

# witches

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SPELLS // CRYSTALS // TAROT // HOROSCOPES

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# W E L C O M E E D I T O R ' S L E T T E R

Dear witches, wanderers and wild ones,

Our *Witches Magazine* founder, Ellen, finally got to have her post-Covid graduation ceremonies at University this summer. And yes, I am such a proud momma. The Chancellor left the graduates with some fabulous words of wisdom which I'd like to share with you this autumn time, as they relate to us all, no matter our age. After all, the creation of *Witches* was born from Ellen's time at the university, so it seems fitting to share some of the support, encouragement and creativity which inspired her to launch this magazine over three years ago.

Time is fleeting, it goes in the blink of an eye. So, drink life in and try not to waste it. Pay close attention to the details of all your experiences, the minute as well as the big. Notice these, in fact, more. Keep going, don't give up. There will be challenges along the way; you might get thrown off course, but honestly, it's okay. As Banksy said, "Winners are not those who never fail, but those who do not quit". Make interesting mistakes, break the rules, leave the world a more interesting place for you being there. Be bold, be kind, and be curious.

As witches, I believe we hold these messages dear in our hearts: it's who we are. But sometimes, just sometimes, we need to be reminded of them. Always let your heart hope, dream and love. Be honest with yourself and make enjoyment important in your life. In fact, log joyful moments in your memory bank for those more challenging days. Make sure one of the paths in your life leads to the beach, the forest or the cake shop. Make the most of the fabulous season which autumn is. And most of all, be happy.

As always, a huge thank you to all those who have managed to make this edition as magickal as the last: writers, photographers, artists, our editors, subscribers, family and friends. The magazine would not exist without the fabulous commitment and support of those who contribute, sharing their world with ours. We welcome our new contributors in this autumn edition, new members to our community, helping us to grow and evolve.

So, if you are a budding writer, have witchy photos, artwork or would like to get involved, get in touch. You could be looking at your work in the *Witches Winter 2023* edition, issue fifteen. Let us know if you would be interested in advertising on our Witches Noticeboard in Winter 2023, too!

Laura X

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So, witches, whether you're new to witchcraft or have been a witch for decades, we can never know everything there is to know about our craft, as there is just so much to learn.

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As the autumn evenings draw in and there is a chill in the air, take time to reflect on you and your craft.

It's the time of year to focus on what works for you and change what doesn't. Keep your intentions strong and your energy positive, and trust your intuition.

# SPELLS OF THE SEASON



# A CLEANSING SPELL FOR THE WEEKEND

BY EMILY SANDERS  
@esandewrites

So, when you've had a hard week with relentless deadlines or the children have run you ragged, take some time out for you this weekend. Use this cleansing spell to help you to relax from the challenges of the past week and fill you with positivity, ready to start a new week afresh.

Create this spell on Friday mornings, when the sun shines through your window and you feel the need to be productive on your day off. Friday, the day under Norse Goddess Freyja, one made for love and self-care. When the week has ended, a period of rest begins. Spray daily until Sunday before discarding.

You will need:

- Incense stick or bundle
- Spray Bottle
- Rose Quartz pieces
- Salt
- Rosemary
- Moon Water

Light your incense stick. Watch the way the smoke flows into the room. Watch to see if it's a thin line or a dark cloud, to see if there's negative energy around. The assignment you turned in late rolls off your shoulder, far behind you now.

Let that smoke flow inside of the spray bottle. Let the ash fall to the bottom of the bottle, the debris floating up to the top as it hits the glass. This cleanses the surface, the same way crying over the loss of a family member cleanses your heart.

Take the jar of rose quartz pieces. Feel how they roll around in your hand as you squeeze tightly. Close your eyes and envision a warm pink aura surrounding your body and protecting your heart from the outside world.

Freyja is guiding you, the comments online bounce off you now.

Let salt from the salt shaker crackle into your palm. Feel the sting on your skin from open wounds and take another deep breath. You've probably forgotten to do that. Your shoulders ache from hunching over the desk, I know, but the deadlines are over. Sit up straight. Breathe.

Funnel the contents of your palm into the spray bottle as well as you can. A few pieces may miss and fall to the carpet, bouncing off your feet. That's okay. You did your best.

Fill the bottle with the rosemary, then the water you've left under the moonlight for the past three days. The water might be dangerously close to spilling, but that's okay. So were you. Picture the energy spilling out of the top instead as you seal the lid.

Spray thoroughly around your space, and yourself. Walk through the mist, knowing the hardships of the week are behind you now.

The bad grade from Monday, crying on Tuesday, and the coffee you spilled on Wednesday. Spray again. The migraine from Thursday and the deadlines from Friday all fall behind you now. You are cleansed. And you are ready for a new day.

# THE POWERFUL MAGIC OF MERLINITE

BY LUCA VOLPE  
@virya\_uk

There is a crystal that not many talk about and it is merlinite. It is known as “the magic crystal” because it attracts good luck and is used to enhance magical rituals. It is a very shamanic stone with high vibrational energy, and it helps to access the inner intuition and to communicate with elemental beings.

In a magical sense, it is called merlinite as it's said to conjure the memories of wizards such as the famous Merlin! In the geophysical sense, it is named merlinite as it comes from one specific mine in New Mexico. It is a crystal which blends different features from the opal and quartz families.

We can use this kind of crystal for spiritual growth, to balance masculine and feminine energies, to enhance our third eye chakra and also to access the spiritual world. In fact, this is the perfect stone to stimulate clairvoyance and automatic writing, and in this article, I am going to show you how to use this stone for scrying.

First, find a quiet place, preferably in nature; if not, try to find a room where nobody will disturb you. Place a piece of paper and a pen close to you, as they will be very important at the end of the session. Sit in crossed leg position, place the crystal between your cupped hands, and start to breathe deeply for a count of four (four in, then hold for four, then breathe out for four... repeat four times).

Once you start to feel relaxed, look at the crystal, try to concentrate your attention on how the light reflects on all the various inclusions, then let your mind be open to all the messages that will start to come into your mind (trust me, they will!). You will start to see images in your mind, words and even scenes from a distant future; let your mind be open to any experience.

Once you feel you want to stop, slowly remove your attention from the crystal and immediately write down all the information you received from the session. Let your pen write down any thoughts, feelings or words that come from your mind, and don't worry if they do not make sense— they will later!

Merlinite is a wonderful crystal to keep on your altar and can also be used for a simple yes/no answer.

Simply place the merlinite and a black obsidian in a drawstring bag (preferably black so you can't see through!) and start to mix the two crystals inside.

Now ask your question and quickly place your hand in the bag and grasp the first crystal you feel under your fingers. If it is the merlinite, the answer will be yes; if it is the black obsidian the answer will be no.

Enjoy the magic!





IMAGE: WHAT LIES BENEATH THE STORM, DAVID HUFF, @drh\_digital, MODEL: MISS RAE, @rae.alistic



# A CHANNELLED MESSAGE: AUTUMN FREQUENCIES

BY ANDREA RAMIREZ  
@fortunallivingspirit

There are subtle divisions between seasons, and there are divisions in life, as well.

After a hot summer where you felt your body being strained by the heat, you also realised the need to make changes at a physiological level for your health, yourself.

Autumn comes as an invitation to take refuge and start a new routine, a new path, a new set of choices of how to live life in a way that it's better and healthier for your body, for your environment.

By environment, we not only mean Earth but your home, the place you work, your car, and any place you spend time surrounding yourself.

Autumn comes again as a time to gather all the pieces, gain strength, and make the changes necessary for your life. You saw in summer all the things that make you feel good, and all the things that make you feel not so good, not only in your relationships but also in your physiological body.

We would like to recommend you follow this new path of taking care of your body until the end of this year.

Your body is like a giant receptor, an antenna that is bringing all the universal vibrations to Earth through you.

The way you take care of yourself and your body is the way you translate your energy here onto Earth. This signature energy you're all transmitting for yourselves, you also transmit it here into the Earth.

You are energetically anchored in Gaia.

Gaia is a source of immense abundance. Gaia is a source of consciousness, an immense source of unconditional love, healing and nurturing; because she is part of your body, you are made of her.

The vibrations you pick up from the universe and bring into the Earth are helping the body of Gaia and your human body to become stronger and resilient. So, no matter what thing might happen on Earth, no matter what reality the TV shows show, the papers, the news, the press, the greater prevailing reality is the Universal reality. The universal vibrations that are incoming now onto Earth in this very special moment for you as a human and for Gaia.

The first step of this revolution will be to honour your body, take care of it, love it, look at your diet without following any fad, fashion, or trend, to truly look into your body and nurture it with what it needs.

It doesn't matter if you cannot have access to superfoods and fancy organic meals. The Earth is there to provide, and whatever you need, you will get.

Whatever foods come to your table, you will have the possibility to clean them, bless them, and ask your body to the best of its abilities to consume that precious living food and get rid of anything that doesn't serve you or is not good for you.

And this counts for all food groups in balance. Drink purified water, as you are mostly made of water, and water connects with your emotional level and connects you with life.

Take care of the waters in your body.

There is a great shift coming, and you need to be prepared physically to receive this new download of information and energies that are coming onto Earth.

The higher you can vibrate, the healthier you are, and the more energy that you can pass through your body.

You are like a beautiful antenna, a cable making the connection of the Holy Child between Father Universe and Mother Earth. Because that's who you are. The better you are standing, the better quality of life you will have. And everywhere you go, the better quality of life that you will manifest for yourself, the better reality you will manifest.

So, I thank you for allowing yourself to remember who you are, to remember how important your physical biological bodies are.

Regardless of all the stupid propaganda telling you what is good, right, perfect or wrong about the biological miracle machine you're living in, respect it, establish a dialogue with it, and take care of it. And if you need help, ask for help to understand it better and to find what is best for the signature of your biological body.

Nurture yourself, take care of yourself. Spend time in nature, in communion with nature. Connect with the sky, connect with your heart. And you will see, by the time the great shift comes by the beginning of next year, you're going to feel that no matter what changes and shifts happen, you will be fine. You will be ready and prepared to walk the path of life in holy connection and communion within Father Sky and Mother Earth.

Blessed you are. Thank you.

# THE MOON ZODIAC CYCLES AND YOU

BY SARAH ROBERTSHAW  
@astrologycoach



It takes on average about 27 days for the moon to orbit the earth. It's no coincidence that many things in nature are governed by the moon's cycle; the tides, some farmers use the moon's cycle for crop growth and, of course, menstruation.

In astrology terms, the moon rules the water sign of Cancer. It's one of the "big three" planets which have a significant impact on our charts. The moon is the fastest moving planet in the zodiac wheel, changing signs roughly every two days. There are full moons and new moons every month, each with their own powers and rituals. The moon is traditionally feminine; it speaks of the mother, the family, emotions and internal well-being. Tracking your periods with the moon cycles can give you great insight into your own well-being.

*How do I track?*

Keep a calendar or journal and note which sign the moon is in for each day of the month. There are plenty of moon journals and apps that can help with this. @sevenstarsco does a beautiful journal which includes the astrology of each day, and The Moon app gives the daily sign the moon is in.

Start on the first day of your period (day 1), and notice which zodiac sign the moon is in. How do you feel? What came up for you that day? How was your period? Now keep track of each day right up to day 25-35 (whatever is your norm) through to day one again. Notice which sign the moon is in and how you feel that day.

You can even keep notes of how heavy or light your flow is and the types of vaginal discharge, etc., you experience. Lisa Lister is the author of a great book (*Code Red*) and refers to menstruation having various seasons: winter when coming into and during your period, spring when ovulation begins, etc.

After a couple of months, you might start to notice patterns. I always feel great in spring and evil in winter! Perhaps your period starts on a new moon, or you feel more emotional when the moon is in Cancer. You might notice where you have high energy days, more social days or more hermit days!

Over time you may be able to use this to plan where, when and who you want to be with on certain days— no point planning to hit the club with da witches if it's your winter in a Taurus moon and all you want to do is eat chocolate under the duvet! It's always worth noting which zodiac sign the moon is in and how that impacts you.

I personally find an Aquarius moon far too anxiety-inducing; Aquarius is an air sign, and air = (over) thinking!

So, I try to minimise any stressful jobs or interactions on those days. It takes time to build a picture of your cycle, but it's most definitely given me a sense of inner peace, knowing why I feel how I feel and when it's going to happen!

Step into your inner well-being, witches, with some moon cycle tracking.

# THE SECRET OF BECOMING A WITCH

BY LEXIE

@enchanted\_pixiewitchhealing

There's that moment again—the cold crisp air hits your lungs, awakening every ounce of your soul as it flows through your body. The freshness hitting your bare skin, sending vibrant tingles shooting up and down your arms. The changes afoot can be heard on the breeze, felt in your soul and seen in that changing glow of the sun. A deep sense of knowing makes you feel like you are connected to something greater than your own existence, to the existence of the entire power of Mother Nature herself.

Autumn is on the horizon, but how is it you have come to feel this season and are aware of its entrance without even needing to look at a calendar?

"How did you become a Witch?" is a question that has been put to me more times than I've had hot dinners, and that's quite a few! Another common question being very similar, "How do you know you are a Witch?". Well, the becoming and the knowing are intrinsically interlinked, but I can guarantee that every Witch has their own story. I am not one of those who will tell you that they always felt that they were different and didn't fit in, or that they were accidentally affecting the weather at five years old either.

I am not one of those who come from a long line of hereditary Witches; you wouldn't find me collecting herbs with my Nan or casting a circle with my mother and sisters.

I was unfortunately a very sick child, plagued with health issues from birth; this gave me a great deal of time at home, and reading was the one thing I could do while being stuck in bed.

Reading took me to many wonderful places, and as a young teen and the birth of the Internet, a whole world opened up to me. I have a very curious mind, and once I start on a topic, I keep digging and I find myself down a rabbit hole, popping up in amazing new subjects.

Reading was a brilliant escape away from my health issues, but also away from the abusive hands of my stepfather. All of these elements combined happened to lead me to website after website about Witches, spells, the power of nature, the power of intent, and so much more.

I felt comfort, a deep comfort and a sense of knowing. The Internet had, unknowingly to me at the time, handed me the key to unlocking that first door to my pathway as a Witch.

I am not a Witch who is big on spellwork, but I will never forget that moment when I was 13 years old and discovered a protection spell. I printed off spell after spell, sheets and sheets on the elements of nature, how to practice safely, and I created what would be deemed as a very basic guide or Book of Shadows.

This protection spell, which I oddly had all the necessary tools for at the time, hinted that I had been drawn to this path without realising! I had decided I was going to use it on my bedroom door, in the hopes it would keep the abusive stepfather at bay. I lined up my white candles, I lit them one by one, and repeated in hushed tones the chant that I had before me. My intention was strong, but my skills were not. However, simply taking part in that spell gave me a stronger sense of self, a sense of control, and a deep feeling of knowing I had something more to give.

That experience has never left me, but it was many years later that I came back to the path I had unlocked as a young teen. There is so much more information available now in comparison to when my path came to life, and it is more freely acceptable to consider yourself a Witch. But I have found there are many Witches, perhaps new or several years into their journey, concerned about their validity. Yes, some of us do come from a long line of healers, crystal collectors, herbalists, mediums, or have generations of knowledge passed down through families with traditional Witch journeys. Or there are those of us who are the only one in our family, our friends, our general social circle, who notice the change in the air as the Wheel turns another cycle, or feel the power of a storm, or feel peace sat within a forest.

We are all different, our lineage different, our path, journey and practice different.

There is one thing that connects us all and stands us firm as Witches: the power of intent. Our intent is present in all that we do and all that we feel. As Witches, our intent to learn, our intent to heal, help, teach, guide, practice and live life in a way that suits us, is what is strong and defining.

Only you can decide whether you are a Witch, and with the best time of year now upon us, gather those Witchy trinkets, decorate, embrace all that you are.

Allow the gratitude of Autumn to wash over you, let the thinning of the veil connect you with the power of your ancestors, feel the culmination of the harvests and the slowing of the world fill your soul.

It's a time for embracing everything you are thankful for, to shed what holds you back from yourself, just as the trees transform and shed their leaves as they let go, to make way for the new and beautiful next stage of their journey.

Trust your intent. Only you can decide how and when you became a Witch.

