

## Procol Harum / Annie Lennox- Whiter Shade of Pale

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Ukens Utvalgte

There is still need for a break before continuing the UU theme '1514-2014', that will be based on the LQ, 3x3 and 5D models. It takes time to shift to such point of views, - shift the focus from the Freudian conscious logic to Jungian perceptions of the inner human nature.

Meanwhile, an old favorite by Procol Harum is proper for setting the view. 'A Whiter Shade of Pale' was their debut single and reached # 1 in several countries. It is the most publicly played song in the last 75 years in the UK. It has a Bach-derived instrumental melody, soulful vocals, and quite astounding lyrics. The story behind it is that Keith Reid at a party overheard someone saying to a woman "You've turned a whiter shade of pale". The phrase stuck in his mind and triggered a series of visions.

The lyrics show examples of what Jungian psychology describes. It appeals to our common sense of feelings, intuitions, visions and archetypes. Keith said: "It's sort of a film, really, trying to conjure up mood and tell a story. It is about a relationship. There is characters and there is a location, and there is a journey. You get the sound of the room and the feel of the room and the smell of the room. But certainly there's a journey going on, it's not a collection of lines just stuck together. It has a thread running through it. I feel with songs that you are given a piece of the puzzle, the inspiration or whatever. In this case, I had that title, 'Whiter Shade of Pale,' and I thought there is a song here. And it's making up the puzzle that fits the piece you've got. You fill out the picture, you find the rest of the picture that that piece fits into." Following up on that description, there are some interesting visions that can be explained in this way:

The basic situation is that a scandalous tale is told and it shocks the involved. The couple's interactions was like an elegant dance but shifts to some 'circus acts' - or from fandango to cartwheels. 'The Millers Tale' might refer to a comedy by Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century where an elderly religious man has a young and attractive wife. He has no clue of her love triangle with two rivaling young men. The comedy is scandalous and burlesque and have some hints about a corrupt religion and naïve followers. The lyric even hints to playing cards, like the occult tarot, to explain the situation. However, images of events prior the fall of roman theology seems essential to the theme.

The phrase "sixteen vestal virgins" is mysterious due to absence of information and relations to other images. Vestals were the priestesses of Vesta, the goddess of the hearth and purity in the ancient Rome. Their protection of good virtues was fundamental to the continuance and security of Roma1. They were free from social obligations, to marry and to bear children. They were probably the ancestors of today's nuns. They cultivated the sacred fire of Rome that could not go out. However, during the fall of Roma1 and rise of Roma2, the Christian emperor of Roma2 ordered in 394 AD the fire in Roma1 to be extinguished. The Pontifex Maximus of Roma1, the Etruscan high priest and predecessor to the Pope, got into a deep theocratic crisis in the following trials. The vestal virgins became scapegoats and suffered punishments for failing the sacred task. 'A Whiter Shade of Pale' hints therefor to serious shocks about the falling of virtues, collective archetypes and the empire itself.

The number of vestal virgins has been discussed since the release. Historically, there were 2 vestal virgins that increased to 6 at the most. There were 12 novices, but never 16 virgins though. On the other hand, it can be an indication to the age of the virgin in the lyrics, - 16 years old. Anyhow, she was leaving for the coast, which can set an image that she was crossing the big unknown to change her life in a foreign land. However, this is a beauty of poesy, it does not have to be factual or logically correct. It also illustrates a

main point of extending the 3-state factual model to a combined Freudian/Jungian 3x3 model that embraces the perceptions of human nature.

'The mermaid' (sea girl) is mythological and therefore stems from the deeper common sub-consciousness archetypes. Both Neptune and the mermaids represent powers of the deep dark unknown of the seas. Mermaids are today mostly symbols of beauty, kindness and mystery, like the Disney and Disney ones. However, in Roman/Greek seafarers' mythologies, there were several different types of aquatic humanoids. Sirens were dangerous and yet beautiful creatures, portrayed as femme fatale. They lured nearby sailors to collide on the rocky coast of their islands with their enchanting music and voices. Romans related sirens as the daughters of Phorcys who is a god of the hidden dangers of the deep seas. In Jungian view, they could represent murky femme fatale UnderConscience.

Neptune is the Roman god of the Seas, like an offspring from a matrimony between Heaven and Earth. Neptune is often presented as a mythological patriarch, like a king. The relatively uncontroversial Roman image can be caused by the vestal principles in Roma1. However, the Greek counterpart (of Roma0), the god Poseidon, was much wilder and dramatic in nature. He had many lovers and offsprings. Therefore the phrase 'The mermaid who took Neptune for a ride' would make more sense if it was 'The siren who took Poseidon for a ride'. Imaginative, it could mean something like; a lustful love-affair that caused fatal disasters, - and that someone eventually ended up with shock and got a 'Whiter Shade of Pale'.

Annie Lennox' video is a personal interpretation of the present social drama. She said in an interview: "Whiter Shade of Pale is a song that went right to my bones the first time I heard it. When I enter a song, I'm exploring its bones, its sinews. Every aspect and I make a shape of my own within it. I know I'm talking in a funny, abstract language here ... but I'm just trying to describe what it's like to enter into a song and be transported by it." The video is artistically convincing in showing the music industry as a circus arena losing control to emotions by some 'Miller's Tale'. There are trained horses, penguin waiters, passionate dancers and a diplomatic clown. Lennox herself, like a trained circus bear, seems very tired, presumably after a tray of drinks, or whatever they feed them.

In reality, the lyrics first verse seems to describe an inner experience from the band's breakthrough in an early live performance. The members had too much to drink, felt sick while the crowd demanded too much of them. The art-rock band shifted to simple rock & roll. Backstage, the crew and groupies continued the party where adultery presumably took place. However, 'feeling seasick', seeing their art turn out to a backstage Dionysus/Bacchus party must have given archetypal associations to the fall of Roma1. However, there must have been some final counter-action in the Games with some occult play cards, since 'I took her by the looking glass and forced her to agree'.

Anyways, early Roman history was brought up in the '1514-2014' theme in UU 2014.april.25 - and the following. It hypothesizes a much deeper and dramatic natural cause to the moral fall of Roma1, - an event that was far more traumatic than the Seas and Heavens could have caused. It certainly changed the collective Underconscious of Drive, Will and Belief (3x3: UD, UW and UB) of humankind for millennia.

Annie Lennox - Whiter Shade of Pale + Lyrics

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZqPoriYXho>

[http://www.lyricsfreak.com/p/procol+harum/a+whiter+shade+of+pale\\_20111595.html](http://www.lyricsfreak.com/p/procol+harum/a+whiter+shade+of+pale_20111595.html)

See also FB UU blog: <http://skrindo.dk>

#### **Extra:**

It seems that the poetry is cut in most versions. Who would be more true to the poetry than the poet themselves, - in their older days? (yet, there is something still missing, - isn't it?)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p8jJ1ORIOes>

[http://www.lyricsfreak.com/p/procol+harum/a+whiter+shade+of+pale\\_20111595.html](http://www.lyricsfreak.com/p/procol+harum/a+whiter+shade+of+pale_20111595.html)