



* Archetypal Analyses *

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The Blue Light

Recovery, Expropriation, and Reactive Uses of *Animus Mundi* in the Grimm's Fairy Tale

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This paper considers the psychological and sociological implications of a very old tale of the sort composed through a process of succeeding generational tellings. As is typical of what are termed fairy and folk tales, it has no individual author. As such, it is considered to present a concretion of collective psycho-social insights that developed in a particular cultural context over an extended period of time. The cultural context in this case is Western European. The intention of this paper is to demonstrate various interpretive readings for this type of 'culturally authored' story. The interpretive readings provided are both stylistic and theoretical. Thus the relational dynamics of the generalized characters and symbolic elements in the tale are 'interpreted' both by re-telling the narrative in different styles of language usage as well as applying theoretical analysis to it. The version of the tale referenced here is found in the Grimm's collection as translated into English by Margaret Hunt and James Stern and published by Random House. The sequence of tellings and readings is as follows:

*The Grimm's Version

*A Summary Re-telling

*A Lyrically Dynamic Re-Re-Telling

*A Lyrically Reflective Re-Reading

*A Socio-Psychological Re-Reading

The Grimm's Telling:**The Blue Light**

There was once upon a time a soldier who for many years had served the King faithfully, but when the war came to an end could serve no longer because of the many wounds, which he had received. The King said to him: "You may return to your home, I need you no longer, and you will not receive any more money, for he only receives wages who renders me service for them." Then the soldier did not know how to earn a living, went away greatly troubled, and walked the whole day, until in the evening he entered a forest. When darkness came on, he saw a light, which he went up to, and came to a house wherein lived a witch. "Do give me one night's lodging, and a little to eat and drink," said he to her, "or I shall starve." "Oho!" she answered, "who gives anything to a run-away soldier? Yet will I be compassionate, and take you in, if you will do what I wish." "What do you wish?" said the soldier. "That you should dig all round my garden for me, tomorrow." The soldier consented, and next day labored with all his strength, but could not finish it by the evening. "I see well enough," said the witch, "that you can do no more today, but I will keep you yet another night, in payment for which you must tomorrow chop me a load of wood, and chop it small." The soldier spent the whole day in doing it, and in the evening the witch proposed that he should stay one night more. "Tomorrow, you shall only do me a very trifling piece of work. Behind my house, there is an old dry well, into which my light has fallen, it burns blue, and never goes out, and you shall bring it up again." Next day the old woman took him to the well, and let him down in a basket. He found the blue light, and made her a signal to draw him up again. She did draw him up, but when he came near the edge, she stretched down her hand and wanted to take the blue light away from him. "No," said he, perceiving her evil intention, "I will not give you the light until I am standing with both feet upon the ground." The witch fell into a passion, let him fall again into the well, and went away.

The poor soldier fell without injury on the moist ground, and the blue light went on burning, but of what use was that to him? He saw very well that he could not escape death. He sat for a while very sorrowfully, then suddenly he felt in his pocket and found his tobacco pipe, which was still half full. "This shall be my last pleasure," thought he, pulled it out, lit it at the blue light and began to smoke. When the smoke had circled about the cavern, suddenly a little black dwarf stood before him, and said: "Lord, what are your commands?" "What my commands are?" replied the soldier, quite astonished. "I must do everything you bid me," said the little man. "Good," said the soldier; "then in the first place help me out of this well." The little man took him by the hand, and led him through an underground passage, but he did not forget to take the blue light with him. On the way the dwarf

showed him the treasures, which the witch had collected and hidden there, and the soldier took as much gold as he could carry. When he was above, he said to the little man: "Now go and bind the old witch, and carry her before the judge." In a short time she came by like the wind, riding on a wild tomcat and screaming frightfully. Nor was it long before the little man re-appeared. "It is all done," said he, "and the witch is already hanging on the gallows. What further commands has my lord?" inquired the dwarf. "At this moment, none," answered the soldier; "you can return home, only be at hand immediately, if I summon you." "Nothing more is needed than that you should light your pipe at the blue light, and I will appear before you at once." Thereupon he vanished from his sight.

The soldier returned to the town from which he had come. He went to the best inn, ordered himself handsome clothes, and then bade the landlord furnish him a room as handsome as possible. When it was ready and the soldier had taken possession of it, he summoned the little black mannikin and said: "I have served the King faithfully, but he has dismissed me, and left me to hunger and now I want to take my revenge." "What am I to do?" asked the little man. "Late at night, when the King's daughter is in bed bring her here in her sleep, she shall do servant's work for me." The mannikin said: "That is an easy thing for me to do, but a very dangerous thing for you, for if it is discovered, you will fare ill. When twelve o'clock had struck, the door sprang open, and the mannikin carried in the princess. "Aha! Are you there?" cried the soldier, "get to your work at once! Fetch the broom and sweep the chamber." When she had done this, he ordered her to come to his 'chair, and then he stretched out his feet and said: "Pull off my boots," and then he threw them in her face, and made her pick them up again, and clean and brighten them. She, however, did everything he bade her, without opposition, silently and with half shut eyes. When the first cock crowed, the mannikin carried her back to the royal palace, and laid her in her bed.

Next morning when the princess arose she went to her father. and told him that she had had a very strange dream. "I was carried through the streets with the rapidity of lightning," said she, "and taken into a soldier room, and I had to wait upon him like a servant, sweep h room, clean his boots, and do all kinds of menial work. It was only a dream, and yet am just as tired as if I really had done everything." "Your dream may have been true," said the King, "I will give you a piece of advice. Fill your pocket full of peas, and make a small hole in the pocket, and then if you are carried away again, they will fall out and leave a track in the streets." But unseen by the King, the mannikin was standing beside him when he said that, and heard all. At night when the sleeping princess was again carried through the streets, some peas certainly did fall out of her pocket, but they made no track, for the crafty mannikin had just before scattered peas in every street there was. And again the princess was compelled to do servant's work until cockcrow.

Next morning the King sent his people out to seek the track, but it was all in vain, for in every street poor children were sitting, picking up peas, and saying: "It must have rained peas, last night." "We must think of something else," said the King; "keep your shoes on when you go to bed, and before you come back from the place where you are taken, hide one of them there, I will soon contrive

to find it.” The black mannikin heard this plot, and at night when the soldier again ordered him to bring the princess, revealed it to him, and told him that he knew of no expedient to counteract this stratagem, and that if the shoe were found in the soldier’s house it would go badly with him. “Do what I bid you,” replied the soldier, and again this third night the princess was obliged to work like a servant, but before she went away, she hid her shoe under the bed.

