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THE SPECTROUS EMBRACE IN THE FOUR ZOAS, VIIa

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Of all the abrupt shifts in the plot of The Four Zoas, perhaps the most startling is the sudden embrace of Los and the Spectre of Urthona in Night VIIa, the climactic reversal of the pattern of further and further fragmentation in the poem, the first unequivocal gesture toward reconciliation that results finally in the reunification of Albion in Night IX. Nothing in the immediate situation leads up to this right-angled turn in the action. On the contrary, Blake erased "End of the Seventh Night" in order to write in the account of this embrace, thus changing the natural stopping point for the Night into a surprising turning point for the entire poem. The reconciliation scene follows immediately upon the Spectre's re-enactment with Enitharmon of the fall of Adam and Eve, during which they copulate and engender the Shadowy Female, whose appearance releases "male forms without female counterparts or Emanations / Cruel and ravening with Enmity & Hatred & War / In dreams of Ulro dark delusive drawn by the lovely shadow" (VIIa.329-31; 85:19-21, E353). The only grammatical, temporal, and logical transition between the moment of the Shadowy Female's birth and the moment of Los's embrace of his Spectre is "But then" (VIIa.336; 85:26, E353). This juxtaposition of scenes of fall and redemption, spectrous enmity and genuine fraternal love, is related to the Blakean paradox that revelation is concurrent with—and contingent upon—the consolidation of error. It is not difficult to grasp the thematic purpose of the juxtaposition, then, but as a quasi-realistic dramatic scene among members of a love-triangle who symbolize aspects of the imaginative faculty, it raises numerous problems of interpretation. Should this apparently arbitrary gesture of loving forgiveness be considered a structural weakness of the poem? Does it indicate a lapse in the profoundly accurate insight into human psychology that Blake's work usually exhibits? Does the suddenness of reversal reflect a religious or psychological conversion of the man Blake, as John Middleton Murry surmised? Or, perhaps, may Blake be saying that he does not know how such apparently unconditioned recoveries happen but that they do and must happen, through the agency of imagination, a going out of ourselves into others?

The dramatic reversal takes place on two planes of action, signifying the importance of imagination both in artistic creation and in intimate personal relationships. Insofar as Los, the Spectre, and Enitharmon are fragmented aspects of the imaginative faculty, representing the artist, his self-doubt, and his inspiration, the sudden shift from hostility to cooperation means that the mature artistic imagination becomes capable of acknowledging inner doubt and sublimating it in art. Insofar as Los and Enitharmon are a husband and wife whose deteriorating relationship has been further strained by the competition for Enitharmon between Los and his false personality, the Spectre, the sudden shift from sexual rivalry to fraternal cooperation and marital concord must mean that imaginative love is capable of overcoming jealousy and self-division. On both these planes of action the contact of Los and Enitharmon with the Spectre is all-important.

Until the moment of the fraternal embrace, the primary bond among the three estranged fragments of the primal Urthona is a sexual attraction, rivalry, and jealousy so intense that Enitharmon is very nearly split into two characters. The problematical new figure called the Shadow of Enitharmon is not a separate person but rather a manifestation of that element in the female personality which is attracted to selfishness and deadness in the male and repelled by vital desire. The Shadow corresponds to one side of the Spectre's character, but she is not a complete counterpart to him. During her entire relationship with the Spectre, at the roots of the Tree of Mystery, Enitharmon remains physically present to
Los, outstretched upon his knees, in his upper region above the branches of the Tree. While she is indulging her shadowy moods or fantasies, she appears to Los as "the image of death upon his withered valleys" (VIIA.172; 81:13, E349). He complains that she is cold and wintry when he approaches her, but summery and delectable when he is absent. Whenever Enitharmon is dead to Los, her Shadow is alive to the Spectre. In her relationship with Los, she has given birth to Orc, a fully defined character, the personification of energy. In her relationship with the Spectre "in sweet delusion" (VIIA.229; 82:35, E351) she becomes the mother of the Shadowy Female, a vague manifestation of Vala who exists briefly as a spectrous condition, knowing that spectres as such appear immediately after "But then the Spectre entered Los's bosom" and, while taking away none of the element of surprise, partly explains how the miraculous embrace was made possible.