Autumnal Blessings.

# THE WHEEL OF WHAT REMAINS UNSEEN

BY RICARDO AGRASO  
@goldencard29

One of Voltaire's best-known quotes says: "present opportunities are not to be neglected, they rarely visit us twice". And so during this year, I've personally become a witness of this statement; I have become the person who decided to let anybody and anything come into my life; I welcomed them even when I didn't send an invitation. I have arrived at a point where I have met narcissists, those who are completely void inside yet feel like they are ready to be filled with someone else's happiness and make their suffering something as precious as their source of freedom; I have met incredible, confused and lost beings that are unconsciously just following the wrong direction, because they've been taught to follow other people's paths instead of their own; and I have met my shadow-self over and over again until I decided to reconcile with it.

Each time I have crossed paths with one of these cases, I realised there was a change in my narrative, in my actions, in my expectations, and in my life. Indeed, each time was a change in a totally different direction. For the record, learning how to let the Universe take the lead to fit into whatever our fate has in store for us is something difficult for a person like me, and I bet it could be for any other that feels like a bit of a control freak or a maniac in some ways.

However, I jumped into the unknown with my heart first, which got me brokenhearted, disappointed, and out of faith to believe there was a silver lining.

But I also ended up with pride in the work I produced and the milestones I reached during that time. It was an opportunity to grow, evolve, and become a brighter and even wiser version of myself. Now, as many people tend to think after a breakthrough, I can do things differently if given the opportunity.

Chaos is something hard to thrive in unless you feel at home within it. I suppose that this is my personal situation, but I have come to realise that sometimes we tend to need and therefore choose the venom that makes us feel drained when we are going through our personal processes.

It's like even when we know it is all wrong, we are being loyal to the pain.

Other times we tend to lie in between spaces to ease the madness and forget the fact we may be thriving in chaos. We have the concept behind those actions right; we are self-injuring ourselves by putting ourselves out there in those toxic and rotten environments, as if unconsciously we are choosing the events that can bring us enlightenment to grow. So, are we also unconsciously choosing to be the shadow of what we can become, of our truest potential?

I can't help but wonder what we owe to each other when somebody or even ourselves crosses the line. Boundaries are also another thing I have come to embrace as never before.

Times are rough, yet even during those troubled times, we are aware it must be coming to an end soon. Everything happens for a reason, and we understand that; but what else is there? What about after the last word in a vulnerable conversation is said? Or what about the email yet unsent? We are committed to bringing forth our greatness, even when all the lights have been turned off. Sometimes this is a tiring action to execute, and other times, we are just way too tired of life to do a thing. Barely breathing, unable to get out of bed, no appetite for a meal, just tired and not enough sleep to recharge, let alone recover from the mess we just survived.

At the end of the day everything dies, everything changes. We have the power and wisdom inside of us. Our intuition yells loudly when the end is near, even before it has officially ended; so we can get our tears ready to be dropped rhythmically after a critical pause. Just like autumn, everything dies eventually to be born again. The reborn phase allows us all to realise we are not insignificant, but the lead role of our own experiences. There are no crumbs of existence. There is oneness in the Universe's timeline. Questions and wonders may occur out of the blue, but answers will also find their way back to us, and that will be the perfect moment to embrace it all. To embrace our flaws, mistakes, and insecurities— to embrace our shadow.



# UNIVERSAL HEARTBEAT MEDITATION

BY FAYE CRAIG  
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With Samhain, the witch's new year, fast approaching, this season is the ideal time to reconnect, re-centre and find presence.

By slowing down during this auspicious time when the veil is thin, we not only give ourselves time to reflect on all we have achieved from the last year, but we make way for new dreams, intentions and messages to flow through.

It also re-establishes our place in the world and web of life, strengthening our relationship with Mother Earth, our ancestors, our guides, and source, letting go of separateness, and reminding us we are all part of an infinite whole.

One meditation I often like to do at this time for these reasons is one I call 'Universal Heartbeat.'

Growing up I always used to be more drawn to cosmic energies, but recently my practice has evolved to incorporate a number of Earth-based practices.

Both still have their own unique place in my craft, but this meditation allows me to connect to both, thus enabling me to feel the spirit and interconnectedness of all things.

The meditation itself came to me when out walking my fluffy companion one day. I tend to make a conscious effort to walk mindfully anyway, but this one particular afternoon it seemed as if all of the sky and elements around were dancing for me. When I got home, I decided to journal on the experience and this meditation flowed out of me.

There is no right or wrong way to do this meditation, and it can be done both in and outside; in my opinion, we always receive what we need each time we meditate. You may wish to only try one aspect of it, too, or every part—again this is absolutely fine, and I only share as an invitation for personal exploration.

## Part 1: Preparation

To start with, you may wish to prepare your space— smoke cleansing with your favourite herbs, setting up a seasonal or intentional altar, and making yourself comfortable in your own little nest. Additionally I like to make myself an herbal tea and move my tarot or oracle deck, journal or any art supplies nearby for me to record anything once I am completed. Then once comfortable, I light a candle and begin.

## Part 2: Reciprocity Grounding

First, as you gently close your eyes, place both hands on your heart, or one on your heart and the other on your abdomen, and start taking some big deep breaths down into your belly. Really sense the air flowing through your nose and down your throat, chest and into your root chakra, relaxing each muscle and releasing all tension in your body. Once centred, as you breathe out, imagine each breath being sent out as a gift to the Earth and Universe, and as you breathe in, you receive this air as a gift back. Really think about what your precious, loving breath can do for the Earth around you, how it can nourish her and all of her plants, animals and spirits. In return, tune into how your inner breath gives and sustains your life. Repeat this for as many cycles as you wish to really sync with the energy around you.

## Part 3: Cosmic Heartbeat

Start to visualise a golden ball of light above your head, shining down from the sky. This light is so bright, that if you saw it with your open eyes it may blind you with its glowing radiance. As you breathe in now, this glowing ball of light starts to shine down onto you, coming in through the crown of your head, down through the rest of your chakras and filling up every inch of your body. Once the light has completely engulfed your whole being, you notice it starts to pulse, and these pulses shoot down on the light beams straight into your heart space, each pulse of light and your own heartbeat as one. Again, stay here for as long as you need to absorb and connect to this cosmic source energy.

## Part 4: Earth's Heartbeat

As the cosmic pulse energy starts to imbue every cell of your heart and body, start to visualise golden tendrils from your root chakra moving down slowly into the Earth's core. They pass through all the mud, clay, bones, and crystals to eventually reach a glowing green ball of light at the Earth's centre. In the same way, this ball of light starts to pulse, and as you breathe in, it again sends light beams back up to you via these tendrils, all the way back up into your heart, your own heartbeat and the pulses of light in perfect harmony. As you now receive this Universal Heartbeat from the above and below, you may start to feel warm or experience some tingling sensations as its energy nourishes you.

## Part 5: Closing

We now give thanks to both the cosmos and Earth for their love, and as we show gratitude the tendrils slowly start to retract back up to us, and the glowing balls of light above and below start to fade. They fade, but we know we can revisit and reconnect with them at any time. This heartbeat of life is found in the air we breathe, the sun on our faces, the soil beneath our feet, the cleansing water we drink, and the moon and stars in the sky.

The Universal Heartbeat is always around, within us and without, we mirror each other every day, and both our hearts beat the same.



IMAGE: CHARLIE SHARP, @charliesharp08

# CREATIVELY CELEBRATING SAMHAIN

BY MAEVE LILLIAN MOONBIRD

@creativepriestess

Samhain means “Summer’s End” in Gaelic. This was traditionally the Celtic New Year, and one of the cross quarter days celebrated. The pagan sabbat Samhain celebrates the New Year on the Wheel of the Year for modern pagans and witches today. On Samhain, 31st October, the old year is ending, and the new year is beginning. This is a liminal space when the veil between the living and dead is thin. Connecting with your ancestors and beloved dead is a meaningful, spiritual way to honour this sabbat Samhain. This is also a night to protect oneself from negative spirits who roam as the veil thins. You can also work with your fears during this dark, liminal time.

Reflecting on the new Wheel of the Year includes setting intentions, and divination and dream work are also ways to celebrate this sabbat. The wise crone, along with dark goddesses including Hecate, Morrigan, Anu, Macha, Badbh, Persephone, Cerridwen and Lilith, are powerful to work with during this Samhain season. The year is getting darker and we can connect to their wise, magical, dark energy. Animals including spiders, bats, crows, ravens, owls, and black cats can also be animal spirit guides on Samhain.

Here are some creative ideas for celebrating Samhain; may they inspire you to have a magickal time.

- Create an ancestor altar to honour your ancestors. You can add photos, name cards or objects to represent them. Colours often related to Samhain are white, black, purple, red, gold and orange. These colours can be part of your altar, including candles.
- Have a ‘silent supper’ of autumnal food and drink, such as squash, pumpkin, apples and apple cider. Or you can prepare favourite foods or special cultural foods that represent your ancestors. The silent supper is then served with one empty chair to represent the ancestors for whom you also leave food and drink. Enjoy your meal in silence as you reflect on honouring them.
- Decorate Samhain-themed cupcakes or cookies. Enjoy them with some hot apple cider or a warm pumpkin spice coffee.
- Paint or draw a spooky night Samhain scene, a beloved ancestor, a dark goddess, a wise crone or a Samhain-related animal spirit guide.
- Get crafty and create a Samhain wreath to decorate your door.
- From paper or felt, cut out Samhain-related images such as cute ghosts, bats, black cats, pumpkins, crows and spiders to decorate your home.
- Carve a pumpkin or turnip with a scary face. Light this pumpkin or turnip on Samhain and set it in a window or outside your home to ward off any negative spirits from visiting.
- Sew a magical costume or create a mask to wear to celebrate Samhain. Or a dream pillow filled with mugwort to place under your pillow for Samhain dream work.
- Light a candle on Samhain and if you wish, incense. Scents for Samhain include cedar, rosemary, patchouli, cinnamon, clove, sandalwood and pumpkin spice. Create a vision board, drawing or painting representing your intentions and desires for the new year. You can also write these in your journal.
- Do some divination with tarot, oracle cards, runes, tea leaves or scrying. Ask for guidance around your new year intentions, including your creative projects.



# ENERGY - THE PATH TO SUCCESS

BY DEB ROBINSON  
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It could be a difficult thing to accept, that the most powerful tool a witch can possess is their energy. What if you aren't feeling filled with positive energy at all? What if you are riddled with insecurities, or anxieties, or depression? It can't be true that witchcraft is only for the joyous, can it?

The truth is, that the practice of witchcraft can bring joy, can ease anxiety and can be truly empowering!

When casting a spell, performing a ritual, etc., the most important thing is to believe in the outcome. Even if just for that moment, you should try to set all negativity aside, take some cleansing, mindful breaths to raise your vibration, and live in that moment. Cast that spell with gratitude for the end result, knowing that your intention is strong, that your belief in the result is unwavering, and that you'll work hard, constantly visualising the required outcome, and so, the Universe will conspire to give you what you need.

Manifesting is really as simple as that!

Learning that your energy is of such importance encourages a positive outlook. Once the positive outlook attracts a positive result, this, in turn, gives you a more positive outlook... and this is how the most successful people succeed!

So, notice your own energy, be mindful of it, take care of it. But, don't beat yourself up if you have negative energy and emotions; negative emotions are crying for your attention, so tend to them.

Take time with those feelings, breathe calmly with them, and soothe them until they quieten— you would not leave a crying baby feeling unloved, so don't leave yourself unloved when you are crying out to be cared for!

If you are running on low energy and feel you simply can't muster the positive energy needed to visualise a positive outcome during a spell or ritual, that doesn't rule out practicing your Craft — there are many ways to work magick without the need for an abundance of positive energy!

Journal:

Work through your thoughts and emotions, allow yourself to be honest about how you feel— getting your thoughts out will be grounding and cleansing. Use your journal to track your progress and set your goals.

Visualise:

Imagine your goals being achieved, tell yourself the story of how you will succeed; goals are not simply 'reached', there are steps along the way. Imagine yourself taking those steps, and think about how it will feel when you have accomplished your dreams.

Meditation:

Entering a state of pure relaxation by meditating is a cleansing, grounding, and altogether magickal experience which can help you to feel more positive. Giving yourself permission to disengage from life for a while and focus on your own well-being is a sure-fire way to raise your vibration, and open yourself up to spiritual connections.

When we feel more connected, and our vibration is raised, we become more energised and motivated.

Your energy is important, so take care of yourself, tend to your emotions, and ensure you are as easy on yourself as you would be your closest friend. The kinder you are to yourself, the more your positivity will increase, and so will your magickal power.

When you are kind to yourself, you set yourself up to succeed!





# THE DOCTRINE OF SIGNATURES

BY MOONHARE

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ILLUSTRATION: ANNA PAYAN, @annapayan.art

Although the term 'doctrine of signatures' was first published in medieval Europe by Paracelsus in the 16th century, it undoubtedly began as a spiritual concept of magical sympathy. With a belief in a symbolic universe, Paracelsus wrote about the "language of nature". He claimed that just as the number of lines on a stag's antler showed the animal's age, so did plants symbolise in their shape, colour, smell or taste their healing properties. Although much hated by the medical establishment, Paracelsus' methods were very effective.

The doctrine of signatures is popularly regarded as a medieval herbalist belief that nature left signs in plants to reveal their medicinal uses. A plant's properties and appearance governed its virtues. Today many of these claims have been supported by modern research.

Common examples of the doctrine include lobelia, the stomach-shaped leaves of which indicate emetic qualities, and bloodroot, the blood-red roots of which treat toxic blood diseases. The milky sap of mature lettuce has been prescribed for lactation, beetroots to build blood, and kidney beans to strengthen kidneys. Liverwort's liver-shaped leaves promote hepatic functioning, and nettles hairy leaves are used in hair concoctions.

Because yellow also indicated plants useful to the liver, the yellow roots of goldenseal, Oregon grape and barberry plants were used to treat jaundice.

The yellow flowered dandelion remains a popular liver tonic today.

Examine a cross-section of a carrot. Lines radiate outward like the pupil of an eye. Popular folk myth claims carrots are good for eye sight; this too is a survival of the doctrine of signatures, although maybe not a good example!

Reportedly walnuts have a perfect signature. The cell represents the pericranium or skull, and therefore salts made from the husks or shells are very good for wounds of the head. The kernel has the shape of the brain and is therefore very profitable for the brain. Research shows walnuts are rich in Omega 3 fatty acids, an essential nutrient for brain functions.

The Doctrine of signatures is used worldwide; in India peasants cure venomous bites with snakeroot, and in China going one step further, recommending using only the upper part of the plant to treat the upper body and the roots of the plant to treat the lower extremities.

Today, we have flower essence and homeopathic medicine to add to this doctrine, but interestingly in blind tests where neither the researchers nor subjects knew which remedies were used, the homeopathic remedies have fully supported the doctrine of signatures' effectiveness.

Mother Nature never ceases to amaze... isn't she wonderful?

# BUILDING YOUR OWN LITHOMANCY SET

BY JESSICA HOWARD  
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As we approach the darker months of the year, practices such as divination become more of a focus. There are many different types of divination out there, but one often overlooked form of divination is lithomancy.

Lithomancy is a divination method which is older than tarot, yet more mysterious. There is little historical evidence to tell us how the practice of lithomancy has evolved over the ages. However, it is by far one of the most accessible forms of divination.

All you need to get started are some stones from your back garden, meaning you don't need to break the bank in order to practice it. It allows us to be creative as we build our sets, and tailor them to our own personal symbology. It is also surprisingly easy to pick up, but don't let that fool you— it is very effective.

Below is a very simple general reading set to get you started. Whilst lithomancy is traditionally practised with stones, you can add crystals, shells, coins, and other items to your set if you wish. If you are going to use materials other than stones, try to choose ones which roughly correspond with the meanings below. For example, you may choose a coin to represent abundance, or a piece of goldstone crystal to represent masculinity. If you are going to be using stones, get creative and design symbols and sigils to represent each attribute to draw on your stones to help you differentiate between their meanings.

*Stone 1: Communication*  
There is a need to work on your communication skills. Don't be afraid to use your voice to communicate what you want out to the world.

