

From the Flame, Truth: Eight Lectures from the Edge of Temuair

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Spring, Deoch 215

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Preface

These lectures, written and given at Mileth College over the course of many Deochs, are a distillation and application of my two centuries of experience with Temuair, its culture, and our people - Aislings. I now bind and submit these lectures to the college archives so that they may find a larger audience and inspire discussion and reflection.

In these lectures, I discuss the Octave and its applications to our lives, advance a theory of Aislinghood itself, ruthlessly critique the Mundane state and its works, and suggest a path forward for our people and their world. That path must necessarily involve a full and final reconciliation with our past and an agreement to constructively build a new future.

I present this to you, the reader, with a question, perhaps the only question that has ever mattered since the Atavism Age passed into myth: Will we participate in the great work of our times, a rekindling of Temuair? Or, through inaction or otherwise, will we allow it to fade away?

In all things, honor and remember Deoch's inspirational flame.

If we meet each other in another time and place, or another world, remember his - and our - work.

A note to the reader: certain footnotes may contain heretical or subversive messages¹.

Lastly, I would be remiss if I did not thank many people for their support along the way: Angelique de Winter, Etienne Lorneau, Topic Gareth, Merisa Lightbelle, Leanna Runda and Inuyoko T'Alveni. Thank you - whether for reviewing this manuscript in advance, providing me with inspiration, or simply existing in Temuair with every fiber of your being.

1 The Octave

Fall, Deoch 166

"All things. Let go."

Many of you are likely aware of the Octagram, and the alignment of our gods. I won't waste your time with that. Suffice to say, the Octagram proceeds from Deoch, the giver of the spark, to Sgrios, the taker of it.

The Octave, however, represents that journey - a journey we all make, in all of our worldly endeavours, from heady Inspiration to quiet Release. As we travel through life, we are very often reminded that history, and indeed time itself - is a wheel. We exist in a cycle of explosive inspiration that must in all cases proceed to a conclusion - a release.

Let us take a look at how the Octave, this journey, begins. Similar to the octagram, we find ourselves in the company of Deoch.

We are inspired. Regardless of our endeavor, we form an idea. We wish for it to make a mark, however minute, on our world. Compassion and Balance allow us to shape what we bring into the world. Compassion gives us the best form for its reception.

As I've mentioned elsewhere, shouting is not generally a way to get anything heard.

Balance lets us shape it into the form most likely to succeed. As you all know, if we force an idea, or use violence to communicate it, the meaning is lost. Instead of an idea, now we have an Idea, and the Idea's Resistance.

Meanwhile, with Gnosis, or really, Knowledge, we come to an understanding of the meat of the thing.

What are we attempting to do? How shall we do it? Where and when?

With Wisdom we can start to have an inkling as to how it will be received. Is this the craziest thing in the history of the world? Or, is this an idea that will shake the very foundations of knowledge?

¹like this one. Not subversive. Yet.

Then we come to Fortune and Courage.

If you have ever performed in front of others - I daresay similar to what I am doing currently - you well know the part that Fortune and Courage play in securing outcomes.

Lastly, we come to that end of the Octagram that so many love to fear: Sgrios.

In the Octave, Sgrios is associated with release.

I wish to speak of this briefly. Many people claim Sgrios is evil, but this is not so.

Chadul, yes - a horrible shambling mess from outside time itself; but Sgrios, no.

Simply put: all endeavors must conclude.

All octaves end. Even us Aislings know well that we too must die. Whether through exhaustion in combat or simply because our spark dulls and dims, we too, conclude. Even the heartiest of us “die” and rise again. A new cycle begins. And, frankly, each and every one of us can speak a name that simply vanished, their spark leaving us forever. Release. All things. Let go.

What is life without the certitude that it too, concludes? A meaningless game to be played forever? No. This is not so.

The lives of Aislings progress in a similar way. Our own personal octaves begin and end throughout the natural course of our lives. Our years begin with the inspiration and compassion of Spring, followed by the balance and knowledge of Summer, flowing to the wisdom and fortune of the Fall; and finally, the courage and release of Winter.

Let me give an example. In the spring we are released from the grip of Winter. We go outdoors, we partake in the Sun once more, we dance and play. We have a newfound compassion for others as the Sun re-energizes our very souls. We are alive!

In the summer, we find a balance, as the Sun may in fact become too hot or oppressive. The pendulum swings backwards: regardless of the burns on our skin, we still may yet enjoy lovely nights and swimming in rivers with a special someone. And we have bursts of knowledge, and effort, that lead to lively discussions or discoveries. This, however, cannot last.

In the fall, a wise man prepares for the cold, the crunch of feet across snow. If fortune blesses us, we find ourselves with adequate supplies to make the winter pleasurable. I feel, by definition, this must include chocolate in large amounts.

The winter generally challenges us. It feels unnatural; a lack of life itself. We find the courage to continue on, to keep going; to believe in renewal. Yule symbolizes this release and summation of the year, and the cycle begins again.

This cycle can be found in all our works and thoughts. Our lives, our relationships, our politics, and our guilds. No man or woman can long escape the nature of the cycle.

It is instead our challenge, as Aislings, to reinvigorate ourselves and others for the beginning of the next. History is littered with the shattered husks of those who attempted to short circuit this process - or to exempt themselves from it. The Anaman Pact, that madman Jean in Loures - nothing but misfortune and gibbering madness lies down the hallway of attempted immortality. In truth: the octave cycle lives on and on.

Eight Deochs makes a full trip, as you may know. But wise men know too, that this, is part of another larger cycle, and another; and another. Eight by eight Deochs, or 64 Deochs; it was once even said among the Aosda that the completion of eight “major octaves” would begin a great renewal (For us, that would be every five hundred and twelve Deochs).

I’ve been alive for two and a half major octaves. Truth be told I might be here for two and a half more. Will we meet here again one day at the conclusion of a great cycle? Or are we called to different paths? Only time will tell.

In conclusion.

Don’t be afraid to let go. The greatest trauma an Aisling can face is trying to swim upstream; to fight and ignore the cycle; to refuse the wheel the room and authority to make its natural transit.

Do we cling to behaviors that would be best left aside, in our childhood?

Do we force relationships to continue that are in desperate need of renewal?

Do we cling to patterns and thoughts, and cower for fear of being flung into new and confusing places?

Release. Let go. Forward is the only direction.

2 The Path of the Aisling

Fall, Deoch 166

“Most importantly, this tells me that we all - the educated, the ignorant, the mighty and the meek, suffer from the same thing: complete, utter, and overwhelming boredom.”

Now, I wish to talk to you about Aislings. Because of the nature of this topic and our history, we must include various heresies. I hope you forgive me and accept this lecture as-is.

A very long time ago, I wrote a treatise on [The Path of the Aisling](#). It was probably....Deoch 37 or so.

In it, I made certain observations about the paths Aislings take in life. I had lived a long time as an Aisling at that point - a good thirty-five plus Deochs - and from Deoch 8 or 9 onward a new type of Aisling had appeared, quite different from what we had seen before.

This new Aisling was obsessed with power and glory, and cared nothing for existing social structures, except as a means to their own end. Many Aislings at the time took a dim view of these new sparks. Debate raged as to how to integrate them into our society. History tells us about the manifold mistakes that were made.

Many of them adopted Sgrios, out of a larger, societal misunderstanding of Sgrios' nature and the path of life itself (remember in our previous class: we too must die. All worthwhile things should eventually conclude and be renewed). It was a way to infuriate the established order. Remember what I have said about an Idea, and an Idea's Resistance? What better way to form a Resistance, really, than to adopt the God of Death as your patron?

