

# Liber CCXLI

Publication in Class C

## Aha!

The Sevenfold Mystery of the Ineffable Love; the Coming of the Lord in the Air as King and Judge of this corrupted World;

Wherein

Under the form of a Discourse between Marsyas an Adept and Olympas his Pupil the Whole Secret of the Way of Initiation is laid open from the Beginning to the End; for the Instruction of the Little Children of the Light.

Written in Trembling and Humility for the Brethren of the A.'. A.'. by Their very dutiful Servant, an Aspirant to their Sublime Order,

Aleister Crowley

## THE ARGUMENTATION

A LITTLE before Dawn, the pupil comes to greet his Master, and begs instruction.

Inspired by his Angel, he demands the Doctrine of being rapt away into the Knowledge and Conversation of Him.

The Master discloses the doctrine of Passive Attention or Waiting.

This seeming hard to the Pupil, it is explained further, and the Method of Resignation, Constancy, and Patience inculcated. The Paradox of Equilibrium. The necessity of giving oneself wholly up to the new element. Egoism rebuked.

The Master, to illustrate this Destruction of the Ego, describes the Visions of Dhyana.

He further describes the defence of the Soul against assailing Thoughts, and shows that the duality of Consciousness is a blasphemy against the Unity of God; so that even the thought called God is a denial of God-as-He-is-in-Himself.

The pupil sees nothing but a blank midnight in this Emptying of the Soul. He is shown that this is the necessary condition of Illumination. Distinction is further made between these three Dhyanas, and those early visions in which things appear as objective. With these three Dhyanas, moreover, are Four other of the Four Elements: and many more.

Above these is the Veil of Paroketh. Its guardians.

The Rosy Cross lies beyond this veil, and therewith the vision called Vishvarupadarshana. Moreover, there is the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel.

The infinite number and variety of these Visions.

The impossibility of revealing all these truths to the outer and uninitiated world.

The Vision of the Universal Peacock--Atmadarshana. The confusion of the Mind, and the Perception of its self-contradiction.

The Second Veil--the Veil of the Abyss.

The fatuity of Speech.

A discussion as to the means by which the vision arises in the pure Soul is useless; suffice it that in the impure Soul no Vision will arise. The practical course is therefore to cleanse the Soul.

The four powers of the Sphinx; even adepts hardly attain to one of them!

The final Destruction of the Ego.

The Master confesses that he has lured the disciple by the promise of Joy, as the only thing comprehensible by him, although pain and joy are transcended even in early visions.

Ananda (bliss)--and its opposite--mark the first steps of the path. Ultimately all things are transcended; and even so, this attainment of Peace is but as a scaffolding to the Palace of the King.

The sheaths of the soul. The abandonment of all is necessary; the adept recalls his own tortures, as all that he loved was torn away.

The Ordeal of the Veil of the Abyss; the Unbinding of the Fabric of Mind, and its ruin.

The distinction between philosophical credence and interior certitude.

Sammatsati--the trance wherein the adept perceives his causal connection with the Universe; past, present, and future.

Mastering the Reason, he becomes as a little child, and invokes his Holy Guardian Angel, the Augoeides.

Atmadarshana arising is destroyed by the Opening of the Eye of Shiva; the annihilation of the Universe. The adept is destroyed, and there arises the Master of the Temple.

The pupil, struck with awe, proclaims his devotion to the Master; whereat the latter bids him rather unite himself with the Augoeides.

Yet, following the great annihilation, the adept reappears as an Angel to instruct men in this doctrine.

The Majesty of the Master described.

The pupil, wonder-struck, swears to attain, and asks for further instruction.

The Master describes the Eight Limbs of Yoga.

The pupil lamenting the difficulty of attainment, the Master shows forth the sweetness of the hermit's life.

One doubt remains: will not the world be able instantly to recognise the Saint? The Master replies that only imperfect Saints reveal themselves as such. Of these are the cranks and charlatans, and those that fear and deny Life. But let us fix our thoughts on Love, and not on the failings of others!

The Master invokes the Augoeides; the pupil through sympathy is almost rapt away.

The Augoeides hath given the Master a message; namely, to manifest the New Way of the Equinox of Horus, as revealed in Liber Legis.

He does so, and reconciles it with the Old Way by inviting the Test of Experiment. They would go therefore to the Desert or the Mountains--nay! here and now shall it be accomplished.

Peace to all beings!

## **AHA!**

Master, ere the ruby Dawn  
Gild the dew of leaf and lawn,  
Bidding the petals to uncloze  
Of heaven's imperishable Rose,  
Brave heralds, banners flung afar  
Of the lone and secret star,  
OLYMPAS. I come to greet thee. Here I bow  
To earth this consecrated brow!  
As a lover woos the Moon  
Aching in a silver swoon,  
I reach my lips towards thy shoon,  
Mendicant of the mystic boon!

MARSYAS. What wilt thou?

OLYMPAS. Let mine Angel say!  
"Utterly to be rapt away!"

MARSYAS. How, whence, and whither?  
By my kiss

OLYMPAS. From that abode to this--to this!"  
My wings?

MARSYAS. Thou hast no wings. But see

An eagle sweeping from the Byss  
Where God stands. Let him ravish thee,  
And bear thee to a boundless bliss!

OLYMPAS. How should I call him? How beseech?  
Silence is lovelier than Speech.  
Only on a windless tree

MARSYAS. Falls the dew, Felicity!  
One ripple on the water mars  
The magic mirror of the Stars.

OLYMPAS. My soul bends to the athletic stress  
Of God's immortal loveliness.  
Tell me, what wit avails the clod  
To know the nearness of its God?

MARSYAS. First, let the soul be poised, and fledge  
Truth's feather on mind's razor-edge.  
Next, let no memory, feeling, hope  
Stain all its starless horoscope.

OLYMPAS. Last, let it be content, twice void;  
Not to be suffered or enjoyed;  
Motionless, blind and deaf and dumb---  
So may it to its kingdom come!

MARSYAS. Dear master, can this be? The wine  
Embittered with dark discipline?  
For the soul loves her mate, the sense.