Drawing on the accounts of the fall which he and the Spectre had exchanged after partaking of the fruit of the Tree, "Enitharmon told the tale / Of Urthona" to Los, whereupon Los embraces the Spectre and gives up "his Domineering lust" (VIIA.338-41; 85:28-31, E353). Los, the creator of the Chain of Jealousy in Night V, is impelled to accept his rival for the sake of reuniting the divided fragments of Urthona: "Come then into my Bosom & in thy shadowy arms bring with thee / My lovely Enitharmon. I will quell my Fury & teach / Peace to the Soul of dark revenge & repentance to Cruelty" (VIIA.367-69; 86:10-12, E354). Correspondingly, "Urthona's spectre in part mingling with him comforted him / Being a medium between him & Enitharmon" (VIIA.397-98; 87:26-27, E355). The fact that the reconciliation of Los and his Spectre takes place against a background of sexual rivalry emphasizes the importance of the imagination in human relationships as well as the arts. The overcoming of jealousy is an act of imagination as surely as the writing of a poem. Enitharmon's withdrawal from this scene of "Extacy & Love" to hide "beneath Urizens tree" indicates, however, that the importance of imagination in overcoming guilt and shame has not yet been fully realized. Full union of Los and Enitharmon does not occur within fallen history; it is "not to be Effected without Cares & Sorrows & Troubles / Of six thousand Years of self denial and of bitter Contrition" (VIIA.399-400; 87:28-29, E355). Though Los is now able to see the Lamb of God within Enitharmon's broken heart, Enitharmon herself shrinks before the punishment she is sure the Lamb will inflict.

In releasing the imagination to function in life as well as art, the Spectre, who among other things personifies the artist's self-censorship, plays a crucial role, and Blake's characterization of this figure is extremely subtle. His prominence in Night VII seems to indicate that the selfish impediment to creativity has come to realize that it cannot be overcome by mere repression, enslavement to Los, but must be acknowledged and dealt with honestly, as the Spectre insists to Los in the very act of embracing him (VIIA.336-51; 85:26-39, E353). Despite his repellent attributes, he reveals even as he seduces Enitharmon a spiritual and psychological perceptiveness not yet possible for her. Although his boast to her that he is the creator and superior of Los is unfounded, his nostalgia for the unity and happiness of Eternity is genuine, and he can see the possibility and necessity for reunion with their Emotions of Thanmas, Luvah, and himself as Urthona. He also deplores his own spectrous condition, knowing that spectres as such are insane, brutish, and deformed; and he interprets his longing for Enitharmon as evidence that he is a spectre of the living rather than of the dead (VIIA.269-310; 84:3-40, E352). As a spectre himself, he perceives the threat to productive activity presented by imageless, disembodied thoughts of futility and negativity, the "spectres of the dead." The spectrous insight which finally wins Enitharmon over is that "till these terrors [the spectres of the dead] planted round the Gates of
Eternal life / Are driven away & annihilated we
never can repass the Gates" (VIIA.302-03; 84:41-42,
E353). It takes the treacherous side of the imaginative
mind to understand that the true Covering Cherub is
made up of one's own shapeless, negative fears and
fantasies. Regeneration, the Spectre understands,
is possible for him because in Los he has a living
counterpart which the spectres of the dead lack
altogether, ravening after emptiness and nothingness.
After the Spectre is accepted by Los, his sense of
responsibility for the creation of the spectres of the
dead, who were released by his begetting of the
Shadowy Female, is the basis of his urging Los to
give form and beauty to these shapeless abstractions
(VIIA.401-10; 87:30-39, E355). The suggestion
inaugurates a great cultural renaissance, a new kind
of redemptive artistic activity. Even his terror at
Vala's new appearance (VIIA.332; 85:22, E353) is
evidence of his special insight, an insight which
can deepen art rather than block it, a recognition
of evil and deadness that need not break an artist's
spirit but can drive him to develop a more complex
form of art.

