

A bell tolls. The rest of the royal party put off their festive white garments and are clad in black. The Queen blindfolds them and six coffins are brought in. A tall black man enters with an axe and beheads each one of them. The blood is caught in a gold cup and the heads wrapped in black cloths. Finally the executioner is himself beheaded, by an unknown hand at the door.

The Virgin of Lights bids the company not to lament. She enigmatically states that the lives of those beheaded even yet rest in the hands of the assembled company.

All retire for the night, but at midnight C.R. looks out of his window. He sees over the lake seven ships proceeding with the coffins, each one with a flame over its masthead.

### *Fourth Day: The Vault of Lady Venus*

At dawn the next day, which is the wished for day of the intended wedding, C.R., is secretly shown some very significant hidden mysteries of the castle by his guiding page.

First they go down an underground stairway where they find a great iron door. Upon it is inscribed in letters of copper, "Here lies buried Venus, that beauty which hath undone many a great man both in fortune, honor, blessing, and prosperity."

Beyond the door is a dark passage that leads to a small door. This, the page reveals, was first opened only the day before, to bring out the coffins. It has since remained open. We are on the threshold of deep Mysteries of love and the creative principle revealed only by sacrifice.

Within the little door is a marvelous vault, lit by the glow of precious jewels. This, C.R. is told, is the king's treasure. We may recall that to reach this place we have come an underground way, and that in Greek mythology the king of the underworld is associated with great riches.

The main wonder of the place is a central sepulchre, fantastically adorned with precious jewels and of a peculiar and significant shape.

It is triangular, which Qabalists will recognize as the principle of form, and has a great polished copper bowl at its center. Within the burnished copper bowl stands an angel, holding in his arms a strange and mysterious tree, from which the fruit fall into the bowl. As they do so they liquefy and run into three small golden bowls standing by. These form a little altar, supported by an eagle, an ox, and a lion. These are three of the holy living creatures of the vision of Ezekiel. They are normally four in number, the fourth being represented by a man or an angel—who in