*Stone 2: Masculinity*  
Energy, vitality and a masculine influence. You are filled with enthusiasm and positivity, and this is a great time to put that to good use and focus on your goal.

*Stone 3: Decision Making*  
You may be clinging onto something which no longer serves you. It is time to decide whether that thing is worth holding on to or whether it is time to let it go.

*Stone 4: Self-discovery*  
Take a look at your own feelings, biases and beliefs— even the negative ones— before you make your move.

*Stone 5: Abundance*  
Abundance and prosperity, and not necessarily just financial.

*Stone 6: Opportunity and New Beginnings*  
Fortune is smiling on you, and you either have been or will be presented with a great opportunity. Be brave, be bold, and go for it.

*Stone 7: Self-Care*  
It is time for you to focus on you, what is best or most important to you, and prioritise that right now.

*Stone 8: Relationships*  
There is a need to reach out and build positive relationships with others if you want to succeed. This is not necessarily romantic relationships, but could also be friends, colleagues, etc.

*Stone 9: Health*  
Anything health related will be at the forefront. This could be physical, mental, emotional, or even spiritual health.

*Stone 10: Protection*  
There is something bubbling under the surface that you should be wary of. Be careful, cautious, and take steps to protect yourself as you progress.

*Stone 11: Personal*  
The personal stone represents 'you' in a reading, and we interpret our reading based on where the other stones fall in relation to the personal stone.

To cast your stones hold them between both hands, arms outstretched at roughly chest height. Focus on your question as you roll the stones between your hands, and when you feel ready, gently release them. Look for where your personal stone has landed. You want to start by reading the stones closest to that, and then working outwards. Lithomancy is often referred to as a 'visual and intuitive' practice— we interpret our reading based on the patterns our stones form when they fall (the visual), and the meanings between the stones (the intuitive).

The first thing to look for is any patterns that the stones have formed. The basic patterns you may see are:

*Squares:*  
Foundations. The four stones that make up the square should be considered in building strong foundations before you can progress.

*Triangles:*  
Opportunity. Work on these three stones to create or make the most of an opportunity coming your way.

*Curves:*  
Energy flow. Read very linearly, from one stone to the next, as this is the order in which you should focus your efforts— one will lead to the other.

The second is to read the stones in relation to one another. Let's say for example that stone 1 (communication) has fallen next to stone 7 (self-care). We could ask, are you being honest about what you want, or are you letting others 'shout' over you to your own detriment, because you want to keep the peace?

Now let's say that stone 6 (opportunity and new beginnings) has fallen next to stone 7. We could interpret this as meaning there is a need to start something new, to find something you are passionate about and empowers you, as this will help you find the courage you need to stand up for yourself.

Perhaps these three stones form a square shape with stone 5 (abundance). With the square representing foundations, this tells us that we have a real opportunity here to create abundance in our lives if we focus on this new opportunity and find the courage to speak up.

There is a lot more to lithomancy than this. There are more patterns, more ways of reading your stones (i.e., using shadow and light to determine whether the message is positive and negative), as well as steps you can take to help you attune to and use your lithomancy set. It is a very underrated form of divination, so give it a go and see if the stones speak to you.

# CREATING CONNECTION WITH OUR ANCESTORS

BY JAYNE CRAIG  
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In today's world, we are often detached from death, and for many of us, it is not unusual to no longer know our family history, or even to have no connections with the generations who came before us.

Yet the very earth we walk on is made up of the dead!

The fertility and quality of life within our soil is dependent on the bodies of our plant, animal and human kin returning to the earth. Rich, dark humus is created to nourish new life into existence. Stars long dead light our skies, and our ancestors whose time has since passed gift us immunity, genetics and particular traits and quirks of character, passed on through each generation. Death influences our physical existence more than we acknowledge.

Ancestor work can become a valuable cornerstone of our personal spiritual practice. We may not know our ancestors by name, or be able to recite tales from our families lineage, but connection can still be created.

This connection to ancestors can be especially helpful when it comes to the development of self, when we wish to heal old traumas and move past old, ingrained patterning. When we do so, we are not only healing ourselves, but also releasing the traumas and stuck patterning that may be in our lineage.

Connecting with your ancestors can become a handy way to step outside of yourself and call in traits and talents that may feel not so easily accessible within your own personality. Thinking back to the adversities, challenges and hardships our ancestors went through can provide us with a way to tap into the strength and resilience we may need to face challenges of our own. Calling in our ancestors can also help us feel less alone and more anchored into the world.

To honour your ancestors and create a focal point for connection, you might also like to try your hand at weaving a remembrance wreath for your altar space. This is a great way to fuse your focus and intent while expressing yourself creatively.

Weaving is relatively simple (although if you are skilled at weaving, no doubt you could create something amazingly complex if you so desired!), and if you have little ones, it's an easy activity to get them involved with.

All you need is some plant materials to weave with. Grapevines, willow or wisteria vine are usually relatively easy to find locally and grow rampantly enough to be able to cut lengths that suit the size of the wreath you wish to make without damaging the plant. You will also need some string or coloured thread (wire will also do the trick), as well as some photos and small trinkets to represent your ancestral loved ones.

**Step 1:**  
Cut your vines to a length that suits the size of the circle you wish to create. While the vines are green and pliable, fashion a few of the vines or willow into a rough circle and then tie a piece of string or twist some wire to keep the circle secure.

**Step 2:**  
Set about weaving the rest of the vines in and out of the circle until your wreath is shaped the way you like it. You could also weave in a few sprigs of rosemary for remembrance.

**Step 3:**  
Take some more of your string, ribbon or thread and weave it around the wreath you have fashioned.

Make sure you have enough thread to allow you to also wrap your thread so it crosses the middle, inner circle of the wreath a few times, creating a spider web effect in the middle (or you could create a pentacle shape). Be sure to keep the thread nice and tight, as your plant material will shrink as it dries. This thread symbolises the threads of fate, as well as the thread of connection that ties us all together. The thread will also be where you attach your trinkets and photos.

**Step 4:**  
When you are happy with the look and shape of the wreath you have created, you can begin to attach your small trinkets or photos to the strings in the middle of the wreath. These objects can easily be attached with small pegs, hot glue, wire or even paper clips.

**Step 5:**  
Hang your wreath up on the wall above your altar and it will dry out over time. If you find your thread has become loose as the material dries, you can either re-wrap it to tighten or you could tuck pieces of crystal, feathers or dried flowers under the loose thread to bulk it out a bit a more and add interest.

Your wreath can be as simple or ornate as you like. It can also be something you add to over time, or it may be something you like to refresh and reweave every Samhain to help you strengthen your connection to your ancestors.



IMAGE: JAYNE CRAIG



# GRAVE FOR A WITCH

BY ANN BOLLEN

@tiptoe\_through\_the\_gravestones

Situated between the high and low tide marks on Torryburn Bay beach in Fife, Scotland, lies the grave of a confessed witch. The usual fate of witches in Scotland was to be burned at the stake. However, this confessed witch died while awaiting her sentence in Dunfermline Jail. Unfortunately for the authorities at the time, they had a confessed witch but not a living confessed witch. Therefore, it was decided she would be buried on the beach in a humble wooden box with a large stone slab laid on top of her grave. So, who was this woman? Why was she buried on the beach in such a fashion? And what does her grave mean in modern times?

Lilias Adie was born around 1640 and little is known of her life until 1704. However, it is thought that Lilias Adie was a vulnerable elderly woman/widow of low economic standing in her sixties. It was in 1704 that Reverent Allan Logan, a minister, heard rumours that one of his constituents, Jean Bizet, was being tormented by the devil. Reverent Logan ordered a Kirk session, which in Scotland is the lowest court in the Church of Scotland led by ministers and elders. During this Kirk session, he called for witnesses to recount the events surrounding Bizet. Witnesses confessed that Bizet had said that Lilias Adie was a witch. However, witnesses also suggested that Jean Bizet was a drunk. In addition to Bizet's accusation, another witness, Jean Neilson, confirmed that she had also been tormented by Lilias Adie. These two accusations resulted in Lilias Adie being arrested.

During Lilias Adie's approximate month in prison, she was interviewed at least seven times and taken to church to confess twice. It must be remembered that interviewing a supposed witch meant that the accused was most likely tortured. Lilias Adie did confess to being a witch. She stated that she had met with the Devil several times and even had sex with him on one occasion. It is not clear why Lilias Adie confessed, but it has been widely suggested that many people gave false confessions just to make their torture stop. This confession ultimately sealed Lilias Adie's fate.

On 29th August 1704, Lilias Adie died while in prison, before she could be sentenced and burned. It is thought that Lilias Adie committed suicide because up until the 19th century, people who committed suicide were buried on the shoreline outside consecrated ground. It was believed that people who died this way did an unspeakable act against God that was instigated by the devil. These people were regarded as bad people who did a bad act and didn't warrant being buried on hallowed ground.

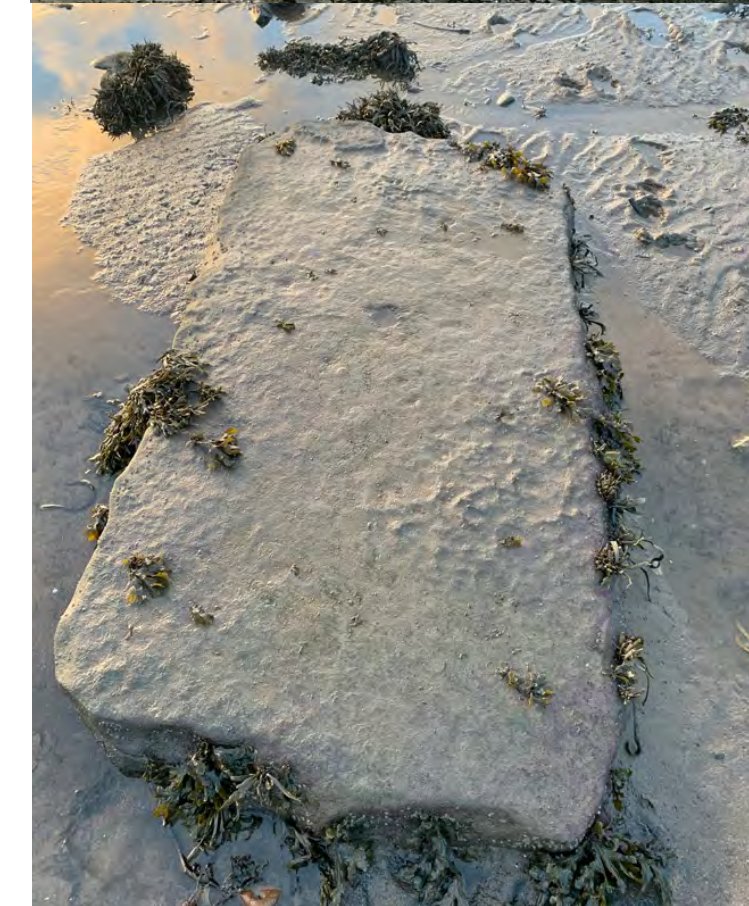
It was also believed that bodies of dead witches could be reanimated by the devil to exact revenge upon the living. This is why witches were burned and not buried.

So, possibly Lilias Adie was buried on a beach with half a ton slab on her grave to stop the devil from reanimating her body.

No one knows how Lilias Adie actually died. But it must be remembered that this woman was most probably elderly and most likely frail. Did she actually commit suicide or were the Kirk sessions and her probable torture a contribution to her death?

Even in death, Lilias Adie never found peace. Antiquarian Joseph Neil Paton ordered for Lilias Adie's coffin to be exhumed and Paton took her skull. Paton was practising Phrenology, which is a pseudoscience examining the lumps and bumps of a person's skull to determine mental traits of that person. It is believed that Paton took Adie's skull to see if there was any difference between a witch's and a normal person's skull. Once Paton was finished with her skull, he handed it over to the Fife Medical Association who then passed it to St. Andrews University. The last record of Lilias Adie's skull was in 1938 during an exhibition in Glasgow. Pictures were taken of Lilias Adie's skull which allowed a computerised reconstruction to be made in 2017. No one knows where Lilias Adie's skull is, and the rest of her body was never found.

Lilias Adie's grave has such significance because it is the only grave of a confessed witch in Scotland. No other graves or markings like hers have ever been found. Lilias Adie is one of the countless stories of how people were accused and confessed to witchcraft. It serves as a reminder as to how easy it was for someone to be implicated and ultimately killed. Lilias Adie and so many others died due to gossip and hysteria. They died because witch panic seized Scotland from 1563-1735. Approximately 4,000 people, mainly women, died during this period. It can be said that the witch trials, not only gripped Scotland but the whole of Europe, and that it was a war against women. Lilias Adie was most likely yet another victim of tragic, sickening, terrifying circumstances that has never been fully recognised. Not only should Lilias Adie be remembered kindly, but also every single innocent person who was burned at the stake.



WIKI COMMONS  
<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/news/2017/face-of-313-year-old-witch-reconstructed.php>

# THE SEA WITCH

BY ELISA M GRAY  
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The sea witch in folklore is a witch who appears to sailors or others who spend their days near the sea. They are usually female and depicted as fairy creatures, such as a selkies or mermaids or, sometimes, as a human who used the art of magic to influence the sea by controlling the wind and the tides.

Sea witchery is a moon-based magical practice and the sea itself plays a symbolic role. The moon charges every drop of sea water with its intense power, and its gravitational pull causes the tides to change.

## NORSE MYTHOLOGY AND THE SEA WITCH

Within the Norse myths, sea witches are mostly shown as magical, mainly evil spirits who take the form of mermaids, sirens or selkies. They are always female and their magical relationship with the sea and tides was believed to have come from worshipping the moon.

The worship of moon goddesses has taken place all over the world, with the triple goddess maiden, mother and crone representing the monthly phases of the moon's cycle. Sea witches were believed to 'twist' their lunar sorcery into 'magical strings and ropes' with three knots, which the witches sold to superstitious mariners to help them control the elements.

Knots have served as containers for magic in many cultures, and as one was tied the witch's intention or spellwork was 'bound to the cord'. The witch's ladder is a good example of this—it was made from knotted cord or hair and normally contained a spell.

Charms were knotted or braided with specific magical intention woven into the cords. The number of knots and nature of charms varies with the intended spell.

The first recorded witch ladder found in the UK was in an old house in Wellington, Somerset, which was demolished in 1878. A 'rope with feathers woven into it' was found in the space that separated the roof from the upper room, a space that was inaccessible from the interior of the house.

When folklorist Charles Godfrey Leland received news of the Wellington find, he undertook an investigation in Italy and discovered that the witches there used a similar form called a 'Witches Garland'. The item was made of cord and contained black hen feathers. The curse was uttered as each knot was tied in and the item was placed under the victim's bed, to cause them ill fortune.

In Norwegian tradition, knot magic was used in healing spells to bind pain, offering temporary relief to the sufferer, so that they could be moved or fed.

The magic of the sea witch's knots differed from place to place, but in general knots were believed to contain the energy to create different types of wind. For example, untying the first knot may release a gentle breeze, while undoing the third knot may release a hurricane. This practice was brought to light in 1617 at the 'Vardø witch trials' in Finnmark, Northern Norway, when the sea witch Else Knutsdatter confessed that 'witches tied fishing ropes three times, spat at it and untied it,' after which the sea 'rose like ashes and people were killed.'

The mythological tradition of 'tying the wind' can also be found in ancient Greek myths—when Odysseus received a bag of wind from Aeolus to help him on his journey.

The nymph Calypso was the daughter of the Titan Atlas (or Oceanus or Nereus), a nymph of the mythical island of Ogygia, portrayed in The Odyssey as a sea witch who was able to lure Odysseus' ship to her island while keeping all the other ships away. She used her powers to keep the weather perfect around her island to 'seduce Odysseus into staying' when his boat was smashed on the shores of Ogygia.

Calypso eventually helped Odysseus mend his boat so he could sail away and return to his former life. She kept Odysseus on the island for seven years until the God Hermes was sent by Zeus to ask her to release him. She bore Odysseus twin sons, Nausithous and Nausinous.

In medieval legends it was believed that Sir Francis Drake 'sold his soul to the Devil' in order to become the skilled sailor that he was, and that he was assisted in his endeavours by sea witches, who in 1588, near Devil's point overlooking Davenport in England, created a storm that defeated the Spanish Armada.

