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Tea, Tao, & Andrew Botts

Lynne Brown

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Mythopoeic Society's Online Midwinter Seminar 2024

17th–18th February 2024: Something Mighty Queer

Submission Deadline: November 30, 2023

<https://mythsoc.org/oms/oms-2024.htm>



Tea, Tao, & Andrew Botts

Abstract

Andrew Botts pushed the books off his desk in a fit of pique.

Keywords

Mythril; Mythopoeic; Fiction; Tea, Tao, and Andrew Botts; Lynne Brown

TEA, TAO, & ANDREW BOTTS

by Lynne Brown

Andrew Botts pushed the books off his desk in a fit of pique. Andrew Botts did not usually display such an amount of emotion, but then he usually didn't have such an amount of trouble in understanding an assignment. And such a simple project.

All Andrew had to do was explain the Tao. His emotion did not happen without pre-meditation, however. Few students show so much control in the face of the impossible; Andrew had simply gone to his room, locked himself in with a stack of books, a pot of tea and a sheet of paper--and had begun work.

Seventeen books and half a pot of tea later, Andrew decided that there was no way to explain the Tao.

He could have said 'The Tao is a collection of philosophical poems indicating a system of social mores.'

He could have said 'The Tao is a set of pseudo-mystical symbolisms, which is not a religion but which nonetheless expounds a certain life-style.'

He could have said these things had his instructor instituted a contest called 'What Is The Tao In Twenty-Five Words Or Less.'

But his instructor had assigned an eight-page paper, and Andrew could not spin

out a simple statement into eight pages.

So Andrew stacked his seventeen books in the dusty corner by the door, drank the rest of his tea all at once, took his one sheet of paper--and began to expound on the Tao According to Botts.

This had nothing to do with the Tao according to anyone else.

Unfortunately--

Two weeks later, in a fit of pique, Andrew Botts drank a pot of tea laced with rat poison. No one found the paper.

The Paper on the Tao According to Botts.

Which had earned Andrew a failing grade in his class and expulsion from his college.

Some thousand years later, after World War XXVII, a small iron box was found in the ruins of a great city.

Some thousand years after that, when all the religious books had been conscientiously destroyed, the State Religion was proclaimed by the handful of devotees who had kept the small iron box well hidden.

And somewhere in limbo, a voice rose in laughter.

Andrew Botts had finally avenged himself.



UNTITLED II by Leslye Wintrob

Who am I?
What am I?
Where am I?
What am I?
I can sense things around me, I can feel
a Warmth, and yet I don't feel warm.
I can sense motion and yet, I'm not
moving.
I want to scream, but I have nothing to
scream with.
I'm afraid, but what is fear, all I

know is a word.
Who am I?
I feel a life force surging through me,
but I don't feel alive.
What am I?
Can someone tell me what I am?
Please, Tell me!
Please...
Tell me!

"Well, Joe, what do you think of the
new computer?" said a man in a white lab coat.