

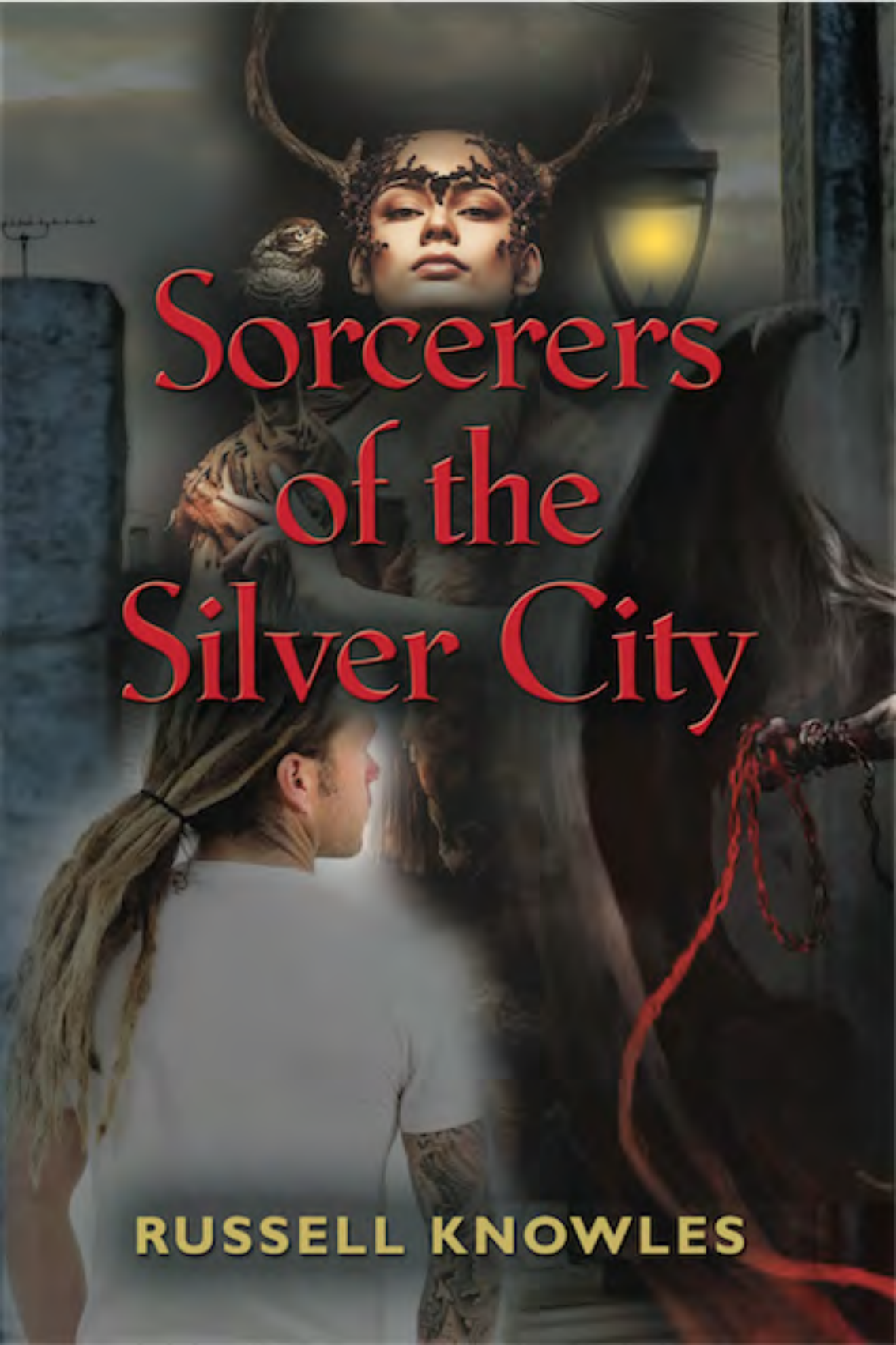
*An engaging story of friendship, dialogue and humour. An insightful and informative tale of magick, Wicca and mysticism. There are no mythical wizards or Gandalf figures in this story! Read about the incredible events based on real Sorcerers that operated in Aberdeen, Scotland in the 1990s.*

## **Sorcerers of the Silver City**

by Russell Knowles

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The book cover features a woman with a bird perched on her shoulder and a man with long braided hair in the foreground. The woman has a crown of leaves and antlers. The background is dark with a street lamp and a horse. The title is written in a large, red, serif font.

# Sorcerers of the Silver City

**RUSSELL KNOWLES**

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ISBN: 978-1-63491-589-2

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Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., St. Petersburg, Florida.

Printed on acid-free paper.

BookLocker.com, Inc.

2017

First Edition

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## *Chapter 12:*

### **The Prince and the Queen of Night**

“But how, for chrissakes, are we going to manage to do a surreptitious magical circle, involving expelling demons, in a busy pub?” I said sitting at the back lovingly caressing my pint of Dark Island.

“That’s a tough one all right,” said Don. “Maybe we could come in early on Sunday and do it!”

“Nah, we need permission, but how? Who’s going to ask? What are we going to say? I wish Hippie Davie would hurry up, what the fuck is he up to?” I said, frustrated as we had been sitting there for a full ten minutes now waiting for him to sit down with his pint so we could continue with the plan of action.

Don leaned backwards and peered up towards the bar. “He’s chattin’ up the barmaid!”

I sighed and shook my head in genuine frustration. “Oh for fuck’s sake, can he no’ think of anything else!? Fuckin’ hippies! I tell ya, never go to war with a hippie; it just doesna work!”

Don shrugged. “Well hippies generally don’t go to war do they? They just form Woodstocks an’ ‘at and run aboot naked, fucking like mad all over the place, high as kites!”

I frowned. “Yeah, yeah, they should get their act together shouldn’t they!? Get their priorities right!”

Don looked at me and gave a little ironic laugh. I began to smirk as I put my pint to my lips, “Well...war’s a serious business; somebody’s got to do it!”

Just then Hippie Davie lolloped over, hair bouncing with triumph as he plonked his pint down in a statement which said, *you’re going to love this*, kinda way, *see what I’ve just achieved*. Hippie Davie sat down and our eyes followed from the brimming, spilling pints to his face, sporting an expression of *easy when you know how*, kind of matter-of-fact concealed smugness.

“You’re going to fackin’ love this!” he said. “I was chattin’ to my mate Fiona there and av’ managed to get us in here after hours in the early hours of Sunday morning!”

