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INTRODUCTION

Harvey Kubernik's Interview with the Author

When I learned Travis had finished this property, given it a new title, and instead of the novel we'd talked about earlier, had decided to release it in screenplay form, and include an entire section on its mysteries, I was super impressed. I asked him who would be writing the introduction, fully expecting him to ask me to do it, and he said he was thinking about finding out who, of his movie industry connections, was still alive and willing to take a crack at it. Thinking quickly, I said, "It's a surrealistic rock musical, isn't it? Why don't I write it? Or, even better, we could do an interview that would let you tell, in your own words, how and why and when you began to write it, and what you're hoping to do with it now."

"You mean do an introductory interview?" he asked.

"Sure," I said, "Why not?"

There was a pause while he considered the idea, and then he said, "You're on! This isn't a typical book, anyway, and I want it introduced properly, not in terms of the rhetoric of screenwriting, but as a surrealistic piece, meant to be experienced, not read."

And that's how this Introductory Interview came to be.

HK: There is a rather unique and inspirational journey behind the publication of this book. Tell me about that.

TP: I suppose it was initially inspired by Rachael Carson's *The Sea Around Us*, which I bought in paperback at a Dudley Street Station newsstand in Boston, Massachusetts, back around 1955. For the first time in my life I had lunch money, and had to take the MTA to get

to Boston Latin School, so why would I spend 25¢ for lunch, when I could buy a paperback book, read it during lunch period, study halls, and on the bus home, too? I was 11 years old. The book brought me to tears. I was afraid that by the time I grew up, the oceans might all be dead. A few years later, she wrote *Silent Spring*. By then, I was living in Newton and could walk to the library, but I read it, too. In that particularly bleak case, DDT eventually was banned, and I began to have hope for a future, but the impact of those two books was with me in 1974; and is still with me today, especially with nuclear waste spreading through the Pacific Ocean, and here on land; the honey bees rapidly going the way of the Dodo. Rachael Carson's writings made an early and deep impression on me, long before the ever-growing threat of ecological disaster became front page news.

It was nearly 20 years later that I composed my original concept album, *CHANGELING*. I had always been concert oriented, and in 1974, by the time I began recording *CHANGELING*, everything from Broadway shows to rock musical movies, were on the market.

HK: So let me see. *Hair* opened on Broadway in 1968; *Tommy*, by the Who, was 1969; *Jesus Christ, Superstar* came to Broadway in 1970; and in 1971, Jethro Tull recorded *Aqualung*, and that was the same year *Godspell* opened on Broadway, and *Grease* opened in Chicago. In 1974, *Phantom of the Paradise* came to the big screen, and the Genesis concept album, *The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway*, was released.

TP: That sounds about right. And I'd been toying with the idea of a concept album ever since the Beatles *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* came out in 1967. After that, the Beatles stopped touring, but continued to record. For all practical purposes, I stopped performing in clubs in 1970, when Travis Pike's Tea Party split up, but I was still writing songs, and while I was attending Cal Poly, Pomona, I signed up for the first multi-disciplinary program offered there. The idea was to identify and solve the environmental issues

facing us all. G. Tyler Miller, Jr's book, *Replenish the Earth, a Primer in Human Ecology* had just been published, and became part of my group's curriculum – this, at the same time I was writing songs for what became *CHANGELING*. So, what I brought to the course was the idea that popular music, which in the sixties had become driven by political issues, could heighten awareness of the environmental issues facing us then, and still facing us today. Creating a concept album, with the potential to become a movie musical, was just my cup of tea. Or perhaps, the beginnings of my “WITCHY STEW.”

HK: We'll come back to “WITCHY STEW,” but first tell me about how *CHANGELING* got started, why you changed the title to *MORNINGSTONE*, and why you're now calling it *CHANGELING'S RETURN*. I'm familiar enough with your work to know there must be some significance to the title changes.

TP: To start with, in Western mythology, a changeling was believed to be the child of a fairy or troll, placed in a human child's cradle in place of the human child, who was then stolen and taken into their otherworldly realms. Apparently healthy babies, later discovered to suffer developmental disorders were believed by their parents and local villagers to be changelings left in place of the human babies. Infants born with a veil were also considered changelings, believed to be clairvoyant, or possess other supernatural abilities.

