

J. E. E. PETTIT AND CHAO-JAN CHANG

A Library of Clouds

*The Scripture of the Immaculate Numen and
the Rewriting of Daoist Texts*



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the Rewriting of Daoist Texts*

道家文化研究中心

Centre for Studies of Daoist Culture
The Chinese University of Hong Kong



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A Library of Clouds: The Scripture of the Immaculate Numen and the Rewriting of Daoist Texts

By J. E. E. Pettit and Chao-jan Chang

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Series Editors' Preface

A Library of Clouds is the first monograph devoted to the important Upper Clarity text the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*. Upper Clarity (*Shangqing* 上清), or Maoshan (茅山), revelations designate a group of Daoist texts—and the slightly later scriptures that imitate them—that were bestowed by deities upon the medium Yang Xi 楊羲 (330–86 CE). The full title of the scripture treated in *A Library of Clouds* is *Taishang suling dongxuan dayou miaojing* (*Most High Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen that Penetrates the Mystery of the Great Existence*). Like other Upper Clarity scriptures, its name designates the celestial realms where the original work was thought to have been stored. *Suling* (Immaculate Numen) and *Dayou* (Great Existence) are the names of the room and palace, respectively, where the heavenly prototype of this text was kept.

The Upper Clarity scriptures have been of intense interest to scholars because they were collected and catalogued by the Daoist scholar Tao Hong-jing 陶弘景 (456–536 CE) and thus are roughly datable. Although Tao's main compilation of Upper Clarity texts, the *Secret Instructions for Ascent to Perfection* (*Dengzhen yinjue* 登真隱訣), is mostly lost, his *Declarations of the Perfected* (*Zhen'gao* 真誥) includes more general information and has provided modern researchers with a guide to the scriptures. Still, the fourth to seventh centuries saw a rapid proliferation of Daoist scriptures, both Upper Clarity texts and writings from other traditions. Scholarly debate on the relative priority of and connections among these works is intense. By deploying

redaction criticism, a methodology seldom applied to Daoist writing, J. E. E. Pettit and Chao-jan Chang have found a way around the roadblocks to greatly advance our understanding of medieval Daoist scripture.

Redaction criticism is a congeries of methods developed to uncover the composition history of the Christian Bible. The methods center on an understanding of how premodern texts came into being through the work of one or more compilers rather than the pen or brush of a single author. Chang and Pettit modify redaction criticism to fit the Daoist case: They probe the different layers of an important scripture from the Upper Clarity lineage to demonstrate how Daoist authors of the fourth to seventh centuries each contributed strands to what is now a single scriptural fabric. Hence the *jing* (scripture) proves to be the work of not one but multiple authors, sometimes working in concert and sometimes attempting to correct one another. Through analyzing this process closely, Pettit and Chang show that, while other religious traditions held sacred writings as immutable, medieval Daoists considered their scriptures to be imperfect human approximations of celestial originals and often altered them in response to new findings.

In the case of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*, Chang and Pettit argue that Wang Lingqi 王靈期 (fl. 404) was likely the work's most prominent editor. We have known since the earliest modern studies of medieval Daoist scripture—Chen Guofu's 陳國符 (1914–2000) *Daozang yuanliu kao* 道藏源流考 (1949), for example—that Wang was a forger of Upper Clarity texts, but *A Library of Clouds* is the first to offer evidence as to which scriptures might be the product of his revisions and how the editing process might have worked. It therefore provides us with a key to unraveling the proliferation of Daoist scriptures that appeared during the fifth and sixth centuries CE. Finally, but not least, *A Library of Clouds* includes a full, annotated translation of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*.

In the present work we not only have a new account of the very meaning of *jing* in the early Daoist context, but also are introduced to methodologies that address questions of dating and authorship. Through meticulous textual analysis and close reading, *A Library of Clouds* sheds light on the processes of redaction and composition in medieval Daoism that might

be applied to a number of undated and problematic texts. To quote the authors, a study of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* “offer[s] insights into the persons and institutions who reformulated these (Upper Clarity) texts and...into what they reflect about the changing norms and expectations of Daoists in this early period.” In our view, *A Library of Clouds* represents an important step forward in studying the Upper Clarity tradition and, indeed, the scriptures of medieval Daoism more generally.

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Titles from the Daoist Canon

DZ 1	<i>Lingbao wuliang duren shangpin miao jing</i> 靈寶無量度人上品妙經
DZ 4	<i>Wushang neimi zhenzang jing</i> 無上內秘真藏經
DZ 6	<i>Shangqing dadong zhenjing</i> 上清大洞真經
DZ 22	<i>Yuanshi wulao chishu yupian zhenwen tianshu jing</i> 元始五老赤書玉篇真文天書經
DZ 23	<i>Taishang zhutian lingshu duming miao jing</i> 太上諸天靈書度命妙經
DZ 33	<i>Shangqing huangqi yangjing sandao shunxing jing</i> 上清黃氣陽精三道順行經
DZ 55	<i>Gaoshang taixiao langshu qiongwen dizhang jing</i> 高上太霄琅書瓊文帝章經
DZ 56	<i>Taishang yupei jindang taiji jinshu shangjing</i> 太上玉佩金璫太極金書上經
DZ 60	<i>Yuanshi tianzun shuo xuanwei miaojing</i> 元始天尊說玄微妙經
DZ 83	<i>Boyu heihe lingfei yufu</i> 白羽黑翮靈飛玉符
DZ 84	<i>Shangqing qionggong lingfei liujia zuoyou shangfu</i> 上清瓊宮靈飛六甲左右上符
DZ 87	<i>Yuanshi wuliang duren shangpin miaojing sizhu</i> 元始無量度人上品妙經四註

DZ 97	<i>Taishang lingbao zhutian neiyin ziran yuzi</i> 太上靈寶諸天內音自然玉字
DZ 103	<i>Yuqing wuji zong zhenwen wenchang dadong xianjing zhu</i> 玉清無極總真文昌大洞仙經註
DZ 104	<i>Shangqing dadong zhenjing yujue yinyi</i> 上清大洞真經玉訣音義
DZ 129	<i>Taixiao langshu qiongwen dizhang jue</i> 太霄琅書瓊文帝章訣
DZ 140	<i>Shangqing wozhong jue</i> 上清握中訣
DZ 179	<i>Taiwei lingshu ziwen xianji zhenji shangjing</i> 太微靈書紫文仙忌真記上經
DZ 184	<i>Taizhen yudi siji mingke jing</i> 太真玉帝四極明科經
DZ 253	<i>Jinque dijun sanyuan zhenyi jing</i> 金闕帝君三元真一經
DZ 254	<i>Dadong jinhua yujing</i> 大洞金華玉經
DZ 255	<i>Taiwei lingshu ziwen langgan huadan shenzhen shangjing</i> 太微靈書紫文琅玕華丹神真上經
DZ 263	<i>Xiuzhen shishu</i> 修真十書
DZ 292	<i>Han Wudi neizhuan</i> 漢武帝內傳
DZ 296	<i>Lishi zhenxian tidaotongjian</i> 歷世真仙體道通鑑
DZ 303	<i>Ziyang zhenren neizhuan</i> 紫陽真人內傳
DZ 304	<i>Maoshan zhi</i> 茅山志
DZ 320	<i>Dongxuan lingbao danshui feishu yundu xiaojie maojing</i> 洞玄靈寶丹水飛術運度小劫妙經
DZ 335	<i>Taishang dongyuan shenzhou jing</i> 太上洞淵神咒經
DZ 354	<i>Shangqing sanyuan yujian sanyuan bu jing</i> 上清三元玉檢三元布經
DZ 388	<i>Taishang lingbao wufuxu</i> 太上靈寶五符序
DZ 394	<i>Shangqing taiyi jinque yuxi jinzen ji</i> 上清太一金闕玉璽金真紀
DZ 396	<i>Dongxuan lingbao ziran jiutian shengshen zhangjing jieyi</i> 洞玄靈寶自然九天生神章經解義
DZ 402	<i>Huangting neijing yujing zhu</i> 黃庭內景玉經註

DZ 412	<i>Shangqing pei fuwen qingquan jue</i> 上清佩符文青券訣
DZ 413	<i>Shangqing peifu wen baiquan jue</i> 上清佩符文白券訣
DZ 421	<i>Dengzhen yinjue</i> 登真隱訣
DZ 426	<i>Shangqing taishang basu zhenjing</i> 上清太上八素真經
DZ 442	<i>Shangqing housheng daojun lieji</i> 上清後聖道君列紀
DZ 455	<i>Taishang xuanyi zhenren shuo santu wuku quanjie jing</i> 太上玄一真人說三途五苦勸戒經
DZ 584	<i>Shangqing liujia qidao bifa</i> 上清六甲祈禱祕法
DZ 611	<i>Dongxuan lingbao liujia yunü shanggong ge zhang</i> 洞玄靈寶六甲玉女上宮歌章
DZ 639	<i>Huangtian shangqing jinque dijun lingshu ziwen shangjing</i> 皇天上清金闕帝君靈書紫文上經
DZ 671	<i>Taishang wuji dadao ziran zhenyi wuchengfu shangjing</i> 太上無極大道自然真一五稱符上經
DZ 765	<i>Shangqing jinque dijun wudou sanyi tujue</i> 上清金闕帝君五斗三一圖訣
DZ 879	<i>Shangqing jinshu yuzi shangjing</i> 上清金書玉字上經
DZ 1002	<i>Zhouyi cantong qi fenzhang tongzhen yi</i> 周易參同契分章通真義
DZ 1016	<i>Zhen'gao</i> 真誥
DZ 1032	<i>Yunji qiqian</i> 雲笈七籤
DZ 1102	<i>Taiping jing shengjun bizhi</i> 太平經聖君祕旨
DZ 1125	<i>Dongxuan lingbao sanding fengdao kejie yingshi</i> 洞玄靈寶三洞奉道科戒營始
DZ 1129	<i>Daojiao yishu</i> 道教義樞
DZ 1132	<i>Shangqing daolei shixiang</i> 上清道類事相
DZ 1138	<i>Wushang biyao</i> 無上秘要
DZ 1203	<i>Taishang santian zhengfa jing</i> 太上三天正法經
DZ 1313	<i>Dongzhen gaoshang yudi dadong ciyi yujian wulao baojing</i> 洞真高上玉帝大洞雌一玉檢五老寶經
DZ 1314	<i>Dongzhen taishang suling dongyuan dayou maojing</i> 洞真太上素靈洞元大有妙經

DZ 1315 *Dongzhen shangqing qingyao zishu jingen zhongjing* 洞真上清青要紫書金根眾經

DZ 1316 *Dongzhen shangqing taiwei dijun bu tiangang fei diji jinjian yuzi shangjing* 洞真上清太微帝君步天綱飛地紀金簡玉字上經

DZ 1317 *Dongzhen shangqing kaitian santu qixing yidu jing* 洞真上清開天三圖七星移度經

DZ 1319 *Dongzhen Xiwangmu baoshen qiju jing* 洞真西王母寶神起居經

DZ 1326 *Dongzhen shangqing longfei jiudao chisu yinjue* 洞真上清龍飛九道尺素隱訣

DZ 1327 *Dongzhen taishang sanjiu suyu yujing zhenjue* 洞真太上三九素語玉精真訣

DZ 1330 *Dongzhen taiyi dijun taidan yinshu dongzhen xuanjing* 洞真太一帝君太丹隱書洞真玄經

DZ 1331 *Dongzhen shangqing shenzhou qizhuan qibian wutian jing* 洞真上清神州七轉七變舞天經

DZ 1332 *Dongzhen taishang zidu yanguang shenyuan bian jing* 洞真太上紫度炎光神元變經

DZ 1333 *Dongzhen taishang shenhu yujing* 洞真太上神虎玉經

DZ 1336 *Dongzhen taishang jinbian hufu zhenwen jing* 洞真太上金篇虎符真文經

DZ 1337 *Dongzhen taiwei jinhu zhenfu* 洞真太微金虎真符

DZ 1339 *Dongzhen bajing yulu chentu yinfu* 洞真八景玉籙晨圖隱符

DZ 1344 *Dongzhen taishang shuo zhihui xiaomo zhenjing* 洞真太上說智慧消魔真經

DZ 1345 *Dongzhen taishang daojun yuandan shangjing* 洞真太上道君元丹上經

DZ 1349 *Dongzhen taishang qingya shisheng jing* 洞真太上青牙始生經

DZ 1351 *Dongzhen taishang feixing yujing jiuzhen shengxuan shangji* 洞真太上飛行羽經九真昇玄上記

DZ 1352 *Dongzhen taishang taixiao langshu* 洞真太上太霄琅書

DZ 1353	<i>Shangqing daobao jing</i> 上清道寶經
DZ 1354	<i>Shangqing taishang kaitian longjiao jing</i> 上清太上開天龍蹻經
DZ 1355	<i>Shangqing taishang yuqing yinshu miemo shenhui gaoxuan zhenjing</i> 上清太上玉清隱書滅魔神慧高玄真經
DZ 1356	<i>Shangqing gaoshang miemo yudi shenhui yuqing yinshu</i> 上清高上滅魔玉帝神慧玉清隱書
DZ 1357	<i>Shangqing gaoshang miemo dongjing jinyuan yuqing yinshu jing</i> 上清高上滅魔洞景金元玉清隱書經
DZ 1358	<i>Shangqing gaoshang jinyuan yuzhang yuqing yinshu jing</i> 上清高上金元羽章玉清隱書經
DZ 1359	<i>Shangqing danjing daojing yindi bashu jing</i> 上清丹景道精隱地八術經
DZ 1371	<i>Shangqing suling shangpian</i> 上清素靈上篇
DZ 1372	<i>Shangqing gaoshang yuchen fengtai qusu shang jing</i> 上清高上玉晨鳳臺曲素上經
DZ 1373	<i>Shangqing waiguo fangpin qingtong neiwen</i> 上清外國放品青童內文
DZ 1376	<i>Shangqing taishang dijun jiuzhen zhongjing</i> 上清太上帝君九真中經
DZ 1377	<i>Shangqing taishang jiuzhen zhongjing jiangsheng shendan jue</i> 上清太上九真中經降生神丹訣
DZ 1378	<i>Shangqing jinzen yuguang bajing fei jing</i> 上清金真玉光八景飛經
DZ 1381	<i>Shangqing mingtang xuandan zhenjing</i> 上清明堂玄丹真經
DZ 1382	<i>Shangqing jiudan shanghua taijing zhongji jing</i> 上清九丹上化胎精中記經
DZ 1391	<i>Shangqing qionggong lingfei liujia lu</i> 上清瓊宮靈飛六甲籙
DZ 1393	<i>Shangqing yuanshi bianhua baozhen shangjing jiuling taimiao Guishan xuanlu</i> 上清元始變化寶真上經九靈太妙龜山玄籙
DZ 1409	<i>Taishang jiuzhen mingke</i> 太上九真明科
DZ 1439	<i>Dongxuan lingbao yujing shan buxu jing</i> 洞玄靈寶玉京山步虛經

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Abbreviations

AA *Ancestors and Anxiety: Daoism and the Birth of Rebirth in China*. Stephen R. Bokenkamp. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

DKW *Dai kan-wa jiten* 大漢和辭典. Edited by Morohashi Tetsuji 諸橋轍次. Tokyo: Taishūkan shoten, 1955–1960.

DZ *Zhengtong daozang* 正統道藏. Texts cited by their number in Kristofer Schipper and Franciscus Verellen, eds., *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the Daozang*, 1393–1440.

ET *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*. Edited by Fabrizio Pregadio. London: Routledge, 2008.

EDS *Early Daoist Scriptures*. Stephen R. Bokenkamp. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.

ET *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio. London: Routledge, 2008.

FGDC *Foguang da cidian* 佛光大辭典. Gaoxiong: Foguang, 1988.

HHS *Hou Han shu* 後漢書. Edited by Fan Ye 范曄 (398–444). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965.

RS *La révélation du Shangqing dans l'histoire du Taoïsme*. Isabelle Robinet. Paris: Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1984.

SK *Shinkō kenkyū: Yakuchū hen* 「真誥」研究 — 譯注篇.
Yoshikawa Tadao 吉川忠夫 and Mugitani Kunio 麥谷邦夫.
Kyoto: Kyōto daigaku Jinbun kagaku kenkyūjo, 2000.

SSJZS *Shisanjing zhushu, fu jiaokan ji* 十三經注疏附校勘記.
Edited by Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849).

WX *Wen xuan* 文選. Edited by Li Shan 李善. Taipei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1998.

WXI *Wen Xuan, or, Selections of Refined Literature*. David R. Knechtges. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982.

WXII *Wen Xuan, or, Selections of Refined Literature. Volume Two, Rhapsodies on Sacrifices, Hunting, Travel, Sightseeing, Palaces and Halls, Rivers and Seas*. David R. Knechtges. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987.

WXIII *Wen Xuan, or, Selections of Refined Literature. Volume Three, Rhapsodies on Natural Phenomena, Birds and Animals, Aspirations and Feelings, Sorrowful Laments, Literature, Music, and Passions*. David R. Knechtges. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996.

YJQQ *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤. Edited by Zhang Junfang 張君房. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003.

ZGGJ *Zhongguo gujin diming da cidian* 中國古今地名大辭典.
Edited by Zang Lihe 臧勵龢 et al. 1931. Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1972.

ZH *Zhonghua daozang* 中華道藏. Edited by Zhang Jiyu 張繼禹.
49 vols. Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 2004.

Part I

Translators' Introduction

Background

The academic study of sacred texts is dominated by a concern for the roles that print and media play in producing and transmitting religious meaning. Many of these studies focus on how technologies like the printing press, television, and the Internet have revolutionized the reproduction of sacred texts. Analyses of handwritten manuscripts, by comparison, have not garnered much attention aside from large caches of texts such as the Dead Sea Scrolls. This book foregrounds the manuscript cultures of Daoism, in part because the copying, editing, and rewriting of handwritten texts was and continues to be a vital part of the Daoist religion. Even today, an aspiring Daoist adept must copy by hand his or her master's scriptures, liturgies, and talismans. Copying these texts serves as a kind of initiation for the disciple, a constituent part of what it means to "be(come) a Daoist."

In religious Daoism, thousands of scriptures circulate at one time, and there can be many different versions of each of these texts. During the medieval era, a scripture was imagined as a text spontaneously appearing in the heavens many eons before humans existed. Starting in the second century CE, when religious Daoism first appeared in China, celestial beings revealed these scriptures through spirit mediums. In some cases, two or more mediums might receive different versions of a scripture. For scholars, these variations are signs of copying, editing, and even stealing earlier editions. But in early medieval China, this phenomenon was explained as the product of the imprecise nature of the "translation" of scriptures from heavenly script

into a mundane one (i.e., classical Chinese). Human language was incapable of fully expressing a text's celestial original. Furthermore, celestial beings transmitted long scriptures to mediums in bits and pieces. A scripture was sometimes first recorded in small units that were later collated together.¹ The title of our book, *A Library of Clouds*, refers to this cache of heavenly texts transmitted in a jigsaw fashion.

The translation of Daoist scriptures from a celestial script into classical Chinese was rarely a process that happened from start to finish at one time. A celestial being might only reveal parts of text; they would then reappear days, months, or even decades later to transmit new parts of texts. During these séances, a medium could also request celestial beings to clarify and explain earlier revelations. New layers would be added to the old text, even if authors of two passages disagreed. Subsequently, Daoist scriptures rarely emerged as one continuous, seamless narrative, but rather as disjointed and uneven texts. But these signs of conflicting voices do not mean that Daoist writers were confused. On the contrary, the different layers of a text reflect an ongoing conversation between the Daoist pantheon and human mediums. The ongoing editing and rewriting of Daoist scriptures also led us to choose the book's title. In addition to describing the lofty origins of Daoist scriptures, *A Library of Clouds* describes its accretive formation. A Daoist text can (and often does) change just like billowing clouds in the sky.

In order to explore the writing and transmission of Daoist scriptures, our book focuses on a manuscript tradition that arose in fourth- and fifth-century China called the Upper Clarity (*Shangqing* 上清) order.² The first Upper Clarity Daoists lived near Maoshan 茅山, a chain of mountains east of present-day Nanjing. Their texts were produced during private séances led by Yang Xi 楊羲 (330–386 CE). Yang was a medium who worked on behalf of his aristocratic sponsor, Xu Mi 許謐 (303–376 CE), as well as Xu's family and friends.³ Between 364 and 370, Yang claimed to have made contact with the Perfected (*zhenren* 真人), celestial beings who revealed scriptures on a daily basis.

Much of the scholarship on Upper Clarity scriptures tries to uncover which extant texts are “original” or “authentic” Yang Xi productions. While

these studies have made immense contributions to Daoist studies, the endeavor has been fraught with difficulties. First, we do not have paper manuscripts of this period or anything prior to the fourteenth century. Most redactions of the Upper Clarity scriptures exist only in late imperial collectanea, such as the fifteenth-century *Zhengtong Daoist Canon*, and are distant refrac-tions of what may or may not have been the original text.⁴ Second, many of these scriptures have been altered, edited, and changed over the centuries. It was common for later mediums to receive new revelations and change a previous manuscript. A single scripture may have multiple authors who wrote parts of a scripture in different times and places. As mentioned above, it was common for mediums not to erase older revelations, thus making a Daoist scripture a pastiche of differing (and sometimes conflicting) ideas rather than a unified thought.

Distinguishing the “original” Upper Clarity scriptures of Yang Xi has often resulted in the neglect of scriptures written by subsequent generations of mediums. While some scriptures might not have been revealed to Yang Xi, they went on to become influential and well known in later centuries. A great example of these latter revealed texts is a group of three scriptures called the Three Wonders (*sanqi* 三奇). Versions of three scriptures circulated between the fourth and sixth centuries, and by the seventh century they were among the most prized and esoteric Daoist scriptures in China. The Three Wonders typically refer to the following texts:

1. *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas* (*Dadong zhenjing sanshijiuzhang* 大洞真經三十九章, hereafter the *Scripture of the Great Grotto*)
2. *Precious Scripture on the Five Ancient Lords, Jade Seal of the Feminine One* (*Ciyi yujian wulao baojing* 唯一玉檢五老寶經, hereafter *Jade Seal of the Feminine One*)
3. *Most High Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] and Penetrating Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]* (*Taihang suling dongxuan dayou maojing* 太上素靈洞玄大有妙經, hereafter *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*)

There has been very little written about the Three Wonders in any language. Isabelle Robinet's 1984 study on Upper Clarity Daoism demonstrates that the terminology and rituals of the Three Wonders resonate with Yang Xi's original revelations. But Robinet rightfully saw inconsistencies within the Three Wonders, particularly in 2 and 3 above, that made them different from other Upper Clarity scriptures. The Three Wonders, for instance, do not appear in the scriptural catalogues and bibliographies extant in the *Zhengtong Daoist Canon*. If these texts were so significant for the Upper Clarity tradition, writes Robinet, why would Yang Xi rarely mention them? Robinet concludes that the Three Wonders were later creations, even "forgeries":

All these texts [featuring the Three Wonders] were added or integrated into the Upper Clarity corpus as an afterthought, yet assumed a form and adopted a terminology that are exactly those of the other writings of the [Upper Clarity] school. The content of the scriptures (e.g., visual meditations, spells, alchemical recipes, invocations) is in perfect harmony with the other texts of the movement. The general themes are the same. This is why they cannot be separated from the rest of the writings of Upper Clarity; they are clearly part of the same group of writings, even if sometimes some details contradict each other and it is clear that these texts are later forgeries.⁵

Later in her study, Robinet provides painstakingly detailed comparisons ("Recoulements et emprunts") of the content of the so-called forgeries with the other "authentic" Upper Clarity scriptures. Through her meticulous study of the scriptures, she proposes that the Three Wonders represent not one but many editorial revisions. The various layers of the texts, according to Robinet, leaves us with scriptures that are "incomplete and ha[ve] undergone interpolations."⁶ She concludes that the conflicting and fragmentary qualities of the Three Wonders illustrate that they are "apocryphal" and that "many of the passages are interpolated."⁷

To call the Three Wonders "forgeries" or "apocryphal" suggests that the Three Wonders are in conflict with a group of "authentic" texts. Given the accretive formation of Daoist scriptures described above, however, we find

it helpful to delve deeper into the Three Wonders to get a better sense of mediums in Upper Clarity circles who copied, edited, and rewrote books.

At the heart of our study is the third of the Three Wonders, the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*. Since Robinet has already provided a thick description of the contents of the scripture, we build on her study in two ways. First, we provide an annotated translation of the scripture, which will make the study of its contents accessible to a larger audience. Second, the five chapters of part 1 of this book explain how the Three Wonders and the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* came into existence among early readers of Upper Clarity texts. Through analysis of contemporary bibliographies, hagiographies, and commentaries, we maintain that many of the ideas of the Three Wonders as “forgeries” are, in fact, rooted in the ideas of medieval exegetes who championed one version of Upper Clarity over another. At the end of this book, we propose that one individual responsible for many of these new texts is Wang Lingqi 王靈期, who was later criticized for his rewriting of Upper Clarity texts in the early fifth century.⁸ A study of the Three Wonders will offer insights into the persons and institutions who reformulated these texts and offer insights into what they reflect about the changing norms and expectations of Daoists in this early period.

Our comparison of different Daoist scriptures moves beyond *what* readers borrowed from such and such a text. We seek to understand *how* readers accessed, [re]interpreted, and used scriptures. Taking cues from historians of the book, we study how readers interacted, consumed, and reproduced texts to shed light on the overlapping activities of reading and writing. We are struck by how the producers of medieval Daoist texts resemble the readers in early modern Europe, who also would:

read in fits and starts and jump from book to book. They broke texts into fragments and assembled them into new patterns by transcribing them in different sections of their notebooks. Then they reread the copies and rearranged the patterns while adding more excerpts. Reading and writing were therefore inseparable activities. They belonged to a continuous effort to make sense of things, for the world was full of signs.⁹

The readers and writers of Upper Clarity scriptures likewise would jump from book to book, break texts into fragments, and assemble them into new patterns. The composers of these texts simultaneously played the role of “author” and “reader” by actively reinterpreting texts, not by passively receiving them.¹⁰ Whereas previous studies of the Three Wonders have ignored these scriptures because of a heavy editorial imprint, we argue that these qualities actually offer tremendous insight into the transmission of early Daoist manuscript cultures.

We see our study as situated in a larger stream of studies in comparative religions. The scribal activities in our book have many parallels with early Christian scribes during this same period. Scholarship on these traditions has been particularly helpful in articulating the social networks in which these manuscripts were embedded. Kim Haines-Eitzen’s studies of religious manuscripts and private scribal networks have helped us consider how literature was reproduced and disseminated.¹¹ She argues that a different kind of methodology is needed to determine the precise circumstances, modes, and contexts of transmission. Examining the social history of Christian scribes, she looks at various kinds of evidence (e.g., copies of text, quotations, mentions of text, colophons, request for texts) to consider the channels or social networks behind transmission.

Focusing on the network around scriptural manuscript production helps us understand the copying of these texts as a phenomenon similar but different from the ways scriptures are “published” today.¹² Daoist adepts, after all, were not the only writers repackaging written texts in medieval times. Buddhists in this same period created pastiches of passages, remarks, and other texts already in circulation as anthologies, compilations, or heavily redacted versions of texts.¹³ Much of these developments were due to the rise of paper as the dominant material for manuscripts in the early centuries of the Common Era. Whereas previous technologies like bamboo and silk had made text production cumbersome or expensive, paper manuscripts allowed an increased circulation of books and expansion of libraries, both imperial and private.¹⁴

Just as Daoists were copying and rearranging fragments in their scrip-

tures, analogous kinds of book production existed in China. It was common for patrons to hire copyists who would call from a variety of sources; rarely was a book copied cover to cover.¹⁵ In fact, leading religious figures of medieval China often held top positions at imperial libraries such as Garden of the Floriate Grove (*Hualinyuan* 華林園), where books were copied, anthologized, and remade.¹⁶ It is our hope that this book will kindle interest in the Daoist canon as one of the principal sources for book history in China. For students of Daoism, our study of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* offers new direction for studying scriptures with a complicated bibliographic history.

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Chapter One

Thirty-One Fascicles

Cataloguing Scriptures of the Heavens

[The book] is not in any sense “finished” until it is read. And since it is re-creatively read in different ways by different people at different times, its so-called objectively, its simple physicality, is really an illusion.

— D. F. MacKenzie, “The Sociology of a Text”

In studies of religions, “scripture” once designated the canonical texts of the Judeo-Christian tradition, but in recent decades the term has been applied to the sacred writings present in every culture. As Wilfred Cantwell Smith notes in his *What Is Scripture*, there is not a single formula dictating the appearance of a sacred text or what a reader might do with this text. Writers in every locale have conceived, written, transmitted, and used scriptures in ways particular to local and temporal conditions. The reading and application of these sacred texts are likewise shaped by conventions specific to that local culture. Smith writes:

We must give our attention not only, nor even primarily, to the text but to the people, and to the way that their lives have been formed or modified or enriched or limited by their appropriation of and involvement with that text at specific times. We must strive to understand how the forming, modifying, enriching, limiting, come about; and in what the appropriating and the being involved consist. What have those people done to the text in rendering it scriptural; and what has it done to them?¹

Smith approaches the study of scriptures by focusing on the *human response* to sacred texts. A text is not holy simply because it was divinely inspired or God-given, but rather because a community of readers recognized and preserved it as such. This does not rule out the possibility that a text has divine origins, but this approach to scriptures is driven by anthropological rather than theological concerns. It brackets questions about inspired origins of a text in an effort to understand what humans do with texts and how readers become involved in the production process.

The term most commonly used for Chinese scriptures is *jīng* 經, which originally meant the warp in weaving, but was later extended to mean “a path that guides” and eventually to venerated texts that unveil deep mysteries. The earliest examples of Chinese *jīng* feature divinatory hexagrams and commentaries that interpret oracles. Two early examples are the *River Chart* (*Hetu* 河圖) and the *Book of the Luo River* (*Luoshu* 洛書). *River Chart* was revealed to the ancient sage Fuxi when a dragon came out of a river and produced Eight Trigrams.² The *Book of the Luo River* appeared before King Yu on the back of a turtle and detailed the Five Phases. Both texts were thought to detail the key principles of the cosmos. Ancient kings, like Yao and Shun, also received similar texts, most notably tables and registers that outlined the oceans, rivers, hills, and marshes of the terrestrial realm.

There was also a strong association between astrology and literary texts, for most writers correlated patterns (*wen* 文) in the heavens to topographic patterns on earth.³ These ancient books required translation, for the revealed texts were encoded in a cosmic language that had to be rendered into written signs intelligible to readers. The individuals who observed and recorded these symbols were seen as interpreters who rearranged the heavenly signs and appended commentary to render these books intelligible for humans. Sagely figures did not write scriptures but supplied the necessary interpretive and hermeneutic devices to make these texts intelligible.⁴

As early as the second century CE, writers of Daoist texts adapted many of these same conventions when composing scriptures.⁵ Like their predecessors, medieval writers coupled celestial writings (*tianwen* 天文) or celestial books (*tianshu* 天書) with exegetical layers. Daoist scriptures often contained tables or registers providing detailed explanations of paradisal geography. The

idea of these literary maps is that they would facilitate one's access to divine realms, a kind of road map through the secret topologies of heavenly realms. Just as King Yu long ago received a cosmic map in the revelation of the *Book of the Luo River*, writers of Daoist scriptures likewise described cosmic principles in an earthly script. This information was key for an adept who mapped this information onto his or her body. The cosmic principles were seen as the heavenly counterpart for the “circulatory laws of the breath and essence” within his or her body.⁶

The Upper Clarity (*Shangqing* 上清) scriptures were not the earliest Daoist texts of this kind but are perhaps the best documented of early texts. This group of texts were initially the product of a temple community near Maoshan 茅山, a chain of mountains east of present-day Nanjing. These texts were produced during private séances in the mid-fourth century conducted by spiritual advisors at Maoshan such as Hua Qiao 華喬 and later Yang Xi 楊羲 (330–386 CE).⁷ Both Hua and Yang procured these texts on behalf of their aristocratic sponsors, Xu Mi 許謐 (303–376 CE) and Xu Hui 許翫 (341–c. 370), who sought divine guidance on a wide range of affairs, from healing to locating a new temple site.⁸ Hua and Yang claimed to have contacted the Perfected (*zhenren* 真人), celestial beings imagined to frequent Maoshan. These Perfected, wrote Hua and Yang, bestowed the Xu family with various fragments of scriptures housed in the heavens.

At the heart of textual production in this era was the issue of access and transmission. Scriptures were not revealed at once, but integrated one piece at a time. And any scripture could be altered and amended at any point in time. For those involved in the Upper Clarity scriptures, there were three main forms of revelatory literature: declarations (*gao* 誥), hagiographies (*zhuan* 傳), and scriptures (*jing* 經). Below we outline the basic features of these texts and focus on how early readers organized the scriptures. We note how earlier scholarship of these texts have applied later (eighth-century) descriptions of these texts and have missed important notions about the production and circulation of early Upper Clarity scriptures.

Most scholarship on the collation of different scriptures has addressed the production of the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). One way biblical scholars have attempted to date the texts is by examining external

evidence about their authorship. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, for example, wrote a work called *Against Heresies* around 180 in which he named all four gospels (the synoptics and John) and quoted passages revealing that he had manuscripts that are very similar to our extant copies. Irenaeus also makes direct assertions about the authorship and dating of the texts. Matthew, he writes, was written in Hebrew while “Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome.” Mark was written after their departure and was based on Paul’s sermons. Luke, by Irenaeus’ account, was written by an associate of Paul’s. Such a dating scheme would suggest that Matthew’s gospel was written first and was followed by Mark and then Luke. We have no way of knowing, however, if Irenaeus had reliable evidence in making such assertions.

A few decades prior to Irenaeus, Justin Martyr quoted sayings attributed to Jesus in what he called “the memoirs of the Apostles.” Countless studies demonstrate that Justin Martyr did not quote passages that correspond directly to extant gospels, and thus it is unclear if he was culling the material from a now-lost source or if he was freely quoting from memory. These quotes do, however, show that by 150 the Christian tradition included titles similar to our gospels but that these texts had not attained canonical status. There is also evidence prior to Justin Martyr. Papias, the Bishop of Hierapolis, quoted some material about Jesus that he attributed to Mark and Matthew. Papias wrote, collected the passages in Hebrew and interpreted as best he could. Mark, on the other hand, became Peter’s interpreter and would:

[write] accurately all that he remembered, not, indeed, in order, of things said or done by the Lord. For he had not heard the Lord, nor had he followed him, but later on, as I said, followed Peter, who used to give teachings as necessity demanded, but did not make, as it were, an arrangement of the Lord’s oracles, so that Mark did nothing wrong in thus writing down single points as he remembered them. For one thing he gave attention, to leave nothing of what he had heard and to make no false statements in them.⁹

We know that Papias’ representation of the synoptic gospels do not refer to the same texts that we now have. Matthew, after all, is not a collection of sayings, but a narrative. Furthermore, Papias writes that Matthew was translated directly from Hebrew or Aramaic, but our version of Matthew shows few traces of Semitic grammar or syntax. Nevertheless, Papias’ observations

are key because this is the first time in our extant literature on Christianity in which names (e.g., Matthew, Mark) are attached to the gospels. Prior to Papias, Christian quotations of Jesus are anonymous and often conflated. While we know that the gospels certainly circulated among communities between 90 and 150, the identities of the authors were unknown and regarded as irrelevant.

Papias' description of the gospels is also considered evidence that there was a hypothetical source Q. The Q source is a hypothetical written document that included the sayings of Jesus. It came about in scholarship to explain the fact that the synoptic gospels often recount the same stories, often in the same order, with only minor syntactical and lexicographical differences. Take the following passage, for instance, in which there is an undeniable affiliation between the ways the authors of the synoptic gospels describe Jesus' wandering in the wilderness:

Table 1.1

Matthew 4	Mark 1	Luke 4
The <i>Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And he fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was hungry.</i>	The spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to him.	And <i>Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit for forty days in the wilderness, tempted by the devil.</i> And he ate nothing in those days; and when they were ended, he was <i>hungry.</i>

In this example, the gospels agree and disagree in the following ways:

Table 1.2

Triple agreements	Matthew—Mark	Mark—Luke	Matthew—Luke
The Spirit The wilderness Tempted by the Forty days	into	and	Jesus Was led Devil And Was hungry

Proponents of the Q source often advocate a “two-source hypothesis,” which posits that Matthew and Luke copied Q, thus agreeing with each other and not with Mark. Mark and Q also overlap, and this explains why

in some parts of the text there are triple agreements. This is useful because it is unlikely that the authors of Matthew and Luke would copy Mark down to “tempted by” and then replace the “devil” with “Satan.” Such examples (and there dozens more) are helpful not because they prove the existence of Q, but instead because they help scholars to make plausible arguments about how the processing of copying and fabrication work. Sometime the “original” and “authentic” are no longer in existence, but we can look at how the latter rendering of these texts differ in order to make reasonable guesses as to how different traditions of scripture diverge from one another.

We cannot hope to present all the different views about the plausibility (or reliability) of positing a hypothetical Q source text for the synoptic gospels. Nevertheless, this and other examples from biblical scholarship teach scholars of Daoist scriptures a valuable lesson: *difference matters*. While all the writers of the synoptic gospels may belong to a loose tradition (however defined), there are important differences in texts that help us come to terms with diverging ideas about scriptures circulating at a single time.

The Literary Forms of Upper Clarity Texts

According to Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456–536 CE), an influential exegete who collected Upper Clarity manuscripts at the close of the fifth century, the most common forms of texts circulated among readers were declarations (*gao*).¹⁰ Declarations were short messages procured by a medium from Perfected beings on behalf of a sponsor. These short revelations offered divine insights to particular problems and provided admonishments to an adept on a wide range of life problems. These pronouncements often began by identifying passages as “declarations of the Perfected,” which led him to see a resemblance in these texts to Buddhist sutras, which often began with the phrase, “The Buddha once said.”¹¹

Declarations were a genre of writing where a medium would pose a particular question or problem to a celestial being. A declaration often referenced a previous conversation; thus, these short texts often clarified earlier questions and conversations. Since declarations are part of a longer conversa-

tion and are intentionally cryptic, it is difficult to understand one passage if it appears out of its original context. This makes the work of Tao Hongjing key, as he collected the fragments of the conversation between the Xu family and Yang Xi and wrote extensively about the circumstances that prompted these writings.

Hagiographies in Upper Clarity Daoism were narratives recording the lives of holy men and women who were now Perfected residing in the Upper Clarity heavens. Whereas earlier hagiographies in China focused on important life events or miracles of holy persons, the Upper Clarity authors placed much more emphasis on the methods of bodily cultivation and ritual methods that led to their apotheosis as Perfected beings. As a result, Upper Clarity hagiographies are didactic, for they reflect the kinds of instructions that might be transmitted from a master to his disciple. Upper Clarity hagiographies are also written in the first person. The medium received the narratives directly from the Perfected who introduced the various techniques they long ago used while human. The records of such techniques were supposed to be for the eyes of those in the “inner” circle of the community; thus, these hagiographies are often called inner traditions (*neizhuan* 內傳). Nevertheless, since these texts were self-contained narratives that could be read independently, their readership was likely broader than those of declarations, which were usually intended for one or a few individuals.

The most prized form of writing among Upper Clarity Daoists was a scripture (*jing*). There were many scriptures circulating among Upper Clarity adepts, but an individual did not receive all these texts after initiation. Instead, scriptures were awarded to adepts when they achieved key stages in the ritual hierarchy of this group. Like hagiographies, scriptures tended to focus on techniques of bodily cultivation and ritual practice. Scriptures also included lengthy descriptions of the ancient adepts who had successfully used the scripture centuries earlier. Many of these techniques were not the creation of medieval mediums but were ancient methods adapted and synthesized into Upper Clarity rituals. Upper Clarity scriptures are difficult to understand; they are often written in a terse format, usually in rhyme. This can make it nearly impossible to decipher without the aid of a master. And

masters would insert “oral instructions” (*jue* 訣) in scriptures to help readers understand texts. Sometimes these instructions are transmitted separately from a scripture, but in other cases the primary text and exegesis are recorded side by side.

Although these three kinds of Upper Clarity texts (declaration, hagiography, scripture) are distinct literary forms, all three types were intended to teach a reader how to transform into a Perfected being. And the writing of one kind of text would often lead to its incorporation into another type. A scripture title, for instance, might be mentioned in a hagiography, which prompted a medium to produce a detailed scripture on the topic at a later date.

Given that Upper Clarity scriptures were transmitted slowly and by multiple persons, it is difficult to trace how such texts were produced. Upper Clarity mediums such as Yang Xi admit that these texts were transmitted through the translation of heavenly texts into earthly copies and that this process was not exact. Heavenly texts were constantly retranslated, and this was thought to bring the earthly copy closer (but never exactly the same) to the heavenly original. Most scriptures were considered to have existed in heaven in a distant past, in archaic times before any spirits or humans existed. The texts are often depicted as objects of veneration, as they were stored in heavenly gardens and precious chests, thus giving the impression that these texts were not even fully visible or available to gods, let alone humans.

The transmission of Upper Clarity scriptures also happened in piece-meal as some bits of scriptures were related in short pronouncements (*gao*), while others were embedded in hagiographies (*zhuan*). The gods who transmitted this sacred information to adepts were merely the transmitters, not the authors of the texts. These deities often formed a teacher-disciple relationship with adepts, and the human mediums could carry on conversations with many different deities, even in the same séance. Also, not all heavenly texts are accorded the same esteem, for heavenly realms, like the human world, were graded into a hierarchy. If a scripture was thought to originate in one of the highest heavens, access to the text would be restricted to a limited number of people. This idea enabled Daoist writers to assert the existence of higher heavens, which would make older scriptures obsolete.

Catalogues of Upper Clarity Scriptures

Nearly all colophons and commentaries of Upper Clarity scriptures maintain that Yang Xi circulated a total of thirty-one Upper Clarity scriptures to his sponsors. While this notion of the existence of thirty-one scriptures stretches back to the late fourth century, the earliest catalogue identifying Upper Clarity titles was composed in the late seventh century. The compilers of the codebook *Regulations for the Codes and Precepts for Worshipping the Dao of Three Caverns* (*Sandong fengdao kejie yingshi* 三洞奉道科誠營始) included a list of the thirty-one scriptures titled a “Catalogue of Perfected Scriptures of the Upper Clarity’s Great Grotto” (“Shangqing dadong zhenjing mu” 上清大洞真經目, hereafter “Catalogue of the Great Grotto”).¹² Over five decades ago, Fukui Kōjun 福井康順 studied the “Catalogue of the Great Grotto” and discovered that the phrase “Upper Clarity scriptures” (*Shangqing jing* 上清經) was used in at least three distinct ways in the Daoist Canon: as a term to describe any scripture associated with Upper Clarity, the thirty-one scriptures featured in the “Catalogue of the Great Grotto,” and the thirty-nine short stanzas of the Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto (*Dadong zhenjing* 大洞真經).¹³

In later studies, scholars adopted the idea that the original canon of Upper Clarity scriptures included thirty-one scriptures. Chen Guofu 陳國符 discarded Fukui’s multivalent categorization of these scriptures and simply asserted that Yang Xi transmitted thirty-one scriptures.¹⁴ More recently, Ozaki Masaharu 尾崎正治 has claimed there is a general consensus among scholars that the Upper Clarity scriptures refers to the thirty-one scriptures. He further asserts that these scriptures correspond to the same titles in the “Catalogue of the Great Grotto.”¹⁵ Ishii Masako 石井昌子 and Isabelle Robinet have made the most comprehensive examination of the Upper Clarity titles listed in the various collectanea of the Zhengtong Daoist Canon; both scholars relied extensively on the “Catalogue of the Great Grotto.”¹⁶ Ishii, in fact, has written the most detailed analysis of the “Catalogue of the Great Grotto” in which she compares the received version against a manuscript copy.¹⁷ While all these studies have advanced our understanding of the thirty-one Upper Clarity scriptures, no one has examined how the notion of thirty-one scriptures came into existence.

The thirty-one fascicles are featured in the hagiography of Wang Bao 王褒, the teacher of Wei Hucun 魏華存 (251–335), the reputed founder of the Upper Clarity lineage.¹⁸ In that text, Wang's hagiographer describes how the Lady of the Southern Bourne (Nanji furen 南極夫人) and the Perfected Being of the Western Citadel (Xicheng zhenren 西城真人) transmitted thirty-one fascicles of scriptures to Wang while the latter was cultivating the mountains outside of Luoyang:¹⁹

The Perfected Being of the Western Citadel next transmitted to Lord [Wang] the following texts: *The Precious Writs Most High*, *Hidden Book of the Eight Immaculate [Ladies]*, *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto*, *Numinous Book of the Eight Paths*, *Purple Crossing and Blazing Radiance*, *Lithic Essence of the Jade Horse*, *Tiger Writs of Divine Perfection*, and *Winged Mystery of High Transcendence*. In all, there were thirty-one fascicles. [Wang] had to abide by the codes, make a pledge, and pay a price to receive these texts.²⁰

西城真人遂以即日授君《太上寶文》、《八素隱書》、《大洞真經》、《靈書八道》、《紫度炎光》、《石精玉馬》、《神真虎文》、《高仙羽玄》、凡三十一卷，依科立盟，結誓而付。

The number thirty-one in this passage does not appear to refer to a specific canon of scriptures, but simply the total number of fascicles that make up these eight scriptures. It is also unclear what kinds of practices are associated with this cluster of sacred texts in Wang's hagiography. Previously in the text, the Perfected Being of the Western Citadel praises Wang for his zeal for bodily cultivation, yet sharply criticizes the adept for relying on harmful techniques that might throw the body off-kilter.²¹ The thirty-one scriptures mentioned in the above passage are given to Wang with the hope that he would replace the spurious texts he formerly received.

Despite the relatively important function that the thirty-one fascicles of scriptures play in Lord Wang's hagiography, previous scholars have concluded that our only recension, featured in the eleventh-century collectanea *Seven Lots from the Bookbag of Clouds* (*Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤), is corrupt. Robinet, for instance, notes that many titles of scriptures in Wang's hagiography do not match those in excerpts from this text found in other medieval collectanea.²² Yet if we compare this passage to other Upper Clarity

hagiographies, there is strong evidence to suggest that the thirty-one fascicles were a key part of this story. In the extant version of a hagiography of Wang’s disciple, Wei Huacun, for example, we find a description of the transmission of thirty-one fascicles that is nearly verbatim to the above passage from Wang’s hagiography:

It was then that the Perfected Being of Clear Vacuity, Lord Wang, ordered his attendant maidens (e.g., Hua Santiao, Li Mingyun) to unfurl the cloudy repositories and open the jade bookbag. They selected thirty-one fascicles of scriptures that included *The Precious Writs Most High*, *Hidden Book of the Eight Immaculate [Ladies]*, *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto*, *Numinous Book of the Eight Paths*, *Purple Crossing and Blazing Radiance*, *Lithic Essence of the Jade Horse*, *Tiger Writs of Divine Perfection*, and *Winged Mystery of High Transcendence*.²³

王君乃命侍女華散條、李明兑等，便披雲蘊，開玉笈，出《太上寶文》、《八素隱書》、《大洞真經》、《靈書八道》、《紫度炎光》、《石精玉馬》、《神真虎文》、《高仙羽玄》等經，凡三十一卷。

In this same recension of “Wei’s Hagiography,” the author quotes Wei’s teacher, Lord Wang, who explains in greater detail the origins of these thirty-one fascicles. Wang tells his disciple that he received the scriptures from the Lady of the Southern Bourne and the Perfected Being of the Western Citadel. He further emphasizes that the versions of the thirty-one fascicles he bestows on Wei are the exact versions previously revealed to him. Due to the lack of corroborative evidence in Yang’s extant revelations, it is impossible to determine in which of these two texts the idea of the thirty-one fascicles first emerged. Nevertheless, the presence of the same grouping of scriptures in these two narratives indicates that the idea of a canon of texts written in thirty-one parts was linked to Lord Wang and Lady Wei, key figures in Yang Xi’s pantheon of divine teachers.

The fragmentary nature of “Wei’s Hagiography” makes it difficult to ascertain how the writer imagines the role these thirty-one fascicles played in Wei’s ritual program. From Tao Hongjing’s criticism of Wang Lingqi in *Declarations* (see chapter 5), we know that a catalogue (*timu* 題目) was once attached to the end of Lady Wei’s hagiography. Robinet asserts that

the “Catalogue of the Great Grotto” featured in a Dunhuang manuscript, *A Guide to the Protocol for the Codes and Regulations of Worshipping the Dao* (*Feng Dao kejie yifan* 奉道科誠儀範, P.2337), is likely a later version of the list originally attached to Lady Wei’s hagiography.²⁴ At first glance, such a claim seems quite logical. First, the size of the scriptures mentioned in the excerpt of “Wei’s Hagiography” (thirty-one) is close in number to the thirty-four fascicles in the “Catalogue of the Great Grotto.” Second, both Wei’s hagiographer and the cataloguer agree that Wei’s teacher, Lord Wang, bestowed these scriptures. Finally, nearly all the titles featured in the catalogue can be found among Yang Xi’s revelations in *Declarations*, which provides corroborative evidence that the content of the catalogue would have been familiar to Yang’s readers.

While Robinet is certainly correct that the Dunhuang catalogue is later text, a closer examination of the “Catalogue of the Great Grotto” shows that these catalogues are quite different. First, while the cataloguer of the Dunhuang text acknowledges that Lord Wang bestowed the thirty-four fascicles, he specifies that these scriptures originated in the great grottoes of the Jade Clarity (*Yuqing* 玉清), Purple Clarity (*Ziqing* 紫清), and Great Clarity (*Daqing* 大清) heavens. He further stresses that these thirty-four fascicles are distinct from a group of four scriptures (totaling seven fascicles) that Lady Wei received “while she was alive” (*zai shi* 在世). Such a distinction between scriptures with heavenly origins and those received during her lifetime as a human adept gives the impression that Lady Wei received the group of thirty-four fascicles from Lord Wang after her death. Yet her hagiography suggests that Lady Wei should have received all her scriptures during her lifetime, including those given by Lord Wang and the texts identified as received during her lifetime, such as the *Scripture on the Inner Effulgences of the Yellow Court* (*Huangting neijing jing* 黃庭內景經).²⁵

In addition to his peculiar division of Wei’s scriptures, the compiler of the “Catalogue of the Great Grotto” employs an editorial technique distinct from other early Upper Clarity catalogues. “Zhou’s Hagiography” and “Pei’s Hagiography,” for example, contain appendices to extend narratives in which hagiographers list all the scriptures the adepts procured during their life-

times.²⁶ The titles in these catalogues all correspond to the narrative portion of the hagiographies. The authors (or perhaps later editors) extracted these titles from the earlier layers of the hagiographies, which feature details about where adepts procured their scriptures and the teacher or deity who bestowed the text. From extant fragments of Lady Wei's hagiography, however, it is apparent that the compiler of the "Catalogue of the Great Grotto" used a different method in composing his list. Of the titles featured in the above excerpt from Lady Wei's hagiography, for instance, at least two, *The Precious Writs Most High* and *Winged Mystery of High Transcendence*, are missing from the "Catalogue of the Great Grotto."

Even those scriptures listed in the "Catalogue of the Great Grotto" that resemble titles found in Wei's hagiography challenge its provenance. For example, the *Tiger Writs of Divine Perfection* (*Shenzhen huwen* 神真虎文) from Wei's hagiography is similar to the *Perfected Talismans of the Jade Scripture of the Divine Tigers of the Imperial Lord of the Heaven of Great Tenuity* (*Taiwei tian dijun shenhu yujing zhenfu* 太微天帝君神虎玉經真符經, DZ 1333) and *Perfected Talismans of the Golden Tigers of the Imperial Lord of the Heaven of Great Tenuity* (*Taiwei tian dijun jinhu zhenfu* 太微天帝君金虎真符, DZ 1336, 1337). Both of these scriptures, however, are listed under the category of texts that Wei received "while she was alive," not from Lord Wang. This would mean that these scriptures are not the same as those thirty-one fascicles mentioned in Wei's hagiography. Finally, there are titles in the "Catalogue of the Great Grotto" like the *Highest Concealed Writ of Jade Radiance's Golden Perfection* (*Taishang yinshu jinzheng yuguang* 上清太上隱書金真玉光, DZ 1378), *Inner Script of the Azure Lad on the Distribution of the Outer Realms* (*Waiguo fangpin Qingtong neiwen* 外國放品青童內文, DZ 1373), and *Primal Register of the Turtle Mountain from the Great Wonder of [the Palace of] the Nine Numina* (*Jiuling taimiao Guishan xuanlu* 九靈太妙龜山玄籙, DZ 1393) that are unattested in Yang's revelations or in other early Upper Clarity texts. All of this evidence casts doubt that the "Catalogue of the Great Grotto" contains the same list of scriptures as Lady Wei's hagiography.

While the above evidence does not contradict Robinet's hypothesis that the Dunhuang catalogue is a later text, it does challenge the supposition that

this catalogue is a modified version of the “original” or “authentic” catalogue of Upper Clarity scriptures. We must look elsewhere to determine how Upper Clarity scriptures were defined and understood.

Rethinking the Thirty-One Fascicles

In the aforementioned fragment from “Wei’s Hagiography,” at least eight titles of scriptures are linked to the goddess. Table 1.3 compares these titles to the same or similar titles found in three early bibliographies, the “Transmissions of the Dao” (“Daoshou” 道授, DZ 1016, 5.2–4), “Zhou’s Hagiography” (DZ 303.15–16), and the *Perfected Scripture of the Eight Pure [Ladies]* (*Basu zhenjing* 八素真經, DZ 426.4a–5b).

Table 1.3

“Wei’s Hagiography”	“Transmissions of the Dao”	“Zhou’s Hagiography”	<i>Perfected Scripture of the Eight Pure [Ladies]</i>
<i>The Precious Writs Most High</i> 太上寶文			<i>Writs for Soaring to the Sun, Yuyi Most High</i> 太上鬱儀奔日文
			<i>Stanzas for Soaring to the Moon, Jielin Most High</i> 太上結璘奔月章
<i>Hidden Book of the Eight Immaculate [Ladies]</i> 八素隱書	<i>The Most High Hidden Book, the Perfected Scripture of the Eight Pure [Ladies]</i> 八素真經太上隱書	<i>The Most High Hidden Book, the Perfected Scripture of the Eight Pure [Ladies]</i> 八素真經太上隱書	<i>The Hidden Book for Soaring to the Stars of the Most High Eight Pure [Ladies]</i> 太上八素奔晨隱書
<i>Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto</i> 大洞真經	<i>Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas</i> 大洞真經三十九篇	<i>Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto</i> 大洞真經	<i>Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto on High in Thirty-Nine Stanzas</i> 高上大洞真經三十九章

“Wei’s Hagiography”	“Transmissions of the Dao”	“Zhou’s Hagiography”	Perfected Scripture of the Eight Pure [Ladies]
<i>Numinous Book of the Eight Paths</i> 靈書八道	<i>The Numinous Book of Purple Writs</i> 靈書紫文	<i>Central Scripture of the Nine Perfected</i> 九真中經	<i>The Upper Scripture of Purple Writs from the Numinous Book of the Golden Porte</i> 金闕靈書紫文上經
	<i>The Secret Sayings of the Yellow Elder, the Central Scripture of the Nine Perfected</i> 九真中經黃老秘言		<i>Central Scripture of the Nine Perfected on the Eight Paths of the Yellow Elder</i> 黃老八道九真中經
<i>Purple Crossing and Blazing Radiance</i> 紫度炎光	<i>The Nocturnal Gleam from the Divine Candle of Purple Crossing and Blazing Radiance</i> 紫度炎光夜照神燭	<i>The Central Scripture of the Inner Vision Map of Purple Crossing and Blazing Radiance</i> 紫度炎光內視圖中經	<i>The Mother of Lithic Essence of the Jade Horse in the Center of Purple Crossing</i> 紫度中方石精玉馬之母
<i>Lithic Essence of the Jade Horse</i> 石精玉馬	<i>Refining One’s Shape by Hiding One’s Phosphors with Lithic Essence and Golden Radiance</i> ²⁷ 石精金光藏景錄形	<i>Transforming One’s Shape by Hiding One’s Phosphors with Lithic Essence and Golden Radiance</i> 石精金光藏景化形	
<i>Tiger Writs of Divine Perfection</i> 神真虎文	<i>Talismans of the Divine Tiger</i> 神虎之符		<i>Great Talismans of the Divine Tiger</i> 神虎大符
<i>Winged Mystery of High Transcendence</i> ²⁸ 高仙羽玄			

Of the eight scriptures featured in “Wei’s Hagiography,” at least two, the *Precious Writs Most High* and *Winged Mystery of High Transcendence*, do not seem to correspond to texts mentioned in the other early bibliographies. It is possible that the *Precious Writs Most High* is placed at the beginning of this list because it is assigned an elevated status, much as the *Writs for Soaring to the Sun, Yuyi Most High* (*Taishang yuyi benri wen* 太上鬱儀奔日文) and the *Stanzas for Soaring to the Moon, Jielin Most High* (*Taishang jielin benyue zhang* 太上結璘奔月章) are labeled as “teachings of highest perfection” (*shangzhen*

zhi dao 上真之道) in the *Perfected Scripture of the Eight Pure [Ladies]*.²⁹ The remaining six scriptures (or seven if we parse the *Numinous Book* and *Eight Paths* into two texts) are all attested in the early bibliographies. Aside from *Purple Crossing and Blazing Radiance*, all of these scriptures are identified as “in circulation” (*chu shi* 出世 or *zai shi* 在世). This makes it likely that the titles of scriptures featured in “Wei’s Hagiography” were treated as top-grade Perfected scriptures that adepts could obtain from their masters with the proper protocol. At the very least, some of the thirty-one fascicles mentioned in Wei’s hagiographies should have been texts in circulation (and in use) among the community of adepts.

Finally, the thirty-one fascicles mentioned in “Wei’s Hagiography” were not considered random books that Wei Huacun collected during her studies. Rather, these scriptures were a specific group of texts transmitted from the Grand Thearchical Lord (*Taidi jun* 太帝君) via Wei’s master, Wang Bao. In fact, Wang also underwent this same transmission of texts by way of his master, the Primal Lord of the Southern Culmen (*Nanji yuanjun* 南極元君, Wang Hualin 王華林). When transmitting these scriptures to Wang Bao, the latter deity told him that all Perfected beings obtain (*huo* 獲) the thirty-one scriptures by command (*ming* 命) of the Grand Thearch.³⁰ This same text also indicates that when receiving these texts Wang performed an initiation ritual for supplicating (*zhudao* 祝禱) the Grand Thearch for the scriptures; Wang also taught this to Wei Huacun.

Even if readers imagined Wei Huacun’s scriptures as originating with the Grand Thearchical Lord, it does not necessarily clarify the titles of these texts. This connection between this deity and the transmission of the scriptures does, however, establish the contours of a “scripture” in this context. The ever-changing list of scriptures attached to Lady Wei further underscores that Daoist scriptures could be altered and remade without detracting from their authenticity. This refashioning of scriptures was a conscious and informed practice, not a haphazard decision that later readers made out of ignorance. In fact, readers acknowledge the complexity and great number of scriptures that made it difficult to discern the actual number of scriptures. In the anonymous catalogue *Description of the Upper Clarity Scriptures* (*Shangqing*

jingshu 上清經述), for instance, the author acknowledges that Wei Huacun went on to transmit other texts not mentioned in her hagiography:

Our Lady [Wei] received other scriptures that are not included here among the thirty-one fascicles. All the books she received are listed in her hagiography; there is no way we could list them one by one.³¹

夫人前後所授，非但此三十一卷而已。其篇卷悉在傳中，不能一一書之。

For readers of Upper Clarity texts, there was an “open canon” of scriptures that could be augmented and changed. These divinely inspired texts were continually revealed and added to previously existing ones. As the texts attached to Lady Wei’s hagiography attest, scriptures were fluid entities, continually made and remade by way of revelatory experiences. As we shall see below, this kind of borrowing, reformulating, and repackaging older texts through revelation was the norm and not the exception in mid-fourth-century Daoism.

Medieval catalogues indicate that scriptures were constantly being altered by Daoist mediums, and it is hard to pinpoint when these changes took place since the cataloguers only list titles. As a result, it is hard to discern when and how mediums added or altered scriptures through revelation. Understanding the textual processes of writing and rewriting scriptures in early Daoist contexts requires us to delve into those texts where we can discern such changes taking place.

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Chapter Two

Three Ones

A Stereoscopic View of a Daoist Hagiography

Daoist mediums in early medieval China would sometimes import older texts without any alteration. Most often, they would juxtapose the earlier text with a newer scripture. In other cases, terms and ideas from an older text were “upgraded,” as mediums altered the older texts with updated ritual knowledge. As Gil Raz has demonstrated, these changes were not simply stylistic choices; they conveyed arguments for and against competing ritual programs.¹ Mediums made conscious changes in scriptural language in an effort to bolster the worth of their new ritual program and diminish the influence of previously circulating texts. Rather than introduce entirely new scriptures and ignore competing ideas, mediums were more likely to borrow, adapt, and appropriate others’ ideas.

One example Raz provides in his study of Upper Clarity texts are the practices belonging to two ideal practitioners within religious Daoism, Transcendent (*xian*) and Perfected (*zhen*). Both appear throughout Upper Clarity literature and represent high postmortem ranks in the afterworld that adepts earned by conducting the rituals featured in these texts. The rituals associated with Perfected, however, are represented as a more elevated and esoteric practice reserved for humans destined to be part of the highest echelon of the Daoist pantheon.

Despite the insignificant status Upper Clarity writers place on Transcendent books and methods, these “lower” forms of practice were constituent parts of the adept’s repertoire. This raises many questions: Why, for instance,

would mediums feature these inferior or low-grade books at all? What roles might such books play in the larger rhetorical schemata? And if Perfected scriptures were so much better, would it not be more advantageous to focus one's writing on the superiority of Perfected texts?

One of the best documented examples of Transcendent and Perfected beings is found in the scriptures revealed to a medium preceding Yang as the Xu family's advisor, Hua Qiao 華僑.² We know little about the dates of Hua Qiao's initial employment. He undertook the position after initiation into the Xu's local Daoist parish in the mid-fourth century. Hua produced a variety of texts on behalf of the Xu family, and these texts were imagined to record the dialogue that Hua maintained with two gods, Zhou Yishan 周義山 and Pei Xuanren 裴玄仁. Only one of these texts is extant, the "Esoteric Hagiography of the Perfected Being of Purple Solarity" (*Ziyang zhenren neizhuan* 紫陽真人內傳, hereafter "Zhou's Hagiography"). This text records the spiritual journey and ascetic regimen of Zhou Yishan, an otherwise unknown figure from ancient China who appeared to Hua in a transfigured state. It is one of the earliest examples of a new kind of genre in Daoist writing, the esoteric hagiography (*nei zhuan* 內傳), in which a lengthy narrative records the biographical details of saints, with a particular focus on the methods he or she used to transform from a human into a Perfected being.

"Zhou's Hagiography" has been studied many times; it has been translated into French and English.³ The majority of these studies have focused on Hua's ritual program of visualization techniques that readers might emulate.⁴ Here, we build on these studies by analyzing the relationship of "Zhou's Hagiography" to earlier texts by reading different versions side by side. Reading this text stereoscopically gives us tangible examples of how scriptures in this era were altered. It further demonstrates how such alterations correlated with ongoing rewriting of the human practices associated with the practices of Perfected beings.

The Esoteric Hagiography of Zhou Yishan

One of the key features of "Zhou's Hagiography" was a list of the scriptures Hua Qiao's heavenly teacher, Zhou Yishan, received (*shou* 授) during his

time as a human adept.⁵ This list of book titles represented those scriptures that the medium (Hua Qiao) could procure from his Perfected teacher on behalf of his sponsors (the Xu family). The scripture titles were not fanciful or chosen at random but were represented as an entire ritual program that Hua circulated among Xu's circle of readers.⁶ The author of an anonymous epilogue, written in the early fifth century, suggests that Hua's contact with the Perfected occurred after his conversion to Daoism helped him overcome an unstable mental condition.

[Hua] Qiao feared there was no escape from this demonic torment. He thereupon turned from the profane [spirits] and unto the Dao. [Hua] called upon the libationer in the Danyang parish of the Xu [family] and underwent Daoist initiation rituals. The horde of demons disappeared, never to return again. Many years after his initial initiation, [Hua] suddenly dreamt of two men roughly fifty years old dressed in extraordinary ceremonial garb. These two then reappeared [to Hua] on the thirtieth day of the first month. They returned many times thereafter at the silent chamber of Hua's residence, but only Hua could see them. One [of the men] was named Zhou [Yishan] and the other Pei [Xuanren]. Pei was refined and talented in a way that Qiao could never quite convey [in his writings]. Zhou, on the other hand, was quite different. These two beings took turns instructing [Hua] Qiao by bestowing scriptures. All of these texts were connected to the *Five Thousand Characters* (i.e., *Daode jing*), and their contents dealt with Daoist precepts and practices, mental cultivation, and prognosticatory texts. All of the scriptures bestowed by these two beings were held in secret and were not in general circulation. Zhou composed his own hagiography, but Pei has yet to do so.⁷

僑自懼必為諸鬼所困，於是背俗入道，詣祭酒丹陽許治，受奉道之法。羣鬼各便消散，不復來往。奉道數年，忽夢見二人，年可五十，容儀衣服非常。後遂二人見，或一月三十日，時時往來僑家靖室中。唯僑得見。一人姓周，一人姓裴。裴雅重才理，非僑所申；周似不如。此二人先後教授僑經書，書皆與《五千文》相參，多說道家誠行，養性事，亦有纖諱。所受二人經書皆隱秘不宣。周自作《傳》，裴作未成。

This passage reflects aspects of the institutional climate in which Hua circulated this text. Hua Qiao “called upon the libationer (*jijiu* 祭酒) in

the Danyang parish (*zhi* 治) of the Xu [family]" to receive Daoist initiation rituals; Hua subsequently constructed a silent chamber (*jingshi* 靖室) in his house. All the words have strong associations for early Celestial Masters in Daoism: "parish" referred to the center of an administrative district; "silent chamber" (or "oratory") was the central place for ritual performances; a "libationer" was the person with the highest clerical status within a parish.⁸ Furthermore, Hua is said to have received the *Daode jing* and Daoist precepts. This leaves little doubt that Hua's employment occurred after he had been initiated into a Celestial Masters Daoist community.

In Celestial Masters' communities, however, only a libationer is invested with the power to transmit texts (usually the *Daode jing*) to initiates.⁹ The epilogue opens the possibility of a potential conflict with Hua's supernatural teachers who bestowed texts through revelation to a newly initiated adept. This would certainly explain why Hua held his scriptures in secret and did not circulate them. Furthermore, the above passage also asserts that Hua joined the parish of the Xu family, but it is not clear how Hua's divine informants were connected with the Xu family. Tao Hongjing's commentary on Hua sheds some light on the relationship between the medium and his sponsors. Tao writes:

Hua Qiao . . . then became a Daoist initiate, and his affairs with the demons came to an end. Then, Perfected and Transcendent [beings] gradually came wandering his way. At first, he thought it was just a dream, but after many years [these deities] became fully visible to him in the middle of the night. Pei of Clear Numinosity (Pei Xuanren) and Zhou of Purple Solarity (Zhou Yishan) both arrived [at Hua's chamber] and ordered [Hua] to convey messages to the senior administrator (Xu Mi) on their behalf. But [Hua] Qiao was impetuous and often spoke to others about these mysterious directives. He was punished for these actions and was replaced by Yang. *Tao notes:* Hua and the Xu family had familial relations. Lord Pei [later] wrote about being steadfast in appealing to [the Perfected] because the senior administrator [continued] writing to him.¹⁰ According to the aforementioned revelations by the Lord Who Protects Lifespans (Mao Zhong 茅衷), Hua Qiao must have been convicted of a crime. The *Hagiography of Zhou of Purple Solarity* was recorded by [Hua] Qiao, and this is why it shares such a close relation to the Perfected beings' revelations.¹¹

華僑……遂入道，於鬼事得息，漸漸真仙來游，始亦止是夢，積年乃夜半形見。裴清靈、周紫陽至，皆使通傳旨意於長史。而僑性輕躁，多漏說冥旨，被責，仍以楊君代之。(陶注：)華與許氏有婚親，故長史書裴君，殷勤相詣也。若如前篇中有保命所告，則僑被罪也。今世中《周紫陽傳》即是僑所造，故與真誥相連也。

The correspondence between Hua Qiao and the two Perfected deities occurred, at least in part, in order to convey messages from heavenly beings to Xu Mi. There are also details about the reading habits of the Xu family's Daoist parish in the descriptions of Hua Qiao. Prior to Hua Qiao's entry into the parish, the Xu family's ritual regimen was primarily (if not exclusively) composed of Celestial Masters texts, especially the *Daode jing*, and they practiced methods of cultivation and prognostication. After Hua's initiation, however, there was a shift in interest toward the messages from supernatural beings, although these messages were still heavily cloaked in Celestial Masters' nomenclature. While Hua's correspondence with spirits was undertaken on behalf of the Xu family, the content of these conversations is unclear. At the very least, we know the transfer of scriptures between Hua and the Xu family occurred behind closed doors. Furthermore, we know that Hua Qiao received scriptures from Zhou and Pei, and the titles of scripture in his hagiography were the kinds of texts circulating among the Xu family prior to Yang Xi's arrival.

Differing Conceptions of Transcendence and Perfection

There are at least three versions of “Zhou’s Hagiography” extant in the Daoist Canon. Two of these redactions are now short vignettes within larger anthologies such as DZ 296 and 1032. The longest version of “Zhou’s Hagiography” is DZ 303, and there is good reason to think that this resembles the version Tao Hongjing possessed at the turn of the sixth century. In a commentarial note in DZ 303 attributed to Tao (referred to by his style Zhenbo 貞白), he writes that his version contains 3,488 characters. The layers of DZ 303 containing Zhou’s biographical details (parts A–D of table 2.1) exceed Tao’s count by only 500 characters. While it is certainly not identical to Tao’s manuscript, it is likely the closest to the early versions of the text.

Table 2.1
The Content of “Zhou’s Hagiography”

Part	Section	Content	Pages	Characters in Section	Characters in Part
A	1	Zhou’s early years	1a2–2a5	396	3,879
B	2	His encounter at Chenliu with master Su Lin	2a5–3b9	589	
	3	“Recipe for killing the grain worms” and “key instruction on flying transcendence”	3b9–5a5	441	
	4	The teachings of the Three Ones	5a5–7a4	658	
C	5	Zhou’s tour of mountains	7a4–8a6	380	707
	6	Meeting with the Yellow Elder Lord	8a6–9a8	372	
	7	Zhou’s second tour of mountains	9a8–10b7	486	
	8	Zhou’s second meeting with the Yellow Venerable Lord	10b7–11b9	370	
D	9	The transmission of the <i>Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto</i>	11b9–12a10	187	
E	10	The oral instructions of Zhou Yishan, no. 1	12b1–b8	124	
	11	The oral instructions of Zhou Yishan, no. 2	12b8–13a3	94	
	12	A brief hagiography of Su Lin	13a3–14b2	489	
F	13	Postface	14b3–4	24	96
	14	Brief commentary	14b5–9	72	
G	15	Zhou’s catalogue of scriptures	14b10–17a1	412	412
H	16	Five poems	17a2–18a5	356	356
I	17	Epilogue	19a6–20a1	259	

Parts A through D of “Zhou’s Hagiography” are composed of a lengthy narrative introducing Zhou’s background (part A), his path toward godhood (part B and C), and his transfiguration as a Perfected being (part D). We can further parse parts B and C, the bulk of this narrative, into two distinct halves. Part B introduces Zhou’s initial master, Su Lin 蘇林, who teaches Zhou the recipe for killing the grain worms (*sha guchong fang* 殺穀蟲方) and the key instruction on flying Transcendence (*feixian yaojue* 飛仙要訣). The second of these teachings is also known as the teaching (Dao) of the Three Ones (*sanyi* 三一), an advanced meditation regimen focusing on three parts of the human body. In Part C, Zhou travels a great distance to famed mountains, where he collects various scriptures and meets the Yellow Venerable Lord (Huang Laojun 黃老君), the deity who ultimately helps Zhou attain status as a Daoist god by bestowing the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto* (*Dadong zhenjing* 大洞真經, hereafter *Scripture of the Great Grotto*).

Hua Qiao emphasizes the conditions and qualifications necessary for the transmission of the scriptures in the text.¹² In the transition between parts B and C, Zhou obtains the key instruction on flying Transcendence and formally begins his training in the Perfected arts. Here we refer to these two phases as Zhou’s study of Transcendence (part B) and his search for Perfection (part C). Su Lin advises his disciple on these two branches of ascetic learning by recalling his own training in the Transcendent arts from his master Juanzi:

I, [Su Lin], received the secret key [teachings] from Juanzi and became fond of the method for preserving the Three Ones. This enabled me to command ghosts and spirits, for after I received the *Perfected Seal of the Thearchical Lord of Taiji*, I was enfeoffed on a famous mountain. Thus I have attained [the rank as a being] who will not die. This is also the first of the Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte’s Perfected books, a great instruction about the multitude of wonders. But I only learned these few things, and this is why I became a terrestrial Transcendent. Your name, on the other hand, is inscribed in the golden books [stored] in the palace of Fangzhu, where it appears on the Azure Register. The celestial offices have registered your so-called jade name of the golden pavilion. You are

certainly capable of riding on the clouds in your dragon-drawn chariot, and ride upward to the Purple Solarity [Palace] of the Grand Clarity [heaven]. You should wear the jade radiance talisman of golden perfection and don dragon robes with a tiger sash so that you can call on Perfected beings. The arts of my teachings (Dao) are only for terrestrial Transcendents or those who escape by simulating death; this is not for a Perfected being like you to study. I am but a middle-grade Transcendent being, so am not worthy to be your master.¹³

我受涓子祕要，善守三一之道，役使鬼神，受太極帝君真印，封掌名山，以得不死。亦是金闕帝君真書之首、眾妙之大訣。但吾所學少，成地仙人也。子名上金書於方諸之宮，命登《青錄》為字，所謂金闕玉名已定於天曹矣。必能乘雲駕龍，上造以紫陽太清，佩《金真玉光》、龍衣虎帶，拜為真人。我之道術，可教陸仙、尸解之人耳，非子真人所可學也。且我是中仙耳，不足以為子師。

Hua Qiao does not detail the division between various soteriological goals (e.g., Perfected being, middle Transcendent, terrestrial Transcendent). He does, however, explain the different activities associated with these arts. Transcendent beings cultivate their bodies after receiving an enfeoffment on a famous mountain. Perfected beings ride up to heavenly palaces in the Grand Clarity (*Taiqing* 太清) heavens where they receive further instruction. According to this passage, Su Lin is in possession of the teaching concerning the Three Ones due to his status as a middle Transcendent (*zhong xian* 中仙). In this system, practicing the Three Ones is a meditation for use by adepts whose rank is a middle Transcendent or lower. Someone who has been determined as destined for a Perfected rank, however, has little use for techniques such as the key instruction on flying Transcendence. Su Lin continues to explain how such methods, while beneficial, are unnecessary for a person who has already reached Perfected status:

While guarding the Ones through refining your spirit may not be a method (Dao) for upper-ranked Perfected, it is nevertheless a good practice for middle-ranked Perfected or terrestrial Transcendent beings.¹⁴

然守一鍊神雖非上真之道，亦是中真地仙之好事。

We also know that this older conception of the division of Perfected and Transcendent methods of bodily cultivation continued after Xu Mi fired Hua Qiao and hired Yang Xi as his advisor. But the exit of Hua did not quell the Xu family's desire to learn both Transcendent and Perfected arts. Xu Hui writes about a conversation he had in a dream with Zhou Yishan on June 4, 365. In his dream, Xu asks the heavenly being if it would be possible to receive transmission of Transcendent practices, now through his new advisor, Yang Xi. The god reprimands the adept for requesting a method that is ranked far below his appointment as a Perfected being.

On the night of twenty-seventh of the fourth lunar month in the third year of *xingning* . . . [Xu Hui] spoke to the Perfected lord, Lord Zhou, saying, “In the past, I heard from your master about the method of guarding the Ones. I beg you to transmit this [text] to me.” Lord Zhou responded, “I was initially a disciple of Lord Su, and he once told me the following: ‘Is it not absurd for someone with a Perfected [status] to ask about Transcendent [techniques]?’ I now offer these same words to you.” . . . Lord Zhou also told [Xu Hui], “You, lord, are a Perfected being. You have already been bestowed so many teachings, what need would you have for the Guarding the Ones method?”¹⁵

興寧三年四月二十七日 與真人周君語曰：「昔聞先生有守一法。願乞以見授。」周君曰：「寡人先師蘇君往曾見向言曰：『以真問仙，不亦迂乎？』，僕請舉此言以相與矣。」. . . . 周君又言曰：「. . . . 君乃真人也。且已大有所稟，將用守一何為耶？」

Xu Hui's dream suggests that Transcendent techniques such the Guarding the One ritual still piqued the interest of Upper Clarity disciples even though they could access more esoteric Perfected texts. Zhou Yishan gives Xu Hui the same advice he had received from his master during his human life. Now that Xu has been confirmed as Perfected being, he can access newer, esoteric scriptures and has no need for these older texts. In “Zhou's Hagiography,” his heavenly status was recorded on the Azure Register. These heavenly records would signal what kinds of books he should be reading during his human lifetime. A similar sentiment is expressed in Xu Hui's record of his dream, where his divine informants wish the human adept to read scriptures that correspond to their postmortem fate.

