

L I O N



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# Lion & Serpent

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Publisher————— Sekhet-Maat Lodge  
Editor/Layout————— Br. Clay Fouts  
Art Editor————— Sr. Fawn  
Development————— Sr. Egeira

For all letters, submissions, subscriptions, and requests for information contact [lionserpent@sekhetmaat.com](mailto:lionserpent@sekhetmaat.com).

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Ordo Templi Orientis  
P.O. Box 32  
Riverside, CA 92502  
<http://oto-usa.org/>



Sekhet-Maat Lodge  
1409 SE Stark St.  
Portland, OR 97214  
<http://sekhetmaat.com/>

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## An Account of the Season

*Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.*

### **Sol in Capricorn**

We greeted winter with an homage to the goat-gods of the south as our Lord and Father the Sun plunged into Capricorn, with feasting, reciting a paean to the Lord of Light, and following up with a call for those willing to execute a formula for renouncing slave religion. The spit flew, the wine flowed, and Secret Satan distributed his gifts during this longest night of the year.

Stepping back from this high and holy precipice, a week later we joined spirits with the vulgar world to use the transition of their calendar as, well, an excuse to bust out the lights and music, and throw a tarot-themed costume ball.

Among our more staid activities during this sign, Fr. MIIAA and T Pelagius baptised and confirmed new members into the church. Sr. Fawn stepped down from her role as chair of the Facilities Committee in order to prepare for an altogether different sort of initiation. Lodge Master Fr. IOI tasked Sr. Διοτίμα with this responsibility, finally giving her one of the two Lodge duties she's not previously fulfilled (and the other one she doesn't want).

The Lodge officers also used this period as a time to engage in a new planning tactic of going on retreat together in the woods

for a weekend, evaluating the goals of the previous reporting year and setting new ones to come. By the end of the weekend, each committee had hashed out the framework of its agenda for the coming year.

### **Sol in Aquarius**

Ever diligent in his efforts to connect initiates to our order's yogic antecedents, Fr. Κηρβς Κρος taught a class exploring and applying the Gayatri mantra. With the assistance of Fr. Michael, they have been holding I<sup>o</sup>-tyled full moon sessions of chanting and pranayama as a group.

With joyful tears and great awe, we welcomed Jasper Mage, son of Fr. Didymus and Sr. Catalyst, into our fold on his 111th day after his first breath, placing his feet on the ground for the first time during his Feast for Life in our temple. We also welcomed as guests two new seekers of the hidden wisdom to our mysteries as Minervals.

Kicking off a new series of classes, T Pelagius led an instruction of the some first principles of the Gnostic Catholic Church. This first of six classes covered the Great White Brotherhood, the eight Magi, and the reception of Liber AL.

### **Sol in Pisces**

With Pisces, the women of our community celebrated wine, blood, and whoredom with a meeting of the Sisters of Babalon, led by Sr. Egeira. Continuing with our quarterly M.:M.:M.: cycle, we initiated a new Man and Brother (and a new initiator), consecrated a new Magician, and devoted two Master Magicians to the culmination of our first mysteries.

With Sekhet-Maat's valuation of providing educational experiences to our members and community, we often go to great lengths to bring in high-caliber speakers from afar who have particularly salient insights into our Work as Thelemites and initiates. Kindling the fires of the star within each of us, T Omphalos and his delightful family traveled from Norway to Portland in order that he may offer instruction in several key areas regarding the history of purpose of O.T.O., the life of a knight-monk of Thelema, and the centrality to each person of building and strengthening the body of light.

*Love is the law, love under will.*

# Andromeda Klein

*Frank Portman*

**Review by John Griogair Bell**

Delacorte Books for Young Readers, 2009 EV ISBN: 0385735251

I ran into mention of Frank Portman's *Andromeda Klein* in one of my various frequent search safaris. Here was a "young adult" novel that showed up on my radar because of a surfeit of esoteric references. It seemed unlikely that the story would live up to the seriousness of the references that brought it to my attention. But, even the first few pages seemed thick with terms that most readers might not manage to get past.