OLYMPAS. This bed is sterile. Thou must fence  
Thy soul from all her foes, the creatures  
That by their soft and siren natures  
Lure thee to shipwreck!

MARSYAS. Thou hast said:  
"God is in all. "

OLYMPAS. In sooth.

MARSYAS. Why dread  
The Godhood?

OLYMPAS. Only as the thought  
Is God, adore it. But the soul creates

MARSYAS. Misshapen fiends, incestuous mates.  
Slay these: they are false shadows of  
The never-waning moon of love.

OLYMPAS. What thought is worthy?  
Truly none  
Save one, in that it is but one.  
Keep the mind constant; thou shalt see  
Ineffable felicity.

MARSYAS. Increase the will, and thou shalt find  
It hath the strength to be resigned.  
Resign the will; and from the string  
Will's arrow shall have taken wing,  
And from the desolate abode  
Found the immaculate heart of God!

OLYMPAS. The word is hard!

MARSYAS. All things excite  
Their equal and their pposite.  
Be great, and thou shalt be--how small!

Be naught, and thou shalt be the All!  
Eat not; all meat shall fill thy mouth:  
Drink, and thy soul shall die of drouth!  
Fill thyself; and that thou seekest  
Is diluted to its weakest.  
Empty thyself; the ghosts of night  
Flee before the living Light.  
Who clutches straws is drowned; but he  
That hath the secret of the sea,  
Lives with the whole lust of his limbs,  
Takes hold of water's self, and swims.  
See, the ungainly albatross  
Stumbles awkwardly across  
Earth--one wing-beat, and he flies  
Most graceful gallant in the skies!  
So do thou leave thy thoughts, intent  
On thy new noble element!  
Throw the earth shackles off, and cling  
To what imperishable thing  
Arises from the Married death  
Of thine own self in that whereon  
Thou art fixed.

Then all life's loyal breath  
OLYMPAS. Is a waste wind. All joy forgone,  
I must strive ever?

Cease to strive!  
Destroy this partial I, this moan  
MARSYAS. Of an hurt beast! Sores keep alive  
By scratching. Health is peace. Unknown  
And unexpressed because at ease  
Are the Most High Congruities.

Then death is thine "attainment"? I  
OLYMPAS. Can do no better than to die!

Indeed, that "I" that is not God  
Is but a lion in the road!  
MARSYAS. Knowest thou not (even now!) how first  
The fetters of Restriction burst?  
In the rapture of the heart  
Self hath neither lot nor part.

Tell me, dear master, how the bud  
First breaks to brilliance of bloom:  
OLYMPAS. What ecstasy of brain and blood  
Shatters the seal upon the tomb  
Of him whose gain was the world's loss  
Our father Christian Rosycross!

First, one is like a gnarled old oak  
On a waste heath. Shriill shrieks the wind.  
Night smothers earth. Storm swirls to choke  
The throat of silence! Hard behind  
MARSYAS. Gathers a blacker cloud than all.  
But look! but look! it thrones a ball  
Of blistering fire. It breaks. The lash  
Of lightning snakes him forth. One crash  
Splits the old tree. One rending roar!---  
And night is darker than before.

OLYMPAS. Nay, master, master! Terror hath  
So fierce an hold upon the path?  
Life must lie crushed, a charred black swath,  
In that red harvest's aftermath!

Life lives. Storm passes. Clouds dislimn.  
The night is clear. And now to him  
Who hath endured is given the boon  
Of an immeasurable moon.  
MARSYAS. The air about the adept congeals  
To crystal; in his heart he feels  
One needle pang; then breaks that splendour  
Infinitely pure and tender ...  
--And the ice drags him down!

But may  
OLYMPAS. Our trembling frame, our clumsy clay,  
Endure such anguish?

In the worm  
Lurks an unconquerable germ  
Identical. A sparrow's fall  
Were the Destruction of the All!  
MARSYAS. More; know that this surpasses skill  
To express its ecstasy. The thrill  
Burns in the memory like the glory  
Of some far beacons promontory  
Where no light shines but on the comb  
Of breakers, flickerings of the foam!

OLYMPAS. The path ends here?  
Ingenuous one!

MARSYAS. The path--the true path--scarce begun.  
When does the night end?

When the sun,  
OLYMPAS. Crouching below the horizon,  
Flings up his head, tosses his mane,  
Ready to leap.

Even so. Again  
The adept secures his subtle fence  
Against the hostile shafts of sense,  
Pins for a second his mind; as you  
May have seen some huge wrestler do.  
With all his gathered weight heaped, hurled,  
MARSYAS. Resistless as the whirling world,  
He holds his foeman to the floor  
For one great moment and no more.  
So--then the sun-blaze! All the night  
Bursts to a vivid orb of light.  
There is no shadow; nothing is,  
But the intensity of bliss.  
Being is blasted. That exists.

OLYMPAS. Ah!

But the mind, that mothers mists,  
MARSYAS. Abides not there. The adept must fall  
Exhausted.

OLYMPAS. There's an end of all?

MARSYAS. But not an end of this! Above

All life as is the pulse of love,  
 So this transcends all love.

OLYMPAS. Ah me!  
 Who may attain?

MARSYAS. Rare souls.

OLYMPAS. I see  
 Imaged a shadow of this light.  
 Such is its sacramental might  
 That to recall it radiates

MARSYAS. Its symbol. The priest elevates  
 The Host, and instant blessing stirs  
 The hushed awaiting worshippers.

OLYMPAS. Then how secure the soul's defence?  
 How baffle the besieger, Sense?  
 See the beleagured city, hurt  
 By hideous engines, sore begirt  
 And gripped by lines of death, well scored  
 With shell, nigh o'pen to the sword!  
 Now comes the leader; courage, run  
 Contagious through the garrison!  
 Repair the trenches! Man the wall!  
 Restore the ruined arsenal!

