

* Here, for the first time for centuries, a witch has written a full confession — a revelation of her weird inhuman power.

"I WAS BORN A WITCH"

The true story of the "Witch of Kings Cross," a woman who has openly practised witchcraft from childhood. She wrote this—and not a word has been changed.

I HAVE been described as eccentric, decadent, exhibitionist, crank, genius, witch, freak, and so on, both in public utterances and in private conversations.

YES, I AM ALL OF THESE THINGS, AND GLAD OF IT.

Since the age of 15, various gloomy and well-meaning people have been prophesying an early demise in harrowing circumstances for me . . . "You'll be dead before you are 20 . . . 25 . . . 30" and so on.

Well, here I am at 38, (perhaps not always "fully dressed and in my right mind," but very much here, nevertheless), having packed more into that span than most people would normally live in a dozen lifetimes, and I am very sure that this is the case only because of the temperamental peculiarities that have earned me such titles.

So if I were to please the prophets (rather belatedly) by dropping dead, at least it would be without regrets, and with the satisfaction of having extracted the utmost from life—and few people, I think, could truthfully say that.

My main life pattern was formulated when I was 14. It was: "To experience everything I could, good, bad, and indifferent, and fully express in my own way life and art."

A numerologist worked out my name chart when I was a child; its main theme was that my "life and work would lie away from the beaten track," which has since proved surprisingly true.

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EXCLUSIVE TO POST



WITCH'S CREDO

This would have meant death, 200 years ago!

POST put these questions to Rosaleen Norton. These are her answers—unaltered in any way.

● What would be the state of the world if evil ruled?

Precisely what it is.

● What comes for the worshipper of evil after death?

LIFE!

● What is your answer to the old Bible saying that the devil is a great deceiver?

That Man created the devil in his own image.

● Do you consider that your recent troubles were the result of malignant magicians or witches levelling their powers against you?

On the contrary. No real magician or witch would ever work against another in such a manner. We—unlike some other religions wherein preaching is often a substitute for practice—really do practise solidarity, as "a house that is divided against itself cannot stand."

● What are your familiars?

Highly intelligent entities. Collectively "their name is Legion," and their natural state that of high spirits.

● Have you the Devil's mark on your body?

My bodily peculiarities include a pair of freak muscles (extending from armpit to pelvic bone on either side), not normally found in the human body. (2) A rare, atavistic formation of the upper ears, known as "Darwin's Peak." (3) Two refutations of a Mendellian law (that progeny cannot inherit characteristics acquired by the parents. Cf. Lysenko). (4) Two small blue dots on my left knee, which are one of the traditional witch marks. (5) Quasi-feline vision, i.e., sharper and clearer in subdued light than in bright light. Take your pick!

● What triggered your interest in Black Magic—when, where, and how?

Some interests are inherent; you might as well ask what triggered a sense of humor or artistic ability.

● Why did you choose Black Magic in preference to White Magic?

The question is based on a false premise. "Black" and "White" Magic are technical terms, having no relation to the vague designation of "evil" and "good" as used by laymen.

Actually they stand for certain methods of manipulating forces, and I practise both—as must any practitioner of Magic beyond a certain stage.

● Have you ever seen a manifestation of the Devil in any form?

If by "The Devil" you mean the being whom I know as the God Pan, I frequently have that privilege. If, however, you mean personified evil, the reply is also in the affirmative. I only have to look at certain members of the human herd to see ignorance masquerading as knowledge, stupidity, smugness, pettiness, bigotry, presumption, and especially self-deception—Caliban smirking at a portrait of Ariel, which he thinks is a mirror.