For just a minor example, in the first few pages one runs into references to Hermes Trismegistus, Thoth, Mrs. John King van Rensselaer, the ancient Egyptian city Hermopolis, mention and description of several specific tarot cards including Two of Swords, the term 'soror,' the Warburg Institute, A. E. Waite, Aleister Crowley, Frances Yates, Pamela Coleman Smith, Celtic Cross spread, the Qabalah, some Hebrew letters, the world of Yetzirah, the Sephera Chokmah, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, Giordano Bruno, Madame Blavatsky, witches, Lemurians, gnomes ... and, not last or least, bone disease. This is all within the first ten pages ... of a young adult novel.

Picking up this book for a newbie must be a bit like going into an initiation of sorts. One might have some sense of the general idea that's going to be explored, but the specifics are going to be a surprise unless you're the kind that ruins that sense of adventure by reading ahead. But even still, there's this sense that things just won't necessarily make sense right away, and maybe only make sense over time.

The story is definitely thick with references, and only some of them are explained at all. Frank Portman seems to not make

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much by way of concession in talking down to the reader. I'm not sure it's the best strategy for a nominally "young adult" novel, but it's definitely different. And, really, why not have a difference from the bazillion bland books being bandied about by bookshops as hopefully half a fraction as attractive as Harry Potter, books heavy on the fantasy but light on the quality. Here's a book that takes the laudable chance that standing out and being different is worth it in the end.

Look, this is to *Harry Potter* or Harry Dresden as *The Invisibles* series is to the *Illuminatus!* books. It's punk, damnit. *Andromeda Klein* is grounded in the gritty reality of a world where kids do things like have sex, drink, cut, die, fight, and, of course, are attracted to the occult. This is also a world where both kids and adults can be troubled, irrational, suspicious, narrow-minded and cruel. But, there's also striving to find meaning and connection. And, for a rare few, there's the drive to develop and change the world, even if that's just one person at a time starting, like a well-known conversation between Krsna and Arjuna, with the self.

This story has a style, seeming to be the overall style of the author, which isn't compromised. That's a delightful thing. The story might have been told without this style, but why? Why make the telling of a story just another bland porridge of words lulling the reader along easily toward a final "meh?" The style of this story makes the reading of it an experiential example of the way the main character thinks and sees the world.

There's a lot to decypher in this story, just like in much of the source materials contained in the esoteric books mentioned within. At first it seems to be doing self-conscious name and concept dropping, but I came to like it. It's part of the fun. Won't say or imply it's a got a lot of hidden meaning that requires one to actually treat the text to analysis through esoteric techniques, but the story demonstrates and models the main character going through a lot of esoteric thinking, pattern seeking, and connection exploring.

One of the consistently fun dimensions of this story for me was the use and playfulness of language, terms, concepts, idiom, malapropism ... It's word play without being superfluous.

Unlike, say, a Xanth novel where the story simply seems to end up being a delivery method for word play which came before or independently from plot development, instead the word play is integrated and an essential character to the development of this story and character, where language and the fractured nature of that is a reflection of the nature of the main character.

*Andromeda Klein* has got a lot in there to offend uptight parents and squares, with magick, sex, drugs, death, language, and more attitude. Even those uptight about esotericism will likely get tweaked. It's kind of refreshing, actually. There's way, way too many stories with weakly developed "magic" in them. I mean, she does an LBRP in the library and is actively practicing *Liber Jugorum*, for just two examples among many. And the frankness about which a wide number of topics are discussed is interesting and similarly refreshing.

The author's approach to a wide variety of topics is alluring and unique. Probably nothing exemplifies this more clearly as a single example to give the character of the rest than the simple fact that Aleister Crowley is not a boogeyman in this story even though he and his work are included both implicitly and explicitly throughout. But, these references are matters not treated with sensationalism or as an ersatz archetype of evil, both of which are so very often the case when authors seem to take the easy, lazy way out. Rather, the life of *Andromeda Klein* is suffused with fictionally drawn and developed, to be sure, but also essentially normal and natural magical practice and rite and thinking in both action during the story and exposition of events outside the timeline in the book.

