

**THE SPRINGFIELD NEWS LEADER
SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI
7 DECEMBER 1924
(page 20)**

**REFORMING THE KIDNAPPED CHILD
CROWN-PRINCE OF THE MOST
NOTORIOUS FREE-LOVE CULT.**

The Very Strange Case of "Beast No. 2," Age 7.

By MARION DOCKERILL
(Sister of Aleister Crowley's "Scarlet Bride,"
and Aunt of the Child Known as "Beast No. 2.")



The Boy, Hattie, as
He is Today—
"Self-Willed, Precocious, Dangerously Intelligent and Seriously Believing That
His Own Will is the Law."

When I learned by cablegram from Cefalu, Sicily, that my third sister, Mrs. Alma H. Bliss, had kidnapped little Hansie Hammond, and was bringing him back to our home in New York, I was filled with terror and dismay.

Hansie is the son of my other sister, Leah Hirsig, who became the bride and high priestess of the notorious Aleister Crowley, famed throughout America and Europe as the head of a cult suspected of Devil Worship, and known to profess a creed which defies all conventions and says:

"DO WHAT THOU WILT SHALL BE THE WHOLE OF THE LAW."

Crowley took my sister to a villa, surrounded by a beautiful park, in the suburbs of Palermo, Sicily, and there founded a community which he called "The College of the Holy Ghost."

There were other men and women who, like my sister, regarded Crowley almost as a god, and who were sworn to follow his teachings.

The community included a number of children, among whom was Hansie, Leah's child by a former marriage, adopted by Aleister Crowley as his son.

For several years we lost touch with Leah and her child. When she wrote back to America, as we learned indirectly, she signed herself "The Scarlet Bride," and seemed so wholly wrapped up in Crowley and his strange religion that we despaired of ever bringing her back to conventional things. We still despair.

Meanwhile we learned that Hansie was being brought up as the bright particular star child of this "Do What Thou Wilt" cult. Crowley called himself "The Beast," and believed that he was an incarnation of the Beast whose coming is foretold by St. John in the Book of Revelation. In other words he was a sort of god, or inspired prophet—an "Anti-Christ" who would upset the old order of things and found a new religion that would make all humanity divine.

It was his intention, or at least so I was told, to rear little Hansie to be his successor, and Hansie was known as "Beast No. 2."

The essence of Crowley's teachings was that all who followed his cult should seek guidance only in their own wills. He held that "Every man and woman is a star," and I think he believed it. He applied it to the children of the colony, and he applied it to Hansie most of all.

Hansie, then a child of four, was encouraged to follow his own will. In other words, he was permitted to do exactly what

he wanted. I am told that he ran stark naked most of the time, and climbed rocks and swam like a little animal. For all I know, that may have been a good thing, for when Hansie was brought here to live with us, I found him stronger and healthier than the average child of his age.

But the freedom went further than that. If Hansie wanted the brandy bottle instead of the milk bottle, they let him have it. That's hard to understand on the part of any grown-ups who are not crazy, but they had their theory about it.

And so far as I gathered, their theory was something like this:

They let him have the brandy bottle and make himself drunk or ill, and after it was over, they carefully explained why it made him ill and told him that if he liked being drunk and ill to help himself again. They did not remove the bottle from his reach, but while I have an intense personal dislike for Aleister Crowley and do not believe in any of his crazy teachings, I'll be fair enough to say I believe it is true that Hansie never touched the brandy bottle again.

It was the same with a hot stove, or any other dangerous object. They paid no attention to him when he went near it. If he burned himself, they told him how it happened, and said, "If it is your will to be burned, by all means go and touch the stove again. We won't stop you. But be sure you do nothing against your own will."

One thing he tried, and stuck to, was cigarettes. He started smoking at five, and as he wanted to keep on, they let him. They played their game fairly, though I think personally it was a terrible thing for a child.

When Hansie came to us, last Summer, at seven years, he cried for cigarettes as an ordinary child would cry for candy. He got sick and nervous when he was deprived of them. We didn't know what else to do and when he got violent we occasionally gave him one, and it seemed to quiet him. I hope this won't frighten any Children's Societies, for we have entirely broken him of the habit now and he is going to school, and being carefully trained and taught as any Christian child should be.

