



Book of Creation

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Chapter One - Creation

¹ Mortal knowledge is circumscribed by mortal ignorance, and mortal comprehension is circumscribed by spiritual reality. It is unwise for mortal man to attempt the understanding of that, which is beyond his conception, for there lies the road to disbelief and madness. Yet, man is man and ever fated to reach out beyond himself, striving to attain things which always just elude his grasp. So in his frustration, he replaces the dimly seen incomprehensible with things within his understanding. If these things but poorly reflect reality, then is not the reflection of reality, distorted though it maybe, of greater value than no reflection at all?

² There are no true beginnings on Earth; for here, all is effect, the ultimate cause being elsewhere. For whom among men can say which came first, the seed or the plant? Yet in truth, it is neither, for something neither seed nor plant preceded both, and that thing was also preceded by something else. There are always ancestors back to the beginning, and back beyond that, there is only ALAHAYAM. This, then, is how these things were told in The Great Book of The Sons of Fire.

³ Before the beginning, there was only one consciousness, that of The Eternal One whose nature cannot be expressed in words. It was The One Sole Spirit, The Self Generator, which cannot diminish, The Unknown, Unknowable One brooding solitary in profound pregnant silence.

⁴ The name which is uttered cannot be that of this Great Being who, remaining nameless, is the beginning and the end, beyond time, beyond the reach of mortals, and we in our simplicity call it ALAHAYAM.

⁵ He who preceded all existed alone in His strange abode of uncreated light, which remains ever unextinguishable, and no understandable eye can ever behold it. The pulsating draughts of the eternal life light in His keeping were not yet loosed. He knew Himself alone; He was uncontrasted, unable to manifest in nothingness, for all within His Being was unexpressed potential.

⁶ The Great Circles of Eternity were yet to be spun out, to be thrown forth as the endless ages of existence in substance. They were to begin with ALAHAYAM and return to Him completed in infinite variety and expression.

⁷ Earth was not yet in existence; there were no winds with the sky above them; high mountains were not raised, nor was the great river in its place. All was formless, without movement, calm, silent, void, and dark. No name had been named, and no destinies foreshadowed.

⁸ Eternal rest is intolerable, and unmanifested potential is frustration. Into the solitude of timelessness came Divine Loneliness, and from this arose the desire to create, that He might know and express Himself, and this generated the Love of ALAHAYAM. He took thought and brought into being within Himself the Universal Womb of Creation containing the everlasting essence of slumbering spirit.

⁹ The essence was quickened by a ripple from the mind of ALAHAYAM, and a creative thought was projected. This generated power, which produced light, and this formed a substance like unto a mist of invisible dust. It divided into two forms of energy through being impregnated with The Spirit of ALAHAYAM and, quickening the chaos of the void within the Universal Womb, became spun out into whirlpools of substance. From this activity, as sparks from a fire, came an infinite variety of spirit minds, each having creative powers within itself.

¹⁰ The activating word was spoken; its echoes vibrate still, and there was a stirring movement, which caused instability. A command was given, and this became the Everlasting Law. Henceforth, activity was controlled in harmonious rhythm, and the initial inertia was overcome. The Law divided the materializing chaos from ALAHAYAM and then established the boundaries of the Eternal Spheres.

¹¹ Time no longer slept on the bosom of ALAHAYAM, for now there was change, where before all had been unchanging, and change is time. Now within the Universal Womb was heat, substance and life, and encompassing it was the Word, which is the Law.

¹² The command was given, “Let the smallest of things form the greatest and that which lives but a flash form everlastingness.” Thus the universe came into being as a condensation of ALAHAYAM’s thought, and as it did so, it obscured Him from all enclosed within His solidifying creation. Henceforth, ALAHAYAM was hidden, for He has always remained dimly reflected in His creation. He became veiled from all that came forth from Him. Creation does not explain itself; under the Law, it cannot do so; its secrets have to be unraveled by the created.

¹³ All things are by nature finite; they have a beginning, a middle and an end. An unaccomplishable purpose would be eternal frustration, and therefore, the universe being created purposefully it must have an objective. If it ended without anything else following, then the ALAHAYAM existing must slumber indifferent to its activities. But He has made it a living work of greatness operating under the changeless Law.

¹⁴ The creating word had been spoken; now, there was another command and the power going forth smote the sun so its face was lit, and it shone with a great radiance pouring warmth and light upon its sister Earth. Henceforth, she would live within the protection of her brother’s household, rejoicing in his benevolence and strength.

¹⁵ The waters upon the bosom of Earth were gathered together, and dry land appeared. When the covering of water was rolled back, the body of Earth was unstable, damp and yielding. The face of the sun shone down kindly upon his sister, and the dry land of her body became very hard; humidity and dampness were taken away. He gave her a garment of fleece and a veil of fine linen, that she might clothe her body with modesty.

¹⁶ From the Great Womb had sprung the Spirit of Life, and it was rampant in the Heavens. It gazed upon Earth and saw her fairness, was filled with desire, and came out of the heavenly spaces to possess her. It came not peacefully as a lover, but tempestuously as a ravager. Its breath howled along her corridors and raged among her mountain tops, but it did not discover the dwelling place of her Spirit. She had withdrawn, as a woman withdraws before force, for modesty must not be outraged in submission. Yet, she desired its embrace, for among all the Radiant Company, she was honored.

¹⁷ The sun saw her perplexity, and he wrestled with the Spirit of Life and overcame it. When it was subdued and the primal struggle had ceased, it was delivered by the sun to his sister. It was chastened and quietened and in silence brooded over Earth's waters; she was stirred in response. Mud eggs of life potential were formed in swamps, at the meeting places of land and two waters. The sun gave quickening heat, and life crawled forth upon the bosom of the Earth.

¹⁸ The land dust brought forth the male and the dark water mist the female, and they united and multiplied. The first brought forth the second, and the two produced the third. Earth was no longer virgin, and the Spirit of Life grew old and departed. Earth was left garbed in the matron's mantle of green; herbage covered the face of the land.

¹⁹ The waters brought forth fishes and creatures, which move about and twist themselves and wriggle in the waters, the serpents and the beasts of terrible aspect, which were of yore, and reptiles which creep and crawl. There were tall walking things and dragons in hideous form clothed with terror, whose great bones may still be seen.

²⁰ Then came forth from the Womb of the Earth all the beasts of the field and forest. All the creatures of creation having blood in their bodies, and it was complete. Beasts roamed the dry land, and fishes swam in the seas. There were birds in the skies and worms within the soil.

²¹ There were great land masses and high mountains, wide, barren places and heaving waters. Fertile greenness covered the land, and abundant life swarmed in the seas, for now Earth throbbed with the energy of life.

²² Metals lay hidden in her rocks and precious stones within the soil. Gold and silver were scattered and secreted. There was copper for tools and forests of timber. There were swamps of reeds and stones for every purpose.

²³ Everything was prepared, everything was ready, and now Earth awaited the coming of man.

Chapter Two - The Birth of Man

² The love of ALAHAYAM penetrated the third veil and became the Seed of Souls within the Soul Sea. The body of man, ALAHAYAM made of water and things of the Earth, breathing into him the Spirit of Life, that he might live. But man, when young, lived only to eat and drink and to fornicate, for, being conscious only of the Earth, he knew only earthly things and earthly ways.

² Now the Spirit of ALAHAYAM moved over the face of the Earth but was not of the Earth. It held all things and was in all things, but on Earth could not be apart from anything. Without substance, it was awake, but entering substance, it slept.

³ Consider that, which was told by the servants of Eban, of Heavenman, who once wandered the Earth. He had no earthly substance and could not grasp its fruits, for he had no hands. He could not drink its waters, for he had no mouth, nor could he feel the cool winds upon his skin. They tell how the ape tribe Selok, led by Heavenman, perished by flames before the Valley of Lod, only one she-ape reaching the cave heights above.

⁴ When Heavenman was reborn of the she-ape in the cavern of Woe, could he taste the fruits of the Earth and drink of her waters, and feel the coolness of her winds? Did he not find life good? It is not all a tale of the courtyard!

⁵ Man, created from earthly substance alone, could not know things not of Earth, nor could Spirit alone subdue him. Had man not been created, who would have known ALAHAYAM's wisdom and power? As the Spirit fills the body of man, so does ALAHAYAM fill His creation.

⁶ Therefore, it was that ALAHAYAM saw something had to be which joined Earth and Spirit and was both. In His wisdom and by the creative impulse which governs the Earth, He prepared a body for man, for the body of man is wholly of Earth.

⁷ Behold, the great day came when the Spirit, which is ALAHAYAM, was joined with the beast, which is Earth. Then, Earth writhed in the labor of travail. Her mountains rocked back and forth, and her seas heaved up and down. Earth groaned in her lands and shrieked in her winds. She cried in the rivers and wept in her storms.

⁸ So man was born, born of upheaval and strife. He came wretchedly and tumultuously, the offspring of a distraught Earth. All was in discord, snow fell in the hot wastelands, ice covered the fertile plains, the forests became seas. Where once it was hot, now it was cold and where no rain had ever fallen, now there were floods. So, man came forth, man the child of calamity, man the inheritor of a creative struggle, man the battleground of extremes.

⁹ Earth nurtured man with cautious affection, weaning him in the recesses of her body. Then, when he was grown sufficiently to be lifted so he walked in the uprightness of ALAHAYAM, she took him and raised him above all other creatures. She led him even into the presence of ALAHAYAM, and she laid him on His Great Altar.

¹⁰ A man imperfect of earthly limitations, a thing unfinished, ungainly and unlearned, but proudly was He presented to Earth's Creator. Not her first-born was man, the son of Earth, the grandchild of ALAHAYAM; man the heir of tribulation and the pupil of affliction.

