

Nuit of the Milky Way
Alchemical Journeys of the Questing Twins
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∞ **Ritual 5. Realm of Leo: the Fiery Lion** ∞
We use Vital Energies for Good

THE TEMPLE OF ALCHEMY

PRIEST/ESS ALCHEMIST (*TO THE TWO APPRENTICES*): You now face ordeal by fire. You learn to use vital energies for good. To do this from experience and not just from teachings, you need to enter the fifth Gate of Leo, and receive within yourselves the Fire of Kundalini, Goddess of the Life Force.

ORACLE OF THE GODDESS KUNDALINI OF INDIA

PRIESTESS ALCHEMIST: Divine Kundalini, the World's Mother, Hidden Fire, Mystic Life Force, Devi, Shakti, arise within us and bring us eternal life! For without Thee we are as lifeless shadows astray in this land of delusions, entangled in dead thoughts, stale emotions, sucked of energies by debilitating forces which we cannot control. Aid us, helpless wanderers lost in this dream of existence, fearing that when the nightmare ends we shall be no more.

ORACLE: Seek Me throughout all the realms of being with selfishness, and you shall never find Me! You acknowledge that from Me proceed the vital flames of the Cosmic Life Force. But why do you seek my Power? Do you love Me, your Mother? Do you desire to bring to birth, to care for others, as I do? Or rather do you seek My energy that you may increase your importance without regard for your fellows? A planet savaged by power-hungry humans is left a waste land, devoid of all living things, pock-marked with craters. And as with a planet, so with my children, both human and beast. For My Fire either creates or it destroys. It will never for long lie inactive. It is not the Fire Goddesses who destroy planets in their anger: it is Their children who lay waste through war and greed.

My occult Power may be still more misused both by the foolish and the wicked. But know that a severe penalty is paid by the ill-doer for each act that misuses My Force, whether in this world or the next. For though permission to use or misuse My Gift is granted, in order that free choice may bring wisdom through experience, part of that experience is gained through paying the penalty for wrongdoing. If you truly seek My creative energy with good intention, find Me in the Heart of Love. Feel Me through parenthood, through caring for all existences. Then your noble ideals, your great projects, will come easily into manifestation with ever increasing effectiveness. Take heed to balance force with gentleness. For know that my Power comes through the harmony of two energies of the Sun and of the Moon: of Fire and of Water: of Gold and Silver. These are symbols: they who truly know Me feel Me within themselves.

PRIEST/ESS ALCHEMIST (*TO APPRENTICES*): You will now enter trance, and enter the Temple of the Zodiac with the central Sacred Flame, from which the diverse constellations proceed. If you have the courage, you will pass through the Gateway of Leo. You, Aiden, will report to us as you make the journey. We join you in your quest.

MUSIC. TRANCE JOURNEY.

AIDEN: I find it easier now to enter trance. The familiar Temple helps me, with its shifting lights and soft music. * * * I find the Leo Gateway. It is surmounted by the figure of the Lion-headed Goddess

Sekhmet of Egypt. A mighty golden halo shines around Her sculptured head. I salute the image and pass through the gateway.

Ah! This is what I have always longed for - why I view endless science fiction and occult films! I am following a procession of monks robed in hooded black cloaks. I note that they are all wearing an emblem of a forked flame – that is, all except me! I suppose I am a tyro awaiting what I have always dreamed of – I am to have the honour of being initiated into an inner Secret Order! Perhaps I should stop reporting . . . no, a voice tells me I may report up to the very moment of receiving the final Acceptance.

Yes – this is what I have always pictured! It must have been fore-knowledge or déjà vu, of a past life as a magician. We approach a mighty Temple, in Gothic style, because instead of a dome it has a soaring spire and above that, the emblem of the forked flame in dazzling gold. We file into the temple through a high Gothic-arched portico. The Brethren are chanting in some unknown tongue – all male voices. There is sound of a muffled drum from within, beating out some unusual hypnotic rhythm. As I file in at the end I am overcome with the heavy smoke of incense and hundreds of candles give flickering shadows. I am being led before a high black marble altar where various magical implements rest – I note clay tablets with script, a long gleaming sword and a huge gold chalice. The Emblem of the Forked Flame on a stand dominates the altar. It almost seems to be self-luminous.

A cowed figure fills the chalice with red wine with muttered words that sound vaguely like Latin. The Brother, whom I gather is Grand Master because of his ornate forked flame medallion set in rubies, addresses me solemnly – in English.

“My friend, before you join our sacred Brotherhood of the Forked Flame, and receive the sacrificial cup of martyr’s blood, you must offer the five-fold surrender.”

A second brother, who appears to be a scribe, intones from ancient-looking parchment: “You who dare to offer your service to our all-powerful Order that secretly rules this earth, must surrender your separate individuality, your right of choice, your worldly life, and instead submit your self, your soul and body to the Everlasting Forked Flame, the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, to be a worthy sacrifice. You will vow to be poor, obedient and celibate. Before you take the final step, do you submit? Know that once you join and then betray us, there will be a terrible punishment in the after-life: you will be tortured in the everlasting fire of the Forked Flame forever.”

I feel a terrible longing to give in – to surrender myself body and soul to this Omnipotent Order, to share its Power. But I send out a call for help. My soul may be little and unworthy – but it is all I’ve got!

Suddenly a figure steps forward, throwing back its hood. She is revealed as no less than the Witch with red hair who guided me through the Alchemical wedding!

I seize the chance to escape from these terrifying monks – I hope without their anger.

I cry out: “Yes, I will be honoured to join your Order and share my soul – on condition that you accept as a member this red-haired Witch!”

Pandemonium breaks out! The monks grab myself and my guide and hurl us roughly out of the Temple, with lurid anathemas. The Witch and I collapse outside the portico, weak with laughter. I am back with you all along with my own soul.

THE COMPANY ARE LAUGHING AND AGREE THAT AIDEN HAS LEARNED NOT TO ABUSE POWER. REPORTS ARE SHARED. IF DIVINE AWARENESS IS DEEMED SUCCESSFUL, THE APPRENTICE GAINS HIS DEGREE. RAYS OF KINDNESS ARE SENT FORTH TO ALL AND THANKS ARE GIVEN TO THE DEITIES.

End of Rite.

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