“No shit!?” I said, a little taken aback that it appeared so easy! I hadn’t realised that his ‘friend’ Fiona was in the building, nor indeed was I aware that he was still ‘friendly’ with her, if you know what I mean!?

Don, however, raised an eyebrow in suspicion, “What do we have to do?”

Hippie Davie cast his eyes away and mumbled into his pint, “Oh a little spot of tidying, maybe a little bit of mopping that sort of thing!”

I was just contemplating what that might entail when Don pulled his pint out of his mouth and almost choking on froth as he spat out the words, “Baggsy not doing the toilets!”

As quick as a flash, Hippie Davie repeated the same thing and then they both turned towards me. I stared at them both a little stunned as the implications quickly filtered through to me; they had bagsied it. The bastards knew I was powerless to overturn the rule.

“Oh fuck me!” I said. “That’s not fair! That’s not fair at all.”

Don sniggered shaking his head, “Geez on a Saturday night as well!?”

I shook my head pissed off at the injustice of it all.

Hippie Davie shrugged. “We had to get in, didn’t we? So that’s the way we’re going to do it. The way I see it, we clean up dead fast, all help each other out like, then we’ll have a few hours to ourselves. We’ll set up candles, bring our robes in and stuff, it’ll be great, I can just imagine it, a rite in here, evoking the spirits of this place, of Union Street, of Aberdeen itself into the circle, be fucking awesome man. All smelling of incense and weed...and piney fresh, especially if you make a good job of the toilets Sensible!”

I was beginning to enjoy the image until that point and then saw them pass a look between each other! Mates eh? “Ye bastards! Ye bastards!” I said and huffed as I drank a big gulp of Dark Island to console myself.

The time came around soon enough and we found ourselves sitting in the Prince, each with our sports bags under the table, sipping beers. In truth, we had been in since early tea time, as a result of having nothing much better to do and the excitement of the task ahead. We decided to have a few drinks first, so that we could cope with the hard night of work ahead. We had huddled together in my flat to come up with an idea to banish this demon from us, stop the chaos magicians

from being able to strike at us and finally send that thing back through the rip in reality, as we had now come to perceive it.

The banishing ritual itself focused on magick being evoked into the bar and infusing this with the Spirit of the Prince of Wales (It's that 'deva' of a place, the sense of a place; the continuity among the comings and goings, the sense of a pub you get when you get drunk and stare at the panels and pictures of the walls, with the kind of affection you had when you stared at the hood of your pram or blankets in your first cot). This was most important as we felt we needed permission from this spirit to do the ritual there and enlist its help. It must have seemed strange to anyone who glimpsed us on that Saturday evening. At around 10 o'clock when the throngs were three or four deep at the bar; we sat, three of us in a triangular formation, at the back of the bar, wedged in a compartment near the fireplace at the back. A team of women and handbags made a useful wall between us and everyone else. Hippie Davie murmured an incantation and we felt ourselves melt into the scenery, becoming invisible. We closed our eyes and imagined ourselves outside the door, on the astral, as it were.

Hippie Davie whispered, "Are we all here?"

Don nodded and I said "Yes."

Hippie Davie smiled, but I was a little confused, "Hey Don, how'd you manage that; how'd you manage to just nod!?"

Don shrugged; we all smiled then laughed a little. Hippie Davie knocked at the door and then we waited a little, "OK, try it now, Sensible!" I tentatively pushed the door and it swung right open; amazingly the sound of chatter in the bar seemed audibly louder, exactly as if we'd walked in from outside.

We each visualised walking through the bar and sitting quietly in our seats, a spare chair sat facing us, into which we invited the guardian spirit of the Prince of Wales and then we waited. Strangely, I felt the need to hang back a little, it didn't seem right that we all just sit straight down. I telegraphed my hesitancy to the group, Don immediately understood.

"I kaen get pints for everybody then!" I smiled and then in my mind I fought my way to the bar, but the regular bartender was not there. Instead I imagined a thin-faced late-to-middle aged-woman with quite lank straight black hair faced me at the bar. She had a fairly mournful expression which did not change; I understood straight away that I was probably picking up on some ghost of barmaids past. She

poured the drinks without a speaking but did say what I thought was a genuinely appreciative thank you, when I thanked her and gave her some money from my pocket. She bowed her head a little but remained transfixed, staring at me, with an almost imperceptible smile across her lips. I went back to the table where my two compatriots, motionless and without speaking awaited me. Any onlookers might have seen three very still guys sitting with eyes tight shut lift their drinks in synchrony and slowly place them back on the table in silence. We spoke, asking with all our hearts for the spirit to join us and then we waited.

Minutes passed and all I could feel was the tight grip on Don on my left and Hippie Davie on my right. I felt a silly sitting there but decided to put all my effort into feeling for an impression or image or vision that might occur. I wasn't going to just imagine it; I really wanted the vibe of the environment to form itself in my mind. And it didn't take too long, as a large form appeared in the doorway of the hall between the rooms. It seemed like a large balding figure in a traditional barman's garb. He was quite foreboding – massive, strong with big arms and big hands – but at the same time he wasn't representing the complexity of the place or the magick. I figured he was some kind of guardian as he did not speak but only seemed to stand there watching. Presently, the corner of the room caught my attention. A shape unfurled itself by the fire and a large brown shaggy shape, that I felt was a Great Dane, got up and walked slowly and lazily from the corner of the fireplace and collapsed beside us in a heap of fur. I gasped in fear and excitement as a very strong cold feeling spread over me and culminated in tears forming at the corner of my eyes, one escaping, brimming over to my cheek. Somewhere in another world, I felt the grip of my friends become stronger and tense for a second or two. The Great Dane spirit rolled its head over its front legs and made a contented *huffle* noise. The bar seemed eerily quiet, as if you could hear a pin drop and I was sure that if I opened my eyes we would find ourselves alone in that corner of the room. The thought scared me so I concentrated on the animal that was at my feet between myself and Don. I began to think it was going to be difficult to communicate with a dog when I realised that the dog did indeed have an owner and that owner was behind me. The atmosphere had gone very, very cold indeed, although my face and right leg were now burning from the fire I could feel in the hearth. I turned around and saw the bar was filled with people, all manner of



people. I saw an image, a vision in my mind of a little old man with a gnarled face sitting watching us on the other side. Closer to me, I felt the presence of a man sitting, smiling at us wearing a top hat which seemed a little torn, like some story book tramp.

