

**The Smaragdine Table
of Hermes,
Trismegistus of Alchemy.**

The words of the secrets of Hermes, which were written in a Smaragdine Table, and found between his hands in an obscure vault, wherein his body lay buried.

It is true without leasing,
certain and most true.
That which is beneath
is like that which is above:
& that which is above,
is like that which is beneath,
to work the miracles of one thing.
As all things have proceeded from one,
by the meditation of one,
so all things have sprung
from this one thing by adaptation.
His father is the sun,
his mother is the moon,
the wind bore it in her belly.
The earth is his nurse.
The father of all the telesme
of this world is here.
His force and power is perfect,
if it be turned into earth.
Thou shalt separate the earth from the fire,

the thin from the thick,
and that gently with great discretion.
It ascends from the Earth into Heaven:
and again it descends into the earth,
and receives the power
of the superiors and inferiors:
so shalt thou have the glory of the whole world.
All obscurity therefore shall fly away from thee.
This is the mighty power of all power,
for it shall overcome every subtle thing,
and pierce through every solid thing.
So was the world created.
Here shall be marvellous adaptations,
whereof this is the mean.
Therefore am I called Hermes Trismegistus,
or the thrice great Interpreter:
having three parts of the Philosophy
of the whole world.
That which I have spoken of the operation
of the Sun, is finished.

Here ends the Table of Hermes.¹

¹ John Ferguson (1906) considered the 1541 edition the first printing of the *Turbla Smaragdina*.

**A brief Commentary of Hortulanus
the Philosopher,
upon the Smaragdine Table
of Hermes of Alchemy.**

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The prayer of Hortulanus.

Praise, honour, power and glory, be given to thee, O Almighty Lord God, with thy beloved son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, the comforter. O holy Trinity, that art the only one God, perfect man, I give thee thanks that having the knowledge of the transitory things of this world (least I should be provoked with the pleasures thereof) of thy abundant mercy thou hast taken me from it. But for so much as I have known many deceived in this art, that have not gone the right way, let it please thee, O Lord my God², that by the knowledge which thou hast given me, I may bring my dear friends from error, that when they shall perceive the truth, they may praise thy holy and glorious name, which is blessed forever.

Amen.

The Preface.

I Hortulanus³, a Gardener⁴, so called for the Gardens bordering upon the sea coast, wrapped in a Jacobin skin⁵, unworthy to be called a Disciple of Philosophy, moved with the love of my well-beloved, do intend to make a true declaration of the words of Hermes, the Father of Philosophers, whose words, though that they be dark and obscure, yet have I truly expounded the whole operation and practice of the work: for the obscurity of the Philosophers in their speeches, does nothing prevail, where the doctrine of the holy spirit works.

Chapter I.

The Art of Alchemy is true and certain.

The Philosopher said, *It is true*, to wit, that the Art of Alchemy is given unto us *without leasing*. This he said in detestation of them that affirm this Art to be lying, that is, false. It is *certain*, that is proved. For whatsoever is proved, is most certain, and most true⁶. For most true Gold is engendered by Art: and he said *most true*, in the

² θεος (God) a possible wordplay with θειος (Sulphur/ Brimstone).

³ Fulcanelli attributes this work to Joannes Grasseus (Johann Grasshoff).

⁴ Included in 'Commentaire sur la table d'emerude d'hermes' text, referring to a person using earth and water for growing flowers (sublimates).

⁵ French term for Dominican Order, established 1218 at Chapelle Saint-Jacques

⁶ αληθεια

superlative degree, because the Gold engendered by this Art, excels all natural gold in all proprieties, both medicinal and others.

Chapter II.

The Stone must be divided into two parts.

Consequently, he touches the operation of the stone, saying: *That which is beneath, is as that which is above*. This he says, because the stone is divided into two principal parts by Art: Into the superior part, that ascended up, and into the inferior part, which remained beneath fixed and clear: and yet these two parts agree in virtue: and therefore he says, *That which is above, is like that which is beneath*. This division is necessary, To perpetrate *the miracles of one thing*, to wit, of the Stone: because the inferior part is the Earth, which is called the Nurse, and Ferment: and the superior part is the Soul⁷, which quickens the whole Stone, and raises it up. Wherefore separation made, and conjunction celebrated, many miracles are effected in the secret work of nature.

Chapter III.

The Stone hath in it the four Elements.