MARSYAS. Serve the great guns! The assailants blench;  
 They are driven from the foremost trench.  
 The deadliest batteries belch their hell  
 No more. So day by day fought well,  
 We silence gun by gun. At last  
 The fiercest of the fray is past;  
 The circling hills are ours. The attack  
 Is over, save for the rare crack,  
 Long dropping shots from hidden forts;---  
 --So is it with our thoughts!  
 The hostile thoughts, the evil things!

OLYMPAS. They hover on majestic wings,  
 Like vultures waiting for a man  
 To drop from the slave-caravan!

MARSYAS. All thoughts are evil. Thought is two:  
 The seer and the seen. Eschew  
 That supreme blasphemy, my son,  
 Remembering that God is One.

OLYMPAS. God is a thought!

MARSYAS. The "thought" of God  
 Is but a shattered emerald:  
 A plague, an idol, a delusion,  
 Blasphemy, schism, and confusion!

OLYMPAS. Banish my one high thought? The night  
 Indeed were starless.  
 Very right!

MARSYAS. But that impalpable inane  
 Is the condition of success;  
 Even as earth lies black to gain  
 Spring's green and autumn's fruitfulness.

OLYMPAS. I dread this midnight of the soul.

MARSYAS Welcome the herald!  
How control

OLYMPAS The horror of the mind? The insane  
Dead melancholy?  
Trick is vain.

MARSYAS Sheer manhood must support the strife,  
And the trained Will, the Root of Life,  
Bear the adept triumphant.

OLYMPAS Else?

MARSYAS The reason, like a chime of bells  
Ripped by the lightning, cracks.

OLYMPAS And these  
Are the first sights the magus sees?  
The first true sights. Bright images  
Throng the clear mind at first, a crowd  
Of Gods, lights, armies, landscapes; loud  
Reverberations of the Light.  
But these are dreams, things in the mind,  
Reveries, idols. Thou shalt find  
No rest therein. The former three  
(Lightning, moon, sun) are royally  
Liminal to the Hall of Truth.  
Also there be with them, in sooth,  
Their brethren. There's the vision called  
The Lion of the Light, a brand  
Of ruby flame and emerald  
Waved by the Hermeneutic Hand.

MARSYAS There is the Chalice, whence the flood  
Of God's beatitude of blood  
Flames. O to sing those starry tunes!  
O colder than a million moons!  
O vestal waters! Wine of love  
Wan as the lyric soul thereof!  
There is the Wind, a whirling sword,  
The savage rapture of the air  
Tossed beyond space and time. My Lord,  
My Lord, even now I see Thee there  
In infinite motion! And beyond  
There is the Disk, the wheel of things;  
Like a black boundless diamond  
Whirring with millions of wings!

OLYMPAS Master!  
Know also that above  
These portents hangs no veil of love;  
But, guarded by unsleeping eyes  
Of twice seven score severities,  
The Veil that only rips apart  
When the spear strikes to Jesus' heart!

MARSYAS A mighty Guard of Fire are they  
With sabres turning every way!  
Their eyes are millstones greater than  
The earth; their mouths run seas of blood.  
Woe be to that accurs'd man  
Of whom they are the iniquities!  
Swept in their wrath's avenging flood



To black immitigable seas!  
Woe to the seeker who shall fail  
To rend that vexful virgin Veil!  
Fashion thyself by austere craft  
Into a single azure shaft  
Loosed from the string of Will; behold  
The Rainbow! Thou art shot, pure flame,  
Past the reverberated Name  
Into the Hall of Death. Therein  
The Rosy Cross is subtly seen.

OLYMPAS Is that a vision, then?

MARSYAS It is.

OLYMPAS Tell me thereof!

O not of this!  
Of all the flowers in God's field  
We name not this. Our lips are sealed  
In that the Universal Key  
Lieth within its mystery.  
But know thou this. These visions give  
A hint both faint and fugitive  
Yet haunting, that behind them lurks  
Some Worker, greater than his works.

Yea, it is given to him who girds  
His loins up, is not fooled by words,  
Who takes life lightly in his hand  
To throw away at Will's command,  
To know that View beyond the Veil.

MARSYAS O petty purities and pale,  
These visions I have spoken of!  
The infinite Lord of Light and Love  
Breaks on the soul like dawn. See! See!  
Great God of Might and Majesty!  
Beyond sense, beyond sight, a brilliance  
Burning from His glowing glance!  
Formless, all the worlds of flame  
Atoms of that fiery frame!  
The adept caught up and broken;  
Slain, before His Name be spoken!  
In that fire the soul burns up.  
One drop from that celestial cup  
Is an abyss, an infinite sea  
That sucks up immortality!  
O but the Self is manifest  
Through all that blaze! Memory stumbles  
Like a blind man for all the rest.  
Speech, like a crag of limestone, crumbles,  
While this one soul of thought is sure  
Through all confusion to endure,  
Infinite Truth in one small span:  
This that is God is Man.

OLYMPAS Master! I tremble and rejoice.

MARSYAS Before His own authentic voice  
Doubt flees. The chattering choughs of talk

Scatter like sparrows from a hawk.  
 Thenceforth the adept is certain of  
 OLYMPAS The mystic mountain? Light and Love  
 Are Life therein, and they are his?  
 Even so. And One supreme there is  
 Whom I have known, being He. Withdrawn  
 Within the curtains of the dawn  
 Dwells that concealed. Behold! he is  
 A blush, a breeze, a song, a kiss,  
 A rosy flame like Love, his eyes  
 MARSYAS Blue, the quintessence of all skies,  
 His hair a foam of gossamer  
 Pale gold as jasmine, lovelier  
 Than all the wheat of Paradise.  
 O the dim water-wells his eyes!  
 There is such depth of Love in them  
 That the adept is rapt away,  
 Dies on that mouth, a gleaming gem  
 Of dew caught in the boughs of Day!

OLYMPAS The hearing of it is so sweet  
 I swoon to silence at thy feet.

OLYMPAS Exhaust  
 The Word!  
 Had I a million songs,  
 And every song a million words,  
 And every word a million meanings,  
 I could not count the choral throngs  
 Of Beauty's beatific birds,  
 MARSYAS Or gather up the paltry gleanings  
 Of this great harvest of delight!  
 Hast thou not heard the word aright?  
 That world is truly infinite.  
 Even as a cube is to a square  
 Is that to this.

