

The Scroll of Set

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[1] The Return of the Son of Hamlet

- by Jim Grady II°

It's sometime after the turn of the century. You're 110 years old and just about to croak. Your family is gathered about the bed, making mandatory speeches and gestures required when a relative with a lot of money is about to die. But there's a little hesitation on your part, and everyone is getting the distinct impression that you are purposely holding up the show. They're starting to whisper over in the corner. Better just take a deep breath and close your eyes. So you do and now you're dead. So now what?

I think it is in the nature of people to grab hold of any theory, religion, lucky charm, etc. that would guarantee them eternal life. It's amazing how adamantly they give credence to these ideas without ever investigating their basis. Perhaps it is the fear of losing the comfortable illusion that keeps them from asking questions or taking time to investigate and confirm or deny the precious relics they've collected.

Messiah-hunting is obviously not a Setian preoccupation, and the consequence of this is that you have placed yourself in a rather terrifying position - one day you just might really die! I don't know how that thought affects you, but it sends shivers up and down my spine. It also makes me realize that the only entity in this universe concerned with my eternal survival is myself, and I had better get a jump on things and start looking at the possibilities.

At first you might think searching through the many and various theories concerning immortality would be a lot of work. Not really. 75% of these theories hinge on your having a great deal of faith. These I discarded without fanfare. 20% rely on monetary donations. These too were trashed.

The remaining 5% is for the most part lost. A piece of it may be revealed in a stranger's conversation, a seemingly-irrelevant sentence in a book, or any other chance happening that rings a bell and sets off a particular train of thought. This has led me to make a decision on the matter of immortality - it is **created**, not given or found. It is not a circumstance of the universe, but a product of the individual.

Within these parameters I would place the invention of the artificial heart. It falls far short of

the ultimate objective, but it **was** created and it **does** impart life.

I doubt medical science will find a way to prolong life indefinitely any time soon, and I doubt they would let it be known even if they did. I think such news would have the same effect as an all-out nuclear war and would produce as many casualties.

Now that I have you thoroughly depressed, let me offer you a theory for consideration. I give you "dual consciousness". I grant it there is really nothing new about this idea, but it would seem to offer the best starting-point I have yet to encounter. In fact it was not so much the idea as it was the wording that attracted my attention.

I'll chance a personal explanation:

During a ritual I may alter my consciousness and gain access to a subjective universe. I continue, however, to process my thoughts and impressions as though I were a singular being. I perceive this, or I sense that, and afterwards I will reflect on it.

I would now propose a distinction be made: that the perspective I use in the subjective universe is not the objective perspective in fancy clothes. It is a facet of myself created by my objective perspective. It was conceived from several mundane factors over a period of my lifetime, and could very well continue to grow and mature to possibly one day offer an alternative vehicle for consciousness.

In this way I use my objective consciousness as an alchemist's oven. It sorts, mixes, distills, and inspects the product. If the product is notable, it can be used to enhance one's subjective universe. If it is lacking in some way, the discrepancies are duly noted and the process repeated in an effort to reach a more viable and useful conclusion.

By doing this the magical self evolves. It is created, nurtured, and strengthened. Its distinction from the mundane world is reinforced by both U/universes. I believe the magical self could grow to dwarf its own creator, and here I would point out one of the more plausible dangers of the Black Arts.

Now we flash back to your death bed [or mine, if It makes you feel more comfortable] at the moment of death. We can safely say that the body is dead. Whether they burn it, bury it, or give it away, it has lost its usefulness as far as my case is concerned. My objective consciousness is rapidly dispersing throughout the objective universe. The consciousness I'm using tonight to write this article is ceasing to exist: not a very happy thought but one that could prove unavoidable.

I've just destroyed what most people would consider to be the totality of their existence. And in my opinion this is what will happen to most people. They will simply cease to exist. I think this is the price you pay for an overabundance of faith. It may allow you to sleep at night, but it's not much help if you don't wake up.

For those who have discarded the more comforting theologies and have recognized

themselves for what they are and what they could become, there remains an option. When all else ceases to exist, there could still be that spark of life in the magical self. The magical self that was born, reared, and outgrew what has now returned to the universe is under no obligation to follow its creator.

I believe the subjective consciousness of the magician could well outlive his objective consciousness. It is not an inherent or mystical afterlife; it is a furnace-forged immortality. It was not meekly sought out or beseeched; it was erected by direct intervention.