In my tale, Morgan, a rock superstar, has an out-of-body experience in *MORNINGSTONE*, a parcel of metaphysical real estate where Furies challenge him, Muses beguile him, and Fates still weave Man's destiny. As to whether he is a grown human taken from us and returned as a changeling, or a changeling reared as human, who returns to his supernatural roots, is re-awakened to his otherworldly origins, and returns to our world to fulfill his purpose, is deliberately clouded. The story works either way, and the title, *CHANGELING'S RETURN* further acknowledges that the story's title and origin have both been restored.

HK: *CHANGELING'S* roots in folklore and mythology aside, you have incorporated many lesser known mystical and occult themes. Where do they come from, and do you think they are more likely to hurt or help you at the box office, if and when the film is made?

TP: In 1973, the year I moved into Hollywood from the San Gabriel Valley, *The Exorcist* did over \$400 million at the box office, and in 1974, took home two Oscars. Of course, by then interest in the occult was already sweeping the nation. You mentioned the incredibly successful rock musical, *Hair*, to which I would add the equally incredible success of the Fifth Dimension's 1969 medley, "Aquarius/Let the Sun Shine" that topped the charts for six weeks in 1969. People of all ages were interpreting their behavior and the behavior exhibited by their friends in terms of their astrological signs, and Hollywood had a plethora of shops catering to occult interests. I wrote "WITCHY STEW" and "THE STRANGER" for my new, as yet undefined concept album, catering to the prevailing interest in occult themes, and at the Bodhi Tree on Melrose Avenue found bookshelves stacked to bursting with texts on comparative religion, folklore, mythology, and the supernatural. But at the end of the day, for me it was the interdisciplinary studies course at Cal Poly that inspired the environmental wrinkle required to make *CHANGELING* meaningful.

As for whether the supernatural elements will help or hinder the property, interest in the supernatural has never waned as much as the quality of movies dealing with it. People continue to be fascinated by the mysteries, which is one reason I'm publishing this book. I think we can both agree that interest in the ecological challenges we face is currently running high, and will continue to do so. In producing and marketing a motion picture, one looks for ways it can be cross-collateralized, and musicals have a built-in source of additional revenue in their soundtrack albums, and with the success of last year's box office smash *La La Land*, which also took home six Oscars from the 2017 Academy Awards, musical movies are again attractive to investors.

I have included articles on the more arcane elements in the section called *HIS SECRETS ALL REVEALED*, inviting readers, and ultimately, I hope, moviegoers to be prepared for the mysteries they will encounter on the big screen. In my experience, people love to know what's going on behind the scenes. Ask someone if they'd like to know a secret, and not only do they perk up and pay attention, but when the secret's been shared, they leave with a desire to apply or experience that secret for themselves. By illuminating them in advance, I hope to present my motives and meanings, which then may still be challenged, but not misrepresented. Carl Jung might have thought it unnecessary, but I got a lot more from reading Robert Graves' *White Goddess* the second time, than I did the first.

HK: You have always been interested in mystical and spiritual concepts. What are the roots of your explorations in this arena?

TP: Well, for one thing, I was born en-caul, the rarest sort of veiled birth, in which the child comes into the world still completely inside the amnionic sac, thus neither born nor unborn, neither of this world or the other. I was an adult when I learned that, and it seems to explain a lot about my interests and motivations. For as long as I can remember, I have always seen through, or believed I saw through, the exaggerations, hypocrisies, and outright lies of much of what passes today for established history, science, and religion, wherefore I have for many years pursued my interests as an independent scholar. My song, "THE FOOL," presents my credentials. To write such a song, one must be versed in all the mysteries it reveals.

HK: I know dialogue is the backbone of this book.

TP: Simply because it is a book. The screenplay is a blueprint for a movie that will bring its surrealistic imagery and action to life, allowing its audience to experience it as in a shared threshold dream. According to Jung, dreams speak directly to the unconscious, so what the symbols mean to one, may not be the same as what they mean to another. Furthermore, if one is not ready to cross that developmental

threshold, the dream may seem to be no more than an entertaining fantasy. But even then, viewers might well give it a second chance, just to make sure they hadn't missed anything – and that's what cult films do best. They call their audiences back again and again, whether mentally or physically, to refresh and reinforce their messages.

HK: Did *CHANGELING* emerge from a personal dream?

TP: No. It was undertaken as a deliberate and thoughtful effort to make audiences aware of the importance of living according to Nature's laws, and then get them to actively support environmental causes. Like the hero in my story, I broke an ankle in an auto accident, and it was during my convalescence that I began writing songs (without my superstar's advantage of a Midi workstation), but there, the similarity ends. I don't believe I ever dreamed any of the specific incidents and events described in Morgan's adventure.