This battle raged on for decades. Dim flareups and faraway rumblings still remind us of it, and for anyone who is as old as I am, those wounds may occasionally bleed as much today as they did then.

As mentioned, I and indeed our larger society viewed these new sparks very dimly. Originally, I suggested that the Aislings who wished of nothing more than the glory of combat were, in fact, attempting to return to the safety of mundanity; they were neglecting their own spark².

For an exceptionally long time I viewed my own path (the path of the Dreamer, as discussed in the treatise) as the “correct” path. Those of you who are familiar with Atavism Age Aislings, in any capacity, are likely not surprised.

And yet: here we are today, in the world that evolved as a result of those decisions made and the history of Aisling culture.

However: along the way, we made many mistakes. I myself attempted to oppress and halt change - to be part of a meritocratic society that seized power undemocratically and exiled, Sgathed, oppressed, and manacled anyone who disagreed with the precise and exact nature of their reality.

For these efforts - among others - we were overthrown, and exiled - by the aforementioned resistance. I attempted to tell my guild of their foolishness. I felt as though we were, one and all, locked into an ignoble and thoroughly stupid pattern; that we were in a prison we could not escape. Unlike Rucesion, because I was a powerful enough leader, I merely shattered my fellowship, rather than being removed from power.

I have been asked many times over many, many decades why I am the only living person in Runic Terra, and now you know: it is a kind of extended penance and a constant reminder of the dangers of fundamentalist thought.

Time passed, as it often will.

I came to what I believe is a deeper understanding of this stupid and totally banal dichotomy which so obsessed us older sparks in our distant youth.

I theorized in my treatise that all Aislings eventually would reach a synthesis of these seeming opposites: the so-called elite meritocracy of the dreamers, and those who only wished to fight³ and

²Example: the ancient term “Toenail” or TNL (to next level) - meant really to cover open heresy by powerhunters, but, really - this attitude referred to anyone who wasn't absolutely and completely self-involved as a roleplayer.

³so-called “heretics” and powerhunters

keep fighting after that. Note that you might be able to drive a wagon through the holes in that logic, and it would be laden with all sorts of Aislings. It takes all kinds.

But the idea, in truth, of a synthesis: of a resolution of two disparate entities - this, in my mind, ties into the idea of the Octave.

We spoke of the Octave in my last class, and the cycle of it; I believed that the new Aisling's lust for power, was in fact, a self-limiting characteristic; that it was not possible to build and maintain a society on such desires. I also believed similarly, that to avoid engaging with the real world, so to speak; to never actually engage with the day to day struggles of our kind, was to avoid another type of knowledge entirely - an equally self-limiting path. Neither would provide a stable foundation for a society.

I myself, used to be a talented wizard, for instance, what seems like a lifetime ago - and now I am so unfamiliar with the craft that I look like a rank amateur - an assertion to which I am sure anyone who has adventured with me recently will attest. Ahem.

So it is that we have come to here, the present. Our towns are empty, compared to my youth - our people stand around in mute silence. Instead of the synthesis that I had hoped for in my treatise - that all Aislings would be drawn towards improvement - for both themselves, their towns, and their greater society - we stand instead in the reflexive antithesis, where all that is Old, is Bad - or worse, Boring - and only New & Interesting have any utility whatsoever.

Most importantly, this tells me that we all - the educated, the ignorant, the mighty and the meek, suffer from the same thing: complete, utter, and overwhelming boredom.

The elders had a word for this state: *dorainneachd*. In another language you may know, "ennui".

We are reduced to apathetic shells of our former selves, struggling, like rats on a slowly sinking ship, locked into a deviant's idea of what our world should be like. Simply put: we are trapped in a locked wheel. It does not spin, or turn. It tries to move; it aches to move, to complete a cycle; to start anew, to be reborn; but it is frozen.

Release. All things, let go. Renew! We are not made of glass. We are not stone! We must grow and thrive. Does not each of our sparks thirst for the flame of Deoch?

One might almost suggest that our world is a punishment; for it often feels that way. But as I mentioned...we have arrived here by a simple enough process.

When the first Aislings began to appear on this continent, they were clustered in Mileth. We came of age surrounded, truthfully, by dreamers. I cannot adequately express to you the deep and absolute privilege I felt being alive at that time. There was no heresy. People often laugh at me when I say this: but it is true. There was no heresy *anywhere*.

Time passed, and a community grew. A great outpouring of works, indeed, some of the finest works of our entire Age, were crafted during this time. Surely you have read the works of Chloe, Etienne, Bentic, Cliona, Dartanian, Garland, Lethalia....I could go on and on. Imagine that you wake up one day, and everyone you know - everyone around you, is someone you respect and love. Even if you disagree with them on this or that - you still exist in a greater society which has made the extremely conscious decision to hold all the greatest sparks from within up to the light - to be held in a place of glory.

A wise person would say at this point that I am exaggerating, and perhaps I am to make a point - but when I say that Temuair in Deoch 1 was a special time and place in a special corner of a special world - I am not wrong. I challenge anyone to argue otherwise.

That being said: we were elitists. All of us, to a man and woman. When it came time for our society to do the work of educating, training, loving, teaching new Sparks - only one in ten of us were willing to do such exhausting work. The rest of us responded with fire and flames.

Every story has a villain: and for a time, most of us were that. We screamed and cried for the mundanes to save us; they did not. In fact, I may say, that our extended....shouting and abuse, contributed to the situation we are in now: where the mundane and their efforts are so distant to almost be a hypothetical.

So: we were cast out. And, we deserved it. I am not here to sing the praises of the past, but to confront it. At the same time that I confront it, and accept my manifest role in its demise -

whether as actor, mute participant, or observer - a voice cries out, "What of it?"

Yes, what indeed?

I have come here today, specifically, to speak to you of the need to return to our Aisling roots. Our spark demands us to rise to a new occasion and new circumstances. Each of us must begin the greatest work in Temuair: To set us all free, and on a cycle of renewal and reinvigoration.

I spoke of the path of true mastership in my essay - of a synthesis of disparate wholes. Each of us has behaviors we must overcome, and let go: each of us is trapped in different prisons. We cannot help others if we cannot help ourselves. If you are a Storyteller who demands purity from everyone around you: you will burn out. If you do not see this world for what it truly is and focus on "toenails"⁴ - you, too, will burn out. It will just be a different path to the same destination.

So. What do I suggest: A simple enough thing. Encouraging the spark in everyone around you, but NOT in the manner that we did in our youth. For we live in a tired decaying society: a wise man once said we cannot feed the living by threshing dead wheat. The nourishment of our individual sparks is a singular responsibility: and when we all make the decision to do so, all of our collective light benefits as a result. We must improve ourselves, to improve Temuair. For what are we doing otherwise, besides wasting valuable time?⁵

Inside each and every Aisling is a Conqueror, a Destroyer, an Actor. The Master is at home with all paths and no paths. We must come to an understanding of the mutable nature of Aisling reality. We must be at ease, humble and gracious. Feed yourself so you may feed others. Grow your spark so that we may encourage this fading light.

The master comes home at last, "knowing the place for the first time." The octave continues. The wheel turns. As Masters we must find pleasure in the journey itself, and in the present moments we share with our friends, our loved ones, and our world.

History is useless. The future is unknown. The present is the true gift of life. After all, we are here, together, now, in the present, and we are not clockwork; Deoch has not given us this gift to lie fallow.

At last a conclusion: Live for now, and live well. It is the best and truest revenge against all of those who wonder why we are still here, and why we endure.

3 On Politics

Fall, Deoch 171

"I said before that politics was a worthless endeavour. Are you beginning to see why I believe this?"