As all things have proceeded from one, by the meditation of one. Here gives he an example, saying: as all things came from one, to wit, a confused Globe⁸, or mass, by meditation, that is the cogitation and creation of one, that is the omnipotent God: *So all things have sprung*, that is, come out *from this one thing* that is, one confused lump, *by Adaptation*, that is by the sole commandment of God, and miracle. So our Stone is borne, and come out of one confused mass, containing in it the four Elements, which is created of God, and by his sole miracle our stone is born.

Chapter IIII.

The Stone hath Father and Mother, to wit, the Sun and Moon.

As we see, that one living creature begets more living creatures like unto itself: so artificially Gold engenders Gold, by virtue of multiplication of the foresaid stone. It follows therefore; *the Sun is his father*, that is, Philosophers Gold. As in every natural generation, there must be a fit and convenient receptacle, with a certain consonance or similitude to the father: so likewise in this artificial generation, it is requisite that the Sun has a fit and consonant receptacle for his seed and tincture: and this is Philosophers Silver. Therefore it follows, *the Moon is his mother*.

Chapter V.

The conjunction of the parts of the stone is called Conception.

The which two, when they have mutually entertained each other in the conjunction of the Stone, the Stone conceives in the belly of the wind: and this is it which

⁷ Red Sulphur.

⁸ Chaos, or Unprepared.

afterward he says: *The wind carried it in his belly*. It is plain, that the wind is the air, and the air is the life, and the life is the Soul. I have already spoken of the soul, that it quickens the whole stone. So it behoves, that the wind should carry and recarry the whole stone, and bring forth the mastery: and then it follows, that it must receive nourishment of his nurse, that is the earth: and therefore the Philosopher said, *The earth is his Nurse*: because that as the infant without receiving food from his nurse, should never come to earth⁹: so likewise our stone without the fermentation of his earth, should never be brought to effect: which said firmament, is called nourishment. For so it is begotten of one Father, with the conjunction of the Mother. Things, that is, sons like to the Father, if they want long decoction, shall be like to the Mother in whiteness, and retain the Fathers weight.

Chapter VI.

The Stone is perfect, if the Soul be fixed in the body.

It follows afterward: *The father of all the Telesme¹⁰ of the whole world is here*: that is, in the work of the stone is a final way. Note, that the Philosopher calls the work, the Father of all the Telesme: that is, of all secret, or of all treasure Of the whole world: that is, of every stone found in the world, is here. As if he should say, Behold I show it thee. Afterward the Philosopher said, Wilt thou that I teach thee to know when the virtue of the Stone is perfect and complete? to wit, when it is converted into his earth: and therefore he said, His *power* is entire, that is, complete and *perfect, if it be turned into earth*: that is, if the Soul of the stone (whereof we have made mention before: which Soul¹¹ may be called the wind or air, wherein consists the whole life and virtue of the stone) be converted into the earth, to wit of the stone, and fixed: so that the whole substance of the Stone be so with his nurse, to wit earth, that the whole Stone be turned into ferment. As in making of bread a little leaven nourishes and ferments a great deal of dough¹²: so will the Philosopher that our stone be so fermented, that it may be ferment to the multiplication of the stone.

Chapter VII.

Of the mundification and cleansing of the stone.

Consequently, he teaches how the Stone ought to be multiplied: but first he sets down the mundification of the stone, and the separation of the parts: saying, *Thou shalt separate the earth from the fire, the thin from the thick, and that gently with great discretion*. Gently, that is by little, and little, not violently, but wisely, to wit, in Philosophical dung. Thou shalt separate, that is, dissolve: for dissolution is the separation of parts. The earth from the fire, the thin from the thick: that is, the lees and dregs, from the fire, the air, the water, and the whole substance

of the Stone, so that the Stone may remain most pure without all filth.

Chapter VIII.

The unfixed part of the Stone should exceed the fixed, and list it up.

The Stone thus prepared, is made fit for multiplication. Now he sets down his multiplication, ie. easy liquefaction, with a virtue to pierce as well into hard bodies, as soft, saying: *It ascends from the earth into heaven, and again it descends into the earth*. Here we must diligently note, that although our stone be divided in the first operation into four parts, which are the four Elements: notwithstanding, as we have already said, there are two principal parts of it. One which ascends upward, and is called unfixed, and another which remains below fixed, which is called earth, or firmament, which nourishes and ferments the whole stone, as we have already said. But of the unfixed part we must have a great quantity, and give it to the stone (which is made most clean without all filth) so often by mastery that the whole stone be carried upward, sublimating & subtilising. This is it which the Philosopher said: *It ascends from the earth into the heaven¹³*.

