

By  
Darkness  
Influenced

**By Darkness Influenced**

Written By Ronald J. Dayton and KOTAH

Edited By Julie Sobanski and R.T. Stark

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And  
Julie Sobanski

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## INTRODUCTION

Life is a journey with many paths to follow. The one we eventually take is the most direct: from the womb to the tomb. It is not an easy trip. There are twists, turns and dangers; all add to the adventure of it. Fears of the unknown grip us too, wondering what waits for us around the bend.

Curiosity and imagination bid us wonder what lurks in the shadows. Along the way, there are lessons, and there are losses. Things are seen and stories heard. Tales, like this trek, often twisted and terrifying; but often true. We journey not just in sunlight, but into darkness too, creating tales such as these which I now share with you.

KOTAH

# MAGIC THAT INSPIRES- MAGIC THAT TRANSFORMS

*As is true with all art forms,  
Magic must evolve and progress to survive;  
innovate and transform to flourish.  
Art that stagnates can no longer inspire or enthrall.*

I wrote the above note in my journal a few months back in preparation for an article I'm writing for a magic magazine, and my own quote kept coming to mind as I gathered my thoughts for this book's introduction.

Thank all the muses that be, that there are a few precious magical thinkers combating the tired, stale, standard approach to magic that has plagued our craft since *World War II*; magicians who are brave enough to shine the lights of freshness, creativity and theatricality on the dimmed magical landscape of these past six or so decades.

Ranking high on my list of innovative magicians and writers is my colleague Ron Dayton, and any reader fortunate enough to be exposed to his magical viewpoint and output, will have a renewed vision of what magical entertainment can aspire to be in the hands of a master.

If fame were determined by creativity and artistry, rather than commercial visibility, Ron Dayton would be one of the most famous magicians of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Ron writes in his own name, but also writes and performs as his alter-ego “Kotah”... because sometimes Kotah can go even farther out on the limb to make a point or provide theatrical impact.

Whichever persona is utilized, the same professional, carefully constructed, and theatrically viable magic is clearly presented for use by the practical performer under real-world conditions.

Ron possesses a vast amount of “*common knowledge*” about the world in general, and the World of Magic in particular, so he has a particularly deep pool to go fishing in to encourage fresh concepts and ideas.

Ron skillfully writes emotionally charged and powerful prose and poetry in addition to his magical presentations and stories. These talents are paired with a pragmatic side that can work out complex technical and mechanical bugs when tackling a magical dilemma from a functional standpoint.

Though oceans of material flood from Mr. Dayton’s prolific mind, the magical ideas he puts forth are always sound in method and straightforward in application.

With his combination of historical knowledge, concentrated ability to work out magical gimmicks, and a focused creativity which allows wonderful stories to unfold magically, one encounters a rare commodity in the Magical World indeed: *A “thinking-magician’s, magician.”*

You’re holding in your hands a thoughtful volume of some of Ron’s (and Ko-

*tah's)* most prized work.

In this book you'll find a range of magic you can actually perform... close-up, cabaret, parlor, even on a stage. You'll find concepts and ideas that will inspire you and transport your imagination to new places.

You'll discover that the magic genre known as "*Bizarre Magic*" is not just for a chosen or peculiar few, but consists of emotionally satisfying stories, presentations, and magic... each and every magician can incorporate into his repertoire to refresh his show and elevate his art.

Like any raging fire, Ron thrives on fuel... and that fuel is often in the comments and feedback he receives from other performers, so if anything ...or everything... in this volume moves you, excites you, or motivates you to change and improve the way you do your Magic, write him and let him know.

*Dear Reader, the future of Magic is yours, and the Art is within your own hands!*

Magically,

*Walt Anthony*  
Spellbinder Entertainment

San Francisco, Summer 2005



## SPIDER IN THE MIRROR

Preston Ellerbe was the sort of man you could meet and easily forget. If he had a personality at all, he must have left it in his other suit. He was quiet, unassuming in the extreme and harmless. At least that was the face he wore for all to see. Secretly he was another thing, as the crawl space in his modest home could attest.

