

Derketo

From Derketo to Semiramis, I saw three generations of daughters. Derketo was a tall, powerful woman. I saw her clothed in skins with numerous straps and animals' tails hanging about her. Her head was covered by a cap made of the feathers of birds. I saw her with a great train of followers, male and female, sallying forth from the neighborhood of Babylon. She was constantly in vision, or engaged in prophesying, offering sacrifice, founding cities, or roving about. She and her followers drove before them scattered tribes with their herds, prophesied on the subject of good dwelling places, piled up stones some of which were immense, offered sacrifice, and practiced all kinds of wickedness. She drew all to herself. She was sometimes here, sometimes there. She was everywhere honored. She had in her old age a daughter, who played a part similar to her own. I saw this vision in a plain, by which was signified the origin of the abomination. Lastly, I saw Derketo as a frightful old woman in a city by the sea. She was again carrying on her sorcery by the seashore. She was in a state of diabolical ecstasy, and she was proclaiming to her people that she must die for them, give her life for them. She told them that she could remain with them no longer, but that she would be transformed into a fish and as such be always near them. She gave directions for the worship to be paid her and, in presence of the assembled multitude, plunged into the sea. Soon after a fish arose above the waves, and the people saluted it with sacrifices and abominations of all kinds. Their divinations were full of mysteries, signs, etc., connected with water. Through Derketo's instrumentality, an entire system of idolatry arose.



After Derketo, I saw another woman, the daughter of Derketo. She appeared to me on a low mountain, which signified that her position was more powerful than that of her mother. This was still in Nemrod's time, for they belonged to the same age. I saw this daughter leading a life even wilder and more violent than her mother's had been. She was engaged most of her time in hunting, attended by crowds of followers. She often went to a distance of three hundred miles, pursued wild animals, offered sacrifice, practiced witchcraft, and prophesied. In this way numerous places were founded and idolatrous worship established. I saw this woman fall into the sea while struggling with a hippopotamus.

Her daughter Semiramis I saw upon a lofty mountain surrounded by all the kingdoms and treasures of the world, as if Satan were showing them to her, giving them to her. I saw that Semiramis put the finishing touch to every abomination of the Babylonian race.

In the earliest times power over others was held more peaceably and was vested in many; later on unlimited jurisdiction was possessed by single individuals. These latter then became the leaders, the gods of their followers, and they formulated various systems of idolatrous worship, each according to his own ideas. They could also perform wonders of skill, valor, and invention, for they were full of the spirit of darkness. Thence arose whole tribes, first rulers and priests combined, later of priests alone. I have seen that, in those days, women of this stamp were more numerous than men. They were all in interior communication, connected with one another by feelings, thoughts, and influence. Many things narrated of them are imperfect recitals of their ecstatic, or mesmeric expressions relative to themselves, their origin, their doings uttered sometimes by themselves, at others by their devilish clairvoyants. The Jews also had many secret arts in Egypt. But Moses, the seer of God, rooted them out. Among the rabbis, however, many such things existed as points of learning. Later on these secret arts became low, vulgar practices among wandering tribes, and they still exist in witchcraft and superstition. But they have all sprung from the same tree of corruption, from the same low kingdom of darkness. I see the visions of all that engage in such practices either just above or entirely under the earth. There is an element of the same in magnetism.

Water was held specially sacred by those early idolaters. It entered into all their service. Whether divinations or ecstasies, they always began by a gazing into water. They had ponds consecrated to that purpose. After some time, their ecstatic state became habitual, and even without the aid of water they had their evil visions. I have seen the way in which they had those visions and it was indeed singular. The whole earth with all that it contains seemed to be once more under water, but veiled as in a dark sphere. Tree stood under tree, mountain under mountain, water under water. I saw that those enchantresses beheld all that was going on: wars, nations, perils, etc., just as is done at the present day, only with this difference that the former put what they saw into effect, made good what they saw. Here was a nation to be subdued, here one to be taken by surprise, there a city to be built. Here were famous men and women, and there was the plan by which they might be outwitted; in fine, every item of their diabolical worship was seen before reduced to practice by those females. Derketo saw in vision that she should cast herself into the sea and be transformed into a fish, and what she saw,

she hesitated not to carry into effect. Even the abominations practiced in their worship, were all mirrored in the water before they put them into execution.

In the age in which Derketo's daughter lived, dykes and roads began to be constructed. She raided down into Egypt itself. Her whole life was one series of movings and hunting expeditions. Her adherents belonged to the tribe that had plundered Job in Arabia. The diabolical worship of Derketo's people became systematized first in Egypt. Here it took such hold that, while the witches sat in the temples and in chambers on strange-looking seats before various kinds of mirrors, their visions, communicated while actually seen, were reported by the priests to hundreds of men who engraved them upon the stone walls of caverns.

Strange that I should see all those abominable chief instruments of darkness always in unconscious communion with one another! I saw similar actions and things going on in different places among similar instruments of the evil one. The only difference among them was that which arose from the diversity of manners and customs among the several nations and the different degrees of depravity into which they had fallen. Some had not as yet sunk so deep in these abominations, and were not so far removed from the truth; those, for instance, from whom the family of Abraham and the races of Job and the Three Kings sprang, as also the star worshippers of Chaldea, and they that had the Shining Star

When Jesus Christ came upon earth, when the earth was soaked with His Blood, the fierce influence of such practices was considerably diminished, and witchcraft lost much of its power. Moses was a seer from his cradle, but he was according to God and he always practiced what he saw.

Derketo, her daughter, and her granddaughter Semiramis lived to be very old, according to the general age of that time. They were tall, powerful, mighty, such as would almost frighten us in our day. They were inconceivably bold, fierce, shameless, and they carried out with astonishing assurance whatever the evil one had shown them in vision. They felt their own power, they thought themselves divinities; they were facsimiles of those furious sorcerers on the high mountain that perished in the Deluge.

It is touching to see how the holy patriarchs, although they had frequent revelations from God, had nevertheless to suffer and to struggle unremittingly in order to keep clear of the abominations that surrounded them. And again, is it affecting to remember in what secret, what painful ways salvation at last came upon earth, while all went well with demonolatry, while all things were made to subserve its interests.

When I saw all this, the immense influence exercised by those goddesses and

the high worship they received over all the earth; and, on the other side, when I contemplated Mary's little band with whose symbolical picture in the cloud of Elias, the philosophers of Cyprus sought to couple their lying abominations; when I saw Jesus, the Fulfillment of all promises, poor and patient, standing before them teaching and afterward going to meet His Cross—ah, that made me inexpressibly sad! But after all, this is the history of the truth and the light ever shining in the darkness, and the darkness not comprehending it. And so it has been and so it is still, the same old story even down to our own day.

But the mercy of God is infinite. I have seen that at the time of the Deluge, many, very many were saved from eternal punishment. Fright and anguish converted them to God. They went to Purgatory, and Jesus freed them on His descent into hell.

Numbers of trees escaped being uprooted by the waters of the Deluge. I saw them thriving again, but most of them were covered, choked up by mud.