punjab Campaign in 1848-1849. He went on half pay as a Captain on January 1, 1869 and remained on the half pay list until his death in February 1889. He was initiated in Masonry in India in 1851 (at 28) and later became a joining member of Lodge Canongate Kilwinning No. 2 at Edinburgh. The British Museum catalogue lists the titles of a dozen books by him, e.g. genealogical studies, military histories, memoirs of Indian campaigns, a work on the Orders of Chivalry etc.. As far as the Sat B'hai was concerned he remained in the background.

In Hindi the word pundit or pandit means a learned man, one versed in philosophy, religion and jurisprudence, alternatively a learned expert or teacher. In military usage it meant a native civilian who was employed to teach the British officers of Indian regiments the Hindi language and to read the Devanagri script. Nothing is known about the Pundit's "Hindu Society" or the nature of Archer's notes, MSS. etc. Archer must have had private means. Somewhere in Scotland, not to be found, he was playing at being a Hindu in an English Masonic order hoping, somehow, to make money, someday, out of the Sat B'hai.

XII

Chapter Nine

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

The philosopher Kant had distinguished between representation and the thing-in-itself. Representation was the type of knowledge that one retrieved from one's senses. The thing-in-itself was outside the realm of human understanding – we could not access this knowledge; we could only go by our intuition and instinct. Arthur Schopenhauer had disagreed. For Kant, the thing-in-itself was inaccessible to our body of knowledge. For Schopenhauer, the thing-in-itself was accessible by the will. Schopenhauer reinterpreted Kant's notion of the thing-in-itself as the will, while retaining the general idea of representation as the relationship between subject and object. Schopenhauer had argued that everything we understand must have a cause and purpose.

We are in direct contact with reality, with the thing-in-itself. The sexual drive we have, Schopenhauer insisted, was a blind energy with constant turning and motion not only concerned with human consciousness but the whole physical world. Schopenhauer claimed the whole world, like man himself, was through and through will and through and through representation and, beyond this, he said, there was nothing.

By going down into the depths of one's own nature, a man may become conscious that he is *all in all* – the only real being. He is *the thing-in-itself*. This real being perceives itself again in others, who present themselves from without, as though they formed a mirror of himself. This man recognizes himself as identical with another individual, who exists in complete separation from him. It is true, or at least possible, that our self can exist in other beings whose consciousness is separated and different from our own. So entirely is the individual consciousness a phenomenon that even in the same ego two consciousnesses can arise of which the one knows nothing of the other. That one and the same being can exist in different places at the same time and yet be complete in each of them seems impossible – absurd, nevertheless, it is true – of the thing-in-itself. Phenomena assume forms in accordance with the principle of individuation. For the thing-in-itself, the will to live exists whole and undivided in every being, even in the smallest, as completely as in the sum-total of all things that ever were or are or will be. Every being, even the smallest, says to itself, So long as I am safe, let the world perish. If only one individual is left in the world, and all the rest perish, the one remaining would still possess the whole self-being of the world, uninjured and undiminished, and would laugh at the destruction of the world as an illusion.

The first edition of Albert Mackey's massive *Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry* was published in the U.S.A. early in 1874.

F. G. Irwin was in Paris during the autumn of 1874, visiting Eliphas Lévi. Unfortunately, Irwin forgot to ask Lévi about the Hermetic Order of Egypt, an occult fraternity from ancient times, immersed in studies of the philosopher's stone, the elixir of life, and the art of invisibility.

In 1886, John Yarker published what he described as a revised edition of the Sat B'hai Code, the Rite of Apex, or the Sat B'hail, containing information about the Order's structure and its rules. The Sat B'hai would evolve into The Order of Ishmael – also called The Order of Esau and Reconciliation. Yarker got the order going – and kept it going – with help from William Wynn Westcott, a co-founder of the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia, as one of its Grand Officers.

The Order of Ishmael, or Order of Esau and Reconciliation, had eighteen degrees divided into four classes. The government of the Order was vested in three supreme and equal powers, respectively known as Patriarch, Priest, and King. The Chiefs of the Order resided habitually in the East; two of the three chiefs were required to live east of Jerusalem. The consent of each had to be obtained before the admission of any candidate. Postulants had to be of "a mature age, of good breeding and education," and "could not be Roman Catholic." It was not necessary, on the continent, that a postulant should be a Freemason. Branches of the Order, operating under the authority of Under-Arch-Chancellors, existed in Russia, Turkey, Greece, Austria, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, France, Spain, Portugal, Africa, and the United Kingdom.

"The Beast," occultist Aleister Crowley, was born in 1875, the year Madame Blavatsky founded the Theosophical Society.

Taking his cue certainly from Yarker, Westcott, Crowley, and Blavatsky, Cal Horan took the esoteric initiation ceremonies embedded in the cipher I'd created, derived from Trithemius's Polycraphiae, and he ran with them.

Essentially, Horan developed not a cult of the sun, but a cult of the moon. I'd often heard that the moon rules over the sexuality of women. The moon was the Great Eternal Mother. St. Augustine had berated women for their dancing "impudently and filthily all the day long upon the days of the new moon."

Of course, yes, I wanted to see the women reveling.

The first ritual display of Cal Horan's new esoteric order took place in a wild setting, in the primal woods just outside Easthaven. Old Terry Stevens encouraged this, and even talked me into dressing up as a woman, to go and witness the session, incognito, firsthand – apparently also telling Horan that I'd be there, because now, that night, Horan was hollering out to his girls, "There he is! Bring him down!" I had climbed to the top of a fir tree and was watching. Now the women were *demanding* I come down. When I refused, they pulled the tree down to the ground with their bare hands.

The Horanians went completely nuts, celebrating insanely. Ultimately, an apparently hallucinating, totally crazed Jamie Culotte killed Eliza Boudreau with her bare hands. She tore Eliza Boudreau's eyes right out of their sockets and stabbed her in the heart with an ornate gold and silver dagger Horan had probably lent her for the purpose. Hurricane strength winds and rain came up suddenly. And lightning.

The library caught fire that night, even as the floodwaters rose.

So soon as Jamie Culotte showed up on the grounds of the devastated library, the old millionaire rabble-rouser Terence Stevens had her take a look at the head she was carrying in her hands. Jamie seemed to have no idea whatsoever as to how she came to be walking around with Eliza Boudreau's eyeless head in her hands. Stevens explained. Jamie Culotte stared horrified at the mutilated remains, though it took about five minutes or more to finally get her to release them from her clutches.

The *Easthaven Daily News* carried only a brief report of these events, quoting Terence Stevens telling of a wild bear loose in the woods – which Eliza had herself, as a hobby, been foolishly trying to tame – that had turned on her. No one – not her mother or father or brother – not her neighbors – not anybody anywhere in Easthaven – took exception to Terence Stevens' version (which protected Horan) of what had transpired. I went to Eliza's mother and father – and to her brother – and I told them what I knew. They told me to *stay away* from them – "Don't make any more waves." Imagine – "*Don't make any more waves*"!

Degraded and humiliated, I felt far more intensely now the four principal sacred passions – love, veneration, admiration, and joy – and their four opposites – hatred, indignation, horror, and grief. I vowed I'd somehow bypass Stevens, that smarmy God-damned heartless son of a bitch, and punish Horan, that God-awful, God-forsaken, mother-fucking *monster*, someday.

As for the library, it was insured and so was salvaged and brought back, for the time

being, from both fire and flood.

XIII

Chapter Ten

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

We, the Carley family, now moved from our quite nice home in Easthaven to a far more modest address, 21 Straten Road, Previnville. By August, 1977 we'd left that address to live in a junk-heap on Trapper Road in Tarrenton. There we remained until November, 1980, when we moved into an even more dismal rat-trap on Trapper Road. We three then re-located to 44 Codelyn Terrace, Tarrenton, living in a damp, decrepit, nearly disintegrated Queen Anne style manse having fourteen rooms, not including the three bathrooms or the pantry, all built back in 1891, the year Madame Helena Blavatsky died.

Back in 1875, in New York City, Blavatsky and Colonel Henry S. Olcott had founded the Theosophical Society. Theosophy ("Divine Wisdom") had offered an alternative to material science, which was busy debunking spiritual ideas. Theosophy claimed to represent an archaic secret tradition. Its aim was to bring the esoteric knowledge of the ancients to the modern world, and to study comparative religions, the laws of nature, and humanity's spiritual faculties. "HPB" (Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, 1831-1891), a native of southern Russia, had come into the tenets of her Theosophy through occult masters she claimed she'd met in Tibet. She identified her Secret Chiefs as non-physical masters from an Egyptian Order that was carrying on the work of Zoroaster and Solomon. Blavatsky's western masters were called Serapis Bey, Polydorus Isurenus, and John King. It was only years later that Blavatsky and Olcott would convert to Buddhism. The Theosophical Society would then shift to an Eastern orientation. Blavatsky would give up her Western Secret Chiefs for three oriental Masters – Koot Hoomi, Morya, and Djwal Khul. There was not a single representative of the Eastern Mystical Tradition among the founding Spiritualists, Qabalists, Freemasons, and Rosicrucians of the Theosophical Society. Theosophy ("Divine Wisdom") offered an alternative to material science, then busy debunking spiritual ideas. Theosophy, carrying an archaic secret tradition into the modern world, would promote brotherly and sisterly love, studying comparative religions, the laws of nature, and humanity's spiritual faculties.

The first complete performance of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* was performed at Bayreuth in 1876.

In 1878, Jacob Wirth moved his restaurant (Jacob Wirth's) into larger quarters across the street. (Jacob Wirth Co. had been established as a bottler in Boston, Massachusetts in 1868 and

had begun bottling lager beer at 160 Broad Street in Providence sometime in 1880 while residing in Boston.) The dining room was made up of simple mahogany tables with a few large steins and bottles for decoration. The floor was covered with sawdust; the tables were bare. The establishment's most notable feature was its bar, a long mahogany structure well equipped to dispense draught beers. Above the bar, a Latin motto proclaimed *Suum Cuique*, generally translated to mean "Each his own." A clock and a portrait of the founder— in a circular medallion — added the finishing touches. Along with several special dishes each day, the menu featured staples that included sausages, pig's knuckles, boiled bacon, hams, cheeses and herrings. The customers included the rich and famous of the day. Boxing champion John L. Sullivan was among them. (Legend is that he suffered a rare knockdown when he was hit by a beer barrel rolling off a brewer's wagon into the restaurant.)

John Yarker later ingeniously amalgamated the Ceremony of Perfection from the Order of the Sat B'hai with the ritual of a recent novelty called the Order of Light.

In April 1877, the Swedenborg Rite needed a Supreme Grand Chaplain. The Rev. William Stainton Moses (1840-1892), seemed the best candidate. One of the most prominent personalities in the spiritualist movement, Moses had co-founded, in 1881, the spiritualist journal, *Light*. He now wanted to form a Lodge, in London, entirely composed of Spiritualists, and "to seek for communion with the world of spirit thro' the solemn ritual of the Swed. Rite. I am afraid I shall not do it: but I want badly to try.... I desiderate for this purpose something rather different from the ordinary Lodge, which meets four times a year to work a stereotyped ritual, or to eat a heavy dinner." Nothing came of those wishes, however. Moses resigned from the Rite in April 1879, by which time there were about a dozen lodges, all with probably very small memberships. Only a handful more were founded during the next few years. The Rite of Swedenborg lingered on in England until the early 1900s, by which time it was merely an item in John Yarker's stock of rites he deemed ripe for exporting overseas.

The Rite bearing Swedenborg's name had been founded in the U.S. in 1859, and had soon after been exported to Canada. It possessed six grades: 1. Apprentice, 2. Fellow Craft, 3. Master Neophyte, 4. Illuminated Theosophite, 5. Blue Brother, 6. Red Brother. The third degree was, in fact, that of a Master Mason but, since the Rite did not initiate Freemasons, only the last three degrees were worked. The Rite reached England by virtue of a Canadian charter, dated July 1, 1876, granted to John Yarker, Francis George Irwin, and Samuel Petty Leather, "to hold a subordinate Lodge and Temple in the City of Manchester to be called the Emanuel Lodge and Temple No. 3, and therein to confer the degrees of Enlightened, Sublime, and Perfect Phremasons upon such lawful Master Masons as they may deem worthy."

The Swedenborgian Rite was introduced to England in a letter from Yarker that appeared in *The Freemason*, July 29, 1876. Yarker wrote that he'd just recently received "a warrant for a lodge and temple of the Swedenborgian Rite, styled Emmanuel Lodge and Temple, No. 3, to confer the degrees of Enlightened, Sublime, and Perfect Phremason upon lawful Master Masons. The lodge and temple consist at present of only four members, but if any of your readers would like to enter the Rite they can do so by sending their names and the fee of £1 to Bro. S. P. Leather, Burnley, Lancashire, the J.W. of said body. We pay the Supreme Grand Lodge and

Temple of the Dominion of Canada £5 5s. for our warrant and ritual."