The transmission of esoteric Perfected scriptures enabled readers to ascend to higher and higher levels in their studies, thereby procuring elevated spiritual ranks. But readers did not always seek out the most esoteric rituals. Sometimes an adept wished to learn techniques below his or her rank. We find this desire for lower-grade scriptures elsewhere in “Zhou’s Hagiography.” In the fifth section, Zhou, who has now been identified as a Perfected being, inadvertently finds a Transcendent being, Yanmenzi 衍門子, while searching for another Transcendent being, Master Luan (Luan xiansheng 樂先生). Upon meeting Yanmenzi, Zhou bows to the ground and begs for an “essential formula for long life” (*changsheng yaojue* 長生要訣), a request to which Yanmenzi responds:

Your name is inscribed in the Cinnabar Terrace, why would you worry about whether or not you can attain a Transcendent [status]? There are many Transcendent beings who live in the Clear Vacuity Grotto-Palace of Mount Wangwu. Since you are just starting your studies, it would be best to go climb that mountain. . . . Master Luan is but a lower rank Transcendent. You, on the other hand, are a Perfected being. Why would a Perfected being even bother asking a Transcendent being? You should only follow a master once you have met a perfect being. You should not study with any being who is lower than a middle-rank Transcendent.¹⁶

子名在丹臺之中，何憂不仙乎？王屋清虛洞宮大多仙人。子始學，宜登此山。. . . . 樂先生，仙之下耳。子乃真人也。以真問仙，不亦煩乎？子遇真人，乃子之師也。中仙以下，非子所學。

Yanmenzi tells Zhou that it is futile to collect scripture of a lower rank given his status as a high-level Perfected being. Despite his reservations, Yanmenzi still bestowed two books concerning Transcendent arts to Zhou. It is not clear from this passage what role, if any, these two books played in Zhou’s ultimate quest for transfiguration as a Perfected being. We know that these two books are most likely ranked as a text for someone who is “a middle-rank Transcendent or lower” since Yanmenzi uses this title to explain why he is unfit to be Zhou’s teacher. Yanmenzi still accedes to the adept’s request. It is also curious that despite his awareness that Zhou was destined

for Perfection and his stance that Transcendent books were unnecessary for Zhou, Yanmenzi encourages Zhou to go to Mount Wangwu, where the aspiring Perfected being might learn from other Transcendent beings.

One key in understanding the dynamics between Yanmenzi and Zhou is the passage where the master remarks that Zhou has just started his studies (*shixue* 始學). Yanmenzi must think that the Transcendent beings at Mount Wangwu had at least a middle rank since he advises Zhou against studying with any god of a lower rank. Yet when Zhou arrives at Wangwu, the adept finds the door to the grotto where Transcendent beings live, and he enters their cinnabar chamber (*danshi* 丹室). After making an entrance, there is an immediate change in the behavior of these Transcendent beings:

[Zhou] encountered many Transcendent beings unfurling [scrolls] of silk to recite scriptures. Once these beings saw Lord [Zhou] they immediately rose to their feet.¹⁷

大遇仙人，皆披素讀經，見君皆起立。

The deference shown by the Transcendent beings indicates they were aware that Zhou's name was inscribed in the Azure Register as a Perfected being. An adept's posthumous status was predetermined, even at the initial stages of their training, and this rank was widely known throughout the heavenly hierarchy. Furthermore, the exchange of scriptures between an adept and a divine instructor occurred within a hierarchical system that bifurcated adepts as destined either for Transcendence or Perfection.

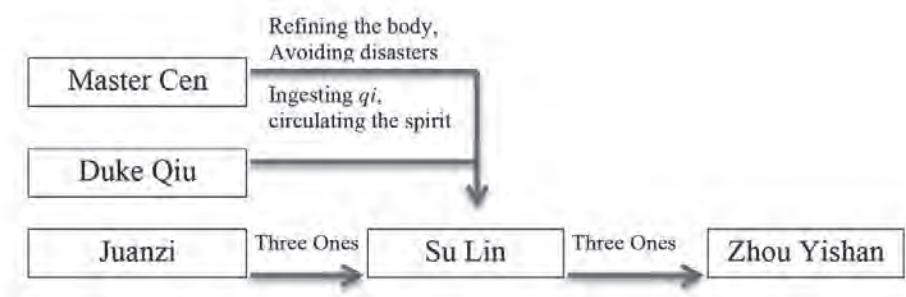
Comparing different Upper Clarity hagiographies suggests that Perfection and Transcendence were not fixed categories but could change over time. In "Zhou's Hagiography," Hua writes about how Su Lin first learned about the "Guarding the Ones" method from Juanzi. Table 2.2 includes excerpts from "Zhou's Hagiography" (left) and the corresponding passage from the "The Hagiography of Lord Su, the Upper Chamberlain of Xuanzhou" ("Xuanzhou shangqing Sujun zhuan" 玄洲上卿蘇君傳, hereafter "Su's Hagiography").

Table 2.2

Su's Lineage as Written in "Zhou's Hagiography" (DZ 303)	Su's Lineage as Written in "Su's Hagiography" (DZ 1032)
<p>I am a Transcendent being of the middle marchmount named Su Lin; my sobriquet is Zixuan. I am originally from Wei, and was born in the final year of Duke Ling (544 BCE). As a youth, I was fond of the Dao and its virtues, and I was taken on as a disciple of Master Cen. He bestowed teaching and techniques to refine my body and avert disasters.</p>	<p>The first teacher is surnamed Su, who had a taboo name Lin and a sobriquet Zixuan. He is from the meandering waters of Puyang.¹⁸ . . . At the age of twenty-one, he became a disciple of Master Qin'gao and received the teachings of refining <i>qi</i> to aid one's lifespan. Qin'gao was initially a secretary in the palace, and he was adept in the arts of using inner cultivation to replenish his essences; he was also able to glide upon the water.¹⁹ By that time, he was already nine hundred years, and had yet to die since he was a flying Transcendent. Later, he would ride a red carp underwater but occasionally would appear in the human world. . . . Later on, [Su Lin] changed teachers [to become a disciple] of Master Qiu, a Transcendent being of Huashan. Master Qiu was a woodworker during the time of King Tang (1617–1588 BCE). [Su Lin] gained many benefits by "circulating his spirit to guard the cloud-souls" through a method of embryonic [breathing] and eating <i>zhi</i> herbs. Master [Qiu] told [Su], "You, son, are a Perfected being, and thus should be studying Perfected teachings (Dao)." These ways of mine are not worth following." He then sent [Su] Lin off to Juanzi. Juanzi is a Perfected being, and meeting him, [Su] obtained Perfected instructions.²⁰</p>
<p>Later on, I met Duke Qiu. Duke Qiu showed me the method for ingesting <i>qi</i>, as well as the way for "circulating [my] spirit to guard the cloud-souls." These practices proved very useful, and I received many benefits as a result. Duke Qiu told me, "My knowledge of cultivation ends here, and I will not be able to help you ascend to heaven in broad daylight to become a Perfected official on high." He then sent me to Juanzi. Juanzi is a middle-ranked Transcendent being. I studied with him for many years before he taught me the method of the Three Ones.</p>	<p>吾是中嶽仙人蘇林，字子玄也。本衛人，靈公末年生。少好道德，受學於岑先生，岑先生見授鍊身消災之近術。後又傳仇公。仇公乃見教以服氣之法、還神守魂之事。吾行之甚驗，大得其益。仇公見告云：「術識盡此，不能使子白日升天，上為真官也。」致吾於涓子。涓子者，中仙人也。守之彌年，見教三一之法。</p>
	<p>先師姓蘇，諱林，字子玄，濮陽曲水人也。 . . . 師琴高先生，時年二十一，受鍊氣益命之道。琴高初為周康王門下舍人，以內行補精術及丹法，能水游飛行。時已九百歲，唯不死而已，飛仙也。後乘赤鯉入水，或出入人間。 . . . 後改師華山仙人仇先生。仇先生者，湯王時木匠也，服胎食芝法，還神守魂之事，大得其益。先生曰：「子真人也，當學真道，我跡不足躡矣。」乃致林於涓子。涓子者，真人也。既見之，遂授以真訣。</p>

Given the different ritual identities attributed to Transcendent and Perfected beings, Juanzi's rank as a Transcendent being in "Zhou's Hagiography" and a Perfected being in "Su's Hagiography" cannot simply be glossed over as a scribal error. Both authors agree that an adept's identity

as a Perfected or a Transcendent has a direct bearing on his or her access to scriptures. In “Su’s Hagiography,” the hagiographer stresses that Su Lin’s first master (Qin’gao) was *only* (*eryi* 而已) a flying Transcendent, and his second teacher (Qiu) told Su he was a Perfected being and needed to find a teacher of a similar rank. In this same text, Juanzi is characterized as a Perfected being who imparts upon Su Perfected instructions (*zhenjue* 真訣). The authors of both texts recognize that an adept’s rank as Transcendent or Perfected dictates his or her proper program of study. Furthermore, although these two hagiographers do not agree on the rank of Su Lin’s teachers, they share a similar conception of Su’s lineage and the content of what he gained from his three masters.



The Transmission of Techniques to Zhou Yishan.

All three of Su Lin’s former masters (Master Cen, Duke Qiu, and Juanzi) appear in the *Hagiographies of Arrayed Transcendents* (*Liexian zhuan* 列仙傳), a collection of hagiographic vignettes attributed to Liu Xiang 劉向 (77–6 BCE).²¹ When Upper Clarity mediums rewrote these hagiographies, they changed Transcendent gods into Perfected ones. In the following passage, Hua Qiao alters a story concerning Juanzi procuring a talisman from the belly of a carp. Instead of obtaining a talisman, Hua writes that Juanzi found a scripture in the fish’s belly. Furthermore, Juanzi’s discovery of this scripture was no mere accident but was the result of a transmission from the Azure Lad (*Qingtong jun* 青童君), here referred to as the Young Lad of the Eastern Sea and the Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte.²²

Table 2.3

Juanzi as depicted by Liu Xiang in the <i>Hagiographies of Arrayed Transcendents</i>	Juanzi as depicted by Hua Qiao in “Zhou’s Hagiography”
<p>Juanzi was a man of Qi. He loved to eat atractylodes so he might consume their essence. He did this for three hundred years until he presented himself [to the people of] Qi. He composed the <i>Scripture of Heaven, [Earth], and Humans</i>, which totaled forty-eight fascicles. Later on, while fishing in a pond of lotus flowers, he caught a carp. He cut open its belly and found a talisman. He [then] went into hiding on Mount Tuo where he was able to summon the wind and rain.</p> <p>涓子者，齊人也。好餌朮，接食其精。至三百年乃見於齊。著《天[地]人經》四十八篇。後釣於荷澤，得鯉魚，腹中有符。隱於宕山，能致風雨。</p>	<p>Juanzi seems to have been a man from Qi. As a youth, he loved to eat atractylodes so he might consume their essence. He could reach the heavens in meditation. Later in life, while he was fishing in the river marshes, he saw the Young Lad of the Eastern Sea. The latter spoke to Juanzi saying, “If you catch a carp, cut it open.” Naturally, Juanzi found such a fish and cut open its belly. He obtained the Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte’s Method for Guarding the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes. He thereupon went to Mount Tuo and was able to summon the wind and rain.</p> <p>涓子似齊人，少好餌朮，接食其精，精思感天。後釣於河澤，見東海小童語之曰：「釣後鯉者剖之」。後果得而剖魚腹，獲《金闕帝君守三元真一之法》。於是遂隱橐山，能致風雨。</p>

The differences in these two texts suggest that writers like Hua Qiao and Yang Xi were consciously adapting these stories to bolster their arguments for a ranked system of heavenly beings. The Perfected beings who purportedly contacted the Xu family’s advisors were viewed as revealing books that would introduce readers to new heavenly places, new forms of bodily cultivation, and new divine powers. Yet these writers could not simply erase the entrenched notions about the path(s) to godhood. Rather than attempt to replace older notions of transcendence, writers of Upper Clarity scriptures developed creative ways to adapt and rewrite the ancient adepts as occupying a place within the Upper Clarity pantheon. This array of gods was constantly in a state of flux and change.

The Rewriting of the Transcendent World

According to their respective hagiographies, both Zhou Yishan and Su Lin studied with Transcendent masters prior to their study of Perfection. Transcendent beings, like their Perfected counterparts, are divided into ranks

that determine what miraculous feats they can perform and what books they may possess. Table 2.4 represents six classes of Transcendent beings as they appear in “Zhou’s Hagiography.” Zhou’s master, Su Lin, tells the adept about the different kinds of Transcendent beings that roam the universe. They are as follows:

Table 2.4

Rank	Capabilities	Possible Positions
Upper Transcendent (<i>shang xian</i> 上仙)	(a) Ride on cloudy chariots pulled by dragons, (b) ascend to heaven in broad daylight, (c) become a peer of the Perfected beings of Taiji heavens, (d) ranked as a Transcendent official	(a) Sire who monitors the Perfected (<i>sizhen gong</i> 司真公), (b) sire who fixes the primes (<i>dingyuan gong</i> 定元公), (c) sire of grand genesis (<i>taisheng gong</i> 太生公), (d) central grandee (<i>zhonghuang dafu</i> 中黃大夫), (e) elder of the nine <i>qi</i> (<i>jiuqi zhangren</i> 九氣丈人), sire of the Transcendent metropolis (<i>xiandu gong</i> 仙都公)
Minor Upper Transcendent (<i>shang xian zhi ci</i> 上仙之次)	n/a	(a) Transcendent chamberlain (<i>xianqing</i> 仙卿), grandee (<i>dafu</i> 大夫)
Middle Transcendent (<i>zhong xian</i> 中仙)	(a) Travels to the five marchmounts, (b) goes to the Grand Clarity heavens, (c) orders ghosts and spirits	n/a
Minor Middle Transcendent (<i>zhong xian zhi ci</i> 中仙之次)	(a) Enfeoffed in the mountains, (b) leads ghosts and spirits, (c) travels to the Lesser Existence (<i>xiaoyou</i> 小有), assembles at the Clear Vacuity Palace	n/a
Lower Transcendent (<i>xia xian</i> 下仙)	(a) Eats grains but does not die, (b) has no shadow when standing in the sun	n/a
Minor Lower Transcendent (<i>xia xian zhi ci</i> 下仙之次)	(a) Can escape by means of simulated corpse in broad daylight, (b) can escape death in the Grand Yin	n/a

In this hierarchy, Transcendent beings occupying the lowest ranks are beings who have yet to cease eating grains. And those beings at the lowest rank were capable of the death-escaping arts that had been popular centuries earlier in the Han dynasty and early Celestial Masters communities. This means that these beings still have bodies susceptible to the three worms (*san chong* 三蟲) and the three corpses.²³ The presence of such entities means that the lower Transcendents did not have a high enough status to engage in any meditative technique requiring one to ingest *qi*. An example of this kind of Transcendent would be Master Cen in “Su’s Hagiography,” who is depicted as “already nine hundred years old, and had yet to die.” Beings belonging to the lower class were adepts who had achieved long life but would nevertheless still die.²⁴

Transcendent beings that are ranked in the middle fall into two categories, middle and minor middle. The middle Transcendents are beings who have been enfeoffed with a spiritual domain over a particular place. Upon reaching the status of either a terrestrial Transcendent (*dixian* 地仙) or a marchmount Transcendent (*yuexian* 罂仙), these beings could control the spirits and ghosts of their territory. In “Zhou’s Hagiography,” there is no indication of what rank Master Qiu reached, but in “Su’s Hagiography,” we learn that he is a Transcendent being of Mount Hua (Huashan 華山), which would indicate that he had been enfeoffed on this mountain. The minor middle Transcendents are labeled as beings who could roam in Lesser Existence (*Xiaoyou* 小有) and Clear Vacuity (*Qingxu* 清虛), where they would gather in assemblies of spirit beings. One of the revelations featured in Tao’s *Declarations* identifies the latter term as one of the palaces in the Grotto-to-Heaven of Mount Wangwu (Wangwushan 王屋山) where Transcendent beings gather.²⁵ Elsewhere in these revelations, we find that Wei Huacun’s master, Wang Bao 王褒, governs over Mount Wangwu under the title of Celestial King of the Lesser Existence [heavens] (*Qingxu tianwang* 清虛天王).²⁶ But Zhou’s hagiographer likely does not see the minor middle Transcendents as restricted to this particular grotto-heaven; rather, they would be appointed to roam within any one of the grotto-heavens where they could join the assemblies of spiritual bureaucrats who gathered in various administrative capacities.

Middle Transcendents were not just assigned to peripheral mountains but could serve at any one of the five marchmounts (*wuyue* 五嶽). These five peaks were objects of considerable worship in medieval China. They were the places where refined *qi* would concentrate and could safeguard the entire empire. Although a seemingly minor detail, the idea that Transcendents could rise to be ranked among the spirits of China's highest mountains indicates that for Upper Clarity mediums, these spirits had a status equivalent to the lowest rung of the celestial hierarchy. Thus they were beings who did not simply hold terrestrial status but could also control lower spirits and ghosts from stations on high in the Grand Tenuity (*Taiwei*) heavens. When Su Lin is described as a middle Transcendent in "Zhou's Hagiography," his rank was the result of practicing the method of the Three Ones. Su Lin describes to Zhou Yishan how he attained this rank :

If you are able to guard [the Three Ones], a chariot of clouds with a feather canopy will be sent. As you ride this, you can send forth wind and rain with flashes of lightning and peals of thunder. . . . When I received this [method], I was then able to soar over famous mountains and visit the various lodges of the Fangzhu lodges. I rested on the hills of the Cinnabar Tumulus and gazed far in all eight directions. I was thus most happy to perch there.²⁷

能守之，致雲車羽蓋，坐造風雨，激電砰磕矣. . . . 吾因受之，得以遊翔名山，往來方諸之館，寢息丹陵之丘，看望八表，得意而栖。

Transcendent beings that were ranked in the highest echelon were stationed in Taiji heavens, where they served alongside the Perfected. The Perfected Taiji were the heavenly officials who monitored the progress of adepts in training. The minor upper Transcendents who served alongside these high gods were called Transcendent officials (*xianguan* 仙官), while the upper Transcendents were referred to as the masters of Transcendent officials (*xianguan zhi zhu* 仙官之主). A revelation from the fifth fascicle of *Declarations*, the "Transmissions of the Dao" ("Daoshou" 道授), describes this heavenly bureaucracy as follows:

The Wilds of Lang refer to the bureau located at Mount Langfeng. This bureau, along with nine others in the Kunlun Mountains, constitute the “nine bureaus,” also known as the “nine palaces.” The grand officials are in the Grand Culmen [Palace]. A bevy of Transcendents serves in each one of the nine palaces. There are also Perfected beings in the nine palaces who serve as sires, chamberlains, and grandes. The Transcendent officials have all been assigned a rank and occupy a specific post among the hierarchy. The Transcendents are [organized into] left and right precincts, and the sires, chamberlains, grandes, and censors are likewise divided into left and right. Those who understand the *Great Grotto* are Transcendent chamberlains; those who have ingested a golden elixir are grandes; those who have ingested a variety of excrescences are censors; and if you have ingested the hidden excrescence bestowed at the Taiji [Palace], you will become a left or right Transcendent sire and perhaps even a Perfected being.²⁸

閬野者，閬風之府是也。崑崙上有九府，是為九宮，太極為太宮也。諸仙人俱是九宮之官僚耳。至於真人，乃九宮之公、卿、大夫。仙官有上下，各有次秩。仙有左右府，而有左右公、左右卿、左右大夫、左右御史也。明《大洞》為仙卿，服金丹為大夫，服眾芝為御史。若得太極隱芝服之，便為左右仙公及真人矣。

Perfected and Transcendent officials assume different posts and are allotted separate duties. But all levels of this hierarchy are governed by the same kind of principles. The posts, duties, and corresponding powers of these spiritual officials are determined by an adept’s human acts. The more rarified and esoteric an adept’s practice, the higher positions the adept was entitled to upon his or her death. Also, every being occupies one part of a larger system, no matter if the official served in Taiji or Upper Clarity heavens. They do not die and wholly transfigure as the Dao, a process described as merging with perfection (*hezhen* 合真). Rather, every Perfected and Transcendent being occupies a position (with a limited jurisdiction) among a vast spiritual hierarchy.

The above passages indicate that Upper Clarity writer envisioned that the training to become a Transcendent being was a long process beginning with longevity techniques and ending with serving as a spiritual official.²⁹ The point is not simply that there were lower, middle, and upper levels of

Transcendents, but rather that human could aspire to these positions in the afterworld. Choices made in this life and the zeal one showed in practicing these techniques would have an impact on the amount of prestige one gained after death. Furthermore, the authors of the above texts emphasize that if human adepts are studying transcendence, it is unlikely that they could attain a rank as a Perfected being. In the above examples of Juanzi, Su Lin, and Zhou Yishan, if an adept's highest level of practice was the method of the Three Ones as detailed in the key instruction on flying Transcendence, the adept would never surpass the rank of middle Transcendent.

Neither “Su’s Hagiography” nor “Zhou’s Hagiography” ends with the description of ancient adepts and their Transcendent arts. Rather, the masters of Transcendent arts appear in these narratives when an Upper Clarity saint starts his or her transition between Transcendent and Perfected training. This liminal identity of the middle Transcendents reflects that writers like Hua Qiao or Yang Xi were cleverly repositioning previously circulating texts. We have already seen that middle Transcendents are featured in early collections like the *Hagiographies of Arrayed Transcendents*. The latter, of course, does not represent Transcendents as subject to a bureaucratic system, nor is there a clear notion of what an adept must do in order to become a Transcendent. But Hua and Yang did not simply systematize their texts. In the first through the third centuries, we find various theories about how Transcendent beings were grouped into three different classes.³⁰ Furthermore, in earlier texts, certain practices correspond with levels of posthumous rank.

In this new wave of hagiographic literature, adepts are identified in the stories as having inborn characteristics entitling them to a position in the Upper Clarity heavens as Perfected beings. Once an adept discovers that he or she is destined for Perfection rather than Transcendence, there is a dramatic shift in the story. This new information requires an individual to procure new scriptures concerning cultivation methods of the Perfected variety. This shift toward Perfection by no means negates or disproves the Transcendent arts, but, once an individual starts on the path toward perfection, all the Transcendent arts he or she may have learned are not only inferior, they are no longer necessary. We see this kind of transition in “Su’s Hagiography” when

Su's master, Juanzi, reveals that he has been summoned to a higher post and will no longer enjoy his blissful existence as a Transcendent.

I have eaten atractylodes for three hundred years, ingested *qi* for five hundred years, meditated for six hundred years, guarded the Three Ones for three hundred years, guarded the Cavern-Room for six hundred years, and have guarded the Mysterious Cinnabar for five hundred years. During this time, I have wandered throughout the famous mountains and have gazed out over the eight seas. When flying circles over the five marchmounts, I have taken rest in cavern chambers. I take joy in the drooping branches of trees and flowers, as well as calling out to the birds and beasts. All the essences formed by the rivers and conduits, as well as the verdancy produced by the hills and ridges, have resulted in the great proliferation of life and the alternation of the seasons. I cast my hook into the long and winding [river] and rambled off to the Xuanlai [Dark sandbar]. I stilled my mind atop source-monts, intoned Perfected [words], and cultivated my *qi*. I called on the six *ding*, and the jade maidens appeared as my guards.³¹ I have passed through all six directions; I have tarried in each and every place. I am now over 2,800 years old as I guard my [bodily] form and meditate on Perfection. I really enjoy life as a middle Transcendent being and never worry about whether or not I am famous. But I have now finally been summoned and must go assume a higher post in heaven. I now pace back and forth across the marshlands and am despondent that this will be my last breath. I must go. Please take care as we depart.³²

吾餌朮精三百年，服氣五百年，精思六百年，守三一三百年，守洞房六百年，守玄丹五百年。中間復周遊名山，看望八海，回翔五嶽，休息洞室。樂林草之垂條，與鳥獸之相激。川瀆吐精，丘陵蓊鬱，萬物之秀，寒暑之節。弋釣長流，遨遊玄瀨。靜心山岫，念真養氣。呼召六丁、玉女見衛。展轉六合，無所羈束。守形思真二千八百餘年，寔樂中仙不求聞達。今卒被召，上補天位。徘徊世澤，惆悵絕氣。吾其去矣，請從此別。

When Xu Mi's advisors posited the existence of the Upper Clarity, this meant far more than simply adding a higher layer to the cosmic map. "Discovering" the Upper Clarity heaven meant there was a higher calling now facing Transcendent beings. Whereas Juanzi appears in the *Hagiographies*

of *Arrayed Transcendents* as “fishing in a pond of lotus flowers” or “hiding on Mount Tuo,” in this Upper Clarity text, Juanzi must relinquish his Transcendent life to go higher in the heavens and take on a new mission. This mission of the Upper Clarity gods to save humans is key since the Transcendent beings are being recruited to take on “jobs” in the heavens.³³ Hua and Yang represent the free and easy lifestyle of Transcendent beings as ending abruptly as these beings were called up for a higher purpose.

Now that we have examined the transition between Transcendence and Perfection, let us return to Zhou Yishan’s story to delve deeper into how he responds to his higher calling toward Perfection.

The Completion of the Three Ones

A key technique marking the transition between Transcendence and Perfection is guarding the Ones. When Su Lin describes the “first of the Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte’s Perfected books,” for instance, he means that he had taken the first step up the ladder of the Thearchical Lord’s otherworldly bureaucracy.³⁴ Zhou Yishan also experiences this kind of spiritual promotion. In the beginning of the following text, Zhou is depicted as the ideal sage of late antiquity: he has a serious expression, rarely makes jokes, is never quick to anger, and often sits in contemplation.³⁵ But once he discovers he is predestined for Perfection, Zhou has an epiphany about the qualities of “nothingness” (*wu* 無) within the human body. Zhou discovers a correspondence of nothingness in the heavens, on earth, and in the human body:

The part of heaven where there is nothing is called the “void.” The part of a mountain where there is nothing is called a “grotto.” The part of a human where there is nothing is called a “room.” The subterranean hollow of a mountain is called its “Grotto-Court,” and the hollow of a human head is called a person’s “Grotto-Room.” Perfected beings can live in the heavens, on earth, or in the human body because of this [shared nothingness]. They pass through places where there is no room. For them, a grain of rice can fit Mount Penglai and can even encompass the “six directions” (i.e., the world). Heaven and earth could not possibly constrain

them. [These beings] only concentrate their thoughts and meditate on perfection by guarding their Three Palaces and calling upon the spirits of the Ones. After diligently contemplating [these spirits], they will surely see Non-pareil, White Prime, and the Yellow Elder Lord within their Grotto-Room.³⁶

天無謂之「空」，山無謂之「洞」，人無謂之「房」也。山腹中空虛是為「洞庭」，人頭中空虛是為「洞房」。是以真人處天，處山，處人，入無間，以黍米容蓬萊山，包括六合，天地不能載焉。唯精思存真，守三宮，朝一神，勤苦念之，必見無英、白元、黃老在洞房焉。

Here the Dao is understood as nothingness, and in the human body, this nothingness is located within the human head. Furthermore, the Dao connects (*tong* 通) the nothingness of the human mind with its analogues in a subterranean cavern, and outer space. The author speaks about the Perfected moving between the realms of nothingness with ease, an idea for adepts who might remain steadfast in their meditative practices to experience nothingness. This passage also bolsters the notion that any person wishing to transition between Transcendent arts to their Perfected counterparts must “guard their three palaces” and visualize spirits as outlined in the “Perfected Ones of the Three Primes” formula.

The most pivotal point in Zhou’s path to perfection occurs in the subsequent part of the text, where he ascends Mount Song (Songshan 嵩山) and has an audience with the Yellow Elder Lord. The author of this text asserts that Zhou’s encounter with this Perfected being was purely coincidental since the latter happened to be in Mount Song’s Grotto-Court in a meeting with a bevy of Transcendent officials. While the hagiography does not clarify what business brought the Yellow Elder Lord to this subterranean chamber, a later revelation suggests that such a meeting was one of the periodic gatherings of spirits held in order to promote and demote human adepts.³⁷ When Zhou asked the Yellow Elder Lord to instruct him on the methods for longevity:

Lord [Zhou] came forth, bowed his head, and kowtowed twice. He begged for longevity and salvation and showed his willingness to ascend and serve as an assistant Transcendent official. The Yellow Elder Lord asked, “Have

you actualized Lord White Prime within your Grotto-Room?” Lord [Zhou] responded, “Indeed, I have often seen Lord White Prime when I actualize him within my Grotto-Room.” The Yellow Elder Lord then said, “Yet your teachings (Dao) remain inadequate. You must travel once again and collect the key esoteric instructions. Only then will I bestow the scriptures of the upper Perfected teachings (Dao) to you. While you have seen Lord White Prime, you have yet to see Lord Non-pareil. You must proceed onward.” With this, Lord [Zhou] bowed and kowtowed to show his thanks for these instructions. He also requested that he receive a dragon chariot to assist him on his long journey.³⁸

君既至，頓頭再拜，乞長生度世，願上佐仙官。黃老君曰：「子存洞房之內，見白元君耶？」君對曰：「實存洞房，嘗見白元君。」黃老君曰：「子道未足矣！且復游行，受諸要訣，當以上真道經授子也。子見白元君，未見無英君，且復行也。」君再拜受教，復頓頭，乞得侍接龍車為遊走之使。

According to the Yellow Elder Lord, the key for Zhou Yishan to transition into a Perfected status is to successfully meditate on the spirits residing in his “Grotto-Room.” Zhou Yishan might have been born with the credentials to become Perfected, but he must first engage in the requisite ritual activity before this kind of postmortem rank is conferred on him.

After Zhou Yishan takes leave of the Yellow Elder Lord, he goes on a tour of various places collecting scriptures outlining different parts of the Perfected teachings. At first glance, this list of scriptures resembles what later Upper Clarity readers call the “thirty-one fascicles” of the Perfected teachings, but this list lacks the systematization of later Upper Clarity catalogues. The scriptural titles feature both Perfected and Transcendent titles, suggesting that the sequence of these texts was not significant. But the author considers the *Scripture of the Great Grotto* as the ultimate goal for those aspiring for Perfection. This scripture is a kind of bridge ensuring that an adept can move directly to the ranks of the upper Perfected. In the end, Zhou sees the three spirits of his Grotto-Room at Mount Kong (Kongshan 空山).

Lord Non-pareil occupied the left, Lord White Prime occupied the right, and the Yellow Elder Lord occupied the center. Lord Non-pareil donned a

brocade [vest] of golden essence and a robe of vermillion *bi*-jade and jasper twill. [He was like] the blazing red of morning auroras and the purling phosphors sparkling in the heavens. On his waist, he wore the “Most High Numinous *Qi*” emblem and the “Nine Thearchs Expelling Evil” slips. He wore a crown with a purple dragon rising from kingfisher feathers. He was the grandfather of the Upper Prime’s Ruddy Infant in Grand Mystery’s Cinnabar Numen [Palace]. To his left, the *qi* of the Azure Palace was in motion and coursed through the manifold spirits. He was born in the vacuous void before the world existed. Lord White Prime. . . . He was the father of the Upper Prime’s Ruddy Infant in the Jade Room’s Cloudy Hall. On his right was a chamber of hoary clarity in which the [radiance] of dawn was first set in motion.³⁹ The Yellow Elder Lord was in the center [of this chamber]; he was the master and elder of the four Perfected kings of Taiji. He could rise into the Nine Heavens and proceed directly to the Kunlun [mountains]. Yellow gate towers flanked him on the outside, and he was within a Purple Room. He then descended and entered into your Grotto-Room along with the other two lords. While [this room] is but three *cun* round, they still had a majestic presence.⁴⁰

無英君處其左，白元君處其右，黃老君處其中。無英君被服金精之錦、朱碧玉綾之袍，光赤朝霞，流景曜天，腰太上靈氣之章，佩九帝祛邪之策，著翠上紫龍之冠，蓋太玄丹靈上元赤子之祖父也。左運青宮之氣，氣灌萬神，乃未有天地，先自虛空而生矣。白元君. . . . 蓋玉房雲庭上元赤子之父，右夾皓清之室，朝運生者也。中央黃老君是太極四真王之師老矣。上攝九天，中遊崑崙，黃闕來其外，紫房在其內，下與二君入人洞房，員三寸，威儀具焉。

Upon seeing these three deities, Zhou asks the Yellow Elder Lord to instruct him on the secret instructions for upper Perfection. The Lord asks Zhou to once again close his eyes and meditate, at which time Zhou is able to see the same three deities inside his own Grotto-Room. Zhou’s ability to see these three lords in his mind, says the Yellow Elder Lord, entitles him to the teachings of upper Perfection.

The key function of the great spirits of the Grotto-Room is their ability to confer Perfected status on the adept. Furthermore, this story is important because it demonstrates that Perfected teachings were predicated on the

idea that there was a resonance and conceptual overlap between the external world (the Grotto-Chamber) and the adept's mind (the Grotto-Room). The discovery of the spirits of the mental realm was not just a new spirit to add to the panoply of deities already known in early medieval China. Rather, the emergence of the Perfected teachings represented a new soteriological scheme, one in which the cosmos, the earth, and the human body were understood as analogous and interpenetrating systems.

Zhou Yishan became an Upper Perfected after visualizing the spirits in his Grotto-Room. This transformation was marked by the bestowal of the *Scripture of the Great Grotto* by the Yellow Elder Lord. Zhou's heightened meditative state was not the culmination but rather the penultimate step in completing his training. After receiving the thirty-nine parts making up the *Scripture of the Great Grotto*, Zhou eventually ascended to the Grand Tenuity Palace.⁴¹ After this, Zhou went before the Thearchical Lord of Grand Tenuity, where he was given the title Perfected Being of Purple Solarity (Ziyang zhenren 紫陽真人) and enfeoffed within the grotto of Mount Geyan (Geyan shan 葛衍山).

The above story of Zhou Yishan, told by Hua Qiao, is an excellent example of how mediums in Upper Clarity Daoism adapted earlier tales and concepts. We have tried to reinforce these changes by studying Hua's hagiography stereoscopically. There are a number of instances we find in this text where Hua consciously borrowed and remade older tales. At the very least, Xu and readers in his Daoist community knew some of these previously circulating materials. This leads us to wonder exactly what kinds of texts Xu and his community likely knew. How might they react when they read these altered texts? What would such conventions reflect about the ways Daoist scriptures were read in this era?

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Chapter Three

Five Stars

Remaking Daoist Ritual

One of the most difficult parts of reading Daoist scriptures is that mediums often include a variety of rituals even though only one is needed. A single scripture might include a dozen macrobiotic and meditation exercises, even though only one or two are perceived as essential. The extra information is included for reference, but is not needed to ensure that an adept becomes a Daoist god in the afterlife. But the information in Daoist scriptures is not random. It represents an array of exercises an adept needs to transcend his human state and reach godhood.

The various ritual options available to the adept are often written as a list of techniques. Scriptures often contain a hierarchy and ranking system for these rituals. In “Zhou’s Hagiography,” the different techniques of bodily cultivation form a sequence of exercises adepts might follow to reach the highest ranks of the Perfected pantheon.¹ Such progressions are a common feature in all the Upper Clarity hagiographies. These expositions are not a hodgepodge of ideas but rather a systematic explanation of how a human adept might progress along a path to godhood. Texts such as “Zhou’s Hagiography” present a wide array of ritual possibilities, yet they are graded into a hierarchy from basic to advanced.

But how did writers such as Hua Qiao come up with a hierarchy of ritual techniques? What were the sources and lineages from which they culled this particular set? Was he arguing against other texts with variant hierarchies? It would be hard to answer such questions if we only look at other

Upper Clarity texts. Many of the ideas developed by Upper Clarity writers exist (sometimes verbatim) in other non–Upper Clarity literature in the Daoist Canon and elsewhere. Hua and Yang adapted the previously known rituals by consciously situating these practices within a larger ritual framework. While many of the practices and ideas were featured in previously circulating materials, we underscore that the pastiche of the rituals formed a systematic explanation of how human adepts could attain godhood. The revelation of the Upper Clarity scriptures was not merely retelling what came before, but the rendering of a new liturgical framework. New mediums breathed new life into previously circulated scriptures.

The Classical Heritage of the Three Ones

In “Zhou’s Hagiography,” the Way of the Three Ones is highlighted as a key ritual to help an adept transform into a Perfected being. Zhou Yishan’s teacher, Su Lin, ate atracylodes for three hundred years, ingested *qi* for five hundred years, meditated for six hundred years, guarded the Three Ones for three hundred years, guarded the Cavern Room for six hundred years, and guarded the Mysterious Cinnabar for five hundred years. Su’s regimen moved from a set of rudimentary exercises (eating atracylodes, *qi*, and meditation) followed by a set of advanced cultivation techniques (Three Ones, Cavern-Room, Mysterious Cinnabar). After completing all of these practices, says Su, he was summoned to fill a bureaucratic post in the heavens. These same techniques are mentioned later in the text. The Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte explains the relationship between the meditations involving the Grotto-Room and the Three Ones as follows:

If you are able to actualize the Grotto-Room, you will be able to gaze upon heaven as an equal. If you are able to actualize the Three Primes, you will rise [to the rank of] Perfected or Transcendent. The realization of the Grotto-Room and the ways of the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes are what the Golden Porte’s Thearchical in the resplendent heavens of Upper Clarity uses to ride the clouds and circulate the nine heavens.²

能存洞房，與天相望；能存三元，上為真仙。皇天上清金闕帝君所以乘雲迅龍，周行九天，寔洞房、三元真一之事也。

The key practice that Su Lin bestowed on Zhou Yishan was called the *Method of the Perfected One of the Three Primes* (*Sanyuan zhenyi zhi fa* 三元真一之法), or simply the Method of Guarding the One (*shouyi zhi fa* 守一之法). This method had been known in China for many centuries prior to the Upper Clarity scriptures.³ The *Scripture of Grand Peace* (*Taiping jing* 太平經), the Celestial Masters “Xiang’er Commentary,” and Ge Hong’s *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity* (*Baopuzi* 抱朴子), all include descriptions of the method, though every text defines “guarding” and the “One” in different ways.

The authors of the “Xiang’er Commentary,” a second-century CE interlinear commentary to the *Daode jing*, stress that the “One” is the same as the Dao, and the One does not reside in the human body. These commentators stress that the One “exists beyond heaven and earth, [and] comes and goes within the human body.” Even if the One passes through a human body, it is “everywhere within your skin, not just in a single spot.” The commentator concludes that false practitioners mistakenly identify places in the body, claiming it is where the One resides, by “closing their eyes and practicing meditation, hoping by these means to seek good fortune.”⁴ Elsewhere, commentators lodge similar attacks, such as the interpretation of *Daode jing* 14 that “[The Dao] is the formless form, the insubstantial image” (*wuzhuang zhi zhuang, wuwu zhi xiang* 无狀之狀, 无物之像). In their response to this passage, “Xiang’er” commentators stress that the Dao is of the highest worthiness (*zhizun* 至尊) and therefore has no shape or physical image. It is, they lament, those who practice false arts who claim that the Dao has certain shapes with “variously colored garments, names, appearances, and heights.”⁵

While Xiang’er commentators do not explicitly describe meditation rituals involving the One, they envision a Celestial Masters Daoist program as its counterpart. Unlike individuals who practice “false arts” of giving the One a concrete form and residence, the writers of this commentary stress that the One (or Dao) sometimes disperses as *qi*, and it will only gather as a form in the Most High Lord Lao; adepts need only to keep the “precepts of the Dao” (*Daojie* 道戒) to preserve the unity of the One. Adepts are commanded

to fuse their bodies with divine spirits so they can live a long time. In the *Xiang'er*, it is inevitable that bodily gods will roam off when an adept is not firm in his concentration. If these gods roam off and do not return, an adept runs the risk of illness or, even worse, death.⁶

Little other evidence about Guarding the One exists from this early period. It is likely that the *Xiang'er* writers lived among rival Daoist groups whose practice centered on visualizing the One. The visualization of the One was certainly commonplace among the Daoist writers around the southern capital region in the early fourth century. Ge Hong (283–343) wrote about the myriad benefits of meditating on the One in his *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*. Ge writes that there are various names for this meditation formula, the Method of the Perfected Ones (*zhenyi zhi dao* 真一之道), the Guarding of the Perfected Ones (*shou zhenyi* 守真一), or simply Guarding the Ones (*shouyi*). According to Ge, ancient adepts achieved godhood through visualization of the One. Juanzi (the Transcendent master of the previous chapter) was the first human to procure the scripture describing this technique, the *Scripture of Heaven, Earth, and Humans* (*Tian di ren jing*).⁷ Ge received the text from his former master (*xianshi* 先師), and many of his descriptions of Guarding the One are written as direct quotes from his master. In this passage, Ge quotes a part of this scripture where the Three Ones reside in the three cinnabar fields of the body:

The Dao originates in the One, and its value is thus beyond compare. Each place where the One resides is modeled on heaven, earth, and humans. This is why it is called the Three Ones. When heaven obtains the One, it is clear. When earth obtains the One, it is tranquil. When humans obtain the One, they have life. When spirits obtain the One, they are numinous. . . . The One has a surname and name, and wears clothes [with particular] colors. It is nine *fen* high in men, and six *fen* high in women. At times, it is located two *cun* and four *fen* beneath the navel in the lower cinnabar field. Other times, it is below the heart in the Golden Porte of the Crimson Palace, i.e., in the center cinnabar field. It can also be found in between a person's two eyebrows: one *cun* beneath the skin is the Bright Hall, at two *cun* is the Grotto-Room, and at three *cun* is the Upper Cinnabar Field.⁸

道起於一，其貴無偶，各居一處，以象天地人，故曰三一也。天得一以清，地得一以寧，人得一以生，神得一以靈。……一有姓字服色，男長九分，女長六分，或在臍下二寸四分下丹田中，或在心下絳宮金闕中丹田也，或在人兩眉間，却行一寸為明堂，二寸為洞房，三寸為上丹田也。

While Ge envisions the Three Ones as residing within the body's three cinnabar fields, he writes little about what an adept might do with this knowledge. Kobayahi and Yamada argue that there are no meditative practices in the *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, arguing instead that these are different places that the One resides.⁹ Yet Ge talks about *each* (*ge* 各) One being in a different zone of the body. And the above passage does little to clarify how a human adept might obtain the One (*de yi* 得一). Elsewhere in *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, Ge includes verses about the One. It is not clear whether Ge intends these as panegyrics to laud the powers of the One or if they are incantations or some other kind verse for use in rituals. The verse describes the One as residing in a state of celestial bliss, a Daoist analogue to the Pure Lands that were gaining traction among Buddhist writers in this same period. The One is surrounded by signs of its divine prowess from grasses made of gemstones to a golden tower that rises to the highest height of the heavens. The verse ends with the One flanked by a pantheon of heavenly gods and spirit animals that come to honor the One.

The One is in the Northern Culmen,	一在北極
Deep inside a great abyss.	大淵之中
Before lies the Bright Hall,	前有明堂
And the Crimson Palace behind.	後有絳宮
Towering tall is a floriate canopy,	巍巍華蓋
As a golden tower vaults high above.	金樓穹隆
The mainstay on the left and <i>kui</i> -star on the right,	左罡右魁
Surge like waves lapping in the air.	激波揚空
Dark <i>zhi</i> -herbs blanket the cliff,	玄芝被崖
As vermilion grasses gather in thickets.	朱草蒙瓏

Sheer cliffs of white jade,	白玉嵯峨
In the suspended and radiant sun and moon.	日月垂光
Like a line of fire rippling across the water,	歷火過水
Passing into the dark and traversing the yellow.	經玄涉黃
The citadel's towers interlock,	城闕交錯
Canopies and curtains jingle like jade.	帷帳琳琅
Dragons and tigers arrayed in a line,	龍虎列紉
As divine beings gather around.	神人在傍

Judging from the passages in *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, we know Guarding the One was a key teaching of Ge's practice, but his descriptions do not explain its practice. Ge does mention that these descriptions are culled from a Transcendent scripture (*xianjing* 仙經) called the *Scripture of the Grand Monad's Perfected One* (*Taiyi zhenyi jing* 太一真一經, hereafter the *Scripture of the Perfected One*). Parts of the scripture are quoted in the *Array of the Five Talismans of the Numinous Treasure* (*Lingbao wufuxu* 靈寶五符序). Kobayashi Masayoshi interprets Ge Hong's text as the base text that was later adapted as the *Scripture of the Perfected One*.¹⁰ More recently, Gil Raz argues that there was an ur-text associated with the Three Sovereigns (*sanhuang* 三皇) lineage that both Ge Hong and the writers of *Scripture of the Perfected One* drew upon.¹¹

The basic structure of these two texts is similar, but the descriptions of the Perfected One diverge in many places. Both passages describe the residence of the One, and both texts identify the One as residing in the adept's head in the abyss of the Northern Culmen. But the *Scripture of the Perfected One* begins with an additional couplet suggesting that aside from the cerebral residence of the One:

While the Three Ones rely on one another,	三一相須
They have different dwellings.	其居不同
At times they are in Northern Culmen,	或在北極
Deep inside a grand abyss.	太淵之中
Before lies the Bright Hall,	前有明堂

And the Crimson Palace is underneath.	下有絳宮
Above it is a floriate canopy,	上有華蓋
Over a jade tower of a myriad stories.	玉樓萬重
The handle on the left and <i>kui</i> -star on the right,	左杓右魁
Surge like waves lapping in the wind.	激波揚風
Dark <i>zhi</i> -herbs blanket the eaves,	玄芝被宇
And everywhere thickets do form.	往往成叢
A deep valley descends straight down,	深谷直下
To vermillion bamboo lush and luxuriant.	朱竹蔚葺
Sheer cliffs of white jade,	白玉嵯峨
And sweet springs that never run dry.	甘泉無窮
The suspended and radiant sun and moon,	日月垂光
The lofty and tall golden furnace.	金鑪隆崇
At times they are in the separate palace,	或在離宮
At times, they are in the gate of destiny.	或在命門
Like a line of fire rippling across the water,	歷火過水
Passing through the square and entering the round.	經方入圓
The citadel's towers interlock,	城闕交錯
Canopies and curtains turn into clouds.	幃帳成雲
Dragons and tigers arrayed and on guard.	龍虎列衛
As divine beings gather in a group.	神人為群

In this passage from *Scripture of the Perfected One*, there are two other places in the body where the One is found, the “separate palace” (*ligong* 離宮) and the “gate of destiny” (*mingmen* 命門). Furthermore, the author of the *Scripture of the Perfected One* appends a verse at the end of this passage to explain how and why an adept might incorporate this knowledge into his or her practice.

In a jade abyss a myriad of <i>ren</i> deep,	玉淵萬刃
[You] can regularly drink from its font.	常飲其泉
Chomp on jade for [you] will not need food,	叩玉却食

To bring back [your] childlike visage.	還反童顏
A hundred evil spirits flee into the distance,	百邪遠避
As [you] command of groups of spirits.	役使群神
With long life and extended vision,	長生久視
[Your] years will increase by the billions.	延年億千
[Your] eyes will have penetrating powers,	目方徹視
[Your] bowels will transform into tendons.	腸化為筋
If you are able to do all of this,	子能得之
You will become a celestial Transcendent.	乃為天仙
But if you are not this kind of person,	苟非其人
These methods (Dao) will be transmitted in vain.	道不虛傳
You should practice this in secret,	子密行之
And be careful not to speak about it to others. ¹²	慎勿多言

This stanza begins by describing the actions of the adepts cloaked in an esoteric vocabulary. “Chomping of jade” refers to clacking one’s teeth together, and the font from which the adept drinks is the saliva that an adept will swirl in his mouth. This representation of the adept accords with the above passage from the *Scripture of the Perfected One* in which the author describes a “deep valley descending straight down” to “cliffs of white jade” where “sweet springs never run dry.” According to the *Scripture of the Perfected One*, this was the same text that the Yellow Thearch (*Huangdi* 黃帝) long ago identified as the *Scripture of the Perfected One of the Celestial Sovereign* (*Tianhuang zhenyi zhi jing* 天皇真一之經). In that story, the Yellow Thearch was confused about the meaning of this scripture and thus traveled to Mount E’mei. There he met a giant being of an unknown origin called the Sovereign Being (*huangren* 皇人). The Yellow Thearch made the following inquiry:

I happened to come in possession of a scripture [detailing] how Perfected beings were to eat essences. After examining this text, however, I could only understand individual words and could not make sense of the entire text.

While I can read each word, I cannot unravel the actions [it describes]. I beg you to please instruct me.¹³

竊見真人食精之經，徒省其文而弗綜其意，看其辭而不釋其事，乞得請教。

In response to the Yellow Thearch's request, the Sovereign Being explains that since the *Scripture of the Perfected One* is a scripture there is no way he can use human language to simply explicate the text. The main goal of the method, however, is to circulate *qi* from the high heavens throughout the body. In so doing, an adept's body would be refined and would produce a "Perfected One."

The Perfected scripture you just mentioned, and these passages you didn't understand, all had to do with making the "qi high in the heavens" course through your body. If you are able to do this throughout your body, you will then understand [the scripture] and will attain long life. . . . My former master obtained this method from the Perfected kings of the nine heavens, and later transmitted the book to me. When it is cultivated in your mouth it is called the Elixir of the Vermilion Bird. When this is done throughout your entire body, it is called the Perfected One.¹⁴

汝向所道真經，言所不解者，蓋上天之氣歸此一身耳。一身分明，便可長生也。. . . .吾先師正受此方於九天真王，令書以相授也。存之於口，名曰朱鳥丹；取之於身，名曰真一。

The Sovereign Being then goes on to provide instructions (*jue* 訣) highlighting the actions that an adept must use to circulate the heavenly *qi* throughout his body. They will silently intone five incantations after which they rub their tongue against specific places in the mouth (e.g., top teeth, bottom teeth) and swallow their saliva three times. The actions prepare the adept to swallow the five sprouts (*ya* 芽) and breathe rarified *qi* through their noses.¹⁵

Despite the overlapping parts of the One in *Scripture of the Perfected One* and Ge Hong's *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, the latter completely lacks information on ingesting "sprouts" or swallowing saliva. Ge Hong's scripture maintains that the Three Ones live in specific places in the body and have specific names, colors, and shapes. But Ge's scripture does indi-

cate the bodily locations of the One. This contrasts with the *Scripture of the Perfected One*, where these featured are detailed in the “Method of Ingesting the Solar and Lunar Essences” (“Shi riyue jing zhi dao” 食日月精之道), which contains instructions on ingesting solar and lunar essences of the Three Ones, as well as instructions for cultivating the spirits of the bodily viscera, the Three Ones, and the divine elixir.¹⁶

1. Actualization of the “five beasts” (*wu shou* 五獸).
2. The summoning of bodily spirits.
3. The guarding of the “terrestrial One” (*di yi* 地一).
4. The guarding of the “human One” (*ren yi* 人一)
5. The guarding of the “heavenly One” (*tian yi* 天一).
6. Eating the divine elixir (the essence of the sun).
7. Drinking the golden liquor (the essence of the moon).
8. Eating the mysterious *qi* of the stars.
9. Roaming through the Taiji heavens.

It is likely that this was the final part of the composition that synthesized the other parts. Numbers 3 through 5, for example, refer to the practices of the Three Ones; numbers 6 through 8 designate the methods involving eating the essences of the sun, moon, and stars. Evidence for the editorial shaping of these texts is found in the instructions on the Three Ones, which are called the “Heavenly Father, Terrestrial Mother, and Children.” The writer asserts that Three Ones known as the “world,” “parents,” and “children” are different names for the Three Ones called “heaven,” “earth,” and “humans.”¹⁷ The Central Yellow Lord of the Dao further specifies where the residences of the Three Ones are located: the heavenly One is beneath the “floriate canopy” (*huagai* 華蓋), the human One beneath the “dipper door” (*douhu* 斗戶), and the terrestrial One is wherever the sun and moon roam.¹⁸ But these names are cryptic and there is no further commentary in the instructions helping us ascertain where readers might have mapped the locations on their bodies. From the subsequent part of this description, it is clear that the writer obscures these locations. The Central Yellow Lord of the Dao says:

If you want to obtain [the Ones], you will surely ask me where the places of the Ones are. You should only worry about guarding the male (*xiong*) and then guarding the female (*ci*), for the One is formless and it is hard to know.¹⁹

子欲得之當問我，一之所在安在茲。不但守雄復守雌，一在無形甚難知。

Later in this text, commentarial layers provide the locations of the heavenly, human, and terrestrial Ones. At one point,²⁰ the author names the three respective palaces: the Purple Palace, Crimson Palace, and Cinnabar Field. Elsewhere, he explains that the three palaces are located in the head, heart, and abdomen of the body.²¹ In such cases, however, the author does not clearly identify these places, so it is likely that such explanations were later inserted in the text. Furthermore, the authors of the *Scripture of the Perfected One* are adamant that the benefits of the “five sprouts” formula outweigh those of the Three Ones. While one text might appear and reappear in various Daoist scriptures, the relative significance of the passage can vary greatly. This is key to understanding the relative place of the Three Ones in the Upper Clarity scriptures as well, since the Three Ones are also in a state of flux.

The Three Ones and Textual Transmission in Upper Clarity Scriptures

The above texts were all written many decades prior to the Upper Clarity revelations. Hua Qiao and Yang Xi remade the Three Ones as gods who were responsible for transmitting celestial scriptures to the adept. Hua and Yang gave the Three Ones new roles as transmitters of scriptures and asserted that an adept’s entry point into Upper Clarity practice began with discovering the Three Ones. This access to divine knowledge opened the possibility of uncovering higher forms of spiritual knowledge.

The transformation of the Three Ones in Upper Clarity practice was a process that developed over many years. Hua Qiao, for instance, emphasizes

the Three Ones in “Zhou’s Hagiography,” but he does not describe what the associated rituals entail. Based on short descriptions in “Su’s Hagiography,” the earliest Upper Clarity articulation of the Three Ones was penned by Yang Xi in the *Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte’s Scripture on the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes* (*Jinque dijun sanyuan zhenyi jing* 金闕帝君三元真一經, DZ 253, hereafter *Scripture on Perfected Ones of the Three Primes*), which is the scripture in the Daoist Canon most closely reflecting the rituals associated with “Zhou’s Hagiography.”²² There are eight sections in this scripture describing rituals associated with celestial beings inhabiting the body:

1. The Three Primes and the twenty-four Perfected beings (1a–b)
2. The Three Ones and the Grotto-Room (*dongfang* 洞房) (1b–2a)
3. The Three Sovereigns and the Three Ones (2a–b)
4. The Three Primes and the Three Ones (2b–3b)
5. The rules for guarding the Ones (3b–4a)
6. A discussion of the body (4a)
7. The three cinnabar fields (4a–6a)
8. The method for guarding the Ones (6a–7b)

While all eight parts of the *Scripture on Perfected Ones of the Three Primes* resonate with earlier texts, one of the best parts for a comparative study is the seventh part of the scripture. Here the author describes the three cinnabar fields, that is, the residences of the Three Ones. The author of the *Scripture on Perfected Ones of the Three Primes* identifies the same places in the body where the Ones reside: (a) the upper cinnabar field (also called the Muddy Pellet Palace), which is three *cun* beneath the skin between the eyebrows, (b) the middle cinnabar field, which is called the Crimson Palace of the heart, and (c) the lower cinnabar field three *cun* beneath the navel.²³ The author reveals their names: the Ruddy Infant (*chizi* 赤子) in the upper palace, the Perfected (*zhenren*) in the middle palace, and the Newborn (*ying'er* 嬰兒) in the lower palace.

One new idea concerning the Three Ones in the Upper Clarity scriptures is that these three beings each have a personal assistant accompanying them. The names of these assistants are the Thearchical Chamberlain (*diging*

帝卿), the Assistant Chamberlain (*huangfu qing* 輔皇卿), and the Guardian Chamberlain (*baozhen biqing* 保鎮弼卿). These assistants, which internally manifest in an adept's body, protect the bodily organs of their respective palace by scaring away evil spirits. Meditation in this case, as in many forms of Daoist bodily cultivation, is aimed at concentrating one's mental faculties in order to protect and preserve the body.²⁴

The method of the Three Ones prepares you to contemplate the Dao via the three primordial [beings]. These [beings] assemble the sacred books, and they protect the divine scriptures. The first instruction is the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto*. The second instruction is the *Miraculous Scripture of Great Existence*. The third instruction is the *Immaculate Numen Most High*. Therefore, the thearchical lord of the Upper One watches over the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto*, the cinnabar sovereign of the Middle One watches over the *Miraculous Scripture of Great Existence*, and the primal king of the Lower One watches over the *Immaculate Numen Most High*. These three texts are the quintessential essence of the perfected teachings (Dao) and the supreme stanzas of the Three Ones. Moreover, they are the restricted instructions of Upper Clarity.²⁵

夫三一之法，觀道備於三元，總括靈篇，握寶神經。第一之訣，《大洞真經》；第二之訣，《大有妙經》；第三之訣，《太上素靈》。是故上一帝君寶《大洞真經》，中一丹皇寶《大有妙經》，下一元王寶《太上素靈》。此之三文，真道之至精，三一之極章，並上清之禁訣也。

According to this scripture, the Three Ones and their assistants guard the transmission of scriptures: *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto* (upper), the *Miraculous Scripture of Great Existence* (middle), the *Immaculate Numen Most High* (lower). The rituals of guarding the Three Ones ensure that an adept receives transmission of these books via the body gods. While the meditative rituals of guarding the Ones predate the Upper Clarity mediums, these writers inserted the idea that meditation would lead to the transmission of Upper Clarity texts. While the method of the Three Ones was not a practice exclusive to Upper Clarity adepts, the ritual was remade as a kind of initiation to obtain key books. In addition to supplying the adept with

the key scriptures of Upper Clarity practice, the Three Ones also helped the adept venture into the heavens on a cosmic voyage.

To guard a Perfected One, your mind must be open, your spirit fixed, and you must be absorbed in this mysterious resonance. Do not let your mind wander, or your fixed gaze dissolve. Only by looking inward for three months and focusing your mind on the One's spirit will their divine radiance project outward so that you can roam [to the heavens] with them. This is why your undivided attention cannot falter and your concentrated energy must remain in harmony. Only through the utmost in simplicity will you be able to quickly reach this [goal].²⁶

守真一，心樸神凝，混專玄感，所以百念不生，精意不散。但三月內視，注心一神，神光化生身外，與之而游。是注念不散，專氣致和，由樸之至也，得之速也。

For Yang Xi, the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes ritual seeks to guide the Three Ones and their ministers along the stars of the Northern Dipper and then to return them to the three cinnabar fields of the body. According to the *Scripture on Perfected Ones of the Three Primes*, the ritual of the Three Ones was not simply about this celestial journey, but was foremost about direct access to divine knowledge. An adept did not roam off into the heavens footloose and fancy-free, but took cosmic journeys to receive sacred objects such as jade stanzas, tiger books, and golden books. All these divine regalia symbolized an adept's status as a Perfected being not simply because they possessed such objects, but because they had acquired the knowledge via written texts.

This inner-body transmission of scriptures is found elsewhere in Upper Clarity literature. In most cases, the rituals for the Three Ones (including the transmission of scriptures) needed the assistance of the Azure Lad, one of four ministers for the Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte.²⁷ In the earliest Daoist scriptures, the Azure Lad was a god who would bestow scriptures and knowledge of rituals to adepts. So the presence of the Azure Lad is a feature of these ritual texts that predates “Zhou’s Hagiography.” There, Hua Qiao writes that there are four methods associated with the Three Ones, and an

adept would receive four Perfected scriptures from the Azure Lad (Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte). Hua did not list titles for these four texts, although later mediums such as Yang Xi speak about these texts in detail.²⁸ Yang identifies the titles of the four scriptures and their transmission:

There are four instructions that the Latter [Age] Sage and Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte received: The *Scripture of Perfected Ones of the Three Primes*, the *Perfected Talismans of the Thearchical Lord of Taiji*, the *Scripture of the Perfected One in the Five Dippers*, and the *Precious Emblem of the Thearchical Lord of Taiji*. These are the texts that were transmitted to the transcendent Juanzi when he was fishing for carp in a river and discovered an azure jade case after cutting it open.²⁹

後聖金闕帝君所受《三元真一經》、《太極帝君真符》、《五斗真一經》、《太極帝君寶章》凡四訣，後以傳仙人涓子。涓子釣河獲鯉，剖得青玉函。

Before long, these four scriptures associated with the Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte mentioned in this passage were circulated as separate texts.³⁰ In his late-fifth-century collectanea, *The Esoteric Instructions for Ascent to Perfection* (DZ 421, *Dengzhen yinjue* 登真隱訣, hereafter *Ascent to Perfection*), Tao writes that he was in possession of at least three of these four scriptures.

Talismans and Emblems

Under the early Upper Clarity writers, scriptures were transmitted as clusters of written texts composed of both writings and talismanic symbols. Tao Hongjing's late-fifth-century analysis of these texts suggests that although Upper Clarity adepts might receive many different scriptures, many of these texts had the same ritual function. Tao writes that at least two of these scriptures, the *Perfected Talismans of the Thearchical Lord of Taiji* (*Taiji dijun zhenfu* 太極帝君真符) and the *Precious Emblem of the Thearchical Lord of Taiji* (*Taiji dijun baozhang* 太極帝君寶章) could be used interchangeably. The *Perfected Talismans* was a set of sixteen talismans that adepts were to wear on their head (presumably under their cap) and ingest daily in sixteen-

day intervals. The ritual use of these talismans helped an adept summon the Three Ones:

[These talismans] include the Six Talismans of the Upper Prime, the Five Talismans of the Middle Prime, and the Five Talismans of Lower Prime that Juanzi obtained when he cut open the carp. These [are the texts] that the Most High [Lord of the Dao] uses to summon the Three Ones to guard his [bodily] form. The inception of spring (February 5), vernal parting (March 21), the inception of summer (May 5), summer arrival (June 21), the inception of autumn (August 7), autumnal parting (September 23), the inception of winter (November 7), and winter arrival (December 22) are the days when you will begin [using the first talisman]. Early in the morning on [these eight days], write one of these talismans in vermilion [ink], face the ruling [force of that day], and swallow the talisman.³¹ After this, bow again and make whatever request you desire. After you place [these talismans] in a damask satchel, put them on your head. Make sure they are not sullied. After five years [of this practice], the Perfected Ones will appear to you. Begin swallowing the talismans on the eight nodal days and stop on the sixteenth day. On the subsequent nodal [days], you will start back at the beginning and consume them in the same way.³²

〈上元六符〉、〈中元五符〉、〈下元五符〉，涓子剖鯉魚所獲，是太上召三一守形也。立春、春分、立夏、夏至、立秋、秋分、立冬、冬至，始日也。朱書，平旦向王，日吞一符。畢，再拜，祝願隨意。佩頭上，盛以錦囊。勿履洿。五年，與真一相見。吞符以八節日始，十六日止。後節復服如初。

In his commentary to *Ascent to Perfection*, Tao Hongjing explains that when an adept swallows a talisman, he should visualize the talisman entering all three palaces in the body, at which time the Three Ones will accept this as a kind of offering.³³ If one chooses to wear the talisman, however, the directions are simple: adepts are to keep the talisman safely tucked away in a brocade satchel, which will be hidden within his headdress. In order for this version of the ritual to work, adepts must wear the talisman for at least five years without pause. The second text, the *Precious Emblem*, refers to the Azure Lad transmitting an emblem to Juanzi. The emblem, like the talisman, causes the Three Ones to manifest before the adept.

The Lord Azure Lad of the Eastern Seas transmitted the [emblem] to Juanzi after which he was enfeoffed atop a famous mountain. Write [the emblem] with vermilion [ink] on a white [background]. Wear it on your left elbow and be careful not to let it get dirty. If you wear it for eight years, the Three Ones will appear before you. On the first day of the lunar year, write one talisman with azure ink, face north, bow down, and swallow it. After the Three Ones appear to you, you should make the emblem out of a piece of gold (nine *cun* long, four *cun* wide, and three *fen* thick) and engrave [the emblem] on its surface.³⁴

東海青童君授涓子，以封掌名山也。以朱書素，佩之左肘。勿經洿。佩之八年，而三一俱見矣。正月朔旦，青書一符。北向再拜吞之。三一相見之後，以金為質，長九寸，廣四寸，厚三分而書之。

The rituals for the *Precious Emblem* are almost identical to that for the talismans. The number of emblems needed is exactly the same, and these designs are also composed in vermilion ink atop a white background. The efficacy of emblems and talismans are also the same: if done properly, the ritual use of emblems will enable adepts to see the Three Ones. The only difference between these two objects is that emblems should be hidden in the left sleeve of one's robe rather than in his headdress.³⁵ Tao writes that these emblems should conform to the size of "golden emblem" (*jinzhang* 金章), that is, nine inches long, four inches wide, and 0.3 inches thick. Tao further writes that these emblems should only be made after an adept has successfully produced the aforementioned talismans. In other words, at the beginning of spring, after all the talismans are made and safely stored in the brocade satchel, adepts can then turn their attention to making emblems.

Another difference with the emblems is that they are not to be swallowed on the eight nodal days, but rather on the new moon of the first lunar month. An adept should write the emblem in azure ink, face north, and consume the emblem. Like the talismans, the *Precious Emblem* is intended to enable the adept to see the Three Ones. Yet this ritual has an added benefit, as it will allow the adept to produce a "golden emblem," the same object that "was transmitted to Juanzi by the Lord Azure Lad of the Eastern Seas

in order that the former could be enfeoffed atop a famous mountain" (see above). In *Ascent to Perfection*, Tao writes that the golden emblem is a kind of "ritual accoutrement" (*faqi* 法器) that will permit the adept to wield influence over perverse spirits and order the gods of China's sacred peaks. But Tao does not elaborate much further about the golden emblem, as he writes that one will need to see the Three Ones first in order to know more about this process:

The process of being enfeoffed [on the mountains] is [for those] who hope to order [the spirits] about. But the ritual process to make this happen is unclear, as one will first need to see the Three Ones in order to gain instruction on how this is to happen.³⁶

封掌之事，是欲有役使，其法制未宣，須三一相見乃可得而受教耳。

Since the content of the talismans and emblems are no longer extant, it is impossible to evaluate the above descriptions alongside the visual content of these objects. Nevertheless, the ritual practices associated with these objects demonstrate that the goal of producing and ingesting these texts was to actualize the Three Ones and secure their respective palaces within the body. By wearing these texts, the adept further hoped to catch sight of the Three Ones and thereafter be invested with power over mountain spirits.

The Five Dipper Stars

The third scripture Tao mentions in this cluster of texts, the *Scripture of the Perfected One in the Five Dippers*, contains important clues about the transformations of the Three Ones in early Upper Clarity scriptures. Tao claims that this scripture was likely the same book concerning the visualization of the Three Ones that Su Lin received from Juanzi in "Su's Hagiography." In that hagiography, the *Three Ones of the Five Dippers* is described as a scripture that the Three Ones bestow after an adept has guarded the Three Ones for twenty-four years.

[Su] Lin went to call upon Juanzi, who was in a quiet chamber. [Juanzi] then gave Lin a book that he had once received. The book read, "The *Three*

Ones of the Five Dippers is a secret of the Grand Thearch.” You will only receive this book after you have meditated for twenty-four years and the Three Ones appear to you. Only those with the Three Ones will have a long life and will not perish; is this not even more the case for those who guard them? Whoever is able to actualize the Three Ones will have their names inscribed on the jade slats; is this not even more so for those who see the Three Ones?³⁷

林詣涓子寢靜之室，得書一幅，以遺林也。其文曰：「《五斗三一》，太帝所祕。精思二十年，三一相見，授子書矣。但有三一，長生不滅，況復守之乎。能存三一，名刊玉札，況與三一相見乎？」

Extant revelations also indicate that the fusion of the Five Dippers and Three Ones was a name applied by Yang Xi to describe the Guarding the Ones method that Xu Mi learned from Hua Qiao. In the following revelation from the youngest Mao brother, Mao Zhong 茅衷, Yang reminds Xu Mi about his past experience in learning the Guarding the Three Ones method. Mao reinforces the value of the method by quoting one of his celestial colleagues, An Yubin 安鬱嬪, the Perfected Consort of Ninefold Florescence in the Upper Palace of Purple Clarity (*Ziqing shanggong jiuhua zhenfei* 紫清上宮九華真妃).³⁸ She refers to the method Xu had formerly learned as “Inner Ones of the Five Dippers” (*wudou neiyi* 五斗內一).

Whoever transmits books is a master; why should this make you feel ashamed? . . . You once approached your master for the Guarding the Ones [method] of Su Lin by first holding the fast and observing the precepts. . . . The Perfected Consort of the Ninefold Florescence once told [me], “‘Guarding the Inner Ones of the Five Dippers’ is a lofty [method] of the Perfected Ones. It is a method for terrestrial Perfected.”³⁹

受書則師，乃恥之耶？. . . . 子往師蘇林守一，當先齋受戒. 九華真妃言：「『守五斗內一』，是真一之上也，皆地真人法也。」

In Tao’s commentary to this passage, he writes that the Five Dippers method mentioned in the conversation between Mao Zhong and Xu Mi refers to the actualization methods for the “solstices and equinoxes” (*fen zhi* 分至) in “Su’s Hagiography.”⁴⁰ The *Three Ones of the Five Dippers*, on the other hand, is recorded in five different places in the Daoist Canon:⁴¹

1. *Illustrated Instructions* (DZ 765, 2a–8a, 8a–20a)
2. *Seven Lots from the Bookbag of Clouds* (*Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤, DZ 1032, 49.11a–13b, 13b–17b)
3. *Upper Clarity Instructions to Be Kept in Hand* (*Shangqing wozhong jue* 上清握中訣, DZ 140, 3.3a–b, 2.2a–4b, 3.4a–5a)
4. *Marvelous Scripture of Mysterious Subtlety as Preached by the Celestial Worthy of Primordial Commencement* (*Yuanshi tianzun shuo xuanwei miaojing* 元始天尊說玄微妙經, DZ 60, 1a–2b, 2b–7b)
5. *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* (DZ 1314, 38a–b, 39a–41a)

The first four of these versions are nearly identical. These texts start with the “Oral Instruction on the *Scripture on Guarding the Perfected Ones of the Five Dipper [Stars]* (*Shou wudou zhenyi jing koujue* 守五斗真一經口訣) and are followed by an explanation of Juanzi’s Three Ones method.⁴² There are two rituals joined together. In the first, “Ritual of the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes,” an adept actualizes the Three Ones and their corresponding ministers as descending down from the Northern Dipper. In the second, the “Ritual of the Three Ones of the Five Dippers” (*wudou sanyi fa*), the adept rides a cloud of purple smoke up to the heavens. Depending on the season when the ritual was performed, this assembly would head toward one of the five directional stars of the Big Dipper. Once this was accomplished, the Three Ones and their ministers would return to the respective bodily palaces within the adept.⁴³ These two rituals worked in conjunction with one another: One ritual brought the gods from the Dipper into the body, while the other stressed the travel of the bodily gods up to their corresponding home in the heavens. This dual direction had significance for the adepts, as the gods’ descent into the body symbolized bodily cultivation, while the gods’ ascent into the starry palaces was thought to be their reward for proper cultivation. Performed together, these rituals would establish a cycle of movement between the mundane bodily gods and their heavenly counterparts.

While the first four of the above texts are quite similar, the fifth version, the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*, diverges significantly. It seems that early readers of Upper Clarity literature viewed the rituals for the Three

Ones as originating in the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*.⁴⁴ But “originate” does not necessarily mean that the text circulated earlier than the rest; it simply means that readers knew the title and that mediums indicated that the various versions of the scripture all emanated from the same heavily original.

In fact, Tao Hongjing remarks that the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* did not circulate as an independent text at the turn of the sixth century CE.⁴⁵ But before situating the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* with the scriptures featured in this chapter, we will consider how this scripture came into being. In particular, how does the author(s) of this scripture understand the Upper Clarity scriptures? And how might these understandings differ from other editors of Upper Clarity texts such as Tao?

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Chapter Four

Nine Palaces

Later Reconstructions of Upper Clarity

Texts are reduced or extended every day . . . but at the cost of introducing changes that quite evidently affect not only length but also structure and substance. To reduce or augment a text is to produce another text, briefer or longer, which derives from it, but not without *altering* it in various manners.

— Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests*

The transmission and composition of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* (DZ 1314) is a topic that has not been explored in any language. Isabelle Robinet outlined the contents of the scripture and concludes that the text is a pastiche of scriptures from various origins. Her analysis confirms that this text is nominally one of important texts of the Upper Clarity tradition, but many of the techniques featured in DZ 1314 were adapted from scriptures external to the tradition. She writes:

We find a number of texts of different origins assembled here, all related to the Shangqing school. . . . The texts and exercises it contains are either earlier or later than the Shangqing revelations. . . . The names of the gods and the topology are sometimes different from those found in other Shangqing texts. A number of the methods expounded here come from a different school and are considered inferior from the Shangqing point of view.¹

Robinet's assessment of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* is accurate; the text lacks multiple recensions and its complicated textual layering makes it difficult to date.² We cannot, after all, be certain what a later author changed in the content or style of a scripture unless we have other versions of the text to compare. Even if it is impossible to verify that the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* circulated in Xu Mi's day, his contemporaries were at least aware of its title and its existence in the heavens. In Hua Qiao's "Zhou's Hagiography" (see chapter 2), the scripture is listed as the third of a tripartite division of Upper Clarity's "primordial diagram" (*yuantu* 元圖).³ Zhou Yishan also received parts of this scripture, the "Twenty-One Stanzas of the *Immaculate Numen Most High*" ("Taishang suling ershiyi qu" 太上素靈二十一曲), from the attendants of the Yellow Elder Lord.⁴ The exalted position of the text is echoed in most of the early Upper Clarity literature.

Internal discrepancies in the nomenclature and ordering of techniques in DZ 1314 reflect some of the concerns and goals of its author. Comparing passages on the visualization ritual Nine Palaces (*jiugong* 九宮) in DZ 1314 and Tao's compendium, the *Ascent to Perfection*, indicates the possible motivations for its composition. Tao abridges information and collates different scriptural sources reflecting his editorial imprint on the Upper Clarity revelations. Here we will compare Tao's reconstruction of this scripture with DZ 1314. We will argue that the author(s) of DZ 1314 propose a bibliographic system of the Three Caverns or Three Wonders that is distinct from the system Tao develops.

Way of the Three Ones and Way of the Nine Palaces

By Tao Hongjing's day, the Upper Clarity rituals of the Three Ones (see chapter 3) were included as part of the "teachings about the nine palaces" (*jiugong zhi dao* 九宮之道). There is no mention of the nine palaces in "Zhou's Hagiography," but Tao quotes a passage from "Su's Hagiography" that glosses the term:

Please allow me to explain the head's nine palaces. Three *fen* under a point between and slightly above your eyebrows are the Dual Fields' Guardian

of the *Cun*. One *cun* [further in the skin] is the Bright Hall Palace, at two *cun* is the Grotto-Room Palace, at three *cun* is the Cinnabar Field Palace, at four *cun* is the Flowing Pearl Palace, and at five *cun* is the Jade Thearch Palace. One *cun* above the Bright Hall is the Celestial Court Palace, one *cun* above the Grotto-Room is the Ultimate Perfection Palace, one *cun* above the Cinnabar Field is the Mysterious Cinnabar Palace, and one *cun* above the Flowing Pearl is the Grand Sovereign Palace. These are the nine palaces of the head.⁵

凡頭有九宮，請先說之。兩眉間上却入三分為守寸雙田，却入一寸為明堂宮，却入二寸為洞房宮，却入三寸為丹田宮，却入四寸為流珠宮，却入五寸為玉帝宮；明堂上一寸為天庭宮，洞房上一寸為極真宮，丹田上一寸為玄丹宮，流珠宮上一寸為太皇宮。凡一頭中有九宮也。

This passage suggests that the Three Ones, Grotto-Room, and Mysterious Cinnabar did not simply constitute a tripartite division, but were one part of complex set of practices. These rituals for the Nine Palaces were a key part of the regimen taught by Tao Hongjing at his Maoshan temple. The writings on the Nine Palaces formed the first fascicle of his *Ascent to Perfection*.⁶ This treatise is made up of two parts: (a) a general introduction to the structure of the palaces, and (b) discussions about rituals associated with individual palaces. By Tao's own admission, the structure of this treatise is his design, not one adapted from a previously circulating scripture or hagiography. He writes:

After examining the explanatory preface of the *Scripture [of the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes]*, [I realized] that the order of the passages did not match the classificatory scheme. Sometimes the different components of the same ritual appeared in different places. Other times, the ritual actions were far more complicated than they needed to be. There was no way I could rely on the text and simply reproduce it. In order to better understand the proper order of these passages, I have copied passages and summarized the main points to make [the meaning] clear. The characters written in large script are those written in the original scripture; I have not emended or augmented [the individual passages]. I have only attempted to rearrange the order, so that [readers] will have an order that they can easily follow.⁷

尋《經》中序說，前後不相次類附，或始末分乖，或事用超涉，不可都依本宣而寫之。今更詮貫次第，鈔拔源領，其大字悉是本文所載，不加損益，但條綜端緒，令以次依按耳。

This indicates that the content of Tao's treatise was similar to earlier versions already in circulation, but the sequence and editorial framework differ significantly. In his general introduction, Tao places passages giving readers a general sense about the placement and names of the Nine Palaces. He also identifies the five male (*xiong* 雄) and four female (*ci* 雌) gods who rule over these palaces. The palaces ruled by male deities are as follows:

1. Bright Hall Palace (*Mingtang gong* 明堂宮)
2. Grotto-Room Palace (*Dongfang gong* 洞房宮)
3. Cinnabar Field Palace (*Dantian gong* 丹田宮)
4. Flowing Pearl Palace (*Liuzhu gong* 流珠宮)
5. Mysterious Cinnabar Palace (*Xuandan gong* 玄丹宮)

According to scriptures that Tao quotes in *Ascent to Perfection*, the cultivation practices associated with the first four palaces freely circulated, but adepts needed permission from Perfected beings to obtain the final text, the *Scripture of the Mysterious Cinnabar Palace* (*Xuandan gong jing* 玄丹宮經). Tao writes, however, that he has only found fragments of the scriptures associated with the Bright Hall and Grotto-Room Palaces. He relies solely on “Su’s Hagiography” to provide details about the Cinnabar Field and Mysterious Cinnabar Palaces, and he writes that he is unable to find any evidence that the scripture for the Flowing Pearl Palace circulated among readers.⁸

The four cranial palaces controlled by female Perfected, writes Tao, have scriptures associated with them, but they are to be used only by beings that have obtained Perfected status. As a result, these texts were off-limits to human readers, and the fact that Tao does not even provide a short quote suggests that such scripture did not exist at the turn of the sixth century. These four palaces are as follows:

1. Jade Thearch Palace (*Yudi gong* 玉帝宮)
2. Celestial Court Palace (*Tianting gong* 天庭宮)

3. Ultimate Perfection Palace (*Jizhen gong* 極真宮)
4. Grand Sovereign Palace (*Taihuang gong* 太皇宮)

Tao's discussion of these palaces focuses on cultivation practices connected with the Bright Hall and Grotto-Room Palaces, as well as the "guardian of the *cun*" (*shou cun* 守寸). The latter functions as a kind of gateway into the Nine Palaces, and the meditations for this portal would be conducted before the adept attempted visualization of any of the cranial palaces. Its name stems from the fact that the length of each cranial palace was a *cun* ("inch") long, and the "guardian" protected access to these sacral zones. The "guardian of the *cun*" is located between a person's eyebrows, just beneath the skin, and contained two structures, a yellow gate tower with a purple door and a crimson terrace with an azure room. The Perfected beings residing in an adept's brain were thought to enter and exit the body from this point. All the rituals associated with this gateway involve ways an adept could welcome or send off the Perfected who traveled between the heavens and the body.