This does not apply to people who even attempt to think for themselves; but only to those mental parasites who fatten their egos on the thoughts of others, contribute nothing of their own, and account it a virtue; and using the borrowed authority of second-hand opinions, presume to judge things, ideas and

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However, perhaps I'd better begin at the beginning, which incidentally was attended by the appropriate sign and portent of a stormy career. I was born at Dunedin, N.Z., at 4 a.m. during a violent thunder-storm. *Perhaps partly for this reason I have loved night and storms all my life.*

Storms arouse in me a peculiarly elated, almost drunken sensation. Night is for me the time when all my perceptions are alert, when I feel most awake, and function best; and this idiosyncrasy was a perpetual bone of contention with my mother, since persuading me to go to bed was no easy task—nor was waking me in the mornings.

"Nothing-beasts"

EVEN AT four years of age I would burst into yells of distress and fury at the very words "good night." Eventually the family had to take to saying "Bona Nox" instead, which apparently was found acceptable.

My first drawings, at about 3½, were mainly creatures called "Nothing-Beasts" and "Flippers," which I knew very well as presences. The latter looked rather like the conventional sheeted ghosts, and were hostile to me; but they were kept at bay by my friends and protectors, the "Nothing-Beasts," who had animal heads surmounting a mass of octopoid tentacles, with which they seemed to swim through the ether.

Apocryphal apparitions, various psychic manifestations, both subjective and objective, have always been an integral part of my life; consequently I accepted them unquestionably as part of the natural order of things.

Some typical early examples include a ghostly "lady in a grey dress" who was often standing beside my bed when I was 5 or 6; an apparition of a shining dragon (at 5) which together with other elements in this vision had, as I later discovered, profound symbolic significance for occultists; and a dream of a small weather-board house surrounded by pepper trees, called "Railway Cottage," which I located in waking life some three or four months later at Chatswood, a suburb which at the time of the dream I had never visited.

My only reaction on actually seeing "Railway Cottage," "in the weatherboard" if not exactly the flesh, was a feeling of "Oh yes, there it is."

While on the subject of psychism, a recurrent experience of early years is worth mentioning, as I now recognise it as a trance condition similar to those practised in certain forms of Yoga. My name for it was "Big Things and Little Things," and it always began with a floating state as though disembodied. Then came a feeling of growing and expanding. Larger and larger I grew, until size became so unthinkable that it ceased to exist, and I encompassed all things and was everywhere.

After a timeless pause again came movement, this time of contraction and shrinking down, down until I had returned to my starting point; but the sense of

dwindling still continued. Down through successive stages becoming smaller and smaller, until at last I was a point too tiny to exist at all; a nothing that was somehow still sentient. Soon the growing, expanding process was repeated, back to the original size—and so on. It was a rhythm suggesting some vast form of breathing.

At seven years old two small blue marks very close together appeared on my left knee, and they are there still. I have since learned that two (or sometimes three) BLUE OR RED DOTS TOGETHER ON THE SKIN ARE AMONG THE TRADITIONAL WITCH MARKS.

Although, of course, I didn't know this at the time, I remember noticing them the year we arrived in Australia and wondering what they were; they seemed important in some way that I couldn't define.

In 1924 my family settled in Australia at Lindfield, a Sydney suburb, where I lived for the next 10 years. Childhood for me was the very reverse of "the happiest time of life," as the sentimentalists call it. I remember it as a generally wearisome period of senseless shibboleths, prying adults, detestable or depressing children whom I was supposed to like, and parental reproaches.

I saw comparatively little of my father, who was away at sea for most of the time, being a captain in the Merchant Navy. (Incidentally, he was a cousin of Vaughan Williams, the composer, to whom he bore a strong family resemblance in build and features.) My mother was a conventional, highly emotional woman, far too absorbed in her family, so, in view of our respective types, any attempt at a pleasant relationship between us was foredoomed to failure.

Not that I made any such attempt, to be candid. Family affection as such never meant anything to me; and although I was very fond of two relatives—my eldest sister and one of my uncles—it was because I regarded them as friends rather than relations (and still do).

Spider-Guardian!

