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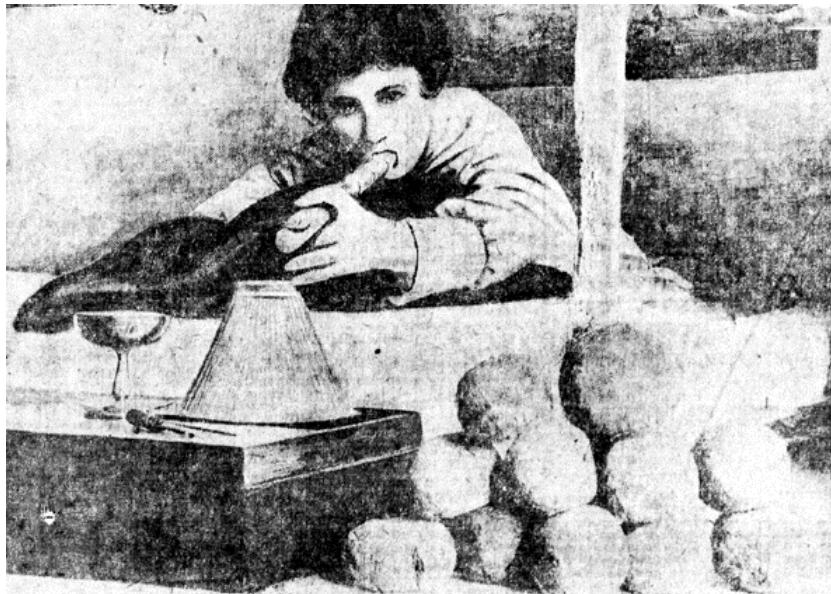
Astounding Secrets of the Devil Worshipers' Mystic Love Cult

Revealing the Intimate Details of Aleister Crowley's Unholy Rites, His Power Over Women Whom He Branded and Enslaved, His Drug Orgies, His Poetry and Mysticisms, His Startling Adventures Around the Globe as "the Beast of the Apocalypse"

By W. B. Seabrook

Chapter XII.

What would you think of a sanitarium for drink-victims in which the chief feature was a de luxe bar, stocked with every variety of whiskey, wine and beer, where the patients—as well as the doctors and nurses—were permitted to drink as much as they pleased and whenever they pleased?

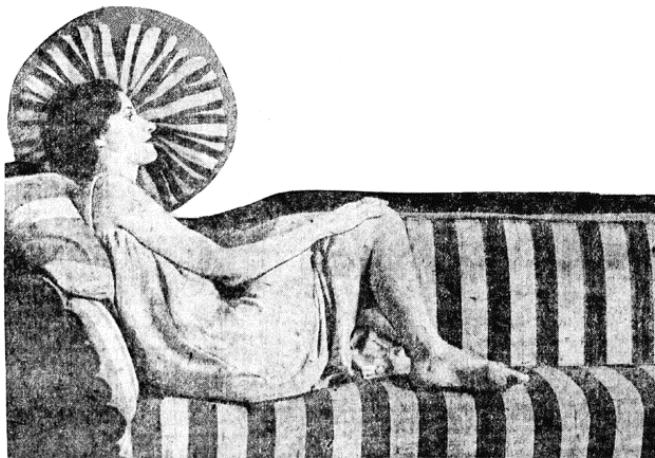


One of Crowley's Woman "Disciples" Smoking Dope in the Drug Room of His "Abbey," Where the Supply of Opium and Hasheesh Is Declared to Be Unlimited.

Sounds like the idea of a crazy man, doesn't it? Well, that is precisely the kind of a "drug-cure" Aleister Crowley has set up in his strange colony at Cefalu, Sicily, where Lea, the "Scarlet Woman;" Jane Wolfe, the former movie star, and other men and women—some university graduates and some day laborers from the field—venerate him as the teacher of a "new morality," the prophet of a new aeon, and as the "Beast of the Apocalypse," whose coming is foretold in the Bible.