Both the scriptures Tao cites in *Ascent to Perfection* underscore how mastering the incantations might establish contact with the Perfected beings in one's head. Since this ritual helps an adept prepare for meditation, Tao identifies this passage, the "explanatory preface of the *Scripture of the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes*," as a passage that an adept can rely on to conduct a ritual for the Three Ones on the first day of spring. Adepts should whisper the names of these deities three times and recite an incantation to open this portal. Perfected beings would then have access to the cranial palaces:

The purple door and azure room,	紫戶青房
Are home to two great spirits.	有二大神
They hold twirling [fiery] bells in their hands,	手把流鈴
And their bodies emit wind and clouds.	身生風雲
They flank and protect the road of the Perfected,	俠衛真道
So that no outsiders will be permitted entrance.	不聽外前

May my meditations stir a response,	使我思感
And all may go through this numinous pass.	通利靈關
For if [the Perfected] find safe passage,	出入利貞
I will all ascend to the Nine Gates.	上登九門
And will see the Nine Perfected,	即見九真
These are most high and venerated [spirits]. ⁹	太上之尊

In Tao's *Ascent to Perfection*, the description of the "guardian of the *cun*" is followed by a ritual sequence featuring the Bright Hall Palace. This editorial framework suggests that the Bright Hall Palace ritual would be conducted after an adept opens the cranial passageway. Tao recommends that adepts contact the deity residing in the Bright Hall Palace for at least seven different reasons, such as calling on divine intervention to alleviate hunger, purge evil spirits, and heal the sick. Adepts could choose to perform the rituals for the Bright Hall Palace independently of other rituals, but Tao stresses that these techniques can also be used after the Guarding the Ones rites.

The rituals for the Grotto-Room Palace can be split into two kinds. The first set is adapted from the *Scripture of the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes*; this suggests that the Grotto-Room incantations were supposed to follow the meditation on the Three Ones.¹⁰ The Grotto-Room is depicted as a chamber of "mysterious essence" (*xuanjing* 玄精) in which the Three Ones rest. Therefore, conducting the rituals associated with the Grotto-Room Palace achieves the same result as the Three Ones rites, but much more quickly since all three deities reside in this one locale.¹¹ In this first set of rituals, Tao does not discuss the identities of the Perfected in the Grotto-Room, but only speaks in general terms about the kinds of benefits the adept can expect by using the Grotto-Room rites alongside the Three Ones.

The second set of the Grotto-Room rituals introduces the three Perfected beings: On the left is Non-pareil Lordling (Wuying gongzi 無英公子), on the right is Lord White Prime (Baiyuan jun 白元君), and in the center the Yellow Elder Lord (Huanglao jun 黃老君). Tao calls the ritual directed toward these gods as the "Way of Flying Perfection" (*feizhen zhidao* 飛真之道) and says that the content comes from a scripture called the *Esoteric Scripture on the*

Grotto-Room's Early Progress (*Dongfang xianjin neijing* 洞房先進內經). While he does not detail the provenance of this scripture, Tao represents the text as nearly identical with a scripture that Yang Xi procured on behalf of Wang Kuang 王曠.¹² A version of this ritual text is now featured in the *Precious Scripture on the Five Ancient Lords, Jade Seal of the Feminine One* (*Ciyi yujian wulao baojing* 雌一玉檢五老寶經, hereafter *Jade Seal of the Feminine One*).¹³

It is likely that Tao's treatise on the “guardian of the *cun*,” Bright Hall, and Grotto-Room, now featured in the first fascicle of *Ascent to Perfection*, is incomplete. The present redaction, after all, lacks the title of scriptures for the Cinnabar Field (i.e., the Way of the Three Ones) and Mysterious Cinnabar. Tao states that his goal is to rearrange the order of the scriptures so that readers have an easy-to-follow ritual sequence, so it makes little sense that he would consciously omit two significant parts of the five male palaces. In his commentarial layers, Tao mentions how the *Scripture of Mysterious Cinnabar* appeared directly after the ritual for the Three Ones in “Su's Hagiography.”¹⁴

There is also evidence that Tao was trying to reconcile many different scriptures he had collected on this ritual. He comments that the yellow gate tower with a purple door featured in the Grotto-Room ritual “is similar to what the Mysterious Cinnabar ritual calls the ‘purple room with green chambers’ (*zifang lüshi* 紫房綠室).”¹⁵ This means that the rituals for the Way of the Three Ones and the Mysterious Cinnabar were both included in Tao's *Ascent to Perfection*. Furthermore, Tao's quote of the Mysterious Cinnabar text closely matches the extant *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*, which reads:

Mysterious Cinnabar Palace is above the Cinnabar Field and measures one square *cun*.¹⁶ It has purple rooms and green chambers, and it is filled with vermilion vapors.¹⁷

玄丹宮在丹田之上，正房一寸，紫房綠室，朱烟滿內。

Given that the passages on the Mysterious Cinnabar ritual in Tao's commentary and those present in the extant *Scripture of Immaculate Numen* are verbatim, it is likely that the passages describing the Nine Palaces in DZ 1314 are the same as the missing portions of Tao's *Ascent to Perfection*.¹⁸ Both texts feature the rituals for the Cinnabar Field, Flowing Pearl, and Mysterious

Cinnabar Palaces after the Grotto-Room ritual and are in the same order listed for the five male palaces in “Su’s Hagiography.”¹⁹ This further indicates that the first fascicle of Tao’s *Ascent to Perfection* is incomplete and that the three missing parts of the text closely resemble corresponding passages in DZ 1314.

Unlike Tao’s ritual progression, those found in the *Scripture of Immaculate Numen* are structured differently. The writer of that scripture discusses the ritual for the Cinnabar Field Palace in detail; he only says that it is the same as “the ritual for the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes.” This abbreviation likely occurs here because this matter had been discussed in detail in the *Scripture of the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes*. We have already seen that in “Zhou’s Hagiography,” the ritual for the Cinnabar Field Palace marks the transition between terrestrial transcendence (*dixian*) into celestial transcendence or perfection. In DZ 1314, however, these terms are changed into terrestrial Perfected (*dizhen*) and celestial Perfected (*tianzhen*), terminology that follows the language of “Su’s Hagiography” closely:

This is an important route [taken] by terrestrial Perfected beings, as the scripture enables them to ride upon dragon carriages. There are many celestial Perfected positions, yet many of them would rather remain a terrestrial Perfected being. This is because the terrestrial Perfected can go into hiding and thereby avoid the arduous demands of [higher] appointments, like the morning court rituals. . . . Although there are some differences between the ranks of celestial and terrestrial Perfected beings, they are nonetheless *all* [ranked as] Perfected.²⁰

此地真之要路，控乘龍車之經也。天真多官位，樂欲為地真人。地真人隱遁於官位，不勞損於朝晏。. . . . 至於天真、地真，雖差階小異，俱一真矣。

Unlike the elaborate description of the Mysterious Cinnabar rituals, the representation of practices for the Flowing Pearl Palace is highly abbreviated. Flowing Pearl is glossed as “one *cun* behind the Cinnabar Field Palace.” The author writes that the Perfected spirits (*zhenshen* 真神) living in the Flowing Pearl Palace possess a scripture containing detailed descriptions for its corresponding ritual, but that this text only exists as a heavenly text and does not circulate on Earth. The author of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*,

however, specifies that an adept must have attained the rank of director of destinies (*siming* 司命) or Taiji chamberlain (*Taiji gongqing* 太極公卿) to receive the text. Tao inserts these same details in his commentary to *Ascent to Perfection* to describe the rituals for the Flowing Pearl Palace. The resonance between these passages makes it likely that DZ 1314 resembles the missing passages in Tao's text and "Su's Hagiography."

Like the preceding entries, the description of the Mysterious Cinnabar Palace begins with its placement (above the Cinnabar Field Palace) and a detailed description of its presiding deity, the Grand Monad Perfected Lord of the Muddy Pellet (*Niwan taiyi zhenjun* 泥丸太一真君). This god is imagined as an infant clad in damask robes and wearing fiery bells hanging from his belt; this symbolizes he is a Perfected of Upper Clarity. He always holds a scepter inlaid with seven stars of the Big Dipper, an image showing that he is the same Grand Monad venerated in ancient apocryphal texts.²¹ Aside from this description of the Grand Monad Perfected Lord, the *Scripture of Immaculate Numen* features a detailed explanation of the ritual. This ritual can be summarized as follows:

1. In evening or at night, the adept sits or lies down in a secluded chamber. He then fixes his meditation on the purple *qi* of the Northern Culmen constellation descending into the Mysterious Cinnabar Palace of his head. Soon thereafter, the purple *qi* will expand and engulf the adept's entire body. The *qi* and body will fuse and amalgamate as a single entity.
2. Once the body dissipates into the purple *qi*, the adept will actualize the sun coming into his Mysterious Cinnabar Palace. Eventually, the sun will fill the palace and will anchor in the center of the purple *qi*. The adept next actualizes the Grand Monad Perfected Lord, and the latter will descend and sit in the center of the sun. The adept then sits in front of the god and respectfully requests a formula for long life. At this point, the adept should swallow the purple *qi* thirty times.
3. The adept then actualizes a red *qi* inside the seven stars of the Northern Dipper; this *qi* descends directly into his Mysterious Cinnabar Palace. The adept and the Grand Monad Lord then ride

inside this sun and ascend on a path formed by the red *qi*. This will lead the human-deity pair straight up to the *kui* star of the Northern Dipper, where the adept can sleep for a long time.

In many ways, the ritual for the Mysterious Cinnabar Palace resembles the Three Ones method, as both formulae call for adepts to imagine a Perfected being descending into their body and thereafter ascending together with the adept into the heavens. There are other ways these two rituals overlap: Both rituals center around the gods associated with the Grand Tenuity heavens, these actions fuse somatic and celestial bodies, and both rituals center on the idea that they travel to the Big Dipper alongside deities. Some scholars understand these two different methods as variations preserved in “Su’s Hagiography.”²² Previous studies indicate that the Mysterious Cinnabar ritual always appears after the Three Ones.²³ But this is not the case for the author of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*, who writes that the adept should devote his or her entire attention to the practice of the Three Ones, as “solely cultivating” (*zhuan xiu* 專修) the Three Ones method would bring about godhood in the most direct and quickest fashion.²⁴

Table 4.1

<i>Ascent to Perfection, juan 1</i>	<i>Scripture of the Immaculate Numen</i>
Overview of the Nine Palaces	Heavenly Transmission of the Scripture
Teachings about the Masculine Perfected	Description of the Three Perfected Scriptures
Teachings about the Feminine Perfected	An Esoteric Instruction concerning Guarding the One
“Guardian of the <i>Cun</i> ”	Teachings about the Bright Hal
Teachings about the Bright Hall	Teachings about the Grotto-Room
Teachings about the Grotto-Room	Teachings about the Cinnabar Field
Teachings about the Cinnabar Field	Teachings about the Mysterious Cinnabar
Teachings about the Flowing Pearl	“Guardian of the <i>Cun</i> ”
Teachings about the Mysterious Cinnabar	Overview of the Nine Palaces
	Teachings about the Masculine Perfected
	Teachings about the Feminine Perfected
	Guarding the Mysterious Cinnabar

Thus, all our extant copies of the Three Ones ritual, from “Zhou’s Hagiography” to the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*, are not one technique for bodily cultivation, but rather a collection of ritual techniques that all achieve analogous effects. Furthermore, all of these techniques have scriptures associated with them all, although *not all* of these scriptures existed, at least not yet in terrestrial libraries.

From the Three Ones to the Three Caverns

One important aspect of rewriting Daoist scriptures in the fourth and fifth century is that readers often knew of a title or possessed fragments of a scripture before a full text was in circulation. As noted in the beginning of this chapter, the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* was known as early as the mid-fourth century when Hua Qiao mentioned its existence among the Perfected in the heavens. Yet according to Tao Hongjing, this scripture was not circulating in his day. Tao writes that he compiled the Three Ones and Mysterious Cinnabar rituals in an attempt to chart out a rough version of the scripture.²⁵ He also copied passages from “Su’s Hagiography” to reconstruct parts of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*.²⁶

DZ 1314 is certainly a product of this kind of editing, for the writer reworks and elaborates passages from “Su’s Hagiography” to compose a lengthy scripture. Even the title of this scripture, *Most High Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] and Penetrating Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]* (*Taishang suling dongxuan dayou maojing* 太上素靈洞玄大有妙經), suggests that readers thought this was a copy of the scripture procured from the Primal King. The scripture can be divided into five main parts:²⁷

1. Three Grottoes [1a–12b]
 - a. “The Precious Names of Officials Who Became Inner Perfected through the Three Cavern’s Unitive Transformation” (“Sandong hunhua neizhen biansheng guanhao baoming” 三洞混化內真變生官號寶名) [1a]

- b. “The Most High Lord of the Dao’s *Scripture on Guarding the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes*” (“Taishang daojun shou sanyuan zhenyi jing” 太上道君守三元真一經) [10a]
- 2. Nine Palaces [12b–24b]
 - c. “The Upper Scripture on the Most High Lord of the Dao’s Preservation of Mysterious Cinnabar” (“Taishang daojun shou xuandan shangjing” 太上道君守玄丹上經) [12b]
 - d. “The Jade Instructions on the Precious Names for the Inner Spirits known as the Feminine Perfected Ones of the Four Palaces” (“Sigong ci zhenyi neishen baoming yujue” 四宮雌真一內神寶名玉訣) [22a]
- 3. Three Ones [24b–41a]
 - e. “The Perfected Talisman and Precious Emblem of the Most High Thearchical Lord of Taiji” (“Taishang taiji dijun zhenfu baozhang” 太上太極帝君真符寶章) [24b]²⁸
 - f. “The Method from the Inner Scripture of Guarding the One of the Most High Grand Cavern” (“Taishang dadong shouyi nei jing fa” 太上大洞守一內經法) [27a]
- 4. Three [Palaces] and Nine [Openings’] Immaculate Words (*sanjiu suyu* 三九素語) [41a–43b]
 - g. “The Most High Writs with Instructions for Esoteric Incantations of the Three [Palaces] and Nine [Openings’] Immaculate Words” (“Taishang sanjiu suyu neizhou juewen” 太上三九素語內咒訣文) [41a]
- 5. *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected* (*Jiuzhen mingke* 九真明科) [43b–68b]
 - h. “The Higher Ritual that Grand Perfected [Use to] Seek Transcendence by a Secret Court” (“Taizhen yinchao qixian shangfa” 太真隱朝求仙上法) [46a]
 - i. *Most High Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected* [46b]
 - j. “Miraculous Litany for the Great Existence [Heaven], a Verse by the Grand Thearchical Lord” (“Taidijun e dayou miao zan” 太帝君偈大有妙讚) [65b]

Just as Tao Hongjing culled passages from “Su’s Hagiography,” the writer of DZ 1314 also incorporates passage from this same text. Parts 2a, 3a, and 3b of the scripture, for instance, have parallel passages from “Su’s Hagiography.” But the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* paints a more complicated picture of the lines of transmission for the text. There are three different lines of transmission identified for this scripture:

The Grand Thearchical Lord, the Celestial Thearchical Lord, and the Thearchical Lord of Grand Tenuity Heaven all received [their initiation from the Most High Lord of the Dao. Each [deity] achieved the Dao after putting [this method] into practice, and were promoted and took new positions as Thearchical Perfected. The Grand Thearchical Lord transmitted this scripture to the Queen Mother of the West. The Celestial Thearchical Lord transmitted to the Upper Primal Lord of the Southern Bourne. The Celestial Thearch, Lord of Grand Tenuity transmitted to the Sage Lord of the Golden Porte, the Sage Lord of the Golden Porte transmitted to Lord Azure Lad, who then transmitted it to Juanzi.

太帝君、天帝君、太微天帝君受於太上道君，施行道成，上補帝真。太帝君以經傳西王母，天帝君以經傳南極上元君，太微天帝君以經傳金闕聖君，金闕聖君傳上相青童君，青童君傳涓子。

Of these three lines of transmission, it is the third line that most closely follows the Juanzi story proposed in “Zhou’s Hagiography.”

1. Most High Lord of the Dao → Grand Thearchical Lord (*Taidi jun* 太帝君) → Queen Mother of the West
2. Most High Lord of the Dao → Celestial Thearchical Lord (*Tiandi jun* 天帝君) → Upper Primal Lord of the Southern Bourne (*Nanji shangyuan jun* 南極上元君)
3. Most High Lord of the Dao → Celestial Thearch, Lord of Grand Tenuity → Sage Lord of the Golden Porte → Azure Lad → Juanzi

The third line of transmission is echoed in two other places in the scripture. One occurs in the passages concerning the “Precious Stanza,”²⁹ where the authors stresses that the text was released from the Lord of Grand Tenuity

to the Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte. Later in the scripture, in the section describing the incantations for the Three Palaces and Nine Openings,³⁰ the writer applies this same extended lineage. This not only demonstrates that the author(s) of DZ 1314 rewrote “Su’s Hagiography,” but also shows a consistent and systematic reshaping of the pantheon of deities affiliated with the scripture.

The *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* also differs from Tao’s *Ascent to Perfection* in that the writer inserts ritual texts that previously had little or nothing to do with the Three Ones of the Nine Palaces. One example of this kind of insertion is the Three Palaces and Nine Openings section, a text intended to help the reader recognize the “Nine Openings” (*jiu kong* 九孔) and three palaces of the body. The writer of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* underscores that such a ritual is important to conduct prior to the rituals for the Guarding the One method.

For all those cultivating the “guarding the Ones” [method], they should first incant the Thearchical Lord’s immaculate words before arranging the passes of the six repositories and opening their “trigger of crystalline darkness.”³¹

凡修守一之道，皆當先行帝君素語之呪，以理六府之關，開瑩幽機。

The writer of the scripture also inserts new ritual texts to be performed after the Three Ones ritual, such as the incantations for the Feminine Perfected Ones. Here the success of the Three Ones is predicated on carrying out these additional rites. The combination of these new and old rituals is imagined as capable of giving an adept access to deeper mysteries and insights.

If you want to practice the method of Mysterious Cinnabar or the instructions for guarding the Three Ones, you should first actualize the spirits of the Feminine Perfected Ones. . . . If an adept receives the rituals of Upper Perfection in the *Divine Scriptures of the Three Treasures*, he might penetrate the deepest mystery, but he will never succeed if he is unaware of the rituals of the Feminine Perfected Ones.³²

行玄丹之道，守三一之訣，當常守四宮雌真一之神. . . . 凡受上真之法、三寶神經，雖通靈究幽，不知雌真一之法，亦萬無成矣。

Finally, the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* differs from its predecessors in that its author makes explicit associations between these scriptures and other texts in circulation. Earlier writers of Upper Clarity scriptures acknowledged the existence of other scriptures, but they would often inform the reader that he or she should look elsewhere for that information. In the descriptions of the Grotto-Room rituals in “Su’s Hagiography,” for instance, the hagiographer states that a different ritual would be “separately [described] in its own scripture” (*bie zi you jing* 別自有經). In DZ 1314, however, this phrase is extended and followed by the phrase “it is also used for the *Scripture of the Golden Efflorescence*” (*shi zai Jinhua jing zhong* 事在《金華經》中). This phrase means that the author links this once unknown text to a text in the *Jade Seal of the Feminine One* (DZ 1313) titled *Jade Scripture of the Golden Efflorescence of the Great Cavern* (*Dadong jinhua yujing* 大洞金華玉經).³³ This type of change shows that the writer is not simply replacing one rite with another, but making connections between many different kinds of rituals. This attempt to systematize Upper Clarity rites can also be seen in the description of the Three Ones method. In the original ritual, the author writes that the adept “should also practice the Grotto-Room rites” in addition to the Three Ones. In DZ 1314, however, the author replaces this passage with a host of separate rites also connected with the *Jade Seal of the Feminine One*.

[You] can also cultivate the methods like “The Five Spirits of the Thearchical One’s Grand Monad” and “Three-Five-Seven-Nine” at the same time [as the above method]. And if [you] cultivate these at the same time, it will make the resonance for [your body’s] spirits of the One much easier.³⁴

又當兼行帝一太一五神及三五七九之事。兼行之者，而一神之感致易也。

The author’s synthesis of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* and the *Jade Seal of the Feminine One* are most apparent in the passages discussing how the Perfected rites are integrated in a system of “three caverns” (*sandong* 三洞) or “three wonders” (*sanqi* 三奇). Adepts do not need to obtain the esoteric texts through meditation, but instead can receive these scriptures through human-

to-human transmission. In one part of DZ 1314, titled “The Method from the Inner Scripture of Guarding the One of the Most High Grand Cavern” (“Taishang dadong shouyi nei jing fa” 太上大洞守一內經法), for instance, a passage is an augmented form of the preceding passage from the *Scripture on Perfected Ones of the Three Primes*. We boldface those parts of the passage that have either been changed or added by the author of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*:

The method of the Three Ones will enable you to fully contemplate the Dao via the “three primes.” This method is wondrous and miraculous for it collects all the numinous books, i.e., those divine scripture that **heavenly beings and Transcendent sovereigns** watch over. The first of these **wonders** is the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas*. The second **wondrous text [concerns] the fusion and transformation of the Feminine One**; it is called the *Miraculous Scripture of Great Existence*. The third jade secret instruction is the “[Method of] **Three-Five-Seven-Nine**” from a **mysterious scripture of penetrating perfection**; it is called the *Immaculate Numen Most High*. Therefore, the thearchical lord of the Upper One watches over the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto*, the cinnabar sovereign of the Middle One watches over the *Miraculous Scripture of the Feminine One*, and the primal king of the Lower One hides the *Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] Penetrating Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]*. These [texts], **which are called the “Three Fives,”** are the most essential of the perfected teachings and the ultimate stanzas of the Three Ones. Their transmission is also closely regulated in the **Jade Clarity** [heaven] for these are the **most exalted of all secret texts**.³⁵

夫三一之法，觀道備於三元，其道奇妙，總合靈篇，天人仙皇，握寶神經。第一之奇，《大洞真經三十九章》；第二奇文，雌一合變，號《大有妙經》；第三玉訣，洞真玄經三五七九，號《太上素靈》。是故上一帝君寶《大洞真經》，中一丹皇寶《雌一妙經》，下一元王祕《素靈洞玄大有妙經》。此三五之號，真道之至精，三一之極章，並玉清之禁訣，高上之祕篇。

This author further states that these three caverns or wonders refer not simply to scriptures, but also to categories of texts that adepts must collect to ensure their postmortem success. The correspondence that the author of DZ

1314 establishes between these texts is further evidence that his interest was to synthesize and correlate differing systems into a loose genealogy of Upper Clarity texts.

This is a superior fascicle of the Immaculate Numen [Palace]. Its teachings stand out among all other scriptures, and its methods are exalted and sublime. . . . If Daoist adepts cultivate [all] the three Perfected levels of highest scriptures, they will become upper sires or upper chamberlains to thearchical sovereigns. . . . The catalogue of the ranked scriptures is taken from the “Eight Simplicities” fascicle of the *Hidden Writings of the Most High*. It also [outlines] the specific protocol for the transmission [of these scriptures].³⁶

此素靈之上篇。此道奇於眾經，其法高妙……道士若修太上三真品經，位為帝皇之上公、上卿也……品經之目，出《太上隱書八素篇》中，有俯仰之格限也。

These forms of rewriting that we find in the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* demonstrate that the author’s goals extended far beyond integrating the rituals of the Three Ones, Mysterious Cinnabar, and Nine Palaces. Rather, he seems to have wanted to expand the idea of the “three instructions” of the *Scripture of the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes* and expand it into a fully developed scheme of a ritual program of the Three Caverns.

A System of the Three Caverns

In the descriptions of the Three Ones in “Zhou’s Hagiography” (see chapter 2), each of the Perfected Ones transmitted a scripture. Earlier scriptures such as the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas* (*Dadong zhenjing sanshijiu zhang* 大洞真經三十九章) claim that the scriptures associated with these transmissions were the *Miraculous Scripture of the Great Existence [Heaven]* (*Dayou miaojing* 大有妙經) and the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*. In DZ 1314, however, the second and third scripture are collapsed into the third text, and a new scripture (the *Jade Seal*) was inserted into this scheme. As table 4.2 shows, this new threefold sequence of scriptures was consistently applied throughout DZ 1314, though the titles of the scriptures vary slightly.

Table 4.2

DZ 253	<i>Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto (Dadong zhenjing)</i>	<i>Miraculous Scripture of the Great Existence [Heaven] (Dayou maojing)</i>	<i>Immaculate Numen Most High (Taishang suling)</i>
DZ 1314, 30a	<i>Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas (Dadong zhenjing sanshiju zhang)</i>	<i>The Fusion and Transformation of the Feminine One, the Miraculous Scripture of Great Existence (Ci yi hebian, hao dayou maojing 雌一合變，號大有妙經)</i>	“Three-Five-Seven-Nine” from a mysterious scripture of penetrating perfection, the <i>Immaculate Numen Most High (Dongzhen xuanjing sanwuqijiu, hao Taishang suling 洞真玄經三五七九，號太上素靈)</i>
DZ 1314, 30a–b	<i>Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto</i>	<i>Miraculous Scripture of the Feminine One (Ci yi maojing 雌一妙經)</i>	<i>Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] and Penetrating Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]</i>
DZ 1314, 32b, 33b, 34b	<i>Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto</i>	<i>High Talisman of the Feminine One (Ci yi gao shangfu 雌一高上符)</i>	<i>Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] and Penetrating Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]</i>
DZ 1314, 1b, 3a, 3b	<i>Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas</i>	<i>Most High Precious Scripture on the Five Ancient Lords, Jade Seal of the Feminine One (Gaoshang yujian ci yi wulao baojing 高上玉檢雌一五老寶經)</i>	<i>Most High Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] and Penetrating Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]</i>
DZ 1314, 44b	<i>Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas</i>	<i>Precious Scripture of the Feminine One (Ci yi baojing 雌一寶經)</i>	<i>Most High Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] and Penetrating Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]</i>
DZ 1314, 48b	<i>Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto</i>	<i>Precious Scripture of the Feminine One</i>	<i>Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] and Penetrating Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]</i>

Corresponding scripture in Daoist Canon	<i>Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas</i>	<i>Cavernous Perfection's Precious Scripture on the Five Elders of the Feminine One's Jade Seal from the Most High Jade Thearch's Great Grotto</i> (<i>Dongzhen gaoshang yudi dadong ciyi yujian wulao baojing</i> 洞真高上玉帝大洞雌一玉檢五老寶經)	<i>Cavernous Perfection's Most High Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] and Penetrating Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]</i>
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When the author of DZ 1314 describes the scriptures, he often calls them by a new name, the Three Wonders or Three Caverns.³⁷ The idea is introduced at the very beginning of the scripture when the author stresses that the *Scripture of Immaculate Numen* emerged only after the first two wonders (*Great Grotto* and *Jade Seal*) existed. This introduction also stresses that this third wonder (DZ 1314) was designed to unite and unify the scriptures of the Three Caverns. The author underscores that the content of DZ 1314 was culled from all three caverns and was an amalgamation of techniques from other texts.

It existed along with the primal *qi* in the beginning and was engendered during the Primordial Commencement [era]. The three essences congealed and transformed into a jade emblem of coalescing brilliance. [The rays of the emblem] spread throughout the bureaus of the Three Caverns. It was in total control of the myriad Perfected [beings] of the abyss . . . it was inscribed on jade slats, and after the characters were carved, the jade characters were gilded in gold to illuminate this text and were unitively transformed the Three Caverns.³⁸

本與元氣同存，元始俱生，三精凝化，結朗玉章，構演三洞之府，御萬真之淵 刻玉為簡，以撰其文，金鏤玉字，以明其篇。混化三洞。

Later on, in the introduction, the author states that this scripture summarizes all three scriptures, a feature that would presumably allow the reader to understand all the texts by merely reading this one scripture.

The miraculous scripture [called] *Great Existence* is the penetrating mystery of the Immaculate Numen. It unites the Three Treasures into one marvelous text and combines their three *qi* into an elevated stanza.³⁹

大有之妙經，素靈為洞玄。總三寶為奇文，結三氣為高章。

One of the author's primary purposes for the composition of DZ 1314 was to forge a text unifying various scriptural lineages. At the end of the scripture, the author appends a lengthy bibliography embedded in the *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected* (*Jiuzhen mingke* 九真明科). We know that the *Code* was an integral part of the text's structure, not appended as an afterthought, because in the scripture's introduction, the author writes that the scripture "controls the inspection of infractions through the *Mysterious [Metropolis] Code*."⁴⁰ The author also states that the *Code* should be used when circulating the *Jade Seal* to adepts. The *Scripture of Immaculate Numen* (with its appended *Code*) was to be transmitted at the same time as the other two "wonders."

To bolster the claims about the unity between the Three Wonders, the author of DZ 1314 further points out that each scripture has a heavenly bureau whose deified officials oversee the texts. These three bureaus—Clear Tenuity Bureau (*Qingwei fu* 清微府), Orchid Terrace Bureau (*Lantai fu* 蘭臺府), and Radiant Hall Bureau (*Huangtang fu* 皇堂府)—are located inside the Immaculate Numen portion of the Great Existence Palace that rests atop the highest echelon of heaven. Each of these bureaus is also composed of spirit officials belonging to the following three categories: grotto-heaven's primal cave (*dongtian yuandong* 洞天元洞), grotto-earth's penetrating perfection (*dongdi dongzhen* 洞地洞真), and grotto-abyss' penetrating mystery (*dongyuan dongxuan* 洞淵洞玄). These names reflect that the author of the scripture sees the Three Caverns as nearly equivalent to the Three Wonders. While the Three Caverns often refers to a system for all Daoist texts in later formulations, here it is limited to only these three esoteric texts.

The [official] titles were spontaneously produced by the Dao of the Three Caverns. [These officials] assist the management of the Three Treasures—*Perfected Scripture of the Great Cavern, [Most High Precious Scripture on the] Five Ancient Lords, [Jade Seal of] the Feminine One, Most High [Wondrous]*

Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace and Penetrating Mystery of] the Great Existence [Heaven]—and inherit [their authority] from the Three Primes. Primal Cave controls the heavens, Penetrating Perfection is in charge of earth, and Penetrating Mystery controls people. The three *qi* unite their luminosity and take charge of your body from within the three palaces. These [*qi*] need one another in order to complete [this process]. . . . To cultivate the “three jewels” of the Perfected scriptures of Upper Clarity, first meditate on the precious names of the Inner Perfected of the Three Caverns, then visualize and intone these officers’ names. They will protect your bodily form, and this [method of] cultivation will enable you to become a Perfected being.⁴¹

三洞之道，結自然之號，輔統三寶——《大洞真經》、《唯一五老》、《大有素靈》；應承三元——元洞主天，洞真主地，洞玄主人。三炁合明，同治兆身三宮之中，相須乃成. . . . 凡修三寶、上清真經，當先思「三洞內真寶名」，存念「官號」，以衛身形，然後修行，克成真人。

The *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* does not detail exactly how the Three Caverns govern over the Three Treasures (or Wonders). This passage does, however, reinforce the correlation between bodily palaces and the tripartite group of heaven, humans, and earth. This idea has a long pedigree and was an integral part of early Three Ones theory. But this writer adapts the old idea into something quite different: The Three Wonders are not separate texts like the “three instructions” of the older rituals. Here the Three Wonders are cast as scriptures that the adept should simultaneously cultivate.

Called the “Way of the Three Caverns” (*sandong zhi dao* 三洞之道) or the “Way of Beckoning the Perfected and Bringing Forth the Numina” (*zhaozhen zhiling zhi dao* 招真致靈之道), this modified version of the Three Ones ritual is called the “Most High Lord of the Dao’s *Scripture on Guarding the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes*.⁴² This ritual is to be carried out three times daily (morning, noon, night), once for each of the heavenly cavern-bureaus. Alternatively, adepts could do all three rituals at noontime, if desired. There are two parts to this ritual. First, adepts visualize the *qi* from the three aforementioned heavenly bureaus descending into their bodily palaces. They were to conduct the ritual in a private chamber where they

would actualize the *qi* from the Immaculate Numen's three bureaus (Clear Tenuity, Orchid Terrace, Resplendent Hall). For each bureau, they would take in nine breaths of the rarified *qi*, and follow these with predetermined incantations.⁴³

After ingesting the *qi* from these heavenly bureaus, adepts would enter into the second phase of the ritual. They would visualize the officials who occupied these bureaus, at which time the gods would bestow powerful talismans. Since it was important that adepts correctly visualize the appearance and name for each of these deities, there is a detailed list, titled "The Precious Names of Officials Who Became Inner Perfected through the Three Cavern's Unitive Transformation," to facilitate this process. After visualizing all these deities, adepts would once again take nine breaths of each bureau's *qi*, at which time the ritual would end.

It is easy to see that the author of the "Way of Beckoning the Perfected and Bringing Forth the Numina" closely modeled this exercise on the earlier Three Ones ritual. The writers place the locus of ritual activity in the adept's three bodily palaces. In both rituals, adepts were instructed to visualize heavenly beings and bring them down into their bodies. Furthermore, both exercises involve the bestowal of texts (e.g., scriptures, talismans) from these heavenly beings. In this new ritual, the old gods of the Grand Tenuity Heaven are replaced with gods of the Immaculate Numen Room. While the sequence of actions, in other words, remains similar, the new ritual has a new heavenly realm and pantheon of spirits who are defined as "Perfected Ones."

All the portions of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* that focus on the Three Wonders, in particular the *Code* and the Way of the Three Caverns, were likely not part of the scripture as conceived in "Su's Hagiography." In this latter text, the scripture likely only covered the old Three Ones ritual and the Mysterious Cinnabar. The question then emerges: Who might want to make these changes? What kind of shifts in the institutional use of Upper Clarity scriptures might this reflect?

Chapter Five

Three Hundred Fascicles

Rethinking the Authorship of Daoist Scriptures

A sociology . . . directs us to consider the human motives and interactions which—texts involve at every stage of their production, transmission, and consumption. It alerts us to the roles of institutions, and their complex structures, in affecting the forms of social discourse, past and present.

— D. F. McKenzie, “The Sociology of a Text”

Who is the author of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*? Based on all the various layers we have already discussed, identifying a single author who wrote this text would be an insoluble riddle. First, there are various layers of texts culled from various sources, some anterior and others posterior to Xu Mi’s mid-fourth-century community. Second, there is disagreement among early readers as to when this text began circulating among collectors of Upper Clarity scriptures. Finally, even if we were to identify all the fragments that compose the scripture (a daunting task that has been undertaken in Robinet’s 1984 study), how could we possibly know what person or group of persons undertook this editing process? The problem with determining dating and authorship of this (and many other) Daoist scripture is that its transmission is not clear: Most scholars seem to be aware that they have been significantly re-edited, but it is not immediately apparent who made these changes and when.

For many Daoist scriptures, which were continually rewritten and remade, it is understandable why previous scholars often conclude that such texts are “forgeries.” A text like the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* could

easily be labeled as a kind of “fabrication” (i.e., a text that an author passes off as historical even though it is a product of the author’s imagination), since it is a pastiche of many different texts.¹ But this assertion has also made it easy to dismiss this scripture and fail to see the creativity and ingenuity of the writers who brought it into existence.

Faced with the fact that Daoist scriptures were continually erased, augmented, and rewritten, we might ask some simple questions: What exactly did *reading* a book in the context of early medieval Daoism entail? And what circumstances might have led writers to compose new scriptures and rewrite old ones? What did readers expect when reading these edited manuscripts? How did the writers of these “forgeries” rhetorically structure and craft scriptures in order to persuade their audience about a text’s authenticity? And if it is impossible to identify a single author for a text, can we at least make an educated guess about what person or persons are likely to be responsible for the creation of the editorial framework of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*?

This final chapter examines two dimensions of reading scriptures in the context of early Upper Clarity Daoism. We begin by studying the editorial practices of late-fifth-century exegetes such as Gu Huan and Tao Hongjing. Characterizing certain Daoist scriptures as forged texts was a practice commonplace as early as the fifth century. In comparing Gu and Tao’s editorial methods, we uncover that there was not one, but many different kinds of Upper Clarity scriptures circulating in these early decades. In the second part of the chapter, we focus on a key but understudied writer of Upper Clarity scriptures, Wang Lingqi 王靈期. This early-fifth-century master, whose reputation was challenged by Tao, is actually one of the best candidates for the primary author of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*. A sustained look at Wang’s reshaping of Upper Clarity brings new insights into the hitherto unknown changes that occurred between the early Upper Clarity writers (Hua Qiao and Yang Xi) and the later exegetes (Gu and Tao).

The Editorial Friction between Gu Huan and Tao Hongjing

Nearly a half-century after the initial wave of Upper Clarity scriptures emerged, there was interest among the Daoist literati in southern China

to collect and collate the various hagiographic and scriptural fragments of the mid-fourth century. One of these individuals was Gu Huan 顧歡 (alternate name Jingyi 景怡 and byname Xuanping 玄平, 420/28–483/91), who pieced together evidence from Upper Clarity hagiographies to chart a history of the transmission of these texts. Later biographers represent Gu as a polymath whose interests spanned a wide range of philosophical and political traditions including both Daoist scriptures (*Daojing* 道經) and Buddhist scripture (*Fojing* 佛經).² Gu was from humble origins, but he quickly gained a reputation for his erudition. He spent most of his life as a teacher in his retreat atop the Tiantai mountains (present-day Zhejiang).

Gu's studies of the Upper Clarity scriptures is most fully expressed in his “Preface for a Commentary to the *Scriptural Catalogue of the Origins of Upper Clarity*” (*Shangqing yuантong jingmu zhu xu* 上清源統經目註序, hereafter “Commentary and Preface”).³ In this preface, Gu outlines the history of the Upper Clarity scriptures from primordial times to their fourth- and fifth-century transmission in China. Much of the information about the initial appearance of the scriptures among Xu Mi's community (nos. 5–8 in table 5.1) relies on Yang Xi's hagiographies. The information about the subsequent transmission of these texts (nos. 10–17) likely was drawn from Gu's own compendium *Scripture of the Dao's Traces* (*Daoji jing* 道迹經).⁴

At first glance, Gu's retelling of the transmission of Upper Clarity scriptures differs little from the account of Tao Hongjing that Michel Strickmann provides in early study of the Upper Clarity movement.⁵ These two accounts, however, differ significantly on the fate of the revelations after Xu Mi's community disappeared. A key difference between Gu and Tao's account occurs in the retelling of how Xu Mi's grandson, Xu Huangmin 許黃民 (361–429) transmitted the scriptures before he died. Both Gu and Tao agree that prior to his death, Huangmin deposited the texts in the Ma family's ritual chamber. Gu and Tao, however, disagree on the location of Xu's death: Gu asserts that he passed on a mountain (Mount Bai), while Tao claims he died while staying with the Du family in Qiantang City.

Gu and Tao also represent the transmission of texts from Xu differently. Gu writes that Xu willingly gave all his scriptures to Ma family in a sign of devotion. Xu removed the scriptures from his “mysterious terrace” (*xuantai* 玄臺), likely an altar where he presumably worshipped the holy writs, and

then sealed the chest with a coat of silver. In Tao's account, however, the devotional dimension of these texts is missing; when Xu realizes his end is near, he merely gathers up his texts, places them in a chest, and gives it to the Ma family.

Gu's and Tao's representations of the transmission to the Ma family differ in their accounts of the individuals who laid a legitimate claim to the scriptures. For Gu, Xu Huangmin's decision to entrust the scriptures to the Ma family was a temporary measure. Gu writes that Huangmin was preparing for a journey and wanted to store the scriptures with the Ma family for a short time. When he suddenly died, the Ma family acted as stewards of the texts. According to Tao, however, the Ma family's possession of the scriptures was a contested point. Tao writes that Xu deposited these texts out of convenience; he was moving from Jurong to Qiantang and needed a place to store the scriptures. Fearing that the Ma family might give the texts away, Xu made them promise that they would not let go of the scriptures unless he personally came to claim the texts. When Xu wanted the texts back, he was too ill to go himself, and the Ma family refused to let Xu's messenger take the texts. While the Ma family was legally entitled to keep the scriptures, Tao does not consider this family as the rightful owners.

Table 5.1

Structure of Gu Huan's "Preface" (DZ 1032, 4.1a–4a)	Textual Origins of Gu's Claims
1. The scriptures were spontaneously formed in a primordial age and stored in a palace in the Upper Clarity heaven.	DZ 55, 12b
2. The Lord of the Dao collated (<i>tuijiao</i> 推校) the various versions of the scriptures.	
3. During the first year of the Middle Sovereign era, the Lord of the Dao ordered officials in the Azure Palace of Eastern Efflorescence to compile the scriptures into a single collection.	
4. The Han Emperor Wu received transmission of the scriptures and stored them in the Cypress Beam Terrace. The following year the terrace burned down and the scriptures returned to heaven.	DZ 292, 19

Structure of Gu Huan's "Preface" (DZ 1032, 4.1a–4a)	Textual Origins of Gu's Claims
5. Mao Ying became a disciple of Lord Wang and received a method called the <i>Gold Medallion and Jade Pendant's Two Phosphors Jade Armil</i> . Mao became a deity in 66 BCE.	("Mao's Hagiography") DZ 1032, 104:13b, 14b–15a.
6. Su Lin became the disciple of Juanzi and received the method of the Three Ones. Su became a deity in 68 BCE.	("Su's Hagiography") DZ 1032, 104:2b–4a.
7. Zhou Yishan received scriptures from various deities but did not transmit them to other human adepts.	("Zhou's Hagiography") DZ 303, 1a–14b; ("Li's Hagiography") DZ 442, 1a–9a.
8. In 1 CE, Wang Bao received thirty-one fascicles of scriptures at Luoyang from the Perfected Being of the Western Citadel.	("Wang's Hagiography") DZ 1032, 106.4a.
9. Between 325 and 334, Wei Huacun received scriptures while practicing in Ji commandery (Henan). She became a deity in 334.	("Wei's Hagiography") <i>Taiping guangji</i> , 58.356–58.
10. Wei Huacun bestowed thirty-one fascicles of scriptures to Yang Xi. The latter became a deity in 386.	Gu Huan's <i>Scripture of the Dao's Traces</i>
11. In 313, Xu Mai moved to Mount Chicheng where he became a disciple of Bao Jing and Mao Ying.	
12. Xu Mai received all the Upper Clarity scriptures from Mao Ying in 373.	
13. Xu Hui became a disciple of Yang Xi, at which time Xu received thirty-one fascicles of the <i>Phoenix Writs of Sinuous Simplicity, the Three Heavens' Correct Law of Upper Clarity</i> .	
14. Xu Huangmin 許黃民 (361–429) died at Mount Bai in the Shan commandery in 435 and gave the collection of Upper Clarity scriptures to the Ma family.	
15. The Ma family safeguarded the scriptures for over three decades. Later, a priest named Lou Hua was denied access.	
16. The Song Emperor Ming (r. 466–472) confiscated the scriptures.	
17. In 473, the Mao family successfully filed a lawsuit to have the scriptures returned from the capital.	
18. The Divine King was asked to compile thirty-one Upper Clarity scriptures.	DZ 1331, 27a

Table 5.2

The Ma Family's Acquisition of the Scriptures According to Gu Huan (DZ 1032, 4.3a [YJQQ 50])	The Ma Family's Acquisition of the Scriptures According to Tao Hongjing (DZ 1016, 19.13a)
<p>Yufu (i.e., Xu Hui) had a son named Huangmin. Huangmin had a son named Yuzhi (i.e., Xu Rongdi 許榮第). In the twelfth year of the <i>yuanjia</i> reign-period (435), the latter died atop Mount Bai of the Shan commandery. Right before [Yuzhi] died, he sealed all the precious Upper Clarity scriptures, as well as the wondrous wrists of the three caverns inside his mysterious terrace. After he sealed [the chest full of texts] with pure silver, he entrusted them to the family of Ma Dusheng (i.e., Ma Lang), who lived in the Shan commandery. [Xu] told them, “I am going on a short journey, and will not be gone long. Do not open [the chest] of scriptures.” The Ma family venerated these scriptures and preserved them for many generations.</p> <p>玉斧子黃民，黃民子名豫之。以元嘉十二年終剗之白山。臨去世之時，以上清寶經、三洞妙文，封以玄臺，印以白銀，留寄鄰縣馬度生家。語之曰：「今且暫行，不久當還，勿開此經」。馬氏崇奉，累世安康。</p>	<p>In the sixth year of the <i>yuanjia</i> reign-period (429), Xu Huangmin decided to move to Qiantang. He sealed up his father's sacred scriptures in a chest, which he deposited in Ma Lang's oratory. He told Lang, “All these scriptures are the relics of my late forebears; you must keep them until I myself return to get them. Even should a letter from me come, do not give them up!” Apart from those, he took with him some ten-odd scrollfuls of scriptures, biographies and miscellaneous autograph manuscripts and went to the house of Du [Daoqu, in Qiantang]. He had stayed there some months when he fell ill. Concerned lest he should not recover, he sent someone to collect the scriptures. But Lang was enamored of their calligraphy, and held fast to his previous instructions. He had, after all, come in contact with [heavenly] instructions; why would he give them away to others? And so, he did not send them. Xu passed away abruptly, and the texts he had taken with him consequently remained in Du's possession.</p> <p>元嘉六年，許丞欲移歸錢塘，乃封其先真經一厨子，且付馬朗淨室之中，語朗云：「此經並是先靈之迹，唯須我自來取。縱有書信，慎勿與之。」乃分持經傳及雜書十數卷自隨，來至杜家，停數月疾患，慮恐不差，遣人取經。朗既惜書，兼執先旨，近親受教敕，豈敢輕付？遂不與信。我（俄）而，許便過世，所賚者因留杜間。</p>

In his account of the transmission between Xu Huangmin and the Ma family, Tao further states that Xu kept ten scrolls of texts in his possession. Perhaps one reason Xu had reservations about allowing the Ma family full access was because this family was allowing new disciples easy access to these texts. Tao writes that He Daojing 何道敬 began to borrow the scriptures and make copies of the originals as early as 434, one year before Xu's death. According to Tao, many of the scriptures from Xu Huangmin's chest were illegally obtained from the Ma family and replaced with copies.

He Daojing . . . was a skilled calligrapher and painter. When young he wandered about the Shan Mountains and was hospitably received by the Ma family. They entrusted him with all their scriptures and ritual manuals. He observed that the calligraphy of the talismans, in its splendor, differed from the usual style. In the eleventh year of the *yongjia* reign-period (434) he began to make some traced facsimile copies of them. Ma Han was at that time already living apart in a house of his own, and he too had He do several items for him. It was probably at this point that the two records remained at Han's house.⁶ Afterwards, He took many of the originals, replacing them with his own copies, and returned to live at Mount Qingtan in Dongshu (Shan commandery). There he set down an account of matters relating to the scriptures of the Perfected, some two or three pages in length.⁷

何道敬 . . . 頗工書畫，少遊剡山，為馬家所供侍，經書法事，皆以委之。見此符跡炳煥，異於世文，以元嘉十一年稍就摹寫。馬罕既在別宅，兼令何為起數篇，所以二錄合本仍留罕間。何後多換取真書，出還剡東墅青壇山住，乃記說真經之事，可有兩三紙。

He Daojing's thievery of the Upper Clarity scriptures is missing from Gu's account. For Tao, this omission is evidence that Gu did not have access to all the available scriptures. Tao uses this omission to cast doubt on Gu's editorial work in a story about Gu's travels to He's residence. When Gu saw He with a hoe over his shoulder he mistook the copyist for a household servant (*nupu* 奴僕).⁸ No matter if Tao's story is true or not, the absence of figures like He Daojing in Gu's preface results in a straightforward account of the transmission, which, as we have seen above, centers on the notion that the Ma family's chest contains the legitimate collection of Upper Clarity scriptures.

The differing stances Gu and Tao adopt over the scriptures' legitimacy are most apparent in their accounts of the royal annexation of Upper Clarity scriptures in the 460s. Initially, these two accounts seem similar. Both Gu and Tao agree that this acquisition was instigated by a priest, a person Gu identifies as Lou Hua 妻化 and Tao writes as Lou Huiming 樓惠明. Both Tao and Gu write that Lou regularly visited the Ma family's compound and was very knowledgeable about the scriptures (Tao adds that Lou had read He Daojing's short treatise). And both Gu and Tao concur that despite Lou's ardent interest to see the scriptures, the Ma family would not allow access to the visitor.

Table 5.3

The Imperial Annexation According to Gu Huan (DZ 1032, 4.3a)	The Imperial Annexation According to Tao Hongjing (DZ 1016, 19.14b–15a)
<p>There was a priest named Lou Hua who was a regular visitor at the Ma family's compound. He was well-versed in the origins of the scriptures and went to great pains to request to see them. But members of the Ma family were quite insistent [on following Xu's] orders and never broke their promise no matter how hard that proved.</p> <p>有道士婁化者，常憇馬氏舍。究悉經源，苦求閱看。馬氏固執，竟不從命，結蹕無方。</p>	<p>In the seventh year of the <i>daming</i> reign-period (463) . . . the retired scholar Lou Huiming had at one time lived in Shan, and now went back there. . . . Lou was already accomplished in the writing of petitions and talismans. . . . Ma Hong, for his part, treated him with respect, and he frequented Ma's hall and oratory, where he saw the chest of scriptures. Being already acquainted with the account of the subject that He [Daojing] had written, he would dearly have liked to see its contents. But they were solidly locked up, and he had no way to examine them.</p> <p>大明七年. . . . 樓居士惠明者，先以在剡，乃復. . . . 樓既善於章符. . . . 馬洪又復宗事，出入堂靜，備覩經厨。先已見何所記，意甚貪樂。而有鏽嚴固，觀覽無方。</p>

Gu and Tao also agree that Lou received a memorial via Shu Jizhen 夏季真 permitting him to confiscate the scriptures. At this point, the two narratives move in different directions. Gu and Tao provide two different dates for the arrival of the Upper Clarity scriptures at the capital. Gu asserts that this happened sometime during the reign of Emperor Ming (Liu Yu 劉彧, r. 466–472), while Tao indicates that this happened during the reign of Liu Ziye 劉子業 (r. 465), the infamous “First Dismissed Emperor” (*qian feidi* 前廢帝), a despised leader who was “immature, unbalanced, vindictive, unjust, and unsavory.”⁹

Aside from different dates of transmission, Gu and Tao also provide extremely divergent accounts of what happened at the capital. For Gu, the arrival of the scriptures at the capital is accompanied by a miraculous tale about a brilliant light shooting forth from the chest when it was opened. Furthermore, Gu writes that when the “Last Dismissed Emperor” (*hou feidi* 後廢帝), Liu Yu 劉昱 (463–77), took the throne, the Ma family successfully petitioned for the scriptures to be returned in their care. Tao, on the other hand, writes that once Lou came into possession of the scriptures, he never

sent the authentic texts to the throne at all, for he was afraid what the crazed teenager Liu Ziye might do with the texts. Instead, after confiscating the texts, Lou left the majority of the scriptures with his aide, Zhong Yishan 鐘義山, and picked out a few minor scriptures and talismans to deliver to the throne. After Emperor Ming took the throne, Shu Jizhen successfully petitioned these texts to be stored in a temple in the capital.

Table 5.4

The Imperial Annexation According to Gu Huan (DZ 1032, 4.3a-b)	The Imperial Annexation According to Tao Hongjing (DZ 1016, 19.15a)
<p>This all happened during the reign of the Song Emperor Ming, who revered the great [Daoist] law. It was [this ruler] who subsequently invited a group of priests to live in a rear hall and fully supported them. When one of the priests living in this rear hall, Shu Jizhen, secretly notified the emperor [about the chest of scriptures], the emperor ordered Lou Hua to go back [to the Ma's compound], take it by force, and bring it back to the capital. They held a ceremony when they opened [the chest] at which point a purple ray in five hues flashed everywhere before [the emperor's] eyes. The emperor, who was startled by these events, proclaimed, “Even the divine Perfected cannot touch these.” It was in this same year that [the emperor] grew ill and died. In the first year of the <i>yuanhui</i> reign (473), the Ma family filed suit and requested that the scriptures be returned to their care. They were returned by imperial order. Thereafter, the Perfected books that are stored in heaven were once again returned to the Ma family.</p> <p>是時宋明皇帝崇敬大法，招集道士，供養後堂。婁化乃因後堂道士殳季真密啟之。帝即命使逼取至京。乃拜禮開之，忽有五色紫光洞煥眼前。帝驚曰：「神真叵觸」。比其年，不愈而崩。元徽元年，馬氏即出訴，啟請其經。詔聽還。於是天藏真書復歸馬氏。</p>	<p>In the first year of the <i>jinghe</i> reign-period (465) he went to the capital. There he had Shu Jizhen of Jiaxing memorialize the emperor to the effect that the texts should be confiscated. But since he was already insane, Lou felt it was not right that these supreme scriptures should be divulged to him.¹⁰ He therefore examined the texts and picked out the authentic scriptures and hagiographies, as well as over ten scrollfuls of assorted revelations, and left them in Zhong [Yishan]’s keeping. To the capital he only took the <i>Unobstructed Descent</i> talisman and twenty-odd short revelations of the Perfected, together with the facsimile copies of the two registers and other pieces that had been made by He [Daojing]. There Shu presented them straightaway to “Jinghe,” who glanced over them at the Hualin and then entrusted them to the Daoists of his household. At the beginning of the <i>taishi</i> reign period (465–471) Shu memorialized that they be removed to his own establishment.¹¹</p>

Since there is no way to corroborate Gu’s preface or Tao’s commentary, it is impossible to know which account is closer to reality. Nevertheless, these two accounts represent two different visions about the “authentic” Upper

Clarity scriptures circulating in the late fifth century. The differences between these two accounts are not quibbles over details: Gu and Tao widely diverge on the circulation of the manuscripts and the transmission (or lack thereof) that the Qi royal family received.

It is certain that Tao knew of Gu's account, written a few decades earlier when writing *Declarations* at the turn of the sixth century. And while Tao might have disagreed with Gu, he does laud Gu as a collector and connoisseur of the scriptures, a role that Tao typically reserves for himself. When describing Gu's student Du Jingchan 杜京產, Tao acknowledges that he had access to different sources of the scriptures. Furthermore, Tao writes that Gu and Du relied on calligraphic evidence as a principal way to distinguish between "authentic" and "fake" texts.

The retired scholar Du Jingchan went to live at Daxu in Nanshu, Shan Commandery, bringing with him various scriptures and other writings. It was then that he studied them with several persons such as Gu Huan, Qi Jingxuan, and Zhu Sengbiao. Gu had already transcribed the scriptures in Lou Huiming's possession and could more or less recognize the calligraphy of the Perfected. He thereupon sorted them and selected [as being authentic] a total of four or five scrollfuls of scriptures and hagiographies, as well as seven or eight individual revelations.¹²

杜居士京產將諸經書，往荆南墅大墟住，始與顧歡、戚景玄、朱僧標等數人共相料視。顧先已寫在樓間經，粗識真書，於是分別選出，凡有經傳四五卷、真授七八篇。

At the same time, Tao is critical of Gu for a lack of attention to the temporal development of Upper Clarity scriptures. In one of his treatises, "Investigating the Pivot of the Gods" ("Jishen shu" 稽神樞), Tao criticizes Gu for not establishing a full chronology of the events surrounding Yang Xi's building of a temple compound at Maoshan. This criticism distinguishes Tao's ordering of Yang's revelations in chronological order, beginning with those revelations disclosed before the 366 building of the site.¹³

The householder Gu [Huan] placed this [revelation about Liangchang] within a fascicle titled "The Present Location that Marks our Quiescent Dwelling."¹⁴ Based on the evidence from Yuan's [i.e., Xu Hui's] manuscript,

we see that this ordering [of the revelations] is incorrect and that the [revelation concerning Liangchang] should be read [as occurring] before the senior administrator built his hermitage.¹⁵

顧居士所撰本，此中向「近所標精舍地」一篇。今視據書者，不以相次，乃別出在長史所營宅前耳。

Tao's comments about Gu Huan clarify what might have been at stake when Tao circulated his compendia of Yang's revelations. In *Declarations*, Tao separately circulated a catalogue of Upper Clarity scriptures to accompany his compendia, so it is likely that these criticisms lodged at earlier treatises by He Daojing, Gu Huan, and others were part of a larger effort to redefine the "authentic" manuscripts.¹⁶ Without an extant copy of Tao's catalogue, it would be pointless to conjecture what might have been included in it. We can, however, take a closer look at Gu's preface, as it would, at the very least, provide insight into the ideas of authenticity that Tao likely was arguing against.

Unlike Tao Hongjing, who sought to restore the legitimacy and authenticity of these texts, Gu assures his readers that the authentic Upper Clarity scriptures had never disappeared. Gu's views of the continuity of the Upper Clarity scriptures are of vital importance as they provide us with a different kind of definition of "authenticity." It was this exegetical construction of the unbroken and ongoing revelation of Upper Clarity scriptures that will best reveal key points in the ongoing editing of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*.

Wang Lingqi and the Expansion of Upper Clarity Scriptures

Tao and Gu make no explicit mention of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* in the respective histories of the Upper Clarity scriptures. But there is a figure, Wang Lingqi, who is removed from the transmission of the "real" Upper Clarity scriptures. Wang supposedly forged a number of Upper Clarity scriptures in the early fourth century. Wang circulated these texts as if they were authentic Yang Xi's texts, and this drew the ire of later writers like Gu and Tao. Modern scholarship has been equally uninterested in Wang.

If Wang's scriptures are acknowledged, it is typically to state the kinds of illicit texts that emerged between the original Yang Xi compositions and later exegetes. As one recent scholar writes:

By the fifth century of the Common Era . . . [Wang Lingqi] obtained the texts and made money by crafting forgeries and selling them to others. By now the reputation of the scriptures had become more widespread throughout southern China. The problem was that some of the scriptures were authentic and others forgeries.¹⁷

One of the problems in characterizing these scriptures as forgeries was that Wang's readers, many of whom were alive or direct descendants of Xu Mi's community, sought after these so-called fake texts. Tao Hongjing recalls how during Xu Huangmin's day, a new wave of Upper Clarity scriptures were written (or edited) by Wang Lingqi. The only record of Wang's scriptural enterprise comes from Tao's commentary in *Declarations*, and Tao is highly critical of these new texts and disparages them as inauthentic. By Tao's account, Wang first read Yang Xi and Xu Mi's manuscripts in the early fifth century after hearing that Xu Huangmin possessed a large cache of these texts. Tao thinks Wang had ulterior motives in gaining access to Xu's manuscripts, for Wang was inspired by the way Ge Chaofu (fl. 397–401) remade the Numinous Treasure (Lingbao 瞬寶) scriptures at the turn of the fifth century.¹⁸ Upset that these new scriptures were spreading like wildfire throughout southern China, Wang desired to combat this new movement by “spreading the Dao” (*fu dao* 敷道), that is, starting his own temple community.

Given his passion to spread Upper Clarity scriptures, Wang traveled to Xu Huangmin's home and requested to see Xu's manuscripts. At first, Xu denied the outsider access to the texts. When Wang displayed his zeal by remaining outside Xu's doorstep in the snow, however, Xu was moved by Wang's sincerity and acquiesced to the latter's request to see the manuscripts.

Having obtained the scriptures, Wang returned home leaping for joy. Yet after due consideration he realized that it would not do to widely circulate their most excellent doctrine and that [the form of] their cogent sayings would not lend itself to wide diffusion. Therefore, he presumed to make

additions and deletions, and embellished the style. Taking the titles [of scriptures] in the hagiographies of [Lord] Wang and [the Lady] Wei as his basis, he began to fabricate works by way of furnishing out those listings. On top of that, he increased the fees for transmission, in order that his teachings might be worthier of respect. In all, [he composed] more than fifty fascicles.¹⁹

王得經欣躍，退還尋究，知至法不可宣行，要言難以顯泄，乃竊加損益，盛其藻麗，依《王》、《魏》諸傳題目，張開造制，以備其錄，並增重詭信，崇貴其道。凡五十餘篇。

Tao criticizes Wang for not only disseminating Upper Clarity scriptures, but for adding to and deleting from the texts. In addition, Tao is irritated by Wang's editorial rewriting of the revelations by expanding catalogues of scriptural titles. Many of these old catalogues contained names of scriptures that exist in heaven but have not circulated on earth.²⁰ Wang relied on these titles to fabricate new scriptures, then made a great profit from the costly fees he required for their transmission. Wang scoured hagiographies looking for titles mentioned in various scriptures and revelations, and he used these as starting points to retroactively make his texts. Eventually, Wang stopped feigning the ancient origin of these scriptures and brazenly claimed the scriptures to be his own. As the following passage suggests, Wang was so adept at writing these texts that people already in possession of the "authentic" manuscripts agreed to pay Wang for the newly released editions.

Once Wang became the authority of these new wonders, everyone wanted to be his disciple. He subsequently claimed that they had been bestowed on him by the Perfected themselves, and he no longer based himself upon the earlier texts. Xu [Huangmin] saw the bundles of scrolls burgeon forth, the substantial rates of his fees for transmission, the great number of his disciples, and his accumulation of gold and silk, but never considered how all this had really come about. He looked on the manuscripts in his own possession as commonplace, locked them away, and went to Wang to transcribe his. . . . When Ma Lang saw how the list of scriptures [supposedly] transmitted by Xu to Wang had grown, he wanted to receive them over again [this time from Wang]. He arranged the fee he was to pay for them and fixed the day it was to be handed over.²¹

王既獨擅新奇，舉世崇奉，遂託云真授，非復先本。許(黃民)見卷袞華廣，詭信豐厚，門徒殷盛，金帛充積，亦復莫測其然，乃鄙閉自有之書，而更就王(靈期)求寫……馬朗既見許所傳王經卷目增多，復欲更受，營理詭信，克日當度。

Even those readers in possession of the “authentic” scriptures of Yang Xi wanted to obtain the new entries available in Wang’s catalogue. Wang penned more than fifty new scriptures and seems to have profited greatly from devising a new hierarchy of scriptural titles. It is probable that the “graded codes” (*kelü* 科律), graded lists of Upper Clarity scriptures, emerged at this time. The earliest iterations of these codes contained regulations for transmitting scriptures. At least one of these codes, the *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities* (*Siji mingke* 四極明科), was first circulated as part of Yang Xi’s revelations, though it has since undergone significant revisions.²²

The extant redaction of the *Code of the Four Extremities*, DZ 184, has two distinct bibliographic categorizations of Upper Clarity scriptures.²³ One scheme, now found in the second fascicle, is called “The High and Grand Perfected Jade Thearch’s *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities*” (“Gaoshang taizhen yudi siji mingke 高上太真玉帝四極明科). The *Code of the Four Extremities* details the prices that are required for these scriptures.

Table 5.5

Title of Scriptures in the <i>Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities</i>	Source
<i>Registers of the Left Yi Hidden Grotto on Eastern [Mount] Meng</i> , <i>Precepts of the Right [Geng Pure] Statutes on Pacifying Killing [Demons]</i> 《左乙混洞東蒙之籙》、《右(庚素)收攝殺之律》	“Zhou’s Hagiography” (DZ 303, 8a)
<i>Jade Scripture of the Divine Tigers, Phoenix Writs of the Golden Tigers, Inner Writs of Upper Clarity, Inner Scripture on the Jade Phosphors of the Yellow Court</i> 《神虎玉經》、《金虎鳳文》、《上清內文》、《黃庭玉景內經》	“Wei’s Hagiography” (lost)
<i>Grand Cinnabar Record-Book of the Encircling Mystery of the Nine Paths, Grand Perfected’s Hidden Book on the Encircling Starlight of the Jade Path’s Register</i> 《九道迴玄太丹錄書》、《玉道錄字迴曜太真隱書》	“Wang’s Hagiography” (DZ 1032, 106.6b)
<i>The Lang-Gem Book of Rose-Gem Writs on the Precious Starlight from the Three Efflorescences, Upper Register of Numinous Starlight, Immaculate Scripture of the Seven Stars</i> 《三華寶曜瓊文琅書》、《靈曜上籙》、《七晨素經》	“Wang’s Hagiography” (DZ 1032, 106.7a)

Title of Scriptures in the <i>Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities</i>	Source
<i>Dragon Writs of Upper Clarity's Hidden Book, Perfected Scripture of the Eight Numina</i> 《上清隱書龍文》、《八靈真經》	“Wang’s Hagiography” (DZ 1032, 106.6a)
<i>Jade Clarity's Divine Tigers of Inner Perfection, Cinnabar Stanzas of the Purple Writs</i> 《玉清神虎內真》、《紫文丹章》	<i>Declarations</i> (DZ 1016, 1.12a)
<i>Hidden Book of Jade Clarity</i> 《玉清隱書》	“Wei’s Hagiography” (lost)
<i>Scripture of the Director of Destinies, Azure Chart of Former Lives, Upper Sovereign's Record of the People, Jade Register [of Names] Determined for Perfection</i> 《司命君經》、《宿命清圖》、《上皇民籍》、《定真玉籙》	“Zhou’s Hagiography” (DZ 303, 10a)
<i>Secret Characters of the Golden Book, Perfected Book of the Upper Prime</i> 《金書秘字》、《上元真書》	“Zhou’s Hagiography” (DZ 303, 10a–b)
<i>Perfected Scripture of Grand Perfection, Purple Book with Cinnabar Characters, Movement of the Three and Five</i> 《太清真經》、《丹字紫書》、《三五順行》	“Zhou’s Hagiography” (DZ 303, 9b–10a), <i>Declarations</i> (DZ 1016, 9.5a)
<i>Scripture of the Initial Azure Path of Purple Tenuity, Upper Register of the Verdant Prime, Perfected Scripture of the Northern Dipper, Scripture of Central Fate's Four Rotations, Jade Register of Grand Simplicity, Upper Scripture of the Precious Mystery</i> 《紫微始青道經》、《蒼元上錄》、《北斗真經》、《中命四旋經》、《太素玉籙》、《寶玄上經》	“Pei’s Hagiography” (DZ 1032, 105.8a–b)
<i>Yellow Book of Grand Tenuity</i> 《太微黃書》	“Pei’s Hagiography” (DZ 1032, 105.8b), <i>Declarations</i> (DZ 1016, 14.6b)
<i>Scripture of the Three Primes' Swirling Pearl, Jade Thearch's Nine [Methods] for Cultivating Upper Perfection, Record of the Fates of the Eight Paths, Purple Characters of Golden Transcendence</i> 《三元流珠經》、《玉帝九鍊上真》、《八道命籍》、《金仙紫字》	“Mao’s Hagiography” (DZ 304, 5.13a)
<i>Golden Stanzas on Jade Purity's Three Qi of the Cavernous Prime, Perfected Scripture on the Phosphors of the Taiji Register</i> 《玉清洞元三氣金章》、《太極籙景真經》	“Mao’s Hagiography” (DZ 304, 5.13a)
<i>Jade Register of the Upper Sovereign, Yellow Register of the Jade Thearch, Purple Book</i> 《上皇玉籙》、《玉帝黃籙》、《紫書》	“Pei’s Hagiography” (DZ 1032, 105.9a), <i>Declarations</i> (DZ 1016, 11.9a)
<i>Scripture of Budding of Azure Sprouts, Essential Scripture of the Path of the Cinnabar Phosphors, Method of Picking Blossoms to Restore Youth</i> 《青牙始生經》、《丹景道精經》、《還童採華法》	“Mao’s Hagiography” (DZ 304, 5.8a, 13a)

Title of Scriptures in the <i>Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities</i>	Source
<i>Perfected Scripture of the Three Efflorescences' Starlight Phosphors for Restoring Life with the Jade Characters that Save Life in the Golden Room</i> 《金房度命玉字廻年三華耀景真經》	
<i>Secret Book of Upper Clarity on the Inner Observation of Jade-[Bright] Aurora's Purple Projections</i> 《上清玉霞紫暎內觀隱書》	<i>Declarations</i> (DZ 1016, 2.7a)
<i>Jade Scripture on the Coursing Phosphors for Unraveling Forms and Hidden Transformations</i> 《解形遜變流景玉經》	“Wang’s Hagiography” (DZ 1032, 106.7a)
<i>Upper Clarity Scripture on Penetrating Darkness with Sunlight for Returning to Dawn and Restoring Youth</i> 《上清還晨歸童明暉中玄》	<i>Declarations</i> (DZ 1016, 2.7b)
<i>Red Book of the Purple Phoenix, Dawn Charts of the Eight Phosphors</i> 《紫鳳赤書》、《八景晨圖》	“Wang’s Hagiography” (DZ 1032, 106.6b)
<i>Ultimate Mystery's Golden Stanza of the Precious Grotto's Soaring Empyrean</i> 《寶洞飛霄絕玄金章》	“Wang’s Hagiography” (DZ 1032, 106.7a)

Whereas the second fascicle of DZ 184 does not correlate with the thirty-one fascicles (see chapter 1), the first fascicle is exclusively written about these Upper Clarity scriptures. There are at least three passages that offer important clues about the author’s hierarchy of the scriptures:

The following are the thirty-one precious fascicles of the Upper Palace: The *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas*, the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*, the *Jade Seal of the Feminine One*, the *Cavernous Room's Golden Efflorescence*, the *Upper Writs of the Purple Book*, the *Primal Register of Turtle Mountain*, the *White Slips of the Azure Register*, the *Upper Scripture of the Golden Root*, and the *Grand Empyrean's Lang-Gem Book of Thearchical Stanzas in Rose-Gem Glyphs*. This is an instruction that should be transmitted separately. It is the Way of a Mysterious Beam of the Highest Jade [Heavens], for these are these are the precious writs of the grotto-heaven's Jade Clarity. They can only be transmitted to individuals destined for Perfection.²⁴

《高上大洞真經三十九章》、《素靈大有妙經》、《雌一玉檢五老寶經》、《金華洞房》、《紫書上文》、《龜山元籙》、《青籙白簡》、《金根上經》、《太霄琅書瓊文帝章》，上宮寶篇凡三十一卷。此獨立之訣，乃高玉玄映之道、洞天玉清寶文，授於已成真人。

These are the rules of transmission from the sixth palace of Upper Clarity's Great Existence Heaven. There are three hundred fascicles of precious scriptures of the Upper Path (Dao), nine thousand jade instructions, and seven thousand talismans. These are precious writs of the Jade Clarity [heaven] that are stored in the palace of the Most High Numinous Metropolis within a purple room emitting seven beams of light. These can only be transmitted to Perfected beings whose mysterious names are written in purple on the Thearch's chart of Jade Clarity.²⁵

上清大有六天宮俯仰之格，上道寶經三百卷、玉訣九千言、符章七千篇，此玉清寶文，藏於太上靈都之宮、七映紫房之內，傳於已成真人有玄名帝圖，紫字玉清。

[Those who] read the “Precious Names of the Hundred Spirits for the Whirlwind and Unitive Fusion of Thearchical Unity” in the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas*, the *Precious Scripture on the Five Ancient Lords, Jade Seal's Feminine One*, the Cavern Mystery's *Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*, and the *Hidden Book of Grand Cinnabar* [have] the highest tier of texts [revealed by] the Perfected.²⁶

讀《大洞真經三十九章迴風混合帝一百神寶名》、《玉檢雌一五老寶經》、《洞玄素靈大有妙經》、《太丹隱書》上品高真之文……。

In these three passages, there are thirty-one fascicles of Upper Clarity scriptures, the same number that we saw in Wang and Wei's hagiographies. While the number of fascicles is the same, the scriptural titles are quite different from those discussed in chapter 1. Of the nine titles mentioned in this part of *Code of the Four Extremities*, only the *Scripture of the Great Grotto* is in both lists.²⁷ Aside from this, there appears to be no relationship between the thirty-one fascicles of the early hagiographies and this *Code*. Since the catalogue that once was appended to “Wei's Hagiography” is no longer extant, we cannot be certain that these two bibliographic representations are completely dissimilar.

There is evidence that changes had been made to the late-fourth-century catalogue. Of all the scriptures featured as part of the thirty-one fascicles, the *Scripture of the Great Grotto* is the only one that circulated among Yang Xi and his readers. And we do not find the phrase “Three Wonders” in *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities* as referring to the *Scripture of the Great Grotto*, *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*, the *Jade Seal of the Feminine One*. Whereas the second fascicle follows a list of scriptures centered on the hagiographic literature, the first fascicle betrays an editor who is closely affiliated with the Three Wonders.

The Three Ones and the Three Instructions

How exactly did this notion of the Three Wonders emerge? The term “Three Wonders” first appears in “Zhou’s Hagiography,” where Zhou’s bodily cultivation is based on the Three Ones method (*sanyi zhi fa* 三一之法). Zhou’s master, Su Lin, informs Zhou that the Three Ones are Perfected beings that are in possession of “mysterious charts” (*xuan tu* 玄圖), that is, scriptures. Su says that these three charts have the following names:

1. *Cavernous Perfection* (*Dongzhen* 洞真)
2. *Wondrous Scripture* (*Miaojing* 妙經)
3. *Immaculate Numen* (*Suling* 素靈)²⁸

The idea that the Three Ones are three Perfected beings in the body who are each in possession of a scripture is an idea that closely resonates with the description of the Three Ones found in the *Scripture on Perfected Ones of the Three Primes* (see chapter 2). This scripture describes how adepts should visualize three Perfected beings and their accompanying ministers. These Perfected beings descend down from the Big Dipper, reside in the three cinnabar fields, and transmit three scriptures to the adept:

It is truly wondrous that the method of the ineffable is so close at hand. Guarding the Ones will bring them into existence, and they will appear before you. After you see the Ones, you can request transmission of these scriptures, but it must all be done in utmost secrecy.²⁹

妙哉無名，其道不遠。守一所生，三一見矣！子既見一，可求此經，亦當秘授。

Whereas the Three Ones in “Zhou’s Hagiography” are linked to the titles of the scriptures that would eventually be called the Three Wonders, the *Scripture on Perfected Ones of the Three Primes* takes this idea a step further. The deities not only possess these texts, but will take responsibility for their transmission. Here the three scriptures are referred to as instructions (*jue* 訣), meaning that they were limited to adepts predestined for a postmortem position in the Upper Clarity. It is highly probable that the “separate instruction” mentioned in the *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities* is developed from the “restricted instruction” in the *Scripture on Perfected Ones of the Three Primes*. Both stress the importance of the Three Wonders (though neither text uses this name to refer to the three scriptures).

The *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* (DZ 1314) features many of the texts in “Zhou’s Hagiography,” and it also emphasizes the dominance of the Three Wonders. While “Zhou’s Hagiography” and the *Scripture on Perfected Ones of the Three Primes* only mention names of scriptures, the author of DZ 1314 writes the names of specific methods that these texts will enable the reader to use. Furthermore, the author of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* has added the word “wonder” (*qi* 奇) to describe these texts. He further underscores that these texts are the most exalted scriptures in all the heavens, not elementary methods for novices. The author glorifies the Three Wonders by asserting that they are not simply texts to safeguard the adept’s body, but are a kind of portal through which one can roam into the heavens.

While the author of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* did not invent the notion of the three highest scriptures of Upper Clarity, he seems to be the first to apply the term “wonder” (*qi*) to these texts. Furthermore, we find that this author also expands the original description of these texts by applying names of methods found in “Zhou’s Hagiography.” This feature of the text points to Wang Lingqi, who expanded previous titles of scriptures and integrated them into new systems.

Table 5.6

<i>Scripture on Perfected Ones of the Three Primes</i> (DZ 253, 3b)	<i>Scripture of the Immaculate Numen</i> (DZ 1314, 30b)
<p>It is truly wondrous that the method of the ineffable is so close at hand. When you guard the One, the Three Ones will appear. And when you see the Ones, you can request their [three] scriptures but it must all be done in utmost secrecy.</p> <p>妙哉無名，其道不遠。守一所生，三一見矣！子既見一，可求此經，亦當秘授。</p>	<p>Once guarding the Three Ones, you can obtain these three scriptures. Thereafter, you will be able to ride the clouds and ascend to the Grand Clarity [heaven]. You can also gaze out for a seemingly endless distance, and roam up to the Purple Court to banquet [with its residents]. How subtle and profound [are these scriptures]; it is hard to convey in writing. When you guard the One, the Three Ones will appear. And when you attain the Ones, you will naturally come in possession of their [three] scriptures.</p> <p>兆守三一，得吾三經，即能乘雲，上昇太清，洞覩无窮，遊宴紫庭。微哉深矣！難可文宣。守一所生，三一見矣！子既得一，自得此經。</p>

It is also curious that the notion of the Three Wonders hardly appears in the other two scriptures belonging to this group, the *Scripture of the Great Grotto* and the *Jade Seal of the Feminine One*. The prevalence of the Three Wonders in the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* is key for those passages as the author prescribes a sequence in which adepts should receive scriptures. According to the passage below, the author of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* envisions access to Daoist texts as occurring in a strict order from lowest to highest. This ascending order would nevertheless mean that an adept was intended to obtain a copy of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* prior to the other Wonders. Nevertheless, the Three Wonders all occupy a high position in a three-part scheme, which means that the Upper Clarity scriptures would only be bestowed on those adepts who had been exposed to the other kinds of Daoist scriptures first.

Everything you learn will progress from lower to higher [rituals], and you should cultivate them in a specific order.³⁰ Do not do more or less than what is allowed, for this would violate the rules of heaven's codes. Scriptures come in three grades; [their] teachings have three kinds of perfection as seen in the great glyphs in heavenly writing of the *Esoteric*

Wrists of the Three Sovereigns,³¹ the registers of the Nine Heavens, and the method of the yellow-white.³² . . . They are, therefore, texts of the lowest grade. The Numinous Treasure's cavernous mystery emerged in [the era of] Primordial Commencement. . . . The scriptures with the methods of Upper Clarity are the concealed wrists of the Grand Cinnabar [Palace]. There are three hundred precious names [of scriptures], as well as nine thousand instructions [written on] jade [slips]. These [texts] make up the premier catalogue of the upper Perfected and are esoteric fascicles of the Jade Thearch. . . . Adepts should begin with the lowest class of scriptures and move their way up to Upper Clarity. The Dao has the Three Wonders. The first of these Wonders is the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas*. The second Wonder is the *Precious Scripture [on the Five Ancient Lords, Jade Seal] of the Feminine One*. The third Wonder is the *Most High Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] and Penetrating Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]*. These [Three Wonders] can only be transmitted to adepts who are Perfected beings; do not transmit [them] to novices.³³

凡學當從下上，按次而修，不得越略，虧天科條。經有三品，道有三真。三皇內文天文大字、九天之籙、黃白之道. . . . 故為下品之第。靈寶洞玄，亦元始俱生. . . . 上清道經、太丹隱書，凡三百寶名，玉訣九千。此上真之首目、玉帝之內篇. . . . 夫學當從下品，造於上清也。道有三奇：第一之奇，《大洞真經三十九章》；第二之奇，《唯一寶經》；第三之奇，《太上素靈洞元大有妙經》。此傳已成真人，不傳於始學也。

According to the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* there were three classes of Daoist scriptures that adepts should attain in a specific order. The lowest position was occupied by the Celestial Master and Three Sovereign scriptures, the middle grade included the Numinous Treasure texts, and the highest grade was Upper Clarity texts. This kind of classification and the integration of the hagiographic titles resonate in many respects with the *Code of the Four Extremities*. This certainly raises the possibility that the scripture and the code were composed by a single person, or at the very least by a single rhetorical community. In either case, this new system looked quite distinct from the idea of the body of scriptures developed in the fourth century under Yang Xi.