HOWEVER as a child my chief aim was to be left to my own devices; and to this end I staged a hunger strike for the right to have meals alone (which I liked to eat on the roof and in other odd places). After a couple of days mother capitulated—apparently not realising that I had access to a well-stocked provision cupboard. Soon after this I acquired a tent which, pitched in the garden, became my sleeping quarters until it fell into tatters three years later.

A big, furry night-spider of the orb-weaving type soon took to spinning nightly over the open tent door. I became very fond of this being, whom, regardless of sex, I named Horatius, because she guarded me from invasion single-handed.

Most of my family were terrified of her, so I could stay up until morning if I felt like it, secure from interruption so long as she loomed in her great circular web over my doorway.

Yes even in the "Leadon Age

of early youth" life had its quota of interest and pleasure. Apart from my own inner world, there was drawing, pets—I always had hordes of these; cats, lizards, mice, guinea-pigs, an opossum, an echidna, a goat, tortoises, dogs, toads, and every sort of insect imaginable were among the creatures I took home from time to time—reading, and a passion for anything grotesque or fantastic, which I have to this day.

I was fascinated, too, by zoology and entomology, which were studied from both life and textbooks with far more concentrated attention than ever went into school work for some four years.

At 9 or 10 I could also have answered a quiz on prehistoric animals with a reasonable chance of winning the jackpot. About that time a family friend wanted to include me among a party of adult scientists who were going to the Barrier Reef to study marine life.

"I MET THE GOD PAN."

★ WE asked Rosaleen Norton, "Have you ever seen the Devil?" She replied "If you mean the being whom I know as the God Pan, I frequently have that privilege." A huge painting of Pan dominates her Sydney flat.

The party, of whom my sponsor was a member, were agreeable to the project after being shown some entomological notes of mine, but mother, for some obscure reason, refused permission.

Side by side with such studious pursuits was that of co-leader (with another little girl) of a wild crew of urchins, with whose aid we plagued the neighborhood.

Admission to membership entailed breaking into a strange house, as well as a grisly ceremony of branding the initiate with a stick of burning cane (from one of mother's cane chairs).

Although complaints were made to the local police by much-trying neighbors, they were on trespassing and general nuisance grounds, as, oddly enough, it didn't occur to us to steal anything from our unwilling hosts—unless releasing a flock of pigeons that were being fattened for the table by the local station master could be accounted stealing. My motive, however, was a nobly disinterested sympathy with the pigeons—which, much to my disgust, all returned trustfully to their loft and appointed fate within a day or so.

This episode was reminiscent of a long previous one, when, as a small toddler, I took our next-door neighbor's Angora rabbits from their cages (not without considerable difficulty) and released them into the adjoining scrub. There was a vague feeling in my infant mind that a cage was the wrong place for them.

Instinctive kinship and sympathy with animals—except for the human variety—is an inherent part of me; I hate to see them abused in any way, while cruelty



to them is one of the few things that literally makes me see red.

The latter reaction has caused me more trouble than enough all my life, through impelling me to interfere on the animals' behalf—sometimes with fists, nails, teeth, and any other weapons to hand. However, my feeling is not one-sided, as most of them, wild or domesticated, respond to me with confidence; the former ranging from a semi-savage circus tiger, who would not allow even his attendants too close to him, to a big freshwater eel inhabiting a creek near French's Forest.

The eel would lie in the shallow water while I stroked it with my finger-tips after two or three visits and some offerings of mince-meat, but was very wary with a friend whom I showed it to; would never let her within touching dis-

tance or anywhere near it, although we often visited it together.

As for the tiger, I inadvertently created a minor furore on my first and last visit to the circus. Having slipped away from the grown-ups, I was found by an attendant, fondling the tiger, which was leaning against the wide-spaced bars of his cage, apparently liking the procedure. (Tigers, incidentally, are a lucky fetish of mine; and "Tiger" was my nick-name as an art student.)