OLYMPAS Royal and rare!  
 Infinite light of burning wheels!  
 Ay! The imagination reels.

MARSYAS Thou must attain before thou know,  
 And when thou knowest--Mighty woe  
 That silence grips the willing lips!

OLYMPAS Ever was speech the thought's eclipse.  
 Ay, not to veil the truth to him  
 Who sought it, groping in the dim  
 Halls of illusion, said the sages  
 In all the realms, in all the ages,  
 "Keep silence. " By a word should come  
 Your sight, and we who see are dumb!

MARSYAS We have sought a thousand times to teach  
 Our knowledge; we are mocked by speech.  
 So lewdly mocked, that all this word  
 Seems dead, a cloudy crystal blurred,  
 Though it cling closer to life's heart  
 Than the best rhapsodies of art!

OLYMPAS Yet speak!

Ah, could I tell thee of  
 These infinite things of Light and Love!  
 There is the Peacock; in his fan  
 MARSYAS Innumerable plumes of Pan!  
 Oh! every plume hath countless eyes;  
 --Crown of created mysteries!--  
 Each holds a Peacock like the First.

OLYMPAS How can this be?  
 The mind's accurst.  
 It cannot be. It is. Behold,  
 Battalion on battalion rolled!

MARSYAS There is war in Heaven! The soul sings still,  
 Struck by the plectron of the Will;  
 But the mind's dumb; its only cry  
 The shriek of its last agony!

OLYMPAS Surely it struggles.  
 Bitterly!  
 And, mark! it must be strong to die!  
 The weak and partial reason dips  
 One edge, another springs, as when  
 A melting iceberg reels and tips  
 Under the sun. Be mighty then,  
 A lord of Thought, beyond wit and wonder  
 Balanced--then push the whole mind under,  
 Sunk beyond chance of floating, blent

MARSYAS Rightly with its own element,  
 Not lifting jagged peaks and bare  
 To the unsympathetic air!

This is the second veil; and hence  
 As first we slew the things of sense  
 Upon the altar of their God,  
 So must the Second Period  
 Slay the ideas, to attain  
 To that which is, beyond the brain.

OLYMPAS To that which is?--not thought? not sense?  
 Knowledge is but experience  
 Made conscious of itself. The bee,  
 Past master of geometry,  
 Hath not one word of all of it;  
 For wisdom is not mother-wit!  
 So the adept is called insane  
 For his frank failure to explain.  
 Language creates false thoughts; the true  
 Breed language slowly. Following

MARSYAS Experience of a thing we knew  
 Arose the need to name the thing.  
 So, ancients likened a man's mind  
 To the untamed evasive wind.  
 Some fool thinks names are things; and boasts  
 Aloud of spirits and of ghosts.  
 Religion follows on a pun!  
 And we, who know that Holy One  
 Of whom I told thee, seek in vain  
 Figure or word to make it plain.

OLYMPAS Despair of man!  
 Man is the seed  
 Of the unimaginable flower.  
 MARSYAS By singleness of thought and deed  
 It may bloom now--this actual hour!  
 OLYMPAS The soul made safe, is vision sure  
 To rise therein?  
 Though calm and pure  
 It seem, maybe some thought hath crept  
 Into his mind to baulk the adept.  
 The expectation of success  
 Suffices to destroy the stress  
 Of the one thought. But then, what odds?  
 "Man's vision goes, dissolves in God's;"  
 Or, "by God's grace the Light is given  
 To the elected heir of heaven. "  
 MARSYAS These are but idle theses, dry  
 Dugs of the cow Theology.  
 Business is business. The one fact  
 That we know is: the gods exact  
 A stainless mirror. Cleanse thy soul!  
 Perfect the will's austere control!  
 For the rest, wait! The sky once clear,  
 Dawn needs no prompting to appear!  
 OLYMPAS Enough! it shall be done.  
 Beware!  
 Easily trips the big word "dare. "  
 Each man's an OEdipus, that thinks  
 He hath the four powers of the Sphinx,  
 Will, Courage, Knowledge, Silence. Son,  
 MARSYAS Even the adepts scarce win to one!  
 Thy Thoughts--they fall like rotten fruits.  
 But to destroy the power that makes  
 These thoughts--thy Self? A man it takes  
 To tear his soul up by the roots!  
 This is the mandrake fable, boy!  
 OLYMPAS You told me that the Path was joy.  
 MARSYAS A lie to lure thee!  
 OLYMPAS Master!  
 Pain  
 MARSYAS And joy are twin toys of the brain.  
 Even early visions pass beyond!  
 Not all the crabbed runes I have conned  
 Told me so plain a truth. I see,  
 Inscrutable Simplicity!  
 OLYMPAS Crushed like a blind-worm by the heel  
 Of all I am, perceive, and feel,  
 My truth was but the partial pang  
 That chanced to strike me as I sang.  
 In the beginning, violence  
 Marks the extinction of the sense.  
 MARSYAS Anguish and rapture rack the soul.  
 These are disruptions of control.  
 Self-poised, a brooding hawk, there hangs

In the still air the adept. The bull  
 On the firm earth goes not so smooth!  
 So the first fine ecstatic pangs  
 Pass; balance comes.

OLYMPAS How wonderful  
 Are these tall avenues of truth!  
 So the first flash of light and terror  
 Is seen as shadow, known as error.  
 Next, light comes as light; as it grows  
 The sense of peace still steadier glows;  
 And the fierce lust, that linked the soul  
 To its God, attains a chaste control.  
 Intimate, an atomic bliss,  
 Is the last phrasing of that kiss.

MARSYAS Not ecstasy, but peace, pure peace!

Invisible the dew sublimes  
 From the great mother, subtly climbs  
 And loves the leaves! Yea, in the end,  
 Vision all vision must transcend.  
 These glories are mere scaffolding  
 To the Closed Palace of the King.

