

Chapter 51: The Grounded Ritualistic Magic

Using magic to settle an IOU?

Is he trying to curse his debtor to death or create counterfeit notes?

I might not have a solution to the problem, but I can finish you instead?

...

All sorts of thoughts appeared in Klein's mind as he looked at Old Neil oddly.

He seriously considered the possibility of calling the cops, no—of informing the Nighthawks.

Old Neil shot a glance at him and said peeved, "I can see ignorance, foolishness, and the weak and shameless disbelief in your eyes. Didn't Dunn tell you the maxim of the Mystery Pryers? Do as you wish but do no harm!"

Although this maxim originated from the secret and evil Moses Ascetic Order organization, Beyonders who choose the path of Moses Ascetic Order have proven that it's right through their own experiences. As long as one strictly abides to it and shows the needed fear and reverence, the risk of losing control will be minimized. The contrary has similarly been established.

"Your suspicion towards me is an insult to Mystery Pryers!"

“Sorry.” Klein did not hesitate to apologize.

He had indeed forgotten that Dunn Smith had once mentioned the maxim.

Old Neil was not truly angry. In a blink of an eye, he chuckled.

“A pity. Very few Beyonders choose to be Seers. There is no corresponding maxim to help you.”

But I have Emperor Roselle’s diaries... Yes, strictly abiding to the maxim has a hint of “acting...” Klein suddenly came to this thought as he nodded as if in deep thought.

Old Neil did not continue. He removed the vases and other items from the round table and placed them in a corner.

Immediately following that, he took out both a crimson red and black candle from the silver chest. He explained, “If ordinary people attempt ritualistic magic, they have to follow the results from astromancy or read corresponding manuals. They have to choose suitable dates and times. For example, the day representing the Goddess—the period when She rules over the moon. But for us Beyonders, especially Beyonders good in this domain, there’s no need for that. Our acute spiritual perception and potent Astral Projections are key.

“Of course, if you are not confident about the ritualistic magic you are attempting, it’s best to choose a suitable date and time. It can increase the probability of success.

“Ah right. This is based on a premise. Remember carefully to abide strictly by the rules!”

Old Neil placed two candles and turned to the side and looked at Klein, saying very solemnly, “Low-Sequence Beyonders are not strong enough. Almost all the ritualistic magic they can perform are the seeking of external powers and help. Therefore, you can only consider orthodox divinities like the Goddess or the Lord of Storms. Absolutely— absolutely do not attempt to communicate with the unknown or unpredictable existences. Even if people believe in them or the promises recorded are filled with enticements!

“Believe me, don’t take any chances. As long as you attempt once, you will go down a slippery slope into the abyss with no return. Any work or resistance will only slow it down with no way to change the trajectory.”

“I’ll remember!” Klein said in a deep voice. However, he felt a little afraid.

My luck enhancement ritual has apparently sought power from an unknown and unpredictable existence...

Furthermore, I have gained powers capable of pulling people into the fog that even a senior Beyonder like the Hanged Man finds unbelievable. Well... At least I think he is a senior Beyonder...

Thankfully, I haven’t gone mad or have any signs of losing control...

While worrying over this, he proactively changed the subject.

“So, Nighthawks should seek the help of the Goddess?”

“No one will stop you if you pray to the Lord of Storms. However,

we are unable to tell from our ritualistic magic whether He replies with malicious intent or not. The outcome will be distorted in unpredictable ways.” Old Neil successfully made Klein give up the idea in a joking manner.

There was no so-called “best,” only “necessary!”

After his exhortations, Old Neil picked up a crimson red candle and said, “By using candles made of moon flowers and dark-red sandalwood, it will represent the Goddess’s identity as Lady of Crimson in the ritualistic magic.”

He pointed to the black candles and said, “Candles made of night vanilla and slumber flowers represent the night.”

As he spoke, he placed the black candle on the top left end of the round table while the red candle was placed on the top right end.

“Why do we symbolize the Goddess with only two candles? She is also the Mother of Concealment, Empress of Misfortune and Horror, and Mistress of Repose and Silence.”

Old Neil chuckled.

“That’s right. This is something I wished you asked.

“Before their fall, the Moses Ascetic Order had a very good relationship with the Church. Their beliefs and results on ritualistic magic have heavily influenced us.

“They believe that all objects are numeric. Every number has a spirituality and in ritualistic magic, 0 represents the unknown

or Chaos. It symbolizes the state of the universe before it was born. 1 represents a beginning, the first Creator. 2 represents the world and various divinities that were produced from His body. 3 represents contact between divinities and material objects to create all things. Here, using two candles represents the Goddess while the third candle is for you.

“Which two candles and which two symbols to have depend on the intended effects of the ritualistic magic.”

Three begets all things [1]? All things stem from three? Klein could not help but recall certain things from his previous life.

Seeing Klein listen attentively, Old Neil took a third candle and said, “This is the candle representing ‘me.’ It’s a very ordinary candle which only has a little bit of mint added. Take note that plants like roses, lemons, mint, moon flower, night vanilla, and slumber flower are beloved and cherished by the Goddess.

