

## Blood on the snow

The sound of drums and guitar echoed in the temple during that cold and long November night. While drinking a few glasses of strong red wine we watched the big black eyes of Mantur shone in the candle fire during the Sunedrion. He felt he needed more, something truly challenging, that can remind him both of his ephemeral human nature and also of his immortal Self. But that alone was not enough, and like hearing the unheard and seeing the unseen, Mantur knew he had to aid the returning of the Dark Gods on our small blue planet. We then recalled the words of an anonymous who said that discipline is remembering your goals. The group work was important for all of us, but this was his mission. So a dangerous dark pilgrimage to the heights of the freezing Carpathians during the winter solstice seemed to be the next logical step in his path. After discussing some technical details, the Choregos clapped his hands and we all understood it was late. Time for rest and food for thought...

A few days before the pilgrimage, he memorized the incantations and carefully prepared the Elixir, during an elaborate ritual spanning over more than two nights. We knew Mantur as a strong, daring and intelligent brother, but this time, as if the whole endeavour wasn't harsh and risky enough, he packed food and water for less than a day, money just for transport and a night at the cabin, and pretty light clothes, despite that the temperatures didn't rise at more than -10 degrees Celsius. The preparations for the journey were not so important for him, at least compared to what he did to obtain the Elixir, which was part red wine, part human, part animal and other ingredient he was secretive about. And each time a new element was added, subtle changes could be felt in the air, around him. Also, exactly at the end of the working a large black fly appeared out of nowhere in his cold ritual chamber and although this sounds amusing, it disturbed that unhuman, high pitch low volume "music" you can sometimes hear at the end of a ritual. If it was a message from THEM, as some might think, then it could have surely been something like: "Enough with the fun. There's work to be done!".

But the time for preparations is over and after some hours the train leaves Mantur in the Sinaia city. And from there a long walk, from 1400 meters to 2000 meters, awaits him. At first the snow is low in height, not higher than his knee, but it's very sticky, and gives the dizzying impression that you're in quick sands. Then the snow reaches the waist and is very hard to pass. Without any human presence for some kilometers in any direction, when the wind's not blowing, there's total silence. Another 200 meters or more lie ahead and the slope is pretty steep. Although one might collapse in such conditions, he carried on. There was snow and mist, and freezing cold, and because of the bad weather most of the cabins in the area were closed. Darkness comes early at the mountain. All the way Mantur kept his strength and temperature using chants and incantations, the most simple being Ave (on inhale), and Satan (on exhale). He finally arrived at night at the only vacant cabin in the area. There he met a young and shy woman, a practitioner of a right hand path influenced by the eastern mysticism. They shared the same room. The woman had felt his sinister presence and asked Mantur about it, why is he there, alone? Then he replied:

- We're at the dawn of a new Aeon and someone has to plant the seeds of Evil.

There was no need for further questions, as she understood him with a tolerance and respect some white light practitioners have



towards us - they view all our Work as a necessary evil, a tool towards the betterment of mankind. In a similar way we also view our Path, with the mention that our betterment differs from theirs. He wanted to tell her something more, anything that could open the doors to the forbidden in her mind. And he did.

But nevertheless, they were both exhausted and words were heavy as stones now. The wind blew savagely. Outside, the dogs were barking at something moving in the snow, around the cabin. Sixty percent of Europe's bears and forty percent of wolves are in Romania, so these beasts are not so hard to find around here, especially when you're in their territory. In *Lupărie* (Wolfland). But dream and reality now mix in a slow vortex and everything fades away...

After a deep sleep, something like a slight push awakens Mantur. It was a quarter to eight in the morning. The woman was still sleeping. Looking at the window he noticed the weather was fine, but there was almost no light. He meditated for a while, did some exercise and silently prepared for what was to come. Then grabbed his backpack and went outside. The dawn just broke but there was no one outside. Perfect – he said to himself. Mantur was walking on the mountain plateau known as *Piatra Arsă* (The Burnt Stone). And now he could perform more complex chants, without getting tired. The landscape is of a staggering beauty (and wildness) and there's a feeling in the air, as if you're stepping into another realm, and sometimes (and in certain places) this can be felt quite literally. Not so many hours passed and Mantur reached his destination. The Carpathian Sphinx. Some believe this rock was carved by the dacians (or their forebears) to resemble a nobleman. Others say here took place the bloody rituals of human sacrifice that the dacians performed. But maybe there is some truth in all of these. The rock itself feels in a certain way, imbued with ancient sinister energy that still lingers in spite of the millennia that passed since then and the "blessings" of Christian priests and of neopagan right-hand path practitioners. Mantur climbed the back of the monolith when he made a small discovery; there was a space, like a bowl, carved inside the rock, as if it was meant to hold something... maybe a liquid. Then he opened his rucksack and pulled out a glass bottle, wrapped in black cloth. Everything – place and time – was aligned to his will. While performing the Call he poured the Elixir over the rock and watched some of the drips falling on the snow. The whole experience was so intense that he started to see the Sphinx and the surroundings as black as tar and then many dark silhouettes gathering around. When all was done, he heard, once again, that unhuman music and knew it was time to leave.



At the cabin the woman was now awake and prepared something good to eat for both of them. His black eyes were shining once again and for a moment she could see something like a shadowy snake coiling around him, not knowing the things that were yet to come...

VATRA