The *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* also contains a series of passages concerning the Three Wonders at the end of this scripture in a section called the *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected* (*Jiuzhen mingke* 九真明科). This part of the scripture details the regulations surrounding the “marvelous writs of the Three Treasures” (the Three Wonders). The writer of the *Code*’s preface states that these rules are key in illuminating the meaning of the scriptures and helping an adept know how to practice them.

All adepts who have seen the upper Perfected [portion of] the secret scriptures and precious stanzas of the Three Grottoes have their names written in golden characters up in the Eastern Floriate [Palace] of the Upper Clarity [Heaven]. . . . But even if [these adepts] have seen these scriptures, they will not be able to open them up and start reading unless they know about the different grades of rules and rituals in the *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected*, i.e., the books of the highest Perfected treasures of the three grottoes’ Three Wonders. . . . This [Code] illuminates the deep profundity of the Three Grottoes and proclaims the ritual norms of the Perfected assembly. . . . It is for this reason that I now eulogize the Three Wonders by proclaiming a three-tier catalogue of [scriptural] titles.³⁴

凡是後學，得見上真三洞寶章、祕經首目者，皆東華書名，金字上清. . . . 然雖見此文，而不知《九真明科》條檢儀式、三洞奇文太上真寶書，不可得而便披也. . . . 此乃明三洞之淵蹟，標眾真之儀格. . . . 今故標出三品篇目，以稱揚三奇。

The Three Wonders are prominently featured in the *Code of the Nine Perfected*. In the *Code*’s Upper Grade, the first nine prohibitions that addresses textual transmission, the writs associated with the Three Wonders are identified as the most important texts that an adept should possess. In the Middle Grade, the prohibitions focus on rules that apply to adepts who have already received the “marvelous writs of the Three Treasures.” This suggests that whoever compiled the texts in the current recension of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* also embedded a set of rules within the scripture to govern the transmission of this and related Upper Clarity scriptures.

The creator of the *Code of the Nine Perfected* further develops a three-tier scheme for all the rules and prohibitions. A passage in the middle of the

scripture states that an adept must master the *Code* in order to attain the Dao since these rules will help him guard against transgressions and will help him know how to change his behavior in the future.³⁵ The ideal result of this system is that an adept would engage in bodily cultivation without having a single demerit attached to his or her name. If this is done properly, an adept would spontaneously stir the Perfected spirits to respond to him or her. After the author details the goals of using the *Code*, he further describes three different versions of the *Code*.

There are nine grades of the *Code of the Grand Perfected*; each grade has twelve entries. The *Code of the Nine Perfected* has three grades; each grade has nine entries. The *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities* has four grades; each grade has twenty-four entries. [These will help adepts] keep a close watch over the rules [concerning] the rules for the relative value of blessings and transgressions. Therefore, it is best that adepts first seek out the *Codes*, as they provide a simple practice for those who are just starting. It will thus not be necessary to collect the various scriptures.³⁶

《太真科》有九品，品有十二條。《九真科》有三品，品有九條。《四極明科》有四品，品有二十四條。誠於輕重罪福之制，故學者宜先尋之。此科亦單行於始學，不必悉備於眾經也。

While the author of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* introduced the *Code of the Nine Perfected*, he was also aware of two other codes, the *Code of the Grand Perfected* and the *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities*. He is adamant that practicing the cultivation techniques in the scripture requires that an adept simultaneously use the code to secure blessings and guard against committing transgressions. He also specifies in detail the relative size and scope of each code, and underscores that it is necessary to seek out these codes in order to achieve success. Later in the same scripture, there is a long passage that describes the differences between the three codes:

The chapter “Nine Perfected” from the *Mysterious Metropolis [Code]* states: The catalogue for transmitting scriptures featured in the *Three-Graded Code of the Nine Perfected* was bestowed to the Latter [Age] Sage and Thearchical Lord when he first received scriptures from the Lord of the Dao Most High. The latter transmitted scriptures according to the three grades of the

Illustrious Code to help him [understand] the wondrous wris of the Three Treasures. The rules of the *Code* detail the proper use of the scriptures of Upper Clarity's teaching (Dao), and include descriptions of the thirty-one scriptures, as well as protocols for all the other scriptures; these [passages] are all taken from the *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities*. The *Three-Graded [Code] of the Nine Perfected* begins with a chapter on the Three Elementals, which are brought into the palaces of the Nine Thearchs. At the four extremities are the officials known as the Four Directors. They are in charge of overseeing all wrongdoings and mete the proper punishments according to the restricted code. The *Illustrious Code of the Grand Perfected* [refer to] the mystic stanzas that the Grand Thearchical Lord received from the Celestial King of Primordial Commencement. This contains the rules [governing] the ceremonies of the upper Perfected, and these methods are kept in secret in the Grand Thearch's hall atop the Nine Heavens. It is stored and locked away in the palace for the high Perfected, and does not circulate among humans. The *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected* is restricted to adepts living in the latter age, and along with the *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities* enables [adepts] to take charge of the world. Its meaning is abstruse and subtle; unless an adept has a jade name written in golden letters, there is no way he would even know about this.³⁷

玄都九真篇曰：傳授經目在《九真三品科》中者，是後聖帝君始佩經之時，授於太上道君。太上授經，出於三品明科，以輔三寶奇文。上真道經施用之科格，其三十一卷獨立餘事，及眾經儀品，悉在《四極明科》之中。《九真三品》，以三素之上篇，置於九帝之宮；四極以四司之官，總統眾非，糾罰之禁律；《太真明科》，以太帝君所受元始天王之玄章，上真之儀格，其法祕於九天之上，太帝之堂，藏誠於上真之宮，不行於世。《九真明科》以禁後學，《四極明科》總領四達。其旨幽微，自無金字玉名，不得知聞。

This description clarifies the differences between the three by highlighting the scriptures, content, origins, and prohibitions associated with each text. The *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected* features the “wondrous wris of the Three Treasures” and are those texts that the Latter [Age] Sage and Thearchical Lord received from Lord Lao. This is distinguished from the *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities*, which is identified as a text that governs the use of the “thirty-one fascicles” of Upper Clarity scriptures.

Thirty-One Fascicles Revisited

While the author of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* understood the Three Wonders as standing above the other three hundred fascicles of Upper Clarity scriptures, the idea of the thirty-one fascicles is nowhere to be found. But as we have shown above, the idea that there were thirty-one fascicles was an idea that had been forwarded by readers of Upper Clarity books from its inception to the later medieval catalogues of Dunhuang. So it seems doubtful that the author of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* simply did not know they existed.

One of the earliest explanations of the relationship between the three hundred scriptures and the thirty-one fascicles is found at the end of the *Scripture of the Divine Continent on the Dance in Heaven of the Seven Revolutions and Seven Transformations* (*Shenzhou qizhuan qibian wutian jing* 神州七轉七變舞天經, DZ 1331). In this scripture, the author writes about the origins and subsequent transmission of these texts in heaven:

In all, there are three hundred fascicles of Upper Clarity scriptures, nine thousand fascicles of jade instructions, and seven thousand talismans and charts. All these texts came from the Highest Jade Thearch of Primordial Commencement, and directly descended as spontaneous stanzas and a mystically ancient teaching (Dao). Any adept who has obtained a catalogue of these texts has been ranked on high as a Perfected sovereign. These teachings (Dao) are secretly stored atop the Nine Heavens in a palace in Great Existence. All the jade wris concerning the transmission [of these texts] are managed by the Azure Lad Lord, who is enfeoffed in the Azure Palace of Jade Efflorescence. When the first year of the Primal Phosphor era arrived, these texts were collated into a single collection and sealed up in Mount Xicheng. According to the old *Code* the scriptures were to be transmitted only once every ten thousand years. But once the [*qi* of the] Six Heavens were defeated and the Three Paths shone bright, the cosmic cycles intensified and the ultimate Dao followed these movements. Thus the *Code* was changed so that these texts could be transmitted once every seven thousand years. [After transmission], there will be a seven-hundred-year period in which any person with a fine mind, the right bones and visage, and a name recorded in Upper Clarity can receive these texts by making

a pledge. Any person who obtains these scriptures can easily become a Perfected being. Follow each step and you will have the knowhow to realize the Dao. And since the adept's *qi* will be adequate to complete the teachings, they will be able to ascend to the stars in broad daylight.³⁸

凡上清寶經三百卷，玉訣九千篇，符圖七千章，皆出元始高上玉帝，稟承自然之章，玄古之道。學者得其篇目，立登真皇。其道祕在九天之上，大有之宮，相傳玉文，以付上相青童君，封於玉華青宮；逮至元景元年，撰集一通，以封西城山中。舊科皆經萬劫一傳，自六天罷退，三道正明，運度相促，至道應行，改科七千年聽傳，若七百年內有至心，骨相應玄，錄字上清者，皆得依盟而傳。有得此經，剋成真人，依次修行，理無不足，道無不成，無足道備，則白日昇晨。

The author of this passage articulates a conception of Upper Clarity scriptures far removed from the revelations of Hua Qiao and Yang Xi. The author not only claims that there are three hundred fascicles of scriptures, but also thousands of auxiliary talismans and charts transmitted alongside the scriptures. These numbers certainly do not indicate that there were really that many texts circulating in the world. Instead, the many hundreds and thousands of texts serve as a rhetorical emphasis of the comprehensive nature of the scriptures. Despite its imaginative representation of the texts, there are still some aspects that likely reflect ideas about the earthly transmission, collection, and collation of these texts.

In the above passage, every individual who receives Upper Clarity texts first receives a “catalogue” (*pianmu* 篇目) of the scriptural titles. These readers must practice the methods in the scriptures in the “order they are received” (*yici* 依次). In the *Scripture of the Divine Continent*, however, the author not only mentions three hundred scriptures stored in heaven, but also explains the origins of the thirty-one fascicles. The latter, according to this scripture, is the product of the Divine King, who had long ago been ordered by the Grand Thearchical Lord (Taidi jun 太帝君) to compile a collection of thirty-one titles to be transmitted as a special “instruction” (*jue*).

The Grand Thearchical Lord ordered the Divine King of Sunlight Vale (the Great Thearch of Fusang) to compile a separate instruction composed

of thirty-one fascicles.³⁹ These [thirty-one books] contain all one needs [to know] about the cosmic cycles.

太帝君命扶桑大帝暘谷神王所撰三十一卷獨立之訣，皆備天地之運。

These passages indicate that the Divine King collated the most essential thirty-one fascicles from the larger collection of three hundred titles. Later passages in the same text clarify that none of the Perfected beings in heaven possess (or have access to) all three hundred of the Upper Clarity scriptures. By extension, human adepts cannot be expected to collect all these texts before they can be admitted to the postmortem ranks of the Perfected. Note, however, that an adept's status as a Perfected being is symbolized by his or her possession of the *Illustrious Code*, not through the acquisition of particular scriptures. The *Code*, in other words, is the essential first step before an adept can begin reading in the library of Upper Clarity's highest stratosphere of texts.

Although there are three hundred upper scriptures, each upper Perfected being possesses these texts only in part; no one has all the scriptures. As adepts progress in their studies, it will not be necessary that they know every practice of the grand Perfected. It is common that the people of the world sully *qi*, especially correct *qi*.⁴⁰ This is why there is the *Code*, which establishes a sequence and hierarchy for adepts. If you cultivate those thirty-one fascicles that have been compiled by the Great Thearch, you will be able to complete the teachings (Dao) and enjoy all its comforts. If those adepts who are just starting their studies do not obtain what they desire, and they lack the *Illustrious Code*, the resulting interrogations will be most severe. So please be especially cautious.⁴¹

上經三百首，上真各有所稟，亦不悉備。後來積學亦不得齊於太真之所修也。世人多混穢炁炁正，故學有次序階級之科。若修大帝所撰三十一卷，道備然後自得適其所好爾。始學之士，不得逕造所欲，以虧明科，其考甚重，深各慎之。

At the very least, the *Scripture of the Divine Continent* reveals what might have been so appealing about the thirty-one fascicles. While the existence of three hundred scriptures likely made readers feel that the scriptures covered

every conceivable method, it also made it impossible to gain a comprehensive command of the Upper Clarity oeuvre. The thirty-one fascicles made the task of collecting and learning the Upper Clarity catalogue a much easier task. Furthermore, it better facilitated the institutional distribution of Upper Clarity texts, for it enabled a master to transmit a manageable quantity of books in a specific order to potential clients. The above passages further suggest that readers procured the same kind of benefits from collecting the thirty-one fascicles as they did the three hundred scriptures. All this suggests that the promulgation of thirty-one fascicles grew out of the need to provide a streamlined service to readers that needed a quicker and easier-to-follow way toward Perfection. The *Scripture of Immaculate Numen* was the centerpiece of this new editorial reshaping of the Upper Clarity tradition.

Conclusion

A library of clouds reveals one last muted breath.

— Timothy Weber, *Zoocology Fragments*

Historians of religious Daoism often face the challenge of too many texts to study. There are tens of thousands of scriptures, liturgies, hagiographies, and other texts collected in the various canons of the literature. Even today, new canons are being published in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. The problem we face in identifying and analyzing these texts is that they are rarely one text, written by one person in one place. On the contrary, Daoist texts are snapshots of a living organism that expands, contracts, and changes as it passes through the hands of multiple readers.

This book focuses on the early Upper Clarity literature in an effort to build new ways of understanding the complex authorship of Daoist scriptures. Much of our insights are built upon the works of scholars who have come before us. But we also noted how scholars have tended to ignore any text that has been heavily redacted or edited; even today, this is sometimes seen as a sign of corruption and forgery. But what basis can we really know which scriptures (or parts of scriptures) are genuine and which are forgeries? Nearly all of these texts, after all, only survive as fifteenth-century transcriptions. Much of our knowledge of these texts is derived from anonymous (and at times late) bibliographies and catalogues. Under such conditions, can we

be confident in calling certain texts reflective of the “authentic tradition” while calling other scriptures apocryphal or spurious?

One of the reasons for this drive to find authenticity in Daoist texts is related to broader notions in the study of sacred texts that treat scripture as an immutable text, a writing (or perhaps an icon or symbol) readily recognizable to a community of readers. In the academic study of scriptures, such texts are often reified and treated as agents exercising force or influence in readers’ minds. Many studies incorporate notions borrowed from Christianity such as “belief” and “truth” to characterize the processes in which people hear a text and choose to either adopt or reject its sacred message.¹

But for Daoists, mediums are viewed as conduits in which divine messages or primordial texts are introduced into the human world. Old texts can also be changed in this same way; a writer only needs to establish contact with the heavens for the authority to change texts already in circulation. Mediums represent scriptures as incomplete, for gods never transmitted entire texts at one time. Rather, mediums were hired by sponsors to communicate with Daoist deities and procure scriptures one part (or stanza) at a time. It was common for mediums to procure new passages that revised or altered previously circulating scriptures. As a result, we can and often do find varying passages sourced to a single scripture that speak on different topics, contradict one another, and are written in dramatically different styles and voices.

While the production of Daoist texts might appear disorderly and in disarray, they illuminate the dynamic processes of scriptural production. These scriptures, we conclude, reflect the complex ways in which manuscript texts are written, received, and distributed. We feel that the following approach to Daoist scriptures allows us to enter a more exciting phase of textual criticism. Here a text is a fluid and ever-changing entity that is shaped and reshaped by an ongoing stream of authors. The emendations of Upper Clarity texts are not mistakes, but a conscious remaking of the past.²

This book has identified key shifts in development of Upper Clarity literature between Xu Mi’s day and Tao Hongjing’s studies on the manuscripts at the turn of the sixth century. Gu Huan’s account is different in

many ways from Yang Xi's revelations and from Tao Hongjing's *Declarations*. Gu's representation of the scriptural transmission differs most from these two texts in the parts that come before and after the information on its fourth- and fifth-century transmission in southern China. The early parts of the preface address how the scriptures were first composed in heaven during a primordial age. Gu depicts the editing of the scriptures as an activity with distant origins. By this account, the scriptures were collated and grouped together long before appearing on earth. Such claims likely appealed to editors like Gu because they underscored how the editorial shaping and ongoing revision of the Upper Clarity scriptures in fifth-century China were the culmination of practices first begun long ago in heaven. Based on extant evidence, it seems that the notion of this heavenly rework of the scriptures was unknown to Yang Xi or Xu Mi or, at the very least, was an insignificant feature of the revelations.

Some might find it ironic that our study of Upper Clarity manuscripts does not actually use any *real* manuscripts. All of our sources in this book are writings about manuscripts that are featured among paratextual evidence: prefaces, colophons, bibliographies, and commentaries. These texts have enabled us to piece together how Upper Clarity scriptures in the fourth and fifth centuries were erased, augmented, and rewritten.³ Rather than ignore places where texts had been heavily edited, we have made them the focus of our study. Such evidence of rewriting has cast new light on the ongoing alteration of Daoist scriptures. We conclude that heavily redacted texts are intriguing specimens for learning how Daoist manuscripts evolve and change over time.

At the heart of our study was the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*, which is annotated and translated below in part II. In the preceding chapters, we have tried to move beyond simply describing what is in the scripture. Instead, we have focused on the evolution of key concepts in the scripture (e.g., Three Ones, Three Wonders) in an effort to learn about the milieu in which this text was born. A majority of the ideas expressed in this scripture were not created out of thin air, but were responses to older ideas already in circulation in other Upper Clarity texts and beyond. Our way of reading the

scripture moves beyond seeing readers as passive receivers and instead studies them as active reinterpreters. We underscored how each generation of Upper Clarity writers, from Yang Xi to Wang Lingqi to Tao Hongjing, remade older texts and gave rise to something else.⁴

Part II

Translation

*The Most High Wondrous
Scripture of the Immaculate Numen
[Celestial Palace] and Penetrating Mystery of
the Great Existence [Heaven]*

太上素靈洞玄大有妙經

The Three Grottoes

(1a) The Precious Names of Officials Who Became Inner Perfected through the Three Grottoes' Unitive Transformation

三洞混化內真變生官號寶名

The *Most High Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] and Penetrating Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]* is a teaching (Dao) that includes the “Immaculate Words for the Three [Palaces] and Nine [Openings],” the “Upper Transformation of the Mysterious Cinnabar,” and the “Nine Grottoes of the Three Perfected.”¹ It originally existed alongside the primal *qi* when both were engendered during the Primordial Commencement era. Its three essences congealed and transformed into a jade emblem of coalescing brilliance. This then transformed into bureaus for the Three Grottoes that now oversee the abyss of myriad Perfected beings. It was thereafter concealed in a jade chamber atop a golden terrace of the Immaculate Numen Palace in Great Existence, the highest of the Nine Heavens. This scripture shone brightly as it was inscribed on jade slips with each character gilded in gold. The Three Caverns unitively transformed with the Upper Prime and first came into existence. The Middle [Prime] controlled the heavens of the Ten Limits that emerged from vacuity.² The Lower ordered the myriad *qi* that passed through every darkened realm.

1b

Its light shone through the primal clouds that billowed above Jade Clarity. Thereafter, soaring auroras and purple haze scintillated and sparkled across Grand Hollow.³ Jade Efflorescence maidens and Golden Dawn lads, each numbering three thousand, came forth to protect these numinous wrists.

《太上素靈洞元大有妙經》，三九素語、元丹上化、三真九洞之道，本與元氣同存，元始俱生，三精凝化，結朗玉章，構演三洞之府，揔御萬真之淵，乃秘在九天之上大有之宮，金臺玉室素靈房中，刻玉為簡，以撰其文，金鏤玉字，以明其篇。混化三洞，變生上元，中統十絕虛生之天，下理萬炁，無幽不關也。流光元藹，鬱乎玉清；飛霞紫煙，耀煥太空。玉華之女、金晨之童各三千人，侍衛靈文。

2a Thereupon, the primal [*qi*] of the heavens merged, and celebration erupted in the divine halls. All gods—from the primal nobles, jade thearchs, and elevated worthies most high down to the Perfected and Transcendent beings—burned incense as they came to pay homage while circumambulating the scripture in the upper palace. This wafting scent enshrouded [the scripture's] light, causing the mystic dawn to remain dark. The billowing fragrances cleansed all the numina, and its vapor dispersed throughout the Jade Capital. Bolts of lightning came down from three-colored primal clouds onto the auroras over mountain peaks.⁴ Floral [bursts of] lights flickered in alternation, and then all these “divine torches” shone in unison. The girls-in-attendance and the assembled Transcendent beings numbered in the billions. Poisonous dragons and giant beasts were on guard at the numinous gate towers to protect [the scripture].⁵ Pythons and snakes clanged their sword [-like teeth], while the “long ivories” struck bells.⁶ The celestial might of these beasts flared and flashed as they transformed into Grand Nothingness. The wind blasted dark banners in all directions, and jade tones emerged from the numinous palace.⁷ Phoenixes chanted around the nine auroras; simurghs sang on the edges of the purple empyrean. In this lush and luxuriant foliage, they gathered above the mystery of mysteries; yet they began dispersing and disappearing when the inaugural gleam appeared.

於時天元值合，慶嘉神庭，元皇玉帝、無上高尊、羣真眾仙，莫不詣座，燒香禮經，旋行上宮也。玄晨冥滯，飛香翳光，揚芳濯靈，散煙玉京，三素元雲，流電霞峰，華光交煥，神燭合明，侍女眾仙有十億萬人，毒龍巨獸，備衛靈闕，蟠蛇擊劍，長牙扣鍾，天威煥赫，變乎太无，八風鼓於玄旛，玉音發於靈宮，鳳鳴九霞之側，鸞唱紫霄之傍，翥靄玄玄之上，蕭蕭始暉之中。

At this time the Celestial Thearchical Lord, the Upper Primal Lord of the Southern Bourne, the Thearchical Lord of Grand Tenuity Heaven, and the Latter [Age] Sage (i.e., the Golden Porte's Thearchical Lord of Nine Mysteries) held a purification fast for three months; they served in the Grand Shroud (i.e., Upper Clarity). They contemplated the mystery while resonating with the realm of Grand Silence, and they reported their concerns before the Upper Clarity heavens. They thereupon exclaimed:

2b

是時天帝君、南極上元君、太微天帝君、後聖九玄金闕帝君，清齋三月，仰稟太冥，玄思感於太寂，積念啟於上清，遂致

The [sun's] beams pause with a glimmering glare,	皓映停暉
As Nine Cross-routes revolve around [the orb]. ⁸	九緯纏形
Hidden polypores come into full bloom,	隱芝結秀
Their precious radiance shines in the night.	寶光夜生
We savor the flavor of these flowery primes,	餐味華元
To infuse upper palaces with “dawn essences.”	上注晨精
We ride through space on billowing vapors,	乘空結煙
Atop eight paths brilliantly illuminated.	八道煥明
We sip slowly on Grand Harmony,	咀嚼太和
For wisdom abounds in these <i>Jade Chapters</i> .	慧暢玉篇
We pace to and fro between the obscure and subtle,	徘徊幽微
And roam freely through the empyrean court.	流逸霄庭
The springs of these caverns floods and flows,	浩浩洞源
In an endless succession for millions of years.	悠悠億齡

We are utterly carefree in this Great Transformation, For its divine splendor never ends. ⁹	容與大化 神秀無窮也
We linger and roost on this numinous belvedere, To share a cavernous banquet for seven dawns.	耽栖靈觀 洞宴七晨
Bright and clear is the flowery garden, Where we take rest and repose in the Nine Mysteries.	澄濯華園 息憩九玄
After transforming our phosphors in Jade Vacuity, We will command the various heavens.	變景玉虛 攜領諸天
We clearly array the Two Options, ¹⁰ Primal blessings appear like millions of drops of moisture.	寥朗二順 元慶億津
Our endless gaze stretches into the distant future, And we are so enraptured that we forgot to return.	流盼極劫 挹趣忘旋
We bathe in these numinous hills, ¹¹ Among orchid buds on a clear mountainside.	沐浴靈丘 蘭穎清岑
Our enlightened models are in place, And these inner rhymes are intact. ¹²	明範既維 內韻齊全
Efflorescence shines in each of our five viscera, A hoary jade reddens our hearts.	五華耀藏 皓瑩瓊心
Secluded and sequestered in our private residence, A purple gleam penetrates our lapels.	窈窕絕宅 紫暉洞衿
Shaking slips with the Mystic River design, We select crimson [blossoms] from Benevolent Grove. ¹³	振策玄河 擣絳惠林
We gaze around at every limit of these broad lands, For our eyes are clarified by the tones of the ten heavens.	周盼廣域之內 目朗十天之音
Distant and dim are the divine traces of these gods, For there are no forms by which we can find them. ¹⁴	眇眇神迹 无形可尋

[*Coda*]

Our numinous transformation is hidden, As we ride along the Dark Clarity. ¹⁵	靈化既隱 乘運玄清	3a
Effortlessly and harmoniously, Our vacuous embryos take form. ¹⁶	條暢純和 空胎結形	

The light from this scripture spread from the mysterious belvedere of Great Existence throughout the Immaculate Numen Palace. The secret mystery of the Nine Heavens (i.e., the congealed essences of the primal grottoes) gave order to the Three Passes in the underworld bureaus. It determined the future generations of the myriad Perfected and established the *Mysterious [Metropolis] Code* that monitors their infractions. This *Code* atones for a person's faults lodged in the Grand Shroud, saves their seven generations of ancestors from the Three Paths, and gives the incalculable souls passage to the Southern Court.¹⁷ Once these enlightened verses of the Three Thearchs was sung, all filth and corruption in the Three Clarity heavens was swept away. Great are these jade stanzas! They are the ultimate power of divine virtue.

大有之妙觀，演於素靈，九天之秘奧，元洞之凝精，理三關於幽府，揔萬真於來生，制玄科以檢違，贖己愆於太冥，拔七祖於三塗，度窮魂於南庭，誦三帝之慧唱，蕩氣穢於三清。大哉玉章！神德之至靈也。

The *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas* is the emblem of the Upper Monarch's teachings (Dao) and is a marvelous book of the Purple Dawn.¹⁸ It regulates the destiny of the officials ranked in the Nine Heavens and invokes the numinous powers of the Five Thearchs. It sends the whirlwind of unitive fusion into motion and condenses the mysterious essence through Nine Transformations.¹⁹ This essence unites the male and female and transforms into a myriad of spirits. It is a like dense forest spreading in every direction, or a rose-gem echoing throughout Grand Perfection. It moves the “avoiding falsity” *qi* into an adept's Bright Beam; this will open up a passage into the Mysterious Gate by way of Yiyou.²⁰ It creates miracles with its “blade of penetrating virtue” for it illuminates

the clouds with its “dazzling and radiant web.”²¹ Thus the *qi* of the three numinous passes are enveloped by Grand Nothingness, while [Mount] Bladeless towers over the years of cataclysmic cycles.²²

《大洞真經三十九章》，上皇之道標，紫晨之妙篇，制命九天之階，徵召五帝之靈，逸迴風之混合，凝九轉於玄精，交會雌雄，混化萬神，森羅幽鬱，瓊響太真。運辟非於明梁，通易有於玄門，洞德刃以造妙，濯耀羅以映雲。太漠為靈關之氣，无刃為浩劫之年。

The divine lodge housing this scripture lies high and steep over the chasm of myriad Perfected beings. The flashes and flares from its golden room engulf the entire Upper Clarity heavens. Its meaning is obscure and subtle, for it is difficult to study in detail. If you can hold a long purification rite by keeping your ambitions distinct from the human world, intone this jade chapter in a secluded chamber so you can strike the rose-gem tones to awaken the numina. Afterwards, Perfected beings will verify your register in the palace of the Eastern Floriate [Peak] and your Seven Mysteries will be continually nourished [with *qi*] in your Purple Court.²³ You can also summon spirits to control demon-kings to spirits and safeguard your body to conjure the Five Thearchs.²⁴ The miraculous power of the *Great Grotto* restores life by presiding over the ten million [manifestations] of the Dao.²⁵ Every person, even those without unusual [Transcendent] feathers, extraordinary features, golden bones, or a jade name, must avoid carelessly handling these numinous wrists. If you have received this scripture, use extreme caution to consult the prohibitions listed in the *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected*.

巍巍神館，萬真之淵；金房煥赫，鬱乎上清。其旨幽微，難可究詳。若能長齋，絕志人門，誦玉篇於幽室，叩瓊音以震靈，則真人定籙於東華，七玄更潤於紫庭，制魔王以威神，攝五帝以衛身。此大洞之奇神，揔億道而反生。自無奇毛異質、金骨玉名，皆不得有妄披於靈文。其禁悉依《九真明科》，受者慎焉！

The *Most High Precious Scripture on the Five Ancient Lords, Jade Seal of the Feminine One* contains twelve high intentions,²⁶ Eight Tablets of the Mysterious

Mother,²⁷ the Nine Cycles²⁸ and Five Turns,²⁹ and the transformation of the female and male. This is the second wondrous writ; it is an ultimate stanza of the gods most high. It unitively transforms you through a myriad of changes, so you can control your fate and live longer. You can also concentrate the essences of your cloud-souls to command and conjure legions of spirits. This unbinds and unshackles you from [embryonic] ties, and spins the primal *qi* around five times. You can draw the myriad *qi* into your body; this energy, in turn, will rise upward to fortify your Muddy Pellet. These *qi* forms flow freely into your Palace of Ultimate Perfection so that your Purple Court will radiate with efflorescence.

《高上玉檢雌一五老寶經》上願十二，玄母八間，九轉五迴，變化雌雄，第二奇文，高上之極章，混化萬變，理命長存，固魂凝精，領攝羣神，解脫釋結，迴元五通，萬炁總歸，上鎮泥丸，陶注極真，華映紫庭。

The [*qi*] flit and float as they illuminate the Nine Mysteries; they penetrate and spread their brilliance across the Jade Clarity heavens. These numinous vapors blanket the bright auroras with sweet fragrances, and their divine light illuminates the Grand Hollow. The congregation of Perfected beings celebrate atop the galleries of rose-gem rooms, while assemblies of Transcendent beings intone encomiums and pay tribute to the scripture. Soaring beasts leap in great excitement over Grand Hollow; simurghs and phoenixes emit a thunderous twitter of plaintive cries. The Three Radiances pause in the air, as this celestial gleam regulates morning into night.³⁰ The great expanse of the shrouded lodge housing the scripture contains the highest and most ultimate form of Perfection.

飄飄朗於九玄，洞暢煥乎玉清。靈煙散馥於明霞，神燈朗耀於太空。羣真慶軒於瓊房，眾仙誦讚而禮經。飛獸踊躍於太空，鸞鳳嘈囁而悲鳴。三光停曜，天暉晝冥。浩汗幽館，高上之極真也。

The meaning of this scripture might seem to lack anything special, but its keen insights are, in fact, both abstruse and deep. It is so sublime one can hardly describe it, and understanding it is infinitely difficult. But if you

stand out like fine jade, your name will be ranked [in the palace] of the Jade Monarch. Once the officials of the Eastern Floriate Palace submit a letter for you, your name will be ranked in Rose-Gem Palace. At this point, you will be qualified to receive the scripture, and you should use this text to guide bodily cultivation as is specified in the [*Illustrious*] *Code [of the Nine Perfected]*. 4b Meditate on the celestial Perfected by holding long purification rites with intense visualization exercises. You should only eat at midday; otherwise, intone the precious stanzas and carry out every single ritual described in its numinous chapters. If you do this for nine years without stopping, you will surely become a Perfected being, for you will have refined your cloud-souls and white-souls in his Nine Bureaus and will have orchestrated unitive fusion within your Three Passes.³¹ Your seven generations of ancestors will thereafter be saved from the dark servitude, for they will find passage from life as a weary cloud-soul into the Southern Palace.

其旨虛鮮，洞趣幽深，妙不可記，理難可窮。若有玉挺，名係玉皇，東華奏札，列于瓊宮，當得此文，依科修行。精思天真，長齋苦念，日中乃餐，誦詠寶章，演究靈篇。九年不怠，乃得造真，鍊魂魄於九府，理混合於三關，拔七祖於幽塗，度苦魂於南宮。

You must first announce your desire to connect with gods before an earthly altar, then make a heartfelt pledge to seek Transcendence. This will begin a miraculous transformation, for the shadows and echoes of the gods will descend from the stars. You will ride with the gods atop vacuity and roam into the empyrean, sauntering about at a never-ending array of banquets.

告形壇以要感，誓信心以求仙。此之妙化，影響降晨，乘虛逸霄，遊宴無間也。

The [Lord of the Great Dao] Most High announces: My teachings (Dao) incorporate the “Unitive Fusion of the Whirlwind” visualization from the *Thirty-Nine Stanzas of the Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto*, as well as the methods described in the [*Most High Precious Scripture on the*] *Five Ancient Lords*, [*Jade Seal of*] *the Feminine One*, like the “Grotto-Room’s Golden Efflorescence,” the “Twelve High Intentions of the Thearchical Lord,” “The

Submission of Tablets at the Eight Gates of the Mysterious Mother,” “The Transformation of the Grand Monad,” and the “Feminine One’s Ascension into Transcendence.” When conducting these rituals, you must first conduct a purification rite by washing yourself in orchid-infused [water]. Only then should you enter into a chamber to actualize the Immaculate Numen’s Five Thearchs, as well as precious names and esoteric bynames of the officials living in his grotto-heaven’s primal cave, grotto-earth, and grotto-abyss. Never begin cultivating the precious instructions of the *Great Grotto* or *Feminine One* until you have first actualized all these deities. This method is mysterious and subtle; it was formed at the same time as *qi* and thus has existed as long as the heavens. This is why the Grand Monad must undergo unitive transformation in the Purple Room, for you will only become a deity when the Primal Father and Mysterious Mother produce this “third embryo.”³² These cryptic words express a profound miracle, for the scripture containing the name of the Nine Perfected is highly esoteric. The *Great Grotto* is most exalted since it was formed in the Primordial Commencement era. The *Great Elixir* creates inner essences by means of the Feminine Ones.³³

5a

太上曰：兆之為道，存思《大洞真經三十九章》迴風混合、《雌一五老》金華洞房、帝君十二上願、玄母八門行間、太一變化、雌一上仙之法。行事之日，每當先自清齋，沐浴蘭香，入室內思素靈五帝、元洞洞天、洞地、洞淵之官寶名內字，招真致靈之道。事畢，然後得修《大洞》、《雌一》寶訣。其法玄微，與炁同生，與天同存。是故太一、紫房為混合，元父、玄母以三胎為神明；秘言要妙以九真名為內經，大洞以高上為元始，大丹以雌一為內精。

Finally, the miraculous scripture known as *Great Existence* penetrates mystery with the Immaculate Numen. It unites the Three Treasures into one marvelous text and combines their three *qi* into an elevated stanza. Its sublime qualities cannot be measured, its esteem cannot be matched, and its depth cannot be plumbed. Its imposing grandeur is nearly imperceptible. This jade chapter truly is of the highest virtue! If you are able to constantly contemplate it, you will ascend to heaven in broad daylight. The teachings (Dao) about staving off death are among the finest of all numinous wris.

大有之妙經，素靈為洞玄。總三寶為奇文，結三氣為高章。其妙不可測，高不可攀，深不可極。巍巍微哉！斯玉篇之有大德矣！子能勤思，則白日昇天。不死之道，極於靈文也。

Official Titles and Precious Names of the Inner Perfected that Emerged from the Primordial Transformations within the Grotto Heaven

洞天混化內真變生官號寶名

5b One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-heaven's primal cave is the Resplendent Primal Lord who Extends Divinity with the Primal Brightness of Primal Sunlight. His secret name is Xuanhun and his byname is Lingyuan. He wears a crown of "soaring dawn" jewels and is cloaked in a single-layer azure damask robe. He holds the "Vermilion Brightness of the Solar Auroras" talisman.

太上神仙洞天元洞元明元曜延靈耀元君，諱玄混，字靈元，頭冠飛晨寶冠，衣青錦單羃，手執陽霞朱明之符。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-heaven's primal cave is the Lord Who Reveals the Bright Heaven with Lesser Solarity's Azure Resplendence. His secret name is Changjun and his byname is Boxuan. He wears an azure crown made of inaugurating dawn jade and is cloaked in an azure figured fine silk robe.

太上神仙洞天元洞青耀少陽啟明天君，諱常君，字伯玄，頭冠青冠，建晨玉冠，衣青綾之羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-heaven's primal cave is the Lord of Grand Solarity, the Fiery and Fragrant Beam's Great Blaze of the Yellow Numen's Great Elixir. His secret name is Qiming and his byname is Zhenwei. On his head, he wears a crown of black jewels and is cloaked a brocade robe of yellow clouds.

太上神仙洞天元洞黃靈大丹炎薰光大赫太陽君，諱啟明，字真威，頭冠玄寶冠，衣黃雲錦羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-heaven's primal cave is the Lord of Grand Transcendents' Primal Fate, Resplendent Numen of the Double Efflorescence of Jupiter's Eastern Floriate [Palace]. His secret name is Shiming and his byname is Hunsheng. He wears a crown made of "soaring dawn" jade and is cloaked in a thin, single-layer robe of azure [silk].

6a

太上神仙洞天元洞東華太歲重華耀靈太仙元命君，諱始明，字混生，冠飛晨玉冠，衣單青飛羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-heaven's primal cave is the Lord of the Precious Cloud-souls and Resplendent White-souls, the August Numen of Eastern Culmen's Grand Prime. His secret name is Feisheng and his byname is Shouming. He wears a crown made of azure essence jade and is cloaked in a light, azure robe of feathers.

太上神仙洞天元洞東極太元皇靈寶魂耀魄君，諱飛生，字守命，冠青精玉冠，衣飛青羽羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-heaven's primal cave is the Azure Sashed Jade Girl of Constant Solarity and the High Cliffs of Jupiter. Her secret name is Huijing and her byname is Ejing. She wears her hair a chignon of soaring clouds and dons a flowing robe of light azure silk.

太上神仙洞天元洞歲星延崖青腰常陽玉女，諱惠精，字娥景，頭作飛雲髻，衣青羅飛羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-heaven's primal cave is the Jade Lad of the Crimson Palace, the elder of the Southern Culmen and the Resplendent Numen of Grand Solarity. His secret

name is Shangxuan and his byname is Shengling. He wears his hair in a chignon of three topknots and is cloaked in a flowing robe of azure feathers.

太上神仙洞天元洞太陽耀靈南極丈人絳宮玉童，諱上玄，字昇靈，頭作三角雲髻，衣青羽飛羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-heaven's primal cave is the Blue Numen of Azure Solarity and Transcendent Lad, the Eastern Monarch of Shadowy Solarity. His secret name is Anlai and his byname is Xuanyao. He wears his hair in a chignon like three tiers of clouds and is cloaked in a feathered robe with azure patterns.

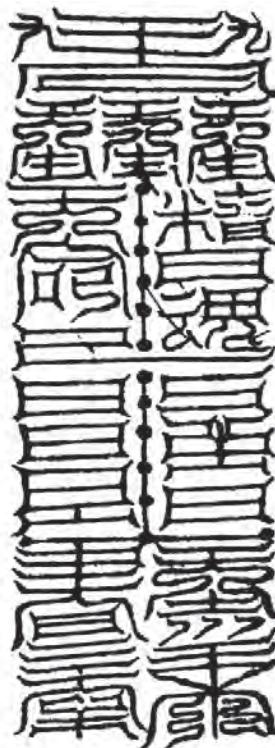
太上神仙洞天元洞景陽東皇青陽翠靈仙童，諱安來，字玄耀，頭作三建雲髻，衣青文羽羃。

6b One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-heaven's primal cave is the Jade Maiden of the Red *Gui*-jade of Grand Cinnabar, the Long-Lived and Ravishing Red Monarch. Her name is Chengling and her byname is Jingwei. She wears her hair in a chignon of scattered clouds and is cloaked in a feathered robe with vermilion patterns.

太上神仙洞天元洞赤皇延齡娥容太丹赤圭玉女，諱承靈，字精微，頭作頽雲髻，衣朱文羽羃。

The aforementioned officials of grotto-heaven's primal cave are born from azure and red *qi*. Their names are spontaneously formed through unitive fusion. Above, they take charge of the Clear Tenuity Bureau of the Immaculate Numen Palace. Below, they are in charge of the affairs within the Muddy Pellet Palace of an adept's Upper Prime.

右洞天元洞之官，化生青赤二氣，混合自然之號，上治素靈宮中清微之府，下治兆身上元泥丸宮中。



The “Vermilion Brightness of the Solar Auroras” Talisman 陽霞朱明之符.

The Official [Titles] and Precious Names of the Inner Perfected that Transformed Within the Fusion of Grotto- Earth

洞地混化內真(變)生官(號)寶名

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-earth's penetrating perfection is the August Lord of the Great Numinous Trigger, the Primal Being of the Great Grotto of Mars.³⁴ His secret name is Jinghua and his byname is Yuanjing. He wears a three-brim crown of pearls and jewels, and he is cloaked in a single garment with a crimson emblem.³⁵ He wields the “Penetrating into the Brightness of the Nine Primes of the Four Grottoes” talisman.

7a

太上神仙洞地洞真太熒惑大洞元生大靈機皇君，諱景化，字元精，頭戴朱寶三
梁之冠，衣絳章單衣，手執通明四洞九元之符。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-earth's penetrating perfection is the Lord who Keeps Registers and Extends Life, the Primal Enforcer of the Law from Southern Solarity's Fiery Region. His secret name is Dusheng and his byname is Yanzheng. He wears a crown of black cloudy jewels and dons a skirt with cinnabar patterns.

太上神仙洞地洞真南陽炎域元執法延壽司籤君，諱度生，字延正，頭冠玄雲寶冠，衣丹文羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-earth's penetrating perfection is the Lord of the Grand Barrens of the Dark Heavens that Penetrate the Ultimate, the Middle Sovereign [Controlling] the Middle Resplendence of the Five Yang and Five Yin. His secret name is Wuqiongzi and his byname is Yundu. He wears a far roaming crown and dons a skirt of cinnabar damask.

太上神仙洞地洞真中耀五陽五陰中皇洞極玄天太虛君，諱無窮子，字運度，冠遠遊冠，衣丹錦羃。

7b One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-earth's penetrating perfection is the Lord of Most High Radiance, the Resplendent Numen and Middle Queller. His secret name is Chengtian and his byname is Yinyuan. He wears a flying dawn crown and a flowing robe with vermilion shirt.

太上神仙洞地洞真中鎮耀靈太上高皇君，諱承天，字胤元，冠飛晨冠，衣朱衣飛羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-earth's penetrating perfection is the Lord of Precious Cloud-Souls and Resplendent White-Souls, the Radiant Numen of the Southern Culmen's Grand Red. His secret name is Xuangu and his byname is Wuzhong. He wears a crown of jade essence jewels and is cloaked in a single[-layer] gown with a crimson emblem.

太上神仙洞地洞真南極太赤皇靈寶魂耀魄君，諱玄固，字無終，冠玉精寶冠，衣絳章單衣。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-earth's penetrating perfection is the Transcendent Lad of the Crimson Emblem That Penetrates Numina of Exalted Scale's Red Solarity. His secret name is Lingqi and his byname is Shengyou. He wears a crown of jade and jewels that penetrate heaven and is cloaked in a flowing robe with crimson patterns.

太上神仙洞地洞真皇衡赤陽絳章通靈仙童，諱齡期，字昇幽，冠通天玉寶之冠，衣絳文飛羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-earth's penetrating perfection is the Impartial Fifth Jade Lad, the Great Queller of the Primal Yellow and Grand Simplicity's Yellow Trigger. His secret name is Fahua and his byname is Exian. He puts his hair in an angled chignon like flying clouds and is cloaked in a thin robe of yellow silk.

太上神仙洞地洞真太鎮元黃太素黃機執中五玉童，諱法華，字娥先，作飛雲角鬢，衣黃羅羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-earth's penetrating perfection is the Immaculate Jade Maiden of Harmonious Purity and Central Yellow, the Primal Spirit of Saturn [who has] the Divine Resplendence of the *Yang*-Jade Harmony. Her secret name is Daoqi and her byname is Taizong. She puts her hair in a chignon of sloping clouds and is cloaked in flying skirt of yellow light silk.

8a

太上神仙洞地洞真鎮星元神神耀玉瑛泰素中黃素玉女，諱道炁，字太宗，作頽雲鬢，衣黃羅飛羃。

The aforementioned officers of the grotto-earth's penetrating perfection are born from the red and yellow *qi*. Their names spontaneously emerge from primordial chaos. Above, they take charge of the Orchid Terrace Bureau in the Palace of Immaculate Numen. Below, they are in charge of an adept's Crimson Palace.

右洞地洞真之官，化生赤黃二氣，混沌自然之號，上治素靈宮蘭臺府，下治兆身絳宮之中。



The “Penetrating into the Brightness of the Four Grottoes’ Nine Primes” Talisman
通明四洞九元之符

The Official [Titles] and Precious Names of the Inner Perfected that Transformed Within the Grotto-Abyss’s Penetrating Mystery

洞淵洞玄混化內真（變）生官（號）寶名

8b One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-abyss’ penetrating mystery is the Grand Transcendent Lord and Primal Guide of Grand Priority, the Bright and Blazing Primal Essence of Venus’s Liujin City.³⁶ His secret name is Haotian and his byname is Jiyuan. He wears a crown with jade and jewels of the mystic dawn and is cloaked in a flowing robe of white damask. He grasps a Heavenly Jewel that Reveals and Penetrates Heaven talisman.

太上神仙洞淵洞玄太白子留金城耀耀元精元導太仙君，諱浩田，字極元，冠玄晨玉寶冠，衣素錦飛裳，手執啟明通天寶符。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-abyss' penetrating mystery is the Lord of the Heavenly Trigger's Starry Beams from the Immense Plain [Silk], Great White (Venus). His secret name is Hunjing and his byname is Haozhen. He wears a crown of roaming cloud jewels and dons a flowing robe with beige patterns.

太上神仙洞淵洞玄太白浩素天機星光君，諱混精，字浩真，冠遊雲寶冠，衣素文飛羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-abyss' penetrating mystery is the White Lord, the Primal and Immaculate Higher Sovereign of the Minor Yin Primal Light's Blazing Golden Beam of Venus. His secret name is Haodan and his byname is Zhenglun. He wears a crown of mystic dawn and is cloaked in a flowing robe of white brocade.

太上神仙洞淵洞玄太白曜金光少陰昊元素上皇白人君，諱浩丹，字正綸，冠玄晨冠，衣白錦飛羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-abyss' penetrating mystery is the Lord of the Primal Blossoms of Yudan, the Extended Numen of the Five Radiant [Planets] of Primal Yin in Mercury's Mysterious Grotto.³⁷ His secret name is Beihao and his byname is Tingyuan. He wears a crown that penetrates heaven and is cloaked in a brocade robe with dark clouds.

9a

太上神仙洞淵洞玄太辰玄洞元陰五耀延靈元華鬱單君，諱北浩，字停淵，冠通天之冠，衣玄雲錦羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-abyss' penetrating mystery is the Transcendent Lord within the Blazing Black Grotto of Mysterious Gate, one of Taiji's Five Marchmounts. His secret name

is Farong and his byname is Baiyuan. He wears a crown of mystic dawn and is cloaked in a single robe with black patterns.

太上神仙洞淵洞玄耀黑洞玄門太極五嶽仙君，諱法容，字白元，冠玄晨冠，衣玄文單羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-abyss' penetrating mystery is the Lord of the Precious White-Souls and Blazing Cloud-Souls, the Primal Sovereign of the Grand Transcendents in Northern Culmen. His secret name is Feisheng and his byname is Shengwu. He wears a crown that penetrates heaven and is cloaked in a black robe.

太上神仙洞淵洞玄北極太仙元皇寶魄耀魂君，諱飛生，字昇无，冠通天冠，衣玄衣。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-abyss's penetrating mystery is the Transcendent Lad of Primal Transformation, the Primal Spirit of the Yin Gleam of the Immaculate Radiant [Planetoid], the Radiant Numen of the Primal Sovereign in Taiji. His secret name is Youjing and his byname is Biantong. He wears his hair in a three-tiered flying cloud chignon and is cloaked in a robe with white patterns.

太上神仙洞淵洞玄素耀陰暉元神太極元皇耀靈元化玉童，諱幽精，字變通，作飛雲三建髻，衣素文羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-abyss' penetrating mystery is the Immaculate Numen's Transcendent Jade Lad, the Western Sovereign of Yin Phosphors. His secret name Chongyuan and his byname is Beiji. He wears his hair in a scattered cloud chignon and is cloaked in a dark polychrome damask flying skirt.

太上神仙洞淵洞玄陰景西皇素靈仙玉童，諱沖淵，字北極，作頽雲髻，衣玄錦飛羃。

One of the highest divine Transcendents [emanating from] the grotto-abyss' penetrating mystery is the Jade Maiden of the Golden Loft-Building in the Jade Gate, the Protector of the Great Grotto and Ninth Leader of Venus's Extended Shadows. Her secret name is Elian and her byname is Huijing. She wears her hair in a scattered cloud chignon and is cloaked in a white robe of light silk.

太上神仙洞淵洞玄太白延影九導大洞承翼玉門金樓玉女，諱娥廉，字惠精，作頽雲髻，衣白羅之羃。

The aforementioned officials of the grotto-abyss' penetrating mystery are born from the white and black *qi*. Their names are spontaneously formed through unitive fusion. Above, they take charge of the Radiant Hall Bureau in the Palace of Immaculate Numen. Below, they are in charge of an adept's Cinnabar Field.

右洞淵洞玄之官，化生白黑二炁，混沌自然之號，上治素靈宮皇堂府，下治兆身丹田之中。



The “Heavenly Jewel that Reveals and Penetrates Heaven” Talisman 啟明通天寶符.

(1b) The Most High Lord of the Dao's *Scripture on Guarding the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes*

太上道君守三元真一經

10a The Way of the [Officials of the] Three Grottoes have titles that spontaneously formed so they could help oversee the Three Treasures—*Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto*, [Most High Precious Scripture on the] *Five Ancient Lords*, [Jade Seal of] the Feminine One, Most High [Wondrous] *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* [*Celestial Palace That Penetrates the Mystery of*] the Great Existence [Heaven]. The jurisdiction of these officials depends on the prime to which they belong: Primal Cave governs the heavens, Penetrating Perfection governs the earth, and Penetrating Mystery governs people. The *qi* of the Three [Grottoes] unite their luminosity and govern your body from within your Three Palaces.³⁸ These [*qi*] need one another in order to complete [this process]. If you wish to avoid death, search for the [*qi*] of your “original birth.”³⁹ If you want to ingest flowing auroras, first ingest the *qi* of the [Three] Grottoes.⁴⁰

三洞之道，結自然之號，輔統三寶——《大洞真經》、《雌一五老》、《大有素靈》；應承三元——元洞主天，洞真主地，洞玄主人。三炁合明，同治兆身三宮之中，相須乃成。兆欲不死，當尋本生；服御流霞，以洞為先。

To cultivate the “three jewels” of the Perfected scriptures of Upper Clarity, first meditate on the precious names of the Inner Perfected of the Three Grottoes, then visualize and intone the officer’s names. They will protect your bodily form, and this cultivation will enable you to become a Perfected being. The method is very miraculous and is hidden within the Immaculate Numen [Palace] of the Great Existence [Heaven].

凡修三寶、上清真經，當先思「三洞內真寶名」，存念「官號」，以衛身形，然後修行，克成真人。其法至妙，祕在大有素靈宮中。

If you have an osseous allotment for this scripture, strive hard to cultivate this Dao of Perfection.⁴¹ The spirits will appear if you continually meditate, hold a purification ritual with orchid scents, and refrain from wrongdoings [that produce] noxious *qi*.⁴² And if you do this for eighteen years, a green phaeton will descend [from the heavens]; you can guide its team of dragons through the clouds. You will ascend into the dark heavens in broad daylight. But you must keep what I have revealed to you a secret and practice it as follows:

10b

兆有骨分，當勤行道真。每自苦念，清齋蘭香，不犯穢炁，神自見形。一十八年，降致綠輶，乘雲控龍，白日昇玄。今以告兆，祕而奉行。

Always visualize the grotto-heaven in the morning, the grotto-earth in the middle of the day, and the grotto-abyss in the middle of the night. You can also do the three meditations all at once during midday. The method to visualize these *qi* is as follows: Enter into a chamber and face east. Knock your teeth together thirty-two times. Then close your eyes and actualize wave after wave of the Clear Tenuity Bureau's azure and red *qi* from the Immaculate Numen Palace descending into your Muddy Pellet's Upper Palace. After gulping nine breaths of these [*qi*], actualize the Orchid Terrace Bureau's yellow and red *qi* descending just like the previous ones; these *qi* will descend and enter your Crimson Palace. After gulping nine breaths of these *qi*, actualize Resplendent Hall Bureau's white and black *qi* descending like the previous ones. Gulp down nine breaths as [the *qi*] descend into your abdominal Cinnabar Field Palace. Once you have gulped down all the *qi* of the Three Grottoes, make the following incantation:

常以平旦思洞天，日中思洞地，夜半思洞淵。亦可日中頓思三真。存思之法：入室東向，叩齒三十二通，先暝目思素靈宮清微府中青炁、赤炁相沓，鬱鬱來下，入兆身中泥丸上宮，便咽九炁。次思蘭臺府中赤黃二炁相沓，如先來下，入兆身絳宮之中，便咽九炁。次思皇堂府中白黑二炁相沓，如先來下，入兆身臍⁴³下丹田宮中，便咽九炁。咽三洞炁畢，便仰呴曰：

11a

When heaven and earth were in a primordial state,
All three essences were deep in the grotto-abyss.⁴⁴
They transformed during Primordial Commencement,
And the Five *Qi* were unitively brought into existence.
This transformed the mystic and primal [*qi*],
Which now pours into my bodily form.
May I ingest and consume these swirling auroras,
And ascend to enter into the Purple Court.
May the Northern Thearch remove my death record,⁴⁵
And my name recorded in the Eastern Floriate [Palace].
I will then penetrate the obscure and subtle,
And will unite with the Thearch.⁴⁶

天地混沌
洞淵三精
元始結化
五炁混生
變化玄元
灌注身形
服御流霞
昇入紫庭
北帝落死
東華記名
洞達幽微
與帝合併

After this is done, knock your teeth nine times. Then actualize the primal cave's Resplendent Primal Lord Who Extends Divinity with the Primal Brightness of Primal Sunlight. His name is Xuanhun, and he will give you the Vermilion Brightness of the Solar Auroras talisman. Next, meditate on the officials born in the grotto-heaven; visualize their clothes and names just as you did in the previous method. These deities will all emerge from the Immaculate Numen Palace's Pure Tenuity Bureau, and will descend into your Muddy Pellet Palace. Once this done, you will want to look up and make the following incantation:

畢，又叩齒九通。思元洞元明元曜延靈耀元君玄混，以〈陽霞朱明〉之符授與我身。次思洞天生官，衣服諱字如上法，並從素靈宮清微府中下，以次入兆身泥丸宮中。畢，仰祝曰：

The [deities] of the grotto-heaven's upper prime,
Oversee and control the Nine Mysteries,
Inspect and coordinate the three *qi*,
And now unitively emerge in my cinnabar field.

洞天上元
監御九玄
總統三炁
混生丹田

Uncover and open the shrouded pass, ⁴⁷	披洞幽關
Enter and exit as if there was no barrier.	出入無間
The precious radiance of my cloud- and white-souls,	魂魄寶耀
Twines and wraps around [them] like fragrant flowers.	纏絡華鮮
As we soar atop the clouds to a crimson chamber,	飛雲絳室
And travel to the banquets in the purple heavens.	遊宴紫天
May I live [as long] as heaven and earth,	齊保天地
So this feast will go on for a hundred million years. ⁴⁸	長享億年

When the grotto-heaven rituals end, face south and meditate on Jinghua, the August Lord of the Great Numinous Trigger, the Primal Being of the Great Grotto of Mars in the grotto-earth's penetrating perfection. He will come and transmit a Penetrating into the Brightness of the Four Grottoes' Nine Primes talisman to you. Next, meditate on the officials born in the grotto-earth; visualize their clothes and names just as you did in the previous rituals. They will emerge together from the Immaculate Numen Palace's Orchid Terrace Bureau and then descend into your Crimson Palace. You must then look up and make the following incantation:

11b

洞天畢，次南方，向南思洞地洞真大熒惑星大洞元生大靈機皇君景化，以〈通明四洞九元〉之符，以授我身。次思洞地生官，衣服諱字如上法，並從素靈宮蘭臺府下，入兆身絳宮中。便仰祝曰：

The [deities] of grotto-earth's middle prime,	洞地中元
Command the flying Transcendents,	總領飛仙
With the precious radiance on their floriate crowns,	華冠寶耀
And the azure sashes and turbans they wear.	腰青建巾
Bestow a numinous talisman upon me,	授我靈符
So I can reach Perfection and bring the spirits to me.	通真致神
I now ponder the obscure and subtle,	洞思幽微
So I might receive the Thearch's secret words.	受帝祕言

Untie and undo my embryonic knots,⁴⁹ 解胞散結
 So my nine orifices will brightly shine. 九孔朗然
 May my seven ancestors are released, 七祖咸脫
 May all ascend above to the Southern Gallery.⁵⁰ 上昇南軒
 Then cloudy chariots descend to the ground, 雲輿下降
 And I take off for the stars in broad daylight.⁵¹ 白日昇晨

Once the [rituals for] the grotto-earth are complete, turn to the north and actualize Haotian, the Grand Transcendent Lord and Primal Guide of Grand Priority, the Bright and Blazing Primal Essence of Venus's Liujin City ruling in the grotto-abyss' penetrating mystery. He will transmit a Heavenly Jewel that Reveals and Penetrates Heaven talisman. Next, meditate on the officials born in the grotto-abyss; [visualize] their clothes and names just as you did in the previous rituals. They will emerge together from the Immaculate Numen Palace's Radiant Hall Bureau and will descend into the Cinnabar Field Palace beneath your navel. You must then look up and make the following incantation:

洞地畢，轉北向，存思洞淵洞玄太白子留金城耀耀元精元導太仙君，諱浩田，以〈啟明通天寶符〉以授兆身。次思洞淵生官，衣服諱字如上法，並從素靈宮皇堂府下，入兆身臍下丹田宮中。便仰祝曰：

The [deities] of the shrouded pass in the grotto-abyss, 洞淵幽關
 Ascend and take their place among the Three Primes. 上參三元
 May this mysterious *qi* multiply in profusion, 玄炁鬱勃
 And soar like auroras of purple clouds. 飛霞紫雲
 With fluid yellow mixed with five hues,⁵² 流黃五色
 It is the precious talisman of floriate dawn.⁵³ 華晨寶符
 I now consume the Revealing [talisman], 服御啟明
 So I might live as long as heaven.⁵⁴ 與元長存
 May we straddle emptiness and ride on vacuity, 乘空駕虛
 To travel and banquet within the Jade Dawn Palace.⁵⁵ 遊宴玉晨

We will join hands with the Phosphoric Sovereign,⁵⁶ 攜提景皇
 And befriend all the Perfected and Transcendent beings.⁵⁷ 結友真仙

Once the rituals for the grotto-abyss are complete, look to the east and clack your teeth together nine times. Swallow your saliva nine times, after which the Three Grottoes will be complete.

洞淵畢，還東向，叩齒九通，咽液九過。三洞畢矣。

If you are able to carry out these rituals, Perfected spirits will appear. You can command jade maidens, and the jade lads will help secure your divinity, for the Three Primes' [twenty-four gods] descend to you. A green phaeton with a cinnabar chassis will come to greet you; you can ride this to the Grand Clarity heavens. This is truly a precious secret; do not treat its transmission lightly.

子能行之，真神見形，玉女可使，玉童致靈，三元下降。丹輿綠輶，來迎兆身，上昇太清。惟在寶祕，慎勿輕傳。

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The Nine Palaces

(2a) The Upper Scripture on the Most High Lord of the Dao's Preservation of Mysterious Cinnabar

12b

太上道君守玄丹上經

The Grand Thearchical Lord, the Celestial Thearchical Lord, and the Thearchical Lord of Grand Tenuity Heaven all received [their initiation] from the Most High Lord of the Dao. Each [deity] achieved the Dao after putting [this method] into practice. After this, they were all promoted to positions as Thearchical Perfected.¹ The Grand Thearchical Lord transmitted this scripture to the Queen Mother of the West. The Celestial Thearchical Lord transmitted to the Upper Primal Lord of the Southern Bourne. The Thearchical Lord of Grand Tenuity Heaven transmitted to the Sage Lord of the Golden Porte, who transmitted it to Lord Azure Lad, who transmitted it to Juanzi.

太帝君、天帝君、太微天帝君受於太上道君，施行道成，上補帝真。太帝君以經傳西王母，天帝君以經傳南極上元君，太微天帝君以經傳金闕聖君，金闕聖君傳上相青童君，青童君傳涓子。

This is the Immaculate Numen Palace's most important fascicle. Its teachings stand out among all other scriptures, and its methods are exalted and

13a

sublime. This scripture is certainly not something about which a mid-level Transcendent being would ever possess. If your name was not written on the crimson slips [of Upper Clarity], you would never encounter the teachings of the Mysterious Cinnabar. If adepts cultivate all three Perfected grades of the highest scriptures, they will become upper sires or upper chamberlains to thearchical sovereigns.² But adepts will only be ranked as kings in the numinous palaces of Lesser Existence, chamberlains in the divine continent, or mid- to lower-level grandees of the Taiji heavens if they happen upon [all the scriptures] but only practice part of them, or if they only receive some [of the scriptures].³ Even so, you could still obtain a team of dragons on which you can ride on the clouds. After mounting them you can soar upwards and harness [these dragons through] vacuity. Divine officials will lead and guide you, and you can send your phosphors in every direction. It would be nearly impossible to proclaim the subtleness and deepness of this mystery. The catalogue of the ranked scriptures is taken from the “Eight Simplicities” fascicle of the *Hidden Writings of the Most High*. It also outlines the specific protocol for this transmission.

此素靈之上篇。此道奇於眾經，其法高妙，非中仙所聞。自無名書絳簡、錄字上清者，玄丹之道，不相遇也。道士若修太上三真品經，位為帝皇之上公、上卿也。若所遭受者偏、聞道有限者，位為小有靈宮之王、神州之卿、太極中下大夫耳，亦得騁龍駕雲篆，乘飛控虛，神官導衛，散景八遐矣。微乎深玄！難可輕宣也。品經之目，出《太上隱書八素篇》中，有俯仰之格限也。

The Three Ones are the progenitors of the body spirits, the source of life for the hundred spirits, the mountain font of spittle, and the jade chamber for cloud-souls' essences. The cranial palaces suit these Perfected because of the [brain's] round and hollow shape, not like the square shape of the stomach pond. The [Three Ones] will make your myriad hairs stand erect and cause your thousand pores to emit vapor. This is why we are full of the virtues of the world, yet we can still chaotically fuse in Grand Mystery. This is why it is called the Muddy Pellet, for this name refers to the uppermost god of your bodily form. If you only understand how to swallow *qi*, gulp fluids, clack

your teeth, and consume saliva, but do not understand the reasons behind it, the streams emerging from your Muddy Pellet will [be wasted as they will] flow into one of the peripheral branches in your brain.

夫三一者，乃一身之靈宗，百神之命根，津液之山源，魂精之玉室。是以胃池體方以受物，腦宮員虛而適真。萬毛植立，千孔生烟。德備天地，混同太玄，故名之曰「泥丸」。泥丸者，軀形之上神也。兆唯知吞炁咽津，鳴齒納液，而不知此所因者，乃泥丸之流沫、腦家之邊枝耳。

I now reveal to you the secret instructions on Guarding the Ones, a wondrous method of the upper Perfected. Do not say anything to others about this cultivation technique and be most cautious about transmitting it to other adepts. For if you go against this pledge, you will have to face the demon officials. Your interrogation will implicate your seven generations of ancestors; all of you will eternally be trapped in the river's source.⁴

13b

今將告子守一之訣，上真之妙法也。閉口奉修，慎勿宣傳。負違盟誓，身沒鬼官，考延七祖，長閉河源。

In between the eyebrows, there is the Bright Hall Palace about one *cun* beneath [the skin], a Grotto-Room two *cun* deep, and a Cinnabar Field three *cun* deep. Right above the Cinnabar Field in a one-square-*cun* space is the Muddy Pellet Cloud-Soul Palace of Mysterious Cinnabar's Cerebral Essence.

兩眉間上，却入一寸為明堂宮，却入二寸為洞房，却入三寸為丹田，丹田直上，辟方一寸為玄丹，腦精泥丸魂宮。

On the left of the Bright Hall Palace is the Perfected Lord of Bright Lads, on the right is the Perfected Official of the Bright Girls, and in the center is the Divine Lord of the Bright Mirror. The Perfected Lord of Bright Lads is named Xuanyang and has the alternate byname Shaoqing. The Perfected Official of the Bright Girls is named Weiyin and has the alternate byname Shaoyuan. The Divine Lord of the Bright Mirror is named Zhaojing and has

the alternate byname Siming. These three lords rule together over the Bright Hall Palace and all wear green damask clothes and belts with four jade bells. They hold jade mirrors in their mouths. Both the mirrors and the bells are made of red jade. Their heads and their bodies look just like infants. They sit facing one another; sometimes they look outward while at other times face inward.

明堂宮中，左有明童真君，右有明女真官，中有明鏡神君。明童真君諱玄陽，字少青；明女真官諱微陰，字少元；明鏡神君諱照精，字四明。此三君共治明堂宮，並着綠錦衣，腰帶四玉鈴，口銜玉鏡。鏡、鈴並如赤玉也。頭如嬰兒，形亦如之。對坐，俱向外面或相向也。

The method for the Bright Hall is as follows: If you ever become frightened, simply actualize the three [Bright Hall] spirits and make them ring their jade bells. The sound [of the bells] will ring throughout the Taiji [heaven]. These [spirits] will emit a red beam of light from the jade mirrors in their mouths that shine for a myriad *zhang*.⁵ Once this actualization is complete, you will need to call out the three names of these lords and clack your teeth together nine times. [This will make] every monstrous [spirit] hide and all ghosts disappear.

此明堂之道也。若道士恐畏，存三神，使鳴玉鈴，使聲聞太極，使口吐玉鏡赤光，令萬丈。存之俱畢，因三呼三君名字，叩齒九通，則千妖伏息，萬鬼滅形也。

If you are hungry or thirsty, actualize the three lords while moistening your mouths by exhaling red *qi*. You should breathe in [this *qi*] and then swallow it; this will make you feel as though you are very full.

若道士飢渴，亦存三君，並口吐赤炁，使灌已口中，因吸而咽之，須臾自飽也。

If you are traveling at night and it is too dark to see the road, actualize the three lords as if a beam of light [the size of] three torches was emanating from their mouths. Within a few seconds, the road will be clearly illuminated.

若道士夜行，闔不見路，又存三君，使口出三火光，照前，須臾路自朗明也。

If you ever find yourself in a bad place, surrounded by difficulty, or trapped in a war zone, quickly actualize the three lords ringing their jade bells. If you focus your mind on this, your enemies will quickly panic and they will no longer think about hurting you.

若行凶處、厄難之中，有刀兵之地，急存三君，使鳴玉鈴，精而想之，敵人自然心駭意懾，不復生害心也。

If you want to prolong life and avoid death, even when you are plagued with illness and on your deathbed, ask to be saved and you will live. You must maintain an upright mind, quietly recline, and actualize the three lords of the Bright Hall [Palace]. The [deities] will face outward, bowed in genuflection, as red *qi* emanates from their mouths. They will produce a beam of light that will pass through your flesh and will form a circle around your mouth. Gulp this red *qi* as many times as you wish; it is best to consume it while closing your eyes. Before long, the red *qi* will wrap around you and will transform into a fire. It will burn your body thus allowing a fusion between you and the fire. This will make you feel as though beams of light radiate both within and without your body. This [feeling] will continue for a long time before going away. It is called “raising people from the dead by refining [their] body with the sun and moon.”⁶

14b

若道士欲求延年不死，及疾病臨困，求救而生者，當正心安寢，存明堂三君，並向外長跪，口吐赤炁，使光貫我身，令匝我口傍，咽赤炁唯多無數，常閉目微咽之也。須臾，赤炁繞身，都變成火，火因燒身，身與火共作一體，內外向光，良久乃止，名曰「日月煉形，死而更生」者也。

You can also lie down in the evening for this ritual. And if you do this often, it will prolong your life and help you avoid death.

又暮臥，常當為之，則必長生不死也。

If you also frequently actualize by gulping this red *qi*, your face will look younger. Your complexion will appear like a young lad or lass, for this is a method for avoiding death. This completes the special instructions of the Bright Hall.

又數存咽赤炁，使人顏色返少，色如童女。此不死之道。明堂之要訣畢也。

At sunrise, swallow your saliva thirty times. You should always brush your hands across your face and press your eyes. And imagine you are salivating colors to make red fluids.

旦起，皆咽唾三十過，以手拭面摩目以為常，存唾色作赤津液。

15a There are three Perfected in the Grotto-Room. On the left is Non-pareil Lordling, on the right is Lord White Prime, and in the center is the Yellow Elder Lord.⁷ These three beings rule together within the Grotto-Room. This method is for those who are flying Perfected beings and is described in a separate scripture. This ritual is featured in the *Scripture of the Golden Efflorescence*.⁸

洞房中有三真：左為无英公子，右有白元君，中為黃老君，三人共治洞房中。此為飛真之道，自別有經。事在《金華經》中。

In the Cinnabar Field are two beings, the Thearchical Lord of the Upper Prime's Perfected One and his chamberlain.⁹ These two beings rule together over the Cinnabar Field Palace together and are the gods [addressed] when guarding the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes. This is an important route [taken] by terrestrial Perfected beings, as the scripture enables them to ride upon dragon carriages. There are many celestial Perfected who have official posts yet would rather remain a terrestrial Perfected being. This is because the terrestrial Perfected are able to hide away and avoid the arduous service required of [higher] appointments, like the morning court rituals. These [terrestrial beings] can wander around and do as they please; they can go on a

journey at a moment's notice, and can ascend [into the heavens] on a convoy of seven carriages. They pace around Grand Non[existence] every season of the year. Although there are some differences between the ranks of celestial and terrestrial Perfected beings, they are all nonetheless still [ranked as] Perfected. The terrestrial Perfected are all very happy where they are located and none of them desire to head up into the clouds to be officials.

15b

丹田中有上元真一帝君、帝君之卿，合二人，共治丹田宮，守三元真一之道是也。此地真之要路，控乘龍車之經也。天真多官位，樂欲為地真人。地真人隱遁於官位，不勞損於朝晏，故從容任適，隨時而遊，坐七輿以上造，步四炁於太无也。至於天真、地真，雖差階小異，俱一真矣。地真人亦各安其所之，不願復為雲中官也。

Mysterious Cinnabar Palace has the Grand Monad Perfected Lord of the Muddy Pellet. One *cun* behind the Cinnabar Field [Palace] is the Flowing Pearl Palace. The Perfected divinities of the Flowing Pearl have their own scripture, but you can only use this text if you are [appointed] director of destinies. Its method is wondrous and great, but you must offer a pledge gift of pearls and silk. This scripture is transmitted once every three hundred years, but once it has been transmitted [to disciples] five times it will no longer be released. This is a method only for Taiji chamberlains or a director of destinies.

玄丹宮有泥丸太一真君。丹田後却入一寸為流珠宮。流珠真神自別有經，司命之所行也。其道妙大，發誓用珠帛結盟，乃能付之。此經三百年一傳，滿五授止，不得復出。此太極公卿司命之道也。

Mysterious Cinnabar Palace is above the cinnabar field and measures one square *cun*.¹⁰ It has purple rooms and green chambers, and it is filled with vermillion vapors. Grand Monad Perfected Lord of the Muddy Pellet rules over the Mysterious Cinnabar Palace. Grand Monad Perfected Lord has the appearance of an infant who was just born. He sits on a golden bed surrounded by jade curtains. He wears damask robes with purple patterns,

16a and flowing fire bells hang from his belt. The flowing fire bells are not a material substance, but rather red beams that can produce a sound ringing for hundreds of thousands of *li* whenever shaken. These are surely the precious bells of a Perfected being in Upper Clarity known as the Central Yellow Grand Monad. In his left hand, he holds a scepter with the seven stars of the Dipper, and in his right hand are the mainstays [emanating from] the northern chronogram. The northern chronogram is the Northern Culmen, the motionless pole star. This is why the mainstays [emanate] from this star. He sits upright in the Mysterious Cinnabar Palace; he faces outward and there are no attendants to his left or right. Since he has no attendants, this is why he is called the Grand *Monad* Perfected Lord. Once you have finished guarding the Three Ones in the morning and evening, you should leave the actualization of this deity for the very end. The reason for actualizing this deity at the end is because you should always complete the inconsequential rituals before moving onto the serious ones.

玄丹宮在丹田之上，正房一寸，紫房綠室，朱烟滿內，其中有泥丸太一真君治玄丹之宮。太一真君貌如嬰兒始生之狀，坐在金牀玉帳之中，着紫繡錦衣，腰帶流火之鈴。流火之鈴者，無質而赤光，動之，聲聞十萬里，蓋上清中黃太一真人之寶鈴也。左手把北斗七星之柄，右手把北辰之綱。北辰者，北極不動之星，謂之為辰綱也。正坐玄丹宮，向外，左右無侍者。無侍者，所以名之謂太一真君也。旦夕守諸三一訖，獨後乃未存之。未存之者，先造其輕，後行其重也。

16b In total, the head has nine palaces; let me explain them in detail. Between your eyebrows are two structures, a yellow gate tower with a purple door and a crimson terrace with an azure room. These are built to the left and right of the “guardian of the *cun*.” The crimson terrace is on the left side of “guardian of the *cun*,” and the yellow gate tower is on the right. Perfected beings of the Nine Palaces enter and exit from a road between the crimson terrace and yellow gate tower. Since the terrace and gate tower flank this road, the [sentries] monitor anything abnormal [passing through] these buildings; they also take note of each Perfected being that arrives. The great spirit [in charge] of the purple door is named Pingjing, with the alternate byname Fawang.

The great spirit of the azure room is named Zhengxin, with the alternate byname Chufang.¹¹ Their bodies appear like infants, and each are clothed in robes that are the same color of the room [they occupy]. In their hands, they hold fiery bells of flowing metal. The “guardian of the *cun*” is three *fen* under [your skin] and this is why it is called “guardian of the *cun*.” Whenever you lie in bed at night or if you are preparing for meditation, you should first actualize these two great spirits. After they have appeared, call out their names three times. When this is complete, make the following incantation:

夫頭有九宮，請先說之。兩眉間上，其裏有黃闕紫戶、絳臺青房，共構立守寸之中左右耳。守寸左面有絳臺，右面有黃闕，其九宮真人出入，皆從黃闕、絳臺中間為道。故以道之左右置臺闕者，以伺非常之炁，伺迎真人之往來也。紫戶大神名平靜，字法王；青房大神名正心，字初方，形並如嬰孩，各服衣如其方房戶之色，手執流金火鈴。守寸者，却入三分，名為守寸也。暮臥及存思之時，先存二大神，彷彿存見，仍三呼其神名字。畢，微祝曰：

The purple door and azure room,	紫戶青房
Are home to two great spirits.	有二大神
Who hold fiery bells in their hands,	手把流鈴
And whose bodies emit wind and clouds.	身生風雲
They flank and protect the road of the Perfected,	俠衛真道
So that no outsiders will be permitted entrance.	不聽外前
May all my meditations stir a response,	使我思感
So [they] can get through [your] numinous pass.	通利靈關
Harmony and constancy will abide in all matters, ¹²	出入利貞
For we all ascend to the Nine Gates.	上登九門
There we will see the Nine Perfected,	即見九真
Those most high and venerated [spirits]. ¹³	太上之尊

Once this incantation is complete, actualize the Three Ones, Grotto-Room, or any of the other key rituals (Dao) concerning the teachings (Dao) of the Nine [Palaces].

呪畢，乃可存思三一、洞房、九道諸要道也。

The two great spirits of the “guardian of the *cun*” only listen to the Perfected officials of the Nine Palaces to permit entrance and exit to the Nine Palaces by way of your ears. The two great spirits will grant passage if a being is delivering a message from the High Thearch, or if they are jade lads, numinous Perfected, or have come from the Thearch’s gallery. Any spirit who is not a Perfected being will not receive an audience with these two great spirits and will not gain entrance. This [protocol] follows the measures of the Middle Yellow Grand Monad. At this point the Red Child Thearchical Lord will order the two ears gods (Jiaonü and Yunyi) to permit entry.¹⁴ The reason your ears ring is because a being from the outside [is granted entry] and Yunyi will strike chime stones and bells that can be heard in the Nine Palaces. This sends out a warning that someone from the outside has come into [your body]. The sound of these chime stones and bells are the ringing we sometimes hear in our ears. Whenever you hear this, you should cross your hands and cover [the opposite] ears. Then make the following incantation:

守寸二大神，唯聽九宮中真官在九宮內者，出入耳目；上帝信命及玉童靈真，往來詣帝軒，二大神聽以進。其餘非真，此二大神皆不聽進以前也。此中黃太一法度也。於是赤子帝君乃命兩耳神——嬌女、雲儀，使引進之。故人覺耳鳴者，外使入也。雲儀時扣磬鐘，以聞九宮，使知外人來入，令警備也。磬鐘者，是今耳鳴之聲音也。其聞之者，錯手掩耳，而呪曰：

The Red Child in its palace,	赤子在宮
The Nine Perfected in their rooms.	九真在房
Let me hear the commands of these deities,	請聽神命
And forever foresee any ominous sign. ¹⁵	永察不祥
May you use the fiery bells of the Grand Monad,	太一流火
To obliterate the myriad afflictions. ¹⁶	以滅萬殃

Once this incantation is complete, use your hand to pat your ears [with your thumbs anchored in your inner eyes] a total of twenty-seven times, at which time you will be finished.¹⁷ If you feel like your face is warm, this is a good

sign. If you feel that your head and neck are cold in any way, it is a sign that evil *qi* have invaded your body. If this is the case, quickly lie down, partially close your eyes, and inwardly actualize the Grand Monad Perfected Lord of the Mysterious Cinnabar Palace. His bells of flowing fire will blaze and cast [these evil *qi*] away. The evil *qi* will depart from your body and the fiery beams will follow behind you resplendent and bright. It will shine for a long time and return your body to a peaceful state.

