

"The Hermetic Chaos of the Golden Sunset"

by Simo Sakari Aaltonen (2008)

One day the Hermetic Hermaphrodite no longer felt up to it. The symbols on his robe seemed faded like the glory of the arcane of late.

Few men dare expose their innermost secrets to the world! Few women dare! But there is one who dares, for he is both! He is... The Hermetic Hermaphrodite! Master of the subtle arts!

The Hermitage was quiet now that the Polytheistic Polyglot was gone. *Polly. You always made everything better. You were my pretty boy, I was your cracker jack... And boy, you were the prettiest bird of them all.*

She's not gone, he reminded himself, *only gone south for the winter*. One had to take what jobs one could get.

But they had laughed the last time he'd unleashed his trademark attack. "I conjure thee... Hermafrost!" The sound of it echoed in his mind as he cast his eyes over the volumes of hermetic lore. *There has to be more to life than this.*

The weighty tomes pressed on his frayed

nerves. It was a burden he could no longer bear. So it was that the Hermetic Hermaphrodite cast off his robe without so much as a hiss or a snarl.

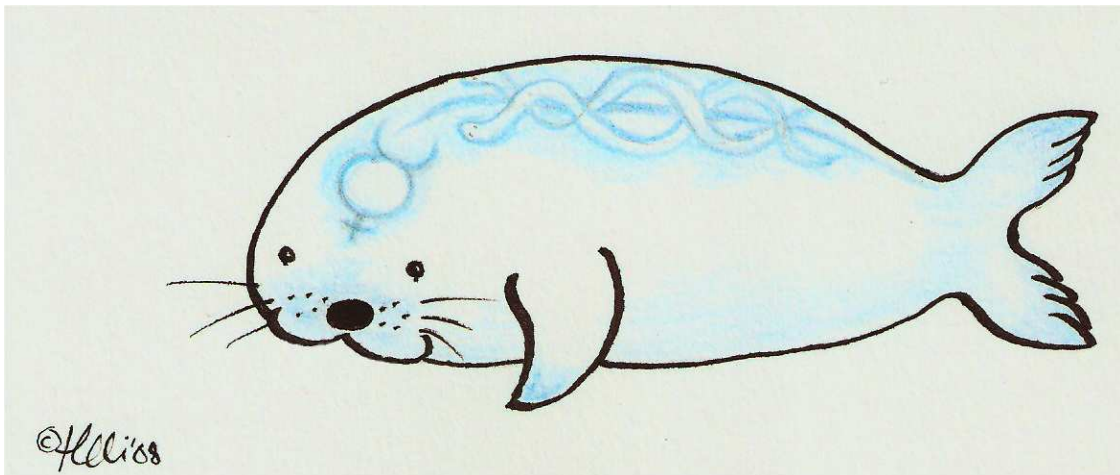
He turned to the mirror and looked upon his naked body. He saw it shine in the cold sunlight of autumn, and he saw that it was good.

He stroked his beard. Yes, it was time for a long leave of absinthe. A long leave. It was with a feeling of renewal that he donned his long-unused clothes of the absinthee landlord.

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The lord of the manor waved to the hermetic seal by the shore before stepping into the Hermobile. Soon the wisp of fumes from the tailpipe had dissipated in the wind.

And as the autumn sun set on the hermit crab's shell, a flock of gulls watched something dark and cylindrical move across the beach, its luminous highlights glittering against the sand.



The hermetic seal.