I can't say the same for the songs. Both "MORNINGSTONE" and "THE LIKES OF YOU" came to me full blown. All I did was try to convey them to paper and guitar while I still remembered the melodies, harmonies, and lyrics. I discuss them in *HIS SECRETS ALL REVEALED*. "WITCHY STEW" and "THE STRANGER" both predate the screenplay, and that's why I placed them in Morgan's show before his otherworldly adventure begins. It may even be that those songs are what attracted the attention of the Muses, and led to his otherworldly adventure. Two other songs in *CHANGELING* have questionable antecedents. "THE FOOL" is a credential song for a wise man who has to couch his wisdom in riddles to avoid running afoul of an ignorant, hypocritical society, fully capable of turning on him for holding thoughts contrary to their own. A young woman who listened to my earliest version of it, brought my attention to Robert Grave's *White Goddess*, thus inspiring my final version of "THE FOOL," and a new song to celebrate that inspiration, "DOG, ROEBUCK AND LAPWING." All the rest of the music and songs I wrote in support of my changeling theme.

HK: When and why did you decide to set the story in a Stonehenge-related community?

TP: Before I moved to Hollywood, I finally remembered the title to a song I'd shelved years earlier. That song was "MORNINGSTONE," but a few years later, discussing *CHANGELING* with Hollywood screenwriter and author Max Shulman, he suggested that my location sounded a lot like *Brigadoon*, the setting for the Lerner and Loewe musical of that title. In fact, although the stories are as different as their musical styles, Celtic folklore inspired both. Some time later, I discovered Manly P. Hall's Philosophical Research Society in the Los Felix neighborhood of Los Angeles, where I found, to my delight, a reproduction of *The Celtic Druids*, a book written by Godfrey Higgins, Esq. and originally published in 1829. It contains sketches and diagrams of ancient Celtic monuments now lost. In 1987, when I recorded the complete demo, with the illustrations from *The Celtic Druids* and the real life backstory of the song in mind, I changed the title to *MORNINGSTONE*, and so it remained until this year, when I revisited the screenplay in anticipation of this book. Realizing that my character-based title was more to the point, I retitled it *CHANGELING'S RETURN*, which also describes its literary journey.

HK: I've heard you describe this as a surrealistic fantasy adventure with big screen possibilities. Why?

TP: My works have been compared to the writings of Lewis Carroll, and *CHANGELING'S RETURN* has more in common with *Through the Looking Glass* or Woody Allen's *Midnight in Paris*, than *The Sound of Music*. In my section *HIS SECRETS ALL REVEALED*, I shed light on its mysteries, but half the show is an out-of-body experience in a world where the laws of physics don't apply, and Fiona is a shape-shifter, perhaps even a personification of the White Goddess herself, able to change into a barn owl at will, and travel between the worlds at twilight. She can also transform herself into the three Fates, three Furies, and three Muses, all at once, and in those forms can and does quarrel with her other selves. That's why *CHANGELING'S RETURN* needs to be experienced.

HK: What drew you to literary and musical development in the first place?

TP: My love of literature, music, and movies, all of which come together in *CHANGELING'S RETURN*.

HK: I know at one time you came pretty close to producing and directing this story. You recorded a music demo, did a script breakdown, budget, location scout, shooting schedule, secured letters of intent from your department heads, and even secured a commitment for a completion bond. What happened?

TP: It wasn't just the one time. I had been submitting *MORNINGSTONE* to major studios, producers, and independent financiers here and abroad for funding and production approval, while I worked on other projects for various outside production companies. In July, 1991, I had serious interest from Capital Funding Group for my three-picture package, *MORNINGSTONE*, *GRUMPUSS*, and *LONG-GRIN*. They loved the package, but wanted Howard Kazanjian to coproduce. I contacted him, but he passed. He was pursuing projects of his own. In October, armed with a completion bond letter that said I deserved an Oscar for prep, I contacted Capital Funding again, and a week later, received a letter saying they were set up for the first quarter of 1992 with Japanese funding approved, and were ready to move forward with *MORNINGSTONE*, but not long after, I was told my funding had again been delayed.

In late February, 1992, I received a phone call offering full funding from another source, if I shot the entire show in central California, at a significantly lower budget than I had proposed. In March, 1992, I took my department heads and scouted in and around Sacramento and Chico, California. We didn't find the locations we required and could not make the movie for the budget offered, so we declined the offer.