You should, however, consider another point: Just as immortality is not inherent, so might its continuation also not be inherent. For instance: Two minutes after your objective death, you find yourself conscious in your subjective universe. This does not make you immortal; it simply makes you alive at that particular point in time. There may be much more work to be done to ensure the continued survival of the magical self.

[2] Another Theory on the Origin of "Baphomet"

- by Stephen E. Flowers IV°

The name or formula "Baphomet" has played a significant role in the history of Black Magic in this century. It was the magical name or motto adopted by Aleister Crowley in the O.T.O., and it was the name given to the sigil used by the Church of Satan.

The explanation of its name and form has been wrapped in controversy and speculation for centuries. This article will probably not put an end to it, but it may extend it into a more magical realm. We will mainly be concerned with the original meaning of the name, which was apparently first used in connection with the Knights Templar in the Middle Ages, and not with the larger principle for which the name may stand.

Some matters connected with this question are discussed in a *Cloven Hoof* article (#III-11, November VI/1971) by then-Priest Michael A. Aquino. This article is printed with additional commentary in his *Church of Satan* (App. #28).

The principal source of my information for this article is Karl Frick, *Die Erleuchteten* (The Illuminated Ones), which is a detailed history of "Gnostic-theosophical and alchemistic-Rosicrucian secret societies to the end of the 18th century".

As is fairly well known, the name "Baphomet" comes into history as the name of an "idol" supposedly used by the Knights Templar in secret cult practices. These practices, which were largely reported by Templars while under torture, may be reviewed in any of a number of books (e.g. #3E, #3F, and #30) on the Temple's Reading List.

Generally the Templars were said to have conducted blasphemous sexual rites in which the symbols of the Church were mocked, inverted, and desecrated - pretty usual clerical projections of the time (i.e. early 14th century). At one point in the proceedings during which a knight was initiated into the secrets of the Order, an idol was supposed to be removed from a shrine and placed upon the altar. This object was variously described as a double-headed bust [with a death's head on one side and that of an old man with a long white beard on the other], or as an androgynous being. The various descriptions always seem to have a common characteristic of being dualistic symbols, or better said, symbols of the integration of a bipolar model. This of course would fit with the Manichean/Gnostic form of heresy which was probably practiced by the Templars.

In addition to this idol, or sometimes in place of it, the initiate was shown a stone tablet which was taken from inside the altar. On one side of the tablet there was apparently some type of figure. Because this particular feature does not fit with the usual "idol fixation" of the Inquisitors, it has, in my opinion, a higher probability of reflecting some genuine aspect of Templar ritual.

In any case, the object was also consistently referred to as a "talking head". This is interesting when viewed within the context of Templar iconography. Their patron saint was John the Baptist, whose severed head was perhaps supposed to inform them of secret knowledge [shades of the head of Mimir!].

But what could this stone tablet have shown or contained? There has been a magical square consistently connected with the Templars:

S A T A N
A D A M A
T A B A T
A M A D A
N A T A S

The interpretation of this square, as it relates to the Templars, had remained a mystery until a solution was provided in a little-known 1931 writing by Count von Hardenberg called "Rosenkranz und Bafomet". [By the way, this magic square also appears in Chapter 3 of *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage*.]

Hardenberg noted the peculiar pattern formed by the "A"s in the square and removed all the other letters, leaving also the apparently centrally located "B":

. A . A .
A . A . A
. A B A .
A . A . A
. A . A .

These two letters will be recognized by the Cabalist as the primal letters of creation B-A. But additionally, and more formally, Hardenberg noticed that the "A"s gave a pattern familiar to all Templars: the "Maltese cross". This was the form of cross used by the Order. What is stranger is that this figure is called "the talking head" (das redende Haupt) in the language of heraldry. This symbol has also been interpreted as a pair of counter-directed swastikas - a symbol known in heraldry as the *fyrfos* or "fire-whisk".

Here are already several magical connections: the primal creative fire to the "*fyrfos*" [under the name "talking head"], and these to the general exoteric sign of the Order: its cross.

In this context Hardenberg gives a solution to the name "Baphomet" as a Latin phrase: *B A fomitem habemus*: "from the letters B and A we have the igniter of fire" [from Latin *fomes*: "touchwood, tinder" used to ignite fires].

This could have been quite naturally referred to with the short forms "BA fomes" or "BA fomit" (=Baphomet). This ties directly into the *fyrfos* symbol.

But what about the other letters of the quadrat?

S . T . N
. D . M .
T . B . T
. M . D .
N . T . S

Curiously enough (!) these are the initials of the official name of the Order: "Solomonis Templum novum Dominorum Militiæ Templorum".

