

THE CHYMICAL JOUSTING OF  
**BROTHER PERARDUA**

WITH THE SEVEN LANCES  
THAT HE BRAKE



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*He slayeth Sir Argon le Paresseux.*

Now Brother Perardua, though he was but a Zelator of our ancient Order, had determined in himself to perform the Magnum Opus, and to procure for himself one grain of the Powder, one minim of the Elixir, and the Tincture of Double Efficacy. Not fully did he yet comprehend the Mysterium of our Art, therefore impose he upon himself the sevenfold regimen. For without the Bell of Electrum Magicum of Paracelsus how should the adept even give warning to the Powers of the Work of his entry thereunto?

Yet our brother, being of stout heart—for he had been a soldier in many distant lands—began right cheerfully. His head that was hoary with eld he crowned with five petals of white lotus, as if to signify the purity of his body, and went forth into that place where is no field, nor any furrow therein; and there he sowed a scroll that had two and twenty seeds diverse.

*He slayeth Sir Abjad the Saracen.*

Nor for all his care and labour could he gather therefrom more than seven plants, that shone in the blackness; and each plant beareth a single blossom that hath seven petals—one would have thought them stars; for though they were not of a verity in themselves brilliant and flashing, yet so black was that wherein they grew that they seemed brighter than suns. And these were placed one above the other in a single line and straight, even according unto the seven centres of his intention that he bare about him in the hollow tube that hath thirty and two joints.

*He slayeth Sir Amorex le Desirous.*

These plants did our brother Perardua pluck, as the mystic rites ordain; and these did he heat furiously in his alembic, yet with vegetable heat alone, while he kept them ever moist, dropping upon them of his lunar water, whereof he had three and seventy minims left of the eight and seventy that his Father had given him; and these he had borne upon a camel through the desert unto this place where he now was, which is called the Oasis of the Lion, even as the whole Regimen that in the end he accomplished is in the form of a Lion.

Thus then his Lion waxed exceeding thirsty, and licked up all that dew. But the fire being equal thereunto, he was not discomforted.

*He slayeth Sir Lionel the Warder of the Marches.*

So now indeed he had wrought the first Matter to a pitch of excellence beyond the human; for without trouble was his tincture thus beautiful. First, it had the crown and horns of Alexander the mighty king; also it had wings of fine sapphire; its fore part was like the Lion, whereby indeed it partook of the highest Virtue, and its hinder quarters were as a bull's. Moreover it stood upon the White Sphere and the Red Cube; and it is not possible for any Elixir to exceed this, unless it be by Our path and working.

*He slayeth Sir Merlin the Wizard.*

Yet our brother Perardua—and by now he was right skilful at the athanor!—determined to attain to that higher Projection. Therefore he subtly prepared a Red Dragon, or as some alchemists will have it, a Fiery Flying Serpent, whereby he should eat up that Sphinx of his, that he had nourished with such ingenium and care.

Now this Red Dragon hath seven fiery coils, proper to the seven silver stars. Also was his head right venomous and greedy, and eight flames were about it; for that Sphinx had two wings and four feet and two horns; but the Serpent is one, even as the King is one.

*He slayeth the Great Dragon called Stooping or Twisted.*

Now then is this work utterly burnt up and abolished in that tremendous heat that is in the mouth and belly of the Dragon; and that which cometh forth therefrom is in no wise that which went in. Yet are these twelve the children of those two-and-twenty. So when he had broken the cucurbitre, he find therein no trace of the seven, but a button of fused gold—as we say, for it is not gold. . . .

Now this button hath twelve faces, and angles twenty-four salient and reentrant; and Our Egyptian brethren have called it the Pavement of the Firmament of Nu.

*He slayeth King Astur of the Arms Argent.*

Now this metal is not in any wise like unto earthly metal; let the brethren well beware, for many false knaves be abroad. Three things be golden: the mineral gold of the merchant that is dross; the vegetable gold that groweth from the seed of the scroll by viture of the Lion; and the animal gold that cometh forth from the regimen of the Dragon, and this last is the sole marketable gold of the Philosopher. For, behold, an Arcanum! I charge you, keep secret this matter; for the vile brothers, could they divine it, would pervert it.

This mineral Gold cannot be changed into any other substance by any means.

This Vegetable Gold is fluidic; it must increase wonderfully and be fixed in the Perfection of the Sphinx.

But this our Animal Gold is to this mighty pitch unstable, that it can neither increase nor decrease, nor can it remain that which it is, or seemeth to be. For even as a drop of glass unequally cooled flieth at a touch into a myriad fine particles, so also at a touch this gold philosophical dissolveth his being, oftentimes with a great and terrible explosion, oftentimes so softly and subtly that no man may perceive it, be he never so acute, nay, as a needle for sharpness or for fineness as a spyglass of the necromancer!

Yet herein lieth the core of the matter that in this explosion aforesaid naught whatever is left either of the seven or the twelve or of the three Mother seeds that lie concealed therein. But in a certain mystical way the Other Ten are shadowed forth, though dimly, as if the Brazen Serpent had become a Sword of Lightning. Yet this is but a glyph; for in truth there is no link or bond between them.

For this Animal Gold is passed utterly away; there is not any button thereof, nor any feather of the Wings of the Sphinx, nor any mark of the Sower or of the Seed. But at that Lightning Flash all did entirely disappear, and the Cucurbite and the Alembic and the Athanor were shattered utterly . . . and there arose That which he had set himself to seek; yea, more! a grain of the Powder, and three minims of the Elixir, and Six drachms of the Tincture of Double Efficacy.

. . . Yet the brethren mocked him; for he had imperilled himself sore; so that unto this hour hath the name of Perardua been forgotten, and they that have need to speak of him say in right joyaunce *Non Sine Fulmine*.