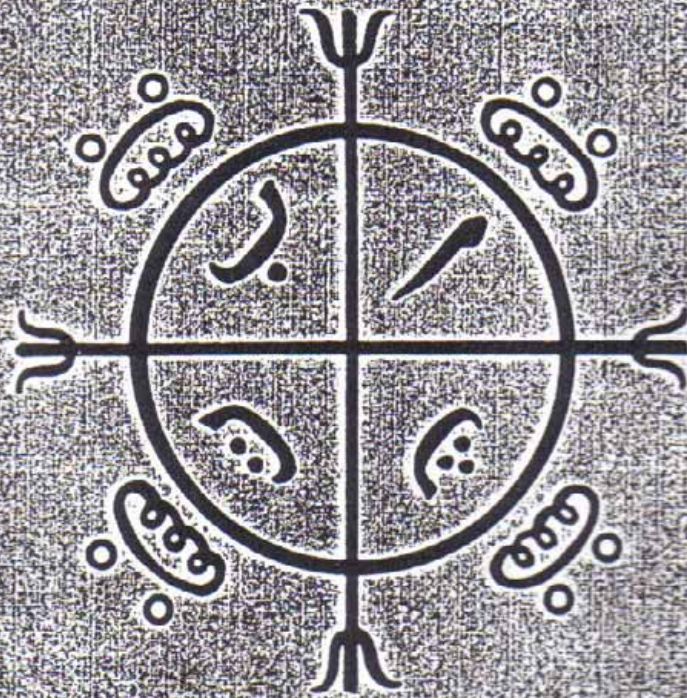


A MANDAean BOOK

OF

BLACK MAGIC

E.S. Drower



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IT is unfortunate that I have no copy of this interesting book that is complete or in good condition. I possess a broken remnant (D.C. 45 of my collection of MSS.), blotted, dog-eared, and often illegible, and a book of excerpts copied by a priest in Baghdad. The latter (D.C. 46) is extremely incorrect. Besides these, I have borrowed and transliterated pages from another fragmentary loose-leaved copy, brittle with age. All these manuscripts were illiterate and corrupt, each talisman displayed variations due to miscopying or miscomprehension, so that originally identical texts showed considerable differences. A dictionary-maker, however, may neglect no text, however corrupt, and although the illiteracy of scribes has led me on many a wildgoose chase, the labour has been amply compensated.

The magic of this book I have termed "black", for the Mandæans themselves regard the book as *harsia bišia*, "evil magic." Some of it is ancient magic, ancient by tradition and use. Of such is the direction "take clay from the two river-paths" (i.e. from the two banks of a river), "and make therefrom two clay images." Professor Stephen Langdon (*Sumerian Liturgical Texts*, Philadelphia University Press, 1917, pp. 199-200) translates an incantation against wizards and witches in which occurs an instruction to make "an image of clay, of clay from the two river's banks". Nor is internal proof of the age of certain talismans missing: for instance, in the popular talisman for separating lovers, or parting husband and wife:—

In the name of the sundering angels! There shall be sundering of N. (woman) from N. (man). Sundered is Bel from Babylon, sundered Nebo from Borsippa, sundered is Nišra from Kaškar.

Babylon lies amidst its dust-heaps, Borsippa, now called Birs-Nimrud, only survives as a ruined pile, Kaškar already lay in ruins when the Arabs built their city of Wasit (itself now a ruin) in the year A.D. 83. Nišra is obviously a corruption: who was the patron god of Kaškar I know not.

Many of the talismans in the collection are in Arabic phonetically transliterated into Mandaic script. These I have not translated.

The collection may be divided roughly into groups.

- (a) Curative, and against the Evil Eye.
- (b) To induce pregnancy or protect the embryo.
- (c) Against enemies and demons.
- (d) To stop children from weeping.
- (e) To assist the fowler and fisherman.
- (f) Love-charms.
- (g) Jealousy-spells—as a rule associated with love-charms.

Occasionally the texts degenerate into gibberish which may or may not have meant something once upon a time. Invocations of angels, demons, and genii occur frequently, in this reminding one of the Jewish book of magic, "The Sword of Moses" (*The Sword of Moses: An Ancient Book of Magic*, M. Gaster. Nutt, 1896). The ineffable name Yahu is a word of power as in Jewish magic. Magical figures and images, similar to those traced in Mandæan magic bowls, occur often: some look like degenerate cuneiform, others like the human figures which a small child draws on its slate. These are copied by the magician with as much care as he bestows upon the text; I will not say "with as great a care", as transcription is often hurried and copyists notoriously inaccurate. For magic is a trade. Few of the magician's clients are literate enough to criticize what is written for them; indeed, only a minority are Mandæans, and Moslems, Jews, and Christians look upon incomprehensibility as part of the mystery of the spell. Of the Mandæans themselves, laymen who read and write the Mandaic script are rare, and even literates understand little of the written and classical Mandaic. The spoken dialect, or *rafna*, is a debased jargon intermixed with foreign words.

I sometimes visit a small dark shop in the Baghdad bazaars. Its owner is a Mandæan priest who depends on magic for his livelihood. Clients slip in, one or two at a time, waiting outside to take their turn if they find the magician occupied with an earlier visitor. He sits on the floor, his ink-pot, sand-box, and reed-pen beside him. His stock-in-trade further comprises a box containing the book of black magic, other phylacteries written on scrolls of paper; bags containing sundry spices, herbs, or other substances necessary to ritual; a bench, carpet, and mattress for his customers. Here he sits the day long, his spectacles on his nose, his greying beard sweeping his white robe, his long hair tucked under his red-and-white head-kerchief, writing talismans and instructing customers

how they should be used, for to each talisman is appended instruction as to its use, just as a pharmacist writes on the label of a bottle of physic "to be taken in water three times daily". These directions are extremely varied. I append a few selected at random:

Write this for a woman who is not pregnant. Write and bury it at the outer door, so that the woman comes and goes (over it). Further, read this order thrice over sesame oil and give it to the woman and her man to drink.