Thousands of years of oceanic mariners who freely interacted with sea witches came to a nasty end at the beginning of the 17th century, as the witch trials swept across Europe. They were persecuted along with the witches who were said to have aided the sailors with their magic.

The Law of Sorcery and Witchcraft was passed in 1617 for the union of 'Denmark/Norway' and was announced in Finnmark in 1620. Church authorities were keen to put this new law into practice, and only two months later they got their chance. Early in 1621, a terrible storm thundered and the 'sea and sky became one,' drowning forty men.

A few months later in Northern Norway, the Vardø witch trial unfolded, which was the first and most extensive in Scandinavian history. At the Vardø witch trial, a woman named Mari Jørgensdatter from Kiberg was interrogated under torture and claimed that Satan had bit her 'between the fingers of her left hand.' She confessed to having 'flown to Satan's Christmas party at the Lydhorn mountain,' and that she and her team of sea witches were responsible for the great storm of 1617. She said the sea had been raised because they had sexual intercourse with devils and demons while their men were at sea.'

Another sea witch from Vadsø, Anne Larsdatter, confessed that the Devil had 'tied the tongues of witches' so they 'could neither cry nor confess until they were exposed to the ordeal of water.' She also confessed to having flown to a black sabbath and had celebrated to such an extent that she 'barely had time to get home to her bed before it was time to get up for church on Christmas morning'.

The church systematically debased Scandinavian women who lived along the coast and accused them of a range of horrible crimes. Being alone while their husbands were out fishing, they were accused of having committed 'adultery with demons', and approximately 150 people were executed for sorcery in Northern Norway between 1621 and 1663.

The sea witch is part of our history, and women were accused of sea witchery and many other kinds of witchery in the 1600s, their fate to be burned at the stake or hung for their 'crimes.'

The sea witch is ruled by the element of water; she can tie the wind, create a storm and control the tides at will.

So next time you visit the coast, spare a thought for the witches who once lived by the sea and had the power of the moon and wind at their fingertips.

# WARDEN SPIRITS

BY ALEXANDRA DE ANGELIS  
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The word 'warden' comes from Old Norse 'vǫrðr', meaning watcher or guardian. In an esoteric sense, a warden is a concept rooted in Northern European folklore and cosmology. What we traditionally think of as ghosts are spirits—energetic imprints of memory contained within the earth, residing in the bones of a building or within people and objects. 'Wraith' also derives from the same root word.

In Germanic and Norse traditions, a warden spirit can be summoned and raised from the earth by a seeress or shaman to be consulted on important matters. In order to do this, one must 'sit out' on the land—a sometimes lengthy process called Utisetá—and chant a 'vardlokkur', or a spirit lure, a raucous song recounting the warden's name and history.

Before the vardlokkur is even chanted, the shaman or seeress strikes the ground with a staff so that the spirits within begin to awaken and listen. Offerings must be made too, for spirits can be bad tempered when woken unexpectedly and for poor reason.

But sometimes during the liminal twilight hours or when the veil between worlds is at its thinnest, warden spirits can rise spontaneously and make themselves known. Countless stories of ghosts haunting abbeys and stately homes and misty figures gliding over moors have been told throughout time, the same encounter experienced by different people at different times. We don't only see warden spirits, we can hear, smell and feel them, too. They can be as subtle as shivers or as foreboding as an apparition.

I've had such an experience myself whilst camping with my son; we heard hundreds of men roaring in the darkest hours of night in what sounded like bloody battle.

The eerie cries rose up from the land as we stood outside our tent, bleary-eyed, having been roused from deep sleep. The roars dissolved into the sunrise. Perhaps we heard them because we had been inadvertently 'sitting-out'!

The land owner was bemused when we recounted what had happened the next day, but we couldn't both be mistaken. We were in the middle of the Cornish wilds, and there definitely weren't hundreds of men anywhere close to the campsite.

Wardens aren't just contained in the earth's mysterious underground; they are also present within us. In the Germanic Northern Tradition wardens form part of our multi-layered soul.

It's what lies at our root, and although always present, they do not influence our decisions—rather, they offer us protection.

Those who tend to pick up subtle energies may sense the warden of another in the form of an outline, a light or a hum, and sometimes it even delivers information which can be perceived as an intuitive thought. Our warden contains all of our imprinted memory, including ancestral information.

A tree can also be a land warden. Usually a linden, ash, elm or oak, it is said to protect the land it grows on. As if holy towers in the rural landscape, warden trees are far taller than all of the other surrounding trees.

In times long gone, respect for the warden tree was so great that a family could adopt a surname in its honour, and it was deemed an offence to break even a small twig from it. Offerings were hung in these trees or given to the earth beneath it to appease the land spirits who dwelled at its roots.

Objects have a warden, too, or at least memories of events attached to them which can be deciphered by those endowed with heightened senses. When we enter into a charity shop for example, it might not be the sight or smell of hundreds of objects crammed together which overwhelms us, but the energy or memories attached to the objects. The act of deciphering memories attached to objects, places or photographs by touching them is called psychometry, a term coined in the late 1800s; it really is the mystical work we have already been doing for millennia. It is the way of the seeress pitched in contemporary terms.

This way of communing can help us understand imprints and programming of everything around us, including ourselves. Perhaps when we acknowledge these warden spirits we can reconcile with memories, gain insight and heal timelines. Let us remember the Old Ways and honour the warden spirits beneath, below and within, so we may gather visions or retrieve information from the otherworld.

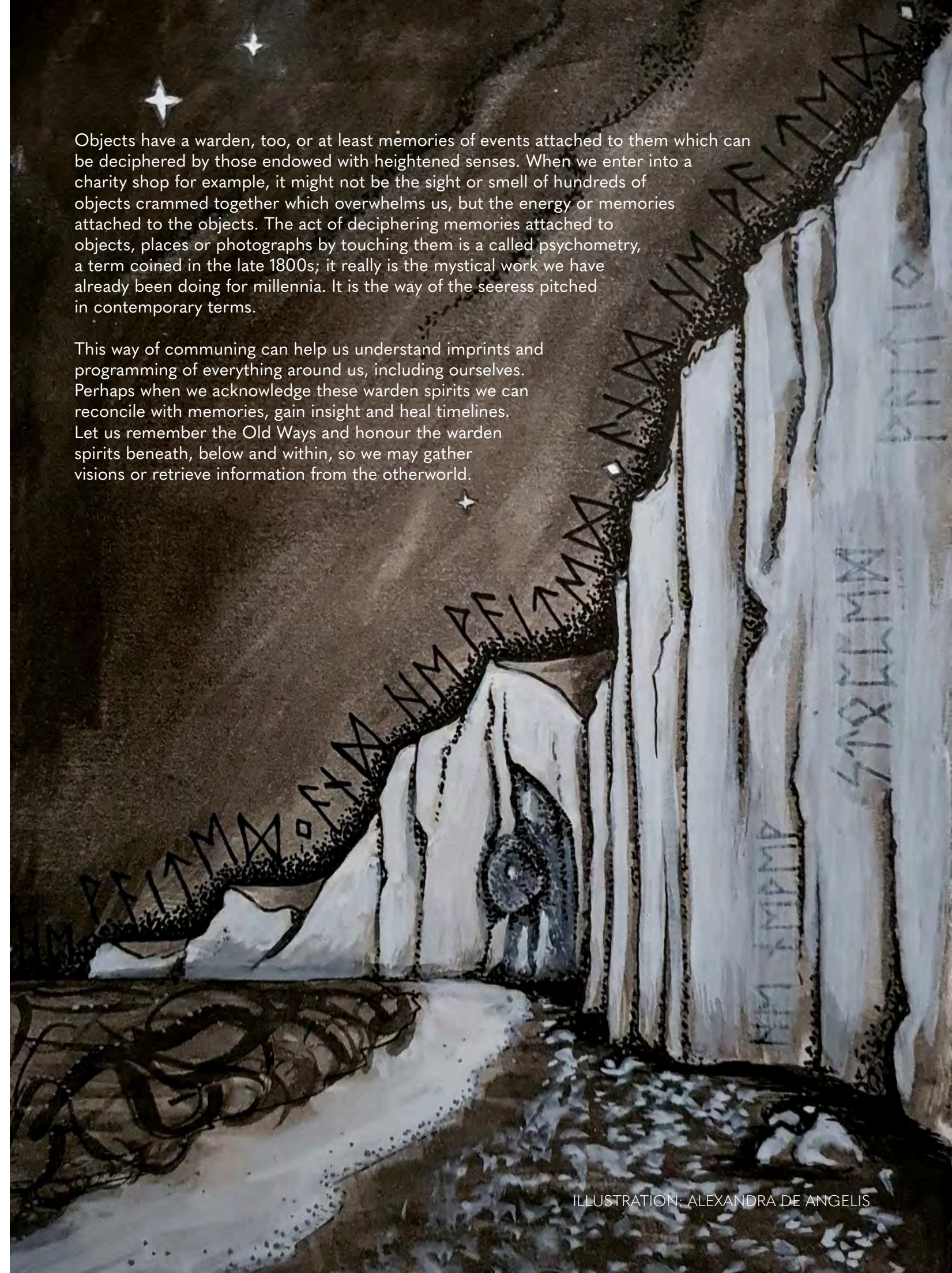


ILLUSTRATION: ALEXANDRA DE ANGELIS

# FROM ASH AND BONE: WORKING WITH THE HONOURED DEAD

BY MICAÉLA ROYAL  
@bloodspell

As a practicing witch, I consider ancestral workings to be one of the cornerstones of my personal practice— one that has gifted me with an unwavering sense of belonging and enriched my overall practice in myriad ways. It has also deepened my understanding of ‘self’ and appreciation for the gifts, abilities, power and magical potential that courses through my veins. It is, in fact, the most sacred aspect of my practice and one that I felt compelled to share with other dedicated practitioners of the craft who feel drawn or have been called to explore the realm of ancestral magic. In my experience, it is a part of my journey as a witch that has led to unexpected discoveries that have validated numerous past experiences and inevitably redefined (or perhaps reaffirmed) my sense of purpose as a practitioner.

## ANCESTOR VENERATION

From ancient to modern times, the belief in ancestral spirits has long provided a crucial link between the past, present and future. Through our ancestors, we not only come to understand who we are, we also begin to comprehend the complexities of lineage and the intricacies of connectivity. When we venerate our ancestors, we honour their life and their legacy, their triumphs and failings, their hardships and good fortune— everything that was and will always be, everything they were and will continue to be. Veneration is a simple, yet powerful way to connect to your ancestors and to that which has been seemingly lost with the passage of time.

How we connect with the honoured dead need not consist of intricately prepared rituals, extravagant offerings or lavish altar spaces strewn with floral garlands and old photos. On the contrary, veneration can begin and end with the purity of intention and the potency of spoken words in the form of a heartfelt greeting of recognition, love and gratitude. Simply put, everything we need to connect with our ancestral family is already within us. The familial thread that connects us to our ancestors is already spun into the fabric of our being, their essence resides in the hollows of our bones, their knowledge and wisdom are stored in our blood, their individual songs and stories are woven into our hair. Nourish the connection with what is already there: a timeless unbreakable bond that can only be strengthened with the transparency of intentions and the power that comes with spoken words. Everything else— the anointing of altar pieces, the handcrafted incense, the candlelit petitions for guidance, and all other acts of veneration— can be slowly incorporated once the intentions are set, spoken into existence and actively nurtured with acknowledgment and appreciation for their presence in our lives, whether felt or unfelt, seen or unseen.

Be patient and trust your intuition when it comes to building relationships with the honoured dead, and bear in mind that your lineage includes ancient ancestors who are likely unnamed and unknown to you, but who may be as present (and in some instances, more present and willing to connect) than the recently deceased.

Remain open and most importantly understand that the choice to connect is a voluntary one for both you and your ancestors. Those who are willing to step forward to offer guidance, support, and mentorship will do so when the time is right. For this reason, I view the practice of ancestor veneration as one wherein the practitioner often feels as though the journey is a solitary one with little to no communication validation, or appreciation of the time and energy invested in honouring the mighty dead. Frustration and self-doubt often come into play, but nothing could be farther from the truth. Dedication to the practice and the craft rarely goes unnoticed by the unseen and the Source. Remember, active work and authenticity of intentions is paramount to what we do as practitioners of the craft, so do your best to remain steadfast, simply because it matters.

In addition to acknowledging and accepting the connection forged of blood and bone, other simple yet meaningful acts of ancestor veneration include addressing them by name and learning as much as you can about their life stories. If possible, dedicate a space in your home to honour the lives of the mighty dead, a sacred “meeting place” where heirlooms, keepsakes and offerings can be left. Offerings can include anything that intuitively feels right — old photos, trinkets, dried flowers and herbs, ethically sourced animal bones and remains, dust and dirt respectfully collected (i.e., with permission) from tombstones and graves, taglocks, sigils written on paper or inscribed onto candles dressed in natural oils, herbs or resins, incense, as well as food and drink are among the favourites of the mighty dead.

## COMMUNION WITH THE HONOURED DEAD

Ancestral work may or may not lead to communion with the honoured dead. In my experience, communing with ancestors, both known and unknown to you, will depend on individual circumstances that are unique to each practitioner. In most instances, it is more a matter of timing, necessity and purpose rather than the natural and/or honed abilities and powers of the witch.



IMAGE: MICAÉLA ROYAL





IMAGE: NIK WILSON, @hart\_heart, MODEL: SAM RYDE, @samryde\_jewellery

Communion with the mighty dead will also differ from practitioner to practitioner and experiences will vary accordingly. If you are naturally gifted or have developed abilities associated with clairvoyance, clairaudience, clairsentience, clairsalience, clairgustance and claircognisance, then communing with your ancestors will likely be easier. Other common methods for communion include meditation, trance work, divination, spirit writing and spoken dialogue.

In contrast to ancestor veneration (which I had noted may often feel like a solitary journey even though it is meant to be shared with members of your lineage), communion with the honoured dead entails active participation from both sides of the veil and a willingness to engage in purposeful interactions between the practitioner and the honoured dead. As always, engagement in said interactions is a matter of choice and practitioners should remain cognisant of the ability to choose who you bring offerings to and who to commune with.

Your lineage will not always consist of individuals who energetically feel safe or benevolent, which may or may not shift with each interaction that you choose to participate in— trust your intuition, feel into every situation, and always protect yourself prior to communion.

Do your best to remain open, but never compromise your energetic boundaries for the sake of connecting to the unseen world and/or validating your abilities and powers as a seasoned practitioner.

#### REPARATIVE WORKINGS

The more advanced undertaking of ancestral magic involves what I would best describe as “reparative workings”. This branch of work typically requires sustained effort and dedication over the course of many days and sometimes weeks, and can help initiate ancestral lineage healing, fuelling the transformation of inherited burdens and “elevating” the honoured dead from the physical plane to the ancestral realm, or from the non-physical plane to an even higher realm.

It can also awaken dormant gifts and abilities, as well as the potential (magical and non-magical) embedded in each practitioner’s bloodline. With the guidance and mentorship of one or more designated ancestors, the practitioner can begin to understand and transform patterns of pain and trauma, gradually reclaiming the essence of the primeval Ancestral Spirit, which is present in all of the ancestors within a given lineage.

Practitioners are often called to undertake reparative workings, which may be performed for one or more specific ancestors and can include both ancient and familial (recently deceased) ancestors. The work required is energetically gruelling and this powerful, transformative process can indeed take a toll on the practitioner’s spiritual, emotional and mental state. As such, I would encourage practitioners to call upon your wise and resilient ancestors to help create a firm boundary between yourself and the ancestors being assisted so that the ‘core’ of your energy remains separate from that being expended during the course of your ritual work. In addition, daily practices of cleansing, grounding and rest will provide the much-needed endurance that is required to complete the assigned tasks. Lastly, if you have been called to undertake reparative ancestral work, know that you have been purposefully selected— you will rarely be given a task that is beyond your capabilities. As with all forms of ancestral work, there is always a choice to undertake the work at hand, but I would add that it is worth the time and energy to do so.