Now, we're going to talk about politics. As you might have guessed, politics is, most unfortunately, something that impacts a lot of our lives⁶, and so I thought it was appropriate for a class.

I will state my position simply, and then work from there: politics is a useless and entirely worthless endeavor engaged in, historically, by vainglorious bureaucrats hoping to fill a void within themselves. In its current form, it merely does damage daily to our lives and society as we engage in a pointless game that has no winners, only losers.

As some of you know, I always like to start off strong, dig a huge hole for myself in the very beginning so that I have a lot of work to do. After all, we need to fill the twenty minutes somehow.

First...I've known many politicians. In fact, as some of you probably know, I was one, a very, very long time ago. I've talked about the zeal and maniacal fervor of the early Aislings and it should not at all surprise you that our politicians, at the time, were the distilled and bottled version of this. Another way of saying that would be to put it baldly: we were fanatics.

⁴mathematics, and bad mathematics at that

⁵...in a madman's idea of how an MMORPG should function?

⁶There is an argument to be made that this was only somewhat true then, and barely true now - but the points herein are extremely important to Aisling history, *especially* with respect to Mundane influences.

At that time, several political issues became so uproarious, and the implementations of various laws and policies became so antithetical to the social order, that the Mundanes stepped in. It should surprise no one that they have continued to do so, time and time again. Each time that they do, it cheapens and denigrates the democratic process, until it has no meaning.

Politics with boundaries, with limits, are not politics; they are a game. And a badly created one at that. Politics is intended to be a mechanism for governing society - for whatever that may mean. We all know that it can become necessary to reinvent society - to reinvigorate it with new ideas, new philosophies, new laws. As I have mentioned in my previous lectures, the wheel we find ourselves in wishes to turn, to complete a circuit - but is stuck, unable to return to the source and renew itself. It is entirely unsurprising, then, that the political process is a mirror of our larger society: feebly attempting to have impact and desperately trying to convince itself that it has importance and relevance.

Here we arrive at my first point: Our politics are circumscribed. There are limits. Our politics SHOULD be able to guide and shape our society but, realistically - our politics are entirely subject to the Mundanes. Some like to call it the King, but really, when we say King, we mean the Mundanes, and if we can be even blunter, when we say Mundanes, we are speaking of the State.

You see: our politics are set aside from mundane politics. And when Aisling interests conflict with Mundane interests - in all cases - in EVERY case this has ever happened - Aisling interests are set aside.

Did you know there used to be a law against selling red potions for a profit?

Did you know, in the old days, you could be imprisoned for heresy, or exiled?

Did you know it was once possible to be sentenced to death⁷ for heresy?

Some instances of bad laws were overturned by Aisling politicians as part of the normal political process - as you'd expect in a healthy democracy. But some were struck down or changed or voided by the direct acts of Mundane interests, who enforce the interests of the State at all costs.

It is a curious time we find ourselves in. Mundane interests, from a detached, logical examination, seem purely and absolutely limited to the accumulation of coin. Nothing else matters. Aisling complaints, feelings, laws - all are subordinate to this goal. Don't believe me? Try making a law that jeopardizes Mundane interests and see what happens.

Let us look at a concrete example. Sleep hunting has plagued these lands seemingly forever. The Mundanes claim it is not allowed - even though many clearly do it. Aisling law very clearly says, repeatedly, and loudly, that it is not allowed. And yet, this activity has been occurring forever, and will likely occur forever. Why? Simple. There is profit in it for the State.

Observe the creation of the Knights and Rangers. These are not political entities, in the slightest, as they are entirely subject to Mundane oversight. They are a politically exempt enforcement mechanism reserved to the Mundanes themselves.

Why?

Because our politics was said to not be able to handle certain types of lawbreaking, especially lawbreaking that happened far from the jurisdiction of Aisling towns.

A reasonable person who was interested in preserving and improving Aisling democracy would have perhaps suggested that a federated body with lawmakers from all towns, empowered with the ability to imprison and detain, would have been a fine solution to this problem.

The solution that was implemented, however, was not to invest more powers in Aislings - or Aisling politics - but to corrupt our own democratic process by making certain, special, influence-holding Aislings agents of the Mundane state and agenda. These Aislings, some of whom no doubt strive for good, and for progress, are still limited by the overall needs and desires of those vested interests. Do you see? It is a prison. When the state's interests are threatened by the activities of those dedicated Rangers and Knights - they are simply ignored. When ignoring them does not work, they can be stripped of power without consequence and without oversight.

This kind of push/pull is the best case, assuming a worthy Aisling with a good heart. You can easily imagine what is possible otherwise.

⁷banned, permanently!

So. What do we arrive at? A system that cannot entirely police or modify itself, with a different, undemocratic system on top of it that is subject to no Aisling oversight? We have the nerve to call this progress?

I said before that politics was a worthless endeavour. Are you beginning to see why I believe this? Our politics are another toy to entertain us. As I have mentioned before, we are all drowning in boredom. It is the main challenge of our age. Some of us play with this toy in the hopes it is not actually a toy. We wish with all our hearts and souls for a mighty sword we can use to impact our environment - to exalt Aisling culture and to improve it - to shake the foundations of Temuair itself.

Sadly it is little more than a baby rattle. Try as we might to get the attention of the Mundanes by shaking it as hard as we can - we are forgotten, because it is in their interests to do so.

At the end of the day, this is why our politics are useless - because they are not authentic. We do not govern, or control, anything. Much of politics now really comes down to paper pushing back and forth, or grand proclamations or new laws that, in the end, do nothing, change nothing, and are in fact, nothing⁸.

Like so much else in our world, it has been crippled by the Mundanes, and we struggle, mightily, to encourage the spark to rekindle and flow into this realm. It cannot, and will not.

The sad part is that this is by design. Aislings were, at the beginning of the Deoch era, the leading force of society and culture. Our spark infused and transformed the world around us. Deoch and Danaan gave us their love and their flame so that we could awaken the world.

Over time this progress, this process, threatened the Mundanes or was outright incomprehensible to them. And so slowly, the Mundanes enforced more and more limits on the Aisling process. Whether or not you agree with certain laws, we can surely agree that the enforcement of those laws - or their revocation - should have entirely have been left to us to decide as a community.

Our home rule has been stripped slowly over very long periods of time, leaving a shell of the original system.

So, what now? Well, in general, I advise that if you are playing a game, you know it is a game, and it is no longer fun: you are empowered to stop. No one is making you do this.

So I would say to any politician listening, or perhaps reading this lecture later: All things. Let go. Remember the lessons of the Octave. You are not required to engage in this nonsense.

Alternatively, remember that politics and governance, in the most idealistic sense, are meant to improve conditions. Perhaps you might use the feeble and limited tools at your disposal to improve the fabric of the society, or to bring Aislings together, rather than to enhance bureaucracy or show us how great you are at writing legalese. Do you serve a purpose beyond enforcing a decaying order?

If not, carefully and thoughtfully consider whether your political endeavors are worth your time and energy. Remember: supplies of either are not infinite.

To citizens, I would say: consider carefully before participating in the process at all. Does this person improve your life? What is their underlying motivation to be granted political power? When you vote, if you vote thoughtfully and well - change can be possible. More importantly: the act of NOT voting is as loud, sometimes, as the act of casting a vote itself. If you support someone simply because you have always done so, you reinforce the decay. Surely, you have better things to be doing with your time and effort than holding up a moldy, rotting wall.

We must address, also, those who use schemes to stuff ballot boxes - another form of abuse which benefits the state, and so therefore, cannot and will not be prosecuted. I would ask you simply: what master do you serve? Do you seek this power to better others? If not, you stand in opposition to the people. You are an agent of the State, a mere satrap to an oppressive order. Surely, you had higher aspirations for your political and personal lives?