About then, I again heard from Capital Funding that they expected to be able to fund me in the third quarter, but that meant I had lost my Spring production window, cast, and staff, so I had to set about putting together a new schedule and budget for 1993. It turned

out Capital Funding couldn't meet that schedule either – and that's when I heard about the collapse of the Japanese bank investors.

I had to scramble around to get work to cover my own operational costs, so I went to work prepping Bo Svenson's *A Spirit Rebellious*, a proposed movie about the Russo-Finnish Winter War of 1939-1940. That became the pattern for the next several years. I'd update and revise the schedule and ever-rising budget for *MORNINGSTONE*, then end up scrambling for outside work during the spring and summer months, to cover my expenses.

I did get close in 1993, with a clear shot at a 1994 production schedule, when Frank Mancuso, then at MGM, called to offer me a split-rights deal, based on the talent I had lined up for the role of Morgan. The studio was to put up half the budget for the distribution rights in the U.S. and English-speaking Canada, leaving me with the rights for rest of the world. With the star I had lined up for the role of Morgan, I was confident I could easily raise the other half of the budget through pre-sales in the U.K., Australia, and Japan, but that deal collapsed when my star's manager unexpectedly pulled him from the project to deal with an unspecified medical condition. I never did give up on the property, but other projects kept me busy until finally, the Fates intervened, and now I'm back to it.

HK: When I first interviewed you in 2013, you said you were writing *MORNINGSTONE* as a novel. What happened to that idea?

TP: I made three serious attempts, squeezing time out of my busy production schedule to write it, but each time, I foundered on the same rocks. The surrealistic adventure became lost in the telling. *CHANGELING'S RETURN* is a tightly written, interwoven tapestry intended to be delivered to its audience like a shared dream. Best-selling books have a fairly direct line to the major studios, but *CHANGELING'S RETURN* is about an out-of-body experience, and its impact comes, in large part, from its audience experiencing it along with the main character. Back in the real world, when my

hero tries to explain himself, the audience will be with him, at least insofar as they have shared that experience, and sympathize with his frustration.

The songs, evocative and crucial to the story, will be available on the new *Mystical Encounter* album, but this book presents the screenplay in the hope that the reader will take the time to visualize each scene, the way a director, actor, cameraman, costumer, set designer, or art director do. In support of that desired outcome, *HIS SECRETS ALL REVEALED* allows the reader to explore the intangibles, those elements not so much on the screen, as buried deep within the reader's own unconscious. The motto of Otherworld Cottage Industries is, "The World Without Is Not the World Within." Hopefully, *CHANGELING'S RETURN* will be able to reach that elusive world within.

HK: Why did you choose to dedicate the title to your European fans going back to your 1963-1964 days as an entertainer, as well as those fans and followers, including servicemen, New England supporters, and also the audiences on the West Coast who welcomed you to Southern California in 1968?

TP: Writers are always being told to write about things they know. Well, rock 'n' roll performance, motion pictures, myth, folklore, the environment, and the supernatural fall within the parameters of my special interests. I'm writing about things I know. You once said you knew the roots of this book and all its related platforms stretch back to the sixties, and that's correct, as far as it goes. But I believe that many of the concepts I explore herein date back many thousands of years, perhaps to the first humans to recognize themselves as individuals, and still share that tribal sense of belonging to something greater than themselves.

HK: In 2013 or 2014, you released *TRAVIS EDWARD PIKE'S MORNINGSTONE MUSIC*, an album containing the music

now attached to *CHANGELING'S RETURN*, and more. What's the significant difference between that album and *MYSTICAL ENCOUNTER – SONGS FROM CHANGELING'S RETURN*, you are remixing and plan to release now?

TP: I'm hoping to improve the mix and reduce the price. The controversial "PEEPING TOM" and "IN THIS PLACE," the eight-minute procession and dance instrumental, will not be in the *MYSTICAL ENCOUNTER – SONGS FROM CHANGELING'S RETURN* album, but if the movie follows the screenplay, then if and when the film is made, both will appear in its soundtrack album.

HK: One last question. I noticed you have several pages for notes at the end of the book. Is that just filler?

TP: I'm glad you asked me that. Terry Hagerty, a writer friend in the New Playwrights Foundation, suggested I include note pages for groups like ours or classrooms where students might read and discuss properties like this. His point was that although we usually take notes separately, he likes to later copy them to the play or screenplay we've read, to keep them together. That way, if the piece comes up again, he knows where to find his notes on that property.