Next morning the King had the entire town searched for his daughter’s shoe. It was found at the soldier’s, and the soldier himself, who at the entreaty of the dwarf had gone outside the gate, was soon brought back, and thrown into prison. In his flight he had forgotten the most valuable things he had, the blue light and the gold, and had only one ducat in his pocket. And now loaded with chains, he was standing at the window of his dungeon, when he chanced to see one of his comrades passing by. The soldier tapped at the pane of glass, and when this man came up, said to him: “Be so kind as to fetch me the small bundle I have left lying in the inn, and I will give you a ducat for doing it.” His comrade ran thither and brought him what he wanted. As soon as the soldier was alone again, he lighted his pipe and summoned the black mannikin. “Have no fear,” said the latter to his master. “Go wheresoever they take you, and let them do what they will, only take the blue light with you.” Next day the soldier was tried, and though he had done nothing wicked, the judge condemned him to death. When he was led forth to die, he begged a last favor of the King. “What is it ?” asked the King. “That I may smoke one more pipe on my way. “You may smoke three,” answered the King, “but do not imagine that I will spare your life.” Then the soldier pulled out his pipe and lighted it at the blue light, and as soon as a few wreaths of smoke had ascended, the mannikin was there with a small cudgel in his hand, and said: “What does my lord command?” “Strike down to earth that false judge there, and his constable, and spare not the King who has treated me so ill.” Then the mannikin fell on them like lightning, darting this way and that way, and whosoever was so much as touched by his cudgel fell to earth, and did not venture to stir again. The King was terrified; he threw himself on the soldier’s mercy, and merely to be allowed to live at all, gave him his kingdom for his own, and his daughter to wife.

A Summary Re-Telling

A faithful soldier whose wounds have rendered him unserviceable is dismissed by the a king (for whom no queen is mentioned) as useless thus of no value. Now lost, the wounded soldier wanders into the forest where a light leads him on to the isolated dwelling of a witch-woman. Out of compassion she gives him shelter and feeds him in return a day of tending her garden, one of chopping her wood, and finally for retrieving her ‘blue light that never goes out’ from where it has fallen beyond her reach into her dry well. As she has nearly pulled him back out of the well with the light, she demands the light before he is out. He sense she will trick him and his attempt to bargain with her to

make sure both he and the light get out of the well prompts a rage in which she lets go the rope and drops him and the light back down the well. Trapped in the moist but empty well, the soldier resigns himself to die, igniting his last pipe full of tobacco the witch's Blue Light that never goes out. In the pipe smoke a black dwarf appears at his service, asking his command and declaring he will always appear when the soldier lights his pipe with the Blue Light. The dwarf then helps him escape underground, taking with him the light and some of the witch's gold found there.

Inadvertently empowered, the soldier chooses to destroy the witch by sending her before the judge who has her hanged. Then he seeks revenge by abducting the king's daughter in her sleep to do servant's work for him while in a passive stupor. The dwarf warns of great danger, but performs the abduction as commanded. After the first night's abduction, the prince (who is not shown as having a mother) tells the king of her dream-like experience. He tries to discover the abductor by having his daughter drop peas as she is carried off on the second night. The dwarf responds by strewing peas in all streets, foiling detection. The third night the king instructs her to wear her shoes when she goes to sleep and then hide one under the soldier's bed. The dwarf warns the soldier that he cannot counter this move, but the soldier demands to proceed with the third night's abduction. In a search of houses the next day, the shoe is discovered under his bed by the king's men. Warned by the dwarf, the soldier tries to flee but is caught, having forgotten his stolen witch's gold and the Blue Light.

Put in chains in prison with but one ducat in his pocket, he sees an old comrade come by the window. The soldier pays him with his last coin to bring the Blue Light and his pipe. Reunited with these, the soldier smokes and thus conjures the dwarf who advises him always to carry the Blue Light, then no one can ever harm him. The judge and king sentence the soldier to die. The soldier asks to smoke first and the king grants this—saying it will do him no good. The dwarf appears and beats all authority figures into submission with a mere touch of his tiny club. The king pleads for mercy, promising anything. The wounded soldier then gets the Kingdom for his own and the king's daughter as his wife.

A Lyrically Dynamical Re-Re-Telling

The 'dramatis personae' of The Blue Light :

- >The Too-Much-Wounded-So-Rejected **Soldier** Man/King
- >The Queenless-**King**-Man of Usefulness
- >The Formerly Blue-Light-Keeping-**Witch**-Woman
- >The Magically Empowering Black-Male-**Dwarf**-Blue-Light-Genie
- >The Un-opposing, Motherless, Half-Shut-Eyed **Kingly-Daughter**/Wife
- >The **Blue-Light**-That Never-Goes-Out

> The Witch's Dry-Yet-Still-Moist-Well

He Who Rules the Real World
has no use for the Too-Much-Wounded Soldier
whose faithful years count for no thing
to a powerfully practical Queenless King Man --
Wages only for the useful

So a Former Warrior
for all his fearlessness
has no value worthy of a living in such a kingdom
and must walk aimlessly in great trouble all the day
till he enters The Dark Forest far from Kingly Order
following the one light he now sees
to the isolated house of a Witching Woman
where he begs shelter and sustenance lest he starve.