This charm is a talisman. Write it in red ink and tie it to the legs of a she-goat. It is a love-charm for man and woman. There shall be solace.

Draw this figure in the sun and put oil of jasmine into it and bury it under a fire. This is a love-charm.

Write this charm upon a horseshoe and cast it into the fire. This is a love-charm.

This is a love-charm. Write on a strip (of cotton) and make into a wick and insert into a lamp. There will be relief and healing by the power of our lord.

Write this charm in the milk of a woman whose husband detests her. Write on paper and melt it off in water and give it to her husband to drink.

Read this charm over an egg dyed with saffron (*lbit maruqtia*) for three days—twenty-one times—and bury it in a place where no one sees it and the evil one will come out of his stomach.

This charm for coldness of heart write and melt off in water and give to the lover to drink.

Write this charm on the skin of a bitch and bring clay from the two river paths and make two images and put writing on one of them and bury it at his door. It is strong (the charm).

Read this charm over pitch seven times, smear it on the door of the woman and man, and it shall come to pass that they become estranged, through the power of our lord.

Inscribe this charm on the interior of a hollow basin in which there is no engraving; steep it in white sesame-oil and make drink of it the woman who does not get pregnant; she should drink it when her husband lies and sleeps with her. There will be healing from our lord, praised be his name.

The proof of a pudding is in the eating, and some talismans are more popular than others because clients have tested their efficacy and pronounced them to be powerful. A sick person cured in the course of nature, a successful lover, these correspond to the "grateful users" of patent medicines and spread the repute of both magician and charm. Small wonder that many of the magical formulae, like coins that pass from hand to hand, become defaced and worn in the course of centuries.

Of the talismans in the volume I offer here only a selection. Should I have the good fortune at some future date to come upon a

text more satisfactory than those I now possess, a complete version might be justified. I have not attempted to correct the texts transliterated below: though occasionally I have inserted an obvious reading in brackets. I have, however, selected from the three manuscripts the likeliest version. Moreover, scribes throughout employ the illiterate *h* for the plural *ia*—the pronunciation is the same. This I venture to remedy. Otherwise the texts are presented in all their corruption: would that it were otherwise! As regards my translations, I fear that I have often sacrificed good English in the effort to be as literal as possible. To translate freely would have been comparatively easy: but accuracy suffers thereby.

#### TRANSLATIONS

##### I. Curative and Against the Evil Eye

1.

In the name of the Great Life! There shall be healing for N. from burning fever and malady and disease and the Evil and the Dimmed Eye. And there shall be health for N. Amen, amen selah. S—a. Write this talisman, melt it in water and give it to the fevered person to drink.

2.

Depart and be scared away, Evil Eye and withered eye and discharging eye and eye with cataract and darkened eye and reddened eye and eye that comes and eye that goes, and discharging eye and inflamed eye and eye directed to the heavens, and squeezed-out eye, and killing and dying. Like a yoke thou art lifted off and departest from my body and spirit and soul and my trunk and my stature and all my fabric, and (from) my wife, and my sons, and my daughters, mine, N. son of N.<sup>1</sup> Amen, amen selah. S—a. A spell for eye complaint (closed vision) . . . (protects) a child from the Evil Eye. Tie on with thy right hand: there will be relief and healing by the strength of our lord. S—a.

3.

Magically bound are devils and *šids*,<sup>2</sup> and groanings, discharges, and blemishes (?); bound is Pain of the Eyes, the pain by the eyes, magically bound membranes scraped by discharge. They are all

<sup>1</sup> The parent's name in magic is always that of the mother.

<sup>2</sup> *Šid*, a household demon.

bound and sealed. The eyes of N. son of N. (are protected) from pains and discharge and waterings and becoming dim. Bound are devils, bound the *pišiaros*<sup>3</sup> and gods and high places and liliths. And health shall be his, N.'s, son of N. Amen, amen selah. S—a. Write this charm for headache. Write and hang upon his right (side) and he will become well by the strength of our lord. S—a.

4.

In the name of the Great Life! Healing and cleansing and sealing and arming and the great safeguard of soundness be his, N.'s, the son of N. And healing be there for his head, that of N. the son of N. from the Life and from Dwelling-of-Life, the Healer, lord of all healers!

From the east I come and to the west I go. I found him and his pain; he was weeping, wailing, and shedding tears. And I said to him: Why weepest thou and why sheddest thou tears? And he said: Why should I not weep, and why should I not shed tears when your blows fall on my face, and (it is) your burning that inflamed it, and (your) staff is in my eyes, and your scourge in my heart and (your) loosening in all my limbs and the sixty-six veins, (also) the great vein of my body.

And I said to him: Beat not thy head on the stones, wail not, nor shed tears! Mourn not! I am the Chief; I order him that came to thee, the six beings,<sup>4</sup> and he shall bring healing from the great Place of Light: (he shall bring thee) of our almonds and our leeks, and our lemon, and our oak (and) the great date-palm.<sup>5</sup> He shall shred the principal ones.<sup>6</sup> (And he shall remove my staff from thy head) and my throne from thy brain, and my blows from the veins of thy body and my burning from thine injured brain (mental infirmity), and my staff (from thine eyes), and my scourge from thy heart, and weakness-as-of-water from all thy limbs and from the sixty (and six) veins and from the great vein of thy babbling (body), and health shall be his, N.'s, the son of N. and for his brain-matter and his head, for his injured brain and for all the body of N. also

<sup>3</sup> *pišiaro*, a kind of demon.

<sup>4</sup> Probably a corruption. Only one healer is mentioned, namely the exorcist.

<sup>5</sup> The reference is to foods eaten in the ritual meal, as all are customarily eaten in the *sidqa brikha* with the exception of the oak (acorn?) unless this is counted "a fruit in season".