This solution to the origin of the formula "Baphomet" may only be another piece in the overall riddle of the Templars, but it does seem to "ring true" in many respects. It is abstract enough to have thrown the Inquisitors off the track, but there are enough corroborative aspects to make it more than mere mystical conjecture. To us it has the added advantage of placing the Templars more firmly than ever in the camp of the Black Magicians of history.

[3] **Poetry**
- by Nancy Flowers III°

From over the horizon came a corsair with furling sails. Motionless in black, you stood forward in amber-scented, windless night - your voice the whining moan of icewater cracking, your eyes unwholesome mirrors where I must measure, in receding reversals, myself. And I cannot sleep now; I wear your talons' wounds.

[4] **Book Review:**
***The Greater Trumps* by Charles Williams**
Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.,
1980.
- reviewed by Robert Menschel III°

I was pleased when Adept Stout loaned me a copy of this book, and more pleased when her book review appeared in the December XXI *Scroll of Set*.

While Williams' characters did not themselves portray individual trumps 100% consistently or accurately, Adept Stout did correctly view this portrayal. [Note, however, that different initiates may see different correspondences depending upon their experience with and approach to the Tarot.]

Williams also investigates the use of the Tarot as an active tool of kinetic magic. While Williams' method is a bit heavy-handed, dangerous, and hard to control, it does point the adventurous student towards experiments I've been conducting for a couple of years.

You will not want to read this book in one sitting. Like Crowley's fiction, it may take some willpower to get through parts of the story. But you will probably find something instructional in the book if you expend the effort.

[5] **H.P.L.**
- by William Farnsler I°

With an eloquent pen you did tell of sight and vision far beyond the body of time surrounding you. Clues you left for those whose minds would in fascination seek what was once nameless. In these were the keys unlocking worlds horrifying compared to the civilized modern, yet exhilarating and exciting to those not of this one. Graphic nightmares of dark, ominous crypts whose walls dripped with terror like trickles of fouled water were laboriously painted from your palette of ancient colors. Opulent entrepreneur of fear and horror, on the wings of the Ancient Ones you now ride.

[6] **Book Review: *Stranger in a Strange Land* by Robert Heinlein**

New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1961

- reviewed by George Smith I°

“The most famous science fiction novel of all time” deserves the close attention of Setians if for no more reason than the need to examine **why** this novel has been so very popular.

First let me warn you about my own bias. I love this book, and it remains my favorite because of its wisdom, its inspiration, and its power. So do not expect a balanced evaluation from me. I have even called it my “bible”.

The story line is a biography of Valentine Michael Smith, the first human being to learn Martian, and is devoted to his experiences when he is returned to Earth. The underlying purpose of the book is a complete examination of human philosophy in all of its five major aspects: metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, politics, and art. The primary value to Setians lies, I believe, in its treatment of *Xeper*.

What would it be like to have evolved to the point where your ongoing experience of sensory reality enables you to as easily “see” the small of your back as it is to see this paper in front of your nose? What would it be like to lift your car as easily as you lift your hand? Consider what would happen to human relationships if you and others could communicate with perfect telepathy. Yet all this is only on the very surface!

Brought up on Mars without contact with other humans, Michael Smith discovers to his astonishment that his fellow humans can't read mental intentions and thoughts, can't lift objects without touching them, can't control their reactions to temperature and climate so that clothing is only a decoration, and, most astoundingly, that other humans can't apparently **grok**.

“Grok” is a verb form in Martian which means “to drink”. But to a Martian drinking isn't simply pouring liquid into a bodily orifice. For a Martian drinking is to become identified with the essence of that which is grokked. [For those of you studying aUI, you might want to note that “grok” is “that which is beyond or rules a positive inside feeling”, i.e. to go beyond a mere physical contact with something as an internal positive experience.]

In *Stranger* when Michael would grok a situation, he would then completely understand it. When Michael finally grokked the human situation as a whole, he laughed uncontrollably and later said when he recovered, “I've found out why people laugh. They laugh because it hurts ... because it's the only thing that'll make it stop hurting.”

Consider the effects of frustration in a living organism. The lower on the evolutionary scale, the more it will mindlessly (!) continue to struggle repetitively to overcome the source of its frustration.

As humans we know we should be able to live as gods. We awaken from every dream of flying, every dream of power feeling cheated. We somehow know that we **should** be able to fly, to live forever, to dazzle the Sun itself as shining, living gods. Every evidence of physical limitation imposed upon our desired actions causes frustration, whether recognized or not. Perhaps the strongest of these frustrations is death. We feel insulted and offended by death most of all, yet our minds leave us with a lack of absolute knowledge on the question of our survival.