All this, you know, talking about interesting things, can't come without cost, of course. I read that one of the author's appearances at a school in Portland was canceled because of parent complaints. And, I think this actually is the book that all the reactionaries thought *Harry Potter* was, as far as even only the esoteric references go. But, you know, even if you took all that out there'd be plenty left to cheese off the same kind of people that couldn't even handle *Judy Bloom*, maybe enough even on just about any single page. However, I'm really heartened by the statement on the copyright page that "Random

House Children's Books supports the First Amendment and celebrates the right to read." Good on them, anyhow, to stand up with and for a work like this. And, I suppose one of the best things for getting the word out would be for more people to freak out and thus only advertise wider that it exists but also essentially prove that the book is something worth reading.

I once lamented the treatment of magick in stories like *Harry Potter* and others as essentially convenient literary mechanisms with no real meaning or necessity. What would a story look like if it were written with real magick in it, I wondered. Well, this story may be the closest thing to what I imagined yet. The Universe moves or not for Andromeda because she's making progress working on herself and her environment in accordance with her inner drive to find and then fulfill her own individual purpose.

This story shows a kind of magical thinking that isn't offered in other stories. It's explicitly ceremonial and symbolic. It's not just a MacGuffin or *deus ex machina* to drive the story; it is the story. Rather, magick literally has personality. Moreover, magick has several characters. There is a demonstrated Intelligence, and that makes the story surprisingly intelligent.

I find myself feeling that *Andromeda Klein* will have a place next to *The Various* and *Below the Root* for me. While reading I held up that hope it would hold up. At times, I even crossed my fingers. In fact, for me the comparison to *Below the Root* is apt, especially because of the way that Snyder's novel was frank about sex and drug use as well as also being similar in that it faced complaints from parents and adults for that treatment.

And, know what else is cool? She's not an orphan. It's a little thing, but that's refreshing too. Of course, there's Harry Potter and quite a few current literary protagonists like Lyra and Lirael and Sabriel and Dorothy and Superman and Batman and even Dahl's Matilda was essentially, if not technically, an orphan until the end of her story. Further, there's Moses and Vulcan/Hephaestus to name only a few more historical examples. The archetype of orphan is an almost obligatory line item in the pedigree of literary children with special powers, and it is extremely overused even if I also recognize that it has very

strong resonance. As I read the story, I actually had a creeping dread that Andromeda would turn out, somehow, to be an orphan just because of how overused that trope is in such stories.

However, while not an orphan, Andromeda is very much a rough ashlar, of course, but the formula is different. She still fulfills an archetypal function which represents a flawed origin. Andromeda is Batman to Harry Potter's Superman. She is not miraculously the chosen one, but rather has gotten to be who she is through hard work and lots of research. Andromeda is maybe a post-modern Everyman or Chauncey or Zelig, on a kind of Fool's journey toward attainment, even so far as to starting out, not as the blank protagonist, but rather as a physically, socially, and emotionally flawed former sidekick to her late best friend. So, actually, in some ways, Andromeda is like a young Robin in a universe where Batman died too soon and his parents didn't (See, because even Robin was also an orphan!), learning to become Nightwing on his own, without actual super powers but still a hero with amazing skills and a story worth telling.

As I read this story, it was in my mind's eye like a mashup as if "Welcome to the Dollhouse" would have been directed by Alfonso Cuarón.

So, honestly, after finishing the book, I'm actually not entirely sure that the ending was quote-unquote satisfying. But, I don't think that's a bad thing. This was a story that was also unique in that it wasn't a perfect Hollywood ending wrapped in a perfectly explained and ordered bow. Like many European or non-Hollywood films, I'm left with the experience of a compelling story, regardless of some notion of being satisfied, that I could hardly put down and read the whole way hoping for it not to end all the while looking forward to each new revelation. There's ambiguity left over at the end, even if there were, to be honest, also a couple bits of dénouement that had me rolling my eyes or feeling an opportunity was missed, and not just sequel-ready ambiguity. Sublimely, some of that ambiguity is around the ultimate nature of magick, and that such a central element to the story is left as an exercise for the reader to decide about for themselves seems to me to be a beautiful thing because first and foremost it rejects a fantasy of magic for a truth of magick. In

