

MAN AND WOMAN

(if you are so inclined!)

A LETTER ON MARRIAGE

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

The following letter was written on April 6, 1924 e.v. to Frater A.I., Eddie Saayman, who was the "Eddie" referred to in Crowley's commentary to LXV iv 61, and not Frater O.P.V., who was Norman Mudd. It is an extremely important letter in that it gives Crowley's initiated interpretation of marriage. Saayman had (as usual with shallow students) married without consulting his Superior beforehand. The letter was dictated to Alostrael, Leah Hirsig, the (then) Scarlet Woman.

You don't say whether it was murder or suicide--but then, of course you don't know, you poor bleeder! Alostrael says it is better that you should go through the worst that can happen. I say that it will make you happy to remember the happy days when you had nothing worse than the clap to think about. That, I think, is about the limit of congratulation...

He was being facetious but kind. Saayman had blundered badly, and he was trying to save the pieces.

...The business before the meeting is to pick up the pieces. The "Book of the Law" is the one help available: luckily, it is adequate. Cf. I 41-42. The important point is never to expect anything sexually...

Most men marry, as most women, in search of emotional security that they should find primarily in their own selves. Crowley simply meant that Saayman must not expect, because he was married, that his wife would automatically be sexually attracted to him at all times, or even that she had a duty to be so; or, which is equally important, that Saayman had a "duty" to keep his wife sexually satisfied and emotionally secure. Marriage is a partnership like any other, and should be spontaneous and naturally profitable to both; anything forced stunts psychic growth. This is true in normal everyday life; much more, then, in the life of a would-be Initiate. That the advice was directed primarily to Saayman is immaterial; it will be noticed that the woman he married is considered in the same breath. After all, they chose to live together. They would either have to achieve their life in common on an Initiatic level, or they would fail worse than most marriages fail; for their responsibility was greater than normal. In this context, it should be observed that the woman was less responsible in the mixup than Saayman, unless she was totally unscrupulous when she married him, in which case she was his vampire. But nobody is vampirized against his or her will. This is what is meant by the tradition that a vampire cannot enter your house--meaning, your magickal circle--meaning, your aura--unless it is invited, either by yourself, or by some badly-

disciplined faculty of yours. And if any faculty of yours is badly-disciplined to that point, whose fault is it? Always remember this! Consider your Oath; specially, specially, consider, if you advanced that far, the Oath of the Neophyte!

...Never make "advances", or allow them: the act must be a spontaneous insanity on both sides...

On BOTH sides, mind you. As to "spontaneous insanity", cf. "Love", "Chastity", "Energy", and "Silence" in "Little Essays Toward Truth"; and "Liber Artemis Iota" elsewhere in this Equinox Volume.

...The best aid is careful technical training in the act. Experts can prolong the honeymoon for months by knowing how to get the last ounce of pleasure...

This, however, totally contradicts what he said above about not making advances or allowing them. Why "prolong" the honeymoon? Why have a honeymoon at all? The whole point of "honeymoons" is that they *end*. In that case, why get married? For one month's so-called pleasure? (Remember, a "moon" meant a lunar month.) Ridiculous, and more than ridiculous; debauched. But Crowley is, of course, speaking from the point of view of his Probationer, and keeping things at a very low level--say, the level of the Outer Circle of the O.T.O., or the level of the average would-be civilized man or woman.

...; how to avoid awkwardness and distaste at the same time; and aversion after the performance. At the best, you can't expect to enjoy it more than a very short time...

As a rule. See our "Field Theory of Sex".

... so, prepare from the start to slide imperceptibly into a sex-free friendship. Train yourself and her to pick up new partners before the enthusiasm has turned into nagging...

This does not mean to try to freshen up attraction for each other by the introduction of "novelties" in the act: it means that if they encourage each other to seek other sexual partners while they are still mentally attracted, they will train themselves into a true friendship towards each other, and a true consideration for each other's feelings, desires, opinions and *True Will*. If they wait until they no longer feel attracted to each other before they seek new partners, their life in common may turn to mutual disgust and scorn, carefully disguised as mutual politeness (in the least bad of cases). This encouragement of each other in new partners, naturally, will not arise while the mutual attraction is still spontaneously strong; for during that phase, as anybody knows, you have no eyes but for each other--as a rule. *All* this is rules; not laws; except, perhaps, that it should eventually produce some needed changes in civil law.

... and see to it that both pairs of eyes are opened, so that you will neither of you do such a foolish thing again...

That is, won't get a divorce and get married again, thinking that it just "didn't work out the first time". The reason why marriages often seem to work better the second time around is that the people have more experience from the first relationship, and show more tolerance and understanding towards each other. It is not that the second marriage is any better than the first; it is just that *you* are better people the second time around. But why go through it more than once, unless it is a matter of the True Will? So-called "love" is seldom *under will*, as it should be; and sexual pleasure for its own sake is, from the Initiatic point of view, animalism and nothing else. Cf. LXV iii 3-20, and the commentaries thereon.

... and be able to amuse yourselves outside without loss of mutual loyalty , or getting the delusion that going off with another partner leads to happiness. Given these attainments, you may be able to get on quite awhile on the theory that it is her True Will to devote herself body and soul to do yours...