OLYMPAS Yet, saidst thou, ere the new flower shoots  
 The soul is torn up by the roots.  
 Now come we to the intimate things  
 Known to how few! Man's being clings  
 First to the outer. Free from these  
 The inner sheathings, and he sees  
 Those sheathings as external. Strip  
 One after one each lovely lip  
 From the full rose-but! Ever new  
 Leaps the next petal to the view.  
 What binds them by Desire? Disease  
 Most dire of direful Destiny's!

MARSYAS I have abandoned all to tread  
 The brilliant pathway overhead!  
 Easy to say. To abandon all,  
 All must be first loved and possessed.  
 Nor thou nor I have burst the thrall.  
 All--as I offered half in jest,  
 Sceptic--was torn away from me.

OLYMPAS Not without pain! THEY slew my child,  
 Dragged my wife down to infamy  
 Loathlier than death, drove to the wild  
 My tortured body, stripped me of  
 Wealth, health, youth, beauty, ardour, love.  
 Thou has abandoned all? Then try  
 A speck of dust within the eye!

MARSYAS But that is different!  
 Life is one.  
 Magic is life. The physical  
 (Men name it) is a house of call  
 For the adept, heir of the sun!  
 Bombard the house! it groans and gapes.  
 The adept runs forth, and so escapes

That ruin!

OLYMPAS Smoothly parallel  
The ruin of the mind as well?

MARSYAS Ay! Hear the Ordeal of the Veil,  
The Second Veil! ... O spare me this  
Magical memory! I pale  
To show the Veil of the Abyss.  
Nay, let confession be complete!

OLYMPAS Master, I bend me at thy feet---  
Why do they sweat with blood and dew?  
Blind horror catches at my breath.  
The path of the abyss runs through  
Things darker, dimmer than death!  
Courage and will! What boots their force?  
The mind rears like a frightened horse.  
There is no memory possible  
Of that unfathomable hell.  
Even the shadows that arise  
Are things to dreadful to recount!  
There's no such doom in Destiny's  
Harvest of horror. The white fount  
Of speech is stifled at its source.  
Know, the sane spirit keeps its course  
By this, that everything it thinks  
Hath causal or contingent links.  
Destroy them, and destroy the mind!  
O bestial, bottomless, and blind  
Black pit of all insanity!

MARSYAS The adept must make his way to thee!  
This is the end of all our pain,  
The dissolution of the brain!  
For lo! in this no mortar sticks;  
Down come the house--a hail of bricks!  
The sense of all I hear is drowned;  
Tap, tap, isolated sound,  
Patters, clatters, batters, chatters,  
Tap, tap, tap, and nothing matters!  
Senseless hallucinations roll  
Across the curtain of the soul.  
Each ripple on the river seems  
The madness of a maniac's dreams!  
So in the self no memory-chain  
Or causal wisp to bind the straws!  
The Self disrupted! Blank, insane,  
Both of existence and of laws,  
The Ego and the Universe  
Fall to one black chaotic curse.

OLYMPAS So ends philosophy's inquiry:  
"Summa scientia nihil scire. "

MARSYAS Ay, but that reasoned thesis lacks  
The impact of reality.  
This vision is a battle axe  
Splitting the skull. O pardon me!  
But my soul faints, my stomach sinks.  
Let me pass on!

My being drinks  
OLYMPAS The nectar-poison of the Sphinx.  
This is a bitter medicine!  
Black snare that I was taken in!  
How one may pass I hardly know.  
Maybe time never blots the track.  
Black, black, intolerably black!  
Go, spectre of the ages, go!  
Suffice it that I passed beyond.  
I found the secret of the bond  
Of thought to thought through countless years  
Through many lives, in many spheres,  
Brought to a point the dark design  
Of this existence that is mine.  
I knew my secret. "All I was"  
I brought into the burning-glass,  
And all its focussed light and heat  
Charred "all I am. " The rune's complete  
When "all I shall be" flashes by  
Like a shadow on the sky.

Then I dropped my reasoning.  
Vacant and accursed thing!  
By my Will I swept away  
The web of metaphysic, smiled  
At the blind labyrinth, where the grey  
Old snake of madness wove his wild  
Curse! As I trod the trackless way  
Through sunless gorges of Cathay,  
I became a little child.  
MARSYAS By nameless rivers, swirling through  
Chasms, a fantastic blue,  
Month by month, on barren hills,  
In burning heat, in bitter chills,  
Troyic forest, Tartar snow,  
Smaragdine archipelago,  
See me--led by some wise hand  
That I did not understand.  
Morn and noon and eve and night  
I, the forlorn eremite,  
Called on Him with mild devotion,  
As the dew-drop woos the ocean.

In my wanderings I came  
To an ancient park aflame  
With fairies' feet. Still wrapped in love  
I was caught up, beyond, above  
The tides of being. The great sight  
Of the intolerable light  
Of the whole universe that wove  
The labyrinth of life and love  
Blazed in me. Then some giant will,  
Mine or another's thrust a thrill  
Through the great vision. All the light  
Went out in an immortal night,  
The world annihilated by  
The opening of the Master's Eye.

How can I tell it?  
 Master, master!  
 OLYMPAS A sense of some divine disaster  
 Abases me.  
 Indeed, the shrine  
 MARSYAS Is desolate of the divine!  
 But all the illusion gone, behold  
 The one that is!  
 OLYMPAS Royally rolled,  
 I hear strange music in the air!  
 MARSYAS It is the angelic choir, aware  
 Of the great Ordeal dared and done  
 By one more Brother of the Sun!  
 OLYMPAS Master, the shriek of a great bird  
 Blends with the torrent of the thunder.  
 MARSYAS It is the echo of the word  
 That tore the universe asunder.  
 OLYMPAS Master, thy stature spans the sky.  
 Verily; but it is not I.  
 MARSYAS The adept dissolves--pale phantom form  
 Blown from the black mouth of the storm.  
 It is another that arises!  
 OLYMPAS Yet in thee, through thee!  
 MARSYAS I am not.  
 OLYMPAS For me thou art.  
 So that suffices  
 MARSYAS To seal thy will? To cast thy lot  
 Into the lap of God? Then, well!  
 Ay, there is no more potent spell.  
 OLYMPAS Through life, through death, by land and sea  
 Most surely will I follow thee.  
 Follow thyself, not me. Thou hast  
 MARSYAS An Holy Guardian Angel, bound  
 to lead thee from thy bitter waste  
 To the inscrutable profound  
 That is His covenanted ground.  
 Thou who hast known these master-keys  
 OLYMPAS Of all creation's mysteries,  
 Tell me, what followed the great gust  
 Of God that blew his world to dust?  
 I, even I the man, became  
 As a great sword of flashing flame.  
 My life, informed with holiness,  
 Conscious of its own loveliness,  
 Like a well that overflows  
 At the limit of the snows,  
 MARSYAS Sent its crystal stream to gladden  
 The hearts of me, their lives to madden  
 With the intoxicating bliss  
 (Wine mixed with myrrh and ambergris!)  
 Of this bitter-sweet perfume,  
 This gorse's blaze of prickly bloom  
 That is the Wisdom of the Way.



