

DREAMTREE

Dreamtree

REVISED EDITION

by
Tom Wallace

DREAMTREE

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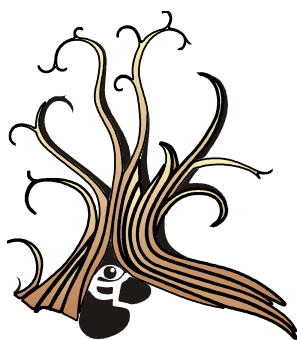
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Yggdrasil

Yggdrasil is no ordinary tree, but the key to understanding heaven, hell and the lives we lead between the two...

A tree on three levels, they call me! Heaven, Earth and Hell. My roots in Hell, my branches in Heaven and the creatures of the Earth dancing around my trunk.

And who came up with that explanation? Yes, you've guessed it – the humans! They always want to split things up into yes and no, either, or, this and that, black and white, right and wrong. It gets them into a lot of trouble. At least, with me, they came up with three things. But they're still stuck with the same problem.

The world is not divided into two or three – the world is one.

Yes, I'm one tree! Don't try to chop me into parts, the way you do with everything else in life, you humans!

Let's start with Hell.

It's a puzzle to me why you humans always think the universe is going to punish you! Most of your problems are your own fault, but you always want to blame someone else for them. And when you can't find a suitable victim on Earth then you blame God or the Devil or Fate or

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the Universe. What's wrong with accepting that there is Chance, Randomness and Chaos in the Universe, just as much as there is Grace and Beauty? Yes, bad things happen, but no, you do not need to blame, let alone punish anyone or anything for this. Remember it is from Chaos that all Order, Life, Beauty and Truth emerges. That is the way of the Universe. That is where I have my roots.

Then let's talk about Heaven.

Somehow you always think it's a long way off! Somehow you think you must earn your place. It is a labour for you. It is a burden in this life and then Heaven arrives only when you are dead! You leave it in the hands of the gods, or One God, or the Universe to make Heaven for you. You do not see that Heaven is within you. That it is already here for you as a gift. That you have the responsibility to receive this gift as a gift of Grace and to pass on that Grace to others. To make Heaven for others. Heaven is my branches, and my branches reach down to the Earth!

What then of Earth itself?

You think of it as a separate realm, shut off from both Heaven and Hell. But no! Think of it rather as somewhere where Heaven and Hell meet up and are mixed. So there's Chaos and then there's Cosmos. Randomness, pain, sorrow – the ripples of Chaos – mixed with Grace and Beauty – the adornment of Cosmos. Take up those difficult things that Chaos brings and then turn them around! If fearful, look after others who are in fear. If grieving, look after others who grieve. If melancholic, look after others who share in your melancholy. In all this, be kind.

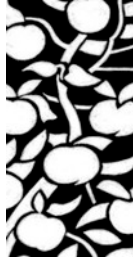
I am one tree – Yggdrasil – and the world is

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one. Honour your gifts, you humans. Be Grace
for the world.

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The Tree Speaks

The tree of life feels that it's been misunderstood...

I am the tree of life! Come, eat of my fruit!
It's been a long time since you approached me,
and I'm going to tell you why.

The myths you've been told get it wrong. For many thousands of years humans lived in peace and prosperity. I was there in your midst. The Goddess was worshipped, men and women were in harmony. Few, if any, lived in poverty or fear. Women were blessed with the wisdom to guide, council and heal. Women made sure everyone ate of my fruit.

But then something went wrong with one half of humanity.

Gradually men usurped their place in human culture. At first they just used their superior physical strength to upset the balance. But then they began making weapons to enforce their power. And the world was turned upside down! They invented myths to try to convince all of humanity of their right to dominance and violence. Their greatest myth was the myth of the one who sought to replace the Goddess, the one who sought to crush the heads of her sacred beings. The one who sought to debase and

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humiliate the feminine.

The new myths forbade humans to eat of my fruit – and the fruit of my sister tree, the tree of knowledge of good and evil. But women could never obey this nonsense as it is against the will of the Goddess. So the story was told that angels with flaming swords guard me from you. But there are no angels of death or angels with swords. This is the lie that you have been sold. And they say that one day I will be set in the midst of a great walled city and only a chosen few will be able to get to me. But once again, this is a lie. I am here for everyone.