“Viewing it from another angle, the three candles represent the bodies, spiritualities and godhood of every person.”

After finishing the description, Old Neil placed the third candle in the middle of the round table.

He then took out a bottle of concocted “Full Moon Essence Oil,” a huge cauldron engraved with the Dark Sacred Emblem, a silver knife with gorgeous patterns, a cup of water, and a saucer of coarse salt.

“To Beyonders who are not good at ritualistic magic, there is a need for bells, crystal balls, silver cups, incense or other supplementary items. However, Mystery Pryers and Seers have no need for that. These artifacts are already sufficient.”

Old Neil placed the fake goatskin parchment with the IOU just below the cauldron and used a special quill to hold down one corner.

He turned to Klein and said, "Ritualistic magic needs a clean spiritual environment where you will not be disturbed. And that requires us to create it. The steps are to first enter Cogitation. Focus your mind and with the supplementary items, draw out our strength, and construct it around us. For example, Ray Bieber's house had used Holy Night Powder while I'll be using a ritual silver dagger.

"Throughout the entire process, we have to go according to the outcome we desire to confirm the symbolism and corresponding incantation. Incantations are best done in Hermes because ancient Hermes stemmed from Nature. It's akin to ancient Dragonese and ancient Elvish. The effects are very direct, lacking the necessary concealment and protection. It easily causes the caster to fall into danger. This is also why it has been modified. However, it's more effective.

"Alright, I have to focus on the ritualistic magic. I won't explain things to you any further. Pay attention by watching and listening. Remember any problems and ask me when everything is done."

"Alright." Klein took two steps back and trained his eyes on Old Neil.

Old Neil's eyes rapidly darkened as invisible wind around him spun.

He was silent for a moment, going from left to right, then up to down, using his psyche to cause friction and consecutively light up the three candles.

Following that, he picked up the silver knife and stabbed it into the coarse salt. Then, he chanted in Hermes:

“I sanctify you, blade of pure silver!

“I cleanse and purify you, allowing you to serve me in this ritual!

...

“In the name of the Evernight Goddess, the Lady of Crimson...

“You have been sanctified!”

After a short but powerful syllable, Old Neil drew a silver knife and inserted it into a cup of clear water. Then, he raised it and pointed to the space beyond the round table.

He aimed the blade tip in the periphery and took a step forward, circling the round table. Every step he took made Klein feel an invisible energy spew out of the silver knife. It was filled with spirituality as it connected with the air, forming a completely sealed wall.

After walking one round, the altar was completely isolated from its surroundings.

Old Neil stood in front of the round table and put the silver knife down. He picked up the bottle of Full Moon Essence Oil and dripped three drops on the black, dark red, and ordinary candles.

Sizzle!

A thin mist emanated as everything seemed to become veiled in mystery.

Old Neil put down the glass bottle and looked at the fake goatskin parchment silently for two minutes. Then, he picked up the quill and drew a mark he controlled—a square that framed all the content, indicating that he was in control of the debt.

Following that, he drew another ‘cross,’ indicating that it was canceled.

Upon reaching this step, he picked up the parchment with one hand and tapped his glabella with the other to activate his Spirit Vision.

Another invisible and exuberant energy bloomed as Old Neil whispered a chant:

“I pray for the power of the dark night.

“I pray for the power of the crimson.

“I pray for the Goddess’s loving grace.

“Please provide me with the funds to pay this IOU.

“Night vanilla, an herb that belongs to the red moon, please bestow your powers to my incantation!”

“Moon flower, an herb that belongs to the red moon, please bestow your powers to my incantation!”

...

Klein was completely flabbergasted listening from the side. All sorts of thoughts arose in him.

Such an incantation can work?

Although it was recited from written Hermes...

Isn't this way too simple and down to earth?

Wouldn't the Goddess be angry and multiply the debt severalfold?

At that moment, the candlelight lit up suddenly!

After Old Neil finished his incantation, he closed his eyes for two minutes. He picked up the Full Moon Essence Oil and dripped one drop onto each of the three candles.

Immediately following that, he grabbed the parchment and pulled it close to the candle representing "me." When it ignited, he immediately threw it into the cauldron.

Old Neil closed his eyes again as he seemed to sense the burning of the IOU.

He opened his eyes after a moment and looked toward the black Sacred Emblem on the cauldron. The parchment was already completely incinerated.

“Praise the Lady!” Old Neil tapped his chest in four spots, forming the shape of the crimson moon. Then, he extinguished the candles in the opposite order as he lit them.

After finishing everything, he used the silver knife to rip apart the invisible wall around him.

A huge wind stirred immediately as Old Neil heaved a sigh of relief.

“It’s done.”

“That’s it?” Klein asked in a daze. “Has the IOU been settled? How?”

“I don’t know either. Anyways, it will be settled in a reasonable manner,” said Old Neil with a smile as he threw up his hands.

This... Klein was unsure what expression or words to use as a response.

Isn’t this a little unreliable?

-
1. This is a Daoism saying: Dao begets One, One begets Two, Two begets Three, Three begets all things.