¹¹ ALAHAYAM saw man, the offering of Earth to her Lord, unconscious on the High Altar, a sacrifice to Him and a dedication to the Spirit of Fate. Then from out of the unfathomable heights and from behind the impenetrable veil, ALAHAYAM came down above the Altar, and He breathed into man the breath of Eternal Life. Into his sleeping body, ALAHAYAM implanted a fragment of Himself, the Seed of a Soul and the Spark of Divinity, and man the mortal became man the heir of ALAHAYAM and the inheritor of immortality. Henceforth he would have dominion over ALAHAYAM's earthly estate, but he also had to unravel the Circles of Eternity, and his destiny was to be an everlasting seeking and striving.

¹² Man slept, but ALAHAYAM opened the Great Eye within him, and man saw a vision of unsurpassed glory. He heard the voice of

ALAHAYAM saying, “O man, in your hand is now placed the tablet of your inheritance, and My seal is upon it. Know that all you desire within your heart may be yours, but first it is necessary that you be taught its value. Behold, the Earth is filled with things of usefulness; they are prepared to your hand for a purpose, but the task is upon you to seek them out and learn their use. This is the tuition for the management of your inheritance.”

¹³ “What you know to be good, seek for and it shall be found. You may plumb the seas and pluck the stars. You may live in everlasting glory and savor eternal delights. Above and below and all about, there is nothing beyond your reach; all, with one exception, is yours to attain.” Then ALAHAYAM laid His hand upon man, saying, “Now, you are even as I, except you sleep there enclosed in matter in the Kingdom of Illusion, while I dwell here in the freedom of Reality and Truth. It is not for Me to come down to you, but for you to reach out to Me.”

¹⁴ Our Unborn Friends, whatever your circumstances of life, you are the children of the past and heirs of those who have lived and died. We trust you have no cause to reproach those who once held stewardship over your estate. But whatever you think of the heritage, you cannot put it aside, any more than you can refuse that Man then saw a vision of glory encompassing even the Spheres of Splendor. Unbounded wisdom filled his heart, and he beheld beauty in perfection. The ultimates of Truth and Justice were unveiled before him. He became one with the profound peace of eternity and knew the joys of unceasing gladness.

¹⁵ The eternal ages of time unrolled as a scroll before his eyes, and he saw written thereon all that was to become and occur. The great vaults of Heaven were opened up unto him, and he saw the everlasting fires and unconsumable powers that strove therein. He felt within himself the stirring of inexpressible love, and unlimited designs of grandeur filled his thoughts. His spirit ranged unhampered through all the spheres of existence. He was then even as ALAHAYAM Himself, and he knew the secret of the Seven Spheres within Three Spheres.

¹⁶ Then, ALAHAYAM lifted His hand from man, and man was alone. The great vision departed, and he awoke; only a dim and elusive recollection, no more than the shadow of a dream remained. But deep

within the sleeping Soul, there was a spark of remembrance, and it generated within man a restless longing for he knew not what. Henceforth, man was destined to wander discontented, seeking something he felt he knew, but could not see, something which continually eluded him, perpetually goaded him, and forever tantalized him. Deep within himself, man knew something greater than himself was always with him and part of him, spurring him on to greater deeds, greater thoughts, greater aspirations. It was something out beyond himself, scarcely realized and never found; something which told him that the radiance seen on the horizon but dimly reflected the hidden glory beyond it.

¹⁷ Man awoke, the revelation and vision gone; only the grim reality of Earth's untamed vastness surrounded him. But when he arose and stepped down onto the bosom of his Mother Earth, he was undaunted by the great powers that beset him or by the magnitude of the task ahead. Within his heart, he knew destiny lay beyond the squalor of his environment, he stepped out nobly, gladly accepting the challenge.

¹⁸ He was now a new man; he was different. He looked above and saw glory in the Heavens. He saw beauty about him, and he knew goodness and things not of the Earth. The vision of eternal values arose before his inner eye. His Spirit was responding to its environment; man was now man, truly man.

¹⁹ The nature of man on Earth was formed after the nature of things in Heaven, and man had all things contained as potential within himself, except divine life. But he was as yet an untrained, undisciplined child, still nurtured simply upon the comforting bosom of Earth.

²⁰ Man grew in stature, but Earth was not indulgent, for she disciplined him firmly. She was ever strict and unyielding, chastening him often with blasts of displeasure. It was indeed the upbringing of one destined for greatness; he was made to suffer cold, that he might learn to clothe himself; sent into the barren places, that his limbs should be strengthened, and into forests, that his eye should become keen and his heart strong. He was perplexed with difficult problems and set the task of unravelling the illusions of Nature. He was beset with hardships of every description. He

was tested with frustrations and tempted with allurements; never did Earth relax the vigilance of her supervision.

²¹ The child was raised sternly, for he needed the fortitude, courage and cunning of a man to fit him for the task ahead. He grew wily and wiry in the hunt; he became adaptable, able to cope with any untoward happening. Overcoming the bewilderments of early days, he found explanations for the perplexities of his surroundings. Yet, the struggle for knowledge, the need for adaptation and the effort to survive were never relaxed. The Earthchild was well trained and disciplined; he was never unduly mollicoddled. He cried for bread and went hungry; he shivered and was cast out; he was sick and driven into the forest. Weary, he was lashed with storms; thirsty, he found the waters dried. When weak, his burden was increased, and in the midst of rejoicing, he was struck down with sorrow. In moments of weakness he cried, "Enough!" and doubted his destiny; but always something fortified and encouraged him; the Earthling never forfeited his godlikeness.

²² For man was man; he was not cowed, nor his Spirit broken; a wise ALAHAYAM knew his limitations. As it is written in the wisdom of men, 'over chastisement is as bad as no chastisement at all'. But man was rarely chastised, he was tried, tested, and challenged; he was led, prodded and urged; yet nothing was done unnecessarily. The seeming imperfections of Earth, the hazards and inequalities of life, the cruelty, harshness and apparent indifference to suffering and affliction are not what they seem; as it is, Earth is perfect for its purpose. It is ignorance of that purpose which makes it appear imperfect.

²³ Where is there a wiser father than the Spirit of ALAHAYAM, or a better mother than Earth? What man is now he owes to these; may he learn to be duly grateful. Above all, let him never forget the lessons learned in his upbringing.

Chapter Three - Destruction and Re-Creation

³ It is known, and the story comes down from ancient times, that there was not one creation but two, a creation and a re-creation. It is a fact known to the wise that the Earth was utterly destroyed once, then reborn on a second wheel of creation.

² At the time of the great destruction of Earth, ALAHAYAM caused a dragon from out of Heaven to come and encompass her about. The dragon was frightful to behold; it lashed its tail, it breathed out fire and hot coals, and a great catastrophe was inflicted upon mankind, The body of the dragon was wreathed in a cold bright light and beneath, on the belly, was a ruddy hued glow, while behind it trailed a flowing tail of smoke. It spewed out cinders and hot stones, and its breath was foul and stenchful, poisoning the nostrils of men. Its passage caused great thunderings and lightnings to rend the thick darkened sky, all Heaven and Earth being made hot. The seas were loosened from their cradles and rose up, pouring across the land. There was an awful, shrilling trumpeting, which outpowered even the howling of the unleashed winds.

³ Men, stricken with terror, went mad at the awful sight in the Heavens. They were loosed from their senses and dashed about, crazed, not knowing what they did. The breath was sucked from their bodies, and they were burnt with a strange ash.

⁴ Then it passed, leaving Earth enwrapped within a dark and glowering mantle, which was ruddily lit up inside. The bowels of the Earth were torn open in great, writhing upheavals, and a howling whirlwind rent the mountains apart. The wrath of the sky-monster was loosed in the Heavens. It lashed about in flaming fury, roaring like a thousand thunders; it poured down fiery destruction amid a welter of thick black blood. So awesome was the fearfully aspected thing that the memory mercifully departed from man; his thoughts were smothered under a cloud of forgetfulness.

⁵ The Earth vomited forth great gusts of foul breath from awful mouths opening up in the midst of the land. The evil breath bit at the throat before

it drove men mad and killed them. Those who did not die in this manner were smothered under a cloud of red dust and ashes, or were swallowed by the yawning mouths of Earth or crushed beneath crashing rocks.

⁶ The first sky-monster was joined by another, which swallowed the tail of the one going before, but the two could not be seen at once. The sky-monsters reigned and raged above the Earth, doing battle to possess it, but the many-bladed sword of ALAHAYAM cut them in pieces, and their falling bodies enlarged the land and the sea.

⁷ In this manner, the first Earth was destroyed by calamity descending from out of the skies. The vaults of Heaven had opened to bring forth monsters more fearsome than any that ever haunted the uneasy dreams of men.

⁸ Men and their dwelling places were gone; only sky-boulders and red earth remained where once they were, but amidst all the desolation, a few survived, for man is not easily destroyed. They crept out from caves and came down from the mountainsides. Their eyes were wild, and their limbs trembled; their bodies shook, and their tongues lacked control. Their faces were twisted, and the skin hung loose on their bones. They were as maddened wild beasts driven into an enclosure before flames; they knew no law, being deprived of all the wisdom they once had, and those who had guided them were gone.

⁹ The Earth, only true Altar of ALAHAYAM, had offered up a sacrifice of life and sorrow to atone for the sins of mankind. Man had not sinned indeed, but in the things that he had failed to do. Man suffers not only for what he does, but for what he fails to do. He is not chastised for making mistakes, but for failing to recognize and rectify them.

