

Wolf's Milk

("Wolfsmilch")

and its Consequences

Report about a Metamorphosis

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translated into English by Pardelkaz
and with sketches made by Rainer Dorfampel



The Letter

"Elixir has come, waiting for you at the full moon", Marguerite wrote at the beginning of June from the Jurassic Mountains.

Marguerite and I were well close friends since long times. When I walked through the Jurassic forests and got lost in the woods, a young woman with long blond hair came across on horseback. She lent me out of the thicket and invited me for an enforcing meal. She told about her little paddock where she rented rooms. From then on I had visited her together with my family or friends as her guests. I loved to browse in her many books about plants and medicinal herbs she had bought at antiquarians on flea markets or on journeys. In her library there have been the works of Pardelkaz, Frazer, Mannhardt, Perger and Unger about plant charm or mythology of plants. Even the rare book of the Indian scientist Sir J. C. Bose about his communication-experiments with plants was present.⁽¹⁾

In the whole house there hung bundles of plants for drying and her kitchen looked like a sorcerers studio by the many crucibles with ointments and tinctures. Neighbours came and asked for her advices when their cattle had become ill and the veterinarian didn't know it better or if they for themselves were slain by a hard illness. Marguerite had a huge heart for animals. Beneath her horses, she cared for many cats and a three-legged goat. She had found it, when it was in despair hung in a fence. The veterinarian had to amputee the leg

eroded by old sores. A stray hare and a pig which had escaped the butcher accomplished the round. Before neighbours from the surrounding farms came she painted it with black patches to mask it as unrecognizable and called it a drooping belly pig.

Marguerite knew much about old rites and customs of the region. She guided us to places with rare plants or to fountains and tree-veterans that stood for old legends and where true to the folk traditions one was able to communicate with nature spirits. Time in the near of Marguerite has been special instructive at any time.

The Old Mari

Often we sat outside of the house at a bottle of red wine and interchanged experiences and stories. Then one could talk about tales from the werewolf (*loup garou*). For the Jurassic county is known as the homeland of werewolves from time immemorial.

Now and again there came a wolf from the near France and nourished those tales conjectured her husband Alphonse. In the area of Freiburg I had found a village where folks, men, women and children went dressed as wolfhounds at Shrove Tuesday. As a passenger in a train from Himmelreich to Schluchsee I fell into a frightened mood when the compartment was filled with werewolves. No, said Marguerite, such a custom were unknown in Jurassic county. She had spoken with old Mari as she knew about my interest on that theme. The old Mari lived remote in a very old cottage near

the woods. She was said to be a wise woman, who knew it. In respect of the clergyman (Mari didn't visit the church) and because of their reputation the women visited Mari only at night. She was said to be able to inactivate charms and seemed to know device also at complicated cases. Marguerite visited her on clear day and brought to her plants, herbs and mushrooms, for Old Mari was not so steady on her feet. All what I've brought to her, Marguerite said, did not only be good for colds or a stomach illness. I always wondered why she did need so many fly agarics in autumn. Mari had told about the conversion into the shape of an animal, a wolf in special, being an old art made by a mixture of special herbs and other ingredients, a kind of "Wolfsmilch" (milk of a wolf).



Marguerite with Carmilla, one of her cats

That is no case of cannibalism unless one was in the conviction to be a werewolf and attacks people. Tales about the cruel deeds of werewolves is

pure nonsense. Marguerite had told her about my interests in such things and asked her if she would be willing to cook such a "Wolfsmilch" for me.

Strange encounters

I'm well-known with sorcerers plants. Having drunken a cup of strong hemp-tea in my student's time I feel into the idea to follow the lines of an old carpet with a strangely carved stick which I had bought on Portobello Road, London, recently. The coloured man who sold it to me for 5 pounds told me, it were from the estate of a Haitian *houngan* what I didn't believe then.

When I went over the lines my legs began to twitch and jerk and I made strange steps. Darkness came around me and I found myself within the body of a wildly dancing wife surrounded by a group of men and women in white clothes. I heard strong drums and strange songs. Instinctively I knew: I was in Haiti. After a short time the priest guiding the ceremony seemed to feel something strange. He brandished with a knife before my head and cried that here had manifested no Voodoo-spirit but a demon from an other land who had stolen a magic stick from the owner, his father, and who tries to recognize his secrets. He would catch my soul and put it into a bottle, he threatened. I beamed me away and found myself back at home in my chamber, lying on the carpet.

At an other experiment, without that damned stick but with the help of magic

mushrooms, I found myself within the body of a confederated officer near a campfire talking about an attack on the Northern troops.

At another time after the consumption of some magic mushrooms I was abducted aboard of an UFO where two shamans set and offered to me a turn on the world wheel. I was refused in disgust and satisfied to look at them and to listen to magic jabbering.

Marguerite said I was keen in these arts. She for herself however declined to gather similar experiences for no price in the world.

