

## THE CHAMBERS OF NATURE'S MACHINES

By **Sharkchild**

I would lie in the middle of Turnby Road on those days when the wind would explain the seasons and the cold and the feelings quickly lit and quickly dampened. The leaves from elderly oak trees would carve their sacred fates between the airs, arousing the nostalgic memories of imagined pasts. In this unsettled ocean of dryness and brittleness, I would rest and soak in the mystifying sounds and crackles. I did not fear that anything might come by, nor did I ever expect it—especially on such days of unrest. So, without disturbance, I laid amongst the turmoil of magical expectancy, involving myself in tales wrapped on the motives lingering behind the engines of nature.

All too many had spoken of the words heard amongst the wind, or at least behind it, but I had much different inclinations from the invisible transports. There was a system to it all, an uncalculated tempo and a mysterious strength. My intuitions conceived an ancientness beset within the heart of a god-like tapestry—a masterpiece sculpted and constructed, mechanically and technically, for purposes of life's resolutions. I envisioned a magnificent machine built in spiritual dimensions that garnered the energy to exude such power. With organic muscle, it forced soul into the essence of menial happenstances, binding its thought with the world. My mind was lost on the exquisiteness of such hidden things—things I sought in the realms above and around, and even in the realms below.

On one particular instance of my reveling on Turnby Road, my own hidden longings came to exist in the most unthinkable of manners. A carriage came down the road at the twilight of the day, and without such sight as would be required to navigate opposite that of a dreaming boy, it ran across my chest, striking me into oblivion then and there. I recall feeling an unnerving spike of discomfort and the sudden splurge of liquid erupting within me. The pain of it only had a rare affect and was over quite instantly.

The driver knew what occurred as it suddenly happened and he stopped his travels. He approached my location with a steady cloak blowing about him. Without any expressions of regret or disgust, he lifted me upon his shoulders and relinquished me to the serene insides of his cab.

I was not alone where I was placed; there was a soothing voice, a lady's voice, singing to me calmly and gently. With her words, my blood flowed. With her tune, my mind reconstructed. Her hands felt upon me with warmth and dexterity, working outside of me and inside of me. Her healing touch captured the essence of my life as if it had never left and only needed to be redistributed.

When my eyes opened from whence I had been, I saw the lady of life. Her hair was dark, but her skin was fair. Light wrinkles spread about her face as she smiled and one of her eyes slightly twitched as she did so. She reached out to me and I took hold of her hand. I held her hand and felt safe. I treasured the feeling of not wanting to be anywhere else.

Then she spoke to me, lovingly, and instructively, with intelligence not natively originated:

"I have found you, young son, between the legions of life and death, staring deeply into the inner times of creation. In caution, you have been

resolute and opened yourself to the wisdom void of intelligence. Surely I am in awe of you and enamored with your presence beside my own.

“Please, close your eyes while I continue to speak to you. Listen to my words and rest against them—feel their presence and make them your own.

“Of things not light or dark, there does exist. Like love and peace, they are true. Like hate and violence, they are repulsed. With instruments attuned to their secret vibrations, they can be found, but they do not approve. They are goliath things meant only for confusion, changing what is steady, removing truth from fact. They create the notion of faith. Moments of both doubt and realization are the antiquities of their births. Where the wind blows, where the waves crash, where the rain falls, they are.

“For those who listen and see, the laws of their ways can be influenced. Gracefully, I have made agreements with some—those that would allow me to explain myself, and those that were willing to know me. It is these that I have befriended and one of which you will shortly meet. It, like me, will be overjoyed to see you.”

When I opened my eyes, the carriage had stopped and the door beside me was open. I found myself gazing into a theatre-sized interior of a deep red cavern. On its walls and ceiling were long, thick veins that coiled in, through, and around the surfaces. And upon them sprouted shoots of translucent flowers that twisted what light existed into scintillations of neon warmth. I looked upon my flesh to see the light rest upon it like a blanket, covering me in a rapturous heat.

Under my curiosity of this extraordinary place, I affixed my eyes upon the lady of life, looking for an explanation to which she replied, “Come, follow me.”