Her Witch-ness snorts at the low value of a run-away Soldier
yet shows compassion
Will he be useful, doing as She wishes?
She puts him to the test --
He tills around Her garden all one day
a task he cannot finish, yet she is satisfied
He chops Her wood small as She likes another full day
And then the slightest task she asks upon the third --
lowering him down Her Dry Well
to retrieve Her Blue Light that's fallen
out of reach under ground
deep in the hole that was once
Her Watering Well Spring

But he will not give it over
suspecting a betrayal
until he is out of Her Well again
Her wishes disobeyed
She throws back all in fury
Faithful Soldier and The Light That Never Goes Out --
even lost down moist Old Well Holes

So the Once Warrior, rejected by functionalist Kingly Ruling
falls again from favor
and though uninjured, falling on moist dark soil, is yet doomed
for what escape can there be
from a Witch's Dry Well?
Ever brave, he accepts fate
finding a last pleasure before death
in his tobacco and pipe
lit at the Blue Light
light which never ceases burning
even when lost and unattended.
The circling smoke of last comfort upon Death's Threshold
congeals Blackly Magical Masculine Dwarf-Power
suddenly attendant upon a doubly betrayed Old Soldier's commands

Accepting the service of this unsought Extra Ordinary Ally --
Little Man with powers beyond all proportions
who deems the Uselessly Wounded Warrior "Lord"
respecting no other person as kingly, and requiring no pay --
the Soldier asks deliverance up out of the Dry Well of Witch-ness
but is lead instead away through subterranean passages
taking of hidden Witch Treasure there
all the Gold he can carry
and not forgetting to claim the Blue Light
as his own

Yet this bounty is not enough
or too much
for Betrayed Soldiering to forego vengeance
He sends his new Black Servant to deliver Her
the Angry Witch Woman, before The Judge
Fleeing, this Forest Feminine without her Blue Light,
shrieks past, riding the Wildness of a Giant Tom Cat --
Yet in an instant the Black Dwarf Force
has her hanging on the gallows.

So easily taking to such power
a Spurned Soldier returns

to the scene of his first betrayal
the citadel from which he was expelled
which he had once defended
in faithful service to Royal Rule.

Revenge! He commands his Black Dwarf Ally
upon the Faithless King, through the Kingly Daughter --
'Bring the Princess to serve me in the dark of night.'
The Ally Dwarf is able but cautious for his master
Not so the Soldier, and so the wish is deed.

Three nights the Motherless Royal Feminine is abducted
to labor as if rightly the Soldier's servant girl
who he uses and abuses without pay
Lacking the passion of any Witch-ness
she bears the shameful seeming-dream
with half-open, half-shut eyes
in silent lack of opposition

The King of Pragmatism understands
his Princess Self's nightmare of humiliation may be truth full
and advises her on how to prove it so
The Dwarf hears all and foils the first Royal attempt
to bring The Abductor of Princess-ness to light
by her trailing peas as she is carried away
His Dwarf-ness counters with peas in every street
Yet the third night the Black One which knows Its limits
and so forewarns of revelation
But revenge misrules the Too-Much-Wounded-Warrior
so the Kingly Daughter hides her shoe beneath his bed
as She bows and scrapes his boots for him a third time
The King's Men find such damning evidence
The Soldier flees the Royal Zone
but, forgetting Blue Lightness and Witching Gold
he is overtaken by those still-useful soldiers
of Queenless Royal Rule .

As if lost down The Well again
the Ever Wounded Soldier is chained

with but one coin of Witch's treasure in his pocket
to the royal prison wall
Yet this is enough to engage an old comrade passing his cell
to retrieve that small but magic bundle from his room
Again possessed of pipe and Blue Lighting
he smokes his Black Ally into being --
'Let them do what they will
only always take the Blue Light with you'
assure the Genie of Witch-ing ways

Now Former Soldier Man himself stands before the Judge
just where he sent the Witch Woman to be condemned
And for making a servant of the Kingman
in the form of His Princess-ness
A Worthless Warrior is bound for the gallows
following the fate of Witches
who would choose to have their powers
Lights the Never Go Out
to themselves

The Soldier pleads one favor of the Unforgiving King
that The Lost Man might smoke, again, one last pipe --
'Smoke three, but don't imagine I will save your life'
The condemned man's tobacco, lit by Blue Lighting
calls once more The Black Dwarfness, tiny cudgel in hand
who lays all that oppose his master low
with but a touch of his small club
while the Has-been Warrior calmly smokes
What King would not then beg mercy
trading for his very life his Princess form
his Royal Power
and all privilege and practical concerns
of Its governing domain?

The once Faithful, Too-Wounded Martial Servant
He who came un-intending
into The Blue Light's aura
by his own unjust exile from Kingly favor
there accepting his mortal fate

trapped in the Almost Dry Well of Witching
now he is King Man alone himself
with the Motherless Servant Princess to wife
and the Blue-Light-Owning-Witch long gone.

A Lyrically Reflective Re-Reading

Some Happy Ending this? Or
Is this New King's story one
that turns around into itself?
Could he be again now the original
Ruler-Who-Has-No-Use
for useless servants?
Who will somehow loose a wife to gain a daughter
Whose dreams of abduction he suspects
of portending subversion and revenge
of those he has abused with potency that is not his--
as if he knows his own past exiled self will come again, and again

Might his Bewitched Queen-ness drop
The Light that Ever Burns Blue
down Her Un-Watered Well
in the absence of un-judging royal attendance
So that she will chose distrustful, witching isolation
waiting in some forest for
This now King's rejected Once-Warrior-Successor
who will, having usurped her lost Blue Light's Earthly Glow
and Black Dwarf Power Ally
send Her yet again
and again, aided by Her own anger and Blue Light's Black Power, to the gallows
even as he will send his precedent countering male part
that Once-Wounded-Warrior-King now doomed
by the same power which brought him power
driven by revenge for his self betrayal?

Is the Ever-Murdered Witch
The Queen, herself the Servant Princess
never to be allowed to rule

as well as he?
Is she doomed only to be taken and given
as some half-eyed King's-Daughter-Self
Or else to seek some Witch Womaning autonomy
where she keeps loosing her grip
on Blue Light Potency
but meets Too-Wounded-Warriors
who just might be able to assist
if she could but trust?
And is her failing to trust them
their doom to revenge and dominating power?

And what of what is that Dark Power
Dwarfish Genie beyond all judgments and judging
mighty but honest of Its limitations
potent without specific intention
obedient to any one who makes smoke from
The Eternal-Burning Blue Light--
Is to use such an ally for power's sake, alone
to be certain of loosing it again?
To what other purposes might the Spurned-Faithful-Servant
put The Blue Light's Black Mannikin
than to right wrongs by force
becoming yet again King of all?
And just whose glow is it that lights these ways
His or Hers or Theirs
to whom together some earthly source
provides a potency that might be either
for power or for harmony?

Is this just the Way It Is
or can we ever tell such a tale differently?
How can the Be-Witched Feminine that might be Queen
ever resist her fury
at the Too-Wounded Soldiering's expecting
another betrayal in her vengeance, righteous as his own,
so that she might negotiate the return of both
Blue Light and Wounded Warrior
into the attendings of a Faithful Man?

