

MAX HEINDEL'S MESSAGE

Psyche

PSYCHE WAS THE DAUGHTER of a king; of one who was a strong man, a leader among his kind. No one who is a craven, a slave, can give birth to a Psyche, a soul of transcendent beauty. All his progeny was not of the same kind; the sisters of Psyche were evil, for no man is totally good and none is altogether bad; hence the mixture in his progeny.

Psyche is the soul, an image of Venus, Universal Love, for the soul is the good of all our lives which eventually flowers in a character of transcendent beauty and loveliness.

This very loveliness is not a source of unalloyed pleasure to the one who has evolved it, for while others who are less fair are wed and enjoy the love and embraces of their kind, the soul who has attained to the Psyche stage is worshiped as a saint, too lofty and above its fellows to be approached with human love. In consequence, it is left alone, and being full of love itself, it craves the response which is denied, and so it weeps at its forlorn state as did Psyche, having neither the love of the gods who are too far above nor of men who are beneath.

At this stage the soul is taken further into the heights, as Psyche was conducted to the mountain designated by the gods. This may either be marriage, if the soul is able to pass the tests of Initiation and attain to union with the Higher Self, or it may be death if it fails. In the latter case, having seen that transcendent reality, Cupid, the Ego begotten of Venus, the Universal mother-love, the soul dies of sorrow at its loss, to try again at some future time until it succeeds.

Pure love is divine, spiritual, and dissociated from personality, and is yet beyond men. Therefore,



Oil on canvas, ca. 1530, Il Sodoma (1477-1549), Hermitage, St. Petersburg

Cupid in a Landscape

Cupid, son of Venus, as both Ego and the personification of desire

they cannot understand Venus, or even Psyche; the flower of the mortal race is too high. Hence Cupid, desire, the son of Venus, is sent abroad among them to teach them love by inoculating them with desire. He kindles the fire of love in their breasts by associating it with a personality not too far out of reach, and in the struggle for possession of the ones desired the world becomes a heaving, seething whirlpool which both the gods above and hell below tremble to behold.

Cast into low soil, love expresses itself as sex, passion, and degrading sensuality until the divine fire has purified the vessel which contains it in the furnace of suffering. Then the vessel will shine and glow with the fire of pure love; it will be saved, yet as by fire.

Sown in purer soil, however, desire will be transmuted to altruism and lead the soul along the path of Initiation to the goddess Venus, the Star of the Sea, the Great Deep of Universal Love.

Psyche, the human soul, is at the stage where it is leaving the world to consort with the divine. From the mountain of Initiation it is conducted into the ethereal abodes of the god or teacher who is to teach it the next lesson and help it to attain the universal, impersonal love which Christ inculcated

when He gave His command to love God and our neighbor. He also advocated that we leave kin and country and adopt the whole world, for He said that unless we leave these behind we cannot follow Him, and He designated those who did the will of the Father as His brothers and sisters, and mother. Not that we are to leave our relatives bodily or that we are to love them less, but that we are to love all others more; that instead of reserving our love for those who have been born in the same family with us, we are to strive to include all others as well. Not that we are to love our own country less, but that we are to strive to love all other places as well so that we may say, "The world is my country and to do good is my religion."

Psyche tastes of divine love in the arms of Cupid

ends and so-called superstition, for it refers to the experiences of the candidate for Initiation while he is out of his body exhuming spiritual treasures from the inner worlds. If he attempts to relate these experiences to others before they have been naturally brought to light, those who hear him will seek to discredit his visions and these will fade before their material skepticism.

Outsiders are all like the sisters of Psyche; they are consumed with curiosity at the thought of others having experiences of which they know nothing and understand as little. When their curiosity has given them a little hint as to these things, they will seek to instill doubts in the mind of the candidate and may lead him to attempt tests contrary to the laws of the higher life, as Psyche was lured to pry

If we allow others to pry into our consciousness of the divine, they will invariably succeed in instilling doubts and fears into us as to the value and reality of this thing which we say we experience in the night, for it will not bear the garish light of material explanation. Therefore the candidate is ever warned to be silent.

but has unfortunately not outgrown the human side of her nature; she is yet quick to hear the voice of her sisters and longs for them. The ties of family have driven many a soul back into the world and into deepest degradation. There is no more severe test than this call of the blood, yet we must stand firm and strive for the higher. If we allow others to pry into our consciousness of the divine, they will invariably succeed in instilling doubts and fears into us as to the value and reality of this thing which we say we experience in the night, for it will not bear the garish light of material explanation. Therefore the candidate is ever warned to be silent.

An old folk story tells how those who dig for treasure-trove in the dark of night must observe the strictest silence, for if a word be spoken while excavating the treasure it will instantly disappear. Only when it has been successfully exhumed and day has broken over it naturally may it be mentioned. This is an occult maxim embodied in leg-

into a secret not yet revealed to her lawfully, and as Elsa in Lohengrin was tempted by Ortrud and Telramund to inquire the name of her Initiate husband.