According to the warrant, Emmanuel Lodge and Temple of The Primitive and Original Rite of Freemasonry otherwise known as the Swedenborgian Rite was to be at Manchester, with Yarker as Worshipful Master, Francis George Irwin as Senior Warden, and one Samuel Petty Leather as Junior Warden. It was signed by McLeod Moore, confirmed by two fellow rulers, and countersigned by the Grand Secretary, Alex. G. Hervey. A subsequent report in *The Freemason* (November 4, 1876) announced McLeod Moore and his fellows had been "pleased to grant a charter for a Supreme Grand Lodge and Temple for Great Britain and Ireland, of the Swedenborgian Rite, a ritual which seems to give great pleasure to Masonic Archaeologists." Interestingly, Yarker was ultimately thrown out of "the Ancient and Accepted Rite in England" for "gross unmasonic conduct."

The Supreme Grand Lodge and Temple was Constituted at a meeting held at Freemasons' Hall, Manchester, on January 13, 1877, at which time eleven officers were appointed, among them John Yarker (M.W. Supreme G.M.) and W. Wynn Westcott (V.W. Supreme Grand Senior Deacon). Though the Rite already had three Lodges, its entire membership then consisted of only eleven "brethren." The first meeting of Emmanuel Lodge at which any members were actually present took place on May 20, 1877, at Weston-super-Mare in Somerset. Cagliostro Lodge No. 7 was warranted in June, 1877, but there no record was kept of its working – no Minute Books exist for any of the Lodges.

In 1882, the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts took action against "Spurious Rites and Degrees and Irregular Bodies (called Masonic)," inviting comments from masonic authorities in support of its action. One W. J. Lewan wrote back at once, setting out the position of the British Grand Lodges, denouncing John Yarker. "As to the 'Swedenborgian Rite,' the 'Rite of Memphis,' and the 'Ancient and Primitive Rite,' and other absurd and pernicious organisations," Lewan concluded his letter, "I wish they were all decently buried."

XIV

Chapter Eleven

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

Jacob Wirth's became New England agent for George Ehert's New York *Hell Gate* lager beer in 1883. From 164 Broad Street in Providence, branch manager Henry R. Wirth began importing Rhine wines from Germany in 1885. By 1886, he was manufacturing his own Rhine and Claret wines and selling mineral and seltzer waters, too.

Through the 1880s, all sorts of secret societies had sprung up all over – not only in

France, England, and Germany, but also in America. Madame Blavatsky had traveled in Egypt, Africa, and India, and had even gained entrance to Tibet, which up till then had been off limits to all foreigners. Claiming the world was governed from some Himalayan caves by a few, perhaps several, Mahatmas – supreme spiritual teachers, otherworldly beings secretly directing all human events – Madame Blavatsky (and then her successor, Annie Besant) spread the esoteric Theosophic teachings all around the globe.

In 1883, John Philip Sousa (1854-1932, who would compose *The Stars and Stripes Forever* on Christmas Day, 1896) was commissioned to compose a processional for the unveiling of a bronze statue of American physicist Professor Joseph Henry, who had died in 1878. Henry, who had developed the first electric motor, was also the first secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Sousa, a Freemason, was fascinated by what the group considered mystical qualities in otherwise natural phenomena. This played a role in the selection of the time and date of the performance, April 19, 1883, at 4:00 P.M. – as Venus and Mars, invisible to the participants, were setting in the west. At the same time, the Moon, Uranus and Virgo were rising in the east, Saturn had crossed the meridian, and Jupiter was directly overhead. According to Masonic lore, Venus was associated with the element copper, and Joseph Henry had used large quantities of copper to build his electric motors.

In July 1883, Frederick Holland established a new order dubbed the Society of Eight, or The Order of the Hermanoubis Temple, steeped in Alchemy, Hermeticism, Masonry, and the Tarot – "a Society of Work," Holland said, "with a sincere end, the sincere study of God & Nature, the result of which is undoubtedly the Stone & Universal Medicine." The London Theosophical Society was founded in 1884. The Hermetic Society was founded in 1885. The Dublin Lodge of the Hermetic Society, a little group of neophytes emulating the London Theosophical Society taking the magical name *Daemon est Deus Inversus*, having William Butler Yeats at its helm, was founded in June, 1885.

After the death of his father in 1885, George Bernard Shaw, trying to keep up his "mystic betrothal" to May Morris, daughter of the Socialist founder of the Arts & Crafts Movement in England, William Morris, nevertheless started up affairs with other lovers. After the death of his mother in 1885, MacGregor Mathers moved back to London to become assistant librarian to the affluent tea importer Frederick Horniman, founder of the famous Horniman Museum at Norwood. It was often said Mathers was certainly the best man in all of Great Britain for arranging and cataloguing that museum's strange collections.

In 1880, in Munich, Germany, Theodor Reuss (1855-1923) had participated in an attempt to revive Adam Weishaupt's Bavarian Order of the Illuminati. In 1885, in England, Reuss joined the British Social League – some said to spy on Karl Marx's daughter for the German Secret Service. While in England, Reuss became friends with William Wynn Westcott, the Supreme Magus of the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia.

After 1885, a minority of Freemasons in search of esoteric novelty tended to join the Theosophical Society, where there was no conflict with the authority of Grand Lodge. Irwin, Westcott and the Rev. W. A. Ayton were all members of the Theosophical Society.

Although one would suppose that the Sat B'hai was completely dead and buried by 1885

both Irwin and Cox were keeping it going in a small way in the West Country. On December 15, 1885, Cox wrote: "I will assist by taking No. 2 Censorship and I would suggest that Dr. Nunn be asked to take the other ... there can be no harm in asking him, the only objection is that he does not care much for occultism." Almost two years later Cox reported: "Dr. Nunn intends to wear at our Thursday's meeting his Sat B'hai jewel ... I forgot to say that Bro. Dr. Nunn thinks that by wearing the jewel of the Sat B'hai at our meeting it may be the means of others joining without outside solicitation."

The founding of Eri Lodge (Swednbourg Rite) was effectively the last gasp of the first phase of the Rite's progress in the United Kingdom. Its revival was due to William Wynn Westcott. By 1885, Westcott was eager to breathe new life into the Rite. It would, he felt, "be a great misfortune to let the order lapse into obscurity." Westcott wrote to Yarker on June 17, 1886, offering to act as Grand Secretary of the order of Swedenborg, and to make an effort to revive the order – "of which I have some years been a Warden."

In August, 1887, Westcott, very busy in his new role as Supreme Grand Secretary of the Swedenborg Rite, received from the Rev. A. F. A. Woodford, a founder member of Q.C. Lodge, a cipher that Westcott knew, at once, to be quite special. Westcott had been trying to devise and orchestrate yet another new organization, one in which both men and women would come together without any such restrictions as were imposed by, for example, Freemasonry or the S.R.I.A. Most occultists at that time were also Masons. Westcott wanted something brand new – an order neither Masonic nor Rosecrucian that would yet research and teach the Qabalah, Alchemy, Astrology, Divination, Invisibility, and more. In order to attract new people to such an order, he knew, he would have to provide it with a written history, proving a legitimate hierarchical succession from some distant authority. Since no such history or authority existed for the order, the Golden Dawn, Westcott realized he now had the key for fabricating these, through the serendipitous cipher manuscript Woodford had handed him – which "may or may not have" been written by "Johann Falk around 1810-1815" but, in any case, later landed in the lap of Eliphas Levi who'd "accidentally left them in England while visiting London in 1854."

In 1887, Theodor Reuss, later the co-founder of the O.T.O., *Ordo Templi Orientis*, published "The Matrimonial Question from an Anarchistic Point of View" even as Samuel Liddell MacGregor-Mathers was translating Knorr von Rosenroth's *Kabbalah Denudata – The Kabbalah Unveiled* – which had first been published in 1684, itself a Latin translation from the original Hebrew, containing a number of books from the Qabalistic text known as the Zohar.

The following year, 1888, Madame Helena Blavatsky published *The Secret Doctrine*, embodying Blavatsky's spin on racist dogma embedded deep in Rosicrucian belief. She was scrambling to keep the Theosophical Society alive. A big block of adherents had broken away in order to form the Hermetic Society, and yet another threat was looming. To shore up the erosions in her Society, Blavatsky started up an Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society, hoping to entice back some of the people then already flocking, in great numbers, to what was called the Order of the Golden Dawn.

XV

Chapter Twelve

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

Embarrassed at being publicly snubbed by Horan, irritated by the vagaries of his "girls" (and his Board colleagues), I was hyper-aware that Horan would soon be going for my jugular. "Can you please be a peacemaker between us?" I pleaded with Stevens and others of Horan's trustee colleagues. But not him nor Horan nor anybody else offered me an olive branch.

Then something extraordinary happened. But, to tell of it, first I must go back.

At the outset of the year 1951, the Trustees of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library had accepted, "only with reluctance," the resignation of the librarian, Miss Norma Van Allstead. The Board had preferred to think of her resignation as "temporary," voting to present the librarian with a pen and pencil set and to increase her salary, hoping she might change her mind. But that hadn't come to pass. Then, in September, the Children's Librarian, a Miss Farrar, who'd been Acting Librarian since March, had departed. In October, the Board had appointed its first director to have a library services education and degree, Ellie Lanning, as well as a new Children's Librarian, Miss Hortense Charlemagne. The Janitor, Mr. Othello Hartwell, had also received a pay increase at that time. In the summer of 1953, Mrs. Lanning had reported to the Trustees that "the gift of a photograph of several unidentified men wearing Scotch tartans, and Masonic aprons had been given to the library, with only a note scribbled on the back saying the photograph had been taken in 1868 in London. It was agreed that the librarian should send the photograph on to the British Museum."

In December, 1953, the Trustees of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library, the public library of Easthaven, Massachusetts, had fired the library director, Mrs. Ellie Forrest Lanning. The Chairman had politely asked if Mrs. Lanning wanted to make a statement of any kind, to which she'd responded she had no intention of resigning under fire. She'd demanded the Board tell her the nature of any complaints leveled against her, and the names of any complainants. She'd then abruptly left the meeting, muttering under her breath. In her absence, the Board had then contemplated what she'd done in the first place – at a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce – which they did not record in the meeting minutes. The minutes did show that the Board had agreed unanimously that an investigation could be made into certain complaints (e.g., that Mrs. Lanning' behavior was "incompatible with the expectations of many patrons of the library and most staff"), but that their decision to dismiss Mrs. Lanning would be final. The Board had composed a letter to Mrs. Lanning to that effect, saying, "The Board of Library Trustees of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library cannot change its decision as to your status. We, as agents of the Town and of the Trusts from which the library derives its income, must base our decision on

the very numerous complaints that we have received from time to time pertaining to your contacts with the public.... the Board has no alternative but to consider that you have been dismissed.... return your key to the Library if you have not already done so'."

Mrs. Lanning had taken her situation to the Board of Selectmen, writing, "As a public official of a public institution, I protest against my summary dismissal from the position of Librarian to the Martin Conwell Memorial Library. The Library board, in neglecting to give me any warning of alleged complaints acted in disregard of a common business practice. The Library board first agreed to a hearing, then when they learned that reporters wished to be present announced that they would not give a hearing, but were willing to listen. It is evident that they did not listen with open, unprejudiced minds. Such meetings are always open meetings, except when cases of embezzlement or moral turpitude are involved. but the meeting was held behind locked doors, with the reporters barred in a method reminiscent of a police state. The Library board, appointed by you, has acted in an unjust and unethical manner in refusing to look at the records or heed the facts. No specific charges have ever been made, and I have never known the names of the complainants or the nature of the complaints. Tenure is an elementary right of any professional person, and the professional library associations are taking a deep interest in this violation. I feel that the Library board by their actions have disregarded the wishes of the majority of the people of Easthaven, and this has caused widespread resentment. Therefore, as a Town employee, I ask for an open hearing before the Board of Selectmen, in order that proper inquiries may be made into the matter'." In January, 1954, Easthaven's Town Counsel, Ebenezer Johnson, had advised the Board of Selectmen concerning whether or not they should get involved with town employee Ellie Lanning' having been dismissed from her post as librarian of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library by the Martin Conwell Memorial Library Trustees. Ebenezer Johnson had advised against their getting anywhere near it.

No one ever knew exactly what had become of Ellie Lanning or her husband Charlie. There were rumors that the two had wound up on the west coast, in Laguna Beach, California.

Now, one Margaret Lanning arrived in Easthaven, Massachusetts from Laguna Beach, California, to be the Adult Services Librarian at The Martin Conwell Memorial Library.

She not only worked all day at the library, and all night too it seemed, but also became active in the art and historical societies of the town, and immersed herself in every other aspect of the community too. Margaret Lanning was 2005 Chairman of the Easthaven Historical Commission, for example.

In the year 2000, the Easthaven Historical Commission was seeking a way to recognize work done by some property owners to improve the façades of some historic properties in the downtown area," and so had instituted "The Well maintained Property Award." The first winners of the the Easthaven Historical Commission's year 2000 "Well Maintaned Property Award" were the owner-restorers of a property at 297-300 Main Street, Margaret Lanning and her boyfriend, Mick McAmbrel.