He wanted it, and I don't mind. And when I thought about it, I decided nine pages for notes would only come to four extra two-sided pages in the book, and that seemed reasonable enough. If no one uses them for notes, four extra pages aren't really that much filler.

Harvey Kubernik
Los Angeles, CA
March 29, 2017

EXT. RUINED ABBEY - NIGHT

Morgan moves to the front of the stage, playing to the eager young girls in the front rows, letting a lucky few touch the toe of his boot or trouser leg, generous with his eye contact. [Listen while you read.](#)

MORGAN (sings)

Baby, won't you tell me all your dreams?
And Baby, if things aren't all you dreamed they'd be,
Listen. I'll help you if I can.

Morgan crouches down, touching the fingertips of the most fortunate of his frantic female fans.

MORGAN (sings) (CONT'D)

Closer. Let me take you by the hand.
I'm the one they call "THE STRANGER!"
I can help make your dreams come true.
I'm the one they call "THE STRANGER!"

Morgan skips along the edge of the stage, making eye contact with a particularly excited young female fan in the second row.

MORGAN (sings) (CONT'D)

Listen and I'll tell you what to do.

The young female fan falls, dizzy and staggering.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RUINED ABBEY/BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

In the soundtrack, the song continues as Security Personnel rush Morgan toward a waiting limousine.

EXT. HIGH ON THE RUINED ABBEY WALL - NIGHT

The Barn Owl watches Morgan's escape below.

EXT. RUINED ABBEY/GROUNDS (OWL'S POV) - NIGHT

From high in the ruins, we see fans scramble around and through the ruins, seeking Morgan.

EXT. RUINED ABBEY (INT - LIMO) - NIGHT

Morgan collapses into the limo's plush seat as the song continues.

MORGAN (sung V.O.)
Poor child. Close and rest your eyes
Lie back. Soon you'll realize
You can trust in me.

EXT. RUINED ABBEY GROUNDS - NIGHT

Fans mob the limo as it moves toward the exit.

MORGAN (sung V.O.)
Listen...

EXT. RUINED ABBEY (INT. LIMO) - NIGHT

Morgan closes his eyes to the madness about him as his fans press their hands and faces against the windows, calling to him. Inside, we hear nothing but the song.

MORGAN (sung V.O.)
And the world will go away.

EXT. RUINED ABBEY/EXIT – RAINY NIGHT

It begins to RAIN. The least committed fans run for shelter, allowing the limo to break free of the crowd, and disappear into the night.

MORGAN (sung V.O.)
Closer...

EXT. RUINED ABBEY GROUNDS – RAINY NIGHT

A sea of umbrellas open over the concertgoers as BBC Crews begin cutting the lights and scrambling to get their gear under cover.

MORGAN (sung V.O.)
Listen only to what I say.

EXT. ROAD (INT. LIMO) – RAINY NIGHT

The windshield wipers swish hypnotically as the DRIVER places a call on his mobile phone.

TRASHBABIES (sung V.O.)
So pretty, perdee, per-dee-per, deeper, deeper...

“THE STRANGER” soundtracks fade away.

INT. MANSION/BALLROOM – RAINY NIGHT

The big screen TV is dark. The noisy Moguls and Guests attending the soiree in the brightly lit ballroom are crowding around the bar and buffet, where BARTENDERS and mini-skirted WAITRESSES dispense food and drinks. Rodney, blocking one ear against the din, shouts into his cell phone.

RODNEY
Outstanding! I'll meet you there.

EXT. MANSION/FORE COURT – RAINY NIGHT

Rain falls steadily as the limo drives into the fore court.

EXT. MANSION/ARCHWAY – RAINY NIGHT

Rodney, armed with an umbrella, steps into the archway beneath the main entrance, moving past a gleaming red SPORTS CAR as the limo's headlights sweep over him, and he hurries out to meet it.

EXT. MANSION (INT. LIMO) – RAINY NIGHT

Rodney opens the rear door and slips inside.

RODNEY

Wakey, wakey.

Morgan GROANS.

RODNEY

You look like hell warmed over. C'mon.
I'll sneak you up the back. You can shower...

MORGAN (dismayed)

Oh, no! How many...

RODNEY

Not so many. Disc jockeys, promoters, regional
reps, a few select members of the press.

MORGAN

I'm not up for this...

RODNEY

C'mon. You can sleep in, tomorrow!

