

KONSTANTINOS

Nocturnicon

CALLING DARK FORCES
AND POWERS



About the Author

Konstantinos has a bachelor's degree in Journalism and Technical Writing and is a published author of articles and short fiction. This is his sixth book with Llewellyn.

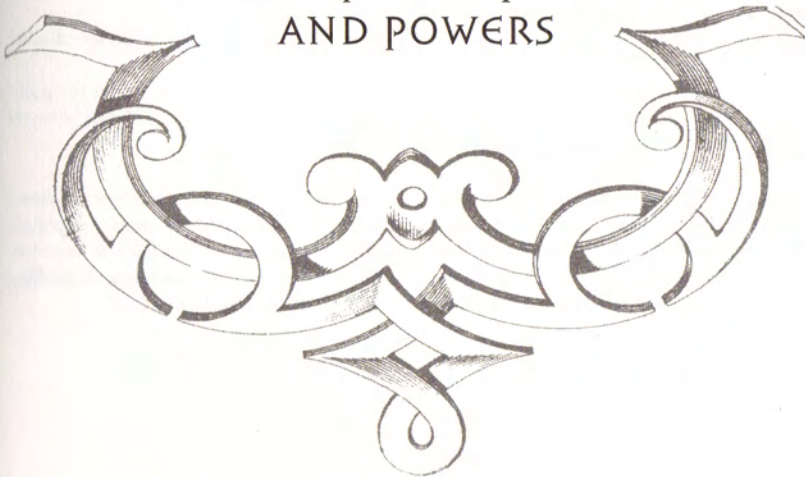
Konstantinos has been researching the occult and practicing magick for over fifteen years. He is also a trained stage mentalist who uses these skills to debunk fraudulent affectations of the supernatural. He often lectures on paranormal topics at bookstores and colleges. He also devotes time to singing dark music, and to exploring nocturnal life both in New York City and around the country.



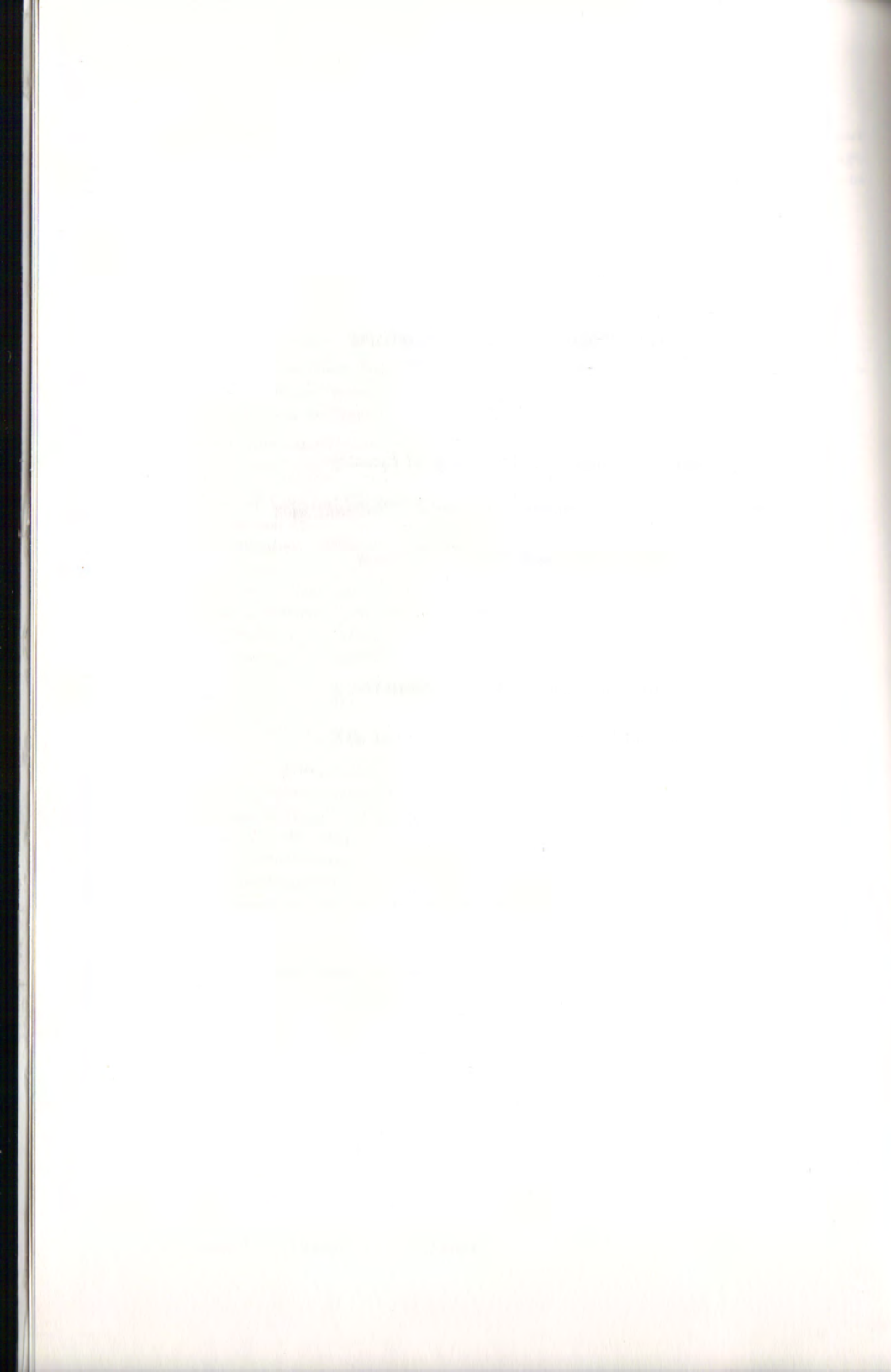
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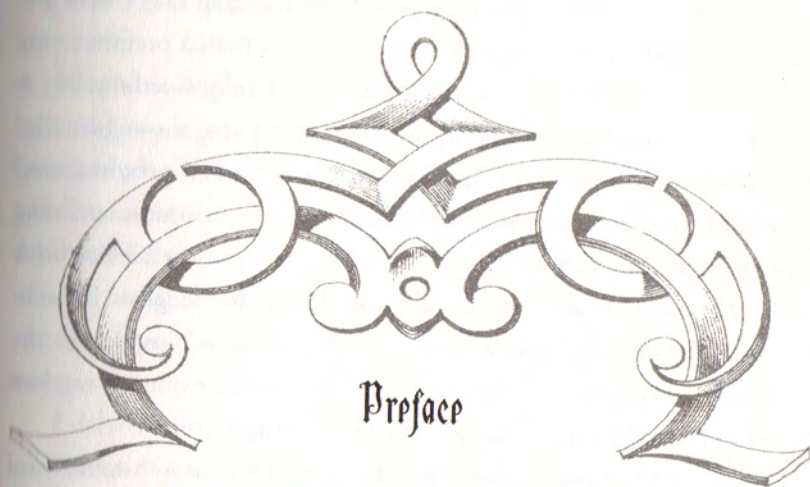
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WARNING!

This book deals with primal energies, psychological forces, and physical acts that may be dangerous if misused. Neither the publisher nor the author will be responsible for those who go too far with these dark rites and techniques. Proceed as prescribed, lest you cause physical or mental damage to yourself or others.

Above all, be sure you actually want to face the things you are about to call forth. . . .





Why this Dreaded Tome Came Into Being

This is the book of night.

What you hold in your hands is unlike most occult tomes. Everything in it actually works, and has been used by yours truly under dire circumstances, which we'll get to in a moment.

Rife with ancient power though it may be, *Nocturnicon* doesn't pretend to be a manuscript that was found in a monastery, stolen from a castle library, or dictated by the gods. I needed to go to extremes to get results, and the primal rites in this book were the only way to do so.

Some of you may have already experimented with my *Nocturnal Witchcraft* and *Gothic Grimoire*, or you've instinctively adapted your occult pursuits to embrace the darkness. This book, however, does not presuppose any particular specialized knowledge or skills on the part of its readers. Come to it with an honest curiosity of what lurks in the shadows, and a potent desire to harness what you find.

Amazing experiences await you in the dark ether.

What I'm about to say carries the risk of sounding as if I were giving a testimonial for someone else's work rather than a preface to my own book. The techniques in this book have literally saved my life. A couple of years before writing this book, I began going through strange periods of numbness on the right side of my body. The people around me blamed it on my intimacy with absinthe, a wormwood-containing liqueur that has been wrongly blamed for much in history. That didn't make much sense to me. Because of my in-depth knowledge on the subject—both scientific and wonderfully experiential—I knew absinthe had nothing to do with these bouts of numbness that came at random times and lasted for frustratingly random lengths of time.

I did what any sane person should do under the circumstances and had medical tests done. Not to turn this into a chronicle of health history, I'll just get to the meat of the problem. A nasty malformed vein was discovered in my brain. No one would venture a guess on how much worse it could get. Most of the doctors I dealt with were under the impression it would probably be there forever. The only real hope I could take away from their explanations was the possibility that the malformation wouldn't get any worse. Little hope to hold on to, seeing as the thing had flared up so suddenly to begin with.

What followed was a series of repeated MRI and MRA tests to monitor the situation. And as fun as hopping into a coffin might seem in playful or even erotic situations, regularly sliding into an MRI tube to see if a malformation has worsened, isn't.

Medical science is a wonderful thing, but I had a strong feeling that I needed a little help from the still mysterious occult science to get through this. And I'm not talking about calming lights of warmth and peace. I needed to annihilate the little fucker in my head!

I knew that if I failed, I could be facing brain surgery—never exactly a routine procedure—or worse. So the desire to succeed was there, which is always important in an occult undertaking. The ability

to concentrate even enough to perform a standard ritual, however, was not there.

A combination of the numbness, worrying about how bad the numbness might get, and worrying about everything that could come later, pretty much dominated my thoughts. This cluttered mental state provided no room for success at mystical feats. The standard methods for entering altered states and performing magick weren't working very well for me. Achieving anything approaching a magickal state required a serious upping of psychodrama . . . a serious attempt to commune with primal energies.

I delved into magicks that haven't been practiced in ages, and created some that have never seen the light of the moon. Some of what I was undertaking felt alien, and some of it was indeed intentionally so (as the Lovecraftian sections of this book will show). Like one who went on a vision quest and returned to tell about it, I have put most of what I've done into *Nocturnicon*. Some of it I'll take with me to the other side . . . in decades.

You see, it turns out that my efforts in the unseen world had their desired physical-world effects. My last series of MRIs and MRAs were "unlike anything I've ever seen," or so said my neurologist, trying in vain to even see a sign of the swollen vein.

Chances are there is something, or many somethings, you'd like to change in your life. I can safely guarantee that this book can help you accomplish miraculous changes, starting tonight. Rather than put in decades of training and meditating, you have the chance here to take a shortcut. All you need is the courage to face the abyss—realms so dark they make even physical night seem aglow—and the primal forces that lurk therein.

Although you will be creating original thoughtforms in some of the rituals, just as often you will be tapping into ancient thoughtforms—group batteries—to fuel your efforts. The forms we imagine and create in the darkness are the forms we build in the astral. The things we sense

or spot in the darkness are thoughtforms that were already created which we can tap into.

Are you brave enough to see those ancient energies and forms are offering you access to their energy? We shall see. . . .

and
that



Introduction

Calling on Dark Forces, Dark Powers

What blasphemy is this? Certainly the thought of conjuring up anything remotely dark goes against everything we've been told is safe, sane, and sanctified.

Or does it? According to modern physics, the universe is composed of mostly dark matter or energy—a field that not only permeates all of creation, but which is partly responsible for our very existence. This dark energy came into being at the Big Bang and can arguably be called the force that keeps up the universe's expansion. Without its power, you could say that the series of falling dominos we call space-time would come to a grinding halt.

Yet people scoff at the study of dark forces.

This dark matter you see in the nighttime sky is not blocked by the upper atmosphere. It is the reason that night down here has an almost soupy feel. And much as dark matter or energy permeates creation, it

carries along it the energies of magick—a dark link to godlike powers of creation awaiting each of us.

Whether you have already embarked down the dark path of spirituality, or just always felt it calling out to you, it's clear that you're looking to nocturnal forces to bring real change about in your life. You can feel the power and possibilities after the sun sets. You are certain there is something tangible in the ether of night. Compounding the power and mystery of the hidden, of the occult, the darkness is, by its nature, a secret realm awaiting those who are brave and curious enough to reveal its treasures.

The night beckons certain ones among us, and refusing that call just isn't possible.

Perhaps night extended its first welcome to you as something simple, like a sudden desire to be outside when the moon provides the only light. In time, the sentient dark ether may have sent its energies to confront you in a dream, perhaps even personified as an ancient dark deity.

No matter what type of calling you've experienced by this point, surely you can feel how the night is a sympathetic link to all things dark—a subconscious understanding that fills some with dread. Not everyone is comfortable with the supernatural forces this book deals with, and many cringe at the thought of associating with death energies or Lovecraftian beings lurking in the shadows. But as I explained in the preface, the forces that are most extreme—and to some, frightening—do get the job done when nothing else can.

The night houses more than just so-called gothic or spooky tendencies and dark essences. Night is half of our reality. And night is a direct link to the forces and energies that can alter that reality, a world unto itself that lurks around everyone, yet which welcomes only a few. While most of those in our vicinity are asleep, and are therefore not filling the ether with psychic interference, we can work dark magicks. The daylight hours of mundane mental activity and business pursuits are always focused on reacting to the now. The nighttime hours are when we can

focus on creating the next. Embrace this dark half, and watch as your total understanding of reality is forever changed.

Magick works because we can alter our consciousness to let it connect with unseen forces. In a profound or advanced altered state, we can mold the very building blocks of the universe to create anything we desire. We can access another plane of reality—called the astral plane—where whatever our imaginations dream up will eventually take on real material form in the physical plane.

You can think of the astral plane as a computer graphics program, with the magick-user acting as a designer who isn't concerned with what happens outside the office. That is, the person doing the designing (visualizing) works in the computer-aided design environment (the astral plane). After he or she saves a final version of the design (completes the image and releases it), the built-up model eventually becomes real enough to take on a life of its own. In the world of computer design, the model could end up as a sequence in a three-dimensional animated film, or may be fabricated into a complex machine at a factory. The final manifestation is out of the designer's or magick-user's control. All he or she sees after letting go of the model or form is that it came into being.

There are no film editors or factory workers to bring your magick to life, of course. What happens after you let go of a form on the astral plane is a mystery—the very mystery of creation and how we all got here. What's important is that we are allowed access to the process. That we are able to create reality in much the same way that the Creator once did.

As my previous occult books and many other ones show, achieving a direct impact on the physical world merely by thinking or wishing takes time and training. This is the reason ritual was developed. Through ritual magick we can enjoy a psychodrama—an exhilarating experience that affects us on deep levels and allows us to access the astral plane.

Rather than practicing altered states for years, we can enter them almost immediately through ritual psychodrama. After experiencing the impact of such rituals repeatedly, we instinctively begin to learn how to recreate those brief moments of ecstasy while using fewer candles, incense, robes, statues, bubbling cauldrons, or whatever else.

These moments of connectedness allow for amazing changes—for real perceivable results. You won't be catching any falling ash from a volcano or stopping a war by burning some candles, though. Despite the power of ritual as a tool, and the fact that it does work, creating the most miraculous of changes in the world is still only possible when one achieves adepthood. To be an adept means to reach an advanced level of mystical achievement where it is possible to directly access the unseen world and shape reality. You know, walking on water, raising the dead . . . that sort of reality manipulation. Yet reaching adepthood can take a lifetime, or lifetimes. Sometimes we need miraculous changes sooner than that.

I'm no adept. While I will be completing my second decade of occult work before long, I still rely on a mixture of ritual and occasional direct access to the astral to manifest the changes I need around me. Through the ether of night, I've found a link to the astral that is real and tangible. I've found that:

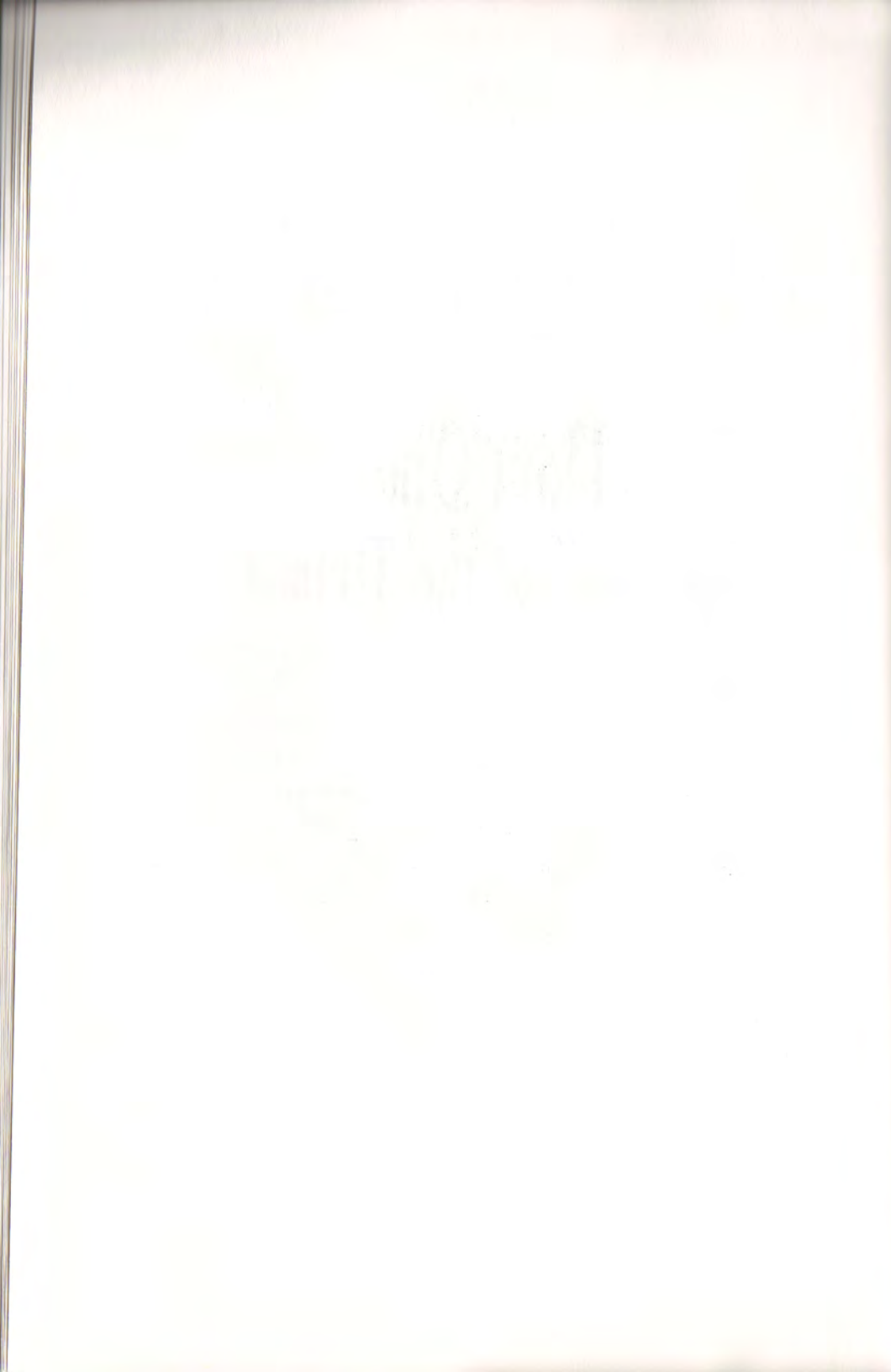
The forms we imagine and create in the darkness are the forms we build in the astral. The things we sense or spot in the darkness are thoughtforms that were already created and which we can tap into.

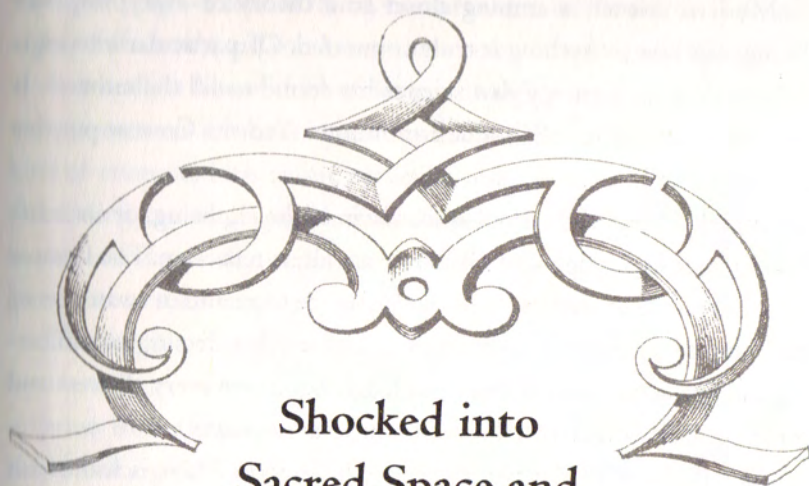
I'm repeating this couplet from the preface because it's that important to what you are about to experience.

For me, a blend of ritual and pure concentration has worked for a long time—with occasional periods where I enjoy a growth in the amount of time I can spend purely concentrating on change for it to occur. I know now, instinctively, when a full ritual is needed, or when I can get away with raw willpower.

Most of the changes I create are not of the type that should be covered on the evening news. On occasion, though, I suppose some of them would make for interesting, unexplainable video segments, were I more interested in TV coverage than completing an occult task at hand.

Under normal circumstances, I get the job done. But even the comfortable equilibrium I've described can be shattered by the unexpected. It is during such times when you especially need to access the psychodrama found in the pages that follow.





Shocked into Sacred Space and Altered States

Whatever force or forces created the universe played some part in creating you, and that creative force is still around and within each of us. If you accept that some unseen force or forces are at work in the universe, whether you call it God or not, then it is an absolute scientific certainty that such a being would maintain its connection with us. Read any book about the latest finds in quantum mechanics if you don't believe this to be true. Subatomic systems in the universe retain their connections no matter how much time or distance is placed between them. For example, two particles of light or photons that are separated will still maintain contact with each other at faster than light speeds. Adjust one photon by polarizing it and the other will just know to do the same, instantaneously, even if this second particle is miles away.

Modern science is coming closer to a theory of everything—to finding out how everything is truly connected. Of particular interest is the so-called dark energy that science has found to fill the universe. It permeates the entire space-time continuum. And the Creator put this in place as well.

Whether you believe the Creator is an all-loving being, or an indifferent if not insane agent of chaos, we are all its reflection. The Creator must have, at least in part, used our existence to maintain awareness of itself. It doesn't matter if the Creator is ethereally caressing us and caring for our every move, or instead laughing at our every distress and downfall. The Source of all relies on us in some way.

As reflections of the Source, we are little gods. There is real occult meaning in the trite-sounding statement "we are all made in God's image." Depending on your degree of optimism or pessimism about the universe, striving to be godlike may mean either aiming for the ultimate good, or abandoning ourselves into the abyss. From a practical occult perspective, striving to be godlike could mean not caring if either extreme is true.

As you'll see in a moment, you can get very real results with this book regardless of your religious beliefs. Unless your religious beliefs bar you from even trying magick, that is, in which case you shouldn't have even read this far. We wouldn't want you suffering in some hell with the rest of us, now would we?

Deep religious devotion is not for everyone at every phase of life. Sometimes, it's best to admit we don't truly know all facets of reality, and accept that we can live with that knowledge or lack of knowledge. We can't always claim to be in perfect sync with the gods or the true source.

Regardless of what we think God is, we will not always feel a connection to the Supreme Being. A perceivable link may never be there, or elude us for several years, or come and go regularly. People mistakenly call this sensation of distance—this feeling that no one's listening

when we pray—a loss of faith. Sometimes, it's referred to as a dark night of the soul (and you know, that choice of words just kills me).

Is it really a loss of faith if we go through a period when none of our prayers seem to work? I prefer to think of it as simply a loss of one kind of connectedness at one particular time. At the risk of trivializing this feeling that sends people into distress, it's analogous to not being in the mood one day, month, or year for watching a type of movie genre you actually love.

This book will work whether you are currently enjoying nightly rapture and deep prayer, or living in a temporary or permanent state of isolation from the unseen beings who should be, but maybe you feel aren't, looking out for you.

Note that I'm talking about how you might or might not feel about the universe right now. I'm not implying that the gods hate you. Read some ancient Greek plays or the Old Testament if you want writings to tell you that. Rather, I'm being honest in letting you know that I don't care how you may feel about your relationship with the Creator at this point in your life. This book will work for you regardless.

You are still a living reflection of the gods, and have access to amounts of power you likely don't recognize.

In the next few pages you will learn a quick way to ready yourself for a magickal ritual. If you're wondering why we just had a brief discourse on our relation to the Creator, it was important to point out what the opening rites in this book will not feature: you will *not* be invoking the gods to protect, help, or otherwise coddle you.

Of course, you're free to use traditional magick circle castings that you're comfortable with. I'm not recommending you stop using ceremonial, traditional Wiccan, or Nocturnal Circles that are part of your nightly practice (actually, the circle casting taught here is slightly based on the Nocturnal Circle). If more standard techniques are working for you at the current time, feel free to stick with them. However, the alternatives presented here are designed to work for anyone, even at times of

distress. If you accept that you were at least created by greater powers, then you have to accept that some of their divine spark lives in you. You just need a way to access it.

So, when you feel isolated from the gods, or otherwise incapable of doing something elaborate to enter a ritual mindset, you can rely on a technique that helps to free up the energy residing in you. Just as an earthquake can cause lightning, the act of introducing shock into a ritual can free up all the divine spark you need.

For example, someone fighting to stay awake all night could rely on coffee, calisthenic motions, and all sorts of tricks to remain vigilant. But the sight of a pair of glowing eyes coming through the darkness and the sound of an accompanying growl would ensure no sleep would be coming any time soon . . . at least not a temporary kind of sleep.

With the dark magicks that fill these pages, we'll be dealing with the kind of shock that doesn't come too late to be of any use. If you choose to use the opening rites described here, you'll be putting controlled shock into the ritual preparation, and letting the positive results of a rite spare you any real agony in the future.

Besides their lack of invocation, the opening rites given here differ from more traditional ones in another noticeable way: you won't have time to memorize them. One careful read should be all you need to actually start using the rites that follow. Try them out and see how they feel. You'll know when they're creating the necessary change in your state of mind.

Once you've done the rites just a couple of times, all the magic of the *Nocturnicon* awaits you.

Absorbing Night, Facing the Void

Traditionally, before doing any kind of elaborate ceremony, a magician would make preparations a part of the rite itself. Fasting would occur for a few days. During this time, tools would be consecrated. A ritual chamber would be set up with time and care. Then, on the night of

rite, a ritual bath would start to accelerate the process of altering awareness. Visualization and relaxation techniques—such as music, drumming, chanting, and some incense inhaling—would be used.

Doing a traditional ceremonial rite with all the aforementioned accouterments could eat up three or four nights of one's time; not to mention, it would require utmost steadfastness, dedication, and concentration. Hardly the sort of rite you'd try if a sudden need or even threat emerged.

What follows is a way to enter the right state of mind for a rite. Replacing fasts, ritual baths, and all the other time-consuming tricks of the esoteric world, this technique literally pulls the dark ether within you, and forces you to enter a state that is sympathetic to the world of darkness.

This technique is not for the easily frightened. Someone spooked by the occult would find the following to be more distracting than helpful. A book like this one acts as its own insulator, of course. It's difficult to imagine that anyone seriously considering working with a book called *Nocturnicon* would feel uncomfortable with a little sense of dread!

If possible, either perform this operation outside at night or in a cold room with the window open. Make sure that it's as close to absolute darkness as possible.

It is important that you can lie without being disturbed. If outdoors, that means a private backyard with a lawn chair is far better than a blanket on a sidewalk!

In any event, you'll get the best results at somewhere between three and five in the morning.

Drawing in the Darkness

Allow your vision to adjust to the darkness for a few moments. If outdoors, pick a patch of the night sky that doesn't contain many stars (a cloudy night makes this easier). If indoors, just gaze into the darkness above you.

Feel yourself sinking into the bed or whatever you are lying upon. Feel as if you are a tiny, miniscule point of consciousness being pushed down by the immensity of space and the dark void above you.

After even the slightest success at the sinking feeling, immediately imagine that you are surrounded by shadowy figures. You can't see their faces, but you know they are looking down at you. Why do they seem so tall?

Are you sinking into a hole? Is that the smell of cold, damp earth around you? Are the dark figures observing your burial? Allow any such bits of natural curiosity to enter your mind.

When you begin to feel a sense of dread—even a remote one—imagine that the shadowy figures begin to turn into mist. Once you can see them in mist form, with your eyes open or closed, they start to swirl about. The swirling is counterclockwise, and occurs around and above you.

That weight of darkness—that cosmic pressure we spoke of earlier—is still above you. Now you begin to notice that it is pressing down the swirling mist. In turn, the mist is forming a cone—a tornado of dark swirling matter. The tip of the dark cone is approaching your mouth.

You gasp. The cone takes advantage of the opening, pushing into your mouth. Fighting back a choke, and sensing the futility in resisting, you breathe in. Cold, stale, heavy air fills you, along with something more. What is this dark plasma that moves down through your lungs?

As you get closer to finishing this first dark inhalation, you can sense the presence of the dark plasma lingering in your feet. It tingles, almost crackles within you, and remains after you exhale.

Take another deep breath of the cosmic, swirling darkness. Feel it seep all the way down to your shins and ankles, filling them with dark plasma.

Exhale, and notice how the dark energy remains in your lower legs.

Continue to take in breaths, leaving behind another eight to ten inches of plasma in your body after each exhalation. More and more of your body is becoming one with the strange, electrical vibrations.

As more than half of your body fills with the mysterious force, you should become even more aware of that sense of dread. Allow any seemingly frightening or negative thoughts to come and go unchallenged.

A few more breaths almost fills your body. The tingling is turning to numbness. Or is it coldness? Yes, the cold of deep space.

When the plasma finally fills your head, you feel almost as if you're drowning in icy liquid. Let this sensation build to the point where you can barely stand the terror. . . .

Now take a deep breath and hold it.

You are alone.

For a moment, reflect on how scientists have found the universe to be filled with an unexplainable matter they call "dark energy." You are feeling the aloneness of this space-filling force at this moment. You are one with the void of the universe.

Listen. There's a swishing out there in the void.

Is it getting closer?

Jump up immediately and try to avoid stumbling. You should now be in a fevered state—a natural high you might not have thought possible. It is in this state that you can cast a circle and begin to call on the darkest of forces.

Try this technique a few times and see how quickly you can attain the strange high it brings on. After at least three times doing this, you can use the quicker version below:

Drawing in the Darkness, Redux

As with the other version of this technique, begin by allowing your vision to adjust to the darkness. Pick a patch of the night sky that contains few if any stars and gaze into it. If indoors, just stare into the darkness above.

Feel yourself sinking down into whatever you are lying upon. Feel the immensity of space above you. The darkness pressing down on you is tangible, heavy, and eerily cold. Try and remember the dread you felt when doing the full version of this rite. That same unknown force is around you . . . touching you.

Begin to breathe in the darkness, as you did in the other version of this rite. Pull some of the plasma in with each inhalation, and with each exhalation feel a tingling remainder of dark energy filling another eight to ten inches of your body.

When you complete the plasma-filling process, and your head feels as if it is swimming in the cosmic fluid, bring back the sensation of cosmic aloneness you felt when doing the full version of this rite. It should be easy to recall the sensation of being one with a dark void that is so inconceivably large.

Listen for the swishing sounds in the distance. Hear the noises getting closer.

Get up immediately and begin your dark magick, taking care not to stumble.

With your mind and subtle senses attuned with the dark ether, you can perform a circle casting of your choice. If you're already comfortable with something like the Nocturnal Circle you can feel free to use it. If you want something more streamlined and less religious feeling . . .

Shielded by Night

The dark experiments you'll undertake in this tome will illustrate what I've just hinted at here. Before we get into the opening rite (A Sphere in the Cosmos) you'll be using to perform said experiments, try to reflect on the following three principles:

1. The powers of the Creator are within you on some level.
2. The dark energy or matter making up the abyss of space is a tangible field, through which ripples of your godlike will can travel.