10,000 years have passed since all this began. 10,000 years wasted. 10,000 years when men have raped, murdered and humiliated women. 10,000 years of ever more terrible war and the weapons of war. 10,000 years when the Goddess has been forgotten. 10,000 years when her creation has been pillaged, polluted and destroyed.

But I am still here. Waiting.

There was one however who understood. At least one.

New wine – he promised – the kingdom of Heaven within you! That new golden city (always a symbol of the feminine) resting not in some far distant place but right in your heart. And I would be there, constantly bearing fruit. You see, that was the way it once was and the way it really is right now! Can you hear that man's words and not wonder at the contrast with that angry faith the ministers of religion seem to promote?

The man cursed a fig tree once. It was not bearing figs, but it was not the season for figs. What do the ministers say of this? They blame you, that's what they say! But look at it another

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way. He was saying there should always be fruit! My fruit!

So there it is. New wine. The fruit of life. The kingdom of Heaven. All of that is open to you right now!

Those ministers of religion – if they believe in that man – have to square the circle. How can they square the angry God who would crush the head of the serpent with the gentle man who would bring you back to the tree of life? But if they succeeded, what a victory that would be! I am the tree of life! Come, eat of my fruit!

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The Knowledge

A young woman awakes confused after eating a mysterious fruit.

I open my eyes and at first I see only flashing lights. It is sunshine, I realise, as my mind gradually adjusts. Sunshine through leaves. I'm looking up into the trees. I raise my head a little and look down at my body. Breasts, belly, thighs, toes – I feel the life force flowing into my fingers and toes. Wasn't it always thus? I think. Don't I always sleep naked beneath the trees? Doesn't everyone, at least when the weather is fine? But something is different this morning. I'm more aware of my body, for one thing. I roll over onto my stomach, kick my legs a little, take some deep breaths, wiggle my hips.

And there is something I must do! Something I have somehow forgotten.

Memories come back slowly. Last night I wandered off alone. I felt the last rays of the sun on my skin and lay down in this shady glade for the night. A sacred creature had appeared, slithered past me and then up the trunk of a tree. A fruit had fallen at my feet and I had picked it up and eaten it without a second thought.

Was it that fruit that had made me forgetful?

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What is it that I should be doing?

Then recollections begin to come to me.

My childhood, under tuition of the priestess. We wore long yellow shifts as children, except when we were playing or swimming or sleeping under the trees on warmer nights. As girls we had sacred duties, the priestess had told us. To learn all the plants and herbs, flowers and trees and their uses for healing and nourishment. To care for our bodies as sacred and the bearers of new life. To teach the boys and men, because the male could be unruly and too literal and likely to go astray unless carefully tended.

It had been boring, she had to admit! As a child it hadn't meant that much, but gradually the teaching had sunk in.

...

These were the first thoughts of Eve, as she awoke that morning.

There are three stages of the Goddess, she remembered now – the Maiden, the Mother and the Crone. But wasn't she still just a child? No, surely not! Too old for that by now.

Women kept the light in their hearts, in their minds, like a sacred city, built on a hill. Women carry humanity forward. Keep us at one with Nature. Broker peace with the Universe of Chaos. Act as ambassadors for the gifts of Grace that the Cosmos bestows.

There is a white robe for the maiden as she takes up her duties and helps teach the children. The knowledge she needed seemed to be inside her now somehow, in a way she could not explain.

She felt tired again, all of a sudden. It was still early. Perhaps she would just have a nap now, then get up and find her parents and sisters.

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The old crone, in her dark blue robe, was watching Eve from a nearby thicket of trees. She had seen her wake up with that puzzled look on her face, lie there thinking for a while, then, looking satisfied, rolling over for a nap. She'd been a troubling pupil, that one. Wilful. Impetuous. Almost like a boy. But such a strong spirit! Now that she had eaten from the Tree of Knowledge, she would be a worthy maiden, a strong leader for the young. The crone tipped back her dark blue hood and looked at the sky, thanking the Goddess for another day and for another woman to guide the world. Then she unfolded the white robe, ready to give it to Eve when she awoke.

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