One of the most suggestive of the Spectre's
ideas is his view of the Tree of Mystery as some-
thing "given us for a Shelter from the tempests of
Void & Solid / Till once again the morn of ages
shall renew upon us" (VIIA.260-69; 84:2-3, E352).
This statement seems a radical distortion of the
truth, but it also comes very close to the Christian
interpretation of the "Law," the old dispensation,
as a divinely-appointed stopgap, and indeed in
Night VIII the Lamb of God, assuming Luvah's robes
of blood, will transfigure the image of the cruci-
fixion on the Tree. Here in Night VIIA the very
ascendancy of the Tree of Mystery over both passion
and imagination, the very urgency and clarity of
the sense of sin, however falsely defined, builds
up a pressure for imminent liberation. Despair over
evil and guilt can be psychologically beneficial if
it awakens an acute and agonizing need for an utterly
new state of existence. The fact that, after the
Spectre puts the Shadowy Female in charge of Ore in
the lower world, the topmost branch of the Tree
sprouts to form roots of the same Tree in the upper,
conscious, world of Los (VIIA.332-35; 85:22-25,
E353) makes the influence of evil and Mystery recog-
nizable now on all levels of the human imagination.
When the serpent-wound Tree, with its outrageously
false Urizenic identification of energy and evil,
overshadows Los, and he joins Enitharmon in eating
its fruit and falls also into the moral system
(VIIA.395; 87:24, E355), he experiences a psychic
suffocation and a wasteful sense of guilt so
terrible that they can only be remedied by a clean
break, a free existential act like that of Shelley's
Prometheus. On the dramatic level this new direction
is possible because Los and Enitharmon have lived
and suffered enough to have become different persons;
in grief and sorrow they have found a depth of
humanity capable of reconciliation and forgiveness.
From no other fallen faculty can this act arise; it
is truly an imaginative leap. Yet this act is
precipitated by the eating of the fruit, through
"self accusation" and "Self conviction" (VIIA.385-93;
87:14-22, E354), through the assumption of an
unsubilite, burdened and definitively imposed of a clearly defined but grossly misunder-
stood "morality," through a despair which would lead
to "death Eternal" but for the Spectre's role as
comforter and mediator between Los and Enitharmon
(VIIA.396-98; 87:25-27, E355).

In retrospect, one can see that events and
characterizations introduced earlier in the poem,
especially in Nights IV and V and earlier in Night
VIIA, without clear significance for human recovery
when they first appeared, have contributed to the
moment of reconciliation. In forming a body for
Urizen, for example, Surgo had begun to feel symp-
pathetic pains for his enemy (IV.288-95; 55:20-31,
E331), a sympathy that has extended even to his
silent sharing of Urizen's envy (VIIA.19,27; 77:19,
27, E346). Los and Enitharmon, repenting the binding
of Orc in Night V, had drawn closer in their grief
and become more aware of their responsibilities, less
selfish. The Spectre, though reluctant to cooperate
in Los's labors, had shown concern for the parental
distress of the couple: after Los and Enitharmon
fainted over Orc, the Spectre "found herbs of the
pit / Rubbing their temples he reviv'd them" (V.173-
74; 63: 7-8, E336).

Undeniably, though, Blake leaves an area of
disjunction between despair and recovery, something
not spelled out for us. But far from being a flaw
in The Four Zoas, this gap reflects Blake's honesty
and acumen. If the conversion were totally explain-
able, the training of psychiatrists could be much
abbreviated and all mental illness, perhaps also
all social problems related to it, could be cured
in one and the same way. Blake's wisdom in leaving
this hiatus of explanation is confirmed in other
great works which explore the spiritual dark night
and recovery from it. The reversal in Prometheus
Unbound arises from the hero's free, imaginative act
of loving forgiveness, but the agency of regeneration
is embodied in Demogorgon, a personified question
mark, the "somehow" in statements like "Somehow we
survived." The same arbitrariness of recovery occurs
with Wordsworth in The Prelude and with the Red Cross
Knight in Book I of The Faerie Queene, where the
protagonists are reduced to something near despair
and then rescued through a form of grace, something
they cannot fully understand or explain. Blake
takes us further than either Wordsworth or Spenser
into the psychology of recovery, regeneration,
renewal, but like them he presents the experience
of grace, not a formula for obtaining it. If a
formula were possible, the concept of grace would
not be necessary in theology nor the metaphor of the
breakthrough in psychology (or in the physical
sciences, for that matter). It happens or it does
not happen; if it happens at all, it happens in the
midst of despair, both because of and in spite of
an intolerable sense of sin and need. Even in such
a realistic work as "The Death of Ivan Ilyich," the
conversion, when it finally comes, is not explained
with the fullness that is offered in the presenta-
tion of the other incidents in the story. In The
Four Zoas Blake does not anatimize the moment of
relief and reconciliation itself, as he does through
the splintered personalities and actions of Milton;
instead, he concentrates on the renewal of life as
it flows out from that moment.