So far so good
That there is a telling that tells
how these loops reiterate such twists and turns
that keep man and woman apart
competing for and loosing the earthly powers
of some Eternal Burning that is/was Hers
And, once discovered, makes Him by revengeful uses
King again
But beyond such circling
we are on our own
now that we know how it is
we tend to go.

A Socio-Psychological Re-Reading

This theoretical reading combines depth psychological and sociological perspectives. The underlying psychical theme of this tale is approached here as manifesting concerns with earthly sources of psychic potency, symbolized by the “Blue Light” of the tales title, and the roles it plays in both gender relations and hierarchical social power structures for a generalized ‘Western European cultural psyche.’ This extra-ordinary ‘force’ is designated in the psychological reading provided here as *animus mundi*. The term *animus mundi* is deployed in deliberate contrast to the more commonly used *anima mundi* as a designation for ‘earth soul’ or ‘soul of the world.’ The potency derived in this tale is associated to some earthly or chthonic source, but in primary relationship to a female rather than a male human figure. Thus, in reference to Jungian concepts concerning a contra-sexual aspect to personal psyches, it is interpreted here as a masculine aspect of the female protagonists psyche. As such, it is given the masculine association of *animus* rather than the feminine one of *anima*.

The potency of the Blue Light is considered then as a representation of some relationship female persons have to a masculine quality of earthly or chthonic psychic energies. The story is thus explored in this reading as expressing a pattern of loss of relationship with this ‘grounded’ or chthonic source of psychic energy whose primary association is with femininity, its near recovery through relationship with the wounded masculine that results in its subordination to masculine control in which it is used for domination of both women and the collective social psyche. This reading is not meant to imply that another reading, such as one in which the ‘lost and recovered’ potency would be regarded as having a feminine character, would not be viable.

To explore the logic of psyche expressed in this narrative involves investigating what the image of that mysterious Blue Light might symbolize in terms of psychic ‘powers.’ The ways that the characters appear related to and use that potency can be further explored as demonstrating some

elemental psycho-dynamics related to gender and power structures in psyche. To ponder the social implications of this tale's psycho-dynamics involves asking how the character's behaviors and interactions express socialized attitudes. Where the potency of the Blue Light is encountered, who comes to control it, and how it is deployed in relation to others express the particular socio-cultural formation given to its psycho-dynamic characteristics. From the more sociological perspective, the King's and the Soldier's uses of power in this patriarchal context appear to determine the uses of the Blue Light and how it effects social order. However, the psychological attitude of the Witch Woman appears to precipitate the Blue Light becoming subordinated to the Soldier. She might have negotiated with the latter and regained immediate 'possession' of the Blue Light and thus avoided its becoming the agency of her own destruction and a 'tool' of political usurpation.

Some exploration of these issues is offered in considering just who socially, or 'what' psychologically, the potency of the Blue Light 'serves', and when and how. Such an investigation requires examining the individual characters both as persons in a social context and as personified aspects of the diversified psyche of a single self. Reading them as persons gives an inter-psyche or interpersonal view of social dynamics while seeing them as personifications of psychic aspects provides more of an intra-psyche constellation of psycho-dynamics.

Political Betrayal, Psychic Self-Rejection, and Potential Empowerment of Femininity through Cooperation with Apolitical Masculinity

Sociologically, the presence of a 'king' or 'queen' in a tale suggests a principle of governance that must judge value. Psychologically it indicates a discretionary ego function that regulates the roles of various aspects of a psyche or self. In a moment of relative social 'peace' this King decides his faithful Soldier, who can fight no more due to the wounds he has incurred in the King's service, is no longer worth the cost of his wages. In rejecting the soldier, he betrays a loyal servant and thus a social responsibility. Psychically, he also rejects his own warrior self, worn out in fighting, from the benefits of his power. This decision seems a politically, or at least economically, practical one—what is worn-out being useless. However, it brings about the downfall of this particular King as the dominant social and psychological 'ruler.'

There is no mention of a queen in this 'kingdom,' suggesting both the social and psychological absence of female/feminine authority in society or psyche. No explanation of this status is offered. The first female mentioned is the Witch who the starving Soldier meets in the dark forest once he has been rejected from the King's service and protection. This structure of the narrative suggests that what autonomous femininity exists in this social and psychological contexting is dwelling 'outside' the political order. Thus she can be seen as a potent female who might have been the queenly counterpart to this pragmatically patriarchal king but, under the circumstances, has chosen or been forced into seclusion. In such a position she might also present a psychologically 'split-off' feminine aspect of

this masculine-dominated 'kingdom of the self' --an aspect personified as a character whose circumstances and behavior symbolize the condition of feminine elements of psyche in this socio-cultural contexting.

Thus the King, viewed both as social patriarch and as ego-function identified with power, appears to unconsciously send the faithful but wounded soldier aspect of his own masculinity directly into the 'lair' of bewitched femininity. These two exiles meet in the 'dark forest', a place ostensibly beyond the control of either political King or psychological ego. Some potential for a 'revolutionary' alliance between these two individuals and elements thusly appears feasible. Both have motive for mutual assistance. There is no immediate indication of gender hierarchy in their relations. Competition for control does not appear to be an issue for this man and woman who meet 'outside the bounds/bonds of social and kingly order.' But the Witch is, like the soldier, evidently debilitated. She has lost her Blue Light, the light that never goes out, beyond her reach down her own well that has run dry. Significantly, she cannot regain possession of it herself. She needs cooperation of the King's Soldiering that is available only because he has rejected it as being too wounded to be of practical value.

Thus the very possibility of her reconnecting to a potent source of empowerment, the location of which is 'in the earth,' is made possible by the King's betrayal of his faithful soldiering. Thereby a politically and pragmatically 'useless' masculinity becomes available for an egalitarian relationship with the 'exiled' status of female autonomy. This is a significant motif in fairy and folk tales. Potential opportunities for social and psychical reorientations often derive not from 'good intentions' but from tyrannical, repressive, negligent, or abusive actions by dominant characters.