Crowley in His Tiger Skin Vestments, Emblematic of
"The Beast," and About to Conduct a "Black Mass."



Lea Hirsig, Once the "Dead Soul," Now the "Scarlet Woman"
and Chief Priestess in Crowley's "Love Cult Abbey," in Sicily

I have the facts, directly and personally, from persons who have visited the place. Besides, Crowley himself admits them in a letter to me, and says, "Go ahead and tell all about it if you want to; I have nothing to conceal."

Maybe nothing to conceal in Sicily. But if he were in America he would have "something to conceal," all right, for in his "abbey" there is a pantry shelf, on which are stored quantities of every imaginable narcotic drug—bottles of cocaine, heroin and morphine, boxes and tins of opium, cans of ether, distillations of hasheesh—all as easy of access as the butter and eggs and milk in your ice box.

Fantastic, crazy, illogical, you think? I think so, too. And the most fantastic, crazy, illogical feature is that in some individual cases, at least, it apparently has worked. It has effected cures where orthodox methods have failed, Crowley claims.

When all is said and done, the chief world-wide interest in Crowley at this moment, particularly in England and America, centers in the sensation made by his book, "The Diary of a Drug Fiend." It is a novel about cocaine, heroin, morphine and opium—a true story, in which the characters and places are thinly distinguished under a veil of fiction.

Crowley paints in detail the delirious ecstasies of the drug user's false paradise in the earlier stages of addiction.

Later he depicts the horrors and tortures of the victim, bound hand and foot by the habit he cannot break.

Finally Crowley describes his own amazing methods of so-called "cure" and his extraordinary colony in the south of Italy.

He believes, like the orthodox reformers, and, indeed, like all sane human beings, that drug addiction is a terrible curse—but there is nothing orthodox about his ideas of how humanity shall get rid of it!

Here are some of the passages which aroused the wrath of reformers in England and on which they based their demand for the suppression of the book. The publishers defended themselves successfully by quoting other passages which depict, in even more vivid language, the horrors and evils of the same drugs.

Describing the "paradise of cocaine," Crowley writes:

"Until you've got your mouth full of cocaine, you don't know what kissing is. One kiss goes on from phase to phase like a novel by Balzac or Zola. And you never get tired. You're on fourth speed all the time, and the engine purrs like a kitten—a big white kitten with the stars in its whiskers. And it's always different, and always the same, and it never stops, and you go insane, and you stay insane, and you probably don't know what I'm talking about, and I don't care a bit, though I'm awfully sorry for you, and you can find

out any minute you like by the simple process of getting a sweet-heart like mine and a lot of cocaine."

Of the wholly different first-effects of heroin he writes:

"The heroin began to take hold. We found ourselves crowned with colossal calm. We dressed to go out with, I imagine, the sort of feeling a newly made bishop would have the first time he put on his vestments.

"When we went downstairs we felt like gods descending upon earth—immeasurably beyond mortality. We were dignified beyond all words to express. Our voices sounded far, far off. We were convinced that the hotel porter realized he was receiving the order of Jupiter and Juno to get a taxi. We never doubted that the chauffeur knew himself to be the charioteer of the gods.

"As we drove toward the Sacre Coeur, we remained completely silent, lost in the calm beatitude. Instead of beating passionately up the sky with flaming wings, we were poised aloft in the illimitable ether. We took fresh doses of the dull, soft powder now and again. We did so without greed, hurry or even desire. The sensation was of infinite power which could afford infinite deliberation. Will itself seemed to have been abolished. We were going nowhere in particular, simply because it was our nature to do so. Our beatitude became more absolute every moment.

"With cocaine one feels oneself master of everything; but everything matters intensely. With heroin, the feeling of mastery increases to such a point that nothing matters at all.

Pretty nice, eh? Like to try it yourself, perhaps if you knew where you could get some dope? Well, just read on a bit before you go out looking for a peddler, and maybe it won't seem quite so nice. Here's what the same man says about the cost of entering this false paradise—and this is true stuff mind you, from the actual experience, this time of a highly bred, beautiful and intelligent English girl who became a cocaine and heroin victim.