Sadly, I cannot change the behavior of any politician. I gave up on that game a long, long time ago. If I could, though - I would uproot you entirely from the face of our lands.

Instead I will ask you to rise to the call and needs of your society. We do not need needy, attention-seeking bearers of titles. We do not need pale shades of statesmen. We do not need

⁸Again, there is an argument to be made that this is not true at all now - that what little political activity still exists is nothing more than following rote instructions left behind by ghosts.

abusive bureaucrats. No more accords, jurisdictional diktats, or useless pages of idiot reports signifying nothing.

What we need are humane, humble, wise men and women willing to put the needs of their society ahead of their own. Do you have it in you to do this? Or shall we all slowly watch as the suffocating wave of business as usual drowns us all?

In conclusion: remember that there is always a great deal of power in the simple act of refusal. Refuse business as usual. Refuse that which dulls and degrades our collective sparks. Refuse the counsel of the so-called learned and wise, who would keep you in your manacles forever.

Your spark is the greatest gift in the entire world, and only you can maintain it.

If you cannot find the energy, ability, or the will to brighten Temuair - certainly, you can find the energy to say no to those who would reinforce its darkness and bring ever closer the greyness of mundanity to our precious world.

4 The Spark

Winter, Deoch 171

"I believe that is the most enduring lesson of the Atavism age: that in the presence of outstanding, amazing people, even mediocre wrecks like myself can shine very bright."

Today, I'm going to talk to you about the spark. All present, indeed, every Aisling, who has felt the touch of Deoch knows exactly what the spark is. It is life, our life.

We know well enough that Danaan's sacrifice brought the Aisling into the world and that Deoch's flame carries on that work, every day. Danaan illuminated the path, bringing the Aisling into being; Deoch was responsible for infusing each of us with his flame, the thing that brought vivid color to our lives. Our spark is the precious and amazing thing which made us free and set us apart from the Mundane.

The spark is the flame of Deoch living on in all of us. Danaan's sacrifice enabled a new type of people in Temuair. Although we are of the Tuatha - literally, the "Children of Danaan" - we are marked and set apart by the power of that sacrifice, that spark.

Danaan's Era, which lasted almost thirty two hundred cycles, marks the first appearance of magic and the dance of the elements in Temuair. During the Eighth Aeon, darkness was discovered. Along with that discovery came the Dubhaimid, Chadul, and Sgrios. During this time, the immortality of the Tuatha was lost; mortals could slip into Chadul's realm. The Pact of Anaman allowed those lost to Chadul to escape his realm; civilizations sprang up, conquered, and were lost.

The great Shadows War lasted almost a hundred years. During this time, Deoch fell in love with Danaan, forsaking his pact to Chadul. The sixth element, Light, Danaan's most enduring legacy to our world, was discovered. This drew the shadows war to an end. Danaan's greatest work during this time was keeping away the gibbering darkness - bringing light into this world.

Danaan, however, knew that something new would be needed to draw the world towards progress and keep that most precious light alive. For it is not simply the light of lamps that we speak of; it is the light of creativity, and of the act of creation itself, in opposition to the forces that would rip Temuair asunder and drive us all mad.

Danaan sacrificed her immortality for our world, and for us, the Aisling, her most important legacy. Deoch, her lover, decided to carry on that work. His spark infuses each of us with that light, so that we may carry on her work of bringing more light into this world.

The first Aislings arrived in Temuair with this legacy alive in their blood. We've talked a lot in my lectures about how, simply put, our age is a much different age and theirs was a wondrous one.

If you've listened to my previous lectures - I've described both the wondrous nature of the old ages, but also, about the problems that plague our age. I don't like to rant about things and not propose solutions - so the question we must begin to ask ourselves is: how do we bring about a new wondrous age?

If we proceed from fundamentals, we could begin by saying that the nurturing of Deoch's gift in each Aisling is and should be their highest and most successful art. The reason why, being, that all Aisling life, all experience and existence as an Aisling, is due to that flame. Our very consciousness would not exist without it.

We currently live in a society in which these flames are dim. However - each of us makes decisions every day which allow that flame to slowly fade - myself included. We've spoken much about how to bring about renewal. We've spoken about how we can begin - and how we desperately need to begin - a new cycle. Realistically, I have come to believe that each of us needs to begin that work on their own, Whether in public, or in secret - and according to their will, their heart, their fears, and strengths, etc.

Each of us needs to begin that work. Today. Now. Not tomorrow, not a double moon or a Deoch from now - but Right. Now.

Simply by coming and listening to my words, if you are indeed listening, you are engaged in that constructive work. By taking that step and then participating in Danaan's great experiment - we can become more than the sum of our mundane part. We become more than the sum of our individuals. We become that wondrous thing: a collective, a group Aisling, that group flame.

That flame can search out other, even larger flames. And so our society grows, and thrives.

That process of renewal, of course, involves release. We want to begin a new cycle, we agree we must - so we must let go - end our current cycle. Release. But, how? What does this mean? If you interpret philosophy too literally - you may be tempted to believe it means we have to die. But, really, I've come to believe that it means giving up all the previous things that brought us no joy, or are simply rote behaviors we engage in to fill time.

Each of us carries on various activities due to misguided concepts of duty, or honor, or requirement, as I discussed in my last class about the futility of politics. Ask yourselves: how many Aislings carry on with an endeavor because of selfless love, or simply put: joy?

This is a concept that has been covered by many other people, in great detail. I walk no unique path. I will simply say that I truly believe that the highest and most important requirement of an Aisling is that they are doing what makes them happy - what brings them joy.

From my own experiences over the length of my existence - I submit that by creating an environment in which that miraculous spark, that flame, can be seen widely, it will draw it out of others. I have witnessed this myself time and time again in the act of teaching classes, when students ask me amazingly thoughtful questions, or simply exchange ideas with me.

I believe that is the most enduring lesson of the Atavism age: that in the presence of outstanding, amazing people, even mediocre wrecks like myself can shine very bright. All of us can ascend to embrace the fire of Deoch and create a light that can be seen through time. It was done before - it is why we are all here, right now. Without it, the memories of these walls, and its people, would never have endured. They would have simply been extinguished.

We have to return to the question: If this, the greatest work of our age, is not worth it, then what exactly is your spark for? I invite all of you to think about this and discuss with me after class. I've wrestled with this question for long periods of time.

I believe that the high art of communion with our spark not only infuses us, personally - allowing us to return to the source of our Aisling life - but it also allows us to distill creativity and bring it downwards into our realm from the realm of the beyond; from the realm of that unknown Kadath, or Aosda.

Simply put: one of the greatest purposes of our spark, our gift, is to transmute what may be into what is. To bring down thoughts, feelings, characters, dialogue - into this realm, to share with others. To bring joy. To allow us to feel the joy of creation, of sharing, and the joy of others receiving our efforts.

As I have repeatedly said, one of the main problems of our age is boredom. What we are really discussing is methods for bringing about an end to boredom: bringing novelty to our lives and world. Our flames, much like Deoch himself, primarily seek and desire novelty. Boredom is a plague, like Sgrios himself. What is worse than simply existing, with no art, no love, no wisdom, no compassion, no fortune or courage? Could it not be said that in that state we are dead, or perhaps

that we shamble on without life, as zombies?

In each of us, that flame, that spark, once represented something new; something that may have never been seen before. That spark represents raw, unshaped potential - the most powerful force known. It could change our world, and, as we have seen, it can also do nothing. But our spark, that potential still exists. We, in communion with Deoch, have brought it into being. Even if we don't decide to utilize it, it is still that communion between our daily lives and his flame that allows us to express ourselves in the artistic realm, or, for instance, the philosophic realm, the one I'm using right now in this moment as Kedian.

