

2/4/01 Sunday's Rock, Fergus's Druid Dreamstone
Closing time: 9:53 P.M., C.S.T.

In this book certain truths such as those about the properties of magnetism, its auras, different sorts of electricity, etc., have been mentioned, although modern science has not yet fully discovered them. The five sorts of electricity can be easily understood if one will direct his attention to the nerve properties, which are purely electrical in nature. Each of the five sensory nerves has its characteristic and unique function to perform. The optic nerve carries light and does not perform the functions of the auditory and other nerves; the auditory nerve in its turn, carries sound only, without performing the functions of any other nerves, and so on. Thus it is clear that there are five sorts of electricity, corresponding to the five properties of cosmic electricity.

So far as magnetic properties are concerned, the grasping power of the human intellect is at present so limited that it would be quite useless to attempt to make the matter understood by the general public. The intellect of man in Truta Yuga will comprehend the attributes of divine magnetism (the next Truta Yuga will start in A.D. 4099). There are indeed exceptional personages now living who, having overcome the influence of Time, can grasp today what ordinary people cannot grasp, but this book is not for those exalted ones, who require nothing of it.

Swami Sri Yukteswar
The Holy Science

A pertinent tale of General John J. Pershing's ill-fated punitive expedition across the Rio Grande to destroy the Mexican terrorist, Pancho Villa

The letters from the divine do not always spell out "martyrdom." Sometimes the design of heaven works exactly like our own joy. Don Jorges had traveled a long way from Yukatan and his little village of Yazuma, a long way from the vine-covered Castillo at Chich'en, where the shadow-serpent of the temple had spoken to him, and he had obeyed. On the first night of his arrival, the sky was brilliant, but he could smell in the wind a coming, brutal change. 'No matter,' he thought, 'I will be gone by then.' The time was almost at hand, and he, Don Jorges, an *h-men*, a "doer," would soon fulfill the dream so long ago promised in his visions, even as he apprenticed on this path. He was about to become the *helol*, the replacement, the sacrifice. Now, as he lay on his back on the stony ground, so far from his jungle homeland, listening to the gurgling of a little trickling spring in this otherwise arid place, he could scarcely grasp his good fortune. He watched the innumerable stars of the *Ek-way* pouring their brilliant milk across the night, thinking about how good it would be to fly into the highest branches of *xibalba be*, the sacred star-tree, and enter the place between worlds, the place of awe. As he watched the dark mouth of *Ek-way*, he saw that here, so much farther north, the *u hol Glorya* was raised up higher than it was in Yazuma. And he marveled that the glory hole of the lying-down sky could be raised-up, not only by the movement of time, but also by his own movement in space. He had come so far to be with his love, that even the Black Transformer had bowed to greet him.

Don Jorge was a serious man. All the people of Yazuma had seen it, even when he was a child. But they attributed his seriousness to his calling. Shamans see many things when they travel the white road to *xibalba*. They see the Gods of Death, and they must enter constantly into the six houses of torture: Razor House, Cold House, Jaguar House, the House of Fire and Bat House. Why should they smile at trivial things like those silly people who have no gifts of knowledge? But Don Jorge was smiling now. The army of the *Norte Federales* was stretched out on the plains before him, its thousands of camp fires pricking the darkness of the desert, like fiery maize kernels, each one feeding a mighty Lord of Time. Time meant everything to Don Jorge, and his own time was nearly at hand. He had carved the pipe from the lightning-tempered bough of the sacred ceiba and sanctified it by means of *pus*, cutting the flesh of his own penis and tongue with the obsidian blade and letting the *ch'ulel*, the "soul stuff," red with pain from its journey from the stars, drip over the hallowed wood. The pipe was in his pouch and almost ready. The mouthpiece was *Hanahpu*, the sacred twin, the stem, *Hanahpu's* blow gun, and the bowl, the *xibalba be* itself, with *Seven Macaw* at the crown, dying in its branches. The body of the pipe-bowl was the whole tree of heaven arising from the cracked carapace of the world-turtle, with all the glyphs of time wound round its branches. Don Jorge had been guided many times in his life by miraculous forces. He had healed the sick. He had impregnated the barren fields with maize. He had caused the fallow udders of the clouds to fill and spurt down rain. But even he, Don Jorge, was awed by the power of this object, lying there dormant now, asleep in his little pouch, wound in its white cotton thread — such a miracle of embodied knowledge, about to transform the white man's rootless world! How could he help but smile! Even the smoke, as its future possessor puffed it, would carry the message, the white-serpent-road ascending to signal the heavens.