呪畢，以手拍耳門二七遍，畢，當覺面熱，即佳候也。若覺頭項頸間色色寒者，惡炁入也。當急臥，臨目內存玄丹宮太一真君，以流火之鈴煥而擲之，令惡炁即出身，火光亦隨之在後，燭燭然以照己一身，良久平復也。

If you suddenly hear the lapping of waves in your ears, or the peals of thunder or the booms of drums, this is a sign that your body is exhausted. It further means that your heart might be on the verge of failure. You will be unable to fill your entire being with the Perfected, and once they are lost, they will disappear forever. Therefore, your six repositories will be off-kilter, and your cloud- and white-souls will woefully lament.¹⁸ [These sounds in your ears] mean that a grave illness on its way, and is a presage that your death draws nigh. Because of this, the Muddy Pellet will rule [the body] with negligence, your Nine Palaces will lose their uniformity, and your life will be beset with heartache. Since the beating of these drums will send chaos coursing through you, [the gods] will want to abandon their residences and leave entirely. If you hear these sounds, meditate and be mindful of the Grand Monad Perfected Lord. This will correct this situation and you will once again be able to focus your Perfected mind. If your transgressions are not too grave, they will surely allow you to change your ways. This is why the ear gods of deaf people have departed their body.

18a

耳中忽聞瀨水聲、雷電及鼓鳴者，是體中勞損，心藏極弊，不能味真注生，而瀋放喪亂，使六府失攝，魂魄哀號，蓋將結疾病，致死亡之兆矣。是以泥丸縱法，九宮失常，悲擾翻錯，鳴鼓亂行，將欲捨其居館，以棄一身也。聞之者，當精思念太一真君，反迷還專真心。若罪未深者，自聽改也。所以耳聾者，耳神亡之故也。

Your ears are the gates through which the Thearchical Lord listens. Your eyes are the sun and moon of the Grand Monad. Your nose is the mountain crest of the Three Primes. Your mouth is the vermillion abyss of the Crimson Palace. Your eyebrows are the floriate canopies of [Lord] White Prime. Your hair is the arboreal essence of the Bright Hall [Palace]. Your tongue is the dragon chariot shaft of Non-pareil.¹⁹ Your teeth are the intimidating knives of your Stomach Palace. Your hands are the external spears of the gallbladder's spirit. Your feet are the numinous passes of the Kidney Prime. The Extremity of Yin [Palace] is the “Trigger of Perfection” in the Grotto-Room.²⁰ All the hundred spirits of your body have a specific place where they belong; you must always inspect [these locations] and treat them with caution.

夫耳者，帝君之聽門也。目者，太一之日月也。鼻者，三元之丘山也。口者，絳宮之朱淵也。眉者，白元之華蓋也。髮者，明堂之林精也。舌者，元英之龍轂也。齒者，胃宮之威刀也。手者，膽神之外援也。足者，腎元之靈關也。陰極者，洞房之真機也。夫一體百神，各有所屬，不可不察，不可不慎也。

18b If you suddenly hear the sound of metal or jade clanking, this means that a Perfected *qi* has entered your body and that your Dao has been completed. If you suddenly hear the sounds of stringed instruments, these are the six jade maidens who have come to protect you; it also means that these methods have been successful. You should hide in silence and hold steadfast to your cultivation. In this way, you will have a zealous heart that is better than before. Because of this, Perfected beings will gradually take form before you. Unless you are talking to your master, you should not divulge this information to anyone else.

耳中忽聞金聲玉音者，真炁來入，道欲成也。忽聞絃樂之聲者，六丁玉女來衛子也，皆道欲成也。當隱靜專修所行，勤至之心愈彌於往也。真人因是，遂有形見之漸矣。自非爾師，且勿言於他人。

If you hear the sound of flutes and horns, this is an auspicious sign that wealth is coming your way. But whenever you hear someone crying out or

shouting, this is an ominous sign that misfortune will soon be here. If you smell something that is putrid, you know that there is something decaying and rotting and that this is a sign that something terrible will happen; why else would this putrid smell be revealed to you? You must quickly go bathe, burn incense, and sweep out your dwelling in order to avert this misfortune. This is an admonishment given to humans from the Thearchical Lord. If you smell something fragrant, you know that divine officials and numinous beings are by your side and watching your every move. At these times, you should cultivate as many good deeds as possible such as distributing gifts to officials, saving the poor, practice secret virtues, and granting clemency. The divine officials and numinous beings will then report to [Lord of the Great Dao] Most High, and will comment on the good or bad things you did.

19a

耳中忽聞簫角之音，吉象貴至也。聞叫喚號呼之聲者，凶象賤至也。鼻聞鳬炁者，必有淹穢之事，不淨潔之舛驗也，故以鳬炁示之矣。急更沐浴燒香，掃除寢宇以答之。此是帝君將戒勸於人者也。若聞香炁者，是神官靈人在子之側，視子之狀也。其時當修諸好事，行德惠，拯窮困，布陰功，施慈愛，神官靈人還將告子於太上，道子之善否矣。

These teachings (Dao) are subtle and wondrous; you must do all you can to learn about it for everything is really like this. If you smell something fragrant, you cannot tell anyone else unless this person is your master. If you smell something putrid, however, you should tell others in order to relay the negative consequences of your transgressions or encountered filth. If you smell blood, or if you unexpectedly see a pool of blood, this is a sign that violence is on its way. Quickly hide away from the human world, guard the Three Primes, and request to be saved by the thearchical lords. You should conceal yourself and make a three-month fast; this will avert all misfortune. These are all prognostications that the thearchical lords have made on behalf of humans; the latter should be reminded of the causes of misfortune and blessings. Whenever you witness an ominous sign, you must practice secret virtues in an effort to save people. For you should do things that others are unable to do, and practice things that others cannot do. In this way, you

19b can begin avoiding any situations where death appears imminent. Take care to note these warnings, for you should not be complacent with your typical [practice].

道之微妙，不可不察，皆此類象也。聞香炁，自非爾師，勿告他人。聞鳧炁者，當告人，以明己之犯罪觸穢之无狀矣。若聞血氣及无故見聚血者，兵凶也。急隨遁人間，守三元帝君求救，自藏齋三月，禍亦止也。此皆帝君先告人之吉凶，以令懼戒其禍福耳。夫見凶象，當行陰德，營惠救人，為人所不能為，行人所不能行者，始免乎必死之候也。子其勗之，勿守常而已。

Three *fen* under a point between and slightly above your eyebrows are the Guardian of the *Cun* and Dual Fields. One *cun* [beneath the skin] is the Bright Hall Palace, at two *cun* is the Palace of the Grotto-Room, at three *cun* is the Cinnabar Field Palace, at four *cun* is the Flowing Pearl Palace, and at five *cun* is the Jade Thearch Palace. One *cun* above the Bright Hall is the Celestial Court Palace, one *cun* above the Grotto-Room is the Ultimate Perfection Palace, one *cun* above the Cinnabar Field is the Mysterious Cinnabar Palace, and one *cun* above the Flowing Pearl is the Grand Sovereign Palace. These are the nine palaces of the human head.

兩眉間上却入三分為守寸雙田，却入一寸為明堂宮，却入二寸為洞房宮，却入三寸為丹田宮，却入四寸為流珠宮，却入五寸為玉帝宮；明堂上一寸為天庭宮，洞房上一寸為極真宮，丹田上一寸為玄丹宮，流珠宮上一寸為太皇宮。凡一頭中有九宮也。

20a There are scriptures for the four palaces of Bright Hall, Grotto-Room, Cinnabar Field, and Flowing Pearl; they detail rituals (Dao) by which divine Transcendents can become Perfected beings. These teachings (Dao) now circulate in the human world. The *Scripture of the Palace of Mysterious Cinnabar* also features key passages for Perfected officials and directors of destinies; this scripture is the progenitor of the four palaces. This [transmission of] scripture must be announced to the Thearchical Lord of Grand Bourne before it can be given to you. Even when transmission has been permitted,

it must be given at the right time. The method for uniting these five palaces now circulates in the human world; those who have a Perfected name may be granted access. If, however, your bones and face do not display exemplary features, you may not receive it.

其明堂、洞房、丹田、流珠，四宮之經，皆神仙為真人之道，道傳於世。其玄丹宮經，亦真官司命之要言，四宮之領宗矣。此一經須太極帝君告可與，乃與之也，亦時出授耳。凡合五宮之道，行乎世上。有真名者，遭值之矣。自非骨相挺命，不聞此言也。

There are four palaces of the Feminine Perfected Ones: The Jade Thearch Palace where the Divine Mother of Jade Clarity resides, the Celestial Court Palace where the Perfected maidens of Upper Clarity live, the Ultimate Perfection Palace that is the home of the Taiji's thearchical consorts, and the Grand Sovereign Palace where the Most High Lord of the Dao resides. These methods are superior to the Masculine Perfected Ones. There are precious scriptures for each palace, but their transmission is only for Perfected beings; you will be unable to hear them if you do not have the status of a Perfected.

又有玉帝宮，有玉清神母居之；又有天庭宮，上清真女居之；又有極真宮，太極帝妃居之；又有太皇宮，太上君后居之。此四宮，皆雌真一也，道高於雄真一也，並有寶經，以傳已成真人者，未得成真，非所聞也。

The key instructions for the Feminine Perfected Ones are not to be transmitted either. For the Most High [Lord of the Dao] will emerge from the extremities of the eight phosphors by racing upwards on a rose-gem carriage. Three thousand jade maidens serve Perfected beings at their vehicles. The numinous consorts sing a tune as the Divine Empress lays out her writing mat. This is all due to the method of guarding the Feminine Ones, which is often used in the highest gatherings of the Mysterious Dawn [Palace]. This is the Most High [Lord of the Dao]'s ancestral root that was transmitted to the Sovereign of Vacuity.²¹ All people possess these four palaces, but if you have not used this ritual, your palaces will be empty. In fact, if you do not do these practices

of the Nine Palaces, all of them will be empty too; thus, this does not simply apply to the four palaces of the Feminine Ones.

雌真一之要，亦自不授之矣。太上所以出極八景，入驂瓊軒，玉女三千，侍真扶轂，靈妃俠唱，神后執巾者，寔守雌一之道，用以高會玄晨也。此太上之宗根，虛皇之所傳也。此四宮，人皆有之，但不修此道者，宮中空耳。夫不盡修於九宮者，宮中亦空耳，非但雌家四宮而已。

There is a thearchical lord in the Cinnabar Field Palace, though it will always be the Great Spirit when you are guarding the *cun*. You do not need to ask them to come; simply practice and you will see them in the palaces. Those who do not practice this are divine Transcendents, a being who simply lives as long as they should. It makes no difference if you are male or female, for both can cultivate the Masculine and Feminine Ones simultaneously. Obtaining the benefits of this [method] only requires that you show the utmost dedication.

至於丹田宮中常有帝君，守寸常有大神，不復問，須修乃見在宮中耳。修之者神仙，不修者以壽死矣。雄雌一神者，男女並可兼修之，無不在也。唯決精苦之至，乃獲益矣。

21a

The method “Guarding the Grand Monad Perfected Lord in the Mysterious Cinnabar [Palace]” is as follows: In the evening, within your silent bedchamber, rid your mind of all thoughts. You may sit or lie down as you please. First, actualize the purple *qi* of the Northern Culmen’s stars descending into your Mysterious Cinnabar Palace. Before long, it will fill up this palace. Eventually, it will burst forth from your body and surround you. It will penetrate all the space within and outside your body, so that the purple *qi* and your body fuse as one. After this, actualize the sun descending into your Mysterious Cinnabar Palace. Once the sun fills this palace, it will be in the center of the purple *qi*. It will appear as though it were a fiery pearl amid a field of darkness. Once this is complete, actualize the Upper Clarity Perfected Lord of the Middle Yellow Grand Monad; he will come forth from the purple *qi* of Northern Culmen, descend into the Mysterious Cinnabar

Palace, and sit in the center of the sun. This lord's secret name is Guiying and his byname is Huaxuan. His clothes and appearance are the same as above.

守玄丹太一真君之道：暮夕靜寢，去諸思念，坐臥任意，先存北極辰星紫炁來下入己玄丹宮中，須臾滿宮，溢出身外，使匝身，通洞內外，與紫炁合體。畢，又存日來入玄丹宮中，日滿宮內，在紫炁中央，望視如闔中視火珠之狀。畢，乃存上清中黃太一真君，從北極紫炁中來，下入玄丹宮日中坐。君諱規英，字化玄，衣貌服色如上。

Next, actualize yourself suddenly rising up and entering the sun of the Mysterious Cinnabar Palace. You will sit in front of and face the Grand Monad Perfected Lord. You may [imagine] the style and color [of your clothing] however you like. Afterwards, picture yourself standing up, bowing down twice, and kowtowing once. Next, crawl on your knees to inquire about his method. You may also request divine transcendence and long life in a manner that you see fit. You will thereupon actualize purple *qi* and swallow it thirty times. Once this is done, gulp it down another thirty times. When you are finished, actualize a red *qi* as big as a bow inside the seven stars of the Northern Dipper. Make this descend directly into your Mysterious Cinnabar Palace. Then you and the Grand Monad Lord will ride inside this sun as it ascends the path formed by this red *qi*. This will lead you straight up to the *kui* star of the Northern Dipper, where you can sleep and rest for a long time. You will surely have a response from the Perfected at this time. If you cultivate this method for fourteen years, you will be able to travel on the mainstays of the seven primes, the stars of the Dipper, with the Grand Monad. If you do this for eighteen years, you will be able to ascend to the palaces of Upper Clarity and receive books, pendants, and talismans, which will then enable you to beckon eighteen jade lads and eighteen jade maidens. You only need to do this visualization technique once every night. Its success depends on how frequently you do it; do not forget this method, even for one night. If you are diligent in cultivating this method, you will not necessarily need to guard the Three Ones. If you choose to do them both, however, it will be better as it will expedite a response from the gods.

又存己一身忽然昇上，入玄丹宮日中，存太一真君前對坐，服色任意，因心起，再拜稽首，膝前問道，求神仙長生，隨意言之。因乃存吞紫炁三十過，畢，咽唾三十過，畢，又存北斗七星內有一赤炁，大如弦，徑下直入玄丹宮，於是太一君及己俱乘日，入行赤炁道中，直上詣北斗魁中，寢息良久。自因此寢也，亦即有真應。十四年行之，則與太一同遊，俱到七元之綱也。十八年，詣上清宮，受書佩符後，役使玉童玉女各十八人。一夕一存之，唯數而已，勿令脫夕。亦可專修此道，不必守三一也。兼之益精，至感速耳。

22a

On the nights of the first, third, seventh, eleventh, and fifteenth days of the lunar month, actualize the Perfected Lord of the Grand Monad in your Mysterious Cinnabar Palace. He will be sitting upright and facing outward. An azure *qi* will come from his mouth and will descend into your mouth. You should swallow this a total of fifty times, and once this is complete, gulp it down another fifty times. After this is over, whisper the following incantation:

月一日、三日、七日、十一日、十五日夜半之時，存玄丹宮中太一真君正坐向外，口吐青炁，下入我口中，我隨咽之，凡五十過。畢，乃咽唾五十過。畢，微呪曰：

Perfected Sovereign of the Grand Monad, ²²	太一真皇
The Purple Lord of Middle Yellow.	中黃紫君
Who is known in secret as Guiying,	厥諱規英
As well by the name Huaxuan.	字曰化玄
Atop your golden bed amid jade curtains,	金牀玉帳
You wear a purple embroidered damask skirt.	紫繡錦裙
On your waist are fiery bells,	腰帶火鈴
That chop evil and decimate debauchery.	斬邪滅奸
In your hands are starry essences,	手把星精
Around your neck is a halo of solar perfection.	項生日真
Sit upright and exhale your <i>qi</i> ,	正坐吐炁
So I may gulp all of it down.	使我咽吞

May you now speak to me,	與我共語
As we feast together in Mysterious Cinnabar.	同宴玄丹
Cultivate and cleanse my seven white-souls,	練濯七魄
Harmonize and soften my Three Cloud-souls.	和柔三魂
May the divine numina standing in attendance,	神靈奉衛
Enable me to fly high like a Transcendent.	使我飛仙
Make my five viscera come to life,	五藏自生
So my white childlike visage will return.	還白童顏
I will then receive a letter from Upper Clarity,	受書上清
To be director of destinies, a Thearch's official.	司命帝官
May everything I ask and desire,	所願所欲
And a hundred blessings come over and over. ²³	百福維新

Next, actualize yourself moving upwards and entering the palace to rest on a bed before the Grand Monad. This will help you sleep, for you will receive miraculous responses [from the heavens] while you are sleeping. If you do this every day and you continue for a long time, all the hurdles before you will soon disappear.

又存己上入宮中，在太一前寢息也。因以取眠，亦當夢感妙應矣。日為此而數積，有相見之階漸。

**The Jade Instructions on the Precious Names
for the Inner Spirits Known as the Feminine Perfected Ones
of the Four Palaces**

四宮雌真一內神寶名玉訣

There is not a single adept who could attain transcendence by studying the teachings (Dao) of upper Perfection but not learning the esoteric names of

the Feminine Perfected Ones. Adepts should obtain this oral instruction from their masters and cultivate its methods.

凡學上真之道，而不知雌真一之內名，亦萬不得仙也。學者受師口訣，然後奉行。

On the first day of the year, on new moons, and on your natal days of the sexagesimal cycle, enter your chamber and face the east. Actualize the Divine Mother of Jade Clarity, who is surnamed Lian and is named Yu, with the byname Huangyan. She is nine *cun* and nine *fen* tall, and wears dark yellow ribbons [of] the Immaculate Numen [Palace]. She braids her hair in a chignon with seven layers of pearls and jade while wearing a Promoting Worthies Crown of Wuji. She lives in the highest [level of the heavens] in the Xuanyuan village of the Wuling county in the Seven Treasures Bureau of the Vermilion Palace in the Taiji heavens. She rules over the Jade Thearch's Palace in your body.

每以正旦、月朔、太歲、本生之日，入室東向，思存玉清神母，姓廉，名銜，字荒彥，長九寸九分，着玄黃素靈之綬，頭戴七稱珠玉之髻，冠無極進賢之冠，居无上之上太極朱宮中七寶之府五靈鄉玄元里，下治兆身玉帝宮中。

The Perfected Maiden of Upper Clarity is surnamed Jue, named Hui, with the byname Bilei. She is six *cun* and six *fen* tall. She wears nine-colored ribbons that are frosty white silk with damask woven of divine beams [shining from] azure jewels. She braids her hair in a chignon of jade jewels and soaring clouds and wears a Promoting Worthies Crown of Dark Yellow. She lives high atop Mount Kunlun in the Dahua village of Jiuguang county in the Bright Hall Bureau of the Grand Seclusion Palace. She rules over the Celestial Court Palace of your body.

23a

上清真女，姓厥，名回，字弼類，長六寸六分，着青寶神光錦繡霜羅九色之綬，頭戴玉寶飛雲之髻，冠玄黃進賢之冠，居无上之上太上崑崙太幽宮中明堂府九光鄉大化里，下治兆身天庭宮中。

The Thearchical Consort of Taiji is surnamed Xuan, named Xusheng, with the byname Bowu. She is seven *cun* and seven *fen* tall. She wears ribbons patterned with five-colored phoenixes and the swirling brilliance of dark silk. She braids her hair in a chignon of seven-jeweled dark clouds and wears a Wuji's Promoting Worthies Crown. She lives in the Danyuan village, Sandan county, and she resides in the Jade Room Bureau in Grand Clarity's Palace of Ultimate Mystery. She rules over the Ultimate Perfection Palace in your body.

太極帝妃，姓玄，名虛生，字伯无，長七寸七分，著玄羅流光五色鳳文綬，頭戴七寶玄雲之髻，冠无極進賢之冠，居元景之上太清極玄宮中玉房府三丹鄉丹元里，下治兆身極真宮中。

The Empress of Most High Lord [of the Dao] is surnamed Qian, named Hanhai with the byname Heyan. She is three *cun* and three *fen* tall. She wears nine-colored ribbons of frosty white silk with cloudy damask of the soaring essence and mysterious beams of seven jewels. She wears a jade crown called the Three Treasure of Mysterious Yellow of Wuji. She resides atop Grand Clarity's Nine Mysteries in the Cinnabar Essence Bureau [located] in the Palace of Cavernous Prime's Ultimate Perfection in Xuanxuan village of Yunguang county. She rules over the Grand Sovereign Palace in your body.

23b

太上君后，姓遷，名含孩，字合延生，長三寸三分，著七寶飛精玄光雲錦霜羅九色之綬，頭戴九玄玉精頽雲之髻，冠玄黃无極三寶玉冠，居太清九玄之上洞元極真宮中丹精府雲光鄉玄玄里，下治兆身太皇宮中。

If you want to practice the method of Mysterious Cinnabar or the instructions for guarding the Three Ones, you should first actualize the spirits of the Feminine Perfected Ones, including their clothes, appearance, names, and places of residence. This is an upper fascicle of the precious scriptures and should only be transmitted to those predestined for Perfection; those in the beginning of their practice should not hear this. It is secretly [stored] in the Immaculate Numen [Palace]; it does not circulate in the [human] world. All

those who obtain the ritual [instructions] of upper Perfection in the *Divine Scriptures of the Three Treasures* might penetrate the deepest mystery, but they will never succeed if they are unaware of the rituals of the Feminine Perfected Ones. This is why Most High [Lord of the Dao] has placed a strict restriction on [its transmission] and does not allow it to circulate freely. It cannot be recorded with paper and ink. Those who are to receive these methods should do so only after inspecting their inner minds.

行玄丹之道，守三一之訣，當常守四宮雌真一之神，衣服、形影、名諱、鄉居所在。此寶經之上篇，以傳見成真人者，始學不得參聞其要。素靈所秘，不行於世。凡受上真之法、三寶神經，雖通靈究幽，不知雌真一之法，亦萬無成矣。故太上標其重禁，格於輕泄，不載於紙墨。有者宜各審實內心，然後受焉。

24a On the first day of the year, the first day of each month, and on your natal days of the sexagesimal cycle, take a bath and undergo a purification rite. Burn incense and enter your chamber. Then, face east and actualize the Feminine Perfected Ones of the four palaces [of your brain], including their residences, names, clothes, and height just like the previous ritual. Once this done, clack your teeth thirty-six times and make the following incantation:

每以正旦、月朔、及太歲、本生之日，沐浴清齋，燒香入室，東向存思四宮雌真一之神，鄉居、姓名、服色、長短，如上法。畢，當叩齒三十六通，呪曰：

Shadowy spirits of Grand Perfection,	太真陰神
Are named the Female Numina.	號曰女靈
Transform your phosphors in Nine Mysteries,	變景九玄
And use Perfected [<i>qi</i>] to hide in darkness.	乘真隱冥
On this favorable day when the heavens are clear,	日吉天朗
I announce my purification to Upper Clarity.	告齋上清
With a conscious mind and gazing eyes,	心念目矚
I have seen deep into your divine forms.	洞鑒神形
As you return to guard my bodily palaces,	還守宮宅

The fragrance of jade flowers abound. 玉華芳盈
 Their five colors change and transform, 五色變化
 So that yellow morphs into purple and azure. 流黃紫青
 At this point soaring auroras will appear, 運致飛霞
 And I will ride them to the courtyard of Thearchs.²⁴ 上造帝庭

After this, gulp down thirty-six more breaths of *qi* before stopping. If you do this for nine years, your face will emit a jade blossom [glow, and your body] will radiate with golden perfection.²⁵ When the gods see this [new] bodily form, they will speak with you. But when you see the gods, you alone will know [they are present]; you should not let anyone else know about this.

畢。咽炁三十六過，止。如此，畢。九年，面生玉華，金真映光，神見軀形，與兆共言。子既見神，心知而已，慎勿妄傳。

The gods of the Feminine Perfected Ones in the four [cerebral] palaces are Yin officers who were born in the era of Heavenly Prime and were deemed thearchical consorts.²⁶ Before their primal *qi* had been established, the Five Rights were unknown. Since the radiant phosphors had not yet shone, all was nonexistent in the vacuity of Wujì: there was no up or down, no in or out, no left or right, and no front or back. This was the primal essence of the most distant past, and the wondrous perfection of the era of the Mysterious Beginning. The very fact that the Vacuous Ultimate first congealed after knotting its *qi*, which then unitively transformed and gave life to all beings, is all due to the presence of the four [Feminine] Perfected. If you can use all your mental faculties to actualize these Perfected, you will not age for a thousand years. You will live as long as the manifold spirits in the nine heavens.

24b

此四宮雌真一之神，是天元始生之陰官，受號帝妃也。其元炁未立，五正未聞，光景未通，無極虛無，無上無下，無外無內，無左無右，無前無後。太上之元精，玄始之妙真。虛極之先，結炁而凝，混化萬物，天地得存，皆由於四真也。能有至心存思者，千齡不知老。九天之中，萬神同壽也。

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The Three Ones

(3a) The Perfected Talismans and Precious Emblem of the Most High Thearchical Lord of Taiji

太上太極帝君真符寶章

This was transmitted to the Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte from the Thearchical Lord of Grand Tenuity Heaven.

太微天帝君受傳金闕帝君



Perfected Talismans and Precious Emblem of the Most High Thearchical Lord of Taiji.

25a The Perfected Talismans of the Thearchical Lord of Taiji include the Six Talismans of the Upper Prime, the Five Talismans of the Middle Prime, and the Five Talismans of Lower Prime. The Most High [Lord of the Dao's] method to preserve your body by summoning the Three Ones is as follows: On the inception of spring (February 5), vernal parting (March 21), the inception of summer (May 5), summer arrival (June 21), the inception of autumn (August 7), autumnal parting (September 23), the inception of winter (November 7), and winter arrival (December 22), write the talismans in vermilion [ink]. In the early morning, face the ruling [force of that day] and swallow the [first] talisman. Do this for a total of sixteen days, at which point you will have consumed the sixteen talismans. On the subsequent nodal [days], you will start back at the beginning and consume them in the same way. Each time you ingest a talisman, face the ruling [force of that day], bow, and make the following incantation:

右〈太極帝君真符〉：〈上元六符〉、〈中元五符〉、〈下元五符〉。太上召三一守形之法：立春、春分、立夏、夏至、立秋、秋分、立冬、冬至始日，朱書，平旦向王服一符，以次十六日，竟服十六符也。後節復如先，從上起服也。

服符悉向王再拜，呪曰：

The Perfected of Upper Prime's One,	上元一真
Guards and protects my Muddy Pellet.	守固泥丸
The Perfected of Middle Prime's One,	中元一真
Pacifies the sprits of my Crimson Palace.	安神絳宮
The Perfected of Lower Prime's One,	下元一真
Safeguards my Gate of Life.	衛我命門
The Three Primes radiate in unison,	三元齊景
Protecting my life and extending my years.	保命長存
I call these numina to send out their <i>qi</i> ,	招靈致炁
And sit here as they descend spontaneously.	坐降自然
Change my body and refine my marrow,	變形練髓
As my bones transform into a Transcendent.	骨化成仙

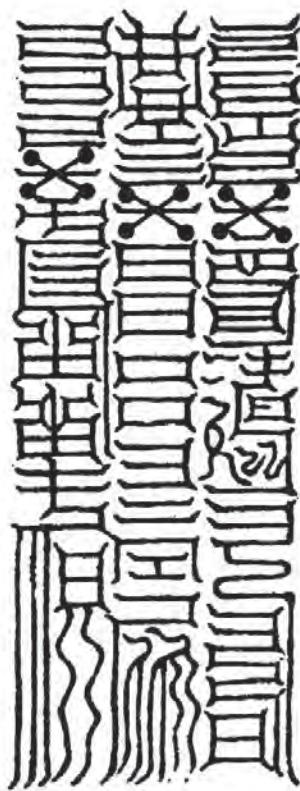
My fury feathers soar up to the [starry] net,
And ascend to the Thearch's levee.¹

毛羽飛羅
騰翔帝晨

Once you have written all the sixteen talismans in vermilion [ink], you should place them in a damask satchel and put them on your head so they will stay clean. If you swallow these talismans for five years, the Perfected beings will appear to you. After nine years, you will be able to penetrate [the world of] numina simply by looking. Sit upright and beckon the six *jia*.² Heaven will then provide you with twelve jade lads and twelve jade maidens, so you can ride a dragon-drawn carriage on the clouds to arrive at a banquet in the Jade Palace.

26a

又朱書符，盛以錦囊，佩於頭上，勿履洿穢。服符五年，得與真人相見。九年，通靈徹視，坐在立亡，役使六甲，天給玉童、玉女各十二人，乘雲駕龍，遊宴玉宮。



One of the Perfected Talismans of the Thearchical Lord of Taiji.

The Precious Emblem of Most High [Lord of the Dao] was transmitted to the Grand Thearchical Lord, who then transmitted it to the Celestial Thearchical Lord. The Celestial Thearchical Lord transmitted it to the Celestial and Thearchical Lord of Grand Tenuity, who then transmitted it to the Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte. The Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte transmitted it to the Azure Lad of the Eastern Seas. This [emblem] will bring the famous mountains under your jurisdiction so you can beckon the [spirits of] the Five Marchmounts. Write it with vermillion [ink] on white [background]. Wear it on your left elbow and be careful not to let it get dirty. If you wear it for eight years, the Three Ones will appear before you. On the first day of the lunar year, write one talisman with an azure brush, face north, bow down, and swallow it. After the Three Ones appear, make an emblem out of a piece of gold (nine *cun* long, four *cun* wide, and three *fen* thick) and engrave its surface. Use it to subjugate perverse spirits of mountains and rivers, as well as control the Perfected essences of the Five Marchmounts. At that time, the lords of the Three Primes' Perfected Ones will let you know the proper protocol, as this is a method for the divine Perfected. Consume the talismans, face north and clack your teeth together thirty-six times. Look up as you make the following incantation:

〈太上寶章〉，傳太帝君，太帝君傳天帝君，天帝君傳太微天帝君，太微天帝君傳金闕帝君，金闕帝君傳東海青童，以封掌名山，召制五岳。以朱書素，佩之左肘，勿經洿穢。佩之八年，三一俱見矣。正月旦，青筆書一符，北向再拜，吞之。三一相見之後，以金為質，長九寸，廣四寸，厚三分，刻而書之，以封山川之邪神，掌五岳之真精也。臨時，三元真一君當悟兆施用節度、神真之道。服符，北向叩齒三十六通，因仰呪曰：

The three Perfected guard my rooms,	三真守房
These primal elders preserve my essence.	元老固精
When the entire world unitively fuses,	天地混合
The two kinds of <i>qi</i> will combine as one.	二炁交并
Formidable slips of the [Taiji] Thearchical Lord,	帝君威策
Conjure all deities by order of their emblems.	命章攝靈

I now call on the gods of the mountain and seas, Who often hasten the lives of living beings.	封山召海 摧滅羣生
Promptly call forth the Northern Thearch, Who keeps a long list of the demons' names.	促詣北帝 條列魔名
Inspect and rectify any duplications, And quickly return the demon armies. ³	檢統无橫 速還鬼營

After finishing this incantation, wear the talisman on your belt so you can enfeoff the mountain [spirits], beckon the [gods] of the seas, command the manifold numina, make the birds and beasts serve you, cause the celestial armies to submit to you, and roam around the Five Marchmounts.

畢，佩符，封山召海，制御萬靈，役使禽獸，伏諾天兵，遊行五岳。

To conduct this ritual, first clack the teeth on the left side of your [mouth] thirty-six times. After this, actualize the seven stars [of the Dipper] hovering above your head, as you spew red *qi* from your mouth. This will cause a large field of *qi* to emanate from your head in every direction, penetrating all that it encounters. Then you will watch as your entire body incinerates until nothing remains. Before long, the divine officials of the Five Marchmounts, as well as all the wild beasts, will come to pay obeisance to you. You should then make the following incantation:

27a

臨時，皆當先叩左齒三十六通，存七星覆兆身頭上，口吐赤炁，冠滿一域，四面洞匝，焚燒內外，無復孑遺，見己身在火中央。須臾，有五岳神官及山野之獸來朝己身，便呪曰：

An order came during the Primal Beginning, Announcing to the manifold spirits:	元始出令 宣告萬靈
A thearchical emblem of Grand Perfection, Has been formed along with the [primal] <i>qi</i> .	太真帝章 與炁俱生
Hereafter I will be in full control,	自下總統

As all [spirits] return to Upper Clarity.	悉歸上清
If there is a [spirit] that does not go back,	若有不反
May I conjure their true form.	收攝真形
I will enfeoff the mountains, and beckon the seas,	封山召海
For all will crumble before me upon my command.	應令摧傾
May [these spirits] quickly come and submit to me,	速來自伏
So that each one will quickly come forth.	不得稽停
Quickly abide by the correct statutes,	急如正律
Do not break the commands of the netherworld. ⁴	无令越冥

After this, gulp the *qi* thirty-six times, and you will be done.

畢，咽三十六炁止。

(3b) The Method from the *Inner Scripture of Guarding the One of the Most High Grand Grotto*

太上大洞守一內經法

The Most High [Lord of the Dao] remarked: Whenever Perfected beings exalt the One, this refers to the Perfected One, the Upper One. When the One [in your body and heaven] link together, there will be resonant transformation with Grand Nonexistence.⁵ When the One opens this channel, the world will undergo a mysterious unification.⁶ The Upper One is the celestial Thearch of the body, the Middle One is the cinnabar sovereign of the Crimson Palace, and the Lower One is the primal king of the Yellow Court. The Perfected [beings] of the Three Ones work together to inspect and regulate the twenty-four *qi* of your body. These *qi* give you life and constitute your body. These *qi* are also the counterpart of the twenty-four Perfected [beings] of the Grand Tenuity [Heaven]. These [beings] have Perfected *qi* that descend and harmonize [with earth]; from this, all beings take form. Mysterious spirits [are

made] through unitive fusion, causing them to hide deep in [your] purple room. Once these numinous vapors (i.e., the *qi*) congeal, they will turn into spirits. And when these spirits assume [the name of] the Three Ones, they will become king. All transformations are brought about by the Three Ones. Any being who achieves this transformation can do so because the concealed spirits join together with the primordial yellow [*qi*] and attain the ultimate Mystery.⁷ For the primal lords of the Three Ones each have Perfected *qi*, and they can combine these Perfected *qi* to make [an entourage of] a thousand chariots and ten thousand horsemen, with cloud chariots with feather canopies. After [all three] enter the Purple Palace, they will ascend into the Jade Clarity [heaven]. There, they will rank [adepts'] registers and primal maps. They attack embryonic [knots] and preserve [adepts'] zygotes.

太上曰：真人所以貴一為真一者，上一而已矣。一之所契，太无感化；一之變通，天地冥合。是以上一為一身之天帝，中一為絳宮之丹皇，下一為黃庭之元王，而三一之真，並監統身中二十四炁，炁以受生，生立一身，上應太微二十四真，真炁徊和，品物成形，玄神混分，紫房杳冥。夫炁者，結靈煙而成神也。神者，託三一以自王也。變化者，三一之所造；得化者，皆由神以自隱，混黃相成，得玄之極。三一元君，各有真炁，真炁結成，自為千乘萬騎，雲車羽蓋，常以內入紫宮，以登玉清，列籙元圖，伐胞保胎。

Once [you] have successfully used the Three Ones [method] for bodily cultivation, [you] will become a Perfected being who can soar throughout the Nine Darks and will be employed high in the [heavens].⁸ But the One does not simply help [you] fly like a winged creature; rather, it is responsible for [your] existence both on earth and in heaven. If [you] are determined to guard [the One], your essential [*qi*] will activate a perpetual resonance [with heaven]. Upon establishing this resonance, the Three Primes will appear before [you]. And upon seeing the Three Primes, white *qi* will begin to expand and transform. And when this white *qi* transforms, it will instigate a “unitive division” [of the twenty-four *qi*]. And it is from this unitive division that one thousand chariots and ten thousand horsemen will suddenly arrive. At this point, [you] can take the reins of a feathered canopy and ride a cloudy

phaeton; thereafter, you will ascend to the heavens in broad daylight and arrive at Grand Tenuity [heaven]. Thus, the mysterious power of the Three Ones will resonate between [bodily and heavenly] essences.

三一養身，得為真人，飛行九霄，受事高上。所以一之所濟者，乃生乎天地也，非但飛行蠕動小事而已。子若能守之彌固則精應感暢，精應感暢則三元可見，三元見則白炁鬱變，白炁鬱變則混分自生，混分自生即千乘萬騎忽焉至矣。於是羽蓋可御，雲輶可乘，爾乃白日昇天，上造太微，寔三一之玄功，精感之所會也。

The twenty-four [kinds of] *qi* of the Grand Tenuity heaven were originally lumped together within a primordial yellow [*qi*]. But once these *qi* congealed and transformed, they suddenly parted all at once and became distinct entities. Twenty-four Perfected beings then emerged from these “transformed *qi*.” These [beings] were thus formed out of vacuous [*qi*], not through embryonic conception. After receiving *qi* from the thearchical sovereigns of the Three Ones, all [twenty-four beings] underwent their distinct paths of transformation. At it is because of this mystery that the [Eight] Phosphors [for each of the Three Ones] come into existence. So, if you are able to guard the Three Ones inside your body, the [twenty-four] Perfected lords of the thearchical sovereigns of the Three Primes of the Grand Tenuity heaven will descend and appear before [you] and speak.

太微天中有二十四炁，混黃雜聚，結炁變化，有時忽爾而分，覺然而生也。化炁中生有二十四真人，結虛生成，不由胞胎，皆三一帝皇之炁所致，分道變化，託玄立景矣。既能守身中三一，則太微天中三元帝皇之真君而降見於外，亦與子面言也。

28b Your body also has twenty-four Perfected beings, who are [likewise] formed when the essential numen of the dark *qi* congeals, divides, and transforms into many [entities]. When this happens, a cloudy phaeton will soon arrive, at which point [you should] fuse [your twenty-four] *qi* with starry phosphors.⁹ This will help you ascend into the Grand Tenuity [heaven],

where the twenty-four Perfected beings of Grand Tenuity will feast with your bodily spirits unitive yellow [*qi*]. Each [of your body's Perfected beings] will pair with its phosphoric [counterpart] in the Purple Room [of Grand Tenuity], and their forms will move like *qi* [traveling] on a thousand paths. [Your] elderly appearance will be reverted to a youthful one, and [your name] on the death registers of Beifeng will be altered. [You] will then live long in the domain of the Thearchs, have access to the Jade Clarity [heaven], and can sleep at night in Grand Tenuity.

身中復有二十四真人，亦體中玄炁精靈所結而造致，分化而造萬也。若雲輶既致，合炁晨景，以登太微，太微二十四真人俱與身中神明合宴於混黃之中，共景分於紫房之內，託形炁於千塗，迴老艾以反嬰，改死籍於北酆，受長存乎帝鄉，出入玉清，寢止太微。

[You] can also cultivate the methods for the Thearchical One, the Five Spirits of the Grand Monad, and “Three-Five-Seven-Nine” at the same time [as the above method].¹⁰ And if [you] cultivate these at the same time, it will make the resonance for [your body's] spirits of the One much easier. The “Purple Room” [method] needs the “Guarding the One” as its foundation; the “Guarding the Ones” [method] needs the “Purple Room” as its floriate canopy. This is why the Three Ones and the Three [Ladies] of Simplicity need one another, and why the Purple Room and the [Palace of] Six-fold Harmony help each other.¹¹ Although these deities live in different places, they can all help beckon the Ones near. You must be fond of meditation and actualize [the above spirits] if you are to complete the method of the Three Ones. If you only are initiated into one of these methods, your Three Primes will not be complete. Nevertheless, by concentrating your mind on the One, you can still live a long life and avoid death. But you will only obtain entry into Grand Clarity [heaven] and will be unable to roam atop the phosphors to Grand Tenuity [heaven], or ascend further north into the palaces of Upper Clarity.

29a

又當兼行帝一太一五神及三五七九之事。兼行之者，而一神之感致易也。紫房須守一為根本，守一須紫房為華蓋，故三一三素相須也，而紫房六合相待也。

雖其居不同，而致一之用俱濟也。子善思而存之，則三一之事畢也。若單得受一道者，則三元不備，但注心於一，亦可長生不死，得入太清而已，不得遊景太微之天，北登上清之宮也。

The Upper One is the ultimate of all the Perfected Thearchs, the Middle One is the pinnacle of all Perfected sovereigns, and the Lower One is the most miraculous of all the Perfected kings. The celestial sovereign attained the ultimate, and this is why he was promoted to Sovereign Ultimate. The terrestrial sovereign attained the pinnacle, and this is why he was promoted to Correct Unity. The human sovereign attained the mystery, and this is why he was promoted to Lord of the Many Miracles. These three sovereigns embodied perfection while guarding the Ones, and this is why the forms of the Ones were never hidden from view. A Transcendent being [similarly] looks for perfection by seeking the One, and this is why the Three Ones will illuminate. When the Ones are “never hidden from view,” this is ultimate form of perfection. If the “Three Ones illuminate,” this means that you have attained the One. For when perfection is at its ultimate and the Three Ones illuminate, you will attain the One and have life. In order to really guard the Ones, silence your mind and still your spirits. Concentrate your whole being on seeking a response [from the Ones]. In this way, your mind may be led in many directions, but you will not allow your thoughts to wander. If you look within for three months and keep your mind firmly focused, their radiant light will shine forth and crisscross throughout your five viscera. So, focus your concentration by bringing your *qi* into a state of harmony. This will help you achieve a heightened sense of resolve and attain the Ones. If, however, your superficial behaviors rise to the surface, or your sense of competition wreaks havoc on your body, this resonance with the One will not manifest and your [bodily] spirits will not respond. It is not that [these gods] do not want to go toward you, but rather that your concentration is not focused and your thoughts are not deep enough. Thus, even if you were to work at this method for many years, you would be doing so in vain. If you can use your mind to cause distant resonance and concentrate your mind on nothing else, you will not even need three months of concentrated thinking to cause a unitive fusion.

上一，真帝之極也；中一，真皇之至也；下一，真王之妙也。天皇得極，故上成皇極；地皇得至，故上成正一；人皇得妙，故上成眾妙之君。三皇體真以守一，故一無藏形；仙人尋真以求一，故三一俱明。一無藏形，其真極也。三一俱明，得一而已。其真既極，三一既明，得一而生也。夫真守一者，當令心寂神凝，體專求感，所以百念不尋，精意不散，三月內視，注心一神，則神光化生，纏綿五藏。所以注向不散，專炁致和，由固之至也，得一之効也。若華偽潛興，競心亂生，故一不卒感，神不即應，非不欲往，存之者不專，思之者不審，故起積年之功，罔有彷彿也。若能心濟遠感，專心无他，亦不必三月之精思，與一混合也。

The [Lord of the Great Dao] Most High announced: The “Three Primes” are jade Perfected of the nine heavens, and [constitute] the Correct Dao of the Upper Perfected. The primes engender your embryonic roots, and they exist everywhere in the “six harmonies” (the universe). After the Perfected Thearchs emerged from the Correct Unity’s Great Dao, these mysterious Perfected of the Correct Dao then engendered the great spirits. After the “five elders” (five phases) separated and joined, a myriad of transformations suddenly took place. The very fact that the Three Primes could develop into so many things was because they were formed through the One. Thus, while spirits acquire their efficacy when *qi* divide and coalesce, this assembly of perfected [beings] must all return to the One; this is what it means to complete the “mystic enterprise.” For the [One] is the ancestral patriarch of the Correct Dao and the root of the primal *qi*. If it were to disseminate throughout Nothingness, a white *qi* would pervade everything. And if you nourish [the One] within your body, it will extend your life.

30a

太上告曰：三元者，九天之玉真，上真之正道也。胎根之所生，六合之所存，故正一大道以出真帝，正道玄真以生大神，離合五老，萬化忽成，三元解變，則一之所生也。故變炁布結，神得以靈，眾真歸一，而玄功成焉。此正道之祖宗，元炁之根始也。散之於無，則白炁杳合；養之於形，則長生永久。

The method of the Three Ones will enable you to fully contemplate the Dao via the Three Primes [method]. It is wondrous and miraculous, for it brings together all the numinous books, that is, the divine scripture that heavenly

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beings and Transcendent sovereigns watch over. The first of these wonders is the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas*. The second wondrous text concerns the fusion and transformation of the Feminine One; it is called the *Miraculous Scripture of Great Existence*. The third jade secret instruction is the “[Method of] Three-Five-Seven-Nine” from a mysterious scripture of penetrating perfection; it is called the *Immaculate Numen Most High*. Therefore, the thearchical lord of the Upper One watches over the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto*, the cinnabar sovereign of the Middle One watches over the *Miraculous Scripture of the Feminine One*, and the primal king of the Lower One conceals the *Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] That Penetrates the Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]*. These texts, which are called the “Three Fives,” are the most essential of the perfected teachings and the ultimate stanzas of the Three Ones. Their transmission is also closely regulated in the Jade Clarity heaven, for these are the most exalted of all secret texts.

夫三一之法，觀道備於三元，其道奇妙，總合靈篇，天人仙皇，握寶神經。第一之奇，《大洞真經三十九章》；第二奇文，雌一合變，號《大有妙經》；第三玉訣，洞真玄經三五七九，號《太上素靈》。是故上一帝君寶《大洞真經》，中一丹皇寶《雌一妙經》，下一元王祕《素靈洞玄大有妙經》。此三五之號，真道之至精，三一之極章，並玉清之禁訣，高上之祕篇。

Once guarding the Three Ones, you can obtain these three scriptures. Thereafter, you will be able to ride the clouds and ascend to the Grand Clarity heaven. From there, you can gaze out for a seemingly endless distance and roam up for a banquet in the Purple Court. They are so subtle and profound, it is hard to convey in writing. When you guard the Ones, the Three Ones will appear. And when you attain the Ones, you will naturally come in possession of these scriptures.

兆守三一，得吾三經，即能乘雲，上昇太清，洞覩无窮，遊宴紫庭。微哉深矣！難可文宣。守一所生，三一見矣！子既得一，自得此經。

The method for guarding the Three Ones forms the first book in the Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte from Upper Clarity in the August Heaven's Perfected texts. It is an exalted jade method, a way used by divine Transcendents, and a miraculous instruction for many perfected [beings].

守三一之法，皇天上清金闕帝君真書之首篇，高上之玉道，神仙之津塗，眾真之妙訣。

If you guard the Ones, the Ones will also guard you. If an adept is able to see the Ones, the Ones will appear to the adept. The Ones need a body to survive, and the body needs the Ones to function. Whenever you embark on a mission, or simply take care of life's odds and ends, be mindful of the Ones. When you experience joy and elation, be mindful of the Ones. When you are sad and rueful, be mindful of the Ones. When you are gravely sick, be mindful of the Ones. When you are in danger, be mindful of the Ones. When you find yourself in a disaster, be mindful of the Ones. Or if you are in an emergency, be mindful of the Ones. Whatever you do or whatever you see, always be mindful of the Ones. When you think of them, your thoughts must be extremely focused; if they are not focused, you will have no hope of survival.

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子能守一，一亦守子。子能見一，一亦見子。一須身而立，身須一而行。子身進退，千端萬事，常當念一：飲食念一，欣樂念一，哀感念一，疾病念一，危難念一，履水火念一，有急念一。舉止矚目，念亦多矣。思念必專，不專無冀矣。

A sick person who has the resolve to live but is not in a stable condition will not live long. Likewise, a person who knows the names of the Ones, but does not guard them, will be unable to stick to his resolve. If you cannot stick to your resolve, you will be unable to bear suffering. Thus you might think about the Ones forever, yet still be full of conceit. For if you know the method of the Ones, but are not steadfast in guarding them, the Three Ones and the correct *qi* will soon depart. If correct *qi* departs a person, stale *qi*

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will take control; if this happens, your death is nigh. When average people study this method, they are often searching for something superficial. Since they do not value the perfected Ones, they will falter in the end even though they had resolve in the beginning. This is all due to the fact that they are not zealous enough and deviant *qi* have entered their bodies and turned stale. The rule for guarding the One is that you must always remain concentrated. If your concentration fails, you will soon lose sight of your essences. If these essences are not fixed in your body, you will be unable to remain steadfast. As such, the Three Ones will depart and you will become an “empty dwelling.” An empty dwelling lacks a master and this kind of calamity will have long-lasting [effects].

患人有志不固，固不能久，知一名字而不能守，守不能堅志，志不能苦，思念無極，多有本心。或知一之道，不能常守，故三一去，則正炁離。夫失正炁者，則故炁前；故炁前，則死日近也。俗人學道，多尋浮華，不以真一為貴，初雖有其志，後必變敗，皆由用志不一，邪炁來入故也。守一之戒，戒於不專，專復不久，久不見精，精不能固，固而不常，則三一去矣，身為空宅耳。空宅無主，其禍安久。

[Lord of the Great Dao] Most High announces: When *qi* knot together and form essences, these essences resonate with the spirits. The spirits transform into a Ruddy Infant and this Ruddy Infant will become Perfected beings. This Perfected being ascends to become the Newborn. This is called the “Perfected One.”

太上告曰：炁結為精，精感為神，神化為嬰兒，嬰兒上為真人，真人昇為赤子，此真一也。

[Lord of the Great Dao] Most High announces: There are three kinds of light in the heavens—the sun, moon, and the stars; these are the “three essences” and can be used to extend life. Humans have “three treasures” in their three cinnabar fields. These are also known as the “three perfected” and can make you live eternally. In the *Scripture of the Numinous Treasure*, it is

written, “Whether in the celestial essences or terrestrial perfections, the ‘three treasures’ exist indefinitely.” This is exactly what is meant.

太上告曰：天有三光，謂日月星也；亦為三精，是用長生。人有三寶，三丹田也；亦為三真，是用永存。《靈寶經》曰：「天精地真，三寶常存」，此之謂也。

[Lord of the Great Dao] Most High announces: The upper cinnabar field is between your two eyebrows. The middle cinnabar field is in the Crimson Palace, or the heart. The lower cinnabar field is three *cun* beneath your navel. Altogether there are three cinnabar fields. The Ruddy Infant resides in the palace within your upper cinnabar field, the Perfected Being resides in the palace within your middle cinnabar field, and the Newborn resides within the palace of your lower cinnabar field. In between and slightly higher than your eyebrows is the Bright Hall; it is one *cun* underneath [the skin]. Two *cun* underneath is the Grotto-Room, and three *cun* underneath is the Cinnabar Field (also known as the Muddy Pellet Palace). “Underneath” means that it is further back on a line running from your forehead to a spot on the backside of your head beneath the crown.

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太上告曰：兩眉間，上丹田也。心絳宮，中丹田也。臍下三寸，下丹田也。合三丹田也。赤子居上丹田宮，真人居中丹田宮，嬰兒居下丹田宮。兩眉間上却入一寸為明堂，却入二寸為洞房，却入三寸為丹田，泥丸宮。却入者，從面却往，就頂後之背也。

The Cinnabar Field (or Muddy Pellet) Palace is perfectly square, one *cun* on each side. Actualize purple *qi* extending to the heavens and picture a simulacrum of the sun that is nine *cun* round inside this purple *qi*. The effulgence [from this solar orb] will shine outward for ninety thousand *li*. Your bodily form will transform and momentarily change size, and all at once you will forget about your body. All of this is happening in your mind.

丹田泥丸宮，正四方，面各一寸。存紫炁衝天，紫炁中有日象，圓九寸，外映照九萬里。我形變化，大小暫見，煥歎忘身，亦在意存之。

The Ruddy Infant of the Upper Prime resides beneath a floriate canopy within the Muddy Pellet Palace. The Celestial Thearch of the Muddy Pellet is the Ruddy Infant of the Upper One. He is named Xuanningtian, with the alternate byname Sanyuanxian. He is also known as Bowushang and Boshihua. He is ranked as the Celestial Thearchical Lord of the Muddy Pellet, and rules over the Upper One's palace. At his right is a thearchical chamberlain, who sits facing his lord. This chamberlain is suddenly born into existence when the spirits of your teeth, tongue, and brain all rise to this palace to transform.

上元赤子居在泥丸宮中、華蓋之下。泥丸天帝上一赤子，諱玄凝天，字三元先，一名伯无上，一名伯史華，位為泥丸天帝君，治在上一宮，其右有帝卿一人坐，相對，是我齒舌腦之精神，昇化而忽生也。

32b The Thearchical Chamberlain Lord formed in the Upper One is named Zhaolejing, with the alternate byname Zhongxuansheng.¹² He is also called Qifei or Changfu. He and the Ruddy Infant rule over the Muddy Pellet Palace. They lack clothing, and their naked bodies look like newborns who have just been delivered. The Upper One's Celestial Thearchical Lord keeps the “Divine Tiger Talisman of Upper Clarity” stored in an azure jade case. The Thearchical Chamberlain keeps the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto* stored in a purple jade case. They sometimes sit facing each other and sometimes face outward. The Thearchical Lord of the Upper One intones the following:

上一為帝卿君，諱肇勤精，字仲玄生，一名起非，一名常扶。此二人共治泥丸宮中，並裸身无衣，貌如嬰孩始生之形。上一天帝君執〈上清神虎符〉，盛以青玉函；帝卿執《大洞真經》，盛以紫玉函，坐俱外向，或相向也。上一帝君口吟曰：

The mystery of mysteries in the Muddy Pellet,
Gives this body life and protects its passes.
The Grand Monad guards this body's register,

玄玄泥丸
生身保關
太一守籍

And the Upper Prime defends its spirits. 上元固神
 The perfected *qi* of this Celestial Thearch, 天帝真炁
 Will nourish this body to make a Transcendent.¹³ 養形成仙

After this, the lord and his chamberlain will inwardly safeguard the domains of the face, eyes, mouth, tongue, teeth, two ears, and hair from the palace where the Upper One resides. Outwardly, they intimidate and eradicate the Six Heavens' manifold ghosts and evil demons.¹⁴ Once every five days, your body's three cloud-souls and seven white-souls will make obeisance to the Thearchical One of the Upper Prime. They will be transformed each time through a "fusion birth." This is the Method of Fusing *Qi*.¹⁵

33a

畢。上一所居之宮，內以鎮守泥丸、面目、口舌、齒、兩耳、鼻上、所居之宮、毛髮之境，外以威震，除六天萬鬼、凶惡之魔也。兆身中三魂七魄，五日一來朝上元帝一而受化混生，混炁之道矣。

The heart is the middle cinnabar field. It is called the Crimson Palace and safeguards the center of the heart. It is perfectly square, each side measuring one *cun* with vermilion vapor that reaches up to the heavens. Within this vermilion vapor is a simulacrum of the sun that is seven *cun* in diameter. Its outer effulgence shines out for seventy thousand *li*. Your body will undergo a transformation, and suddenly you will forget about your body. This instantaneous [change] is happening in your mind. The Crimson Palace is the Cinnabar Field Palace in your heart; the Primal Cinnabar Sovereign Lord of the Middle One lives there. This Cinnabar Sovereign of the Middle One is named Shenyunzhu, with the alternate byname Zinandan. He is also called Shengshangbo and Shi Yunju. He ranks as the Cinnabar Sovereign Lord of the Crimson Palace, and he rules over the heart's palace. To his right is the Assistant Sovereign Chamberlain, who is a spirit of the five viscera. This [chamberlain] enters the heart after suddenly coming into existence by the knotting of fused *qi*; he thereafter serves as the Middle Chamberlain who Assists the Sovereign. His name is Zhong Guangjian, with the alternate

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byname Sihualing. He is also known as You Chebo and Dong Shihua. The Sovereign Lord and Chamberlain rule over the heart's Crimson Palace. They lack clothing, and their naked bodies look like newborns who have just been delivered. In the left hand of Cinnabar Sovereign Lord is the star of dazzling bewilderment (Mars); this star should be actualized as yellow (*lit.* middle color) and about the size a chicken's egg. In his right hand, he holds the "High Talisman of the Feminine One," which he stores in a white jade case. The Chamberlain Lord Assisting the Sovereign holds a bright moon pearl that is three *cun* round; the cavern is ablaze with its effulgent light. Sometimes they sit facing outward; other times they sit facing one another. The Cinnabar Sovereign (Lord of the Middle One) intones the following:

心為中丹田，號為絳宮，鎮心之中央，正四方，面各一寸，朱烟參天。朱烟中有日象，徑七寸，外映照七萬里。我形變化，煥歎忘身，恍惚在意存之。絳宮心丹田宮，中一元丹皇君處其中。中一丹皇，諱神運珠，字子南丹，一名生上伯，一名史雲拘，位為絳官丹皇君，治在心宮。其右有輔皇卿一人，是五藏之精神，合炁結化而忽生也，入絳宮為輔皇中卿，諱中光堅，字四化靈，一名幽車伯，一名董史華。此二人共治絳宮心中，並裸形無衣，貌如嬰孩始生之形。丹皇君左手把熒惑星，存之如雞子，正中央色，右手執〈雌一高上符〉，盛以白玉函。輔皇卿君左手執明月珠，圓三寸，光明洞映，坐俱外向，或相向也。丹皇中一君口吟曰：

The five viscera's effulgent brightness,	五藏光明
Comes into existence through <i>qi</i> .	由炁得生
The eight phosphors most high,	太上八景
Penetrate and survey this heart's court.	洞觀心庭
The Thearchical Sovereign Middle One,	中一帝皇
Protects life and ensures tranquility. ¹⁶	保命常寧

After this, the lord and his chamberlain will inwardly safeguard the domains of your tendons, bones, five viscera, blood, and muscles. Outwardly, they intimidate and eradicate the ominous appearance of the manifold perverse

spirits. They will nurture your *qi* and pacify your spirits, so that you may have a long life and perpetual youth as a flying Transcendent of Grand Clarity [heaven]. You will then be able to ascend to the extremities of heaven. Once every seven days, the three cloud-souls and seven white-souls will pay obeisance to the Cinnabar Sovereign Lord of the Middle One. They will receive the *qi* that once split and transformed, as well as the phosphors that unitively fused your embryonic spirit.

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畢。內以鎮守筋骨、五藏、血肉之境，外以震消萬邪之不祥，養炁安神，長生久視，飛仙太清，上與天相極。兆身中三魂七魄，七日一來朝中一丹皇君，而受分形散化之炁，混合胎神之景也。

Three *cun* below the navel is a Cinnabar Field Palace called the Gate of Life, which is where the Newborn of the Lower Prime resides. It is perfectly square, one *cun* on each side, and its white *qi* penetrates the heavens. Within this white *qi*, [actualize] a simulacrum of the sun that is five *cun* round; it will cast its brilliance outward for fifty thousand *li*. Your [bodily] form will begin to change, and suddenly you will forget all about it. The instantaneous [change] will take place in your mind. The Gate of Life is where the Lower One's Primal King of the Yellow Court resides. This [deity], the Newborn of the Lower Prime, is named Shi Mingjing, with the alternate byname Yuan Yangchang. He is also called Ying Ertai and Bo Shiyuan. He is ranked as a primal king in the Yellow Court.

臍下三寸號命門丹田宮，下元嬰兒居其中宮，正四方，面各一寸，白炁衝天。白炁中有日象，圓五寸，外映照五萬里。兆形變，倏歛忘其形，恍惚在意存之。命門，下一黃庭元王處此宮中。下元嬰兒，諱始明精，字元陽昌，一名嬰兒胎，一名伯史原，位為黃庭元王。

To his right is the Protector and Deputy Chamberlain, the god who guards the white pearl of secretion of the dark stalk's essential *qi*. He suddenly comes into existence and assumes his position as Deputy Chamberlain once your essences are knotted by circulating vapors that rise up and transform.

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The Deputy Chamberlain that enters the Cinnabar Field Palace is called Gui Shangming, with the alternate byname Gu Xiaxuan. He is also known as Feng Shenbo and Cheng Guangsheng. The King and this Chamberlain jointly rule over the Lower Prime's Cinnabar Field Palace. They lack clothing, and their naked bodies look like newborns that have just emerged from the womb. The Yellow Court's Primal King intones the following:

其右有保鎮弼卿一人，是陰莖精炁白珠津液之守神，乃結精迴烟，昇化而生，忽然成人，位為弼卿也。入在丹田宮，弼卿諱歸上明，字谷下玄，一名奉申伯，一名承光生。此二人共治丹田下元宮中，並裸身無衣貌，如嬰孩始生之形。黃庭元王口吟曰：

When the jade stalk's white pearl secretion,	玉莖白珠液
Knots and congeals to produce the manifold spirits.	結凝成百神
And the Five Elders' talismans nourish the body,	養形五老符
This sends your register to the Most High's gallery.	拔籍太上軒
You must not overlook your Gate of Life,	命門不可傾
Nor can you lose your golden liquor. ¹⁷	金液不可愆
Circulate your essences until they fill every pore,	迴精自滿塞
But do not let the font of jade marrow overflow. ¹⁸	勿漏玉髓泉
Birth and death both have their causes,	生死皆所由
Refrain from these to be a divine Transcendent. ¹⁹	閉之乃神仙

After this, the Lower One's lord will hold the Grand White Star (Venus) in his left hand. You should actualize this as a white orb about the size of a chicken's egg. In his right hand, he clutches the [*Most High*] *Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* [*Celestial Palace*] *That Penetrates the Mystery of the Great Existence* [*Heaven*], which he stores in a yellow jade case. In the deputy chamberlain's left hand is a bright moon pearl, which is three *cun* round and illuminates all that lies within the jade stalk beneath the Lower Pass. He often holds your jade stalk in his right hand, and typically will grip it and never let go. Sometimes the king and chamberlain face outward while other times they face one another.

畢。下一君左手把太白星，存之如雞子，色正白，右手執《素靈洞玄大有妙經》，盛以黃玉函。弼卿左手執明月珠圓，三寸，映洞下關玉莖之內，右手恒執兆之玉莖，常持之不放，坐俱外向，或相向也。

These two deities will inwardly safeguard the offices of your lower pass, four limbs, secretions, marrow, hundred apertures, intestines, stomach, and pancreas.²⁰ Outwardly, they will bestow long life by dispelling disasters, averting calamities, repelling the manifold perverse spirits, and avoid the three worms. Every day, your body's three cloud-souls and seven white-souls will pay obeisance to the lord of the Yellow Court three times. They will receive methods (Dao) that will enable you to seal your essences, nourish your *qi*, and knot these *qi* to first become a Transcendent, then a Perfected, and then [a being] of Jade Vacuity.

內以鎮守弼卿兆下關、四支、津液、骨髓、百竅、腸胃、膀胱之府；外以長生不死，消災散禍，辟却萬邪，絕滅三蟲。三魂七魄一日三來朝下黃庭君，受閉精養炁、結炁為仙、從仙得真、從真得玉虛之道也。

The method to actualize the simulacrum of a sun within their white *qi* is the same as those described above. Note, however, that while the color is the same, its relative size is different. When you actualize the sun, do it early in the morning when the *qi* is just emerging. You may sit or lie as you please. Actualize the Three Ones sitting calm in their respective palaces. After you finish, wait for the rest of the day before you resume the actualization of these gods in the middle of the night. You should always burn incense to your left and right.

存白炁日象之法皆如上，但色同，而日大小為異耳。存念之時，皆以生炁時，坐臥任意也。存三一，安其宮，竟，周一日，夜半輒復更存耳。常當燒香左右。

The method of guarding the Ones is as follows: At midnight on the “inception of spring” [February 5], sit upright, face east, swallow *qi* nine times, and gulp your spittle five times. Once this is done, actualize the seven stars of the Big Dipper. It will come down slowly until it rests above your head. It should

“recede toward heaven,” meaning that the Dipper’s handle will point away from you toward the east. After a long time, incant the following:

守一之法：至立春之日、夜半之時，正坐東向，服炁九通，咽唾五過。畢。乃存北斗七星，冉冉來下，在我頂上，却向天，以杓柄正向前指東也。良久，呪曰：

With the Most High’s mysterious mainstay, ²¹	太上玄剛
I guard the Ones to become a divine Transcendent.	守一神仙
May a manifold of demons be destroyed,	萬魔消滅
So I can ride off to the Jade Gallery.	身乘玉軒
The tests of ghosts cannot be administered,	鬼試不行
For I have attained Jade Dawn’s blessings.	度福玉晨
May Jade Clarity’s Perfected beings,	玉清真人
Take my hand and guide me. ²²	攜我在前

After this, you should do the same visualization technique on all the eight nodal days in order to mitigate any trials you might face while guarding the Ones.

畢。八節日皆存如此，以辟守一之試校。

A person who already possesses the *Inner Scripture on Guarding the Ones of the Great Grotto* is a master, while those he gives it to are his disciples. This transmission enables the master to articulate the ancient origin of the text, and it helps a disciple understand the serious pains of this great undertaking. It further helps an adept strive for those things that spirits venerate and provides a clear path on which one can begin his studies. If a master models his actions from those around him, and reflects his interior with the Three Ones, the Thearchical Lord will be pleased with his palace, and the Ruddy Infant will delight in his residence. Thereupon, [the *qi* of] his Purple Room will rise to the top of the empyrean and his cinnabar fields will blaze brightly.

This will cause the Five Elders to descend into his chamber, and the jade blossom [girls] to rest by his bedside. This means his spirits will surely ascend to the Grand Aurora Palace and will definitely find passage into the empty grotto.²³ His body will merge with the miraculous spirits and will ascend to the heavens in broad daylight. But if this person were to turn against these teachings (Dao), he would be lacking, and if he showed these prohibitions to others, he would be destroyed. But whoever hears of these teachings (Dao) will have their years extended, and whoever practices it will become a divine Transcendent. Who could possibly treat this method carelessly? If it is your natal day, you should actualize [the Three Ones] in broad daylight; just make sure you strive to show reverence.

有是《大洞守一內經》者，即為師也；受經者，則為弟子。所以崇建本之盡著，明大誠之苦至，期神靈之所崇，託階級以自始。所以師友理其外，三一鏡其內，帝君欣其宮，赤子悅其宅。於是紫房秀霄，丹田曜煥，五老降其室，玉華憩其寢。將必神登太霞，信濟空洞，體合妙靈，白日昇天。違是道者不全，泄是禁者身殘；聞此道者延年，行此道者神仙。可不慎與！若本命之日，自可白日存之，唯敬勤耳。

Only those who are predestined for godhood with Transcendent bones, a dark register, or a jade name in the Golden Porte will have the privilege to learn about the wondrous method of the Perfected Ones. These methods for the Perfected Ones are also available to persons who have done good deeds in previous lives, performed five hundred meritorious deeds, have a compassionate heart of virtue, show humaneness to birds and beasts, or have encountered gods in previous lives.

夫自非宿有仙骨玄籙，及金闕玉字，亦自不得聞見真一之妙道也。或宿世行善，功滿五百；或慈心至德，仁及鳥獸；或本命運遇，與神合會。諸如此者，得真一也。

If you are just beginning your actualization by guarding the Ones, and you are not sure of the protocol of the Three Palaces, just make the incantations

36b

and gulp down the *qi* as described in the instructions. You can follow this text, and can even do it in broad daylight. If you are a novice, be sure to rehearse its recitation in advance; this way it will be much easier when you close your eyes to begin actualizing the deities.

若始存守一，未能究三宮之節度，咽炁祝吟之旨者，自可按本文白日而行之。初亦宜熟讀，預習之，於臨目存思為易也。

The Celestial Thearch of the Muddy Pellet, the Lord of the Three Ones, is the numinous patriarch of all the Ones' spirits and the source of life for the manifold gods.²⁴ He is the mountain font of spittle and the jade chamber of the cloud-soul essences. This is why the “stomach pond” takes in things with its square shape, the “cerebral palace” is fit for Perfected spirits with its round and hollow shape, the myriad channels stand erect, and thousand pores emit vapor.²⁵ It is also why we cultivate the virtues of the world and why we chaotically fuse in Grand Mystery.²⁶ It is, therefore, called the “Muddy Pellet,” for this name refers to the uppermost god of our bodily form. If you only understand how to swallow *qi*, gulp spittle, clack your teeth, and consume saliva, but do not understand the reasons behind it, the streams that emerge from your Muddy Pellet will flow into one of the peripheral branches in your brain.²⁷

夫泥丸天帝三一君者，乃一神之靈宗，百神之命根，津液之山源，魂精之玉室。是以胃池體方而受物，腦宮員虛而適真，萬穴植立，千孔生煙，德修天地，混同太玄，故名之曰「泥丸」者，軀形之上神也。兆唯知吞炁咽唾，鳴齒納液，而不知此所因者，乃泥丸之流末、腦家之邊枝耳。

Now I will tell you of the esoteric arts you can use to guard the Ones, which will enable you to become a Perfected [being] of the upper Transcendents.

今將告子，趣彼守一之祕術，得為上仙之真人。

When a disciple undergoes initiation, he must perform a purification ritual for forty-five days. Once this is complete, the [method] can be transmitted.

弟子受者，齋四十五日。畢，乃傳。

You will then make a contract that you will penetrate the Ones by wrapping thirty *chi* of azure cords around three golden rings. It is not necessary to announce this pledge. Your master will accept the pledge items on your behalf. Since he lives perched in the mountains without the need for money, he will toss the gifts out into the street for those who are gravely ill. There is no way that these items can be misappropriated, so do not worry about the loss of your personal property. If you go against this contract and do not offer the items, you will become a lower ghost upon dying. You will then be subjected to the trials of walking through windblown knives.

37a

用青繒三十尺、金環三枚，以為洞一之約，勿宣之盟誓矣。經師受此盟物，以待林澤山栖窮乏，以投行路急病之困；不得妄用，贍己之私矣。違而不奉，死為下鬼，受風刀之考。

When this method is transmitted between fathers and sons, the pledge must accord with the rules. But when transmission takes place, they must wholeheartedly treat one another like master and disciple; this is based on the laws between heavens and people. Keep your mind on this single teaching and respect it with all your heart; be thankful for receiving its transmission. Those who ask for the teachings are disciples, while those who possess the scripture and guard its methods are the masters. How could a person who “taps both ends of a question” ever guard the Ones?²⁸

父子傳授，亦盟如科，傳授此經，厚相師友，此天人之法也。服膺一教，丹心奉一，為厚受教。問津為弟子，有經保法者曰師也。兩端有問者，則非守一之才也。

The method of guarding the Ones should be conducted on each of the eight nodal days, just as it is described above. At midnight, sit upright, face east, swallow *qi* nine times, and gulp spittle five times. Once this done, actualize the seven stars of the Big Dipper. It will come down slowly until it rests above your head. It should “recede toward heaven,” meaning that [the Dipper’s]

37b handle will point away from you toward the east. Two stars, Solar Radiance and Shadowy Essence, will be behind you while two other stars, Mysterious Darkness and Perfected Being, will be in front of you.

守一之法：依前至八節之日、夜半之時，正坐東向，服炁九通，咽唾五過。畢，乃存北斗七星，冉冉來下，在我頂上，却向天，以杓柄正向前，指東，陽明、陰精二星在後面，玄冥、真人二星在前面。

Actualize them in your mind as if they were really in their respective places. Next, meditate on the venerable lords of the Three Ones. Suddenly they will come into being, and they will appear together in the bowl of the Dipper. Before long, the three chamberlain lords will also appear in the same way as the Three Worthies. After a short while, you will see these six ascend together to Mysterious Darkness, and they will head east, passing the handle of the Dipper, until they reach Heaven's Gate and stop, at which point they will all turn toward your mouth.

於是鬢鬚存念位定，又思三一之尊君，忽乃變生，共出在斗魁之中。須臾，三卿君復生如三尊。須臾，見六人俱登玄冥，剛行東去，達天闕而止，俱向我口。

Then you will actualize these deities again and will see the Upper Prime holding hands with his upper chamberlain, the Middle Prime holding hands with his middle chamberlain, and the Lower Prime holding hands with his lower chamberlain. After this, breathe their *qi* in once, very deeply. The two beings of the Upper Prime will follow this *qi* and will enter your mouth. They will ascend and return to the Muddy Pellet Palace. Once this happens, breathe this *qi* in once more, very deeply. The Middle Prime and his minister follow with the breath and enter your mouth. They descend and return to the Crimson Palace. Thereafter, breathe in once more, very deeply. The Lower Primordial and his minister will follow with your breath and enter your mouth. They descend and return to the lower Cinnabar Field.

38a

又存見上元手扶上卿，中元手扶中卿，下元手扶下卿也。我乃咽炁一通，良久，上元二人從炁中來入我口，上昇還泥丸宮；次咽炁一過，良久，中元二人

從炁中來入我口，下廻還絳宮中；次咽炁一過，良久，下元二人從炁中來入我口，下廻還入下丹田中。

Then you will actualize Heaven's Gate star and bring it down before your mouth at a distance of seven *chi*. The Three Ones will make their entrance into your three palaces. When all this is finished, meditate on the Perfected Ones and be sure they are at ease in their respective palaces. Next, sit or lie down and meditate on their forms in your mind. Whatever wishes you have, you should use your mind to convey them. If you have something you want to request, you should use your mind to express it. Meditation requires peaceful surroundings, so find solitude in your bedchamber. It is fine to do this meditation in the morning light.

存天關星，令去口七尺，令對口前，三一入我三宮中。都畢，乃精念真一君，各安所在。坐臥，思之在心。心有所願事，心啟之；所求者，亦心啟求之。存思唯令靜寂。靜寂寢室，晝日亦可存思。

On the “inception of spring,” actualize the Three Ones while facing east. On the “the inception of summer” (May 5), actualize the Three Ones while facing south. On the “the inception of autumn” (August 7), actualize the Three Ones while facing west. On the “the inception of winter” (November 7), actualize the Three Ones while facing north. You should meditate on these other days just like you did on “inception of spring.”

立春存三一，東向；立夏存三一，南向；立秋存三一，西向；立冬存三一，北向。並如立春精思。

On the “vernal parting” (March 21), take a bath and conduct purification rites. At midnight, enter into your chamber and burn incense. Face the east and clack your teeth together nine times. With your eyes shut, actualize the Three Ones of your three corporeal palaces, as well as their chamberlains and yourself. Group these seven beings together in the center of your body. This group will ride en masse atop vapor of purple *qi* and ascend to the Solar Radiance star of the Dipper. (The Solar Radiance star is the eastern spirit

of the Dipper). You will next actualize that this group of seven is entering into the star and sitting down to inhale thirty breaths of purple *qi*. After doing this for a long time, the Solar Radiance Star's Most High Palace of the Eastern Prime will appear before you. The Lesser Lad of Azure Mystery will be in this palace and will bestow a Perfected beam of light. You will then actualize a purple *qi* as big as a bowstring beneath the stars of the Dipper. It will come down from above and come before you. At this point, actualize the Three Ones, and when this is complete, incant the following:

至春分日，沐浴清齋，夜半時入室燒香，東向叩齒九通，冥目存我身中三宮三一、三卿及我，合七人，我存中央，俱乘紫炁之煙，共登北斗陽明星。陽明星者，北斗之東神也。於是存入星中，共坐，吞紫炁三十過。行之久久，自見陽明星東元太上宮，宮中有青玄小童，授予真光也。皆悉先存北斗星下紫炁，大如絃，從上直注我前，然後乃存三一也。存思畢，乃微祝曰：

From the five directions, I govern the Dipper,	五方命斗
Which brings down spirits from the seven stars.	神致七星
These Three Worthies who congeal and transform,	三尊凝化
Are the purple numina that we upwardly beckon.	上招紫靈
The six spirits pace to and fro,	六神徘徊
Within the walls of the three cinnabar palaces.	三丹宮城
I can mysteriously reach the Great Thearch,	玄通大帝
And downwardly penetrate Yellow Tranquility. ²⁹	下洞黃寧
The celestial Perfected will protect and safeguard,	天真保衛
As I summon and employ the six <i>ding</i> .	召引六丁
Divine Transcendents drift up alongside me,	神仙同浮
As we ride the vapors to Grand Clarity.	乘煙太清
My four limbs become firm and imperishable,	四體堅練
My five viscera are born of themselves. ³⁰	五藏自生

39a Once finished, wait until “summer arrival” (June 21) and enter your chamber at midnight. Burn incense, clack your teeth together twelve times, face south,

and close your eyes. Actualize the Three Ones of your three corporeal palaces, as well as their chamberlains and yourself. Group these seven beings together in the center of your body. [This group] will ride en masse atop vapor of purple *qi*, and ascend to the Cinnabar Prime star of the Northern Dipper. (The Cinnabar Prime star is the southern spirit of the Dipper.) Thereafter, you will actualize that you are entering the star and sitting down. Swallow thirty rounds of purple *qi*. After a long time, the Cinnabar Prime Star's Most High Palace of Southern Culmen will appear before you. The Numinous Consort of Vermilion Solarity will be in this palace, and will give you a crimson book and bejeweled clothes. Once this is finished, you will make the incantation just like the previous ritual.

畢。至夏至日，夜半時入室燒香，叩齒十二通，南向冥目，存我身中三宮三一、三卿及我，合七人，我在中央也。俱乘紫炁之煙，共登北斗丹元星。丹元星者，北斗之南神也。於是存入星中共坐，吞紫炁三十過。行之久久，自見丹元星南極太上宮，宮中有朱陽靈妃，授子絳書寶衣也。存思畢，呪如上法。

On “autumnal parting” (September 23), take a bath and conduct a purification rite. At midnight, enter your chamber and burn incense. Sit at ease, face west, and clack your teeth together nine times.³¹ With your eyes nearly closed, actualize the Three Ones of the corporeal palaces, as well as their chamberlains and yourself. Group these seven beings together in the center of your body. This group will ride en masse atop vapor of purple *qi* and ascend to the Shadowy Essence star of the Dipper. (The Shadowy Essence star is the western spirit of the Dipper.) Thereafter, you will actualize yourself entering the star and sitting down to swallow thirty rounds of purple *qi*. After doing this for long time, the Shadowy Essence Star's Most High Palace of the Western Prime will appear before you. Inside, the Junior Maiden of White Immaculacy will transmit the *Tiger Book of Jade Stanzas* to you.³² Once this actualization is complete, you will make the incantation similar to the ones in the previous rituals.