In 2002, a special "Easthaven Historical Commission Well Maintained Historic Property Award" was given in the "Commercial" category. The award went to Margaret Lanning and

Mick McAmbrel for a property at 27 East Street. The former owner-restorers of what had been a single-family home – listed on the National Register of Historic Places – were Mick McAmbrel and Margaret Lanning, who had converted the house into a restaurant and bed and breakfast and then sold it to Leon and Katie Storch, who dubbed the place "The Schumacher Inn."

In the summer of 2002 came the news headline: "Historic Downtown Easthaven Blossoms With Improvements" – "Easthaven's Downtown Partnership is a formal association of the Town, business owners, property owners, and other supporters of the historic heart of the community. After more than a year of planning sessions, working meetings, and just plain hard work you can see fruits of their collaborative efforts. Large Victorian urns and concrete planters have begun to appear in place of the old whiskey barrels. Volunteers Margaret Lanning, Mick McAmbrel, and Minnehaha Horan not only found sources for the planters, they painted and installed them. And they researched and recommended how to achieve the most improvement in Downtown lighting with this year's budget from the grant. The advisory group supported the choice of replacing all the remaining old, fainter light fixtures on the historic poles that were not covered by the recent sidewalk and lighting improvements, plus replacing two poles that had been broken. Watch this fall for brighter lighting near parking lots and alleys in the Downtown. A priority for subsequent grant money will be to pay for additional historic light poles and fixtures down Dimpleton and Coral Streets toward the Depot parking lot. 'The Town is fortunate to have such talented volunteers working hand in hand with me,' said Cal Horan, 2004 Chairman of the Easthaven Historical Commission and liaison between the Partnership and the Town. 'Here's a great example of how positive things result when you get a group of people together, outline an objective, set goals, and implement a plan of action'. Horan said."

As far as the progress of my work, beyond doing my work at the library, I was busy constructing my patchwork quilt, this history of hermetic orders. I'd arrived at the threshold of the creation of the Order of the Golden Dawn, whose founders, I determined, had been Samuel Liddel MacGregor Mathers and William Wynn Westcott, who'd basically spun the rites of their order out of a sixty page encrypted document which Westcott had concocted, though he insisted he'd *found* it among the papers of Frederick Hockley upon his death in November, 1885.

The key to deciphering that manuscript, Westcott had said, was a 15th century code found in Abbot Johann Trithemius' book, *Polygraphiae*. Westcott's work was further padded out with rites Mathers distilled from the ancient tenets of the Qabalistic Tree of Life and rituals taken straight out of manuscripts stored in the British Museum.

Now three years passed between the 1885 discovery of the so-called "cipher manuscript" and the actual founding of the Order of the Golden Dawn, which was facilitated through the help of a fictional German woman by the name of Fraulein Sprengel, the "Greatly Honored *Soror Sapiens Dominabitur Astris*" (Wise Person Ruled by the Stars), declared (by Mathers and Westcott) an eminent Rosicrucian and Adept of the occult order *Die Goldene Dämmerung* (The Golden Dawn). Fraulein Sprengel's name may or may not have been a code word derived from the German Masonic word "sprengelrecht" ("territorial jurisdiction"). In any case, Westcott had a contact address for Fraulein Sprengel (c/o "Herr J. Enger, Hotel Marquardt, Stuttgart."), which he claimed he'd also found (along with the cipher manuscript) among Fred Hockley's papers.

Westcott had written to Fraulein Sprengel ("S.D.A."), he said, and had got a letter back (the correspondence between Westcott and Fraulein Sprengel was translated by a Mr. Albert Essinger of the Sanitary Wood Wool Company). Fraulein Sprengel, Westcott said (and Mr. Albert Essinger verified this), had granted Westcott permission to operate the Order of the Golden Dawn in England. More, Fraulein Sprengel had authorized him to establish a new temple in England, Hermanubis Temple No. 2. She gave Westcott permission to sign her name to any document that might be required to achieve that end. She next called on Westcott to produce a Charter of Warrant for her Isis-Urania Temple #3, which was to have three chiefs. Westcott, a London coroner who was then Secretary General of the S.R.I.A., the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia (the Rosicrucian Society in England) invited the Supreme Magus of the the S.R.I.A., Dr. Robert Woodman, to join him and Mathers in being this "triumvirate of Chiefs."

Four further letters were sent to Westcott, written by *Frater In Utroque Fidelis*, Secretary to Fraulein Sprengel. The mythical *Soror Sapiens Dominabitur Astris* having served her purpose, Fraulein Sprengel conveniently died. A final letter, dated August 23, 1890, sent from *ex Uno Disces Omnes*, informed Westcott that Fraulein Sprengel had gone against the will of the other continental adepts to charter Isis-Urania Temple No. 3, and that henceforth there would be no contact.

Though most societies at that time admitted only men, Mathers insisted the Order of the Golden Dawn should allow both men and women, who would work together as equals in magical ceremonies whose purpose would be to test, purify, and exalt an individual's spiritual nature so as to unify it with his or her Holy Guardian Angel. Westcott and Woodman insisted the new order should be *for men only*, but Mathers held out, saying it was non-negotiable. He would not proceed until they gave in to his demand.

The outer order of the "Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn" was finally founded on March 1, 1888. The outer order was controlled by an inner second order (*Ordo Roseae Rubrae et Aureae Crucis*, Order of the Rose of Ruby and the Cross of Gold), of which only Westcott, Woodman, and Mathers were members (them being its self-appointed chiefs), who claimed to be under direction from the Secret Chiefs of a Third Order, entities from the Astral Plane.

Late in 1888, Mathers met his future wife, Mina (later Moina) Bergson, the sister of philosopher Henri Bergson. The two were descended from a Polish Jewish family on their father's side, while their mother was from an English and Irish Jewish background. The family had lived in London a few years, then crossed the English Channel and settled in France, becoming naturalized citizen of the French Republic. MacGregor met Mina, a graduate of the Slade School of Art, at the British Museum, where she'd been studying Egyptian art. On becoming the first woman to be initiated into the order of the Golden Dawn, she would change her name to Moina. She and Mathers were married on June 16, 1890.

By the end of 1888, the Isis-Urania Temple in London had thirty-two members, nine women and twenty-three men. That year, two more temples were established. These were the Osiris Temple #4 at Weston-Super-Mare, and the Horus Temple #5 at Bradford. Amen-Ra Temple #6 in Edinburgh, Scotland was not founded until 1893. The Osiris Temple was active until 1895, but the Horus Temple at Bradford prospered until 1900.

In 1889, America's preeminent librarian, Melvil Dewey, had said, "All nations recognize the United States as leading in the matter of libraries. The United States recognizes the New England states and especially Massachusetts as its head." In 1890, the Massachusetts General Court established the Free Public Library Commission as the nation's first state library development agency, authorizing the country's first state aid to local libraries program. The aid came in the form of one hundred dollars' worth of books to every town establishing a free public library, appointing a board of trustees, providing facilities, and establishing an appropriation of local funds.

In England, George Bernard Shaw and William Butler Yeats were in love with the luminous Irish actress, Florence Farr, just then starring as the Priestess Amaryllis in a play titled *A Sicilian Idyll*, written by a future member of the Golden Dawn, John Todhunter. In *A Sicilian Idyll*, the Priestess Amaryllis invokes the Moon Goddess Selene to destroy her faithless lover. After Shaw wrote of his affair with her in his play *The Philanderer*, Farr wrote a novel in response – *The Dancing Faun* – in which an enraged woman kills a man and gets away with it.

"The Vedantists tell us that sound is the elemental correspondence of etheric spaces," Florence Farr had reflected, "the root of measurable things. And our hearing and our speech, the part of the mind that receives impression, can all be resolved into the element of sound—the strange grey world of sound, flashing or detonating, imperceptibly subduing and mastering, or roaring maledictions upon us, gasping in ecstasy or choking in death, thousand-tongued. The mystery of sound is made manifest in words and in music... we are overwhelmed by the chatter of those who profane it, and the din of the traffic of the restless disturbs the peace of those who are listening for the old magic, and watching till the new creation is heralded by the sound of the new word."

Florence Farr and William Butler Yeats were both initiated into the Order of the Golden Dawn in 1890. She quickly progressed through the grades. On being initiated into the Isis-Urania Temple of the Esoteric Order of the Golden Dawn, she took the motto *Sapientia Sapienti Dono Data* (Wisdom is a gift given to the Wise). That year, 1890, Moina Mathers introduced her husband to Annie Horniman, a wealthy friend and fellow student from the Slade School of Art known for financing the building of theaters throughout England and Ireland (and the daughter of Mathers' employer at the Horniman Museum, Fredrick Horniman who, in 1891, fired him).

Madame Blavatsky died in 1891. William Wynn Westcott founded the Wescott Hermetic Library as an alchemical resource for Golden Dawn members.

The Golden Dawn now had five temples in England and, after eight years of operation, had initiated over three hundred members. The Isis-Irania temple had been established in London, with several other temples having sprung up in Dublin, Paris, and elsewhere. In 1892, Florence Farr was elevated to *Praemonstratrix* of the Order (Chief of the Golden Dawn). As *Praemonstratrix*, her duties were to teach and instruct the Outer Order. With the Order rapidly expanding, she began easing up on the grade advancement examinations by changing them from written to oral. She felt Magical understanding was more important than memorization. Furthermore, she was impatient to advance gifted students, so that as Adepts they could join her personal inner Order group called "The Sphere" which was specializing in skrying work such as

projecting the Tree of Life over the City of London. Farr improved her knowledge of Egyptology at the British Museum, ever uncovering fresh parallels between Egyptian Magic and Hermetic, Kabbalistic, Alchemical, and Rosicrucian rites. She used Egyptian texts to serve as models for ritual invocations to awaken the dormant faculties of human nature. W. B. Yeats said no one could evoke in rituals the kind of shivers that Florence Farr did, especially by her resonant and commanding voice.

In 1892, Yeats told a correspondent, "the mystical life is the centre of all that I do & all that I think & all that I write.... I have all-ways considered my self a voice of what I believe to be a greater renaissance – the revolt of the soul against the intellect – now beginning in the world." Yeats was then "in constant company" with the beautiful Dublin actress and Irish revolutionary, Maud Gonne who, with both golden eyes and golden hair, was said to have looked "like a queen out of a saga," as radiant as sunlight.

Yeats and Maud, who'd first met in 1889, enjoyed a "spiritual marriage" of Bard and Earth Mother – poet and goddess. Yeats said Maud Gonne, distraught at nineteen over her future life, had found among her father's books a tome on magic that "had made her believe that the devil, if she prayed to him, might help her. She asked the Devil to give her control of her own life and offered in return her soul. At that moment the clock struck twelve, and she felt of a sudden that the prayer had been heard and answered. Within a fortnight her father died suddenly, and she was stricken with remorse."

In 1903, Maud would marry Major John MacBride, who would be hung as a traitor to Britain in the aftermath of the Irish Rising of 1916.

XVI

Chapter Thirteen

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

Jacob Wirth's company was then, in 1892, wholesaling liquors and bottling foreign and domestic lager and ale beers, with the company headquarters located at 33 Eliot Street in Boston. The Rhode Island branch, located in Providence at 186 Weybosset Street, was actually a restaurant listed under the name of Jacob Wirth & Co. They were also located in Pawtucket at 25-27 Page Street. In 1892-93, the company was listed as selling beer, wines, liquor, etc. at another Pawtucket address, 17 North Main Street. Jacob Wirth died that year, 1892, in Boston. His son, Jacob Wirth, a Harvard dropout, took over the family's business – Jacob Wirth's.

In the spring of 1892, MacGregor Mathers and his wife Moina moved to Paris, where they lived in poverty. Their main source of income came in from Annie Horniman, who had

agreed to support them. As a condition of her support, Horniman expected them to dedicate all their time to the work of the Order of the Golden Dawn. It was two years after moving to Paris that Mathers succeeded in establishing a working Temple, this they called "Aathoor Temple #7". During which time Mathers become increasingly distracted by Jacobite politics and other pursuits. He also devoted a great deal of his time to a translation of an old manuscript, claiming it to be bewitched and inhabited by a species of a nonphysical intelligence. From this *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage* was eventually published in 1898.

In 1895, in Boston, the Order of the Golden Dawn established its Thme Temple #8. Thme was an Egyptian goddess having a human head and yellow-gold skin. She wore a black and white nemyss and a white linen gown. She carried the mitre-headed scepter of the hegemon. Above her head was the glowing white outline of the cross and triangle, the symbol of the Outer Order of the Golden Dawn. Thme was the "Beautiful One, She of the Feather of Truth." She was Power and Mercy and Light in Abundance, and Expounder of the Mysteries. Watching over the gateway of the Hidden Knowledge, She was the reconciler between Light and Darkness. It was only through Her intervention that anyone could even rightly *approach* the sacred Thme Temple, for only Thme at Her station between the two Pillars of Hermes and Solomon, Her face turned toward the Cubical Altar of the Universe, could speak in the assembly of the gods, communicating in silence with the energies, the four figures, in the East.