But there was still one thing missing. And, to tell the truth, Don Jorge was a little concerned. He was a long way from home and *sapo grande* was a creature of water, not of the desert. How would he know to come? And could he travel, as Don Jorge had only perilously managed, so far into these heathen lands? For the pipe had still to be impregnated with the *ch'ulel* of the giant toad, or its magic would die, infertile. As he let his mind fall into the Milky Way, Don Jorge fretted about this, but looking at the three stones in the sky-turtle's carapace, what the gringos call Orion, he suddenly knew what he should do. It was now near dawn, and the *xibalba be* was beginning to lie down. Don Jorge sprang up, and hurriedly took the conjuring pebbles from his pouch. With nearby broken creosote and mesquite branches, he hastily built a little sky-tree altar, placed his pebbles — his "lights" — about it, and set out and lit the copal incense. Then he began to pray and chant, mouthing the weakly *whoa-whoa* sound of the toad in heat, and sprinkling the sacred objects with *pom* and virgin water. The dried tree-sap *pom* filled his nostrils with its fragrance and mixed with the redolence of the creosote and smoking copal. And just as the first lights on the horizon rose up to eat the brilliant stars of night, he heard it: *whoa-whoa*, it was *sapo grande*. He had come. Don Jorge awoke from his trance, and in the dawn's first light began gingerly hopping about in the desert bushes seeking the source of the sound. "Ah, there you are, my stout brother, but a little different than your kin in the rain forests, no?" For Don Jorge had found *Bufo alvarius*,

not *Bufo marinus*, and he had found a treasure. For the parotoid glands of *Bufo alvius* excreted an even more potent hallucinogen than those of his rainforest cousin. Don Jorge gently held his *nagual* and began milking the squat grayish-green body, extracting the venom onto a miniature stone *hawate* — the little four-footed offering plate he had brought for just this purpose. He began with the large kidney-shaped glands on either side of the toad's neck, working along the tympanum, carefully squeezing each tiny oval-shaped lobule, so that the *ch'ulel* oozed out onto the *hawate*. That done, Don Jorge then worked the secondary glands, the femorals, those on the hind legs between the toad's knees and thighs, and then the tibeals, those running between the knee and ankle. Finally, he milked the glands on the forearms. When he saw how much of the viscous milky-white *ch'ulel* he had collected, Don Jorge was smiling again, astonished at the bounty of *sapo grande*.

By the time Don Jorge had finished and released the toad near the spring, the sun had already climbed high enough in the sky to have doused the most stubborn of stars. It was day, and although it was winter, the sun was warm, and the venom dried quickly on the stone plate. He watched the movements of the American army stretched out on the flats before him. They were, he knew, preparing for Christmas. They had dug some enormous pits and were filling them with wood, and they had brought three steers that he guessed they were going to slaughter. But they knew so little about sacrifice, he wondered why the food that they extorted from their brothers did not poison them. They were greedy people, and as Christmas approached, he knew that it was the time foretold, and he could proffer his magical gift and have it received. Thanks be to Christos! All morning the sky was a blue sheet with only the sun cruising through it, hot and white and high. Yet the wind told, just at the edge of things, a different tale, and by late afternoon, as the black-whites slaughtered and butchered the steers — how terrible their lowing! — the ice-crystals of a few long mares' tails were spotting the turquoise and alkali-dust canopy. As it grew dark, the winds rose and a dry cold front blew in. On his last night, Don Jorge settled into the pit he had gouged in the rocky earth, and under a woven wooden roof of creosote and mesquite limbs, he began to cure his pipe.

Having dug the pit just large enough to accommodate his body, Don Jorge had lit a punk of copal and as the winds began to sing a moaning song through the staves of his branch-blanket, he loaded his pipe with a prepared sliver of *ch'ulel*, and with one deep, practiced breath drew the vapor of the indole-based alkaloid into thousands of expectant alveoli. The effect was immediate and profound. In an instant Don Jorge was journeying — like a sleek fish undulating its way swiftly down through the turquoise, inky and then brilliantly lit layers of the sea. It was like climbing the Castillo at Chich'en, but in reverse, going down and down into the *ol*, the very heart of the waters. Legions of tiny metallic voices sped him on his way to that great crystal carapace, which he had visited so many times before on his shamanic wanderings. They guided him as always to that tiny hole in its dome, too small for even a single water molecule to enter, but not too small for his now needle-thin body to slip through. He felt a sexual rush, as if he were entering the vagina of a woman moaning in ecstasy, and in a moment, he was soaked by the gush of a star-fountain, bathed in a great diamond light. From the core of this light, the voice of his *nagual* flooded him with joy. Francisco! It would not be long now, he

