

THE LIFE STORY OF ROSALEEN NORTON

★ With amazing calm this self-confessed magic arts devotee has astounded those who thought the "Goat-Fold" cult dead and buried

WITCHES WANT NO RECRUITS

EXCLUSIVE TO POST
by ROSALEEN NORTON

★ This story of a witch by a witch began last week with an account of Rosaleen Norton's childhood. She believes she is in touch with forces outside the ken of normal human belief. It is HER story without addition or subtraction.

AT thirteen, I was confirmed — as a WITCH.

Although it seems strange to the mores of this society and century, it happens to be a fact that there are horn witches.

Also, some achieve witchhood—but I have yet to hear of witchhood being thrust upon anyone, despite rumors of covens trying to clutch all and sundry into the "Goat-Fold."

I shall simply say this — any such indiscriminate procedure would be not only pointless but an invitation to trouble, as

"recruits" lured or forced into it would be first-rate nuisances.

The main thing is to keep them out—especially those wanting superficial excitement.

If people of this type managed to get in, under the impression that magic rituals were only sexual orgies, they would either be a hindrance to magical operations or become hysterical with fright at resultant effects and manifestations.

An atmosphere highly charged with such forces in itself often has a peculiar effect on people unused to such things.

Time and again I have known visitors to become uneasy and literally touched with "panic"—sometimes for no apparent reason.

C O N T I N U E D



★ ROSALEEN NORTON says that the conceptions for her out-of-this world drawings and paintings come to her from sources and intelligences not known among "ordinary" people.

and occasionally at some incident usual in my world, but inexplicable and "supernatural" to them.

I have often noticed that sceptics are very susceptible to, and are apt to become shaken and upset, at occurrences which are accepted calmly or with interest by people more psychically aware.

At one time I kept a record of such happenings and the reactions of people who experi-

O V E R L E A F



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"Finally, we are not as others"

ence, them. However, all this belongs to a later part of my narrative.

People have occasionally suggested that perhaps some of my actions are motivated by reaction from a family background of undue piety or strictness.

No, I was neither—simply the conventional one of a comfortably off middle-class family, whose religion was a matter of custom rather than personal conviction, and whose sporadic attendance at church was more a token of politeness than anything.

So I was certainly not for that reason that the imagery and terms used in orthodox religions aroused a sense of repulsion in me.

I sometimes have to still my mind by an act of will before I can enjoy discussions or even arguments on the subject.

One childhood incident might help to make my attitude of those days clearer.

I remember being told in hushed tones by another child—we were only seven or eight at the time—that to say a certain word aloud (she spelt it out to me, and it was not what is generally classed as an "obscene" word) was the "unforgivable sin." This seemed promising; so, conscious of the importance of such an occasion, I postponed committing it until after school, in order to do the thing in style.

Later, taking up position in the centre of the back lawn at home, I pointed skyward to

ensure attention for the shattering communication I was about to make. I said: "Listen" (a pause) — then I shouted the word, and waited for the skies to fall.

I felt both relieved and affronted when it became apparent that the universe was refusing to totter — much as when, a few years previously, I had made the portentous announcement to mother, "I know EVERYTHING," and, absorbed in some sewing, she had replied absently, "Do you, dear?"

Before continuing with my story, I shall try to explain something of an outlook that has remained fundamentally unchanged throughout childhood, adolescence, and maturity; and answer, at the same time, some recurrent questions that have been put to me by people of many different types.

To begin with, I am what a psychologist of my acquaintance defines as a "Psychic Invert": Which means a person whose basic psychology naturally functions on opposite lines to those considered normal.

(Although, of course, no absolute norm exists individually speaking, there are behavior patterns and reactions common to the

"THIS," says Rosaleen Norton, "is a chess contest between black and white, showing myself manipulating the dark forces." In fact, this picture was arranged as a joke on her part although witches rarely joke.

majority of human beings, although modified according to racial type, society, &c.)

With inversion, it is as though the elements in some chemical compound were polarised in an opposite direction—in effect, therefore, the result is a different substance.

Psychologically and spiritually at least, Psychic Inverts ARE A DIFFERENT SPECIES, and—this I know from long experience—find the thoughts and behavior of normal human beings quite as strange as the latter find theirs.

A queer little incident from school symbolises my position perfectly; and since a concrete instance generally conveys an idea more vividly than any amount of theory, here



★ ALL of Rosaleen Norton's drawings have a definite significance, she claims. These figures are some of the denizens of the other worlds which she says, she can enter while she is in deep trances.

★ WITH the onset of adolescence, Rosaleen Norton felt "everything changing form like patterns in a kaleidoscope." Drawing by POST artist Gerry Lantz.

it is; I was never any good at algebra; so hopeless at it, in fact, that maths teachers suspected me of being deliberately "stupid."

Yet, in a certain memorable exam. paper, I worked out a complicated algebraic problem to its correct conclusion back to front—and it was the only problem with the right solution in the entire paper, even though working it backwards had involved two additional stages in arriving there.