¹⁰ Then the great canopy of dust and cloud, which encompassed the Earth, enshrouding it in heavy darkness, was pierced by ruddy light, and the canopy swept down in great cloudbursts and raging stormwaters. Cool moontears were shed for the distress of Earth and the woes of men.

¹¹ When the light of the sun pierced the Earth's shroud, bathing the land in its revitalizing glory, the Earth again knew night and day, for there were now times of light and times of darkness. The smothering canopy rolled

away, and the vaults of Heaven became visible to man. The foul air was purified, and new air clothed the reborn Earth, shielding her from the dark hostile void of Heaven.

¹² The rainstorms ceased to beat upon the faces of the land, and the waters stilled their turmoil. Earthquakes no longer tore the Earth open, nor was it burned and buried by hot rocks. The land masses were re-established in stability and solidity, standing firm in the midst of the surrounding waters. The oceans fell back to their assigned places, and the land stood steady upon its foundations. The sun shone upon land and sea, and life was renewed upon the face of the Earth. Rain fell gently once more, and clouds of fleece floated across day skies.

¹³ The waters were purified, the sediment sank, and life increased in abundance. Life was renewed, but it was different. Man survived, but he was not the same. The sun was not as it had been, and a moon had been taken away. Man stood in the midst of renewal and regeneration. He looked up into the Heavens above in fear for the awful powers of destruction lurking there. Henceforth, the placid skies would hold a terrifying secret.

¹⁴ Man found the new Earth firm and the Heavens fixed. He rejoiced, but also feared, for he lived in dread that the Heavens would again bring forth monsters and crash about him.

¹⁵ When men came forth from their hiding places and refuges, the world their fathers had known was gone forever. The face of the land was changed, and Earth was littered with rocks and stones, which had fallen when the structure of Heaven collapsed. One generation groped in the desolation and gloom, and as the thick darkness was dispelled, its children believed they were witnessing a new creation. Time passed, memory dimmed, and the record of events was no longer clear. Generation followed generation, and as the ages unfolded, new tongues and new tales replaced the old.

Chapter Four - Affliction of ALAHAYAM

⁴ This comes from the scroll of Kerobal Pakthermin, who wrote, “The forbears of all the nations of man were once one people, and they were the elect of ALAHAYAM who delivered all the Earth over to them, all the people, the beasts of the field, the creatures of the wasteland and the things that grow.”

² They dwelt through long ages in lands of peace and plenty.”

³ “There were some who struggled harder, were more disciplined; because their forefathers had crossed the great dark void; their desires were turned Godward, and they were called The Children of ALAHAYAM.”

⁴ “Their country was undulating and forested. It was fertile, having many rivers and marshes. There were great mountains to the East and to the West, and in the North was a vast stony plain.”

⁵ “Then came the day when all things became still and apprehensive, for ALAHAYAM caused a sign to appear in the Heavens, so that men should know the Earth would be afflicted, and the sign was a strange star.”

⁶ “The star grew and waxed to a great brightness and was awesome to behold. It put forth horns and sang, being unlike any other ever seen. So, men, seeing it, said among themselves, ‘Surely, this is ALAHAYAM appearing in the Heavens above us.’ The star was not ALAHAYAM, though it was directed by His design, but the people had not the wisdom to understand.”

⁷ “Then, ALAHAYAM manifested Himself in the Heavens, His voice was as the roll of thunders, and He was clothed with smoke and fire. He carried lightnings in His hand, and His breath, falling upon the Earth, brought forth brimstone and embers. His eye was a black void and His mouth an abyss containing the winds of Destruction. He encircled the

whole of the Heavens, bearing upon His back a black robe adorned with stars.”

⁸ “Such was the likeness and manifestation of ALAHAYAM in those days. Awesome was His countenance; terrible His voice of wrath; the sun and moon hid themselves in fear and there was a heavy darkness over the face of the Earth.”

⁹ “ALAHAYAM passed through the spaces of the Heavens above with a mighty roar and a loud trumpeting. Then came the grim dead silence and black red lit twilight of doom. Great fires and smoke rose up from the ground and men gasped for air. The land was rent asunder and swept clean by a mighty deluge of waters. A hole opened up in the middle of the land; the waters entered, and it sank beneath the seas.”

¹⁰ “The mountains of the East and West were split apart and stood up in the midst of the waters, which raged about. The Northland tilted and turned over on its side.”

¹¹ “Then again, the tumult and clamor ceased, and all was silent. In the quiet stillness, madness broke out among men, frenzy and shouting filled the air. They fell upon one another in senseless, wanton bloodshed; neither did they spare woman or child, for they knew not what they did. They ran unseeing, dashing themselves to destruction. They fled to caves, and were buried and, taking refuge in trees, they were hung. There was rape, murder and violence of every kind.”

¹² “The deluge of waters swept back, and the land was purged clean. Rain beat down unceasingly, and there were great winds. The surging waters overwhelmed the land, and man, his flocks, and his gardens and all his works ceased to exist.”

¹³ “Some of the people were saved upon the mountainsides and upon the flotsam, but they were scattered far apart over the face of the Earth. They fought for survival in the lands of uncouth people. Amid coldness, they survived in caves and sheltered places.”

¹⁴ “The Land of the Little People and the Land of Giants, the Land of the Neckless Ones and the Land of Marshes and Mists, the Lands of the East

and West were all inundated. The Mountain Land and the Lands of the South, where there is gold and great beasts, were not covered by the waters.”

¹⁵ “Men were distracted and in despair. They rejected the Unseen ALAHAYAM behind all things for something, which they had seen and known by its manifestation. They were less than children in those days and could not know that ALAHAYAM had afflicted the Earth in understanding and not wilfully, for the sake of man and the correction of his ways.”

¹⁶ “The Earth is not for the pleasure of man, but is a place of instruction for his Soul. A man more readily feels the stirrings of his Spirit in the face of disaster than in the lap of luxury. The tuition of the Soul is a long and arduous course of instruction and training.”

¹⁷ “ALAHAYAM is good, and from good, evil cannot come. He is perfect, and perfection cannot produce imperfection. Only the limited understanding of man sees imperfection in that, which is perfect for its purpose.”

¹⁸ “This grievous affliction of man was another of his great tests. He failed and in so doing followed the paths of unnatural gods of his making. Man makes gods by naming them, but where in this is the benefit to him?”

¹⁹ “Evil comes into the midst of mankind spawned by the fears and ignorance of men. An evil man becomes an evil spirit, and whatever evil there is on Earth comes either from the evil of spirits or the evil of men.”

Chapter Five - In the Beginning

⁵ Now, the Children of ALAHAYAM were molded by the Hand of ALAHAYAM, which is called Awen, and it manifested according to their desires. For all things that have life are molded by Awen. The fox, shivering in the coldlands, longs for warmth and so its cubs have coats. The owl, clumsy in the dark, longs to see its prey more clearly, and in generations of longing, the desire is granted. Awen makes everything what it is, for all things change under its law.

² Men, too, are molded by their desires, but unlike the beasts and birds, their yearnings are circumscribed by the laws of fate and destiny and the law of sowing and reaping. These, the desires, modified by the laws, are called Enidvadew. Unlike the beasts and birds, this, in man, is something relating to him rather than to his offspring, though they are not untouched by it.

³ Destiny may be likened to a man who must travel to a distant city, whether or not he wishes to make the journey, the destination being his destiny. He may choose whether to go by way of a river or by way of a plain; whether across mountains or through forests, on foot or horseback, slow or fast, and whatever befalls because of this decision is fate. If a tree falls on him because he chose the forest path, it was fated, for luck is an element of fate. Destiny leaves no choice; fate gives limited choice which may be good or bad, but it cannot be averted. What is fated must be, for at no point can there be any turning back.

⁴ The circumstances, Enidvadew, of the traveler conform to the law of sowing and reaping; he may travel in comfort or pain, happily or sorrowfully, with strength or weakness, heavily burdened or lightly burdened, well prepared or ill prepared. When the destination is set according to the degrees of a former life, then the circumstances of the journey should conform with the desire. For what use is it desiring a great destination when the law of sowing and reaping decrees that an intolerable

burden must be carried on the way? Far better to have lesser aspirations. The decrees of fate are many; the decrees of destiny are few.

⁵ When the Earth was young and the race of man still as children, there were fertile, green pastures in the lands where all is now sand and barren wasteland. In the midst of it was a gardenland, which lay against the edge of the Earth, eastward towards the sunrising, and it was called Meruah, meaning The Place of The Garden on the Plain. It lay at the foot of a mountain, which was cleft at its rising, and out of it flowed the river of Tardana, which watered the plain. From the mountain, on the other side, ran the river Kal, which watered the plain through the land of Kaledan. The river Nara flowed westward and then turned back to flow around the gardenland.

⁶ It was a fertile place, for out of the ground grew every kind of tree that was good for food and every tree that was pleasant to the sight. Every herb that could be eaten and every herb that flowered was there. The Tree of Life, which was called Glasir, having leaves of gold and copper, was within the Sacred Enclosure. There, too, was the Great Tree of Wisdom bearing the fruits of knowledge granting the choice and ability to know the true from the false. It is the same tree, which can be read as men read a book. There also was the Tree of Trespass, beneath which grew the Lotus of Rapture, and in the centre was The Place of Power, where ALAHAYAM made His presence known.

⁷ Time passed, and The Children of ALAHAYAM were grown strong and upright under the tempering hammer of ALAHAYAM, and Earth, The Anvil of ALAHAYAM, became more kindly. All was pleasant and food plentiful, but life palls in such places, for it is against the nature of man to flourish in these circumstances. Earth is not for pleasurable dallying, it is a place of teaching, trial and testing.