knew, before his alienation would be ended, and the body shivering in the hole in sandy earth would be forever transformed. Don Jorges saw the eyes of his benefactor — and his own eyes filled with tears. How beautiful to find himself, here, at the very nadir of all pain and striving, effortlessly alive, and saturated by the effluent of love! He had long since been cured of any personal yearning. His training in suffering had years ago seen to that. But here, at the portal to his apotheosis, he found the old stain of desire resurrecting itself, desire for these eyes that now bathed him in this sub-aqueous, super-celestial light. And in that instant, the terrestrial air filled his lungs again, and he was back in the pit, earthly clay in clay, the cold wind of his last night clawing fiercely at his make-shift covering.

This night, Christmas Eve, Don Jorges made six journeys to the center, and with each one, he burned away a little more of the final vestiges of his desire, so that on the sixth, and last sojourn, he and his *nagual* were indivisibly one, an object at the very center of the galaxy that had drawn in so much of fire's impoverished love that it collapsed from the weight of its own gravitational forces. By dawn, his incarnational escape-velocity was equal to the very speed of light, and the pipe, fit now for its mission as a fuse to ignite the last of history, was ready and fully cured.

A little light banter among the troops

Although it was just past dawn, sometimes Corporal, sometimes even Sergeant, but currently Private Frank Lanckton, the General's long-time personal aide, was squatted down in the old latrine, behind the supply truck graveyard, taking a shit and a swig. Christmas Day or no, it had already been a rough morning, with the General faunching around, fit to chomp the heads off nails, let alone Privates, still fuming about those damned misprinted cards. Lanckton liked the old latrine, even though pranksters, wind and rain had leveled the makeshift adobe walls, and you had to take a trenching tool to scrape off the sifted sands and uncover the mercifully desiccated remains of coprolithic defecations. 'Funny,' he thought, 'a man can feel shamed to the quick for a fly-speck on his hat during inspection, but be perfectly content to take a dump on an open plain with God and an entire Corp of the United States Army looking on.' No one, however, was looking on now. Lanckton liked that. It was a luxury seldom afforded him. It was quiet here, and a man could drink and think. And most of all, he could escape the General's belligerent tongue and eye. What Lanckton was thinking now was how the special barbecued steers were going to taste, and if the camp whorehouse would be open for the holiday. The Private, like most of the womanless men in camp, was a person whose awareness rotated around the planet of a few basic instincts, and crapping and drinking made him hungry and horny. Meat was definitely on his mind as he checked his own for any unwarranted discharges. He was just fastening his braces, and slipping his flask back into the specially sewn inner pocket of his fatigues, when Phoomf! he heard the report. As he ran out from behind the junked Jefferys, he saw Corporal Proffit, his gun belt strapped about his gut, but his pants down around his ankles, and his member half-swollen with the excitement of having just fired.

“Hey Corporal, why discharge the boomer?”

Corporal Proffit twirled his heavy .45 Colt revolver clumsily round his trigger finger, Annie Oakley style, blew the smoked from its barrel and stuffed the big black banger back in its scarred leather holster. “Done, kilt me a varmint.”

“Rattler?”

“No, but same difference. Have a look see, over by the Quad, whilst I hoist up my drawers.”

Lanckton crouched to a body lying face down by one of the cannibalized, wheelless supply trucks. “Villista?”

“Don’t reckon so, looks like an injun or a mis-see-toe to me. Kinda lean, even for Mess-a-can. Clean shot, though, don’t you think?”

The Private rose from the body and stared back at the Corporal with a look of mixed disgust and admiration. The big slug had ripped through the first couple of cervical vertebrae just at the base of the occipital bone, slicing the ligaments on its disastrous course, and blossoming out the front of the larynx so that the intruder was nearly decapitated. “Jesus Christ, Luke, ya’ nearly blowed his head clean off!”

“Private, I’ll thank you not take the Lord’s name in vain on the day of his birth.”