EXT. MANSION/FORE COURT – RAINY NIGHT

Rodney gets out of the limo and opens the umbrella to shield Morgan from the rain. Morgan ignores the umbrella, looks up, and lets the refreshing rain fall on his face.

RODNEY (to the Driver)
Thanks. That'll be all.

Rodney takes Morgan's arm, propelling him toward the archway. Squinting through the falling rain, Morgan sees the red sports car and shrugs out of Rodney's grasp.

MORGAN
They delivered my car!

EXT. MANSION/ARCHWAY – RAINY NIGHT

Morgan caresses his new car as the limo pulls away.

RODNEY (indulgently)
It's just a car, Morgan.

MORGAN
No, Rodney. This is MY car!

Morgan slips behind the wheel.

EXT. MANSION (INT. SPORTS CAR) – RAINY NIGHT

The keys are in the ignition. Morgan locks the door, leaving Rodney standing outside.

RODNEY
Morgan?

MORGAN (sotto voce)
My getaway car...

Morgan straps on the safety belt, and starts the engine.

EXT. MANSION/ARCHWAY – RAINY NIGHT

Rodney knocks on the driver's side window.

RODNEY

C'mon, Morgan!

Morgan switches on the headlights, illuminating the falling rain. Rodney pulls a cell phone out of his pocket.

EXT. MANSION (INT. SPORTS CAR) – RAINY NIGHT

The car phone rings, startling Morgan. He finds it.

MORGAN

Hello?

EXT. MANSION/ARCHWAY – RAINY NIGHT

Rodney talks into his cell phone.

RODNEY

Having fun?

EXT. MANSION (INT. SPORTS CAR) – RAINY NIGHT

Morgan lowers the window a bit. Rodney leans in.

RODNEY

You can't go anywhere.

Morgan hands Rodney the car cell phone.

MORGAN

I'm taking it for a test drive.

RODNEY

You can't. Adam Fuller, the A&R man, and Angela Knight from *Knight on the Town* are waiting inside.

Morgan puts the car in gear.

MORGAN

It'll wake me up.

Morgan closes the side window, switches on the windshield wipers, and steps on the accelerator.

EXT. MANSION/FORE COURT – RAINY NIGHT

Rodney follows the sports car out from under the archway.

RODNEY

Come on, Morgan. Don't do this!

Rodney YELPS, shielding his face from the stinging gravel kicked up by the spinning wheels as the sports car speeds away.

RODNEY (shouting) (CONT'D)

Morgan!

EXT. MANSION/ARCHWAY – RAINY NIGHT

Glaring at the rain, Rodney turns and runs back under the shelter of the archway. He tugs at the door, but the door handle slips out of his wet hand. He kicks the door angrily, grabs the door handle again, throws his shoulder against the door, and then pulls it open.

INT. MANSION/BASEMENT HALL TO ARCHWAY – NIGHT

Rodney tries to slam the door, but the pneumatic door closer resists, and the door handle escapes his grasp. Fists clenched, Rodney

marches down the long, concrete floor, his footsteps echoing in the corridor, as “THE STRANGER” returns in the soundtracks.

EXT. MANSION – RAINY NIGHT

The sports car speeds down the long driveway. At the GASP in the music tracks, a lightning flash reveals the Owl, in a tree over the driveway, as it takes flight, and follows the car out into the rainy night.

TRASHBABIES (sung V.O.)
So pretty, perdee, per-dee-per, deeper, deeper...

EXT. MANSION/BRIDGE AND GATE – RAINY NIGHT

The sports car speeds under a bridge and through an open wrought iron gate, followed on high by the Owl.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE (INT. SPORTS CAR) – RAINY NIGHT

MONTAGE: Morgan drives along the glistening, wet road, distorted by falling rain, revealed by the windshield wipers.

MORGAN (sung V.O.)
Poor thing! You're really feelin' sleepy.
Lie back. All those eerie feelings will go away.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. COUNTRY LANE/AERIAL (OWL'S POV) – RAINY NIGHT

Tracking High Angle Shot of sports car racing through the rain on the slick road below.

MORGAN (sung V.O.)
Softly. Surrender is no sin.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE (INT. SPORTS CAR) – RAINY NIGHT

The windshield wipers slap back and forth hypnotically.

MORGAN (sung V.O.)
Easy! Open up and let me in...

TRASHBABIES (sung V.O.)
So pretty, perdee, per-dee-per, deeper, deeper...

