

THE WIZARD WAY

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VELVET soft the night-star glowed
Over the untrodden road,
Through the giant glades of yew
Where its ray fell light as dew
Lighting up the shimmering veil
Maiden pure and aery frail
That the spiders wove to hide
Blushes of the sylvan bride
Earth, that trembled with delight
At the male caress of Night.

Velvet soft the wizard trod
To the Sabbath of his God.
With his naked feet he made
Starry blossoms in the glade,
Softly, softly, as he went
To the sombre sacrament,
Stealthy stepping to the tryst
In his gown of amethyst.

Earlier yet his soul had come
To the Hill of Martyrdom,

THE EQUINOX

Where the charred and crookèd stake
Like a black envenomed snake
By the hangman's hands is thrust
Through the wet and writhing dust,
Never black and never dried
Heart's blood of a suicide.

He had plucked the hazel rod
From the rude and goatish god,
Even as the curved moon's waning ray
Stolen from the King of Day.
He had learnt the elvish sign ;
Given the Token of the Nine :
Once to rave, and once to revel,
Once to bow before the devil,
Once to swing the thurible,
Once to kiss the goat of hell,
Once to dance the aspen spring,
Once to croak, and once to sing,
Once to oil the savoury thighs
Of the witch with sea-green eyes
With the unguents magical.
Oh the honey and the gall
Of that black enchanter's lips
As he croons to the eclipse
Mingling that most puissant spell
Of the giant gods of hell
With the four ingredients
Of the evil elements ;

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Ambergris from golden spar,
Musk of ox from Mongol jar,
Civet from a box of jade,
Mixed with fat of many a maid
Slain by the inchantments cold
Of the witches wild and old.

He had crucified a toad
In the basilisk abode,
Muttering the Runes averse
Mad with many a mocking curse.

He had traced the serpent sigil
In his ghastly virgin vigil.
Sursum cor! the elfin hill,
Where the wind blows deadly chill
From the world that wails beneath
Death's black throat and lipless teeth.
There he had stood—his bosom bare—
Tracing Life upon the Air
With the crook and with the flail
Lashing forward on the gale,
Till its blade that wavereth
Like the flickering of Death
Sank before his subtle fence
To the starless sea of sense.

Now at last the man is come
Haply to his halidom.

THE EQUINOX

Surely as he waves his rod
In a circle on the sod
Springs the emerald chaste and clean
From the duller paler green.
Surely in the circle millions
Of immaculate pavilions
Flash upon the trembling turf
Like the sea-stars in the surf—
Millions of bejewelled tents
For the warrior sacraments.
Vaster, vaster, vaster, vaster,
Grows the stature of the master ;
All the ringed encampment vies
With the infinite galaxies.
In the midst a cubic stone
With the Devil set thereon ;
Hath a lamb's virginal throat ;
Hath the body of a stoat ;
Hath the buttocks of a goat ;
Hath the sanguine face and rod
Of a goddess and a god !

Spell by spell and pace by pace !
Mystic flashes swing and trace
Velvet soft the sigils stepped
By the silver-starred adept.
Back and front, and to and fro,
Soul and body sway and flow
In vertiginous caresses
To imponderable recesses,

THE WIZARD WAY

Till at last the spell is woven,
And the faery veil is cloven
That was Sequence, Space, and Stress
Of the soul-sick consciousness.

“Give thy body to the beasts!
Give thy spirit to the priests!
Break in twain the hazel rod
On the virgin lips of God!
Tear the Rosy Cross asunder!
Shatter the black bolt of thunder!
Suck the swart ensanguine kiss
Of the resolute abyss!”
Wonder-weft the wizard heard
This intolerable word.

Smote the blasting hazel rod
On the scarlet lips of God;
Trampled Cross and rosy core;
Brake the thunder-tool of Thor;
Meek and holy acolyte
Of the priestly hells of spite,
Sleek and shameless catamite
Of the beasts that prowl by night!

Like a star that streams from heaven
Through the virgin airs light-riven,
From the lift there shot and fell
An admirable miracle.