I could sense women with bags and lots of people with instruments, fiddles and whistles looking like they were getting ready to play. There were just far too many people and I understood that they were all the guardians of the Prince of Wales. I looked again at the man with the torn hat; he had a black coat on with a chequered waistcoat underneath. He had a very kind face. He kept his gaze level with mine the entire time. I asked him for permission, but before I got the words out he smiled and nodded. Simultaneously, the Great Dane raised his massive head and then lowered it on my lap. It felt amazing, so warm and loving and the weight seemed to surround me entirely like a hug or a loving embrace from a very familiar friend. I thanked him and then thanked everyone in the bar. They didn't even seem to notice me but at the same time I knew I was there with them and they allowed that. I felt a huge surge of belonging, of eternal bonds and love. I belonged here, here was a focus of my home town and I felt safer in that place than in any other place on earth right at that moment.

As with all rituals, it was plain when the time had come to return, to come back down to earth, as it were. I felt the image of the guardians subside and caught the impression of the last faint wisps of music. I became more aware of my friends and for an instant wasn't sure if the few bars of fiddle music I heard came from the jukebox or came from the people I had just perceived. I realised I was now completely back behind my eyes, which slowly opened, adjusting to the light and sense of reality. Hippie Davie was blinking, clearly just back to earth a few seconds before me, Don was opening his eyes, like a new born baby; big pupils struggling to take in the smiling faces of both Hippie Davie and myself.

We took a few seconds smiling at each other and waiting to come back completely. Curiously I still felt the weight of the Great Dane on my left thigh, to such an extent that it was becoming uncomfortably heavy.

Don gasped, "Hey Sensible, half your face is bright red!"

Hippie Davie nodded, "That's coz he was sitting too close to the big fire!"

I put my hand to my face, "Fucking right! Whose idea was it to sit here?" The empty fireplace to my right looked very dusty from years of lack of use.

Don was the first to talk about what he'd seen. "Well did ye all see 'im?" and he motioned to the door way to the connecting halls. I turned to look where he was motioning and then back at Don, excited and incredulous.

"You mean you saw a guy there?" I said.

Don nodded. "Yep a big guy, huge hands, baldy and cleaning a glass, towel over his right shoulder!"

I didn't particularly remember seeing the towel or glass but knew they were there all right, as soon as Don mentioned them.

Don continued, "He was definitely like the bouncer in here, could crush you into a fine powder if he wanted too, kinda thing!"

Hippie Davie was nodding animatedly. "Yep, yep I think I saw the same guy, but he is definitely a boxer or a wrestler or both, he's definitely a guy to call on if need be."

"You don't have to," said Don. "He's here all the time and whether we call him or not, nothing is going to be able to get past him in here. Demon or not, he would flatten it to a small disc and just turf it outside! I have his assurance of that!"

"Well done Don, well done!" I said nodding in his direction. I felt he had secured solid protection, whereas I realised I hadn't paid much attention to the big guy, so I was glad Don had taken care of that, good old Don.

Hippie Davie was smiling. "What else?" His eyes were bulging with glee and his eyebrows were making his face contort into a gesture of exclamation.

"You mean the people?" I said and with that the image of the top-hatted man and the feeling of the place washed over me like a strong emotional wave, I couldn't stem the flow of tears welling up as I said it, Hippie Davie just smirked and his eyes bulged even bigger emphatically as he slowly nodded towards me.

Don gripped onto the table and reeled at the intensity of the feeling, saying, "Oh gods!"

The image of the man with the top hat was very strong and intriguingly dominated my thoughts, as if a part of them had bonded with me. I could see it in my mind's eye and it just remained there, it would not leave. I wondered if it ever would!?

"I saw a guy sitting right there!" I said pointing to the table where the women now sat. Again a huge feeling swept over us as I pointed.

"No shit!" said Hippie Davie, "I think I spoke to the same person; he was a magician, a very magick man and believe me, we are quite privileged that he chose to reveal himself to us tonight. His name...started with an H, Hendry or Horacio or something like that!"

As he said it, I knew it was right and then realised the magician aspect was correct as well!" "Tarot!" I said, I think he even had a card in his hat!"

"Yes!" said Hippie Davie, "This man was crafty, a conjurer, maybe even a gypsy but also very knowledgeable in the craft of the wise."

"Nah," I said, "Not a gypsy, a countryman of some kind, perhaps a travelling man who earned a living here and there telling fortunes and doing spells for people but also of a strong mind, an intellectual and skilled sorcerer in his time."

Don nodded. "Ohhh I'm getting that, I'm getting that, yeah."

I laughed. "Yep Don old son, seems you weren't the original 'top-Hat, top hat!"

Don shrugged. "I don't mind; I feel good carrying on this tradition!"

We each looked at one another and smiled; we had done it. We had connected with something and all this time I could still feel the weight on my leg.

"And his dog is like his familiar or something, also wrapped up in both the friendliness and the protection of the place!"

Both of them looked at me quizzically, "Dog?"

Don gave an ahhhh sound with a conciliatory smile, "I thought there was something, maybe under the table, but I wasna sure!"

"Yeah I said, you can say that again!" I relayed my story of the dog, the people and the music and how I felt we were welcomed in and totally protected in this place.

Hippie Davie glanced around as I spoke, "God yeah, I think I may have been aware of this at some level, but I was totally focused on trying to speak with the one person."

With that, we raised our glasses and toasted our new friends and to the Spirit of The Prince of Wales.

"To the old top hat!" I said and felt a chill of appreciation running down my face and spine.

Eventually, the last drunkards left the pub and a strange calm descended almost straight away. The bartenders and barmaids

hurriedly packed things away and tidied up, counting coins and pulling the dregs out of the pipes. I felt like an intruder. It was awkward as the staff really didn't seem to like us hanging about, disturbing their routine. Clearly they thought us a bit strange as they eyed us suspiciously while they worked. However, Hippie Davie's obvious influence on their boss was apparent as he joked and smiled with her in the background, the chemistry between them was quite clear. I eyed Don feeling very jealous of Hippie Davie's relationship with this attractive older woman. As I looked at Don it struck me that he was feeling jealous too! I was a little giddy after the ritual and, to a large extent, the beer; not to mention quite knackered by my job. I wasn't relishing the work we still had to do and I was now thinking that it was a really bad idea. Surely I would have very little energy to repel demons after mopping toilets for the next hour or so!?

We each set about our tasks. I had no choice and was resigned to tackle the lavs. I decided to just go head to head with the men's first. Christ it was bad! It's an unpleasant aspect of male behaviour that to urinate somewhere in the general direction of a urinal is kind of acceptable, I mean; statistically some will go where it is meant to. The more beer consumed on the premises translates as more urine on the floor and walls and even, it seemed, around the sinks. Much to my horror, it seemed that urine was not my only problem. There were also other even less savoury items to dispose of. I ran out retching from time to time, saying; "Uuugh fuckin' Christ, fuckin; Christ sakes," much to the barely concealed amusement of Don and Hippie Davie. "How about a swap? Anybody?"