For otherwise, at least until Saayman reached Mastership, she would act as a vampire. People often forget--to my despair, at least--that Initiatic training is much more demanding on a marriage partner than any other form of life in common; indeed, so demanding that any man who has any true consideration, which is to say any true love, for a woman will punctiliously refrain from making of her the total slave that she will become (or of himself the total slave that he will become if she is unwilling to become a total slave) if he marries her before his occult training is complete. The women whose True Will is to do yours, even for a time, are so rare that, unless she makes it absolutely clear that she is getting into the relationship with both eyes open, you should firmly avoid entering any kind of commitment that entails life in common--or even too regular dating.

It should be clearly understood that the problem is just as equally acute in cases where the *woman*, rather than the man, is aspiring to Initiation. The sex is immaterial; specially since it is part of the Initiatic training, if you are a man, to develop your feminine qualities; and if you are a woman, to develop your male ones. The subject is beyond the scope of these notes; indeed, this whole EQUINOX number was planned to treat of it in as many of its aspects as it is possible at the present time.

Remember that the birth of a child inevitably destroys married love as such; it creates a divided interest...

The obvious corollary being, until you have reached Mastership, even if you have married a woman who is totally dedicated to your True Will, DO NOT have children. If you are a woman, naturally it should be evident to you that child-bearing will, to say the least, delay your training for several years.

These reservations entail, manifestly, the premise that you, whether man or woman, are not just an irresponsible slob worse by far than a sow or a pig. For such slob--who frequently manage to pass for human beings--have children without benefit of the True

Will, and then proceed to make of their children slobes just like themselves. Sometimes they have enough moral courage to put the child up for adoption; but if so, why have a child in the first place? In short, for the Initiate, marriage and child-bearing are so extremely serious responsibilities that he--or she--prudently avoids them until he--or she--can cope with them. There are enough featherless bipeds walking the earth already--and making a mess of it. Indeed, the overabundance of "low men" is the most serious problem of our times.

These remarks apply to men of intelligence an imagination and ambition; of course, the bourgeois type simply becomes brutalized by marriage, and sinks into a sodden state of vegetative rumination plus spasms of savage animal rancour. Of course, you are young and strong and you may pull through; but you have wantonly put a burden on your back and hers...

Please notice again the emphasis on the fact that the burden is mutual. We must also repeat that the responsibility, if it was not the woman's True Will to serve Saayman during his apprenticeship, was much more Saayman's than hers.

...which a steady thousand pounds a year from investments would not go far to ease...

For this amount would not be sufficient to buy them the necessary independence and leisure for Saayman to do his Work and the woman to be comfortably supported while he did it; so, to say the least, either he would have to take a job to support her (and have no time for Initiatic training, and no energy for the same, unless he were an Overman--but he obviously wasn't), or she would have to take a job to support them.

Please notice that a thousand pounds a year was then a very comfortable sum indeed--the equivalent, perhaps, of twenty thousand dollars a year nowadays.

The one course indicated above all is for you both to act as if this calamity had not befallen you.

This is calling a spade a spade, indeed.

Preserve your spiritual integrity, both of you; don't waver in your aspirations...

Meaning, in theory, Saayman's aspiration to be an Initiate and the woman's aspiration to help him become one; for unless these were their aspirations, he was an ass, and she a fool or a knave. Combinations and permutations of both have been known to occur.

...Don't look toward each other--or you'll see pretty ghastly sights! Move parallel...

For parallels meet in the Infinite, which is Nuit. Cf. LXV iii 53-54, and the commentaries thereon.

...; with infinite tact, and utter self-abnegation on her part...

Condition "sine qua non". Remember once more that the same would apply if the woman were a Probationer, and Saayman her recently-acquired husband.

...(at first; it will come natural later, and fulfil her nature) you may be able to avoid too rapid a divergence of the paths. Above all, keep a sharp look-out for signs of cooling passion; the first time that you quarrel two days running, take the bull by the horns and get a divorce while you are still not too bad friends. Go on living together after the divorce, if you feel like it, and drift quietly apart. Enough for the present!

Here ends the letter. It should be unnecessary to add that Saayman was a fool and the woman a knave; they drifted quietly apart, indeed, but together--and from the Great Work. The story had been the same frequently before, and has been the same often since.

Since the problem is so frequent, so simple to the Initiate, and so difficult to the profane, we have thought it possibly useful to include further notes from the same Diary period, referring to Magickal Chastity as applied to the Order of Thelemites:

***Chastity:* All sexual acts are lawful. But two conditions must be strictly observed...**

This means that the first statement, that all sexual acts are lawful, is not true as it stands. But what Crowley actually meant was that ANY type of sexual act is lawful, provided the following conditions be STRICTLY observed:

1(a). "Always unto me" (i.e., to Nuit). This means: The act must be an utterly Magickal Act. (Self-indulgence is barred. Physiological necessity is pleadable, as being in accord with the Will-to-Live and to work as best may be. See *b*.)