<sup>6</sup> The passage is obviously corrupt. It probably ran *unīqal . . . mn rišah*, "and he shall remove my staff from thy head."

for his children by means of this writing which is appointed this purpose). Life is victorious. S—a. This charm for the removal of injury to the head should be read over the owner of the head. S—a.

5.

Upon thee, Dirdban, I have called by name! devil that eateth the flesh of a corpse and drinketh its blood. And upon evil liliths, and upon N. the evil one that guarded not the great (abscess). Libat,<sup>1</sup> his daughter, make live (i.e. cure) the great abscess of N. Libat, remove (?) it. Amen, amen selah. S—a. Read this charm over a saffron-dyed egg (seven times) for three days—twenty-one times—and (bury) in a place where no one sees it, and the evil (one) will issue from his stomach.

6.

Enclosed in a trap, the lion roared and the fever of N. was stayed (lit. quenched).

7.

Grinding the teeth. And split is the tree<sup>2</sup> and laughter<sup>3</sup> by His Name, that which is great and honoured, and beloved is his Name! They were afraid, they were severed from N. son of N., from his ears and from his heart, (namely) the grinding of his teeth and the laughter from between his lips and the bolt (or "holding fast") from beneath his tongue, that is of N. son of N. (They were severed) by the Name of Glory, yea, hiding it from the worlds, by His Name that they feared (fearing) its beauty. It bringeth the protection of authority: there shall be health for N., he shall not grind his teeth. Amen, amen. And health, and the great protection of the angels, and satisfaction (shall be his). Yea, yes, selah. S—a. Write this charm for one that grinds his teeth at night and for one that talks in his sleep.

8.

In the Name of the Great Life that is eternal! Thou groonest, and I wept and rose to the heavenly vault. I stopped, I found a

<sup>1</sup> Libat is the Mandman Ishtar or Venus (Dilbat).

<sup>2</sup> Corrupt: should probably read 'tis "wailing".

<sup>3</sup> *guba* is written, i.e. "trembling" or "terror", but *ghuba* is written below, so I have read it here as *ghuba*.

great cloud<sup>1</sup> resting on the edge (summit) of the mountains. I questioned her and said to her: What is the pain of fever? I have brought the pain of fever, the portion of a man, a scribe, and have dispersed the fever from the body of N. to the mountains and marshes. And (for lo!) he sins not, nor (behaves) vainly, nor makes strife, nor does his hand work for reward. S—a. The mystery of this charm for fever whisper it beside him with a bell so that it is not understood seven times and insert it into a place which no one knows. There will be healing and relief. S—a.

9.

Tremble, be off and vanish, be expelled and removed, all ye devils, *šids*, plague-demons, satans, "misadventures," and "dividing demons"<sup>2</sup> and roo-demons from N. son of N.; moreover, appear not to him whether in dreams at night or visions by day, neither sleeping nor waking. Lie not upon him, deceive him not, appear not to him nor to his wife, nor to his sons or daughters, nor to any persons in his house, N.'s son of N. Life is victorious (over) all works. S—a. Ye are all bound, and these phylacteries shall bring healing to N. son of N.; they shall not loosen one another. By the name Yahu Yaya and Yu, Light, by Tus Qas they will bind. Strike! They are struck down and . . . (illegible) . . . the bond, a (powerful) word . . . and health be there for N. son of N., amen, amen selah. Lying-down, lying-down. . . . This talisman is for one that hath nightmares. Write and fasten to him and there will be relief. S—a.

(There are talismans of a curative character for a number of complaints—"those bitten by a snake" or "mad dog", or "stung by a scorpion", "for hæmorrhage," "nose-bleeding," "cold fever," "hot fever," for "one whose hand is painful" or "whose heart and side are painful", and so on. In quite a different category are a series included in D.C. 46, which bear a markedly Arab stamp, and are probably translated from some Arabic book of magic. The pattern, however, has little that is Moslem in its composition. The illness or trouble from which the client is suffering is personified as a demon. The appearance of the demon is described: "with

<sup>1</sup> The *anana* (cloud) of this charm was originally in all probability a Babylonian deity (Nana? Nanai?). Hence the secrecy, the whispering, and drowning the voice with a bell.

<sup>2</sup> *pigis upalgis* are often cited in exorcisms of demons. They are personified pollutions, which separate the polluted persons from his fellow men.

the head of a bull and the body of a man," "a fish," "a dog-headed woman," and so on. The formula then proceeds in every case in similar fashion. The demon is brought before Solomon, who asks it: "O demon, where residest thou, and how much evil has thou wrought upon the son of man?" The demon then names its place of residence, "in water," "beneath trees," "at cross-roads," "in the markets," as the case may be, and confesses which part of the human body he attacks, or how otherwise he injures the sick or afflicted person. Solomon then asks, "O demon, what is the charm that exorcises thee?" (*qublaḥ mahū ḥawīa*). The demon replies, giving a recipe and a magical formula, the latter being usually Arabic in Mandaic script. The recipes are various: for instance, "black rue in the milk of a red cow: boil over the fire and eat it." Concoctions are often to be inserted in the nostrils of the patient, probably because the nostrils are supposed to be one of the places by which evil spirits enter and issue.)

## II. To Induce Pregnancy, or Protect the Embryo

(These are numerous, especially in the Arabo-Mandaic. Most of them are corrupt. They include lists of liliths, of angels, etc. I give a few typical examples. The *uṭhras* are Mandaic life-spirits: the "Spouse" (*anana*) again suggests a former invocation of *Nana*.)

10.