The surge of new life takes the form of creative
activity. The benefits to both human nature and art
are reciprocal. Man's spiritual sickness is treated
by therapeutic art. At the same time this sickness provides new subjects for a deeper, more troubled inner life rather than reflections of the outer world--bring new art forms into being. All this is presented in the new relationship among Los, the Spectre, and Enitharmon. In the unwilling drudgery of their collaboration in Night IV, they had rebuilt the fallen mental and physical world; art in Night IV is the mirror held up to nature--nature as seen by the fallen imagination and organized according to human conceptions of time and space. But in Night VII the collaboration of the Spectre and Los is willing and mutual, and Enitharmon--though fearful--is cooperative. Instead of working as artisan and apprentice to build a body for Urizen as in Night IV, Los and his Spectre join to build in the "nether heavens" a new and separate world for art, the city of Golgonooza, placed within the merciful limits of Satan and Adam, opacity and contraction, discovered in Night IV (VIIA.379-83; 87:8-12, E354). In the blended consciousness of Los and his Spectre is "a World within / Opening its gates & in it all the real substances / Of which these in the outward World are shadows which pass away" (VIIA. 364-66; 86:7-9, E354). Although the Spectre's claim on Los, "I am thy real Self," is untrue as a bald, isolated statement, it is effective as a means of forcing Los to act on his moment of self-recognition. After his impulsive embrace of the Spectre "first as a brother / Then as another Self; astonished humanizing & in tears," Los is forced to listen to the insistent voice of his repressed negative and sinister personality:

I am thy real Self
Tho thus divided from thee & the Slave of Every passion
Of thy fierce Soul Unbar the Gates of Memory
look upon me
Not as another but as thy real Self I am thy Spectre
Tho horrible & Ghastly to thine Eyes tho buried beneath
The ruins of the Universe.

(VIIA.339-52; 85:29-40, E353)

When a new world opens within and Los again embraces the Spectre as well as Enitharmon, the Spectre also "Wondering beheld the Center opend by Divine Mercy inspired / He in his turn Gave Tasks to Los" (VIIA. 374-75; 87:3-4, E354); his destructive impulses are, however, rendered harmless by Los's concentration on the work at hand. The Spectre's claim that he is Los's self is a demand that Los acknowledge his errors; this claim on Los is entirely different from Urizen's reductive blasphemy in Night I, the insistence that there is nothing else in man: "The Spectre is the Man the rest is only delusion & fancy" (I.341; 12:29, E303). Los directs the continued building of Golgonooza, where "beneath / Was opend new heavens & a new Earth beneath & within" (VIIA.379-80; 87:8-9, E354), but it is the Spectre who proposes the new direction for art, the creation of forms for man's shadowy hopes, fears, negative thoughts, desires, failures of nerve, frustrations: "Let us Create them Counterparts / For without a Created body the Spectre is Eternal Death" (VIIA. 409-10; 87:38-39, E355).