3. Any point in space-time can be influenced by you, regardless of its physical or chronological distance from you.

The following circle or sphere casting (it surrounds you in all directions) prepares you to send the ripples of your will out into the cosmos to effect real change. You may perform it with an altar, candles, and incense, but no tools are required to get the basic psychodrama out of it.

As with the previous Drawing in the Darkness rites, doing the following outdoors on a cool night will yield the best results. If indoors, try to keep the room as cool and dark as possible, preferably with a window open.

A Sphere in the Cosmos

Shiver. Yes, shiver. Allow the cosmic fluid within you to continue to cool and numb you with its electric pulse. This is the cold of space, the cold of the eons that you are feeling.

Standing in place, with your eyes open, spin counterclockwise three times. Keep these rotations slow, with almost shuffling steps.

Close your eyes and spin approximately three times clockwise. This time, make your movements a little faster and lighter of step.

Open your eyes to the darkness. Whatever direction you are facing is the direction you begin the working. There are no cardinal points of east, south, west, and north in the void of the abyss.

Imagine the plasma in your body coalescing most heavily in your solar plexus. With eyes still open, try to sense that it is a dark purple color. It is a tiny, pulsing sphere.

Begin to breathe deeply. With each inhalation, imagine the color of the sphere glowing more vividly and crackling with more excitement. With each exhalation, begin to feel this sphere emanating a force in all directions. Do not imagine the sphere growing in size. Only imagine its presence taking on more intensity. Note that with each exhalation you make, the sphere is pushing the cosmic plasma out of your body in all

directions. After a few exhalations, the dark plasma will surround you in the form of a cold oval. Feel the dividing line of cold lead. Continue the breathing to enlarge this oval even more.

After a few more breathing cycles, imagine the oval stretching and forming into more of a sphere. Continue to push it with your will until it becomes more than double your height in diameter. Then form a dark dome above you, with the rest of the sphere sinking into the ground below.

Know that this dark sphere is composed of matter from the furthest reaches of space. This matter is within you and, therefore, belongs forever to you.

You now stand within a bubble that is surrounded by the void of the universe. The plasma wall of the sphere responds to your thoughts and sends your will radiating out through the dark ether.

Reaffirm your visualization of the purple sphere crackling with energy. You are the center. This is the true center of all creation. Walk straight toward the top of the sphere you are currently facing. Take a deep breath, feeling the sphere inside you crackle. Exhale, feeling some of this crackling energy leave you and shimmer out through the dark sphere. Try to feel it pass, like a misty wind, out into space.

Move to the quarter of the circle to your right—this would be south if you were just at the east. Place your hands together, palms facing each other, fingers extended, as if you were in prayer. Take a deep breath, feeling the purple energy within. When you exhale, feel the energy flowing from your palms. Rub them together slowly, so you can feel the heat and the skin swishing. Turn both palms out to the sphere wall and imagine this charged heat radiating out into the universe from your hands.

Continue around the perimeter of the circle, to the opposite quarter from where you began (this would be west if you started at the east). Take a deep breath, once again exciting the purple sphere within your solar plexus. As you exhale, feel the energy welling up your throat and vibrating in your mouth. Wet your right fingertips with the

your tongue and touch the sphere. Feel the cool, wet, vibrating liquid pass out of your body and into the cosmos.

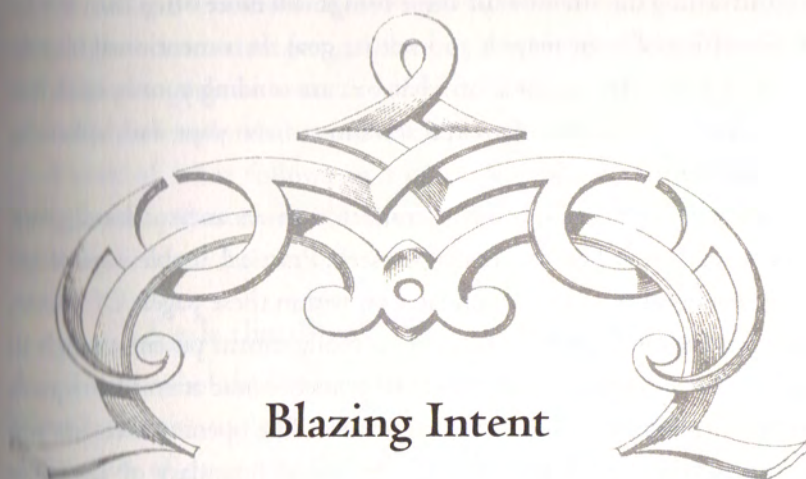
Continue to the remaining quarter. Take a deep breath, once again activating the purple sphere within. Hold this breath for a moment, then drop to your knees, exhaling. Feel an electric shock leave you and pass into the impact spot on the ground, from there radiating out into the dark mass.

Return to the center of your dark sphere and listen.

Be sure to practice this simple yet powerful circle casting for a few nights before you try to use it with an actual magickal rite. Don't think of this as a simple preparatory exercise, however. After completing the Drawing in of the Darkness and A Sphere in the Cosmos, you will be in an excited state of awareness. Spend at least a few moments listening to the cosmos. You might be surprised by the useful kinds of impressions that come to you. Sometimes you'll receive simple solutions to problems you've been having. Other times, warnings.

What emerges from the abyss at such times is not to be taken lightly. With repeated practice at creating this sacred space, you will begin to hear more and more noises in the dark abyss—whispers, rustlings, and unidentifiable sounds will all add themselves to the swishing you heard while Drawing in the Darkness. Take note of anything you sense at this time.

You are now ready to call upon and command the dark forces of night and the abyss.



Blazing Intent

It is widely accepted in quantum mechanics that our universe exists on a single membrane-like slice, or a 'brane of a bigger, multidimensional reality. And we have occupied only the tiniest portion of this 'brane for what is a virtual nanosecond on the fifteen-billion-year scale of the universe.

How insignificant we must seem to some of the beings that lurk out there—in the abyss. Their sense of scale both in size and time would seem distorted to us. There are things gliding through the dark matter that register time in millennia, and movement by the millions of light years of cold, empty space they traverse.

You may hear or even see these beings out in the abyss while standing in your dark sphere, sending your willpower out into the ether they inhabit. Most of these leviathans will go racing by, and will not even notice the magickal emanations you're sending out into the cosmos. After all, the ether or astral plane is full of such thoughtforms. However, expect a few dark beings at your perimeter, gazing upon you with ancient eyes.

Attracting the attention of these beings will more often than not be a side effect of your magick and not its goal. It is mentioned here to remind you of the vastness of what you are sending your magick out into, and to ensure you don't run screaming from your dark sphere in surprise during a working.

On occasion, making direct contact with an ancient intelligence may actually speed up the results you seek. Practical, usable ways of accomplishing this will be found later on within these pages. Of course, this is all assuming much. To create a thoughtform potent enough to create real change, and to consequently attract cosmic attention, requires attaining a pure connection to dark matter. The opening exercises you learned earlier will help you touch the initial boundary of the ether around you. You now need a way to send your will out into this abyss. The rest of this tome deals in just such practical, magickal techniques.

At the core of all the dark magick here is the art of using psychodrama to punch a direct connection into the abyss surrounding you. A part of our mind or consciousness is naturally attuned to the dark matter of the cosmos, despite how we dull its effectiveness by embracing the mundane world by day. This is another certainty—another parallel between our physical and subtle bodies and the tangible and multidimensional parts of the universe.

The amount of psychodrama needed to reach this hidden or often dormant part of our consciousness is determined by the type of magickal working attempted and the magnitude of the goal we are trying to attain. Sometimes, a great deal of psychodrama results in a magickal manifestation that then adds even more punch to your rite. For example, it takes a great amount of effort to do a magickal evocation where a spirit appears on the physical plane before you. However, the impact of seeing this entity standing there acts as an even larger psychodramatic element and helps you then attain your goal.

We will get to a shortcut for successful evocation later on. In this chapter, however, we are going to look at another way to attain moderately complex goals without a lot of effort. I am speaking of sigil magick, which is simpler than even the simplest evocation.

Think of what follows as a quick way to punch through the wall guarding the other side, thus gaining access to your magickal subconscious.

Sigils that Break Through the Barrier

A sigil is a symbol used to represent something in a magickal working. If you're not new to the occult, you may have come across or even used sigil magick of some type. In basic candle magick, sometimes symbols of desire are carved into candles before they're burned. In the advanced art of evocation, sigils are used as signatures of sorts, representing the entity being called forth. Somewhere in the middle of these two magickal uses of sigils lies what is commonly called "sigil magick."

Most modern versions of sigil magick owe their roots to the work of Austin Osman Spare. Spare was an artist with an uncanny connection to the unseen world. One can assume he saw things moving in the dark matter all around us on a regular basis. More important, however, was his ability to pull things out of his deep consciousness and reveal them through his drawings and paintings. By doing so, he forged links to atavistic or hidden forces in his own body and in the universe.

Spare worked on a way of using symbolism to quickly contact the forces that his art sometimes had to painfully call up. His Alphabet of Desire was a series of symbols that could be assembled like mystical keys to an ancient puzzle. The way he'd put them together determined what real forces were called into his life.

At least that's the aspect of it that we'll explore for our purposes here. Rather than use Spare's symbols, however, modern magicians realize that his work was truly relevant only to his subconscious. Spare's Alphabet of Desire and other paintings are not universal symbols.

To come up with a symbol that will speak to your hidden consciousness, you have to trick that part of your mind into making a connection with a symbol or sigil during its creation. The idea is to know why a symbol makes sense during its creation, but then sort of forget the significance upon its completion. In other words, you should be fully conscious of why the squiggles on paper represent your magickal desire while you are designing the sigil. When you use the sigil in a rite, though, you want the alien look of it to jump past your daytime mode of thought and straight to the hidden parts of your mind. If you think of daytime consciousness as a mundane barrier to your latent powers, then think of sigils as blades that penetrate the barrier to release a tiny but specific sliver of your potential.

To spend time in a rite trying to make sense of why a sigil looks as it does will lead to failure. Any time you spend reasoning in this way will add power only to your mundane thought patterns. Don't allow that part of your mind to silence the altered state of awareness trying to come to the forefront.

We'll explore two powerful ways to charge sigils in a moment—psychodramatic methods designed to take care of any possibility of your dwelling on a sigil's significance at the wrong moment. For now, here is a quick and effective way to create symbols that can puncture unnecessary barriers, thus exposing clear links to the cosmos.

Designing Sigils of Desire

How do you make sense of a bizarre pattern during its creation but then view it as totally alien soon after? The trick lies in relying on one of two things: either a set method that through its mechanics helps you forget what went into a finished sigil, or spontaneous images from your subconscious that can be combined to create an indecipherable sigil.

We look at both methods here. The mechanical method is the easiest, as it relies on no trance states or special skills, and it has two variations that you can experiment with. However, don't let the mechanical

method's ease keep you from trying the spontaneous method. While the spontaneous method does require a connection to the forces you hope to manipulate, it is a great psychic enhancement exercise to practice when you're standing in a freshly created dark sphere. You'll want to practice casting your dark sphere a few times anyway, so trying some spontaneous or automatic art at the end of each session will give you a more concrete way to open up your senses than would just listening to the darkness around you.

The Mechanical Method—Letters

Sit at a table with two blank pieces of paper and a black pen or marker. Close your eyes and breathe deeply for three cycles.

With eyes still closed, firmly establish in your mind what it is that you desire—what it is that you are willing to bend cosmic reality to attain.

If only words come to you (such as “a new car”), then write the exact phrase you come up with, in all capital letters, at the top of one piece of paper. Try to limit your use of fragment sentences to those not exceeding four or five words.

If you feel as if you're forcing a phrase to come to you, but are instead getting a clear mental image or two that won't go away, skip to the next section (The Mechanical Method—Pictures).

For a sigil based on words, rewrite the phrase that came to you, removing spaces and any letters that appear more than once. For example, let's use a wish you may have seen explored in other magick books—that of a new car. In a moment, we'll explore how the Pictures Method will bring something new to the dream. For now, with the Letters Method, A NEW CAR would become ANEWCR after the repetitive *A* is removed. To further distance your mind from the phrase, try moving a few of the letters around and copying the resulting pseudo-word over. Make it almost pronounceable if possible. In this

example, WRCENA would be a good choice. Note: Do not let any of these rewriting steps fill up more than the top half of the paper.

Whisper the made-up word a few times, focusing on how strange it sounds and not on what phrase originated it.

Randomly pick one of the letters from the new word. Toward the bottom of the paper (you should still only be using the first sheet), draw a somewhat large version of the letter. Now, fold the paper back so you can't see the original phrase, crossed-out letters, or recopied work that got you this far. Only your made-up, rearranged phrase and the large, randomly selected letter should be visible now.

By the way, when drawing that character, allow it to flow freely, complete with any exaggerated angles that feel right. Here's an example:



To represent the other letters from your made-up phrase, try to add as few lines as possible to the original letter. For example, if you picked the *E* in WRCENA, you might notice that the *W* is sort of there already (if you look at the *E* sideways), so you don't need to add any lines for *W*. You could add a curve and a line to represent the *R*:



In this example, that's all you need to do. Note that the top curve is also a backwards C, and the bottom diagonal line helps create a sideways and flipped N. That same added diagonal creates an A that is slightly pointing to the left and upside down. See it?

When you feel you've included all the letters, even if they're skewed and reoriented, you can feel free to go with any artistic embellishments that make the sigil look more arcane to you. In our example, a few touches go a long way to make this sigil seem straight out of a grimoire:



Copy your completed sigil to the other piece of paper, maybe adding some extra embellishments in this step as well. Dispose of the worksheet paper without ever looking at it again.

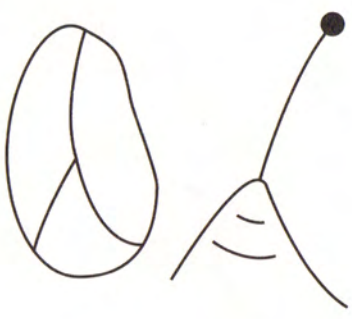
Your sigil is now ready to be remade once more, in a dramatic way. I will discuss this during one of the charging rituals, soon.

The Mechanical Method—Pictures

This method is similar to the Letters version, but should be done when you are granted clear visual images of your desire. Start with two blank pieces of paper and a black pen or marker. Close your eyes and breathe deeply for three cycles.

Firmly establish your desire, and try to capture images that are dancing around in front of your mind's eye.

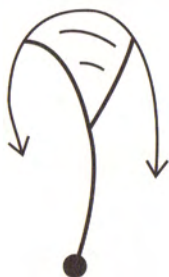
Draw simplistic representations of these images (instead of words). For example, you might draw the logo of the car you desire and a stick shift. As with the Letters method, try to draw these in whatever dramatic way occurs to you at the time:



In this case, a well-known European luxury car logo takes on a seemingly running life of its own. Look for any similarities between the pictures. This example has an obvious one for simplicity's sake, as well as an intentional snafu we'll get to. You can quite nicely incorporate the stick shift:



However, you might notice the snafu. It looks a little too much like a running person now (maybe one jumping rope, actually), doesn't it? You want to make the symbol seem a bit more alien, so flip it and add the two-prong feel of the glyph's center as arrow heads to the sides. You can also remove a couple of unimportant but tricky lines:



This should be just enough to hide the unintentional humanoid similarity, though judging whether this type of error is corrected will depend on your instincts. You are the one who will be working with the sigil, after all.

When you're done experimenting with the sigil, copy it over to the other piece of paper and dispose of the worksheet without looking at it again. The sigil is ready to be used in one of the rites given later in this chapter.

The Spontaneous Method

After you've attained an altered state by Drawing in the Darkness and casting your dark sphere, sit cross-legged on the floor with a large pad of paper on your lap. At most, there should be one candle burning in the room, and it should be a few feet away from you.

Using whatever drawing tool feels most natural to you, place the tip toward the upper left quarter of the large page and close your eyes.

Make sure you can summarize your need—why you're making a sigil—in as few succinct words as possible: a new car; a raise at work; an A in calculus. As with the statement in the mechanical method, try not to go above four or five words.

Perform three deep breathing cycles.

Whisper into the darkness, saying:

*Icons of the abyss, I summon forth this night.
Show me the forms to manifest (your need).*

Obviously, replace "your need" with the statement of desire you came up with.

Listen for the swishing or shambling noises out in the abyss. Try to imagine that the darkness all around you is teeming with motion and activity. You may even hear whispers.

Still with your eyes closed, imagine whispers are in fact coming in from all around you, including above and below. Whether you actually have an audible hallucination of them is unimportant. Just know they are coming toward you. Whisper the following:

Yes, I hear you. Are these the signs you mean?

Let your pen or other instrument begin to move. Imagine that it is moving on its own. Try to be aware of its motion, but do not look at it or try to sense any patterns evolving.

After you've felt a good amount of activity—perhaps a minute's worth—remove your hand and open your eyes. In the dark, you should barely be able to make out the squiggles and shapes you made. Don't focus on them. Just place your pen to the upper right quarter of the page, and close your eyes again. Whisper:

Show me more.

et your hand move again, and try to let it do so on its own. After about a minute, open your eyes and move the tip down to the lower right quarter of the page. Close your eyes and whisper:

More.

After another minute or so of drawing, open your eyes. Move the pen to the lower left quarter, and close your eyes. Whisper, with a little added intensity:

Finish it.

When your drawing is complete, open your eyes and stand up. Say out loud:

I thank you, whisperers. I now join you in the darkness.

Blow out the candle and leave the room, or go indoors if you were outside.

In a brightly lit room, sit at a table and analyze what you have drawn. Look for patterns in the swirls and shapes that pop out at you. Try to select only one or two prominent shapes from each quarter of the page.

On another piece of paper, begin to assemble a sigil much as you did in the mechanical method with pictures. This time you'll be using the prominent shapes you selected. Try to overlap and incorporate as much as you can, ending up with the simplest glyph possible. Because it came from deep within your subconscious—or possibly from another realm—this sigil will be of the most powerful type.

Note: Practicing the aforementioned method of sigil creation may have an interesting side effect. At some point, you may find words come from the pen without your direct control. This is automatic writing. It should not be forced, but if it happens, do explore the messages, for they are sent to you by the whisperers.

Those familiar with the occult may have noticed that there were no banishing rituals involved. This is intentional. Very few of the rites in this book would benefit from using a banishing. At night, the dark matter is all around you no matter what you do. Banishing the forces present at a rite would only push them slightly away, into the ether. In some rites you will make such a push—in others, you won't.

If you walk the dark path, be prepared to regularly come across its denizens in your nightly life.

Blazing Sigils

Now that you have a sigil that is truly your own—a one of a kind link to your specific need—you have to do your best to forget all about it for at least one night. Consider it to be a mystical glyph in need of ritual awakening, but do not think of the need behind it. Under no circumstances should you look at it and recall your statement of desire. Keep the sigil covered and out of sight.

When the time is appropriate, the sigil must be charged at night, preferably during the psychic quiet time of three to five in the morning. During the daytime preceding this rite, and preferably when you're in a daytime mood (right after work or school is perfect), you can prepare the sigil for one of the two following rites.

The first is the most psychodramatic. To perform this Flashing Sigils charging rite, you'll need a block of wood painted flat black; something about the size of a plaque would be perfect. You'll also need a type of glue that doesn't claim to be flammable; one for children's projects is usually fine. A squeeze bottle is best to use for drawing your sigil.

The most important ingredient will be tricky to find, depending where you live. You might need to order it from a magician's supply shop—that is, a stage magician's supply shop. The special ingredient to your rite is called flash powder, or sometimes magician's powder. Even a small bag should be good for a few rites, if you're careful with how much you use.

Flashing Sigils

Warning: Do not deviate from the steps given in this rite. Use common sense when working with flash powder, and heed any warnings on the package label.

During the daytime, uncover your paper sigil for reference. Use glue to redraw the sigil on the center of your wood block. Try to make the glue lines as thin as possible. Overall, the sigil should be about as large as the palm of your hand. Remember to avoid thinking about what the sigil means while copying it over to the wood. Rotating the original and drawing it upside down might help.

Following the general lines of the sigil, pour flash powder onto the glue. Use as much powder as you can get to stick to the lines.

After a half hour (depending on the type of glue), gently tip the wood and catch the leftover powder for later use. Put the flash powder sigil out of sight, but don't cover or touch it until nightfall.

At night, put the sigil block in the center of the area where you will create your dark sphere. If possible, place this on top of a table or altar. Have matches on hand, but keep the room dark. Try not to look at or think about the sigil's meaning.

Perform your opening rites in as close to absolute darkness as possible, but take care not to bump into the table or touch the sigil as you create your dark sphere.

Standing before the table, place your right hand a few inches above the sigil, palm down and fingers spread. Close your eyes. From the opening rite, recall the purple sphere in your center, or imagine it there if you used a different ritual opening. Take a deep breath and feel the crackling purple sphere in your center becoming excited.

Exhale and imagine some of the crackling energy flowing down your right arm and pouring straight from your palm onto the sigil. Repeat these breathing cycles twelve more times. By the thirteenth exhalation you should feel a combination of lightheadedness and excitement.

Move your hand away; take another deep breath and hold it. Quickly strike a match. Drop the burning match directly onto one of the “busiest” parts of the sigil. Spotting where the most lines bisect should be easy, thanks to the light of the match.

Exhale as the sigil flashes before you, temporarily imprinting its image on your retina.

Look out into the abyss and allow the orange image of the sigil to begin to fade. Imagine it drifting off into the darkness around you. Do not think of what it means, though; only observe it disappearing.

Depending on the type of glue and how much you used, you may be able to scrub the block and use it again. Speaking of your assembly technique, you may want to experiment once or twice with random shapes to get just the right amount of “flash.”

The following technique for charging sigils requires a black light, which you can get at many novelty shops or even department stores. You will also need a way to generate a large version of your sigil in reverse—white lines on a black background. One way is to scan your sigil into a computer and print an enlarged, negative version of it by using some type of graphics software. Another way is to use white paint to draw a large version of your sigil on a piece of black paper.

You will also need some kind of stand to hold your sigil upright. A “copy holder” from an office supply store works well. Or, you can just rest it against a large photo frame that stands at an angle.

Glowing Sigils

Set up a room so you can perform your ritual openings around a bed or sofa. You will need a nightstand or table next to your pillow—next to the place you plan to sleep this night. On the table, have your white-on-black sigil facing toward the stand you acquired for it. Position the black light right in front of the sigil stand. Make sure the black light is

plugged in or equipped with batteries. Place an alarm clock next to the black light and set it for around quarter past three in the morning. Make sure you can easily shut off the alarm clock without knocking over the black light. Practice it a time or two if you must.

At around eleven at night, dim the lights and begin to do your opening rites. You can do all the standing parts next to your bed or sofa. However, finish the creation of the dark sphere by sitting on the bed.

With the lights out, turn the sigil around so that it is facing you in the darkness. Place your right hand in front of it, palm facing the sigil.

Exhale some of the excess energy you may feel in your body. Feel it flow out your right hand and into the sigil.

Find the black light power switch and close your eyes. Turn on the black light, careful not to see the sigil.

Get comfortable and prepare to drift off. Remain aware of the feeling of being surrounded and observed. You are getting ready to sleep in a magical realm. Let the swishing and whispers from the void be the last thing you hear before sleep overcomes you.

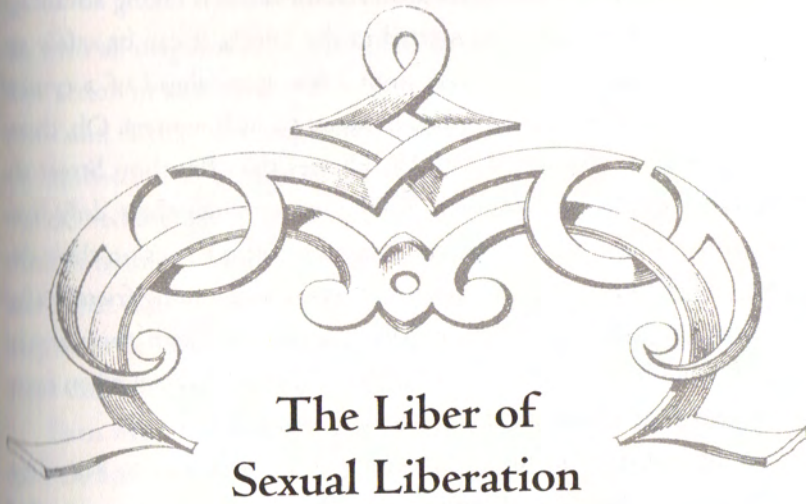
When the alarm awakens and somewhat shocks you, and you reach to turn it off, you will catch a glowing view of your sigil. Let the image imprint on your eyes for a few seconds and then turn the paper over.

Shut off the black light and gaze out into the abyss around you. As the sigil image fades from your retina, know that it is drifting off into the dark matter. Do not think about what the sigil represents, only passively observe it fading away.

Go back to sleep.

In the morning, dispose of the sigil without looking at it again.

With either of these methods, go on with your normal life for the next few days without thinking about the sigil or the desire it represents. You may be surprised by how soon your need manifests.



The Liber of Sexual Liberation

Good boy meets good girl and waits until marriage for a good time. This line probably sounds more mythical today than one describing faeries and unicorns. That is, at least the latter beings are found represented in merchandise and movies. The good boy and girl paradigm doesn't even exist in fiction any more.

What a wonderful accomplishment.

Sex is, after all, a part of life—and one that comes in various forms. No matter what form of sex you enjoy, never let anyone tell you there's something wrong with an experience shared between consenting partners of legal age. Premarital sex is the kind of issue that polarizes religious groups and, even more controlling, governmental bodies (think red states, in particular). Trying to stop premarital sex is also what makes such groups seem so antiquated, and what makes it less likely these groups will have much support in years to come.

While each year more of the mainstream world is taking advantage of the sexual revolution that started in the 1960s, it can be safely argued that nightkind have always been a few steps ahead of a typical mundane-minded individual when it comes to such matters. Oh, those who seem more concerned with Wall Street than Bourbon Street do have temptations and fantasies. They just structure their *daily* lives around day-world limitations, and can never seem to act on their desires. While a night of group sex is not so unusual among friends who frequent edgy clubs together and are comfortable with their sexual identities, it's hardly the sort of thing you expect to happen when executives and their wives meet for dinner at a classy bistro.

Nightkind have an unfair advantage when it comes to sexuality. Unfair, isn't it? You almost have to feel sorry for the daytime-minded people who shut themselves off to the energies available as they sleep, and whose blind acceptance of "proper" behaviors leads to complete frustration.

Lurkers in the dark are used to thinking against the social grain. Yet it's not just their willingness to be different that gives nightkind the edge in sexual situations. True children of the night have a more romantic nature and are more attuned not only to their desires and dreams, but to those of others as well. And it is others whom you really want encounters with, no?

The pages you're about to read do not deal with any forms of . . . solitary sex. Nor does this section deal with only sexuality itself, just as sigil creation wasn't just about drawing unusual pictures. Sex in this *Nocturnicon* is about using a wonderful, powerful experience to fuel your dark rites. Best of all, for most of the sex magick given here, your partner or partners don't even need to be aware of anything occult going on at all.

Whether you're in a monogamous or open relationship or marriage, or a confirmed free soul roaming the sexual nightscape, you will be able to benefit from using the power of sex to aid your magickal goals.

Before an Encounter

As with all magickal rites, the actual work begins before you take that first action in an altered state of mind. In ancient grimoires, preparing tools and fasting were important parts of a rite, beginning one's mental connection to the working and in effect beginning the creation of the desired thoughtform. Something similar holds true for sex magick, though fasting is hardly necessary, and there's very little "tool preparation" that can be done hours beforehand. Two very important magickal steps can be taken before you venture out on the prowl, so to speak. Let's deal with the first one right now.

Even when not trying a magickal feat, people take for granted just how difficult it may be to think clearly during sex. Before you are in another's arms, you really need to have firmly decided what your magickal goal is. In fact, it's best to have it already germinating as a magickal seed.

The following rite will begin your magick for you while you're still in full command of your senses. To begin, all you need to do is form a statement of desire about what you hope to achieve with your rite. Follow the same rules used to create a sigil (see *Blazing Intent* if you need a refresher or are reading out of sequence). Make it four or five words maximum; sentence fragments are okay.

So that you can take advantage of psychic quiet time, this rite should preferably be done one night before your planned sexual encounter, though a few nights beforehand is fine, too. If possible, this rite should be performed in the nude, to establish a subconscious link between the feeling of being nude and the desire for your magickal need. Since you will be sitting on the floor nude, you may want to have a mat on hand for comfort. You'll also need a small pad of paper, a pen, and a lighted candle.

Preparing the Thoughtform

Begin by performing your dark opening rites in the nude. Sit cross-legged on the floor.

Write down your short statement of desire, then begin to reduce it in size by removing redundant letters.

Now, letting your altered state guide you, rearrange a few letters to end up with a pronounceable word or a few words of power. Copy your finalized word or phrase of power to another sheet of paper in large letters.

Position the paper near the candle on the floor (in front of you) in such a way that you can easily read the word or phrase.

Close your eyes and take a deep breath, feeling and mentally seeing the purple sphere in your chest becoming excited and enlarged. Hold the breath for as long as you can.

Exhale when you must, visualizing and feeling a beam of purple, crackling energy firing directly down your spine and toward your genitals. Hold this empty lung state for as long as you can, really feeling and seeing little sparks of purple electricity dancing all over your genitals.

Repeat the process of drawing in and moving down energy, being sure to hold your breath for as long as possible at each exhale and inhale. Try to feel even more intensity in the energy each time.

Begin the process a third time by inhaling and trying to feel even more energy present in your chest sphere. Imagine that, in its swollen size, it is almost coming out of your core.

Hold your breath to the point of exhaustion and exhale, firing an intense beam of energy at your genitals again. This time, open your eyes during the exhalation.

Look at the word or phrase of power and recite it out loud. With the last bit of your exhalation, feel the energy swirling around your groin while simultaneously radiating down your thighs and up your belly.

As you breathe normally again, continue staring at the phrase with intensity. Allow the crackling and tingling feelings in your genitals to linger. After a minute or so, flip the paper over, hiding your phrase from view. Close your eyes and meditate for a few moments, visualizing yourself having whatever it is you are asking for in your statement of desire.

When you've excited yourself with the possibilities, end the rite by picking up the paper and leaving the room. Do not look at the phrase of desire again this night!

Getting Out of the Routine

The second sex magick preparation to undertake is not done in a ritual setting. This one is done in the physical and social world, and relies more on charm and cunning. It's also a bit of a gamble in that you won't always be able to make this kind of preparation days in advance.

Before we get ahead of ourselves, though, let's identify this essential preparation. All the magick in this *Nocturnicon* relies heavily on psychodrama for success. Yet believe it or not, just using a sex act to fuel a magickal desire does not guarantee psychodrama. If you've fallen into some kind of routine with a partner, and you are beginning to find this routine to be ho-hum (as the word "routine" usually implies in sexuality), then your magick will probably not work.

It's not just the feeling and actual energy of orgasm you'll be using in your rite. It's also the excitement of something different or extra special in the bedroom that will provide the right amount of psychodrama for the charging of your prepared statement of desire and ultimately the thoughtform you will create.

If you're in a committed relationship with no understood "open" clause in your virtual couple contract, you shouldn't use the need for something new as an excuse to go out and cheat. Whether you believe in karma or not is irrelevant, and this book is no treatise on ethics. Speaking strictly here from an occult perspective: you shouldn't cheat, because you're likely to have anxiety about it, and this anxiety will impair the effectiveness of your rite.

Those in a committed relationship will have to find a way to suggest something different and mutually appealing. It doesn't even have to be a sex act that is totally new to you and your partner. A certain position or act that you seldom get to enjoy, but really do enjoy, should suffice. Let your imagination run free on this account.

I could provide suggestions or hints as to what I consider different and exhilarating, but what sparks me may have no interest to you. And besides, when suggesting the truly naughty, I'd hate for anyone to think I was stereotyping due to my personal attractions or "Greek" heritage.

Finding something extra special to set apart an encounter is, of course, much easier if it's your first time with a particular person. Planning a sex magick rite for such a first time is a terrific idea, as the encounter itself will be something new and likely dramatic. The only caveat is that if you're overly sentimental and really care for this person, you might have worries of your first time together being tainted by some rite. This could manifest into another kind of guilty feeling, and could be just as hazardous to a rite's success as is guilt from cheating. If you feel that a first time should be special, save the magick for the second time, which should still be new enough an experience on its own to guarantee sufficient psychodrama.