Socio/Sexual Courtship and a Ritual of Psycho-Erotic Rapprochement

This 'bewitched' woman/feminine aspect appears as a woman who can avoid being completely dominated by the patriarchal king only in a childless, manless, archaic seclusion. There are hints of the Greek goddess Artemis in this posture of asocial, 'virginal' autonomy in nature. In this tale's cast of psychic characters she is an alienated adult femininity whose exile has left only a faint presence of *anima* in the psychic field and social family of the royal palace, meaning the obedient kingly princess. This is a socio-psychological context subservient only to a political identity whose egoic function is primarily masculine. Thus the kingly daughter has no model for the equal potency of male and female, masculine and feminine. From this rigidly hierarchical context, the much-wounded warring figure that is no longer of practical use to the kingly ruler/masculinized ego is expelled to fend for himself.

It is in the forest with this outcast meets the absent adult feminine. And it is there, the tale tells, where and when the two outsiders meet, that an 'inhumanly numinous' element is encountered (or re-encountered): The Blue Light. The setting where this marvel resides can be understood as inherently alien and improper to the ordinary social order of the Christianized social standards in which this tale

was told. The ‘owner’ of the Blue Light is both an ‘independent woman’ and a witch—a woman with abnormal, suspicious, super-natural powers. She is attentive and clever. She immediately recognizes the vagrant for a “run away soldier,” remarking, “who would give anything” to such a person? Yet she perceives that he, who has no use because he has only been trained to fight, might be of some value to her. She is careful to test him first, however, to see if he is true to his word. Before she mentions that she wants the soldier to retrieve her ‘lost light’ for her, she assigns him two very specific tasks.

First he must ‘dig all around her garden’ for a full day, suggesting a labor of preparing the area of creative productivity for seeding. It is not difficult to interpret this image as symbolizing her ‘wombness.’ This turns out to be a task he cannot complete in full day. Here one can detect a reference to how extensive an autonomous woman’s sexual fecundity is. Yet, seemingly confronted with this somehow impossible task of ‘satisfying her,’ the former warrior does not complain, but devotes his energies for the entire day. Next the witch woman demands that he chop her a load of wood, and do so meticulously, cutting it into small pieces just as she likes it. Again he chops all day to supply her stove, another elemental imago of transformative processes where heat and cooking are generated. And, given the cultural contexting, the stove is almost explicitly associated to females and feminine creativity. Both these efforts, the tilling of the garden/womb and fueling of the stove/womb, suggest a sexual attendance by the willing soldier. These actions can be seen as both a socialized and symbolic form of foreplay with a female sexuality. As such these seem particularly appropriate for approaching a femininity associated more with nature than society, and who is not defined by ‘possessable’ images of idealized female beauty (she is described neither as beautiful nor ugly). Again, the extent or potency of this femininity is suggested by how he labors with all his strength, digging the full day, but by evening he has not finished. In his uncomplaining and un-judging efforts to ‘do as she wishes’ in return for his sustenance, he appears to ‘court’ her in a respectful psychological, if not typically social manner. Since he earns her confidence enough that she allows him to stay with her, and trusts him to help her with the ‘trifling work’ of regaining her Blue Light, it would seem that his conduct has established a psychically erotic connection. That this ‘foreplay’ or ‘courtship’ occurs as ‘prelude’ to the soldier’s ‘descending’ into her ‘dry well’ (which turns out to still be ‘moist’) further elaborates a sexual metaphor. The well provides the most overt suggestion of penetration into a womb.

The soldier is distinguished from the more typical male protagonist one finds seeking to engage the feminine in fairy tales. He seeks only sustenance and shelter. He has no home to return to or destination to attain. He is neither young, overtly adventurous, nor heroic. Thus he does not present the puer figure of the ‘eternal youth’ who has yet to be tried and tested by life. Instead, he appears more as a tempered adult man without projective expectations about what he should get from women or the world. Similarly, the witch woman appears to be an evidently mature, un-romanticized female figure who shows no inclination to project fantasies and expectations upon the man who comes to her isolated dwelling. Together these two can be seen as enacting a ritualized engagement that constitutes a symbolically erotic rapprochement of genderal identities taking place ‘in the forest,’ thus ‘outside’ of

socialized roles and 'beyond' the dominion of the 'kingly ego.' That engagement does seem to be guided by her perceiving an opportunity to retrieve her Blue Light from where it has "fallen out of reach" down her "dry well." Yet again, she demonstrates an aura of poise and maturity by not 'rushing' toward that goal when he first appears.

What then is one to make of this Blue Light that never goes out? This seems a particularly impractical image or item. It appears neither to be a lamp that lights a room nor a pair of magical boots that can travel leagues in a stride. Its color is a 'cool' blue. The witch woman does not speak of it as having any significance. Yet she clearly feels the need of regaining her possession of and thus some relationship with it. Its color and location suggest association with some elemental power presently out of reach, or perhaps returned to its source inside the earth and earthiness. It is both in and under the surface of the earth. And, it is literally 'down her dry well.' What portion of the social body or fragmented psychic wholeness might this extra-ordinary Blue Light that never goes out represent? If the seemingly queenless king suggests a pragmatized masculine ego function inflated with the rule of power for its own sake that has banished both the soldiering masculinity and queenly femininity, somehow thus disempowering both, then perhaps the Blue Light manifests as a numinous essence to which the 'over ruled' and 'banished' are lacking access. By extensions, then, it would suggest both some repressed aspect of the human psyche as well as one of social ordering that facilitates male <> female relationships. Given its description ('cool' blue, eternally burning) and location, the association with some 'world soul' or 'earth power' arises. Those qualities in association with its being 'in the field of the feminine' prompt the designation of *animus mundi* or 'masculine earth spirit/soul' element. Referring to the Jungian concept of contra-sexual aspects to the individual psyche, this suggests that it represents the masculine potency or animus of the witch woman. Sociologically, it can be further characterized as her lacking a social role for assertion of her autonomous selfhood in egalitarian relationship with men.

A rather asymmetrical relationship appears here between the king' having power in the absence of an equal feminine counterpart and the witch woman having some independence in so far as she dwells outside social contexts and without a male counterpart. Whereas the king seems to manage with only a subservient princess/daughter femininity, the witch woman seeks not 'a man' but her Blue Light as some 'missing element' from her psychical wholeness. However, regaining relationship with this *animus mundi* appears to require the assistance of a masculinity trained in war, for which it is no longer suited, and so rejected by socially dominant male authority. In the context of their meeting, the potency of this other worldly, inextinguishable elemental factor is separate from the realms of relationship and society. In order for it to 'come back into play' some collaborative cooperation appears to be required between these socially exiled figures of masculine and feminine identity.