The Spectre has found his place within the mature artistic consciousness as a dark vision of emptiness and longing, an intimate knowledge of passion, guilt, and sin, the negative and doubting shadow of idealism which annihilates the ideal if it is disowned and denied but strengthens it if honestly admitted. From Los's acceptance of his Spectre comes the power of Romantic and modern art which admits its own vulnerability and thus speaks to man's doubts as well as his faith. Acceptance of what the Spectre represents allows Wordsworth apparently to undercut his most affirmative statements with such formulations as "If this be but a vain belief." From the same source flows the power of Byron's self-deflations in Don Juan, along with his self-assured mockery both of his own creation and of his reader's illusions. This is also the principle of Friederich Schlegel's "divine buffoonery" or Romantic Irony: acceptance in art of that which destroys art, acceptance by the self of that which destroys the self. Just as the artist's admission of his difficulties and his incorporation of negative possibilities into his work may actually serve to enrich and enliven his efforts, so an acceptance of doubt can strengthen any act of imaginative faith. Thus in the last two stanzas of the Intimations Ode, Wordsworth can affirm the thoughts too deep for tears because he no longer shuts out the dark truths avoided in strophes iii and iv.

Since the Spectre's vision is blended with Los's own and the Spectre no longer serves merely as an apprentice-slave, Los is now free to share his creative work with his spouse and to turn to her for inspiration. Their complementary activity in art gives rise to a new intimacy in their male-female relationship. The Enitharmon who calls Los "wonder of Eternity," her "defence & guide," and says, "Thy works are all my joy. & in thy fires my soul delights" (VIIA.447-48; 90:16-17, E356), has become a different person from the tease who evaded her husband's sexual advances or even the sullen adulteress who tearfully and bitterly accepted the shadowy embrace of the Spectre. In their new partnership they work like Blake and his wife as draughtsman and colorist to create celestial murals (VIIA.467-71; 90:35-39, E356). Enitharmon sighs forth vanishing forms from her bosom, from which Los fabricates sublime and permanent forms "Such as the piteous spectres may assimilate themselves into." In response to her plea for "sweet moderated fury," Los, "his hands divine inspired began / To modulate his fires." No longer the dogged blacksmith imposing his will on his spouse, his emanation, his material, his technique, and his form, he becomes the genius whom the very elements gladly obey. His flames are "delighted" and the weeping spectres willingly "Assimilating to those forms" become young and lovely (VIIA.439-74; 90:8-42, E356).

Troubled by the sense of sin, Los, the Spectre, and Enitharmon have felt the need for redemption and have planned to use their artistic creations as sacrificial offerings, ransoms for their sins. But the translucent center opened in Enitharmon's broken heart affords Los a brief glimpse of the possibility of mental sacrifice, self-annihilation, mutual
forgiveness of each vice, the spirit of Jesus:

Turn inwardly thine Eyes & there behold the Lamb of God
Clothed in Luvah's robes of blood descending to redeem
O Spectre of Urthona take comfort O Enitharmon
Couldst thou but cease from terror & trembling & affright
When I appear before thee in forgiveness of ancient injuries
Why shouldst thou remember & be afraid. I surely have died in pain
Often enough to convince thy jealousy & fear & terror
Come hither be patient let us converse together because
I also tremble at myself & at all my former life.

(VIIA.415-23; 87:44-52, E355)

Although Enitharmon resists this vision and persists in seeing Jesus as punisher, Los has discovered the spirit of self-sacrifice and mutual forgiveness that opens the Gates of Paradise. In his appearance before Enitharmon "in forgiveness of ancient injuries" he is an embodiment of Jesus, and in having "died in pain / Often enough to convince thy jealousy & fear & terror" he has enacted what is meaningful in Jesus' death, the loving gesture of self-annihilation. If this husband and wife could forgive each other, they wouldn't need a Redeemer, nor would they need to sacrifice their "children," their mutual creations, to an imagined Accuser. No more is said in Night VIIA about Los's vision of Jesus, but when the moment for sacrifice comes

Los loved them & refused to Sacrifice their
infant limbs
And Enitharmons smiles & tears prevail'd over self protection
They rather chose to meet Eternal death than to destroy
The offspring of their Care & Pity Urthonas spectre was comforted.