The driver of the carriage came with us, but he remained silent. His eyes were always focused, narrow and probing. He was ready to act, it seemed, in an instant, but there was no cause for him to do so. The pointed chin on his face swiveled sporadically with the constant twisting of his neck—he was scouting diligently in all directions.

Instead of walking through an opening in a wall, we descended between the grounds, crawling down a pit that stretched far beneath us. In the darkness, the lady of life sang once again. Her words and melody rang unfathomably into my mind and body. The light from the cavern quickly faded.

We soon reached a break in the tunnel, which opened into a strange and disheveled hallway. Random planks of wood were propped along the wall and ceiling, giving what little support was needed to maintain a path. Between the wood I could see the glowing red of veins.

“We are almost there,” the lady of life announced.

By the time we started making our way through the hall, I noticed a peculiar sound, which, in its essence, emanated from within me. It was a low churning throughout my body, caused by a vibration in the ground so fast and potent that it created a hum within the flesh. It crawled down my arms and legs and danced inside my stomach. Even the beat of my heart trembled beneath it.

At the end of the hall we stopped, which turned out to be as long as about 30 feet.

“There,” spoke the lady of life as she crouched down low.

I looked where she pointed. Down on the ground, at the hallway's end, there was a window as wide as the hall. Through this window was a gigantic, sphere enclosure, and within this enclosure was an entity of glory and of terror.

It may not have been seen at first glance, beneath the heavy darkness that shrouded us, but it could not have been avoided after looking for long. In the most genial of terms, it was an enormous snake of uncertainty. It was in constant motion, moving around the carved out sphere of coiled veins. There was no pattern to its movements or hesitation in its force. The anomaly slid around faster than anything I had known, so fast that I could not capture the appearance of it. When its travel came closer to us, I could feel the vibrations within me spike in intensity, as if winds were blowing upon my insides, numbing them in coolness.

"We must leave now," spoke the driver of the carriage in urgency, letting words leave his lips for the first time.

"But I have not met it," I returned.

"Perhaps another time," said the driver.

There was then a real sound growing in the distance, coming closer to us. This sound was severe and unsettling. With the harshness of growls, it echoed in multiples of many numbers, representing a group of something rather than an individual. I knew instantly that the motives behind the sounds were ill intended.

"Can't it protect us?" I asked, pointing into the chamber.

"No," answered the lady of life, unexpectedly.

"But you know it," I pleaded with her.

The twitch in the lady of life's eye ceased then and she pushed me into the window. As I twisted in shock, I saw the horror in her eyes, the change of her composure, and the selfishness of her desires. She knew more at that moment than the driver of the carriage did, and she acted in accordance. She would have nothing to do with me at the sake of her own life. I had become nothing but a burden—a hindrance to the escape that was necessary.

I fell terribly into the sphere, rolling and breaking as I tumbled down the curvature of the enclosure. When I reached the bottom, I was a helpless mass. My breathing was shallow and I could not open my eyes. Save for the vibrations running heavily through me, I was just short of dead.

I did not die again, nor did I live ever the same. Of my family left behind, I never considered; as surely as I had changed, my family was forgotten. When the machine of the sphere ran across me, not unlike the carriage, my life as previously known was lost. Like nature, in its embodiment of power, raw carnage, and gentle vitality, I was converted from one element to another, transferred, in essence, to a capacity of natural energy. I did not become a part of the machine, but like it. I joined the chambers of nature's machines.

It truly was an accident—those thieves of enlightenment coming upon me in the middle of Turnby Road. Their kindness was only a short-lived hand of fate. By no means did their intentions become the results of what truly underwent. The lady of life had beguiled me for no other reason than the yearning of company. She had perhaps discovered the thoughts lingering in my mind to influence her words, but it did not explain her want of my presence beside her own through her endeavors.

The lady of life and her driver never escaped that day. The sounds of anger converged upon her and her driver. These sounds, as I soon learned of within the chambers, were the ululations of spiritual defenders, beasts on watch and so many times fooled by the lady of life and her strange sorceries. This, of course, was apparent by the lady of life's ability to construct the passageway that led to the inner places of the chambers. However, this time, even without me, they were overcome.

I greatly thanked the lady of life, for she gave me life not once, but twice.