Planning for an encounter with someone new is never foolproof. You may be ready for magick on a given club night, for instance, but your yet-to-be-chosen partner may never manifest. Even if you go to a place where singles frequent, and go there on a rainy night (when only those who *really* want to get out show up), the mating dance still awaits with all its possible pitfalls. There are mystical ways to stack the odds in your favor, of course. While tips for scanning a room to find someone who digs you are beyond the scope of this book, you might want to check the mind reading sections of *Nocturnal Witchcraft* and *Gothic Grimoire* for some added assistance.

Sensuality in Numbers

Besides trying a new or seldom used act, or trying any act with someone new, there is a guaranteed way to boost not only psychodrama but the energy level in a room as well: group sex. Setting up an encounter with multiple partners is not always the easiest feat, but it has its benefits.

As for psychodrama, threesomes, foursomes, or "moresomes" all but scream out to you that something special is happening. They're

rarely something you'd consider humdrum. In fact, they can be the most exciting sexual experiences imaginable—as long as you find the idea appealing, of course. The stereotype is that all guys want two girls and most girls want one special guy, but stereotypes are just that.

For best results, you want a magickal group sex encounter when you're single or free to have open experiences. It is possible, of course, to involve a longterm partner and work out all the jealousy issues and ground rules. But the chances for such a dicey situation to play out exactly as planned are not good, and any problems that arise will negatively affect your ritual . . . not to mention your relationship.

Occultists have long believed that orgasms emit real energy into the universe, and it's safe to say this is true. Having multiple people experiencing such highs creates a tangibly pulsing room where magickal success becomes all but inevitable. Also, having multiple people involved in multiple actions can provide much-needed lulls when you can prepare for the magickal parts of the night, while still observing something that will maintain your interest, so to speak.

The Most Important Preparation

After you have prepared your word or phrase of desire, and determined what it is about your forthcoming sexual experience that will make it truly a standout, dramatic event, you're ready to get on to, well, getting it on. You'll need to bring the phrase you created with you, folded up so you don't look at it yet. You'll also need to remember that sex acts these days are rarely safe without a little common sense and protection.

Unless you're a fool who wishes for your own untimely demise, as well as the deaths of others—and there's nothing romantic about loving death with a lowercase *d*—there's no excuse for practicing unsafe sex. Getting HIV and eventually AIDS is still a very real possibility, even if the disease has taken on less headline power in the new millennium. The verdict is still out on whether oral sex and certain other activities are HIV-safe, but that's irrelevant. There are plenty of other diseases that are 100 percent proven to be transmittable by any kind of

genital contact. If you go bareback, so to speak, you can catch a variety of sexually transmitted infections that at the very least will cause you discomfort. Worse, some of them may make your "equipment" rather undesirable to others. In the realm of the occult, warts should remain on fictional witches' noses, for instance!

Someone may modify the advice in this book and, for instance, cheat on a spouse during a ritual to fuel some sinister thoughtform with anger and guilt. I can't stop creativity. However, do not mess with the safe-sex advice just given. Unless you're in a committed relationship with clean bills of health fueling you and your partner's desires, take whatever precautions you can. It's not just the blood drinkers in the world of nightkind who may be risking it all for some quick pleasure.

Be extra careful during group sex, as not every intimate contact is easy to control. Also, take extra care when excess alcohol is involved. The great inhibition remover also does away with a good bit of common sense.

Let the psychodrama come from the partner or partners you're with, or from the situation itself. Don't make unsafe sex the thrill that fuels your rite!

Setting the Mood

With the most important considerations taken care of, you're ready for the magickal night. If you have previous access to the room where the encounter will occur (for example, if you're going back to your place), there are some preparations you can make that will enhance the rite. A colored, dim light source is perhaps the most powerful. Filling a room with a soft reddish tint will do wonders for enhancing the psychodrama and actual energy of an encounter. A low-watt bulb used for a dark room is ideal. But the usual soft candle light will always suffice.

A little incense goes a long way, too. While you will not be telling your partner or partners that a sex magick rite will be occurring, there's nothing suspect about incense, and it will help remind you that some-

thing occult will happen. Also, the smoke will help everyone achieve a slightly altered state without trying. Any smell that feels mystical to you is ideal, but do not use a heavy scent that will just give everyone headaches. Some people claim sandalwood is notorious for this, but only you can verify what bothers you, or pleases you for that matter.

If you have no access to the room beforehand, do your best to set a special, or at least different, mood. The right music choice alone might do it. Everything from a dramatic melancholy movie soundtrack to a driving industrial album can be used, depending on how you and your partner feel that night.

During the Throes

Keep the paper with your magickal phrase handy. Right before you get too involved in foreplay, you should take one look at the paper and be sure you know the made-up phrase by heart. Slip away to the bathroom or another room to do this. Reading from a paper, as if you're memorizing lines, might raise a few too many questions.

Again, under no circumstances should you tell your partner that you are about to perform sex magick. Two or more people can do sex magick consciously, of course, but that requires working together over a period of nights or weeks to get certain techniques and timing just right. The following technique is for when you need superior results in a hurry.

Let the fact that you're keeping this one secret from your partner do one of two things: enhance your excitement (consider it innocent, victimless naughtiness) or not enter your mind at all. Do not let it become an issue of ethics in your mind. Millions of people around the world are imagining Hollywood figures when making love and not telling their less attractive partners. You're doing something far more flattering. You're using the excitement your partner provides to fuel something awe-inspiring.

He or she would be flattered . . . if you were only able to tell.

The Secret Sex Rite

Take one good private look at your phrase of power, then hide the paper. Make sure you've memorized the phrase, but do not think about the goal connected to it. The link to your goal was established in the preparatory rite. You only need to remember the phrase.

Consider foreplay to be an opening rite of sorts. You don't want the entire sexual encounter to be about the magick that's about to happen. If you're sure you memorized your phrase of power, don't think about magick at all for a while and just enjoy yourself. Be "there" for your partner—not on a mental drift.

When it seems you are about ready to get to the heart of whatever sexual act you are counting on for the most psychodrama, quickly imagine that your dark sphere is around you. Do this in two steps, without taking away from any intensity building in the room.

First, just know that you can see the dark sphere around you. Second, listen or feel for at least some of the signs that you've become accustomed to when dealing with the abyss: hearing swishing or whispering noises is the most common sign. Under normal ritual circumstances, you may occasionally feel as if light touches are made to your skin, but this is less likely to register amidst embraces, kisses, and nibbles, obviously!

With the acceptance of your dark sphere's presence, try to continue with your main sex act, while maintaining at least some awareness of the sphere's presence. For example, you should be as aware of the sphere as you are of the color of the room's walls, but not as aware of it as you'd be if you were trying to read some graffiti written on the walls. Again, just know the sphere is there.

When you feel you are getting close to orgasm, imagine the presence of the purple sphere in your chest. Do not try to excite it using breathing techniques. Instead, really take in what is happening to you sexually. Allow any adoration you feel for your partner's body to well up. Allow what she or he is saying or moaning to carry you into higher

levels of excitement. Maintaining an awareness of that energy core while reveling in the sexual moment will provide the necessary subconscious link to the magickal processes you need.

Try to hold back your orgasm to the point of agony. With one last image of the purple energy core clearly in your mind's eye, allow yourself to orgasm, mentally screaming the phrase of power (but don't really scream it, obviously!).

As the waves of pleasure overtake you, try to hear or imagine the one mental pronunciation of your phrase echoing out into the abyss. Feel the borders of the dark sphere around you, vibrating in perfect time with the pulses you're feeling.

Then, think nothing more of the magick you just accomplished. Focus all your attention back to your partner and enjoy the rest of your night together.

If possible, later on in the night, try to secretly dab a little bit of your or your partner's sexual fluid (or both) onto the paper that hides your phrase of power. You can open the fold to do so, but do not read the phrase written inside.

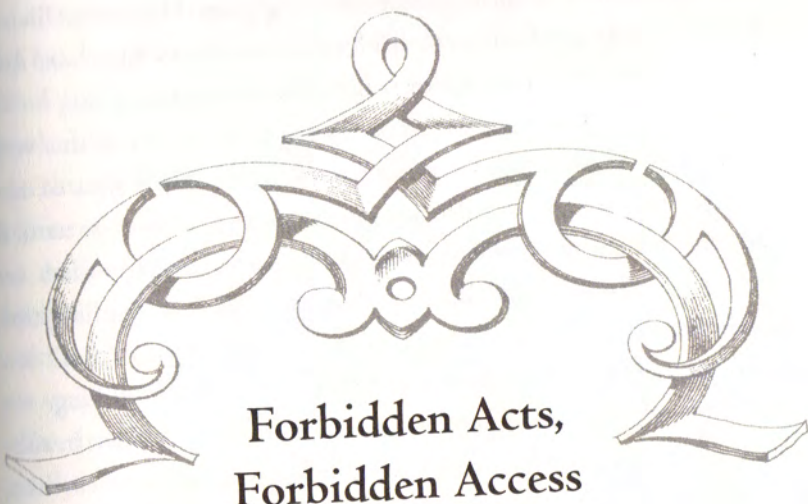
Use caution when working with sexual fluids, of course. Some STIs can be transmitted through such contact, especially if you end up touching your fingers to your eyes, mouth, or someplace else. Try to dab without direct contact if possible. Wash your hands afterward, just to be safe.

A night or two later, you should burn the paper with the phrase of power written on it. Do so without ever opening and looking at the writing again. If you were able to wet the paper after the rite, it will definitely be dry and flammable by now.

While it's not necessary, you might want to burn the paper within a dark sphere. You won't need to think about the actual burning of a "dabbed" paper—just drop it into a censer of some sort.

If you weren't able to wet and charge the paper, burn it in a dark sphere a night or two later anyway. Only, add a quick visualization of the most exciting part of your encounter as you watch the flames engulf the paper.

Regardless of whether the paper was dabbed or not, do not think of the phrase itself or the magickal goal behind it when burning the paper.



Forbidden Acts, Forbidden Access

Never, ever perform a magickal ritual under the influence of drugs or alcohol—

Sorry about that. The author of *Nocturnicon* must have left quill and parchment unattended for a moment. You never know when an overly cautious spirit will take an opportunity to censor a work in progress. And they have a point, too. Unfettered by flesh and waking consciousness, the etheric forms shambling in the dark abyss have constant access to the unseen world. Why would they need any help reaching it?

You probably have constant access to the unseen world as well, right?

Didn't think so.

Let us return then to the disquieting, but not disingenuous, discourse planned for these pages, shall we? Let us have the line that was really supposed to open up this chapter:

*Never, ever waste a perfectly good altered state of awareness,
no matter how it was induced.*

It had to be said. The burning times are long gone. The fear of being accused of stealing babies for their blood is too silly to entertain. Admitting a few naughty occult secrets now should be okay.

Most of the great adepts of history are winking at you this very moment from the shadows. Aleister Crowley is raising a glass of absinthe, surrounded by so-called primitive shamans with their natural plant-based entheogens. The phantoms of entire occult orders are wondering if you're just a hallucination or real, and then recalling that it doesn't matter either way. They can see you, and that's all that's important to the psychodramatic adventures they're currently having.

You'd be right to argue that at least a few who have dabbled in substance-aided mysticism have ended up as specters far before their time. Yet the potential for abuse is no reason to immediately discount a proven path to success. Do a little anthropological research and you'll find that the mystic elders of many ancient societies wisely used entheogens and suffered no premature ill fate. That's why they were called elders!

Note the word "entheogen," by the way. It's literally something that brings you closer to the gods. That's a good thing, right?

The righteous few reading these words are getting all enraged prematurely, jumping to incorrect conclusions. We're not talking about highly addictive substances here. Interestingly enough, most of the addictive chemicals are pretty useless in ritual. Heroin, for example, will leave you resembling more of an etheric blob than someone in command of the etheric. Cocaine will just have you racing around your dark sphere, building a pretty useless burst of undirected energy from your own frenzy.

While the title and subject matter of this dark tome act as insulators against most of the unreasonable goody-goodies, here's a shocker for them and even for many lovely nightkind with open minds:

One of the substances described in this chapter has actually been proven to cure addictions to dangerous drugs like cocaine and heroin.

More on that later, but it's not really the point. For now, please take my hand with an open mind and don't listen to the warnings that have filled politically correct magick books for nearly half a century. This book is concerned with magick that gets immediate results, and that can change lives—it is not concerned with mediocre methods that take a lifetime.

And, of course, the publisher and author can't be held responsible for those who break their local laws. This chapter merely describes how certain substances affect magickal mindsets. Some of the substances are quite legal in many areas. Some are not. You'd be wise to act on the rules that apply in your locale—no need to sample all the treats in the candy store to satisfy a sweet tooth.

Remember, too, the line that is the theme of this section. It states quite clearly that you shouldn't waste any altered state, chemically induced or otherwise. Nowhere will this text urge you to get into such a chemically induced state with something that's illegal to possess. One of the substances is legal to buy everywhere—another is legal to own anywhere. Another couple of them are—well, not so much legal. Those are just described, though. Any way you read it, this text will nowhere encourage you to do anything illegal.

Why invite a new Inquisition and new Burning Times? Especially when we got away with all that stuff about kissing the devil's hindquarters and offering up human sacri—

Unguarded quill and parchment again. Sorry.

The Elixir of Long Life

One mystical substance every occultist should consider trying is legal everywhere. And while the author has been accused of using it often for non-mystical purposes, and the author's accusers are absolutely correct, every dark explorer is allowed to have a favorite vice. Put less formally: I like it, so there. Besides, having a vice or two will separate you from the anal-retentive purists who never seem to actually experience anything.

The legal substance we're discussing, if you're of legal drinking age, is glorious Chartreuse. Mini disclaimer aside, get your hands on some as soon as possible. It's the closest you're likely to get to drinking an authentic alchemical elixir without spending a few years studying the use of horrifying-looking chemical apparatus.

Brewed only by an order of monks in France, from which it takes its name, Chartreuse is for the most part based on an ancient alchemical manuscript. Called the *Elixir of Long Life*, the manuscript was given to the monks as a gift in 1605. It's unclear how old this manuscript and its bizarre formula were by the time the monks received it from an artillery marshall of Henri IV's army. What we do know is that the mixture of herbs and other ingredients was so complex that it was for the most part incomprehensible and unusable by the small branch monastery in Vauvert that received it.

When the manuscript finally made its way to the order's main building in Grenoble in 1737, the apothecary there was able to understand its complexities. This man, Frère Jerome Maubec, was able to brew the elixir. And the first version of Chartreuse elixir was sipped with what mystical expectations? We'll never know.

Suspended in 71 percent alcohol by volume, the mixture of secret herbs and other ingredients was sold in tiny bottles to nearby villages as a tonic for general health and well-being. At 142 proof, however, more than a few people were probably quick to realize other uses for the tasty green liquid. In 1764 a version in larger bottles with a lower alcohol content was created, bringing green, 110 proof Chartreuse to the world. A yellow, 80 proof Chartreuse would be introduced seventy-four years later—it was sweeter and milder.

While some periods of political turmoil affected the creation of Chartreuse on and off for the next two hundred or so years, the version bottled by Chartreuse Diffusion in Voiron, France, since the 1970s is believed to be very similar to the original alchemical manuscript, containing over one hundred and thirty ingredients known only

to three working monks at any given time. A small amount of Chartreuse each year is chosen for extra care and aging, and is released as *Viellissement Exceptionnellement Prolongé* or V. E. P. Chartreuse. This amazing stuff comes in a wooden box and is quite smooth, but does cost around three times as much as ordinary green Chartreuse.

The idea of only three monks knowing the secret formula for Chartreuse at any given time greatly adds to the mystery of the drink. Not all monks surrender the secrets to death, however. Apparently, some do leave the order for other spiritual pursuits.

I met one of these former monks who is now a priest in Manhattan and happens to visit an upscale bar in Gramercy that carries the V. E. P. version of the liqueur. Seemingly moments from getting at least some little-known information on the mysterious drink, I was politely told that he couldn't be affiliated with "someone so well-known for occult practices and speaking with the dead." While I'm flattered at the recognition, it was a little disappointing to lose the chance at a little extra firsthand knowledge about the mysterious liqueur.

Maybe "firsthand" on that occasion is the wrong word, as I get plenty of firsthand experience every time I drink the wonderful elixir, and so can you. While the alcohol content may still be considered strong for some at 110 proof, it quickly becomes clear as your sobriety vanishes that it's not just an alcohol high that carries you away. Assuming you're not such a lightweight that a shot or two messes you up, you will notice that something in Chartreuse brings about a different sensation than that of other hard liqueurs.

That is, as long as you don't get drunk too quickly on the alcohol, you will find that a different kind of buzz awaits you. It might take a few times to build up the tolerance to the unexpectedly strong pure grain alcohol inside, but you will definitely notice something else happening if you drink enough Chartreuse.

What this something else is differs between people who experience it. How will the herbs and plants in Chartreuse affect you? You're absorbing

a variety of energies and chemicals when you drink this elixir. It can be argued that its ingredients energize parts of you, while the alcohol possibly tires other parts if you drink yourself into a stupor.

Besides just enjoying it on the rocks, I use Chartreuse in an occult fashion before undertaking a rite that's designed to get inspiration from the night or the abyss. For me, drinking around six ounces of the liqueur over a half-hour preparation period puts me in just the right state where I can sense the benefits of the herbs. I usually divide this amount of the elixir into three two-ounce drinks and add ice. However, I'm six foot, six inches tall, and have a higher tolerance than most (recreation has its benefits). You'll have to be your own best judge when determining how much you can ingest . . . and actually keep inside you!

If you drink it on the rocks, note how the water from the melting ice swirls into the Chartreuse. Sometimes, you can just dim the lights and position a candle, or something close enough to the glass to give a faint glow, to see these swirls. Scrying Chartreuse in this manner—while under its very influence—can have some impressive results.

Sometimes, I catch myself scrying unintentionally when in a dimly lit bar that makes me comfortable enough to let a vision come naturally. While such a trance never comes over me at a bright, noisy place—like the one where a certain priest visits—the dark setting of an older bar in Manhattan or New Orleans does, often, do the trick. If you reach the point where you're effortlessly scrying with Chartreuse, try to do it only at home, if possible—unless you're with someone you trust, or at a place where you're known.

Another feeling that sometimes comes on is the chills. This can be a useful sensation for some types of rites designed to evoke extreme psychodrama, but the chills are also a sign that you might be on the brink of going too far during a drinking session.

Will the Elixir of Long Life make you live forever? I've yet to meet someone who can claim that, and the monks who know the secret for-

mula are replaced every so often. We can assume "long life" was just a gee-whiz saying favored by an unknown alchemist. Yet, we can also assume that any alchemist skilled enough to create a formula that baffled all but the most skilled apothecaries years later, must have known what he was doing.

The mystery of what Chartreuse may or may not be bringing to your body and mind is part of its magick.

Before we move on to the next mystical liqueur, a word of caution is in order: strong alcohol can make you quite ill either that night or the next day.

Carefully ease into drinking the liqueurs that follow, going an extra ounce or two each time you set out to drink. You may even have to stay at a certain level for a long period of time—every body has its limits. It's wise to remember that alcohol can catch up to you as well. Upon first use of a drink unfamiliar to your body, go sparingly and see how the alcohol shifts your system as time wears on. The idea is to feel the buzz that's not alcohol alone, without having foamy green liquid come right back up. The latter is not a very mystical experience, obviously.

If you feel a little chilly and woozy the next day, try some Pernod (another herbal) with soda water on the rocks. It just works, I don't know why.

Seeing (The) Green (Fairy)

A slotted spoon is placed on a glass. On it rests a cube of sugar. Some greenish liquid is poured over the cube, just barely rounding the top corners. A little chilled water comes next, nearly finishing off the sugar cube, which is just tipped into the glass and stirred with the slotted spoon anyway. The louche liquid turns a cloudy, yellowish green.

Chances are you've seen the ritual in at least one movie or TV show, or perhaps you just read about it. So exotic is this preparation that surely it must be building up to something magical. And in the truest sense of the word "ritual," the preparation of a glass of absinthe does exactly that.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, this anise-flavored herbal became a favorite among writers, musicians, artists, and, not unexpectedly, occultists. More than just a strong liqueur (versions often exceeded 140 proof), absinthe contains wormwood and other narcotic herbs . . . some are even mildly poisonous. What these herbs share in common is *thujone*—the chemical that makes absinthe an experience worth having.

The aforementioned artists and seekers of inspiration would drink absinthe in hopes of freeing their imagination: van Gogh, Toulouse Lautrec, Oscar Wilde—all may arguably owe some of their creations to *La Fée Verte* or the Green Fairy. Not to say that they weren't talented individuals. I guarantee that drinking absinthe won't provide the brush technique of van Gogh or the uncanny wit of Oscar Wilde. Rather, absinthe provided a ritualistic way to open up the genius inside. People do all sorts of things to unwind. For artistic types, why not unwind with something that noticeably jumpstarts your imagination.

During the time period of these giants, absinthe was rather strong. The thujone level in the drink exceeded a ratio of thirty parts per million (ppm) or milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg). Some believe the thujone level might have been as high as 260 mg/kg. Put simply, a glass would allow the narcotic effects to kick in quickly. As with Chartreuse, absinthe is a substance where you race against your reaction to excessive alcohol content in hopes of feeling something from the other ingredients. A hundred years ago, it wasn't much of a race. The thujone won every time, bringing on states of euphoria and ideas so vivid that it almost made sense to believe there was a green fairy granting them from within the bottle.

Unfortunately, the thujone's dominance over a drinker's physiology may not have been temporary. Scientists continue to argue whether thujone caused any manner of nervous disorders, but we'll never be sure today. The "good stuff" was outlawed in many countries in the early 1900s.

While the US still doesn't allow the sale of real absinthe, the liqueur flows freely—legally—in Europe, with a mildly enforced thujone-level limitation. The so-called "safe versions" of absinthe are 10 mg/kg in Europe, but stronger versions, even if the legalities are not so clear, can be found. To prevent legal trouble, most distillers keep the thujone to 10 mg/kg or less. Because of this low concentration, most people who drink absinthe today are let down. Where are the visions of past lives, as in Coppola's *Dracula* film? Where are the floating green swirls and fairy in Ozzy Osbourne's voice, a la *Moulin Rouge*? Especially that last one!

The good news is that if absinthe ever did cause people to go insane, you won't be getting the amounts of thujone that past drinkers received: van Gogh could have been drinking 260 mg/kg or more of thujone when he cut his ear off. We'll never know. But taking a look at the lifestyles of some other supposed absinthe victims, it becomes likely that syphilis-induced madness might be to blame for some "documented" cases of absinthe abusers gone haywire.

Again, most of today's absinthe is absolutely safe—some say too safe. And as someone who still manages to score 20–60 mg/kg-rated bottles on a regular basis, I can safely say that even the harder-to-find stuff doesn't cause insanity. The only voices I ever clearly hear in my head are, most assuredly, during an evocation!

Hope is not lost for Americans who want to experience the magic in their magickal journey. You need one of two things: a friend in Europe willing to send a locally obtained bottle to you, or a credit card and a little bit of luck.

As for the credit card technique, it turns out there's a fun little legal loophole in the US. While you're not allowed to sell or buy absinthe here, the law isn't defined one way or the other about whether you are allowed to own or possess it. Interesting, no? Several companies online provide ways to order absinthe with overseas transactions. The tricky part is sometimes your bottle gets confiscated by Customs, and you get a lovely note in the empty box telling you so (no further disciplinary action is taken). You can imagine that those bastards are enjoying your pricey bottle, too, which is the worst part, trust me.

To avoid a hundred-dollar (or more) letdown, look for the companies that use couriers. That is, even though you place the order overseas, some companies use local couriers in the US to actually ship you the bottle. Works like a charm.

When shopping, throw at least a little caution to the wind and try to get a bottle with a higher than "safe" concentration of thujone. About a third of brands actually list the concentration numbers on the label, though you can't see the label too clearly on a website. Some vendors require a little online digging to find the information you want, but most ordering sites mention the thujone concentration of each bottle. Some even group their wares by concentration—dark blessings upon them for making it so easy!

If you're fortunate enough to find one of the higher thujone-concentration bottles, take caution on your first sitting. Have only one (small) drink to see what happens. To prepare your first glass using the technique described at the start of this chapter, use about 1.5 ounces of absinthe and 5.5 ounces of water.

Another way to go is to put a little water in a glass, then pour only absinthe over a slotted spoon and sugar cube. Ignite the wet cube with a match or lighter and immediately stir the spoon into the mixture in the glass. I find the burning technique is better for a quick hit, and the slower pouring technique tastes better for gradual sipping. Whichever way you prepare it, make your first absinthe glass a sipping experience.

What can you expect from the Green Fairy in reality? As always in the realms of mystical experience, don't rely on Hollywood for accurate information. An absinthe with a low concentration of thujone will be no match for another race against the effects of alcohol. Expect a feeling of enhanced clarity before the drunkenness sets in. Maybe some strange sensations such as being hyperaware of every nerve-ending in your body. If you're lucky, you might experience a feeling of swimming through the ether.

Experiment with how much low-grade absinthe it takes to make you feel something useful in a mystical sense. Learn when you need to stop to avoid those insanely awful absinthe hangovers (Pernod and soda water works for these, too). Just a little extra creativity flowing might be a boon when designing rituals. A little absinthe goes a long way when listening to the abyss, as well.

What if you score a high-grade bottle, however? Ah, then the possibilities open up. The race against alcohol becomes less of an issue. That first experimental glass might very well be all it takes to grant you at least a glimpse of something in the shadows surrounding you. A glass of high-grade absinthe makes scrying an amazing experience, especially if you've ever gotten crystal or mirror gazing to work for you in the past.

Some of the letdowns that people have with absinthe are caused by nothing more than their unfair expectations of it. The liquid won't do all of the work for you. If you want it to contribute to your visions, take advantage of your unique occult abilities that are developing. Even if all you've done are a few of the preparatory rites from this book, you're likely to have a visible or audible experience with the drink.

One of the reasons artists loved and love the drink so much is that they are used to tapping into their imaginations. Any visualization abilities that painters and writers relied on were endowed with extra "juice," thanks to the green juice.

If you consider yourself an explorer of the unseen world or the imagination—both of which touch and blend with each other—then

you owe it to yourself to try at least some form of thujone-containing absinthe. Avoid the knockoffs, like absente, where the wormwood and magic are decidedly “absent.”

DMT and DPT—Heaven and Hell

One exists in nature, and is even found in small amounts in the human body. The other substance is a manmade variation. Both are members of the same family of chemicals, yet will take you on journeys in opposite directions of the unseen universe. More on that in a moment. Proper introductions have yet to be made.

Dear reader, please meet dimethyltryptamine (DMT) and dipropyltryptamine (DPT). Naturally existing DMT can provide a trip to pleasing vistas that both incorporate any mythology of heaven you believe in and introduce new elements you'd never believe you could dream up on your own. With DPT, on the other hand, the journey is often far more sinister in tone. This chemical, though wrought by man in the last century, can bring on what resembles Biblical visions of Hell for some. For others, DPT lets its para-nature show by granting glimpses into seemingly alien realms of fright.

Depending on the explorer and the amount of the chemical used in a sitting, both substances may continue to grant some minor hallucinatory experiences for a day or two after their use. Some users have even claimed they never looked at the world the same way again, realizing finally just how delicate the balance is between something that's tangible and something that is merely visible.

The argument has been made that substances either containing DMT or chemicals similar to it may have been responsible for the creation of religion. Having a DMT experience will make it clear why this argument has come up. The “trip” comes on as if a switch is thrown, and there's no time for you to try and call on preexisting mythologies for visual assistance. What you see comes seemingly from *elsewhere*, and almost always appears to be from something higher. The experience is often complete with the feeling of flying up to meet greater powers.

As someone who has been on visionary experiences with and without the aid of substances, I can say that there is definitely an unseen world. I've seen it without even entering a trance of any kind. Despite DMT's existence in the body, there doesn't seem to be any mechanism designed for releasing extra bits of it into general neurological use. In other words, you can't make it multiply and provide you with self-contained highs, but you can still see the same kinds of things while on or off DMT.

So, even if DMT (or a cousin of it) was responsible for the first religious or magical experiences in history, it doesn't mean that these explorers went to a make-believe tripland unrelated to the occult world. In fact, having experimented with substances from this chapter (how's that for intentional vagueness?), I firmly believe that substances take us to the same places as traditional out-of-body experiences and the like.

When asked about the unseen world, I have said it repeatedly: seeing it—experiencing the occult—is a matter of shifting your perception by a minuscule amount. Substances definitely aid in that, shutting down some unnecessary background noise and enhancing unused resources of our brains. The doorway is then open. What you see as a result of a substance—the so-called hallucinations—may not truly be caused by the drug any more than the pictures on a movie theater screen are caused by the ticket collector in the lobby. He or she, and DMT or DPT, may just let you in.

Unlike the herbs in Chartreuse or absinthe, DMT and DPT cannot just be ingested to feel their effects. Here's an explanation of why, without letting this turn into a chemical discourse.

Our bodies contain an enzyme known as monoamine oxidase or MAO. While preventing excessive flow of neurotransmitters—an important function in the body under normal circumstances—MAO also prevents certain substances, including tryptamines, from having any effect when taken orally.

Certain antidepressants act as MAO inhibitors or MAOIs, allowing for a variety of ingestion forms without MAO getting in the way. MAOIs also exist in nature. What's fascinating about this is that, in at least one case, MAOIs form in the same plant as a hallucinogenic! Talk about nature providing for a pathway to the unseen world. The ayahuasca or yage plant's leaves contain a form of DMT, while its vine contains natural MAOIs, enabling a potion containing both to be easily manufactured. There's no evolutionary reason why this should be so in one plant. Evidence like this doesn't hurt the case for entheogens being responsible for the birth of religion, but it makes you wonder if higher beings purposely wanted entheogens to provide the doorway to religious realms.

To avoid MAO countereffects, DMT and DPT are most often smoked. In fact, even when smoking these substances, people claim increased effects with the addition of MAOIs. Because this section is not meant to encourage the actual use of an illegal substance, no details on DMT and DPT suggested doses will be given. Having read this far, however, you might have picked up on the idea that starting with low doses of any substance is wise when first experiencing it.

This section is also not a diary of DMT and DPT experiences. If you'd like a fascinating account of some of these, along with a look at how entheogens actually made someone begin to believe in the existence of the unseen world, get a copy of Daniel Pinchbeck's *Breaking Open the Head*. Reading it as an occultist is a fascinating experience on its own.

For now, consider that the intensity of DMT and DPT experiences is unlike anything you've ever experienced. What they show is rightly called more realistic than reality. Nothing in the real world looks as perfect and multidimensional as the visions from a good DMT or DPT trip. I like to think of it as evidence that we spend an eternity seeing with our soul's eyes, as opposed to less than a century of seeing

with the physical eyes. Which do you think our souls would consider the preferred way of seeing?

On the general thread of philosophical speculation, what do you suppose it means that natural DMT more often than not takes one to heavenly places, while manmade DPT can bring on the hellish? Note that in common experience, DPT visions are not ones that the user is unable to handle. Think of DPT as most likely to show you the sinister things you want to see, in a way. No one to my knowledge has come back a permanently drooling mess from DPT, looking like a doomed character from an H. P. Lovecraft tale.

Experiencing both substances within a period of a few hours, or even two consecutive nights, takes one on an unparalleled type of vision quest—a shamanic journey from angels to the arms of demons and back to the middle ground we live in. The user would have to decide on the order in which to make this round trip.

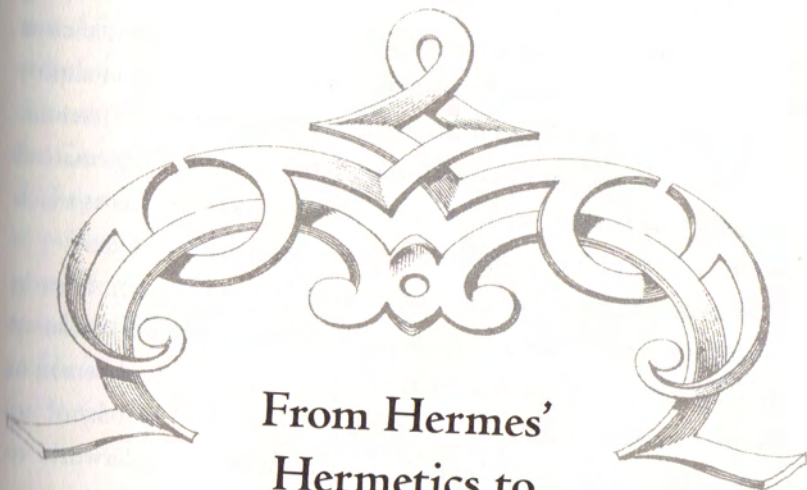
Even if only launching into one of the two realms, new users of DMT and DPT are always wise to have an experienced user with them when obtaining and using the substances. Sources of such items are not always forthcoming with just what they're selling, and new users could also use a hand getting their trip kicked off the right way. This is all applicable only if someone decided to try the substances, of course.