Then springs the statue from the clay,  
And all God's doubted fatherhood  
Is seen to be supremely good.

Live within the sane sweet sun!  
Leave the shadow-world alone!

OLYMPAS There is a crown for every one;  
For every one there is a throne!  
That crown is Silence. Sealed and sure!  
That throne is Knowledge perfect pure.  
Below that throne adoring stand  
Virtues in a blissful band;  
Mercy, majesty and power,  
Beauty and harmony and strength,  
MARSYAS Triumph and splendour, starry shower  
Of flames that flake their lily length,  
A necklet of pure light, far-flung  
Down to the Base, from which is hung  
A pearl, the Universe, whose sight  
Is one globed jewel of delight.  
Fallen no more! A bowered bride  
Blushing to be satisfied!

OLYMPAS All this, of once the Eye unclose?  
The golden cross, the ruby rose  
Are gone, when flaming from afar  
The Hawk's eye blinds the Silver Star.

MARSYAS O brothers of the Star, caressed  
By its cool flames from brow to breast,  
Is there some rapture yet to excite  
This prone and pallid neophyte?

O but there is no need of this!  
I burn toward the abyss of Bliss.  
I call the Four Powers of the Name;  
OLYMPAS Earth, wind and cloud, sea, smoke and flame  
To witness: by this triune Star  
I swear to break the twi-forked bar.  
But how to attain? Flexes and leans  
The strongest will that lacks the means.

There are seven keys to the great gate,  
Being eight in one and one in eight.  
First, let the body of thee be still,  
Bound by the cerements of will,  
Corpse-rigid; thus thou mayst abort  
The fidget-babes that tense the thought.  
Next, let the breath-rhythm be low,  
MARSYAS Easy, regular, and slow;  
So that thy being be in tune  
With the great sea's Pacific swoon.  
Third, let thy life be pure and calm  
Swayed softly as a windless palm.  
Fourth, let the will-to-live be bound  
To the one love of the Profound.  
Fifth, let the thought, divinely free  
From sense, observe its entity.

Watch every thought that springs; enhance  
Hour after hour thy vigilance!  
Intense and keen, turned inward, miss  
No atom of analysis!  
Sixth, on one thought securely pinned  
Still every whisper of the wind!  
So like a flame straight and unstirred  
Burn up thy being in one word!  
Next, still that ecstasy, prolong  
Thy meditation steep and strong,  
Slaying even God, should He distract  
Thy attention from the chosen act!  
Last, all these things in one o'erpowered,  
Time that the midnight blossom flowered!  
The oneness is. Yet even in this,  
My son, thou shalt not do amiss  
If thou restrain the expression, shoot  
Thy glance to rapture's darkling root,  
Discarding name, form, sight, and stress  
Even of this high consciousness;  
Pierce to the heart! I leave thee here:  
Thou art the Master. I revere  
Thy radiance that rolls afar,  
O Brother of the Silver Star!  
OLYMPAS. Ah, but no ease may lap my limbs.  
Giants and sorcerers oppose;  
Ogres and dragons are my foes!  
Leviathan against me swims,  
And lions roar, and Boreas blows!  
No Zephyrs woo, no happy hymns  
Paeon the Pilgrim of the Rose!  
I teach the royal road of light.  
Be thou, devoutly eremite,  
Free of thy fate. Choose tenderly  
A place for thine Academy.  
Let there be an holy wood  
Of embowered solitude  
By the still, the rainless river,  
Underneath the tangled roots  
Of majestic trees that quiver  
In the quiet airs; where shoots  
Of the kindly grass are green  
Moss and ferns asleep between,  
Lilies in the water lapped,  
Sunbeams in the branches trapped  
--Windless and eternal even!  
Silenced all the birds of heaven  
By the low insistent call  
Of the constant waterfall.  
There, to such a setting be  
Its carven gem of deity,  
A central flawless fire, enthralled  
Like Truth within an emerald!  
Thou shalt have a birchen bark  
On the river in the dark;  
And at the midnight thou shalt go  
to the mid-stream's smoothest flow,

MARSYAS

And strike upon a golden bell  
 The spirit's call; then say the spell:  
 "Angel, mine angel, draw thee nigh!"  
 Making the Sign of Magistray  
 With wand of lapis lazuli.  
 Then, it may be, through the blind dumb  
 Night thou shalt see thine angel come,  
 Hear the faint whisper of his wings,  
 Behold the starry breast begemmed  
 With the twelve stones of the twelve kings!  
 His forehead shall be diademed  
 With the faint light of stars, wherein  
 The Eye gleams dominant and keen.  
 Thereat thou swoonest; and thy love  
 Shall catch the subtle voice thereof.  
 He shall inform his happy lover:  
 My foolish prating shall be over!  
 O now I burn with holy haste.

OLYMPAS This doctrine hath so sweet a taste  
 That all the other wine is sour.

MARSYAS Son, there's a bee for every flower.  
 Lie open, a chameleon cup,  
 And let Him suck thine honey up!