⁸ The Children of ALAHAYAM were not yet the heirs of ALAHAYAM, nor inheritors of godhood, but there was one among them who had almost completed the Pilgrimage of Enidvadeu. He had unravelled the tangled skeins of fate and traversed the tumultuous seas of life to the many ports of destiny, and having paid the debts of sowing and reaping, was one triumphant over Enidvadeu.

⁹ He was Fanvar, son of Auma and Atem. He was wise and knew all things; he beheld mysteries and the secret things hidden from the eyes of other men. He saw sunrise and the sunsetting in their splendor but longed for things not realizable in the place where he lived. So, because he walked with ALAHAYAM, he was culled out from his kind and brought to Meruah, The Gardenplace.

¹⁰ He came to it across the mountains and wastelands, arriving after many days' journeying. Weary and close to death because of the privations he suffered, he could just reach the refreshing waters, from which he drank deeply, and filled with exhaustion, he slept. In his sleep, he dreamed, and this was the manner of his dreaming: he saw before him a being of indescribable glory and majesty, who said, "I am the ALAHAYAM above all, even above the ALAHAYAM of your people, I am that which fulfils the aspirations of men, and I am that in which they are fulfilled. You, having traversed all the Circles of Enidvadew and established your worthiness, are now made my governor on Earth, and you shall rule all things here, guiding them in my ways, leading them ever upwards into glory. This will be your labor and, behold, here is your reward."

¹¹ A cloud mist seemed to gather about The Glorious Being, enfolding Him so He was no longer visible. Then, the mist gradually cleared, and the man saw another form emerging. It was that of a woman, but one such as Fanvar had never seen before, beautiful beyond his conception of beauty, with such perfection of form and grace that he was dumbfounded. Yet, the vision was not substantial; she was a wraith, an ethereal being.

¹² The man awoke and sought food from the fruits about him and, having refreshed himself, wandered about the garden. Wherever he went he saw the wraith, but was unafraid because she smiled encouragingly, bringing comfort to his heart. He built himself a shelter and grew strong again, but always, wherever he went, the wraith was not far distant.

¹³ One day, near the edge of the garden, he fell asleep in the heat of the day and awoke to find himself surrounded by the Sons of Bothas, not true men but Yoslings, kinsfolk to the beasts of the forest. Before they could take his strength and wisdom, he lost himself among them, slaying some in his rage and might before the rest ran away. When it was done, he sat himself down beneath a great tree, for he was wounded, and blood gushed

out from his side and gathered thickly beside him. He became faint, falling into a deep sleep, and while he slept, a wondrous thing happened. The wraith came and lay beside him, taking blood from his wound upon herself so it congealed about her. Thus, the Spiritbeing became clothed with flesh, born of congealing blood, and being sundered from his side, she rose a mortal woman.

¹⁴ In his heart, Fanvar was not at rest, because of her likeness, but she was gentle, ministering to him with solicitude and, being skillful in the ways of healing, she made him whole. Therefore, when he had grown strong again, he made her Queen of The Gardenland, and she was so called even by our fathers, who named her Gulah, but Fanvar called her Amah, meaning helpmate. In our tongue, she is called The Fady of Fanevid.

¹⁵ Now, ALAHAYAM enlightened Fanvar concerning the woman, saying, “This woman was drawn from her compatible abode in a realm of beauty through the yearning aspirations of men. Her coming accomplishes something, which would otherwise have taken countless generations, for Earth is more fitting for men to learn manly things than for women to learn womanly ones. This woman is not as other women, being in no way like yourself; every hair of her head is unlike that of a man, every drop of blood and every particle of flesh is that of a woman and quite unlike that of a man. Her thoughts and desires are different; she is neither coarse nor uncouth, being altogether of another, more refined realm. Her daughters will walk proudly, endowed with every womanly perfection and grace. Delicacy, modesty and charm will be the lovely jewels enhancing their womanliness. Henceforth, man will be truly man, and woman will be truly woman, men being girded with manliness and women clothed with womanliness. Yet, they shall walk together, hand in hand, towards the ascending glory before them, each the helpmate and inspiration of the other.” So Fanvar and Aruah lived in contentment amid bounty and fruitfulness, with freedom from afflictions and sickness. They delighted in each other and, because of their differences, were drawn closer together.

¹⁶ Aruah brought but one thing with her when she crossed the misty frontier, the treasure of Lanevid, the jewel contained in the moonchalice, the stone of inspiration fashioned by the desires of men. Never owned by any but the daughters of Aruah, this, the Lengil, Aruah gave to Fanvar as

her dowry and her pledge of purity and exclusiveness. She followed the ways of the cradleland, not the ways of Earth.

¹⁷ Within the Gardenland was the Sacred Enclosure, the domain of Fanvar and Aruah, forbidden to those of The Children of ALAHAYAM who had now come to this place. It contained the Chalice of Fulfilment, granting any who drank from it the realization of all things to which they aspired. None might drink from this, save Fanvar and Aruah. Also, there was the Cauldron of Immortality, containing an essence distilled from the fruits growing in the garden, and this guarded against mortal ills.

¹⁸ Aruah brought forth a son by Fanvar, and he was called Rautoki, and a daughter who was called Armena. Each knew the mysteries of magic and the ways of the stars. In the fullness of time, Rautoki married among the daughters of the Sons of ALAHAYAM and had two sons, Enanari and Nenduka. It was Enanari who first taught the weaving of cloth from plants, and Nenduka was a mighty hunter. Armena also married among the Sons of ALAHAYAM and brought forth a son who was called Belenki and daughters called Ananua and Mameta. Ananua knew the making of pots and things of clay, and Mameta the taming of beasts and birds.

¹⁹ Nenduka had two sons, Namtara and Kainan. Namtara had two sons also, Nenduka and Dadam, before dying in the fullness of manhood. Belenki married Enidva and had a son called Enkidua and a daughter called Estartha, meaning Maid of the Morning, and she became a great teacher among The Children of ALAHAYAM. This was the Estartha who became the first Moonmaiden, being later called Lady of The Morning Star. Enkidua had a daughter, and her name was Maeva.

²⁰ Outside the Sacred Enclosure, known as Gisar, but forming a gateway into it was a circular structure of stones called Gilgal, and within this was a shrine, wherein was kept a sacred vessel called Gwinduiva. This was like a goblet and was made of rainbow-hued crystal set in gold with pearls. Above the cup appeared a shimmering moon-coloured mist like a thin, cold flame. At certain times, when the Heavens were in a proper position, the Gwinduiva was filled with moondew and potions from the cauldron within the Sacred Enclosure, making a pale honey-coloured liquor, and this the people drank from the goblet. However, there were different proportions in the vessel for those of the blood of Fanvar and Aruah and

those who were Children of ALAHAYAM, but not of their blood. It was the potion from the Gwinduiva which kept sickness and disease away from those who drank it.

²¹ Dadam the Firstfather married Leitha, and they had a son called Herthew. Dadam then married Maeva who had a daughter, not by him, and this was Gwineva, the cuckoochild fathered by Abrimenid of Gwarthon, son of Namtenigal, whom we call Lewid the Darkfather.

²² About the land of The Children of ALAHAYAM was the wasteland where Yoslings, called The Children of Zumat, which means They Who Inherit Death, dwelt. Amongst these, Namtenigal, the wily hunter, was the most wise and cunning; he alone was unafraid of The Children of ALAHAYAM, and he alone dared enter the Gardenland.

²³ In the days when Estartha was teaching, Namtenigal often came to hear her words, and The Children of ALAHAYAM were not displeased, for teaching the wild men about them was a duty with which they had been charged. Namtenigal, therefore, participated in their rites but could not partake of the elixir from the Gwinduiva, because this was forbidden. While it gave health and strength to The Children of ALAHAYAM, safeguarding them from the sicknesses of the Yoslings, if given to others, it caused a wasting away. It was also altogether forbidden for any of The Children of ALAHAYAM to mate with the Yoslings, for this was deemed to be the most unforgivable of sins.

²⁴ Now, the wily one learned much from Estartha and, in the fullness of time, brought his own son to her and he became as her son, living in her house and forsaking the ways of his people. Estartha called him Lewid the Lightbringer, for it was her intention that he should be taught the ways of those who walked in light, that he might in time enlighten his own people.

²⁵ Lewid grew up tall and handsome; he was quick to learn and became wise. He was also a man of the chase, strong and enduring, a hunter of renown. But there were times when the call of his people was strong; then, he would go out furtively into the night to indulge in their dark rituals. Thus, he became knowledgeable in the ways of the flesh and in the carnal indulgences of the body.

²⁶ Dadam became a servant of the Sacred Enclosure, where the misty veil between the realms could be penetrated, for all those having the blood of Aruah had twinsight, an ability to see wraiths and sithfolk, ansis and spiritbeings, all the things of the Otherworld, not clearly, but as through a veil.

²⁷ Beside the place called Gisar was a pleasant parkland with trees of every kind and a stream, also thickets of flowering bushes and all manner of plants growing lushly. It was the custom of Maeva to wander there in the sunshine, and Lewid also went there; so, it came about that they met among the trees. Maeva knew the man but had shunned him in the past; now, she saw he was handsome, possessed of many attractions, so her foot was stayed, and she did not run away.

²⁸ As the days passed, they dallied longer together, and Lewid talked of things Maeva had not heard before. She felt a stirring in her blood, but did not respond or heed his temptations, because of the things that were forbidden. So Lewid went to the Moonmother, wise woman of the Yoslings, and telling of his desires, beseeched her to help him. The Moonmother gave him two apples containing a vile substance, which they had drawn through their stalks; this Lewid gave to Maeva who then became helpless in his hands.