THE EQUINOX

Carved minute and clean, a key
Of purest lapis-lazuli
More blue than the blind sky that aches
(Wreathed with the stars, her torturing snakes),
For the dead god's kiss that never wakes ;
Shot with golden specks of fire
Like a virgin with desire.
Look, the levers ! fern-frail fronds
Of fantastic diamonds,
Glimmering with ethereal azure
In each exquisite embrasure.
On the shaft the letters laced,
As if dryads lunar-chaste
With the satyrs were embraced,
Spelled the secret of the key :
Sic pervenias. And he
Went his wizard way, inweaving
Dreams of things beyond believing.

When he will, the weary world
Of the senses closely curled
Like a serpent round his heart
Shakes herself and stands apart.
So the heart's blood flames, expanding,
Strenuous, urgent, and commanding ;
And the key unlocks the door
Where his love lives evermore.

She is of the faery blood ;
All smaragdine flows its flood.

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Glowing in the amber sky
To ensorcelled porphyry.
She hath eyes of glittering flake
Like a cold grey water-snake.
She hath naked breasts of amber
Jetting wine in her bed-chamber,
Whereof whoso stoops and drinks
Rees the riddle of the Sphinx.

She hath naked limbs of amber
Whereupon her children clamber.
She hath five navels rosy-red
From the five wounds of God that bled ;
Each wound that mothered her still bleeding,
And on that blood her babes are feeding.
Oh ! like a rose-winged pelican
She hath bred blessed babes to Pan !
Oh ! like a lion-hued nightingale
She hath torn her breast on thorns to avail
The barren rose-tree to renew
Her life with that disastrous dew,
Building the rose o' the world alight
With music out of the pale moonlight !
O She is like the river of blood
That broke from the lips of the bastard god,
When he saw the sacred mother smile
On the ibis that flew up the foam of Nile
Bearing the limbs unblessed, unborn,
That the lurking beast of Nile had torn !

THE EQUINOX

So (for the world is weary) I
These dreadful souls of sense lay by.
I sacrifice these impure shoon
To the cold ray of the waning moon.
I take the forkèd hazel staff,
And the rose of no terrene graff,
And the lamp of no olive oil
With heart's blood that alone may boil.
With naked breast and feet unshod
I follow the wizard way to God.

Wherever he leads my foot shall follow ;
Over the height, into the hollow,
Up to the caves of pure cold breath,
Down to the deeps of foul hot death,
Across the seas, through the fires,
Past the palace of desires ;
Where he will, whether he will or no,
If I go, I care not whither I go.

For in me is the taint of the faery blood.
Fast, fast, its emerald flood
Leaps within me, violent rude
Like a bestial faun's beatitude.
In me the faery blood runs hard :
My sires were a druid, a devil, a bard,
A beast, a wizard, a snake and a satyr ;
For—as my mother said—what does it matter ?

THE WIZARD WAY

She was a fay, pure of the faery ;
Queen Morgan's daughter by an aery
Demon that came to Orkney once
To pay the Beetle his orisons.

So, it is I that writhe with the twitch
Of the faery blood, and the wizard itch
To attain a matter one may not utter
Rather than sink in the greasy splutter
Of Britons munching their bread and butter ;
Ailing boys and coarse-grained girls
Grown to sloppy women and brutal churls.
So, I am off with staff in hand
To the endless light of the nameless land.

Darkness spreads its sombre streams,
Blotting out the elfin dreams.
I might haply be afraid,
Were it not the Feather-maid
Leads me softly by the hand,
Whispers me to understand.
Now (when through the world of weeping
Light at last starrily creeping
Steals upon my babe-new sight,
Light—O light that is not light !)
On my mouth the lips of her
Like a stone on my sepulchre
Seal my speech with ecstasy,
Till a babe is born of me

THE EQUINOX

That is silent more than I ;
For its inarticulate cry
Hushes as its mouth is pressed
To the pearl, her honey breast ;
While its breath divinely ripples
The rose-petals of her nipples,
And the jetted milk he laps
From the soft delicious paps,
Sweeter than the bee-sweet showers
In the chalice of the flowers,
More intoxicating than
All the purple grapes of Pan.

Ah ! my proper lips are stilled.
Only, all the world is filled
With the Echo, that drips over
Like the honey from the clover.
Passion, penitence, and pain
Seek their mother's womb again,
And are born the triple treasure,
Peace and purity and pleasure.

—Hush, my child, and come aloft
Where the stars are velvet soft !

ALEISTER CROWLEY.

SCANS FROM ALEISTER CROWLEY'S
THE EQUINOX

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