Touching on the other end of the zoological scale was a trick I had as a kid that often surprised people, who would pester me with questions, as to how I did it. Actually, it was not a trick, but the

ability to make moths or butterflies settle on my hands for any required length of time; and how it was done can't be put into words, although a particular inner faculty was used. The insects, for one thing, had to be within a radius of a few yards, and visible, if I remember correctly.

I don't know if this would have worked with other flying insects. However, as there was little wish to induce hornets, wasps, and such-like to settle on and possibly sting me, they were spared my attentions in that direction.

At school I was unpopular, on the whole, being regarded with a mixture of dislike, derision, and fear by most of my contemporaries.

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However, while still at preparatory school I discovered a most effective method of coping with hostile demonstrations. It consisted simply of staring silently and fixedly at the antagonist of the moment, following the child about in order to do so, for the entire day, two days, or as long as was necessary.

This, if persisted in, CAUSED ITS OBJECTS TO BECOME HYSTERICAL, and led on one occasion to a pupil being removed from school suffering from a nervous upset.

The best of this method was, that if asked what had I been doing to little Peggy or Betty or Margery, I could and did reply quite truthfully: "Nothing at all—I was looking at her and she suddenly began to cry"—which was generally verified, amidst walls, by the victim.

In spite of my distinction as a prize nuisance, most of the teachers rather liked me—largely, I think, because they were often amused in spite of themselves by some of my activities.

There was the time, for instance, when having been taken to the play "Dracula" at the Theatre Royal, I became positively Dracula-happy for weeks afterwards. I had a crush on my sinister idol, rivalling anything felt by today's bobby-soxers for Elvis the Pelvis or Marion Brando.

I had enlisted an unwilling cast of fourth-form actresses by bribes, threats, and persuasion, to

enact daily in the lunch hour an even more bloodily serie version of the play (adapted by myself). Our theatre was the large hall, situated just outside the boarders' dining-room.

I played the title role, draped in blackboard cloths with two open umbrellas for wings; and very soon the rest of the cast were hurling themselves into their parts with equal abandon.

The ensuing spirited performance was terminated on the third day by an irate head mistress declaring that the cries of "Give me blood to drink," and the screaming, were putting the boarders off their food, and that furthermore this sort of thing was morbid and must cease.

The idea of such an anti-climax as stopping half-way through was an outrage to my artistic sense, not to be tolerated—and then, remembering a high wind had been blowing all day, I had an inspiration.

Hastily reassembling the audience, I told them to wait outside the assembly-room window after school and they would see "Dracula's Farewell" as an extra special performance.

So they did: me with my two umbrellas emerging from a 20ft. window, and—far from being dramatically borne away on the wind, via my "wings," crashing to the ground in a most un-Draculoid manner.

"Well," I thought ruefully as I was assisted hobbling from the scene, "at least it was an unusual performance!"

NEXT WEEK: Growing Powers!

(We hope this instalment will be ready, but as witches have no deadlines, we can't be certain.)

WITCH'S CREDO

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people beyond their understanding, in the murky light of their own bigotry. While, for a manifestation of "human virtue," ask the people of—Hiroshima!

● Where did you learn the ritual?

Which one? There are many. I learned a few from fellow witches, two or three more from books, but I gained my main body of knowledge on the inner Planes of Being.

● Have you ever attended a Witches' Sabbat? What did you see?

Many times, both astrally and physically; but I could no more be expected to give details than a Mason to reveal the workings of his Lodge.

● Has a Black Mass ever been performed here?

If you mean a Black Mass proper, which must be celebrated by an ordained priest, how do I know? In such cases the purpose of the Black Mass, presumably, would be negation of the orthodox by reversal of its forms.

The general principle in Magic of reversing a form in order to negate its influence is thousands of years old, and was used by early Egyptian Magicians.

Certain Witch ceremonies, ignorantly or mistakenly referred to as "Black Masses" by the popular Press, are also far older than Christianity, and older, therefore, than either form of Mass.