Both men laughed. Then Proffit said, by way of further explanation, “I was out takin’ a dump in the mesquite bushes over yonder when I spied him nosin’ around this here ol’ Jeffery’s carcass. Couldn’t think whether to grab my dick or my gun. But I got a good shot off, and dropped him.”

“Georgie Patton couldn’t ‘ave done it better.”

“Just like shootin’ the eye out of scorpion at a full gallop. Guess all that damned target practice ordered by the ol’ man finally paid off.”

“You gonna report it?”

“Whata you think?” Both men laughed again. “I reckon we just dump him in the old latrine with the other crap.”

“I think he’s an injun, for sure, but not from around here.”

“When did you get to be such a scholar?”

“When my Mother raised me with her Mother’s milk, asshole. Look at this here pouch. That’s monkey skin, like I saw in the Philippines, and they ain’t no monkeys in this here desert.”

“Well, he done come a long way to get hisself kilt for thievin’ corncobs of horse forage. What’s in the bag?”

“Some rocks. A little plate with legs on it. And some other kinda little rocks, smells like incense. Trash.”

“What’s he got there in his hand? A knife?”

Lanckton pried the hand open and took away an irregularly shaped object wound in white cotton thread.

“Naw, looks like some kinda packin’.” The Private unwound the thread. “Some sort of cer-e-MON-ial object. A pipe, I reckon. Just the kind of thing the ol’ man prizes for one of his souvenirs.”

“Give it to me then. He was bare-butt naked comin’ out of the shower hut the other day and I didn’t salute him. He like to bit my head off.”

“Which one?” Both men laughed again, and continued their banter as they lugged the guts back to the abandoned latrine pit. “I heard in Cuba he damned near got his own and a general’s heads blowed off, standin’ horse-ass deep in a river and salutin’ while being splashed by shell fire.”

“That’s like him. He’s a stickler for protocol. If you give it to ‘em, maybe you’ll shuck one of your many demerits.”

“And maybe I’ll just get another one for jackin’ your flappin’ jaw.”

“Hey, Luke, what do you suppose this guy was doing out here all alone so far from the jungles?”

“Who cares? You know what Sheridan said about injuns.” They both laughed again, because they both knew. It took them a few minutes of work with their trenching tools to uncover enough of the pit to get to the ooze. They were both silent as they worked, the cold wind sucking the sweat off their faces as soon as it formed, and picking at their eyes with flying sandgrains.

They heaved the body into the pit, and Corporal Proffit said, as he pushed it down in the muck with a mesquite stick, “Well, this one must be a good’injun, cause he sure as Sam Hill is a dead one. One stinker of a way to start Christmas day.” They both covered their faces with their kerchiefs and trudged briskly back to the makeshift canvass-topped adobe huts, which constituted Pershing’s camp at Colonia Dublán. Then Lanckton said:

“I’ll be glad when Wilson orders us out of this god-awful country. As far as I’m concerned, Villa can live forever and fuck a new Rosita every day of his life!

From the camp, the two heard a chorus of four-hundred troopers, who had been practicing for weeks, burst into the holiday strains of “Joy to the World,” while the icy wind swept grit from the barren plain and tore their collected voices into tatters. But only Don Jorge, face-down in the pit, the bacteria, sisters to the stars, already converting his lifeless flesh to light, could feel the steep crescendo of that bliss.