Healing and the great safeguard of authority be there for her, N. Bound, bound, bound are all idols, great and small; bound are the female liliths and the mouth of the vagina is bound. Bound are the liliths. And thou speakest: and they are removed, fettered and impeded. Bound is the Spouse of the *uṭhras*, all the tribes of demons and angels and idols are removed, made powerless and expelled from the body of N. The twelve liliths are bound into darkness, bound is Shamish (the sun-god), bound are the male gods by their own mysteries; bound are the idols whose names I mention with your names, (ye) four beings who surround and protect the sleeping. And health shall be N.'s and the unborn child's in her womb, (that) is found with her. . . . upon you, ye holy and pious angels, so that ye bring safely<sup>1</sup> (to birth) the embryo of N. (by the names of) Nuriel, Sauriel, Tibiel, Hamriel, "Scatter-Demon,"

<sup>1</sup> Past after conditional.

Shamish, Mlakḥiel, and Suarel. S—a. Write this spell in the interior of a shallow basin in which there is no engraving, steep it in white sesame oil and let the woman who does not get pregnant drink it. And she shall drink it when her husband lies with and sleeps with her. There will be healing from our lord, praised be his name! S—a.

11.

Health be there for N. and the embryo in her womb. And I praise you, holy and pious angels. Ye have hearkened, ye have hearkened, so that ye will bring safely (to birth) the embryo of N. by the names of Nuriel, Šuriel, Uthriel, Ardiel, Shatashiel, Kbel, and Šidriel. S—a. Write this charm on gazelle-skin and tie it to the woman's neck when her labour begins.

## III. Against Enemies, etc.

12.

The voice of the earth so that he weeps, and the voice of the heavens with Shamish so that he sits in his blood and weeps at the torture to which the Seal<sup>1</sup> subjects him. He weeps, my enemy! And my tooth is upon his tooth. In his blood he mourns<sup>2</sup> and weeps.<sup>3</sup> By the names of . . . iel, Rufiel, Markiel, by the name of Gabriel and Glaplaiel and Pakriel, ye shall turn away and separate the evil one N. from his companions and friends, and his wife and sons and daughters and from any river at which he may drink. Quickly, quickly! Amen, amen selah. The mystery of this command read upon bitter salt (salt-petre?) sixty-one times and put it into thine enemy's house and the evil man will depart from it. Establishing and efficacious. S—a.

13.

Earth is separated from the heavens and the heavens from the earth! The sun is separated (from the moon)<sup>4</sup> and the four corners of the House (i.e. the world) are separate, turned away is the likeness of the demon in the nights,<sup>5</sup> turned away (i.e. unpropitious?) are the twelve Signs of the Zodiac!

<sup>1</sup> *Qubḥanqa, qubḥanqa.*

<sup>2</sup> Read *mamōa* (mourns).

<sup>3</sup> Read *alia* (weeps).

<sup>4</sup> This opening is common: and should run as in brackets.

<sup>5</sup> The passage is corrupt. "Her likeness" is probably intended. The *dmuḥa* "likeness" is a spiritual double which acts as a guardian angel, and its estrangement would mean that she was no longer protected.

And she is turned away from her village (the village of . . .) and from her husband N. and from her children and her district: she is turned away from her husband, her sons and her daughters and from her home, so that she wanders away from it. And the king shall turn from her and his regents (yea she shall be shunned) by all the children of men. Amen, amen selah. S—a. Write and bury at thine enemy's outer door, and she (or he) will be overthrown by thee.

14.

In the names of the angels written down in this talisman, and of (this) subduing spell and bond! In the names of Shaiel, Biniael, Nhuriael, Haqaniel, Qashtiel, Huriael, Dahwiel, Ananiael, Biniael, Shiaiel, and Kibiael; further, (of) Wawiel, Haniael, and Aniael! Ye angels (and I) Ruhm'iael,<sup>1</sup> whose names are written down, ye shall avert hatred from, and bestow upon me, N. love and beauty and fame and honour. Subjugate (to me) great and small, women and men, and virgins male and female, completely, and the river from which they drink, and freemen and freewomen, and the worlds and generations, and all the world in its entirety. And the whole world shall tremble, and the sun shall tremble and the moon shall tremble and gods and men will tremble and mountains and valleys will tremble, and all the evil folk that offended me, N. and my house, (also) my enemies. Revenge (me) with fire, blood, and slaughter.

I have adjured thee, Biyarukt, daughter of the gods, and Turiael and Miniael and Qiniael and Tuniael and Aṭiael and Miniael and Qiniael and Tuniael and Aṭiael and Miniael. Su, su, su! Depart, break down, earth and dust, depart!

Their tongues were held fast, all the evil ones who wronged me, N., and my house, moreover their mouths were exorcised and a clamp (was placed) beneath their tongues. Ye seven stars! (ye whose names are concealed or were not revealed with the exception of the Great Name which they revealed, and it was revealed—by the name *Adonai Šaboth* (My Lord of Hosts) this it is!—break, cause to depart, . . . bind and accomplish! By the name Ainiael, and fire and blood and slaughter of witches. Amen, amen selah. S—a. Write this charm and hold it to thee then read it over salt and

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation from a gloss.

mustard, and it will destroy thine enemy and evil persons and their tongues will be bound.<sup>1</sup> S—a.

15.

In the names of Yaniael, Shiel, and Niaiel! Ye angels that have removed hatred and bestowed love, favour, beauty, fame and honour upon N.! Bring into subjection to him persons in authority,<sup>2</sup> great and small, women and men. Amen, amen selah.

This is a charm for the humiliation of those in authority. And read it over salt and mustard, and cast it (into) the place of whomsoever thou wishest (to humiliate). Further, hold it to thee with thy left hand and the evil persons will be quelled. S—a.

IV. For Children's Ailments and Crying

(There are a number of these, both in Mandaic and Arabo-Mandaic. Some, such as that addressed to a personified Sobbing, and that which invokes a mysterious Fish of Sleep, have something of a nursery rhyme flavour, as if they had been crooned over a restless child. The fish is associated in Lower Iraq with sleeplessness because a fish "never closes its eyes". When a marsh-dweller complains "*Chan es-semech yanam bil-hor ana nimet!*" ("If the fish in the marsh slept, then I slept!") he is saying ironically "I never closed my eyes all night". Unfortunately, all these charms are corrupt and badly misspelt. The first given below has a Christian invocation.)