Don was hiding way back in the kitchen area. "I'm not havin' much fun either, it's knee deep in sauce and greasy pots here!"

I, however yearned for the sanitary conditions of a kitchen in comparison to the dank dirty men's toilet. "I don't mind grease, yeah; let's say we swap for a bit?"

A short bubble of silence was then met with a "No, Fuck aff!" I looked over at Hippie Davie behind the bar, but before I could say anything he shook his head.

"I have to clear all the pipes and deal with the barrels and things, I'm the only person allowed to do it and you don't know how to anyway, do ya?" Annoyingly I thought that he must have been making that up, that it was complicated and required a lot of skill, I'd never known him to do a day's work in his life!

I mocked him a little, “Yoo don’t know how anyway do yaa;” in a childish voice as I returned back into the pungent atmosphere of the toilet.

I could hear Don reassuring Hippie Davie under his breath as the door swung closed. “He gets like that sometimes when...”

That was like a red rag to a bull to me, I clenched my teeth, seething with injustice and a sudden desire to pick a fight. I hauled at the door with all my strength so as to shoot my head back through and shout, “Gets like what, exactly?” But in my haste to pull the door open dramatically, I *thwacked* the inner door straight into my own head. I howled in frustration and pain. I could hear the others giggling outside. I kicked the mop across the toilet but then, a little hurt, picked it up in resignation, instantly regretful as the handle had touched the piss stained floor.

Some half an hour or so later I was forced to run out again, retching or ‘cowkin’, as we say in Aberdeen, a much more adequate expression than merely retching. There to my total disbelief were Hippie Davie and Don sitting at the bar having a smoke and each supping a pint of beer! They looked a little sheepish. I was incredulous and virtually speechless for a moment.

Hippie Davie smiled and said, “Oh fuck’s sake, here we go!”

I raised my voice, “HERE WE GO!?! FUCK’S SAKE!?! HERE WE GO!?! Here I go you mean, here I go...mopping up three colours of fuckin’...SHITE through there!” I motioned back into the toilet, the emotion straining in my voice as I looked back into the pit where I had crawled out of, “Ah canna believe...and you sit there having a jolly fuckin’ time!?! Oh ME! Let me tell you, you won’t have to worry about Demons coming to get ye tonight, coz I’m about to hae yez both mur-dert myself’ afore the night’s oot!”

Hippie Davie motioned with his hands for me to calm down and revealed that he was actually in the midst of pouring a third.

“Relax, relax will ye for crying out loud, I was just about to give you a shout. We thought it was time for a wee break, we can have one each; but no more after that or else Fiona will give me fucking shit for it! Don in the meantime was giggling uncontrollably, taking amusement at my bad mood.

I simmered down (instantly at the sight of free beer) and pulled up a seat. As the three of us sat there just chilling out, smoking and sipping beer listening to the radio in the background, I realised I was probably

as happy at that moment as I had ever been. "Fuck, I wish I owned a pub!" I said out loud.

The other two immediately concurred nodding in approval "Aye, this is good," "Aye, aye, exactly what I was thinking aye!" they replied in succession.

I sighed and shrugged. "...Sorry about being a bit moany earlier on!"

Hippie Davie patted me on the shoulder. "Comes with cleaning toilets, forget about it!"

I felt I had to justify my ill temper. "Mind you, you bastards were enjoying it a bit too much, you can't deny that!?" I turned to look at Don, making him recoil slightly into a look most sheepish. "And you should know better, you're my best mate an all."

Don shrugged. "I was only funnin'!"

Meanwhile Hippie Davie just stared ahead at me in a kind of mock seriousness. I did a double take as I sipped my pint, beginning to smile at his foolishness, reading the exaggerated mock concern etched on his brow and eyes. I protested,

"What? ...Well I've known Don for ages, we're coven brothers; we go way back to previous lives and everything!" I looked over at Don who nodded in affirmation.

Hippie Davie now began to exaggerate his feelings of rejection by quivering his bottom lip; it made him look like a lost teddy bear with all those dreadlocks and beard. I resisted the urge to hug him for a second. He shrugged a little in resignation, which immediately shot a bullet of guilt that lodged in my chest and stayed there.

"Oh it's all right dudes, I can always see your love for Don and each other, it's kinda nice man, no worries!"

I looked over at Don shaking my head. "Nah, nah, well yeah, that's true, but you're kinda in that same group anawh?" My voice quivered as I strained to disguise the emotion; as a mere man I was dreading showing this too obviously.

Don chipped in, completely emotionally unrestrained and having no problem finding the words my macho self could never let me say, "Sure, we love you as well, man!"

I was jealous. Hippie Davie reached over and patted Don on the shoulder, "Likewise brother, likewise!" Before giving each other a large bear hug.

I began to feel very awkward; I was able to say that to Don, but only after a couple of years and even then, he wasn't like other blokes, he had no barriers to feelings. It was easier. He didn't bottle everything up like the rest of us. Now he was sharing a hug with Hippie Davie and their ease sharing feelings in such a way made me more jealous and slightly uncomfortable at the same time.

Hippie Davie started fiddling with his tobacco pouch, "Cool, cool, well I always kinda thought you didn't like me too much at first, dude!"

I sucked my top lip, "No, no not at all, I..." I cleared my throat a little to maintain my normal tone; I was worried it was getting a little higher pitched in order to suppress the underlying emotion that was building as I clenched the muscles in my throat. 'Damn beer, damn hippies,' I thought.

"Not at all, I erm, kind of thought the same as you, really, you didn't like me as much as perhaps, Don or The Doc and stuff!" I was careful not to use words like "felt" or "cared."

Hippie Davie looked a little put out. "Nah man, c'mon did I give you that vibe? Naaah dude, I can honestly say I never did not like you, Sensible!"

I now felt a little embarrassed and felt the need to qualify what I had accused him of now! "Well, yeah, you know, not 'not liked,' you know but I mean, with all the Jedi stuff and sometimes we seem to argue about, well my scientific views, which is a stumbling block for me. I suppose that I gathered you might be a little exasperated with me at times...it's nothing! Forget about it!"

Hippie Davie fidgeted and shifted a little closer,

"Man I can honestly say I'VE NEVER thought bad of you or been exasperated by you! In fact, I totally respect your views and thoughts, dude, that's true! Just ask Wolf, he'll tell you! Am always bigging you up to him man!"