Using DMT or DPT is obviously foolish, right? After all, neither drug has ever been known to cause addiction. Tests have shown DMT even affects pleasure centers in a way that causes addicts of heroin or cocaine to have less cravings for either heroin or cocaine.

See? DMT and DPT should be outlawed!

Also, why would anyone want to take either drug when they're known to expand consciousness and perception of reality?

Yes, do keep away from DMT and DPT.



From Hermes' Hermetics to Hades' Hadetics

Ancient forces abound in *Nocturnicon*. The inner, atavistic, or latent powers used throughout this tome have been with humankind for millennia. The herbs and substances discussed contain hidden energies that predate our appearance on this planet. And, before creation there was the abyss.

Did the ancients take advantage of all the forces around them? The evidence that they did is overwhelming. Hardly any past culture is studied without coming across a vibrant religio-magical system. These beliefs must have been based on results, too, because separated even by thousands of miles, cultures all shared beliefs in similar beings and powers. They also had uncannily similar beliefs in the ultimate mystery—the fates we all share after death.

While it's unclear how systematic cultures were when developing their magick and folklore, the world's birthplace of philosophy, ancient Greece, was where many occult ideas began to be studied in an almost scientific fashion. For the ancient Greeks, there was no real differentiation between philosophy and science. Figuring out a mathematical equation for measuring large objects by shadow and ratio was as much the realm of the philosopher as was figuring out why we're here.

No usable data was ever discarded, either. If an inspiration came in a dream, it was taken just as seriously as if it were a distance measured with a ruler. If a solution to a problem was uttered by a dead person in a dream or waking vision, well then that was even more worthy of attention. The dead had to come all the way from the underworld to share a message with us, after all. And Hades isn't known for his generosity and easy open-door policies.

Before we deal a little with the ancient force known as "deity," and the place known as Hades, let us first acknowledge that most people attribute magical mysteries to another deity from the Greek Pantheon. . . .

Ever-Lovable Hermes

Hermes—the messenger of the gods—was a popular, benevolent god in a pantheon known for jealousy and other ugly human emotions. This messenger was more often attributed to the kind of wisdom thought to aid the magical arts than any other Greek god. His caducean wand is still the symbol of doctors, though it was more closely related to wise folk or witches at the time. His ability to bring messages to and wisdom from the gods is in essence the whole point of any theurgic or deity-related magick, even to this day.

The name of this magical god was attributed to a legendary philosopher from Egypt. Hermes Trismegistus (or Thrice Great Hermes) is believed to have created the famous Emerald Tablet, which contained the "Hermetic" axiom, "As above, so below." It takes little dwelling on the phrase to see how it polarizes magickal systems devoted to connecting with the Creator.

Whether a man with the name Hermes really existed is unimportant. His namesake, the "messenger god," represented an entire philosophy of mystical pursuit for millennia. For many, Hermetic magick is the only kind of magick worth considering. If it brings you closer to the Creator while alive, then it's worthwhile, right?

I agree. Hermeticism is very worthwhile, and very much something to pursue over the course of a lifetime. Just don't expect it to change your life today, tomorrow, or any time soon after that. For all the speed attributed to Hermes, depicted as he was with winged sandals and helmet, the magick named after him is not famous for providing quick results.

Moving a Little South of Hermes

This is not a Hermetic tome in the true meaning of the word. The dark forces you call upon in these pages will get you results in the near future. Further, even the most sentient of the forces you call upon do not much care for your overall spiritual development any more than a car battery cares if you eventually trick-out your engine. The forces of darkness are a power you can use right now.

As discussed in the beginning of this work, psychodrama gets you to an altered state, a place where you can access the mystical powers and energies you need to get the job done. And many of these energies are ancient, primarily because they were built up as thoughtforms long ago. Yet, not all magick is about taking energy A for result B.

Once in a while you want to find out something useful, which you can then apply to get immediate positive results. This is the whole point of divination, and is the reason psychic hotlines still rake in millions. People want information they can use now. Unfortunately, psychic hotlines are more likely to deplete one's resources than provide authentic information.

Information can be obtained with psychodramatic rituals, however. It's all a matter of providing the right setting and tapping into the right

thoughtforms. For information-gathering rites, we're going to look at the realms trusted by the ancient Greeks—lovers of information.

Necromantic rites of divination do have very practical applications, I assure you. In later chapters, we'll also look at how necromantic energies can be directly applied to your dark magicks.

So, instead of exploring the Hermetic, prepare to experience the Hadetic—the rites of Hades.

Hades: One Face of an Antihero

If you've read any Greek mythology, you know that Hades was not a popular guy. He stole the daughter of a goddess and tricked her into staying with him for half the year—a mythological explanation for winter. He took heroes before their time. He stole loves even from bards, robbing the world of their happy art. Taken at a glance, the actions of the Lord of the Underworld make him seem a perfect villain. Taking anything at a glance in the occult world is to take much for granted, of course.

Hades, mythical though he may be, represents a very real and quite misunderstood thoughtform. To understand him, think not of a scoundrel ready to trick you out of your mortality; think more of a being created to usher the souls of the living on to the next realm. Not a real relative of Zeus, Hades, like all manifestations of Death with a capital D, was created by us to make our transition easier to understand. When the ancient Greeks dreamt up Hades, they were trying to make sense of the senseless. As a side effect, they gave themselves a villain to keep the hands of the other gods clean.

Most, if not all, devout Christians and other monotheists have a difficult time with death. How could a loving God take away a loved one? An unexpected death of someone young, in particular, has been behind many a lost faith. The Greeks and other cultures who personified death as Death spared themselves such religious anguish. Blaming Death, not God, made life much easier to deal with.

By any name you know him or her, Death is very real now. Because of the Greek rites we'll be focusing on momentarily, we'll stick with the name Hades here. Yet any of the names Death has been called throughout history will act as a direct link to the massive, impending thoughtform. Consider that this thoughtform of intelligence behind the end of life has been expanded by most cultures up until recent, so-called scientific times. More people have seen Death's effects than they have felt compassion from any other deity or angelic being.

Also consider what types of moments over the centuries got people to think about Death (the being). The death of a loved one, for example, can be a traumatic and emotionally charged event. Nothing adds to this thoughtform more effectively than someone dealing with the grips of this kind of inherent psychodrama, unpleasant though it may be. Ironically, cursing Death only makes him or her more real and powerful.

With such power now amassed by Death, it almost seems foolish for an already dark-minded occultist to ignore the being and its energies. Theurgic or Hermetic pursuits can result in ultimate peace, happiness, and fulfillment in life, eventually. But wielding Hadetic forces will more quickly bring usable information and result in magickal changes.

Hadetic Magick

Anubis has always been one of my favorite primal personifications of Death, and he still is. However, during my crisis time, I began experimenting with some necromantic arts that were directly related to ancient Greece. Adding to this one of the rites I developed on my own, which had an antiheroic but human element, and I knew that I had to exclusively align myself with Hades to maximize the impact of it all—at least for a while.

Anyone with a standard or occult dictionary can quickly find out that the word "Hadetic" never existed on paper before I wrote these pages. It came to me as a way to codify some of the pursuits I was engaging in more and more often during a time of crisis. Considering the obvious parallel to Hermetic, and the fact that both are Greek in root,

I'm almost disappointed I didn't think of it earlier. Considering how it helped me at just the right time in my life, I'll stick to saying I'm "almost" disappointed in the delay.

Naming things is a magickal act. Naming something based on a preexisting magickal being gives it even more potency and significance—the energy is already pooled out there, awaiting your access. Also, naming something with a recognizable occult root better triggers your mind to enter an altered state. Lighting a candle and some incense and thinking of beginning a Hadetic rite is a lot more powerful than doing the same actions and calling it, say, "the accountant's opening."

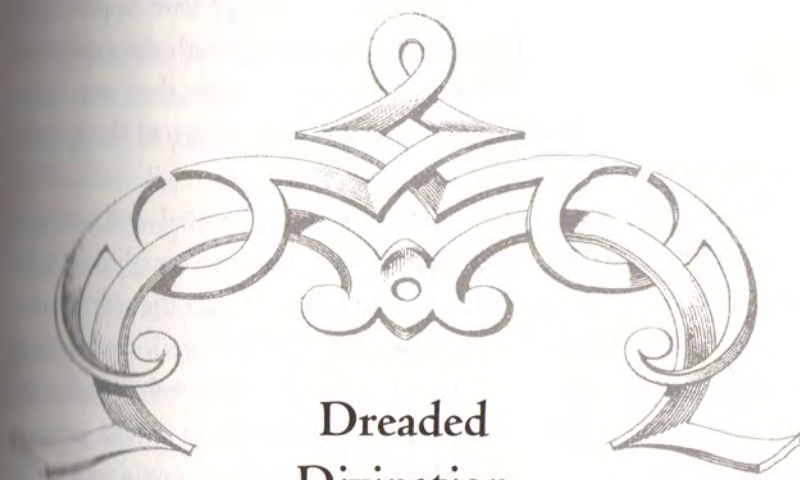
And now, sending the word "Hadetic" out into the more tangible world of print is yet another magickal act. We'll get into this much later on, when we speak of magickal tomes and the thoughtforms surrounding forbidden works. For now, know that as you and others read these pages and prepare to work with them, you are all helping each other manifest your Hadetic, magickal goals.

Armed with the knowledge that for all practical purposes Hades—the realm and the being—is real and accessible, you're just about ready to move on to the Hadetic magick itself. One more thing, though. And this is important:

To get the most of the Hadetic rites to follow, you have to allow yourself to act a little bit like the antihero himself.

Read a mythology tale or two if you're not clear on just who Hades is. While you won't be calling him to visible appearance or invoking him in a traditional sort of pagan rite, the psychodrama involved in the following rituals is very much enhanced by taking on an air of cockiness, combined with a touch of the sinister. These are not rites to be approached with meekness and humility. To work with the Hades realm, you must, on at least some level, try to feel like its master.

Any attempt to get in the Hades spirit, so to speak, will help. Again, read at least one Hades myth, but also try to read between the lines during the rites.



Dreaded Divination

When the ancient Greeks called upon the dead, they most often did so to acquire information. As true then as it is now, information can be the most useful tool to both magickal and mundane undertakings. Some Greeks undoubtedly used information for mundane matters, such as love or money, but legends are filled with Greeks, even kings, who solved major problems with otherworldly consultations.

How did so many people have access to the dead? Rather than set up do-it-yourself night classes for necromancers in training, Greeks would rely on a few individuals who specialized in reaching out to the other side. A seer who provided such a service was called a *nekuomanteia*, or “oracle of the dead.”

Imagine what a lovely job that must have been, living in a time when everyone accepted the existence of the unseen world. Today, offering to help someone contact the other side may be met with any number of uncomfortable reactions. Chances are that with the Hadetic rites you are about to learn, you will likely be acting as your own best customer. Few dark powers are appropriate for showing off, obviously, and just as few are worth even mentioning to the mundane world.

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Becoming a *nekuomanteia* will involve having a safe, appropriate place to work. These dedicated areas for speaking with the dead were called *nekuomanteions*. Archaeologists have found more than one fascinating *nekuomanteion* setup, showing just how dedicated the Greeks were to providing a full psychodramatic experience.

The main ritual chamber would typically be located well within a labyrinthine setup. You can imagine a seeker walking through cold hallways of rock, maybe carrying a small lamp, looking for the seer waiting within. Using a symbolism significant to them, the Greek designers of a *nekuomanteion* usually had right-hand turns take a seeker to the ritual chamber. Some labyrinths used for this purpose would contain statues of deities on the walls, or just paintings of mythical events. Persephone has been found on a few such walls, as she is the goddess taken by Hades.

Upon entering the warm glow of the room, the seeker would be told by the *nekuomanteia* what steps he or she had to take to be part of the rite. Then, the magick would begin.

Sometimes *lecanomancy*, or “bowl divination,” was used—the seer viewing an image of the dead in a bowl of liquid. Others would rely solely on *lychnomancy*, allowing the dead to manifest by lamp. Still others used *catoptramancy*, or “divination from distorted reflections,” with a mirror or shiny metal.

For a more direct experience, the *nekuomanteia* would perform a dream incubation rite, allowing the seeker to fall asleep and dream of the dead.

You are about to try a couple of these techniques for yourself.

Note: I will not deal with the psychological issues of trying to communicate with the deceased. If you feel a strong need to do so, that is all that matters. The will of a magician is what drives him or her in life and in occult practices. Only you know if it is your will to contact the other side in this manner and at this particular point in your life.

Prepping the Ritual Chamber

Before you attempt any of the hinted-at techniques and take on the tasks of the seer, you need to first simulate the seeking of the sacred ritual place. If you live in a studio apartment, this will be a little tricky. For best results, you will need a large apartment or a house. Any setup where you can perform a rite in one room and then move through at least a couple of rooms or hallways would be ideal.

The chamber where you will begin your rite will not need much. If possible, try to get a small oil lamp that is easy to carry. Otherwise, a candle and candle holder should be okay—maybe with the addition of a simple wax guard. The room where you begin will also need a comfortable place for you to rest while doing your Drawing in the Darkness rite (page 13).

On the floor, against the walls of the longest hall that separates you from the second chamber, you need to place three reminders of the deceased person with whom you wish to communicate. Try not to make these mementos all of the same type. For example, a photo, followed by a prized possession, followed by an article of clothing would be a good way to go. If you do have a photo among the items, definitely place it first; if this is the only photo you have, you'll need to make a copy for use in the actual rite of working. Also, if all you have is the one photo—and no other keepsakes—you will need to make a couple of extra copies to place in the hall. You absolutely need three items.

Evenly space the items out down the hallway, and alternate the sides of the hallway when you place them. Try to place each item on the floor with care, and position each so that if you kneel before it, you can see it easily by the light of your small oil lamp or candle.

As you walk down the hallway, you approach the main chamber. How you prepare the main ritual chamber depends on which of the methods of divination you attempt. We'll deal with some different options later on.

If you have a way to do so, accelerate your altered state of awareness before you begin the opening. The ancient Greeks documented the use of herbs to help them along in their seership. They even listed certain foods to avoid. For this rite, it is okay to use a mild substance, but not an outright trip-launcher like DMT. I find absinthe to be perfect—even a little Chartreuse helps. As for foods to avoid, it's usually best to avoid all food from around noon on the day of the rite. If you do fast in such a way, adjust your green liquid intake accordingly!

Now, the ritual steps you should take before trying to peer into the realm of Hades.

The Hadetic Opening

Begin in the preparatory chamber. The door leading to the hall should be open. The room should be as dark as possible, so be aware of the position of the items around you. Have matches or a lighter next to your lamp or candle, but do not light it yet.

Get comfortable and begin your Drawing in the Darkness rite. Proceed as normal with the technique, until you get to the end where you try to listen for the swishing sounds out in the void. Instead, imagine the swishing is coming from down the hallway.

Get up and light your candle or lamp, still listening for the sounds in the hallway. Are they getting farther away?

Go to the doorway and slowly follow the noises. Are those whispers as well?

When you get to the spot where you placed the first memento of the deceased, notice how the noises down the hall stop. Really be aware of this before you kneel down. The noises, whatever they are, are waiting for you—they're trying to show their approval of your stopping here.

Kneel and carefully illuminate the object with your flame. Up until this point you were walking as if in a dream, not meditating on what

you were embarking upon. The photo or other object should immediately let you know what the noises in the hall are trying to tell you. You are being led to the gate of Hades—to communication with this person, whose relic is before you.

Whisper the name of the deceased, then listen. Can you hear the name being repeated amidst the noises down the hall?

Stand up and note the stirrings moving farther down the hall. They seem to stay just outside the glow of your flame.

When you get to the spot of the next relic, note again that the whisperers have stopped moving. Kneel and think about this object's significance. It's okay to lose a little bit of your ritual cool at this point. Don't let emotions overcome you, but do let any natural ones come to you. Reach out and gently touch the object if you wish, but do not pick it up.

Say the name of the deceased a little louder than last time, once again listening for any whispers of this name down the hall.

Stand up, hearing the swishing noises moving down the hall once again. Follow them to the position of the final keepsake. This time when you kneel down, truly allow yourself a full rush of emotions. Pick up the object with your free hand and hold it close to you. If it's an item of clothing, try to imagine the person's scent still on it. If it's a ring, slip it on your finger for a moment. After your emotions begin to peak, drop the item onto the floor (as long as it's not fragile) and look up into the barely illuminated darkness.

Say the name of the deceased out loud and with intensity. This should almost be a yell, and can be if your emotions warrant it.

Imagine the swishing noises backtracking and coming closer to you for a few seconds. Really try to hear them whispering or even saying the name of the deceased. You should be able to feel a sense of urgency from this dark mass of the unknown.

Stand and turn toward the final ritual chamber's doorway.

Look for the dark etheric mass obscuring your view. Still hearing the noises and voices coming from this mass, say:

Take me to him (or her).

Sense the mass receding into the chamber, and follow it inside.

Move to the center (where you have beforehand placed all the implements for the necromantic rite of your choosing). Note how the swishing mass has moved to the edges of the room, surrounding you in a sphere but keeping its distance.

Begin casting a dark sphere. This one will likely feel more tangible and powerful than any you have created before.

Perform your necromantic rite.

On Lamps and Dreams

Earlier you were given the primary methods the Greeks used to communicate with the dead. One of them, lychnomancy, might seem a bit of an oddity, even in the world of the occult. The idea of specters manifesting just by aid of a lamp doesn't seem like a full technique on its own. Unlike the Arabian belief of genies trapped in a lamp, lychnomancy implies that the dead are supposed to just be drawn to the light.

Rather than use lychnomancy on its own, you can use a lamp in the Hadetic Opening and keep it with you for the working as a light source. The methods you use—speaking with the dead by way of bowl scrying (lecanomancy) and mirror distortion (catoptramancy)—will benefit from the mystical glow of an oil lamp.

Dream incubation will also not be dealt with in this tome. I've covered various forms of that in both *Speak with the Dead* and *Nocturnal Witchcraft*, and would like to focus on other techniques here. However, if you do wish to try incorporating dream incubation with the Hadetic ritual structure taught in this chapter, you'll find it easy enough to do in the ritual chamber after the opening.

Bowl Scrying

Warning: This one uses blood. The squeamish can skip to the next chapter.

If you have some experience at scrying (often called crystal gazing), you'll find this method quickly gets you necromantic results. If you haven't performed any crystal, mirror, or other kind of gazing in the past, just having worked with the dark opening rites in this book has put you one step closer to success, so do give it a try.

Experienced or not, you will need to try bowl scrying at least once before a ritual—up the number of trial runs according to your success or failure.

Bowl Scrying Practice

Obtain a black bowl. Fill about two-thirds of it with water. Then, add the secret ingredient—blood. Before you start thinking this to be the ravings of a homicidal madman, note the amount: a few drops.

Some ancients would scry with a bowl full of blood. However, because you will be using a black bowl, you don't need enough blood to darken the water. This is a symbolic and powerful ingredient, even with a few drops.

Unless you have an understanding butcher nearby, the freshest blood you can add comes from your own fingertips. Pick up a package of sterile lancets at any drug store and follow the instructions on the package for obtaining a few drops from a finger or two.

After you add a few drops of blood to the water, swirl the mixture three times counterclockwise if you live in the Northern Hemisphere, clockwise if in the Southern Hemisphere. Know that with this motion you are making an unnatural swirling of liquid for where you live. This is an otherworldly mixture before you.

Position a single light source (your oil lamp or candle) so that you can make out a faint glow on the surface of the water. However, be sure that you can't see an actual reflection of the flame or your face in the water. You may find placing the light behind you provides the best effect.

Relax and let your gaze comfortably sink into the subtly glowing portal before you. Imagine that you can see thin trails of blood still swirling in a counterclockwise motion.

After a few minutes of this open-eye visualization, see if any images naturally come to you. You may see clouds overtaking the red tendrils. You may see little points of light moving around.

Don't force the process. Keep your first sitting to a length of about fifteen minutes. Unless you are bombarded with fascinating images during your first sitting, then you can make the sitting shorter.

Working with this simple visualization and relaxed scrying, along with your peering into the darkness during opening rites, should all lead to strong scrying visions within a few sittings.

When you can get at least some types of visions that are unexpected on the surface of the liquid, you're ready to try bowl divination after the Hadetic Opening. To prepare the ritual chamber for this type of work, have a table and chair set up so that you will be able to sit and gaze into your bowl. Place the bowl on the table and add the water. Have a sterile lancet on hand, as you should add the blood during the rite.

Using the Bowl in a Rite

After you enter the chamber during the Hadetic Opening and create the dark sphere around you, continue to listen for the whispers that are out there. They still seem to be saying the name of the deceased. With the creepy cacophony surrounding you, position your light source and take a seat at the table.

Turn toward the light source just long enough to prick your finger or otherwise obtain the blood you will be using in the rite.

Add the drops of blood to the bowl and use your finger to swirl the mixture three times counterclockwise (again, if in the Northern Hemisphere). Visualize the tendrils of blood as glowing red and continuing to swirl after you remove your finger.

Relax. While continuing the swirling visualization, take a deep breath. Inhale, whispering the name of the deceased.

Take another deep breath and exhale, saying the name louder. Keep increasing the red swirling in the bowl.

Take an even deeper breath and exhale, almost yelling the name of the deceased.

Still observing the glowing red vortex, take another deep breath and hold it. Listen to the noises outside the dark sphere. The whispers should seem so plentiful that you can hardly even distinguish the name any longer. At the point where you almost feel lightheaded, exhale fully and begin a slow, comfortable breathing pattern. Say with intensity:

Hear me, Lord Hades. Seek not to match wits with me.

I ask only an audience with the dead (name).

Allow him (or her) to come forward now from the abyss.

*Send him (or her) forward quickly,
before the cacophony of shades shatters the gates to your realm.*

Continue to gaze into the center of the glowing red vortex. Listen to the whispers around you and wait for the deceased to appear to you within the bowl.

If you get no results within approximately fifteen minutes, you will need to try again on another night. Proceed to the Hadetic Closing at the end of this chapter.

If you do start to see a face or figure in the bowl, try not to get excited. Remain calm to prevent the vision from fleeing. By this point, with all the practice you've had at listening to the voices of the unseen, don't be surprised if you clearly hear the deceased as if he or she is in the room with you.

Try to keep your conversation short and to the point. It doesn't seem easy for the dead to make the journey out of the underworld, and

prolonging a conversation with them will cause their messages to become disjointed.

When you've obtained the information you need, use your own words to thank the deceased for answering your questions and wish him or her everlasting peace in the afterlife. Then, say:

(Name), you are free to return to Hades' embrace.
 Lord Hades, I thank you for your assistance this night.

At this point, you are ready to end the rite, and should proceed to the Hadetic Closing at the end of this chapter.

Mirror Distortion

Catoptramancy, or true mirror distortion, hasn't been used in occultism for millennia. This technique is not to be confused with the controversial technique of facial distortion. The latter is used by some in evocation, and is the practice of staring at the reflection of your face in hopes of letting the reflection morph into a demon or angel. We won't be dealing with that cop-out for developing true scrying abilities here.

Catoptramancy, as practiced by the ancient Greeks, involved dipping a shiny piece of metal (a mirror of the times) into water mixed with some substance. The mirror would then be half-removed from the water and essentially scried. The water and added substance did the distorting on the mirror's surface, providing interesting reflections and refractions of light that seemed to jumpstart the scrying process.

Nowhere in the surviving descriptions of catoptramancy is it even hinted that you are to stare at your own face. In practice, I've always found this to be a deterrent to scrying.

Anyway, only attempt the following rite after you've had at least some success with scrying, either through your own practice or using the trial runs from the bowl divination technique.

Some forms of catoptramancy suggest drawing on the mirror's surface with blood. I found the dipping version combined with blood is the best way to go.

To prepare, acquire an ordinary reflective mirror that's about a foot tall. A rectangular or oval shape would be best.

Get a small tub or bucket that is black, or even just a dark color. The idea is to find a tub that is big enough to lie the mirror flat in, while still being able to get your fingertips under the edge of the mirror to lift it out again. Also, you should be able to stand the mirror at a roughly 45-degree angle while having the tub be deep enough to cover half the standing mirror with water. This is important. You will need to completely submerge the mirror, then stand it up so only half the mirror is out of the water. The ancient Greeks had large installations built and natural springs to accomplish catoptramancy. You need to meet the requirements any way you can. This may include gluing something in the base of the tub—perhaps a shelf placed a few inches from one of the short sides—to prevent the mirror from sliding.

After you fill the tub with water, to a level of about six inches (if your mirror is a foot tall), add the ingredient that was almost certainly used if surviving hints and regional availability are considered: half a cup of olive oil. That should do the trick!

The oil will float on the water and will work on its own to provide the necessary effect required for catoptramancy. If you wish to add blood, you can do so in one of two ways for one of two effects. To just add blood for the symbolism, use a lancet and mix in drops as in bowl divination. To obtain a true ruddy sheen, add at least as much blood as you do olive oil to the tub. Here is where having an understanding butcher would be a great help.

Note: Slaughtering an animal yourself would do nothing to aid the power of the rite. All it would do is likely get you into trouble with the authorities. You'd piss me off, too, because animal sacrifice gives all occultists a bad rep with no positive benefits.

You don't need the escaping life force of a living thing or any such sacrificial, superstitious nonsense. The blood is only a symbolic link in this rite, and using more than just a few drops is for pure visual psychodrama. If someone told you they were adding blood for you and it turned out to just be paint, this would work too, as long as you didn't know. So, no killing the neighbor's dog. Even if he does keep you up during your daytime naps.

To prepare for the actual rite, have the water and olive oil already in the tub. Place the tub in the center of the ritual chamber. If you're using obtained blood, just have it in a cup next to the tub. If it will be your blood, have a lancet next to the tub. The mirror should be covered in a black cloth.

All this will need to be on the floor, so be sure not to step on anything when entering the chamber. Also, this rite can get messy, so don't wear clothes you care about, and definitely have a hand towel placed within easy reach. You may want to protect your floor as well.

Whichever direction you end up facing for the casting of the dark sphere (remember, it's random), you will need to make a quick adjustment during the rite. The mirror, besides standing at a 45-degree angle, will have to be rotated (with the tub) to face the space just behind your left shoulder. You will place your lamp or candle to your left, providing the necessary glints of light in the mirror and ensuring that you do not see your reflection. Think of this setup as one designed to let you see something hovering next to and above your left shoulder; it's a lot less complicated than it sounds.

Using Mirror Distortion in a Rite

Having entered the ritual chamber in the Hadetic Opening and created your dark sphere, carefully move to the center of the room where you placed the tub of water and oil. Sit cross-legged—facing the direction you randomly chose to start the rite—with the tub before you.

As you try to maintain awareness of the whispering voices coming from all around you, position the tub with one of the short sides facing you. Tilt the tub slightly by pushing gently on the left edge. You will be eventually placing the mirror against the short side of the tub opposite you, so that it reflects the space over your left shoulder.

If you are adding your own blood to the mixture, prick your finger and add the drops. Mix the drops in with about a dozen random diagonal motions, almost as if you were drawing spokes on a wheel. Try to imagine red lines glowing with each of these slashing-like motions on the water's surface. When you're done, dab your finger on a hand towel.

If you are using a cup of obtained blood, pour it slowly into the tub in as many random diagonal paths as you can (until the cup is empty). Visualize each path glowing red. No need to mix this foreign blood with your finger.

Position your light source to your left and a little behind you. Try to get the glow on the surface of the water to simulate that of bowl divination.

Unwrap the mirror from its black cloth. Still visualizing the red jagged lines on the surface of the water, gently place the mirror flat into the mix, reflective side up. Imagine the red lines shifting like fractals, disrupted as they are by the mirror penetrating the surface of the water.

With the mirror lying flat underwater, allow yourself to get close to the scrying state, by gazing at the surface of the water and imagining the red lines still moving and intersecting each other. Try to relax, even though by now the chorus of voices around you may be a little louder.

When you start to feel your awareness shift to that distinct scrying state that you have felt during other sessions, slowly reach over and begin to lift the mirror out of the tub. Let your gaze fall on the reflections of light in the smears of water, oil, and blood that slide down the mirror's surface. Again, you shouldn't see your own reflection when the

mirror is properly angled: just a bit to the left and standing upright at about a 45-degree angle.

Take a deep breath and observe the natural effects of the light on the mirror, trying to maintain an altered state. When you exhale, whisper the name of the deceased.

As in bowl divination, take another deep breath and exhale, this time saying the name louder. Observe all parts of the mirror, especially the point where it bisects the water line.

Finally, take an even deeper breath and exhale, practically shouting the name.

Take one more deep breath, this time holding it. Listen to the noises coming from the abyss. They are continuing to echo your demands to see the dead. Let their roar fill your ears as your eyes begin to see more than just reflections of light on the mirror.

When your lungs can no longer handle the strain of your sustained breath, exhale. Say with intensity:

Hear me, Lord Hades. Seek not to match wits with me.

I ask only an audience with the dead (name).

Allow him (or her) to come forward now from the abyss.

Send him (or her) forward quickly,

before the cacophony of shades shatters the gates to your realm.

Look amidst the tiny reflections of light and scried clouds (or other phenomena). Continue to hear the voices around you.

A face or figure should emerge from all the lights and images. If this doesn't happen within about fifteen minutes, proceed to the Hadetic Closing and try another night.

Should the dead appear, remain calm and attempt to communicate. Remember to keep the interchange brief, however.

When you've learned what it is you seek, use your own words to thank the deceased for answering your questions and wish him or her peace. Add:

(Name), you are free to return to Hades' embrace.
Lord Hades, I thank you for your assistance this night.

Perform the Hadetic Closing, and be sure to clean your mirror with running water and a clean towel before using it again.

Ending it All

Regardless of what occurs in the ritual chamber, you should always close the rite properly when dealing with an abundance of Hadetic energies. Use the following simple steps to do so:

The Hadetic Closing

Walk to the edge of the dark sphere, facing the randomly chosen direction or quarter where you began casting the sphere. Extend your right arm slightly, with your palm facing out. Allow a dip in your elbow, creating a wide V. The look should be as if you're getting ready to push something, not stop an oncoming vehicle.

Listen for the whisperers. You may have stopped noticing their presence after the deceased appeared to you and filled your astral hearing with his or her voice instead. Note how much calmer the whisperers in the shadows seem now.

Take a deep breath and hold it. Apply tension to your nearly outstretched arm. Feel almost as if you are pushing something heavy, or as if someone has draped a bunch of heavy items over your arm.

Hold your breath as long as you can, continuing to feel the tension in your arm. By the time you can't hold your breath any longer, your arm should be visibly trembling.

Release the breath, pushing your arm to full extension. You should be able to feel something like a weak force field being pushed away. Listen for the whispers and swishing. They should seem farther away now.

Move counterclockwise ninety degrees, to the next quarter of the sphere. Repeat the process of slightly extending your arm, listening for the whisperers, and holding a breath. Tense your arm muscles again, getting ready to push against the dark sphere.

Do this for the next two quarters of the sphere and move back to the center, facing the randomly chosen starting direction. Allow an inner sense of cockiness to rise up in you. Why? Because you just spoke to Lord Hades as an equal. Try to listen for noises coming from down the hallway you used to enter this chamber. The swishing is still there, isn't it? Maintaining a sense of superiority—a sense of being on par with the master of the underworld—turn to the direction of the hall and walk toward it.

Leave your light behind.

Walk past the barrier of the dark sphere and into the abyss. Stop thinking about or actively trying to hear the whispers and other noises from the abyss as you enter the hallway. Move comfortably through the ever-darkening hallway, with the “safe” glow of your lamp or candle receding behind you.