If the event of the soldier descending into the witch woman's 'dry well' in search of her somehow important Blue Light represents a 'climax' to their erotic engagement, what might the psycho-sexual significance of the Blue Light be?

How might intercourse between masculine and feminine which ‘takes place’ at the invitation and direction of the feminine figure, involve the reestablishing of relationship between the feminine and some *animus mundi* element? Given the socio-cultural background, sexual and relational engagement between men and women that is initiated by the woman is socially ‘abnormal.’ Yet perhaps such an encounter is psychologically inherent or necessary to promote some appropriately balanced relations between masculine and feminine. If so, it appears reasonable that this encounter occurs ‘outside social contexts’ and ‘beyond the reach of egoic kingship.’ It would seem then that a rapprochement between the socially estranged relations of male and female, masculine and feminine involve some cooperative effort to regain connection with the *animus mundi* of the Blue Light.

Before considering the outcome of that effort, it seems important to contemplate the psychodynamic character of this ‘earth-spirit/soul’ element. Once engaged in the appropriate manner (making smoke with it) the Blue Light personifies in the form of a genie: the magical black dwarf or “mannikin” that appears at least remotely human and vaguely masculine. Here then is the most particular image of that psychical element whose absence from social relations is somehow involved in the disempowering of both soldier and witch woman. What the dwarf might be as a social character is not identifiable for it/he is, like the light, not ‘real’ but of spirit or psyche, and thus ‘fantastically represented.’ This configuration of ‘animating principle’ or source of psychic and thus super-natural potency has an archetypal valence in fairy tales in general. Whereas male protagonists are generally ‘motivated’ by association with an attractive feminine figure, female ones often contend with this sort of dwarfish, sometimes monstrous, male personification of the contra-sexual element in psyche (think Snow White, Rumpelstiltskin, Beauty and the Beast). Thus, again, as psychic counterpart to ruling ego and soulful anima, Blue Light and dwarf can be seen as *animus mundi*, a spirit of the depths associated more primarily with femininity, rather than *anima mundi* as the female contra-sexual to male psyche. However, though this light that never goes out appears more primarily associated with the feminine, it might also somehow be what the soldier has lost connection with through all his fighting and the king through all his pragmatic ruling. Additionally, their loss of relation to it also might also be what has ‘sent’ the witch woman to live ‘in the forest’ to evade this kind of ‘man’s world.’

Articulating these relations becomes increasingly complicated since male power seems to also derive from association with this *animus mundi* factor. Here is found perhaps the most curious part of the tale’s structure: the Blue Light that appears associated with the feminine yet proves powerful enough to protect a broken-down soldier from the power of a king, subsequently making him one himself, has been ‘in the keeping’ of a woman, and a witch at that, yet she herself cannot access it. Once again, the imagery suggests that access to the potency of the Blue Light occurs through male/masculine attendance to females and the feminine, or even its witch-ness in particular. And yet that potency can be usurped by male figures despite the evidence that this deep chthonic aspect of spirit or *animus mundi* ‘belongs’ in the keeping of the female or feminine aspect. Sociologically, in the ‘real’ world of society, the way this missing psychical element is situated in the tale suggests a lack of

recognition of women's role in men's access to emotional depth and spiritual complexity—in the absence of which they are prone to fighting and pragmatic authority. Intra-psychically, this arrangement suggests that when the 'soldiering masculinity' becomes too wounded to fight it may then at last be able to attend to facilitating relationship between females/femininity and *animus mundi*, thereby revitalizing their own psychic wholeness.

This blue luminosity of depth that personifies in the black 'earth-working' figure of dwarf-ness stands in direct contrast to the 'high minded,' hierarchically obsessed kingly ego. The *animus mundi* figure is magically powerful yet appears unconcerned with who rules it or others. It is not an ethical entity but a more elementally potent one. It is a primordial power suggestive of the minotaur's glow at the center of the labyrinth born of a coupling between a human queen and Zeus' bull of heaven, or Paracelsus' *lumen naturae*, the light of nature. One might go so far as to consider it the cool, un-extinguishable light of the potentially ruthless *animus* aspect in the feminine psyche. Its black dwarf agent rises from earth and smoke like the mysteriously dark and potent force of Lorca's Duende. When the Duende is one, Lorca asserted, a mere human is magically potentiated, and though making no personal effort, it sings dramatically through one so that even as one sits calmly smoking the king, his judge, and all his soldiers are laid low. Thus, despite the role this potency appears to be able to play in the assertion of male power, it also appears to be accessed in or through relation to autonomous femininity.

Rupture of Erotic Relations and a Fall Into Psychological Expropriation

Despite the seeming potential here for interpersonal reconnections between male/female, and psychological ones between masculine/feminine and anima/animus, the telling of the Grimm's tale appears to promise failure. While 'his' attendance to 'her' wishes enables access to the Blue Light, emotional reactions disrupt their erotic rapprochement. The soldier's intuitive doubt about her intentions prompts a violent reaction in the witch woman. It would seem she that his doubt triggers some repressed rage in her that seems likely to derive from some past experiences, rather than from her recent relationship with the soldier, rupturing the newly established eros. Somehow the soldier's blunt bargaining at the lip of the well might well be a misplaced suspicion deriving from his own history of betrayal by the king. From this perspective, their 'personal histories' of 'abuse' deriving from the patriarchal power structure of the social system in which they have been situated generate reactive behaviors that have not basis in their actual interpersonal engagements up to this moment. His departure from respectfully attending to her wishes by showing distrust puts her in such a passion that she 'throws' him and 'her light' back down 'her well.' These reactive outbursts of suspicion and outrage not only disrupt their personal and psychological eros but also trigger a sequence of dramatically confrontational and violent consequences.

As noted, the act of the soldier willingly going down the well as his third task for the witch woman suggest the culmination of his other tasks: foreplay that leads to an sort of psychic intercourse. Based on the preceding ‘tests’ she evidently decides he is worthy of ‘going down her well’ to retrieve her light for her. He ‘performs’ competently for her this task in an ‘old dry well.’ Yet he suspects that she is only using him thus triggers her fury. Sociologically, her behavior might be that of a previously ‘abused’ woman conditioned into a paranoid reactivity that perceives any male defiance and control and dominance. Psychically, as a representation of the ‘exiled’ queen or ‘ruling feminine element,’ she might be manifesting a form of the ‘devouring mother’ similar to the ‘devouring father’ in the king. In this sense the witch is potentially the equally negative counterpart of the ruthlessly pragmatic king and the soldier’s fears are well founded. There appears no clear indication of the specific cause of the witch woman’s reaction, and it seems quit possible that both elements are involved. What is most significant is that her reaction to his doubt causes her to forego regaining relationship with the Blue Light and subsequently results in her own destruction.

