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Magick in Action

by Margaret Bruce.

As I have stressed so often, the test of true Magick is that it should culminate in solid material reality. This seldom bothers the kind of occultist who uses esoteric phantasy as an escape from a dull environment and his own inadequacy. Assuming however that one is a sane, logical, fun-loving human creature, how does one nip smartly over the Abyss into the realm of Magick? Just as important; how does one return to reality?

The classical Grimoires are reasonably explicit. They explain the need for a period of preparation by meditation, abstinence and prayer before beginning the Rituals and Invocations. However they are limited by the stilted and often mistranslated language in which they are written and by the primitive conditions of their particular era. Modern magicians make use of modern facilities in this year of Space probes and Computers. Their Magick calls for fast cars and a world-wide telecommunications system as well as for the symbols of primitive racial memories. In order to demonstrate this technique I'll show you how a really practical magician might go about acquiring - let us say - a really impressive Night Club.

His first practical step is to acquire all the reading matter he can about Night Clubs. He never misses an opportunity to visit Clubs similar to the type he visualises owning. While other guests are enjoying the Cabaret, he is studying, analysing and estimating costs, takings and profits. He chats with the staff. Gets on good terms with the management. He never tells anyone of his ambition. This is very important. However much he may yearn and pray and study he must never disclose his final aim. Deprived of every means of expression, his dream can then find only a single outlet - fulfilment!

All the time he continues to learn and absorb atmosphere. He collects Night Club beer mats, programmes, and Menus, together with books on Gambling Laws, Catering and Entertainment which he reads and re-reads until he can discourse like an expert on any aspect of Catering, Entertaining and Management. For a period of at least three months, he lives, breathes and dreams NIGHT CLUB. Whilst keeping his ultimate ambition absolutely secret, he will get a part-time job as bartender, waiter or even dishwasher. (Humility and the ability to do menial tasks with cheerful dignity is a Magickal asset that neither charlatans nor self-deluded dabblers possess.) All this is in preparation for the Magnum Opus. As I have mentioned in previous articles; the realm of Magick is one where the only language is symbols, emotions and thought. The magician must therefore get the feel of the emotions and ideas he is about to convey to the denizens of the Primordial realms of consciousness.

During this period of preparation, the magician has cut out every possible distraction. He has spent no money that was not directly aimed at bringing his dream to fruition. He has avoided useless and frivolous contacts and has cultivated the type of acquaintance he is attempting to emulate. Like the hero-worshipping film-fan he will deliberately imitate their mannerisms, dress and speech. Unlike the

film-goer, he knows what he is doing and intends this deliberate piece of play-acting as a message to the primordial realms in the only language that is current amongst pre-human concepts. His pursuit of his aim is single-minded and ruthless. His ruthlessness is with his own weakness. His glass of "whisky" as he watches a Cabaret will be nothing stronger than dry ginger, his bantering small-talk with the waitress or hat-check girl will have the sole purpose of adding to his detailed knowledge of staff attitudes to management and clients. His aim is to own the plushiest Night Club in town. Everything else; sex, gambling, relaxation, the occasional alcoholic drink; has ceased to exist.

During this three month period of preparation which, if the man is a real magician, he will have started in the early Spring; he has arranged his Temple or "place of working", ready for his next three months of intensive abstinence and concentration. This is the real "Magickal Retirement" when he cuts himself off from all non-essential human contact, including radio, television and newspapers. He trains like an athlete and limits his diet to a meagre fare of fruit juices and non-animal foods. He rises before dawn and lights a candle on his altar to greet the Day. He prays devoutly as the candle burns. If he is an atheist he simply talks earnestly to the candle flame whose existence even an atheist cannot deny. He paints mind pictures of his desire and mixes them with the words he utters. If he finds this difficult he can draw plans, make plasticine models or paint pictures of things pertaining to his aim. He repeats the process at mid-day and at sunset. During the rest of the day he is reading, studying, and learning - perhaps to a taped background of night-club sounds. There are no idle moments or time for "meditation". There are the ritual tools and symbols to be made in readiness for the Great Invocation to which all this is but a lead-up. An important thing about the tools and symbols is that HE ALONE MUST MAKE THEM.