This means that self-indulgence, be it under the form of masturbation or any other, is forbidden to the Initiate. Physiological necessity = when the physical impulse becomes so irresistible that a health problem is involved. This, by the way, seldom happens; very few people are that intensely sexual, specially after adolescence, although they are always--particularly the "macho" men--willing to fool others and themselves.

1(b) "as ye will", etc. The act must be one of *love under will*, not undertaken unless the proper conditions exist--i.e., the natural enthusiastic attraction combined with the technical Magickal purpose. (This is evidently an Ideal of Perfection, rarely to be so attained. There will nearly always be found some need to compromise, that is, there will be an element of Restriction somewhere...

Cf. the 30th Hexagram of the "Yi Jing", and Crowley's and our commentaries thereon.

...Even the "physiological need" above mentioned partakes of the nature of a restriction of pure Will, caused by the body. And this--paradoxically enough!--although the "Enthusiastic Energy" is wholly in harmony with the other conditions. No conditioned Act can be wholly free; at the best, it relieves the existing stress to the maximum. It is essentially, therefore, a destructive act...

For being conditioned, therefore not free. This does not mean that a free act cannot be an act of destruction, it simply means that conditioned acts are, essentially, reactions, and pertain to catabolism. No idea of "morality" or "sin" is involved.

... It destroys the existing partial energies--Two reverting to Zero--yet, it also creates the "child"--Two combining to form the twins V H'.)

2. The second condition is a practical point of policy. Whatever the act, it must not be allowed to lead to any consequence soever save that designed by 1(a) and 1(b). "Thou hast no right but to do thy will." Marriage, e.g., must have nothing to do with the matter...

That is, the fact that the people involved have a permit (bought from some government) or a blessing (bought from some church) to copulate, or do not have it, is totally irrelevant to the Magickal conditions. They may have a thousand permits, and the blessings of a thousand churches, and still the act be unlawful from an Initiatic point of view. The planes *cannot* be mixed!

... Nor must personal affection and the like be permitted to cause, or to spring from, the act.

(The above really follows the clause "strictly Magickal". The point is to avoid impurity in any form.)

Often, a spontaneous sexual act is followed by a sense of mutual obligation to show "affection" or "fidelity" to each other. Such tendencies are fruit of a thousand years of degradation of the sex-instinct on the part of sexual perverts masquerading as priests. Affection and fidelity have nothing necessarily to do with Magickal Chastity. My dog may be faithful to me, and I have affection for it; this does not mean either that we must copulate, or that we should get married.

(The above, hopefully, will not be interpreted to mean that I am calling women dogs, or even bitches. I repeat, hopefully; for, as the great Fernando Pessoa once remarked, the stupidity of mankind is great; and this necessarily includes our better half.)

Love built up from sex-attraction through affection only to discover too late a fundamental spiritual incompatibility means disaster, the Gods blasphemed taking Their vengeance by destroying the affection...

The Gods blasphemed are the Stars involved in the situation. Ultimately, the entire Cosmos is involved!

... The unhappy ones try to mend this by return to excessive sexual stimulus, and find increased tension in the daytime, and ultimately disgust all round. The disaster is irreparable. *Vice versa*, a real spiritual marriage, probably unconscious, awakes from above a true affection, unshakable by any trials; and from this arises the desire to express the true Unity by destroying the sexual duality. They therefore begin to copulate with genuine ardour, not sensual, although arousing the senses to the highest rapture; and even should this enthusiasm wear out, Anteros never appears, but the past is seen to have broadened the base and deepened the foundation of the romantic and poetic love. But it is always fatal for the attraction to be towards each other, save only with the object of destroying the strain between the male and female forms of bodily expression...

Serious students are advised to meditate deeply on the above two lines.

...The union must not be between two opposing points; the two forces must be joined throughout their whole lengths, with compatible velocities, and a constant convergence to a spiritual norm beyond the scope of either's conscious will. I instance a pair of remote galaxies, in opposite directions from the earth, yet forming part of a single system of physical motion. In such a case, every consciousness of each other is a "recognition", with ever-increasing certainty that the proper movement of each is such as to keep them eternally in touch, that they can never lose each other in the vastness of the Universe, yet never clash in mutual destruction. "Twin souls are we, to one star bound in heaven."

---Cf. LIBER ALEPH, Ch. 144.

No earthly circumstance can matter to such souls, who "no roseleaves ask to leaven the manna that the moon of Love provided". And they may be sure, moreover, that death itself can only destroy the illusion of their separateness in space, and confirm them in their real Unity of Going, the dynamic equation all independent of any material basis!

One further, and final, observation, is perhaps useful here: the average reader, wallowing in grossness, may complain: But I thought Crowley came to free my prick (or cunt, as the case may be) forever; and from what you just said, and from what this whole book implies, not only women should wear chastity belts henceforth, but men as well!!! Reassure yourself: You are perfectly free to go on being, in Fernando Pessoa's still other immortal phrase, postponed corpses who procreate. Indeed, you are freer to be that than before. The specialized advice in this book is meant only for those who aspire to be Initiates; and particularly for those who aspire to be Thelemites.

Love is the law, love under will.