Ancestral work is metamorphic and empowering. It has significantly deepened my understanding of ‘self’ and to whom I truly belong, as well as reaffirmed my sense of purpose as a practitioner of the craft. When we honour our mighty dead, we in turn honour the essence of our Ancestral Spirit. We are an extension of their spirit and the vessel for their memories in this lifetime— they deserve our honour, respect, and reverence.

Wherever your journey in ancestral magic takes you, allow two things to guide you: intuition and an unwavering belief in the whisperings of your blood— neither will fail to lead you where you need to be.

# A COFFEE WITH THE DEAD: HEARTH WITCHCRAFT FOR THE ANCESTORS

BY EMILIANO RUSSO  
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## MUST BE THE SEASON OF THE WITCH!

We are now officially in the Season of the Witch. Everything around us is tinged with mystery, nights are longer and deeper, and the Veil gets thinner. It is that time of year that every Witch loves! But it is the season of melancholy, introspection and silence, as well. Persephone once again leaves her Mother and descends back into the Underworld. The Wheel brings us back on the Path of our Ancestors, and we think about those who have left this World to begin a new journey beyond the Veil, toward the Summer Land or any other Spirit Dimension. We honour our roots, the River of Blood that flows through our veins, and our biological and spiritual lineage. So I decided to open my heart, lift the Veil and tell you about my Grandmother: my Nonna.

## DEAR NONNA...

Nonna was a woman from southern Italy; she grew up in the areas around Naples and Benevento (the land of the famous Walnut Tree). She was not a witch and would never have called herself one, since she was a devout Catholic Christian.

Although she never spoke to me specifically about magic, she carried with her a number of folk beliefs and practices, which I would call magick today, but which she would simply justify by saying, "because it is done that way".

It was Nonna who taught me to keep a sprig of rue in my pocket to ward off evil; to light candles blessed during Candlemas mass to calm a storm; to mark the "malocchio" (the evil eye) on people with olive oil to make their headaches go away, and many other practices of what is, in effect, Italian Folk Witchcraft.

## WHAT IS REMEMBERED, LIVES

Nonna's favourite tool was her prayer beads. Her day was marked by the slow rhythm of shelling bead after bead through her fingers. She used to pray with it at least four times a day: at dawn, noon, dusk and midnight, the great liminal thresholds of the day. When I used to ask her why she prayed so much, she said: "I pray for those for whom no one prays anymore. For the lost Souls in Purgatory. I pray for the Forgotten Dead".

It wasn't until a few years ago that I discovered that women like Nonna in popular culture are referred to as Oratrices, and their task was to pray for the forgotten and afflicted Dead in Christian Purgatory so that they can atone for their sins and obtain the indulgence needed to enter into Heaven.

In paganism we can find a more or less similar concept in the expression "What is remembered, lives", by which Witches honour their Ancestors, those we have known, those we have never met, and those whose names have been lost, never spoken, or forgotten. It is a way of celebrating the Mystery of Immortality, because the only way we can continue to live when we have left this life is if we are remembered. This is a fundamental principle of Ancestral Worship. We honour, remember and take care of our Ancestors so that they can take care of us when we need them. We honour them, celebrate them and tell their stories so that one day our descendants will do the same for us. This is a cross-cultural concept, found all over the world and, somehow, Nonna knew this.

## DREAMING BEYOND DEATH

Nonna was very much into dream work, as well, and this was how the Dead communicated with her. She knew the different meanings of dreams; she taught me that if we dream of a dead person who is hungry or asking for food, they are actually asking us to pray for them; dreaming of a deceased person crying seemingly for no reason means that they are preparing to welcome another family member.

She had a clarity in remembering her dreams that I still envy to this day. It is very rare that I can recall my dreams, but when it happens there is always something meaningful that speaks to me, especially when they have to do with Nonna. I want to share one of them with you, but first I have to tell you one more bit of ancient lore handed down to me by Nonna.

## IN LIEU OF FLOWERS, PLEASE BRING FOOD!

As I mentioned, Nonna was Neapolitan, and my life is full of Campanian traditions. One that I remember perfectly is that of the so-called "Cuonzolo" (The Consolatory). There is no literal translation for this ancient funeral custom. It is a dialect expression that has its root in the verb "to console" and consists of offering food to the family of the deceased when one goes there to pay condolences.

It is a very generous gesture to the family members of the deceased, who at the time of suffering have neither time nor desire to eat or prepare anything for themselves or others; at the same time, it is a form of physical and moral support to revive the condolent involved with funeral preparations and paperwork.

According to tradition, there are different forms of "consolation" food that depend on two factors: the closeness to the bereaved family and the time or timing of the condolence visit. The first factor is usually related to kinship proximity and takes place early in the morning. One of the relatives returns to visit the family of the deceased (who have been engaged all night in the wake of the Beloved Dead) with a tray full of pastries and a thermos filled with hot coffee, prepared with the hope of giving new energy to face the difficult time of the funeral.

Much more substantial is the cuonzolo in the middle of the day, when even neighbours, acquaintances and friends bring food to support the family so that there is food for everyone. This type of cuonzolo is called "cooked" and consists in most cases of hot broths and soups.

In the days following the funeral, another type of cuonzolo, called "raw", is brought by visitors less close to the family or distant family members who express their sympathy by bringing packets of sugar and coffee, which have a specific meaning: the sugar is to sweeten the bitter sad moment and the coffee to give vigour and cheer up.

Now that I have taken you a little deeper into this world of Italian folk ways, I can tell you about my dream and the ritual that came out of it.

#### FROM DREAM TO RITUAL

I had this dream on the nights around Samhain in 2018, where Nonna and I were wandering around with a package of sugar and coffee without being able to find the person to deliver it to. A dream with no end result. Just a long wandering looking for the recipients of our Consolatory package, without being able to find them. I remember having a distressing feeling for a few days, as I attributed a sinister meaning to the dream. But then I reevaluated everything from a different perspective. The fact of not being able to find the recipient to deliver the cuonzolo to was actually something positive and, of course, nothing terrible happened in the days that followed. Again, according to ancient traditions when one dreams of a deceased person holding something, the person who had the dream must then donate that thing to the poor as a gesture of atonement for the Forgotten Dead. The person who receives it responds, "Let it be refreshment for the souls of your Beloved Dead". So I began to see the dream again more as an invitation from Nonna, inspiring me to perform a small ritual for the Ancestors.

#### THE RITE OF CONSOLATORY

The Cuonzolo Rite (Rite of Consolatory) is one of those examples that shows how magic can also be extremely simple. But simple does not mean easy, as you will see from the deep emotional part of this ritual.

In the days around Samhain, or whenever you want, take a moment for yourself and your Beloved Ones who have died, meditate and bless a small bowl of sugar and a small bowl of coffee, and make yourself a hot cup of coffee: prepare your own Cuonzolo. Some grief never goes away completely, you learn to live with it, maybe never talk about it with anyone again, but it lays there. During the Cuonzolo Rite, feel free to still cry if you want to. There is nothing wrong with mourning for our loved ones. After you have cried, console yourself and honour the memory of your Beloved Dead by drinking and sharing a cup of hot, sweet coffee with them. According to some traditions, offering coffee to our Ancestors helped them awaken and get their energies going, so don't be surprised if while you are there remembering them and talking to them, you get a message.

Your Ancestors love you and are just waiting to hear their name on your lips, because don't forget that WHO is remembered, lives!



# ABUELA'S HOUSE OF SPIRITS

BY GABRIEL LOPEZ  
@\_concentratedmess

"Family will always be with us," she would say. My grandmother was a woman who understood me better than anyone, feeding my imagination with tales of fantastical magic.

Growing up, she would have a table near the front door, full of pictures. It was almost as if each family member was represented, being under her watchful gaze each day and night. There were some pictures of living relatives, and also ones of those who had passed on. We came in all shades, sizes, genders, etc. Our family was, and still is, a very colourful bunch. When I would see my grandmother pass by the table, she would say a little prayer under her breath while looking at the pictures with love. In the middle of the table, she would have white flowers placed just so. I assumed it was normal, never paying much mind to the arrangement.

"I remember seeing Nieve in the mirror, the one your Tio Papo has in the house in New Haven," she told me one day while I was sitting on the porch with her.

"How?" I asked. I was a teenager, not really understanding anything at that point in life. She sipped her coffee, the late morning sun praising her dark skin. The red and orange and yellow leaves drifting lightly around her, the soft breeze catching underneath her dark black hair. How we got onto the topic of spirits, I'll never know.

"Papito, sabes que puedo ver los espíritus. Papito, you know that I can see spirits." Wide-eyed, I shook my head. No, that wasn't possible, but deep down, I knew it was; because I saw them also. Throughout her home, I felt safe, but in ways, I couldn't put my finger on it.

Feeling a brush past my shoulder, a small laugh, or even smelling cream-coloured roses when there weren't any to be found. Each room housed a spirit, some from the Spanish highlands, others from the deserts of northern Africa, and even two from the Antilles who always seemed to bring rain every time we said our prayers before bed. They would fill my head with tales of wonder, while a couple would share rum-induced secrets that slipped between cousins and other family members.

"They're all over the house, our family. They watch over us." Continuing to sip her coffee, I look at the table near the garage door, the screen door opening itself to the golden-coloured kitchen, straight towards the table with white flowers. I could see a figure in white, kissing their hand and placing it onto the picture nearest to them. Peering over in my direction, the spirit smiled, shimmering like a winter light, disappearing in the golden light of the morning. "Is that why you pray in front of the table sometimes?" I asked, sitting up straight on the patio sofa. She shook her head. She placed her coffee mug on the patio table, "I think it's time to tell you about our family, papa".

Espiritismo, thick in the crevices of our life, was something that became a way of life. The tradition itself is a product of the synchronisation of African and Indigenous ancestor veneration, and the European Spiritism movement of the 19th century. The European Spiritism movement made its way to Latin America, blending into what we know as it is today. These movements centred around Cuba and Puerto Rico while having branches of this tradition in the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

Narrowing on the broad spectrum of Espiritismo as a whole, it can be divided into niches such as Table Espiritismo, Espiritismo de Cordon, Espiritismo Cruzao, Puerto Rican Espiritismo, and Santerismo. The specifics— I never really figured out for myself— would interchange with each other. The commonality between the sects would be the communication with Spirit and the spirits themselves.

Through these rituals, a medium would interpret the messages through automatic writing or even by a trance, the dead using the body of the individual. Regardless of how and in what manner, the message will always be given to those in need of them.

"My grandmother was a curandera, santera, a healer. Everyone in the neighbourhood knew and would come to her for blessings or to commune with their lost loved one's papa. It's a gift, but you must be careful of such things. Spirits have a way of toying with the living, so if you ever decide to pick it up, it must be done with precision." Her stoic expression said more than needed to what I had to understand. Fickle as the spiritual world can be, in this belief, those same spirits can cause good fortune, love, and health, but also malignities that could curse an entire family line. To communicate as such, from what she told me, one would need to set up a boveda, a sacred space through which the ancestors can walk through. To do this type of work, one must clean the entire room, because cleanliness is of the utmost importance. A small table covered in a white cloth, a white candle, white flowers, seven glasses of water, an offering of coffee or fruit for the spirits, and a mirror facing towards you.

"Purity is the only thing that the spirits want to see in you," my grandmother told me, "if you are not of a pure heart, they will not help you, or come to you when you ask them to."

Growing older with each passing year, I remembered those words she told me out on the patio in the late Sunday morning sun. While trying to remain pure-hearted, as people, we stumble once in a while, and my grandmother knew that, never holding it against me.

Knowing as such, she would hold me accountable for my transgressions, making sure that I grew into the person that I was meant to be— an honourable man.

As time will have it, my grandmother passed away in the autumn of 2021. Through the immense grief, I also came to the realisation that through her passing, I was the grandchild who was trusted with this tradition, holding up a legacy that would determine the success of not only my life, but that of my future children and their children. It wasn't a curse, nor a blessing, but something else entirely. I knew that following such responsibilities would be time-consuming, but it was a gauntlet that I would hold with pride. I was to be a bridge between the living world and the spiritual one. Being of two cultures myself, this in itself was all the more familiar.

Spirit permitting, I follow the steps that my grandmother told me, setting up the boveda once a month, our family practices landing in my lap.

Following the traditions of my grandmother and of her grandmother, and from generations past, I kneel and pray, hoping that my grandmother would come to heed a message for myself, but also for someone in need that is in the room with me, as well. Sometimes she comes through, talking with me about worries and sorrows; other times she laughs at my stories of men who come running back, knowing that I would never take them back. She looks peaceful and elegant, just as she did when she was living. With this connection, she assists with delivering messages to the ones that seek my help, always accompanying the spirit of the one who is being reached for.

Espiritismo is more than just messages of ancient wisdom or healing capabilities that come with the responsibility. It's about reconnecting with the ones who have passed on, remembering their lives and vivacious spirits, knowing that their wisdom rests within each and every one of us. But only if one will listen and heed their advice shall someone truly feel welcomed. Just as I did all those years ago, in my grandmother's house of spirits.



IMAGE: CHRIS PERRETT, [chrisperrett.com](http://chrisperrett.com)

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF TAROT

BY SNAZZ STANNARD

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For many people, Tarot cards conjure up images of gypsies and fairgrounds and are viewed as nothing more than another side-show at the circus or the seaside. But to many of us in the magical community, they mean something different, something more. Everybody who uses the cards has a different story of how they came to do so, and if you believe in the power of the Tarot as I do, then you know that not one of us happened onto this path accidentally. What has always fascinated me is the history behind the cards. Where did their imagery, meaning and power come from? Were they designed to be used for fortune telling? Are they as ancient as some historians believe? I invite you now to explore their background with me in the hope of uncovering their mystical secrets.

The origin of the Tarot has long been shrouded in mystery and rumour. For centuries, it was believed to have originated in Ancient Egypt. The story goes that around two and a half thousand years ago, a prophecy had predicted the absolute destruction of Egypt. Temples and dwellings would crumble and fall, and the language and culture would be forever lost beneath the sand and rubble.

In an effort to preserve the legacy of the great ancient kingdom, the sages of Ancient Egypt were said to have created a set of universal symbols, which were in turn transformed into a set of playing cards.

As romantic and awe inspiring as this myth is, Tarot historians now believe it to be false. Most agree that the Tarot as we know it, came into being in Italy during the mid-fifteenth century, where it made its debut not as a tool for divination, but merely as a parlour game, quite like the game of bridge.

To get to this point though, the Tarot would undergo many drastic revamps and changes, and for us to understand how we have the Tarot of today, and how they went from frivolous parlour game to answering questions about the lives of those who believe in the power of the cards to divine the future, we have to go right back to the late medieval period.

By 1370, The Black Death had swept through Europe and killed off half of the population, triggering complete social collapse. From the ashes, cities arose and became a brand new, dominant economic force.

Cities were centres of commerce, banking and trade, and from trade with China came a fundamental innovation that was crucial for the creation of playing cards— paper. The introduction of paper into Europe was a pivotal point in time during which card games seemed to soar in popularity.

Paper had made it possible for these cards to be mass-produced. Unfortunately, very few of these playing cards survived. Some cards have survived, however, because they are beautiful works of art that have been preserved and passed down through generations over hundreds of years. There are 271 surviving Visconti-Sforza Tarot Cards from fifteenth century Italy.

In contrast to the mass-produced cards that are now mostly lost to antiquity, the Visconti-Sforza cards are hand painted, gilded and ornate, and feature a female pope and a female knight. Up until this mid-fifteenth century deck came about, no cards had featured women in such high societal roles.

Jump forward to 1782 and King Louis XVI sits on the throne of France with Marie Antoinette at his side. A Protestant pastor and high-grade Freemason in Paris named Antoine Court de Gebelin publishes paper after lengthy paper on ancient myths and legends. His papers are read fervently by the king and his fellow Freemasons. In volume eight of his epic saga, Gebelin inserted an essay about the Tarot. Antoine Court de Gebelin had decided that the Tarot was derived from the ancient book of Thoth (the Egyptian God of Wisdom) and was therefore profoundly Egyptian. Gebelin believed that the ancient Egyptian priests had transliterated the book of Thoth into symbols which were encoded onto cards, and that those cards were taken across Rome during the days of the Caesars.

Because Gebelin believed the cards to be of Egyptian origin, he changed a number of them to suit this idea.

