

**Booklet: Ishtar of the Starry Heavens,
Shape-Shifting of the Alchemical Twins
by Olivia Robertson**

RITUAL 1. MAGIC OF THE CENTAUR

"To know all is to be all."

TEMPLE OF ALCHEMY

PRIESTESS ALCHEMIST (TO TWIN APPRENTICES AIDEN & ELAINE): To attain spiritual wisdom, it is necessary to invoke the Goddess Pallas Athena.

PRIEST ALCHEMIST: I invoke the Goddess Pallas Athena, Pallas of the spear of Sagittarius; Medusa of the Inner Sun; and Athena of the olives of Peace. Help us to achieve the wisdom that can face truth with compassion.

ORACLE OF THE GODDESS PALLAS ATHENA

ORACLE: Every small child loves animals and flowers, and any insect that they wish to keep in a jar! Divine Nature, divided against herself in the physical world, ever endeavours to become one again, even through slaying in order to devour prey or win a mate.

The object of the descent of Spirit into matter is to achieve individual souls. Yet this very individuality, attained especially through humanity, brings intense passions, and fear of death. This can only be solved by winning the lost heaven of telepathic communion through deep understanding of those seen as prey or enemies.

Those who would bring harmony to a new age need to combine empathy with all that is, yet must maintain the Inner Flame of the Self. It is through the arts that humanity has gained such empathy. The struggle to achieve power is bringing disaster to humanity, whether this be political or religious wars.

Take heart! I have gained control of my mind, my inner sun and my heart. You too shall win the olive branch of Peace, The Gnosis.

PRIEST ALCHEMIST: We give thanks to The Goddess Pallas Athena for her Oracle.

PRIESTESS ALCHEMIST (TO ELAINE): Elaine, further to extend your consciousness, it is necessary for you to descend the spiral of evolution and shape-shift into an animal! But for your own safety you need to heed the Goddess' warning, and not lose your individual soul. Some unfortunates have done so, and become entrapped in another dimension, neither beast nor human. When you have attained this alchemy, you will be able to help trapped souls, whether humans lost in some animal body, or an animal caught inside a human.

PRIEST ALCHEMIST: Your task is to explore the starry realm of the constellation Centaurus. The Portal is within the Temple of the Magical Stars. You will enter trance. We will accompany you, but may not help you. *** You will report during your journey.

*** TRANCE JOURNEY ***

ELAINE: As I make my way up a winding path of stardust, I feel confident! My family have always loved horses and worked with them in war and while hunting. We have bred racehorses. I do remember a Talking Horse in some American comedy – but that won't do at all. All this stardust is making me dizzy. I must be spiritual. *** I have it. Of course! Chiron the Centaur taught Theseus, Founder of Athens – Athena's city. This must be the link. There is that Botticelli painting of Athena taming a centaur. I

wonder why they need taming? I am quite safe. I shall be “led by the golden stars as Chiron’s Art had marked their spheres celestial.”

Just as I thought! Here, within the shining Starry Temple is the arching Portal to Centaurus. And Chiron is depicted on the right side, his golden arrow pointed upwards. And there on the left is painted Pallas Athena herself! She is holding a replica of herself in her left hand. And this figure in turn holds another Athena. *** Of course I recognise a fractal. I cannot find the greater Figure that should be surrounding them all. But now I get a shock. There is a figure, so vast that it reaches the starry dome. I look suddenly at the centaur painting. There is a tiny replica of a small centaur concealed between his hoofs and yes –curiously, there is a mighty Godlike Centaur around him, reaching the stars. I observe I have some sort of pro-human prejudice. The Egyptian honoured animal Gods. I am learning! After all, there is Epona, the Pony Goddess. And that wild faery horse, the Irish Pouka. I pass through the portal, feeling prepared.

*** I WAS NOT PREPARED. I find myself involved in some frightful battle, the cause unknown, the outcome, my death. I feel unspeakable pain. My bones are smashed. Then I am aware of a human being struggling to his feet. He is wearing a soldier’s red uniform. He is hesitating – I am his charger, in agony. I read his thoughts. He is wondering whether to shoot me and put me out of my agony. But no. His duty comes first. He has only one bullet left; so he turns away from me – and shoots a fellow human, his enemy. I take three-quarters of an hour to die. I still have some of my human mind. I can calculate.

Now as I slowly leave that mutilated body, I am living through a sequence of events, some pleasant, galloping in sunshine with a company of wild horses over a prairie, some overworked drawing a cart, and one in which I am killed during a race.

I must escape being trapped in this form if I value my own soul. I try to remember the great Jonathan Swift’s wise horses in his “Gulliver’s Travels.” But it is impossible. I realise I must leave the physical world and win my astral body. I imagine myself as a magnificent chestnut mare with flowing mane. It is not enough. I grow wings. Now I find myself in a heaven of happiness, with other horses, my own family with many colts in a land so vast one can hardly see the circular horizon. I gallop and gallop. As I enjoy myself I give myself a human centaur’s body! Then I see a despondent human being, a young man, seated on a stone, his head in his hands. I ask, “what is wrong?” He replies: “You may well ask, you blessed beast, you so soon have attained a heavenly body. We poor humans are tied mentally to the wheel of our painful rounds of incarnations on earth, while you ride free and joyful!” Somehow the young man vaguely reminds me of Aiden – and this makes me laugh *** and I find myself back with you all, with a bump – as if I had fallen off a horse!

*** *END OF TRANCE* ***

THE COMPANY SPECULATE AS TO WHETHER THE YOUNG SOLDIER HAD BEEN ELAINE OR AN ANCESTOR IN A PREVIOUS EXISTENCE. THEY AGREE SHE HAD SUCCEEDED IN SHAPE-SHIFTING AS A CENTAUR WITHOUT LOSING HER SELF, AND SO HAD OBTAINED HER ALCHEMICAL DEGREE. EXPERIENCES ARE SHARED AND THANKS ARE GIVEN TO THE DEITIES.

END OF RITE.

SOURCES: “The Centaur” Algernon Blackwood, about 1913 MacMillan. “The Divine Adventure,” Fiona MacLeod, Heinemann, 1912. “Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race,” Rolleston. “Metamorphoses,” Ovid. “Star Names,” Hinckley Allen, Dover.

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