This is how he came to us:

Crowley had a lot of money when he took my sister, Leah, to Italy and founded his colony. During the past year he lost all his money and they began to have a terrible time. Part of the time they didn't even have enough to eat, and my other sister, Mrs. Bliss, who was traveling in France, heard about their

troubles and went to see them. When she got to Cefalu, Crowley and Leah were in Paris, trying to arrange for the publication of a book, and they had left Hansie behind, at the Villa, with a number of other people who belonged to the cult. She found Hansie running wild—that was last Summer and he was seven years old—swimming and climbing the mountains behind the villa stark naked, smoking cigarettes, imagining he was a grown man. And she found, because of the poverty, that he, like the rest who lived at the villa, was getting nothing to eat but bread, olive oil, and the salads that grew wild on the hillside.

She decided it would be a good thing to bring Hansie away from that atmosphere and suggested that she would like to adopt him and bring him to America and send him to school. They told her she couldn't do that, as Crowley had ordered them all to stay there and that Crowley's orders must be obeyed.

So she kidnapped him. She told them she was going to take him into Palermo to buy some toys, and instead she took him aboard the boat for Naples, where she explained the case to the American consul and got proper passports.

Then she called me, and it's no wonder I was filled with terror. Imagine being confronted with the responsibility for a boy who has been taught from babyhood that his own will is the only law!

Well Hansie arrived in New York, and for a little while it was just as bad as I had imagined. He believed that he was a great person and that we were nothing—servants to wait on him, stupid people who imagined we could tell him what to do and make him do it, when he knew that he was "Beast No. 2," a sort of god.

He fought like a little wild-cat when we didn't want to give him cigarettes. He had apparently seen a sword used in some of Crowley's mystical ceremonies, and he had the idea that it was the right thing to kill anybody who opposed his will. He would grab up an umbrella or walking stick or anything that came to hand and try to kill us, or pretend to try. He got in such rages that we had to give him cigarettes occasionally to quiet him. We gave him picture books and toys, and he said, "To H--- with you stupid women, I want somebody to play chess with me." We were trying our best to do what was right for the child, and we called up a friend who knew chess, and took him to call. We were both surprised and astonished as his good manners. He really played chess quite well and we let

him have one cigarette, and when he left, he bowed and shook hands with our host and said, "Thank you, I shall come here again."

It's difficult to handle a child like that, self-willed, precocious, dangerously intelligent, and seriously believing that his own will is the law.

As a matter of fact, you'd have a better chance, morally speaking, with a stupid or ordinary child. We say, "No Hansie, you mustn't have a cigarette. They are bad for little boys." He replies, "What do I care about little boys? I am Hansie. I have what I want. I want cigarettes. Let them hurt little boys. They can't hurt me. I am strong. Nothing can hurt me that is contrary to my will. I smoked all the time in Cefalu before you came, and see, I am strong. I am Beast No. 2. You are only stupid women."

You can't spank a child like that. He doesn't take it. He fights you as an equal to the last gasp, and then when you have mastered him by pure physical strength, he defies you, and then you're sold out, for you know and he knows that physical cruelty is no argument.

What we have finally done is to get Hansie by kindness. We learned one piece of psychology that has helped us a lot. Children may want to be superior, but no child wants to be thought "queer." And we've shown Hansie that other little children in America do not smoke cigarettes. If they do, they are tough, bad, little boys. And Hansie has never regarded himself as bad. He is a gentleman, he says.

He was taught by Crowley. For Crowley, whatever his morals or lack of morals may be, prides himself on being a gentleman. It may be that his definition of "gentleman" is not the same as yours or mine; certainly it is difficult to associate such a word with Crowley's attitude, for example, toward women. But Hansie was told always to be a gentleman. No definition has crystallized in his young mind. So he accepts ours. He believes us when we tell him that only tough, bad little boys smoke—only little boys who are not "gentlemen."

By that means we have persuaded him to stop smoking. We have started sending him to a good Christian school, where the teachers tell us that though he is self-willed he is more intelligent and advanced than the average child of his age, and on the whole we are proud of Hansie. We believe that soon he will entirely forget that he was ever "Beast No. 2," and finally develop into a first-rate 100 per cent American boy.

Aleister Crowley's Commands for Bringing Up Children.

"Each child must develop its own peculiar individuality and will, disregarding all other ideas and ideals.

"Nothing can be really taught a child except how to think for itself.

"True education is simply assisting a soul to think for itself.

"Every child should be presented with all possible problems and permitted to register its own reaction. If he wants the brandy bottle instead of the milk bottle, give him the brandy bottle.

"Respect a child's individuality! Submit all life for its inspection, but without comment.

"Those who train children according to fixed standards cripple and deform them. Every child is a sphinx and none knows its secret but itself. Every child is the god of its own universe and must be taught nothing but to govern its own environment."