I would say to anyone who listens or who reads this later, we need you. Your world needs you. The Octave needs you. We were not made to make little progress; we are not mundanes. We were not infused with this flame to go unnoticed. We were not infused with this gift to remain standing in lines saying nothing.

Of course, saying something turns out to be the hardest thing of all. And it may be the case that you have nothing to say. After all, nothing should force you to speak. However, we can surely agree, you can, and should, allow others to speak. As I said before; the act of not voting is just as important as voting; the act of not harassing those who are expressing their spark, to me, even supporting and welcoming them, that - that should be a bare minimum to be an Aisling.

I would ask all of you to attempt to return to this great work and make our world brighter. To make Danaan's sacrifice meaningful and to continue to carry on the great work which Deoch started in each of us as that light brightened in our eyes.

Refuse that which dulls your spark. Return to the well, return to the flame, to again live and breathe as we all once did. Find renewal in that flame. Find redemption. Find hope. Find splendor, and wonderment. The world that we find ourselves in represents so very little, and makes so little sense, when it is stripped of its great majesty and its art.

I suggest trying it once, or even perhaps twice, and you will fall in love with it, and it will be as natural to you as putting on a cloak.

The alternative is to admit to ourselves that standing in lines is the highest art we can achieve, and I, for one, am not ready to admit that.

I would love to hear your thoughts on the spark, or, any questions you would like me to answer. Is this perhaps a moment in which you might find a bit of inspiration? Have you been waiting to be heard? We wait, as we all do, for the Octave to complete.

5 On Order and Chaos

Summer, Deoch 172

"Chadul has returned to Temuair as a blanket of mundanity - a blanket of permanent, absolute, static dominion."

I'd like to talk to you about order and chaos, light, and darkness. We've talked a lot about rebirth, and the cycle of the Octave, and now I'd like to consider "what lies beyond", so to speak.

I owe some thank yous for the development of this subject.⁹¹⁰

Now then.

Many people naively assume from a philosophical view that light and order are identical; chaos and darkness too. As philosophers, though, we should hold ourselves to higher standards of rigor. It is our job to examine things from every angle, and in particular, I think this subject to be very worthy of our study.

Let's begin by considering chaos. The unenlightened believe chaos to be a negative - a destructive force. But in fact, chaos, like order, has at least two sides: constructive, and destructive.

⁹Topic Gareth, in particular, for general discussions & support.

¹⁰Angelique de Winter, who published [her analysis](#) of the orderly and chaotic natures of our world.

We're all familiar with chaos as a destructive force. Ceannlaidir is often the avatar of this - war being its absolute embodiment. Chaos, however, can also be a constructive force. What about a war to overthrow a ruthless despot?

Or, we could consider Danaan, the light-bringer. We can actually say that static darkness - unceasing, unending darkness - is actually a form of order. But, so is light - an infinite void of light would be just as orderly as an infinite void of darkness. Unceasing, unchanging.

I think we can say for sure that we would prefer residing with Danaan for eternity than in the infinite void of Chadul - gibbering darkness, slowly losing our minds for eternity, frozen like flies caught in amber. Regardless: the shadows, the interactions between light and darkness, the infinite shades of grey - that is the stuff of life, and of chaos - constructive chaos. This chaos powers our world. It is the engine of its novelty.

Let us go back to order for a moment. A fellow philosopher asked what age of Temuair we are in. Many answers were put forth, some good, some very obviously wrong. One interesting thought is Sgrios. Sgrios is an interesting thought - witness the decay of all Temuairan systems - but it is not precise enough. Although we are in a state of decay, *we are frozen in it*. Recall what I have said previously about the Octave and the cycle of rebirth.

There is only one power we may associate with a fixed, decaying static, and so I must conclude instead that the age we are actually in, is the age of Chadul. Since the battle of Light versus Dark - we believed Chadul was defeated, sealed, but in truth the light of our collective, constructive chaos did not last. The lights dimmed, and Chadul has returned, to bring his unceasing, unmoving dominion to Temuair.

Consider that Mundanes are easier to control, easier to influence, easier to manipulate. Chadul has returned to Temuair as a blanket of mundanity - a blanket of permanent, absolute, static dominion. Our lives become ever more orderly, ever more rote. Soon we may be frozen forever. The final death, and the ultimate victory of Chadul: the death of all Aisling light.

Every eight Deochs, the energy of the Pentagram binding Chadul wanes. He wants to escape from this trap, to conquer the universe, to bind us to him in infinite slavery. The foolish believe he is locked there, bound indefinitely, but we know for sure that some of the Mundane elements wish to provide him with aid and succor.

From the history of Loures as well as our own history, we may conclude that nothing is as important as the total dominion of the sovereign. So it is no leap of logic to suggest that the Mundanes are aligned with Chadul, aligned with the desire to bring about a permanent, unchanging order. I cannot consider an easier kingdom to rule. Long have the mundanes wished to erase Aislings from time itself; to reduce this world to a collection of easily managed static parts.

So again we come to the importance of the spark, and more importantly, of the importance of chaos.

Deoch was pulled away from Chadul to Danaan by his love of novelty, of unique inspiration. As Aislings, infused with his flame, we too exist as novelty-seeking organisms, unless mutated or damaged by our environment. We begin as mundanes, but we are called by Deoch to a higher service, and art. More importantly, our spark is a protection, a guarantee of the ability to fight the static oblivion of Chadul.

Danaan's light provides infinite diversity in infinite combinations, a never ending buffet of inspiration, of debauchery, of new and novel. Danaan's light blows away the dark permanent unceasing order of Chadul, who represents the static, unchanging, material, mundane universe. She is literally a representation of the spiritual act of creation - the act of the magician - bringing definition and the sprawl of nature into existence.

Danaan's magic is, really, the word - in the magic sense, but also in the religious sense. The Word is the mechanism of invocation. We've talked about the spark before. The flame of Deoch is our magic, our way of bringing light into the world in the form of novelty. As Aislings, we carry on Danaan's great work - Deoch's work. Deoch begins as a daemon lieutenant of Chadul kept fat and happy with the gifts heaped upon him by the dark majesty, but he eventually rebels to become an agent of Chaos. With Danaan, he conspires to fight the ordered darkness with the best weapon imaginable: light, in an infinite and ever changing number of forms.

Danaan's light is chaotic, of course, because it casts a shadow that is constantly changing. Even the brightest lights of our time could not keep the darkness away indefinitely. I have come to believe that Danaan was not about defeating darkness - but providing a counterbalance - and ensuring that the darkness did not consume Temuair. After all, Danaan does not wish the material world to become a void of infinite light - that is her desire for our eventual death.

Deoch's union with Danaan shows him that there is more beyond the static, infinite darkness of Chadul - that the light of Aislings represents a leap forward, a new way of being, a new consciousness heretofore unknown in Temuair; an interweaving of light and dark.

So we've reached a particularly interesting thesis; that Danaan's manifestation in the material realm is chaotic, and her spiritual form orderly; and Chadul's material manifestation is orderly, but his spiritual form is chaotic.

We must therefore cleave away this concept of "evil" and "good" from order and chaos. It can, in fact, be both.

The gods themselves remind us of this fact. Some are most comfortable as an avatar of one facet - but some also remind us that they can each be representative of chaos or order, destructive or constructive, and that these elements are not inherently good, or bad.

As in much else, the question of ethics arises from the direct use of the component itself, and not from its inherent capabilities.

Let's look at the other gods, in the order of the octagram.

Deoch, true to his nature, is the very embodiment of constructive chaos: all our creative efforts take root and bloom in his flame of inspiration.