16.

In the name of the Great Life, healing and purity and sealing and arming and the great guard of authority be there for me, N. son of N., from the Life and from "Dwelling-of-Life", the Healer, lord of healers that heal my soul, so that the Spirit (of) Wailing and the spirit (of) Weeping and the spirit that wails in the night and affrighting spirits were scared off. And she (the spirit of Wailing) was made impotent by the name of the Seven Angels that govern the children of men and cure them from pains and infirmities, and the Evil Eye, and persistent fever and dampness (perspiration?),

<sup>1</sup> The text is very corrupt, and the above only an approximate translation

<sup>2</sup> Or "masterful persons", "tyrants"



and Weakness, daughter, sister,<sup>1</sup> of Death, so that she shall fly away and be rendered harmless<sup>2</sup> by the vaunted name of Jesu Christ, son of the Remover.<sup>3</sup> He is the healer of the souls of boy-child<sup>4</sup> and girl-child, and removes the troublesome<sup>5</sup> spirit and diarrhoea and weakness from boy-child and girl-child by the name of Qass Damad<sup>6</sup> and chases them away to cure him and makes (them) fly, yea, he made (them) flee (etc.). S—a. This, a spell (for) fear, is of Hibil (Ziwa)<sup>7</sup> it is for a child that cries and has nightmare. Write and fasten to thee, on thy neck. There will be relief. S—a.

17.

Health be the portion of N., son of N. The fishermen fish, they fish, the fishermen. His fast shall cease. Put into contact,<sup>8</sup> bind (his eyes?). Rise, calm the thought and spirit of N., son of N., who refuseth to suck and to whose eyes sleep cometh not. He shall not arise from his sleep until he seeth the light of the sun, and the Fish of Sleep shall lie in its place. Amen, amen selah. Write this charm for a child that cries and refuses to suck its wet-nurse. Write, and it will suck its wet-nurse.

18.

Sobbing, Child of Hysteria, Child of Sobs! He was shaken by sobs<sup>9</sup> and was quietened from sobbing, his sobs were vain, his sobs are subdued, and his sobs (tears) are dried and sent away. If not, I call on the angels of wrath that oversee and expel weeping and the dire affliction of sobbing, and they shall drive out weeping from N., the son of N. And there shall be health for N., son of N., from heaven. Sobbing. And Life is victorious. Write this charm and insert into an onion of three knots<sup>10</sup> and tie to the little one's neck.

<sup>1</sup> Delete "daughter".

<sup>2</sup> *hiblal*. The feminine singular refers primarily to the Spirit of Walling.

<sup>3</sup> Probably *mansa* should read *masiha* (messiah).

<sup>4</sup> For *yanqia* read *yanqia*.

<sup>5</sup> *'liza*. More probably to be read *'liza* "the spirit of walling".

<sup>6</sup> "The Christian priest Damad"? *Qass* = (Christian) priest.

<sup>7</sup> Hibil Ziwa is the Light-Giver, a saviour-spirit.

<sup>8</sup> With the breast.

<sup>9</sup> Or "his sobs were scared away".

<sup>10</sup> *amusa*. So a priest translates the word, but it is disputed. "Of three knots" is, I believe, a mistake, and it should read "tie to the forearm with three knots".

## V. Charms for Fowler and Fisherman

19.

In the name of the Great Life which is unending! I have called on you by name, (by the names of) those seven angels, that liberate game-birds before me, N. By the name of the angel Zarziel, the angel Hudiel, the angel Zaranaiel! All ye angels shall liberate in my direction all birds and fishes. I conjure you with all the conjurations, ye angels, that ye track down, espy, and make settle every eagle and bird in the mountains and plains and gorges; they shall rise up, and (also) the fish that are in the rivers: they shall come before me, N. Amen, amen, yea and amen selah. Recite this charm over salt and mustard, it is an exorcism for fowlers (and fishermen). And tie it to his forearm, further, write it on a piece of silk and tie to his forearm. There will be relief.

20.

In the name of the Great Life that is never-ending! From Tarwan, the great mystery of the flowing-water,<sup>1</sup> came I forth, and I stand upon the great artery<sup>2</sup> of the air, and I expound occult mysteries to thee,<sup>3</sup> this man that draweth up (the net) so that they may be drawn up and come, the fishes and birds of the lake and marsh, at my call, and may go to me and to my snare and my net and my command (?), N. son of N., drawing up (the net) in thy name, (the name of) that being, drawing-up, so that they shall be drawn up, so that they shall come, the fishes and the birds. And his name is the Great Light. Write this fishing spell and suspend it to thy hand, and it shall be that they will come before thee. For the fowler, write and hang upon the snare.

## VI. Love Talismans

(The example given just below is much copied, and I had purchased a separate copy of it before the book of magic came into my hands. Like all these talismans, it is used for a woman in love with a man, or vice versa, with resulting confusion to the gender of verba.)

<sup>1</sup> *Tarwan*, a river in the world of light. G.R.(r) 214, 300, 301.

<sup>2</sup> *diriana* or "sheath".

<sup>3</sup> For *akwath* ("like"), read *'akth* ("to thee").