The Pope and the female Pope became The Hierophant and The High Priestess, and he reordered the trump cards (the major arcana) so that The World, which represents creation, was first. Gebelin did not know that The Fool was not conventionally a trump card, so he numbered it 0. This was significant because it made the total number of trump cards up to twenty-two, which made sense for his theory because there are twenty-two letters in the Hebrew alphabet.

King Louis and many other high ranking French socialites were captivated by his theories and accepted them as fact, and they were therefore carried into Italy, Switzerland and the rest of Europe.

It is easy to imagine how Antoine Court de Gebelin's Ancient Egyptian theory was made fashionable throughout Europe when endorsed by the King of France, but many historians now agree that Gebelin knew very little about Ancient Egypt and even less about the true origin of the Tarot. At the time that Gebelin made these claims, nobody could read Ancient Egyptian. The Rosetta Stone had not yet even been discovered, but Freemasons were already so accustomed to incredible antiquity, secret traditions and rituals that these Egyptian interpretations of the cards were readily accepted.

Join me next time for part two of this investigation into the origin of the Tarot, when we will explore what happened next and how the eighteenth-century occultist, Alessandro Cagliostro, validated the myth of the Egyptian Tarot still further.

# THE FOOL'S JOURNEY

BY ELISE FAROTTO  
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What if your entire life's journey could be distilled down into a pack of just 78 cards? If you think of it as a story, it can be. A tarot deck is an allegory divided into two parts: the Major Arcana (representing universal experiences) and the Minor Arcana (the details of our individual journeys).

This tarot story, also known as the Fool's Journey, is told from the perspective of the Fool through symbolic archetypes.

So let's follow our hero on his journey through the Major Arcana and see what he has to teach us about ourselves!

A tarot deck starts with the Fool, card 0, because this is where everyone begins. We all begin our life's journey as playful innocents. We don't take life or ourselves too seriously. There is actually wisdom in this, but we won't really fully integrate it until we complete our journey.



At this stage, we are tricksters, ridiculous, only interested in how much we can get away with and the playful side of life.

The Fool is initially able to manifest just about anything he wants in the outer world of achievements. Things come easy to him because he completely believes in himself and has never experienced any real obstacles. In this stage, he is **the Magician**, card 1, the ultimate manifestor.

He has some initial awareness of his spiritual power as he is introduced to **the High Priestess**, card 2, but this is only a first meeting and she is still a great mystery. He vaguely recognises her as the Divine Feminine part of himself, but he is far from understanding the deep well of her mystical powers.

He does, however, have some exposure to the feminine mystique through his connection to his mother, **the Empress**, who loves and nurtures him unconditionally.

But as he grows up, he is more and more ruled by **the Emperor**: patriarchal authority, societal structure, what he's been taught to believe.

As he leaves his parents and enters into adulthood, he becomes aware of the larger beliefs and traditions of his culture, represented by **the Hierophant**. He enters into society without questioning these ideals. He strives to fit in and believes he has been rightly taught.

As a young adult, he finds himself longing for a relationship. He seeks to become part of **the Lovers**, pursuing romantic connection and partnership.

As the Fool moves further into adulthood, he begins to ride his **Chariot**, a symbol of his drive and exertion of willpower. He encounters the minor hardships of early adulthood which help him develop mental **Strength**.

But now that he seemingly has everything, he begins to question the meaning of these things and of the ideals he has been taught to believe. He now becomes **the Hermit**, seeking a more solitary journey, contemplating his spirituality more deeply than ever before.

Through this introspection, he perceives a larger destiny in **the Wheel of Fortune**. His life is so much bigger than just himself and the limited culture he has been exposed to. He begins to see the part he is meant to play in the great human drama.

Faced with this truth, he now must confront his past and who he really is. He becomes aware of his mistakes and seeks **Justice** through owning them and making amends.

He faces his greatest personal challenge to date, his personal cross to bear, and it proves to be too much for him to handle on his own. He surrenders, becoming **the Hanged Man**, and this surrender leads to the **Death** of his identity up to this point.



Going forward, he now must find a way to integrate balance between his old and new identities through **Temperance**. As he strives for this, he is confronted head on by **the Devil** who reveals his deepest mental and spiritual obstacles. These are so much scarier than anything he has ever dealt with before and threaten to undo him. These are his greatest fears and biggest sources of personal bondage.

This mental **Tower** of belief the Fool has built is actually his prison and it is now being thrown into upheaval. It is being struck by lightning and destroyed. At first the Fool is rocked by the destruction of his precious beliefs, but when the wreckage clears, it is replaced by **the Star**, the symbol of purest hope and freedom. This is a time of bliss and utmost relief.

With his eyes blissfully heavenward, the Fool feels he has now reached enlightenment. But as **the Moon** rises, he becomes susceptible to new illusions. He spends some time wandering down shadow paths until **the Sun** comes up and he can see his new path more clearly.

Now the Fool can rightly exercise his **Judgement**. He knows himself, his purpose, his life's path. He recognises his own shadows and fully integrates them into his identity.

And it is finally at this point that he is able to step fully into **the World** as his truest most authentic self.

# J U D G E M E N T

## A CALLING TOWARDS SELF-AWARENESS AND EXERCISING COMPASSION

BY RYAN KURR  
@ryankurr

The twentieth tarot card in the Major Arcana, just before The World/Universe, is Judgement—a heavy final lesson that must be understood and integrated before the all-encompassing, cosmic success of completion can be realised.

In the most general and traditional sense, it is a card that speaks to the concept of rebirth, an awakening to being called towards a higher version of yourself, armed with a clarity that will help you approach yourself, others and the future without shame, and allow you to fulfil your purpose, goals and life's work.

The card in more traditional decks has very religious undertones and can often look, well—judgemental. However, that shouldn't suggest that this is a negative card, or a way of being. Truly, it is a positive one, when you look at it from the right angle and unburden yourself from the weight of being overly critical in a cruel or superfluous way that is beneficial to no one. One of the most difficult things to grasp about the concept of judgement is that those who exercise compassion and are completely self-aware—the very core elements which are required to be of service to others—often refrain from judging or criticising others, even if they do not personally agree with one's behaviour, choices, politics, morals or lifestyle. This is the very heart of Judgement, to ascend to a higher level of being where judgement itself is not deemed necessary.

Not too long ago, I was scrolling through Twitter thinking to myself, why am I even on this futile thing? My endless scrolling stopped when I read a tweet from a witchy account. It wasn't the first judgemental tweet from a random internet stranger that I'd come across that day, and it most certainly was not the last (more on that in a moment). The tweet was from a fellow witch, and that witch felt the need to tweet to the world for all to see, that they knew "people" who were still embracing being "quirky" and were pushing 40, so they needed to stop, suggesting it was juvenile and immature. I'm not quite sure what prompted me to respond to it, usually I try to stay out of social media drama (and usually just watch it unfold from the comfort of my little screen with a bowl of popcorn), but I had reached my limit of tweets that were mean, rude or unnecessary for the day, and being an Aries, I have to admit that sometimes I can't resist feeling the need for just a little bit of a fight. I later found out through a messy string of replies, the witch was apparently talking about herself, something that no one would have even been privy to unless they were, well—her. The whole thing escalated into just the sort of unhinged drama that you find all over social media, with other people screen shotting the exchange, taking it out of context and formulating an opinion of me without ever understanding what had actually happened, why it happened, nor did any of them care.





What they did care about was having their voice heard, having the last word, and reposting the screenshots with their own personal little internet stabs about me and what kind of person I was, like they were some kind of warrior for the witch community, thrilled they got to be the one seen holding my head on a pike as they manically paraded through the internet.

Later on, I'd see these people show up here and there through the magic of the algorithms, and every single time they did, all I could do was cringe and give a hundred eye-rolls as the incident came flooding back in all its twisted glory, raising my heart rate and making my fingers twitch with the intense desire to jump back on that person's profile and rage tweet just how ignorant and judgemental they were all being when they didn't know, care about, or agree with my side of the story.

How could I so quickly become ostracised by an entire group of random mystical strangers, all part of a small, often mocked and ridiculed community, that has a very real history of being persecuted, judged and killed?

Even more confusing was trying to determine if I was being judgemental about them judging me.

Part of that answer has to do with the toxicity that is social media, but the other part has to do with why we judge others in the first place.

The most common answer is usually because of something we lack, like self-love, self-worth, or to avoid the negative feelings we have about ourselves and use judging others as a way to make ourselves feel better. Only that never actually fulfils us, nor does it treat the root of the problem, which only makes judging others feel like it's something that you must keep doing, like how eating sugar makes you want to keep eating sugar.

Other people judge because they are trying to make sense of something they don't understand; we see this a lot in today's world, especially in marginalised communities.

People do it because it temporarily makes them feel superior while making others inferior, it has nothing to do with the person being judged. We as humans have been conditioned to compare and have been trained to believe that nothing is in abundance.

Even for people who are privileged and are born into abundance with a trust fund and a private jet, they are conditioned to put people into categories, those who have and those who do not have something, well— anything.

However, this kind of cycle of repetitive judgement will never bring happiness, and more often than not, the person caught in this pattern will usually be their own harshest critic.

Judgement isn't something that is specific to any one group or type of person; it is indiscriminate in that way. There is also no guarantee that a member of a marginalised, oppressed or judged group will automatically extend kindness to others who are also a part of another oppressed, ridiculed or ostracised group. This exists when a member of a marginalised community chooses not to accept others within that group that are a minority of the minority, such as trans men/women or BIPOC people within the LGBTQIA+ community, or male witches within the mystic community.

The very act of being judgemental robs not only the person being judged, but it also robs the person that doles out judgement of the opportunity for growth, the chance to ascend to a brighter and more compassionate person. This doesn't mean that we have to like every single person we meet or encounter, or agree with everyone's perspective or opinion; that's many things, but mostly it's unrealistic. What it does suggest is that one should always strive to transmute that kind of critical energy into something that activates your awareness and empathy.

What does this kind of attitude do? It essentially counters the idea that there is scarcity, and encourages that the more aware we are, the more we have to gain, the more we give the more we receive.

It is why some actors tend to be empathetic people, because their job is to embody someone who is not them. They may be portraying a cruel character who does things they would never in a million years see themselves doing. So how does one portray that character truthfully? They disarm judgement, they show mercy in order to see the core. They may not agree with it, but it allows them to paint a believable portrait.

There is a level of acceptance that comes along with letting go of judgement. It also releases you from using up energy to focus on something that is truly just a way to waste valuable time and energy. So, let that person do magic their way, let that person publicly share their altar tools when you want to keep your practice private. As long as it isn't hurting anyone else or applying the harsh eye of judgement, let them be them.

We as witches, (and even more importantly— people), need to remember that we never know what someone else is going through just by looking at them, or reading a tweet, or listening to someone else's opinion of them.

Even the greatest and most intuitive reader will never be able to tell you everything that is going on in your head, and we need to be aware of that, not only in regards to others, but ourselves as well. It is not something to be achieved and finished, it is something to continually strive for while we are here on this earth.

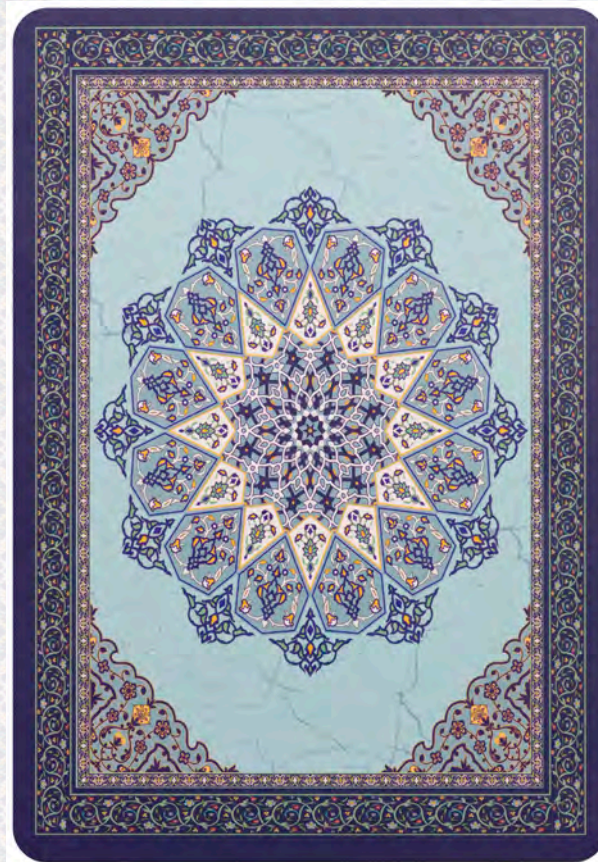
# YOUR VERY OWN TAROT READING

BY GENETTE  
@genette\_ellis

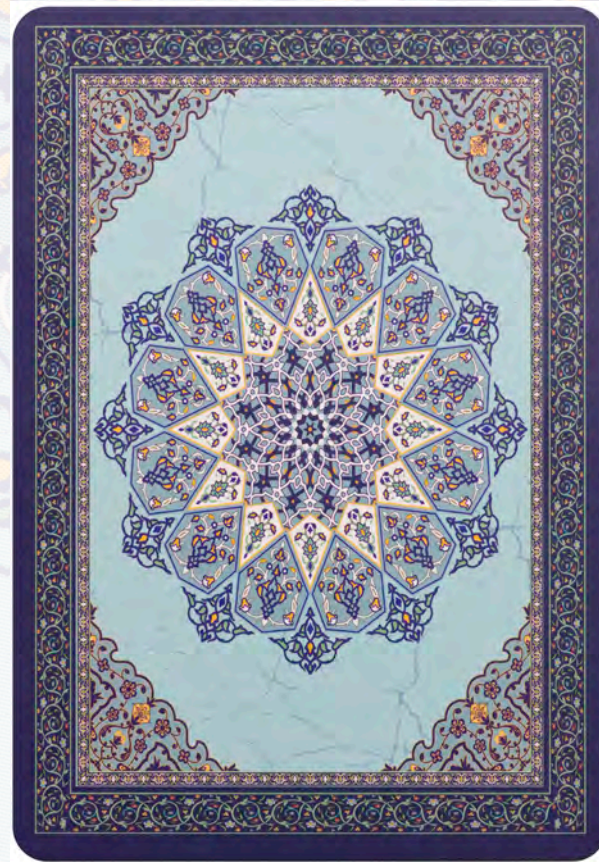
In this edition we are featuring The Sufi Tarot, by Ayeda Husain which is published by Hay House.

Transform your life with ancient Sufi wisdom. The quest for mystical truth is common to both tarot and Sufism. Sufism, called the 'path of the heart', is about polishing the mirror of the heart to reflect the Divine. Similarly, tarot is about discovering the hidden secrets behind the Arcana. This beautifully illustrated deck creatively reenvisioned the cards through a Sufi lens and shares the potency of its ancient teachings and healing techniques.

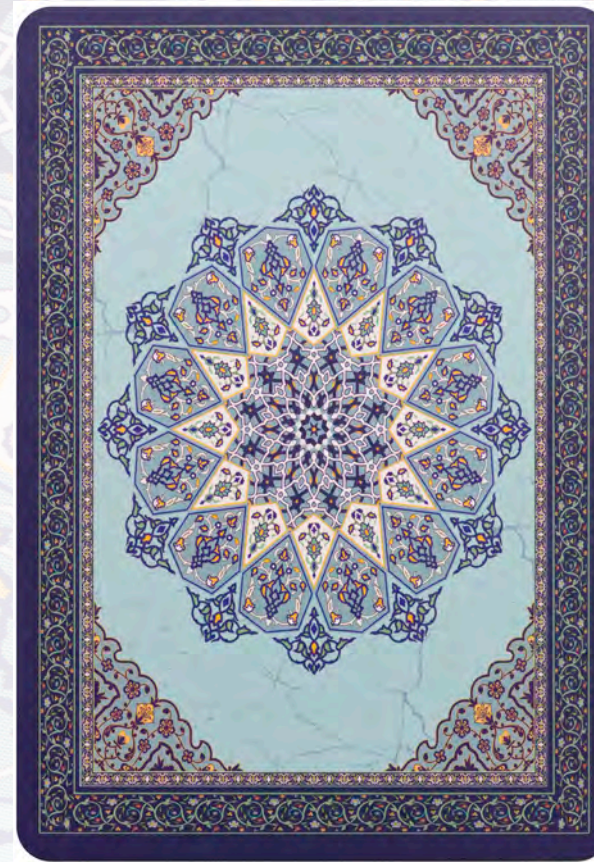
So, witches, think about your question: What's been troubling you? What do you need some insight on? Breathe. Count to five. Allow your mind to fill with your question: don't just ask yourself, ask the universe. You're in no rush. When you're ready, pick a card. Which number calls out to you? Which do you think calls to your current situation? Turn the page to discover which card is yours.