Not that I had done it deliberately: The algebraic symbols apparently had been arranged out of order, and placing them in their right positions was supposed to be part of the problem, but my general knowledge of algebra was so hazy that I hadn't recognised them as being out of order at all.

The effect on the teacher who had set the paper was very curious, causing her to regard me with cold dislike for quite some time. The fact of my performing this odd feat, which she "wouldn't have believed possible," to use her own words, yet failing in every other comparatively "easy" problem, was regarded as some elaborate private joke.

As she saw it, anyone with sufficient maths. ability to do such a thing should have found the rest of the problems child's play; therefore, I must have been posing as a dunce all along.

The incident itself, as I said, symbolised the larger reality; and even in certain matters of occultism (wherein quite other laws of nature exist) my experience seems to have been opposite to that of any known tradition.

For example, some years ago I underwent a deep trance lasting five days. Shortly after this I met a Buddhist monk from Burma, who was an expert on such things. He seemed astounded when I described the contents of this trance, and, after questioning me closely on the subject, said it had undoubtedly been what some Buddhist schools call the "Trance of Annihilation."

Occult paradox

IT IS the final stage in a course of esoteric practice, and, according to him, was supposed to be a comparatively rare achievement, only possible after a long series of intermediary steps.

Yet, at that time I was having some difficulty with certain problems in occultism that, he said, could have been easily managed by most students in a quite early stage of the course.

It's the same on the mental level: I can "visualise" metaphysical and abstract ideas in what I am told are pure mathematical terms, yet often find the simplest concrete problems outside my grasp.

Again, in more mundane matters, nothing would ever induce me to have a baby; the very idea of it was always repugnant, chiefly because, I feel, it would detract from my own completeness—which is apparently the opposite feeling from that of most women.

In general social relations I am often nervous unless there is opposition. Public speaking before an apparently sympathetic audience almost paralysed me with fright, until some of its members began heckling — which immediately restored confidence.

And so on. . . I could continue indefinitely with such examples.

All this, however, brings me to the questions referred to previously. "Why do you like ugly, grotesque things — why not draw something beautiful?" "If you see the sort of things you draw, don't you get frightened?"

The answer is: I do draw my own conception of beauty, which, like any other quality (including obscenity, as I have remarked before), is in the eye of the beholder.



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★ THERE'S black magic at the bottom of this garden. The horrified owner of the summer house discovered 14 stones arranged in a ring. A black magic spell had been cast.

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AS FOR "DO I FEEL FRIGHTENED OF THE THINGS I SEE?", NO! NEVER! MOST OF THEM ARE AS FAMILIAR A PART OF MY WORLD AS THE TEAPOT IS, AND AS NECESSARY TO ME.

The onset of adolescence often awakens the religious as well as the sexual urge, and this was so with me. For some time previously I had been constantly aware of a world wherein moved vast mysterious powers, the sense of gay daemonic presences and hauntingly familiar atmospheres, elusive yet powerful and compelling, when everything round me seemed to change focus like patterns in a kaleidoscope.

If the Kingdom of Pan had always been with me, it had been mostly in the background, overlaid by what was called reality: *Now it had begun to emerge and pervade the latter.*

Awareness grew stronger and stronger that the tedious world of childhood didn't really matter, because this held the essence of all

that called to my inmost being: Night and wild things and mystery; storms; being by myself, free of other people. The sense of some deep hidden knowledge stirring at the back of consciousness; and all about me the feeling of secret sentient life, that was in alliance with me, but that others were unaware, or afraid of, **BECAUSE IT WAS UNHUMAN.**

So, my first act of ceremonial magic was in honor of the horned god, whose pipes are a symbol of magic and mystery, and whose horns and hooves stand for natural energies and fleetfooted freedom: And this rite was also my oath of allegiance and my confirmation as a witch.

I REMEMBER MY FEELINGS ON THAT OCCASION WELL, AND THEY ARE VALID TODAY: IF PAN IS THE "DEVIL" (AND THE JOYOUS GOAT-GOD PROBABLY IS, FROM THE ORTHODOX VIEWPOINT) THEN I AM INDEED A "DEVIL" WORSHIPPER.

NEXT WEEK: Kingdom of Pan

Wot? No witches?

★ *THIS week's instalment of the life story of Rosaleen Norton, the Witch of Kings Cross, didn't reach us in time for publication. We don't know why — possibly Miss Norton had a few urgent spells to cast. We can't keep a witch to a deadline, but we'll publish the story when we get it. When will that be? In the words of an old song hit, "Witch day, what day? We don't know what to say."*

Jan. 17th, 1957.

Corrected

YOUR correspondent has been misinformed if he believes that 1,000 copies of "The Art of Rosaleen Norton" were sold at £8/8/- a time.

As publisher of the book this statement could cause me embarrassment in many ways. The facts are: (1) Only 500 copies were printed; (2) only approximately 200 copies were bound and distributed, many at no

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charge to libraries, universities, agents, etc. Two weeks after the book appeared the N.S.W. Police summoned me for publishing and selling an obscene book. From then on only a few were sold.

W. GLOVER, Bondi (N.S.W.).