

the historical details of the year's events, the major portents or omens are also listed. The modern mind tends to sneer at this preoccupation, but as Jung has found and reported in his work on synchronicity, when one approaches the inner worlds particularly, whether in analytical psychology, Mystery initiation, or the psychic upsurge caused by great national events, signs preceding (portents) and signs following are to be expected. Admittedly, interpreting them may be difficult, but the inner worlds have a way of making their presence felt in no uncertain manner. They are, after all, levels of causation, even though the effects of that causation work out in a perfectly ordinary "accustomed" way.

The strange portents are swiftly followed by bad news of corruption and death, and following upon this the most unlikely things happen, the most significant of which is the old market gardener turning upon a centurion who tries to commandeer the ass and beating him up and leaving him unconscious. They then become fugitives, for assaulting a Roman army officer is a serious offense, and they go into hiding. Their hiding place is betrayed however by the ass's shadow showing up against a wall. Thus are we all betrayed by our "shadow" side. It is that which constitutes the dweller on the threshold of initiation and causes all the life problems that we have, as our own adverse side is projected onto the world about us.

These unfortunate occurrences are, however, the prelude to initiation and are at least a sign that progress is being made. From now on Lucius is on a plainly discernible upward path that leads first to his leaving behind his asinine form, and then his higher initiation into the rites of Isis and Osiris.

We need to bear in mind however, if we are to avoid the pitfall of vainglory and ego inflation, that although it behooves us to try our best, it is not by our own merits alone that we achieve initiation. We need help from others, and we need divine grace. This is signified by the story that is interpolated here of an innocent victim only being saved from evil machinations by the intervention of a *deus ex machina* in the form of a holy medical man.

Having got his attitude right through the numerous tests, realizations, and retributions that have gone before, Lucius is set for initiation, the stages of which follow in the narrative, beginning from the point where he is put into kitchen service (again the symbolism of spiritual food) with the lord chief justice. This symbolizes law, order, and the civilizing process represented by initiation and the aims and aspirations of the Mysteries.