

## **Soul-Searching**

*The following is an excerpt from a sermon from a religious sect devoted to self-effacement. The religion's influence has been spreading, and there have even been reports of several high-profile converts.*

We only achieve purity through self-negation. Earthly success gives a sinful measure of Excitement, though our intent be Noble as the angels'. Loathe all temptation to recognition and glory. And beware: a false humility is itself a revelry of the sanctimonious, leading somberly on to the dusky gates of eternal damnation. From the sad Ebony portals there is no return. One measure we take is to conceal our unabridged histories with shadowy identities so as to divert fame, lest it Uncork the weak vessels of our profane persons. Yet we must beware if misdirection gain its own repute, and cause alternate trapdoors unfamiliar to us in our new opacity, as horrible and as sinister as past snares that caught the benighted cretins that we once were. The most beautiful of souls are those that never shine for themselves or anyone else: a virtuous obscurity. We Imprecate thus the Shyness that conceals its own indulgences, and rebuke they who satiate themselves whensoever not perceived. Remember always that the psychological aspirations to oblivion must be matched by the physical abatement inherent to a life spent in penury and pure asceticism not jaundiced by greed, or Blemished by the material and our bodily recalcitrancies. One last task remains to they whose souls are not Obese with worldly or ethereal dreams and pretentions. This is to enhance one's incognito with the charades of values far from one's true wont-- Jezebel to the outside world, but inwardly a nonentity, not a saint. Finalizing our self-erasure, we fade back into the noise of mankind, leaving the Hellish prison of our individuality for the sheer nirvana of anonymity.