In the name of Libat (Venus), mistress of gods and men ! He shall be brought into subjection, this man, N., neath the feet of N., woman, by the four limbs of his body, by the eight corners of his stature ; his male member and his sinews are subjected, subjected are his incoming and outgoing, subjected his slaves and his handmaidens, subdued are his *sids* (household spirits) and his demons, subdued his amulets and idols, subdued his knowledge and understanding, subdued are the evil thoughts that are in his heart and his body, that of N. by the name of Mimhisig Qusum, the lady that illumines them,<sup>1</sup> that casts water on dry land, and on the hands of (Libat) mistress of gods and men. He shall be bound and will come : he is brought into subjection, N., by the strong bond (spell) where-with heavens and earth were brought into subjection. From underneath the feet of N. (woman) he will go abroad, and his liver shall be seized, and he will not go to any place other (than hers), by the name of their mistress, she whose purity is sweet, who arose from the east,<sup>2</sup> who removeth them,<sup>3</sup> the queen<sup>4</sup> whom they remove<sup>5</sup> and call her and she comes, and they seek her and find her and consider (?) her, and sleeps<sup>6</sup> in the firmament of Qidsar,<sup>7</sup> the love-longing and marriage-maker. In the name of Libat (Venus), mistress of gods and men he is brought into subjection, and became impassioned.<sup>8</sup> And the heart and mind of N. are brought into subjection beneath the feet of N. the woman. He is bound and made subject, (yea) and heavens and earth are subdued at her name. Verily, and amen selah. S—-a.

This talisman and bond and mystery summon. And there shall be love and fame and honour and fairness of face for N. (woman) before N. (man). He shall be driven after N. (woman).

Woe to the mouth that speaketh falsehood and to the lips that

<sup>1</sup> *ḡmaiarūn*, "or that awakes them." It will be noticed that the verb is throughout in the masculine form, probably because many texts use the word *malāḡa* ("angel") for *malīḡa* ("queen").

<sup>2</sup> *mn madna*. The variant *mn maruna* ("from rebellion") might be *mn maruma* ("from the height"). The reference is to the planet Venus, or to her attendant.

<sup>3</sup> The whole passage is corrupt. I suggest that *mrahyan* should read *mrahmanan* "makes us love".

<sup>4</sup> Read *malāḡa* or *malīḡa* for *malāḡa* in all cases when Libat is invoked.

<sup>5</sup> Probably should read "whom they love", see note 3.

<sup>6</sup> Read *ḡakīb*.

<sup>7</sup> The name only occurs in this text, and is probably a corruption.

<sup>8</sup> Read *usurḡ ḡiq* = "his fire was kindled", i. e. "he became impassioned."

lie, for they are brought low even as the earth below the heavens above. And N. (the man), (is brought into subjection) below N. (woman) by the names of Kabshiel, Darkiel, Balmiel, Sanuel, and Ariel<sup>1</sup> (and) by the name of Libat, mistress of gods and men. Bind him, seal him, bring him and subjugate him beneath the feet of N. by the seal and name of this lord of a seal<sup>2</sup> and by the name of (the mistress of) gods and men. S—-a.

All the children<sup>3</sup> of men, small and great, are bound, sealed, and subdued, (yea) all that sit in the market and mosques and stand in the streets.<sup>4</sup> By the names of the gods he, N., shall be brought low beneath the feet of N., woman, in the name of the Life, until he sits upon her couch,<sup>5</sup> in the name of Adunai, who trod down the earth and condensed the heavens, by the name of YA (*repeated seven times*), by the name Markiel<sup>6</sup> by the name of those angels of love that is fervent and glowing, (bind on him) bonds and upon all the children of men. These are the angels that subjugate N. to N. ! (He is subdued) by the name of (Libat mistress of) gods and men, and by the name Adunai ḡbaboth. YA YAHU, amen, amen selah. S—-a.

By your names have I called upon you, Rahmiel and Mrahmiel, that cause men to fall in love with women and women with men, in love and lust, and such ardour as thou bestowest on fire when it flames and glows, such glow and love and passion as thou bestowest on the ready (impetuous) north wind. And upon thee, N. (man) and N. (woman) there shall be bestowed that love which was infused into Adam and Eve, and love and passion were kindled in them,<sup>7</sup> their hearts embraced, they were clothed in love and covered with love, putting on passion and desire. They joined together, Adam and Eve, and fell in love : they were wrapped up in each other<sup>8</sup> and were not parted from one another. Thou didst make him enamoured of her loveliness and her society. And the love which

<sup>1</sup> Some texts omit angel-names.

<sup>2</sup> *ḡubānqa. maria ḡ ḡubānqa*. See p. 11, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Literally "daughters".

<sup>4</sup> A miscopying at some early date has resulted in a displacement of *qaimia* which should precede *biriaḡa*.

<sup>5</sup> Read *alma ḡ yaiḡ ḡ araḡ ḡumḡ ḡ Adunai*. The *lucarsa* (which makes nonsense) is influenced by the *lucarsa* "on dry land" above.

<sup>6</sup> In one variant only.

<sup>7</sup> Read *ḡamāḡun*.

<sup>8</sup> Read *ḡhamā*.

rested upon Adam and Eve arose, (and) shall rest upon thee, N., that same love and passion for her loveliness and society. Ye shall possess each other, ye shall be wrapped up in each other as in a single garment, and shall not be parted one from the other.

And they shall not see, they shall die (of their love) and will neither eat nor drink until they possess<sup>1</sup> each other. These. Yea, and amen selah. S—a.

He is humbled and laid low by the name of the angel Mumhaq. When (they ?) send him (the angel), he goes and subdues the heart and mind of N. beneath the feet of N. (woman). Yea, and amen selah. S—a.

He (N.) is curbed in like a horse with four halters; he is held like a camel<sup>2</sup> by its head-rope, tied back like a mule by its halter, held back like a dog by its collar, by the name Dashtiel which bringeth assault into cities, by the name Rufiel who is a ministering angel upon earth, who answereth and removeth the troubles of mankind, by the name of the angel Ntita, who tieth up men with women.

And N. said: "I behold N. (woman) before me, my own: we will not part from each other."

Beseech the angels that they may go and make (love) overpowering, and kindle love for N. (woman) in the heart of N. (man). (By) all the names that there are, N. shall go after N. with ardent love and passion, like unto a breeding dog after a bitch on heat, even thus shall he, N., be drawn and dragged after her, N., by the names of those angels of heaven<sup>3</sup> and earth, by the names of the angels of love. Images.<sup>4</sup> Yea, and amen selah. S—a.