39b

至秋分日，夜半時入室燒香，平坐西向，叩齒十二通，冥目存我身中三宮三一、三卿及我，合七人，我在中央也。俱乘紫炁之煙，共登北斗陰精星。陰

精星者，北斗之西神也。於是存入星中共坐，吞紫炁三十過。行之久久，自見陰精星西元太上宮，宮中有白素少女，授子《玉章虎書》也。存思畢，呪如上法。

At midnight on the nodal day of winter, enter your chamber, light incense, and sit at ease while facing north.³³ Clack your teeth together twelve times, and with your eyes barely closed, actualize the Three Ones of your corporeal palaces, as well as the chamberlains and yourself. Group these seven beings together in the center of your body. This group will ride en masse atop vapor of purple *qi* and ascend to the Northern Culmen star of the Dipper. (The Northern Culmen star is the dark spirit of the Dipper.) Thereafter, actualize this group [of beings] entering the star and sitting down to swallow thirty rounds of purple *qi*. After doing this for long time, the Northern Culmen star's Most High Palace of the Northern Prime will appear before you. The Perfected Being of Mysterious Essence will be in this palace and will transmit a golden book of esoteric characters, the *Astral Rotation of the Three-Five*. Once this actualization is complete, you will make the incantation similar to the ones in the previous rituals.

40a

至冬節之日，夜半入室燒香，平坐北向，叩齒十二通，冥目存我身中三宮，三一、三卿及我，合七人，我在中央也。俱乘紫炁之煙，共登北斗北極星。北極星者，北斗之玄神也。於是存入星中央共坐，各吞紫炁三十過。行之久久，自見北極星北元太上宮，宮中有玄精真人，授子金書祕字《三五順行》。存思畢，呪同上法。

These [methods of] actualization will ensure that the Three Ones rest safely in their palaces. You will clack your teeth twenty-four times, look up, and incant the following:

存思令三一各安本宮，又叩齒二十四通，仰祝曰：

Three worthies of upper Perfection,
Oh, high spirits of Grand Mystery.
Govern spring with Solar Radiance,³⁴
At which time ten thousand lads open the gates.

三尊上真
太玄高神
陽明主春
萬童開門

Govern summer with Cinnabar Prime, ³⁵	丹元主夏
By fusing scarlet and purple vapors.	朱紫合煙
Govern autumn with Shadowy Essence, ³⁶	陰精主秋
When heavens' wrath [spreads] to the six <i>chen</i> . ³⁷	天威六陳
Govern winter with Northern Culmen, ³⁸	北極主冬
When a myriad of evils will be obstructed.	萬邪塞軒
The five earths [are positioned at] <i>geng</i> and <i>ren</i> , ³⁹	五土庚壬
While <i>wu</i> and <i>ji</i> mark Heaven's Gate. ⁴⁰	戊己天關
Anything you topple will be decimated,	所摧皆滅
For nothing can run counter to your wishes.	所向莫干
Cultivate now my seven white-souls,	練我七魄
And harmonize my three cloud-souls.	和我三魂
May you arise within my five viscera,	生我五藏
For this will help me attain perfection.	使我得真
I will thereafter soar up to Upper Clarity,	飛登上清
And float effortlessly over the seven primes.	浮景七元
Long life will follow thereafter,	長生順往
For I command every spirit with a soft sigh. ⁴¹	嘯命千神

On each of the four nodal [days], make sure to add this incantation. For those adepts that are more experienced, they can conduct all four rituals on a single nodal [day]. Beginners, however, should keep things simple and stick to [rituals] for one nodal [day].

40b

畢。此四節，亦共此一呪。然上達學士，至一節行事，亦并思四節也。始學者至一節，便單行也。

This miraculous ritual for the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes should only be transmitted to people with the postmortem rank of an upper Perfected. This is not something that can be transmitted to mediocre Transcendents. For those who possess this text but have not had a chance to begin cultivation in earnest, they should begin serving the Three Ones by

making oblations and burning incense day and night. The Three Ones are always within your body and will help mitigate disasters, cast away evil, and will ward off calamities. They will not, however, necessarily provide you with a cloudy phaeton to ascend to the heavens.

此三元真一妙法，法傳上真之士，不傳中仙之才也。有此文而未獲修行，朝夕禮拜燒香，供養三一，亦常在子身也，亦為子禳災辟惡，消却不祥，但不致於雲輿耳。

[Lord of the Great Dao] Most High announces: The Perfected beings of the Three Ones are relatively easy to move through sympathetic resonance. You must undergo a period of intense meditation for three straight months. The Perfected image of the Three Ones will thereafter appear and speak to you. When people study something they must first have resolve and thereafter can never be lax. If you are able to produce something early on but then change [your mind] midway, it will be as if you have resolve without any fortitude. Without fortitude, you will not be steadfast, and this will result in the lack of sympathetic resonance [between you and the Three Ones]. Heaven never tricks people, but reveals itself through echoes. The earth likewise does not trick people, but responds to them in shadows. If the echoes do not reach you, the gods will distance themselves. Thus, if the celestial Perfected do not give you a sign, it is due to your failings.

太上告曰：三一之真，易而致感，精思苦念，三月不倦，三一便見真形對言。人之為學，皆有先志而未怠，初成而中替，悉由有志而不堅，堅而不固，便致不應。天不欺人，示之以響；地不欺人，應之以影。響不至，神便遠也。此豈天真不驗，由於子身爾。

For those cultivating the “guarding the Ones” method, first incant the Thearchical Lord’s immaculate words before arranging the passes of the six repositories and opening your Mysterious Trigger.⁴² This will ensure that the residence of the Ruddy Infant is fixed, the fragrant polypores overflow throughout your body, and the divine blossoms are internally blooming.

If you cultivate the “guarding the Ones” method, it will be easy for you to sympathetically resonate with the Perfected. These teachings (Dao) are secret and wondrous; those who practice it will be divine Transcendents. After nine years of practice, you will ascend to heaven in broad daylight.

41a

凡修守一之道，皆當先行帝君素語之呪，以理六府之關，開瑩幽機，令赤子定宅，芳芝流溢，神華內生，於修守一，易為真感。其道祕妙，得者神仙。修行九年，白日昇天。

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Three [Palaces] and Nine [Openings]

The Most High Writs with Instructions for Esoteric Incantations of the Three [Palaces] and Nine [Openings'] Immaculate Words

太上三九素語內咒訣文

All the immaculate words of Upper Clarity's Cinnabar Numen are immaculate incantations of thearchical lords. These incantations will help you cleanse the nine openings and recognize the three palaces.¹ This is why it is called "Three and Nine." On your natal days, or at any time when you are using the various scriptures, you should first light incense on your left and right and properly adjust your ritual vestments. After you have entered your chamber, sit at ease. Close your eyes until they are nearly shut, and then silently make the following incantations. Within one hundred days, your *qi* will harmonize and your spirits will rise, as your Ruddy Infant will be delighted. The Perfected numina will descend to you, and your face will emit a jade luster. Your body will produce a peculiar light that penetrates the mysterious and subtle. By this point, you will be able to converse with spirits. If you do this for nine years, you will ride the clouds and fly all the way to a feast in Grand Clarity.

上清丹靈素語者，皆帝君之素呪，以理九孔，通鮮三宮，故號「三九」焉。每以本命之日，及修行眾經之時，皆先燒香左右，整束法服，入室平坐，冥目陰呪。百日之中，則炁和神暢，赤子歡悅，真靈下降，面發玉澤，體生奇光，洞徹幽微，與神共言。如此九年，乘雲飛行，遊宴太清也。

The First Esoteric Incantation of Immaculate Words—Grand Thearchical Lord

太帝君素語內咒第一

Go alone to a quiescent chamber, sit at ease while facing east. Clack your teeth together nine times. With your eyes nearly closed, silently incant the following:

靜室獨處，平坐東向，叩齒九通，冥目，陰祝曰：

Great Numen of Verdant Prime, ²	蒼元浩靈
Master of the Lesser Solarity,	少陽先生
Return the nine <i>qi</i> back to my liver, ³	九炁還肝
In order that my cloud-souls will be at peace.	使我魂寧
My dark repositories will blossom,	幽府結華
The inside of my viscera will brightly shine.	藏內鮮明
Refine my visage with firm marrow,	鍊容固髓
And my white hair will become dark again.	返白為青
May this divine transformation begin within,	神化內發
For my phosphors will shine on my Purple Court.	景發紫庭
Who would possibly dare to test me,	敢有犯試
For would they not topple under my fiery bells? ⁴	摧以流鈴
Rise to the jade registers of the Thearchs,	上帝玉籞
To mark my name high in Grand Clarity. ⁵	名上太清

After this, block your breath nine times and swallow your saliva nine times before stopping.

畢。因閉炁九息，咽液九過，止。

The Second Esoteric Incantation of Immaculate Words—Celestial Thearchical Lord

天帝君素語內咒第二

Face due south with your eyes nearly closed. Clack your teeth together three times and silently incant the following:

正南向，冥目，叩齒三通，陰呪曰：

In a red courtyard of the Crimson Palace, ⁶	赤庭絳宮
Is an upper Perfected being on high.	上有高真
Who returns the three <i>qi</i> back to my heart,	三炁歸心
For this god is my Cinnabar Prime.	是我丹元
Soar upward with my purified body,	騰我淨躬
And then broadly announce it for all to hear.	逕奏以聞
Once my heart is fixed and my spirits are quiet,	心固神靜
My Nine Numina will be guarded tightly. ⁷	九靈閉關
The inner reflections of the golden Perfected,	金真內映
Form clouds among the purple vapors.	紫煙結雲
The green letters of Grand Tenuity, ⁸	太微綠字
Record my name as a divine Transcendent.	書名神仙
I will hereafter soar off to Upper Clarity,	飛行上清
And call upon the thearchical worthies. ⁹	朝謁帝尊

After this, block your breath three times and swallow your saliva three times before stopping.

畢。閉炁三息，咽液三過，止。

The Third Esoteric Incantation of Immaculate Words—Upper Primal Lord of Southern Culmen

南極上元君素語內咒第三

Face due west with your eyes nearly closed. Clack your teeth together seven times and silently incant the following:

正西向，冥目，叩齒七通，陰呪曰：

The Immaculate Prime of the Grotto Barrens,	素元洞虛
Within the divine shanty of the celestial Perfected.	天真神廬
Use seven <i>qi</i> to guard my lungs,	七炁守肺
So I may live alongside the deities.	與神同居
Preserve and refine my jade repositories, ¹⁰	保練玉藏
So that they bloom forth flowers in profusion.	含華秀敷
May I be pure and sincere like the Bright Stone, ¹¹	澄誠明石
To roam and command over the Mystic Barrens.	遊御玄虛
May jade letters appear on golden slips,	玉字金簡
In the Perfected books of the Nine Thearchs. ¹²	九帝真書
And I will become a flying Transcendent,	使我飛仙
Whose time of death will henceforth be erased.	死名已除
May I saunter in the grottoes of Three Clarities,	遊洞三清
So that I may do whatever I please. ¹³	適意所如

After this, block your breath seven times and swallow your saliva seven times before stopping.

畢。因閉炁七息，咽唾七過。止。

The Fourth Esoteric Incantation of Immaculate Words—Thearchical Lord of Grand Tenuity Heaven

太微天帝君素語內咒第四

Face in the direction your natal year with your eyes nearly closed. Clack your teeth together twelve times and silently incant the following:

42b

正向本年命之上，冥目，叩齒十二，通陰祝曰：

The central Thearch of the Yellow Prime,	黃元中帝
Is the spirit of the year in which I was born.	本命之神
With a single <i>qi</i> he attends to my spleen,	一炁侍脾
And makes me able to attain Perfection.	使我得真
Blossoms bud from bejeweled repositories,	寶藏生華
To knot a web over the Purple Dawn [palaces].	結絡紫晨
He transforms shapes to refine my countenance,	變景鍊容
To protect my life and extend my years.	保命長延
I shall not wither away like other things,	後物而傾
For a thousand spirits come to my aid.	千神來臣
On the mysterious registers of Lord Lao,	老君玄籙
My name is recorded as a divine Transcendent.	書名神仙
This lengthens my life and extends my vision,	長生久視
So that I will exist alongside heaven. ¹⁴	與天同存

After this, block your breath one time and swallow your saliva twelve times before stopping.

畢。因閉炁一息，咽唾十二過。止。

The Fifth Esoteric Incantation of Immaculate Words—The Latter [Age] Sage and Thearchical Lord

後聖帝君素語內咒第五

Face due north with your eyes nearly closed, clack your teeth together five times and silently incant the following:

正北向，冥目，叩齒五通，陰祝曰：

Mystic Prime of the Northern Culmen,	玄元北極
Is the uppermost motive force.	太上之機
Five <i>qi</i> guard my kidneys,	五炁衛腎
And makes turtle jade [vessels] jagged.	龜玉參差
Bejeweled blossoms knot in nets,	寶華結絡
So my stomach viscera will brighten and open.	胃藏朗開
Write my name on jade slips,	著名玉札
So that my age will match the Two Mechanisms. ¹⁵	年同二儀
The upper sovereign, the grand thearch,	上皇太帝
Will head straight up without err.	峙然不迷
He will send forth the six <i>jia</i> officers,	役使六甲
And call upon the eight mighty beings. ¹⁶	以致八威
After harnessing dragons we drive by floating,	驂龍駕浮
To head far away and soar above.	超然昇飛
I will breathe out and consume divine polypores,	吐納神芝
That will never rot in the cataclysmic cycles. ¹⁷	歷劫不衰

43a

After this, block your breath five times and swallow your saliva five times before stopping.

畢。閉炁五息，咽唾五過，止。

The Sixth Esoteric Incantation of Immaculate Words—The Assembly of Perfected

眾真素語內咒第六

You will then face due east and actualize the *qi* of the five directions. After this is done, gulp [*qi*] nine times, then clack your teeth together nine times. Once you are finished, face north again and silently incant the following:

還東向，存五方之炁都畢，又咽唾九過，叩齒九通。畢，北向再拜，陰祝曰：

Respectfully, I speak to the four Perfected lords 謹白太上太極四真君
of Taiji most high,
Allow me to actualize five spirits of the five 請存五方五帝五靈神
Thearchs in five directions,
Inscribe my green letters, 刻其綠字
So I can ride my carriage in the ten heavens. 驂駕十天
Bind a myriad apparitions with your *qi*, 萬祆束炁
So that every perverse spirit will lack vapor. 署邪絕煙
Let [insert your name] see you, 使某相見
And hear your voice.¹⁸ 得其語言
After this, begin your meditation. 畢，乃精思。

[Lord of the Great Dao] Most High announces, “You must first recognize the Three Palaces before cultivating the methods of this scripture (e.g., actualizing divine Perfected or Guarding the Ones), for this will open your nine apertures and calibrate your five viscera. Otherwise, your bodily spirits will become miserable, the Perfected numina will not descend, and you will waste all your efforts in meditation without receiving a single benefit. If you are zealous, focus your efforts on doing the [three and nine] rituals.”

43b

太上曰：「凡欲修行經方，存念神真、守一之法，不先通釋三宮，開明九孔，調理五府，然後修行，則神炁不懽，真靈不降，亦徒勞於精思，無益於自補也。有志者，精行其事。」

When you have finished the immaculate incantations of the five directions, resume actualizing [the Three Palaces]. At this point, the configuration of your body's *qi* will be harmoniously balanced, and your inner spirits will be joyfully elated. Every single god who is the counterpart [of an inner spirit] will clearly manifest. If you zealously apply yourself, there is no doubt you will become a divine Transcendent. This advanced method is most miraculous and should not be translated to those who are not worthies.

五方素呪訖，還存思，炁理和調，內神欣喜，影響相對，无不朗然也。兆勤勗之，必得神仙。至妙上法，非賢不傳。

Any adept who cultivates methods for long life and seeks methods to ascend to the heavens in broad daylight must first undergo the trials of conducting purification rites. This will enable the advanced adept to call down gods simply by looking into the clouds and auroras, or inspire gods to respond simply by thinking of vacuity and nothingness. This is not a lie!

凡修長生之道，白日昇晨之法，每當清齋苦念為先。故至人之學，望雲霞而致降，思虛無而致感者，豈復虛謬哉！

The celestial Dao is mysterious and silent,	天道玄默
Gazing at it makes you feel soothing and serene. ¹⁹	望之泯泯
You, my child, truly have a mind,	子既有心
That tranquilizes your body through actualization.	安存子身
Your resolve grows out of the sincerest intentions,	決由精誠
With steadfastness may you sustain Perfection.	守固握真
The Dao is not that far in the distance,	道不期遠
So simply do this meditation for a few years.	正存數年
Its <i>qi</i> will enable us to respond to one another,	與炁相應
And the Dao will soon descend unto you. ²⁰	道便降焉

These are the wondrous instructions from the Most High [Lord of the Dao] on how to attain divine transcendence.

44a

此太上之妙訣，得者神仙。

Everything you learn will progress from lower to higher [rituals], and you should cultivate them in a specific order.²¹ Do not do more or less than what is allowed, for this would violate the rules of heaven's codes. Scriptures come in three grades, and these teachings (Dao) have three perfections. Great glyphs in heavenly writing of the *Esoteric Writs of the Three Sovereigns*,²² the registers of the Nine Heavens,²³ and the method of the yellow-white:²⁴ these [texts] will enable you to harness your reins [and ride into] the dark empyrean, as well as circle around the five marchmounts. They are, therefore, texts of the lowest grade.

凡學當從下上，按次而修，不得越略，虧天科條。經有三品，道有三真。三皇內文天文大字、九天之籙、黃白之道，亦得控轡玄霄，遊盤五岳，故為下品之第。

The Numinous Treasure's cavernous mystery emerged in the era of Primordial Commencement. It is like a deep mystery of an abysmal spring, wondrous miracle of a cavernous font, the fragrant orchids of purity, and the gleaming sublimity of the five ascendant [talismans].²⁵ These texts save your seven generations of ancestors by releasing them from the roots of their transgressions. Furthermore, the texts will cause Perfected beings to descend, after which you can fly off to the Grand Clarity heaven. These are the marvels of the middle class of scriptures and the lower methods of earth Transcendents.

靈寶洞玄，亦元始俱生，淵泉深奧，妙趣洞源，齋淨芳蘭，五稱映玄，拔度七祖，解釋罪根，亦致真人下降，飛騰太清，中品之妙，下方地仙。

44b

The scriptures with the methods of Upper Clarity are the concealed wris of the Grand Cinnabar Palace. There are three hundred precious names of scriptures, as well as nine thousand instructions written on jade [slips]. These texts make up the premier catalogue of the upper Perfected and are esoteric fascicles of the Jade Thearch. Any adept who possesses these texts will have his or her name verified in green letters upon the jade slips of the Azure Palace. They may also ascend to the stars in broad daylight and arrive at the thearchical hall. The instructions for these top-tier [scriptures] are secretly stored on high in the nine heavens in the Great Existence Palace. Adepts should begin with the lowest class of scriptures and move their way up to Upper Clarity.

上清道經、太丹隱書，凡三百寶名，玉訣九千。此上真之首目、玉帝之內篇，得者名參玉簡，錄字青宮，白日昇晨，上造帝堂。上品之訣，祕在九天之上、大有之宮。夫學當從下品，造於上清也。

The Dao is made up of Three Wonders. The first of these Wonders is the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas*. The second Wonder is the *Precious Scripture [on the Five Ancient Lords, Jade Seal] of the Feminine One*. The third Wonder is the *Most High Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] That Penetrates the Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]*. These [Three Wonders] can only be transmitted to adepts who are Perfected beings; do not transmit them to novices. For adepts with the great fortune of coming in possession [of the three wonders], do not carelessly reproduce these numinous wris. All the methods in these texts should first be studied and cultivated, which will lead an adept toward perfection. Whoever masters these methods will definitely reach transcendence. All adepts should treat these words with great respect; do not go against these commands.

道有三奇：第一之奇，《大洞真經三十九章》；第二之奇，《雌一寶經》；第三之奇，《太上素靈洞元大有妙經》。此傳已成真人，不傳於始學也。忽遇因緣，得見篇題，不得便妄披於靈文，皆當先練涉學，然後造真。道无不備，萬無不仙，學者詳而奉之，勿虧此言。

There will not be one adept in ten thousand who can attain the Dao without first mastering the *Codes*. The *Codes* are intended to guard against infractions. So if an adept knows the *Codes*, he or she will be able to make the necessary changes to cause spontaneous resonance with the Perfected. There are nine grades of the *Code of the Grand Perfected*; each grade has twelve entries. The *Code of the Nine Perfected* has three grades; each grade has nine entries. The *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities* has four grades; each grade has twenty-four entries. These help adepts keep a close watch over the rules concerning the relative value of blessings and transgressions. Therefore, it is best that adepts first seek out the *Codes*, as they provide a simple practice for those who are just starting. It will thus not be necessary to obtain the various scriptures.

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學道不先備科而學，亦萬無成也。科以制犯，知科便改，自然應真也。《太真科》有九品，品有十二條。《九真科》有三品，品有九條。《四極明科》有四品，品有二十四條。誠於輕重罪福之制，故學者宜先尋之。此科亦單行於始學，不必悉備於眾經也。

The *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected*, which is in the jade records of the *Most High [Wondrous Scripture of] the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace That Penetrates the Mystery of] the Great Existence [Heaven]*, is only to be transmitted to people who have Perfected bones. At the beginning of the Upper Monarch era, the ancient scriptures were to be transmitted only once every ten thousand epochs.²⁶ But once the Three Heavens were established, it was determined that these texts could be transmitted three times every seven thousand years.²⁷ But these texts can be transmitted up to three times in a seven-hundred-year period, if the right people are born.

太上素靈大有玉篇、九真明科，皆傳骨相合真之人。依上皇之初，舊經萬劫一傳；三天立正，改七千年聽得三傳，七百年內有其人，亦聽三傳。

According to the [*Illustrious*] *Code*, you must remit a payment of three taels of fine gold, a hundred *chi* of purple embroidery, twenty-seven *chi* of azure silk, five taels of red silken threads, one catty of aloeswood incense, and

one tael of cinnabar. You will need to contact a master who will conduct a hundred-day purification rite; a thirty-day rite is also permissible. You must make an oath before the Northern Thearch of the Nine Primes, the grand numina, the manifold Perfected, and the jade officers of Transcendents by offering the pledge gifts and promising to keep this a precious secret.²⁸ If you cultivate these numinous writs, be sure to not divulge to others or reveal any part of these divine and Perfected writs. Any violation of this contract should be dealt with according to the *Code*. Otherwise, calamities will befall your nine generations of ancestors, for their cloud-souls will die after being interrogated and flogged. They will be locked up for long periods in subterranean prisons. They will not be paroled for a thousand epochs, their bodies will be so severely damaged that, in the end, they will not reach Transcendence.

按科齋上金三兩，紫紋百尺，青繒二十七尺，赤絲五兩，沉香一斤，丹一兩，詣師造齋百日，或三十日，上誓九元北帝太靈萬真領仙玉司，以為盟信，誓約寶祕。修行靈文，不得輕泄，宣靈神真。愆盟負科，殃及九祖，考撻死魂，長閉地獄，萬劫不原；身沒形殘，終不得仙。

All those who receive the [*Most High Wondrous Scripture of] the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] That Penetrates the Mystery of [the Great Existence Heaven]*] are bestowed this text at appointed times; if this chance passes, there will be no way to [transmit the text] at a later time. If the methods are completed, Perfected beings will descend, and you can rise up to the heavens in broad daylight. You will disappear by “simulated release” and will leave no trace in this world.²⁹ If you have a disciple to whom you can give this [scripture], you may take an oral contract and transmit [this text]. If there is no one to whom you can give this text, you should place the scripture in a high empty chamber so that future generations will not be able to see it. Those who go against this directive will have a string of calamities befall them. Adepts should take caution with this matter.

凡受《素靈洞玄》，當依年限而傳，過此不得復出。若道備真降，白日超騰，乃隱化託解，滅迹去世。有可付弟子，便口盟而授也。若无其人，當與經俱昇虛室，无留下世，使人見聞。犯者殃譴累身，學者慎焉。

All those who receive the divine scriptures of the three treasures should hold a purification rite in a detached chamber. Burn incense and offer ritual oblations in the morning and in the evening. Do this as though you were serving your lord or father; do not eat anything or go anywhere that is defiled. If you do not treat these precious scriptures with respect, the Jade Lad will make a report, and the matter will be taken up with the jade directors. You will then undergo interrogation of the “winds and knives,” which could put your nine generations of ancestors in great peril. Your body might be lost in a disaster, which means that you would by default lose the scripture, as well as any chance you have of becoming a Transcendent.

46a

凡受三寶神經，常當清齋，別室燒香，朝夕禮拜，如奉君父，不得胃穢履淹，輕慢寶輕，為玉童所奏，玉司所執，身被風刀之考，殃延九祖，禍滅於身，自然失經，終不得仙。

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Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected

(5a) The High Ritual that Grand Perfected [Use to] Seek Transcendence by a Secret Court

太真隱朝求仙上法

All those who receive [transmission] of the [*Most High*] *Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] That Penetrates the Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]*] should use this high secret instruction: Secretly hold an audience with the Celestial King of Primordial Commencement, the elder of the grand Perfected, and the Perfected king of the nine heavens, three days of each lunar month (the first, fifteenth, and twenty-fifth days).¹ On these [three] days you will bathe, enter a chamber, burn incense, face northward, and bow six times. Kneel respectfully, clack your teeth together nine times, and make the following incantation:

凡受《素靈洞元大有妙經》，施行上訣，常以月一日、十五日、二十五日，一月三過，隱朝元始天王、太真丈人、九天真王。其日沐浴，入室燒香，北向六拜，長跪叩齒九通，呪曰：

I submit this report to the Celestial King of Primordial Commencement, the elder of the grand Perfected, and the Perfected king of the nine heavens. This novice (insert name) now tells you:²

上啟元始天王、太真丈人、九天真王：小兆王甲今有言，

46b

With great respect on this auspicious day,	謹以吉日
I make ritual oblations to the high heavens.	拜禮上天
I beg and implore the divine Transcendents,	乞願神仙
To place my name up on the jade books.	上名玉篇
May my bones engender jade marrow,	骨生玉髓
And my body transform into a golden Perfected.	肉化金真
Cinnabar and polypores mysteriously pour in,	丹芝玄注
And fill my chamber with purple vapors.	室生紫煙
Knotted network of my divine viscera,	神藏結絡
Embryonic Transcendent of my inner phosphors. ³	內景胎仙
Will make my body survive a myriad of epochs,	身履萬劫
And I will long serve in the Thearch's levee. ⁴	長侍帝晨

After this, rise up and then bow down again. You can also use your mind to imagine yourself bowing down. Clack your teeth together three times and then swallow your saliva three times before stopping. This is a higher ritual for seeking transcendence through holding a secret court. If you cultivate this method for seven years, you will see the Perfected numina appear before you. They will be counterpart phosphors in your secluded chamber, and will speak with you. If you hold court and do not miss [the proper] day, you can become a flying Transcendent. You will ride in the harness by harnessing vacuity and ascend into the dawn during broad daylight.

畢。起，再拜，亦可心拜。又叩齒三通，咽唾三過，止。此隱朝求仙上法。修之七年，真靈見形，對景寂室，與子共言。朝不虧日，克得飛仙，乘空駕虛，白日昇晨。

(5b) *Most High Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected*

太上九真明科

The Three Grades of Rules

三品律

The Most High [Lord of the Dao] announced to the thearchical kings of all the heavens, the Latter [Age] Sage and Thearchical Lord, the Upper Minister (the Azure Lad), and the Perfected beings of Taiji:

太上告諸天帝王、後聖帝君、上相青童、太極真人曰：

“All adepts who have seen the upper Perfected [portion of] the secret scriptures and precious stanzas of the Three Grottoes have their names written in golden characters up in the Eastern Floriate [Palace] of the Upper Clarity [Heaven]. Although they have yet to cross over by taking up the reins for [passage into the] Purple Court, they are nevertheless people who will be promoted for salvation.

47a

「凡是後學，得見上真三洞寶章、祕經首目者，皆東華書名，金字上清，雖未超騰，控轡紫庭，皆是昇度之人也。」

“But even if these adepts have seen these scriptures, they will not be able to open them up and start reading unless they know about the different grades of rules and rituals in the *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected*, the books of the highest Perfected treasures of the three grottoes’ Three Wonders. The *Illustrious Code* is guarded and secretly hidden in a palace in the Mysterious Metropolis, where it is kept in a golden room on Jade Capital [Mountain]. It does not circulate in the human world. This [Code] illuminates the deep profundity of the Three Grottoes and proclaims the ritual norms of

the Perfected assembly. It also removes predestined litigations [lodged] in tenebrous palaces and saves seven generations of your ancestors [by placing their names on] Transcendent registers.⁵ Since this will cover all of the manifold methods, the officials in the Nine Yin will surely strike all your inherited guilt.⁶ The miraculous [benefits of the *Code*] can be obtained right away since all of its rules have been carefully crafted. It is for this reason that I now eulogize the third wonder, the [*Most High*] *Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* [*Celestial Palace That Penetrates the Mystery of the Great Existence Heaven*], by proclaiming a three-tier catalogue of [scriptural] titles. You can use it to admonish adepts by making them strive toward lofty [virtues] by being cautious [about the rules] in the precious *Code*.”

然雖見此文，而不知《九真明科》條檢儀式、三洞奇文太上真寶書，不可得而便披也。明科寶祕藏於玄都之宮、玉京金房之內，不傳於世。此乃明三洞之淵
蹟，標眾真之儀格，拔宿對於幽宮，度七祖於仙籍，業總絡於萬道，解九陰之重責。其妙可得立用，其科可以肅勵。今故標出三品篇目，以稱揚三奇素靈妙經。可誠於後學，使勤尚之人告慎於寶科也。」

The thearchical kings of all the heavens, the Nine Mysteries' Thearchical Lord (the Latter Numen [or Sage]), the Upper Minister (the Azure Lad), and the Perfected beings of Taiji bowed their heads and asked the Celestial Worthy Most High: “The most perfect and high way culminates on high in ‘dark (i.e., mystic) clarity’ and it spreads out as it intersects the manifold phenomena. It is mysteriously silent and vacuously condensed, but it also wondrously moves with a gushing brilliance. This way transforms into three vehicles that will last for tens of millions of eras. What could possibly measure up to [these ideals]? Shouldn’t we once more study the *Illustrious Code*? ”⁷

諸天帝王、後靈九玄帝君、上相青童、太極真人，稽首敢問太上天尊：「至真上法，高秀玄澄，彌絡萬宗，玄寂虛凝，妙趣激朗，法化三乘，彌綸億劫，量何可勝任，豈復稽於《明科》乎？」

[Lord of the Great Dao] Most High responded, “Your words are excellent! But these people of the latter era are not descendants of Jade Vacuity as they

are not spontaneously born.⁸ Rather, they are conceived through impure *qi*, stained and fettered by tumultuous filth. They cannot act properly because of these knotted [*qi*], and they do not have the charm of a focused mind because of their dispositions. So even if they are reverent of and seek out the mystery, they would nevertheless turn against me. Every one of these people will commit wrongdoings in whatever they undertake. These wrongdoings will externally manifest, and internally will shorten their allotted lifespan. If they study with these kinds [of bodies], will they not be even farther from Perfection? If the Three Officers discover their faults, these will be made known to the tenebrous (subterranean) directors. The latter will extend the interrogation to [the person's] seven generations of ancestors, and all of these transgressions will accumulate on the individual's [record]. But any person who has committed these wrongdoings should know that the mystic *Code* has a system of self-punishment as well as a sagely transformation that is brought about through the forgiveness and expiation of sins. If they use the *Code* as it is written, they will not wait in vain for Perfection, for it will be quite close at hand.

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太上曰：「善！子之言！夫後生之徒，自非玉虛之胤，結自然而生者，皆孕於混炁，染係於囂穢也。結有不純之行，性有不專之美，雖玄慕玄頤，故心常背我。舉止所乘，莫不犯於過。過生乎外，命滅乎內。承此而學，豈不去真遠矣！如使三官執咎，對在幽司，考延七祖，罪累於身。有犯斯過者，而使悟於玄科有糾罰之制，聖化之大復許有贖罪之法。案科而用，如此期真，將必近矣。」

But an adept who does not possess these regulations will toil away in meditative states yet never procure any benefits from this arduous mental activity. It is for this reason that I am now proclaiming the *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected in Three Grades*. If you hereafter bestow this on a latter-age adept, he will surely become a Perfected being.”

為學之士，而無此檢，亦徒勞於精思，無益於苦念也。今故標出《九真三品明科》，自可授於後學應為真人者。」

Once the thearchical lords, the Upper Minister (the Azure Lad), and the Perfected beings of Taiji had concluded their purification rite in the Upper Clarity [heaven], they received the [*Most High*] *Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* [*Celestial Palace That Penetrates the Mystery of*] *the Great Existence* [*Heaven*] with the regulations of the *Code of the Nine Perfected*. This is stored in a jade box within a golden repository; three thousand jade lads and three thousand jade maidens stand in attendance and protect this canon of numinous writs by wafting incense in the vacuous courtyard. Flying dragons and poisonous beasts, such as giant hornless dragons one thousand *xun* [long], grip cloudy walls with their fierce claws and fully protect the Jade Pass.⁹ Subsequently, the great sages of the Ten Heavens and the Perfected and Transcendents of the Nine Palaces meet three times each month. Every one of these spirits must ascend to Mystery Palace and rely on the *Illustrious Code* to pay homage to these numinous writs.

帝君、上相青童、太極真人，於是退齋上清，奉受《素靈大有妙經》、九真科檢，祕於金藏玉匱，衛以玉童、玉女各三千人，侍典靈文，散香虛庭，飛龍毒獸，巨虬千尋，奮爪雲牆，備衛玉關也。如是十天大聖、九宮真仙，一月三過，莫不上登玄宮，稟承明科，禮拜於靈文也。

48b The Upper Minister (the Azure Lad) reported, “If adepts have golden bones and jade marrow, their names will be ranked in the Azure Palace. As such, they will be able to receive the *Code* and practice it in secret. This is why the initiation rite for receiving the *Code* enigmatically accords with the upper canon [of heaven]. When [adepts] put these ritual measures into practice, they will experience a result on par with Perfected [beings]. Their seven generations of ancestors will be elated as all of their transgressions will be forgiven and they will be shielded from disasters. Thus, all of the [ancestors’] knots from previous lives will be unraveled. The adept will rise to the heavens and will feast on high in the Jade Capital.”

上相青童君曰：「凡有金骨玉髓，名參青宮，得有此文，祕而施行。於是承受之儀，玄合上典；施用節度，與真同功。贖罪拔難，宿結咸解，七玄之祖於是而欣。已身昇騰，上宴玉京也。」

The Upper Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis' *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected*—Records on “Transmitting the Scriptures”

玄都九真明科上品傳經篇

The Upper Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record One: The *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto*, [Most High] *Precious Scripture [on the Five Ancient Lords, Jade Seal]* of the Feminine One, and the *Most High Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace That Penetrates the Mystery]* of the Great Existence [Heaven] are the stanzas of the Three Wonders. These precious books belong to the Jade Sovereign Most High and are secretly stored atop the nine heavens within a jade room of the Grand Mystery's Numina Terrace in a palace in the Great Existence heaven. At the inception of the Upper Monarch era, the ancient *Code* stipulated that these books could only be transmitted once every ten thousand epochs. But when the Three Paths were illuminated, the number of [people] studying Perfection grew.¹⁰ The Most High [Lord of the Dao's] correct *Code* was revised so that these books could be transmitted three times every seven thousand years. Jade lads and jade maidens, each numbering seven thousand, stand guard with incense in hand as they oversee the numinous writs. According to the *Code*, the transmission ritual will be a one-hundred-day purification fast held jointly [by master and disciple], after which the two will break a golden seal in half.¹¹ The disciple will then receive jade lads and jade maidens as described in the *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities*. If they do not abide by the *Code* for this transmission, their transgressions will extend to their seven generations of ancestors, as the cloud-souls of the latter will be placed in indentured servitude. Their ancestors will also have to swallow fire and consume iron, as well as bear the weight of mountains as they move enough stones to fill the wellsprings of Wuji. Meanwhile, the adept and master will face the punishment of wind and knives, as their bodies will disintegrate and will be ripped into pieces. They will then be locked away in subterranean prisons and will never reach Transcendence.

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玄都上品第一篇曰：《大洞真經》、《雌一寶經》、《太上素靈大有妙經》，三奇之章，高上玉皇寶篇，祕在九天之上，大有之宮，太玄靈臺玉房之中。上皇之初，舊科經萬劫一傳。三道正明，學真日興，高上正科，七千年內，聽得三傳，侍衛玉童玉女各七千人，執香典靈。按科，傳授之法皆對告齋百日，分金鈕為盟，給玉童玉女，依《四極明科》。不依科而傳，罪延七祖，幽魂充役，吞火食鐵，負山運石，以填無極之源；己身抱風刀之罰，身沒形殘，長閉地獄，萬不得仙。

The Upper Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Two: When transmitting the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto in Thirty-Nine Stanzas*, adepts should pledge ten taels of pure gold, twenty-five catties of bronze, five golden seals, one golden fish, one jade dragon, one tael of azure silk string for the seal. [The *Most High Precious Scripture on the Five Ancient Lords, Jade Seal*] of the Feminine One requires five taels of pure gold, fifty *chi* of patterned silks for each of the five colors, one catty of incense, and three golden seals. The *Most High Mysterious Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] That Penetrates the Perfection [of the Great Existence Heaven]* requires three taels of pure gold, one hundred *chi* of purple patterned silk, twenty-seven *chi* of azure silk, five taels of red silk string, one catty of incense, and one tael of cinnabar.¹² Even in the Upper Monarch era, pledges had to convey their sincerity [for transmission]; anything missing from these items is considered an infraction against the *Code*. If a Master violates [the *Code*], the jade lads and jade maidens standing guard over this scripture will return to their places of origin. The master will undergo the torment of wind and knives up to three years, and his copies of these scripture will spontaneously disappear. If an adept receives these scriptures but does not rely on the *Illustrious Code*, he will lose his eyesight and his body will be destroyed. Furthermore, his seven generations of ancestors and parents will be condemned in Beifeng, meaning that a myriad of eras will pass before they are once again reborn as a human being.¹³ All adepts should take heed of this.

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玄都上品第二篇曰：傳《大洞真經三十九章》於後學者，誓以上金十兩，銅二十五斤，金鈕五雙，金魚、玉龍各一枚，青絲一兩，纏鈕為盟。《雌一》以上

金五兩，五色紋繒各五十尺，香一斤，金鉢三雙。太上素靈洞真玄經，上金三兩，紫紋百尺，青繒二十七尺，赤絲五兩，香一斤，丹一兩。上皇以信誓心，不得有闕，闕則虧科，師犯則遷侍經玉童玉女，還於本宮，不過三年，身被風刀之考，自然失經。受者不依明科，皆失明形殘，七祖父母充北酆之責，萬劫還生非人之道，學者慎之。

The Upper Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Three: Any adept whose name is written in gold within the Eastern Floriate [Palace], or written in jade within the Upper Clarity [Palace], can receive the *Grand Empyrean's Lang-Gem Book of Thearchical Stanzas in Rose-Gem Glyphs*,¹⁴ the *Scripture on the Divine and Mysterious Transformation of the Purple Measures' Fiery Radiance*,¹⁵ the *Upper Clarity's Seventy-Four Methods for Transformation*,¹⁶ the *Central Scripture of the Nine Perfected*,¹⁷ the *Eight Arts for Concealment in the Earth through Cinnabar Phosphors and the Dao's Essence*,¹⁸ the *Jade Scripture on Changing Forms through Hidden Transformations and Flowing Phosphors*,¹⁹ and the *Dance in Heaven of the Seven Transformations*.²⁰ [These texts] are all exalted stanzas of Barren Nullity that the Perfected kings of the Nine Heavens, the Celestial King of Primordial Commencement, the Most High Celestial Thearchical Lord, and the Central Yellow Old Lord all received in Grand Vacuity and within the Nine Mysteries. These texts are all secretly stored in a purple room of a palace in the Most High Numinous Metropolis. The lords of the Three Primes govern [their transmission], and these books are guarded by three thousand jade lads and three thousand jade maidens. At the beginning of the Primordial Commencement era, these scriptures were only transmitted one time every seven thousand eras. After the establishment of the Three Paths, however, these texts can now be transmitted three times every seven thousand years, and their transmission can occur within a seven-hundred-year period, if the right person appears. To receive transmission, an adept must conduct a ninety-day fast (others say a thirty-day or even nine-day is also permissible), after which he must announce your contract, you will be given jade lads and jade maidens, as is written in the *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities*: If an adept does not follow the *Code* and transmits these texts [as he wishes], his transgressions will adversely affect his seven

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generations of ancestors and parents. The latter will be condemned by the demon officials to move the stone of Mengshan to fill the river of “long night” (hells), and they will never be reborn again as human beings for a myriad of eras.²¹ They will be subjected to interrogation by wind and knives, will instantly lose their scriptures, and will never reach Transcendence. Those transmitting these texts should take heed.

玄都上品第三篇曰：凡有金名東華，玉字上清，得受《太霄琅書瓊文帝章》、《紫度炎光神玄變經》、《上清變化七十四方》、《九真中經》、《丹景道精隱地八術》、《解形遁變流景玉經》、《七變舞天》，皆九天真王、元始天王、太上天帝君、中央黃老君，受於太空之中、九玄之內，虛无之高章也。皆祕在太上靈都之宮、紫房之內，三元君主之，侍衛玉童玉女，皆三千人。元始之初，經七千劫一傳。自三道立正之後，七千年內聽三傳，七百年中有其人亦聽傳。傳皆對齋九十日，或三十日，或九日，告盟而授之，給玉童玉女，依《四極明科》。若不依科而傳，罪延七祖父母，充責鬼官，運蒙山之石，填積夜之河，萬劫還生非人之道。己身被風刀之考，自然失經，終不得仙。傳者慎之！

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The Upper Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Four: To receive the *Thearchical Stanzas in Rose-Gem Glyphs*, an adept must offer a pledge of a golden fish, a jade dragon, thirty-two *chi* of silk, and three pairs of golden seals. The *Purple Measures' Fiery Radiance* requires a pledge of fifty *chi* of five-colored damask, five taels of pure gold, five catties of aloeswood incense, one catty of fine pearls, a writing knife, seven golden dragons, and seventy *chi* of crimson patterned silk. The *Upper Clarity's Seventy-Four Methods for Transformation* requires a pledge of forty *chi* of azure silk, ten taels of pure gold, six golden seals, one catty of fine incense, a golden fish, and a jade dragon. The old *Code* required adepts to cut their hair when making a contract for the *Central Scripture of the Nine Perfected*. Nowadays, however, you can substitute this by making a contract with ninety catties of white chiffon (this is the number that represents the Nine Perfected), one catty of azure silken string, twenty-four *chi* of crimson-patterned silk (the pledge for the solar gleam), twenty-four *chi* of cyan silk (the pledge for the lunar blossom), and three pairs of golden rings (the pledge for the Eternal Lad

is flexible).²² For either the *Eight Arts for Concealment in the Earth through Cinnabar Phosphors and the Dao's Essence* and the *Jade Scripture on Changing Forms through Hidden Transformations and Flowing Phosphors* require ten taels of pure gold, a golden fish and a jade dragon, forty *chi* of azure silk, forty *chi* of purple patterned silk, and three pairs of golden rings. For the *Dance in Heaven of the Seven Transformations*, pledge five taels of pure gold, one catty of pearls, and thirty-two *chi* of azure silk. These gifts will give material form to the intentions of an adept's mind. He cannot have any deficiencies, for this would be treated as a breach of the *Code*. Masters should give a part of these heavenly pledges to adepts in the mountains and a part to save the poor. If there are any remaining gifts, these should be used to supply the materials needed for making scriptures. If a master breaks one of the upper-grade rules of the *Code*, it will be as if he is stealing from jade lads and jade maidens. Years will be removed from his life tallies, and his name will be duly noted as one to be sent to Beifeng. If after receiving the scriptures, an adept breaks the *Code*, he will lose his cloud-souls and bodily spirits. He will further be submitted to the interrogation of wind and knives and will not be released for three years. His scriptures will spontaneously disappear, and he will lose any chance to become a Transcendent.

玄都上品第四篇曰：傳《瓊文帝章》，齎金魚、玉龍，青繒三十二尺，金鈕三雙之誓。《紫度炎光》，五色錦各五十尺，上金五兩，沉香五斤，真朱一斤，書刀一口，金龍七枚，絳紋七十尺之誓。《上清變化七十四方》，青繒四十尺，上金十兩，金鈕六雙，好香一斤，金魚玉龍之誓。《九真中經》，舊科落髮為盟，今以白絹九十尺准盟，法於九真之數，青絲一斤，絳紋二十四尺，此日暉之誓，碧繒二十四尺，月華之誓，金環三雙，無常童子負變之信。《丹景道精隱地八術》、《解形遁變流景玉經》，悉上金十兩，金魚、玉龍各一枚，青繒四十尺，紫紋四十尺，金環各三雙。《七變儻天》，上金五兩，朱一斤，青繒三十二尺之誓。信以質心，不得有闕，闕則違科。師以天信投於山栖，以救窮乏，餘以供營經書之具，不得他散。師犯上科，奪玉童玉女，減筭奪紀，注名度還北酆。受者不依科，皆喪魂失神，風刀之考，不出三年，自然失經，終不得仙。

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The Upper Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Five: The versions of the *Wisdom that Annihilates Demons*,²³ the *Hidden Book of Jade Clarity*,²⁴ the *Treasure Grotto's Golden Stanzas on Flying into the Empyrean's Farthest Mystery*, the *Purple Phoenix's Red Book*, the *Dawn Chart of the Eight Phosphors*,²⁵ the *Jade Beam of Golden Perfection*,²⁶ the *Numinous Book's Purple Writs*,²⁷ *Gold Medallion and Jade Pendant*,²⁸ the *Upper Scripture of the Golden Root*,²⁹ and the *Correct Law of the Three Heavens*³⁰ are all precious stanzas transmitted from the Lord of the Great Dao Most High, the Celestial King of Primordial Commencement, and the Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte. Three thousand jade lads and three thousand jade maidens oversee and protect these numinous wris. At the beginning of the Primordial Commencement era, these scriptures were only transmitted once every one thousand eras, but after the establishment of the Three Heavens, they are now transmitted three times every seven hundred years. If there are other people in this one-hundred-year period fit for transmission, they can receive the texts and be granted jade lads and jade maidens. Those receiving these texts should first hold a joint purification rite [with their master] for ninety days (others say a thirty-day or even nine-day is also permissible), as it is written in the *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities*. If an adept and master do not follow the *Code* and transmit these texts as they wish, their transgressions will adversely affect their seven generations of ancestors. The latter will be placed in long-term in servitude as ghosts, and they will have no chance for liberation. Those persons illicitly transmitting texts will be submitted to the interrogation of wind and knives, and will be posthumously demoted to the level of ghosts. They will never be able to reach Transcendence for a myriad of eras.

玄都上品第五篇曰：傳《消魔智慧》、《玉清隱書》、《寶洞飛霄絕玄金章》、《紫鳳赤書》、《八景晨圖》、《金真玉光》、《靈書紫紋》、《金璫玉佩》、《金根上經》、《三天正法》，皆太上大道君、元始天王、金闕帝君之寶章，祕在玉清之宮、金房紫戶之內。典衛靈文，玉童玉女，各三千人。元始之初，皆千劫一傳。自三天立正之後，七百年內聽得三傳，百年中有其人，聽一傳，給玉童玉女。依《四極明科》授者，對齋九十日，或三十日，或九日而傳。不依科而傳，罪延七玄之祖，長充鬼役，無有解脫。己身被風刀之考，死充下鬼，萬不得仙。

The Upper Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Six: To transmit the *Wisdom that Annihilates Demons*, the *Treasure Grotto's Golden Stanzas on Flying into the Empyrean's Farthest Mystery*, the *Purple Phoenix's Red Book*, or the *Dawn Chart of the Eight Phosphors*, adepts must pledge ten taels of pure gold, one jade writing strip, a golden fish, and a jade dragon, as well as forty *chi* of purple silk. The *Collected Scripture of the Golden Root* or the *Numinous Book's Purple Writs* require five taels of pure gold, gold slips, a jade writing strip (this should be one *chi* long, six *cun* wide, and two *cun* and four *fen* thick), a golden fish, a jade dragon, one hundred *chi* of purple silk, and forty *chi* of azure patterned silk. The *Correct Law of the Three Heavens* requires a secret pledge of thirty *chi* of azure silk,³¹ forty-three *chi* of azure cloth, five pairs of golden rings. A further gift of ten taels of pure gold is needed to communicate with the spirits. The *Jade Beam of Golden Perfection*, the *Gold Medallion and Jade Pendant*, or the *Hidden Book of Jade Clarity* requires a golden fish and a jade dragon as pledge gifts. All these transmissions must abide by the *Code*; do not omit any part of the pledges. If any item is missing, it will be treated as if the master was robbing from jade lads and jade maidens, and this will cause [the master's] name to be recorded as a person destined to be reborn in Beifeng. If an adept receives these illicit scriptures, he will lose his cloud-souls and [bodily] spirits and will further be subjected to the interrogation of knives and wind. Within three years, he will be released, but his scriptures will have spontaneously disappeared. This adept will have no chance to reach Transcendence.

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玄都上品第六篇曰：傳《消魔智慧》、《寶洞飛霄絕玄金章》、《紫鳳赤書》、《八景晨圖》，皆上金十兩，玉札一枚，金魚、玉龍各一枚，紫繒四十尺。《金根眾經》、《靈書紫紋》，上金五兩，金簡、玉札各一枚，枚長一尺六寸，廣二寸四分，金魚、玉龍各一枚，紫繒百尺，青紋四十尺。《三天正法》，清繒三十尺，青布四十三尺，金環五雙，以為密誓，上金十兩，通神之信。《金真玉光》、《玉佩金璫》、《玉清隱書》，皆金魚、玉龍各一枚，以為誓信。依科不得有闕，闕則師奪玉童、玉女，注名還度北酆。受者皆喪魂失神，考以風刀。不出三年，自然失經，萬不得仙。

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The Upper Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Seven: The scriptures transmitted under the titles the *Passage of the Seven Stars*,³² the *Winged Scripture on Flying with the White-Winged and the Black-Feathered [Phoenixes]*,³³ the *Ascent for Pacing the Celestial Guideline and Treading the Seven Primes*,³⁴ the *Most High Hidden Book*,³⁵ and the *Six Jia [Talismans] of the Numinous Flight [Maidens]*³⁶ are all secret stanzas concerning the “disappearing transformation,” that is, the teachings about ascending into the sky [as used by] the Most High Grand Thearchical Lord and Thearchical Lord of Grand Tenuity Heaven. These texts are stored in secret in a purple room atop the Rose-Gem Palace Most High. Three thousand jade lads and three thousand jade maidens stand in attendance [to guard these texts]. According to the *Code*, the scriptures were originally to be transmitted once every seven thousand years, but after the Three Heavens were established, this was changed to three times every seven hundred years. If there are other people in this one-hundred-year period, they may receive the transmission. When transmitting these texts, adepts should first make a formal announcement during a ninety-day purification ritual (others say a thirty-day ritual is also permissible), at which time they will be given jade lads and jade maidens, as is described in the *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities*. If [the master and adept] do not follow the *Code* when transmitting texts, their transgressions will extend to their seven generations of ancestors. The latter will forever be placed in servitude as ghosts in Beifeng where they will experience the Ten Sorrows and Eight Difficulties.³⁷ The master and adept, on the other hand, will be subjected to interrogation via wind and knives, after which they will sink to the Tenebrous Springs (subterranean prisons). They will never have a chance to reach Transcendence.

玄都上品第七篇曰：傳《七星移度》、《白羽黑翮飛行羽經》、《飛步天綱躡行七元》、《太上隱書》、《靈飛六甲》，皆太上太帝君、太微天帝君登空之道，隱化之祕章，祕在太上瓊宮之上，紫房之內，侍衛玉童玉女，皆三千人。依科七千年一傳。三天立正之後，改七百年內聽得三傳，若百年中有其人便傳。傳授告齋九十日，或三十日，給玉童玉女，依《四極明科》。不依科而傳，罪延七玄之祖，長充北酆鬼役，十苦八難。己身被風刀之考，身沒幽源，萬不得仙。

The Upper Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Eight: The transmission of the *Passage of the Seven Stars* [requires] thirty *chi* of azure silk, seventy *chi* of crimson silk, ninety *chi* of light silk with phoenix patterns, and a pair of golden seals. The *Winged Scripture on Flying with the White-Winged and the Black-Feathered Phoenixes* requires] a pledge of two taels of gold and thirty-two *chi* of azure patterned silk (this is a substitution for cutting your hair and smearing blood over your mouth). The *Ascent for Pacing the Celestial Guideline* requires thirty *chi* of damask, a golden fish, and a jade dragon. The *Most High Hidden Book* requires a pledge of a golden fish and a jade dragon. The *Six Jia [Talismans] of the Numinous Flight [Maidens]* requires sixty *chi* of white silk, six pairs of golden rings, and six taels of azure silken string. The heavenly *Code* requires that [adepts] materialize their intentions by giving these gifts; make sure that there is nothing missing. If anything is missing, the master and adept will be going against the Mysterious *Code*, and this will be treated as if the master was robbing from the jade lads and jade maidens. The [master's] jade name will subsequently be stricken from the azure records, and he will be sent to Beifeng. If an adept receives these scriptures but does not abide by the *Code*, he will lose his essences and his bodily essences will be destroyed. He will further be punished with [the interrogation] of wind and knives, and three years will pass before he is released. By this time, all of his scriptures will have spontaneously disappeared, and the adept will never have a chance to reach Transcendence.

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玄都上品第八篇曰：傳《七星移度》，青紋三十一尺，絳繒七十尺，鳳紋之羅九十尺，金鉗一雙。《白羽黑翮飛行羽經》，金二兩，青紋三十二尺，以代截髮歃血之誓。《飛步天綱》，錦三十尺，金魚玉龍各一枚。《太上隱書》，金魚玉龍之誓。《靈飛六甲》，白素六十尺，金環六雙，青絲六兩。天科以信質心，不得有闕。闕則違玄科，師奪玉童玉女，除落青簿玉名，移遷北酆。受者不依科，亡精喪神，罰以風刀。不出三年，自然失經，終不得仙。

The Upper Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Nine: There are over six hundred talismans stored in the Mystic Metropolis' jade bookshelves; these include the *Quaking Numen of Fangzhang*,³⁸ the *Seven Primes of the*

Unobstructed Descent,³⁹ the *Hidden Writs of the Eight Heavens*, the *Fiery Bells of Purling Gold*,⁴⁰ the *Golden Spirit's Tiger Talisman*, the *Limbs and Trunk that Annihilate Demons*, the *Divine Candle that Shines at Night*, the *Hiding and Escaping from the Eight Heavens*, the *Jade Talisman of Purple Clarity*, the *Cavernous Mystery of the Five Records*, the *Upper Talisman of the Six Jia-Spirits*, and the *Secret Writs of the Five Phases*. The [Lord of the Great Dao] Most High placed all of these talismans in the ancient scriptures so that we might use them. The transmission rituals for the talismans should follow the corresponding transmission ritual for the scripture in which they are found. If there is anything missing, this will be considered a transgression of the highest sort. Any adept possessing scriptures without talismans will be subject to the punishment by the heavenly demons. If a person possesses talismans but has no scriptures, he will meditate in vain, as the divine Perfected will not descend to his side. The *Code* states, “These scriptures and talismans cannot be transmitted separate from one another. If they are transmitted separately, this will be treated as a transgression.” The *Code*, scriptures, and talismans all emerged from the *qi* of spontaneity; their [content] mirrors the directives of Barren Nullity. This is why you cannot practice them independent of one another. A person who cultivates his body without the *Code* cannot possibly succeed.

玄都上品第九篇曰：諸《方丈震靈》、《豁落七元》、《八天隱文》、《流金火鈴》、《金神虎符》、《消魔支幹》、《夜照神燭》、《八天隱遁》、《紫清玉符》、《五籍洞玄》、《六甲上符》、《五行祕文》，玄都玉格諸符，凡有六百部，太上悉以其文，標於舊經之內，以為立用。傳授盟科，悉依經科傳受。有闕，罪同上品。有經無符，則天魔害人；有符無經，則思念無感，神真不降。科云：皆不得單行，單行罪亦如之。科、經及符本同出於自然之炁，虛無之章旨，故不可得獨修也。無科修道，萬不成也。

The Middle Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis' *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected*—Records on “Warnings on Transgressions”

玄都九真明科中品誠罪篇

The Middle Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record One: An adept will have to undergo a severe interrogation if one of the following apply: [a] one of his previous seven generations of ancestors murdered or caused injury to others, pillaged or looted, schemed or plotted against rulers, or [b] one of their Nine Tribes plotted unethical designs.⁴¹ There is no worldly clemency that can be granted for adepts whose family members have caused endless knots in the Nine Yin after being blamed for these iniquitous actions. Adepts will never be allowed to sully the Perfected scriptures and pilfer the precious wris due to these unresolved transgressions. But if an adept has the resolve to withstand hardship, he should first strive to confess and expiate the sins of his Seven Mysteries (ancestors) by repeatedly offering merit to save their darkened cloud-souls. An adept should undo his hair, expose himself beneath the Three Lights, and continually knock his head on the ground for three years. Afterwards, he should offer an expensive gift by tossing it into [one of the] Nine Rivers; this will purchase the release of the previous mentioned wrongdoings. For the [Lord of the Great Dao] Most High to take note of these actions, adepts must conduct a one-hundred-day purification ritual, respectfully receive the precious scriptures, and then do as the scriptures prescribe. If an adept has these transgressions, he should first accept responsibility and confess these faults before the Heavenly Treasure.⁴² If he does not do this and still receives the scriptures, both the master and disciple will be subjected to the interrogation of wind and knives. Their seven generations of ancestors will forever be locked away in the Dark Springs where they must prop up a mountain by bearing a boulder on their shoulders; they will have no chance of release for myriad of eras. [Master and disciple] will both pass away and their scriptures will disappear. Take heed of these words!

玄都中品第一篇曰：諸是後學，七祖以下，有殺害人命，劫賊攻掠，謀圖奸姦，篡逆之過，九族交通，謀反无道，其考尤重。怨對咎逮，積結九陰，非赦所原。後生皆不得以餘殃之身，參染真經，竊受寶文。若有苦志，志尚自勵，首謝七玄，重施功德，救出幽魂，披露己身於三光之下，散髻叩頭，三年不倦，自齋重信，投於九江，贖解前述。太上聽得清齋百日，奉受寶經，然後行事。有此之罪，而不先自罰責，吐首天寶而受法者，師及弟子，同被風刀之考；七玄之祖，長閉幽源，負石擔山，萬劫不解；身亡失經。明慎之焉！

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The Middle Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Two: An adept who wants to study the upper rituals must beware of the following: [a] his ancestors have taken another person's life, treated their inferiors with cruelty, murdered any sentient being, robbed from the common folk, or made evil plans like a villain, or [b] a person in his Nine Tribes is jealous of others' talents, or goes against the master or ruler. There is no clemency that can be granted for an adept whose [ancestors or relatives] have caused endless knots in the Nine Yin; this adept will be unable to receive transmission of the scriptures containing the miraculous methods. But if he is able to withstand hardship, he should confess to the crimes of his forebears by building up vast amounts of merit. He should untie his hair and expose himself beneath the Three Lights. For three years, he must expiate [these wrongdoings] by unbraiding his hair and constantly kowtowing. After this, he will toss his "punishment gift" into the river, and this will compensate for these wrongdoings. This will save his Seven Mysteries as it will properly differentiate the Three Realms that will be set right.⁴³ For this offering to be heard on high, he will conduct a purification rite for one hundred days and will thereafter receive the precious scriptures detailing the ritual actions. If an adept has such transgressions, but receives scriptures without first confessing, seeking forgiveness, and assuming the requisite punishments, both he and his master will undergo interrogation by wind and knives. Their cloud-souls will be subjected to the Ten Sorrows and Eight Difficulties, their bodies will sink to the Tenebrous Font, and their scriptures will spontaneously disappear. Furthermore, seven generations [of their ancestors] and their parents will long be entrapped on the Dark Path and will not be released for myriad eras.⁴⁴ Those who study these scriptures, take heed!

玄都中品第二篇曰：凡欲修學上法，己身先有重罪，手殺人命，及酷虐下賤，殺害眾生，劫掠百姓，謀圖奸宄，九族相交，姦妬賢能，伐逆師主，不赦之罪，積結九陰，皆不得參受妙法，修行經文。若能苦志，吐首先犯，効功施德，披露三光，散髻叩頭，三年陳謝，罰信投河，以贖己愆，拔出七玄，使三界右別。然後聽得清齋百日，奉受寶經行事。有此之罪而不先自首謝，責罰自勵，而受經文，師及弟子，同受風刀之考；魂魄十苦八難，身沒幽泉，自然失經；七祖父母，長充幽塗，萬劫不解。學者慎之！

The Middle Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Three: If an adept receives the precious writs of the Three Wonders, the wondrous scriptures of Upper Clarity, but carelessly circulates the catalogue, he jeopardizes the wondrous secrets by making them public knowledge. From the first to the tenth time an adept is careless with the precious stanzas, he will be removed from all ritual activity for three years, and will, in addition, be required to conduct purification fasts. Beginning with the eleventh offense, however, his transgressions will knot up in the Nine Yin and will cause his seven generations of ancestors to undergo an extended interrogation. The latter will be placed in servitude on the Three Paths and will have to move a stone that supports the weight of a mountain. [These ancestors] will further be subjected to the Ten Sorrows and Eight Difficulties and will never be released for a myriad of eons. Even when they are reborn [in some distant age], they will not be born as humans. The adept meanwhile will be punished with the interrogation of wind and knives and will lose his eyesight and bodies. He will be sent down [to the world of] ghosts upon death and will never become a Transcendent. Those who possess these [scriptures] take heed.

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玄都中品第三篇曰：凡是學者受三奇寶文上清祕經，而輕泄目錄，以示不固，宣露妙祕，輕慢寶章者，一犯（至）十，罰功斷事三年，然後得更清齋修行。過此以上，皆罪結九陰，考延七祖，充役三塗，運石負山，十苦八難，經萬劫得出，還更生不人之道；己身罰以風刀之考，失明形殘，死充下鬼，萬不得仙。奉者慎之！

The Middle Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Four: An adept who receives transmission of the precious scriptures of Upper Clarity, the precious

writs of the Three Wonders, is not permitted to sully the texts by crying, seeing cadavers, or touching blood. For the first to the tenth infraction, an adept will lose his right to conduct meritorious rituals for one year. He should thereafter use the *Code* to determine his punishment. And to ensure that his transgressions are removed from Grand Yin, he should also conduct purification fasts. For the eleventh to the twenty-fourth infractions, years will be removed from his life register, and the jade lads and jade maidens guarding the scriptures will be sent back to their places of origin. For up to three years, this adept will lose his scriptures and the condition of his body will deteriorate. The ancestors of his Seven Mysteries will also be placed into servitude as ghosts, and they will not be eligible for parole for a myriad of epochs. Adepts must take heed!

玄都中品第四篇曰：凡是學者受上清寶經三奇寶文，不得哭泣，臨見死尸，及血穢之淹。一犯至十，罰功斷事一年。然後得依科自罰，拔罪太陰，更清齋行事。過此以上，二十四犯，奪筭減命，玉童玉女還於本宮。不出三年，失經身喪。七玄之祖，長充鬼役，萬劫不解。學者慎之！

56a The Middle Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Five: An adept who receives the precious Upper Clarity scriptures, the secret writs of the Three Grottoes, should not take them near women or any unclean place, as this will taint the Perfected *qi* [of the text] with impurities. If an adept breaks this rule ten to twenty-four times, he should punish himself by not conducting meritorious rituals for three hundred days. Before resuming cultivation, he must conduct a purification rite. After [twenty-four] infractions, the jade lads and jade maidens will return to their places of origin, and adepts will have years taken off their life registers. For up to three years, this adept will lose his scriptures and his bodies will deteriorate. During this time, the seven generations of his ancestors will undergo interrogation. Adepts must take heed!

玄都中品第五篇曰：凡學者受上清寶經三洞祕文，不得帶近婦人及行穢濁之處，皆混染真炁。十犯至二十四過，罰功斷事三百日，然後得更清齋脩行。過此以上，玉童玉女各還本宮，減筭促命。不出三年，失經亡身，七祖被考。學者慎之！

The Middle Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Six: If an adept receives the precious Upper Clarity scriptures, the esoteric writs of the Three Grottoes, but still has thoughts of harming others, personally violating others, killing life in disgusting fashion, torturing others in perverted ways, coveting others' abilities, demolishing his own kind, or usurping the power of their masters, he must do the following. For the first through fifth such infractions, the adept should express that they have accepted blame for these transgressions in the Nine Yin by offering a pledge gift. This will remove these transgressions from the [records of the] Five Marchmounts, provided that he stops conducting meritorious rituals. It will take ten years of a "purification fast" before he has regained all the rituals he previously received. After the fifth infraction, and up until the twenty-fourth, the Four Directors have the right to order death by gathering up all of an adept's cloud-souls.⁴⁵ The faults will be communicated to Beifeng, at which [the adept's] seven generations of ancestors will be placed in servitude for a myriad of epochs. When they are released, they will not be reborn as humans. The jade lads and jade maidens guarding these texts will return to the palaces on high from whence they came. For nearly a year, adepts will lose their scriptures and their bodies will deteriorate [thus making it] impossible to become a Transcendent. Adepts take heed!

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玄都中品第六篇曰：凡學者受上清寶經三洞祕文，而心懷賊害，手行暴虐，殺生行凶，攻掠姦宄，姪賢妬能，攻毀同炁，伐敗經師。一犯至五，聽得罰信，謝責九陰，拔罪五岳，斷功禁事。十年，聽得清齋，還脩所受。過五以上，至二十四犯，四司執殺，收攝魂神，充責北酆，七祖充役，經萬劫，得還更生非人之道，玉童玉女各返上宮。不出一年，失經身亡，終不得仙。學者慎之！

The Middle Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Seven: An adept who has received the precious Upper Clarity scriptures, the esoteric writs of the Three Grottoes, should never face north when defecating or urinating, eat meat infused with the five pungent roots, drink alcohol in an indecent fashion, destroy the teachings and ignore the rituals, or ignore the taboos. For the tenth to twenty-fourth infractions, adepts should offer whatever gift

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the *Code* prescribes. They should also admit their faults to Grand Yin, and cease conducting meritorious rituals for a year. Afterwards, the adept will conduct a ninety-day purification rite so he can return to cultivating the methods in the scriptures he has received. But if he commits over twenty-four infractions, his life spans will be shortened and he will have to undergo interrogation by wind and knives. His ancestors of the Seven Mysteries will be given many responsibilities for the Three Paths, a punishment that will last five years. This adept will lose his scriptures and his body will be harmed. Adepts should take heed!

玄都中品第七篇曰：凡學者受上清寶經三洞祕文，不得北向便溺，及食五辛含血之肉，飲酒邪淫，虧道慢法，疑貳不專。十犯至二十四過，聽得依科罰信，謝過太陰，斷功一年，然後聽更清齋九十日，還修所受。過此以上，減筭促命，身被風刀之考，七玄充責三塗，不過五年，失經身亡。學者慎之！

The Middle Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Eight: An adept who has received the precious Upper Clarity scriptures, the esoteric writs of the Three Grottoes, should rely on the *Code* to make his pledge offering. His master should make an announcement during a purification fast before transmitting the scriptures. Do not begin copying these precious writs without first making a contract. Adepts most commonly acquire scriptures by receiving the texts from masters. This is how one must act (i.e., he must take this person as his Master), and the adept must never carelessly or illicitly copy scriptures. Nor should he change these holy writs in any way by changing it to what makes sense, altering the names that are based on ancient sounds, or making up a new ritual. The Four Directors will make a report of these transgressions and submit it to the Nine Yin. For the first through third such offenses an adept must be removed from ritual activity for three years. He should rely upon the *Code* to determine what gift should be thrown in the Nine Rivers as punishment. He should then conduct a thirty-day purification rite, after which he can resume their cultivation. But if an adept commits between four to twenty-four infractions, the jade lads and jade maidens will have to return to their place of origin, and years will be taken off an adept's life register. The adept's body will sink into the jurisdiction of demon officers

after death, and his ancestors of Seven Mysteries will be placed in demonic servitude, and will remain there for a myriad of epochs and never again be reborn as a human. Adepts take heed!

玄都中品第八篇曰：凡學者受上清寶經三洞祕文，當依科齋信，諸師告齋，然後受經。不得不告盟，而妄披寶文。凡詣常人得經，便師而授焉。此皆宜使授之，不得輕略竊寫，及改易聖文，以意通決，毀名古音，自作一法。四司所糾，罪書九陰。一犯至三，斷功禁事三年。案科自罰，投信九河，更清齋三十日，然後得還修行。過此以上，至二十四過，玉童玉女各還本宮，減筭奪命，身沒鬼官，七玄之祖長充鬼役，經萬劫得還更生非人之道。學者慎之！

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The Middle Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Nine: An adept who has received the precious Upper Clarity scriptures, the wondrous wris of the Three Grottoes, should secure the scriptures in a detached room atop a high platform that is four *chi* and four *cun* tall and five *cun* wide. In order to properly secure these scriptures, adepts should keep vigil morning and night by making obeisance to the texts through lighting lamps and incense. No person with aberrant *qi* should be allowed to approach and handle the texts, especially wives who might enter the chamber, for this would violate the divine Perfected. This is not permitted by any *Code* in circulation today. For an adept cannot accept the clothes and shoes of others, nor can they let others borrow theirs. [An adept] should always remain different from others, whether at night or in the daytime. For the first through twenty-fourth infractions of this kind, an adept will not be allowed to perform meritorious rituals for a year. After this they will need to conduct a purification rite and begin their bodily cultivation once more. The Four Directors, however, will deal with any additional infractions; they will relay this matter to bureaus of Jade Clarity. An adept's name will be listed once more in Beifeng, and for seven years his body will deteriorate and his scriptures will be lost. His seven generations of ancestors will be interrogated. Those possessing scriptures should take heed.

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玄都中品第九篇曰：凡受上清寶經三洞奇文，當別室安高牀，高四尺四寸，廣五寸，以安所受之經，明燈燒香，朝夕禮願，常為供養。不得使異炁之人，冒

淹履穢，及婦人參入室內，觸忤神真。此世間所用之科。受經之身，不得衣服、履履，交關非類，臥息坐起，皆當與物有異。犯者，從一至二十四過，罰功斷事一年，然後更清齋修行。過此以上，為四司所執，言過玉清，還名酆都。七年，身亡失經，七祖被考。奉者慎之！

The Lower Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis's *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected*—Records on “Forgiving Transgressions”

玄都九真明科下品贖罪篇

The Lower Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record One: An adept whose parent or ancestor of the last seven generations has committed the infractions listed in the first record of the higher or middle grade of the Mysterious Metropolis will undergo extremely intense interrogation and be bound up in the Nine Yin. When such complaints are lodged against ancestors, they will be sent off for countless epochs for dark torture, while calamities will continue to befall their descendants. Anyone who cannot shake off these caliginous forces should bare themselves beneath the Grand Yin, undo their hair, knock their heads on the ground, and confess their transgressions to the Nine Yin. They must do this for three years. At the end of the [last] year, offer nine pairs of golden rings, one tael of azure silk, and one golden effigy by tossing them into the Three Rivers. This will absolve an ancestor's transgressions and will remove them from the difficulties afflicting their shrouded cloud-souls. According to the *Code*, adepts should write the following in five lines with vermilion ink atop a paulownia board. This text should read:

玄都下品第一篇曰：凡有後學之人，七祖父母，生世有犯玄都上品、中品第一篇之罪，其考尤重，結在九陰。七祖怨對，幽掠累劫，殃充後代，冥逮不釋者，皆當露身太陰之下，披散叩頭，首罪九陰。三年自責，年竟，齋金環九雙，青絲一兩，金人一形，投於三河之口，以贖七祖之罪，拔出幽魂之難。其科：朱書五行，桐板一枚，記曰：

In the year [insert year], in the month [insert month] on day [insert date], I, [insert name], here at [insert state, county, village] state that one of my, [insert adept's name] ancestors, parents, or even myself has committed one of the transgressions featured in the upper and middle grades of the Mysterious Metropolis *Code*. Since this transgression is bound up in the Nine Yin, I now respectfully follow the *Code* to offer nine pairs of golden rings and a golden effigy in order to purchase their release of the shrouded cloud-souls from strenuous service. I throw this document into the river in order to declare my order. May these offerings reach the water officials so that these transgressions will be forgiven and erased [in the ledgers of] the Three Officials. The cloud-souls of my ancestors will then ascend into the Nine Heavens.

某年某月某子，朔如干日，某子某郡縣鄉里王甲，七祖父母、下逮己身，有犯玄都上品、中品第一篇之罪，罪結九陰，今謹依科，罰金環九雙，金人一形，以贖幽魂酷對之罪，投書告命，歸首水宮，以自解拔，罪滅三官，魂昇九天。

Once this is finished, use the azure silk to tie the present on a paulownia board. Fix this to an azure rock and let it sink to the bottom. As an adept watches it sink, he should face north, knock his head on the ground, and make the following incantation:

畢。以青絲纏物及版，以青石沉之。臨沉之時，北向叩頭呪曰：

To the Nine Lords of Grand Yin,	太陰九君
Those numinous officials and acting directors:	執司靈官
I have spoken these words to you,	甲今有言
And may this report reach the river's source.	歸告河源
I toss my pledge gift into the Nine Fonts,	投信九泉
In order to extract my Seven Mysteries.	拔出七玄
May all their grievances be absolved,	怨對咸解
So I might ascend as a Transcendent being. ⁴⁶	我身登仙

Upon finishing, the interrogation of the adept's seven generations of ancestors will come to an end, and these progenitors will leave the Shrouded Palace to ascend to the Hall of Blessings. The adept will then be able to devote himself to the constant cultivation of the precious scriptures. After nine years, a Perfected numen will transfigure, and the adept can ascend to the heavens with this spirit. The Mysterious [Metropolis] *Code* is a most serious matter; adepts must avoid violating it again.

畢。如此七祖之考於是釋散，得離幽宮，上昇福堂；己身便得參脩寶經。九年克有真靈降形，與神同昇也。玄科尤重，不得又犯。

The Lower Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Two: Any adept who studies the teachings (Dao) of superior perfection, yet violates the second record of the upper or middle grades of the *Code* will undergo a scrupulous interrogation and be knotted up the Nine Yin. When these transgressions in the underworld are many, the cloud-souls of an adept's seven generations of ancestors must undergo interrogation. If an adept is unable to extricate himself, he should stand beneath the Nine Yin, face north, untie his hair, bow down to the ground, and ask the Three Lights for forgiveness. To ensure that all his faults are forgiven, he should offer one catty of pearls, a writing knife, one tael of azure silk, and a golden effigy at the end of third year by tossing it into the mouth of the Three Rivers. This will atone for any of his wrongdoings of brutality or rebelliousness, and will resolve all [litigation] tied up in the Three Offices. Furthermore, it will save his seven generations of ancestors. According to the *Code*, an adept should write a one *chi* azure silk document with vermilion ink. Inscribe the following words:

玄都下品第二篇曰：凡欲修學上真之道，若己身先有犯上品、中品第二篇中之罪，其考沉結，結罪九陰，盤塞冥中，上延七祖，考對窮魂，纏綿不解者，皆當先於太陰之下，北向散髮，叩頭首罪三光。三年，尅責年竟，當賚真朱一斤，書刀一枚，青絲一兩，金人一形，投於三河之口，以贖己身酷逆之過，解結三官，拔出七祖也。其科朱書，青繒一尺，上記曰：

In the year [insert year], in the month [insert month] on day [insert date], I, [insert name], here at [insert state, county, village] state that prior to this year, I had never violated the Mysterious [Metropolis] *Code*, and subsequently committed an act of “primal wrongdoing.”⁴⁷ I confess that this transgression against the second record of the upper and middle grades of the *Code* has unfortunately caused me to commit transgressions that are now bound up in Grand Yin. I am now using the *Code* to present my fine—a gold effigy, one catty of pearls, and a writing knife. May these atone for my disgraceful transgressions, and may you to return the source and convey my regret to the spirits once I finish submitting this document. Afterwards, these transgressions will be stricken from my record stored in the Nine Rivers, and I will be granted long life.

某年某月某朔某日，某子某郡縣鄉里王甲，年如干，甲身先无所見，行失玄科，身犯元惡，上罹玄都上品、中品第二篇之罪，罪結太陰。今以依科，罰金人一形，真朱一斤，書刀一口，以贖己身醜惡之罪，投書告命，歸首有靈，以自解拔，罪滅九河，身得長生。

Once this is complete, adepts should use the azure silk to wrap up the gifts and the document, tie them to an azure rock, and let them sink. After watching these objects sink to the bottom of the river, face north, knock your head on the ground, and make the following incantation:

畢。以青絲纏物及文，以青石沉之。臨沉之時，北向叩頭呪曰：

On high in Grand Yin,	上有太陰
The Nine Lords are in charge.	執司九君
I presently convey these words to you,	甲今有言
And send my reports by way of the river's source.	歸告河源
Forgive all transgressions and untie my knots,	贖罪解結
Thereby saving me from the Nine Difficulties.	拔度九難
May aggrieved cloud-souls and white-souls,	怨魂對魄

Now each return in a spontaneous fashion. 各返自然
 Calamities will cease so I can study Transcendence, 禍滅學仙
 And my body will ascend to the heavens.⁴⁸ 我身得昇

After finishing, the knots in the Nine Yin will be released and ancestors' 60a aggrieved cloud-souls will return spontaneously. Adepts will once again be able to cultivate by receiving the scriptures of Upper Clarity, and if they practice this method for nine years without fail, a Perfected numen will descend to Earth. The adept can then mystically unite with the spirit. The Mysterious *Code* is extremely rigorous; adepts must avoid violating it again.