The thought of Hippie Davie bigging me up to Wolf both surprised me and caught me off guard, making me a little emotional. I puffed my cheeks and clenched my lips, just to make sure they wouldn't visibly start to quiver. I shuffled, still thinking how to respond (it took careful consideration at this point) when Hippie Davie held his hand up in a friendly gesture. I shook his hand, it was a good feeling and all a proper bloke requires for emotional contact with another bloke, as stipulated in the rules that all males get drilled into them when they take you into that little room in primary seven and read out the man-rules

handbook! (Or as my former girlfriend Jen had referred to it – the bastard’s handbook). But of course, Hippie Davie being a Hippie and me being a member of the cooler anarchistic counter culture also, meant that no rules, however sacred were, erm, sacred!

“Oh c’mon Sensible, I luv ya man!” He then got up and flung his arms around my neck. That was too much, I hugged him back.

“I luv ya too, man! Like, totally respect you too and everything.” But the last words didn’t get out, drowned out as they were by escaping sobs wrenched from a throat near clenched to the point of cramping up with the effort of holding in the emotion.

“Awwwwwwwh isn’t this cute!?” Don said slowly and deliberately getting up and covering us both in an effeminate group hug.

Hippie Davie continued, “You guys are family to me, man!”

Don chimed in “We’re all brothers of the craft!”

I reaffirmed, now no longer hiding my emotional outpouring; “The musketeers, man, best mates!”

Then it occurred to me it was way after closing time, we had been drinking beer all day and we were in our favourite pub in the middle of the night, essentially to defend each other. The ritual had begun and we hadn’t realised it! I looked down at Hippie Davie’s open army bag; the Badb triskele glowed up at me.

Then I pushed Hippie Davie away a little.

“Fuck me, it’s the beer man, it’s the beer talking. I joked a little, “We’re getting all maudlin like guys do at closing time! It’s the power of the Badb triskele, man, we’d better be careful; we can’t handle this man...we’re not even Irish or anything! It’s getting to us!”

Don and Hippie Davie turned to look at and their laughter broke the tension! Instinctively, Hippie Davie realised what I also had at some level. “Ok let the rite’s begun!”

We finished cleaning up quickly and cleansed ourselves and prepared ourselves mentally. We had done a good job of cleaning and making the surroundings that bit more hygienic. We set about creating our circle and positioned the candles and incense accordingly so. When we put the lights off completely and the effect was quite stunning in that old pub in the dark. I cast the circle while Don called the quarters, that is, invoked the elemental forces of Earth, Air, Fire and Water around the circle at key points. Then we walked the circle with the altar candle in silence and we each envisaged the light of the Goddess entering and imbuing the circle. Hippie Davie then sealed it with the



force and Don called down the moon as a protection into the circle. After some concentration and memory work, by all of us, we were undoubtedly successful. The very room seemed to now glow with an aura, so much so that I looked around expecting a light to be on somewhere. It was extraordinary!

The next step was to try to visualise and invite in the spirits of the pub itself, who we now considered as our friends and very powerful allies. I placed the Badb triskele on the makeshift altar and in an act of intuition decided to consecrate it with Guinness and invited the spirits of the Irish pub into here. Then I concentrated and sent a prayer to Badb asking for help in battle, as was our Celtic right! It worked, an eerie presence crept over the pub and it became darker and electrified. A loud bang echoed from the back of the pub. I looked over at Don who was looking downward, in an effort to control the intensity starting to overwhelm him. I then looked at Hippie Davie who was grinning manically and in a manner that, if I were to turn around and see him like that were he sitting on a couch with me, for example, I would jump off shrieking, 'Get the hell away from me you freak.' It was like he was plugged into the mains, his dreadlocked hair seemed to be standing up in response, as if he had been struck by lightning and his eyes gleamed with a mesmerising kind of madness.

He looked back at me, "Well fuck, that's worked all right!"

Don and I then sat hidden, wearing Mag's talismans, under heavy cloaks that we had prepared. We doused these with consecrated water and imbued them with sage smoke. Sage has a curious power of its own, a strong spirit ally that can cleanse a place. We used it to blind the demon or any forces from knowing our tactics. We knew this was an extremely strong negative force. It would relish a fight like a predator, instinctively going after moving prey. So we were going to present it with a target. Bravely, Hippie Davie was to stand in the circle, apparently alone. This was to create a space, an astral-mental imaginary space, where will and imagination were to be used to visualise a rite that would create an area between worlds which would suck the entity towards it, like a vacuum. For this, Hippie Davie was going to use a rite which he said was inspired by, among other material, the Star Ruby. He predictably enough had entitled his version "The Star Wars Ruby!" This worked as a most effective banishing ritual for those with the skill to utilise it. The original was a Pagan/Hellenistic ritual created by Alistair Crowley; Hippie Davie understood the reality

of this rite. Crowley had created it from other rituals devised by early nineteenth century occultists combining powerful words and magical phrases aimed at clearing a space in readiness for further magical operations or meditation. Now Hippie Davie had created his own version in true Shamanic/Jedi style, using his own allies, - the Force!

First he performed a version of the qabalistic cross. Facing the east, in the centre, he drew a deep breath and closing his mouth with his right forefinger pressed against his lower lip. He forcibly shouted out,

“Apo pantos kakodaimonos (Completely away Evil Spirits).” He touched his forehead and shouted out,

“Force Unto thee!” in a small emotionally charged voice, almost under his breath. It really felt like he meant it, as he paused, to allow the words time to be acknowledged. He traced his hand to his groin and shouted,

“Oh Solo” and then his right shoulder and said,

“Strength of the Force!” to his left;

“Blessings of the Force.” Then he clasped his hands locking the fingers and cried out;

“Hail to the trilogy.” Hippie Davie then advanced to the east as he imagined a pentagram on his forehead and making the sign of Horus roared out:

“Chaos.”

And then put his finger to his lips whilst adopting the stance of silence.

He advanced to the north and made another sign, roaring out “Leia.”

To the West he cried out; “Leia and Solo.”

And to the South he bellowed, “Solo.”

Completing the circle widdershins, Hippie Davie walked slowly to the centre and raised his voice with the words (I.O. Y. O. D. A.) Whilst adopting five distinct postures such as holding his hands in front of his abdomen and then leaning back throwing his hands in the air, like he was catching a large beachball from behind.

Any magician seeing a spaced Hippie dance about with a light toy saber glowing on the floor would probably smirk sardonically. Don and I could not see, but started to visualise everything. This was a good tactic; as it meant we were more attuned to the level of imagination and not being distracted by the reality of the empty pub where we sat.