Glioca, pure daughter of the Light, is the embodiment of constructive order. Compassion is entirely orderly, the purest of logical propositions: accept all, deny none. But there are many forms of love. Desire can be twisted to destructive ends, and anyone who has been alive for more than eight seconds knows this.

Cail, beget of the union of constructive order (Glioca) and destructive chaos (Ceannlaidir) shows us that nothing in nature can exist long outside of this balance. Cail represents the unity of these disparate wholes; the synthesis. Cail is the best representation of the infinite diversity within the interplay of light and darkness. Nature always errs on the side of creation, even when it must destroy itself.

Generally speaking, Luathas is constructive order: the best knowledge, the best wisdom, is that which endures and propagates itself. But gnosis, that divine spark, is also inherently chaotic.

Gramail is an interesting one. He can either be constructive order (a stereotypical good government) or destructive order (a government hellbent on dominating its citizens, or at the very least, stifling them and their creative expressions). Law, however, generally speaking, is a logical construct, and an inherently orderly one at that (even if politics is generally the opposite).

Ceannlaidir is most explicitly the embodiment of destructive chaos - although there is certainly an order to war, he is most at home on the ground in a raging battle.

Fiosachd can be all four facets - orderly, chaotic - destructive, creative - as the embodiment of Fortune, there is profit and opportunity to be found in all of the representations.

Sgrios, perhaps obviously, prefers destruction over all else. Anything that returns souls to his domain, he embraces.

Now we can begin to think about these facets in our lives as they relate to our political and social orders. Constructive order might give us well-run towns and systems that respect personal authority and dignity (Danaan, Glioca, Luathas). Destructive order would trend towards corrupt or ossified political orders that do not serve the will of the people (Chadul, Gramail, Sgrios). Destructive chaos would embody the destruction or obliteration of the world for pure spite or thrilling at its desecration (Chadul, Ceannlaidir). Constructive chaos would give us, as discussed, the spark of the Aisling. Creativity, novelty, light, beauty, art. (Danaan, and most especially Deoch).

Finally, we know for sure that Chadul is the worst basis for a political and social order. His influence is subtle, and dangerous; he slowly weaves a noose of permanent order around the neck of Temuair. I have mentioned the need for renewal, the need for reinvigoration of our flame, and a rededication to the great work of Danaan.

I fear that a long, infinite, ordered darkness awaits us if we cannot find our own inspiration and save ourselves, and our world.

Interregnum

Deoch 173 - Deoch 212

“Even an advocate of the path can still stumble on it from time to time.”

Careful readers will wonder what happened to me between Deoch 173 and Deoch 213. I had intended to finish these lectures then, and continue to teach, but my ego got the better of me. During Deoch 173, submissions to the college (as now) had started to pick up significantly. I again, to my chagrin, got caught up in a form of politics regarding submissions to the College and their underlying quality and motivations. I forgot my lessons - the ones I wrote with blood - and engaged in the battles with the same ardor and ferocity as in my youth.

The result? Disillusionment. And the outcome, which was predetermined, did not change. Which is generally the result of such things.

Time passed, as it often does. But the ideas did not pass from my mind: they lingered, demanding attention. I started to work on the classes again. Hearing the news of all the new sparks, I felt the time was finally right to free myself from this burden I carried, feeling I would never complete the classes, feeling that I could never quite encapsulate everything I needed to say, and worried that I would once again fail to live up to my own lessons and the demands I have continually made on my own spark and character.

In truth, some opportune divinations indicated it was time for me to lay these concerns aside - and far past time to revisit the work and its conclusions. I worked on the later half of the lectures through Deoch 212 and 213, and started giving them from the beginning¹¹ in the fall of Deoch 213.

I won't lie, the flood of new sparks back to Temuair was a major impetus. I thought I was perhaps content to allow my spark to dim to nothingness, but when I heard of the renewal of the land, I decided I simply had to finish them and make my position known to history - if only to satisfy the incessant demands of a philosopher's ego.

¹¹as a suggestion of Merisa, and many others - thank you.

6 On History and Memory

Fall, Deoch 214

“We weave as art, and all of us are part of the tapestry.”

A while ago, I attended a class given by Thubub on the functioning of our temples and fellowships. What I witnessed was rather surprising: the classroom was filled with people I have never seen before, asking for more details. What I am witnessing, of course, is our memory: our collective dream, being passed on to new sparks. To be quite honest, it has been...well, longer than I want to admit publicly, but a very, very, very long time since I saw anything like this.

If you’ve listened to [any of my other classes](#) you perhaps know that I take a dim view of our current society. Frozen, unmoving, unchanging: Chadul’s dominion. Similar to the ancient Grinneal: Mundanes work with little progress.

The question that now stands before us is: *shall Aislings work with little progress?* Am I wrong in my assertion that our society cannot change, because of the Mundanes (aka the state)? Admittedly, I would happily concede the point.

I would be thrilled to be so wrong as to see a total renewal of this society. One might say every flash of my spark requires it. Demands it.

But alas, dear reader, I do not hold my breath. Time, and experience, have taught me otherwise. New Aislings especially assume - the state cannot be in league with Chadul! How could that be!

And yet.

We need to look at our own history - Aisling history - to understand this process. Our own culture has failed, nearly totally, to remember itself, and its history. We live in broken fragments of the past: occasionally, dedicated servants make unbelievably valiant efforts to reconstruct these fragments, or to extract new meaning from them. But, similar to how Chadul holds us, and the state, in its grasp, so too do his tendrils creep within our very minds. How often do we destroy our own memories? Multiple libraries worth of our history have been burned, sometimes in rage, sometimes in spite, sometimes as censorship - but always contributing to a misunderstanding of the thread of history.

Our memories are destroyed by ourselves, and by the process of this life itself. This world is a palimpsest: scrubbed clean, written over - yet an essence remains: the knowledge that there is something to be valued, something to be treasured. Maybe it’s why you are here now. Perhaps it is why you attend mass, or why you came to this class.

A fragment of this world, a glamour, embeds itself in us when we receive the spark. We see the world entirely differently from the Mundanes. We live in this world. We breathe in it. We create this reality as a shared dream between all of us. Temuair is the summation of those threads. The word itself, *Aisling*, means “dream” in the old tongue. Aislings were not created by Deoch to toil - we were created to *dream*. To weave and share that dream. We are builders: we forge castles in the sky that others cannot even perceive.

But, too often, there is an assumption that dreams are pleasant, heroic, mythic things. We forget that even our reality might be a dream - or a nightmare. We forget entirely that one of the most concrete dangers of dreaming is losing track of what is the dream, and what is real.

The Mundane suffer from no illusions. There is one world, one story. That story is by in large, mechanical. It would prefer that the Aisling not exist; it tolerates it out of sheer necessity. The mundanes would much prefer that we simply shut up and go about our business, and stop complaining. After all: they have no real comprehension of our history, our world, our fabric. It was something they tolerated so long as it was convenient for them. When it stops being convenient...

We live in their world now. New Aislings come, and they go. The Mundanes? Content to ignore it all. So long as the coffers swell...all is well. All is good.

Pay your taxes, peasants!

You and I know better, because we *live* in this world. We are of it. We see the tapestry: a centuries long battle. A thread that many have tried to carry, including myself. A struggle to

continue the line of the first Aislings into the present day, to continue to invoke and nurture that shared dream. We carry on this work in opposition to the Mundanes. This work has never been supported by them, not once, not even briefly, in centuries.

So: we need to understand history to not repeat the mistakes of the past. Dwell too long there, though, and we neglect the present. We are frozen in the past. Enthrilled by its mirage. As we discussed - this is the realm of Chadul. We must be of the present. This specific moment in history, more than any other, *demands it*.

