

The Incantations

By Richard Tornello

Facing her spell casting table, cigarette in hand, waving back and forth, smoke spiraling up to the roof, jars and books a jumble, Josie, the senior family witch begins her traveling incantation:

"As it should be,
The world folds in upon itself,
The membrane is pierced
Tomorrow and yesterday are the same
Attainable.

Brush away the dust
Opens, it must."

But Josie sort of messes up. She forgot to put the correct coordinates as well as the subjects to be moved into the body of the incantation. Something had to go.

And the Town Center in some far off district, its associated subdivisions and all the people disappear, to where about, totally unknown.

"Oops, it happens. Got to find my book. I know I put it somewhere. A bother, always misplacing things." She laughs to herself. Oh well. Life is full of surprises.

In some other universe the Town Center building shows up in the middle of an Olympic sized pool. The subdivision now sits upon an international airfield. The Home Owners Association is demanding all the planes be of the same color with matching interiors. Fuel trucks must be parked out of sight and any alterations or repairs for any reason to the runways or structures must be approved by the standards committee with approvals by the airports neighbors before work begins. The committee is staffed by retired bureaucrats and frustrated individuals with nothing better to do then make arcane and inane rules that they can't even justify. But the HOA is powerful. And so it goes.

Those that are now in this other universe as well as the regular inhabitants, scratch their collective heads in wonder.

"Another gift from the gods. And now this HOA. What have we done to deserve this?" some wonder out loud. They are put to the torch quickly by the Property Management folk. They breach no insult and are quick to fine any one who dares question their edicts. "Do you want someone with a pink plane next to you? We're here to make your property valuable."

"Pink isn't so baaa..." begins one resident of that universe.

"Fine him 50.00 a day and tow his aircraft away." The huge employee of the Property Management commands. "Put a lien on his home too. Anyone else have a problem?"

"The way of the gods are mysterious, who are we to question," all the others state in unison, with solemn grace born of such incidents. "Pink, oh not a good color. He deserved that. Yes."

Josie is looking under piles of piles of papers. Three calendars are laid out with dates circled and no notes. More books are piled beneath, astride and on top of the calendars. "Oh dear now what did I do with that book of instructions? I know it was here, or was it there? Or," she turns and looks at the calendars, "or there?"

"Hmmm I'll find it later; I know I put that book in a safe place. I just want to go visit my family across the Great Way."

The telecommunications device beckons. "Madame, an incoming visitation."

"What Mirror? Who is it?"

Before the mirror can respond, "Mother have you been working outside your local area? You've gone non-local again or so we've heard. You know they are going to take your incantation license away if you keep this up."

"Dear boy what are you talking about? I haven't left the home. I've been looking for... What book was that? I was about to visit your sister."

"Mother your incantation book. You're looking for your incantation book. You're going to get us all in trouble. You need the book if you can't remember."

"How can I do that? I'm just an old witch, an antique. My powers are feeble. I need my books."

"Mother they are not feeble. You're just forgetful, you've always been. Remember when you kept going back and forth in time-space before you realized you didn't complete the geolocation portion of the incantation? Eight hours of what should have been a fifteen minute trip. Well, now I think you just displaced a whole subdivision to another universe!"

"NO mi dega, you don't say. I hope it has a nice view."

"Mother no more. Please. Just call and we'll arrange a teleport."

"I don't like having my molecules rearranged. I never feel right after reassembly. And the preparations, such a bother. An old witch has her pride."

"It simply, it's just, information realignment. In fact it really does make things better in the brain department.

"My brain is fine for an old witch. I am antique. I like it just the way it is. Now where is my book? Besides I like the old manner of folding time-space. It's neater and less prone to mistakes. Look what happened to Prince. He's a frog in some marsh. They scrambled up his atomic structure. You thought I didn't know or remember did you?"

"It can happen, Mother."

"Not Time-Spacing. BTW Is anyone complaining about the missing what ever it was?"

"Subdivision Mother, a missing subdivision, with eight thousand homes and a town center... No one is complaining, yet. In fact I think that some of what you might have done is a great service. But this can't happen again!"

"You're correct; it can't, not with time-space folding. Sub what? How many ...oh boy a big one this time."

"Mother, you sent a huge land mass to another universe! Please. Besides when it comes to travel, Time-space folding is so slow. It takes forever."

"Not forever and you know that. But it is a comfortable manner and one can enjoy the view. Not like zip zap now you're here, then you're not, and then you're there, maybe. So, is anyone complaining about the missing whatever you called it?"

"I just told you, you moved a whole subdivision and a town center. And no, not yet anyway. You can't do that. I told you."

"Told me what, when? Where is my book? I'm antique you know. When are you coming out here? Pretty funny a whole subdivision. You think I don't remember. It takes some time to sink in, but I do get it eventually. You said you'd be here when?"

"But you screw up mother! Someone is going to get mad, eventually."

"You said you'd be here when?"

"Soon very soon, mother, soon. Don't change the subject and please, and don't guilt trip me."

"A new discovery! And now we have a third method of transport, Time-space, teleport and guilt-trip. I like number one and three the best. You can keep your DNA scramble with all the associated rules and mathematics for travel now. What a pain. An old lady can't just fold time-space any more and travel with dignity."

"Mother, that's... it's is not fair. Rules you know and...As you would say 'Life's not just, get over it.'"

Smiling, she tunes out and turns to her table,

"As it should be. The world folds in upon itself,
The membrane is pierced
Tomorrow and yesterday are the same
Attainable.

Brush away the dust
Opens, it must.
TSA is a bust."

Her mirror reports in a manner that could be construed as polite boredom, "Madame you have another message, from your son."

"Yes dear, how are you. We haven't spoken for a while. That's not nice. I'm antique you know. You should call more often"

Sputtering, "MOTHER what did you do with that part of the government? And I just spoke to you not a while ago."

"I don't have a strong constitution. Dear please don't yell it's not polite. Didn't I teach you manners?"

"Yes Mother you did but this...Mom come on, please.

In another universe after the initial shuffling of executives and official pronouncements, the HOA and TSA people are getting along famously. They've organized the whole planet to look exactly alike. No body or government asks any question enjoying the strict regularity that this form of organization lends to an otherwise unkempt manner of government where the past pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness were the stated aims.

And so it goes.

The End

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