The pub was now transformed by words of power and images of the mind, which were getting stronger and stronger (and thus more and more “real”) with every passing minute.

Hippie Davie danced in spiral movements, imbuing the movements with energy, every footstep deliberate, like a Red Indian ghost dancer, alive with the moment. When he felt that he was fully tranced out and in the moment, the moment where the energy he was building was almost too much for one person to handle, he leapt to the East. He bent his head back suddenly like an epileptic wolf and shrieked, his body arching and assuming the stance of a clawed hawk.

“I am Mando’a as the Jai’galaar, the shriek Hawk.” He danced around and around on the spot and shouting “The Force is a wheel, turning as I shriek; I paralyse and bring dread to my enemies and I collect their very souls unto me.”

Under my shroud I saw, again, the idea of will being like a singularity, a small black hole, bending space and the fabric of reality itself in space-time.

Then like a manic wide eyed tranced out fiend he leapt backward to the west and then stood up abruptly; making his body into the sign of a T-shape, shouted out,

“I am a hero of a thousand faces; I am Luke of light and the blessed path! My destiny awaits and it is written I SHALL-NOT -FAIL! My will is reconciled with my destiny; I am at one with the Force!”

Then he walked with his eyes closed to the south and stood to face it. With his eyes still firmly shut, he said,

“I use my eyes not, but trust in the force, with love and with the trust in the force.”

Then he bent down and picked up his lightsaber that had been deliberately placed near to where he now stood. The pub reverberated in a smoggy green light from the toy lighting up the incense smoke. He continued;

“As I am bound to the force by love and will, so the force is bound to me; this is my weapon, this is my truth and it runs through my wand, my saber!”

As he said this he raised the weapon to the south and then held it upright in front of his head as a salute. Then he turned around and knelt and saluted to the North.

“I salute you Yoda, as a force spirit-Daemon! To all those who cross and become enlightened ones, as Luke my father daemon shows

that all evil will be consumed eventually by the force, there is nothing to fear as all will be so, so mote it be!"

He stood for many seconds motionless and with a huge smile on his face, laughing and smiling at the North of the circle. From where we were, Don and I, "saw" the spirit outlines of Yoda, Obi-wan Kinobe and Darth Vader exactly as we'd seen in cinema many years before, for this image was timeless and thus part of the fabric of our space in time.

Hippie Davie stood up and shouted out,

"About me flames the pentagram and in the column stands the six-rayed star!"

Immediately I saw the pentagram fluoresce around Hippie Davie in the circle and I was certain Don did too. I "saw" Hippie Davie in my mind's eye stride forward and step into the middle raising his light saber over his right shoulder and sling down his back, fighting ready he sneered into the midst,

"Come on Demon who stalks me; I call on thee to face me here!"

We had gambled on Hippie Davie being somewhat a first wave of attack here, but as he stood there, after his flawless *Star Wars Ruby* I didn't think any demon could stand up to him. His will filled the pub and I knew it would never feel the same again; anyone with half the ability to sense atmospheres would feel Hippie Davie's will in here now, I was sure of it. To use the space time analogy, he had created a small star; just as if matter had coalesced in the vacuum of space to create gravity and light, mimicking creation itself.

As Hippie Davie stood there challenging the Demonic force, all was quiet. We didn't have its symbol to call it or trap it, but that was ok. I had actually seen it! So Hippie Davie had made me draw it on a scrap of paper and he had fashioned a sigil from instinct which he felt suited the image I had described. He tossed it onto the ground on top of a symbol he had chalked on the floor.

He further continued to evoke its presence;

"I command you demon of hate, command you to come and fight! I evoke you here by the might of Yoda and the will of the force!" Again he stood still waiting to strike, but something was different this time. This was our cue to begin our part and Don and I began our invocations.

The Pub seemed darker, very much darker and Hippie Davie's nerve began to waver, just a fraction, as a real thick darkness spread all around him, leaving him feeling very vulnerable and alone. He was in a very dangerous place and he knew it. To his dismay, a very large pitch

black shadow appeared behind the bar to his left. He turned, expecting the image to disperse with the light of logic and direct sight, but it did not. Instead, a mouth appeared and snarled at him; as clear as day he saw it. He froze, resisting the urge to shout on us out of sheer fear. Instead he bravely gritted his teeth and faced it, a lone Jedi in the dark beneath Aberdeen's Union Street in the quiet, in a pub between the worlds.

He arched his light saber towards it, directing his will as strongly as he could,

"I now control you beast of hate, you will do as I say, arise, step into the circle before me and face me!"

But it did not move into the space, instead the vision morphed into a devious grin as the light from his lightsaber faded to a dim glow and then peter out as he held it towards the direction of the black demonic void. Hippie Davie gasped as he was plunged further into complete darkness; it was like being alone in a sea with a shark somewhere in the dark with you sensing, but not seeing it! He waited for the strike as he summoned what will he could to form a circle around himself. However it was not enough because as soon as fear crept in, he was weakened and it was now stronger. Anyone ever taking part in any kind of exorcism or banishing will know that fear is the weapon of such entities as it erodes the will and belief, corrupting faith.

The windows rattled a bit in the wind outside and the candles flickered. Loud cracks and bangs could be heard all around the pub whilst the back door over at the other end of the kitchen rattled madly and loudly in its hinges. He knew this wasn't a coincidence. The entity was showing its strength, a strategy geared to kill off any confidence Hippie Davie still had. Still, Don and I held our positions. Hippie Davie now crouching moved right into the centre of the circle, eyes darting to and fro towards the sources of various creaks and sudden thumps. The centre of the *Star Wars Ruby* appeared less lit and powerful than it did originally almost fading into a wispy shadow of what it had been. Fear was punching holes in the protection; Hippie Davie's star was becoming a red dwarf! He slowly placed the palm sized piece of Mags' rock salt in the centre of the sigil we had created for it on the floor.

Timbers squealed and floor boards creaked, as if something large was stalking over them. Still Don and I held fast our positions and remained still. We were concentrating on an impenetrable wall around us, in a manner reminiscent of the antagonist in John Wyndham's 'The

Midwich Cuckoos,' where the teacher Gordon Zellaby kept his thoughts away from the "children," by concentrating on an image of a brick wall.

Hippie Davie began to whimper,

"No...no, no...you cannot get to me, please; I'm in my cir-cle of protection."

