LIBER XXI

KHING KANG KING

THE CLASSIC OF PURITY

first written down by me

KO YUEN

(LAO-TZU)

In the Episode of the Dynasty of Wu and now made into a Rime by me

ALEISTER CROWLEY

A.'. A.'.

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I

LAO KUN THE MASTER SAID:

TAO IS DEVOID OF FORM -
YET HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE BROUGHT TO BIRTH,
AND NURTURED BY ITS NORM.

TAO HATH NO WILL TO WORK;

YET BY ITS WAY OF HEAVEN
THE MOON AND SUN REJOICE TO RUN
AMONG THE STARRY SEVEN.

TAO HATH NO NAME; ITS WORD

IS GROWTH, AND SUSTENANCE
TO ALL; I AIM TO GIVE IT NAME:
TAO (HEAVEN PROSPER CHANCE!)

TAO HATH TWIN PHASE WITH TEH:

THE SILENT AND THE STRESSED.
OF MOTION, THOSE; OF THESE, REPOSE
SUBLIMELY MANIFEST

HEAVEN MOVES, PURE SILENCE HE;

EARTH RESTS BENEATH THE STRAIN;
SHUTTLE AND LOOM, AS WORD AND WOMB,
THEIR MYSTERY SUSTAIN

PURE MOTION MAKETH REST

AS SILENCE MAKETH STRESS.
IF MAN WERE STILL, THEN HEAVEN SHOULD THRILL
WITH EARTH TO NOTHINGNESS.
SELF LOVETH SILENCE. YEA,
   BUT MIND DISTRACTETH IT.
MIND LOVETH REST; BUT PASSION'S PEST
   ALLURES THE TREMBLING WIT.

IF MAN RESTRAIN DESIRE,
   HIS MIND WILL CEASE TO ROLL,
AND MIND'S RELEASE ALLOW PURE PEACE
   OF SILENCE TO THE SOUL.

THE SENSES WILL NOT SOIL;
   THE THOUGHT WILL NOT UPSTRESS;
NOR POISONS (GREED, WRATH, DULNESS) BREED
   THEIR TRIFORM DEADLINESS.

MEN EARN NOT EASE OF TAO
   FOR THEIR DESIRE'S DISEASE;
BECAUSE THEIR MIND IS NOT REFINED
   OF THOUGHT BY KILLING THESE.

IF ONE SHOULD SLAY DESIRES,
   HIS MIND AND BODY SEEM
NO LONGER HIS, BUT PHANTASIES
   DANCED IN A WANTON'S DREAM.

SLAY MIND, SLAY BODY, SLAY
   THE EXTERNAL: MATTER GOES.
THEN SPACE REMAINS; RENEW THY PAINS!
   UP! FRONT THE FINAL FOES!

SLAY SPACE: THEN NAUGHT ABIDES.
   HOLD NOT THINE HOLY HAND!
WHEN NAUGHT GIVES BACK BEFORE THE ATTACK,
   SERENE THY SILENCE STAND!

ALL'S REST, DEVOID OF MARK;
   HOW SHOULD DESIRES FIX TOOTH?
WHEN THEY ARE PAST, THOU SURELY HAST
   THE SILENCE OF THE TRUTH.

FLAWLESS THAT TRUTH AND FIXED,
   YET APT TO EACH APPEAL
NATURE AND SENSE TO INFLUENCE –
   THE MAGNET TO THE STEEL!

OH! THIS TRUE TOUCH WILL ALL
   ELASTIC AND EXACT
THAT YET ABIDES ABOVE THEIR TIDES –
   THE SILENCE FREE FROM ACT!

HE THAT HATH THIS SHALL COME
   LITTLE BY LITTLE, A BREATH,
SO FLOETH HE NOW, TO TRUTH OF TAO,
   WHEREIN HE VANISHETH.
MEN STYLE HIM LORD OF TAO,
   YET HE HATH NONE TO LORD.
   HID MOTIVE HE OF ALL THAT BE:
   ENOUGH FOR HIS REWARD!

HE THAT CAN COMPREHEND
   THIS DOCTRINE MAY TRANSMIT
   THIS SACRED TAO TO MEN THAT VOW
   THEMSELVES TO FATHOM IT.

II

LAO KUN THE MASTER SAID:
   THE ADEPT IN SKILL OF SOUL
   HATH NEVER AN AIM: THE BUNGLER'S SHAME
   IS THAT HE GROPES A GOAL.

WHO MOST POSSESS THE THE
   CONCEAL THEIR MAGICK POWER;
   WHO LEAST POSSESS EXERT THEIR STRENGTH
   SEVEN TIMES IN EVERY HOUR.

THESE, WHO CLING FAST TO POWERS,
   WHO GUARD THEM, AND DISPLAY
   THEIR MAGICK ART -- THEY ARE NOT PART
   OF TAO NOR YET OF TEH.

MEN WIN NOT TRUTH OF TAO
   BECAUSE THEIR MINDS ARE WRIED.
   THE MIND UNCURBED, THE SELF'S PERTURBED,
   AND LOSES TUNE OF TIDE.

LOST, THE EXTERNAL LURES;
   THEY TURN TO SEEK IT: THEN
   ALL THINGS PERPLEX, CONFUSE, AND VEX
   THOSE Miserable MEN.

DISORDERED THOUGHTS ARISE;
   BODY AND MIND GROW SICK.
   DISGRACE AND FEAR GROW YEAR BY YEAR
   TO THEIR CLIMACTERIC.

WILD, THEY ARE TOSSED ABOUT
   THROUGH LIFE AND DEATH; THEY QUIVER,
   SUNK IN SEA-STRESS OF BITTERNESS,
   AND LOSE THE TAO FOR EVER.

THE TRUE, THE ABIDING TAO!
   WHO UNDERSTANDETH HATH;
   WHO HATH THE TAO IS HERE AND NOW
   IN SILENCE OF THE PATH