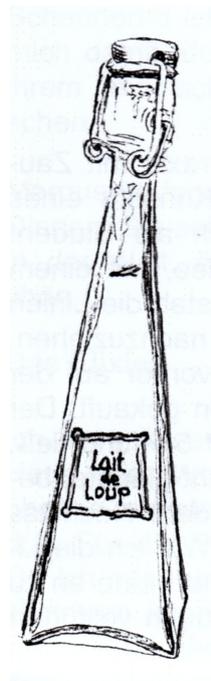
The Elixir

One day before full moon I reached Marguerite's house. She and Alphonse had to make a trip for two days to Zurich. A neighbour looked after the horses. I was begged to look after the other menagerie. When I would transform into a werewolf I should behave and spare the animals, Marguerite said with a little laughing.

Next day a community in the near had its midsummer-celebrations at a glade in the forests. There was music, a barbecue, beer- and wine-serving and a big fire.

At 9 o'clock p.m. I said farewell to the animals giving them sufficient food, took my little bottle with a milky yellow liquid in my jacket and went through the wood to the celebrating comrades and saw the count. He worked as a historian researcher at the university, was owner of an old mansion and Marguerite's landlord. I

had learned him at her house as a kind talker. At ten o'clock p.m. I separated and went to an empty desk at the side. Mari had said I should drink the liquid two hours before midnight. The effects would come two hours later and at the latest then I should be alone and in the forest.

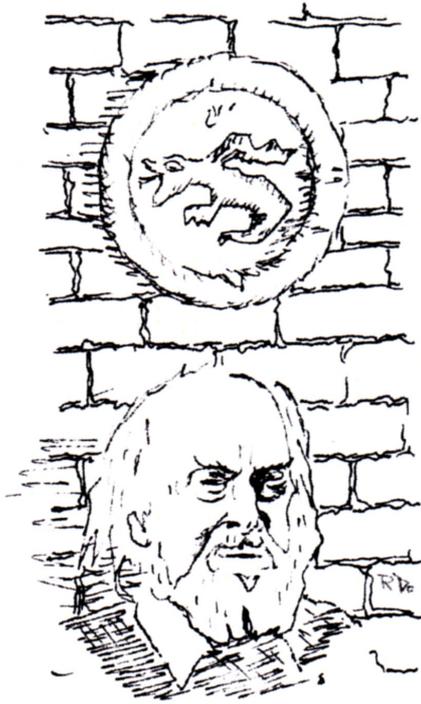


The bottle with the elixir

Nervously I drank the awful swill and a big glass of wine on top. Then I sat in silence and looked at the full moon.

May I have a seat? I heard a voice. A woman about fifty years old stood before me with a glass of wine in her hand, pale and with blood-red made-up lips gowned into an out fashioned brocade dress with a spacious décolleté showing an ample bosom. I agreed and asked politely about the cause of her visit of that feast. She said she was the sister of the Count and had come for a prolonged weekend from Brussels to the mansion. A little time we talked about this and that and the longer the

more I felt the loss of my capability to follow her and to say something for my own. Her face changed into green, yellow and violet colour, her mouth grew and her eyes became black hollows. Her view was no longer comfortable and I saw her crazy enough as a huge white snake. Who goes into a danger will perish there in, she whispered. Did I hear wrongly? Was that the effects of the elixir at the end?



The Count in front of the family arms

I murmured an excuse and went in direction of the toilets and from there into the wood. The noises of the feast came through the air still weakly, I stood feeling a heat, streams of fire flashed through my body. My knees turned to jelly and I sat down. Feeling a growing heat I began to scrape a hollow in the soil to get cooler. When I looked at the disk of the full moon I got a view which I never will forget. The moon was enormous, a door into

another world: The moon of the witches and sorcerers and of the dead ones coming out of their graves to bath their bones in the silvery light. My body was racked by a lightning and I was shaken about by spasms. I knew I would die. What a fool had I been, what for did I drink the brew of the old woman? Who goes into a danger will perish there in, that had said my mother at every time. I felt sinking into earth and thought now the Devil would come to snatch me. At last losing my consciousness I felt with ecstatic dismay my hands bending and the growing of hairs between my fingers.



The Sister of the Count

The Moon of the Wolves

Awaking I stuck fast in the body of a wolf and ran through the wood. I smelt my way at the same intensity as I saw

it. I had a feeling of wildness, independence, freedom and a sense of belonging. Stopping at a huge old tree I heard in my head a voice, "Be welcome, brother, go with me." There stood a gigantic old she-wolf with a grey mane before me. We ran through the wood to a pond. Round the pond there came many wolfs out of the wood. The rays of the moon stood in connection with the pond. The eye of the wood reaches the eye of the night, I heard the she-wolf say. From the moon there came a chariot pulled by two horses. Twelve nymphs came out of the pond to welcome the chariot and its passenger with music. The lady bailed out and sat on a white hind. The music enchanted my senses.