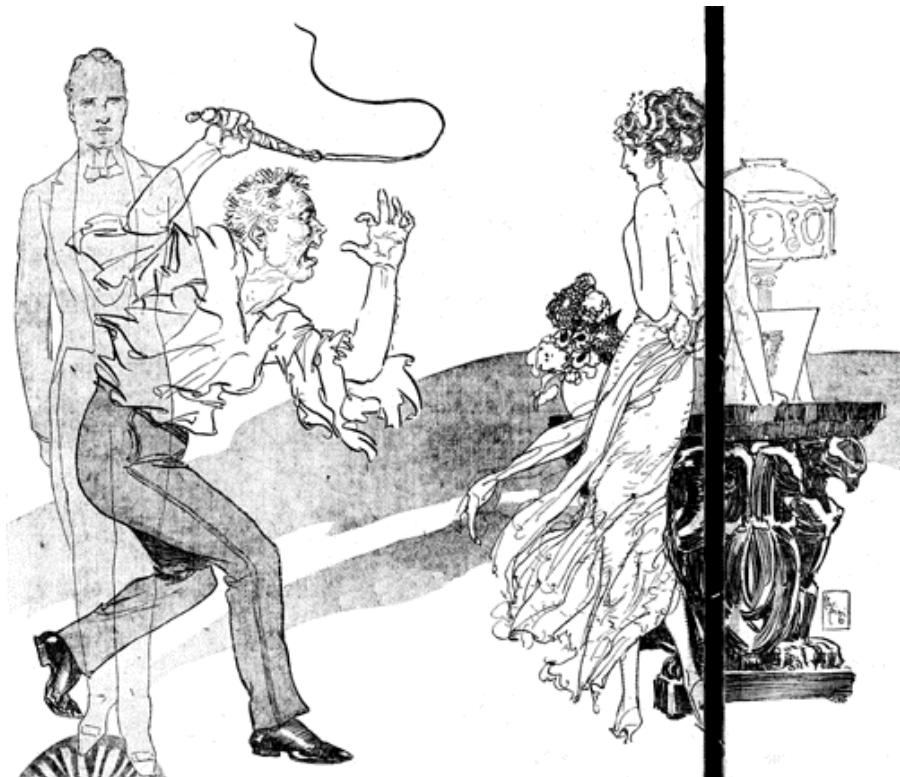
"I wanted now to stop heroin and cocaine, to fight them to a finish, but my hands were tied behind my back, my feet were fettered by a chain and ball.

"P— (the girl's husband, also a victim) had gone to sleep. He snored and groaned. He was like one's idea of a convict. He hadn't shaved for two days. My own nails were black. I felt sticky and clammy all over. I went to the looking-glass. I didn't know who I was. My complexion is entirely gone. My hair is lusterless and dry, and it's coming out in handfuls. I think I must be ill. I've got a good mind to send for a doctor. But I daren't.

"We have both had spasms of weakness, a ghastly sensation of the sinking of the spirit. It is the same dread that seizes one in an elevator that starts down too quickly. Waves of weakness washed over us as if we were corpses cast up by the sea from a shipwreck.

A shipwreck of our souls. And in these hideous hours of helplessness we drifted down the dark and sluggish river of inertia toward the stagnant, loathsome morass of insanity. We were obsessed by the certainty that we could never pull through. It must be so, that we couldn't pull through, because the doctors, reformers, vice-crusaders, everybody said so. We were sunk in a stupor. When we found voice at last, it was to whimper our surrender. The unconditional surrender of our integrity and honor. And on top of everything else was the torture of shame, for I had always been proud of my pride.

"I wonder how I have lived through this. When P—— came home last night I had never seen him like it before. His eyes were half out of his head, bloodshot and furious. Unable to get drugs, he had been drinking like a madman. He came straight up to me and hit me deliberately in the face. He staggered back into the middle of the room and pointed to the blood that was running down my face. The edge of his ring had cut the corner of my eye. The sight sent him into fits of hysterical laughter.