²⁹ They met again after this, for Maeva became enamoured towards Lewid, but it happened that she became ill with a strange sickness and was afraid. Then Dadam became ill, and Lewid also, and Lewid said to the woman, "You must obtain the pure essences from within the Sacred Enclosure, and Setina, the Moonmother, will prepare an elixir which will cure us." This he said because none of his kind had ever been able to obtain the Sacred Substances, though they had always coveted what had been denied them. Now, because of her frailty, the woman was pliable in his hands, and Lewid seized the opportunity.

³⁰ To achieve his ends, Lewid gave Maeva a potion which had been prepared by the Moonmother, and she administered this to Dadam and those with him, by guile and deceit, so that they fell asleep. While they slept, Maeva stole from the Sacred Substances and took them to Lewid, who gave them to the Moonmother, and she made a brew.

³¹ Part of this was given to Maeva, and the rest was drunk by the Yoslings, from their awful ankital during their night rites. When the morning came, they were all smitten with grievous pains, and before the sun set that day, all the Yoslings were stricken with a sickness, such as they had not known before.

³² Maeva took what had been given to her and, finding Dadam, laid low in his bed gave him a draught from her vessel, though she had to use womanly wiles to get him to drink it. She drank the remainder, and they both slept. But when they awoke in the morning, both were suffering pains, and this was something they had not known before. Dadam said to the woman, "What have you done, for what has happened to us cannot be unless the things which are forbidden have been done." The woman replied, "Lord, I was tempted, and I fell, I have done that which is forbidden and unforgivable."

³³ Dadam said, "I am bound by duty to do certain things, but first let us go into the Gisar to the place called Bethkelcris, where I will seek enlightenment." So, they went there together and stood before the shrine beneath the Tree of Wisdom. There, they were filled with an inflowing vision, seeing themselves as they were and as they should have been, and they were ashamed. He, because he had not followed the proper path of a man and she, because of her falsity. There, in the reflecting mist, the contamination of the woman was revealed, and the man's heart shriveled within him like a flower licked by flame.

³⁴ Then, they saw a great Spiritbeing materializing in the reflecting mist, and he said to them, "Woe to you and your house, for the greatest of evils has befallen the race of The Children of ALAHAYAM, and it is defiled. The heritage of Kadamhapa is lost. The fetid flow defiling the woman results from the incompatible intermingling, but it is not all, for sicknesses and diseases are also generating from the ferments of the impure implantation."

³⁵ Dadam said, "The fault is with the woman; wherefore should I suffer?" The Spiritbeing replied, "Because you two are now as one, the cankerworms of disease and sickness strike both equally, but you shall not again defile this place. Henceforth, the misty veil becomes an impenetrable barrier severing our two realms from each other, so they can

no longer be easily spanned. Between us, there will now be no means of communication. Henceforth, man and woman, fated to unite in love divine, shall be divided and set apart, though ever yearning reunion. They may cleave one to the other, seeking the unity, which will rekindle the flame, but unless their efforts transcend the limitations of earthly things, they will be in vain. The spirit of man is now severed from the whole and cast again into unconsciousness, and it too shall long for reunion with the whole. The spark shall seek to return to the fire; for otherwise, it becomes nothing. The web of fate is rewoven, and the paths of destiny remade; the design of life is redrawn; again, the progression begins in ignorance, birth and death, pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow, success and failure, love and hate, peace and war, all the light and shade, the many hues making the splendidly intricate pattern of life on Earth. This is a new beginning, but a beginning not in purity and unencumbered, but one already weighted with debts and burdens.”

³⁶ The Spiritbeing continued, “Enough wickedness has been wrought by your willfulness and disobedience, for the decrees forbidding certain things were for your own benefit. Immortality was nearly within your reach, but had you achieved this, you would have brought an even more grievous evil upon yourselves and your inheritors, for freed from servitude to change, you and they would have been unable to progress.”

³⁷ The Children of ALAHAYAM were driven out of the gardenland by Spiritbeings, and then guardians were set at its gates so none could re-enter. Then, it was withdrawn beyond the misty veil; the waters ceased to flow, and the fertility departed; only a wilderness remained. The Children of ALAHAYAM went to dwell in the land of Amanigel, which is beyond the mountains of Mashur by the sea of Dalemuna.

³⁸ From this time onward, man fashioned his own spiritlikeness. Some, who were loathsome in aspect even unto themselves, went apart and were mercifully veiled in dark depths, and they said among themselves, “Let us dwell here in the darkness and prepare a place for others like ourselves, so that when they follow, they abide here and join us.” Thus, were the Dark Regions formed and inhabited by demons who are nought but the hideously fashioned spirits of evil men.

³⁹ These things have been written into the record. In Siboit, they used to say this was the manner of man's making, "ALAHAYAM sent His creating Craftsman Spirit down to Earth, and the reflection of The One was drawn into a spiritless body, and this became the heart of man."

⁴⁰ These are the words written by Thonis of Myra in Ludicia in his day:

⁴¹ "You ask me what man is, and I answer: He is life becoming aware of itself. He is the intangible knowing the tangible, Spirit in matter, fire in water. When this first happened, none remembers, and only the old folktales remain. There was the beginning and then the garden, and it was in this garden man found himself; before this he was not free, being one with everything about him. As he could not disobey, good and evil could not be; they were non-existent."

⁴² "Man became free through awareness of himself, and with this knowledge, denied any kinship with the beast. As he was no longer in harmonious relationship with things of the Earth, he became discontented, dissatisfied and restless, he wanted to belong, but felt his place of belonging was not there. He had been reborn as a mangod, and therefore, it is truly said that man was born of Earth and Spirit, under a tree, the symbol of life, and in a garden."

⁴³ "There the eyes of the man and woman were opened and, being above the beasts, they knew they were different and set apart from all else that breathed. They separated themselves, being now ashamed of their state and strangers to each other. The carnal satisfaction of lesser creatures now no longer sufficed; they had lost contact with the Source of Love, but, though knowing something was lacking, knew not what. They had fallen into carnal knowledge which only man can know, for only he feels the reproach of divinity. They were removed from The Garden of Content by an inhalation of the Divine Substance and could not return because of the barrier between man and non-man.

⁴⁴ Kamelik has written: "The entwined were cut apart and since that day have never known content. They wander restlessly, ever seeking to unite again and together find the jewel, which is lost to Earth forever."

⁴⁵ Lupisis has written: “This first woman, who came from the void, is the eternally glorified goddess, the inspirer of hearts, the ideal of womanhood honored by all men, the priestess at the shrines of delicacy and tenderness. She was the ideal woman who, because of man’s nature, is always tempted by his twinshade, the beast in his form. If the beast triumphs and she falls, the ideal becomes enshrouded in winding cloths of disillusionment, and something is lost to the heart of a man.

⁴⁶ These words are also there: “They did not partake of wisdom, and fruit from the tree of knowledge is bitter. Men are denied their true birthright. The fall of man was a fall from loving contact with ALAHAYAM into material carnality. The Soul that had shared the consciousness of ALAHAYAM fell into unconsciousness by becoming ensnared in matter. The fall severed man from the source of his spiritual sustenance; thereafter, his efforts were to struggle back. In his blind groping for ALAHAYAM, after the fall, he discovered demons and found it easier to worship them than to continue the search.”

⁴⁷ “ALAHAYAM is always waiting; man has only to look up, but it is easier to go down the hill than to climb it. It is easier for man’s spiritual beliefs to degenerate than to evolve. Who among men knows the truth and can write with certain knowledge? Would not this certainty be against the Law? No man was there at the beginning to see and write, but of one thing alone we can be sure; The Creating ALAHAYAM knows how and why, and could the acts of One so great be without purpose?

Chapter Six - Dadam And Lewid

⁶ Maeva fled for her life, and many kinfolk went with her. But Dadam was unable to follow, being laid low with the sickness. This loosened his tongue, so it became uncontrollable, making him babble like a child, and the sickness covered his body with red sores, from which came an issue. Lewid also departed for a place far out in the wilderness.

² Those with Dadam, who looked back towards the place of the garden, saw bright tongues of light licking the sky above it, the whole being interwoven with flickering flames in many hues. Those who sought to return were repulsed with a tingling ache over their bodies, which increased into severe pain as they approached; so, they were driven away.

³ When Dadam recovered so he could stand, only a few remained with him, and they all moved further into the wilderness to a place where there was water and pasture. There, Dadam left Herthew, his son, and the boy's mother, with Habaris the Learned and set out to find Lewid.

⁴ After many days, Dadam and those with him came upon Lewid and his Yoslings, who were full of sickness, and slew many, but Lewid was not slain, though mortally wounded, and he lay against a great rock. When Dadam came near, Lewid raised an arm heavily and said, "Hail to the victor and benefactor, who has come to terminate our wretchedness." While Dadam stood sternly contemplating him, Lewid said, "To kill me now is your prerogative, for even we lesser beings, who are far removed from godmen have the law of husbandly pride. What I did has been done before and will be done again, but I erred by crossing an unknown barrier which could not be discerned, for we, within ourselves, are no more contagious to each other than are your people. If I then must die, let it be for my part in spawning the cankerworms of disease which have stricken both our peoples."

⁵ "Back in the dreaming-time, when the great alahayam strove among themselves for dominion of the skyspaces, and the wide expanse of Earth

was rent apart by unearthly wildfire, Bemotha was cut apart by the bright arrows of Shemas. Then, this land was given to my people as their dominion, while yours was in another unearthly place far distant. Our domain was a pleasant place and though you teach that because of this, we remained as we are; yet we were content. We know of no great design, nor of any barely attainable objectives, to which men must aspire. Such striving, as you know, is to us no more than purposeless vexation.”