1



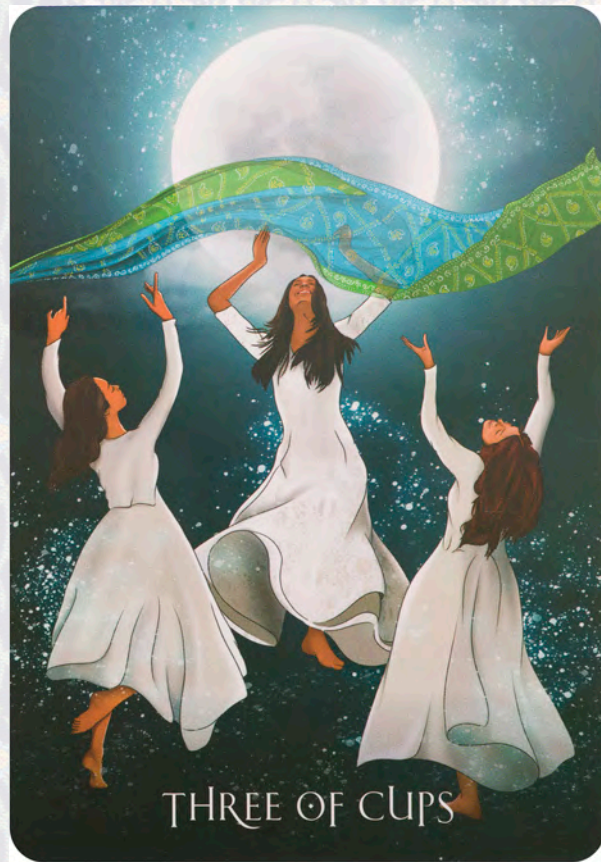
2



3



4



### CARD TWO - THE HANGED MAN

Feeling stuck? Perhaps it's the way you're seeing things that is keeping you in a state of lack. It's time to slough off your old skin (literally if you need to!) and allow the best of yourself to shine through. Take a moment to check in with yourself and see if you can see any issues from another perspective. Often, we can convince ourselves that our beliefs are facts, and that is simply not the case. Could you be over-analysing something, doubting your abilities or assuming how others feel? You are good enough, you can do it, you are worth treating well, and you do have the power to achieve the life you want. There is rarely only one way through to the solution. What do you need to do to find your way back to the path?

### CARD THREE - NINE OF STAFFS

We talk about freedom as though it requires radical change, and sometimes it does. More often, it's the small things that set us free from the monotony of our everyday routine. It's time to break loose and let your creative streak fly free! Whether it's painting, acting, drawing, playing an instrument, crafting or writing, creativity is cathartic. It's a balm for the soul in turbulent times. Set some time aside to do something that fills your heart with joy and allows you to express yourself. Even better if you can get outside and do your thing in nature! How can you build creativity into your esoteric practices? There is more than one way to "craft", after all.



### CARD ONE - THREE OF CUPS

It's time to reconnect with your friends. It's true what they say— friends are the family you CAN choose, and healthy friendships are a key requirement for well-being and happiness. Whether the ideal number of friends for you is one or 100, friendships require maintenance. Who have you not heard from in a while? When was the last time your group got together for a really good giggle? Whether life is busy, or your brain is not your friend right now, reach out to the ones you love and strengthen the bond between you.



### CARD FOUR - FOUR OF COINS

It's time to audit your finances. Check your accounts to look for any unnecessary spending, such as unused subscriptions, gym memberships and out of date recurring payments. Make sure that your investments are working for you. Seek financial advice to make sure you're investing in the right schemes for you, and to make sure you're not paying more than you need to in interest or payment protection fees. Filter out what is draining you and release yourself from it. Nourish your money as though it were a plant and it will grow into a beautiful flower.

# POETRY & ARTS



ILLUSTRATION: ELEMENT OF FIRE, ANGELA FERREIRA, @magicpaintings

# REBORN

BY MOLLY RONAN  
@mollyronanharpist

Basking and gentle,  
death is imminent but wanted.  
Blanketed and serene,  
I feel calm and chill envelop the world.

Changing and replete,  
the days diminish quickly.  
Transforming and new,  
the last vestiges of light shine completely.

Waving and pure,  
the Earth feels soft beneath me.  
Renewing and nourished,  
the soil becomes whole once again.

Harvesting and full,  
the toil begins to provide.  
Reminiscent of work,  
necessary, yet no less hard with each year.

Crying and entire,  
the world changes itself once more.  
Growing and different,  
the season arrives anew.

Ending and beginning,  
I feel the tides of time shift again.  
Fall arrives today.

# MY FAMILIAR

BY TANYA MCCOY  
www.theravensgate.com

As I sit under a blanket of stars, my familiar sits beside me.  
We sit quietly together in a solemn state of simply being.  
The warmth of the late summer's wind blows softly across our skin,  
Bringing with it a gentle hint of fall.  
The wind softly rustles through the trees as the golden half-moon slowly rises  
Above their outstretched arms reaching high into the darkness of the sky  
The silent call of magick can be felt enveloping us like a warm soft blanket  
drawn softly across our skin.  
My familiar gently circles around me waiting patiently for a soft loving caress.

My withered aging feline reminds me much of me.  
Her spirit ever wandering, she is a creature living free.  
She will not be tethered down here, nor surrender without a fight.  
Her soul is free to wander, the darkness of the night.  
Her life belongs to no one, but her heart she gives away.  
Her soul may wander freely, but her heart will always stay.  
She often goes to wander, to the world both far and near.  
But each time she returns here to the ones she holds most dear.  
Her life has been a rough one through the trials she has seen,  
But she continues onward down her path, a world of broken dreams.

Her hair grows old and matted, her bones grow weak with age.  
But still she travels onward, her destiny awaits.  
Through the trials and tribulations that she has sought to sew,  
She would take that broken road again; it was meant for her to go.  
Her body withers with passing time, but her soul goes strongly on,  
Until one day the journey ends and her soul descends along.  
Past this earth-bound body, the hardships, and the pain,  
To ride along the Autumn winds into another majestic plain.  
Do not shed a tear, or wipe a tearful eye, her soul continues on.  
Just listen for her whispers among the Autumn's gentle song.



# OCTOBER SLEEPS

BY JOSEPH AND EMMA GHOST  
@josephghost and @themuseumofghosts



Wrapped within our remains,  
The great provider holds aging glimmers,  
Amber glow of promise within,  
Breathing, exhaling, a final whisper to  
mark the waning year.  
Buried within its chest,  
A possibility.  
Turning and confining, twisting and  
growing,  
Starlight into moonlight,  
Darkness hums a choir.  
Symphony dances,  
And from its mouth,  
A dawn approaches through its thicket  
cloak.  
Skin is shed and October is born.

# THE NIGHT BEFORE ALL HALLOWS' EVE

BY AMY BEATTIE  
@thegothicwordwitch



Sultry shadows beckon  
Grinning gravestones entice  
Chilled air and hastened breath  
The lure of sombering solitude  
On a lonely walk through the cemetery  
Under a full Hunter's moon  
The night before All Hallows' Eve

# SIDEREAL HOROSCOPES

## AUTUMN 2022

BY DAVID PETRUSICH  
@davidpetrusich

As all Witches know, this time of year symbolises the great harvest in our practice of magic, but have you ever wondered how this season is defined by the cosmos? Before diving in, know that I will relate to this time as the “September Equinox” opposed to “Autumn Equinox”. From a universal perspective, we of course have two Equinoxes— one in March and one in September— and depending on where you reside in the world, either one could be Spring or Autumn. Afterall, Witches are found in both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, are they not?

With all technicalities aside, as I write to you from Seattle, Washington, Autumn is just around the corner. In the mainstream Astrology of the West, the September Equinox is marked by the first day of Libra— a sign derived from a millennia-old constellation representing the scales of justice and balance. But what does that mean, “marked by the first day of Libra?” It means that we would know it’s the Autumn Equinox in the Northern Hemisphere (or the Spring Equinox in the Southern Hemisphere) when the Sun moves into the constellation of Libra.

When the Romans created the constellation 3,500 years ago, the Sun did move into Libra at this time of year, but when we look up to the cosmos during this September Equinox of 2022, the Sun is no longer in Libra, but still residing in Virgo. The shift from an ancient concept of what the cosmos looked like into the current and true view of space is exactly what Sidereal Astrology is. After all, Astrology and Astronomy were once the same science— so why aren’t Astrologers referencing the real sky anymore, but talking like they are?

Yes, you understood that correctly, Western Astrology hasn’t used the real sky in 2000 years. It’s all fixed to what once was our view of space, thus creating a beautiful story and system of balance (how very Libra).

So why does this matter?

Let me break it down a little further. Sidereal Astrology uses the most accurate astronomy for Astrological divination, while Tropical Astrology uses a seasonally fixed system— which now in the 21st century is 24 degrees off astronomically. So, next time you hear that the Full Moon is in a specific sign, look up at her with an astronomy app and see what constellation she actually falls in— that is Sidereal measurement.

Is one better or more accurate than the other?

Absolutely not! Although Sidereal Astrology is astronomically accurate, the accuracy of results with a divination system relies heavier on the Seer than the Oracle itself. Use what resonates... but know the full nature of your Oracle.

The original Western Astrologers knew the full extent of their divination system when they chose to separate from Astronomy. As mentioned, Astrology and Astronomy were not separate fields of study like they are now, but when science was beginning to show that our view of the constellations from Earth would begin to shift due to the astronomical event called “precession”, Astrologer’s froze the cosmos into the Oracle that we all know as Western Astrology today.

Balance was the goal— again, how Libra.

Out of all the constellations that we work with in Astrology, Libra is the only object and non-sentient sign of the Zodiac. Believed to be the scales of Lady Justice herself, Libra represents equality, harmony, duality, and relational themes in Astrology. Fascinatingly enough, Libra is one of the only constellations that actually looks like the archetype it represents. It’s also important to note that the symbolism of “the scales” was significant for this time of year when there were equal parts of light and dark in a 24-hour period.

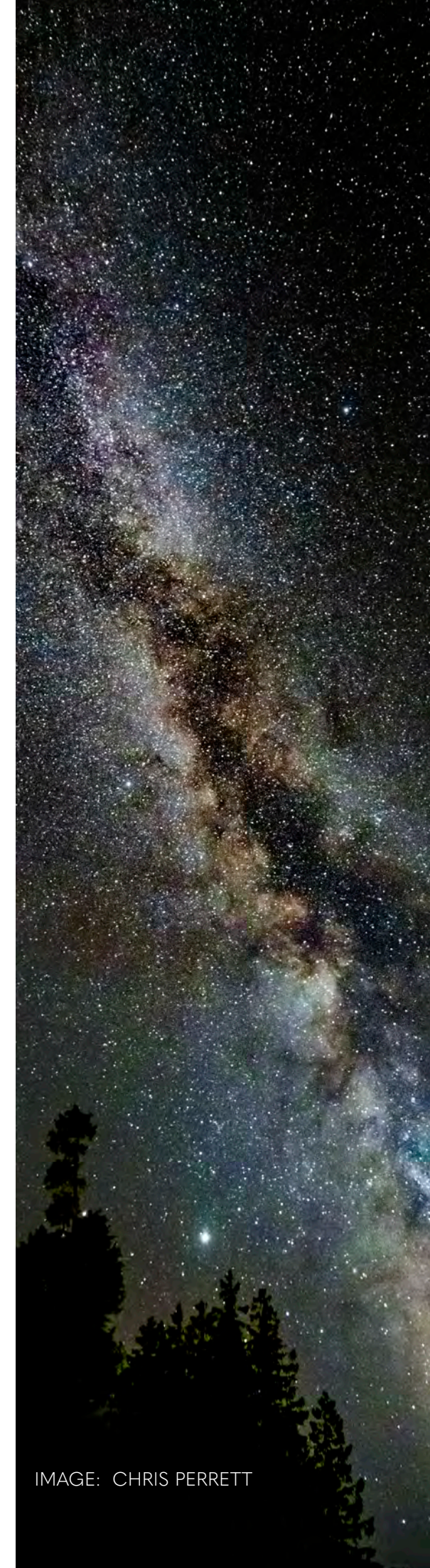
As mentioned in my last column, the energetics of Libra and its counterpart across the Zodiac, Aries, play a big role this year. Just a week before the March Equinox, the nodal axis of our Moon shifted to the oppositional signs of the ram and the scales. The Moon’s nodal axis is always in contrasting signs, illuminating the karmic story and lessons of the two polarised archetypes, ultimately determining what signs the Eclipses are in for the year.

Before considering the approaching Eclipse Season (E.S.), look back to the time of our first E.S. this year, which began on April 23rd and ended on May 22nd— what was going on then? Think of the first E.S. of a given year as an “amuse-bouche”— it’s just giving you a taste of the full course. Now, imagine the time between the two E.S.s (in this case, June-October) to be real meal, and consider how it takes time to digest each lesson. Finally, the last E.S. (beginning on October 18th) is the dessert... so make sure you save some room!

Regardless of the signs that they fall in, Eclipses always bring about two things: beginnings and endings. The Solar Eclipse in Libra on the 25th of October will conjunct Venus while it is in a trine aspect with many of the goddess dwarf planets including Juno and Astraea, creating a positive and celebratory time for romantic, platonic, and business partnerships! This Solar Eclipse has the mark of a “soulmate” on it, so be open to new dynamics and people coming into your life. Following this burst of new energies, the Lunar Eclipse on the 8th of November will summon necessary endings as it opposes Venus and squares Saturn. With daddy Saturn in the picture, it’s wise to sharpen your boundaries and agree to disagree, as there’s no need to extend disagreements into further conflicts. Considering all the energetics of this Eclipse Season, one thing is certain— relationships are due for some major upgrades and reform... let in the new and let go of the old!

With 2022’s last Eclipse Season feeling so significant, I decided to cater each of your horoscopes around the Solar and Lunar Eclipses. As always, they are assessed upon the ascendant and written for your rising sign. If you don’t know your rising sign, work with an Astrologer to determine it, or utilise one of the many free resources on the world wide web.

Many Blessings!  
David Petrusich - Astrologer & Psychic-Medium

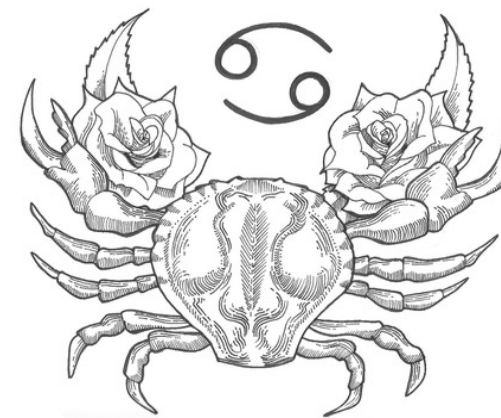






## ARIES

August may have been a pivotal point in your life, Rising Aries, and November will surely be another one! The Solar Eclipse of October will occur in the relationship sector of your chart. Compromise, sacrifice and flexibility are major themes of this Eclipse Season, and you may be beginning a completely new way of relating within your most intimate dynamics. Others will ask a lot from you this season, and I know you won't let them (or yourself) down.



## CANCER

If I could summarise your Eclipse Season down to two words, they would be security and satiation. With October's Solar Eclipse occurring in your domestic sector, the need to be connected to your home or family unit will be paramount. Take time to reassess where you're living... is it time for a move or a major change? The Eclipse seems to think so. By the middle of November, your career may also take a sudden shift—remember, change is necessary.