Nymph

A feeling of timeless bliss came into me. The lady on the hind rode slowly around the pond. The wolves howled and I too gave a kind of croak out of my throat. She was of celestial beauty; it caught my breath and I had to look down. Her hair was interwoven with

reed and at her forehead she wore a shimmering silver crescent. The ray hit me in my heart and I saw the world in its eternal cycle. Every cell of my body was filled with energy. In a moment I knew all secrets of the world. The cosmos and me had become one.

The hind disclosed together with her rider into the woods followed by the wolves who gathered around her. It's time, I heard the old she-wolf say. She escorted me to the big old tree. Here our ways will separate. Now you will find back without my help.

The Return

In a sudden I was back in my own body, smelt the soil of the forest and felt my arms and legs. I straightened up. The noises of the feast were to hear still. Time was three o'clock. I went back. In the toilet-car I washed hands and face, brushed down my cloths and cleaned my shoes. I took a bottle of red wine and five fried sausages with a large hill of onions. My hunger was immense.

In the hurly-burly of the feast nobody had been aware of my absence. The Count spoke to me. I asked him if his sister is still present. "My sister? My dear God!" he said, "would you be so kind to describe her, please." I told of our meeting and how she had appeared to me at the beginning. He was severely shattered seemingly. "Yes, that is she or to say it correctly, had she have been. Some years ago she committed suicide in Brussels and we transported her remains here and buried them in

our family tomb. But she cannot find her rest, that's our problem. You are not the first who has seen her. We will have to repeat the consecration and to put a blessed object at her coffin. Hold your adventure secret, I beg you, for people are superstitious enough here."

Looking into the night I shuddered with horror. I chose a place near to the musicians, drank wine and remained till the morning.

I came back to Marguerite's house, all the eight cats sat in front of the door. With one scream they scattered becoming aware of me. In the kitchen I looked into the mirror. No, I hadn't changed into a werewolf. A remnant of wolf must be given of me for the sensitive feeling of the cats, however.

Further Selection

When Marguerite came back she found me sitting in her chamber reading in botanical books. I found plants like Wolfsauge (wolf's eye), Wolfsbohne (wolf's bean), Wolfsgesicht (wolf's face), Wolfsohr (wolf's ear), Wolfstatze (wolf's claw), Wolfstrapp (wolf's footstep) and Wolfsschote (wolf's pod) bearing the term "wolf" in their names. I didn't know however if they were used as witch's plants or sorcerer's herbs. When I told her my story Marguerite said I had been transported into the Other World and welcomed by the Lady of the woods for audience. The peasants of the neighbourhood gave account since a long time about Count's sister walking. Should she tell my adventure to Mari? No, I answered, I feel she

has been there in person as the old she-wolf with a grey mane. At the next morning Marguerite at breakfast said my story didn't leave her at rest and she had tried to find out more in an old book about mythology. She cited one passage:

"Artemis or Diana similarly as her twin brother Apollo melted with Helios was combined with the goddess Luna or Selene and had same cognomen like goddess of the lunar night, goddess of the light, bright eye of the night, the most beautiful one, the lover of music, the clear one, the chaste one, the virgin.

For as plants and fruits in the freshness of the night refreshed by rich dew grow and flourish the best and as one knows that the fall of dew be substantial if the sky is clear and the moon shines down with pure light Artemis was said to be the bringer of fruitfulness. Therefore people believed she strolls accompanied by her nymphs through forest, grove, hills and valleys at night and honoured her at fountains, rivers, ponds, wet meadows and marshes. As a carrier of all fruitfulness she was honoured and was regarded as protectress and female ruler of all game in wood and the fields.

And, Raoul, Marguerite said, you should know also that witches and sorcerers look at her as their queen and she receives at definite times her devotion by them. But only he who knows the old art of transformation into an animal is allowed to come under her eyes. To the humans she doesn't show herself since long times.

Tell me please, Marguerite asked with

a furtive glance, what was the gown of the lady on the hind? Eh, a kind of close baby-doll, I stuttered. And under that? I referred to my averted view. That was your luck, she replied, often already she converted an annoying lecher into dog food, look at the terrible fate of king Actaion.⁽²⁾

Well, I thought, that she didn't ask for the dress of the nymphs, for they had been nude, mind.

When I called Marguerite in November, I heard that old Mari died at All Souls Day. The secrets of making wolfs' milk she carried with her into the other world. Marguerite as her heiress didn't find any records in the humble state, whereas the little house belonged to the village.

⁽¹⁾ Jagadis Chunder Bose, Die Pflanzen-schrift und ihre Offenbarung, Zürich 1928

⁽²⁾ Notice by the editor: There is taken reference to an event as follows: When the King passed a spring by accident where Artemis took her bath together with her playmates, his eyes dropped on her and was delighted on her view. The goddess discovered him and turned him into a stag. His own dogs misjudged him and tore him into pieces in a moment. (Cited from: Lexikon der Symbole, Wiesbaden 1987, page 154/5)

The Author:

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