Chapter IX.

How the volatile Stone may again be fixed.

After all these things, this stone thus exalted, must be incerated with the Oil¹⁴ that was extracted from it in the first operation, being called the water of the stone: and so often boil it by sublimation, till by virtue of the fermentation of the earth exalted with it, the whole stone do again descend from heaven into the earth, and remain fixed and flowing. This is it which the Philosopher say: It descends again into the earth, and so *receives the virtue of the superiors* by sublimation, and *of the inferiors*, by descension: that is, that which is corporal, is made spiritual by sublimation, and that which is spiritual, is made corporal by descension, or when the material descends¹⁵.

Chapter X.

Of the fruit of the Art, and efficacy of the Stone.

So shalt thou have the glory of the whole world. That is, this stone thus compounded, thou shalt possess the glory of this world. Therefore *all obscurity shall fly from thee*: that is, all want and sickness, because the stone thus made, cures every disease. Here *is the mighty power of all power*. For there is no comparison of other powers of this world, to the power of the stone. *For it shall overcome every subtle thing, and shall pierce through every solid thing*. It shall overcome, that is, by overcoming, it shall convert quick Mercury, that is subtle, congealing it: and it shall pierce through other hard, solid, and compact bodies.

Chapter XI.

This work imitates the Creation of the world.

⁹ Original text, yeres. In French text, the term is *la terre*.

¹⁰ Samuel Hartlib attributes this word to miraculous objects, eg 'sigil', 'talismen', or 'lamin'.

¹¹ The amount of red sulfur is very small compared to the amount Earth.

¹² Original text, paste.

¹³ Air space within the flask.

¹⁴ Sulphur.

¹⁵ Final comment found in French text.

He gives us also an example of the composition of his Stone, saying, *So was the world created*. That is, like as the world was created, so is our stone composed. For in the beginning, the whole world and all that is therein, was a confused Masse or Chaos (as is above said) but afterward by the workmanship of the sovereign Creator, this mass was divided into the four elements, wonderfully separated and rectified, through which separation, diverse things were created: so likewise may diverse things be made by ordering our work, through the separation of the diverse elements from diverse bodies. *Here shall be wonderful adaptations* that is, If you shalt separate the elements, there shall be admirable compositions, fit for our work in the composition of our Stone, by the elements rectified: *Whereof*, to wit, of which wonderful things fit for this: *the means*, to wit, to proceed by, *is here*.

Chapter XII.

An enigmatical insinuation what the matter of the Stone should be.

Therefore am I called Hermes Trismegistus. Now that he hath declared the composition of the Stone, he teaches us after a secret manner, whereof the Stone is made: first naming himself, to the end that his scholars (who should hereafter attain to this science) might have his name in continual remembrance: and then he touches the matter saying: *Having three parts of the Philosophy of the whole world*: because that whatsoever is in the world, having matter & form, is compounded of the four Elements: hence is it, that there are so infinite parts of the world, all which he divides into three principal parts, Mineral, Vegetable, & Animal: of which jointly, or severally, he had the true knowledge in the work of the Sun: for which cause he faith, *Having three parts of the Philosophic of the whole world*, which parts are contained in one Stone, to wit, Philosophers Mercury.

Chapter XIII.

Why the Stone is said to be perfect.

For this cause is the Stone said to be perfect, because it hath in it the nature of Minerals, Vegetables, and Animals: for the stone is three, and one having four natures, to wit, the four elements, & three colours, black, white, and red. It is also called a grain of corn, which if it die not, remains without fruit: but if it do die (as is above said) when it is joined in conjunction, it brings forth much fruit, the afore named operations being accomplished. Thus courteous reader, if you know the operation of the Stone, I have told you the truth: but if you are ignorant thereof, I have said nothing. *That which I have spoken of the operation of the Sun is finished*: that is, that which hath been spoken of the operation of the stone, of the three colours, and four natures, existing and being in one only thing, namely in the Philosophers Mercury, is fulfilled.

Thus ends the Commentary of Hortulanus, upon the Smaragdine table of Hermes, the father of Philosophers.