"I burst out crying. The contrast with what had been was too shocking. I had married a fine, courteous English gentleman, and

drugs had turned him into this screaming, swearing bully, with his insane jealousy and senseless brutality.

"He staggered and groped his way round the room looking for me. He stumbled up against me, gripped me by the shoulder, and began to strike. I sat as if I were paralyzed. I couldn't even scream. He swore and struck at me savagely, yet now so weakly that I could not feel the blows. Besides, I think I was dulled to pain.

"Presently he collapsed and rolled over on the bed. I thought for a moment he was dead, and then he was seized by a series of spasms; his muscles twisted and twitched; his hands clawed at the air; he began to mutter rapidly. I was horribly frightened.

"I got up and lit the gas. The poor boy's face was white as death, but small, dark, crimson flushes burnt on the cheek bones. I didn't dare send for a doctor. He might know what was the matter with both of us. Presently P—— went to sleep.

"A dreadful thing happened. We had used up all the heroin and cocaine, and couldn't get any more. I remembered that once before I had sewn some little cloth packets of heroin in the lining of my white frock, and went to get it. We had been living without servants, like pigs, and it was on the floor, in the corner of the drawing room.

"It was all shrunk and rumpled and dirty, and it was still quite wet. I suppose I must have gone out in the rain, though I don't remember anything about it.

"All the heroin was washed away. There wasn't a grain left. P——, too, had wanted some dreadfully; finding it gone made him want it insanely.

"He took one of the packets and began to chew it. 'Thank God,' he said. 'It's quite bitter. There must be a lot in the dress.'

"I was shivering and faint. I got another packet and put it in my mouth. He went wild and clutched me by the hair and forced open my jaws with his finger and thumb. I struggled and kicked and scratched, but he was too strong. He got the heroin out of my mouth and put it in his own mouth. I went flat and limp and began to cry.

"He picked up the dress and packets and started to go. I caught at his ankles desperately, but he kicked himself free and went out of the room with the dress.

"I feel that I shall scream if this goes on much longer; ad by scream I don't mean just an ordinary scream; I mean that I shall scream and scream and scream and never stop.

"I am conscious of nothing but this tearing, stabbing, gnawing pain; this restless, raging, trembling of the body; this malignant tearing of the open wound of my soul."

Crowley got this unhappy girl and her husband down to his "abbey" in Cefalu, and undertook to cure them.

Don't ask me if I think there is anything in this method of "cure." I don't know. I am not advocating it. I am merely quoting. For the normal, sensible human being the only safe method of dealing with dope is to let it absolutely and completely alone.



Roddie Miner, of New York, Who Attended Several of Crowley's Seances in America.

Since the publication of this series of articles began I have received letters and communications about Aleister Crowley from every quarter of the globe—even from Australia and Tierra del Fuego. They are mostly from people of whom I never heard. To quote them all would require a book. Some of them picture Crowley as a holy man, a saint, sacrificing himself to teach humanity a new religion of freedom; others depict him as a monster of depravity, hypocrisy and dishonesty.

What is the real truth about this extraordinary character? I don't think you can have discovered it from reading these chapters, for I confess that I don't pretend to have discovered it in writing them. I have known Crowley for years. I own most of his books. I have a mass of material written about him, both by his friends and enemies. Yet he remains an enigma.

Once in talking with me about his long Asiatic travels, he said:

"When you read or hear any stories about the interior of China, no matter how incredible they may happen to be, it is never safe to take for granted they are lies. No matter how fantastic the story may be; no matter how cruel, how impossibly wicked and vile on the one hand, or how beautiful and saintlike and holy it may be on

the other—there is always the possibility that somewhere in that great, mysterious interior of China the story may be true."

I've often thought of that statement in connection with Aleister Crowley, and have wondered if he wasn't unconsciously drawing a picture of himself as well as of the Mysterious East.

(*The End*)