⁶ “I have my ALAHAYAM, and you have yours, and as they strove one against the other beforetimes, so will it always be; but now, there is a new battleground with new battle chiefs. I will go to my appointed place, and you will go to yours, and from thence, as leaders of the fray, we shall wage a never ceasing war. Such is fated and must be, but who will win the fair prize of Earth for their king? We shall not strive with clubs and lances, the hurling stone and flying dart, but with more subtle weaponry. This thing is not our choice; we are but playthings of fate. That you and I should head the fray is not because of our qualities, but because we were where we were, when we were. Now we are but two precarious points of life in a hostile wilderness, but what might we be in a hundred generations?”

⁷ Dadam said, “These things I know too, for my eyes have always been opened. I too have looked out into an endless plain without any horizon, but I shall lead those who have grown strong through seeking and striving, while those in your ranks will be weakened through indulgence in the fleshpots and pleasure places of Earth. We are the disinherited, but not the disowned; we have the seeds of victory within us. You and yours were never more than you are, sons of the easy path, followers of the downhill road.”

⁸ Then, when these things had been spoken, Lewid died, and Dadam and those with him burnt his body. Dadam and those with him wandered the wasteland for many days, then turned southward towards the mountain. Then it happened that one day, Dadam was seated apart, in solitude among rocks, with chin on chest, and a hunter of the Ubalites came upon him from behind. The hunter slung a smooth stone as the man turned, and it struck out his eye. Then, the Ubalite slew him by smashing in his head with a stone.

⁹ This hunter was the son of Ankadur, son of Enanari, king of the Ubalites, by Urkelah, daughter of the Chaisites. This is known because those who were with Dadam came out of the barren places and learned the ways of builders, becoming great among the Ubalites and raising cities along the rivers. Among them was Enkilgal who built Keridor, which stands between the two great rivers, and Netar and Baletsheramam, who taught men the ways of writing, setting the letters upon a pillar in Herak.

Chapter Seven - Herthew, Son of the Firstfather

⁷ The Book of Beginnings tells us all things began with Varkelfa, therein called Awenkelifa, from whom flows gwinin, the energiser which stabilizes all things, so they maintain their proper form and awen, which responds to the moulding desires. This is well enough, but men concern themselves more with the beginnings of their race, and ours is rooted in Herthew the Sunfaced, son of the Firstfather.

² While Herthew was still young, he was expelled from the lushlands where he was born, and he journeyed across the harshlands in the company and keeping of wise Habaris. After many days, they came to Krowkasis, cradleland of our race, land of mountains and rivers, which is beside Ardis, and they encamped there in a valley. With them were retainers and flocks.

³ Herthew grew to manhood there, and always Habaris was at his side, instructing him in all the things he should know. He taught Herthew the nine essential disciplines of Imain and the secrets of the three sacred vessels. Herthew learned that there was a place of gloom, where the air was foul, and malodorous breezes carried pestilence and poisonous particles. This was the source of all maladies and ailments and of the things which cause putrefaction and decay. This place had been closed off from Earth, for it existed in another realm beyond the ken of mortals; but it had been brought into attunement with Earth when a forbidden act was accomplished. Thus, the bodies of mortals became susceptible to influences from the baleful place.

⁴ To this and similar parts of the Otherworld, the wicked would be drawn when they passed through the grim gates of death. But Habaris taught a different conception of wickedness, one where lack of effort, indolence and indifference to duty and obligations, the taking of the easy path, were just as wrong as actual deeds of wickedness. He taught that men reach the true goal of life by transmuting lustlove into truelove. That true victory is

gained only over the defeated bodies of their vanquished passions and baser selves.

⁵ These and many other things were taught by Habaris, but many of his teachings displeased the people of Krowkasis who were then as they were before Herthew's forefather was led away. So Habaris concealed many things from them and taught, by simple tales, things within their understanding. He taught them the mysteries concerning the wheel of the year and divided the year into a Summer half and a Winter half, with a great year circle of fifty-two years, a hundred and four of which was the circle of The Destroyer. He gave them the Laws of Weal and Woe and established the folkfeasts of harvest-tide and seeding-tide. He taught them the ritual of Ulisidui.

⁶ But Habaris instructed Herthew in the ways of the Otherworld. He taught him concerning the three rays from the central invisible sun, which manifest all things, upholding them in stability of form. Also concerning the Oversoul, which filled everything in creation, as the Soulself filled the mortal body. This Soulself, he declared, would develop from mortal sensitivity and feeling transmuted into divine sensitivity and feeling, through suppression of the baser instincts within mortals. It was strengthened by development of feelings of love between man and woman and between these and their kindred by the appreciation of beauty and devotion to duty, by the development of all qualities that pertain to humans and not to animals.

⁷ Herthew learned that the Soulself is quickened by soul substances outflowing from The Divine. That the strong soul is transformed and molded to the soul's desire, but the weak soul is not its own master; it is flabby, unstable and is pulled into a state of distortion by its own vices. In the afterlife, there is unbounded joy for the entry of a noble soul; it will glow with splendor and stand out proudly. The mean soul of the wicked is dull-hued, twisted and drab, and, being drawn towards its own compatible state, it shrinks into the dark places.

⁸ When Herthew had barely crossed the threshold of manhood, black-bearded spearmen began to ravish the borders of Krowkasis, and Idalvar, king of that country, called his fighting men together and when word came to Herthew, he prepared to depart. But Habaris bid him stay awhile, for

he was unprepared for battle. Then, Habaris prepared a strange fire with stones, unlike any fire seen before, and when it burnt low, he plucked out that which is called 'child of the green flame' and he beat it out so it became a blade. This he fitted to a horned handgrip and, when it was edged and blooded, gave it to Herthew, saying, "Behold, Dislana the Bitterbiter, faithful servant of he who strikes hard and true." Then, he made a shield of wicker covered with ox-hide and a cap of hide which came down over the face and neck. So equipped, Herthew went to the encampment of Idalvar, taking eight fighting men with him.

⁹ In those days, men fought with hand-thrown spears and clubs, with flung stones and sticks sharpened by fire and weighted, but they did not close in the battle clash. So, when Idalvar saw the battleblade of Herthew, he wondered and it passed his understanding; but when he saw Herthew close on the battleline and the foeman fall before him, he was amazed.

¹⁰ No man about the king could understand the making of such weapons, offspring of fire and stone, but Habaris made others, and Herthew became the king's right-hand man and the first hero of the Noble Race. The king offered Herthew his daughter's hand in marriage, but Herthew declined, saying, "The days of my manhood are not yet fulfilled."

¹¹ When the war-filled days had passed, Herthew withdrew to the place where Habaris made the bright battleblade, and already he had taught the mysteries of their making to others, sealing their mouths with magic. But Herthew was less concerned with the weaponry of war than with the mysteries of life and the battles of the Spirit beset by mortality. So, while his workmen drew bright blades from the thunderstones, Habaris taught Herthew and his battlebrothers, and these were the things they learned from his mouth.

¹² "Beyond ALAHAYAM, there is an Absolute, which no man should try to understand, for it exists and has always existed in a state beyond man's finite comprehension. It is from this Absolute that ALAHAYAM, The Ultimate in all Perfections, was engendered."

¹³ "To create, ALAHAYAM first visualised in thought, then He produced an outflowing wave of power, which, in a manner of speaking, solidified what might be called building stones. The outflowing power also

produced the Celestial Hymn, which brought the building stones together in harmonious forms. So, it is truly said that all creation is the harp of ALAHAYAM, and it responds to His song and manipulations. It is an everlasting unfoldment. The voice of ALAHAYAM can also be heard in the voice of His beautiful daughter who endows all growing things with life and beauty.”

¹⁴ “There is a divine purpose in creation, which may be known only to the few; this knowledge is the key to all unanswered questions. Acquiring it is like the drawing back of heavy curtains, which have kept a room in gloomy half light, so all things suddenly become clear and distinct. He who gains this knowledge knows the Grand Secret, the answer to the riddle of the ages and knows beyond a shadow of a doubt. This divine purpose, and the divine secret concerning it, is called Gwenkelva.”

¹⁵ “Apart from Gwenkelva, ALAHAYAM gains nothing from His creation, except that as a Being possessing infinite love and goodness, He must have something to receive the gift of love and respond to it. Even among mortal beings, who is there that could find satisfactory fulfilment in self-love? Also, He needed something wherewith He could contrast Himself, some medium wherein He could perform, and this is creation.”

¹⁶ “Creation is also, for mortals, the school of life. The training ground for godhood. There are Three Circles of Reality, three realms, three stages of existence. They are: Heaven, where perfection visualized on Earth may be realized and desires and ideals materialized; where hard-striven-for aspirations are attained; it is the place where all the properly developed spiritual potential latent in man reaches maturity and fulfilment. Earth, the place of training, development and preparation, the testing ground, the battlefield where men discover their true natures when confronted by life’s challenges, contests and contentions; where competition and controversy are the rule. It is here that aims and objectives are conceived and thought-out for realization later in the proper place. It is a starting point, the beginning of the journey; it is here that the proper road must be wisely chosen. Then, there is the Realm of the Misty Horizon, the intermediate place, the place of spirits, where those above can commune with those below and where free spirits wander within their limitations.”

¹⁷ These things, which Habaris taught in those far off days, have been rewritten in transmission to accord with our understanding, but it is unwise to voice them in these troublesome days, when words become snares to entrap the unwary.

