

Ulver

"A Memorable Fancy 4"

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(plates 17-20)

An angel came to me and said: 'O pitiable foolish
young man! O horrible! O
dreadful state! Consider the hot burning dungeon thou
art preparing for
thyself to all eternity, to which thou art going in such
career. 'I said:
'Perhaps you will be willing to shew me my eternal lot &
we will
contemplate together upon it and see whether your lot
or mine is most
desirable. ' So he took me thro' a stable & thro' a
church & down into the
church vault. At the end of which was a mill: thro' the
mill we went, and
came to a cave: down the winding cavern we groped
our tedious way, till a
void boundless as a nether sky appear'd beneath us.&
we held by the roots
of trees and hung over this immensity; but I said: 'If
you please we will
commit ourselves to this void, and see whether
providence is here also: if
you will not, I will? ' But he answered: 'Do not presume,
o young-man, but
as we here remain, behold thy lot which will soon
appear when the darkness
passes away. ' So I remain'd with him, sitting in a
twisted root of an
oak; he was suspended in a fungus, which hung with
the head downward into
the deep. By degrees we beheld the infinite abyss,
fiery as the smoke of a
burning city; beneath us, at an immense distance, was
the sun, black but
shinning; round it were fiery tracks on which revolv'd
vast spiders,
crawling after their prey, which flew, or rather swum, in
the infinite
deep, in the most terrific shapes of animals sprung
from corruption;& the
air was full of them,& seem'd composed of them:

these are devils, and are
called powers of the air. I now asked my companion
which was my eternal
lot? He said: 'Between the black & white spiders' but
now, from between
the black & white spiders, a cloud and fire burst and
rolled thro' the
deep. Black'ning all beneath, so that the nether deep
grew black as a
sea, & rolled with a terrible noise; beneath us was
nothing now to be seen
but a black tempest, till looking east between the
cloudes & waves, we saw
a cataract of blood mixed with fire, and not many
stones' throw from us
appear'd and sunk again the scaly fold of a monstrous
serpent; at last, to
the east, distant about three degrees, appear'd a fiery
crest above the
waves; slowly it reared like a ridge of golden rocks, till
we discover'd
two globes of crimson fire, from which the sea fled
away in clouds of
smoke; and now we saw it was the head of Leviathan;
his forehead was
divided into streaks of green & purple like those on a
tyger's forehead:
soon we saw his mouth & red gills hung just above the
raging foam, tinging
the black deep with beams of blood, advancing
towards us with all the fury
of a spiritual existence. My friend the angel climb'd up
from his station
into the mill; I remain'd alone; & then this appearance
was no more, but I
found myself sitting on a pleasant bank beside a river
by moonlight
hearing a harper, who sung to the harp; & his theme
was: 'The man who never
alters his opinion is like standing water, & breeds
reptiles of the mind. '
But I apose and sought for the mill, & there I found my
angel, who,
surprised asked me how I escaped? I answer'd: 'All that
we saw was owing
to your metaphysics; for when you ran away, I found
myself on a bank by
moonlight hearing a harper. But now we have seen my
eternal lot, shall I
shew you yours? ' He lugh'd at my proposal; but I by
force suddenly caught

him in my arms, & flew westerly thro' the night, till we
were elevated
above the earth's shadow; then I flung myself with him
directly into the
body of the sun; here I clothed myself in white & taking
in my hand
Swedenborg's volumes, sunk from the glorious clime,
and passed all the
planets till we came to Saturn: here I staid to rest, &
then leap'd into
the void between Saturn & fixed stars. 'Here', said I, 'Is
your lot, in
this space, if space it may be call'd. ' Soon we saw the
stable and the
church, & I took him to the altar and open'd the bible,
and lo! It was a
deep pit, into which I descended, driving the angel
before me; soon we saw
seven houses of brick; one we enter'd; in it were a
number of monkeys,
baboons, & all of that species, chain'd by the middle,
grinning and
snatching at one another, but withheld by the shortness
of their chains:
however, I saw that they sometimes grew numerous;
and then the weak were
caught by the strong, and with a grinning aspect, first
coupled with, &
then devour'd, by plucking off first one limb and then
another, till the
body was left a helpless trunk; this, after grinning &
kissing it with
seeming fondness, they devour'd too; and here &
there I saw one savourily
picking the flesh off of his own tail; as the stench
terribly annoy'd us
both, we went into the mill, & in my hand brought the
skeleton of a body,
which in the mill was Aristotele's analitycs. So the angel
said: 'Thy
phantasy has imposed upon me, & thou oughtest to be
ashamed. ' I answered:
'We impose on one another, & it is but lost time to
converse with you
whose works are only analytics. ' Opposition is true
friendship.

(plates 21-22)

I have always found that angels have the vanity to
speak of
themselves as the only wise; this they do with a

confident insolence
sprouting from systematic reasoning, Swedenborg
boasts that what he writes
is new; Tho' it is only the contents or index of already
publish'd books.
A man carried a monkey about for a shew, & because
he was a little wiser
than the monkey, grew vain, and conceiv'd himself as
much wiser than seven
men. It is so with Swedenborg: He shews the folly of
churches & exposes
hypocrites, till he imagines that all religious, & himself
the single one
on earth that ever broke a net. Now hear a plain fact:
Swedenborg has not
written one net truth, now hear another: he has written
all the old
falsehoods. And now hear the reason. He conversed
with angels who are all
religious & conversed not with devils who all hate
religion. For he was
incapable thro' his conceited notions. Thus
Swedenborg writings are a
recapitulation of all superficial opinions, and an
analysis of the more
sublime but not further. Have now another plain fact.
Any man of
mechanical talents may, from the writings of Paracelus
or Jacob Behmen,
produce ten thousand volumes of equal value with
Swedenborg's, and from
those of Dante or Shakespear an infinite number. But
when he has done
this, let him not say that he knows better than his
master, for he only
holds a candle in sunshine.

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