Despite that outcome being what the story narrates, this encounter at/in the old well also suggests there is some genuine opportunity for the masculine and feminine to re-approach each other in ways that could preserve their evolving erotic relationship. If the soldier had phrased his concern in a less distrustful, more erotically connecting manner, perhaps coaxing her with his desire to help her tend ‘her light’ and her wishes, she might have trusted him enough to not ‘swallow him up’ in her well—she has, after all, cast him ‘back into her own depths.’ In one regard, this moment suggests an opportunity for the ‘act of erotic intercourse/collaboration’ to be experienced as a mutual attendance to Blue Light-ness rather than a competitive one in which either the man is ‘devoured’ by a negative mother (or witch-ness compensating for patriarchal repression), or one the woman is distrusted and controlled by a fearful, dominating man. In another regard, this is a moment of potential psychic relationship when the woman, as expression of the man’s contra-sexual *anima* aspect, might be engaged and trusted by the man, as *animus* figure for the woman, so that both enable her role as keeper of a depth chthonic or underworld aspect of *animus mundi*. In the tale, however, neither ‘human character’ appears capable of ‘following through’ on the erotic collaboration. Perhaps the soldier is too-much-wounded to be subtle and the woman too ‘bewitched’ by her experience of men in a queenless kingdom of power-identified, masculinized ego function to remember how attentive the soldier has actually been.

In one sense, the events at the lip of the well suggest a ‘coitus interrupts’ in which the partners loose their focus prior to their collaborative reengagement with the earthly potency of the Blue Light. That the erotic bond is ruptured when emotional history is triggered by projective paranoia at the very moment of potential conjunction with a numinous manifestation of ‘inhuman spirit’ or ‘psychic power’ is most poignant. In one sense this situation suggests some inherent distrust men and women feel at the moment of such potential erotic transformation from competitive individuals to psyche’s subsumed into relations with a ‘more than human’ potency. Certainly there appears a ‘risk’ for the egoic identity

of both parties that submission to this final ‘act’ of erotic collaboration will ‘dethrone’ the priority of its individualized, separate sense of autonomy.

Considering how soldier and witch fall out of their erotic connection at this moment may be related to the character of the Blue Light’s genie -- the seeming object of their efforts in her ‘well.’ The supernatural black dwarf does not question or judge accidental his master’s intentions except in so far as to warn him of the dangers they pose to his human existence. The genie loyally serves who ever ‘smokes’ at the Blue Light. There appear no restrictions on how this power can be used. It is not a moral power. It would seem that when it is approached, great care needs be exercised about what one desires, what feelings take precedence. The consequences of not erotically cooperating in its use are obviously devastating to interpersonal relations. The failure of their erotic communication appears to result in a form of psychic expropriation whereby the male figure gains control of the feminine *animus* as *animus mundi*.

The consequences demonstrate that the autonomous elemental dwarf-force from beyond, or below, the human dimension, will serve who ever encounters it in the depths of the witch woman’s ‘dry well that is still moist.’ It seems significant, however, that the soldier does not gain access to this potency merely by falling back into the well. It is only when he accepts his evident doom and calmly lights his pipe for one last smoke that the genie appears. Conceivably, a man who wailed and fretted would not gain such access. Once so empowered, however, the soldier’s mood of acceptance turns to one of revenge. He proves capable of destroying the witch by using the Blue Light’s power. And though she can ride by shrieking on her wild tomcat, a fearsome image, without the Blue Light she is powerless to counter the dwarf.

The unintended expropriation of the potency of the Blue Light by the soldier actually appears to generate a significant change in his behavior. Whereas he was previously respectful and did not attempt to control or dominate the witch woman, once associated with the black dwarf genie, he immediately becomes spiteful and manipulative. This shift appears the more curious since the black dwarf does nothing to encourage it, and even attempts to discourage the soldier from his reckless provocation of kingly powers. This attitude on the dwarf’s part suggests that though its power is not moral, its intelligence is discerning. Thus it would not appear to be, in and of itself, a corrupting or deceptive influence—except, perhaps, in that inhuman power tends to overwhelm human empathy and judgment.

Reactionary Interpersonal Revenge and Psychic Subversion

Thus the soldier’s abrupt shift from resignation after the rupture of erotic relations to violent revenge upon the witch woman seems to be an indicator of how power relations in this socio-cultural context control psychological behavior. At the first hint of capacity to overwhelm other persons he moves dramatically away from the personal and psycho-erotic engagement he commenced with the

witch. His access to the Blue Light's power immediately propels him toward escape, theft, and petty personal vengeance. He appears to give not one thought to using the Blue Light's potency for the purpose of compelling the witch woman to reengage him in some form of relationship. Once out of her well and in possession of her gold he devastates the witch with the power of the spirit of her own light. Perhaps he is punishing her for leaving him in the well or strategically trying to secure his grip on his new power. Perhaps he is attempting to eliminate the 'negative mother' once and for all. And who is to say the light was really hers? She's a witch, after all. In reacting against the feminine, first in the witch and next the king's daughter, he seems to be abrogating any chance for erotic relations and psychic unity with the feminine, and thus the very elements that have enabled his access to the potency of *animus mundi*. His behavior, in that he immediately sets about subverting both the feminine, can be assessed as indicating some sense of how he has indeed expropriated this power in a way that is inappropriate, at least in terms of egalitarian social and psychical relations. Perhaps in order to 'keep' this new potency he somehow must use it to destroy witch-ness and dominate princess-ness.