At some point you may feel a change in the air, as if you moved into a mass of cobwebs . . . or something even thicker. Ignore this sensation and any associated temperature change. Keep walking.

When you get to the chamber where you prepared for tonight's rite, feel against the wall for the light switch and turn it on.

The rite is now ended.



Death Magick

The assimilation of powers by simulation has been practiced by seemingly superstitious cultures. Wearing a wolf's fur before a hunt and painting the face of a demon on oneself before attempting an exorcism are two terrific examples, spanning not only different types of sympathetic magick but cultures separated by oceans as well.

With a wolf-fur dance around a fire, a hunter takes on attributes of a wolf to make himself more feral the next morning: a clear example of like attracting like. With face painting, an exorcist hopes to frighten demons by becoming an even more fierce being—one which other demons must bow before and obey. In this relationship, demons must leave at the command of the exorcist. An interesting case of like scaring like, but a power being assimilated nonetheless.

What of Hades, or Death in any of his or her myriad guises? Can the powers possessed by the Lord of the Underworld be tapped into by the living?

When readying for the Hadetic Opening, and indeed for the divinations that followed, you were told to keep in mind some of the scoundrel-like, cocky nature of Hades. To close the rite, you had to

think along similar lines before leaving the dark sphere and moving into the abyss as its master. All of these thoughts or actions were necessary for getting everything possible out of the necromantic ritual.

What you began, you can now continue to benefit from. Working with Hades need not be only for communicating with the dead and obtaining reassurance that there is something beyond. What follows in this chapter and the next are ways to harness and control some of the darkest energies in the universe for real benefits, while still alive.

Becoming the Dark Sibling

Depending on your family and how you read into the above subhead, you likely already fit this title. We're speaking of becoming one with Hades, however; of becoming one with the god who stands apart from his deity siblings. Forced into isolation by his calling and purpose, the Hades of mythology can be seen as one who adapted to his surroundings. His scoundrel-like actions are somewhat justified when thought of in this context. Later in this book, we'll meet another character wrongfully maligned in the occult world, though his domain is often assumed to be another kind of underworld.

While it's arguable that deities can truly go mad, it's reasonable to assume the energies and aspects of personality attributed to Hades have something to do with keeping the god at least somewhat in control of his realm. Hades has to be hardened.

Listening to the pleas of the dead—who long to be among the living again—could become incessantly annoying, wouldn't you think? Even when they don't protest, souls are still being guided away from their loved ones at the moment of death. Having to be the one who constantly does this would take its toll on a being that is not made of the so-called right stuff.

Again, we're not saying Hades was always there, tricking deities and mercilessly reaping the dead. The energy that does these deeds, however, has been there since the first living cell appeared on the planet. And just as organisms became more complex, the etheric form responsible for re-

absorbing their energies and essences upon death likewise evolved. The being known as Death came into being with the very first death, and hasn't stopped evolving since. The attributes given to Hades by the ancient Greeks, for the purposes of storytelling, were the result of a philosophical examination of the energies associated with this entity.

The Hades of myth is very realistic and very human, as are most of the Greek gods. It is this humanity that made it so easy for the ancients to believe that the gods walked among them—that they should be careful who they wronged. This humanity also made it easy for oracles and other mystics of the time to sympathetically take on some of the attributes and powers of the gods. You can do the same today.

While it's difficult to imagine acting like jackal-headed Anubis for any significant amount of time, becoming more like Hades is a much easier task. Despite how alien the concept of becoming one with Death might seem to some, nightkind will surely find it much easier than, say, emulating a loping, snarling wolf. Okay, so my other emulation example might not seem so difficult to pull off for a few of my readers, either. You know who you are, you who would like to paint your faces and pass off a demon's rage and ferocity as your own. Fun stuff, but not the real point of this chapter.

Walking through magickal nights and daily life with the confidence of Hades will have noticeable effects.

Hit the Scrolls

Or the *books*, as the case may be today. If you read one myth containing Hades to get ready for divination and the Hadetic framework, it's time to at least triple your efforts. Get your hands on anything containing representations of this being. Mythology books written for all age groups will help—even ones for children, which may have paintings full of impact for your psychodrama-seeking mind. Even watch a cartoon of Hades if it helps, tapping into the imagination-fueled layers of the thoughtform. Remember that these new layers are being added by toddlers, adults, and every movie-loving age in between.

Know the scoundrel of the underworld. Know what he would think or do in a random situation. If you're a poet or a writer, create a bit of verse or a short story where you present your vision of Hades. Paint him if you have this skill. Sketch him, write a song about him, be him for Halloween—whatever it takes to get a little closer to this particular mask worn by a universal force of nature.

Now, take all this experience to the next level with a preparatory rite.

Sink into Hades

Look at that, another subhead you can read in two ways. Remember, Hades is both a being and a realm. Finding a way to sink your consciousness into both will have remarkable effects. The rite you're about to attempt is designed to do just that.

As with the opening rites in the beginning of this book, you should perform the following ritual a couple of times with no clear magickal goal. Your only aim should be to get closer to Hadetic energies and become used to working with them. Similar to the Hadetic framework used for divination, what you are about to do will require a specific type of surrounding, but few actual items, to achieve the best results.

To do this rite, you will need a house that is (at the least) mostly free of occupants. "Mostly free" means that if anyone is home, they will have to stay out of a good part of the house, depending on its layout. You need access to a room and a hallway on one floor that connects to a stairwell. You will also need access to the room closest to the bottom of the stairwell, assuming the stairs don't just lead into an open room anyway. The ideal setting would be a ground floor leading down into an unfinished, cold, damp basement. Get as close to that setup as you can with the house you live in (or can borrow).

Apartment dwellers will find this practically impossible to do without borrowing a more suitable abode, trust me. You can't use the building's public staircase and hallway for this rite, no matter how cool you think your fellow tenants are!

The highest floor used in the ritual will be set up in a similar fashion to the Hadetic Opening (page 76). That is, you will have a room that is a sort of preparatory chamber leading out to a hallway. The prep room will contain a comfortable couch or the like, for you to Draw in the Darkness (page 13). You will also need to have a candle or oil lamp ready to light and bring with you.

The hallway leading to the steps needs to have a few distinct items placed in it. As with the Hadetic Opening, these will be evenly spaced and against opposite walls. In this case, the last one is close to the steps. The first object must be a picture that you feel represents a beloved part of your ordinary life. The second and third items can be photos, too, or just some other types of symbols representing your earthly loves and desires. This hall will be left dark prior to the ritual.

The steps, which will also be left in the dark, need only one bit of preparation. On the railing, exactly halfway down the stairs, you should hang a beloved piece of black clothing—preferably a shirt or something easy to put on. If possible, do not wear the same type of item when beginning the ritual. For example, if it's a shirt you're leaving on the steps, don't wear a shirt before you begin the rite. The item should remain exactly at the halfway spot. (Note: you may use a little loop of tape if there aren't posts or some other features to help keep the item from sliding down.) One other preparation—the item should be almost freezing cold. Leave it in the freezer or fridge for a while before the rite.

The downstairs chamber also remains dark. In the center, you will need a table, preferably draped in black cloth. On the table, place a single reflective mirror (or a black, scrying-type mirror). When using the Hades Rite with an actual magickal working to follow, place any other items you need for your particular working either on the table or below it. Again, your first few times doing this ritual should be for no other reason than to experience its effects and energies.

As with any rite in this book, you can use a mild mind-altering substance to get started. For obvious reasons, avoid DMT or DPT in this rite—you'd never get to do anything but trip. And, as steps are involved, the word "trip" can take on extra meaning here.

The Hades Rite

Begin in the upstairs preparatory chamber. Relax with the candle or lamp unlit, but be aware of where the matches are, so you can easily light the implement when the time is right.

Begin the Drawing in the Darkness technique (page 13).

When you reach the point where you try to listen for the sounds in the abyss, try to imagine the swishing noises being somewhat focused and coming from down the hallway.

Sit up, light your candle or lamp, and pick it up. Begin to walk toward the hallway, listening for the noises, possibly whispers, coming from down there.

Venture into the hall, following the receding noises. When you reach the spot where you put your first reminder—an aspect of life you enjoy—notice how the noises stop, waiting for you to take a look.

Kneel down, being careful to illuminate, not burn, the photo with your flame. Look at the photo and remind yourself of why the pictured subject is important to you. If the subject has true emotional power, allow those feelings to well up in you at this point. While doing so, try to think of the simplest phrase to describe this aspect of life (my sibling, my singing ability, whatever). You will use this phrase now, saying:

*As I journey into Hades,
I will retain my connection to (the descriptive phrase).
The land of the dead can never offer such earthly delights
and to (the phrase again) I shall soon return.*

listen for the noises down the hall. Note how they become more excited or restless. They're starting to move down the hall. Stand up and follow.

Repeat the process of stopping and reflecting with the next two chosen items or photos. After allowing any emotions to well up in you at each stop, repeat the statement about maintaining your connection. Then, move on. Always listen for the receding whispers. Note that you will not be making the statement with more intensity at each stop as you did with the Necromantic Opening. This is because you are dealing with a different subject of import at each stop; you are not trying to increase your link to one person.

After the third reflection or statement is made, listen for how the noises and rustlings have attained an almost wall-shaking pitch. They are trying to lead you downstairs. Hear them venture down the stairwell.

Stop at the top of the stairs and look down. Your light should illuminate about half of the steps. You should just barely be able to make out the black item of clothing you draped over the railing. It hangs there, balanced halfway between the worlds of the living and the dead.

You can tell by their close rustlings that the things in the abyss are evidently staying just outside of the candle or lamp glow. Take a deep breath and take one step down. Exhale and go down another step. Feel for any vibrations the unseen noisemakers may be creating on the steps themselves.

Continue to take one slow step after an inhalation, and another slow step after an exhalation. As you reach the halfway mark, where your clothing item awaits you, turn around and place your light source about three steps back (so it is around chest height or so). Turn back to the clothing item and touch it. Feel how cold it is, but do not think about the actions you took to make it so. Imagine the cold of the underworld has touched this item, poised as it is at the threshold. Try to lift the item, noticing that there is a tugging from down below (it

might be the tape, but don't think of that either). By tensing your arm muscles, imagine that you can barely lift the item. By this point, the cacophony from the bottom of the steps should seem loud enough to be audible to the neighbors.

Still tensing your arm, continue to slowly move the clothing item toward you. Note that it will get easier, as if the dividing line between the worlds is sharp, and the hold on the item is relaxed the higher you pull it toward you.

Put on the cold item. Feel the iciness of death against your skin. You have now accepted something from the entrance to the underworld. There's no going back at this point.

Turn to grab your lamp or candle, and catch one last glimpse of the portal above that leads to the world of the living.

Turn around to face the downstairs and resume your descent. Take a deep breath and step down past the halfway dividing point between the worlds. Do you feel the subtle temperature shift? The icy tendrils or etheric cobwebs brushing your skin?

Exhale and take another step down. Continue alternating steps with inhalations and exhalations until you reach the step just above the ground floor.

After a few seconds of breathing deeply and exhaling, take a deep breath and step onto the ground floor. Hold your breath, and reflect for a moment on how you have just entered the underworld. Continue to hold your breath while you listen for the mass of whisperers moving toward the entrance of the ritual chamber.

Walking toward the ritual chamber and still holding your breath, notice how it is as if breathing in this hallway is dangerous.

When you enter the chamber, note how the noises around you seem hesitant to move back and let you enter. They have full sway here in the abyss, but must obey the lord of the realm. Now is the time to walk with the confidence of Hades himself. Recall any understanding

of his persona that you have obtained from the suggested preparations and research. Maintain willpower and walk toward the center table, confident that nothing dare thwart an incarnation of Hades himself.

Place your lamp or candle on the table and begin to create a dark sphere, using Hades-backed willpower to push the whisperers to the perimeter. Command the noises with whatever imperious phrases come to you; these words may not be coming from you alone.

This should not feel like a comfortable circle casting. This is a struggle of wills, with you demanding a little space to work amidst true darkness and chaos.

Return to the table and lift the mirror so that your lamp or candle is hidden by it, creating a backlighting effect. Spend a moment experimenting with how far away you should hold the mirror to make your features barely distinguishable in the reflection. The idea is to know that a figure is present, but to not be sure it's you. You don't need to scry—just get a shadowy image in the mirror. Say:

Lord Hades commands the forces here.

By my dark reflection, I command the forces here.

Still looking at the shadowy figure in the mirror, try to become aware of things moving around the perimeter of the dark sphere. Use an astral form of peripheral vision here. Don't look away from the mirror or try to fix on a particular form; just notice the motion all around you. The whispers you hear are coming from these forms.

If you are doing a particular magickal, Hadetic working, you can put the mirror down and begin it now. If you are doing this rite just to experience the energies, continue staring at the shadow reflection. Start a simple chant, repeating in a whisper:

I am Hades.

As you repeat this, slowly move the mirror even farther away, creating more of a scrying view than an actual reflection. You will actually be scrying into the darkness of your reflected chest area.

See what happens after a few minutes. No planting of suggestions on my part here. You'll have to see for yourself what will happen.

When you're ready, you may use the Hadetic Closing (page 87), with a couple of changes. After you push back the whisperers, bring the light with you as you leave the ritual chamber. Also, about halfway up the stairs, remove the item of clothing that you put on, letting it fall back into the darkness. From there, return upstairs to the preparatory chamber, turn on the lights, and do something that requires a waking consciousness, such as eating or going for a walk.

Applying Death to Magick

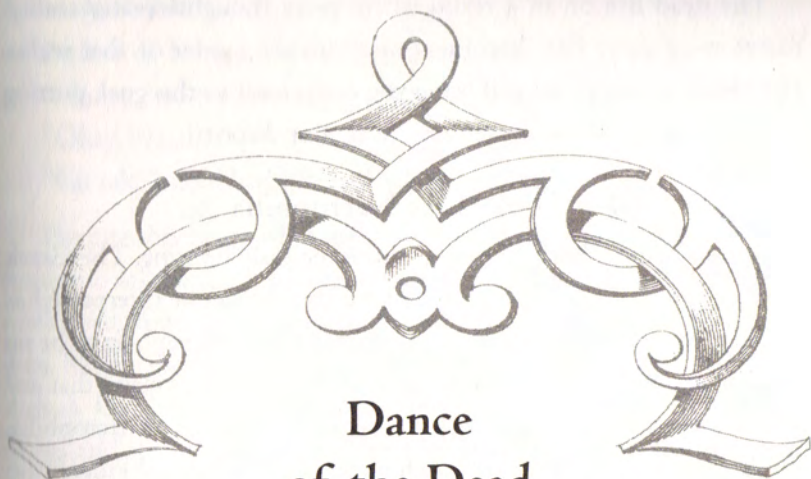
What magickal rites can you perform while in the Hadetic dark sphere? There you are, surrounded by the energies of the underworld, in many ways one with the god Hades. How do you take advantage of this? With two different approaches, actually.

The simplest is to use most any type of spell or technique, from this book or others, with a simple modification: keep in mind that you are working with the energy of death. Such a concept sounds too simple, but that's because it is.

Whether you want to create a sigil for use in a Hadetic context, or any of the other techniques you'll learn here, just remember to mold your magick to work with the powers of destruction. If you wish to cure a disease, use a sigil to destroy or kill the disease. To do well on a business enterprise, destroy the lack of productivity or whatever the perceived problem may be. Doing such a rite in the Hadetic underworld context will provide the rite with energies and psychodrama to make such a simple magickal concept kick into metaphysical high gear.

The other approach is to design a rite that furthers your link to death energies. Doing so will enable you to merely will the underworld to act on your behalf. Rather than theorize endlessly about what you may want to try, I'll let you read on and see a fleshed out rite that will not only illustrate this point, but bring about some amazing results.

Know that you will need the help of an extremely understanding, romantically interested partner. Unlike the subterfuge involved in pre-charged sex magick, there's no hiding that something odd is going on with the Dance of the Dead.



Dance of the Dead

If nothing else in this book so far has made you think your dear author has spent a little too much time in the abyss, the rite you're about to explore surely will. Yet I assure you, fellow occultist, that my time spent in the darkness, listening to the echoes of my voice reaching out through the void, has not rendered me insane.

Call it sick, perverted, demented, or an even tastier word and the fact will remain: the Dance of the Dead works, and works quickly.

Some of you may find this ritual terrifying, others a little too endearing for your comfort. Either way, the psychodrama will be there, and the rite will help you firmly establish a simultaneous foothold in the worlds of both the living and the dead. This is not to say you will see the dead everywhere you turn in your daily and nightly life. Rather, this rite will give you the power to tap into the very etheric link that the dead have with the astral plane, and give you the ability to manifest desire by willpower alone.

The dead live on in a realm where every thought creates reality. You've spent some time becoming one with the master of that realm. The Dance of the Dead will bring you even closer to this goal, putting the astral matter of the universe more at your disposal.

If it Looks Like Necrophilia . . .

Definitions can be both clarifying and hopelessly limiting. The Greek word *necrophilia*, for example, has root words that can be interpreted as "kissing" or "loving" the dead. Some texts consider necrophilia to be no less than sex with a corpse, while other academic sources claim that any sort of activities undertaken with a corpse are also signs of necrophilia. While they're trying to use this definition to classify serial killers who sleep with body parts or keep them as mementos, such a definition can be distorted to turn even funeral directors into villains in the public eye.

Preparing a defense for the ritual I'm about to propose you try, let me settle on a neutral definition we can agree on. Necrophilia is, for our purposes, any sort of activity with a corpse that brings sexual pleasure to the living participant. We'll assume the dead don't quite care what happens to their bodies after they've moved on. And the living get sexual pleasure from the dead, period—no room for ambiguity in our definition.

Now, with that established, let's get one other thing straight: if it looks like necrophilia, it's not *necessarily* necrophilia! At no time in the Dance of the Dead will you be fucking a corpse.

However, there is a sexual element involved, and the rite will resemble necrophilia to someone watching or hearing a retelling of the Dance. It will even seem like necrophilia to the person helping you with this rite. As I said, you will need a *very* understanding partner.

Seriously, no joke

At the risk of being a little cliché, here's a little joke:

"Honey, let's try something a little different tonight."

"Okay. What?"

"Go take a cold bath, come back to bed, and lie perfectly still."

Despite this being what most women do not want to hear on their honeymoons, such a sexual experiment could arguably tide over someone's need to go dig up corpses and get his groove on amidst the maggots. Maybe the guy in this joke needs to get an odd fixation out of his system. Conversely, the act could only enflame his desire for the real thing, and after a few nights of pretend play he'd be out the door with a shovel and flashlight.

The psychodrama, combined with the sexual peak achieved, would definitely change something in this fictional guy . . . who could be quite real somewhere out there.

I'm not a necrophiliac, and chances are that most of you reading this aren't, but you can easily see that even a little imitation could go a long way. And the example given isn't even a magickal one. Now, imagine for a moment what happens when one tries to get closer to the realm of the dead while acting as the Lord of the Dead.

We've called him a scoundrel, but Hades is also a cold romantic who knows what he wants and does what he must to obtain it. He stole a goddess and tricked her into remaining with him for half of each year. He's been known to fall in love with his subjects—a romantic hero unparalleled by anything Anne Rice's world contained.

If Hades wanted to use sexual release as a magickal tool, how would he do so? And if we tried to emulate such a powerful moment in an already powerful realm, what would be the earthly results?

Naughty Considerations

If you do wish to try the Dance, I wish you luck meeting the criteria. For starters, you have to be able to put aside all your inhibitions and your sense of acceptable morals for the duration of the rite. Then, you have to find someone willing to do the same for you, and for little other explained reason. While he or she will know that a ritual is being performed, it is imperative that this partner does not know the goal of the rite. You don't want them to form their own, possibly counterproductive, thoughtforms. Actually, for best results, you shouldn't even be sure that they'd approve fully of the goal of the rite.

The more selfish the goal is, the more likely it is to succeed with this rite. Remember, you're playing the part of a cosmic scoundrel in this little psychodrama.

The person assisting you could be doing so because he or she cares about you . . . or maybe just desires to be intimate with you. It could be a magickal one night stand, most definitely, and one that this other person is not likely to forget, no matter how promiscuous he or she may be.

Your best bet may be to find someone from the goth or counterculture community—assuming you fit in as well. Besides an alternative gal or guy's likely willingness to try something as creepy as the following rite, chances are they'll also be used to some of the theatrics involved. Let's face it: one of the most beautiful and dramatic aspects of a good goth club is just how many of its attendees try to look "movie dead," or undead. Combined with the right music and lighting, and some liquid elixir, it all makes for an altered state without any ritual techniques. This rite will elevate any such feelings you might have had while on the prowl at even the best goth clubs in large cities.

How you broach the subject with a possible partner is up to you. Besides detecting any sexual interest on his or her part, you have to also determine if this person is interested in the occult. Not to stereotype,

but the odds of finding someone in the goth scene who's into the occult is far easier than finding an honest person at a church fundraiser. An interest in the occult is natural for someone drawn to the dark and macabre. Speaking of the dark, this person can't be afraid of it, or of being alone in it, for reasons you'll soon find out.

When you're sure you've found "the one"—hell, call him or her that for an ego boost—you can proceed with preparing for and performing the Dance.

Sinister Preparations

I gave a fair amount of theory at the beginning of this book, and attentive readers are welcome to evoke those occult facts now. However, what you are about to read will be heavy on direction and light on explanation. The slightest bit of meditation and analysis on your part will reveal exactly how this rite works. I'd like you to forget about that before you try the Dance, though. There will be time for reflection later on. First, just try to let the experience take you. Really become one with the psychodrama and ecstasy that await you.

To prepare, you will need to set up a house as in the Hades Rite. The upstairs chamber will be bare, except for your lamp or candle, and a place to rest. The hallway will still have its objects that tie you to the world of the living. On the steps, position a chilled item of clothing. Choose a dressy but gothic item. You should dress on par with your partner (more on that in a moment).

The biggest differences will come in how you set up the downstairs ritual chamber. First, there should be a stereo in it that's easy to trigger, either by remote control or with minimal fumbling in low-light conditions. Dramatic classical or even movie soundtrack music—maybe from a horror movie—is a good way to go. Ideally, you'll have a few minutes of somber music followed by music good for slow dancing. A CD you burn yourself or an MP3 player will make all this much simpler. Be sure

to have enough dark mood music to fill the amount of time it normally takes you to create the dark sphere. Immediately follow this with the songs worthy of a slow dance. It's even okay to repeat the dance tracks, burning or copying them over and over in your playlist.

You won't need the hand mirror, and you'll be placing your light on the floor near the center of the room. Instead of a table or altar, the room should be set up with something like a bed or couch in the center. Oh yeah, and there will also be a gal or guy lying upon the furniture, waiting for you in the darkness.

How is this lovely to be dolled up? For starters, she or he should be wearing something darkly romantic . . . or funereal. Rather than black jeans or a short skirt, think a black suit or gown. Basically, this partner should dress along the lines of a fancily dressed club-goer. A black suit with a red shirt and black tie would have a lot of impact in the dark for a guy. Any color dress, as long as there's a hint of the grave, would work for a gal. Avoid too many industrial or punk elements such as PVC and spikes. The mood should be more Victorian horror than Clive Barker's Cenobites.

Makeup is a necessity as well. She or he should feel free to layer on light or white foundation, heavy eye shadow and eye liner, and lipstick ranging from ruby to black. Jewelry should be kept to a minimum.

It's not necessary to take a cold bath, by the way. Remember, we're only dramatically acting the part of sickos during this rite! However, the room should be a little on the cold side. And the theatrical dead will have to lie perfectly still, at least when he or she hears you coming down the stairs. This is important. He or she absolutely must lie still with eyes shut when you walk in.

The only other bit of direction you have to give is to listen during the rite. Let this person know there will be a time when he or she is told to open his or her eyes and arise, helped up by your hand. He or she should keep eyes closed, no matter what is felt or heard in the

room, until you say it is time to open them. The actual dance in the Dance of the Dead will at that point begin.

Note that you should not go through a dry run, even under bright non-atmospheric conditions. The actual events of the rite should come as a bit of a surprise to him or her. How he or she looks when acting it all out should be a surprise for you, as well.

The final thing to prepare before performing the rite is a solid magical goal or need. Considering what the previous chapter said about using the powers of death as a destructive force, prepare a magical phrase of intent that describes how you want to apply these forces to the destruction of something (a bad situation, a tumor, whatever).

The Dance of the Dead

With your partner awaiting you downstairs, you can begin in the upstairs preparatory chamber. Relax and Draw in the Darkness (page 13).

Continue to go through all the steps of the Hades Rite, moving out into the hallway and reflecting on each object that ties you to the world of the living.

Do your descent as normal, listening for the noises, doing the controlled breathing steps, and putting on the clothing item with the appropriate psychodramatic emphasis, as explained in the Hades Rite (page 94).

Holding your breath, enter the ritual chamber. Do not exhale until you catch your first glimpse of the dead at the edge of your light's glow. The feeling will be that you stumbled on an ancient tomb or a forgotten cavern in the realm of Hades. Focus on the latter idea even more at this time.

Walk over to the funeral slab (couch or bed) and place your light down on the floor next to it, in a spot preferably behind the head of the dead.

Spend a moment in silent adoration. Look at how beautiful this poor soul is. How could something this desirable be lost forever to the underworld? Shouldn't he or she have one last chance to radiate life?

Listen to the whispers around you, then trigger the music you selected for casting your dark sphere. Spend a few seconds trying to imagine the rustlings around you, even over the music.

Cast the dark sphere, maintaining awareness of the things that lurk in the abyss and of the beauty that awaits you on the funeral slab.

Return to the body, standing right next to his or her chest and shoulder area. Gaze down longingly at the made-up face. Whisper:

Lord Hades commands the forces here.

By my dark reflection, I command the forces here.

Still looking down at your partner lying there, try to become aware of things moving around the perimeter of the dark sphere. Use your developing astral peripheral vision. Don't look away from the dead and try to fix on a particular moving form or source of a whisper. The motions and indistinct lurkers will remind you that this beautiful creature before you is sadly among the dead.

Yet you command the dead now. Don't let the beauty lying before you be forever lost to decay.

Reach out and take the hand of the dead.

As you hold the hand, imagine that some warmth is returning to the cold flesh (remember, don't question too much here, just fall into the psychodrama). Look for any fluttering in the eyelashes. Look for signs that life is partially entering this body simply because you, the master of the underworld, have touched it.

Take a deep breath and hold it. Feel your muscles tense as you hold the hand, but don't squeeze. Exhale, imagining that something vital has passed from you to the dead. Issue a command, using a firm tone:

Arise, (name).

Open your eyes to the darkness around you, and rise.

If it feels natural, allow an excited reaction to come out. You can even gasp. Smile upon the face looking up at you. Pull on the reanimated arm slowly, motioning for the body to rise up from the slab.

Amidst the miracle taking place, be aware of the music. Be aware of when your dance song is about to play. Stare into the dead woman or man's eyes, trying to impart a sense of calm with your own confidence. He or she has just returned from a twilight world and needs to be reassured that you offer safety.

When the first danceable song begins to play, slowly pull your partner to you, feeling the warmth and life that you have imbibed as you caress her or him. Whisper in his or her ear:

Now, my dear, we dance.

We dance in honor of your escaping the grave.

We dance in awe of the forces that surround us in this place.

By the light of your candle or lamp, you should now dance. Let the music and atmosphere move you into a waltz or any other type of slow dance that you know. Be aware of the light, lest you knock it over, and try to keep within the perimeter of your dark sphere. Otherwise, lose yourself. Gaze into your partner's eyes, but do not speak or smile for now.

After the mood has fully taken over and you're acting more on impulse than intent, gradually steer your partner to start dancing around the room in grand counterclockwise paths. However, any turning or rotating that your bodies do should be clockwise.

Remain silent as the dance builds in intensity. After a song or two, begin taking deep breaths, holding them as you dance. During the times when you're holding your breath, mentally recite the words from your phrase of intent. During each exhalation, try to imagine a visual image associated with your magickal desire. For example, if this is for healing, you can imagine a dark tumor being ripped apart by the shadows.

When you begin to feel lightheaded and fatigued, gradually start bringing the dance inward with each time around the room. Get closer and closer to the funeral slab.

Ideally, you'll know the songs playing well enough to know the precise moment when the music will stop. If possible, your dance should culminate at that precise moment, with you pulling your partner down to the couch in a sudden but gentle motion. As you hit the cushion, blast out a silent, mental command to the forces around you. Scream in your mind to them, forcing these agents of death to carry out the destruction you have in mind.

Whatever happens next is up to you. If it turns sexual, however, be sure to mentally fire off your command one more time during orgasm.

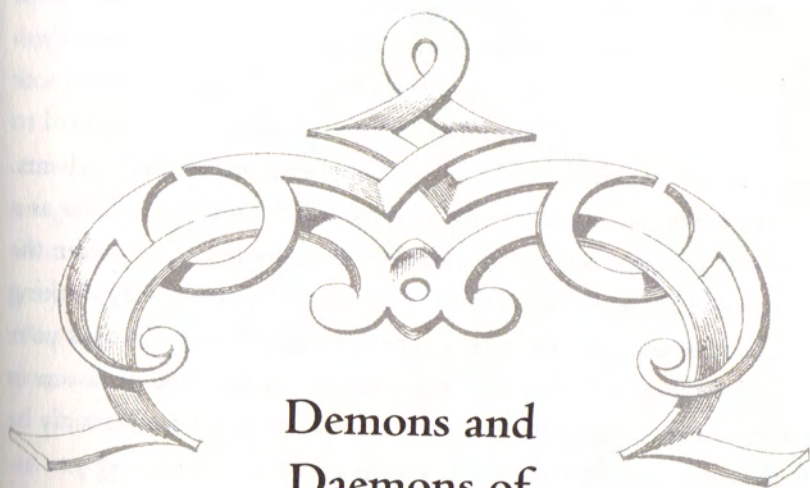
To end the rite, do what you did to close the Hades Rite (page 94 and 87), with one exception. Your partner can walk upstairs with you, a silent, forever changed witness.



Part Three
The Book of the Damned







Demons and Daemons of the Mind

By now you must have noticed, even if only by skimming, that the magick in this book is not of the safe and cozy type. Experiencing intense psychodrama and tapping into the energies described in these pages will cause you to unleash all manner of raw emotions and psychic reverberations throughout the cosmos. What you attract into your life as a result may not always fade back into the darkness when you turn on the lights.

There's very little banishing described in this tome. Part of the reason is that the forces at work for you are not exactly meant to go away when a rite is complete. The other reason is a little scarier to accept for some. If you attract the wrong kind of nasty in your rite, a stock banishing will do nothing to rid you of it!

To put all this another way: you need to go through the brave steps of moving out into the abyss, amidst the noises and cold tendrils you may hear and feel. Maintaining this connection throughout your more mundane days packs the final psychodramatic energy punch needed to make your rites work better than stock candleburning spells and chants.

Sometimes a cohesive, negative force will be attracted to you as a result of your flamboyance and willingness to move freely between the worlds of light and the void. When we think of sinister beings lurking in an abyss, one word definitely comes to mind. No matter what your religious beliefs are, you have likely learned of some kind of *demons* in the particular mythos you subscribe to. And the word can certainly be used to describe the things that may begin to torment you if you attract enough cosmic attention in your dark sphere. Before we look at ways to prevent these things from being of any consequence to you—yes, this chapter will ensure your safety—let's spend at least a moment figuring out what you may be up against on some bizarre night.

Demons?

Are demons really fallen angels? Are they some kind of beings created by a sinister leader of the forces of evil? My experience with demons I've called forth to visible appearance in evocations, as well as with demons I've encountered either inside people or "haunted locations," has led me to believe otherwise.

We create demons of a sort when we let negativity build into a thoughtform with its own purpose. Most of these negative energy blobs dissipate on their own and do no harm. Think of a snowball rolling down a dry hill—it will melt from the friction. Sometimes, a cohesive "ball" of negativity resonates with a preexisting batch of negative energy that was created and believed in by others. Such a form will become stronger by pulling in the similar energy to itself, following the occult principle of like attracting like. Think of a snowball rolling down a hill made of the same white stuff. It may take on a bolder, or boulder, presence! In this sense, a

demon attracted to your magick may have been created centuries ago by someone else—or perhaps it was created just recently. Finding you is a matter of bad luck, for you.