In 1894, Theodor Reuss had published, in Germany, "The Mysteries of the Illuminati" (*Die Mysterien der Illuminaten*); In 1896, Reuss published, in German, "The History of the Order of Illuminati" (*Geschichte des Illuminaten-Ordens*).

Dr. William Wynn Westcott became the Chief of the Second Order in England, which thrived under his leadership, causing jealousy and resentment from Mathers, who continued to create new material for the Order and send it back to London via Paris. Mathers, eccentric, demanding, and now jealous, turned autocratic.

In the spring of 1896, a disagreement erupted between Annie Horniman and Mathers over his politics, and the time he was taking away from his Order responsibilities. Mathers accused Horniman – one of the richest women in England and a benefactor to him – of trying to weaken his authority. Though Mathers understood that dismissing her would cause him terrible financial hardship (it had been her funding that had allowed him to continue his work and research for the Order) he dismissed her for meddling and generally making mischief.

Later that same year Mathers claimed that the Secret Chiefs had initiated him into the Third Order, thus making him supreme master over and above Dr. Westcott. Rumblings of discontent began spreading through the Second Order Adepts in London, as they became increasingly restless with his autocratic behavior. Mathers acted swiftly and sent each of them a manifesto demanding complete obedience to him on everything related to the First and Second Orders. All but Annie Horniman submitted to his demand, while she, verbally disputed his claim to the third order. Mathers to the consternation of many expelled her from the Order further adding to their discontent.

The discontent in the order was further exasperated when in March 1897 someone sent a letter to Dr. Westcott's political superiors regarding his role in the discovery of the Cipher

Manuscripts. By this time the order was achieving notoriety in the press, and it was not seen fit for a "Coroner of the Crown" to be associated in any way with such a society, he was therefore requested by his political leaders to cease his activities with the Golden Dawn. Rather than refute any claims of illegality, Westcott remained silent and merely resigned from all public duties associated with the order.

In Paris, Mathers and his wife Moina had started working on a series of Egyptian rituals called the "The Rites of Isis". These they acted out as ritual dramas, performed publicly on stage at the Theatre Bodiniere on the Rue Saint-Lazare. They were well received and earned them a meager living after Horniman's support had been withdrawn.

While living in Paris, there is much speculation that Mathers also visited Egypt, Germany and America. While no definitive evidence proves to the sceptical that he made these visits, the reasons and motivations would seem obvious. In Egypt he could continue his research into the Ancient Mysteries. In Germany he could meet and report to fellow Brethren on the progress and state of the Order. In the United States he would conduct necessary initiations and advancements, provide additional teachings and, in general, provide the necessary foundation for the continued growth of the Order in America. Mathers also made frequent trips back to London to deal with Order business.

In 1897, Dr. William Wynn Westcott withdrew from the Order. Aleister Crowley had insinuated that Mathers caused Westcott's withdrawal. This is an absolute bogus allegation. It was obvious that there was a relationship strain between Mathers and many of the British Adepts, which would indicate that he would have needed the support of Westcott. Also, it is obvious that the relationship between Mathers and Westcott was not strained as many would have us believe, for Westcott continued to sign grade advancements and important Order documents long after his public withdrawal. In addition, there is at least one instance where Mathers borrowed money from him. This whole fabrication was launched by Crowley to portray Mathers as a jealous, ambitious person. Crowley had his motives, not the least of which were self-seeking and his own personal ambition.

MacGregor-Mathers was deposed as the Head of the Golden Dawn. With his wife Moina, he hastily departed London, taking up new quarters in Paris. There Moina was interviewed for an article on "Isis Worship in Paris." As High Priestess Anari, Moina told her interviewer, "The idea of the priestess is at the root of all ancient beliefs. Only in our ephemeral time has it been neglected. What do we find in the modern development of religion to replace the feminine idea, and consequently the Priestess? When a religion symbolizes the universe by a Divine Being, is it not illogical to omit woman, who is the principle half of it, since she is the principle creator of the other half—that is, man? How can we hope that the world will become purer and less material when one excludes from the Divine that part of its nature which represents at one and the same time the faculty of receiving and that of giving—that is to say, love itself and its highest form—love the symbol of universal sympathy? That is where the magical power of woman is found. She finds her force in her alliance with the sympathetic energies of Nature. And what is Nature if it is not an assemblage of thought clothed with matter and ideas which seek to materialize themselves? What is this eternal attraction between ideas and matter? Is it the secret of life. Have

you ever realized that there does not exist a single flame without a special intelligence which animates it, or a single grain of sand to which an idea is not attached, the idea which formed it? It is these intelligent ideas which are the elementals, or spirits of Nature. Woman is the magician born of Nature by reason of her great natural sensibility, and of her instructive sympathy with such subtle energies as these intelligent inhabitants of the air, the earth, fire, and water."

Florence Farr had become the Chief Adept in Anglia of the Golden Dawn. When Aleister Crowley, initiated in 1898 into Outer Order of the Golden Dawn at the Isis-Urania Temple in London, wished to be initiated into the Second Order in 1899, Farr, supported by other London Adepts, called attention to his "sex-intemperance" and rejected his advancing. Then came the Horos Scandal, and Florence was driven to resign.

Crowley went to see MacGregor Mathers in Paris, demanding he, Crowley, be initiated into the Second Order of the Golden Dawn. Sensing an ally in Crowley against the Adepts in London, Mathers agreed. Crowley was initiated into the Second Order as an Adeptus Minor in January, 1900. After collaborating with him in creating a Third Order for the Golden Dawn, Mathers sent Crowley to London to take possession of the Second Order. Crowley was caught breaking into the London temple. William Butler Yeats, taking control of the Order, reconvened the committee, immediately expelling Mathers and Crowley.

In 1901, a Mr. and Mrs. Horos, an American couple, con artists, convinced MacGregor Mathers, in Paris, that "Madame Horos" was in fact the fabled "Anna Sprengel." Madame Horos presented herself to MacGregor Mathers as having come to help them with their "Isis movement" (the mother lodge of the Golden Dawn was called the Isis-Urania Temple). Mathers formally introduced her to his group, the Ahathoor Lodge, as the very woman who had been their contact with the original German lodge. Shortly after, the couple stole several copies of the Golden Dawn's rituals and fled with them to London. There, they set up their own bogus Order of Theocratic Unity, which they used as a front for fraud, extortion, and sex. Eventually Mr. Horos was arrested for rape. Mr. and Mrs. Horos now drew tremendous publicity to themselves in claiming they were the leaders of a secret order called the Order of the Golden Dawn. The media had a field-day revealing, in connection with a secret society, abundant illicit sex, fraud, and extortion. Some of the arcane secrets of the Order became public knowledge. The initiation rituals of the Golden Dawn were printed in the London newspapers.

MacGregor Mathers further fed the fire, proclaiming openly there was no Fraulein Sprengel and that Westcott had forged her letters to him in the first place. Florence Farr formed a seven-member investigating committee. Mathers, refusing to answer any of the committee's questions, dismissed Florence Farr from her post.

It was all quite devastating to William Butler Yeats, who was trying hard to restore dignity and order to the Order. In 1903, at Yeats' urging, A.E. Waite (past Grand Master of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn) changed the order's name to the Independent and Rectified Rite of the Golden Dawn. Dissatisfied with Waite's focus on mysticism over magic, another of Yeats' cronies, Robert Felkin, formed yet another rival splinter group, the Order of the Companions of the Rising Light in the Morning – Stella Matutina – the Morning Star.

XVII

Chapter Fourteen

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

At the time of the Horos trial, members of The Golden Dawn were all bound by solemn oath to divulge nothing concerning the Order or its members or what took place at its meetings. Anything published about the Order could only have been obtained by the willful perjury of some member or through a reporter's imagination.

Florence Farr's followers changed their order's name to the Hermetic Society of Morgenrothe. Arthur Edward Waite, an occultist and prolific writer who'd stepped in to salvage the remnants of the original Isis-Urania Temple, called his faction the Order of the Independent and Rectified Rite. Those loyal to MacGregor Mathers formed the Order of the Alpha et Omega Temple. Mathers, by now drinking very heavily, had no further dealings with the other splinter groups of the Golden Dawn, though he continued to control and operate the "Aathoor Temple" in Paris.

Aleister Crowley, "driven of the Spirit into the Wilderness," left London to travel around the world "for six years, studying by the light of reason the sacred books and secret systems of initiation of all countries and ages." He took a ship from London to New York en route to Mexico. He traveled on from there to Ceylon and to India. He headed to Egypt and to France.

In 1900, Moina Mathers' brother, Henri Bergson, published his essay on "Laughter." Basic to Bergson's conception of the comic was the tension that exists between rigidity and suppleness: "rigidity is the comic, and laughter is its corrective." He noted that for something to be really funny, the comical needed to be shared ("laughter always implies a kind of secret freemasonry, or even complicity, with other laughers"). "You would hardly appreciate the comic if you felt yourself isolated from others. Laughter appears to stand in need of an echo, Listen to it carefully: it is not an articulate, clear, well-defined sound; it is something which would fain be prolonged by reverberating from one to another, something beginning with a crash, to continue in successive rumblings, like thunder in a mountain. Still, this reverberation cannot go on forever. It can travel within as wide a circle as you please: the circle remains, none the less, a closed one. Our laughter is always the laughter of a group. It may, perchance, have happened to you, when seated in a railway carriage or at *table d'hote*, to hear travelers relating to one another stories which must have been comic to them, for they laughed heartily. Had you been one of their company, you would have laughed like them; but, as you were not, you had no desire whatever to do so. A man who was once asked why he did not weep at a sermon, when everybody else was shedding tears, replied: 'I don't belong to the parish!' What that man thought of tears would be

still more true of laughter. However spontaneous it seems, laughter always implies a kind of secret freemasonry, or even complicity, with other laughers, real or imaginary.... To understand laughter, we must put it back into its natural environment, which is society, and above all must we determine the utility of its function, which is a social one. Such, let us say at once, will be the leading idea of all our investigations. Laughter must answer to certain requirements of life in common. It must have a social signification."

XVIII

Chapter Fifteen

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

With "the death of H.M. Queen Victoria occurring on January, 22, 1901," John Yarker, approaching seventy, wrote in *The Arcane Schools*, "the accession of the Prince of Wales as Edward VII caused his resignation as Grand Master on the February 15, upon which the Duke of Connaught was nominated as Grand Master and was Installed July 17, 1901, in the Royal Albert Hall."

John Yarker was still in charge the Order of Ishmael, the Rites for which he'd acquired in Paris in 1872, he said – from an Arab. One Saladin had given him the rite to the *Coeur de Lion*, a "good precedent for the admission of Christians." Yarker was also, meanwhile, occasionally admitting candidates to the Egyptian Lodge. In 1902, Yarker issued a Warrant to Theodore Reuss of Germany and Carl Kellner of Austria to start up a Societas Rosicruciana in Germania; also Warrants for Memphis and Misraim, and for the Rite of Swedenborg. From the Charter of Memphis and Misraim, Reuss formed the Societas Rosicruciana High Council in Germany with himself as Magus, next going on to appoint himself Sovereign Grand Inspector General of the Cerneau Scottish Rite. Out of the Charter for the Rite of Swedenborg, Kellner and Reuss together developed a Holy Grail Lodge of the Swedenborgian Rite.

In 1873, in Cairo, Kellner had met and been very much impressed by Aia Aziz (Max Théon), Grand Master of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor. In Asia, Kellner had encountered, he later said, three wise men – the keepers of all sacred wisdom and knowledge who had, of course, initiated Kellner into their ancient tradition of magic and mysticism. Since 1880, Kellner had been attempting to revive an old order called the Illuminati. By 1901, Theodor Reuss – Rosicrucian, Grand Master Mason, 33rd Degree Scottish Rite Mason, professional singer, journalist, spy for the Prussian police – had in hand an official Charter issued by the Order of the Illuminati, backdated to January 1900, granting him authority to form Masonic lodges and appoint himself head of the Order. His Lodge Brother "Merlin" (Carl Kellner) dubbed it the

Hermetic Brotherhood of Light – Ordo Templi Orientis – the Order of Eastern Templars.

The original Knights Templars, a religious military order, had stemmed directly from a lineage of numerous secret societies conveying the suppressed wisdom of the ancients. In 1303, France's King Philip IV, who'd owed the Templars a sizeable amount of money (and who'd signed a formal treaty of allegiance with the Templars), had then turned on them, seizing their property in France, torturing them into confessions of heresy. The Roman Pope, on hearing the confessions of the Order of Knights Templars, had disbanded them. The Templars who survived, being assimilated into other orders, were, at least outwardly, obedient to the Pope. Secretly, the Knights Templars continued on, adopting and honing new secrets revealed to them by a Muslim Shiite sect known as the Ismaeli, later known as the Hashishim, who used hashish in their initiations.

The Order of Eastern Templars, *Ordo Templi Orientis*, the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light mingled together anew the traditions of Egyptian religion, the Gnostics, Knights Templars, Rosicrucianism, Freemasonry, the Illuminati, Ansari Islamic Tantrism, Madame Blavatsky's Theosophy, and Max Théon's Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor. The order allowed women as members, expanding the member base even as they made their orgy rituals more elaborate and interesting. Reuss and Kellner translated tantric sex manuals from the Orient, illuminating "sex magick." The letter "G" stood not for God, but for Generation. The final 'k' had a dual significance, distinguishing the system from other varieties of occult magic and referring to the Greek word *kteis*, which had meant, in ancient times, the female organs in their entirety – labia, clitoris, vagina, and uterus.