In the names of the Queen of Love, Libat the beautiful, and a gleaming-white queen thou art! And thou wilt beautify N. (woman) before N. (man). (She shall shine) in his heart like the glow of the sun or the glow of the moon, or the radiance of Venus, or like the glow of the sun amongst the encircling stars.<sup>5</sup> N. shall be magnified with N. like unto a mountain peak.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Delete *mn.*

<sup>2</sup> Read *gumia*.

<sup>3</sup> Read *ḡ 'ilmia wargā for 'aṭṭā wargā.*

<sup>4</sup> Probably indicates that magic features are inscribed here. Similar notes have *ḡilmia uṣurāṭḡ.*

<sup>5</sup> Delete *bhdadia*. The expression *mīṭarkia bhdadia* is so common in love-charms that the word probably crept in by inadvertence.

<sup>6</sup> Or, "her chosen one."

By thy name have I summoned thee, Kiwan (Saturn), so that N. shall be inflamed. When his vessel<sup>1</sup> emits (semen) he rejoices, ejecting it as his seed upon his thighs. He blossomed, the head of N. was turned towards N. (woman): like trees they were intertwined. Amen, amen selah. S—a.

The man N. is held to the woman N. his wife like these: like a horse with four halters,<sup>2</sup> like camels by a camel-halter, like a bull by his yoke, reined-in like a mule by its head-rope, pent back like fishes by a stone. And N. the man said, gazing upon her, upon N. the woman, "I am drawn to her body: I have called to her in love, mine own, N. We will not part company."

Splendour, nobility, and honour shall be N.'s in the eyes of N. woman, by Bel<sup>3</sup> by the name of Libat, mistress of gods and men. S—a.

This is the spell of the Seven Gates of Love, for a man after a woman, or for a woman after a man. S—a.

22.

(Much copied and misspelt.)

In the names of these angels, that they may seize on N. in every place to which he comes (goes), bringing him (hither): (namely) Azael, Abdael Tarqun Ptauna. He shall say, "Go. . . (?) there, there my husband." (?) Hathmiel, (names of various angels follow) . . . these angels shall inflame him, make him restless, N., everywhere that he goeth, bringing him to her bed. Bring him (withersoever he goeth), whether on water, or on mountains, he shall come and shall remain at her place: they will inflame him and bring him to her house and her place and her village, quickly, speedily they shall bring him. Amen selah. This word is for N., with stringency. He shall have neither breath, nor relief, nor rest, and whatever the place to which he comes, they will bring him, and he shall remain in the presence of N. (woman). Amen, amen selah.

Write (this) mystery for an absent one and put it beneath the head of the woman and the man will come. Moreover, bury (it) at cross-roads and the man will come.

<sup>1</sup> An euphemism.

<sup>2</sup> One variant has *baḡbia pīka*.

<sup>3</sup> This should probably read: *asfara sharaṭḡa u'gara niḡūliia (P)lan(iḡa) alampia (P)lan bāḡḡ,* "splendour and nobility and honour shall be N.'s (the woman's) in the presence of N., her husband."

Upon thee by name I call, angel<sup>1</sup> dwelling in Arbela that solaceth<sup>2</sup> hearts and consciences, and taketh away N. from N. and from the home of his father and mother and brethren and friends, and from his place and his amulet. . . . (?) And Pthahil<sup>3</sup> called, and the voice of Libat in dreams and she seals him (?). And (I hear) the sound of the rain in the clouds, and the noise of the lion that roars, and the sound of the serpent in the grass, and the noise of earthquake with its mysteries, and the voice of the lion that roars in the thickets, and the voice of thunder that rumbles from the heavens, and the voice of the lion in the sea, and the roar of a bull that is in pain, and (of) a dog that barks, and the voice of neighbours that are intoxicated, and the noise of a village of human beings, and the voice of the creatures of Libat, the doves,<sup>4</sup> and the sound of earthquake with its mysteries, and the sound of rain in the clouds, and the noise of the serpent in the reeds and the sound of thunder that arises from the heavens<sup>5</sup>: nevertheless, I have heard (the plea) of N. that burns for and flies after N. just as her loins (burn for) his husbandry (lit. "ploughing"). Amen, amen sala. Write this charm and fasten it to thy fore-arm. For a woman after a man. And it is powerful and proven.

Cause these seven angels to descend and put love for N. (woman) into the heart of N. (man). And (I invoke) all names that there are. And N. shall be inflamed, and be sent off<sup>6</sup> and fly and come after N. (woman) with love that is fervent and burning, like a he-goat after she-goats, like a bull after a cow, like a breeding-dog after a bitch on heat, and like a fish after a fisherman,<sup>7</sup> even thus shall he be towed and pulled. And N. shall be inflamed with love for N.

<sup>1</sup> The deity invoked was probably Ishtar of Arbela, and *mlkšš* ("angel") should read *mlkšš* ("queen").

<sup>2</sup> Literally "bringeth forth".

<sup>3</sup> A demi-urge and spirit of creation.

<sup>4</sup> For *šumia* read *šumia*. Doves were sacred to Ishtar (Libat).

<sup>5</sup> I suggest read *gala š* *šumia* *š* *šumia*, "the cry raised to heaven" (i.e. by the suppliant woman).

<sup>6</sup> The verb has also the meaning of emitting semen.

<sup>7</sup> In the marshes of Lower Iraq fish have a string run through their gills when caught, and are towed after the boat; a method of keeping fish alive and fresh during fishing.

(woman) by the names of the angels of love. Images and pictures. Amen, amen selah. S—a. Write this charm and bury (it) at the back of a fire: the man shall be kindled with love for the woman.