(VIIA.482-85; 90:50-53, E357)

The imaginative act of creating form, of embodying these ghostly negative ideas, has taught Los and Enitharmon how to sacrifice themselves, not their "offspring." No longer are they the selfish parents who sacrificed Orc to their own jealousies in Night V. Through their artistic endeavors they have given living form to the deadly aggressions that fuel the Urizenic wars; they are now able to see their enemies, Urizen and his eldest son Thiriel, as their own children, Rintrah and Palamabron (VIIA.476-94; 90:44-62, E356-57). The possibility of a reconciliation with Orc is also suggested: "Orc was comforted in the deeps his soul reviv'd in them / As the Eldest brother is the fathers image So Orc became / As Los a father to his brethren." Tharmas, organizing instinct now fallen into shapelessness, is heartened by the new forms being created, for he hopes to find among them his lost Enion (VIIA.478-87; 90:46-55, E356-57), the hope that had proved vain in the earlier craftsmanlike work of Los in Night IV (IV. 32-33; 48:9-10, E329). Even Urizen finds himself--or a portion of himself--in the loving and shaping hands of a Los who now loves him, and who is surprised at his own ability to love (VIIA.496-99; 90:64-67, E357).

Although Los's conflict with his Spectre is a major theme of Jerusalem, the spectrous embrace is not a part of its resolution. Perhaps Blake thought tightness of plot and clarity of motivation were more important than the theme of Los's acknowledgement and acceptance of his negative double. In Jerusalem there is no disjunction between juxtaposed scenes of error and illumination, no sudden reversal. Instead, Los first attempts in vain to resist the forces that separate him from his Spectre and Emanation:

Los rag'd and stamp'd the earth in his might & terrible wrath:
He stood and stamp'd the earth! then he threw down his hammer in rage &
In fury: then he sat down and wept, terrified! Then arose
And chaunted his song, labouring with the tongs and hammer:
But still the Spectre divided, and still his pain increas'd!

(46:8-12, E147, K625)

When the separated Spectre attempts to block Los's work, the artist combats his influence first by kindness and then by self-assertion. In his first speech to the Spectre, he sounds as though he has already learned the lesson of The Four Zoas, Night VIIA:

I know that Albion hath divided me, and that thou 0 my Spectre,
Hast just cause to be irritated: but look stedfastly upon me:
Comfort thyself in my strength the time will arrive,
When all Albions injuries shall cease, and when we shall
Embrace him tenfold bright, rising from his tomb in immortality.

(47:52-56, E149, K626)

It is Los's resolution, self-confidence, and unselfish concern with Albion's regeneration that give him power over his Spectre in Jerusalem, a point just touched upon in Night VIIA, when the Spectre's desire to destroy Los's body is defeated by Los's concentration on the building of Golgonooza. Los's stern words to his Spectre, out of context, might even be mistaken for one of Urizen's threatening speeches against Albion:

unless
Thou abstat ravening I will create an eternal Hell for thee.
Take thou this Hammer & in patience heave the thundering Bellows
Take thou these Tongs: strike thou alternate with me: labour obedient[.]
Obey my voice & never deviate from my will
And I will be merciful to thee:

If thou refuse, thy present torments will seem
southern breezes
To what thou shalt endure if thou obey not my
great will.

(78:37-40, E150, K627;
A10:29-30, 35-36, E152,
K629)

This change in Los's tone toward his Spectre in
Jerusalem may indicate, however, not that Blake had
changed his mind about the importance of the embrace
in Night VII but that in the illuminated book he
was concerned primarily with the establishment of
Los's authority and control, the attitude toward

the final resistance to vision lie within the
shadow of Enitharmon as Suppressed Imagination (p. 379). Frye
has identified the Spectre with "clock time," "the will," and--
in a poet--"what is usually called the 'man' in him" (p. 292);
he is "the inventive faculty," a sorcerer's apprentice as capable
of inventing instruments of destruction as works of art, and is
expressed in society as the "sheer automatic compulsion to
produce" (pp. 294-95).