畢。如此，九陰之結便得解釋，怨對之魂返於自然也，便得修受上清之經。九年不虧，真靈降形，與神合冥也。玄科嚴重，不得又犯。

The Lower Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Three: An adept who cultivates the precious scriptures of Upper Clarity and the esoteric wris that penetrate mysteries, but commits an infraction against the third record in the upper or middle grades of the *Code* will be tied up in interrogation by the Grand Yin. The four directors assigned to this case will make verbal reports to Jade Clarity. If an adept commits this kind of infraction, he should not conduct meritorious rituals in order to remedy the situation. The adept should enter a chamber, light incense, knock his head on the ground in order to ask for forgiveness. He will then face north and clack his teeth together ten times. Looking to the heavens, he will make the following incantation:

玄都下品第三篇曰：凡修上清寶經洞玄祕文，己身有犯於上品、中品第三篇目之罪，其考結於太陰，為四司所執，言奏玉清。犯此之過，當斷功剋己，入室燒香，叩頭自謝，北向叩齒十通，仰祝曰：

The dark distance of the Grand Mystery 太玄幽邈
 Is rarely known in this lowly realm. 下世希聞
 Since I carelessly divulged its precious perfection, 輕泄寶真

My faults have reached you, Thearchical Worthy. 上虧帝尊
 I take full responsibility for my actions, 自投負責
 And respectfully bow before your numinous gate. 伏款靈門
 I respectfully implore you most high one, 伏願高上
 To send down your mystic bounty. 曲垂玄恩
 Descend to let your numen resonate in me, 降以靈感
 And inspire me through spontaneity.⁴⁹ 啟以自然

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Once this is finished, the adept must knock his head on the ground nine times. If he confesses his wrongdoings like this for three years, he will be able to clear all records of transgressions after conducting a thirty-day purification rite. Once this has been approved from above, he will be released from the watch of the Three Offices and released from the interrogation of the Nine Yin. Afterwards, the adept will be able to resume his bodily cultivation again, as well as secretly intone the precious secrets so he can become a flying Transcendent. The Mysterious [Metropolis] *Code* should not be taken lightly; adepts must avoid violating it again.

畢。便叩頭九過。如此，三年首謝，更清齋三十日，得上解三官，解考九陰，便還修行，寶祕密念，克得飛仙。玄科尤重，不得又犯。

The Lower Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Four: An adept who cultivates the rituals (Dao) of the upper Perfected, but commits an infraction against the fourth record in the upper or middle grades of the *Code* will be tied up in the Grand Yin and face severe interrogation in Jade Clarity. Those who have violated the *Code* should light thirty-two lamps in their courtyard at midnight. This will cleanse all their defiled *qi* and make them pure within and without their bodies. Adepts should first enter their chambers, light incense, face north, and knock their heads on the ground. They will ask for forgiveness for their infractions by clacking their teeth together thirty-six times, looking to the heavens, and reciting the following incantation:

玄都下品第四篇曰：凡修學上真之道，己身有犯上品、中品第四篇目之罪，罪結九陰，殃考玉清。犯者當於中庭夜半，然三十二燈，以洗穢炁，清明內外，入室燒香，北向叩頭，首謝所犯，叩齒三十六通，仰頭呪曰：

	The world keeps moving closer to its demise, As numerous flying corpses block the sky. ⁵⁰	世運交喪 蜚尸翳障
	All is entangled and entwined in defiled <i>qi</i> , It seems so opposite from the Perfected beings.	穢炁紛紛 與真相迎
	I have violated the <i>Code</i> and broken the precepts, And now find myself living among the guilty.	虧科犯戒 身入罪鄉
	May my respectful repentance bring atonement, After cleansing myself with these bright lamps.	贖以禮謝 洗以明燈
	May the Three Clarities quell all disasters, So that blessings will abound and I will prosper.	禍散三清 福充我昌
61a	May the Dao shelter me and course around me, And felicitations extend evermore. ⁵¹	道廕曲流 其慶靡央

Once this is finished, adepts should knock their heads on the ground nine more times. After doing this for a year, adepts should conduct a thirty-day purification rite, after which time they can return to bodily cultivation. Examine and carefully observe the *Code*, for only those with a diligent mind will ponder perfection. After nine years, successful adepts will ascend to the stars in broad daylight.

畢。又叩頭九過，止。如此一年，更清齋三十日，然後得還修事，檢行慎科，勤心注真。九年，克得白日登晨。

The Lower Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Five: An adept who cultivates the rituals (Dao) of the upper Perfected, but commits an infraction against the fifth record in the upper or middle grades of the *Code* will be tied up in the Grand Yin and be stuck in interrogation by officials in the Azure Palace. Those who have violated the *Code* should bathe themselves in

fragrant water, purchase fine oil to light twenty-four lamps for ninety days in their central courtyard. After doing this for ninety days, adepts will enter a chamber, face north, and knock their head on the ground nine times. They should ask forgiveness for these infractions by clacking their teeth together twenty-four times, as they look up to the heavens while making the following incantation:

玄都下品第五篇曰：凡修上真之道，已身有犯上品、中品第五篇目之罪，罪結太陰，考懸青宮。犯者當作香湯自浴，齋油於中庭，然二十四燈。九十日，入室北向，叩頭九過，首謝所犯，叩齒二十四通，仰頭呪曰：

Masculine heaven and feminine earth,	天乾地坤
These two phenomena intertwine with one another.	二象交通
Yet dark <i>qi</i> now have mixed with correct ones,	陰炁混正
Thus filling the entire world with defiled <i>qi</i> .	穢炁彌充
I have lost these spirits and lack their treasures,	喪神虧寶
And their regal countenance is now in ruin.	損落法容
Carefully I set out these bright lamps,	謹設明燈
So their light will reflect in the Mystic Palace.	上映玄宮
Calamities will be averted through the Nine Yin,	禍滅九陰
These blessings reunite me with my ancestors. ⁵²	福慶歸宗

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Upon finishing, adepts should keep doing this for ninety days. At the end of the last day, conduct a purification retreat for twenty-four more days. Afterwards, adepts can resume cultivation of the Perfected rituals. Whenever an announcement is issued, take caution to abide by each line of the *Code*. If done properly, adepts will reach mystic perfection and their bodies will morph into a Transcendent [being]. The Mysterious [Metropolis] *Code* should not be taken lightly; adepts must avoid violating it again.

畢。如此九十日，日竟，退齋二十四日，然後得還，修行真法。每在告慎，明依科文，克得玄真，與形合仙。玄科尤重，不得又犯。

The Lower Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Six: An adept who cultivates the rituals (Dao) of the upper Perfected, but commits a transgression against the sixth record in the upper or middle grades of the *Code* will have his case submitted to the Four Directors, as this transgression is considered very serious. Adepts will be tied up in the Nine Yin, and they will have to face the scrutiny of dark officials. Anyone who has committed this infraction should bow beneath the Grand Yin, untie their hair, and kowtow. Adepts should then ask forgiveness from Jade Clarity, for these officials are able to release them from the Nine Yin. In accordance with the *Code*, adepts should secretly render money to the poor and needy, at least enough money to feed one hundred people. After doing this for ten years, they will enter a chamber, kowtow, and accept blame for their wrongdoing. After facing north and clacking their teeth together nine times, adepts will look up and make the following incantation:

玄都下品第六篇曰：凡修上真之道，已身有犯上品、中品第六篇目之罪，其罪尤重，為四司所執，榜結九陰，對在幽官。有犯，當於太陰之下，披散叩頭，首謝玉清，解拔太陰。依科，當以祕寶，散乞貧民，作百人食，以飼餓乏。十年，入室，叩頭自責，北向叩齒九通，仰呪曰：

62a	Into the distance of heaven and breadth of earth, The [waters of the] Nine Fonts run at full force. I now must pass through Calamity's Gate, For my faults have been recorded in Jade Capital. Their vast network crisscrosses everything, And its mystery penetrates the cloudy field. ⁵³ I provide treasures to remove my transgressions, By bestowing provisions to those in need. May my transgressions be removed by Grand Yin, Thus creating blessings both near and far. ⁵⁴ May the old disappear as I present the new, So that my future successes will never end. ⁵⁵	天遐地廣 九源開張 身履禍門 懸罪玉京 彌羅纏絡 玄洞雲場 散寶拔罪 施以窮糧 罪消太陰 福生十鄉 去故奉新 方隆未央
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Once this is finished, the adept must kowtow nine times. This is a superior method that will cause the high [gods] to erase all transgressions. Thus it has been ranked within this strict *Code*. If adepts do this ritual for ten years, any of the blocked *qi* from previous lives will be erased by the Grand Yin. At the end of the final year of this self-inflicted punishment, adepts should conduct a one-hundred-day purification ritual, after which time they can resume their bodily cultivation. Always monitor your actions to make sure it abides by these laws; adepts must avoid violating [the *Code*] again.

畢。又叩頭九過，止。此乃高上拔罪上法，標於正科。十年如此，宿罪滯炁，並消太陰。施行自責年竟，更齋百日，然後得還修行。檢身慎法，不得重犯。

The Lower Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Seven: An adept who cultivates the rituals (Dao) of the upper Perfected, but commits a transgression against the seventh record in the upper or middle grades of the *Code* will find that this transgression is known throughout the Upper Clarity heavens. Those who commit this infraction should offer ten catties of fine incense to ten fellow adepts who live in ten different places so that this transgression may be absolved. After a year, guilty adepts must enter a chamber, light incense, face east, and kowtow nine times. They will ask the upper Perfected for forgiveness by clacking their teeth together nine times and looking upward while making the following incantation:

玄都下品第七篇曰：凡學上真之道，有犯上品、中品第七篇目之罪，罪充上清。犯者，當以上香十斤，送同學之人，合十處拔罪。一年，入室燒香，東向叩頭九過，首謝上真，叩齒九通，仰呪曰：

Whenever the Five <i>Qi</i> become randomly mixed,	五炁錯綜
Upper Perfection then turns imperfect.	上真不全
My body is now stained with defiled <i>qi</i> ,	身染穢炁
As I have gone astray from the teachings of the grottoes.	觸忤洞門
It has harmed my viscera and decreased my life span,	傷藏伐命
As these actions have shaken my Three Passes. ⁵⁶	搖動三關

I have gone against the *Code* and broken the precepts, 違科犯戒
 Thus making these intricate interrogations even longer. 羅考自延
 I respectfully present these punishments for my actions, 謹以罰責
 Please return and announce to his Thearchical Worthy. 歸告帝尊
 I implore him to allow me the chance, 乞丐使我
 To make my actions transparent from this day forth. 於今自宣
 I might then bid farewell to this lower realm, 去離下世
 And ascend on high with the heavenly Transcendents.⁵⁷ 上登天仙

The adept should continue doing this for a year, at which point he will conduct a twenty-four-day purification fast. Thereafter, he can resume the rituals he has received. Done properly, this will cause the Perfected numina to descend. The *Illustrious Code* is great; [adepts] must avoid violating it again.

畢。如此一年竟，更齋二十四日，還修所受，克得真靈下降。明科之大，不得重犯。

The Lower Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Eight: An adept who cultivates the rituals (Dao) of the upper Perfected, but commits a transgression against the eighth record in the upper or middle grades of the *Code* will be scrutinized by the directors in charge of his case and will be locked up in interrogation by the gods of the Three Clarities. Those who have committed these infractions should procure one *hu* of decanted oil and use it to light lamps in their central courtyard. They may use as many lamps as they like, but the oil must be used up completely. But in order to remove these wrongdoings [from their record], they will also need to offer ten catties of fine incense to a master who possesses scriptures. After doing this for three years, they must enter a chamber, light incense, face north, and kowtow nine times. They will ask for forgiveness for their transgressions by clacking their teeth twelve times, and looking up while making the following incantation:

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玄都下品第八篇曰：凡學上真之道，有犯上品、中品第八篇目之罪，為監司所執，榜結三清。犯者當以清油一斛，於中庭然燈。多少適意，惟令油盡。又以

上香十斤，奉有經之師，以拔其過。三年，入室燒香，北向叩頭九過，首謝所犯，叩齒十二通，仰呴曰：

Heavenly Perfection seems so high and distant,	天真高遠
Whenever its mystic effulgence shines down.	玄光下明
I have been fated to rely on my former blessings,	緣恃宿慶
So that I can now see the Perfected scriptures.	得覩真經
But I had not obtained the Mysterious <i>Code</i> ,	未獲玄科
And thus I was not fully aware of the heavenly numina.	虧略天靈
I have turned against Perfection and broken the precepts,	違真犯戒
And my body now sinks into the nether regions.	沉身分冥
I take full responsibility for these actions,	剋自責勵
So return and announce this in Upper Clarity.	歸告上清
From this moment forth,	自是之後
My old form will be washed clean.	洗濯故形
I respectfully inherit the mystic perfection,	奉承玄真
And wish to unite as one in the Dao. ⁵⁸	與道齊並

Once this is finished, the adept will continue doing the ritual for three full years. At its conclusion, he should conduct a ninety-day purification rite. If the adept has already received [ordination], he can return to the bodily cultivation. If, however, a master has not ordained them, he must pay a pledge gift to a preceptor, and begin cultivation as specified in the *Code*. By doing this, he will ascend upward as a deity. The Mysterious [Metropolis] *Code* should not be taken lightly; adepts must avoid violating it again.

畢。三年周竟，當更齋九十日。先以師受，便得修行；未經師受，當齋信，詣師度經，修行如科，克得上昇。玄科尤重，不得又犯。

The Lower Grade of the Mysterious Metropolis, Record Nine: An adept who cultivates the rituals (Dao) of the upper Perfected, but commits a transgression against the ninth record in the upper or middle grades of

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the *Code* will find these transgressions tied up in the Grand Yin and will undergo unending interrogation from the gods of Jade Clarity heaven. Those who have committed these infractions must light seven lamps in front of their hall, enter their chamber, kowtow, and ask for forgiveness before their scriptures. After clacking their teeth together twenty-four times, they will make the following incantation while looking to the sky:

玄都下品第九篇曰：凡修上真之道，有犯上品、中品第九篇目之罪，罪結於太陰，懸考於玉清。犯者當然七燈於堂前，入室叩頭，首罪經前，叩齒二十四通，仰呪曰：

The brilliance of your jade effulgence suspended in air,	玉光垂曜
As I gaze up and peer into Upper Clarity.	仰徹上清
I have lost my sense of decorum during my practice,	執供不禮
And have maligned and mistreated the treasured scriptures.	虧犯寶經
I fear that the Four Directors,	恐為四司
Have listed all my transgressions in the Purple Court.	列罪紫庭
I have cautiously prepared this fast to express my sincerity,	謹重齋敬
And truly look forward to the Perfected numina.	仰希真靈
They will bestow their grace and descend to me,	曲垂下降
So my past transgressions will be wiped cleaned.	滅罪消刑
I will upkeep and abide by the Mysterious <i>Code</i> ,	攝奉玄科
So I can live forever in this primal honor. ⁵⁹	永保元貞

The adept must continue doing this ritual for one year, at which point he should conduct a twenty-four-day purification rite. He can thereafter return to his practice and cultivate those rituals he has received. The Mysterious [Metropolis] *Code* should not be taken lightly, so always take care to be clear what it commands; adepts must avoid violating it again.

畢。如此一年，更齋二十四日，然後得還，修奉所受。玄科尤重，宜自明慎，不得又犯。

The aforementioned *Grand Mystery's Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected* has three grades and a total of twenty-seven entries. It originated in the palace in the Most High's numinous capital. It is a precious secret of the [Lord of the Great Dao] Most High, for he has not yet circulated it in the lower worlds. He collated these key instructions and gave them to the Latter [Age] Sage. Thus the latter was able to understand the Three Wonders, for the Lord wrote everything down in the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Palace] in the Great Existence [Heaven]*. If an adept has the osseous allotment to join the Transcendent [beings], he can use this text to absolve his transgressions: this will remove any blame or implication and subsequently set his Seven Mysteries free. Before the end of the third year, the Perfected numina will appear, and they will join the adept to ascend into the Nine Heavens. If, however, an adept is careless and divulges the Mysterious *Code*, his transgression will be treated as it is written above. An adept should use this precious secret, but keep it to himself.

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右《太玄九真明科》三品二十七條，出自太上靈都之宮。太上常所寶祕，不宣下世。今抄立用要訣，以付後聖，輔明三奇，標於《大有素靈》之經。有骨分合仙，便得此文，施用拔罪，解咎釋結，散理七玄。將无三年，真靈見形，與子合併，同昇九天。輕泄玄科，罪同上文。唯在寶祕，密而奉行。

The chapter “Nine Perfected” from the Mysterious Metropolis [*Code*] states: The catalogue for transmitting scriptures featured in the *Three-Graded Code of the Nine Perfected* was bestowed to the Latter [Age] Sage and Thearchical Lord when he first received scriptures from the Lord of the Dao Most High. The latter transmitted scriptures according to the three grades of the *Illustrious Code* to help him understand the wondrous writs of the Three Treasures. The rules of the *Code* detail the proper use of the scriptures of Upper Clarity’s teaching (Dao), and include descriptions of the thirty-one scriptures, as well as protocols for all of the other scriptures; these passages are all taken from the *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities*. The *Three Graded [Code] of the Nine Perfected* begins with a chapter on the Three Elementals, and this text is stored in the palaces of the Nine Thearchs. At the four

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extremities are the officials known as the Four Directors. They are in charge of overseeing all wrongdoings, and mete the proper punishments according to the restricted code. The *Illustrious Code of the Grand Perfected* [refer to] the mystic stanzas that the Grand Thearchical Lord received from the Celestial King of Primordial Commencement. This contains the rules governing the ceremonies of the upper Perfected, and these methods are kept in secret in the Grand Thearch's hall atop the Nine Heavens. It is stored and locked away in the palace for the high Perfected and does not circulate among humans. The *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected* is restricted to adepts living in the latter age, and along with the *Illustrious Code of the Four Extremities* enables adepts to take charge of the world. Its meaning is abstruse and subtle; unless an adept has a jade name written in golden letters, there is no way he would even know about this. An adept who obtains this text will not need to study it in its entirety to successfully use it. The *Code* details the transgressions that are not permitted, so once an adept sees the *Code*, he will know what he must change. Once he knows what to change, he will no longer injure the natural order, and having done this will merge with the spontaneous. And once this happens, he will ascend to serve as a Perfected or Transcendent being. Any adept who tries to study without the *Code* will find himself farther and farther away from attaining Transcendence.

玄都九真篇曰：傳授經目在《九真三品科》中者，是後聖帝君始佩經之時，授於太上道君。太上授經，出於三品明科，以輔三寶奇文。上真道經施用之科格，其三十一卷獨立餘事，及眾經儀品，悉在《四極明科》之中。《九真三品》，以三素之上篇，置於九帝之宮；四極以四司之官，總統眾非，糾罰之禁律；《太真明科》，以太帝君所受元始天王之玄章，上真之儀格，其法祕於九天之上，太帝之堂，藏誠於上真之宮，不行於世。《九真明科》以禁後學，《四極明科》總領四達。其旨幽微，自無金字玉名，不得知聞。有得此篇，不須學而自成。科以禁罪，見科知改，知改則無虧於天地，無虧於天地則合於自然，合於自然便得上補於真仙也。無科而學，去仙將為遠哉！

The chapter “Nine Perfected” from the Mysterious Metropolis [*Code*] states: An adept with great resolve whose name is ranked in the Mystic Palace should focus only on the scriptures of the *Illustrious Code*. With this, he

will know the prohibitions of the celestial law and will qualify to receive scriptures. After verifying his osseous allotment, an adept should announce his oath before receiving transmission. The ritual objects required for his pledge gift should accord with the numbers specified for the precious scriptures of the Three Wonders. Also, be aware that there are limits on the number of years between transmissions. Be cautious that you avoid divulging these mysteries to persons not destined for Perfection. If an adept does not follow the commands of the *Code*, he will fall into the hands of demon officials. His seven generations of ancestors (including his parents) will be forced to pass a mountain of daggers with knife trees with no hope of finding their way back for eternity. Any person who appears like a model adept but does not rely on the commands of the *Code* will commit a transgression like those described in the *Code*. These prohibitions are both for those who transmit and receive the text; adepts should take heed.

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玄都九真篇曰：凡有至志，名參玄宮，欲單受明科，知天法禁，然後受經，審有骨分，亦可先告盟而授之。盟信法物，悉依三奇寶經之數，年限亦同如之。不得輕付非真，宣露玄文。不依科旨，身沒鬼官；七祖父母，履刀山劍樹，萬劫不原。外好不依科旨，罪同科文。彼此之禁，學者慎焉！

The chapter “Nine Perfected” from the Mysterious Metropolis [*Code*] states: If a person has obtained the rituals of upper [Perfection], but does not uphold the *Code*, he will commit a serious breach in the heavenly prohibitions. This transgression will affect his seven generations of ancestors, and he will be subjected to interrogation. But if he knows how to change and ask for forgiveness, he will know how to subject himself to punishments that will enable him to return to the cultivation of the scriptures he has received. But if he relapses and starts committing future infractions, the ensuing interrogations will be much worse than before. This would show that his osseous fate is not to become [a Transcendent being], and his shape is not that of a Perfected being. The white-souls will become no better than a ghost and no amount of expiation will enable this adept to resume cultivation of the Perfected scriptures. Now because I have released the *Illustrious Code*, you can understand those things previously unknown. But if you know the

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Code and still commit infractions, what would be the value of having these instructions? Those who uphold the *Code* should take heed. Do take heed!

玄都九真篇曰：凡受上法，而不承明科，虧略天禁，罪累七祖，考逮一身，既知改首，罰責自勵，還修所受，而迴又犯，其考倍先。此則骨命不合，形與真返，魄同鬼伍，皆不得重首，復修於真經也。吾今故以明科悟於未悟，既知而犯，將何要哉。奉者慎之！奉者慎之！

(5c) Miraculous Litany for the Great Existence [Heaven], a Verse by the Grand Thearchical Lord

太帝君偈大有妙讚

The primal transformation began in a dark shroud,	翳翳元化初
When dawn auroras dispersed in a distant dimness.	眇眇晨霞散
Grand Silence hovered above emptiness and vacuity, ⁶⁰	太寂空玄上
And Vast Clarity split the Two Mechanisms.	寥朗二儀判
Congealing essences encapsulated my vacuous embryo, ⁶¹	凝精抱空胎
They transformed through conception at a numinous observatory.	結化孕靈觀
Embodying Perfection all my spirits were conserved within, ⁶²	含真頤神內
And I then unexpectedly awoke in that caliginous morning.	倏歟啟冥旦
I first realized how sad it was that my years were passing,	始悟憂促齡
An eon had passed as the world returned to the Heavenly Han. ⁶³	運交返天漢
In my soothsaying solitude I intoned the “Pacing the Void” [stanzas],	蕭蕭詠步虛
As I circumambulated and paid homage to the Jade Capital.	旋行禮玉京

Bowing my head I returned to Grand Nonexistence,⁶⁴ 稽首歸太無
And rode the wind as a numinous fragrance behind 乘風散靈香
trailed me.

I gazed upwards unto the thearchical sovereign's court,⁶⁵ 俯仰帝皇堂
Flitted and floated as I followed the spiraling patterns of 飄飄隨虛翔
vacuity.

I sublimely sang and emitted wondrous tones, 妙唱發奇音
Singing these verses that are the stanzas of grand Perfection. 吟詠太真章
These [sounds] rambled throughout the four great realms,⁶⁶ 流度四大界
And kept emanating throughout all the ten heavens.⁶⁷ 十天量無央
The Lang-terrace glowed in the dark night,⁶⁸ 閨臺發幽夜
With a divine candle emitting a curious light.⁶⁹ 神燭吐奇光
The bright resplendence of the blossoms in this jade grove, 曙暉玉林華
Dazed and dazzled as it illuminated the Rose-Gem Hall. 煙爍曜瓊堂
A vapor then spontaneously formed in vacuity, 虛生自然煙
That vigorously billowed throughout the Dark Mainstay.⁷⁰ 菲鬱御玄綱
An assembly of Perfected composed empyrean litanies, 群真披霄讚
The precious canopy swayed with the wind's gusty [blows]. 寶蓋順風昂
With each soaring step I intoned a vacuous song, 飛步詠空歌
As I led the spirits in chorus and became an elder of the Dao.⁷¹ 神唱化道長

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Enlarging and enveloping: this great transformation now 鬱鬱大化隆
prospers,

Dignified and distinguished: this teaching flourishes. 濟濟茲道興
This [divine] resonance grows daily as I continue to study, 積學隨日感
And my merits accumulate as I become part of the Great 功滿入大乘
Vehicle.⁷²

Blessings and felicitations shower upon every being, 福慶加一切
My seven [generations] of ancestors will all ascend.⁷³ 七祖咸得昇

Preparing my carriage to soar atop Grand Efflorescence,⁷⁴ 整駕凌太華
I steer the reins aiming for the highest empyreal lodges. 迴轡絕霄館

A numinous wind pulsates through the Hollow of Space,⁷⁵ 靈風鼓空洞
 As I am able to ride atop the lingering fragrance of flowers. 香花乘煙散
 Soughing and sighing I pay my respects to the Vacuous 蕭蕭禮虛堂
 Hall,⁷⁶

Over the swarming crowd, I pass through the Dark Han.⁷⁷ 諫諫步玄漢
 Bright odes open up my shrouded lapel, 朗詠啟幽衿
 It is so hard to bring these past roots to salvation. 拔度宿根難
 The five sufferings can be alleviated at the right times, 五苦應時解
 Once the wafting fragrance infuses the entire body.⁷⁸ 流芳注陶灌
 A mystic porte towers above the cloudy mainstays, 玄闕峙雲綱
 Soaring auroras prop up my numinous chassis. 飛霞翼靈輿
 This leads me toward traceless Perfections, 提攜無跡真
 Secluded and withdrawn, I enter Grand Vacuity. 窈窕入太虛
 Riding through empty space I chant these jade fascicles, 乘空誦玉篇
 Barren and desolate I intone these feathered books. 蕭條詠羽書
 With broad thoughts I am in every place, 廣念無不普
 Everything is blessed beyond measure.⁷⁹ 一切慶有餘

Litany of the Celestial Thearchical Lord

天帝君讚

When the ultimate Way gave birth to vacuous silence, 至道生空寂
 A mysterious echo cast a deep shadow over what we seek. 玄響陰相求
 Although the Three Perfected were originally a Primal One, 三真本元一
 Their *qi* transformed and their configuration separated. 炁化理還殊
 The Wheel of the Law [turned] within this formless [world],⁸⁰ 法輪無形內
 [Causing] a clear stream of consciousness to flit and flutter. 飄飄清觀流
 There was no need to ponder over these congealing stanzas, 凝章不待思
 While the knotting *qi* fused with the dark talisman. 結炁合玄符

The numina then sang and sounded out these vacuous 灵唱發空歌
tunes,

As they intoned “Pacing the Void” while sauntering along.⁸¹ 吟詠步虛遊

In the beginning, my mysterious transformation had no traces, 玄化本無跡
But once such traces appeared, I became the Way’s progenitor. 有跡生道宗
Rambling and sauntering to the limits of the Nine Heavens,⁸² 遨遊九天際
I rested my carriage in the palace of the Sixth Ridge.⁸³ 息駕六領宮
They guided me along as guest of the highest [honor], 提攜高上賓
And returned me to the room of the Immaculate Numen. 返我素靈房
There the Way spread throughout the vacuous and silent, 道暢虛漠內
As its numinous song resounds throughout the Grand 灵歌發太空
Void.

My form resonated in the Hall of the Utmost Quietude,⁸⁴ 形感至寂庭
For I discovered the rarified and tenuous by silently 思詠希微通
chanting.

I was shrouded in brilliance by the pause of the morning 光翳晨暉停
glare,
Its dazzle sheltered me in the courtyard of the Jade Capitoline. 曜廢玉京場
Just as a dark dragon waits not to be harnessed, 玄龍不待駕
But flies up to pace the vacuous in a soughing solitude. 蕭蕭步虛翔
I raised my hands and pluck a seven-jeweled flower, 手掇七寶華
And a numinous wind dispersed its wondrous fragrance. 靈風散奇香
Like a miraculous chant, it blew my lapel wide open, 妙詠乘衿發
As it commenced the brilliant tones of jade stanzas. 紛繁啟玉章
The manifold *qi* fused into the Primal One, 萬炁混元一
Together they returned via the bridge of the Three 總歸三玄梁
Mysteries.⁸⁵

May you now ride into the heavens and not feel it so high, 乘天不云高
And gaze into the distance at the expanse of the Nine 遙望九玄遼
Mysteries.⁸⁶

May you flap your wings and ponder the reins of mystery,⁸⁷ 振翮思玄轡
 Only wishing to ascend and admire the clouds and auroras. 希登慕雲霄
 I have so many thoughts to reveal through divine inspiration, 積念告靈感
 And I only hope you can join together with the jade 期與玉真交
 Perfected.⁸⁸

All grows dark and dimmer as the Heavenly Han sinks 曉曠天漢澄
 down,⁸⁹
 Everything flits and floats as phosphors and clouds encircle 飄飄景雲迴
 us.

67a The Three Perfected soar atop the void, 三真騰空上
 And tug on the bit to hasten us unto Purple Tenuity. 控轡迅紫微
 We will save all the latter-day beings with dazzling chants, 明唱度後身
 So that they all can soar up by riding on phosphors.⁹⁰ 咸令乘景飛
 This will extract all from the difficulties of the Three Paths, 拔出三塗難
 For the Nine Mysteries are all troubled by suffering and 九玄難苦哀
 lament.⁹¹

Litany of the Thearchical Lord of Grand Tenuity Heaven

太微天帝君誦

This [scripture] of grand Perfection was born in the Hollow 太真生空洞
 of Space,
 Within a rose-gem [starry] net sparkling on a gemmy 瓊羅耀寶臺
 terrace.
 All ceremoniously circled around the Dark Capitol, 旋行禮玄京
 As an assembly of Transcendent beings chanted subtle 眇仙唱微詩
 odes.

I maintained my orbit within that which has no trace, 迴轉無跡內
And arranged for a tenebrous rendezvous with a vacuous 虛歌契幽期
song.

This safely allowed me to ascend and be born in the 度身上生天
heavens,

Where I now add to these accrued blessings by intoning 吟詠積福基
verses.⁹²

I spur on the reins [of my team] for the Grand Aurora 策轡太霞館
Lodge,⁹³

Where I host banquets now and again atop phosphors 時復宴景雲
and clouds.

I flit and fly off unto the deep reaches of limitless space, 飄飄無崖際
Parting from my troubles to enter into the gate of mysteries. 離苦入玄門

My mind is at ease and I lucidly understand the Way, 意適道亦暢
For my mind is resolute and perceptive. 心丹志亦分

Since I keep studying more and more, each day is anew, 積學隨日新
As I chant my writs of the Immaculate Numen.⁹⁴ 詠我素靈文

The eight phosphors set the heavenly equipage in motion, 八景運天輿
Flying to the empyrean gives rise to the mysterious 飛霄蔚玄靈
numina.

Under my white canopy I ride the whirlwind, 素蓋乘風迴
To a place beyond comprehension within Purple Clarity. 寥寥入紫清
I wondrously sing the praises of a manifold Perfected verses, 妙讚萬真曲
As jade echoes out with a never-ending clinking and 玉響何鈴鈴
clanging.

This pulls out my register in the Nine Yin, 披拔九陰籍
So I may be saved and return to the Southern Court. 度身返南庭
Felicitations pour over in every direction, 慶流普一切
As nothing outshines my miraculous transformation.⁹⁵ 妙化靡不榮

Clear and pristine is the progenitor of this mysterious Way, 清淨玄道宗
 As it flashes in Grand Hollow brilliant and bright. 明朗煥太空
 During my miraculous transformation all was quiet and silent, 妙化由靜嘿
 As my mind sunk into the palaces of the three colors. 潛想三素宮
 For my many thoughts penetrated the mysterious vacuity, 積念徹玄虛
 That runs to the ultimate Way infinitesimal and imperceptible. 微微至道通
 [Now], I respectfully chant and it echoes into mysterious silence, 叩詠響玄寂
 And sing [a song] along with the numina that is truly glorious.⁹⁶ 靈唱靡不隆

A cinnabar glow gleams throughout the numinous court, 丹暉映靈庭
 As a purple vapor sparkles the Jade Grove. 紫煙曜玉林
 The flashing brilliance of the seven-jeweled blossoms, 煥爛七寶華
 Glitter and gleam as they vibrate with numinous tones. 璀璨搖靈音
 Their *gong* and *shang* notes are in perfect harmony,⁹⁷ 宮商自相和
 Its sublime texture causes people to bow down in admiration.⁹⁸ 妙趣傾人衿
 These mysterious chants will plant fields of blessings, 玄唱種福田
 That will broadly save those with indiscriminating minds.⁹⁹ 廣度無界心

A Chant of the Latter [Age] Sage (Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte)

後聖金闕帝君誦

A Nebula Incognita of the primordial commencement 夥莽元始天
 heavens,¹⁰⁰

Fused the Three Images into a mysterious unity. 三象混玄一
The Correct Way then flourished as it soothed and 蕭蕭正道興
soared above,
And the Great Vehicle freely moved uninhibited and 浩浩大乘逸
unrestricted.
The Six *Qi* restored my Correct Court,¹⁰¹ 六炁還正庭
As I commanded them to return to my Muddy Pellet 總歸泥丸室
chamber.
In and out I sauntered through the thearchical court, 出入遊帝堂
As purling essences glistened through the beclouded sun. 流精曜雲日
In a revolving orbit, I returned to the Heavenly Han, 運周返天漢
Secluded and withdrawn, I rode atop the Mysterious 窈窕乘玄七
Seven.¹⁰²

A round blossom lightened the bright pearl,¹⁰³ 圓華映明珠 68a
While the Two Phosphors faced off in a Perfected gleam. 二景對真光
With a numinous radiance, I called an assembly of the 靈暉啟翔會
flying,
As its mysterious simulacrum united at Fusang. 玄象交扶桑
Its tenebrous laws were everything that I sought, 冥度自相求
For its Yin power might swell and illuminate the Eight 陰暢朗八荒
Wilds.
Once I was able to dine on this essence, 若能餐此精
I grew into one who could command the Dark Mainstay.¹⁰⁴ 長得御玄綱

I then played atop the Terrace of Nine Mysteries, 遊戲九玄臺
And took respite on the Bank of Western Feathers. 解憩西羽阿
Divine beasts called out to my Rose-Gem Hall, 神獸鳴瓊堂
As flying phoenixes flew in interlocking patterns. 飛鳳互參差
Odes spontaneously formed from vacuous space, 虛生自然詠
As Perfected beings chanted in metered harmony. 真人唱節和

This transformed my body in the Jieren Courtyard,¹⁰⁵ 化身劫刃庭
 With encircling scents that ordered clear melodies.¹⁰⁶ 緣香命清歌
 I displayed my merits in order to establish blessing-fields, 建功立福田
 Whereby I might save all the beings who came after. 拔度後身羅
 My seven mysteries then took leave of the Dark Palace, 七玄散幽宮
 Once these mysteries left, no more harm came their way.¹⁰⁷ 玄離無艱那

With soaring steps I traversed across every layer of the 飛步躡霄嶺
 empyrean,

And with a flap of my wings I went to the Eastern Floriate 翱翩東華宮
 Palace.

In windy clouds, chanting came from within vacuity, 風雲虛中唱
 As jade tones scattered across the Rose-Gem Hall. 玉音散瓊堂
 Perfected beings chanted vacuous tunes, 真人詠空歌
 Which sublimely echoed throughout my empty room. 妙響絕空房
 This untied all that had been spontaneously tied up within 解我自然衿
 me,

And enabled me to build up merit over many kalpas. 成我積劫功
 I then sent out a long whistle atop the Nine Mysteries, 長嘯九玄上
 And I peered out over Kongtong with clear vision.¹⁰⁸ 清矚覩空同

Dragons [now] intone in my Removed Residence Bureaus,¹⁰⁹ 龍吟絕宅府
 Phoenixes warble atop the Grand Empyrean Lodge. 凤嘯太霄館
 Their vacuous singing feels like it will not linger, 虛唱無留味
 Sad tones trickle everywhere atop the gust of wind. 哀音乘風散
 Whoever has the ability to study these stanzas, 誰能究此章
 Should chant the litanies of the Immaculate Numen with 精誦素靈讚
 zeal.

This will help them resolve their transgressions in the 以解九陰過
 Nine Yin,

And save their Seven Mysteries from harm's way.¹¹⁰ 拔度七玄難

The Perfected Being of Taiji says: “*The Most High Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] That Penetrates the Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]* first emerged in the era of Primal Incipience.¹¹¹ Once these numinous wris appeared, the assembly of Perfected gathered before its altar. The assembly burned incense and recited the scripture by circumambulating the altar until all twenty-one fascicles had been recited. This then spread blessings throughout the Divine Hall. The jade tones of the scripture are lofty and bright; their clear sound resounds in the Nine Heavens. Its phrasing is mysterious and subtle; its wondrous sentiments permeate everything. After one time of chanting this scripture, the manifold spirits will be enlightened as numina. If you are able to constantly practice [its methods], you will become Perfected alongside the Thearchs. It will alleviate the heavy burden of the actions of your past lives and will extract your Seven Mysteries from the Tenebrous Palace. It will enable you to understand the Five Sufferings of the aggrieved cloud-souls, so that you can save all beings and lead them to the heavens. Oh, how subtle and wondrous is this numinous text!”

太極真人曰：《太上素靈洞元妙經》，以元始同生，靈文既存，眾真詣座，燒香禮經，旋行誦此二十一篇之章，以慶於神庭也。玉音激朗，清徹九天。其句幽微，妙趣傍通。誦詠一過，萬神啟靈。常能究習，與帝合真。解宿對之重責，拔七玄於幽宮，釋五苦於愁魂，度身生於上天。妙乎微哉！斯之靈文也。

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Notes

Introduction: Background

- 1 This same practice of scriptural production continued in subsequent centuries and continues throughout the Chinese diaspora today. See Clart, “Generals, Pigs, and Immortals,” 210–214.
- 2 Elsewhere, these texts are called the Maoshan revelations, the Highest Clarity scriptures, and Shangqing texts. We have chosen Upper rather than Highest Clarity, as there additional layers of heavens in this literature called Jade Clarity (*Yuqing* 玉清) that were even higher. For an introduction to these texts, see EDS, 275–302.
- 3 For an overview of Yang’s role as advisor, see Robinet, *La révélation du Shangqing*, 1.107–111; Strickmann, “The Mao Shan Revelations,” 3–5; Bokenkamp, *Ancestors and Anxiety*, 131–136.
- 4 Hereafter texts from *Zhengtong Daoist Canon* (*Zhengtong daozang* 正統道藏) will be cited as DZ according to their number in Schipper and Verellen, *The Taoist Canon*, 1393–1440.
- 5 RS, 1.80. Cependant, il importe de remarquer que tous ces textes, qui semblent donc avoir été ajoutés ou intégrés au corpus de Shangqing après coup, revêtent une forme et adoptent une terminologie qui sont exactement celles des autres écrits de cette école. Leur contenu, méditations visuelles, charmes, recettes alchimiques, invocations, est également en parfaite harmonie avec les autres textes du mouvement. Les thèmes généraux sont les mêmes. C’est pourquoi ils ne peuvent être séparés du reste des écrits du Shangqing; ils font clairement partie du même groupe d’écrits, même si parfois quelques détails détonnent, et se détachent en cléa nettement des textes qui ont été forgées postérieurement.

6 ET, 921.

7 RS, 2.298.

8 Tao Hongjing thinks that Wang had ulterior motives in gaining access to Xu's manuscripts, for Wang was inspired by the way Ge Chaofu (fl. 397–401) concocted new Numinous Treasure (Lingbao 灵寶) scriptures at the turn of the fifth century. See chapter 5. For more on Wang, see Ōfuchi, *Dōkyō to sono kyōten*, 89–96; Strickmann, "The Mao Shan Revelations," 46; Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scriptures*, 379–380; Miller, *The Way*, 15–16.

9 Darnton, *The Case for Books*, 149–150.

10 When we speak of "active reading," we are thinking of a "transactional model of reading," which understands *active reading* not as the cerebral effort involving in making a text, but rather the goal-oriented readings and active pursuit to give rise to something else. See Jardine and Grafton, "Studied for Action," 30–32.

11 Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters*, 77–104.

12 See Luijenijk, *Forbidden Oracles*; Choat, *Belief and Cult in Fourth-Century Papyri*; Veidlinger, *Spreading the Dhamma*; Lowe, *Ritualized Writing*.

13 Nattier, *A Guide*, 153; Bingenheimer, *Studies*, 2–3; Salguero, *Translating Buddhist Medicine*, 96.

14 Tsien, *Written on Bamboo and Silk*, 184–185; Edgren, "The History of the Book in China," 354.

15 Dudbridge, *Lost Books of Medieval China*, 4–8; Tian, *Beacon Fire*, 86–93.

16 This library was on the northern edge of the southern capital Jiankang on a site that once was the imperial hunting grounds. It was built at the start of the Liang dynasty (502) in response to a fire that had destroyed the previous imperial library. All non-Buddhist texts were housed separately, either in the Basilica of Literary Virtue (*Wende dian* 文德殿) or in the Gallery of the Imperial Secretariat (*Shangshuge* 尚書閣). Over a decade later in 527, this Buddhist library would become the home of the Tongtai Monastery 同泰寺. Suwa, *Chūgoku Nanchō Bukkyō*, 47; De Rauw, "Baochang," 207–208; Tian, *Beacon Fire*, 86; Mugitani, "Dōkyō ruisho," 344–345. As the head bibliographer for the imperial library, Baochang was commissioned by the emperor to compile a wide range of texts such as the *Collated Ritual Manual for Offering Food to Sagacious Monks* (*Zhongjing fangong shengseng fa* 署經飯供聖僧法), and the *Differentiated Manifestations of Scriptures and Laws* (*Jinglü yixiang* 經律異相).

Chapter One: Thirty-One Fascicles

Epigraph. McKenzie, “The Sociology of a Text,” 190.

- 1 Smith, *What Is Scripture*, 21.
- 2 See Hsieh, *Tianjie zhi wen*, 68–69.
- 3 Zürn, “Writing as Weaving,” 212.
- 4 John B. Henderson sees resonance between the Chinese model of “revealed text” and “commentary” and the Hindu distinction between revealed scripture (*sruti*) and explanations of saints and prophets (*smṛti*). See his *Scripture, Canon, and Commentary*, 71; ET, 27.
- 5 For an overview of these early Daoist documents, see Kleeman, *Celestial Masters*, 62–110.
- 6 Robinet, *Taoist Meditation*, 21.
- 7 These texts are also called the Highest Clarity scriptures or Maoshan Revelations. For an introduction to these texts, see Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scriptures*, 275–302.
- 8 For an overview of Yang’s role as advisor, see RS, 1.107–111; Strickmann, “The Mao Shan Revelations,” 3–5; Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scriptures*, 131–136.
- 9 Quoted in Sanders and Davies, *Studying the Synoptic Gospels*, 8–9.
- 10 Tao located more than ten fascicles of scriptures and hagiographies, compared to more than forty fascicles of pronouncements. See DZ 1016, 19.9b–10a.
- 11 DZ 1016, 19.2a.
- 12 DZ 1125, 5.1a–2a [ZH, 42.21a–b]. For more on the composition of this Tang codebook, see Yoshioka, “Tonkō hakken *Sandō hōdō kakai gihan ni tsuite*,” 241–269, “*Sandō hōdō kakai gihan no seiritsu ni tsuite*,” 81–128, “*Sandō hōdō kakai gihan no kenkyū*,” 75–129; Ōfuchi, *Dōkyō to sono kyōten*, 557–590; Reiter, *The Aspirations and Standards*, 150–155; Kohn, *The Daoist Monastic Manual*, 23–47.
- 13 Fukui refers to these three usages as “expanded texts” (*kōhon* 廣本), “major texts” (*taihon* 大本), and “minor texts” (*kohon* 小本) respectively. See his “*Jōsei kyō ni tsuite*,” 7–9. Note that Fukui points out that the three hundred texts supposedly belonging to the “expanded texts” category is not an exact number, but a figure that emphasizes the inclusive nature of the texts imagined to share an affiliation with the Upper Clarity teachings.
- 14 Chen, *Daozang yuanliu kao*, 16.
- 15 Ozaki, “*Dōkyō keiten*,” 101–102.

16 Ishii, *Dōkyō gaku no kenkyū*, 329–56; RS, 2.18.

17 Ishii, “Dōkyō jōsei keiha no keiten mokuroku kō,” 5–30.

18 While we know that Wang’s hagiography circulated among Yang’s readers (Chen, *Daozang yuanliu kao*, 12), our only extant version is a fragment of the original. See DZ 1032, 106.1a–8a [YJQQ, 2288–2294].

19 This is the deity Wang Yuan 王遠, not Wang Bao. For more on the overlapping identities of Wang Yuan 王遠 (Wang Fangping 王方平, fl. 146–95 BCE) and Wang Bao 王褒 (fl. 73–49 BCE), see Steavu-Balint, “The Three Sovereigns,” 44–50.

20 DZ 1032, 106.4a [YJQQ, 2290].

21 DZ 1032, 106.3b–4a [YJQQ, 2290].

22 RS, 2.371.

23 *Taiping guangji*, 2.356. Note that we have changed the Lithic Essence of the Golden Horse (*Shijing jinma* 石精金馬) to Lithic Essence of the Jade Horse (*Shijing yuma*) to accord with the preface on the Upper Clarity scriptures in YJQQ, 4.9b. For a detailed analysis of the sources and transmission of this hagiography, see Chang, “Xipu, jiaofa ji qi zhenghe,” 173–224.

24 She writes “celle du manuscript de Dunhuang P. 2337 est vraisemblablement plus tardive.” RS, 2.401. She does not explain how she arrived at this conclusion, but she must have thought that the thirty-four fascicles of the catalogue is slightly larger than the thirty-one fascicles of “precious wrts” bestowed to Lady Wei by Lord Wang. Also, the Dunhuang version of the “Catalogue of the Great Grotto” is more or less the same as the list featured in DZ 1125, with the exception that the Dunhuang version mistakenly states there are thirty-seven fascicles in the first group of scriptures when there are only thirty-four. *Dunhuang daozang*, 1703–1705.

25 Wei supposedly received this from the Perfected Being of Jinglin (*Jinglin zhenren* 景林真人); in both the Dunhuang and received versions of the “Catalogue of the Great Grotto,” this last scripture is named the Most High Jade Scripture of the Inner Effulgences of the Yellow Court, Inner Writ of the Great Emperor (*Taishang huangting neijing yujing Taidi neishu* 太上黃庭內景玉經太帝內書). See DZ 1125, 5.2a [ZH, 42.21b]; *Dunhuang daozang*, 1705.

26 For more on the catalogues in Lord Pei and Lord Zhou’s hagiographies, see Chang, “Xipu, jiaofa ji qi zhenghe,” 303–304.

27 We follow Robinet’s reading of *lu* 錄 here as a synonym of *lian* 鍊 (ET, 859).

There are various quotes and passages from the scripture featured in later collectanea. For more, see Robinet, *La révélation du Shangqing*, 2:137–140.

28 Ishii (“Dōkyō jōsei keiha no keiten mokuroku kō,” 20) asserts that this scripture is the same as *Winged Scripture on Flying with the White-Winged and the Black-Feathered [Phoenixes]* (*Baihu heihe feixing yujing* 白羽黑翮飛行羽經, DZ 83, 1351), but there do not appear to be analogous titles in earlier bibliographies.

29 For more on the meaning and content of these texts, see Esposito, “Sun-Worship in China,” 359–370. These should roughly correspond to the meditative exercises mentioned in the *Upper Clarity Central Scripture of the Nine Perfected of the Most High Thearchical Lord* (*Shangqing taishang dijun jiuzhen zhongjing* 上清太上皇帝九真中經, DZ 1376.2.1a–8b).

30 *Taiping guangji*, 2.357. For more information on the representation of the transmission of scriptures to Wei in the extant hagiographical literature, see Schafer, “The Restoration of the Shrine,” 131–132; Chang, “Xipu, jiaofa ji qi zhenghe,” 173–224.

31 DZ 1032, 4.10a.

Chapter Two: Three Ones

1 Raz, *Emergence of Daoism*, 20, 33, 215–216.

2 Bokenkamp, *Ancestors and Anxiety*, 143–144. We also know that other writers preceded Hua Qiao as the Xu family’s spiritual advisor, such as Yang Quan 羊權. Since no texts can be linked directly to Yang Quan, we will not feature him in this study. See DZ 1016, 1.1a.

3 Porkert, *Biographie d’un taoïste légendaire*; Miller, *The Way*, 107–160.

4 This point has already been suggested in Kominami’s *Chūgoku no shinwa to monogatari*.

5 For more on this transmission, see Chen, *Daozang yuanliu kao*, 8; Robinet, “Shangqing: Highest Clarity,” 208.

6 Kominami, “Jinyaku kara zonshi e,” 39; Xie, “Xiuzhen yu jiangzhen,” 73–79, 229–230; Tsai, “Reading the Inner Biography.”

7 DZ 303, 18a–19a [ZH, 46.196b]. We have benefited from translations by Porkert, *Biographie d’un taoïste légendaire*, 22–23; Miller, *The Way*, 107–108.

8 Chen, *Daozang yuanliu kao*, 330–351; Ōfuchi, *Dōkyō to sono kyōten*, 379–383; Kleeman, *Celestial Masters*.

9 Early descriptions of Daoist communities indicate that the *Daode jing* was the central scripture of the community and was administered by each parish's libationer. *Sanguo zhi*, 264. The same practice is reflected in the "Xiang'er commentary." See Rao, *Laozi xiang'er zhujiao zheng*, 2–5; EDS, 30, 39.

10 Tao refers here to a correspondence from Pei Xuanren (via Yang Xi) in which Pei writes, "Those who study the Dao should not be complacent in who they are by nature, but ought to entrust all they have to [make their mind] pure and whole." 夫學道者，固不宜恃其質分，必當保住於清全矣。DZ 1016, 12.1b [SK, 435].

11 DZ 1016, 20.13b–14a [SK, 713–714].

12 And this, as Xie Conghui has shown, is why the word "esoteric" or "inner" (*nei* 內) is used to describe these texts, as they were only transmitted within a community of disciples. See his "Xiuzhen yu jiangzhen," 229.

13 DZ 303, 5b–6a. We have consulted the translation of this passage in Miller, *The Way*, 125–126, but have departed from this text in a few places.

14 DZ 303, 6a; cf. Miller, *The Way*, 127.

15 DZ 1016, 17.6a–b [SK, 614].

16 DZ 303, 7b; cf. Miller, *The Way*, 132.

17 DZ 303, 8a; cf. Miller, *The Way*, 133.

18 Puyang 濮陽 is northeast Henan province. ZGGJ, 1282.

19 Since *menxia* 門下, a generic adjective applied to offices within the palace, is a term coined in the Han dynasty, it follows that the titles in the hagiography were not written to be historically accurate but instead use early medieval nomenclature to refer to these positions. Thus we translate *sheren* 舍人 as "secretary" to convey its bureaucratic responsibilities rather than "houseman" or "kinsman," which would capture its older connotations if this story were really written in ancient times. See Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles*, 328, 417; Rogers, *The Chronicle*, 198 note 40.

20 DZ 1032, 104.1a–b [YJQQ, 2244].

21 Unlike the Upper Clarity literature, there is no notion of the ranking system in this earlier collection of hagiographies; "array" here simply refers to an "impressive display," not an "ordered arrangement." There are differing opinions over the dating of this text, but even a later dating of the first through third centuries CE would still make this text an antecedent to the Upper Clarity literature. For more on this text, see *Liexian zhuan*, 1–4; Campany, *Strange Writing*, 40–41; Bumbacher, *The Fragments*, 356–362.

22 For more on this passage, see Li, “Liuchao Daojiao de dujiuguan,” 153. See also Kroll, “In the Halls of the Azure Lad,” 79, 83, for more on this deity’s association with the Eastern Sea and his residence.

23 Hua Qiao calls the three worms Azure Elder (*qinggu* 青古), White Maid (*baigu* 白姑), and Blood Corpse (*xiehu* 血尸). These disrupt an adept’s bodily processes and can be eradicated early in ascetic practice through ingesting various herbal elixirs. DZ 303, 4a [ZH, 46.191a]. For more on the eradication of these corpses in Yang Xi’s hagiographies, see Kubo, “Nihon ni denrai shita,” 171; Raz, *Creation of Tradition*, 372.

24 See DZ 1016, 4.16a–b; Smith, *Declarations*, 302–303.

25 DZ 1016, 5.14b.

26 DZ 1016, 2.3b.

27 DZ 303, 3a; cf. Miller, *The Way*, 117–118.

28 DZ 1016, 5.15a–b [SK, 206].

29 This kind of system of promotions was certainly not the invention of Upper Clarity writers, as analogous ideas are expressed in early Daoist texts like the *Scripture on Great Peace*. For more on these predecessors, see “Shenxian sanpin shuo de yuanshi ji qi yanbian” 神仙三品說的原始及其演變 in Li, *Wuru yu zhaijiang*, 33–92.

30 Li, “Shenxian sanpin shuo de yuanshi ji qi yanbian,” 44–56.

31 The six *ding* are protective spirits that were derived by using a diviner’s cosmological compass. For more on the appearance of these spirits in Daoist texts, see Andersen, “The Practice of *Bugang*,” 33–34; Schipper, *The Taoist Body*, 142–144; EDS, 328–329.

32 DZ 1032, 104.3a–b.

33 For more on the notion of salvation in these texts, see Chang, “Liuchao Daojiao shangqing jingpai cunsi fa yanjiu,” 49–55.

34 Li, “Liuchao Daojiao de dujiuguan: zhenjun, zhongmin yu dushi,” 138–160.

35 For more on the representation of classical sages, see Tang’s “Wang Bi shengren you qingyi shi” 王弼聖人有情義釋 in his *Wei Jin sixiang*, 75–86; Wang, *Xuanxue tonglun*, 569–594.

36 DZ 303, 12b.

37 DZ 1016, 11.7b, 13a–b; Pettit, “Learning from Maoshan,” 267, 277.

38 DZ 303, 8b–9a.

39 This end of this sentence is difficult to understand. This chamber is the point of origin of the *chaoyun* 朝運, but it is not clear to what *chaoyun* refers. We

interpret *chao* as dawn (*chen* 晨), and we think this chamber is the source of the brilliance of daybreak.

40 DZ 303, 10b–11a.

41 While many versions of the *Scripture of the Great Grotto* are extant, DZ 6 is likely the version that most closely resembles the earliest redaction. Robinet, “Le Ta-tung chen-ching,” 398–402; Robinet, “Shangqing: Highest Clarity,” 201; RS, 2.31; ET, 295; Mugitani, “*Daidō shinkyō sanjūkyū shō* o megutte,” 68–69.

Chapter Three: Five Stars

1 The notion that Su Lin practiced multiple forms of bodily cultivation must have been a difficult concept for some medieval readers to understand. Tao Hongjing stresses that both practices are detailed in the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* and that they are listed in various parts of “Zhou’s Hagiography” so that readers can comprehend the sequence of exercises Su used during his life. See DZ 421, 1.4b.

2 DZ 303, 13b.

3 Robinet, *Taoist Meditation*, 120–121; Xiao, “*Daojiao ‘shouyi’ xiuchi*,” 1–12; Kohn, “Guarding the One,” 127–130.

4 Rao, *Laozi xiang’er zhujiao zheng*, 19, trans. Bokenkamp in EDS, 42, 89.

5 Rao, *Laozi xiang’er zhujiao zheng*, 17, trans. Bokenkamp in EDS, 97.

6 Yoshioka, “*Taihei kyō* no shuitsu shisō,” 315–351; Tanaka, “*Taihei kyō* no kanshin hō ni tsuite,” 291–303; Yamada, “*Taihei kyō* ni okeru shuitsu to shisō,” 27–48; Chang, “*Jingyan yu jiaofa*,” 186–193. Also see DZ 1102, 1b–2a; Kohn, “Guarding the One,” 140.

7 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 334.

8 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 323; we have greatly benefited from Gil Raz’s translation of this text in his “Creation of Tradition,” 187–197. See also Ware, *Alchemy, Medicine*, 301–302.

9 Kobayashi, *Rikuchō Dōkyō shi kenkyū*, 75; Yamada, “*Deigan kyūkyū setsu kō*,” 336, 338.

10 See his *Taijō reihō gofuso* no sosei katei no bunseki.”

11 Raz, “Creation of Tradition,” 175–181; Robinet, *La révélation du Shangqing*, 1.23. For analogues to the Upper Clarity literature, see Dominic Steavu-Balint’s study of the hierarchy of prevalent practices in southern esoterica surrounding the Three Ones, *The Writ of the Three Sovereigns*, 111–117.

12 DZ 388, 3.17a5–17a9.

13 DZ 388, 3.18b6.

14 DZ 388, 3.20a–22a.

15 This passage is translated in Raz’s “Creation of Tradition,” 347.

16 The first part of this section is similar to the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth stanzas of the *Central Scripture of Laozi* (*Laozi zhongjing* 老子中經). For more on the resemblance of these two texts, see Maeda, “*Rōshi chūkyō* oboegaki,” 282–283.

17 We have already seen this last triad in Liu Xiang’s *Array of Transcendent Hagiographies* and Ge Hong’s *Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, though their relationship with this is difficult to ascertain.

18 DZ 388, 1.22a. This passage is translated in Raz, “Creation of Tradition,” 352–353.

19 DZ 388, 1.22a.

20 DZ 388, 1.23a.

21 DZ 388, 1.22b.

22 We follow Poul Andersen’s hypothesis that this description of the ritual was likely appended to the end of “Su’s Hagiography.” See his *The Method of Holding the Three Ones*, 10–11.

23 DZ 253, 4b3–6, 5a6–8, 5b8–10. Robinet (*Taoist Meditation*, 125–126) also notes this more detailed exposition of the Three Ones, but she relies on the description of the Three Ones in DZ 1314, a later redaction that we will examine in detail momentarily.

24 Andersen, *The Method of Holding the Three Ones*, 27.

25 DZ 253, 3a–b. We have consulted Andersen’s translation in *The Method of Holding the Three Ones*, 41–42.

26 DZ 253, 2b; cf. Andersen, *The Method of Holding the Three Ones*, 41.

27 For more on the new position assigned for the Azure Lad, see Kamitsuka, Hōsho Seidōkun o megutte,” 136–142.

28 See especially the *Thearchical Lord the Golden Porte’s Illustrated Instructions for [Visualizing] the Three Ones of the Five Dippers* (DZ 765, *Jinque dijun wudou sanyi tujue* 金闕帝君五斗三一圖訣, hereafter *Illustrated Instructions*) and the *Thearchical Lord the Golden Porte’s Oral Instructions for [Visualizing] the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes in the Five Dippers*” (DZ 1032, 49.11a–17b, *Jinque dijun wudou sanyuan zhenyi jing koujue* 金闕帝君五斗三元真一經口訣). A brief analysis of these two texts can be found in RS, 2.300–301.

29 DZ 765, 18a; DZ 1032, 49.17b. The DZ 765 version of this story says that Juanzi discovered “three talismans and two scriptures,” but this is surely a scribal error as the preceding list only mentions the “perfected talisman” and “precious stanzas.”

30 This phenomenon had already taken place by Tao Hongjing’s time, as his commentary to the *Ascent to Perfection* mentions that there are variants of the Three Ones method in the “scripture” (*jing*) that are distinct from those of the “solstices and equinoxes of the Five Dippers” (*wudou fenzhi*). DZ 421, 1.6a, 7a–b; *Dengzhen yinjue jijiao*, 14–16.

31 The ruling force (*wang* 王) refers to the direction that is calculated by discerning the date and time of birth of an adept.

32 DZ 421, 1.1a–b; *Dengzhen yinjue jijiao*, 5–6.

33 DZ 421, 1.1b.

34 DZ 421, 1.2a–3a; *Dengzhen yinjue jijiao*, 7–9.

35 DZ 421, 1.2a.

36 DZ 421, 1.3a.

37 DZ 1032, 104.2a–b [YJQQ, 2246].

38 She was also the spiritual bride of Yang Xi, for more on which see Kroll, “The Divine Songs,” 160–161; Smith, *Declarations*, 35–36.

39 DZ 1016, 10.6a [SK, 358].

40 Tao also changes the name from the Inner Ones to the Perfected Ones (*zhenyi*). He further states that adepts should use the Five Dippers method on the solstices and equinoxes, which indicates that Tao’s version of the hagiography included a Five Dippers method as well as a talisman and an emblem. DZ 421, 1.6a; *Dengzhen yinjue jijiao*, 14.

41 Also see RS, 2.300.

42 The “Method from the Inner Scripture of Guarding the One of the Most High Grand Cavern” (*Dadong shouyi neijing fa* 大洞守一內經法) section of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*, the fifth and dissimilar version, includes this first part alongside *Scripture of the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes*.

43 DZ 765, 1b–8a.

44 DZ 303, 14a. Tao Hongjing later draws the same conclusion. He writes that the aforementioned *Perfected Talisman* and *Precious Emblem* were extracted from the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*. DZ 421, 1.3a.

45 DZ 421, 1.3a. Later in the text (1.4b), Tao stresses that while he is aware that the Three Ones practice originates in the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*,

there is “no way he can supplement with what he lacks” (*wu fu suo que* 無復所闕). See also Andersen, *The Method of Holding the Three Ones*, 16; RS, 2.285.

Chapter Four: Nine Palaces

Epigraph: Genette, *Palimpsests*, 229.

- 1 Robinet, “Dongzhen taishang,” 187.
- 2 It is akin to what Gennette calls a “baffling hypertext” since it lacks earlier recensions (“hypertexts”) and its genealogy cannot be traced. See Gennette, *Palimpsests*, 381–384.
- 3 DZ 303, 3a.
- 4 DZ 303, 8a–b.
- 5 DZ 421, 1.3a–4a.
- 6 Yamada (“Deigan kyūkyū setsu kō,” 332) argues that the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* incorporates the concept of the Nine Palaces and that this adaptation was likely from Tao’s hand. Kakiuchi (“Tōbu kyūkyū,” 22–23) points out, however, that this view is anachronistic given that this scripture did not circulate separately. In fact, both of these ideas had been discussed earlier by Robinet (RS, 2.288).
- 7 DZ 421, 1.6a.
- 8 DZ 421, 1.4b, 10b.
- 9 DZ 421, 1.7b.
- 10 Note that Tao appears to have misread the primary text here (DZ 421, 1.10b–11a) since he argues that the “guardian of the *cun*,” Bright Hall, and Grotto-Room should be used one after the other. The quote from the Grotto-Room ritual, however, makes it clear that the only the Grotto-Room is to be conducted alongside the Three Ones ritual.
- 11 DZ 1016, 14.16a; cf. DZ 879. As Robinet notes (RS, 2.303), these rites are the same as those called the “Way of Pacing the Mainstay of Fangzhu’s Grotto-Room (*Fangzhu dongfang bugang zhi dao* 方諸洞房步綱之道) in *Declarations* (DZ 1016, 2.22a). Tao acknowledges that his recovery of this technique was based on a text called *Jade Characters of Fangzhu* (*Fangzhu yuzi* 方諸玉字), a scripture Yang Xi calls the *Scripture on the Grotto-Room of Fangzhu* (*Fangzhu dongfang jing* 方諸洞房經) in *Declarations*.

12 DZ 1016, 17.16b. Robinet makes a mistake in punctuating this sentence, which results in thinking the scripture was written by the early-fourth-century CE writer Ji Kang (see RS, 2.277). We follow the reading in SK, 630–631.

13 DZ 1313, 24b–26b.

14 DZ 421, 1.4b.

15 DZ 421, 1.11a.

16 Read *fang* 方 for *fang* 房.

17 DZ 1314, 15b.

18 Robinet uses the *Scripture of Immaculate Numen* as her basis for the Nine Palaces (*Taoist Meditation*, 127–130); she does not, however, provide an analysis of why DZ 1314 represents an early layer of Upper Clarity literature. Kakiuchi (“Tōbu kyūkyū no sonshi to Taiitsu,” 23) likewise opens the possibility that the depiction of the Nine Palaces in DZ 1314 might predate Tao’s *Ascent to Perfection*.

19 DZ 1314, 15a–16a.

20 DZ 1314, 15a–b.

21 Yamada (“Deigan kyūkyū setsu kō,” 338–340) cites a passage from the Han dynasty apocryphal text *Yiqian zaodu* 易乾鑿度 to show that the writers of Upper Clarity modified previously circulated ideas about the Grand Monad. In the Han text, the Grand Monad is described as taking a ritual tour around the Nine Palaces of heaven, and Yamada concludes that the writer of the Mysterious Cinnabar ritual is mapping this cosmic framework on the human mind. Kakiuchi (“Tōbu kyūkyū,” 35–36) follows this idea yet notes that there are quite a few differences. In *Ascent to Perfection* (DZ 421, 1:5b), Tao writes that there is a correspondence between the nine palaces in the human mind and the nine perfected beings who live in the Grand Tenuity heavens. That Tao omits this account of the Grand Monad’s cosmic tour indicates that early readers likely did not explicitly connect these two systems.

22 Kakiuchi (“Tōbu kyūkyū,” 33) makes this conclusion based on the fact that the Three Ones method, as depicted in DZ 1314, also features the actualization of a solar orb. This sun, however, does not appear in the other Three Ones ritual and is likely an emendation by the writer of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen*.

23 Robinet (*Taoist Meditation*, 130) even proposes that the Mysterious Cinnabar should follow the visualization of the four feminine palaces, but it is not clear to what evidence she refers.

24 DZ 1314, 21b.

25 Robinet (RS, 2.285, 287) points to a revelation concerning the Three Ones in *Declarations* (DZ 1016, 10.6a–b) to demonstrate that while a full redaction of the scripture may not have circulated among early readers, there were certainly many known quotes from the text.

26 Tao was not the only exegete to do so. The *Upper Fascicle of Upper Clarity's Immaculate Numen* (*Shangqing suling shangpian* 上清素靈上篇, DZ 1371), for instance, recasts the information from “Su’s Hagiography” as a small-scale scripture. Andersen (*The Method of Holding the Three Ones*, 18–19) contends that DZ 1371 was produced after Tao’s *Ascent to Perfection* (c. 499 CE), probably first circulated sometime in the sixth century, and was later incorporated in the larger version of the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* (DZ 1314). The content of DZ 1371 is nearly identical to the third part of DZ 1314, “The Upper Scripture on the Most High Lord of the Dao’s Preservation of Mysterious Cinnabar” (*Taishang daojun shoo xuandan shangjing* 太上道君守玄丹上經). There are, however, some major differences, such as the lack of the Mysterious Cinnabar ritual in DZ 1371 and the insertion of a passage from the *Dragon Book Most High* (*Taishang longshu* 太上龍書). It seems unlikely that DZ 1371 was simply inserted in DZ 1314.

27 Robinet (RS, 2.287) argues that the extant redaction is not the three-fascicle edition that supposedly circulated in the late sixth century. Using internal clues and quotes from *Wushang biyao*, however, Robinet shows that parts of DZ 1314 correspond to the first (DZ 1314, 1b–6a), second (DZ 1314, 17a–19b), and third (DZ 1314, 22b–23a) fascicles.

28 The version in DZ 1314, but a fuller version exists in Tao Hongjing’s *Ascent to Perfection*. See DZ 421, 1,1a–3a.

29 DZ 1314, 24b.

30 DZ 1314, 41a.

31 DZ 1314, 41a.

32 DZ 1314, 23b.

33 For more on this change, see Robinet, *Taoist Meditation*, 128. Also see RS, 2.261–276.

34 DZ 1314, 28b.

35 DZ 1314, 30a–b.

36 DZ 1314, 12b–13a.

37 In DZ 1314, the collective names for the *Great Grotto*, *Jade Seal*, and *Immaculate Numen* Three Wonders include the “three treasures” (*sanbao* 三寶, 44b, 47a), the “three wonders” (*sanqi*), the “precious stanzas of the three caverns” (*sandong baozhang* 三洞寶章, 46b), the “miraculous wris of the three caverns” (*sandong qiwen* 三洞奇文, 57b), the “miraculous wris of the three treasures” (*sanbao qiwen* 三寶奇文, 64a), the “divine scripture of the three treasures” (*sanbao shenjing* 三寶神經, 45b), the “three treasure of Upper Clarity’s perfected scriptures” (*sanbao shangqing zhenwen* 三寶上清真經, 10a), the “secret wris of the three caverns” (*sandong miwen* 三洞秘文, 56a–57a), the “precious scriptures of the three wonders” (*sanqi baojing* 三奇寶經, 65a), the “precious wris of the three wonders” (*sanqi baowen* 三奇寶文, 55a–b), the “most high perfected and precious books of the three cavern’s wondrous wris” (*sandong qiwen taishang zhen bao shu* 三洞奇文太上真寶書, 47a), and the “stanzas of the Three Wonders, precious books of the Jade Sovereign Most High” (*sanqi zhi zhang gaoshang yuhuang baopian* 三奇之章高上玉皇寶篇, 48b).

38 DZ 1314, 1b.

39 DZ 1314, 5a.

40 DZ 1314, 3a. Later on, in the preface for the *Code*, the author further stresses that the *Code*’s three grades and twenty-seven entries help the adept understand the Three Wonders and thus are transmitted alongside the scripture. DZ 1314, 63b.

41 DZ 1314, 10a.

42 While the title is modified after the earlier ritual of the Three Ones, the *Thearchical Lord of the Golden Porte’s Scripture on the Perfected Ones of the Three Primes* (DZ 253, see chapter 2), the content of this older text appears later in the *Scripture of the Immaculate Numen* under the title “The Method from the Inner Scripture of Guarding the One of the Most High Grand Cavern.”

43 DZ 1314, 10b–11a

Chapter Five: Three Hundred Fascicles

Epigraph: McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*, 15.

1 Ehrman, *Forgery and Counterforgery*, 55, 61.

2 For more on Gu’s biography, see *Nan Qi shu* 南齊書 (Beijing, Zhonghua shuju, 1972), 54.928–936; *Nanshi* 南史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 75.1874–1880; ET, 451–452; Bumbacher, *The Fragments*, 230–233.

3 DZ 1032. 4.1a–4a. Many studies on this preface attribute it to Lu Xiujing; see Yoshioka, “Riku Shusei to rikuchō Dōkyō mokuroku,” 32; Chen, *Daozang yuanliu kao*, 15; Li, Han Wudi neizhuan *yanjiu*, 82–83; Ishii, “Dōkyō jōsei keiha no keiten mokuroku kō,” 6–7. Our attribution to Gu Huan has been influenced by Kobayashi, *Rikuchō Dōkyō shi kenkyū*, 43, and Zheng, “Mai xiang shengdian zhi lu,” 154–155. Since the author of the preface claims there are thirty-one scriptures in the now-lost catalogue that follows this preface, it is unlikely that Lu was the author.

4 For more on Gu Huan’s collation of the Shangqing Revelations, see DZ 1016, 19.7b–9a; Strickmann, “The Mao Shan Revelations,” 31–33, 51; Ishii, *Dōkyō gaku no kenkyū*, 128–159; Chang, “Xipu,” 157; Pettit, “Learning from Maoshan,” 41–42.

5 For a translation and analysis of Tao’s account, see Strickmann, “The Mao Shan Revelations,” 31–34, 51.

6 Elsewhere in *Declarations* (DZ 1016, 19.3b–4a), Tao describes that the record of the second [year] (*erlu* 二錄) was a text that included all the records transmitted to Xu Mi and Xu Hui by Yang Xi.

7 DZ 1016, 19.14a–b.

8 DZ 1016, 19.14b.

9 Bielenstein, “The Six Dynasties: Volume 1,” 158 (see also 148–150).

10 This refers to the Liu-Song Emperor Qianfei 劉宋前廢帝 (449–465), whose personal name was Liu Ziye (劉子業) and whose byname was Fashi (法師). In his brief reign as a teenager, Qianfei earned a reputation as savage and depraved individual. Later historians emphasize how the brief reign of this ruler was characterized by unjustified murders, incestuous relationships, and rape. He was deposed a year after his rule began. Tao, writing less than four decades after these events, shares this negative opinion of the young ruler. See *Songshu*, 7.141–148; *Nanshi*, 2.68–72.

11 DZ 1016, 19.15a [SK, 691]. Translated based on Strickmann, “The Mao Shan Revelations,” 52–53.

12 DZ 1016, 20.1a [SK, 694–695]. Translation based on Strickmann, “The Mao Shan Revelations,” 54.

13 Tao bolstered his argument by culling these revelations with passages from Mao Ying’s hagiography, the *Mao sanjun zhuan*, a text that also contained similar details of Maoshan’s topography and history. Chang, “Xipu,” 89–112.

14 Gu Huan’s title of this now-lost fascicle is a quote from a revelation about how Xu Mi’s temple was built on top of the highest room of Maoshan’s Grotto-Heaven. DZ 1016, 13.16b [SK, 497]. Also note that the original *jīngshe* of Yang’s revelation has been changed to *jīngshe* in Tao’s note. Regardless of whether this alteration was by Gu or Tao, it suggests that the two terms were nearly synonymous.

15 DZ 1016, 11.14b [SK, 420].

16 DZ 1016, 20.2a. The existence of this catalogue is corroborated in the seventh-century compendium *Daojiao yishu* (DZ 1129, 2.3b).

17 Miller, *The Way*, 15–16.

18 For more on the formation of these scriptures, see Ōfuchi, *Dōkyō to sono kyōten*, 89–96; EDS, 379–380.

19 DZ 1016, 19.11b–12a [SK, 686]. Translation is modified from Strickmann, “The Mao Shan Revelations,” 46.

20 The best example of this in extant literature is the catalogue featured at the beginning of the fifth fascicle of *Declarations*. See DZ 1016, 5.2a–4b.

21 DZ 1016, 19.12b [SK, 687]. Translation is modified from Strickmann, “The Mao Shan Revelations,” 47–48.

22 The Lady of Purple Tenuity (*Ziwei furen* 紫微夫人) mentions this book when explaining to Yang Xi why the Perfected beings are not allowed to write their communications but must rely on a human medium. DZ 1016, 1.9b. Ozaki has done extensive research on this text and has determined that the extant version was likely formulated in the early sixth century. See Ozaki, “*Shikyoku meika shomondai*,” 350, 360. RS, 1.209–210, 2.428–430; ET, 907–908.

23 The division was quite an early invention with a *terminus ante quem* of the seventh century as the idea is articulated in the *Grand Empyrean’s Lang-Gem Book*. DZ 1352, 3.1a–b.

24 DZ 184, 1.12b–13a.

25 DZ 184, 1.13b.

26 DZ 184, 1.15b–16a.

27 That is, of course, unless we accept that the *Upper Writs of the Purple Book* is an alternative title for the *Numinous Book of the Eight Paths* that we saw mentioned in Wei’s hagiography.

28 DZ 303, 3a.

29 DZ 253, 3a–b. We have consulted Andersen’s translation in *The Method of Holding the Three Ones*, 41–42.

30 In the next few paragraphs, we have benefited from Michael Stanley-Baker's translation in his "Daoists and Doctors," 219–220.

31 For earlier appearances of the *Esoteric Writs of the Three Sovereigns*, see Campany, *To Live as Long*, 67, and Campany, *Making Transcendents*, 95. These were later reworked as a set of talismans, though the dating of these talismanic characters is still under debate. See Liu, "Sanhuang wen xintan," 27–28; Steavu, "The Writ of the Three Sovereigns," 133.

32 This likely refers to gold and silver. See Pregadio, *Great Clarity*, 173, 190.

33 DZ 1314, 44a–b.

34 DZ 1314, 46b–47.

35 DZ 1314, 44b.

36 DZ 1314, 44b–45a.

37 DZ 1314, 64a–b.

38 DZ 1331, 26b–27a.

39 Sunlight Vale (*Yanggu* 暘谷) is the eastern extreme of the world where the sun rises first each morning. See Kroll, "Li Po's 'Rhapsody,'" 15 note 70. Fusang ("Supporting Mulberry") refers to the enormous tree of sunrise upon which ten suns rest. These suns each rise over earth once every ten days before returning to the Fusang tree to be replenished (ET, 789).

40 Read *qizheng* 烈正 as a scribal error for *zhengqi* 正炁.

41 DZ 1331, 28b.

Conclusion

Epigraph: Timothy Weber, *Zoocology Fragments*, unpublished manuscript.

- 1 Olson, "The Sacred Book," 11.
- 2 Campany, "Religious Repertoires," 111–112; Puett, "Listening to Sages," 271–272; Bokenkamp, *Ancestors and Anxiety*, 130–157.
- 3 We hope this might provide fruitful evidence to compare to the redactional forgeries, fabrications, or falsifications as recently discussed by Ehrman in *Forgery and Counterforgery*, 33–61.
- 4 We follow Jardine and Grafton by studying the process of "reading" as goal-oriented and goal-directed. A single text thus might give rise to plurality of responses, not a "tidy univocal interpretation." See their "Studied for Action," 30–32.

1: The Three Grottoes

The numbers in the margins represent the corresponding page number of the text in the *Zhengtong Daoist Canon*.

- 1 The Three Grottoes are the Grotto-Heaven (*dongtian*), Grotto-Earth (*dongdi*), and Grotto-Abyss (*dongyuan*). These terms are discussed in detail below. Reading *xuan* 玄 for *yuan* 元 in the title of the scripture based on *Taizhen yudi siji mingke jing* (DZ 184), 3.3a and *Wushang biyao* (DZ 1138), 95.8a. We are also reading *xuan* for *yuan* at the end of this phrase, the “Upper Transformation of the Mysterious (*xuan*) Cinnabar” not “Primal (*yuan*) Cinnabar.” We have preserved the “Nine Grottoes” (*jiudong* 九洞) in the final method, although other early texts all read this as Penetrating Mystery (*dongxuan* 洞玄). See *Wushang biyao* (DZ 1138), 21.2a; *Shangqing daolei shixiang* (DZ 1132), 4.3a; *Yunji qiqian* (DZ 1032), 8.19b.
- 2 Ten Limits (*shi jue* 十絕) refers to distant galaxies in every direction. In *Dongxuan lingbao danshui feishu yundu xiaojie maojing* (DZ 320, 2b), the author writes “When the celestial beings see the mysterious measures, they should go out unto the Ten Limits of space to pay homage [to them]” 天人見玄度，應於十絕虛空中作禮.
- 3 Grand Hollow (*taikong* 太空) refers to the vast space separating the royal palaces of the sky. During the cosmic voyages of Daoist ritual, adepts traversed the Grand Hollow as if they were sailing on the seas between the starry mansions of the Great Dipper. See Schafer, “Cosmic Metaphors,” 11.
- 4 In *Shangqing sanyuan yujian sanyuan bu jing* 上清三元玉檢三元布經, these three clouds are identified as cinnabar, green, and azure. See *Shangqing sanyuan yujian sanyuan bu jing* (DZ 354), 41a.
- 5 According to early Buddhist texts, “poisonous dragons” (*du long* 毒龍) were serpents who might help rather than hurt humans. In the early-third-century *Middle-Length Scripture on Former Events* (*Zhongben qi jing* 中本起經), the Brahmanic priest Kāśyapa (Jiashe 迦葉), brought such dragons under his control in his meditation chamber. See Yoshioka, *Dōkyō to Bukkyō* (vol. 3), 344.
- 6 In *Taishang dongyuan shenzhou jing* (DZ 335), 12.11a, there are “giant beasts” (*jushou* 巨獸) with long ivory tusks who roam the human world to capture all evil beings. The “long ivories” in this couplet likely refers to an elephant-like creature who safeguards the scripture by ringing heavenly bells with their tusks.