By the name of the Great Life have I adjured you, ye Seven (Planets) and twelve (Signs of the Zodiac); by thy name Life, and (the names of) Hananiel, the sun; Hanfael, the moon; Hadael, Venus; Hakimishel, Mercury; Agiael; Kibrael; Dushael, Mars; so that N. shall come after N. (woman). By the name Harziel who is Hufnael, Haziael and Mibaqiael and Kifael and Haniael and Sihiael and Haziael<sup>1</sup>—these, the seven planets and the twelve Signs of the Zodiac (I have adjured), so that N. shall come after N., his mouth open and his saliva flowing. He will take her skirt in his hand, and she will put her hand to her head and say, "Woe is me, woe! I am pierced<sup>2</sup> and lie in the embrace of N.!"

Amen, amen selah. Write this charm on gazelle skin or in a place of water<sup>3</sup> and bury at the mouth of three springs. It is either for a woman after a man, or for a man after a woman. For whomsoever is in love with the other write this charm.

In the names of Yaniel, Shaniael, and Nisael! Remove, ye angels, hatred and set up love, kindness, beauty, fame, and honour for me, N. And subjugate to me masterful persons, whether great or small, whether men or women, to me, N. Amen, amen selah.

In the name of the Great Life! A beautiful appearance and a blooming countenance be mine, N.'s, in the eyes of N. (the beloved). I anointed my face and shone like the sun, I was radiant with the moon and glowed with the stars before N., I increased<sup>4</sup> with the dawn. I shall be his incubus, like his echo I call to him.

He will kindle and take fire, N. (will come) after N. like a wild cat

<sup>1</sup> The first list is an identification of angel-names with the seven planets; the second list must have given an identification of angel-names with the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

<sup>2</sup> Or, "I exude drops of moisture."

<sup>3</sup> A corruption of the phrase "on a gut (sic) skin". The juxtaposition of a reference to springs explains the scribe's error.

<sup>4</sup> As the whole simile is that of light, I imagine that *gila* here has not the usual meanings of "waves" or "features", but should be read *gila* (גילה) "the glowing horizon" or "dawn". Variants have *gila* *š* *mic* ("waves of water"), but this is probably a corruption, the whole text being degenerate.

and mad dog; (yea) he shall wax hot and become inflamed, and N. will come after the man N. in the name of Libat, mistress of gods and men. In the presence of (his friend) N., N. will be fair of face, he will find favour and be beloved. Amen, amen selah.

In the name of the Great Life, and in the names of the seven angels of love, the angel Qadishiel, the names of the angels, and his Name! Go ye, rest upon N., take away his eating (appetite) and his drinking (thirst), and make him come after me, N., when his excitement shall be appeased in his (fore?) skin in your names, (ye) seven and twelve angels, (and of) Sun and Moon. And I conjure thee by thy name, (and the name of) the Twelve (signs of the Zodiac). For his melting they sent thee (!) to thee, ye (!) Shagriël.<sup>1</sup> Thy heat (shall be) for the burning of N. N. shall appear before N. as the moon. Ye twelve angels, by day and night I made sure of N. Thou hast aroused his burning (love), my father, with thine eye, when he averts and turns away his eyes. And N. shall come after N. in love, for his choice. . . .<sup>2</sup>

Write these three charms and secure to thyself. For a man after a man.

### VII. Jealousy Charms

27.

In the name of the angels! Turned away is his countenance, there will be alienation for N. (woman) from N. (man). Bel is turned from Babylon, Nebo turned from Borsippa,<sup>3</sup> Nišra turned from Kaškar,<sup>4</sup> and alienated is the heart and thought of N. from the thought and heart of N. His<sup>5</sup> face is the face of a lion, his body that of a wild cat, his snout that of a pig, his feet those of a buffalo, and his hair that of a night-demon. He stinketh, (and) she will spurn him like a potsherd for scraping. With him she will not eat, with him she will not drink, with him she will not sit, neither shall he approach her. In the name of the astarte, Libat, amen, amen selah.

<sup>1</sup> All variants of this text are confused and corrupt from here on, and differ considerably.

<sup>2</sup> What follows is hopelessly corrupt.

<sup>3</sup> The list of gods and cities is corrupt in this, the oldest text I possess; but should be compared with the next talisman which is still more corrupt.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 3

<sup>5</sup> The gender of pronouns and verbs varies, as the charm is used for both sexes, according to the wish of the client. The same applies to the following talisman.

Write this spell on a day's-old hen's egg and bury (it) at the gate of him (or her) whom thou wishest to drive out of his (or her) house, for all that thou wilt. And it is strong and proven.

28.

(Compare previous talisman)

Bel is turned from Babylon and Nirigh (Mars) from his countenance<sup>1</sup> (read *Borsippa*) and Kiwan (Saturn) from his light, and Nebo (Mercury) from his father, the Arab: and Shamish (sun) from the dwelling of the Persians and Libat (Venus) from the Indians, and all evil folk.

They have bound the loins of N. with pitch: when he beholds N. (woman) he says: "Send her away, she shall not remain in my presence." Amen, amen selah. Read this spell seven times over pitch and (then) smear it on the door of the man, and the man and woman shall become estranged by the strength of our lord, and there will be relief and healing.

29.

Afriël, Badriël, Qadriël, Dukrabel, Dufiel, Hurel, and Bulziel, these seven angels, sever the thoughts and pondering and habit and root of N. (man) from N. (woman). Amen, amen selah.

This spell for making the heart cold read upon a cup of water for one who is lovesick and give it him to drink, and his heart will grow cold by the strength of our lord.

There are a number of jealousy charms, which not infrequently include directions for making figures in clay or dough.

#### TRANSLITERATION

o	= A	ℓ	= T
≡	= B	⋈	= Y and I
⋈	= G, Gh (when guttural)	∇	= K, Kh (when guttural)
4	= D	∩	= L
∩	= H	∩	= M
∩	= W, U	∩	= N
∩	= Z	∩	= S
o	= h (3rd pers. suffix only)		

<sup>1</sup> *parpuh* for *Bursipi* or *Bursipa*.