Here is a bit of common sense for those prepared to absorb it. Tools and Weapons (magickal or secular) have no innate power other than being an expression of the creative genius of their maker. Modern craftsmen buy tools. Old-time craftsmen often made their own special tools. The magician must always make his own tools because Magick, by its very nature, is a continuous and unbroken creative process that starts with nothing but an abstract idea and finishes with a solid material result. Purchasing ready made or second-hand magickal instruments leaves great gaps in the creative process begun by the individual buying them. These gaps are reflected in any final results he may obtain and are the equivalent of trying to lose weight by paying somebody else to diet.

The strict discipline and the limited hours of sleep combined with a low calory diet will, within a short space of time, bring the mind of the operator to a delicately balanced position on the edge of consciousness. He will begin to experience hallucinations and visions. Dreams will become superimposed upon reality. Because of the intensive preparatory period which excluded all other interests, the dreams and hallucinations will have a Night Club atmosphere and content intermingled with grotesque phantasies. This is where a magickal diary is so important. Emotions, experiences, names, numbers and messages arising out of these phenomena are carefully recorded.

The old Grimoires inform us that, to know the name or number of a "demon" or "Spirit" is to be able to command it. The magician is going to encounter a whole host of "demons" of all aspects during his retirement. His job is to see through their disguises, identify their true nature and name them. Once identified, each will depart to make way for another. That these entities, fair or foul, are aspects of his own personality is cold comfort to one whose mind is hovering between the worlds and to whom each fresh encounter is a soul-shattering experience.

When, in the early Autumn, the time arrives for the Grand Invocation, this is preceded by a complete three day fast apart from pure water. This brings the consciousness well over the boundaries of the primordial awareness. The invocation itself consists of cataloguing all the "demons" encountered to date and, having thus subjugated them, dismissing all but those suited to the task in hand. These are given their orders by means of words, signs and gestures and dismissed. All that remains is for the operator to thank whichever Deity he believes in, for a safe return from the Abyss and then, very cautiously, to return to a normal life. If he has done everything correctly he will just be in time to take over his brand new Night Club - just like that.

The important thing is that he avoids becoming befogged in a Walter Mitty world of daydreams. At no time does he indulge in the sedentary luxury of "meditation". He is not the piano but the player. Every move, even his retirement, has been a positive and deliberate action. His consciousness has been expanded and his creative imagination stimulated beyond the capacity of ordinary men. Above all, he has returned from a state of virtual insanity, unscathed and with his sense of reality unimpaired. He went into retirement a nobody and has emerged a somebody.

Because there are so many approaches to Magick I have not filled in the obvious blanks such as the appropriate symbols and colours to use. The Qabalist would possibly approach Chesed and Netzach through the four Worlds from Asiah up to Atziloth. The Chaldean Magician would make use of planetary correspondences and furnish the Temple with the combined Blue and Green draperies of Jupiter and Venus. Others might be certain that Sagun and Zebul were the correct Heavens to explore in search of a really swinging Night Club. All these are the details that fascinate the "something for nothing" dabbler who hopes that a Word of Power and some fancy robes will fulfil his desires. The magician who has really tried to fulfil his True Will through intensive self discipline and rigorous retirement knows that the trimmings count for very little and that the "demons" devour "protective symbols" and "words of Power".

His secret of success lies in his ability to distinguish mirage from reality. His power lies in his ability to discard the shackles of habit and conditioned reflexes and, having decided his aim in life, pursuing it to the exclusion of all other considerations. Here is the Truth that lies behind the misused and discredited aphorism "DO WHAT THOU WILT SHALL BE THE WHOLE OF THE LAW!"

The End.