7 There is a similar line in the *Huangtian shangqing jinque dijun lingshu ziwen shangjing* (DZ 639, 1b), although the author in that scripture describes canopies dancing in the wind rather than jade tones rushing forth. See EDS, 308.

8 Originally, the term Nine Cross-Routes (*jiu wei* 九緯) referred to east-west roads in the capital city. Commentators of the *Zhouli* distinguish these roads from the Nine Avenues (*jiu jing* 九經), or the north-south routes. See *Zhouli* 41.24b–25a (SSJZS) [642–643]. In Upper Clarity scriptures, however, the term refers to the nine stars of the Big Dipper (the seven visible and two invisible stars). Schafer, *Pacing the Void*, 46; Smith, *Declarations*, 250 note 47; SK, 151 note 12.

9 “Carefree” (*rongyu* 容與) was a term in classical poetry that denoted the feeling that a person felt when relaxing in the company of gods and goddesses. See Hawkes, *The Songs of the South*, 107, 109. Rhyme: 形 (gheing-4), 生 (sreing-2a), 精 (tseing-3b), 明 (meing-3a), 篇 (phan-3by), 庭 (deing-4), 齡 (leing-4), 窮 (gung-3b).

10 In classical literature, “two options” (*ershun* 二順) refers to a situation where there are two possible solutions or outcomes to a predicament (DKW, 1.435d; Legge, *The Ch'un Ts'ew*, 810). Writers of Daoist scriptures borrowed the term to refer the powers of Yin and Yang.

11 It is unclear if “numinous hills” (*lingqiu* 靈丘) denote a specific place or are a metonym for the idyllic heavenly realms. The term could be interpreted either way since it is used to refer to holy hills generally or a specific location associated with fantastic medicines. In this latter sense, the term is likely connected to *Shanghai jing*'s Mount Numinous (Lingshan 靈山), a place near the Queen Mother of the West's home. See Smith, *Declarations*, 202.

12 Rhyme: 觀 (kwan-1), 晨 (dzyen-3b), 園 (ghwan-3a), 玄 (ghwan-4), 天 (than-4), 津 (tsen-3b), 旋 (zwan-3b), 岑 (leingQ-3b), 全 (dzwan-3b).

13 This line probably conjures up images of finding and eating precious stones growing in the shapes of flowers. See *Yunji qiqian* (DZ 1032, 101.4a) where the author of the *Shangqing gaosheng taishang yuchen dadaojun ji* 上清高聖太上玉晨大道君紀 writes, I pick *lang* fruit from Crimson Grove, and nibble on the purple lotuses from the Mystic River 摘絳林之琅實，餌玄河之紫蕖.

14 Rhyme: 心 (sem-3), 衿 (kem-3x), 林 (lem-3), 音 (em-3x), 尋 (zem-3).

15 We follow Smith (*Declarations*, 34), who notes that the term Dark Clarity (*xuanqing* 玄清) is connected with deities residing in the Northern Sea (Beihai 北海), described in the beginning of *Zhuangzi* as the “northern darkness”

(*beiming* 北冥). Later the term was also chosen as the name for black sesame oil in *Yunji qiqian* (DZ 1032), 106.7a.

16 Rhyme: 清 (tsheing-3b), 形 (gheing-4).

17 The Three Paths (*santu* 三塗) is a term adapted from the three kinds of unfavorable forms of rebirth: in hell, as an animal, or as a hungry ghost. The homophonous “three [types] of servitude” (*santu* 三徒) is often used in similar passages to describe three kinds of slave labor that one experiences in hell. See Zürcher, “Buddhist Influence on Early Taoism,” 117–118; Bokenkamp, “The Yao Boduo Stele,” 59; EDS, 435–437 note 12 and 14; AA, 4.

18 This paragraph is featured verbatim in Zhu Ziying’s 朱自英 (976–1029) preface to the *Scripture of the Great Grotto*, and is translated by James Miller (*The Way*, 220). We have, however, departed from this translation in many places. The Upper Monarch is an imaginative reign-title of an era in the former ages of the “Former Heavens.” RS, 1.112–113; EDS, 312–313.

19 When using the “whirlwind” (*huifeng* 迴風) method, an adept visualizes white *qi* spreading throughout his or her whole body until it becomes purple. At this point, the adept exhales it, and the *qi* transforms into a newborn infant thought to be the androgynous Thearchical One (*Diyi* 帝一), the father and mother of all. For more information on the variants of this method, see ET, 297.

20 In the *Shangqing dadong zhenjing* (DZ 6, 2.2b), there is rarified *qi* from the heavens that manifest in the Bright Beam (*mingliang* 明梁) of an adept. Beam in this case refers to roofbeam, not a beam of light. Commentators on this passage claim that the Bright Beam refers to an adept’s heart, and that this heavenly *qi* permeating the heart is also known as a vaporous substance called “avoiding falsity” (*bifei* 辟非). We translated *bifei* based on a passage from the *Shangqing wozhong jue* (DZ 140, 1.4b) where an adept avoids falsity (*bifei*), avoids war (*bibing* 辟兵), and avoids death (*bisi* 辟死). The commentators on the *Scripture of the Great Grotto* identify *Yiyou* 易有 as the northwest gate of heaven. See DZ 6, 2.2b; *Shangqing dadong zhenjing yujue yinyi* (DZ 104), 3a.

21 In the *Shangqing dadong zhenjing* (DZ 6, 2.5a), the deity Lord of Jade Vacuity (Yuxu jun 玉虛君) holds a “blade of virtue” (*deren* 德刃) as the emblem of his spiritual prowess. Commentators on this scripture also identify the phrase *zhuoyaoluo* 灌耀羅 (“dazzling and radiant web”) as a synonym for the sun. DZ 6, 2.7b. This passage is also quoted and used in a similar way by Yang Xi in *Zhen’gao* (DZ 1016), 9.24b [SK, 345].

22 Both “Grand Silence” (*taimo* 太漠) and “Bladeless” (*wuren* 无刃) appear together in a couplet in the *Scripture of the Great Grotto* (DZ 6, 2.9b). Our interpretation here is based on the *Yuqing wuji zongzhen wenchang dadong xianjing zhu* (DZ 103, 4.2a–b), in which the three corporeal palaces, called “numinous passes” (*lingguan* 靈關), are surrounded by an infinite space called “Grand Silence.” The commentator on this scripture also identifies “Bladeless” as a synonym for Jade Capitoline Mountain (*Yujing shan* 玉京山), the locus for the highest spirits living in the brain.

23 According to Yang Xi’s revelations, the Azure Lad resides along with many other heavenly beings in the Fangzhu Palace atop the Eastern Floriate Peak (*Donghua shan* 東華山). See *Zhen’gao* (DZ 1016), 9.20b; Kroll, “In the Halls of the Azure Lad,” 79. On the Seven Mysteries (*qixuan* 七玄), see below (DZ 1314, 48b), where this term refers to the seven generations of ancestors whose transgressions will be removed.

24 The Five Thearchs (*wudi* 五帝) are the high deities in charge of the four cardinal directions and the center. Medieval Daoist writers correlated these gods to various other parts of the Five Phases system (e.g., the five planets, the five viscera, the five marchmounts), and they were invoked in many different rituals to protect humankind (ET, 79, 542). As Gil Raz notes (“Imperial Efficacy,” 109), while the Five Thearchs were adapted from the imperial rites of the Han dynasty, Daoist writers cleverly used them as symbols to simultaneously bolster the imperial throne and subvert imperial power. The thirty-seventh stanza of the *Shangqing dadong zhenjing* (DZ 6, 6.6b–10a) is devoted to the Five Thearchs, and these gods are correlated to the adept’s five viscera. Proper actualization of the Thearchs, writes this author, will help preserve the body and prepare it to rise to the heavens.

25 Whereas previous translations of *yi dao* 億道 have rendered the term as “countless ways” (Miller, *The Way*, 222), it seems to refer more narrowly to the various phenomena brought into existence through the Dao. This understanding of phrase *zongling yidao* 總領億道 resonates with other passages in other Daoist scriptures. The same phrase appears in the *Shangqing waiguo fangpin qingtong neiwen* (DZ 1373, 2a), where harmonious tones of the thirty-six heavens oversee all spirits and other beings of the universe.

26 The author of the *Dongzhen gaoshang yudi dadong ciyi yujian wulao baojing* (DZ 1313, 20b) quotes from a text called the “Annotated List of the Thearchical

Lords' Twelve Intentions" ("Dijun shier yuan pianmu" 帝君十二願篇目). This list describes twelve different kinds of intentions (*yuan* 頑) that an adept can make to heaven (*tian* 天), earth (*di* 地), wind (*feng* 風), clouds (*yun* 雲), Yin, Yang, Grand Emptiness (*Taikong* 太空), Grand Nonexistence (*Taiwu* 太無), Grand Barrens (*Taixu* 太虛), Great Existence (*Dayou* 大有), one's birth (*zisheng* 自生), and to spirits' births (*shensheng* 神生). *Yuan* 頑 (intention) is an action between a prayer and a vow. For more on this term in Daoist texts and the so-called "vows" of Buddhism, see Bokenkamp, "The Silkworm and the Bodhi Tree," 327–331.

27 Read *jian* 簡 for *jian* 間. The Eight Tablets of the Mysterious Mother (*Xuanmu bajian* 玄母八簡) contain eight intentions (*yuan*) that the adept expresses to the Mysterious Mother. In the course of reciting these intentions, the adept visualizes deities who will descend to the adept on carriages made of light (*jing* 景) and clouds (*su* 素) on each of the eight nodal days. These days are also correlated to the Eight Gates (*bamen* 八門), the eight directions of the world. See *Dongzhen gaoshang yudi dadong ciyi yujian wulao baojing* (DZ 1313), 20b, 22a–24a; Robinet, *Taoist Meditation*, 141; ET, 219, 297; AA, 165.

28 The author of the *Jade Seal of the Feminine One* only mentions consuming a Nine-Times Cycled Elixir (*jiuzhuan dan* 九轉丹) one time, and claims it will make the adept look younger and qualify to receive Transcendent books at the Gatetower of the Taiji heavens (DZ 1313, 56a–b). This elixir is discussed in detail elsewhere in the Upper Clarity literature (especially Mao Ying's hagiography), and should be the same elixir that Tao Hongjing failed to produce in 506 and 507. See Strickmann, "On the Alchemy," 133, 146–151.

29 As described later in this passage, Five Turns (*wuhui* 五迴) is a technique featured in the *Jade Seal of the Feminine One* by which an adept cycles rarified *qi* throughout the body five times. There is evidence elsewhere in that scripture, in a passage culled from the *Jade Scripture of the Great Grotto's Golden Efflorescence* (*Dadong jinhua yujing* 大洞金華玉經), that the term is an abbreviated compound of the "five universals (*wutong* 五通) and "returning prime" (*huiyuan* 回元). The "five universals" are "great Transcendents" (*daxian*), beings whom adepts can beckon to their aid. The five deities correspond to the five planets, whose movement also marks the "five universal days" in the Upper Clarity liturgical calendar. See RS, 2.53; Robinet, "Shangqing: Highest Clarity," 203; Smith, *Declarations*, 122. "Returning prime," on the other hand, refers to the entire

ritual regimen that an adept uses not only to personally reach godhood, but also save his ancestors. See *Dongzhen gaoshang yudi dadong ciyi yujian wulao baojing* (DZ 1313), 21a.

- 30 Three Radiances (*sanguang* 三光) are the sun, moon, and stars. ET, 399, 716.
- 31 In *Dongzhen gaoshang yudi dadong ciyi yujian wulao baojing* (DZ 1313, 24b), the Three Passes (*sanguan* 三關) are said to contain “embryonic *qi*” (*taiqi* 胎氣) that form when Thearchs merge together. This suggests that the Three Passes is an alternative name for the three palaces within the adept’s body.
- 32 The passage is featured verbatim in the *Dongzhen gaoshang yudi dadong ciyi yujian wulao baojing* (DZ 1313), 3b.
- 33 The authors of the *Dongzhen gaoshang yudi dadong ciyi yujian wulao baojing* (DZ 1313, 3b), further identify the Feminine Ones as the Three [Ladies] of Simplicity (*sansu* 三素).
- 34 Given that there is a *bian* 變 and a *hao* 號 inserted above in the titles “Precious Names of Officials Who Became Inner Perfected through the Three Grottoes’ Unitive Transformation” (*Sandong hunhua neizhen biansheng guano baoming* 三洞混化內真變生官號寶名) and the “Official Titles and Precious Names of the Inner Perfected that Transformed through the Fusion Within Grotto-Heaven” (*Dongtian hunhua neizhen biansheng guano baoming* 洞天混化內真變生官號寶名), we have added them here. The name for Mars is literally the “Grand Sparkling Deluder” (*tai yinghuo* 太熒惑), and Mars was a planet that held many frightful associations for a Daoist adept. See Schafer, *Pacing the Void*, 212.
- 35 In royal courts, the Three-Brim (*sanliang* 三梁) was a kind of cap with a trapezoidal piece (long side on top) affixed that was worn by high officials. Brim (*liang* 梁) refers to the length of the horizontal rectangular board on top of the cap. This board, which was made with latticed bamboo strips, could range in size from One-Brim (*yiliang* 一梁) to “Five-Brim” (*wuliang* 五梁). See HHS, 30.3666.
- 36 We have inserted a *bian* 變 and a *hao* 號 in this title for the same reasons listed above.
- 37 In early Daoist texts, Yudan 鬱單 is the name of a mythical land far to the north of China. The notion of this region is likely adapted from the Sanskrit Uttarakuru (often translated in Chinese as *Beiju luzhou* 北俱盧洲), the northern of the four continents surrounding the axis mundi of early Buddhist cosmology, Mount Sumeru. In early Vedic and Buddhist literature, Uttarakuru

is semimythical land that is home to a wide range of spiritual beings living in blissful places. See Law, “Geographical Data,” 5; FGDC, 1585. As Zürcher notes (“Buddhist Influence,” 118, 122), Daoist scriptures are littered with references to Yudan, but writers often intentionally conflate information about the northern continent with descriptions of heavenly realms. A great example of this occurs in *Wushang biyao* (DZ 1138, 4.15a–b) when Yudan is described as a realm with frozen waters with jade polypores growing from crystal lakes.

- 38 In this last instance, govern (*zhu* 主) is a synonym for cure. For more similar uses of *zhu* for words related to curing such as *yangming* 養命, see Stanley-Baker, “Daoists and Doctors,” 273.
- 39 Original birth (*bensheng* 本生) usually refers to the day of one’s birth, but in this context it must refer to the origin of life itself, that is, the three *qi* discussed earlier in this passage. Similar uses of this phrase are found elsewhere in the Daoist Canon, such as the *Shangqing jiudan shanghua taijing zhongji jing* (DZ 1382, 2b) where the author writes that one of the techniques that will help adepts reach “upper Transcendence” (*shang xian* 上仙) is to “guide the *qi* from one’s original birth to eradicate the roots of the Three Gates” 引氣於本生，滅根於三門.
- 40 Flowing auroras (*liuxia* 流霞) describe colored clouds that swirl around. The term refers to a cultivation method by which the adept ingests *qi*.
- 41 Osseous allotment (*gufen* 骨分) refers to the notion that the structure and alignment of one’s skeletal frame correlates to one’s predestined postmortem rank. See *Taishang santian zhengfa jing* (DZ 1203, 10b–11a), where the author writes that the name of an adept with an osseous allotment is recorded in the registers of the Upper Clarity heavens, thus qualifying him to possess esoteric scriptures.
- 42 A ritual with an orchid scent (*lan xiang* 蘭香) likely means that the adept will bathe in water that has been prepared by infusing the bathwater with orchid petals, as is described for a three-day fast in *Taishang lingbao wufuxu* (DZ 388, 2.23a).
- 43 DZ 1314 has *qi* 齊, but this should be the homophonous *qi* 脐 (navel), as the author is trying to distinguish it and show that it is the abdominal Cinnabar Field Palace.
- 44 The three essences here refer to the essential *qi* of grotto-heaven, grotto-earth, and grotto-abyss.

45 In Yang Xi's revelations, the Northern Thearch (*Beidi* 北帝) is the high deity who is in charge of the demon officials of Fengdu. See *Zhen'gao* (DZ 1016), 13.3b. Mollier, "La methode de l'empereur du nord," 333; ET, 222–223.

46 Rhyme: 精 (tseing-3b), 生 (sreing-2a), 形 (gheing-4), 庭 (deing-4), 名 (meing-3b), 幷 (peing-3b).

47 That is, open a passage for the *qi* to travel to parts of the adept's body that were formerly dark and unknown.

48 Rhyme: 元 (ngwan-3a), 玄 (ghwan-4), 田 (dan-4), 關 (kwan-2a), 間 (kan-2b), 鮮 (san-3b), 天 (than-4), 年 (nan-4).

49 In Upper Clarity scriptures, human adepts acquire twelve embryonic roots (*baogen* 胞根) when gestating in a mother's womb. Over time, these roots knot up and stiffen (*jiezhi* 結滯), thus causing an adult's body to improperly function. In order to reach liberation, adepts are required to untie these knots, four in each of the three parts of the body. See *Dongzhen taiyi dijun taidan yinshu dongzhen xuanjing* (DZ 1330), 38b–39a; *Shangqing jiudan shanghua taijing zhongji jing* (DZ 1382), 2a; Robinet, *Taoist Meditation*, 139–143; ET, 932.

50 The Southern Gallery (*Nanxuan* 南軒) is the heavenly palace to which souls ascend after they have been rescued through salvific rituals. The author of the *Dongzhen shangqing kaitian santu qixing yidu jing* claims that the souls are able to rise to the Southern Gallery whenever their "roots of death" (*sigen* 死根) have been severed and their name is ranked in the ledgers of Jade Clarity. At this time, the souls can break free from the Northern Thearch (*Beidi*), pass through Heaven's Gate (*Tianguan*), and thereafter live indefinitely in the Southern Gallery (DZ 1317, 2.7b). Later in this same text, the author further specified that the reason that souls are initially unable to break free from the Northern Thearch stems from the mortal knots that are monitored by the Nine Yin (DZ 1317, 2.11a). For more on the translation of *xuan* as "gallery," see W XI, 357.

51 Rhyme: 元 (ngwan-3a), 仙 (sran-2b), 巾 (ken-3bx), 神 (zyen-3b), 言 (ngan-3a), 然 (nyan-3b), 軒 (han-3a), 晨 (dzyen-3b).

52 Fluid yellow (*liu huang* 流黃) is an alternative name for the homophonous *liuhuang* 硫磺 (sulfur). Sulfur was a common ingredient in alchemical recipes (Huang, *Daozang danyao*, 174–175, 262–263; Ware, *Alchemy*, 274; Campany, *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth*, 199 note 235, 320; Ho, Moffett, and Cho, *Explorations*, 90–91). The "five colors" in this line likely refers to the fact that

sulfur was occasionally used in preparing the popular drug Five-Mineral Powder (*wushisan* 五石散). See Smith, *Declarations*, 294 note 203.

53 Based on the rhyme scheme of this incantation, it is probably that *fu* 符 is a scribal error for *wen* 文.

54 We are reading *yuan* 元 as a scribal error for *tian* 天 (heaven) as it is written in the *Yunji qiqian* (DZ 1032, 43.2b).

55 Jade Dawn (Yuchen 玉晨) is the name of the palace where the Lord of the Dao of Jade Dawn lives. See *Wushang biyao* (DZ 1138), 22.10a.

56 Phosphoric Sovereign (Jinghuang 景皇) is the name of a Perfected being. A passage from the *Numinous Stanza on the Vacuous Grotto* (*Kongdong lingzhang* 空洞靈章) that is quoted in the *Wushang biyao* (DZ 1138, 20.16b) mentions that this deity was a master musician in the Queen Mother of the West's bevy of spirit officials.

57 Rhyme: 元 (ngwan-3a), 雲 (ghwen-3a), 符 (buo-3c), 存 (dzwen-1), 晨 (dzyen-3b; zyen-3b), 仙 (sran-2b).

2: The Nine Palaces

In the opening heading, we have replaced *yuan* 元 with *xuan* 玄, as it is written latter in the scripture.

1 The Thearchical Perfected (*dizhen* 帝真) are beings who were invested with power by the thearchical lords (*dijun*). See *Shangqing suling shangpian* (DZ 1371, 1a) where adepts “who cultivate and achieve their Dao will be promoted on high as Perfected beings by thearchical kings” 修行道成，上補帝王之真.

2 The three Perfected grades of the highest scriptures (*taishang sanzhen pin jing* 太上三真品經) refers to three sets of scriptures associated with three different kinds of Perfected beings: upper (*shang* 上), middle (*zhong* 中), and lower (*xia* 下). This tripartite division of the scriptures is present in early Upper Clarity literature, such as the *Shangqing taishang bausu zhenjing* (DZ 426, 4a–5b), where it says that there are seven texts of upper perfection, six for middle perfection, and eight for lower perfection.

3 Lesser Existence (Xiaoyou 小有) is palace described by the author of *Ziyang zhenren neizhuan* (DZ 303, 12a) as a Grotto-Heaven beneath Mount Wangwu (Wangwu shan 王屋山). In his mid-fourth-century revelations, Yang Xi also specifies that a spirit named Wang Zideng 王子登 was in command of Lesser Existence. DZ 1016, 1.2b.

4 The river's source (*heyuan* 河源) is the place where deceased souls live. See *Dongzhen shangqing qingyao zishu jingen zhongjing* (DZ 1315, 1.3b), where the author warns that a person might become a “lower demon” (*xiagui* 下鬼) after death, and will be sent down to the river's source by spirit soldiers (*shenbing* 神兵) of the Five Thearchs.

5 One *zhang* (ten *chi* 尺) is roughly 3.5 meters long.

6 See DZ 1016, 10.15a, where the one lays down and visualizes that the heat from the sun engulfs one's torso and penetrates throughout the entire body.

7 The first two of these deities were likely considered bodily gods in early Celestial Masters practice (ET 668), while the latter, Yellow Elder Lord (Huanglao jun 黃老君), was an Upper Clarity amalgam of Huangdi 黃帝 and Laozi (ET, 62).

8 The last sentence of the paragraph was likely added at a later date, as none of the other redactions (*Dengzhen yinjue* [DZ 421], *Dongzhen taishang daojun yuandan shangjing* [DZ 1345], and *Shangqing suling shangpian* [DZ 1371]) contain the sentence. We have been unable to find any extant scriptures that might correlate with this *Scripture of the Golden Efflorescence* (*Jinhua jing* 金華經), though it might be related to the *Jade Scripture of the Great Grotto's Golden Efflorescence* (*Dadong jinhua yujing* 大洞金華玉經, DZ 254; RS, 2.282–283), but this is largely a pastiche of material from DZ 1313.

9 We have amended the text to “two” (*er* 二) based on the *Wushang biyao* (DZ 1138, 5.12a) version of the scripture.

10 Read *fang* 方 for *fang* 房.

11 The name Chufang 初方 is recorded with the graphic variant Qiefang 切方 in the *Dengzhen yinjue* (DZ 421), 1.7a.

12 Harmony and constancy (*lizhen* 利貞) is a phrase from the *Yijing* (SSJZS), 1.1a–b [8] where the changes of the Dao are said to be modeled on Heaven and thus are always right and appropriate. Lynn, *The Classic of Changes*, 129.

13 Rhyme: 神 (zyen-3b), 雲 (ghwen-3a), 前 (dzan-4), 關 (kwan-2a), 門 (men-1), 真 (tsyen-3b), 尊 (tswen-1).

14 In DZ 1016, 9.6a–b, Yang Xi similarly describes that the eyes and ears are the entry point for the Perfected to pass into the body. These same names, Jiaonü and Yunyi, also appear later in the revelations (DZ 1016, 9.8a–b) as the spirits who will remove all calamities when the eyes and ears are purified.

15 There are at least two variants for *yongcha* 永察 (“forever inspect”): *yicha* 亦察 (“also inspect”) in the *Shangqing suling shangpian* (DZ 1371, 5b) and *Shangqing wozhong jue* (DZ 140, 2.1b, 3.6b), and *shicha* 示察 (“reveal and inspect”)

in *Yunji qiqian* (DZ 1032, 47.4b). The meaning, however, does not change significantly among these three variants.

16 Rhyme: 房 (bang-3), 祥 (zang-3), 殇 (ang-3).

17 Literally this says “two-seven” times, which could also be fourteen. But given the strong numerical symbolism in this text for threes and nines, it is most likely this should be three times nine, or twenty-seven.

18 As early as the first century CE, in *Baihu tongyi* 白虎通義, the “six repositories” (*liufu* 六府) refer to the large intestines (*dachang* 大腸), small intestines (*xiaochang* 小腸), stomach (*wei* 胃), urinary bladder (*pangguang* 膀胱), the gallbladder (*dan* 膽), and the triple burner (*sanjiao* 三焦). These are the yang hollow organs featured in the *Huangdi neijing*, and in the *Huangting neijing* the first five of these repositories are linked as outer aspects of the five viscera (*wuzang* 五臟), the lungs (*fei* 肺), heart (*xin* 心), spleen (*pi* 脾), kidneys (*shen* 腎), liver (*gan* 肝) respectively. The final repository, the “triple burner,” is linked to the Gate of Life (*mingmen* 命門). See ET, 1078. Here the “six repositories” are used metonymically to refer to the adept’s entire body.

19 We follow the *Shangqing suling shangpian* variant (DZ 1371, 6b) and read Yuanhua 元英 as Wuying 无英 (Non-pareil).

20 In DZ 1313, 47b, *yinji* 陰極 is identified as *yinji gong* 陰極宮, the place through which an adept visualizes the thearchical lords residing in the body.

21 Sovereign of Vacuity (Xuhuang 虛皇) or Sovereign of Grand Vacuity (Taixu huang 太虛皇) was a high god whose daughters were famous for their study of esoteric Upper Clarity scriptures. Later commentators claim that Master Redpine (Chisongzi 赤松子) took this position when his earthly life ended. See Smith, *Declarations*, 60 note 158.

22 We have emended the text from *huang* 黃 (“yellow”) to its homophone *huang* 皇 (“sovereign”) as is written in *Shangqing suling shangpian* (DZ 1371, 10a).

23 Rhyme: 君 (kwen-3a), 玄 (ghwan-4), 睿 (gwen-3a), 舜 (kan-2a), 真 (tsyen-3b), 吞 (then-1), 丹 (tan-1), 魂 (ghwen-1), 仙 (san-3b), 顏 (ngan-2a), 官 (kwan-1), 新 (sen-3b).

24 Rhyme: 靈 (leing-4), 冥 (meing-4), 清 (tsheing-3b), 形 (gheing-4), 盈 (yeing-3b), 青 (tsheing-4), 庭 (deing-4).

25 Whereas *zhen* 真 (Perfection) often refers to deities in this scripture, the phrase *jinzhēn* 金真 (Golden Perfection) likely refers to the hue of the jade blossoms (a nephrite-like glow) that fill the adept’s body. The writer of the *Dadong zhenjing*

(DZ 6, 3.16b), for instance, writes that an incantation from that text will cause the reader to have the “golden perfection of jade brilliance” (*yuguang jinzen* 玉光金真) penetrate his laryngeal artery.

26 For more on the Yin officers, see Andersen, “The Practice of *Bugang*,” 33–34; Schipper, *The Taoist Body*, 142–144; EDS, 328–329.

3: The Three Ones

- 1 Rhyme: 丸 (ghwan-1), 宮 (kung-3b), 門 (men-1), 存 (dzwen-1), 然 (nyan-3b), 仙 (san-3b), 晨 (dzyen-3b).
- 2 Writers of Daoist scriptures not only used the ten Celestial Stems and the twelve Earthly Branches (*ganzhi* 干支) to mark time, but they asserted that the sixty combinations resulting from the Stems and Branches were connected to one’s fate. In fact, there were deities, variously called numinous officers (*lingguan* 靈官) or astral lords (*xingjun* 星君), who controlled each Stem-Branch combination. Generally speaking, the ten Celestial Stems were associated with Yang powers, while the twelve Earthly Branches represented Yin. Yet the twelve combinations of Stems and Branches including *jia* 甲 or *ding* 丁 were considered the most powerful, and the twelve Stem-Branch combinations that included these two characters were collectively known as the six *jia* and the six *ding*. In most Upper Clarity texts, the six *jia* (*jiazi* 甲子, *jiaxu* 甲戌, *jiashen* 甲申, *jiawu* 甲午, *jiachen* 甲辰, and *jiayin* 甲寅) were protective deities that could be summoned to do an adept’s bidding at any time, such as when calling the mobile kitchen (*xingchu* 行廚) through the six *jia* talismans. In other texts, however, the six *jia* deities can only be placed in one’s service on these six days of the sixty-day cycle. See *Shangqing liujia qidao bifà* (DZ 584, 2a); Li Xian’s 李賢 (653–684) commentary in HHS, 50.1677; *Baopuzi* 15.3a–b; ET, 695–697; RS, 1.24–25; Campany, *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth*, 72–75; Kalinowski, “La littérature divinatoire dans le *Daozang*,” 91–95; and Kalinowski, *Cosmologie et divination*, 87–88 and 384–387.
- 3 Rhyme: 精 (tseing-3b), 幷 (peing-3b), 靈 (leing-4), 生 (sreing-2a), 名 (meing-3b), 營 (yweing-3b).
- 4 Rhyme: 靈 (leing-4), 生 (sreing-2a), 清 (tsheing-3b), 形 (gheing-4), 傾 (khweing-3b), 停 (deing-4), 冥 (meing-4).

5 Grand Nonexistence (*Taiwu* 太无) is sometimes characterized as a field of ultimate emptiness and at other times is interpreted as the highest level of heaven. In the *Yuanshi wuliang duren shangpin maojing sizhu* (DZ 87, 3.35b), it is described as the field of emptiness that hovers over the entire phenomenal universe.

6 This passage is quoted in *Shangqing daobao jing* (DZ 1353, 1.27a) with a slight variant, for the author writes that the will be a “resonance with the One of Grand Nonexistence” (*Taiwu gan yi* 太无感一) rather than a resonant transformation (*ganhua* 感化).

7 For more on the primordial yellow [*qi*] (*hunhuang* 混黃), see below where the author writes that the Grand Tenuity heaven originally contained twenty-four kinds of *qi* that were originally lumped together within a primordial yellow *qi*.

8 We follow Schafer’s translation (“Wu Yün’s Stanzas,” 340 note 133) of *xiao* 霽 as the “Darks” rather than the more common “Empyrean” or “Welkin” because these term emphasize the remote, esoteric, and caliginous aspects of the Nine Heavens. Writers of medieval scriptures correlated these nine deep reaches of space to a wide range of enneads: The Nine Palaces of the brain, the Nine Stars, Nine-Cycle Elixir, and so on. See Robinet, “Metamorphosis and Deliverance,” 43.

9 The adept will fuse the Perfected lords of his body with their counterparts in heaven.

10 The Thearchical One (*Diyi* 帝一) and the Five Spirits of the Grand Monad (*Taiyi wushen* 太一五神) are all spirits residing in the body. The Thearchical One is an alternative name for the Thearchical Lord. The Five Spirits are the corporeal gods charged with monitoring an adept’s registers of life (*shengji* 生籍). See ET, 864. The Grand Monad is one of these spirits; the others include White Prime (Baiyuan 白元), Non-pareil (Wuying 無英), Peach Child (Taokang 桃康), and the Director of Destinies (Siming 司命). The author of *Dongzhen taiyi dijun taidan yinshu dongzhen xuanjing* writes that each of the Five Spirits are in charge of different parts of the body, and an adept can use the processes of unitive fusion so that the five deities will properly display their registers (see DZ 1330, 8a and 9b). According to the *Shangqing taishang dijun jiuzhen zhongjing* (DZ 1376, 1.4b), the Grand Monad and the other Five Spirits fix a person’s registers and reside in their Five Viscera when they are but an embryo. The “Three-Five-Seven-Nine” is a collective term for methods pertaining to longevity, often techniques incorporating sexual intercourse. See DZ 1313, 37a–42b, 44a.

11 The Three Ladies of Simplicity (Sansu 三素), or the Three Primal Ladies of Simplicity (Sansu yuanjun 三素元君) are the Primal Lady of White Simplicity (Baisu 白素), Yellow Simplicity (Huangsu 黃素), and Purple Simplicity (Zisu 紫素). They are the mothers of the Three Ones and help sustain a person's registers of life after death. See DZ 1313, 5a; Robinet, *Taoist Meditation*, 128–129, 143–147; AA, 117. Six-fold Harmony (*liuhe* 六合) is the name of the palace where the Grand Monad resides. See DZ 1313, 5a–5b.

12 The sentence is likely corrupted since Thearchical Chamberlain Lord (Diquing jun 帝卿君) appears to be two titles of deities rather than one name. The *Jinque dijun sanyuan zhenyi jing* (DZ 253) has no corresponding sentence, which suggests that it was later inserted, perhaps accidentally.

13 Rhyme: 關 (kwan-2a), 神 (zyen-3b), 仙 (san-3b).

14 The Six Heavens (*liutian* 六天) was a term in Upper Clarity literature designating the residences of evil gods and spirits. See Andersen, *The Method of Holding the Three Ones*, 59 note 61.

15 This entire description of transforming through fusion birth (*hunsheng* 混生) and fusing *qi* (*hunqi* 混炁) is entirely missing from *Jinque dijun sanyuan zhenyi jing*. The latter simply states that the adept “receives an appointment” (*shou shi yan* 受事焉); see DZ 253, 5a.

16 Rhyme: 生 (sreing-2a), 庭 (deing-4), 寧 (neing-4).

17 In early medieval alchemical texts, golden liquor (*jinye* 金液) referred to an alchemical mixture prepared by mixing gold, mercury, saltpeter, and realgar (ET, 588). The gods speaking in Yang Xi's revelations also speak about preparing such a concoction (Pettit, “Learning from Maoshan,” 108, 288–289), although it is trivialized as a “minor art” (*xiaoshu* 小術) in certain Upper Clarity hagiographies; see *Yunji qiqian* (DZ 1032), 105.21b. Given the context of this stanza, “golden liquor” should be a synonym for semen, as are white pearl secretion (*baizhu ye* 白珠液) and the overflowing jade marrow (*yusui* 玉髓). A similar but less sexually charged use of the phrase “golden liquor” appears in the *Dongzhen Xiwangmu baoshen qiju jing* (DZ 1319, 15b).

18 Adepts who were predestined to become gods were often described as beings with “golden bones” (*jingu* 金骨) that were filled with jade marrow (*yusui* 玉髓). See *Wushang biyao* (DZ 1138), 31.13b. That this author describes jade marrow as flowing from a source and warns of the possibility that it can be depleted suggests that this author views it as a synonym for “essential liquid” (*jingye* 精液), the bodily fluid that adepts try to purify and prevent from infection by violations against the Perfected.

19 Rhyme: 神 (zyen-3b), 軒 (han-3a), 懿 (khan-3bx), 泉 (dzwan-3b), 仙 (san-3b).

20 Given the parallel construction of this sentence with the preceding descriptions of the palaces in the Upper One and Middle One, the insertion of “deputy chamberlain” (*biqing* 弼卿) in this sentence is a scribal error.

21 Mysterious mainstay (*xuangang* 玄剛) is the handle of the Big Dipper.

22 Rhyme: 仙 (san-3b), 軒 (han-3a), 晨 (dzyen-3b), 前 (dzan-4).

23 Grand Aurora (Taixia 太霞) is the name of a distant eastern palace compound that adepts typically travel through on the way to the Upper Clarity palaces. See Smith, *Declarations*, 182 note 93, 206.

24 Above it is *yi shen* 一身 (single body), not *yi shen* 一神 (single god).

25 Above it is *wan mao* 萬毛 (a myriad of hairs), not *wan xue* 萬穴 (a myriad of channels)

26 Above it is *bei* 備 (“full of”), not *xiu* 修 (cultivate).

27 Above it is *yinjin* 咽津 (gulp fluids) not *yintuo* 咽唾 (gulp spittle).

28 The person who “taps both ends of a question” recalls a line from the *Analects* where Confucius stresses that he is not a wise person, but always answers questions by “tapping them at both ends until he exhausts them” (*kou qi liangduan er jie yan* 叩其兩端而竭焉). *Lunyu* 9.8 (SSJZS), 9.4a [78].

29 Daoist scriptures typically use the phrase *huangning* 黃寧 [Yellow tranquility] to refer to a god (see DZ 6, 4.1a), or to a realm for adepts who have attained the Dao (DZ 263, 57.8a). The lines preceding this couplet describe the three cinnabar fields, suggesting that *huangning* is an alternative name for the phonically similar *huangting* 黃庭 (Yellow Court), or the lowest cinnabar field.

30 Rhyme: 星 (seing-4), 靈 (leing-4), 城 (dzyeing-3b), 寧 (neing-4), 丁 (treing-2b), 清 (tsheing-3b), 生 (sreing-2a).

31 It is unclear what *pingzuo* 平坐 means in this context. The phrase is typically understood as “sitting where one wishes,” that is, sitting down without worrying about the relative rank of the person in one’s company. See DKW, 4.494c. This could be important in ritual settings since a person would want to properly position himself when interacting with supernatural beings. Here, however, the writer seems to tell readers to sit however they please.

32 *Tiger Books* (*hushu* 虎書) is a text that writers of early Upper Clarity scriptures describe as a text attached to the belts of perfected beings. The *Dong zhen taiwei jinhu zhenfu* contains “Perfected talismans from Tiger Books” (*jinhu zhenfu* 金

虎真符), also called the “Tiger Books of the Three Heavens” (*santian hushu* 三天虎書). See DZ 1337, 1a–b, 2b. These talismans contain “stanzas of Jade Clarity” (*Yuqing zhi zhang* 玉清之章), thus making it likely that those talismans are similar to those discussed here.

- 33 *Dongjie* 冬節 is likely a variant for *dongzhi* 冬至 (winter arrival), or December 22.
- 34 Solar Radiance (*yangming* 陽明) is the eastern god of the Big Dipper. It is also known as the Greedy Wolf (*tanlang* 貪狼) and Pivot of Heaven (*tianshu* 天樞), i.e., Dubhe. See Schafer, *Pacing the Void*, 45–46, 51.
- 35 Cinnabar Prime (*danyuan* 丹元) is the star of the Big Dipper understood as the southern spirit. It was also known as Honest Chastity (*lianzen* 廉貞) and Jade Transverse (*yuheng* 玉衡), i.e., Alioth. See Schafer, *Pacing the Void*, 51.
- 36 Shadowy Essence (*yinjing* 陰精) is the star of the Big Dipper understood as the western spirit. It is also called Giant Gate (*jumen* 巨門) and Heaven’s Jade-Cog (*tianxuan* 天璇), i.e., Merak. See Schafer, *Pacing the Void*, 51.
- 37 Heavens’ wrath (*tianwei* 天威) refers to the great anger of the high heavens when they unleash their autumn chill (*susha* 肅殺, literally “soughing death”) each fall. The “six *chen*” are the six directions (four cardinal, up, down) throughout which this wrath spreads.
- 38 Northern Culmen (Beiji 北極) is the most powerful star-god of the Big Dipper. Elsewhere, it is called the Fighter of the Crooked (*wuqu* 武曲) and Disclosed Yang (*kaiyang* 開陽), i.e., Mizar. See Schafer, *Pacing the Void*, 50–51, 67.
- 39 In a revelation on establishing auspicious grave sites, Yang Xi writes that if adepts place an inscribed brick behind a gravestone, the living might be able to “wield control of the essence of the Five Earth [positions]” (*zhi wutu zhi jing* 制五土之精) in order to turn a baleful site into an auspicious one. See *Zhen’gao* (DZ 1016), 10.16b [SK, 375].
- 40 Read *yi* 巳 as a scribal error for *wu* 戌.
- 41 Rhyme: 神 (zyen-3b), 門 (men-1), 煙 (an-4), 陳 (dren-3b), 舒 (kan-2a), 關 (kwan-2a), 干 (kan-1), 魂 (ghwen-1), 真 (tsyen-3b), 元 (ngwan-3a), 神 (zyen-3b).
- 42 Mysterious (or Dark) Trigger (*youji* 幽機) is the supernatural passageway found deep in the recesses of the body. The author of the *Dongzhen shangqing longfei jiudao chisu yinjue* describes how a person can “open their Mysterious Trigger by [intoning] its numinous stanzas” (*lingzhang qi youji* 靈章啓幽機). See DZ 1326, 7b.

4: Three [Palaces] and Nine [Openings]

- 1 We read *tongshi* 通釋 for *tongxian* 通鮮 based on a nearly verbatim passage (43b) at the end of this section.
- 2 Verdant Prime (*cangyuan* 蒼元) is the green primal *qi* associated with the eastern direction. The following names in the subsequent couplets follow a similar formula: Cinnabar Prime (*danyuan* 丹元) is the red *qi* of the south, Immaculate Prime (*suyuan* 素元) is the white *qi* of the west, yellow prime (*huangyuan* 黃元) is in the center, and the Mystic Prime (*xuanqi* 玄元) is the black *qi* of the north.
- 3 The nine *qi* (*jiu qi* 九炁) are those associated with the eastern direction. As we shall see below, each direction has a group of *qi* associated with it: south (three), west (seven), north (five), center (one).
- 4 The flowing bells (*liu ling* 流鈴) are also known as the fiery bells of flowing gold (*liujin huoling* 流金火鈴). These are ritual objects in Daoist ritual that emit red rays and are believed to drive perverse spirits away.
- 5 Rhyme: 生 (sreing-2a), 寧 (neing-4), 明 (meing-3a), 青 (tsheing-4), 庭 (deing-4), 鈴 (leing-4), 清 (tsheing-3b).
- 6 This passage in the *Yunji qiqian* (DZ 1032, 105.11a) reads, “Crimson clouds above the red courtyard” (*chiting jiangyun* 赤庭絳雲).
- 7 The Nine Numina (*jiuling* 九靈) are the nine Perfected beings in control of the nine somatic palaces.
- 8 Green letters (*lüzi* 緑字) was a phrase in traditional China to describe imperial commendations that were first engraved on a stone monument and then covered with a lacquer coating. Here the adept is receiving similar praise when his name is engraved on the heavenly books.
- 9 Rhyme: 真 (tsyen-3b), 元 (ngwan-3a), 聞 (men-3a), 關 (kwan-2a), 雲 (ghwen-3a), 仙 (san-3b), 尊 (tswen-1).
- 10 “Jade repositories” (*yuzang* 玉藏) is probably an orthographic error for the more common “five viscera” (*wuzang*). This latter term is recorded in *Dongzhen taishang sanjiu suyu yujing zhenjue* (DZ 1327), 4a.
- 11 The Bright Stone (*mingshi* 明石) is the symbol of the western *qi*. In the *Yuanshi wulao chishu yupian zhenwen tianshu jing* (DZ 22, 1.33b) we find a passage saying, “The August Elder and Hoary Numen of the Golden Gate of Seven Jewels in the west . . . has essences [created] during the era of Primordial Commencement. He is known on high as the Bright Stone of the Heavens’ Seven *Qi*.” 西方七寶金門皓靈皇老 其精始生，上號明石七炁之天。

12 *Yunji qiqian* (DZ 1032), 105.11a: “The golden letters on white jade, the book of the nine Thearchs” (*baiyu jinzi, jiudi zhi shu* 白玉金字，九帝之書). The Nine Thearchs (*jiudi* 九帝) likely refers to the thearchical lords of the nine heavens, as is recorded in the *Dongzhen taishang sanjiu suyu yujing zhenjue* (DZ 1327, 1b).

13 Rhyme: 廬 ljo (luo-3b), 居 kuo-3b), 敷 phuo-3c), 虛 huo-3b), 書 syuo-3b), 除 druо-3b), 如 nyuo-3b).

14 Rhyme: 神 zyen-3b), 真 tsyen-3b), 晨 dzyen-3b), 延 yan-3b), 臣 dzyen-3b), 仙 san-3b), 存 dzwon (dzwen-1).

15 The Two Mechanisms (*eryi* 二儀) refer here to heaven and earth. The author of the *Yuanshi wulao chishu yupian zhenwen tianshu jing* writes that when the Two Mechanisms are divided, heaven and earth will become distinct. See DZ 22, 1.1b. In this context, the adept is asserting that he will live forever.

16 The *Yuanshi wuliang duren shangpin miaojing sizhu* (DZ 87, 2.6b) defines the eight mighty ones (*bawei* 八威) to refer to dragons, *lin*-unicorns, tigers, leopards, lions, snakes, pegasus, and vicious beasts.

17 Rhyme: 機 ki-3a), 差 tshri-3b), 開 khei-1a), 儀 ngi-3bx), 迷 mei-4), 威 wi-3a), 飛 pi-3a), 衰 tshrwı-3b).

18 Rhyme: 君 kwen-3a), 神 zyen-3b), 天 than-4), 煙 an-4), 言 ngan-3a).

19 *Min* 混 typically means “to disappear” or “to use up or exhaust,” and this can sometimes extend to negative meanings (“in disarray” or “in shambles”) or more neutral concepts like “all mixed up.” As a reduplicative binome, however, the character refers to the appearance of still water (and is thus often used as a positive representation of a person’s death). Sometimes, it is pronounced *mian* and refers to things that are mysterious and beyond the sight of human eyes. DKW 6.1074a. Here the character should be pronounced *min* based on the rhyme scheme, but the meaning seems to refer to both the stillness of the viewer’s mind and the supernal phenomena he witnesses.

20 Rhyme: 混 men-3by; menQ-3b), 身 syen-3b), 真 tsyen-3b), 年 nan-4), 焉 an-3bx).

21 In the next few paragraphs, we have consulted and profited from Michael Stanley-Baker’s translation in his “*Daoists and Doctors*,” 219–220.

22 For an earlier appearance of the *Esoteric Writs of the Three Sovereigns*, see Campany, *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth*, 67, and Campany, *Making Transcendents*, 95. These were later reworked as a set of talismans, though the dating of these talismanic characters is still under debate. See Liu, “*Sanhuang wen xintan*,” 27–28; Steavu-Balint, “The Three Sovereigns Tradition,” 133.

23 In classical Chinese texts, like the *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 and *Huainanzi* 淮南子, *jiutian* 九天 (Nine heavens) or *jiuye* 九野 (Nine fields) referred to eight horizontal spaces with a center zone. Writers of early Daoist scriptures, however, adapted the term to describe vertical heavenly layers that correspond the cosmogonic events of the world. Upper Clarity writers also conceived of the gestation of the human embryo as being endowed with the *qi* of the Nine Heavens (*jiutian zhi qi*). See ET, 593–594.

24 In its earliest appearance in alchemical texts, the term *huangbai* 黃白 [Yellow and white] refers to gold and silver. In later texts, the term appears in longevity recipes, though its referent is unclear. See Pregadio, *Great Clarity*, 173, 190.

25 The author the *Taishang wuji dadao ziran zhenyi wuchengfu shangjing* (DZ 671, 2.3a) writes that the five ascendant talismans (*wuchengfu* 五稱符) are the “mother of the Five Phases” (*wuxing zhi mu* 五行之母), and enable the adept to submit petitions both in heaven and atop the sacred peaks of Earth.

26 Upper Monarch (*shanghuang* 上皇) is a Daoist kalpa cycle of the distant past. See *Shangqing taishang kaitian longjiao jing* (DZ 1354, 2.2a) where the author describes how twelve venerated Daoist scriptures were revealed in this distant time. Also there is probably a missing character in this sentence, as there is a line later in this text (49a) that has a nearly verbatim sentence that refers not simply to the ancient scriptures” (*jiu jing* 舊經), but the “ancient Code of the scriptures” (*jiu ke jing* 舊科經).

27 The establishment of the Three Heavens (*santian li zheng* 三天立正) refers to a distant time when the heavens and their ancient *qi* (*guqi* 故炁) came into existence.

28 The Nine Primes (*jiutian* 九元) here is an uncommon phrase; it is likely an error for Nine Heavens (*jiutian* 九天) as it appears in the sixth-century collectanea *Wushang biyao* (DZ 1138, 95.8b).

29 Simulated release (*tuojie* 託解) refers to a practice where an adept escapes death by secretly placing a material object (e.g., pill, staff, sword) in his grave. This illusion would allow him to continue living for hundreds of years after his feigned death.

5: *Illustrious Code of the Nine Perfected*

1 The secret court (*yinchao* 隱朝) is a ritual method whereby the adept holds audience with high gods in a secluded and private space. Yang Xi mentions this

technique in his revelations as a practice that his clients (the Xus) should study. DZ 1016, 9.15b.

- 2 “Novice” is a loose translation for *xiaozhao* 小兆. *Zhao* means “a commoner,” and the addition of *xiao* (“little”) reinforces the sense of humility that the adept has when addressing high gods.
- 3 Inner phosphors (*neijing* 內景) refer to somatic manifestations of the cosmos that the adept experiences during meditation. The author of an annotated edition of the *Huangting neijing jing*, featured in the *Xiuzhen shishu* (DZ 263, 1b–2a), writes that inner phosphors are the counterparts of the sun, moon, stars, and clouds that appear within the body during meditation rituals.
- 4 The Thearch’s levee (*dichen* 帝晨) refer to a bevy of transcendent officials who serve high Thearchs in heaven. This group of supernatural officials are elsewhere called *dichen* 帝宸, *diju* 帝居, *shi dichen* 侍帝晨, and the abbreviated *sizhong* 侍中. See *Zhen’gao* (DZ 1016), 17.6a. Rhyme: 天 (than-4), 篇 (phan-3by), 真 (tsyen-3b), 煙 (an-4), 仙 (san-3b), 晨 (dzyen-3b).
- 5 Predestined litigations (*sudui* 宿對) refer to any of the past transgressions that an adept or his ancestors have committed. Adepts will face cross-examination with regards to these past faults in tenebrous palaces (*yougong* 幽宮), dark administrative districts in subterranean realms. In *Dongzhen taishang daojun yuandan shangjing* (DZ 1345, 41b) this passage reads, “Intone this one time . . . to erase the heavy burden of predestined litigations, and save your Seven Mysteries (ancestors) in tenebrous palaces 詠誦一過，. . . 解宿對之重責，拔七玄於幽宮.
- 6 The Nine Yin (*jiuyin* 九陰) are nine subterranean prisons. The author of the *Taizhen yudi siji mingke jing* (DZ 184, 5.20b) writes, “If you have been determined as a person destined to be a transcendent being, and are not mired in the Three Paths and beset by the Five Sufferings, you will then be saved from the Eight Difficulties and have your transgressions removed in the Nine Yin. This will sever your karmic roots and help the cloud-souls of your seven generations of ancestors to return the Southern Gallery.” 若有遇得宿挺應仙，三塗不履，五苦不纏，超度地獄，拔出八難，罪散九陰，斷截宿根，上解七祖，反魂南軒. Also see ET, 219, 594–595.
- 7 This passage appears poetic, but it is not grammatically parallel and its rhymes are not perfectly matched: 澄 (dreing-2a), 凝 (ngengH-3), 乘 (zyeng-3), 勝 (syeng-3).
- 8 “Descendants of Jade Vacuity” (*yuxu zhi yin* 玉虛之胤) are those beings that are impregnated with the purest *qi* of heaven. The author of the *Gaoshang taixiao*

langshu qiongwen dizhang jing (DZ 55, 1b) defines this phrase as the “central children of the great Thearch” (*taidi zhi zhongzi ye* 太帝之中子也).

- 9 The Jade Pass (Yuguan 玉關) is the gate and watchtower guarding the entrance to heavenly palaces. In the *Shangqing huangqi yangjing sandao shunxing jing* (DZ 33, 23a), the author writes that the names of all adepts destined to become Perfected beings are stored in secret in the Jade Pass.
- 10 The Three Paths (*san dao* 三道) is an abbreviation of the “paths of the Three Heavens” (*santian zhi dao* 三天之道). In the *Shangqing dadong zhenjing* (DZ 6, 1.10b), adepts are encouraged to faithfully follow these three paths even when the entire world around them is in despair.
- 11 The golden seal (*jin niu* 金鉦) is a button-size piece of gold that is used during transmission ceremonies to symbolize that a master has made a pact with his disciple.
- 12 This is likely a scribal error for the *Most High Wondrous Scripture of the Immaculate Numen [Celestial Palace] That Penetrates the Mystery of the Great Existence [Heaven]*.
- 13 Beifeng 北酆 (or Luofeng 羅酆) is in the Luofeng mountains of the distant north. In Upper Clarity scriptures, it functions as a kind of purgatory. See *Zhen'gao* (DZ 1016), 15.1a–2a; ET, 421–423.
- 14 In its earthly manifestations, the *lang*-gem (*lang* 琅 or *langgan* 琅玕) likely refers to malachite (see Schafer, “The Transcendent Vitamin,” 33–34; ET, 605). Here, however, the word evokes images of the vegetative wonders of heavenly realms, for the bushes in celestial gardens were imagined to be lustrous blue-green gemstones (Strickmann, “On the Alchemy of T’ao Hung-ching,” 134–135; EDS, 289). We have thus retained *lang* in the translation to preserve this otherworldly connotation of the word. The text mentioned here could refer to one of two extant texts in the Daoist Canon, DZ 55 [ZH, 1.636–645] (*Gaoshang taixiao langshu qiongwen dizhang jing* 高上太霄琅書瓊文帝章經) or DZ 129 [ZH, 1.703–706] (*Taixiao langshu qiongwen dizhang jue* 太霄琅書瓊文帝章訣), which correspond to fascicles one and five respectively of the larger compendium DZ 1352 (*Dongzhen taishang taixiao langshu* 洞真太上太霄琅書). See Ōfuchi, *Shoki no dōkyō*, 281–286; RS, 1.201, 216, and 2.233–235; ET, 955–956.
- 15 This might roughly correspond to DZ 1332 [ZH, 1.310–322] (*Dongzhen taishang zidu yanguang shenxuan bian jing* 洞真太上紫度炎光神玄變經). See RS, 2.111–116; TC, 153–154.

16 This scripture has no corresponding text among extant Upper Clarity literature but is mentioned in various medieval collectanea, most notably the *Wushang biyao*. RS, 2.85–86.

17 This is DZ 1376 [ZH, 1.222–236] (*Shangqing taishang dijun jiuzhen zhong jing* 上清太上帝君九真中經) and 1377 [ZH, 1.237–244] (*Shangqing taishang jiuzhen zhong jingjiangsheng shendan jue* 上清太上九真中經降生神丹訣). See Robinet, “Introduction au *Kieou-tchen tchong-king*,” 24–45; RS, 2.68–76; TC, 144–146. For an English translation of the first fascicle of DZ 1376, see Miller, *The Way*, 161–210.

18 For more on the extant version of this text, DZ 1359 [ZH, 1.360–366] (*Shangqing danjing daojing yindi bashu jing* 上清丹景道精隱地八術經), see RS, 2.141–144; TC, 157–158.

19 This scripture has no corresponding text among extant Upper Clarity literature, but it is mentioned in various medieval collectanea like *Taizhen yudi siji mingke jing* (DZ 184), 2.12b.

20 See DZ 1331 [ZH, 1.367–377] (*Dongzhen shangqing shenzhou qizhuan qibian wutian jing* 洞真上清神州七轉七變舞天經); RS, 2.145–149.

21 Mengshan 蒙山 should be a purgatory where one ancestors go to face punishment. The author of the *Shangqing gaoshang miemo yudi shenhui yuqing yinshu* (DZ 1356, 9b) asserts that adepts who are not circumspect in their observance of these rules will “face the interrogation of wind and knives, and their ancestors will be punished at Mengshan 濡山.”

22 *Fubian* 負變 is likely a scribal error for *yuanbian* 員變 or *yuanbian* 圓變. See *Shangqing taishang dijun jiuzhen zhongjing* (DZ 1376), 2.17b; *Yunji qiqian* (DZ 1032), 4.19a, 68.8b–9a.

23 This text likely corresponds to parts of DZ 1344 [ZH, 2.468–485] (*Dongzhen taishang shuo zhihui xiaomo zhenjing* 洞真太上說智慧消魔真經); RS, 2.179–186; TC, 590–591.

24 There are at least four texts in the Daoist Canon to which this title might refer: DZ 1355 [ZH, 1.707a–721c] (*Shangqing taishang yuqing yinshu xiaomo shenhui gaoxuan zhenjing* 上清太上玉清隱書滅魔神慧高玄真經), DZ 1356 [ZH, 1.722b–729a] (*Shangqing gaoshang miemo yudi shenhui yuqing yinshu* 上清高上滅魔玉帝神慧玉清隱書), DZ 1357 [ZH, 1.729b–732c] (*Shangqing gaoshang miemo dongjing jinyuan yuqing yinshu jing* 上清高上滅魔洞景金元玉清隱書經), and DZ 1358 [ZH, 1.733a–742a]. For more on these scriptures, see RS,

2.40–41, 237–244; TC, 139–140, 180–181; Eichman, “Converging Paths,” 203–260; Ishii, “*Gyosei insho kō*,” 80–113.

25 This likely corresponds to DZ 1339 [ZH, 2.563a–565b] (*Dongzhen bajing yulu chentu yinfu* 洞真八景玉籙晨圖隱符); RS, 2.245; TC, 182.

26 See DZ 1378 [ZH, 1.161a–69c] (*Shangqing jinzen yuguang bajing fei jing* 上清金真玉光八景飛經); RS, 45–49; TC, 141.

27 There are four scriptures in the Daoist Canon that were previously grouped together as the *Purple Texts*: DZ 639 [ZH, 1.299a–303b] (*Huangtian shangqing jinque dijun lingshu ziwen shangjing* 皇天上清金闕帝君靈書紫文上經), DZ 255 [ZH, 1.306a–309a] (*Taiwei lingshu ziwen langgan huadan shenzhen shangjing* 太微靈書紫文琅玕華丹神真上經), DZ 442 [ZH, 2.106–10b] (*Shangqing housheng daojun lieji* 上清後聖道君列紀), and DZ 179 [ZH, 1.304a–35b] (*Taiwei lingshu ziwen xianji zhenji shangjing* 太微靈書紫文仙忌真記上經). See RS, 2.101–110; EDS, 278–302; TC, 150–153.

28 See DZ 56 [ZH, 1.518a–529a] (*Taishang yupei jindang taiji jinshu shangjing* 太上玉佩金璫太極金書上經); RS, 2.213–218, 396–397; TC, 176–177; EDS, 320.

29 This title is listed as *zhongjing* 署經 (collected scriptures) below, which is used in the title of the only extant version of the text, DZ 1315 [ZH, 1.323a–338c] (*Dongzhen shangqing qingyao zishu jingen zhongjing* 洞真上清青要紫書金根署經); RS, 2.119–125; TC, 155.

30 This may correspond to DZ 1203 [ZH, 1.259a–263a], *Taishang santian zhengfa jing* 太上三天正法經, but this is likely a Tang repackaging of the text. See Ozaki, “*Taijō santen seihō-kyō seiritsu kō*,” 12–29; RS, 2.87–91; TC, 587–588.

31 Read *qing* 青 for *qing* 清 based on the variant in *Yunji qiqian* (DZ 1032, 4).

32 The seven stars in this title are those of the Big Dipper. The “passage” (*yidu* 移度) refers to the rotation of the Dipper, which was the primary vehicle by which adepts traveled in the heavens. See DZ 1317 [ZH, 1.404a–414b] (*Dongzhen shangqing kaitian santu qixing yidu jing* 洞真上清開天三圖七星移度經); RS, 2.163–169; TC, 163.

33 This title likely refers to either DZ 83 [ZH, 494a–496a] (*Baiyu heihe lingfei yufu* 白羽黑翮靈飛玉符) or DZ 1351 [ZH, 2.1a–5b] (*Dongzhen taishang feixing yu jing jiuzhen shengxuan shangji* 洞真太上飛行羽經九真昇玄上記); RS, 2.192–195, 199–202; TC, 169–171.

34 See DZ 1316 [ZH, 1.212a–121c] (*Dongzhen shangqing taiwei dijun bu tiangang feidi ji jinjian yuzi shangjing* 洞真上清太微帝君步天綱飛地紀金簡玉字上經); RS, 59–65; TC, 143–144.

35 This is an alternative name for DZ 426 [ZH, 1.171a–180c] (*Shangqing taishang basu zhenjing* 上清太上八素真經); RS, 51–57; TC, 141–142; Eichman, “Converging Paths,” 146–155.

36 This could refer to one of two extant scriptures: DZ 84 [ZH, 1.502a–509c] (*Shangqing qionggong lingfei liujia zuoyou shangfu* 上清瓊宮靈飛六甲左右上符) or DZ 1391 [ZH, 1.510a–517c] (*Shangqing qionggong lingfei liujia lu* 上清瓊宮靈飛六甲籙); RS, 2.207–211; TC, 174–175.

37 The Ten Sorrows (*shiku* 十苦) and Eight Difficulties (*ba'nan* 八難) refer to the ten kinds of punishments and the eight tribulations that an adept experiences when facing interrogation in subterranean prisons. Thus it differs from the Seven Sufferings (*qiku* 七苦) and Eight Difficulties of Buddhist literature that refer to the troubles besting a person during life, such as not being able to hear the teachings of a buddha.

38 The identity of this talisman is not known. There is a similarly titled talisman in the *Shangqing peifu wen baiquan jue* (DZ 413, 4a) called the *Taishang sanju fangzhang zhenling zhi fu* 太上三舉方丈震靈之符. According to this text, the talisman was originally featured in the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Grotto*. For more on Fangzhang 方丈, the paradisiacal isles off the eastern coast of China, see ET, 788–790.

39 The *huluo* 豁落 (Unobstructed descent) talismans were considered to help adepts free themselves from the ghostly hordes of the Divine King of the North, who imprisoned the souls of humans who fail to reach transcendence. This deity is often referred to as the Great Thearch of Northern Yin in the Metropolis of Fengdu (*Fengdu beiyin daidi* 鄭都北陰大帝). For more on this talisman and the eight texts in the Daoist Canon in which it appears, see Schafer, “Li Po’s Star Power,” 6–9. Also see RS, 2.113; Hsieh, “Writing from Heaven,” 261; EDS, 310.

40 These heavenly writings were talismanic representation of the Yang essence from the stars of the Big Dipper (see Hsieh, “Writing from Heaven,” 261). In the later medieval period, this talisman would grow to become one of the most prevalent talismans among Daoist adepts for subjugating demons (see RS, 1.235; ET, 532–533).

41 An adept’s Nine Tribes (*jiuzu* 九族) include himself, the four previous generations of ancestors, and the four future generations of descendants.

42 The text originally says a royal person with a heavenly transgression (*wangren tianzui* 王人天罪), but we follow this alternative reading based on *Dongzhen taishang daojun yuandan shangjing* (DZ 1345) 27b; *Taishang jiuzhen mingke* (DZ 1409), 8b.

43 In both Buddhist and Daoist literature, the Three Realms (*sanjie* 三界) symbolizes the “entire world” or the “cosmos,” but writers have different explanations for the reference. In Buddhist texts, the realms are often understood as the “realm of desire” (*yujie* 欲界), the realm of form (*sejie* 色界), and the realm of the formless (*wusejie* 無色界). In early Daoist formulations, however, the term refers to the heavenly, terrestrial, and aqueous regions of the earth. See *Lingbao wuliang duren shangpin miao jing* (DZ 1), 1.11b–13a; *Dongxuan lingbao ziran jiutian shen shen zhangjing jieyi* (DZ 396), 1.11a.

44 In Buddhist literature, the Dark Path (*youtu* 幽塗 or *youtu* 幽途) symbolizes the three unfavorable forms of the rebirth: born again in a hell, as a hungry ghost, or as an animal. We have translated it here in the singular rather than the plural, as Daoist writers usually only refer to being born in a subterranean prison.

45 The Four Directors (*si si* 四司) are heavenly officials who specialize in inspecting the transgressions of adepts. In the *Gaoshang taixiao langshu qiongwen dizhang jing* (DZ 55, 8.9a), the Four Directors are identified as the officials who take charge of the taboos for the celestial thearchs.

46 Rhyme: 官 (ghan-3bx), 源 (ngwan-3a), 泉 (dzwan-3b), 玄 (ghwan-4), 仙 (san-3b).

47 Also known as principal wrongdoing (*shou'e* 首惡), a primal wrongdoing (*yuan'e* 元惡) arises when an adept commits grievous acts that result in the punishment of the gods. Notice that the author of the *Taishang xuanyi zhenren shuo santu wuku quanjie jing* (DZ 455, 8b) proposes that Daoist initiation means that adepts need not fret over the “primal wrongdoings” committed in previous lives.

48 Rhyme: 君 (kwen-3a), 言 (ngan-3a), 源 (ngwan-3a), 難 (nan-1), 然 (nyan-3b), 昇 (syeng-3).

49 Rhyme: 聞 (men-3a), 真 (tsyen-3b), 尊 (tswen-1), 門 (men-1), 恩 (en-1), 然 (nyan-3b).

50 Read *fei* 飛 for *fei* 蜚 based on Wang Chong’s *Lunheng*.

51 Rhyme: 障 (tsyang-3), 邸 (ngeing-3a), 鄉 (hang-3), 燈 (teng-1), 昌 (tshyang-3), 央 (ang-3)

52 Rhyme: 通 (thung-1b), 充 (tshyung-3b), 容 (yung-3c), 宮 (kung-3b), 宗 (tsung-1c).

53 It is unclear what cloudy field (*yun chang* 雲場) might mean in this context. This phrase is adapted in the *Taishang jiuzhen mingke* as the “numinous field of its mysterious cavern” (*xuandong lingchang* 玄洞靈場). See DZ 1409, 16a. *Lingchang* 靈場 is a term in Daoist liturgy referring to the altar where fasts take place, so even this meaning does not seem to make sense here.

54 “Near and far” is a loose translation of *shixiang* 十鄉 (Ten counties), which refers to the cardinal and ordinal directions, as well as up and down.

55 Rhyme: 張 (trang-3), 京 (keing-3a), 場 (drang-3), 糧 (lang-3), 鄉 (hang-3), 央 (ang-3).

56 The Three Passes (*sanguan* 三關) are an adept’s mouth, hands, and feet. See *Huangting neijing yujing zhu* (DZ 402), 2.6b.

57 Rhyme: 全 (dzwan-3b), 門 (men-1), 關 (kwan-2a), 延 (yan-3b), 尊 (tswen-1), 宣 (swan-3b), 仙 (san-3b).

58 Rhyme: 明 (meing-3a), 經 (keing-4), 靈 (leing-4), 冥 (meing-4), 清 (tsheing-3b), 形 (gheing-4), 幷 (peing-3b).

59 Rhyme: 清 (tsheing-3b), 經 (keing-4), 庭 (deing-4), 靈 (leing-4), 刑 (gheing-4), 貞 (treing-3b)

60 Grand Silence (*Taiji* 太寂) is a state of ultimate tranquility. It refers to a state of the cosmos early in its creation when Yin and Yang had yet to be separated. See *Zhen'gao* (DZ 1016), 14.12b.

61 A vacuous embryo (*kong tai* 空胎) is one that is formed spontaneously in empty space. This same language is used in the *Shangqing sanyuan yujian sanyuan bu jing* where the Primal Lord of Grand Simplicity (*Taisu yuanjun* 太素元君) is similarly described as being born in the heavens by means of a vacuous embryo. See DZ 354, 1b.

62 Embodying Perfection (*han zhen* 含真) describes a state in which an adept is filled to the brim with perfected *qi*. A passage in the *Yunji qiqian* describes how the Celestial Worthy of Primordial Commencement (*Yuanshi tianzun* 元始天尊) arose to his rank in the highest heavens after embodying Perfection. See DZ 1032, 44.23a.

63 Rhyme: 散 (sanH-1), 判 (phanH-1), 觀 (kwanH-1), 旦 (tanH-1), 漢 (hanH-1).

64 Grand Nonexistence (*Taiwu* 太無) is a state of ultimate emptiness, and is often used as a synonym for the Dao.

65 The thearchical sovereign’s court (*dihuang tang* 帝皇堂) is the palace of the high Daoist god, the Celestial Worthy of Primordial Commencement.

66 The “four greats” (*sida* 四大) is a term used in Laozi 25 to refer to the Dao, heaven, earth, and the king (EDS, 121). The same term was also adapted by early Buddhist translators to describe the Indic four elements (earth, water, fire, and wind), which could also be translated as the four realms (*sijie* 四界) or four great realms (*si dajie* 四大界). See Salguero, *Translating Buddhist Medicine*, 59. Here, however, the “four greats” appears to be used spatially and might be

an altered form of Buddhist terminology like major chiliocosm (*daqian shijie* 大千世界) or the “Four Continents” (*sizhou* 四州) thought to surround Mount Sumeru. This kind of revision of Buddhist terms is part of what Erik Zürcher calls the influence of Buddhism’s “cosmological complex” on Daoist writers. See his “Buddhist Influence,” 121–122.

67 The Ten Heavens (*shitian* 十天) might refer to the ten celestial realms, as it does when writers talk about flying into the Ten Heavens (see DZ 1016, 10.20b; DZ 1032, 12.13a; SK, 385 note 12). But it might also be describing the ten Grotto-Heavens existing beneath the Earth’s surface (EDS, 344).

68 Also translated as “Wind on the Fells,” the Lang-Terrace (*lang feng* 閶風) See Schafer, “Wu Yun’s Stanzas,” 338 note 126.

69 A divine candle (*shen zhu* 神燭) is a fire that miraculously appears in thin air. As a passage in the *Shangqing jinzen yuguang bajing fei jing* attests, these supernatural flames are also said to appear in the oratories of adepts. See DZ 1378, 14b.

70 The Dark Mainstay (*xuanwang* 玄綱) or Heavenly Mainstay (*tianwang* 天綱) is the cosmic meridian that binds the stars to each other and the cosmic poles. See Schafer, *Pacing the Void*, 241.

71 Rhyme: 京 (keing-3a), 香 (hang-3), 翔 (zang-3), 章 (tsyang-3), 央 (ang-3), 光 (kwang-1), 堂 (dang-1), 綱 (kang-1), 昂 (ngang-1), 長 (drang-3)

72 We translate the term *dasheng* 大乘 as “Great Vehicle” because this term is so well-known for the use of the term to translate Mahayana in Buddhist texts of this period. In Daoist contexts, however, *dasheng* simply refers to an idyllic place high in the heavens. See *Dongxuan lingbao yujing shan buxu jing* (DZ 1439), 10a.

73 Rhyme: 興 (heng-3), 乘 (zyeng-3), 昇 (syeng-3)

74 Grand Efflorescence (*Taihua* 太華) is a compound of palaces in heaven. The author of the *Dongzhen gaoshang yudi dadong ciyi yujian wulao baojing* describes how this place is filled with golden halls (*jintang* 金堂) that contain the names of all adepts destined for godhood. See DZ 1313, 7b–8a.

75 Hollow of Space (*kongdong* 空洞) is the empty regions of outer space where divine beings come into existence when they are infused with primal *qi*. Variants of this idea appear throughout classical literature as *kongtong* 崑峒, *kongtong* 空桐, *kongdong* 空峒, and *kongtong* 空同. See Schafer, “Wu Yun’s Stanzas,” 333 note 108.

76 Vacuous Hall (*Xutang* 虛堂) is a high palace located in outer space. In the *Dongzhen taishang zidu yanguang shenyuan bian jing*, this hall described as a golden building surrounded by purling auroras (*liu xia* 流霞) and a mysterious fragrance (*xuan xun* 玄薰). See DZ 1332, 2a.

77 Dark Han (*xuanhan* 玄漢) or Heavenly Han (*tianhan* 天漢) are collective terms for outer space. Yang Xi also describes beings pacing across the Dark Han in a revelation in the *Zhen'gao*. See DZ 1016, 2.6b–7a.

78 Rhyme: 館 (kwanH-1), 散 (sanH-1), 漢 (hanH-1), 難 (nanH-1), 灌 (kwanH-1).

79 Rhyme: 輿 (yuo-3b), 虛 (huo-3b), 書 (syuo-3b), 餘 (yuo-3b).

80 The Wheel of the Law (*falun* 法輪) is a term most often associated with the *dharmacakra* in Buddhist literature: the spiritual “weapon” that rolls over and crushes all evil and mistaken beliefs. See FGDC, 3423–3424. In this context, however, the wheel is a symbol for the ongoing transformations of the Dao that result in the orbiting cosmic patterns. See *Dongxuan lingbao yujing shan buxu jing* (DZ 1439), 5a.

81 “Pacing the Void” (*buxu* 步虛) refers to the hymns that an adept intones while progressing through the heavens. The *Dongxuan lingbao yujing shan buxu jing* (DZ 1439, 3a–5b) contains ten of these hymns. Rhyme: 求 (gou-3b), 殊 (dzyuo-3c), 流 (lou-3b), 符 (buo-3c), 遊 (you-3b).

82 The Nine Heavens (*jiutian* 九天) include the heavenly realms in the cardinal and ordinal directions, as well as overhead. See Mugitani, “Dōkyō ni okeru tenkai setsu shosō,” 54–73.

83 Read *ling* 嶺 for *ling* 領. In the *Shangqing taiyi jinque yuxi jinzen ji*, an adept is told to head far west until he arrived at the Six Ridges (*liu ling* 六嶺). There he could enter into the halls of thearchical lords. See DZ 394, 6a.

84 The Hall of the Utmost Quietude (*zhiji ting* 至寂庭) is a serene palatial compound in which the Worthy of Primordial Commencement lives. See *Dongzhen taishang taixiao langshu* (DZ 1352), 1.17a.

85 Rhyme: 宗 (tsung-1c), 宮 (kung-3b), 房 (bang-3), 空 (khung-1b), 通 (thung-1b), 場 (drang-3), 翔 (zang-3), 香 (hang-3), 章 (tsyang-3), 梁 (lang-3).

86 Nine Mysteries (*jiu xuan* 九玄) is an alternative name for the Nine Heavens.

87 Taking the reins of mystery (*xuanpei* 玄轡) in hand symbolizes that an adept begins his cosmic flight to the heavenly palaces of the gods. See *Dongxuan lingbao liujia yunü shanggong ge zhang* (DZ 611), 3a.

88 Rhyme: 遼 (lau-4), 霄 (sau-3), 交 (kau-2).

89 Dark and dim (*aiai* 曖曖) is a common phrase in the *Chuci* anthology and early rhapsodies that describes the sky growing dark, and fading into twilight. For a detailed discussion, see WXIII, note 37.

90 Riding on phosphors (*cheng jing* 乘景) meant something akin to floating atop clouds, as is described in the *Taishang lingbao zhutian neiyin ziran yuzi* (DZ 97), 4.3a.

91 Rhyme: 迴 (ghwei-1a), 微 (mi-3a), 飛 (pi-3a), 哀 (ei-1a).

92 Rhyme: 臺 (dei-1a), 詩 (syi-3d), 期 (gi-3d), 基 (ki-3d).

93 Grand Aurora Lodge (*Taixia guan* 太霞館) is a palatial compound high above the clouds where transcendent beings live. See *Taishang santian zhengfa jing* (DZ 1203), 4a–b.

94 Rhyme: 雲 (ghwen-3a), 門 (men-1), 分 (pen-3a), 文 (men-3a).

95 Rhyme: 靈 (leing-4), 清 (tsheing-3b), 鈴 (leing-4), 庭 (deing-4), 榮 (ghweing-3a).

96 Rhyme: 空 (khung-1b), 宮 (kung-3b), 通 (thung-1b), 隆 (lung-3b).

97 The *gong* 宮 and *shang* 商 notes are two of the pentatonic notes of the classical register. In Daoist contexts, the two notes symbolize the sound of the gods, or *lingyin* 靈音. See, for instance, the description of the sonic harmony of these two notes in the *Shangqing gaoshang yuchen fengtai qusu shang jing* (DZ 1372), 6b.

98 A literal translation of the phrase *qing ren jin* 倾人衿 would be “turning peoples’ sleeves inside out,” meaning that people hearing these sounds suddenly bowed with their arms outstretched and their sleeves draping the ground.

99 Rhyme: 林 (lem-3), 音 (em-3x), 衿 (kem-3x), 心 (sem-3).

100 Nebula Incognita (*miaomang* 渺莽) is the empty space deep in the cosmic sea where an adept’s soul congeals and forms. See Schafer, “Wu Yun’s Stanzas,” 333 note 108.

101 There are a wide variety of ways that the Six Qi (*liuqi* 六炁) are interpreted (FGDC, 1286). Many of these interpretations develop the idea that the body is influenced by atmospheric or seasonal changes and that the adept can inhale and exhale these vapors (ET, 336; Smith, *Declarations*, 254 note 66). In early Upper Clarity literature, adepts are encouraged to vocalize different sounds when breathing these *qi* to influence different organs in the body (Stanley-Baker, “Daoists and Doctors,” 283 note 95).

102 Rhyme: 一 (et-3by), 逸 (yet-3b), 室 (syet-3b), 曰 (nyet-3b), 七 (tshet-3b).

103 “Round blossom” (*yuanhua* 圓華) is an alternative name for the moon. See *Taishang zhutian lingshu duming miao jing* (DZ 23), 17a; *Dongzhen taishang qingya shisheng jing* (DZ 1349), 2a.

104 Rhyme: 光 (kwang-1), 桑 (sang-1), 荒 (hwang-1), 綱 (mangQ-3).

105 Jieren Courtyard (Jieren ting 劫刃庭) is a name of a mountain in the Jade Capital (Mysterious Metropolis). See *Dongxuan lingbao yujing shan buxu jing* (DZ 1439), 2b.

106 Observance of Daoist rituals is sometimes referred to as encircling the scents (*yuan xiang* 緣香). The idea would be that an adept would light incense before an altar and the fragrant smoke would permeate the entire place, and

by extension the cosmos. In the *Wushang neimi zhenzang jing*, this term is contrasted with those who “forget to [light] incense” (*wang xiang* 忘香). See DZ 4, 5.4a.

107 Rhyme: 阿 (e-1), 差 (tshri-3b), 和 (ghwe-1), 歌 (ke-1), 羅 (le-1), 那 (ne-1).

108 Rhyme: 宮 (kung-3b), 堂 (dang-1), 房 (bang-3; bang-1), 功 (kung-1b), 同 (dung-1b).

109 Removed Residence Bureaus (*juezhai fu* 絶宅府) or simply Removed Residences (*jue zhai* 絶宅) refer to the bodily palaces. For more on this term, see *Dongzhen Xiwangmu baoshen qiju jing* (DZ 1319), 14a; *Wushang biyao* (DZ 1138), 97.16a–b.

110 Rhyme: 館 (kwanH-1), 散 (sanH-1), 讚 (tsanH-1), 難 (nanH-1).

111 Read *xuan* 玄 for *yuan* 元

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