¹⁸ Now, Idalvar desired to learn the secret of the bright blade engendering thunderstones, but no man who came with Habaris or labored for him would disclose any part of it, and the king was afraid to put them to the test. So, having thought the matter out, the king sent for his daughters and told them what he expected them to do, for he had devised a plan to learn the secret. Then, he sent an invitation to Herthew and Habaris. When they arrived at the king's encampment, they found a great gathering in their honor, and the king's daughters favorably inclined towards them, one smiling upon Herthew and the other upon Habaris who was at the age of hoaryheadedness. Though at first, Habaris was indifferent and wearied her, the king's daughter pandered to him, encouraging even his follies, setting out to charm him with her wit and beauty.

¹⁹ It was no great length of time before her womanly wiles ensnared the heart of Habaris, and though he was almost ripe for the surrender of secrets, the damsel's efforts had taxed her, and the game became tiresome, so there came an evening when she could not endure his company. In the midst of the merrymaking, when the alebowls had made many rounds and the sound of song and story was at its height, she slipped away with a young battleman, who attended upon her father. Many who sat among the benches saw this and whispered to one another, nodding knowingly in the direction of Habaris who was not unaware, though he appeared to have drunk to his capacity.

²⁰ Habaris had learned to love the young woman; so he was sorely heartsmiten, but within himself, he knew the tree of Winter love bears only Winter's fruits. Yet he made excuses to himself for her, thinking perhaps it was just some girlishness with no more weight than a floating feather, nothing of serious import, for it was true the merrymaking was better suited to the natures of men than the natures of women. Maybe, he thought, it is just an innocent indiscretion.

²¹ So when the day came to its fullness and those who had made merry went heavily about their tasks, Habaris approached the king and asked for

his daughter's hand in marriage. He said, "Your daughter Klara has delighted me with her winsome ways; she has charmed me with her gaiety and beauty; she has displayed much pleasure in my company; surely I have not misread the signs." The king was not overpleased, for though he greatly desired to know the secret of the bright blade he had not intended giving his daughter's hand to Habaris, but neither did he wish to offend him. Therefore, he was wary in his reply, saying, "It is the custom for any suitor for a highborn woman's hand to be him self highborn and worthily battleblooded. Yet, such is my affection for you that I would not let even the custom become a bar to this marriage, and you may be a battleblooded man among your own people. But let us not enter lightly into this thing, for the girl is still young and it would be well if you established yourself favourably with her. She will be a worthy wife indeed, for she is one who is ever ready to learn, one with an enquiring mind. Nothing gives her greater pleasure than the acquisition of knowledge." So the matter was left.

²² Now, some days later Idalvar and his retinue, accompanied by Herthew and Habaris, went to the gathering place for folkfeasts, some five days journey away. People were accustomed to meeting here every thirteen moons to celebrate the season of fruitfulness, many coming a great distance. Beside the gathering place was the compound of a far-framed seer and warlock called Gwidon, who, in the fullness of the moon on the third night, would prophesy events for the forthcoming year.

²³ Idalvar and those with him presented their gifts and took their places before the compound. Presently, Gwidon came out cloaked in the skins of wild dogs, with a horned crown and skull-headed staff. He seated himself before a small fire, into which he threw prescriptions, making a cloud of smoke, which completely enveloped him. When this had drifted away, he seemed to be asleep, but after a while, he lifted his head; then raising himself up, he started to prophesy.

²⁴ He talked awhile of small matters, then told of dangers to the people through enemies who would bear down from the Northlands. He prophesied a great bloodletting, telling people they would be saved by a great war leader, a king knowing the secret of the bright blade, himself a war-wielder of one. He exhorted the people to bestir themselves and prepare, wasting no time in finding their leader.

²⁵ No man among the people knew the mysteries of the bright blade except Habaris, but he was not a man of battle and Herthew was not high born among them. So, though they talked long, they talked in tangles, failing to resolve the issue. It was then decided each should go his own way, but they should meet at the same place again at the next full moon, when Gwidon would be able to help with their decision.

²⁶ When Idalvar returned to his encampment, he was no longer hesitant about the marriage of his daughter, ordering that it should take place forthwith. But he stipulated that Habaris must initiate him and his sons into the mysteries of the bright blade immediately. This being agreed, arrangements for the marriage were put in hand.

²⁷ Habaris and Klara were married, and Idalvar and his sons partially initiated into the mysteries of the bright blade, for the king was told it would take some time for the initiation to be completed. So when they next went to the meeting place, Idalvar was proclaimed the war leader, with his sons to follow according to their ages, should he fall in battle. But Habaris had spoken to Gwidon in secret, and matters were so arranged that should the sons of Idalvar fall, then Herthew would become the battle chief.

²⁸ The king and those with him returned to their home compound where they were to prepare battlemen, but Herthew was to go back to the gathering place and there train fighting men in the battle tactics which brought them clashing into the foe.

²⁹ Now, on their wedding night, when they had retired to their bower, Klara burst into tears and fell weeping with her head on the knees of Habaris, confessing she was not a virgin and had deceived him, begging his forgiveness. Habaris raised her up and said, "Even the wisest of men becomes a fool when his heart blinds him to reason. The older the fool, the bigger the fool. He did not question her regarding love, for he knew she could not love and deceive him; she had given her heart, and with it, her virginity to another. Yet, he made an excuse for her to himself, thinking that she had not willfully deceived him but had acted out of duty to her father. Also, truly loving someone and wishing to demonstrate that love, she necessarily had to sacrifice the happiness and content, the self-respect of her husband-to-be, the choice had been hers to make. It is ever

so. Habaris asked if her father had known how things were and she said, "He suspected, for am I not his daughter?" Thus, Habaris found himself tied to an unloving wife, for he chose to disregard the custom of the people. He wondered, was she also to be an undutiful and unfaithful one?

³⁰ A woman reserves herself for her husband, or she does not, according to her marriage criterion. A woman reserved for marriage is one unlikely to be unfaithful; a woman easily come by before marriage is no less attainable afterwards, for if she says love is the criterion, then she measures by something unstandardised, which may figuratively vary from one inch to a mile. A man declaring his love may have seduction in mind or a lifetime of protective devotion; the marriage proposal determines the difference and establishes the intent.

³¹ After the marriage, the king showed little concern for Habaris, for he kept Klara's young battleman in his retinue when he should have despatched him elsewhere. Nor did Klara maintain the restraint and decorum, which dignifies wifedom, except in their outward manifestations, which is no more than a deceptive crust disguising the polluted love beneath. Thus, Habaris bore the shame of belittlement in the eyes of men, for Klara was furtively unfaithful.

³² Habaris visited Herthew and, on his return, told the king that he and his sons would now receive their final initiation.

³³ So, having made preparation, they set off, accompanied by Klara, to the place of the thunderstones, this being a deeply cleft mountain wherein there was a large cavern, from which flowed a river. Entering the cave, Habaris told those with him to bide where they were, for only Idalvar, his sons and Klara were to accompany him into the place of initiation, a small cave entered through a long narrow passage closed off by a heavy door and lit by a fire already prepared, a fire which burnt tardily with a blue flame.

³⁴ When a length of time had passed, those who waited without grew uneasy, but it was long before they approached the door, and when they did, their throats were seized, so they were affrighted and fled, and one among them died. Then, those who knew the mysteries of the thunderstones came and cleared the way, and all within the cave were

found dead. Habaris did what had to be done, for though it is well for men to conform to the laws of men, there is a superlaw, by which men who are men should live, and which sometimes decrees that they must die.

³⁵ Herthew married the daughter of Idalvar, and they had a son who died in his seventh year. Idalvar's daughter died in childbirth. The invaders came and were defeated with a great slaughtering, and Herthew became the first king over all the people of Krowkasis.

Chapter Eight - Gwineva

⁸ Maeva, one time wife of Dadam, found refuge among people of Ardis, where she gave birth to Gwineva the Cuckoochild, but as the child grew, it was seen that she had red hair. Though all knew there were fair-haired and dark-haired people, none had ever seen anyone with red hair. Also, strange maladies had manifested in Ardis, for which the strangers were blamed; therefore, because of these things, Maeva and her child were driven out.

² They came to a pool near the border of Krowkasis and built a habitation of reeds, living there for many years. However, Maeva was killed by a wild beast, and Gwineva was left alone, but she learned much from familiars who came to her, and so she became a sorceress.

³ Time went by and the half-folk called Yoslings began to gather around her habitation, and they thought she was a goddess and worshipped her. As her fame spread, word came to Herthew concerning the strange woman, so he sent men to find out about her and report. Gwineva knew about Herthew, but he did not know who she was or that any child of Maeva lived. When Herthew heard the report, he was intrigued and sent men to escort her to him, and she came at his request. They brought her into his presence wearing a cloak of feathers and a garment of doeskin, her hair unbraided like that of other women, falling outside the cloak almost to her knees. He was amazed at the cascade of red hair, and his heart was stirred by her beauty.

⁴ Herthew gave Gwineva a bower and attendants, but she preferred to be attended by Yoslings, whom the people about Herthew despised. They gossiped about the strange woman, for it was seen that Yosling men freely entered her bower; yet, her bearing was modest and maidenly; the Yoslings showing her every form of respect.

⁵ It was the season of fruitfulness, and when Herthew went to the gathering place, he took Gwineva with him, but the Yoslings could not be

taken there. So they remained behind, but the people removed them. When they arrived at the gathering place and Gwidon saw Gwineva, he was startled, for he had seen such a woman in the darkened waters; but he welcomed her and was surprised at her wisdom and skill at sorcery. When the time came for Gwidon to prophesy and all who came to hear him were gathered about, they became apprehensive, for his coming forth was delayed, and the moon began to disappear, eaten away by the blackness of the night. Then, when they started to jostle and flee, there was a great shout, and Gwidon appeared; as he did, a great fire sprang up on either side of him. The people remained, for each was rooted to the place where he stood.