It's important to realize that negativity can come from those we're currently in conflict with, including ourselves. If you have desperate magickal needs that you're turning to this book for, chances are you're in at least some kind of a situation that is breeding negativity. You may very well end up creating the thing that haunts you . . . all by yourself. The last thing you need is a demon with an existing personal link to you, setting out to make you miserable.

A demon bothering you could even take on the famous name of an energy it resonates with. This could be your subconscious doing. For example, you could be familiar with a famous demon's name and just assume that what you are experiencing must be this very demon. Or, an even scarier possibility: a negative thoughtform may somehow become self-aware enough to pick up on and adopt a well-known sinister identity!

The self-awareness theory of demonic formation can account for why, when moving through your dark path, you come face to face with a demon recognizable to folklore. Why, for example, a being seemingly out of a fantasy roleplaying game suddenly becomes your personal tormenter. The scariest thing about such an admittedly rare occurrence is that such a demon would believe itself to be the dangerous, named force.

Names have astounding occult power, as evidenced by the various ritual techniques for creating a mystical being—a living thoughtform known as an egregore. We can give such a being even a seemingly innocuous name. As long as the rite to create it is done properly and with proper intent and power, the name Booper could conjure up a vicious monster. Imagine what a name already associated with a sinister nature can do for a burgeoning thoughtform.

Whether a demon takes on a name or not doesn't change its ability to torment you. You clearly need a way to ensure such negativity remains at a distance.

An Ancient Source of Help

While this tome is not a devoted work of Greek mysticism, the inclusion of some of the mysteries from my ancient heritage was no accident. Atavistic and hidden in my very cells and soul, some of the old ways called out to me during my time of worst suffering. Dark inspiration came flying across the eons to grant me something that modern medicine couldn't provide.

For their abilities to bring about real change when I needed it most, the darkest of rites from ancient Greece have had their impact on these pages. What you're about to learn in this chapter is another example—an instance where an almost forgotten aspect of Greek lore helped me solve the problem of dealing with the gathering lurkers at my dark sphere.

And it all began with some dwelling upon mythological beings of utter cosmic madness. Similar to the beings in the Cthulhu Mythos, the Titans of ancient Greece were once considered a major, sinister force. Imagine a group of beings with unearthly power and unparalleled chaotic rage—not to mention a desire to spread utter chaos. Imagine living in a time when it was believed that the Titans, in their defeat by the good gods, may very well have provided the seed for our existence.

According to one variation of the Greek creation myth, Prometheus, a Titan, fashioned humankind. What would moral Greeks of the time think about that? Would they imagine that Zeus and the other good gods of Mount Olympus would do something to help the earthly children of madness?

They might imagine that Zeus would grant us some aid—a fighting chance to prevent us from becoming more like our monster relatives. Perhaps the Greeks imagined that Zeus could still hear the dark Titans, banging away in the abyss, hoping to be free once again to wreak havoc. And as we've seen, by imagining and accepting something as a group—by making it into a thoughtform—the something becomes quite real.

You shall see for yourself later on if beings like the Titans are really out there or not, especially when you deal with the Cthulhu magick at the end of this tome. Back to the point and benefits at hand: the other things made real by the imagination of an ancient people, and how you can use these thoughtforms to protect yourself from demonic haunting . . . or hunting.

Enter Daemons

Not to be confused with demons, daemons are quasi-intelligent beings supposedly created by Zeus to guide and protect each of us. Sort of like guardian angels, daemons are assigned to individuals and remain with them from birth to death. Depending on what source you consult, daemons either died when their assigned individuals died, or were immortal and reassigned to new humans after the person died. Most beliefs from ancient Greece seem to point to the former—that daemons were created all the time as new life came to be on earth.

Some Greeks took daemons quite seriously, leaving offerings for them throughout their lives, either on special occasions or when a good streak of luck manifested. Daemonic intervention, not probability, was believed by many to be behind any great fortune gained from games or ventures of chance.

Let's face it. Any reality that daemons might have had didn't come from Zeus. The ancient Greeks really created these beings, or at least

the cosmic blueprint for them. Whether they believed that we would take after the Titans or not is irrelevant. They thought we all needed a little help in general, especially with protection from forces that didn't have our best interests in mind.

A little experimenting showed me that daemons are just as real as demons. The thoughts of self-preservation we all have, combined with the energy blueprints created by belief in daemonic and guardian-angel theories, make these protector beings wonderfully real. Whether we make them or attract them, daemons can truly protect us from our own personal demons.

Eliminating Demons with Daemons

Relying on a guardian angel of sorts to get us through our normal lives goes against what it means to be an occultist . . . or just an independent being. Will has to drive your existence to accomplish much of anything in either the mundane or mystical world. Hoping for some unseen guardian to hold your hand would be a crutch not worth having.

Yet that doesn't mean an intelligence that hangs around you with aims to preserve your self is of no use. Much as the dark forces of nature and the dark energy or matter of the cosmos is available for our use, a being intent on protecting us can be taken advantage of to serve our aims.

Think of your own personal daemon as a guardian that will always be within reach when discomfort or, worse, danger arises from a ritual. Your daemon is a satellite that you want orbiting your dark sphere, hopefully to knock away the uninvited beings that wish to attach themselves to you.

Think of the daemon as a tool for fighting fire with fire. Being made of the same astral stuff as anything meaning you harm in the abyss, the daemon's energies and efforts are best put to use as an etheric guard dog of sorts.

To firmly assign the daemon this task, and to grant it extra power, it needs to play the role. And you must begin accepting its existence as a potential ally. Again, do not expect it to become a daily crutch. You still need to pay attention to the road when driving, both figuratively and literally.

Before you try the next rite, cast a few dark spheres with the knowledge that the daemon is out there, watching. Remember the peripheral movements you observed in the Hades rituals? While creating your dark spheres, try to sense a friendly shadow in the abyss. Use the same peripheral astral vision to look for the friendly shadow in whatever form pleases you.

Daemons in ancient time were often depicted as beautiful youths. You may wish to look for yours in a slightly more menacing form—whatever a protector looks like to you, in other words. In time, the form you imagine will be the form it takes, and it will be the form you sense peripherally during rites.

Stop at any point during your nightly workings and verbally acknowledge that this daemon is welcome. Thank it for its presence and tell it that it needs no invitation from you to come.

If you wish to follow the lead of the ancients, you can even begin to leave a sort of offering for your personal daemon. Set aside some food outdoors or pour some alcohol onto the ground. You can even wish it a happy birthday on your birthday, if you wish. Do whatever it takes to bring about a feeling of appreciation for this thing, along with a feeling that this being is really out there.

A final thing to try before doing the following ritual is to dream of your daemon. Before you go to sleep, invite it to visit you in a dream. Try setting your alarm to a time between three and five in the morning. When you awaken, immediately close your eyes and ask the daemon to come to you. Because you'll still be in a half-sleep state, you should be able to quickly enter a dream with the knowledge that the daemon is coming.

After at least two weeks of trying to become aware of your daemon, you can use the following rite to formally charge it to the task of your active protection. This rite should also be used any time you feel lurkers in the shadows are a little too close for your own comfort. The daemon may take care of it on its own anyway, but doing the rite will only lend the being more power to act on your behalf during a time of obvious threat.

There are no physical preparations needed for this rite, and you can perform it during any other ritual working if you feel the need.

Calling the Daemon

Draw in the darkness and cast a dark sphere as normal. You can go about any magickal working that you need to accomplish.

Stop and gaze out into the darkness of the abyss. Try to find a spot where you can see nothing but shadow, if possible.

Begin to think of your daemon, but try not to do so using any pet name that might have come to you. In fact, never ritualistically try to give this thing a name. Think of it as your version of a universal being that everyone gets. You're just trying to put it to extra use.

Gazing into the darkness and thinking of your guardian, wait for a peripheral visual (or even audible) sensation that the guardian is nearby. It doesn't matter if you're imagining the being. Knowing it is nearby is all you need for success.

Imagine or know that this guardian is moving slowly into your direct line of sight. Say the following, inserting the words in parentheses only if you are in danger:

Emerge, daemon, emerge from the shadows.

Your (immediate help) attention and presence are needed this night.

Wait a few moments for the daemon to make itself known to you at a level of visible, audible, or just sensed presence that you are comfort-

able with. Only you know what kinds of things you are used to detecting in the shadows at this particular point in your development.

Thank the daemon in your own words for being ever vigilant on your behalf. If this is the first time you are contacting the daemon formally, say:

Your vigilance will be in ever greater need these coming nights.

My daemon, the reach of the abyss has no bounds.

*Guard me against whatever foes may come for me
through cavernous space and time.*

Otherwise, if you have detected an immediate threat, say the following, pointing in the general direction of the threat if it's noticeable:

*Be quick. Remove the peril that has swooped down upon us this night,
for I detect a presence unwelcome at the perimeter of this dark sphere.*

Do not try to dismiss the daemon now in any way. Go on with what you need to do this night, maintaining casual awareness that the daemon is acting on your behalf.

This is important: If you were asking for help against a particular threat this night, do not, under any circumstances, try to imagine an occult battle going on outside your sphere. To do so would be to severely limit the daemon to act in its own way and to do what needs to be done.

Just know that your daemon will never fail you, having your preservation as its solitary reason for existence. In this being you will always have a useful servant.

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The Occult Lucifer

"At one's darkest hour, the Light Bearer may come."

That's how the often misunderstood being introduced himself to me, beginning what would be the most life-changing couple of weeks of my life. What I have to say about the experience is not for everyone. Read on only if you're willing to disregard the efforts of the Church to wrongfully malign a beneficial force of nature. Read on only if you're willing to ignore the silly offshoots of Satanism that try to integrate a name of power into the non-magickal quest for worship of the self.

Lucifer is so misunderstood as an occult force. Here are some bits of wisdom about Lucifer, shared by his darkness himself . . . or is it lightness?

Behold, an Angel of Light

Why did this being seek me out? I think it was quite the opposite actually, but the occult world has the marvelous trait of making everything seem a miraculous manifestation. We get what we ask for, often without knowing we asked for it.

This entire book, and quite possibly my survival, would not have been possible without a dialogue that began on an otherwise unremarkable night. Life was just as bad this night as it had been for the previous few months. Reread the beginning of this tome if you wish to dwell on the agony I was enduring at the time.

After finally getting to sleep with the help of some green liquid (the only way to actually get to sleep at the height of numbness), a beautiful being came to me in what I thought to be a vivid dream. While my definition of beauty is normally limited to females, there was no other word that in dream, or afterward in waking, could possibly be used to describe him. He was blond, pale, and with sharp, narrow features. Angelic, and dressed in a robe of pure light, all he lacked was wings. He radiated light that would have blinded me, had I been looking at him with waking eyes.

His face seemed to have on it an almost constant expression of wit and awareness—something between a smirk, smile, and acknowledgment of some inside joke or piece of knowledge. That's the best way to describe his expression. Some might say this is suitable to a being that has been demonized, but it didn't feel at all menacing. There were no horns, for the record.

When he spoke the words that open this chapter, his voice seemed a perfection of my own. As if he knew me so well that he would speak to me with a tone familiar to me, ensuring that no information be lost. Realize that this statement I just made and others you'll read here are not the result of deep logical analysis. I'm trying to capture here the thoughts that came to me at the time.

He identified himself as the Light Bearer, as I've said. I had the lucidity to then ask him if that meant he was Lucifer. He said yes, but that I should "dwell on only what people believe I [he] was punished for" (i.e., for bringing wisdom to mankind).

Even though, "no such punishment ever came."

In other words, Lucifer does not see himself as evil for bringing wisdom to mankind. Before leaving, he said I would think this conversation was all a dream, but that he would prove me wrong the next night.

No Dream

True to his word, Lucifer did make it clear to me the next night that I hadn't simply had too much Chartreuse the night before.

Okay, so he didn't mention Chartreuse, but because of it I had my doubts. I decided the next night to rest in bed, unassisted by any substance or even prescription medication. What happened next was amazing.

Lucifer began speaking to me before I fell asleep! Note that from here on I will not be using quotes, as I wasn't taking dictation of any sort during our talks. Instead, I will mix paraphrasing with the ideas he was trying to get across. Some of these ideas came across exactly as that—wordless ideas, pictures, sensations, inspirations.

That second night, in a half-awake state, I heard his voice and answered. Whenever I let my amazement come to the forefront of my mind, knocking me out of the altered state I hadn't even tried to achieve, the conversation would cease. When I relaxed again, it continued.

This second night we talked for about an hour, without my falling asleep. It was over the course of this second talk that I realized some of the dialogue was coming nonverbally. Even when the dialogue was in audible words, however, it wasn't accompanied by a true visual component. During all our waking talks, I was aware of his face in the same way a friend's face appears in your mind's eye when you're speaking to him or her on the phone. Yet, my physical eyes were for the most part open.

This lying down and effortlessly entering an altered state went on nightly for two weeks. Realize that at any other time during the day or night I found it hard to concentrate on so much as typing the words "altered state," let alone entering one. Still, each night at roughly the same time (a little before one in the morning), Lucifer would come speak to me. I thought he was providing me with the altered state, but he had another theory to share when I suggested this.

Lucifer told me that those with brain ailments often do end up with one foot in the other realm, so to speak. Most are not open to the experience, however, and do nothing with it. Those seeking to enter altered states of awareness, say for magickal workings, find that their ordinary methods for perception shift no longer work when the biomatter involved is damaged.

While here, on the physical plane, we are confined by our bodies in more ways than one. According to Lucifer, a brain-damaged individual has a soul crying out to be heard, possessing not only higher truths it learned before the injury, but added higher intelligence as well—intelligence it never possessed before.

Lucifer made it clear that he had come to others who had either ailments of the brain or of other parts of the body that led to a state of stress that affected ordinary brain function. Having a lot of grief on one's mind, interestingly enough, is a way to invite inspiration from the Light Bearer.

Wisdom I Applied

You've already read much of what Lucifer led me to experiment with and try in the preceding chapters, and the following chapters will contain even more. I'm not implying that he wrote or dictated any of this book, but he did cryptically push me to try new things.

I always knew that the amount of psychodrama in a ritual determined its success to some level. Lucifer made it evident that when your

normal brain functions are impeded by a physical trauma or psychological strain and worries, you need to devise rituals that can overcome all that with their attention-getting nature.

I can't claim to have retained everything he hit me with over those two weeks. As his name suggests, he is the bearer of "light" or *wisdom*—the crime he was allegedly banished for, which he told me to meditate upon. Those who invented this story of banishment, however, didn't do so for altruistic reasons. They did it to control the masses by making the acquisition of knowledge something that only the "holy" can approve of and facilitate.

In truth, the human desire to acquire new knowledge had coalesced long ago to form the thoughtform behind the name Lucifer. He seems to love the sinister persona granted him by humankind, even hinting at why he's amused by it all. Anyone who blindly accepts such a silly tale of a fall from heaven, and that knowledge must be approved of before it is passed on, isn't ready to attain any wisdom at all. The universe is very much a closed book to those too scared to even glance at its cover for fear of divine retribution.

Never did he claim to be anything but an identity that existed before humankind and which really has nothing to do with any of our moral battles. I got the impression that by his existing at all, it sort of implies that there is no grand evil being. Thoughtforms draw similar energies, like anything else in the occult. For this benevolent, helpful Lucifer of wisdom to come to me was evidence that on a grand scale there is only wisdom. Evil and negativity could surely form lesser demonic entities. But none could coalesce to form part of a grand design that contains an evil on par with the "goodness" of the Creator.

If this was Lucifer—a true wisdom bearer—then what did he think of any Devil with a capital *D*? Lucifer offered an entertaining suggestion. Satan is really dozens of bad guys inhabiting the unseen world, appearing to those who want different things from them, and

to those who tap into the most appropriate Satan thoughtforms. Mephistopheles figures of varying intensity abound, appearing to those hung up on the Faust legend. The Devil is certainly legion, as Bible thumpers proclaim, but not for the reasons they offer. Simply put, there are devils to go around for those who want and need them, or create them.

The experience of talking to this amazing being was so welcome during my mystical dry spell, of sorts, that I put up little resistance to Lucifer's ideas. Even though he occasionally sounded as if he was trying to convince me of his benevolence, I realized later that he was aware that I wasn't resisting. He wanted to, it seems, make sure I wouldn't in hindsight think him to be a trick of my mind. His arguments were always logical and fully fleshed. If I forgot some of them, at least I would remember how much sense they made.

His message of finding alternative ways to help myself was never far from our discussions. Lucifer clearly had my survival and sanity as a goal and motive for coming to me, seemingly uninvited. As the things he taught me ended up in many of the chapters in this book, this chapter will not contain its own ritualistic techniques. It is more of an homage and an admission of where much of this book came from.

Lucifer helped me to see that the alien presence and pressure I had been feeling in my head were distorting consciousness for me without my even knowing it. Lucifer admitted that when I resolved my health dilemma, with the help of techniques he would suggest, he and I would never speak in the same way again. He would be there in the abyss, able to be called forth. But these waking, non-ceremonial discussions would cease, bringing me the first evidence I was well again.

All came to pass as he said it would. I learned to use psychodrama more effectively than even trained altered states of awareness. I experimented with some of the things he suggested and developed my own, too. Not that I'll ever admit which is which within this tome. I'm still a little jealous that some of the more effective rites were completely from him.

I'm not Alone

Synchronicity has a funny way of showing up in relation to mystical matters. You may never again end up in a room with a bunch of people that were born in the same hospital on the same day as you—heck, you may never even come across one such person. But have a bizarre paranormal experience that you feel separates you from humankind and just watch how you coincidentally run into those who witnessed the same thing!

You know who you are, those of you who shared some of your experiences after I admitted having them. And to those of you reading who haven't come forward yet, this is your invitation.

Lucifer is still reachable by the healthy, as he suggested. All better now, I'm never really alone in having had the experience, and am never fully out of reach of this amazing being. In the dark sphere, he's always a peripheral flash of light waiting to grant inspiration, if not an outright dialogue. Reach out to him.

Okay, so maybe this chapter did have a practical technique to try after all. . . .





GOTOS and Other Dark Beings

Despite the techniques he outright suggested, Lucifer may have inadvertently (or purposely) caused me to dwell on an interesting possibility. Communing with the Light Bearer was a matter of tapping into an awe-inspiring battery of knowledge and energy. He said when he'd be back. And numbness or illness aside, he returned. For the first time in my occult experience, an external force maintained beneficial and repeated control over me for an extended period of time.

Nothing before had made it so clear that preexisting intelligent thoughtforms or egregores simply must be tapped for their benefits. Lucifer was powerful enough to seek me out when I needed him, and he was mostly shaped and fed by millions of ordinary humans over the ages. What about some of the more specialized egregores that were created by those with above average abilities? They might not seek out a soul in need, but seeking them out could represent a powerful shortcut to achieving results. Why expend all the energy creating a being to do your bidding when there's one out there, charged up for the task?

Especially if you're in a place in your life where creating one doesn't seem possible.

Borrowing Power from the Adepts

While not all occult orders and mystical organizations throughout history could claim to have had true adepts in their ranks, at least a few must have contained spiritually advanced members. This is even more likely the case with the orders that lasted for years, rather than just long enough to have a few meetings and put out a poorly printed newsletter or two.

Many true occult orders pool their energy into a current that they can tap into. Sometimes this is an amorphous thing—just a pulse that is felt by members in attendance at meetings. Other orders would give this energy a name and face, creating an egregore or temple entity that could help them accomplish their magickal goals. Depending on the aims and morality of the order, such a being could be perceived as a minor god or demon by the members—and anyone else who tapped the energy.

Some of these egregores are still out there, waiting to be called into action. Trained individuals have, at many points in time, gathered their forces to create these things. They've pooled their talents to create something alive. No sense in letting all the hard work and training of these select individuals vanish with their earthly incarnations, right? Especially when you need adept-like power in the pre-adept phase of your path.

Finding myself in exactly this predicament, I began experimenting with unlocking cosmic batteries that, unlike chemical batteries, don't lose much power over time. I started out trying to tap into egregores that might not have been named, but which I knew had to exist based on the rites of the groups that made them. I thought these less-defined beings might be easier sources of energy to work with, or more flexible to adapt to my needs. All that might have been the case if not for one

important fact: accessing these nameless ones proved to be devoid of psychodrama.

I needed to tap into something that excited me on some level, as well as something that would fit into my planned goals and dark current of working. I chose an egregore from an organization that was misunderstood and labeled outright sinister, but which may have only partly deserved such a title. I knew of this organization for years, and knew that they worked with energies more than just a little in league with my own.

In fact, this organization even claimed to be working with Lucifer himself at one point in time. I will discuss this organization first, before divulging the named being I chose to seek out.

The Brotherhood of Saturn

The Pansophical Society of 1920s Germany was an interesting, but now rarely mentioned, occult group. Just like modern discussion and study groups, the Society used to meet in the back of a bookstore, which happened to be owned by one of its members, Eugene Grosche, and studied available occult literature. The group consisted of some minor celebrities of the day. Besides Grosche, who would go on to publish occult books (and doesn't that make one a celebrity?), another member, Albin Grau, was involved with UFA Productions.

For those who don't share my love of silent German film, UFA was responsible for the classics *Nosferatu* and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. Albin Grau had a lot to do with the look of those films, as he worked as a set and costume designer. As we'll see in a moment, his influence was to help create one of the most sinister and awe-inspiring egregores of all time.

Any practical occultist knows you can't get very far with study groups, and Grosche decided in 1926 to form a "working group" of the Pansophical Society. It was called the *Fraternitas Saturni* (FS) or Brotherhood of Saturn. Within two years, in the spring of 1928, the

Pansophical Society dissolved, leaving the FS group to become a completely independent organization. It would go on, with some war-caused hiatuses, well into the 1960s. It survives in splinter groups to this day.

Some find the FS of particular interest because it was the first group to accept Crowley's Law of Thelema but act independent of the Great Beast himself. Those not obsessed with Crowley but interested in dark occultism (like yours truly), are more interested in just about everything else about this group.

For those seeking out the dark throughout history, you couldn't find working at the time a darker current, in any sense of the word. The ritual chambers predated the look of satanic films from the 1960s, complete with upside-down pentagrams (symbolizing mostly telluric or chthonic energies) and black robes. Oh yes, and people engaging in sexual rites and drug use.

It's far beyond the scope of this book to go into all the beliefs of the FS. An out of print but excellent book on the subject by S. Edred Flowers (or Stephen Flowers, now of the Temple of Set) can still be found for sale online, and occasionally in used bookstores: check out *Fire and Ice: Magical Teachings of Germany's Greatest Secret Occult Order* for a plethora of FS material.

For our purposes, it's important to note that the FS believed in something called "saturn gnosis." The order accepted that darkness preceded light, and, as with all forms of gnosticism, that the supernal deity is separate from a lower deity or demiurge responsible for the dark, impure world we live in. Saturn (or Saturnus) was the demiurge for the FS, and only via this dark sphere can we know God and all the higher knowledge of the universe. One aspect of the demiurge—its "higher octave"—was believed to be Lucifer himself, the Light Bearer who brings wisdom to humankind.

To achieve the ultimate gnostic goals of the order, its initiates obviously needed training. Each of the thirty-three grades developed for

this purpose focused on a different magickal practice. The most famous is Magus Pentalphae, or the eighteenth degree, which focused on sex magick, but there were grades focusing on everything from alchemy to evocation.

Considering the extensive coverage of occult areas provided by the degrees, we can see that the FS was a complete order in every way. Despite its laser-like focus on saturn gnosis, the FS provided at least as much of a framework for development as did the Golden Dawn, and even provided a series of holiday celebrations and sacraments that made one aspect of the order resemble an occult church. Be it a Luciferian one.

That name again. It bears some emphasizing that while this advanced order was built on a Luciferian philosophy, he was not the being that presided most closely over the group's meetings. And now for the being I chose to seek out. . . .

Gothic GOTOS

It's never been proven, but the work of Albin Grau lived on in the FS even after he left. The egregore of the order, named GOTOS, looks exactly like Nosferatu, the character from F. W. Murnau's famous film. The official story is that a female medium in the order came up with the look of the egregore in a vision. More likely, the power of suggestion is what it is. To give a fully fictional analogy (no fanatical mail, please), it would be like an occult order that Walt Disney belonged to receiving an image of a mouse as its egregore!

With the exception of a closed mouth that does not show fangs, it is difficult to differentiate the bust of GOTOS from a statue of the famous vampire, especially in low-light settings. This fact comes in quite handy for modern occultists, as we'll see.

The name GOTOS is an abbreviation for Gradus O. T. O. Saturni, or the name of the thirty-third degree of the order. It was believed that the leader and holder of the thirty-third degree was a direct mouthpiece

for the egregore of the same name. The first such leader was the aforementioned Eugene Grosche, or Gregor Gregorius as he became known in the FS. There are documents that show some members wanted Albin Grau to get the job, but Eugene/Gregor was able to acquire a large amount of money for the order. Money and politics have destroyed more than one occult group.

Despite the acronym naming scheme, it's been argued that GOTOS was based on existing words from years earlier. I've seen Indo-Germanic etymologies, as well as Indo-European ones. The explanations of the word range in meaning from "having a relationship" to "something possibly godlike" to just "something that can be invoked." Interesting, certainly, but unimportant to a practical occultist. Naming a being forever gives a new meaning to the word or name used to do so. The name becomes a key to accessing the power locked in the being.

Besides having a look that appeals psychodramatically to anyone who appreciates gothic culture, GOTOS has traits that are beneficial for anyone with occult goals. As a form of Saturn, he is a representative of willpower and resolve. That was enough for me, not to mention that he seemed fully in league with the Lucifer being who helped me at my bleakest moment.

Even more important is the type of egregore that GOTOS is. While some temples would create a being to aid them, GOTOS was unmistakably designed to act as a battery. Order literature states that his energy can be accessed, and that it is deifying. That was the type of energy I needed—power designed to make one feel like a god. Not a bad sensation to achieve when trying to accomplish the impossible.

Initiates of the FS wore special rings with a Saturnian symbol on a triangle. When the ring was turned inward, so that the apex pointed toward the knuckle, energy was believed to flow from GOTOS to the initiate. When turned outward, energy was shared with the order. Having no such ring, I decided to just have a little face-to-face time with the egregore and gain some help that way.

Choosing a Powerful Aid

Before we move on to a rite for calling forward GOTOS or another preexisting egregore, I should point out that the next chapter will contain exactly that: a rite for calling forth a being of your choice. I gave GOTOS as an example because I turned to him. In the past, I've evoked a great many lesser demons and other intelligences using ceremonial techniques. Those techniques weren't working for me during my crisis time, however, so I needed a combination of a powerful being and a potent new way to call it.

The amount of well-defined, preexisting egregores and entities is staggering. If you're not comfortable with or intrigued by GOTOS, you can look to some other well-known sources for a little dark inspiration. For example, if you have a grimoire like the *Goetia* or *Necronomicon* lying around, you may find the description and expertise of one of those spirits appropriate for a particular situation at hand. If you have a copy of my *Summoning Spirits*, you'll find you can use those beings with the ritual that will follow as well.

True, it is odd for an author to give a shortcut for his own training system, but anyone who's read this far knows why I'm doing so. Still, note that the bizarre framework you are about to learn is no substitute for magickal training carried out under normal circumstances. It is very much a shortcut for desperate times, with an added side benefit. Having come this far and triggered some of your scrying abilities, you've been training your astral senses while hardly realizing the effort.

Seeing something like GOTOS now will give you one hell of a start on a powerful occult path—you can pursue the path in a more methodical manner later on.





Evocation by Electrical Fire

"It was a dark and stormy night" may be the all-time worst opening line from fiction, but there's no denying the power that such a setting has on a ritual. Performing magick during a thunderstorm seems to fill the air with extra magickal energy for you to feed off, channel, and definitely add to the work at hand.

Are humans the only participants who can make extra use of electrical energy in the air, however?

Modern parapsychologists are convinced that when an entity manifests in a room, they can detect it electronically. To do so, they don't use a PKE meter straight out of *Ghostbusters*. Rather, they detect the effect that an entity has on the energy already present in the room. A digital thermometer may register unexplainable cold temperatures, as an entity draws thermal energy to manifest. An EMF detector may show spikes in electromagnetic activity, possibly as an entity pulls together energy either from the spectrum in general, or from the tiny bits given off by nearby electronic devices.

It gets even more interesting. When a spot in a home is found to naturally contain lots of energy of some sort, say a room located underneath high-voltage wires, haunting phenomena are much more likely to occur there than anywhere else in the house.

Occultists have believed for ages that static electricity and psychic energy behave in similar ways, and have even physically felt the similarities. Now some parapsychologists are catching on as well, going so far as to coax manifestations at haunted houses by bringing along a gadget we'll get to in a moment.

It is this gadget that will help you evoke a mystical being, be it egre-gore, demon, or other denizen of the abyss, using a little manufactured lightning.

It's Alive!

We've all seen horror movies where a mad scientist has a laboratory full of all kinds of devices emitting sparks. In the case of Frankenstein's monster, not only are these devices necessary, but the help of real lightning seems needed as well. High voltage on top of high voltage is the apparent recipe for success when giving life to inanimate flesh. Either that or all those flashes just looked great on black and white film. In the occult, where energy and psychodrama both play integral roles to the success of a rite, both the voltage *and* the flashes help.

The whole point of the rite you are about to try is to provide an astral or etheric being with both energy and substance to appear before you—all while creating an eerie setting, which never hurts. For best results, you should do this ritual on a stormy night, and preferably in close proximity to the natural ground. Be part of the natural cycle of electricity seeking its way to earth or ground, in other words.

You'll also need to add one of two items that will give you a little extra charge: an electrostatic generator or a high-voltage, high-frequency device. There are several types of these available for reasonable

prices in scientific supply catalogs and even online auction sites. The most popular, and safest, is the Van de Graaff generator. This is the famous metal ball that causes your hair to rise when you touch it. Inside the device, a moving belt and some friction create the static that builds on the metal sphere.

Attaching a metal needle, point upwards, to the top of the sphere (with an electrically sound connection) has an uncanny effect conducive to the ritual. It causes electrons to flow upwards in a stream away from the needle point. The same needle trick can be tried with a Wimshurst Device or one of several variations on these electrostatic generators. This electron stream can help an entity gather particles to itself, and can empower its very energy level.

Another option is to use a high-voltage, high-frequency device like a Jacob's Ladder or maybe a Tesla Coil. You've seen the Jacob's Ladder in horror movies. It has two leads that angle away from each other, forming a V. A spark appears at the bottom, bridging the gap between the leads, and travels up, maintaining contact with both leads until it gets to the top and dissipates. This happens repeatedly, releasing energy and ozone into the atmosphere.

A Tesla Coil usually looks like a conical coil. It's about a foot tall with a small metal sphere at the top. High voltage electricity can travel from the top sphere to a nearby grounded rod, providing another good source of energy and ozone for this ritual.

Because all these devices can come in various sizes and even shapes, I'm going to keep specifics about their setup somewhat generic. Whichever device you choose, whether by fancy or budget, be sure to read the experiments it comes with. Pick an experiment, like the aforementioned ones, that is designed to produce either visible sparks or an electron wind of sorts. Spend some time getting the effect just right.

And read the safety instructions! Before you know what you're doing, be sure to stand on a rubber mat or at least wear sneakers. Also,

never, ever play around with the device using both arms. Keep one hand in your pocket when experimenting. High voltage electricity going from arm to arm will cross your heart, having potentially fatal results.

Why not keep your trips to Hades ritualistic ones for now?

Conjuring Out of Thin, Electric Air

If you've done at least half of the rites in *Nocturnicon* up to this point, and if you follow the directions here, the combination of your developing abilities and this electrical shortcut will provide you with success at an amazing feat.

To perform this rite, you will need your newly acquired device set up to produce the spark or electron wind effect described earlier. Set the device near the plainest wall in the room and just outside your circle. You should be able to look beyond the device and peer into the abyss, as you've done so many times before. Later, when you create a dark sphere, you can still pick a random direction to begin. You'll just have to eventually return to the spot where your device is located. Remember, direction has no real meaning in the abyss of space anyway, so picking the plainest wall is really the top priority here.

If your device has a power switch, you will need to rig it so the switch is on but the device has no power until you want it to. Using a powerstrip with a switch should do the trick. Just plug the device in and leave the strip in the dark sphere with you. You can then turn on the device from a distance, without leaving the sphere.