**Continued on page 18**

# The Way of the Tao

1. Black part of Malkuth.

Candidate fasts in perfect darkness & silence for 24 hours

2. Olive do.

C. bathes. He is given cool foods & wines. He reads the chapters appropriate and meditates upon the Universe as Water, according to the doctrines of Anaximander

3. Russet do

C. in heat - He eats spicy foods & wines. He reads chapters of fire & meditates on the Universe as Fire as said Anaxagoras & Empedocles

4. Citrine do

C. in open air, preferably on a mountain. He contemplates Universe as air.

5. He then goes through the 0 = 0 ceremony simplified but not altogether purged.

6. He meditates again in darkness & silence, fasting

7. He returns to his normal life for a day.

8. **Jesod**

He meditates on the Universe as Generation.

9. He studies profoundly the System

10. of Correspondences

He imagines himself as the God

11. Shu, supporting the fabric of

12. the Universe. To this end a

13. heavy globe is bound upon his back.  
These practices alternate during the week.

14. He returns again to the world.

15. **Hod**

16. With the aid of a teacher he

17. continues to master the Table of

18. Correspondences & prepares the

19. necessary rituals, talismans &c for the

20. great invocation of Netzach

21. He retires into the world.

22. - 27. **Netzach**

During these 7 days he desperately seeks to invoke God to visible appearance by the rituals of Art.

28. Again he rests in the world. (N.B. During these days of so-called rest he must strenuously fight against any thoughts of initiation, memory or hope.)

29. - 34. The Ritual is performed as laid down by DDS &c in the Book.

35. The day of rest.

36. He meditates upon the Harmony of all Things

37. upon the Death of Christ & Osiris & on any convenient

38. day passes through the 5 = 6 ritual modified duly

39. He must seek to reconcile in one harmonious symbol all the antinomies.

40. He must think of all things soever with love, especially his own dead body.

41. He must seek to perceive Beauty in all things, again with reference to his body.

42. He again resteth

43. - 48. He practiseth Pranayama, only ceasing from exhaustion. The Brother will see that this is done. Scourging, vigils, and feasts are applied.

He is made to eat highly seasoned foods, & has as little water as may support life

49. On this day he resteth not, seeing it is the Path of the Lion. He shall triumph in his strength. [? a Ritual of 6 = 5]

50 - 55. Here in perfect ease and delight among his friends (the Brethren of the Order if possible) he shall learn to reject them & all things. He shall offer up all that he hath, if so be he may somehow attain. He shall talk with his teacher concerning the reason & shall perform the holy meditation which refuteth the same, and go through a fire ritual.

56. Again he resteth not, seeing that there is no path. He shall sign away all his property, give his wife & children or all that he holdeth dear to another or to death: he shall take off all his clothes and plunge from a height into a certain black waterpool. He shall further reject the desire of initiation.

57. - 63. Drawn from the water, he shall sit in silence and darkness with love & lamentation, thus destroying the Ego in the Non-Ego

64 - 70. He shall now destroy the pairs of opposites, thus destroying the Ego in the Ego

70. - 77. Saying ever Hua allahu alazi laillaha il Hua he shall abide in the Supreme bliss of Samadhi, thus destroying the ego in Hua.

78 - 91. He shall withdraw himself into the Abyss of annihilation.

$$V.V.V.V.V. 8^{\circ} = 3^{\square}$$

This is to be worked out with infinitely greater detail.

### **Transcription Notes**

All brackets and punctuation as in original. Transcribed from manuscript in the hand of Aleister Crowley contained within OS 37, Gerald J. Yorke Papers, Warburg Institute, University of London (GJY film 4, reel 1, Sekhet-Maat Lodge Microfilm Library).

# The Avenger

*Aleister Crowley*

I

How can I bear the fullness of the joy,  
The brilliance of the burning of delight?  
Time cannot wither, nor distaste destroy  
This blossom beauty, or this fruit the Light

Of Truth. I penetrate the inmost shrine,  
Compass the utmost circuit of the skies;  
Demeter brings me bread, and Bacchus wine.  
My wisdom makes me glad, my gladness wise.