The significance of the Spectre is illuminated by Bloom's
use of apt analogies from Shelley: the Spectre is "the ruin or
desolation that shadows love" near the end of the first act of
Prometheus Unbound and the doubling, negating First Spirit in
"The Two Spirits: An Allegory" (Blake's Apocalypse, ithaca:
Spectre as Doppelganger at an MLA seminar in 1975, E. J. Rose
was primarily concerned with the Spectre's role in Jerusalem.
C. William Spinks has briefly noted that the Spectre embodies
a sense of absurdity that must be incorporated into the artist's
work if it is to be redemptive ("Blake's Spectre," in Studies
in Relevance: Romantic and VictorIan Writers in 1972, ed. Thomas
Meade Harwell, Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und

One's Spectre that one must assume as a day-to-day
working artist. Los's gesture of wiping the dark
tears of his Spectre in Jerusalem 10:60-61 suggests
that Los is still aware of the Spectre as a brother,
if not as another self. The final resolution of the
conflict occurs in Chapter IV, when Los, after
allowing his Spectre freedom to produce his anti-
creation, smites the Spectre upon his anvil "& every
Ratio of his Reason / He altered time after time,
with dire pain & many tears / Till he had completely
divided him into a separate space" (91:50-52, E249,
K739). Yet in the final plate of Jerusalem the
Spectre is shown to be present as in his best moments
in The Four Zoas, cooperating with Los and Enitharmon,
carrying out his proper duties as Los's assistant,
working with the material of the fallen universe.

Though the text of Jerusalem never presents a
reconciliation scene, this concluding design suggests
that Blake continued to accord the Spectre his
subordinate but significant function in shaping the
products of imaginative activity.

1 M. H. Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and
Revolution in Romantic literature (New York: Norton, 1971),
pp. 36, 300, discusses this sort of reversal as one of the
features of biblical design adopted by the Romantics.

2 All quotations from Blake are based on David V. Erdman, ed.,
The Poetry and Prose of William Blake (1965; Garden City, N. Y.:
Doubleday, 4th printing, rev., 1970), abbreviated as E, with
parallel references to The Complete Writings of William Blake
(1966; London & New York: Oxford University Press, rpt. with
corr., 1974), abbreviated as K. To simplify references to The
Four Zoas, we give citations in the following order: The
Number in roman numerals, followed by the line number in Keynes,
followed by the MS. page number as cited in Erdman, followed by
the line numbers of the MS. page and finally the page number of
the Erdman edition. Thus the present citation refers to the
passage from Night VIIA running in Keynes from line 329 to 331,
running in Erdman from line 19 to 21 on MS. page 85, and printed
on page 353 of Erdman's edition. Citations from Jerusalem,
abbreviated J, provide plate and line numbers, followed by page
references to Erdman and Keynes.

3 Murry's essay, "Los and the Spectre," chapter XI of William
one of the few extended discussions of the spectral embrace,
which Murry sees as a pivotal moment both in the poem and in the
development of Blake's thought and work; it expresses Blake's own
discovery that the final resistance to vision lies within the
artist himself, "a necessary element of [his] being," and by
recognizing and receiving his spectral personality, "Los-Blake
attains a new understanding, a new synthesis" (pp. 164-65).
Press, 1969), Northrop Frye cites Murry's chapter as the basis
for his own observation that the "conception of the Spectre of
Urthona seems to have broken on Blake quite suddenly when he was
proceeding to a simpler climax, and occasioned the rewriting of
Night VII, if not of the next two Nights as well" (p. 298). As
for the significance of the Spectre himself, S. Foster Damon,
William Blake: His Philosophy and Symbols (1954; rpt. Gloucester,
Mass.: Peter Smith, 1968), identifies Urthona as Spirit. Los

The Four Zoas, p. 91 (following page).
Vala

Night the Seventh

The final portion of the page is obscured, but it appears to be a continuation of the text from "Vala," a poem by William Blake. The visible text reads:

"Vala"

"Night the Seventh"

The final portion, which is not fully visible, seems to describe a scene or event related to the poem's narrative. William Blake's works often include intricate and imaginative themes, often rooted in mysticism and spirituality. The page seems to be part of a collection or manuscript that preserves Blake's works. The presence of the poem's title and part of the text provides a glimpse into the poet's rich and surreal imagination, typical of his work.