Internally he was a tormented man; festering with, fears and phobias which like a cancer grew. An intense fear of spiders and a desperate, overpowering fear of being friendless and alone. On the outside he maintained the appearance of a good worker and unobtrusive neighbor. He is betrayed by two things, the household mirrors and the crawlspace's god-awful smell. Certainly no one could be allowed to visit, but visitors visit still. Thinking of their perpetual presence made him smile.

More than mere guests, he thought of them as friends. Friends he could never make among the living. In the early evening before retiring, he would talk to them. Later as he tried to sleep, they would answer. It started as a barely audible din of unintelligible chatter, then turn into a mumbled mantra, a song sung by a choir of the dead.

And so it went for several months. He could not sleep for the incessant singing, could not eat amid the stench of rotting meat.

Preston worked a rather menial job in the city's old park system. He seldom came into direct contact with a lot of people. Having access to a pick up truck and shovels, the outside work provided him with two precious things. Fresh air and an opportunity to see new prospective house guests. There were times and places that he and his chosen were in close proximity, no one to see. It took but a moment. Under cover of night, the truck took him and his newfound friend home. Another voice to sing. One more friend he hoped would end the loneliness.

Aside from the companionship / camaraderie they provided; the consensual sex was nice as well. It helped him sleep. When decay took lovers out of play, they had to stay with the others. It seemed so unfair. His desire was so strong, but *their* flesh so weak. He started to believe decay was their way to make him grieve, leave him broken hearted.

It was then he started to gaze deeply into mirrors, trying to appraise himself, and his fears.

The impartial glass can only show what stands before it, even though we may abhor it. Things change in shadows. They rearrange, get strange when seen through tormented eyes. He would stare for hours and still not understand. It was a monster, not a man, looking back at him. Copious notes scrawled in a trembling hand filled in blanks of what he saw, or thought he saw, in his last fevered days. A statement, or perhaps a testament to madness: the stench of festering maggot beds beneath the house's floor was thick enough to fog up the mirror.

He hated the slick slimy feel; as his hand would wipe and swipe to clear a spot. All he got was a smear of cadaver snot. So intense was his gaze it seems, the glass instantly broke into smithereens.

Fine lines of the break radiate to form a silver web. Hanging there, in wait to snare the first to dare peer in. Eight long sharp shards joined to an octagon of glass, to create a creature he had always feared. A spider oh so real in this matrix mirror, frozen by his phobia, he watched as it reared in three dimension, then leapt as it inched nearer. Scalpel-like legs gleaming flashing slashing, deep strategic gashing. After the attack, he lay on his back, bled out and dead, seemingly the victim of a spider in his head.

Was the spider real? That likelihood is slim. The prints on each bloody shard of glass belonged to only him.

(Possible use of a shard of mirrored Plexiglas. Paddle move and then reveal of a bloody fingerprint.)

*If I may interject, this also cries out for a shattering mirror, slate effect using a mirror complete with cracks, bloody hand prints, and perhaps a spider creature that lunges out to one spectator who shrieks in panic while the others wonder what the fuss was about.*

*A bit of an apparition involving a snot-like substance on a mirror or dripping off the performer's hand out of nowhere could make an equally nice touch. LOTS of food for thought here..... R. T. S.*

## CRESCENT CITY ROOFTOPS

SCENARIO: Two blue back playing cards are used to tell a tale of hurricane Katrina's devastation and life altering impact. \*

Removing two blue back playing cards from your pocket, they are shown front and back. One is a court card, the other is an ace.

Each card is folded in half end to end. You then fold each card in half side to side along their length. One of the cards is folded in half end to end and set on the table in an inverted 'V.' The other card is folded in half lengthwise and nested on top of the first card, creating what could appear to be two roof tops, one below the other on the surface of your table. Lets say the long roof sits atop the short roof. In the blink of an eye you can cause them to exchange in the act of simply picking them up and setting them back down on the table. How? Place the first finger tip of the right hand on one end of the top roof, and the RH thumb on the opposite end. Squeeze the thumb and first finger together as you pick the cards up. The reversal of shape and position is automatic! Try it and see. These same two cards, with a minor alteration of one, are also ready to perform Roy Walton's effect *Card Warp* for the conclusion of the routine.