Such rapture surges from the universe,  
Caresses sense and soul, that I am swept  
Onward to combat the one shame and curse  
That can be The Great Work of the Adept?  
To lift the hoodwink that holds man in awe  
From knowledge of the Liberty of Law.

## II

I come Alastor to avenge the Gods.  
I come to wage implacable the war  
Against the slaves of custom, serfs and clods  
Whose life is fear and shame. I stand before

The Altar of the Crowned and Conquering Child,  
From Him to take my consecrated Sword  
Of Song, my shield whereon Medusa's wild  
And wanton head is fixed. I come, the Lord

Of the devouring Light, the blasting Life,  
The branding Love that smite with whirling waves  
The souls of men, that stir them to strife.  
The Kings of Earth against the sullen slaves—  
I cry the battle cry! I lift on high  
The Standard! Forward! Alastor am I!

# The Starry Sky

## *Sr. Theodora*

Astrology is a reflection of a set of correspondences, based in the supposition that the moment of birth holds specific symbolic significance for the individual. Each of us can correlate our personality, health, and many other basic aspects of our lives to natural phenomena. Like most divination systems, it is connected to a deep, rich set of symbols that apply to a substance, like water or fire. If we compared it to the I Ching, we find a basis in the philosophical construct around nature in China. The earth, thunder, or heaven has this quality and this means...

The specific phenomena involved with Western astrology are the constellations, images created in the archetypal minds of our ancient ancestors from gazing at the stars. We wouldn't have this system in a world where the lights are on all the time. It took a pre-modern society looking for meaning from the obvious surrounding environment to create these images. It also took imagination.

The images of the constellations comprise the Zodiac, a term which literally means "the zoo." It is in reference to the animals in the images of the constellations. They are representative of stories about the gods, the Greek pantheon, as well. For instance, one understanding of the symbol for Pisces is the story of Venus with her son Cupid escaping from Typhon in the form of fish. This doesn't account for the subtlty of the fish swimming in separate directions which the glyph depicts clearly. It does reflect well the nature of the sign, however. The mutable water nature accounts for the presence of water and the ability to transform to fit the environment necessary to escape or blend in as the need arises.

The symbol for Aries is another example. It is presumed in modernity to be the ram's head and that is an apt symbol for the strong, surging quality of Aries energy. The specifics of the glyph are, however, uncertain. The symbol of the ram in its Aries nature begins in Egyptian mythology where the ram's head is the symbol for Amun, a leader. The glyph for Taurus has another

Greek myth surrounding it. It is said Jupiter turned himself into a bull to steal a woman, Europa, from her father, the King of Crete. Gemini is symbolized by two pillars joined or possibly the Roman numeral two. The symbol is an example of the non-animal symbols in the Zodiac is representative of polarity or in human terms, twins. I have always envisioned the two faces of Janus; one seeing the future, and one the past; one looking forward, and the other back. Mercury or Hermes is said to be connected to these dual or compound gods. Mercury also rules Gemini.

As we head into the Spring, we look to the sign of the beginning of the Zodiac and come full circle in this column. Aries is cardinal fire in the Zodiac and, as mentioned earlier, is symbolized by the ram. Fire is the element associated with Aries. Aries is the beginning, the sprouting, surging start of life. Its cardinal nature puts it out in the front, and the fire element leaves it with no baggage to carry. It is the essence, the spark of intelligence, of knowing and conceiving of existence. I think of the moment of fertilization, when inert elements become vivified and identified. This nature that I rhapsodize is a difficult one to bear, at times. It teaches us the need to associate all experience to ourselves. Ruled by Mars, this can be a ruthless existence. In its strength, Aries can lead us to our True Wills. The ability to know what is uniquely and specifically our own way in this existence. Look for the house in your astrological chart where Aries rules for clues.