OLYMPAS There is one doubt. When souls attain  
 Such an unimagined gain  
 Shall not others mark them, wise  
 Beyond mere mortal destinies?  
 Such are not the perfect saints.  
 While the imagination faints  
 Before their truth, they veil it close  
 As amid the utmost snows  
 The tallest peaks most straitly hide  
 With clouds their holy heads. Divide  
 The planes! Be ever as you can  
 A simple honest gentleman!  
 Body and manners be at ease,  
 Not bloat with blazoned sanctities!

MARSYAS Who fights as fights the soldier-saint?  
 And see the artist-adept paint!  
 Weak are those souls that fear the stress  
 Of earth upon their holiness!  
 They fast, they eat fantastic food,  
 They prate of beans and brotherhood,  
 Wear sandals, and long hair, and spats,  
 And think that makes them Arahats!  
 How shall man still his spirit-storm?  
 Rational Dress and Food Reform!

OLYMPAS I know such saints.  
 An easy vice:  
 So wondrous well they advertise!  
 O their mean souls are satisfied

MARSYAS With wind of spiritual pride.  
 They're all negation. "Do not eat;  
 What poison to the soul is meat!  
 Drink not; smoke not; deny the will!

Wine and tobacco make us ill. "  
Magic is life; the Will to Live  
Is one supreme Affirmative.  
These things that flinch from Life are worth  
No more to Heaven than to Earth.  
Affirm the everlasting Yes!

OLYMPAS Those saints at least score one success:  
Perfection of their priggishness!  
Enough. The soul is subtlier fed  
With meditation's wine and bread.  
Forget their failings and our own;  
Fix all our thoughts on Love alone!

Ah, boy, all crowns and thrones above  
Is the sanctity of love.  
In His warm and secret shrine  
Is a cup of perfect wine,  
Whereof one drop is medicine  
Against all ills that hurt the soul.  
A flaming daughter of the Jinn  
Brought to me once a wingäd scroll,  
Wherein I read the spell that brings  
The knowledge of that King of Kings.  
Angel, I invoke thee now!  
Bend on me the starry brow!  
Spread the eagle wings above  
The pavilion of our love! ...  
Rise from your starry sapphire seats!  
See, where through the quickening skies  
The oriflamme of beauty beats  
Heralding loyal legionaries,

MARSYAS Whose flame of golden javelins  
Fences those peerless paladins.  
There are the burning lamps of them,  
Splendid star-clusters to begem  
The trailing torrents of those blue  
Bright wings that bear mine angel through!  
O Thou art like an Hawk of Gold,  
Miraculously manifold,  
For all the sky's aflame to be  
A mirror magical of Thee!  
The stars seem comets, rushing down  
To gem thy robes, bedew thy crown.  
Like the moon-plumes of a strange bird  
By a great wind sublimely stirred,  
Thou drawest the light of all the skies  
Into thy wake. The heaven dies  
In bubbling froth of light, that foams  
About thine ardour. All the domes  
Of all the heavens close above thee  
As thou art known of me who love thee.  
Excellent kiss, thou fastenest on  
This soul of mine, that it is gone,  
Gone from all life, and rapt away  
Into the infinite starry spray  
Of thine own AEon ... Alas for me!

I faint. Thy mystic majesty  
Absorbs this spark.  
All hail! all hail!

OLYMPAS White splendour through the viewless veil!  
I am drawn with thee to rapture.  
Stay!

MARSYAS I bear a message. Heaven hath sent  
The knowledge of a new sweet way  
Into the Secret Element.

OLYMPAS Master, while yet the glory clings  
Declare this mystery magical!  
I am yet borne on those blue wings  
Into the Essence of the All.  
Now, now I stand on earth again,

MARSYAS Though, blazing through each nerve and vein,  
The light yet holds its choral course,  
Filling my frame with fiery force  
Like God's. Now hear the Apocalypse  
New-fledged on these reluctant lips!

OLYMPAS I tremble like an aspen, quiver  
Like light upon a rainy river!  
Do what thou wilt! is the sole word  
Of law that my attainment heard.  
Arise, and lay thine hand on God!  
Arise, and set a period  
Unto Restriction! That is sin:  
To hold thine holy spirit in!  
O thou that chafest at thy bars,  
Invoke Nuit beneath her stars  
With a pure heart (Her incense burned  
Of gums and woods, in gold inurned),  
And let the serpent flame therein  
A little, and thy soul shall win  
To lie within her bosom. Lo!  
Thou wouldst give all--and she cries: No!  
Take all, and take me! Gather spice  
And virgins and great pearls of price!

MARSYAS Worship me in a single robe,  
Crowned richly! Girdle of the globe,  
I love thee! Pale and purple, veiled,  
Voluptuous, swan silver-sailed,  
I love thee. I am drunkness  
Of the inmost sense; my soul's caress  
Is toward thee! Let my priestess stand  
Bare and rejoicing, softly fanned  
By smooth-lipped acolytes, upon  
Mine iridescent altar-stone,  
And in her love-chaunt swooningly  
Say evermore: To me! To me!  
I am the azure-lidded daughter  
Of sunset; the all-girdling water;  
The naked brilliance of the sky  
In the voluptuous night am I!  
With song, with jewel, with perfume,  
Wake all my rose's blush and bloom!

Drink to me! Love me! I love thee,  
 My love, my lord--to me! to me!

OLYMPAS There is no harshness in the breath  
 Of this--is life surpassed, and death?  
 There is the Snake that gives delight  
 And Knowledge, stirs the heart aright  
 With drunkenness. Strange drugs are thine,  
 Hadit, and draughts of wizard wine!  
 These do no hurt. Thine hermits dwell  
 Not in the cold secretive cell,  
 But under purple canopies  
 With mighty-breasted mistresses  
 Magnificent as lionesses--  
 Tender and terrible caresses!

MARSYAS Fire lives, and light, in eager eyes;  
 And massed huge hair about them lies.  
 They lead their hosts to victory:  
 In every joy they are kings; then see  
 That secret serpent coiled to spring  
 And win the world! O priest and king,  
 Let there be feasting, foining, fighting,  
 A revel of lusting, singing, smiting!  
 Work; be the bed of work! Hold! Hold!  
 the stars' kiss is as molten gold.  
 Harden! Hold thyself up! now die---  
 Ah! Ah! Exceed! Exceed!