I want to speak briefly on the concept of worthiness, which goes hand in hand with these concepts. I have noticed a disturbing trend in my life where valued friends and loved ones constantly question their worthiness to serve, to endure, to be participants in this shared fabric. Too often those that carry the flame forward feel as if they are unworthy to perform this service. They question whether they honor the past sufficiently, whether they are worthy of the service they perform, if they are doing it correctly...if they should be doing it at all.

Sadly, the people who *need* to be wondering this, never do. It is those with certainty, without questions, without worry, who do the most damage to our society - not the ones who wonder if they are carrying forward a two hundred Deoch legacy correctly.

We must redefine our concept of worthiness.

I have spoken at length previously that we must not allow ourselves to be prisoners of a mythic past. It prevents us from focusing on the present. We are drug, unwillingly, into a vicious battle: comparisons with legend. I myself suffer from this, as I somewhat uniquely straddle both realms: I have seen legends. I have loved them, with all my heart. I miss them now, with all my soul. I have been transmuted into one, against my will.

A historical past that others consider legend or myth is something that *was my life*.

I persist, but: is the legend actually me? Am I living up to some arbitrary theory people have about Kedian? When people pay me deference, am I worthy of it? Is this class sufficiently...class-like?

I will give you this advice. Let the legends lie. We are the inheritors, like it or not: our participation, our survival, marks us as such. Our endurance, our refusal to simply vanish, is what sets us apart from legend. The legends left. They vanished. Our fortitude and determination mark us as living. We carry the threadbare blanket. We ensure it does not disintegrate entirely. Not the legends, not the miracles of the past, not ancient history - but us, now, here, in the present.

The highest art of Aislinghood is *existing*. The practice of this art marks us as worthy. The flame demands it. Deoch's gift is a reminder: that the height of Aisling existence is to exist in the moment, in the totality of the now - seized by inspiration.

When we are in that present, as you are now, with me - we inhabit the nature of Aisling entirely. We become legend because we practice that art. We are legend, we are myth, we inherit every fragment of that past, an unbroken line of history connects us from when I appeared in Mileth, confused, eyes wild, not understanding anything about Aislinghood, to this moment right now.

Nothing is a higher calling than that. And nothing is more worthy.

On this I would add: when that inspiration passes, as it must, then we are left with memories. Our moments, transmuted into history. Our history, and existence, counterbalances the legends. I am not merely a legend: I am a man, with hopes, dreams, loves, pains and regrets. We all are.

Examine your memories, reflect upon them. I encourage you to simply write them down! Perhaps share them with others. Add your recollections to our shared history. Away and separate from Mundane concerns and interferences. Do not do this to be rewarded, or to seek fame - simply do it. We weave as art, and all of us are part of the tapestry.

Remember the path of the Octave. We begin with inspiration: rooted in the now and the pleasure of the moment. But we cannot remain there forever. Deoch unlocks the path, it is on us to walk it. And walk it we must...or it will walk us.

When you remember and record your times here, reflect:

With compassion: constantly develop your ability to forgive, and to show compassion for those who do not understand. Even Mundanes. They know not what they do.

With balance: Have you been equanimous? Did you talk when you should have been listening?

With gnosis: Where does this fit into the larger pattern? What lessons can we draw from it?
With wisdom: How can we use lessons learned to improve our shared future?
With courage: Share your stories, theories and art with the world. If your works are ridiculed? Let them. A threadbare, forgotten blanket does not complain about a clumsy stitch. And besides: everything improves with practice.

With fortune: Luck illuminates the path to wit. A leap into the dark unknown is better remaining safely at home. Fiosachd in particular reminds us of the importance of *existing in the world*.

With death: All things end. Maybe even this class. End a cycle with these thoughts in mind, but end it. The state of the world illustrates that we suffer grievously from a lack of ability to *bring things to a close, and to renew ourselves*.

Thus we walk the Octave.

If you have heard any message at all today, let it be this: Weave for art - and art alone. We can break this cycle...and perhaps the end of the world will be beautiful when it comes.

7 What Is To Be Done?

Winter, Deoch 214

“Temuair is the sum of all of us who dream within it - no more, no less.”

By now I think we have laid bare the planks of my philosophy, but to summarize: my beliefs center around the idea that our world is frozen, and cannot progress. We looked at the historical state of Temuair in all of its glory, and what contributed to its so-called fall. We examined the aftermath of that, the root of much of the original division in our society, and we have also discussed at length the damaging impact the Mundane has had on Aisling affairs.

In previous classes, I’ve talked about what I believe to be the practicality of persistence. The Aisling is an aberration, a mutation. The very word Atavism means: a throwback to something ancient or ancestral. Therefore, the Atavism Age was a return to a previous state of being: a world of wonder, a time of greatness.

Do you see? Already in the seed of the beginning we have arrived at the nature of the wheel. That age was not a one-off! It was not an accident - it was part of a *cyclical path of events*. And it required the dedication and encouragement of thousands of Aislings.

The entire history of Temuair was preparing and moving towards...us.

I’ve talked before about how I believe we live in the era of Chadul. The unceasing dominion of absolute order. Even with all of the new sparks, we still feel that something about this land isn’t...quite right. There is something missing.

What is it exactly?

We see shades of the past and reach out to grab them. We want so badly to return to the past that we neglect and forget the present. And we cannot and will not have a future without rebuilding the present.

So, now we must ask ourselves: *What is to be done?* Which is to say, having identified the problem - now what? How can we improve our world, and our lives, in spite of the grasp of Chadul on the mundanes and the state? Can we learn to dream together again?

I propose simply, the following:

1. Put aside the past

Aisling unity is now the most important and precious thing. We have all had our arguments in the past, ranging from small blowups to full blown wars. The past is the past. Glioca’s compassion is infinite: let us have a drop of that. Perhaps you feel you have been so egregiously wounded that you cannot let it go - in which case, I ask you - do not make it worse. Do not return to a poisoned well. Remember the Octave: release. Let go. A new cycle demands

our shared attention. Forgiveness yields the society we want, not re-litigating and revisiting history.

2. Be present in the now

All of my classes have remarked repeatedly on the necessity of being present. Many of us are present - but do we live in it? Are we standing in lines daydreaming when we should be speaking, walking, going to masses, listening to classes? This is an appeal to all who hear or read this: be present. Your world needs you. Your fellow Aislings do, too. Light begets light: by existence here, in spirit and in body, we draw others. We can have that throwback age, if each of us acts in accordance with fostering it once more into existence.

3. If it isn't fun - don't do it

We must all live in this world. We must be willing to encourage others to do so. If we wish to make it better, we need to encourage a larger, more comprehensive idea of what that means - a wider hearth for all of us.

Value enjoyment and joy over syntax. Encourage art in others, even if their art is not perfect, or even sensible. Do not dull attempts of other sparks to infuse this world with their own mark. At the same time, do not let your attempts to be dulled by those who do not understand, or who would oppose it.

Simply put, your spark is precious. Use it to shine light, not to dull others. Nothing is gained by opposing joy where ever it may be found in this world - so long as it does not hurt others.

Sometimes, we daydream, and may not respond for hours or even moons. This, too, is expected. We must slowly rebuild the presence and immediacy of the past. That requires time - and effort. Be gracious in the absence of it. We are lucky to have the opportunity to exist at all within this dream of ours - and we would do well to remember that.

4. Be the Aisling you wish to see in the wider world

Each of us has a challenge now. We must be ourselves, Aislings, in this world, not as an act of defiance, or in opposition to others, or to be noticed and lauded - but to **frame and invoke the world we desire**.