"Our order possesses the KEY which opens up all Masonic and Hermetic secrets," Kellner and Reuss said of their Ordo Templi Orientis – the O.T.O. – "namely, the teaching of sexual magick, and this teaching explains, without exception, all the secrets of Nature, all the symbolism of Freemasonry, and all systems of religion." Reuss and Kellner were particularly interested in the properties of sexual fluids in the context of alchemy – for example, they were confident the right combination of male and female juices could be used to create a "Philosopher's Stone" style magickal object of power, which could then be used to create a magickal child, a "homonculus."

In 1902, another Austrian, Rudolf Steiner, joined not only the *Ordo Templi Orientis*, but also Madame Blavatsky's Theosophical Society. It wasn't long before Steiner was General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Germany. Steiner seemed especially attracted to the esoteric coterie of "spiritual masters" she spoke of, otherworldly beings living high in the Himalayas, secretly directing human events. Similarly, Steiner had been drawn to Carl Kellner's encounter, in Asia, with the keepers of sacred wisdom and knowledge – "the Great White Brotherhood" – who had initiated Kellner into their ancient tradition of magick and mysticism.

At the close of 1904, Rudolf Steiner lectured on the history of Freemasonry in Berlin, regaling his audience with tales of Carl Kellner and Theodor Reuss, the founders of *Ordo Templi Orientis*. When Kellner died in 1905, Reuss began at once to expand the O.T.O.

XIX

Chapter Sixteen

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

In 1900, at the age of twenty-five, Aleister Crowley bought and moved into a house on the shores of Loch Ness, Scotland. Once there, he set about performing the Abra-Melin, a black-magic ritual dating from the 14th century. In Edinburgh, Aleister Crowley met Rose Edith Kelly, who instantly fell for him. However, Rose was already engaged to another man, who she said she didn't love. Crowley traveled to Mexico, where he was initiated as a Mason. He returned to Boleskine in 1903, at which time he married Edith Rose Kelly, at Dingwall, Scotland.

For their honeymoon, the couple embarked for Egypt, posing as the Prince and Princess Chioa Khan. In the spring of 1904, in Cairo, between intense sex sessions with Rose, Crowley practised black-magic rituals. Deep within the king's chamber in the Great Pyramid he recited the preliminary invocation of the occult ritual called Goetia. It had unexpected consequences. Rose, who had previously known nothing of the occult, began to chant. In a trance, she repeated 'They are waiting for you' over and over. On three successive days in April, 1904, Crowley entered a state of trance, listening to a voice speaking in their hotel room, identifying itself as Aiwass. From Aiwass, Crowley received *The Book of the Law*, inaugurating "a new aeon of human evolution." With *The Book of the Law*, Crowley established a new Third Order of the Golden Dawn, his Argentum Astrum (AA), or Order of the Silver Star. This included three degrees: Magister Templi, Magus, and Ipsissimus – the Hermit, the Lover and the man of Earth. The Chief of the new order, of course, would be Aleister Crowley.

As the "interpreter" of Thelema, Crowley was, of course "the Prophet of the New Aeon." He immediately wrote down the first three chapters of the 220 verses which would come to be called *The Book of the Law – Liber AL vel Legis* (also known as *Liber AL* and *Liber Legis*) – as told to him by Aiwass, or Aiwaz, an invisible entity who claimed to be the minister of Hoor-Paar-Kraat, and a messenger from the forces ruling the planet during the Aeon of Aquarius. Crowley's decree: "Do What Thou Wilt Shall Be The Whole Of The Law." The essential nature of the Law of "Thelema," Crowley announced, was that of Love – "Each individual unites with his or her True Self in Love, and so empowered, the entire universe of conscious beings unites with every other being in Love."

While in Egypt, Rose found out she was pregnant. Nine months later, she gave birth to their daughter, Lola Zaza. Crowley went to Calcutta, to connect with his wife and daughter there. Then, on a trek in Vietnam, he bid farewell to Rose and child, sending them back to Scotland. In March 1906, Crowley reached the port of Hai Phong in French Indo-China.

Crowley went afoot to Shanghai in search of his Guardian Angel, Aiwass. Instead he got

"morbid dreams" which he afterwards treated "as if they had never happened." In April, he left Shanghai, boarded the Empress of India ocean liner bound for Vancouver, Canada, and from there took a train to New York. The following winter, the Crowleys were together in China, Aleister seeking "the Knowledge and Conversation" of his "Holy Guardian Angel." He commenced the mystical undertaking known as the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage. Eventually his daughter, Lola Zaza, died of typhoid fever, a tragedy that Crowley blamed on Rose and her alcoholism. Left alone, in grief, Rose descended into madness.

In 1906, Theodore Reuss moved to London, proclaiming himself "Sovereign Grand Master General ad vitam of the United Orders of the Scottish, Memphis and Misraim Freemasons in and for the German Reich, Sovereign Grand Commander, Absolute Grand Sovereign, Sovereign Pontiff, Sovereign Grand Master of the O.T.O. Freemasons, Supreme Magus Soc. Frat. R.C., SI 33°, Termaximus Regens I.O. etc." He worked on in obscurity.

Rudolf Steiner was meanwhile contemplating the future of Masonry, its "snoozing forces" needing "to be woken up again." It was his duty, he felt, "to save the Misraim-Dienst for the future." Through practice of the the Misraim Service – which combined the Terrestrial with the Celestial and the Visible with the Invisible – the Eleusinian Mysteries would be experienced firsthand again. Declaring "The exaggerations of the male culture must be back-drawn by the occult forces of the woman," in January, 1906, Steiner sought out Theodor Reuss in Berlin, in order to develop a new Misraim-Dienst, a "Mystica aeterna" designed to include both men and women.

In 1906, Steiner accepted a charter from O.T.O. – the Ordo Templi Orientalis – which licensed him to work as head of the "Mysteria Mystica Aeterna." Steiner was looking for an "apostolic succession" to give authority to his own ideas, which mingled Theosophical ideas of karma and reincarnation with Northern European occultism, Goethe, and his own brand of Christianity.

Around halloween of that year, while meditating, Aleister Crowley asked his Holy Guardian Angel for guidance in creating yet another new new ritual, one based on an Old Aeonian ritual – the Troa – in which an initiate had been taken through the ritual by two people, a "Hegemon" and a "Hieruus." Crowley's Troa a ritual was to be one of "self initiation" – a compact made between a candidate and his Guardian Angel.

In 1907, Florence Farr toured America, doing poetry recitals with her psaltery.

Henri Bergson, in London in 1908, visited William James, the American philosopher of Harvard, Bergson's senior by seventeen years (James was instrumental in calling the attention of the Anglo-American public to the work of the French professor). In an October 4, 1908 letter, James wrote of meeting Bergson, "So modest and unpretending a man but such a genius intellectually! I have the strongest suspicions that the tendency which he has brought to a focus, will end by prevailing, and that the present epoch will be a sort of turning point in the history of philosophy."

William James assisted Arthur Mitchell in preparing an English translation of Henri Bergson's Creative Evolution. James died in August, 1910. Published in 1911, the translation brought renewed interest in Bergson and his work. The world, according to Bergson, was not a

great mechanism, but rather a living organism permeated by the *élan vital* – the world is a always evolving and creative *duration*. The creative process begins with an enormous eruption, the first products of which settle in the heaviest forms as powerless matter. The course of creative evolution is the constant struggle of the *élan vital* with matter. Evolution is not hindered by any determinism. Reality has a psychic nature. The central point from which the *élan vital* radiates is God – the source of life and the energy of life. Humans live in a reality of two elements – are endowed with two kinds of cognition and memory. By rational cognition, a human is a worker who transforms the world (*homo faber*). By intuitive knowledge, a human is wise (*homo sapiens*). A human is free, but in practice he/she is subject to the pressure of material conditions and habits resulting from interhuman contacts (the social fabric), which create in him/her a secondary consciousnesses – the “superficial self” superimposed upon the “deep self” – curtailing freedom and blunting creativity.

In 1911, Aleister Crowley's first wife, Rose, entered an insane asylum.

In 1912 Aleister Crowley was initiated into the cult of Ordo Templi Orientis. "Although I was admitted to the thirty-third and last degree of Freemasonry so long ago as 1900," Crowley wrote, "it was not until the summer of 1912 that a man... of those mysterious masters of esoteric Freemasonry who are alike its Eyes and its Brains, and who exist in its midst unknown, often... deemed me now worthy to partake in the Greater Mysteries."

In 1912, S. L. MacGregor Mathers returned to Paris. He would research and later provide a suitable translation of the "Grimoire of Armadel." Mathers was also responsible for the "Greater Key of Solomon," an important document in Ceremonial magic. In his later years, Mathers and his wife Moina may have been regularly attending a Catholic Church. One must realize that, besides Anna Kingsford in his earlier life, Mathers was without question influenced by the writings and works of Eliphas Levi. Thus, it is possible that Mathers may have enjoyed the occult symbolism of the Mass, and the interchangeability of Isis with Mary, Queen of Heaven.

In England in the summer of 1912, Theodore Reuss, co- founder of the O.T.O., met with Aleister Crowley, who received an accelerated initiation into the higher degrees of the O.T.O. Crowley was immediately declared Grand Master of the OTO in Britain and Ireland. The lower degrees of the lodge were called the M.:M.:M.: Crowley's manifesto announcing its launch laid claim to about every conceivable source of occult knowledge. Once Aleister Crowley got mixed up in it, the O.T.O. became, beyond all of the above, "a luminous vehicle of Truth serving as an infallible guide to human conduct," dedicated to following the doctrines of Aleister Crowley. Ordo Templi Orientis was now "an Initiatic Body composed of men and women who have accepted the principles of The Book of the Law as transmitted through Aleister Crowley" – "free from any defects of human interference" – "a luminous vehicle of Truth."

The O.T.O. had grown from the traditions of Knights Templars, Gnostics, "expanded" consciousness, Illuminati, and conspiracy, New Rosicrucians, Voodoo, the occult, and magical practises, rituals. The order's "secret" was "sexual magick" – "sexmagick" – satanic rites, black masses, and sex orgies complete with blood, excrement, oral, anal, homosexual and bisexual intercourse, and sodomy with animals.

Theodor Reuss was then working on an essay that would be published, in 1914, as a booklet, "Parsifal." Reuss liked to tell anyone who would listen that he'd taken part in the first performance of Richard Wagner's Parsifal, and that he'd enjoyed some excellent conversations with the composer, regularly discussing the opera with him. In fact, he may have once or twice shyly said hello to Wagner. From that he hatched and built up his later stories. Reuss had not been a member of the cast for the first performances of Parsifal (maybe he was in the chorus of the first Parsifal performances). He was never mentioned in Cosima Wagner's Diaries, nor by any of the people who were close to Wagner at the time of the Parsifal premiere. Similarly, Reuss liked to tell anyone who would listen that he'd once been a celebrated Wagner conductor. It wasn't true. None of Reuss' claims could be taken seriously.

In the 1914 booklet, "Parsifal," Reuss provided his "proof" for the existence of a sect of Manichaeins called "Adamites," who he claimed had not only existed (in Austria) in the middle of the 19th century (1850-1860), but had even had equal footing with the Roman Catholic church. "The Adamites got their name because they celebrated their church ceremonies and feasts completely naked. Their ceremonies and teachings exist in a modern form and correspond to those of the Manichaeins. Their Maria festival, especially the Maria festival during the month of May (May devotion), corresponds to the Bacchanlia of the festival of Ceres Libera, the Eleusinian orgies. The Adamites were believers and followers of the primal-mystery of generation. This cult of generation was the inexhaustible source of life's joy and enthusiasm. Above and below this cultus produced religious ecstasy until the holy Maria enveloped hearts and senses and the holy Phallus in its abundance impregnated the fruitful womb. In these... ceremonies and in the sacred places (Temples and groves) the men and the youths had the right (and the duty) to complete the sex-act with any of the women present in the Temple or groves.... the church has not succeeded in destroying these descendants of the ancient Manichaeins... members fleeing persecution gathered themselves secretly under the protection of the night and they made themselves secret societies after the ways of the ancients. It is in this way that the descendants of the ancient Manichaeins and members of the old Phallus cult of classical times has survived...."

Crowley, nicknamed "the Great Beast delighted in bragging, "I had somehow turned a tap. From this time on I lived in a perfect shower of diplomas, from Bucharest to Salt Lake City. I possess more exalted titles than I have ever been able to count. I am supposed to know more secret signs, tokens, passwords, grandwords, grips, and so on, than I could actually learn in a dozen lives. An elephant would break down under the insignia I am entitled to wear."