The soldier's abuse of the feminine in the form of the king's daughter/anima, who submissive lack of opposition is expressed in her half-shut eyes, is an act of vengeance against the ruling/ego principle which he clearly enjoys -- but it is an indirect revolt. He might have used the Blue Light to directly attack the king. Instead, he indulges his revenge by humiliating the feminine aspect of royal egoic power. He pursues this indulgence beyond the power of the dwarf to conceal his identity. At that point he appears to lose his nerve and flee the punishment of the king's socio-political power, forgetting the witch's gold and the Blue Light—the very source of his new potency, without which he is easily imprisoned and subject to execution. He thereby subverts his own interests by his reactionary behavior. However, this behavior suggests that the soldier has not been motivated by a desire to attain any ultimate social or political dominance. He does not even appear motivated to possess the princess, though his actions of forcing her to 'clean his boots' might be a metaphor for some sexual debasement of her. In this way he appears as rather naïve. Perhaps his vindictive betrayal of the witch woman to the king's "judge" and his humiliation of the princess are reflexive impulses of his socialized male identity, rather than traits of a particularly cruel or domineering character.

Significantly, though the princess is abducted by the dwarf in a semi-conscious state, she retains some awareness of the adventure the next day. Thus, though she is 'under a spell' while she is being humiliated in the soldier's attempts at revenge upon the king, she is not entirely subordinated. This 'glimmer of autonomous consciousness' enables her to gain her father's advice on how to reveal the identity of her tormentor. Thus the soldier's attempt to revenge himself upon the king through the princess thus results in his imprisonment. Her behavior seems to indicate that the feminine as represented in her is capable of some autonomous resistance to male domination, though she does rely upon her father's kingly strategy to accomplish her deliverance.

Subsequently, there is no indication she resists a further subversive subordination of her person and femininity to the soldier once he has wrested the kingship from her father. Thus, as carrier of the feminine, she is transferred as a possession of political dominion from one male figure to another.

Ultimately, the soldier appears to have extraordinary luck. Though he has pursued his vengeance against the dwarf's explicit warnings and then fled without either his stash of gold or the Blue Light, he finds on his person in prison one coin of witch's gold. That trace of purloined feminine wealth proves enough to regain his access to the Blue Light and thus make him the new king, legitimating his domination of the old king's daughter/anima, who becomes by default his 'wife.' That he is favored thusly by 'fortune' suggests that he is somehow fated to succeed the present king from the moment that he is betrayed by that patriarch. Thus his impulse for vengeance results in the subversion of witch, princess, king, and kingdom to his dominion.

Political Revolution and Potential Re-ordering the Self

It appears that the potency of the Blue Light enables a new political order to emerge when a mere 'commoner' in the person of a too-wounded soldier displaces the queenless king and the kingdom now has both a king and queen since the soldier takes the princess to be his wife. The order of the psyche or self as represented by the kingdom is also shuffled as the formerly split-off psychic aspect of the rejected soldier becomes ego-king, and the feminine figure of the kingly *anima* is shifted from daughter to wife. Missing from this psychic tableau, however, is the autonomous femininity of the witch woman. Thus, between the manner of the abused soldier's 'coming to power' and the continuing subordination of the feminine, one might well doubt whether they will 'all live happily ever after.' Instead, the future may resemble the past.

Will this former princess now king's wife become a real queen -- or will she be used to produce another un-opposing kingly daughter princess anima and then be exiled, or take her self off to the forest as a witch with her the Blue Light lost in her 'well?' The story has a reiterative aura about it, the new king seeming all too likely to behave as the old one did and thus trigger the same events by using up then exiling his faithful soldier self-aspect once again for greedy, or just plain soulless practicality. The dwarf tells the soldier no one will be able to harm him so long as he has the blue light with him. But as king, personifying primary political power and ego function, will the soldier be able to keep access to that *animus mundi*? One can imagine that a king would 'forget' his relationship with that potency because he now has access to a political basis of absolute power. Thus the reordering of the collective psyche/selfhood suggested by the soldier's rise to kingship seems of dubious consequence for the social role of women and the psychological relationship to femininity. The *animus mundi* of the Blue Light seems all too likely to end up back in that 'dry well' of potentially autonomous femininity.

A Reflection upon the Reality of the Tale

The interpretations of this story offered here are intended to suggest how such unrealistic renditions of ‘actual events’ can vividly portray quite real social and psychological phenomena. What is ‘real’ here is neither kings nor Blue Lights in a literal sense. It is the psycho-social dynamics that are ‘realistically represented’ in the elements and style of such tales. Similarly, its potential meaning for understanding our actual relational lives is obscured if it is judged as ethical or unethical, moral or immoral, healthy or pathological in its portrayal of human behavior.

This reading of The Blue Light could easily be criticized for representing vindictive and abusive behavior that goes unpunished—is in fact ‘rewarded.’ Similarly, it seems principally ‘pathological’ in that the narrative indicates a ‘negative’ cycle being repeated in the psychosocial context of the story. But if the word pathology is interpreted in relation to its Greek roots, the meaning is more akin to suffering than ‘diseased.’ This tale of the Blue Light’s potency and how it is involved in human suffering under certain interpersonal social and intra-psychic relationships presents a remarkable expression of psycho-social reflection. While most ‘fairy tales’ (even those with ‘happy endings’) can be read as renditions of some negative psychological development or inequitable social behaviors, there is another view as widely applicable.

These intensely and sparsely archetypal tellings of life can be read as statements of ‘how it actually is,’ as condensed ‘snap shots’ of situations and responses to them that are in some sense inevitable in life, or at least in given socio-cultural contexts. Concern with what is good or bad, positive or negative about these social and psychic patterns is not overtly judged in the telling of the most elementally archetypal of these tales. Though they might seem to affirm certain hierarchically dominant social roles, these are not moral fables. Some present visions of ‘how things are’ in specific cultural and psychological contexts -- such as the masculine and patriarchal ego dominated kingdom of The Blue Light. But this tale might also be expressing some more widely valid characteristics of human psychological life. The archetypal ‘accuracy’ of a tale is relevant to such socialized background factors that frame this ‘deeper;’ psychological context. But the two are not necessarily the same.

When “The Blue Light” is viewed as such a statement of ‘how life is’ (inter- and intra-psychically) in such circumstances it neither condemns nor praises the missed connection between bewitched woman and too-wounded soldier. To read it as an affirmation of the behaviors it narrates is to ignore its psychological sophistication. The circumstances and psycho-social history indicative of the tale may be said to dictate the characters behaviors. But such might be the vary ‘purpose’ for which these tales evolved and were kept ‘alive’ over many generations. Their existence offers the reader/hearer of the tale an opportunity to take notice and perhaps be a bit more prepared ‘the next time around’ when he or she might find them selves playing out some part of this tale’s ‘inevitability’ in social and psychological relationships.

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