Older Aislings in particular - you remember the magic. You have not forgotten it. No one who has experienced it truly, has ever forgotten it. Our presence here, in spite of the state of our world, is not an accident. We lament its absence. Many have asked me how to replicate it, and the answer is: **every choice you make while you are in Temuair builds this magic collectively**. Temuair is the sum of all of us who dream within it - no more, no less.

So, too, was the Atavism Age - a time made, not found.

If you are an older Aisling, your spark is needed the most. Be what you want to see in the world, encourage it in others, and do not judge those who attempt to follow in our paths, especially when they stumble - and they will stumble!

5. Do not worry about the future

Trust that what we have built can be rebuilt elsewhere. Do not despair of what will happen to this world. It will survive, in one form or another. Perhaps if the world ends, we shall meet each other again in a new one. The project of Aislinghood is eternal, and the great work continues. Be not too attached to any one form of it. Trust in the friendships you make, and in the companions you meet. Anyone can put on a cloak and join you on your path. That is the magic.

I, myself, am fully committed to these principles. I intend to remain here for as long as I can, now - having come back and forth several times. Each time I have returned, it has been for a different reason, and this time - I return to be of service where possible. To provide inspiration, to deliver encouragement, to provide succor for those who would join together

with all their wit, power and energy within this world to aid in the invocation of a new Atavism Age.

With your permission, Aislings. The hall is rented, the orchestra engaged. Now it is time to see if we can dance.

8 A New Spark Arises

Spring, Deoch 215

“Be in this world. Inhabit Temuair. Be present. Be mindful.”

I thought for a long time about how exactly to end my class series. Many of you may know I’ve been working on it for some time, and for a while the conclusion entirely eluded me. I had a desire to tie it all up in a big bow - a neat philosophical package, clean and gleaming. Ego more than anything, I suppose, demanded it.

In truth, I don’t think it is possible, because our world is a mess. And I don’t say that with some kind of foreboding, but with realization that it is messy in the same way *we* as Aislings are messy. We now live in a weird alchemical combination of history, myth and legend: something only a handful of us have witnessed, even fewer shaped, and yet...widely idealized.

We wish so badly to return to that magic, and to do that we must confront - at last - the legacy of our past.

What I have always sought more than anything else, is a synthesis within Temuair. We examined the thesis: the mythic age of Atavism. A world where Deoch’s spark was blazingly bright...so bright it led many of its recipients to wage war against any who deviated from this path, even in simple ways.

Fun fact. Did you know I almost exiled Biomagus when I first met them? Because that is what I was supposed to do. That is what was **expected** of me. Heretic, you know. Throw it in jail!

We also examined the antithesis: the focus on the mechanical and technical aspects of our world. In my youth that would have been called a denial of the spark, but I don’t see it that way. Each of us has the right to explore their spark in whatever way we wish. **But we must, in fact, explore it** - not just as an imperative from Deoch - but also to express and explore our own art. When we cleave that exploration, that magic, away from this world - a paltry shadow emerges.

A threadbare, forgotten blanket.

We are poorer for it, as is the fabric of our society.

However, this focus did not appear unexpectedly or suddenly. We’ve talked about how you cannot *force* someone to understand, comprehend or even agree with an idea - use force, and you have now your idea, and your idea’s resistance. In my youth, many people refused to live in Deoch’s spark simply because they were threatened if they didn’t. Alongside that, there was an insular, almost maniacal kind of gatekeeping: only the Worthy shall Advance, and be able to profane themselves at the altar of Storytelling.¹²

We live in the failure of our society to resolve these two great impulses. A somewhat ruthless individualism that denies the exterior realities of our world, or indeed, its foundational purposes - and a solipsistic, communal certitude standing eternal guard over the ruins of an ever decaying, ever more insular fascist state.

As we’ve discussed, a theory of my own for most of my life has been that it would simply not be possible to construct a stable society on the basis of either: that resolution of the disparate elements into one cohesive path was required.

An examination of our society, I think, would conclude that I am largely correct. We spoke of boredom, and the eternal disinterest of the Mundanes. But what of Aislings? I’ve suggested a path

¹² “A large-scale pure roleplay game would basically have to be a fascist state”. - Raph Koster

forward, and I am trying very desperately to keep myself on this path, for better or worse - if only as a last experiment.

The fact is, even after all this time, even after all that has happened, even after all that I have seen - I still believe in Temuair. Which is why, I suppose, I cannot simply disappear. I have seen it over and over - a priest speaking from their hearts during their mass and the worshipers walking away feeling something they had never felt. I've watched students begin to question the nature of our world in classes, a flame in their eyes. The surprise and laughter of others in the presence of that ancient and pure magic: novelty. Our world does not easily yield to the certitude of death because it continually provides us with a inspirative flame that we cannot easily disregard, *even if we only see it in others*.

It would be easier to do so, certainly: to walk off into the distance and drop the cloak. Forget it, ignore it, discard it as some mutation, some weird freak of nature. Allow it to pass fully into myth. In an aeon, someone might mention: Temuair? Wasn't that the place with those weird dreamers?

And so, I suppose, if there is a conclusion in this rambling series of classes, it is this: **A new spark must now arise in all of us**. Those of us who have lived in this world must be willing to honor and cherish its memories, but we *must also allow them to fade*, to make room for new ones. Those of you who are new - whether newly sparked or new to the spark - try to listen to the whispers of the past, but do not be commanded by them. Instead, hear it for what it is - an invitation to discover yourself, to seek a certain glory, to continue in a long project of exploration, play, dreams and inspirative presence. This is no easy path, but it is, ultimately, and finally, rewarding. This is the path of true mastership. No one path is sufficient...we contain multitudes.

Over a hundred or more Deochs I have been asked over and over how to rebuild society, how to do this or fix that or return to something and I say to you simply: **Be**.

Be in this world. Inhabit Temuair. **Be present. Be mindful.**

Bring your energy to Temuair. Allow the collective energy and works of others to invigorate you, to inspire you, to fill you - to summon you to a higher art and work. Inhabit it fully and completely, as if it were a mission, as if your life and the lives of other Aislings depended on it. Deoch's work continues, whether here or elsewhere.

There are *so many other places to be a Mundane*, where the Mundane existence is indeed, a default. Places filled with weaponized, soulless routines. Why bring that energy here? Reject it. Discard it. You will be better for it. Your soul will be better for it. Your life will be better for it. Ascend to the stage, be a part of our shared fabric, our shared dream. If you hear one word today, or have noticed any thread in my classes, it is this plea: **Be**. Reject mundanity in all its works and forms.

Rage, rage against the dying of the light¹³.

All of us, every one of us, has experience of an exterior world which *endlessly demands mundanity of us*. Put it down. It does not belong here.

So, in the end: **just be**.

Be.

Be...or we all shall not be.

¹³Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight / And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way / Do not go gentle into that good night

Afterword

Having now finished the series, I wonder: *what is left for me?* Simple enough: appreciation of the Aisling life. I hope to continue to teach, to meet new sparks, to participate in the fabric of our world. To be seen...and to see. To be.

I spent a significant portion of my Aisling life paying a lonely penance for the sins of a long forgotten past. A relic of a ruined era. No more. I decided, reviewing these lectures, that the time has come for me to stop living in a mausoleum.

Time for Runic Terra to have new members, time for me to put down this weight of memory - time to let the past truly be the past. History shall decide my value, and instead I will focus my time and energy on the present.

After all: **we have a future to win.** Whether in Temuair or elsewhere, the work continues.

Inscribed in Spring, Deoch 215, in Rucesion - for the benefit of all Aislings

*Kedian Tassadar Ta'Null
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