The other item to set up in that part of the room, but just inside the sphere, is an incense burner with a lot—I repeat, a lot—of incense handy. If you use sticks, during the rite you will have to have many burning at once, with extras on hand. If you like powder incense that burns on coals, have plenty to continually pour on. The idea is to create a wall of smoke in front of the electric device at the right time in the ritual. The egregore or entity will use the smoke and electricity to

fashion a body for itself—or, at the very least, a glowing portal through which you can view its features and hear its voice. Before you begin the rite, have only a minimal amount of incense burning to set the mood. In the ritual example, I'll explain when to add the copious amounts.

You'll need one light to position in the middle of the dark sphere; it will be behind you at the time of the actual evocation. An oil lamp or candle is fine.

The final ingredient is absolutely necessary as well. You will need a physical representation of the being you wish to evoke. This could be a picture you copy from a book or print off the Internet (try searching for "GOTOS occult," for example). You could replace this, or combine it, with a sigil from a grimoire. It is also possible and effective to use a three-dimensional representation of the being.

When calling GOTOS the first time, I used a statue of Nosferatu that was a gift from a fan. It worked very well, and thankfully didn't result in my evoking the ghost of Max Schreck (the actor who played Nosferatu in the original film). As I said, the similarity between GOTOS and Nosferatu in low-light conditions is uncanny and useful.

In the rite that follows, I include a conjuration that is not difficult to copy to an index card or even memorize. If you are calling a being from a particular grimoire that you fancy, you might want to substitute the conjuration with one from that book. If the words make sense to you, or sound appropriately exotic, they can only help to key in to the energy of the egregore or thoughtform.

The Lightning Rite of Evocation

Carefully set up your ritual area, as you won't want to leave once this rite is underway. Position the electric device and censer as discussed earlier, lighting the latter up with only a barely perceptible amount of incense. Next to the censer, however, have on hand plenty of incense for later in the rite, as well as a way to dampen the smoke on demand.

This will depend on the type of incense, obviously. A cup of water works for dipping incense sticks, for example, while pouring some sand on coals works, too.

Close to your oil lamp or candle, place the picture, sigil, or other links to the entity. Try not to glance at these link items during the opening parts of this rite.

Lightning Rite

Create a dark sphere, using either a random starting point or the direction where your device and censer are located. Remember, the sphere perimeter line should fall between the censer and the electric device; the latter falls just outside the sphere.

Standing at the center of the sphere, move just in front of the oil lamp or candle and pick up the item or items related to the being you will call. Don't focus on them, just have them in hand.

Spend a few moments listening to the whispers and noises coming from outside the dark sphere. If it is a stormy night, listen for any changes in the cacophony after a flash of lightning or a rumble of thunder.

Gaze in the direction where you set up the censer and electric device. The amount of smoke should barely be noticeable—you're really just gazing into the depths of the abyss at this point.

Allow peripheral astral visions of motion to come to you, as you did in other rites. When you're satisfied with the amount of astral activity you're detecting—both visible and audible—say:

Move, beings of the firmament.

Move, beings of the abyss.

Be heard. Be seen.

But prepare to make way for he (or she) that will come forth.

Substitute the gender of the being. If in doubt, use your instincts to decide on the correct gender—or just say “the one.”

Move to the censer, bringing the entity's link items with you. Get down on one knee and add more incense to the censer—a *lot* more incense.

Position the powerstrip so that you can tap the switch on with your foot, then stand up. Look at the link item(s) you are holding. They might be difficult to make out in these lighting conditions. Tilt them a little to one side to get at least a fifteen-second look at them in better light (which is coming from behind you). After this, turn to face the electrical device and just make do with seeing the link items as best as you can, despite the shadow cast over them by your body.

If you read your chosen conjuration from a card, you will likely have to hold it off to your side to catch better light. Be sure to glance at the items in your other hand after every few words. If you memorized the conjuration, don't take your eyes off the link items. Also, note that it's okay to paraphrase. The egregore or demon won't carry you off into the chasms of space because you changed a few words!

While you are reading the conjuration and looking at the link items, continue to be aware of the movement and noises coming from the abyss. Say this conjuration, or one of your own that you find to be relevant to your entity:

I summon and conjure thee, (Name).

Appear before me in whatever form enables you to cross the abyss.

Appear before me using whatever angles and spatial geometry necessary for me to see;

using whatever etheric blasts of wind necessary for me to hear.

My eyes are open to the void,

my ears attuned to the whispers of the ether.

Make your presence known to me, (Name).

(Name), come forth and appear.

Kick on the powerstrip, activating the electrical device. Take one last look at the link items in your hand and slowly lift your gaze up, to

look into the wall of smoke and whatever electrical effects are visible behind it.

Begin to repeat the name of the egregore or entity in a slow, monotonous tone that is barely louder than a whisper. Continue to gaze into the smoke and electrical field. As you repeat the name of the entity, allow yourself to become lost in the visual depths before you.

Within a short period of time, you should detect some unusual phenomena: either a prominent movement somewhere in the periphery of your astral vision, or something beginning to coalesce within the smoke field.

If you sense the peripheral motion, begin to repeat the name a little louder and mentally *will* the motion to come directly into your line of sight, within the smoke and perhaps sparks.

If you sense something already coalescing in the smoke, begin to repeat the name louder, allowing the form to become clearer—to go from shimmer to shape.

Note that if you sense nothing at all after fifteen minutes or so, you will need to skip to the end of this rite and do the closing.

When you're satisfied that the manifestation is as clear as it will be this night, you may welcome the being in your own words.

Ask whatever questions you have for it, and give it any commands you must. But, as with the dead, do not keep this thing lingering here for very long. It is violating some of the order and balance of physical space-time to be here with you.

When you've finished giving your interrogation or commands, thank the being, again, for coming. Tell it to depart in your own words, or with something like the following:

Be still, movers of the unseen.

Be still and make way for the passing of (Name).

(Name), you may now relinquish your hold on this intersection of time, space, and the unseen world.

*Return to your own realm,
being ever ready to answer my call some future night.*

Watch the entity begin to fade back into the abyss from which it came. When you're satisfied that it has at least begun to do so, continue.

Here is how you should close the rite:

Kick off the powerstrip and look away from the spot of manifestation. Try to minimize the amount of smoke coming from the censer. How you do the latter will depend on the incense type. Leave the entity link items next to the censer, and walk back to the center of the circle without looking at the spot where the entity manifested.

Only after you've returned to the center of the dark sphere, turn to face the area of manifestation. Extend your right arm with your palm facing out, allowing your elbow to dip into a V shape. Walk back toward the area of manifestation. On the way, take a deep breath and hold it. Apply tension to your arm, feeling as if you are pushing something toward the edge of the perimeter.

When you reach the edge of the sphere, continue to hold your breath for as long as you can. The tension in your arm should be almost unbearable. When it does become unbearable and you can't hold your breath any longer, push your arm out all the way and exhale.

Listen for a moment . . . and gaze out into the dark once again. If you detect something menacing, quickly call on your daemon to dispatch it (use the technique you learned earlier).

If all seems normal—and you should trust your intuition by now—turn and leave the room. No need to do the pushing motions at the other quarters of the circle.

Go do something non-magickal in a brightly lit setting to ground yourself.

This rite will have amazing results when it works, but it can occasionally fail. Also, there will be times when you will be unsure if the thing you called is the thing that appears before you. In some ways, it doesn't much matter. You may be able to force the being that appears to obey your will.

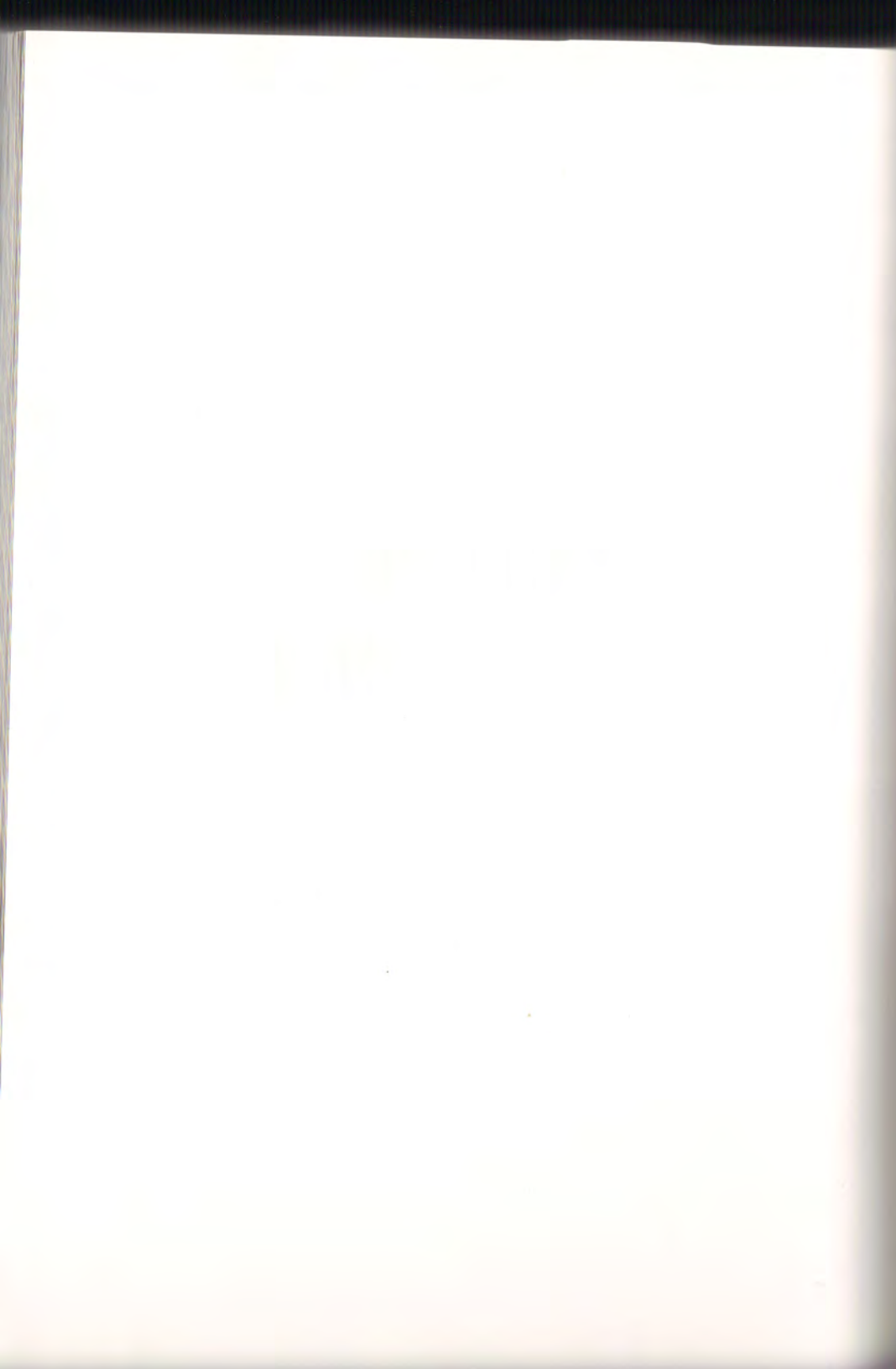
Again, this rite is no substitution for training your senses and abilities. It is just a way to get powerful aid when it is impossible to concentrate on rituals that demand more from the user.

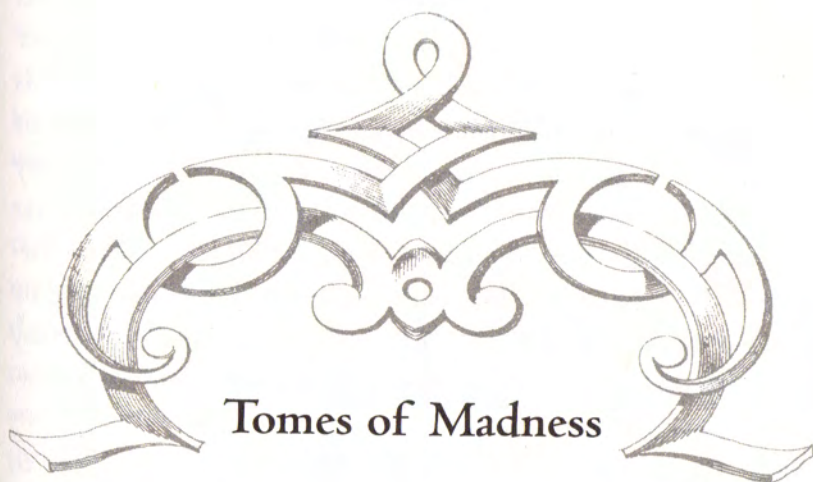


Part Four

The Book of the Threshold







Tomes of Madness

What you hold in your hands may be considered a forbidden tome to some. Perhaps such critics have religious beliefs that prevent them from reading about the occult. Maybe they're just scared off by its subject matter.

Ask yourself something, right now, while you think about these faceless people who would be condemning you if they knew what you were "wasting your time" with: Does it feel good, knowing that these dark magicks are for many a taboo?

Still on this subject, realize that this book probably wasn't even terribly difficult to get, was it? You saw it, or ordered it, or borrowed it (with or without telling the owner). As forbidden as this book may be to many, you were able to get it rather quickly and effortlessly.

Now imagine that this book was only mentioned in hushed whispers, in esoteric groups where its very existence is a jealously guarded secret. Imagine that it was only rumored to exist, and for decades people had searched for it, hoping to unlock its secrets.

Acquiring it then would make the book not only more of a prize, but also a thing of added power. The dreams and frustrations of those trying to find it for so long would imbibe it with an emotional core, as if rituals were done to bless, or curse, *Nocturnicon*. The imaginings of seekers would begin to take form on the astral, attributing to this very book countless more powers and miracles than any tome could ever hope to contain. This book, of a couple hundred pages, would be surrounded by a thoughtform so thick and heavy that it would hardly matter if the book existed at all. Reaching out for the ghostly shell may result in touching a solid, phantom-turned-physical cover—an etherically materialized pulp page.

Ah, the words you would read then. Words I could never hope to conjure alone. Words no sane human could read and stay sane. For how could anything written by the frustrations and hopes of the masses ever come across as sane?

Perhaps in a century, some teenager will learn of this book and seek it out well into adulthood, being the first to read its words after decades of others only speculating about its contents. Whether this book ever attains such a cosmic oddity of identity—that of book turned more powerful by desire—is unimportant.

At least one book exists out there with just such added power. This chapter explores that famous tome, and gives examples of others that almost contain a mystical life of their own. In the next chapter, you'll learn what to do with a book you feel is more than just the pulp it's printed on.

The *Necronomicon* of Lovecraft

Loosely and likely incorrectly translated to the “Book of Dead Names,” the *Necronomicon* is the eldritch daddy of all forbidden books. While the idea and reality of lost occult manuscripts go back before the burning of the great library at Alexandria (roughly 1600 years ago), no leg-

endary book ever captured the imaginations of more seekers. Ancient scrolls full of secrets would have been sought by small groups of literate magi way back when. Meanwhile, the *Necronomicon* has spread as a legend for eight decades among the mostly literate masses of the modern world.

The invention of horror and fantasy writer Howard Phillips Lovecraft (1890–1937), the *Necronomicon* is a book so terribly rife with cosmic secrets that merely reading it may cause one to go insane. Worse, the words in the book can act as sonic keys, unlocking doorways to a race of alien beings or monsters called the Great Old Ones. Servants and worshipers of Old Ones desire the book to help facilitate the return or at least contact of these ancient beings. Sane protagonists in H. P. Lovecraft's stories tend to want just the opposite.

Abdul Alhazred—the “mad” Arab—was supposed to have written this book around 730 AD, gathering in it the horrible alien but mystical secrets he discovered in the deserts of Arabia. Lovecraft was a sheltered chap from Providence, Rhode Island. For most of his life he was a xenophobe, if not an outright racist, and having an Arab as the author of his fictional book made it undoubtedly seem even more a forbidden book.

While I and many a writer whose prose puts me to shame admire Lovecraft's works, few literary critics would call him a master of characterization, plot, or even style. All the things that normally make a fiction writer immortal were lacking in Lovecraft, who strung together sentences so long and twisted that even a scholar of Old English would have a hard time reciting them. What he excelled at, and will always be remembered for, was his ability to evoke true cosmic terror. Few writers before or since could ever make us feel so tiny, insignificant, and alone in the universe.

Lovecraft might have had the fear of foreigners or foreign things, but in his book, he makes readers feel “cosmophobic”—afraid of

everything found *out there*, in the abyss. Part of the reason he was so successful at making us feel cosmic fear is the way he depicted the nature of the Old Ones. They view humans much as we view insects: hardly worth noticing and for the most part useless. Even when insects do something good for us—such as a spider that keeps our realm free of flies—we'd still just as easily kill them if they were to get in our way.

The possibility that a book can open vistas for us and invite such things to appear should be horrifying. For some reason, however, the *Necronomicon* instills fascination, not fear, in most who read about it. Its terrible secrets should quell any sane person's desire to lift the fabled book's cover. Yet fear of the unknown doesn't have any power over insane curiosity.

We do want to know, even at the risk of our entire race, what these Old Ones have to tell us. Though we can't conceive of maintaining consciousness for millennia, we seek out the twisted wisdom of those who have done exactly that, foolishly expecting to understand it.

Central to Lovecraft's tales in the *Necronomicon* was a being named Cthulhu, who lies not dead but dreaming in a city named R'lyeh, which is trapped beneath one of our seas. This giant creature, with tentacles where a mouth should be, has contemplated his move against humankind for millennia. He waits for when the stars are "right" so that he may rise once again. Key to the type of madness found in Lovecraft's tales, this being had Lovecraft's work named after him as the Cthulhu Mythos.

Contemplating our utter defenselessness against beings like Cthulhu—trying to understand what kind of knowledge mixed with insanity such beings must possess after hundreds of thousands of years—these are the makings of truly maddening fear. Fear that has given Lovecraft and his *Necronomicon* lasting power.

Even more prolific at letter writing than fiction, Lovecraft has left us with enough correspondence to fill rooms. In these gems are found

the real Lovecraftian secrets. A staunch materialist, Lovecraft basically admits to having no esoteric agendas in his fiction. He did dream of some of his monsters and settings, but he didn't consider these occult phenomena—just his excellent imagination working after hours.

The *Necronomicon* is purely made up, first appearing in the 1923 story "The Hound." Despite anyone's wishes to the contrary, it wasn't a real book that Lovecraft had heard about in his reading.

Despite his admitting the book didn't exist, Lovecraft had some fun with the tome by publishing a short "History of the *Necronomicon*" in 1927, forever solidifying the belief that a mad Arab really did pen the famous tome. The fact that Lovecraft's literary buddies added to the Cthulhu Mythos tales didn't help, either. The *Necronomicon* began appearing in stories from many different writers during and after Lovecraft's life, usually mixed in with a list of real occult titles. What was a reader to assume but that this marvelous book existed?

The Necronomicons Appear

In the late 1970s, forty years after Lovecraft's death, the Cthulhu Mythos was still going strong. In fact, thanks to the success of a specialty publisher called Arkham House as well as some paperback deals, Lovecraft was more widely read in the 1970s than at any point during his life. New generations would come to the stories and encounter the *Necronomicon*. New generations would wonder about the book's existence.

None of these new readers had the benefit of the Internet—the great myth creator and dispeller—and none had the benefit of pulp-magazine letter columns and discussions from the 1920s and 1930s. As far as these new readers knew, the *Necronomicon* was real.

People started placing ads looking for the book. Occult store owners would get requests for it. One such owner did something about it.

The Simon Necronomicon

I knew Herman Slater, the now deceased owner of the famed Manhattan shop Magickal Childe. Whenever I had a decent break between college classes, I would go to the store to kill time amidst the racks of rare books, musty herbs, and statues of Pazuzu. Herman seemed to love Pazuzu, or at least the statue's ability to sell simply with a sign identifying him as the demon in William Peter Blatty's *The Exorcist*.

Herman could sell oddities. It's what he excelled at, and the New York City magickal community will never be the same without him and his store. I never found him to be a particularly jovial person, and he never really acted in a mentor-like fashion to me or any other customer I ever saw in there. But that's not why we went to Magickal Childe. We all went there because it was the kind of place where you never really knew what you'd find. If ever there was a store where Lovecraft's book would materialize, it had to be within the dark confines of Magickal Childe. It had to be on one of those old shelves that never seemed to have the same books, or even the same category of books each time you returned.

And there it did manifest, both in legend and fact. The legend is that L. K. Barnes went there looking for it, and that Herman Slater had the manuscript to show him. The mysterious man responsible for finding the manuscript—one Simon—later turned up at Barnes's place to seal the deal that brought us this dark masterpiece. With obvious involvement credited to Herman Slater, the mysterious *Necronomicon* appeared in 1977, in a limited run of 666 copies (I own number 660, and I think King Diamond is the lucky scoundrel who has number 666).

The wonderful tale is all recounted in the introduction to the *Simon Necronomicon*. Wonderful fiction and fascinating reading. The facts about how the book really turned up in Slater's store are a little different. Evidence shows that there were meetings held at the store to

plan the creation of the book, making Herman Slater at least part of the imaginary Simon. For our purposes, suffice it to say that a talented writer by the name of Peter Levenda may have had enough to do with the creation of the book that he should be forever known as Simon Peter Levenda. Not sure if they were going for a Biblical in-joke there, but you've got to love the sound of it.

If you want a wonderful exposé on this and other *Necronomicons*, read *The Necronomicon Files* by Daniel Harms and John Wisdom Gonce III. I can't recommend it highly enough.

The Simon book is the one you'll still see, in paperback, in most every bookstore. It's one of the best-selling occult books of all time, and with good reason. Anyone who's ever read Lovecraft simply can't pass it up, and anyone drawn to the occult can't ignore its forbidden look and subject matter. The book is a fabrication, but one that brings a powerful thoughtform into a tangible, usable form. That's right: *usable*.

The book mixes Lovecraft's Old Ones with gods and demons from Sumer (including Pazuzu—he and Herman really were inseparable). The fraud contains enough errors to delight a book detective—if Johnny Depp's fictional character in *The Ninth Gate* were real, the *Necronomicon* would be his life's work! Still, it works better than most occult books on the market today. As we've said, a forbidden book acquires around it a thoughtform that, if somehow measured physically, would create an aura miles wide around the book. The Simon *Necronomicon*, with its mixture of partially authentic Sumerian cosmology and Lovecraft's creatures, captured every drop of energy ever put into thinking about how amazing it would be to find the dreaded tome. It was just exotic enough to satisfy seekers, and its rituals just tempting enough to get people to try them and only add to the egregore of the book.

Fake though it may be, the Simon *Necronomicon* remains the ultimate manifestation of a forbidden book. In no way can it be confused with Lovecraft's version—not a single quote from the stories is found in the

magickal text. Also, like all *Necronomicon* hoaxes, it is way too short. According to the stories, the “real” one was close to eight hundred pages.

Obvious flaws aside, Simon’s version works.

The Hay Necronomicon

Far less needs to be said about the *Necronomicon* published a year after the Simon version. George Hay, the “editor,” created a story about how Lovecraft’s father was an occultist who spoke of the real tome to his son. The manuscript of the *Necronomicon* was then allegedly discovered hidden as a cipher. John Dee was involved, as is always suspected to be the case with medieval forgeries. Therefore, it’s amazing and wonderful that the book is in our hands today. After enduring some more such fantastic fiction in the form of introduction, readers are presented with material that’s strikingly similar to Lovecraft. Some pages are outright plagiarism, actually.

The latter fact made a few purists quite happy, of course. Here was magick that either inspired Lovecraft, or was inspired by him. Either way, using this book was very much like playing the Call of Cthulhu role-playing game (still published by Chaosium). You say the words Lovecraft’s characters had said, and hopefully you get the same results. Okay, maybe “hopefully” is not the best choice of words!

The problem was, this book only appealed to the most devoted purists. Real occultists didn’t even find it to be a worthy curiosity. Teens who had seen the Simon book first thought the Hay one was ridiculous. To make matters worse, Colin Wilson, one of the contributors to the book’s introduction flat-out admitted the book was a hoax.

Curiously, though, what finally did the Hay book in, so to speak, was a marketing principle known as “positioning.” First to market usually wins, as evidenced by McDonald’s and Coca Cola. Burger King and Pepsi are always playing catch-up, or so it seems. In the occult world, the positioning issue is compounded by energy. The first *Necronomicon* is the one that tapped into the built-up thoughtform of expect-

tation, excitement, and mystery. I don't think Simon's book had to be half as interesting as it was to be a success, thanks to the thoughtform fueling it. No one will ever literally get the same charge from reading a *Necronomicon* version that comes after.

And as far as grimoires claiming to be the *Necronomicon* are concerned, there hasn't been a successful one since Simon's.

Tyson's Necronomicon

A brilliant move by a contemporary of mine, Donald Tyson, was to publish an admitted novel of sorts that sought to capture the exotic feel of the mad Arab's testimony. I don't agree with the attempts to attribute Lovecraft's monsters to planetary energies, and even give them clean-cut sigils from medieval planetary magic squares. These are alien beings, after all. However, the rest of the book wonderfully captures the feel of someone seeing terrible, eldritch things by night in an ancient desert.

It isn't meant to be a grimoire or practical manual of magick—and Tyson has done many of the latter. Rather, the *Necronomicon* is compulsive reading for someone who wants a taste of what might have been written between the pages containing "formulae" in Lovecraft's legendary book. I read it over the course of two nights, stopping only for non-Lovecraftian daytime distractions.

The Lesser Knowns

So far, this chapter about forbidden texts has yielded us one book that is actually usable in a magical ritual. You may wonder: Are there any other candidates still obtainable today?

Lovecraftian Leftovers

Besides the multiple versions of the *Necronomicon*, other books from Lovecraft's writings have "surfaced" as well since the 1970s. These seem more like works of fan love and commercial hope than occult

tomes, unfortunately. Commercial success never followed any of that hope, by the way.

None of the Lovecraftian pastiches to come later had the backing of fanatical beliefs. Remember, the masses had lots of time to fabricate stories of their own and let their imaginations run wild before the Simon version was printed. If you've read Lovecraft and his contemporaries, you might recall coming across the *Book of Eibon* or the *R'lyeh Text*. But did you ever feel the need to go out and find them? You're not alone if you said no.

As a result, *The R'lyeh Text* (the followup to Hay's *Necronomicon*) and *The Book of Eibon* (from the works of Clark Ashton Smith, currently published by Chaosium) never took off as occult books. Forbidden books have to be at least somewhat desired to attain any kind of magical power . . . and sales value, apparently.

The Book of Dzyan

Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891) is a controversial figure in a field where saying that means something. She was responsible for Theosophy, a few very interesting occult overview texts, and possibly the root theories behind some Nazi principles. I might get bombarded with letters from angry Theosophists, but they should take a moment to look up who it was that first popularized the idea of a caste system of races, and even pointed out the significance of the swastika. But I digress. Besides, someone might start a nocturnal, black-wearing, absinthe-drinking superpower one night and blame it all on me.

One of the interesting legends to come from Blavatsky was the *Book of Dzyan*—a scripture supposedly shown to her by mystical beings known as the Secret Chiefs. No one can say if this book was actually received as any sort of inspiration or made up by Blavatsky. Actually,

the *Book* is not a book at all, but a handful of stanzas quoted in Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*.

Mostly focusing on a non-scientific but mystical evolution of the universe, the stanzas do provide a somewhat cosmic sense of time elapsing. And what's not to like about a line like: "Darkness alone filled the Boundless All"?

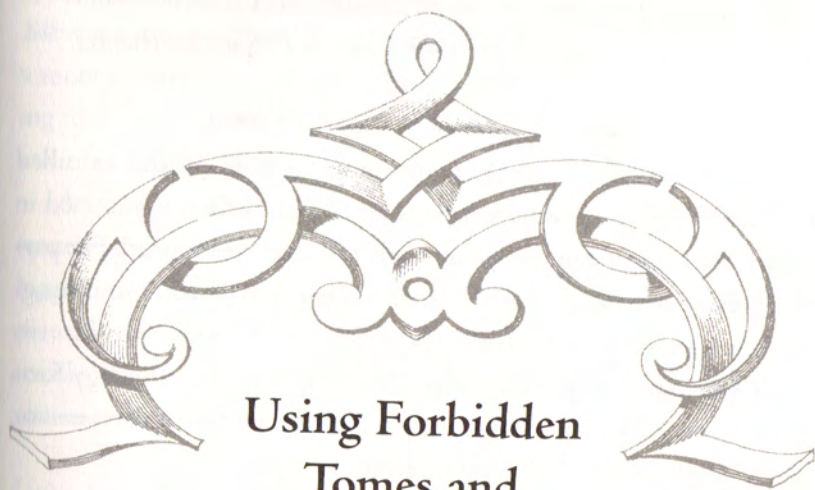
The King in Yellow

Some have attributed the inspiration for the *Necronomicon* to an older literary contemporary of Lovecraft's. In 1895, Robert W. Chambers (1865–1933), another writer who dabbled in weird short fiction, created a themed collection called *The King in Yellow*, in which most of the stories are about a play called *The King in Yellow*. Nothing too unusual, until you find out that reading the fictional play causes madness.

Since Lovecraft apparently discovered Chambers' work in 1927, the *Necronomicon* had apparently made its first appearance in a story four years earlier. Still, there are aspects of the story that have a Cthulhu Mythos flair, even though they predate it. For instance, seeing the Yellow Sign has devastating paranormal effects in the book, and seems to predate the Elder Sign that made its way throughout the Mythos with the help of Lovecraft's circle.

Story collection though it may be, *The King in Yellow* is a fascinating book that perpetuates its own oddness. You can never hold the real play in your hands and see what is so otherworldly about it. Holding a copy of the real collection in certain ritual settings, however, could still act as a link to the fictional play. Assuming you want to perform a ritual where you need the threat of insanity symbolized somehow.

Hold any thoughts this triggers until the next chapter.



Using Forbidden Tomes and Dream Grimoires

What can you do in the real world with a book that seems to have come from the surreal? Quite a lot actually, depending on the material you choose and how you apply it to your dark workings. Realize that lurking at the threshold of the abyss as you have been doing has its consequences, and mostly good ones at that. Being at the threshold means you are often a step away from the etheric, and always an effort away from bringing your desires to life.

Using a forbidden tome in your work is sort of like borrowing a tool from the etheric or astral world to work with the very matter from that realm. We won't be limiting our choices to books that exist on the physical plane, however.

Dream grimoires, or repositories of arcane wisdom in the unseen world, are also available to the seeker looking into the abyss, and benefit also from the principle of like attracting or affecting like. Using a

book from the astral plane for astral magick is an occult no-brainer . . . or at least it should seem so to you a little later on in this chapter.

Accessing the Forbidden Power

While the Simon *Necronomicon* is the most usable of the so-called dreaded tomes, you may be drawn to one of the others mentioned in the previous chapter, or even another that I haven't mentioned. For psychodramatic purposes, whatever fascinates you and captures your imagination as a musty tome worth seeking out, can be put to use in a ritual. If you're planning on tapping into a large amount of energy for a ritual, however, you'll have to go with something like the *Necronomicon*, which is well-fed by the imaginations of others.

Here are some practical suggestions for getting more than an interesting read out of your discovered black books of infamy.

Using the Book as a Symbol

When you find that a book feels special to you, and almost resembles a living occult being, try to isolate exactly why you feel so strongly about it. Does it symbolize something for you? If all you feel for a book is that it is something special, and a particular primal emotion doesn't immediately leap out at you, spend a moment trying to figure out your feelings. Distance yourself and try to think about what the book could symbolize.

The *Necronomicon* could be used during a rite without ever opening it inside the dark sphere. Knowing that it's supposed to represent a key to the Old Ones, you can use it as an amulet to draw unseen participants to a rite, for example. Holding the book when listening for the whisperers or lurkers at the perimeter of your dark sphere will, at the very least, fire up your imagination. Best case, it will add a few extra shamblers and rustlers to the ranks of shadow beings in attendance.

The King in Yellow could also make a powerful symbol in a rite. You can hold it with the knowledge that it is the legendary play and not just stories about the madness-inducing object. Banishing madness

from a situation in your life could be as simple as tossing *The King in Yellow* out into the abyss from the center of your dark sphere. I suppose a more sinister occultist could use the book as a symbolic curse, forcing madness to descend on an enemy, but we won't dwell on such negativity in this bright and cheery tome of ours.