In 1912, Sigmund Freud was frustrated over attempts then being made to label psychoanalysis "a Jewish Science." He struggled to rise above Aryan opposition, fighting "arrogance", "conscienceless contempt of logic", "courseness", and "bad taste." Freud also warned, in 1912, against the "dangers" of onanism, confessing "I cannot rule out a permanent reduction in potency as one among the results of masturbation." (– from a paper presented before the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society, 1912).

In 1912 came publication of Ernest Henry Starling's book "Principles of Human Physiology." In 1902, the science of endocrinology (concerning hormones) moved from

speculation to reality. In 1902, Ernest Henry Starling (1866–1927), an English physiologist born in India and a professor at University College, London (an authority on heart action and circulation) had, with William Maddock Bayliss (1860-1924) introduced the concept of hormones, studying intestinal movement and describing (1899) peristalsis as a ganglionic reflex. They demonstrated the existence of a substance that they called secretin in the duodenal secretions of the pancreas and demonstrated the secretin activated the pancreas to secrete pancreatic juice. With the discovery of glycogen and secretin, it was now obvious that internal secretions were extremely important in regulating body functions. Starling published his book "Principles of Human Physiology" in 1912.

Also in 1912, Eugen Steinach (1861-1944) was experimenting with masculinizing the mating behavior of female guinea pigs, and feminizing the mating behavior of males (by castrating them at birth and transplanting heterotypic gonadal tissue into them). This demonstrated for the first time the prenatal hormonal control of the adult behavioral outcome of the male-female bipotentiality that exists in us all. Steinach of course then applied his findings to humans, believing that by ligating the vas deferens (a method now used to bring about male sterilization), he could bring about sexual rejuvenation. This rejuvenation, he argued, would occur because the secretions associated with ejaculation would then flow back into the body.

In India, Tantric yoga Shakta doctrine postulated seven "chakras" called the "Muladhara" ("Root Support") at the base of the spine. The chakras were strung along the central or Sushumna channel (usually located at the spine). In the lowest chakra, the Muladhara, at the base of the spine, there lie the kundalini-shakti, the latent consciousness-energy, the microcosm of the cosmic creative shakti. When this was aroused, it could be made to ascend the sushumna, either activating or dissolving (depending on which yogic tradition it was) each chakra in turn, until it reached the highest or crown chakra, the Sahasrara, where dwelt the Godhead or Supreme Shiva ("Paramashiva"). As the Kundalini-Shakti united with Paramashiva, the original transcendent equilibrium was restored, and the yogi returned to the state of oneness with the Absolute. The Vajroli-Mudra was one of the mudras by which sexual energy was controlled and reabsorbed into the body. The term Vajroli came from vajra or "thunderbolt," which pierced the body in sexual energy. The adept was expected to draw in the female seed or energy through the erect penis into his body during the sexual union, a process called sahaoli. Emission of the semen was not to occur. If semen was released, both male and female energies were to be drawn back into the body, prior to withdrawing the male member from the vagina (the process called "amaroli").

The "Vindu-Siddhi," the power of retaining the semen, is one of the most interesting and important branches of Hatha yoga, the Hindu "Physical Culture." The Shiva Sanhita wrote of the Vajroli Mudra— of the method and aim – "Actuated by mercy for my devotees, I shall now explain the 'Vajroli Mudra', the destroyer of the darkness of the world, the most secret among all secrets. This practice gives emancipation even when one is immersed in sensuality; therefore it should be practised by the Yogi with great care. First let the talented practitioner introduce into his own body, according to the proper methods, the germ-cells from the female organ of generation, by suction up through the tube of the "meatus urinarius"; restraining his own semen, let him practise copulation. If by chance the semen begins to move, let him stop its emission by

the practice of the Yoni Mudra. Let him place the semen on the left hand duct, and stop further intercourse. After a while, let him continue it again. In accordance with the instruction of his preceptors and by uttering the sound "hoom", let him forcibly draw up through the contraction of the "Apana Vayu" the female juices from the uterus, prior to withdrawing the male member from the vagina (amaroli).

The Kama Sutra of Vatsayana (from some time between the first and fourth centuries, AD.), a compilation of even earlier works, had listed *Cryptography* as the 44th and 45th of 64 arts (yogas) which all men and women should know and practice. Part I, Chapter III listed the 64 arts. "Man should study the Kama Sutra and the arts and sciences subordinate thereto.... Even young maids should study this Kama Sutra, along with its arts and sciences, before marriage, and after it they should continue to do so with the consent of their husbands." The 44th and 45th of the arts are: [44] "The art of understanding writing in cipher, and the writing of words in a peculiar way." [45] "The art of speaking by changing the forms of words."

By 1912, Florence Farr's acting career was fading, her lovers were married to others, and her beloved Golden Dawn was in a shambles. She took a teaching position in Ceylon. Within a few years, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. She wrote to Yeats about her having had a mastectomy, making an illustration of herself with a fern-like scar. Yeats wept uncontrollably on reading the letter. He knew her time had come. Within two months, she died – alone in a Colombo hospital. She was cremated in the Hindu custom, her ashes scattered in a sacred river.

A. E. Waite would depart from the Order of the Golden Dawn, in a shambles from internal feuding, in 1914. In 1915, he would form the Fellowship of the Rosy Cross. By that time, there would be some half-dozen offshoots from the original Golden Dawn.

Rudolf Steiner founded The Anthroposophical Society on Christmas Day, 1912, in Cologne, Germany, with approximately 2,500 members. In 1906, Steiner had become the leader of its German branch, but he'd then withdrawn from the O.T.O. to found the Anthroposophical Society. Steiner, one of Theosophy's best-known spokesmen, took most of the German-speaking Theosophical sections with him when Annie Besant and her colleagues declared the young Krishnamurti, a boy they'd "discovered" in northern India, to be the reincarnation of Christ. Steiner was unwilling to accept a brown-skinned Hindu lad as the next "spiritual master." (What separated Steiner all along from Blavatsky, Besant, and the other India-oriented theosophists was his insistence on the superiority of the European esoteric traditions.)

At the center of Steiner's Anthroposophy was spiritual advancement through karma and reincarnation, supplemented by the access to esoteric knowledge available to a privileged few. Steiner claimed clairvoyance, having familiarity with the "astral plane," with "archangels," and with daily life on the lost continent of Atlantis. Direct descendants of the Atlanteans included the Japanese, Mongolians, and Eskimos. Steiner also claimed to have access to the "Akasha Chronicle," a supernatural scripture containing knowledge of higher realms of existence as well as of the distant past and future. Steiner taught that individuals chose their parents before birth, and people planned their lives before beginning them to insure they would receive the necessary spiritual lessons. Steiner elaborated a systematic racial classification system for human beings and tied it directly to their paradigm of spiritual advancement. The Theosophic Society's

Madame Blavatsky had originated the "root races" idea, declaring the extinction of indigenous peoples by European colonialism to be a matter of "karmic necessity." Steiner now taught that each "root race" was divided into sub-races which were also arranged hierarchically. Steiner claimed that within the Aryan root race was the most advanced group, the Nordic-Germanic sub-race. Steiner believed that only enlightened Nordic-Germans – the world's most spiritually advanced ethnic group – the "Aryan race" – would evolve in a forward march of racial and spiritual progress while their unfortunate, spiritually inferior neighbors would degenerate and die out. Steiner taught that "lower races" of humans were closer to animals than to "higher races" of humans.

Rudolf Steiner had originally been hostile toward Christianity, but later codified its spiritual tenets into his own Anthroposophy. Steiner's interest was in Masonry, mysticism, the occult, and the esoteric. At the center of Steiner's Anthroposophy was spiritual advancement through karma and reincarnation, supplemented by the access to esoteric knowledge available to a privileged few. Steiner claimed clairvoyance, having familiarity with the "astral plane," with "archangels," and with daily life on the lost continent of Atlantis. Direct descendants of the Atlanteans included the Japanese, Mongolians, and Eskimos. Steiner also claimed to have access to the "Akasha Chronicle," a supernatural scripture containing knowledge of higher realms of existence as well as of the distant past and future. Steiner taught that individuals choose their parents before birth, and people plan their lives before beginning them to insure that they receive the necessary spiritual lessons.

Summer 1914 In Germany, Rudolf Steiner stopped giving private consultations, ceased to hold meetings of his Esoteric School, and ended the "Misraim Dienst" (600 members). Steiner felt confident there was sufficient material for training already published. War conditions made it impossible to hold closed meetings safely.

On Christmas Day, 1914, Rudolf Steiner married his second wife, Marie von Sivers.

Shortly before the outbreak of World War I, Rudolf Steiner moved the organization's headquarters to Dornach, Switzerland. Steiner, enthusiastically active in pan-German nationalist movements at the end of the nineteenth century, saw World War I as part of an international conspiracy against German spiritual life. Steiner was a personal acquaintance of General Helmuth von Moltke, chief of staff of the German high command. After Moltke's death in 1916, Steiner claimed to be in contact with his spirit, and channeled the general's views on the war from the nether world. After the war, Steiner had high praise for "German militarism" (his own term), and continued to rail against France, French culture, and the French language.

The revolutionaries of the 1919 Munich Council Republic derided Steiner as "the witch doctor of decaying capitalism." Industrialists, on the other hand, showed a keen interest in Steiner's notions. Soon after the revolutionary upsurge of workers across Germany was crushed, Steiner was invited by the director of the Waldorf-Astoria tobacco factory to establish a company school in Stuttgart – Waldorf education was founded. Anthroposophists themselves avowed in internal forums that the idea of karma and reincarnation was the "basis of all true education." They believed that each class of students chose one another and their teacher before birth.

Steiner himself demanded that Waldorf schools be staffed by "teachers with a knowledge

of man originating in a spiritual world." The curriculum at Waldorf schools was structured around the stages of spiritual maturation posited by anthroposophy: from one to seven years a child develops her or his physical body, from seven to fourteen years the ethereal body, and from fourteen to twenty-one the astral body. These stages were supposed to be marked by physical changes; thus kindergartners at Waldorf schools could not enter first grade until they'd lost their baby teeth. Steiner emphasized repetition and rote learning, insisting the teacher should be the center of the classroom and that a student's role was not to judge or even discuss the teacher's pronouncements.

In 1915, A. E. Waite (having departed from the Order of the Golden Dawn in 1914) formed the Fellowship of the Rosy Cross. By then, 1915, there were some half-dozen offshoots from the original Golden Dawn.

XX

Chapter Seventeen

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

From 1914 to 1919 Aleister Crowley, Grand Master of *Ordo Templi Orientis*, lived in the United States. In 1914, Crowley went to America on the Cunard liner *Lusitania* (later sunk by Germany, launching America's entry into WW I.). His superior in *Ordo Templi Orientis* was the German, Theodor Reuss. O.T.O. members, like other soldiers, met on the battlefields with orders to kill. "Civilization is crumbling under our eyes," Crowley wrote. "I believe that the best chance of saving what little is worth saving, and rebuilding the Temple of the Holy Ghost on plans, and with material and workmanship, which shall be free from the errors of the former, lies with the O.T.O."

W. B. Yeats, in the context of the struggle for Irish independence, wrestled with the both intoxicating and brutalising power of hatred that he found not only in others, but also in his own heart. In the aftermath of the 1916 Easter Rising, the English executed Maud Gonne's husband, Major John MacBride. Yeats, who'd known of MacBride's poor treatment of Gonne in their marriage, and so had despised him, wrote of MacBride in his poem, *Easter 1916*: "This other man I had dreamed / A drunken, vain-glorious lout. / He had done most bitter wrong / To some who are near my heart, / Yet I number him in the song; / He, too, has resigned his part / In the casual comedy; / He, too, has been changed in his turn, / Transformed utterly: / A terrible beauty is born."

"The dead men, before considered 'Madmen' at best, were now considered National Heroes," Daniel Herlihy of Division 36 of the Ancient Order of the Hibernians (the

Marlborough, Massachusetts branch of the Irish Catholic society) would eulogize at a May A.O.H. banquet held in Worcester in the year 2000. "We now know that the Easter Rising served ultimately to define a national purpose and to create a national will that could not have been defined or created in any other way. Through the Easter Rising of 1916, an attainable vision was established for The Irish People."

Early in the year 1917, W. B. Yeats bought and restored a run-down, leaky Norman stone tower, Thoor Ballyle. Later in 1917, he married Georgie Hyde-Lee. During their honeymoon Yeats's wife demonstrated an extraordinary gift, in seance sessions, for automatic writing. They collaborated on writing what would become *A Vision* (1925), part marriage manual and part book of occult mysticism.

In 1918, the Spanish influenza pandemic killed 22 million people worldwide. S.L. MacGregor Mathers, who'd lived out his last days in complete obscurity in Paris, died from the flu in his apartment in the Rue Rivera on November 20, 1918.