So may the soul which allows itself to be inveigled into telling its experiences be tempted to exceed its right and be expelled from the temple, as Psyche was divorced from her divine husband when she had listened to the contaminating tongues of her mortal kin and acted upon their advice contrary to the divine voice of her true lover. Then both teacher and pupil may grieve. It is no easy task for the teacher to expel his pupil, but he is under universal Law and must obey. Lohengrin suffered perhaps more than Elsa at the parting, and Cupid was inconsolable at the fall of Psyche.

Then comes the period of loneliness when Psyche, the human soul which has tasted of the divine association, feels utterly despondent at the loss and seeks to end its existence. But in the arms of Cupid, Psyche received the divine seed which

cannot be destroyed, and so the water refuses to drown her; each succeeding attempt at annihilation is equally futile. Once the seed of immortality has been implanted, the soul is indestructible, and though its sufferings may seem beyond endurance, it must go on nevertheless till it attains to the divinity whereof it has tasted

Then we hear of Psyche, the human soul, applying for help and worshipping in turn at the shrines of various gods; but though they feel kindly toward her, they dare not help. It is only by helping itself that the soul grows strong enough to be able to help others, and then it will also have grown too unselfish to want to help itself at the cost of pain or pang to others. All the divine Teachers have accentuated this phase of evolution. They were ever ready to save and to succor others, but it was said of each, "Himself he could (or would) not save." Such masters of evolution have fed the hungry multitude by their spiritual powers, but they have always refused to turn even the smallest stone to bread to assuage their own pangs of hunger. This lesson has to be learned, and therefore Psyche, the human soul, is refused help from the gods; she is thrown upon her own resources that she may learn self-reliance, and at last she is forced to present herself to the love she has outraged and to commence to labor for love, symbolized by Venus.

Venus, Love, is no easy taskmaster, however; none work so hard as those who are driven to work by Love. There was a time in the history of man when man worked from sun to sun, particularly perhaps in the medieval times upon the continent of Europe, where small shops abounded in the many cities and the guilds flourished. Then the master worked as hard as or harder than the man; he was respected in the community for his skill and his apprentices sought to emulate him. Then the song of the anvil was the accompaniment to the gladsome lay of the worker, the day was ever too short; he cared not for time, his joy was in the thing which he created.

Then came the era of the steam engine, the day of machinery when man became only a cog in the production mechanism, when he could scarcely hope to become master but must drudge his life



Psyche in the Underworld

One task assigned Psyche was to retrieve without opening a box of Beauty from Proserpina in Hades, Overcome by curiosity, she opened the box and released a Stygian sleep.

away in obscurity. He makes only a small part of the completed product and has therefore no joy in its creation. It is no longer a part of him as was the product of the medieval craftsman who wrought the finished product from the raw material.

Therefore the modern workman lacks interest in his work; therefore he watches the clock and waits longingly for the week's end when he is to receive his compensation in filthy lucre which is incapable of satisfying his heartfelt but uncomprehended longing; therefore he strikes for shorter hours and more pay, though he does not deserve them by application. Nothing can satisfy him. The exigencies of evolution have taken from him the opportunities

of creating something that he might love as the medieval craftsman loved his handiwork. To hand him money instead of love is like handing him a stone for bread, and until we find a method of satisfying his heart, we shall have to endure the spectacle of his suffering. The painter, the sculptor, and their kin are yet imbued with the love of their work; are yet content to starve in a garret so that they may paint and carve; they alone are not forming unions and fighting a world which hands them but kicks and crusts. They alone work on regardless of time; they bemoan its fleetness where the factory hand watches the snail-like crawl of the hands on the clock.

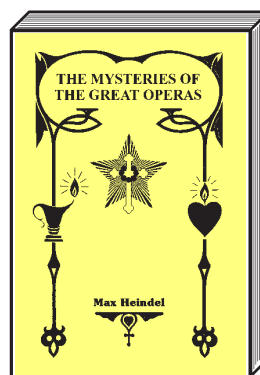
A higher stage must come when we learn to regard money at its true value, as a symbol, and find a higher love to impel us to work. When we learn to work for the love of others, then again the time will fly and the remuneration be of smallest consideration. To this stage Psyche is driven when she at last presents herself at the court of Venus and is set to work by the goddess Love. And what tasks are these, each more difficult than the preceding and all nearly impossible! But the soul that works for love, though it may realize its own weakness and the enormity of the task before it, is also soon made aware that it is not alone in its struggle; it is working in harmony with nature, unselfishly and for the good of the unborn, even, represented by the babe in the womb of Psyche, a babe that is higher than she, being partly divine. The soul is then helped by all things in nature. The ants that separated the seed for Psyche are willing workers in nature and ministering spirits to help us in our labors of love. They are all about us and our necessity is their opportunity for advancing the good.

Out of the waters of Being Psyche obtains a potion for Love or Venus. Into the realms of Death she travels, also at the command of Love or Venus. She refuses nothing, though each task seems to her as though it must surely end in her destruction. Therefore, having shown her willingness to lay down her life for Love's or Venus' sake, she is at last elevated to the heavenly realm where in the kingdom of the gods she is received as one of themselves. Thus Love is won by love, and lasting

bliss is the result of unselfish perseverance in well-doing. May we all learn to labor for Love! ☐

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