Laughter as the escape valve for existential frustration permitted Michael to penetrate the essence of humanity as he found it, and with that knowledge he began to teach Martian - as a **religion**.

The concepts can't be thought about without the language, and the discipline that results in this horn of plenty benefits - from how to live without fighting to how to please your wife - all derive from conceptual logic: understanding who you are, why you're here, how you tick, and behaving accordingly. Happiness is functioning the way a being is organized to function, but the words in English are a tautology, empty. In Martian they were a complete set of working instructions.

And what is the essence of the meaning of understanding these working instructions? “Thou art God” was the ongoing message of Michael. Yet before you assume some white-lightish dissolution of the ego into some huge, white-bearded egomaniac named Jehovah, hear Michael's words:

“Thou art God. It's not a message of cheer and hope, Jubal. It's a defiance and an unafraid, unabashed assumption of personal responsibility.” He looked sad. “But I rarely put it over. A very few, just these few here among us, our brothers, understood me and accepted the bitter along with the sweet, stood up and drank it, grokked it. The others, hundreds and thousands of others, either insisted on treating it as a prize without a contest - a conversion - or ignored it. No matter what I said, they insisted on thinking of God as something outside themselves. Something that yearns to take every indolent moron to his breast and comfort him. The notion that the effort has to be **their own**, and that the trouble they are in is all their own doing, is one that they can't or won't entertain.”

Stranger was held by some (the press) to be the bible of the hippie movement of the 60s, but guilt by association is never proof. Instead I find *Stranger* to be the most Satanic statement made in modern times for a potential future.

Michael acted always from the posture of a human who was (1) **certain through knowledge** of his immortality, (2) capable of discovering (grok) the truth about anything he would investigate, and (3) operated from a code of ethics proper to such a godlike state. These actions included such surprising items as cannibalism, free sex, killing evil humans, communism among fellow gods, etc.

Probably one of the greatest benefits I still obtain [among others] when I reread *Stranger* is a view to what it would be like to experience exponential *Xeper* among an elite group [hint!] in modern times, in today's world. You know, down the street from McDonald's by the service station on the corner. There is an immediacy of **now! here!** flowing from this book of highest heresy and Satanic satire.

So this is a strong appeal to read or read with new eyes this book. As Set has spoken through direct human agency, so too I believe that Set has produced other words, other inspirations through indirect human agency.

Mike is our Prometheus ... Mike keeps emphasizing this. Thou art God, I am God, he is God, all that groks. Mike is a man like the rest of us. A superior man, admittedly - a lesser man, taught the things the Martians know, might have set himself up as a pipsqueak god. Mike is above that temptation.

This is the story of a modern Prometheus whose name is Michael. He was called "Antichrist" by the masses. He taught practical human evolution. He refused to enslave the minds of those who cast their lot with him. He was a master of human persuasion and LBM. He taught and knew that, in truth, what is most important in us is alien, that we are all "strangers in a strange land".

I am within and beyond you, the Highest of Life. - *The Word of Set*

bu cEv kU! tc! *Xeper*.

[7] Editorial: Those Born of Setians

- by Constance L. Moffatt IV°

We welcome Nathaniel Conchis Whitaker to our world. Baby Whitaker was born on Saturday, January 24th, to Priest Roger and Priestess Colleen Whitaker. The beautiful, bouncing boy was a

bountiful 7 lbs. 2 oz. We wish the Whitaker family the very best of Setian congratulations. Young Nathaniel Conchis was also born on the birthday of Temple of Set Executive Director Priest Mitchell Wade.

This recent birth of a baby to the Whitakers recalled a conversation held at a Set Amentet Pylon meeting in July XXI. I had just shared the news that Priest and Priestess Whitaker were expecting their first baby in January. The statement was made that this would be the third child of second generation (prospective) Setians.

Although children are not part of the Temple of Set in any way, children raised in the home of Setians are certainly going to be influenced by the marvelous exposure to Setian philosophy. Since a few of us have raised children in our homes while members of the Temple, I did not exactly understand the concept of third-child second-generation.

Priest Robert Menschel, however, pointed out that since the inception of the Temple only three children would be born into Setian families in that time period, thus second generation.

We discussed how interesting it would be to follow the development of these [and any other newborns] as children of Setians. Over the Past year I have observed that Ian Seth Reynolds (9) and Camber Menschel (5) are brilliant, extremely individualized, and special children.