" Sometimes life is like a house of cards, fragile and easily disrupted. We seldom have control of the hand we're dealt."

"These cards remind me of what happened in the Crescent city when Katrina struck. As gale force winds whipped and levy's crumbled; houses , hopes and dreams also tumbled. To the roof tops some survivors fled, waiting, anticipating rescue." ( The cards are set like roof tops on the table as explained earlier. As they are picked up their shapes and positions change. You immediately drop them to the table as a set, as if they had been 'hot' to the touch. )

" Amid the death and devastation/ resultant relocation, many changes took place that day."

(The card folded lengthwise is placed into the folder formed by the card folded end to end. You now perform *Card Warp* to illustrate how completely their lives had been turned inside out, for ever changed !)

ADDENDUM: \* By using one blue back and one red back card; with proper wording, you may seem to cause an instantaneous color change of the cards. Rather than a transposition of shapes. The different colors also enhanced the Walton effect.



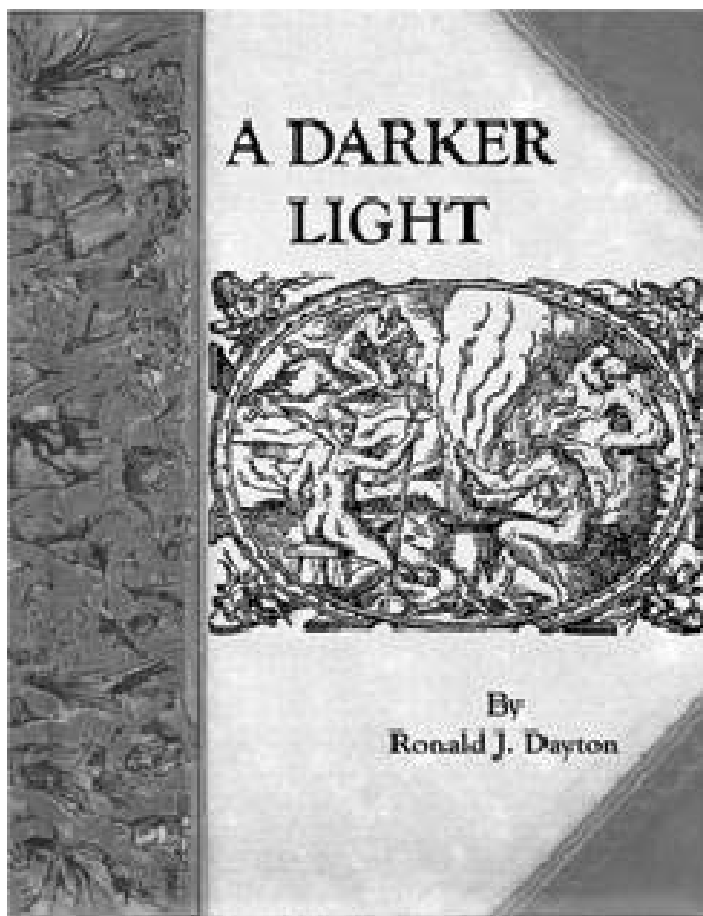
“THE INVITATION “

I received a message most bizarre  
On black paper in ink dark as tar.  
Unable to be read.  
I knew not what it said.

Then a second message came  
In its way much the same.  
Seemingly a blank white sheet  
I held it near a candle's heat.  
The message soon my eyes did meet.  
An invitation from death you see.  
That ended in RSVP

(Buddha Papers Applications?)

*I could also see this as a nifty framework for a blendo of sorts, or a mini casket production that leads in to any number of other routines! R.T.S.*



The Original book from the fertile mind of Ronald J. Dayton (a.k.a Kotah) is a collection of dark stories and poems entangled in a web of magic. Some 120 plus pages of material for the Bizarrist. Twisted, and thought provoking stuff. Dark but real, pages from the tests of life. Tales that will touch emotions, and possibly a nerve or two. Things which once heard, will not soon be forgotten. Presentations gathered over the past three years and all released in one book for the very first time. A Darker Light is sure to please the dark side of your performers soul. Come, walk this shadow path, bathed in a darker light. In its glow you will come to know magic differently. This is the best of Dayton, at Dayton's best! The imagery of words used as tools of creative inspiration.