The General Receives New Orders

For the Commander of the Punitive Expedition, the soldiers’ singing could not assuage the disappointment burning in his bowels, nor could their festive melodies placate the thunder in his heart beating out the black spondees of martial ambition. For he whose disciplined mount’s high stepping hoofs had shattered the frozen bodies of grandmothers and children at Wounded Knee, whose Springfield Repeaters’ bullets pierced the lean breasts of Cubans at San Juan and whose fires scorched the *cottas* and the bodies of Moros in tropical Mindanao was not to be appeased by these pacific returns on the day. He was a man of war, a soldier, and on this day, the day of one who came not to bring peace, but a sword, he felt his anger snarling with the wind’s. As the canvas roof of his adobe headquarters bunched and billowed at the edge of the storm, the General wondered how he might make the Hearst-maddened journalists embedded in his army’s coils twist words for the news to set his failure right. He would have to retreat, he knew. But he would have to retreat as an army advances, banners banging the regimental staffs in contrary winds, with an entourage of refugees trailing weakly at its dusty behind in a gaseous wake of death. He had built the bronze of his career by eviscerating the pesky displaced indigenes who are always nipping at the fetlocks of the beast of empire, and Villa, bellowing *Meurtes Americanos*, had survived bullets, gangrene and double-betrays to leave manifestos denouncing the “abhorred Yankee” in the smoldering embers of villages and rancheros. The Centaur still roamed, still flaunted the corroding bronze effigy of official history, still drowned out the caws of buzzards as he shouted “Mueran los gringos!” and still practiced his filthy lusts on innumerable Mexicali roses. The General was steaming: ‘May God damn his debauched, perfidious soul!’ But Black Jack knew enough to know when he was snookered. And with his long eye for history, he knew that the official apologists would mimic that the expedition was an heroic success and that the troops marched out of enemy territory “with pride.” Hearst’s lackeys would crow that Villa had been defeated and the Villistas scattered, and that only misfits in the higher echelons and milquetoast political restrictions had kept the force from running the beast to ground. But Pershing was no fool, and he knew, too, that some jackanapes was sure to call it “a wild goose chase,” or a “prolonged and furious fumble” with ultimate failure. Christmas or no, this day for Pershing, and every day that he remained in this hellhole of a county, was soured. Then, too, petty annoyances salted the wounds of bigger ones. Major General John J. Pershing turned his Tartarean-dark mood towards Black, Starr and Frost, proprietors, Fifth Avenue, New York. His order of Christmas cards was placed back in November, with a specified delivery date of December 15th. But when the style A cards of “spinning wheel and fireplace” arrived, they had misprinted his rank and downgraded him to a lowly *brigadier*. Even the Rush Rush re-order was delayed when the cantankerous wind kept the unreliable Curtiss R-2 on the ground, assuring that the cards would no doubt arrive well after Christmas was passed. God in heaven, it reminded him of the dressing downs for habitual tardiness that

had so stung him back at the Point, and he felt like a green cadet again, ready to piss his grey dress pants in mortification to be at the business end of a superior's sharp tongue. Jesus, he was a soldier, and he could and would follow that candy-ass Wilson's orders, but he would be horsewhipped if we could follow that man's vacillating mind. The wind was picking up, and he could hear the Negro cooks motha-fucking about the dust clouds enveloping their barbecuing beeves. Then Lanckton came in with some rigmarole about Corporal Proffit shooting a half-breed by one of the abandoned forage trucks, with no intention of filing a report. Damn, these incompetent malingerers, with no better sense than to waste good ammunition that had to be hauled by worthy mule-sweat across a couple hundred miles of alkali waste when a bayonet or a sword would have done the job for nothing. He would have long ago busted Corporal Proffit down to his shoe leather and tossed him in the brig, if the press had not made a hero of him for getting himself carelessly wounded in a fruitless engagement with the wrong Mexicans. Nice gift, though — the pipe. He was almost tempted to smoke it, since he had taken up the habit again after a decade-long hiatus. But the General had an inkling that the thing might serve a higher purpose at some unspecified later date. 'Curious carving,' he thought, 'wonder what it means?'

The canvas roof flopped and popped in protest as the icy, dusty wind kicked up to the fierce howl of one of this country's famous "blue northerns." The sudden dry gales had sent the trooper chorus and even the Negro cooks scurrying for cover. The half-charred steers were abandoned to their inevitable, inedible fate. Christmas day, and Black Jack Pershing, his eyes stung with the finegrained sand of frustration, sat down at his camp desk and inked a quill. He shook his head and gritted his teeth, and said to the man that his armies had looked for in vain: "Oh, Francisco, the lead that will pierce your satyr's evil heart has yet to be forged into a bullet, and will never be fired by me!" Then, he began to write his father-in-law a letter. He might have written his wife, Frankie, which he did every day, but somehow or other it was easier to confide his deeper feelings to a man, especially one who was a United States Senator, owned most of Wyoming and was well-aquainted with the underbelly of U.S. foreign policy. Francis Warren knew how to lie and keep a secret.

Dear Francis,

It begins to look as if we are to withdraw soon, having been outwitted or outbluffed at every turn of the proceedings. When the true history of this expedition is written, it will not be a very inspiring chapter for children or even adults to contemplate. Having dashed into Mexico with the intention of eating the Mexicans raw, we turn back at the very first repulse, and are now sneaking home under cover, like a whipped cur with his tail between his legs. I would not dare to write this to anybody but you . . .