A book doesn't even have to be a published or bound version of something legendary to help in a rite. Copying relevant lines from a bigger book and using them as a scroll can have the same effect. For example, you could take some yellowed paper that looks like an old scroll, copy onto it some of the *Book of Dzyan*, and see if it doesn't help you imagine the vast age of the cosmos in a meditative rite.

Using Symbols from the Book

Forbidden tomes—especially ones in the form of grimoires—often contain some wonderful sigils and symbols. Considering that these glyphs have been stared at and fantasized over gives them noticeable power. The *Simon Necronomicon* is a good example.

I've told this tale in the past, but it applies here. One night years ago, before I had much occult practice and experience behind me, I made the mistake of reading the *Necronomicon* while drifting off to sleep. The last thing I was gazing at before doing so was the sigil of Kutulu (as Cthulhu is spelled in the book). What happened afterward quickly taught me two things: I should always be in control of a mystical experience, and the *Necronomicon* is powerful.

Seeing countless blue flames on your ceiling and feeling as if you're being suffocated by the weight of the ocean shouldn't be your goal, however. You should use sigils from the *Necronomicon* and other books in more intelligent ways. You can call forth the beings represented using the Lightning Rite of Evocation. Marduk's Legion of Fifty make for excellent thoughtforms to work with. You can create blazing sigils out of their symbols, too, choosing a being relevant to your magical phrase of desire.

More on a way to use the sigil of Cthulhu in the last chapter.

Acting Out the Drama Within

The most effective way to use a forbidden tome in a ritual is to do exactly what it says in its pages, completely accepting the belief system of the narrative or system described within. Okay, maybe you shouldn't always do *exactly* what it says, especially if the book contains life-threatening acts for shock value. Rather, approximate the sane stuff within the book, within reason.

In the case of the *Necronomicon*, you can create some of the talismans described there and try the astral projection experiment known as Walking the Seven Zones. Having come this far in *Nocturnicon* and having experienced these rites, trying something from the *Necronomicon* should seem more enticing than terrifying.

Of course, you'll come across rites in forbidden tomes that just seem too difficult or unrealistic to carry out. If you find a suggested framework (opening rituals and such) to be too demanding, you can use what makes sense and fill in the rest with your own psychodramatic rituals. The opening rites contained in this book work very well for most dark-themed rites I've come across, dealing with amorphous dark matter as my rites do. In fact, I've made the majority of the *Necronomicon*, in particular, work for me—even during my recent rough times—by using it within the nocturnal framework I teach in this book.

Dream Grimoires

Ever wish for a magickal book to come along that addresses a particular problem you're having? It's fascinating how much more often than not such a wished-for book eventually shows up on some shelf or in some catalog. Sometimes it shows up just when you need it the most, demonstrating how you can always count on the universe to send the right tools at the right time. Sometimes the book appears after you already found another solution, perhaps teaching you a lesson about your own willpower and ability to find what you need.

Now, imagine for a moment that a book you once wished for has actually existed for hundreds or even thousands of years. You couldn't find it for sale from any dealers, however, because no one ever bothered to write it down on paper.

Sometimes, the right book coming along isn't just a matter of you being ready to accept the teachings within. Sometimes, the entire human race has to be ready for a body of teachings before they'll manifest.

Eastern adepts have long believed that some books are written centuries before the world is prepared to receive them. By "written," the adepts were speaking of a technique very real to them, and which should be becoming a little more real to you. The creation of thoughtforms and the bending of etheric matter to the will is at the core of Tibetan occultism. The books of forbidden knowledge they spoke of were encapsulated as concepts in thoughtforms and stored in the astral plane or *akasha*.

This could be an explanation for books "received" by mortals. Did Aleister Crowley really channel the *Book of the Law* via a being named Aiwass while in the Great Pyramid in Egypt? Or did he just tap into a body of knowledge hidden centuries before? Did Blavatsky's Secret Chiefs have the stanzas of *Dzyan* at their disposal for ages?

Encapsulating knowledge in a thoughtform does not require adept-like wisdom. It's just a magickal technique, albeit one that comes easier to some than others. This means that what is received on the astral plane was not always planted there by a reliable source. A mad Arab could have put the *Necronomicon* there for Lovecraft to find (although I don't think any such thing happened). However, a mad guy named Bob could have just as easily put his shopping list for "protecting against a UFO invasion" on the astral plane. Finding Bob's list on the astral plane and transcribing it would not mark a significant moment in the history of humankind. Although, it might cause some mass paranoia!

Still, it can be argued that more often than not, a body of knowledge stored on the astral plane will contain something that the responsible party thought was important enough to empower in such a way.

As a writer, I like to share my occult theories with the world. Maybe if I become an adept someday I'll have something I feel is deserving of being hidden on the astral. For now, if it's good enough for me, and I can put it into words, it's good enough for the masses—at least the masses who have similar dark tendencies. What I'm getting at: this section will not get into ways for you to plant your secret thoughts in astral time capsules for others to find. I haven't done it yet, so I can't write about it.

However, I have come across some of these “books” or bodies of knowledge while visiting the astral plane. Most often, I find them in lucid dreams (that is, dreams where I know I'm dreaming). Because of this particular method I've found for accessing akashic tomes, I call these discovered books “dream grimoires.”

To suggest a way that you can look for these hidden pockets of knowledge beyond the threshold, let me describe the most bizarre one I came across. Not only will this give you a better idea what to expect, but it will also show you, step by step, how to do this for yourself.

The Book of Octaves

One night, merely creating a dark sphere put me in a highly charged mood. The abyss surrounding me seemed to be more alive with noises and rustling than it had been in a long time. I couldn't deny how real this brink or dividing line between the physical and etheric worlds felt.

I decided to stay within this perfectly cast sphere and allow whatever inspiration would come to do so. I got comfortable right near a random edge of the sphere, with one hand touching it actually, and began to drift off to sleep.

Having created a vivid sphere, complete with astral perceptions in the abyss, I was not in a normal state of consciousness. Drifting off to

sleep after you have just had your astral senses excited in this manner is entirely different. Visions come quickly when your eyes close, and you maintain a better awareness of the fact that you are entering the realm of dream.

With the peripheral visions of dark movement around the sphere fresh in my mind, I began to imagine, with my eyes closed, what those shadows in the abyss had just looked like to me. A strange thing happened then. My imagination took on an extra level of vivid clarity, and I was standing before that void, in a pseudo astral projection. I say "pseudo" because I didn't feel quite the vibratory state from previous out of body experiences. It was more like what I'd consider a vivid lucid dream of me getting ready to leave the dark sphere.

I was at least visually aware of moving out into the abyss. The shadows moving peripherally were still there, although some of them seemed to come up alongside me, flying next to me out of curiosity it seemed.

Keep in mind, you can try everything you've read thus far as well as an approximation of what follows. . . .

For some reason, the spontaneous experience made me think of isolated memories from the past. I don't know if it was the fact that I was floating in the realm of thought, but dozens of memories flashed through my mind as if I was having a cliché end-of-life experience. One of them caught my attention and refused to flee (unlike the other memories). It was a vision of me sitting and composing lyrics to a song years ago. A phrase had come to me back then and, even though I had no idea what it meant, I put it in the song. It sounded cool at the time, I guess.

The phrase, "Book of Octaves," came to me and stuck with me here, in the etheric realm. The more time I spent dwelling on it—and I use the word "time" loosely, as there is no real time here—the more

the phrase seemed important to me. I heard myself say it and was pulled with a jerk that would have given my physical body whiplash.

The only time I had felt a sudden pull like this before was when being jolted awake from an out of body experience. This time, I found myself standing in a brownish-orange room. Floating before me was a giant brown, smooth metal object that looked like a book.

Looking at it, I came to the realization that it was a stacked pile of metal sheets, each maybe half-an-inch thick, unless my perception was skewed and the entire thing actually towered over me. However, I perceived it as a large book just thicker than my palm is wide, so eight half-inch plates seems about right.

Yes, eight plates or metal pages. I thought immediately of the significance of this number. Although I didn't know why eight metal pages should be called such a thing, I knew that this was the Book of Octaves.

I don't know if the same holds true for others, but my natural curiosity is magnified tenfold when experiencing a visionary journey of any sort. I wasted no "time" reaching out and flipping the brown, but not rusty, metal cover.

The first page was a faded bluish metal. Noticing its color made me realize that I could also discern the color of the other pages by looking at the side of the pages. Following the faded blue were gray, red, black, emerald, purple, yellow, and dark blue plates. Not the colors of the rainbow, and not any color sequence that meant anything to me at the time.

I ran my dream (or astral) finger across the faded blue page. It vibrated, echoing a bizarre tone throughout the chamber and, it seemed, entire universe.

A vision came to me.

I lifted the faded blue page, to what seemed a distance of just a few inches above the gray one below it, and rubbed it between my fingers. A different note sounded when it was separated from the pile, as if the tone before was actually a chord that my astral ear couldn't break apart into individual notes.

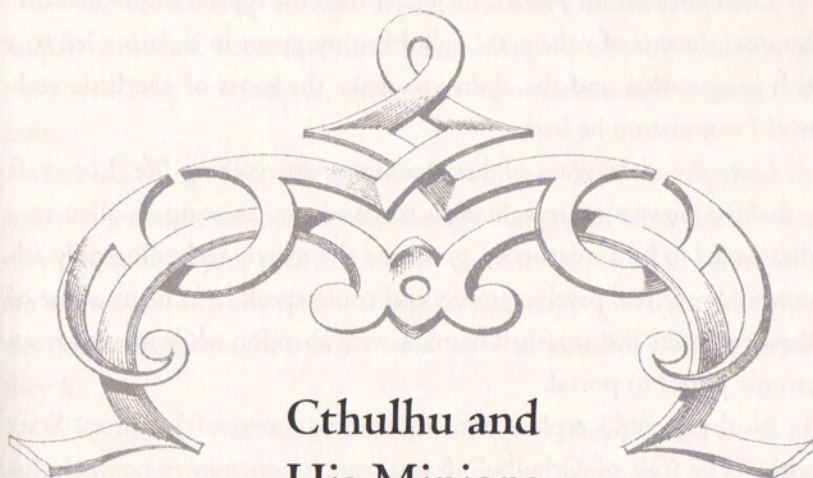
As the new note resounded, a different vision came to me.

When I could not stand this trip any more, I woke up. I've been back to the book since, using the aforementioned simple setup that you, too, can try for yourself. You are free to use the name "Book of Octaves," of course, to chart your trip. But perhaps another destination will come to mind. Perhaps an odd phrase came to you at some point and now you want to know more. Call this phrase out as I did mine. Or maybe you wish to just call out a question in hopes of coming across a pocket of knowledge that can answer your call.

And here's where a touch of madness or mystery may set over you, dear reader of my own forbidden book. I'm not telling you what revelations the vibrations of these pages brought on. I may some day, but I'd have to find a way to have the visions and concepts make sense after they leave my mind and end up on paper.

Or maybe I'm quite capable and am just subconsciously hoping enough of you spend a few moments dwelling on this dream grimoire, bringing it more power to do what I know it must do.

Until I find a way to sort it all out on paper, though, you're welcome to try and find the Book of Octaves for yourself and vibrate its pages. . . .



Cthulhu and His Minions

What beings lurk within the legendary *Necronomicon*? More important, can they be reached through the dark ether? Answering this requires an acceptance of some facts about the beings of the Cthulhu Mythos and their creator.

Although this fact has disappointed so many budding occultists over the years, Lovecraft really didn't believe in anything remotely supernatural. He didn't channel higher forces, didn't come across real books written by ancient gods, and certainly wasn't insane. Fine, he was at least a little odd, which befits any genius or progenitor of something entirely new. Touched by the Old Ones though? Lovecraft wasn't.

Growing up, Lovecraft had frequent health problems that kept him out of school and normal social life. After one night of having bad stomach pains, he dreamt of winged, dark beings he called Night-gaunts, which carried him into the air and "tickled" his belly with their tails. The cause of this dream is obvious to anyone, occultist or not, who has gone to bed with a full stomach.

Lovecraft's dream was a little juicier than the typical abdominal-discomfort dreams of others, though. His time spent in isolation led to a rich imagination and the ability to make the most of the little real-world stimulation he had.

Over the main years of his productive storytelling life, Lovecraft put those powers of imagination to good use, creating an alien race that seems to be a mixture of gods and the merely technologically advanced. Some had psychic powers and could speak to humans, some of these monsters just smashed humans with abandon while moving from cosmic portal to portal.

Nothing could replace actually reading Lovecraft's stories. Start with "The Call of Cthulhu" if you want to encounter not only his most famous Old One, but the tone of humankind's helplessness as well—all in one sitting. Still, occultists and just fanatics have tried to encapsulate the monsters in encyclopedias of the Mythos. Some stuck to the literary material. Some tried to match the Old Ones to astrological correspondences, as if they were demons from our cosmology and magickal history.

I disagree with any attempts at codifying the Mythos beings. They are truly, utterly, hopelessly—and any other adverbs you care to add in honor of Lovecraft—alien. Coming from other stars or even galaxies as they do, how can the Old Ones be attributed to the energies in our solar system? Or to our elements? You can't identify Cthulhu from the depths of space as an earthly water elemental just because he ended up in the ocean. You can't call a Lovecraftian horror originating from the chaotic mass of matter in the center of the Milky Way a "solar being." The closest any Mythos beings come to corresponding to our solar system, in fact, are the lesser race known as the Fungi from Yuggoth. Lovecraft was excited to equate Yuggoth with the then recently discovered planet of Pluto, but these Fungi or Migo are hardly as godlike as some of the beings we'll get to.

What follows is no attempt to place the Old Ones into any kind of human construct. I consider the Mythos beings to be pure denizens of the abyss. They're out there, encompassing unfathomable mixtures of traits.

Instead of rigid classifications, you will read brief descriptions of some of the more famous Mythos beings, along with hints about what they might be helpful with due to the roles they've played in Lovecraftian stories. As with any mythical beings, you may want to read the stories containing them for a better sense of what kinds of thoughtforms they fit.

What you do with the information is up to you. You can think of these things as egregores of a sort, and use the Lightning Rite of Evocation to try and call them forth. Trying to do so with Cthulhu wouldn't be wise, however. It goes against the Mythos and his thoughtform to bring his giant, sleeping form from R'lyeh to your magical sphere. If you succeeded, it couldn't really be him, obviously, and you may likely just weaken your chance at a connection to this particular being . . . or the entire Mythos. To contact Cthulhu, a special rite in league with his special circumstances is given in the next and last chapter of this book.

Whatever you do, remember that having been fantasized about for decades, the following beings are just as real today as, say, the abominations known as the Titans were to the Greeks. What's interesting to note is that the energies once surrounding the lore of the Titans could have found their way to contribute to the strength of the newer thoughtforms surrounding the denizens of the Cthulhu Mythos. Again, like attracts like.

The Cthulhu you seek out may be much older in some ways than you think.

Cthulhu

We begin with the being that struck a significant resonance with readers, and led to the naming of the Cthulhu Mythos. The reason for his popularity is difficult to explain. Cthulhu is not exactly the most active in the Mythos—Nyarlathotep and other beings make far more “on-stage” appearances. With one brief, almost anticlimactic exception, Cthulhu remains in a deathlike sleep at the bottom of the ocean—in the sunken place known as R’lyeh.

Perhaps the lingering potential for apocalypse is what makes Cthulhu so popular. He is waiting for the stars to be right for his city to rise, and for his slumber to end. A skyscraper-sized being awakening in our world would pretty much spell the end times, no? Things with the potential for Armageddon are always popular in fiction.

Maybe it’s the way that Cthulhu speaks to his followers in dreams, informing them of his wishes. Imagining not only the potential for his rising but the fact we may play a role in it is strangely enticing.

Or maybe we are just fascinated by how this alien thing has something earthly about him. He is currently residing in our oceans, an alien visitor, yet shares the main features of octopi. Interesting.

Whatever the reason, Cthulhu is the one being most Lovecraft readers return to in their musings. A virtual fanclub of his exists, with pop culture items available ranging from stuffed animals to t-shirts proclaiming him a presidential candidate. This popularity could have either an energizing effect on his thoughtform, keeping him real in everyone’s minds, or a damaging effect, turning him into a harmless cartoon.

Choosing to ignore the cuddly Cthulhu, we are left with a high priest of the Old Ones—a being clearly possessing supernatural abilities and the alien technology needed to bring a city across the reaches of space to our planet. What kind of knowledge has such a being amassed before his long sleep? And what has the perception of passing time in his dreams done to that knowledge?

Going by the description of Cthulhu in the story, we are left with a selfish, cold, but intelligent monster. Something that is calculating enough to know how to get what he wants, and ultimately uncaring for those who help him get it.

Keep both sides of his personality in mind should you wish to pursue his stores of ancient knowledge in the next chapter.

Nyarlathotep

The sinister being known as Nyarlathotep was one of Lovecraft's greatest attempts at creating verisimilitude. By identifying him at times with the "Black Man" or "Dark Man" from legendary witches' sabbats, we are led to believe that it was Nyarlathotep and not the devil who presided over the puritanical fantasy setting. You know, the one where witches even believe in a devil and sign their names in his black book. Hints are given at Nyarlathotep's presence throughout history in other sinister forms, all making it a little more believable to fanatics in recent years that maybe Lovecraft wasn't making all this stuff up. Again, this was a fictional device to make the rest of Lovecraft's world seem true, as was the mixing in of the *Necronomicon* with names of real occult works.

He succeeded, obviously. But Lovecraft's literary trickery might have garnered other results, too. Taking into account the theory that maybe relatively new thoughtforms can pull from truly eldritch ones that resemble them, we can imagine that Nyarlathotep might really contain in him some of the chaotic forces of the Egyptian god Set, or the savvy antagonism of a devil from more recent cultures.

Because he was depicted as coming in either a dark human form or that of a monster, Nyarlathotep might be the best being to contact to try and open up a dialogue with the Old Ones. Too bad you can't be sure which extreme end of the spectrum he'll choose to appear in.

Yog-Sothoth

It seems a great many Lovecraftian monsters were agents of chaos. Caring for us one way or the other is a good start to a chaotic nature. But the very alien nature of the beings, along with our inability to comprehend what it is they represent or even look like, fully tips us over the edge into the unpredictable and the unfathomable.

Consider Yog-Sothoth. He appears as a mass of multicolored spheres that always seem to change size and location. In stories called "the gate," implying that through him one can reach realms inhabited by the Old Ones. Calling on him is calling on a power that is difficult to control or contain. He may very well fill up your room or chamber, swallowing any paraphernalia you used to call him into existence. process.

What you'll see looking through him after this happens is hard to say. If you're fortunate, it just might be a glimpse of a single tentacle. Namely, that of . . .

Azathoth

Called by variations on the phrase "Blind Idiot God," and understood to be insane, Azathoth is a formless being that lives within the starry material of the center of our galaxy. He is said to be either playing a flute or surrounded by the piping of flutes, which could possibly be the cause of his insanity after millennia.

Azathoth is the purest representation of chaos in the Cthulhu Mythos. Because of his location in the cosmos, he is surrounded by matter from which anything can spring, including life, agents of destruction, and even matter itself. Anytime the forces of true chaos, creation, and destruction are desired, Azathoth is quite a battery to tap into.

Shub-Niggurath

Another being of Lovecraft's to capitalize on the puritanical beliefs of the nineteenth century, Shub-Niggurath is imagined as a feminine being.

that is worshiped in dark forests. Known as the Goat of a Thousand Young, her links to both sabbats and fertility rites are obvious.

Calling Shub-Niggurath could conceivably help a human with fertility problems; although, it's hard to imagine anyone insane enough to want help with their innards from this kind of source! Bringing metaphorical fertility to another kind of external working seems far safer to try with the energy of an Old One.

The Others

As I said, nothing can compare with reading the tales of Lovecraft. In them you'll find a great many lesser beings that may also capture your magickal imagination. Also, some of Lovecraft's contemporaries did a great job, with his approval, of expanding the Cthulhu Mythos. Clark Ashton Smith, Robert E. Howard, and Frank Belnap Long were some of the better writers who added other beings, other books, and other mystical artifacts to the dark world.

Some words of warning, though: nothing destroys the impact of these ancient thoughtforms like attempts to sanitize or sanity-ize them. Avoid, if possible, the works of August Derleth. Although we owe him much for helping get Lovecraft's stories into collections after his death, Derleth's own tales of the Cthulhu Mythos try to add benevolent Elder Gods that can help humanity fight the Old Ones. Part of the power of the Old Ones and their egregores is that we can't hope to fully understand or control them.

On second thought, avoid the Old Ones altogether if possible.





Calling Cthulhu

It wouldn't be fitting to close a book like this one on any sane note. When reading about or maybe even attempting the rituals thus far, you must have noted the delightful sensation of cosmic danger in it all. Ordinary banishing rites are not found here. At the end of most rites, you venture out into physical space that was inhabited by darkness-knows-what only moments before.

Yes, delightful danger. What is more psychodramatic than just letting go and letting the unseen swallow you at times? How bad could the consequences be? Unless I'm writing this all from a padded cell and am too delusional to know otherwise, the madness induced by the rituals in this book is at worst temporary.

By the rituals so far, that is.

What you are about to read should be considered optional—especially if you've been practicing the rites given so far. Perhaps if seeing things in the Lightning Rite of Evocation or hunting out the Book of Octaves hasn't affected you, you should consider yourself lucky and

enjoy the benefits your insane magickal experiments have likely brought you. If the things you've seen in the Lightning Rite were Lovecraftian, then it's already too late for you and you might as well read on.

It turns out that things are about to get a whole lot more alien than all I know, you might have wanted to keep your universal vision a somewhat limited in scope. Then again, if you got just as far as the DPT section with a try-as-you-go approach, it's also too late for you.

You know there are terrible things in the abyss.

And unless you want to get even closer to one of them, now is the time to shut this book and move on.

Answering or Making the Call

While the title of Lovecraft's famous story "The Call of Cthulhu" generally means a call that the eldritch being is making, there are several kinds of calls happening in the story. The tentacled one is calling the cultists, sure, to have them prepare for his coming. More horrible is that the cultists are also calling to Cthulhu with rites designed to hasten his return.

These humans are betraying their planet and race to an alien power that may likely use them as padding for his giant, green, clawed feet. How insane they are.

By the way, if you're up for it, you're about to do sort of the same thing.

No, Great Cthulhu won't rise as a result of this rite. Don't count on yourself with quite that much. As powerful as the thoughtform egregore of Cthulhu might be, I doubt it is powerful enough to manifest the entire city of R'lyeh and all the Star Spawn of Cthulhu will act as his winged agents of destruction. . . . At least, I think it couldn't be the case.

Instead of bringing about the end of life as we know it, this rite is intended to bring you into a very powerful form of contact with

Cthulhu in a way that is in perfect league with his nature in the stories. Dreaming, sleeping Cthulhu will communicate some of his alien knowledge to you in a dreamlike state, much as he reached out to the cultists.

An occultist is someone who studies the unknown or hidden. A cultist is someone who blindly follows a leader, usually into oblivion. You'll have to adapt a role somewhere in the middle to get the most out of this rite.

Of Course, Why?

What could you possibly hope to gain from a ritual like this one? Cthulhu can't grant you wealth or possessions. He won't make you more popular with the ladies or guys. Sheer curiosity can be used as a reason for some, certainly. We've all done a ritual or two just to see what, if anything, would happen. That's part of the learning process.

Contacting or calling out to Cthulhu, though, doesn't seem like the sort of thing a sane person does out of curiosity. Recall what happened when I unintentionally scried his symbol before going to sleep. It felt as close to death as any paranormal experience ever has brought me.

And now we're getting somewhere.

Nothing is more psychodramatic than contacting a truly alien intelligence like Cthulhu. If your concept of the elasticity of reality has been changed so far with what you've learned or tried in this book, it's about to take a leap into entirely new vistas of understanding. That you can call out to an allegedly fictional being and be so affected by him is nothing to take lightly. You could truly never look at reality in the same way again.

After having any kind of success with this rite, you may notice your abilities at perceiving the unseen enhanced. Any veil separating physical reality from the astral will be torn and shredded by eldritch claws.

Benefits from this rite are not limited to its altering of your perception. Listen to what Cthuhlu has to say when your call is answered. The response is not likely to be wordy, but it will be alien at the very least, and mind-numbingly complex at the very best. Adding to a point I made a moment ago: the fact that you can get such bizarre information seemingly from out of nowhere will change a lot of your views on the nature of reality.

Performing the Call

To unlock the proper psychodrama for this rite, you will need to relocate on an eldritch setting, some of what you have learned so far, a few physical ingredients, and patience.

The setting is crucial. To make your initial call to the slumberer beneath the sea, you will need access to the sea or at least a large natural body of water. Everything from the swamps of Louisiana (watch for eldritch gator bites) to a lake in the Midwest would work. But a shoreline view, in an isolated patch of beach, would work best. You will have to visit this waterside spot in the dark, obviously, so make sure it is safe from interruption and legal repercussions (such as trespassing).

There's just no way around the natural body of water setting. If you don't live near any of the given options, plan a trip and choose an ideal spot for the working. Don't use the area for aquatic recreation later in the day, however, at least not until you're satisfied with your results. Frolicking in the surf will destroy any chance of attaining the proper mental associations with the locale.

The next requirement, what you've already learned, entails being able to carry out the steps of the rite successfully. Don't try this rite if you haven't succeeded at hearing or feeling the presence of otherworldly forces during the creation of a dark sphere. Make sure you've

done at least a couple of blazing sigil rites, and absolutely have some experience at seeing the unseen out in the abyss.

Physical requirements for the rite are minimal. You will need a sigil of Cthulhu (or Kutulu)—the Simon *Necronomicon* seems to have the most potent sigil. Speaking of names, you can pronounce the name Kuh-thoo-loo or Kuh-too-loo, depending on how much of an influence the Simon book may have had on you, or on how much Lovecraft research you've done (he changes his mind about pronunciation in different letters to friends, even claiming once that it's not a humanly pronounceable word).

Copy the sigil of your choice to a piece of paper. Also, you will need a way to make a giant blazing version of this sigil. On a beach, some digging in the sand and experimenting with lighter-fluid-soaked string can have wonderful effects. Experiment with how much lighter fluid you need. (You may want to refer back to page 32, Blazing Sigils.)

The sigil only need be about a foot in diameter, so there's no need to fear starting a bonfire. If you're not on a sandy beach, you may have to experiment with creating smaller, more containable versions. It can be a sigil that will flash for an instant, or burn for as much as a few minutes, with the latter being preferable to add to the psychodrama.

Do all of your sigil-creation experimenting before you do the rite. During the Call, you should be able to quickly and accurately create the burning sigil by the light of a red flashlight, which is the other physical requirement. Using one with a red filter or bulb will preserve your night vision. They sell these at astronomy supply stores for just this reason.

Finally, patience is needed, as the ritual's effects will not manifest immediately. It may be the same night or a few weeks before your call is answered. Do the ritual properly, however, and Cthulhu will answer.

The Call to Cthulhu

Preferably on a clear, moonless night, bring your sigil-making items to the chosen location.

Rest on the ground for a few minutes, looking at the spot on the horizon where the water meets the sky. Meditate on this dividing line between the darkness of space and the depths of the water.

Slowly let your gaze drift upward to the sky. If you are in a dark, secluded location, you should be able to see more stars than possible from a city or even modest town setting. Look out into the depths of space. Take a moment to fix your gaze on the glowing stripe of stars and stellar matter that make up one of the arms of our Milky Way galaxy. You can't miss it if there are no natural lights around.

Contemplate for a moment that Great Cthulhu traveled across the galaxy, trading the black void of space for the dark waters before you. Turn on your flashlight for a few seconds and glance at the paper version of the sigil in the red light. Once you are done, get comfortable, and begin to do the full version of Drawing in the Darkness (not the Redux version). The dark figures that surround you in the technique should not look humanoid this time, however. Try to see the shadows of winged beings, those with giant heads. Are those tentacles creating shadowy points to the sides of the heads?

Get up and begin to create a dark sphere. Take full advantage of the natural surroundings, allowing the abyss to imbibe the extra sonic activity. If on a beach, hear the crashing of the waves mixing with the whisperers. Add the flapping of wings if you can. And give it all a sense of cosmic rhythm, mixing the sounds of waves, flapping wings, and even an imagined banging against stones under water. Let your imagination guide the kinds of things you think you hear out there in the darkness.

When you feel confident that you stand within the strongest dark sphere you've created up until this night, return to the center of your

sphere and turn on your red flashlight. Using the materials you brought, create the large version of the Cthulhu sigil on the ground.

Remain seated or kneeling and stare for a moment at the paper version of the sigil. Internalize the image, bizarre though it may be, and try to assure yourself that you know its every curve and angle. Gaze out at the dividing line between water and sky again. Say:

From the great abyss above to the great abyss below, I call out to you.

Cthulhu, slumberer in the great abyss, I call out to you.

Turn your attention to the giant sigil before you. Take a long, barbecue-type wooden match and light the sigil. Contemplate all the grandeur of the emblem and its flaming tribute to the alien intelligence you are trying to contact.

Take a deep breath and exhale, chanting the following barbarous phrase:

Ia, Ia, Cthulhu Fhtagen.

Continue to breathe deep and exhale, chanting the alien words. You should try to "vibrate" the words, which means you'll deliver them in a drawn-out, monotonous tone. Use your entire exhalation each time to say the words. At the last syllable of each repetition, it should be time to breathe in again.

Gaze at the flaming sigil as you continue the rhythmic chanting. When the sigil's visual impact begins to diminish—when it either burns out suddenly or starts to fade in parts—move your gaze away from it and to the deepest black patch of water you can find. Continue the rhythmic chanting as you allow your developing scrying abilities to awaken this night.

What happens next depends entirely on you. If your scrying skills have advanced by this point, the entire Cthulhu contact experience may occur now, with you seeing and hearing him in the depths of the large

aquatic magic mirror before you. You can stop chanting when you make first contact.

By the way, if you ever take my advice about not trying to get chatty during a communication with something from the abyss, now would be the time!

If nothing occurs after about fifteen minutes—by which point your voice will be hoarse anyway—say:

Great Cthulhu, great dreamer, I know you have heard my call.

I shall await your reply.

In dreams, I shall await your reply.

At this point, whether you have had contact yet or not, you'll have a decision to make. Should you try sleeping here, near the water's edge, and with one hand touching the perimeter of your dark sphere? You may have further dialogue in dreams, or your first dialogue if nothing happened so far. Staying here is tempting. As venturing out after dream grimoires has shown, any dreams experienced within a dark sphere and in a charged post-ritual state are special, vivid, and easy to remember.

Of course, there are always the real-world horrors of crime to contend with. You have to decide if it's safe to let yourself lose consciousness in these surroundings. Having a friend come by at an agreed-upon time to act as a sentry could work, but he or she might not be ready for the other things attracted to your area of working!

If you return to a safer location to sleep for the night, try and visualize the sights and hear the sounds from the abyss that night. Try to recreate in your mind's eye what it was like to gaze at the sigil and then the water. Your dreams this night may still have the same impact.

Whatever the tentacled horror tells you, be sure to write it down soon after, lest your mind be incapable of sorting it all out later. Your mind may very well be incapable of doing lots of things for a while after this rite, actually.

There's still time to reconsider.

It's not too late.

If you do still want to seek out Cthulhu, I'll see you in
the abyss. . . .



Before I Leave You

You may have noticed that despite my sharing some personal details at the start of this book, this wasn't a treatise on curing medical problems, whether similar to or different from my own. It's a book to help you solve whatever may come up in your own life. I gave you directions to find all the same dark vistas that I explored, and passed along all the basic tools I took with me during these nocturnal jaunts. Your destination is up to you.

The techniques in this book have real power—use them. Use them however you feel is wise . . . or just necessary. And begin experimenting with these dark rites with one extra element of psychodrama added to your arsenal: you know that at least one other walked the same path and got somewhere worthwhile. I wouldn't be here, sharing these ideas, if that wasn't the case. Think on that even if you are coming to *Nocturnicon* after being frustrated by ancient or dubious tomes that haven't worked for you in the past.

You will succeed with this book of night.

"Rather than put in decades of training and meditating, you have the chance here to take a shortcut. All you need is the courage to face the abyss. To face primal forces that lurk in realms so dark they make even physical night seem aglow."

—Konstantinos

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Konstantinos (New York) has been practicing magick for over fifteen years and is a recognized expert on the occult. A popular lecturer on the paranormal at colleges and bookstores, he has also been a guest on various shows and documentaries on MTV, the SciFi Channel, NBC, and other networks.