"All his final thoughts while undergoing the transition of leaving his body were for our Order [of the Golden Dawn]," Moina Mathers noted in "S.L. MacGregor Mathers's Final Address to the Order of the Golden Dawn" (December 12, 1918, Paris, 2:30 in the afternoon). "He wished you might all continue your Work within the Order," Moina continued, "just as if he were still present among us in his physical body. He had reason to believe he would be able to guide and to protect you from the Spiritual Plane where he now dwells. He asks that you keep intact the official Instruction of the Order, knowing that he received it in a direct line from the most pure Rosicrucian source, although these Mysteries are found somewhat modified in their exterior form, for reasons of Tribe and Culture. For those of you who aspire to become Adepts, he insists on the importance of the spirit of Brotherhood, which is essential in a mystical association, as the least discord permits the Evil Forces to get a foothold among us. By 'Brotherhood' he means not only submission to the letter, but also to the spirit of our Obligation; as among the most important points about which we must be aware there are those things which could afford entrance to the adverse forces – in particular, intolerance and sterile discussions. We should assemble in our Temple, for our Work, on a Ground of neutrality and Harmony, even if in private life, our relations with certain *Fraters* or *Sorors* might not be as harmonious or amicable as we would desire. The goal of our efforts should be to arrive at a strong and harmonious synthesis. To this aim we shall most rapidly and completely attain by melding all our individual virtues and abilities, so that we function together as a single homogeneous unit. Our G.H. Chief asks above all else that you cultivate tolerance, and that sympathy which flows naturally, sympathy for your immediate circle, and sympathy for all of Nature – because with what does the Adept work, if it is not with Nature and her Forces? He must enter into contact with the Forces, serving and assisting them. The Forces certainly won't obey a stranger to them, when they submit but uneasily even to one who knows them well. They will only submit to one who can understand their nature, who can sympathize with them, and to one who, in rising to a higher plane, can just so rule them. It is only to him who can elevate himself to a higher plane than the Forces, that can comprehend the Forces in their interior nature – who, in a word, shall 'sympathize' with them. And he shall attain the most absolute Harmony, the most perfect communion with all things – he

shall understand the true Charity, which is a ray borrowed from the Universal Light. And such a one shall repeat with the fullest of verities this saying of the Adept: 'I am He who is robed in a body of flesh, but in whom doth shine the Spirit of the Gods'."

In 1919, Aleister Crowley created his own branch of *Ordo Templi Orientalis*, the *Mysteria Mystica Maxima*. In 1920, he founded the Abbey of Thelema in a hillside villa in Cefalù, Sicily, an experimental commune based on Thelema, inspired by Rabelais. In 1921 and 1922, Crowley proclaimed himself Outer Head of the Order of O.T.O., proclaiming himself "O.H.O. and Frater Superior of the Order of Oriental Templars" and so taking complete control. While at Cefalù, he met a new woman, Leah Hirsig, whose vagina he dubbed "the Hirsig patent vacuum-pump." Leah bore him a child, Poupée, who did not live past infancy. In 1923, Mussolini expelled Crowley and his Thelemites from Italy.

After Theodore Reuss died in October, 1923, the O.T.O. was Crowley's to do with as he would. For one thing, the O.T.O. was a great source of funds. Through the twenty-eight years Crowley continued as the Head of the O.T.O., until his death in December, 1947, he used it mainly as a platform for evangelizing the religion he'd himself invented, Thelema.

In 1921 Crowley was consecrated a god by his followers. After the mysterious death of one of his magical brothers, a 23-year-old Oxford undergraduate Raoul Loveday, Crowley was expelled from Sicily by Mussolini (by Italian authorities). Loveday died after killing a cat and drinking its blood. The dead man's wife informed authorities of Crowley's activities. English papers were full of stories of his ritual sacrifices and other assorted occult activities.

In 1903, at W. B. Yeats' urging, A.E. Waite, the past Grand Master of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, had changed the order's name to the Independent and Rectified Rite of the Golden Dawn. Yeats' friend Robert Felkin had formed a splinter group, the Order of the Companions of the Rising Light in the Morning – *Stella Matutina* – the Morning Star.

Fed up with all the in-fighting going on inside the order, Yeats finally withdrew completely from the Order of the Morning Star in 1923, the year he won the Nobel Prize in Literature.

In 1923, Harry Houdini was initiated in the New York Masonic Lodge of St. Cecile. In 1924, he gave back to the fraternity via a benefit performance for the Valley of New York, filling the 4,000 seat Scottish Rite Cathedral and raising thousands of dollars.

In October, 1926, just prior to his death on Halloween, in New York's Mecca Temple, Houdini was initiated into the Ancient Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine – the Shriners. The organization had a buoyant philosophy expressed as "Pleasure without intemperance, hospitality without rudeness and jollity without coarseness." The most noticeable symbol of the Shrine was the distinctive red fez that Shriners wore at official functions. Shriners were said to be "men who enjoy life." They enjoyed parades, trips, circuses, dances, dinners, sporting events and other social occasions together.

Harry Houdini was disgusted at fraudulent mediums using cheap tricks to fake contact with the dead, conning and scamming money from the credulous. Houdini crusaded against irrationality and mystical cons, exposing phonies – psychics, faith healers, astrologers, and anyone else trying to separate people from their happiness by appealing to their mystical

instincts.

On November 4, 1926, last rites for Harry Houdini were held at the Elks Clubhouse in New York City. After prayers, tributes, and eulogies, the service ended in Masonic Rites.

By 1927, Jacob Wirth & Co. had become the Wirth Concorde Ade Co., located at 227-231 West Exchange Street, Providence, Rhode island, and were the manufacturers of "a delicious and refreshing drink made from grapes." (In 1900, under the name Jacob Wirth & Co. (Henry R. Wirth), the establishment had begun importing and wholesaling liquors and wines at the West Exchange Street address, and had become one of the earliest and largest bottlers of beer, wine, and mineral water in New England. They'd bottled for many different breweries including the famous Narragansett Brewery, Cranston, Rhode Island.) The name Jacob Wirth Co. has remained only as the name of the restaurant and bar at 33-37 Stuart Street in Boston.

In 1928, Israel Regardie (1907-1985, born in London) became Aleister Crowley's secretary. (In 1932, Crowley and Regardie, both leading members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, would part company.)

In 1929, Aleister Crowley married his second wife, Maria Ferrari de Miramar, and published "Magick in Theory and Practice." Synthesizing Yoga with Alchemy and Magick, Crowley created his Cult of the True Will. In 1931, Aleister Crowley's second wife, Maria entered an insane asylum, just two years after marrying him. In 1934, on a London street, a nineteen-year-old girl rushed up to Aleister Crowly and declared she wanted to have his baby. She wound up in an insane asylum, too.

XXI

Chapter Eighteen

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

In 1933 Israel Regardie, former secretary of Aleister Crowley, joined the Hermes Temple of the Stella Matutina, and became a leading Adept in 1934. Regardie quickly realized the Order of the Golden Dawn was dying a slow death, and felt that its leaders were more interested in claiming exalted grades than in understanding and learning from the basic material. Many of the Knowledge Lectures were being changed or dropped altogether. After much soul searching in regard to his oath of secrecy, Regardie took the bulk of the Order's rituals, lectures, and associated documents and compiled the book, *The Magical System of the Golden Dawn*, published in 1937. The book transformed the work of the Order into an entire new branch of the Western Occult Tradition. Through vilified at the time, Regardie would eventually be credited with keeping the order alive.

W. B. Yeats died January 28, 1939 in Menton, France.

Upon Hitler's ascendancy to power in Germany, he dissolved the ten Grand Lodges of the land. Prominent dignitaries and members were all eventually sent to concentration camps. The Gestapo seized membership lists and looted their libraries and collections of Masonic objects. The loot was exhibited in an Joseph Goebbels' Anti-Masonic Exposition in Munich in 1937. When Austria was captured by the Nazis, the persecution was continued. Masters of Vienna lodges were confined in concentration camps, including Dachau in Bavaria. The same was repeated when Hitler took over Czechoslovakia, Poland, Holland, Belgium, Norway, and on and on.

Rudolf Steiner had elaborated a systematic racial classification system for human beings and tied it directly to their paradigm of spiritual advancement. Steiner had taught that each "root race" is divided into sub-races which are also arranged hierarchically. Steiner claimed that within the Aryan root race is the most advanced group, the Nordic-Germanic sub-race. Steiner believed that only enlightened Nordic-Germans – the world's most spiritually advanced ethnic group – the "Aryan race" – would evolve in a forward march of racial and spiritual progress while their unfortunate, spiritually inferior neighbors would degenerate and die out. Steiner taught that "lower races" of humans were closer to animals than to "higher races" of humans. Steiner's Anthroposophy fed into the ideology of Nazism. Hitler's concentration camps, slave labor, and the murder of Jews paralleled the theories of Rudolf Steiner.

Steiner propagated racist myths about negroes, saying blacks were instinct-driven, primitive creatures ruled by their brainstem. He denounced the immigration of blacks to Europe as "terrible," "brutal," "dreadful," and decried its effects on "blood and race." He warned that white women shouldn't read "negro novels" during pregnancy, otherwise they'd have "mulatto children." In 1922 he'd declared, "The negro race does not belong in Europe, and it is of course nothing but a disgrace that this race is now playing such a large role in Europe." Steiner declared black people could never develop spiritually on their own, but must either be "educated" by whites or reincarnated in white skin.

Anthroposophical Biodynamic farming was based on Steiner's revelation of invisible cosmic forces and their effects on soil and flora. Anthroposophy taught the earth was an organism that breathed twice a day, that ethereal beings acted upon the land, and that celestial bodies and their movements directly influenced the growth of plants. Hence biodynamic farmers timed their sowing to coincide with the proper planetary constellations, all a part of what they considered "the spiritual natural processes of the earth." It was through Biodynamic farming that anthroposophy most directly influenced the course of Hitler's Nazis.

In 1934 the German Anthroposophic Society sent Hitler an official letter pointing out anthroposophy's compatibility with National Socialist values and emphasizing Steiner's "Aryan origins" and his pro-German activism. Thousands of socialists, communists, anarchists, union members, and other dissidents were thrown into concentration camps. Anthroposophists suffered no harassment. Anthroposophist collaboration with Nazi barbarism persisted until the end of the Third Reich. The Anthroposophy-based Weleda cosmetics factories continued operating throughout the war and even received state contracts. In fact Weleda supplied naturopathic

materials for 'medical experiments' (torture) on prisoners at Dachau.

In 1991, Swiss and German Anthroposophists re-issued the 1931 book "Das Rätsel des Judentums" ('The Mystery of Jewry') by Ludwig Thieben, one of Austria's leading Anthroposophists in Steiner's day. Jewish organizations and civil rights groups protested this ugly tract, which decries the "far-reaching negative influence of the Jewish essence," alleges that Jews have "an anti-christian predisposition in their blood," and holds Jews responsible for the "decline of the West."

In 1992, a Swiss Waldorf teacher published a book claiming there were no gas chambers in Auschwitz. In 1995, a prominent Anthroposophist periodical carried an article on "Jewish-Christian Hostility" which recycled the old myth of Jews as Christ-killers. In 1998, an Anthroposophist from Hamburg wrote to another Steinerite journal claiming that "from 1933 to 1942 any Jew could leave the Nazi dictatorship with all of his property, and even be released from a concentration camp, as long as he went to Palestine." Anthroposophists formed the modern German Green Party.

In the Netherlands in the mid-1990s, Dutch Waldorf schools were teaching "racial ethnography," where children learn that the "black race" has thick lips and a sense of rhythm and that the "yellow race" hides its emotions behind a permanent smile. Waldorf school teachers taught "good spirits live inside of candles; demons live inside fluorescent bulbs."

The *Ordo Templi Orientis* had splintered into dozens of offshoots, each claiming apostolic succession from Aleister Crowley. Only O.T.O *Agapé* Lodge No. 1, formed by Crowley in 1935, was authorized by him to perform the *official* "Gnostic Mass," a ritual Crowley had himself invented – said to be something like a Catholic Mass but for the worship of the male apparatus of fructification and a naked female seated on the altar – but variations arose all over, as in the French Gnostic Catholic Church, the German *Pansophia*, the Swiss *Ordo Templi Orientis*, the *Typhonian Ordo Templi Orientis*, the *Ordo Templi Orientis Antiqua*, the Monastery of the Seven Rays, *La Couleuvre Noire*, the *Fraternitas Saturni*, and the pan-American *Fraternitas Rosicruciana Antiqua*.

XXII

Chapter Nineteen

The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place

U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, a Democrat, was a 33rd degree Mason, a member of the Shriners – a member of The Ancient Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine. President Gerald Ford, a Republican, was a 33rd degree Mason. It was Ford who appointed Republican

33rd degree Mason George Bush head of the the CIA. In 1998, at the Texas premier of the movie *Titanic* in Houston, the film's director, 33rd degree Mason James Cameron, was joined by former director of the CIA and former President George Bush, 33rd degree Mason, and his 33rd degree Mason son, George W. Bush.

Lessing J. Rosenwald (1891-1979), former chairman of Sears, Roebuck & Co., gave to the Library of Congress a collection of over 2,600 rare illustrated books, including an enormous two volume illuminated manuscript known as the *Great Bible of Mainz* from 1452. Other treasures included Prolemy's *Cosmographia*, William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, the only known copy of the first edition of the English version of the *Lohengrin* legend, *The Knight of the Swan*, and the only illustrated book published by Manutius, Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*.