Morgan's eyelids are heavy. He shakes his head, trying to stay awake.

LAUREL (V.O.)
Morgan?

Laurel's voice sounds like she is in the car with Morgan.

LAUREL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Morgan.

And then, more urgently...

LAUREL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Morgan!

Morgan's sleepy eyes open - WIDE.

Through the windshield we see a DOE, standing in the road, frozen in the oncoming car's headlights. Morgan pulls the steering wheel hard over, and turns into a barely visible country lane, avoiding the doe in the road.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE – RAINY NIGHT

The trembling doe watches as the sports car speeds away.

MORGAN (sung V.O.)
I'm the one! "THE STRANGER!"

EXT. RHODODENDRON-LINED LANE - DAWN

The rain has stopped. The Owl, safely perched in a tree, watches the sports car speed by on the wet road. The Owl ruffles its feathers, releasing a shower of silvery moon dust.

MORGAN (sung V.O.)

I'm the one!

The FIRST MUSE, a beautiful girl in a short, diaphanous gown, trails silvery moon dust as she dances into the road behind the car.

MORGAN (sung V.O.) (CONT'D)

I make your dreams come true!

The SECOND MUSE, similarly attired, dances out onto the roadway to watch the car speed away.

MORGAN (sung V.O.) (CONT'D)

I'm the one. "THE STRANGER!"

As the sports car roars across a bridge, the THIRD MUSE twirls out of the shadows and onto the bridge in its wake.

MORGAN (sung V.O.) (CONT'D)

Listen and I'll put my spell on you.

EXT. SHRINE - DAWN

The shrine is a small Stonehenge-like circular construction on a level section on the east side of a hill. In the center of the circle, is a *Menhir*; (solitary standing stone). A *Trilithon*, two big vertical stones supporting a transverse stone, forms the entrance. A smaller trilithon set into the hillside beyond the menhir, frames the entrance to a cave.

LAUREL, dressed in a long, gold-trimmed gown, crowned with a floral tiara streaming multi-colored ribbons through her shining thigh-length hair, stands by the menhir, staring out over the countryside.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE (LAUREL'S POV) - DAWN

Morgan's sports car approaches on the road below, nearly hidden by the Rhododendrons that line the rural lane.

EXT. SHRINE/STONE CIRCLE – DAWN

Laurel, shielding her eyes against the rising sun, peers down at the countryside below, pleased to see the approaching sports car.

LAUREL (a whisper)
Morgan.

EXT. FLOWERY LANE (INT. SPORTS CAR) - DAWN

Morgan drives slowly through the lush countryside with the top down.

EXT. FLOWERY LANE - DAWN

Morgan sees a white STAG bolt away from the approaching sports car. As he turns back to the road, he slams on the brakes just in time to keep from running into the FURIES, three statuesque “Goth” divas wearing ornate body armor. As they draw near, Morgan sits atop the back of his car seat, the better to see them.

MORGAN (cheerfully)
Good morning, ladies!

A huge brindled MASTIFF steps out of the Rhododendrons, and stares up at Morgan.

MORGAN
Whoa! Big dog!

FIRST FURY
What brings you here?

MORGAN
You want the truth?

SECOND FURY
That is slyly spoken.

THIRD FURY
Like a deceiver spoken.

FIRST FURY
Intended, perhaps, to mislead?

Morgan is unused to getting “attitude” from female fans.

MORGAN
Truth serves me well enough...

SECOND FURY
Truth serves not.

THIRD FURY
It is its own unbending master.

FIRST FURY (dismissing Morgan)
The tomb of every hope.

When the Furies continue past the car, the Mastiff releases Morgan from its baleful gaze and follows them. Morgan slides back down behind the wheel, scowls at the Furies in his rear view mirror, and puts the car in gear.

MORGAN
Goths.

EXT. FLOWERY COUNTRY LANE - MORNING

The top is now closed, and Morgan is asleep behind the wheel as the slow-rolling sports car goes off the road into a watery ditch.

REVVING UP THE ENGINES FOR THE LOVE CHASE

An interesting and somewhat unique aspect of Celtic mythology is that its immortals, from time to time, require the aid of humans to achieve their grand designs. In the *Mabinogi*, *Arawn*, king of the otherworld, recruits *Pwyll*, the mortal lord of Dyfed in southwest Wales, to slay his enemy — and rewards him handsomely for his success. *CHANGELING'S RETURN* requires a sacred marriage between Man and Nature, so again, a mortal hero is required. But the old gods have been forgotten, their symbols unknown, or worse, imbued with meanings other than those the gods might have intended. If Spring reveals her ageless mystery, will an uninitiated foreigner, unfamiliar with the old ways, respond appropriately?