Here is what James Luce had to say after reading this book:

"I Just wanted to announce my most joyous experience I had when reading Brother Kotah's new book "A Darker Light. All I can say is wow! He has created works which will tug on hearts and intrigue the mind with the vivid imagery of his story telling.

Among my favorites are Amanda's Last Breath, a heart jerker where meaningful words are manifested from the loss of someone special. Oh What a Tangled Web... where a spiders web is a metaphor for lies. This ends with a visual surprise! Money Does Not a Restless Spirit Soothe, Where the spirits of mistreated workers comeback and avenge an insult the company ensues upon their families.

It is obvious from reading Ronald J. Dayton's creations that he is a very talented writer and cares deeply about his art. You can count me amongst his fans. May your inquisitive mind bloom and creations blossom."

This excursion into the world of Bizzarism is a collection of powerful but simple bizarre effects as well as poems and stories useful for atmosphere and just plain getting you in the ookie mood.

A Darker Light will be printed in soft cover 8.5" X 11" format, and is sure to please the dark side of your performers soul.

**\$35.00**

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First of all, a VERY big thank you to everyone who has so kindly supported Leaping Lizards Magic in our first year of return business to the magic world. In reality, we have about 30 years experience in the business, with a 10 year hiatus, and everyone's "welcome back" has been VERY refreshing!

We are pleased to have a few new books in the works, to add to our titles from this year. So, let's talk about those titles for a moment.

**Quietus of Creativity, Volume One**, is almost sold out from OUR end... That is, we made a commitment to print only 500 copies, and to sell them for only 365 days. Murphy's Magic Wholesale has taken up an exclusive distributing arrangement for our magic titles, and has purchased ALL the remaining copies of that book. We retained a very few retail copies that you can order from here, but now all our magic titles are available from YOUR favorite magic dealer. Just ask them to contact Murphy's Magic Wholesale.

**Quietus of Creativity, Volume Two- Psychic Diversions**, will appear around the new year.

Also on the Horizon is Dean Montalbano and Julie Sobanski's book, **"Dusting It Off."** This book is based on their old Genii Magazine column, Tarbell Treasures. It illustrates how you can take old routines and classic methods and dust them off into something that is NEW and YOU! This book is very careful not to reveal other people's methods, and uses the Tarbell Course In Magic as a reference repeatedly, so if you've been waiting for an excuse- but that AMAZING book set from your favorite dealer so you'll be ready when this new book is released! The Leaping Lizards

Also upcoming we will release Carl Herron's Autobiography, **"Carney, Pitchman, Indian Chief."** This Promises to be a WONDERFUL book. I already read it, cover to cover and enjoyed it thoroughly. Carl Herron, better known as Brother Shadow to those in the bizarre field, is one of founders of the bizarre magic movement. His life story, complete with tales of shilling

for his father's street pitch sales- and his days as a Super Hero (You'll have to read the book) make for a GREAT read. NO MAGIC in here, other than the magic of wonderful stories that make you laugh, cry and long for days gone by.

I found myself very touched in certain parts, but also thinking to myself "WOW... this is a true story, but what a COOL idea for a routine!" So, even the magic geek in you will find something. The Hard Cover edition that will TENTATIVELY be out in December will be Limited Edition as well. About 175 pages, hard cover, color dust jacket, signed and numbered... It will retail for \$39.95, and there will ONLY be 350 copies. This edition also includes some extra pages, about 10 or so, specifically related to Carl's involvement in magic.

And, YES- there will be a sample on our web site when the book debuts. Look for ads for this book in January, UNLESS we sell out before then.

There will be a general release of this book, soft cover, for the general public some time late next year as well, as the book has a mass appeal, but that will NOT include the extra material and have fewer photo's.

So, Check it out and keep an eye on the Lizards!