He punctuated the word "cir-cle" expertly as this had the effect of actually puncturing his circle, as if the lack of confidence made a hole in his defences, a hole in the circle. The principle was the same as kids at school arguing in the playground. As soon as one bottles it and loses their nerve, the other kid senses this and goes straight for the kick in the bollocks! Astoundingly, Don and I could see in our mind's eye a large dark silhouette fly over the bar and traverse the space towards Hippie Davie, like a large stalking shape. Amazingly, Hippie Davie was looking at the same thing; as it entered the space with him. This was a very dangerous place for him now.

For a second Hippie Davie's head seemed compressed and nausea filled his senses, his energy was being attacked and he was going to be quite ill and lethargic if this was allowed to continue for another minute. He looked up and then he finally caught sight of the astral image that inhabited the space with him. The spectre loomed over him, allowing him to see it a bit more fully, setting the final jolt of fear into Hippie Davie's mind, perhaps in an attempt to unhinge it, perhaps lesser men would have been. It was huge, it was terrifying and deformed. A perverse, evil manic grinning face filled with teeth and large empty eye sockets fixed on Hippie Davie in the dark.

Hippie Davie instinctively scabbled backwards almost crying out in revulsion. Reaching to the altar he held aloft the Badb triskele from Eire in an attempt to stall it for a vital second and create confusion in the midst of battle.

"I call upon all my allies here; HOLD the infernal here." He threw the old Badb triskele talisman towards it and scrambled back out to the side of the circle towards the North. The disc tinkled on the ground with a pleasant chiming sound which seemed to freeze the surroundings in time. A soft sound like a bird in flight settled like a calm in the circle. The atmosphere again changed and I could imagine the big boxer bouncer loom out of the shadows and grip the demon like a vice. Hippie Davie felt the image of the top hatted spirit walk into the circle and lend his magick to it. Hippie Davie lit a small candle which

was connected by chalk lines to two others, creating a large triangle where the sigil and rock salt lay exactly in the centre.

Hippie Davie stood up and walked into the west side of the circle faced the centre of the circle and lit the next candle; he could sense the Demon struggling in the centre being sucked into the sacred space and absorbed onto the rock salt, right underneath wherein the column stands the blessed six-rayed star. The demonic influence being rendered ineffective in turn. It was trapped but it was going to need a bit of will to rid us of it altogether. As Hippie Davie continued to walk anti-clockwise to the south-east to light the last candle he looked over to our position and shouted,

“Now!” That was our cue; as I said before, fear erodes confidence and faith and here is where “religious faith” has a very real power, as it consumes the mind and eradicates fear, the unknown and uncertainty. That is why the human mind craves it. But for us, faith was a burning star light that would not be dimmed; as Erneh had once told me, “For a witch, there is absolutely nothing more powerful than the Goddess.” For some time Don and I had been concentrating on one thing, murmuring incantations and invocations, turning our imaginations towards another ancient night, for me, Turkish/Greek and Don, Italian! We threw off our cloaks of invisibility and stood up walking towards the circle. Hippie Davie held aloft pieces of rose quartz in one hand and a small incense burner in the other with appropriate herbs for the respective Goddesses burning in them. There was a sudden surge of sensation, smell, sound and intent. In synchrony we spoke almost as one at the top of our voices, strong and confident. I spoke aloud;

“I invoke Hekate! And she rules this night and rules all spirits herein; Come Hekate, she who will bind and banish you never to blight my priests again; back whence you came by the force of my will, you henceforth are banished!”

Simultaneously, Don chanted,

“I invoke Trivia! And she rules this night and rules all spirits herein; Come Trivia, she who will bind and banish you never to blight my priests again; back whence you came by the force of my will, you henceforth are banished!”

We spoke this mantra over and over getting louder in synchrony as we stepped forward. We met in the middle, west of the banishing triangle and clashed out pieces of quartz together forcibly. At the same time Hippie Davie joined us with his quartz and light saber, looking

tired but smiling. We then started spinning in a circle, going widdershins whilst chanting the mantra all the time. We became louder and louder and faster and faster. Every time Don and I said, "Force of will" Hippie Davie joined in with the "Will of Force!" simultaneously. It had a magical and mesmerising effect. We then grew further apart until we were at the edges of the circle. We drew an Earth invoking pentagram over the sigil and the rock salt; then we sent the whole pentagram spiralling faster and faster. I mused that it was like an event horizon and it began to shrink, gaining pace as it did so. We saw the flames of the pentagram grow larger and stronger in our minds until it consumed the target within. In our minds we called on the elementals of earth to help hold the demon in the salt.

Eventually the pentagram shrank and disappeared into a singular spot, as our imaginations followed it down to the level of the atoms of the crystal lattice. I was reminded in a flash of the prison for General Zod in Superman 2. We all then sat down and Hippie Davie directed us to visualise being together on the astral, chasing the influence away from us. We saw each other surrounded in purifying flames, Hippie Davie with a strange bluey-green glowing light saber and Don holding a bow with a crown on his head.

"Wow, I think I can see you guys with weapons," I said.

"Mmmm wow Sensible you seem to be holding a large knife which seems to be on fire!" said Don.

Hippie Davie acknowledged this as if it was quite apparent, "Yep, let's go, all for one!" and we all repeated "And one for all!" Then we chased after our quarry.

As I visualised the scene and allowed the image to form in my mind, I had an impression of a small, squirming animal-like figure caught in a trap. I was contemplating just how much this was my own imagination filling in the gap; or whether it was an impression of some reality when the image quickly changed, without any apparent effort on my part. The image now gave way to a strong impression of a spinning neutron star or something that reminded me of that. I realised, somewhere deep down, that I was seeing it 'for real,' not clothed by my mind but more like it really was, a representation of it actually. It wasn't an entity at all as such, but conscious mental energy; a small vortex of will power gone awry, given birth by concentrated effort and then sustained by its own mass. Like a rip in time and fate it was a little gravitational lens to bend our fate, to deflect us from our



real destinies and cause untold havoc in our lives; the personification of ill will.

And that's what it was all about, I realised, in that moment with my Goddess consciousness expanding my mind. Life was about living according to your own will, fulfilling your own destiny and being at peace with that. The phrase that Hippie Davie had pointed out with glee that Gerald Gardner had transposed to Wicca from Aleister Crowley came to mind, "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law; love is the law, love under will!" However, life was a constant struggle to attain that against the slings and arrows of other people's agendas or wants and needs. We often have to toe the line rather than be ourselves.