As a specialist in this field, I cannot help but feel that these children are completely a result of their magical environment and education. I truly believe that great things are in the future for Ian Seth, Camber, and Nathaniel Conchis. Forum letters welcome, of course!

[8] The Laughing God

- by Ruth E. Smith I°

Fellow Setians,

I would like to share with you the experience I had during our last working on 1/10/87 here in Olympia, in the land of the mundane.

While doing *misagi* breathing (a martial arts technique) with my eyes closed during the compression sequence, I suddenly found myself floating in space, complete with blackness and stars. While I was aware in the back of my mind of my physical presence in my living room, I was more aware of the vividness of the stars, the blackness, and the apparition before me.

This was one impressive apparition. He was a line-drawing, glowing red lines, three dimensional, with himself transparent [you could see the red lines that made up the back of him], though you could not see the stars where he was. He was in 16th-century

garb, with a flamboyant hat and an enormous cloak/cape flapping behind him as though in a stiff breeze. He had horns upon his forehead. His gloved hands were on his hips, and his head was thrown back in laughter.

That's right, he was laughing! Not scornful, painful, mad, or hysterical, but completely joyous. It was the joy of existence, of sure knowledge, of confidence.

There was communication between myself and this being, an almost instantaneous exchange as he grinned at me and his huge frame shook with mirth. I can just poorly express it in English as a conversation, which it was not. I was not afraid, as I knew that I was made of the same stuff as this being, though not quite so much of it.

I asked him why he appeared in this form, and he said that it was because it appealed to my neuronal structures. Then he indicated as a statement of fact that one must *Xeper* or die, and that he fully expected that I would successfully establish myself upon the path of *Xeper*. He also warned that I have a tendency to get caught up in mundane stuff and that I should not devote so much energy to it.

I asked if we humans were alone in the universe as recipients of the Gift of Set, and he indicated that there were many others.

I find it difficult to verbalize most of what I received during the communication. The whole experience was breathtaking, and the laughter was contagious. I have mulled over the event over the last week, and it has resulted in some changes in what I do and how I feel about it. I am more aware of those moments when I feel the echo of that cosmic joy of life, and I seek to make more of them. I find myself grinning when I do things that I know contribute to *Xeper*. My energy has increased, and I am accomplishing more. The laughing god is an extremely important part of *Xeper*. Without the laughter, without the joy of life, there is only death.

[9] **Still/(B)/Earth**

- by William H. Huber I°

Creatrix or creator masturbating. We've been spurt, moist, into being. Eventually we crawled out from the wreckage of creation, eager to scan the blueprint of the fallen temple. Some caress the lone cornerstone, others vie for possession of some rusted relic, perhaps the phallus of some noble rapist, forgiven and forgiving, forging swords and steel bars till rheumy, senile. In the hills above the ruin, twelve misshapen hags boast of the undone deed of destruction. A large black dog pisses on the eldest, a bent and noble crone given to gossip and wild gesturing.

[10] **The Beast**

- by Burton P. Gillis III°

Mine is not the voice of the falsely altruistic, who are deceived yet deceive not.

Mine is not the voice of the pacifist, who would relinquish his ground before it were even asked of him.

Mine is not the voice of supposed "justice", which claims sacrifices myriad to appease its absolutes.

Mine is not the voice of the righteous, who would see the world destroyed by an angry God.

Mine is not the voice of the "normal", who justify their actions by the standards of a sick society.

Mine is not the voice of Jehovah, who would see you destroyed, had he his way.

Mine is the voice of one admittedly selfish, who unabashedly pursues the flame of Life.

Mine is the voice of vengeance, which earns respect in the hearts of men.

Mine is the voice of logic, which demands changes in morality from age to age.

Mine is the voice of the "immoral", who would see the world persevere.

Mine is the voice of pleasure, which offends those who possess it not.

Mine is the voice of the creative, who justify their actions by their desires.

Mine is the voice of Satan, who delights in great evil.

[11] **Proem: Queen of Hell**

- by James Martin I°

Behold! There stands before thee a goddess. "Nay," sayeth the heathen, "she be dæmon!" Yet her star shineth boldly down through the night and lighteth the path for the wandering beast, giving him succor on his perilous way. And her name be Lilith, whom the Greeks wisely called Hecate, queen of night, daughter of the waning Moon.

Goddess divine! Come unto me. Let me slake my thirst from thy holy cup, beloved, and count the hours until we pollute the sacred vessels of man, you as incubus, I as succubus. We ravish them, give them fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, so that they may choose and, having chosen, know infinite and eternal joy and rapture as Dæmons such as we.