The elements are all in place. The solitary menhir is draped with a stag's hide, and crowned with a multi-pronged stag's headdress symbolic of the Man-sacrifice Nature demands. Morgan, an outsider, is silent witness to the procession of wanton choir girls. Laurel's erotic dance of the immortal sacrifice, properly sends Morgan's blood racing. Human nature hasn't changed much after all, and by the time the orchestra and choir disappear, screaming and giggling into the night, Morgan is as Nature intended, well past any intellectual consideration of the symbolism in Laurel's dance!

LAUREL'S RITE, PART ONE

The Muses help Laurel to her feet, wrap her in a doeskin and send her merrily on her way, alone, along the narrow wooded path back toward the cottage. And Morgan, from his hiding place on the hillside, half mad with lust, rises to stalk her. Morgan knows nothing of her mysteries. His single-minded, instinctual pursuit has only one objective, to possess her, if not by favor, then by force.

Joseph Campbell pointed out, in his *Hero with a Thousand Faces*, that ordinary people are more than content to stay within the rules and limitations that define their societies. But the hero must cross those boundaries to enter the region of the mysteries. According to Campbell, "...Plutarch numbers the ecstasies of the orgiastic rites of Pan along with the ecstasy of Cybele, the Bacchic frenzy of Dionysus, the poetic frenzy inspired by the Muses . . . and, fiercest of all, the frenzy of love, as illustrations of that divine 'enthusiasm' that overturns the reason and releases the forces of the destructive-creative dark."

The symbolism of this crossing of the first threshold, this first step in Morgan's initiation to the mysteries of *CHANGELING'S RETURN*, is not really very complex, but it requires a complete reversal of ordinary understanding, which is as it should be, for here, we enter the realm of the mysteries. Laurel, Morgan's supernatural guide, deliberately seeks to break down his inhibitions and reconnect him with his primitive nature. To do so, she exploits her own "natural" gifts and, of course, she succeeds. In thought and in deed, Morgan turns outlaw. His pursuit of her takes him beyond the pale, deepening the rift between him and the society that shaped him.

The secret hidden in the Love Chase is that Laurel is the huntress, Morgan, her prey, and she has snared him. No wonder the Muses celebrate.

Will a movie audience get it? If Jung was right, they don't need to, not consciously, anyway. The scene reveals a mystery and speaks directly to the unconscious, the way all mysteries do.

Be that as it may, I will offer my unadulterated interpretation of the mythical and folkloric content and symbolism I presented, so that my readers (and viewers, should the movie ever make it to the screen), understand the concept and my rationale for it, immediately following *THE FURIES SECOND CHALLENGE*.

THE FURIES' SECOND CHALLENGE

When first the Furies challenged Morgan, they dismissed him as an unlikely hero, but now Morgan has crossed the first threshold, and so they have come to conduct his second “interview,” and again, the huge and threatening Mastiff is with them. We’ve seen the form, before. This time, we will look closer at the substance.

When the Fury asks again, “What brings you here?” she may be asking what brought Morgan to Morningstone, or how did he come to be wet, cold and shivering in the middle of the brook. How should he answer? Was it the doe, that tumbled him into the brook, or the dog, that won’t let him climb out, or his own lust that brought him to his sorry state? Rather than directly admit to his follies, he tries to turn their question back on them. “As if you didn’t know,” he replies, which brings waspish responses from the Furies. “That is boldly spoken,” they reply. “Like a challenge, spoken. Intended, perhaps, to provoke?”

Morgan snaps back, “The only reason I’m here . . .” They cut him off before he can finish. Again, there are two simultaneous conversations going on. In one, Morgan might blame Laurel’s provocation for his sorry state, but in the other, he could be saying that the sorry state of the world has brought him there, the hero’s answer.

As in the first challenge, the Furies resort to word-play and another important lesson for our would-be hero. “Abandon Reason,” the Furies tell him, “Before you is a mystery. A wonder not attained by reason.” The Furies and the dog melt away into the darkness and Morgan, unwilling to accept their pronouncement, shouts after them, “There must be some reason!” Again, the phrase may be interpreted at least two different ways. Morgan may be saying that there must be some reason for what is happening to him, or that there must be some Reason in the world, by which Mankind can understand and order itself.