⁶ Gwidon spoke at length, telling them that the night sky sign heralded a new era. That as the moon grew again in brightness, so should their race wax strong and virile, spreading wide across the face of the Earth, driving lesser races before them. That a son of Herthew would lead their sons out of Krowkasis, and his sons and their Sons would continue westwardly, towards Hesperis, meaning Land of Spirits. That there they would meet their final destiny. He told them that there would be a great bloodletting, when brother would fight with brother and father with son, but that this would be the planting of the centrepole, around which the framework for the structure of their race would be woven. He said, "I shall go before the vanguard in spirit."

⁷ Later, Herthew asked Gwidon to cast the omensticks and read the ashes, as he wished to know things concerning Gwineva. This Gwidon did, telling him that she was his fatemate, one destined to be his wife; that she was indeed a true maiden, and he would not be foreridden. He said, "She acts as she does through innocence and not through brashness." But what Gwidon told Herthew was no more than a grain in the grainsack among all that, which he knew and saw.

⁸ When Herthew returned to his homesite, he paid court to Gwineva and asked her to marry him, and this she consented to do after one year. The people, hearing what was intended, were displeased and murmured against the marriage, saying it was unseemingly for their king to marry a sorceress and one strange in so many ways. Also, there was a custom forbidding the intermingling of blood, but there was no doubt as to what she was, some thinking she was one who could be acceptable.

⁹ Gwineva was not the bloodkin of Herthew, so as the marriage would not be incestuous, Gwineva decided she would say nothing of their relationship, for she was in love with him, and love is ever ready to make excuses. Yet, despite her knowledge and wisdom, her heart was full of fears because of her background, but she displayed none of her anxieties. She did not feel at ease among the people, but never asked that the Yoslings be allowed back. She tried to become acceptable by ministering to the sick with simples and remedies, but the more she cured and healed, the more people feared her, and fearing they shunned her, except they were in dire need of her help.

¹⁰ However, Herthew remained firm in his resolve to marry, though many advised that if he simply took Gwineva as a concubine or as something less than a wife, it would be more acceptable. They said, “None would object if she were treated as a woman with no standing; mate, but do not marry, for marriage would grant her undue status, and is marriage so necessary? Does a wise man buy the pie, whereof he can freely eat at any time?”

¹¹ Such sayings enraged Herthew, for he knew Gwineva to be a woman reserved for marriage, and this he tried to tell the people, but they laughed, saying, “She has bewitched you; put her to the test.” But he replied, “This is unworthy, for it displays doubt and distrust; a virgin is a virgin, whether named so by horn or wand and remains so whatever the conjectures of carnal-minded men who are more familiar with women of lesser repute.” Yet, whether the marriage bar applied was still a thing of doubt in the minds of many, for none knew the lineage of Gwineva, nor did she enlighten anyone, though it was customary to recite this at the betrothal. But Herthew and Gwineva remained unbetrothed, though the forthcoming marriage was made known.

¹² Now, the nephews and kin of Idalvar nurtured seeds of discord among the people, and because it was a time of peace, when the skills of a warchief were not needed, many heeded their words. So it developed that there were those for Herthew and those against him. Then, Herthew said to the people, “Let this not be something to cut people apart, but something, which can be decided at the next folkfeast.”

¹³ The seedsowing time had passed, but it was not yet harvest- tide, and the young men held spear-throwing contests and tested each other in many manly skills. At such times, seated on a platform against the palisade, Herthew gave judgement and awarded merits. Inside the palisade was a walkway and places, from which great stones could be hurled, and from one such place came a murderous weapon which cut down through Herthew's head to pierce the shoulder of his shield arm, striking him to the ground. Immediately, there was a great tumult and confusion; fighting broke out and men died, but Herthew was carried to safety in the bower of Gwineva. There he was protected by his retainers, but within the palisade, all was taken over by those hostile to Herthew.

¹⁴ Before the cowardly blow, those for Herthew had been more numerous and powerful, but after he was so sorely wounded, they were less, and of these, many were inclined to waver, for such is the nature of man. But to contrast with the frail reeds who wavered, those who remained loyal were resolute, for this too is the nature of man.

¹⁵ Now, when Gwineva and the wise men attended to Herthew, they saw that while the shield arm had been injured it was not unfeeling, for it grasped the hand of Gwineva, but this the sword arm could not do, though it was uninjured. Therefore, they knew the slaughter-bent weapon had been charmed, and no woman could remove such enchantment, nor could the wise men, for they were unblooded. In the days that followed, the enchantment caused demons to enter through the wound and take up their abode, so Herthew was tormented, and his body wracked before subsiding into the quietness, which precedes death. The demons had abused Gwineva, called her foul names and cried out in loud voices against people, so that they should abandon their king.

¹⁶ The place where Herthew lay was near the lakeside and in the lake was an island called Inskris, meaning Isle of the Dead, where those about to die were taken, as well as the dead, before being consigned to the waters. For the people believed that those given into the lake went straight into awareness in the Otherworld, while anyone buried on land was only half aware upon arrival and remained half awake and half asleep for many years. So, those loyal to Herthew carried him down to the boats and accompanied him and Gwineva to the Isle, and they were not molested, for none interfered with those mourning the dead. On the isle were priests

and nine holy maidens, who attended to the rites while other women ministered to the newly dead, but Herthew was not dead, though halfway across the threshold.

¹⁷ When Herthew arrived, he was placed in the hospice house, where Gwineva attended to him. Gwidon opened Herthew's skull where it had been cleft and let out the demon which had taken up habitation there, and he brewed powerful potions which removed the enchantment. When, after many days, he departed, Herthew was no longer at the door of death, though weak and in many ways like a baby.

¹⁸ While Herthew lay so sorely stricken, the kin folk of Idalvar were disputing among themselves, and this led to fighting and battles. But none came near the isle to harm Herthew, because it was a sacred place and gave him sanctuary. When it came to the time of the folkfeast, there was a great battle at the gathering place, and Gwidon was slain. There came a day when Herthew, though still not whole, could move about, and then, he and Gwineva departed with those who remained with them. They were married before leaving their isle of sanctuary.

¹⁹ They fled to a place afar off where, as the years went by, Herthew became whole again and Gwineva gave birth to sons and daughters. It was a good place, fertile and well watered, and so they prospered. But there came a time of drought, when the waters dried up and their flocks died. So Herthew sent men to Krowkasis, and these came back saying that there, too, the land was stricken and the people distressed. He also sent others to the West, and they returned, saying that there, the land was not stricken, but the people would not accept them except with spears.

²⁰ Herthew then sent men back to Krowkasis to tell the people there of the plenty, which lay to the West, and they came back with a warband led by Ithilis, and many people followed. Herthew could no longer bear weapons, and his sons were as yet young and unblooded. Therefore, he gave his two sons, who were of sufficient age, into the keeping of Ithilis, so they might learn the art of war, and they followed him loyally, becoming men of valour in the conflict, which ensued. Many people left Krowkasis and settled in the land lying to the West, and Herthew and Gwineva also settled there.

²¹ Time passed, and Herthew became renowned for his wisdom, and Ithilis king of Arania honoured him with lands and servants. Herthew's two sons, who had followed the king and were twins, married the king's two eldest daughters who were also twins. This caused problems, for the king, though having three wives, was sonless; therefore, the twin sons of Herthew became his heirs. The king was perplexed, for the two men could not rule together, and both were of equal standing in his eyes. Yet, it was the king's duty to nominate his heir and proclaim him to the people so there should be no division after his death. Therefore, Ithilis consulted Herthew as to how the judgement should be made, and Herthew said, "Let fate decree who shall be king."

²² In Arania, the people gathered four times a year for the folkfeasts. At such times, it was customary for new laws to be proclaimed, judgements given and all contentious issues settled. So before the next folkfeast, Herthew prepared a manmade stone from sand, clay and other things, and while it was still soft he set the hilt of his great sword, Dislana the Bitterbiter, into it, and when the stone was hardened Dislana was fast. The sword-implanted stone was then set down near the place where the king gave judgement. Around it was drawn a wide circle bisected across.

²³ On the day when the people were first assembled to hear his words, Ithilis told them of his perplexity over the problem concerning the twin sons of Herthew and his daughters, he said, "So the people are not divided and the kingdom rent by strife, it is well this matter be settled now. Therefore, I am setting a fair test involving no men other than these two, whom I hold equally dear. Whichsoever of them shall remove their father's great weapon from this stone, so he frees it and grasps the hilt, shall become my lawful heir, with the other being to him as a younger brother. They will each try in turn during the duration of the fall of a feather, the first trier being he who casts his bracelet over the blade. Then, each of Herthew's sons was placed in a spot where the bisecting line joined the circle, so they stood opposite each other, and each had three bracelets. They threw until one encircled the blade with his bracelet.

²⁴ Then, this one tried to withdraw the weapon with his hand, but could not, because of the sharpness. The other tried by placing his two palms on each side of the blade, then pressing them together while lifting, but he could not move it either. The first one tried again, copying what had

just been done more powerfully, so the stone almost lifted off the ground, but the sword did not leave the stone. Then, the other approached the stone, but this time he put his hands under the edges of the stone, so he could lift it in his arms, and he dashed it down over a rock which was nearby, so it broke asunder. He then picked Dislana up by the hilt and brandished it over his head. The people acclaimed him while his brother grasped his arms in congratulations. Thus, by wisdom was the problem overcome.