We chased the entity. Occasionally Don would fire a bow at it, causing it real pain, I imagined. I thought that after this intervention the demon would never come to Aberdeen again, we were safe! It was banished, it was gone! We all then picked up a corner of the small piece of cloth which lay under the salt and sigil, bundled it all together and tied it at the top. Don would drop that into the briny water of the quay later, the rock salt forever dissolved among the mighty North Sea. Thus we thought it could never make itself a body here again and be forever dispersed in the north east. (Its body, if it ever tried to inhabit the astral realm with us here, would forever have this quality).

There was only one thing left to do and that was bind The Doc and his crew, so that they wouldn't be able to direct anything like that towards us again. We had some of his hair and some photos of him that we attached to a small sackcloth doll we had acquired for the purpose. We all meditated on it silently for a few minutes and when we were ready we spoke to it.

"I call you, Doc!" I said making contact with it and my wand. "I hope and pray that you will see I always loved you as a friend, as a brother even and I have done little to merit your hatred towards me; with that in mind, I bind you from further attacking me! With regret and love, I wish the Goddess helps you find healing. But I will not allow you to obstruct my will to live my life in accord with my own will and destiny."

Don and Hippie Davie spoke their mind also, each being careful not to create further negativity. All half decent magicians worth their salt know this.

Using magick for defence, of course is legitimate, especially in a case like this. However; I think magick should basically be viewed as a martial art, such as Aikido or Jujitsu. Every person has the right to follow their own will and destiny and it harm none as we Witches say! So if an aggressor is trying to prevent you from following your own will, magick, like Aikido or Jujitsu is best utilised to redirect the energy back like karma or deflect it. I especially think we magicians should take our leave from Morihei Ueshiba (O Sensei) the founder of Aikido. Aikido was developed for world peace; to teach people the error of their ways; O Sensei understood this idea well. Magick should be about spiritual development and self-alchemy; making yourself "gold." If you start acting like a power mad bully or try to influence every aspect of your life then you will never develop as a person.

We ate furiously; to ground ourselves as daylight crept under the door. We thanked our friends, our new allies and also we thanked Badb and each Goddess in turn. We tidied up and with much fatigue shuffled outside and locked up.

Don turned to Hippie Davie, as he locked the door, "Phew, thank fuck for that, you think that's it; for good like?"

Hippie Davie nodded. "Oh fuck yeah, we sent it back alright...though...neither of us should venture into that basement place in Edinburgh, wherever it is!? I have a feeling that it may still have some reach under there, lurking in the darkness!"

I knew it, too. "Mmmm yeah, it'll still have a bit of reach there, where it was made as it were, but not as much, I have the impression that it is a shadow of its former self, but still a nasty presence nonetheless. I pity anyone that spends any time there, but fuck it, not our fault, people will never know how close it came to being free and people will never know how we stopped that thing from getting out and creating problems. We should be thanked for locking it up in those dark cellars below reality, wherever that was. I guess it will eventually disappear without any attention anyway!" I didn't know where this place I had seen had been, but I felt it was very dark, dank and old, as if a series of almost medieval looking streets, still intact, under the very city itself. I could see it in my mind's eye. The entity would be cautious but always present and much more pissed off. Although, how could this be? There wasn't really a weird old cavernous town underneath Edinburgh was there? Of course, that couldn't be for real! I mused that this place obviously existed in the astral and so must

be long gone, therefore the presence must have been removed from the physical, thankfully!

Still, we felt a sense of relief after that night, free from a presence we'd grown used to. It was difficult to describe, but it was only now when this nagging presence was gone, that we realised the weight that had been there, like an albatross around our necks. We had rid ourselves of the terrible demonic form raised against us but how could we be sure this was going to end our woes in this department.

Some hundred and fifty miles away, on a cobbled street a guy with chaos magick symbols inscribed on his leather jacket was punched square in the face for looking a bit too long in the direction of a group of lads out on a binge pub crawl in the west end. He received a beating which meant he would flee Edinburgh for some time and go home. It would end up being a good move for him, he would befriend old friends from school and feel less of an outsider and not need to prove himself by the excitement of black magick. He also would discover the healing arts after as his own bones slowly mended.

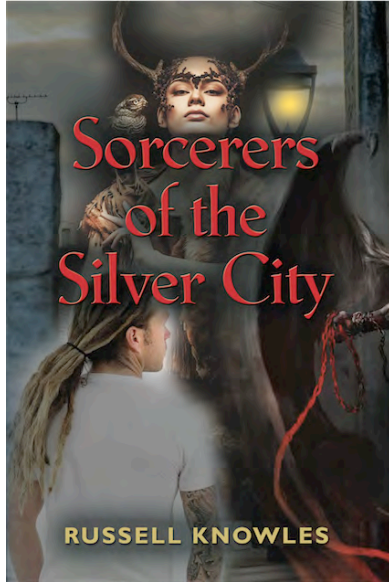
A few days later, one of his mates, a neurotic person, would start dreaming of the demon walking around in the darkness. He saw it cock its massive shaggy head backwards and scream up through the streets at him to set it free, accusing him of locking it there. He would wake up covered in sweat, as the beast's screams morphed into the sound of air brakes of large buses squealing outside in the street as he awoke. He eventually developed so much paranoia that he ran into St Giles Cathedral on Parliament Square, Edinburgh and flung himself on the floor sobbing. There was no exorcism; he was taken to a sanatorium, where he spent the next year drugged and lost to the world. He realised he had done something which could not be repaired, that he was responsible for something that would continue to haunt him for a long time to come.

And The Doc, who had been dossing with a guy who had to go home after being beaten up, had no choice but to return home himself. Walking alone back towards his mother's house in Torry, he walked tall, the mighty shaman that no one should mess with. In his mind, people moved before him in swathes as he walked through the crowds. As he walked along the streets of Torry, two boys of about thirteen years old walking in the opposite direction saw him coming. They nudged each other, amused at the sight of a greasy-haired bespectacled lank goth-like man with balding hair and big clumpy boots walking

towards them. The Doc stared ahead, to command the respect he deserved and walked towards them sneering. The kids passed by laughed and began to taunt him.

The Doc sneered, "I'm not the kind of person you should mess with, boys!"

This was like a red rag to a bull to these tough kids. "Oh aye!? You? Fa the fuck are you? Ah yoor Fuck-all!" and then they ran around him chucking stones at his head and kicking him and jumping away swiftly from The Doc's slower reflexes. The Doc had no choice but to take to his heels and run inside. They chased him, in scenes reminiscent of the small dinosaurs in Jurassic Park attacking the thief. Like that bad case of Karma as well they enjoying mocking him whenever they saw him thereafter. The Doc hated everyone from his bedroom in his mum's house; it was all he could do. After all "Hatred is the coward's revenge for being intimidated," is it not?



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