OLYMPAS And I?

MARSYAS My stature shall surpass the stars:  
 He hath said it! Men shall worship me  
 In hidden woods, on barren scaurs,  
 Henceforth to all eternity.

OLYMPAS Hail! I adore thee! Let us feast.

MARSYAS I am the consecrated Beast.  
 I build the Abominable House.  
 The Scarlet Woman is my Spouse--

OLYMPAS What is this word?

MARSYAS Thou canst not know  
 Till thou hast passed the Fourth Ordeal.  
 I worship thee. The moon-rays flow  
 Masterfully rich and real

OLYMPAS From thy red mouth, and burst, young suns  
 Chanting before the Holy Ones  
 Thine Eight Mysterious Orisons!  
 The last spell! The availing word!  
 The two completed by the third!  
 The Lord of War, of Vengeance  
 That slayeth with a single glance!  
 This light is in me of my Lord.

MARSYAS His Name is this far-whirling sword.  
 I push His order. Keen and swift  
 My Hawk's eye flames; these arms uplift  
 The Banner of Silence and of Strength--  
 Hail! Hail! thou art here, my Lord, at length!  
 Lo, the Hawk-Headed Lord am I:

My nemyss shrouds the night-blue sky.  
Hail! ye twin warriors that guard  
The pillars of the world! Your time  
Is nigh at hand. The snake that marred  
Heaven with his inexhaustible slime  
Is slain; I bear the Wand of Power,  
The Wand that waxes and that wanes;  
I crush the Universe this hour  
In my left hand; and naught remains!  
Ho! for the splendour in my name  
Hidden and glorious, a flame  
Secretly shooting from the sun.  
Aum! Ha!--my destiny is done.  
The Word is spoken and concealed.

OLYMPAS I am stunned. What wonder was revealed?

MARSYAS The rite is secret.

OLYMPAS Profits it?

MARSYAS Only to wisdom and to wit.

OLYMPAS The other did no less.

Then prove  
Both by the master-key of Love.  
The lock turns stiffly? Shalt thou shirk  
To use the sacred oil of work?

MARSYAS Not from the valley shalt thou test  
The eggs that line the eagle's nest!  
Climb, with thy life at stake, the ice,  
The sheer wall of the precipice!  
Master the cornice, gain the breach,  
And learn what next the ridge can teach!  
Yet--not the ridge itself may speak  
The secret of the final peak.

OLYMPAS All ridges join at last.

Admitted,  
O thou astute and subtle-witted!  
Yet one--loose, jaggäd, clad in mist!

MARSYAS Another--firm, smooth, loved and kissed  
By the soft sun! Our order hath  
This secret of the solar path,  
Even as our Lord the Beast hath won  
The mystic Number of the Sun.

OLYMPAS These secrets are too high for me.

Nay, little brother! Come and see!  
Neither by faith nor fear nor awe

MARSYAS Approach the doctrine of the Law!  
Truth, Courage, Love, shall win the bout,  
And those three others be cast out.

Lead me, Master, by the hand  
Gently to this gracious land!  
Let me drink the doctrine in,

OLYMPAS An all-healing medicine!  
Let me rise, correct and firm,  
Steady striding to the term,  
Master of my fate, to rise  
To imperial destinies;

With the sun's ensanguine dart  
Spear-bright in my blazing heart,  
And my being's basil-plant  
Bright and hard as adamant!

Yonder, faintly luminous,  
The yellow desert waits for us.  
Lithe and eager, hand in hand,  
We travel to the lonely land.  
There, beneath the stars, the smoke  
Of our incense shall invoke  
The Queen of Space; and subtly She  
Shall bend from Her infinity  
Like a lambent flame of blue,  
Touching us, and piercing through  
All the sense-webs that we are  
As the aethyr penetrates a star!

MARSYAS

Her hands caressing the black earth,  
Her sweet lithe body arched for love,  
Her feet a Zephyr to the flowers,  
She calls my name--she gives the sign  
That she is mine, supremely mine,  
And clinging to the infinite girth  
My soul gets perfect joy thereof  
Beyond the abysses and the hours;  
So that--I kiss her lovely brows;  
She bathes my body in perfume  
Of sweat . . . . O thou my secret spouse,  
Continuous One of Heaven! illumine  
My soul with this arcane delight,  
Volumptuous Daughter of the Night!  
Eat me up wholly with the glance  
Of thy luxurious brilliance!

OLYMPAS

The desert calls.  
Then let us go!  
Or seek the sacramental snow,  
Where like a high-priest I may stand  
With acolytes on every hand,  
The lesser peaks--my will withdrawn  
To invoke the dayspring from the dawn,  
Changing that rosy smoke of light  
To a pure crystalline white;  
Though the mist of mind, as draws  
A dancer round her limbs the gauze,  
Clothe Light, and show the virgin Sun  
A lemon-pale medallion!  
Thence leap we leashless to the goal,  
Stainless star-rapture of the soul.  
So the altar-fires fade  
As the Godhead is displayed.  
Nay, we stir not. Everywhere  
Is our temple right appointed.  
All the earth is faery fair  
For us. Am I not anointed?  
The Sigil burns upon the brow  
At the adjuration--here and now.

OLYMPAS

The air is laden with perfumes.



MARSYAS Behold! It beams--it burns--it blooms.  
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OLYMPAS Master, how subtly hast thou drawn  
The daylight from the Golden Dawn,  
Bidden the Cavernous Mount unfold  
Its Ruby Rose, its Cross of Gold;  
Until I saw, flashed from afar,  
The Hawk's eye in the Silver Star!

MARSYAS Peace to all beings. Peace to thee,  
Co-heir of mine eternity!  
Peace to the greatest and the least,  
To nebula and nenuphar!  
Light in abundance be increased  
On them that dream that shadows are!

OLYMPAS Blessing and worship to The Beast,  
The prophet of the lovely Star!