Taurus is our fixed earth nature. In this nature, it is the most solid and consistent energy in the Zodiac. Immediately following the spark of creation is manifestation in the cycle of physical being. Taurus is the bull, unhurried, but not necessarily slow. The Taurean body is solid and strong. The neck is ruled by this sign. Taurus is ruled by Venus and her values preside. Beauty, comfort, sensuality, and enjoyment are centrally important to the Taurean expression. Possessions and, most importantly, our primary possession, our bodies, are the province of this sign. In your chart, look for your native ability to ground in Taurus.

Gemini is mutable air, again, a superlative nature. Mutability lends air a most unpredictable quality. Gemini, as an air sign, has

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## **The Starry Sky (continued)**

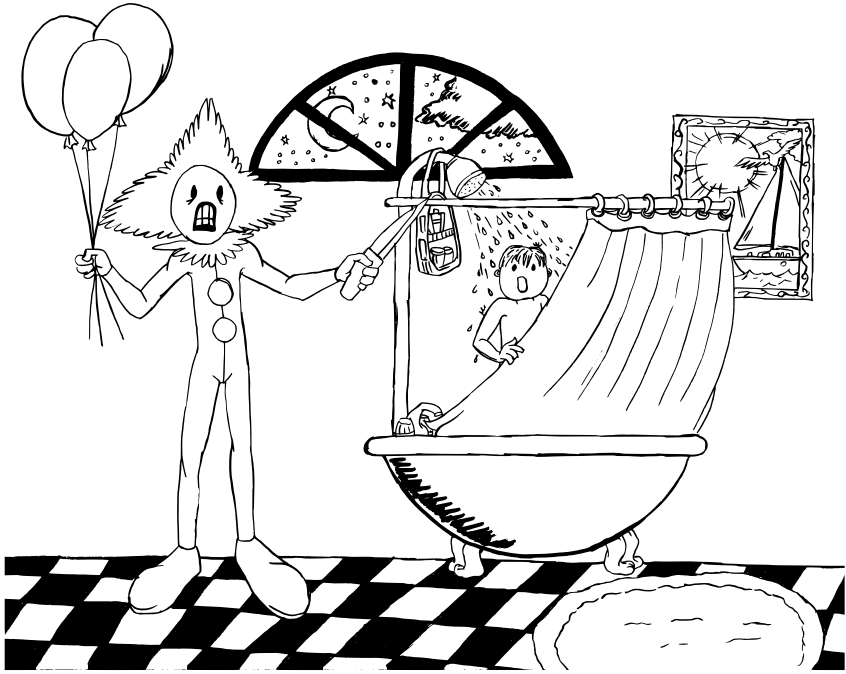
a distinct duality. The ability to communicate is at the center of its existence. Mercury rules this sign with his changeable nature. Gemini is the shape shifter, charming and easy to get along with. His shortcoming may be a tendency to see the surface and not dig for deeper understanding. His strength is the ability to wordsmith, to navigate expression expertly. Gemini is a smooth talker, persuasive; a natural salesman.

With that, I finish this installment. Go enjoy the Spring!

## **Andromeda Klein (continued)**

fact, I can imagine how hard it might be to develop a sequel to this story. This could easily be forever a standalone novel, even with the left over ambiguity. Maybe even better because of that left over ambiguity, after all.

However, in spite of, but moreover maybe because of the apparent flaws, I for one would happily read the other, as yet unwritten, 21 volumes of *Liber K*. And, I recommend this book to both you and your precocious, precious little snowflakes.



## Don't Forget to Wash Behind Your Ears!

Every night before bed, Tommy Parker has to take his shower. Tommy hates taking a shower. But his mother insists. Tommy does everything he can to make his shower as quick as possible, but every night, Mrs. Parker yells up the stairs, “Tommy! Don't forget to wash behind your ears!” Tommy doesn't know why he should wash behind his ears. No one can see behind them, so, why does it matter? Most nights Tommy is very tempted to skip washing behind his ears. That is, until he opens the shower curtain to find Mr. Clown waiting to make sure he's washed properly. And each night when he sees Mr. Clown waiting, Tommy quickly shuts the shower curtain and makes sure he's squeaky clean. Thanks, Mr. Clown!



“The venom of my fang is the inheritance of my father, and of my father’s father; and how shall I give it unto thee?”