XXIII

Lew's notes ended there.

There was no Chapter Twenty of *The Infinitely Productive Darkness of the Clean, Well-Lighted Place*.

At the close of 2004 came the news headline, "Librarian Carley Blamed for Morass of Troubles at Library" – "December 31, 2004: In Superior Court yesterday, Easthaven's Town Manager filed suit against the Martin Conwell Memorial Library Board of Trustees in a dispute over the Board's financial records. Former Library Trustee now Town Manager Terence Stevens said in a press release the lawsuit was filed by the Town Counsel's law firm, Popelman & Cage after numerous, unsuccessful attempts to secure the Trustees' voluntary compliance with the state Public Records Law and Open Meeting Law. 'The trustees have repeatedly refused to comply with these state statutes or to fully account for hundreds of thousands of dollars in private donations,' Stevens said. 'The trustees have even refused the town's independent auditor access to the library's financial records.' He said a hearing is scheduled in Superior Court on January 12th. Trustee Chairman Cal Horan insisted the board *has* complied with the Town's requests, and that it only remain for the 'unbendingly stubborn and totally unprofessional' library director, Lewis Carley, 'to finally set the record straight,' Horan told reporters. 'An independent audit of the board's finances was made, and that the audit was *supposed* to have been put on on Mr. Stevens' desk by Mr. Carley' who, according to Horan, 'failed to comply. I suspect Carley is once more up to his same old tricks,' Horan accused.

"The dispute, which originally arose a year ago, centered on whether the board of library trustees, which controls trust funds, gifts, and bequests to the Conwell Memorial Library, is a town board or an independent board. The library board asserted it is a public charitable trust and that it, not the town treasurer, should be the custodian of trust funds. Town Manager Terence Stevens has said the town treasurer must control the accounts, but the money would be used only by the trustees for the library's benefit and would not be part of the town's general fund. In June,

Stevens asked the Public Records Division of the Secretary of State's office to support his request for the board's financial records, contending that they are public records. The state supervisor of public records issued a finding in September that the records were not public and that the library board is not subject to town government. The board has since registered as a nonprofit agency. In his statement yesterday, Stevens said the trustees were attempting to 'shield their use of these (public and private) funds from public view.' He said the Trustees' actions 'have undermined public confidence in the administration and management of the town library and have interfered with the town's independent audit, thereby threatening the town's bond rating.'

"Cal Horan said last night the board had *intended*, in good faith, to give access to its financial records to the Town, but that Margaret Lanning, to whom they'd handed the documents over for photocopying, had failed to return them to the Trustees. Horan said the board had hired Steiner & Nudelman, a certified public accounting firm, to audit the board's records. 'We haven't refused compliance with the request for records. We have not broken any Open Meeting Laws. We have not refused him [Town Manager Terence Stevens] the audit,' Horan said."

On January 11, 2005 came the headline, "Easthaven Library Records To Be Turned Over" – "The Town of Easthaven and the Trustees of the Martin Conwell Memorial Library have reached an interim agreement that postpones a Superior Court injunction hearing, originally scheduled for tomorrow, to January 21st. Town Manager Terence Stevens, in announcing the agreement at last night's Town Council meeting, said the library's board of trustees said reference librarian, archivist, and head of the Easthaven Historical Society, Margaret Lanning, would provide the town with 'complete and uncensored' copies of all the financial records relating to the town library. The town is hopeful that this interim agreement will lead to a broader, permanent agreement that the board of trustees will comply with the state Open Meeting and public records statutes," Stevens said. "Acting on the instructions of the Board of Library Trustees, library director Lewis Carley had, in May, provided monthly account summaries and meeting minutes to Mr. Stevens, along with a bill for photocopying and related work performed by library staffer and Easthaven Historical Society Chairwoman Margaret Lanning. The town got an estimated bill for \$2,750 to find, photocopy, refile, review, and redact other records requested. The Chairman of the Board, it was said, had blacked out parts of the copies of Town Treasurer's reports, invoice approvals, and some correspondence reports and nominating committee reports from the minutes. Horan, Chairman of the Trustees, last night said Mr. Stevens said the Library Trustees established three separate checking accounts from revenues of a trust and that the accounts should be under Town control. The Library Board asserts it is a public charitable trust, not a public board, and that it should be the custodian of library funds, not the Town. Mr. Stevens said the money could be used only by the Trustees for the Library's benefit, and would not be part of the Town's general fund. "But,' he said, 'the Town Treasurer must control the accounts.'

"Horan said the State Supervisor of Public Records issued a finding that the trustees' records were not public, and that the Library Board was not subject to Town government. In its suit, the Town contends the supervisor is in error. 'I don't know if it's going to satisfy him,'" Horan said of Stevens when asked if he felt the agreement would end the dispute between the Library Board and the Town Manager. 'I think he actually ought to be going after Library

Director Lew Carley, not the Board of Library Trustees. I think it's pretty clear that all of the library's problems basically stem back to ridiculous statements and actions made, and errors committed, by Mr. Carley, a very unprofessional not to mention downright inept public library librarian, in my opinion,' Horan said. 'And I won't even say anything about his maltreatment of the *girls*,' Horan added."

Off the record Carley responded, "The faiths in all the world all preach charity and forgiveness. Now, I can accept the wrongs and forgive the wrong-doers but, if what is past is prologue, I can't afford to waste another minute of my life amid these unrelenting always undermining vicious sons of bitches in their conical, flat-crowned wool felt Fez hats topped with tassels, their pants on backwards, practicing their God-forsaken secret rites in rubber chicken suits."

Two weeks after Carley left the Martin Conwell Library, a new director was ushered in: one C. Caldwell Norse from Provincetown, apparently a friend of Terence Stevens from an organization called the the Choronzon Club. This C. Caldwell Norse didn't mind telling people he was the son of a millionaire and that he'd formerly made his living as a Sophia Loren impersonator, prior to achieving his Master's degree in Library Science. "I feel right at home here," C. Caldwell Norse said of the recently re-modeled library director's office, him providing lavish lentil salad, roquefort cheese and grapes, and sparkling appletini punch to reporters at his initial news conference or banquet. Many more would follow.

Under the auspices of the Easthaven Chamber of Commerce, Margaret Lanning of the Conwell Memorial Library was appointed Chairwoman of the Easthaven Chamber of Commerce Program Committee's Steering Subcommittee, at the outset of organizing "A Salute to Lew Carley" – which Margaret thought might just push Cal Horan to the brink of insanity or even over the edge. The event had been scheduled for May 20, 2006.

They had nailed down the committee Chairs, and the Committees were starting the actual work of planning out activities, marketing, financing, and logistics. Other Committee Chairs were the Town of Easthaven Representative for the Town Manager, Terence Stevens, and assorted individuals selected from the Easthaven Police Department, the Easthaven Downtown Partnership, the Easthaven Chamber of Commerce, the Easthaven Credit Union, the Easthaven Savings Bank, Costco, Walmart, and the *Easthaven Daily News*.

XXIV

There would be no citywide "Salute to Lew Carley," of course.

In mid-October, 2005, I'd met up with Carley at Jacob Wirth's, with its dining room of small mahogany tables with a few large steins and bottles set around for decoration, the portrait of the founder in a circular medallion over the long mahogany bar and, also over the bar, the

Latin motto posted there, *Suum Cuique* – “Each his own.” Old Lew had eaten filet mignon and I'd enjoyed a salmon filet. We'd drunk a pint each of Jake's dark beer, followed by a pint each of Guinness Stout. We'd been enjoying the evening, Lew talking about how he'd once been interviewing people for a reference desk job and this one fellow had come in to the library dressed to the nines, wearing a fine gray pin-striped suit and brightly shined black shoes – and *both* shoelaces were untied. Still, Lew had hired the guy. Then Lew was telling me about his book, at which time the three men dressed comically in black three-piece suits, wearing dark glasses and carrying canes had showed up, entering the eatery and heading menacingly toward us. “Hah! Here it is!” Lew had cried out, setting down his papers lightly.

“It is thought Carley had a heart attack,” the *Easthaven Daily News* reported. “He was found dead on the floor in the men's room of a Boston restaurant. He'd already ceased breathing before anyone could call for an ambulance. Acquaintances say he had been much depressed in recent weeks. An autopsy revealed Carley had a small brain tumor. Cal Horan, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Library where Carley had formerly been employed, said Carley had ‘just been a mess,’ suggesting he had perhaps ‘swallowed cyanide or arsenic.’”

In the course of pursuing the truth of what had happened, and in seeking the return of what had been stolen, and in learning of Lew's life, I went through some heavy changes. For one thing, I left Harvard. For another, my wife left me.

“When I was a child,” Lew had written, “and through my youth, into manhood, what *mattered* to me was *clover* – and moss. And rocks. Studying lichen on boulders and trees. Being out – sleeping out under the stars. Mystical encounters. Later, of course, the love of a woman and the union of polar halves – *that* was mystical – particularly in the jettisoning, the falling through one's body to sheer space. The ceilings, walls, floors all dropped out. *That* was mystical. *That* mattered. Good writers and fine books stirred me – that was mystical. Alone in the woods, under water, on a lake shore, on an ocean pier – mystical. Dying's not so hard, then – what can be more mystical? I've been around – I can go gentle into that good night. What could be more beautifully mystical than death – to fall through one's body to *that*?”

As a teen, Lew had posted in his room a sign, a “To Do” checklist: “Value having this room of your own; keep the integrity of your philosophy; keep to creative energy / artistic expression; operate in a “metaphoric” universe (Transcendental / Mystical); face problems as creative challenges; be self-reflecting; allow for inner diversity; come home to yourself; allow for paradox; center and renew your connection with Spirit through cyclic and seasonal rituals, initiations, and rites of passage; use will and imagination to transcend societies; always affirm life.”

“Let me tell you about growing up with my father,” Val offered. “He would tuck me into bed at night, and pull up a chair and tell me fairy tales about whole civilizations under water; about cities inside volcanoes which, every one hundred years, erupted, spewing up the ashes of tens of thousands, and still the people kept rebuilding; about men on whose faces grew moss and clover instead of sideburns and beards; about quiet, hardworking craftsmen in ancient guilds who every summer held merry festivals, impregnating the buoyant, lighthearted, dancing women who always gave birth only to triplets. He would tell me of the spirit world and of elaborate rituals

meant to protect people from evil, then speak of his own having witnessed terrible Satanic rites of human sacrifice. Without a moment's hesitation, had anyone requested it, I would have signed commitment papers for the man. Now that I see how sane he was, it is too late."

"A perversity of heart," her father had written, "often prevents us from seeing truths which our intelligence would otherwise grasp easily."

Val and I never did get back her father's final manuscript, but traces of its continued existence, beyond our heavily footnoted copy of his last draft version, surfaced from time to time – for example in the spring, 2006 when we got wind of, but did not attend, the First International Morning Star Conference, which took place between April 25 and 27 in New Haven, Connecticut. The stated goal of the Conference was "to celebrate the Order and its influence on art, literature, and society, and also its many derivative bodies – associated movements and organizations – and to increase mutual understanding between the various groups and traditions represented." Through papers, committee meetings, and assorted workshops, the assembled "drew together the various strands of the Western Hermetic Tradition as epitomized by the Order of the Morning Star, its forebears, and its offspring." Among the lectures presented in the course of the conference were "On the Earliest Orders Admitting Men and Women", "Ken Mackenzie and the Legacy of Trithemius, the Father of Bibliography", and "The Work of The Companions of the Rising Light of the Morning, the Precursors of The Morning Star."

All fine and good. Even this lecture's being on the roster – "The Phallic Imperative: An Analysis and Critique of Calvin Horan's Restless Quest for Wisdom" – did not raise my ire. What did get to me, finally, was when Val showed me this one presentation also on their plate: one M. Morrison Michaelson [a *nom de plume*, I found out, of Conwell Library Director C. Caldwell Norse], was scheduled to read a paper he'd allegedly himself prepared, "The Infinitely Productive Brilliance of the Low-Lighted, Humming Places: The Awakened, Well-Ordered Bearers of the New Technologies."

That was a sufficient wake up call for me.

Enough – enough.

Life is lived by all different beings in all different places in all different times. Our identities, the communities we belong to, our responsibilities, our hopes, our dreams, our nightmares – all are shaped by our frame of reference. What is it to be *human* in this web of ongoing mistaken notions – from the old God *cults* to the new God *technology*?

"What's with our submission to the deluding social fabric?" Lew wrote. "We should be awakened people at the razor's edge of cosmology and consciousness, not duped sleepwalkers. Imagine you wake up one day on your death bed and find you'd already been dead the whole time anyway."

Lew knew, the social fabric is deadening – too *heavy*. We are not born into it – we are born into the world that really *is*. What *is*, is the world in all its mystery – nothing and something in perfect whirling paradox and balance, generating emptiness and everything everywhere always forever.

Sink *and* swim.

Per the poet Rilke, "*Everything wants to float.*"

Val and I, we traveled light. We moved to St. Lawrence, Newfoundland, this place
occasioning bright shimmering waves overhead of the glorious Northern Lights.

Per Rilke: "*You must change your life.*"