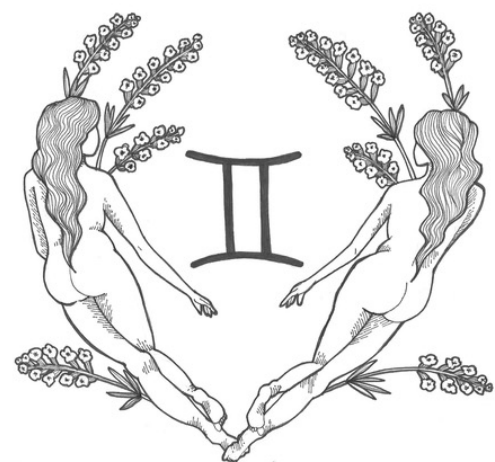
## TAURUS

I really want you to relish in the gifts of October's Solar Eclipse, as it will be conjunct with your ruling planet, and with it happening in your identity sector, your confidence and sense of self will be your greatest tool. November's Lunar Eclipse may throw you a few surprises, as it will occur in your 12th house—the house of secrets, spirit, and the subconscious. You're being asked to summon all the shadows out of your deepest closets and face them head on. You've got this.



## LEO

The first Eclipse in October will bring about much-needed clarity and a shift in perspective that will prepare you for the big changes brought on by November's Eclipse. I really want you to get your priorities straight this season, Rising Leo. I don't know why, but I feel like you've been putting off "the next big thing" for quite some time. It's been a few years since you've shaken things up to such an extent, and these Eclipses are here to assist! Trust the timing.



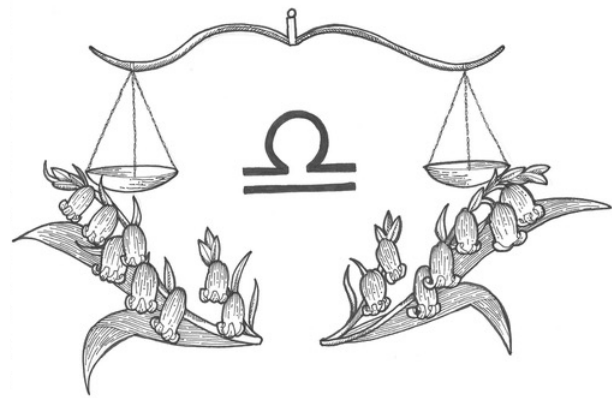
## GEMINI

You're really going to have to prioritise what matters to your heart this season, rising Gemini. I see the entire six weeks of the Eclipse cycle focused on your personal values as well as the ideals of others. By the Lunar Eclipse on the 8th of November, you may have gone through a spiritual renaissance, so don't be surprised if you feel you can't relate with certain friends or circles anymore. What dynamics are outdated, and which ones have been overlooked?



## VIRGO

The Eclipse Season will ask you to surrender to what you cannot control as it tempers your ability to ask for and receive support from others. The relationship with your finances and assets will go through a major upgrade during October's Eclipse, and I have a feeling you'll be quite pleased with the outcome! There is no doubt when it comes to your own autonomy, Rising Virgo, but what hang ups do you have on being dependent upon someone else?



## LIBRA

There is a great deal of focus on your identity this Eclipse Season, rising Libra, and you may be on the brink of a personal rebirth. The demands and duties of your most intimate relationships will be amplified during November, but it is imperative that you stay true to the wishes of your heart and prioritise your own needs first. Take time this season to remember that you're the main character of your story— without you, the rest are just support.



## CAPRICORN

This Eclipse Season is going to ask you to recalibrate the amount of energy you give and receive to your private and public lives. It may come through an advancement or further demands in your career around the October Eclipse— think big changes in the workplace, a promotion, or new responsibilities. By the second Eclipse, it may feel like you are having to sacrifice domestic or familial needs for the needs of your job, but remember that balance is the goal of these Eclipses.

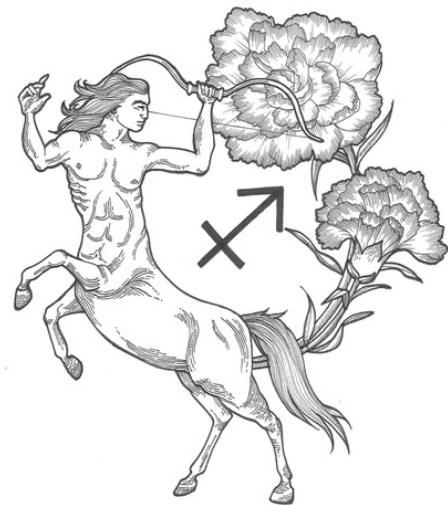
## SCORPIO

With the first Eclipse happening in your 12th house, I really feel you're going through some kind of spiritual initiation this season, rising Scorpio. All 12th house transits tend to yield large moments of evolution, so be patient with the alchemy of this season. By the end of November, you may feel called into a new field of study, work, or duty as the second Eclipse will occur in your 6th house. Expect changes to your daily life this season and eliminate soulless routines.



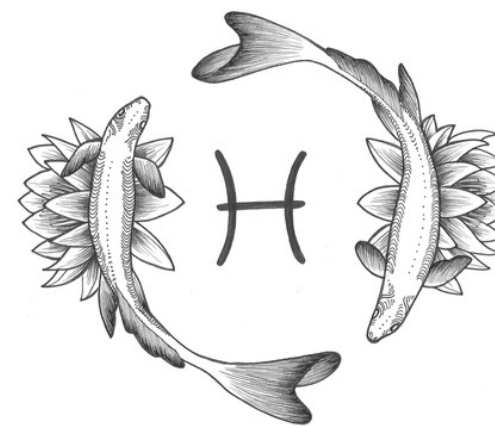
## AQUARIUS

This season, it's important to get out of your head and root yourself into the true nature of what you are experiencing. The October Eclipse will redefine your comfort zone(s) and will likely push you beyond the boundaries of what you once thought was impossible— this can be experienced through learning a new skill or travelling to a distant location. These Eclipses will reorient you to all new energies... so focus on the experience vs. the judgement or analysis.



## SAGITTARIUS

Clarity is the main gift of this season for you, rising Sagittarius, and clarity of this calibre can yield grand results! Your perspective has expanded a lot this past year and with it, your values and interpersonal needs have changed— it's as if your heart requires an entirely different sphere of influence to operate properly. Don't be alarmed if certain friendships finally meet their expiration date this October, as this Eclipse thinks it's long overdue for a change.



## PISCES

I have a feeling the October Eclipse will bring a large amount of catharsis, rising Pisces, and you deserve it! With this Solar Eclipse happening in your 8th house, there will be no shortage of metamorphosis during this time. Eclipses in this sector of a chart tend to bring big closures to an era or chapter of life— think career changes, contracts ending, or relocations. With such big changes, focus on what resources are needed at this time... new energies require new fuel.

# FOOD FOR THE SOUL

BY RYAN KURR  
@ryankurr

## HARVEST BANNOCK BREAD

A common food traditionally served for sabbats is a simple, dense bread known as Bannock. Sometimes you will see it fried in a pan, unlike here where it is baked in an oven. It is often sliced and served on its own or with a knob of butter. When it is part of a sabbat or other harvest gathering, the bread is usually blessed in some way as it cools. This version is a little lighter and has a few embellishments to add flavour and texture.

### Ingredients

3 cups	flour
3 tbsp	baking powder
1 tbsp	milk powder
1 tsp	salt
¼ tsp	sugar
1 tbsp	pepita (pumpkin seeds)
1 tbsp	sunflower seeds
113 g	butter (4 oz, 1 stick), room temp
1¾ cups	milk, hot

### Method

- Preheat the oven to 400°F (204°C) and line a sheet tray with parchment.
- In a large bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder and milk powder. Whisk in the salt, sugar, pepitas and sunflower seeds. Cut in the butter, then add the hot milk and stir with a spatula to combine. Knead the dough a few times until you get a smooth ball.
- Transfer to a sheet tray lined with parchment and shape the dough into a large round, slightly domed circle. It shouldn't be more than an inch thick. Spray the top with water.
- Bake for 30-40 minutes or until the bread is golden brown. A toothpick should come out completely clean.

## BAKED APPLES

One of the best things about autumn is the food. If you've ever had the luxury of walking through an apple orchard and hand-picking a fresh apple from the tree, then you know just how special it truly is. Apples can be enjoyed in a variety of ways, from raw or baked into a pie. Here I offer you a simple method that brings out the apple flavour without overwhelming it with spices. I recommend using Pink Lady, Honeycrisp, Cortland or any other good baking apple.

### Ingredients

4	apples
½ cup	orange juice
4 tbsp	dried cherries
4 tbsp	walnuts, chopped
3 tbsp	pecans, chopped
½ tsp	cardamom, ground
1 tsp	fresh rosemary, chopped
½ tsp	salt
1 cup	apple juice/cider
1	lemon, juiced and zested
1	vanilla bean (pod), split & scraped
3 tbsp	olive oil
2 tbsp	demerara sugar

### Method

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).
- In a small bowl, combine the cherries with the hot orange juice and let soak for 10 minutes. Drain the cherries, discard (or drink) the juice. Add the cherries back to the bowl, along with the walnuts, pecans, cardamom, rosemary and salt; mix well and set aside.
- In a pot, combine the apple juice, lemon zest, vanilla bean and seeds. Bring to a boil, then remove from the heat. Cover and let infuse for 30 minutes.
- Slice the top off of each apple and set aside. Slice a little off the bottom of the apple so it can stand up straight without toppling over. Core the apples and drizzle with lemon juice. Place the apples in a baking dish and divide the cherry-nut mixture stuffing among them. Cover them with the apple tops. Pour the infused juice over the apples, then drizzle the oil over and sprinkle them with demerara sugar.
- Bake for 30 minutes to 1 hour (depending on the size of your apples), or until the flesh is tender, regularly basting with the cooking juice. Remove from the oven and serve warm.

# A SEA WITCHES' HALLOWEEN PARTY

BY FAITH BARNES  
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*'Ghouls and ghosts are no more, sea witches and octopuses galore, Halloween is for a party, time to celebrate that, put on your sea-themed outfit and have a fun sabbat!'*  
- The Sea Witch Poet

Are you tired of the same old dressing in black as a witch with an orange pumpkin and broomstick? Or the usual scary monsters and ghouls running around the neighbourhood? Or are you just after something unique and new this year? Then look no further, this article is for you! Moving away from the traditional Halloween concept, why not host a Sea Witches' Halloween party instead!

## What is a Sea Witch?

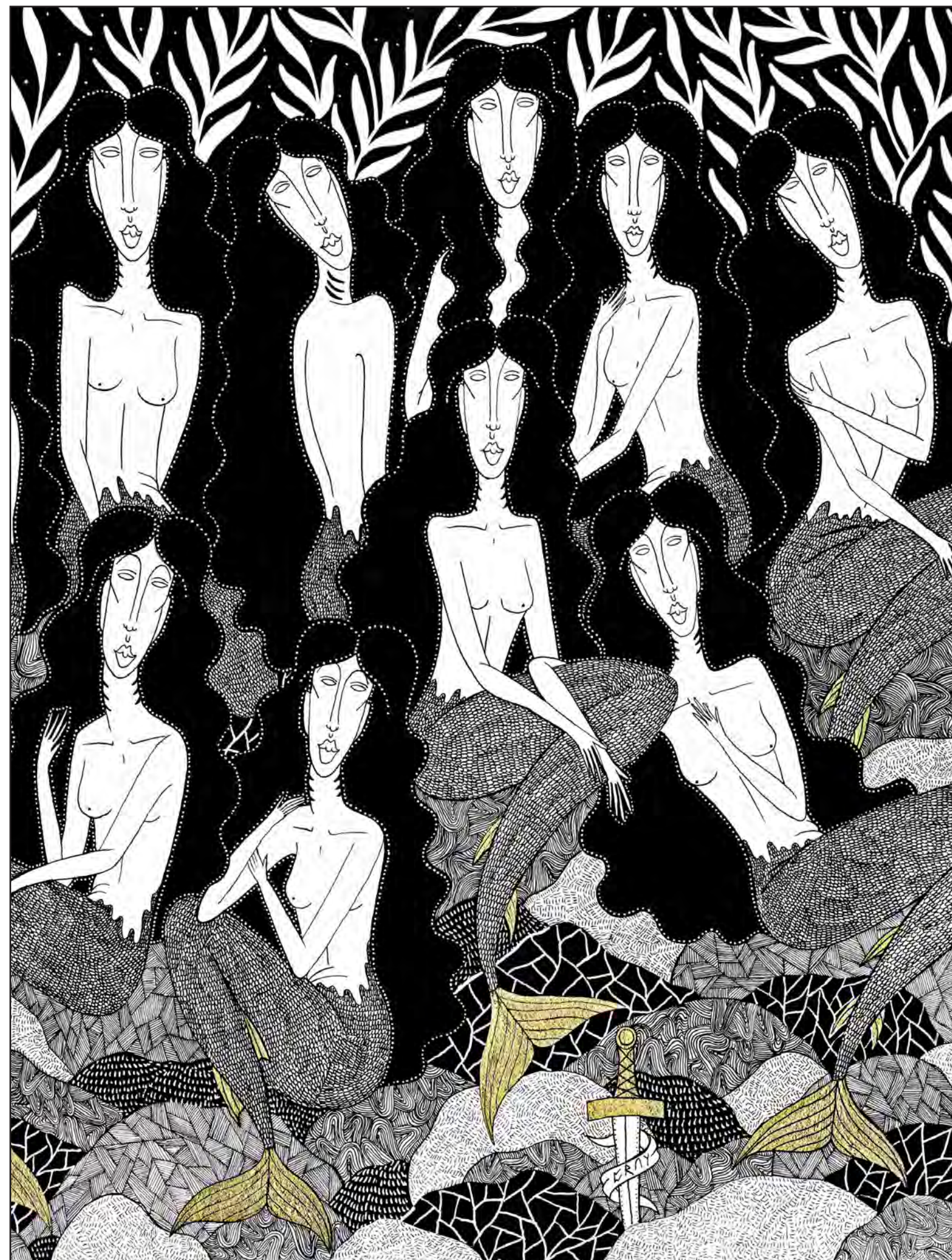
A sea witch is someone who involves the tides in their practices. They have a close bond with the sea and work closely with the moon. Sea witches have a natural ability to control anything water-related, even the weather! You will most likely find a sea witch down on the beach, performing their magick close to some form of naturally flowing water.

You can have a sea witch-style bonfire BBQ party on the beach to celebrate Halloween, but why not do a sea witch-themed party at home instead! It's much more fun for all, especially if the weather isn't up to much.

Here are some of the ideas I use when Halloween approaches:

## Decorations

- Make spooky octopus legs hanging from the ceiling! Using paper mache-painted purple tendrils with blue and green silver streamers.
- Use dried seaweed for decoration.
- Place coloured sand bottles around the room. Add in a plastic octopus and some fish skeletons for that spooky touch!
- Pumpkin Fun - Why not paint your pumpkin blue? Glue on shells and dried seaweed for the hair!
- Or turn the bottom of the pumpkin into a sea hag's face by using the stalk at the bottom for the nose and painting her turquoise metallic blue to start. Don't forget to add her intense staring eyes too!





### Decorations (continued)

- **Sea Storm Sound Effects** - Storm magic is a powerful part of being a sea witch. Use lightning and thunder effects to create a haunting atmosphere to spook the children. Even throw in some rain or waves spray as they pass!
- **Ceiling Poppet Blessings** - Make sea witch poppets and hang them from the ceiling. Attach different health charms and sigils to each one to bless your guests as they pass under!

### It's All About the Outfit

- Embrace your sea witch theatrical side by going all out with a sea witch costume! Make it scary with sharks' teeth and seaweed from the deep. Or dress up as a Mermaid - Siren - Fish Monster - Seaweed God - Ocean Enchantress. Have fun with it!
- Craft a shell-covered traditional witches' hat or crown! All you need is a glue gun, hat, glitter and shells. You can even paint the shells first before sticking them on.

### Drinks

Blue Sea Witch Punch Recipe:

Why not try this wicked punch cocktail?

- Add blue food colouring to your favourite fizzy drink such as (Fanta Zero, Powerade Berry, Tropical or Lemonade).
- Garnish with Red gummy fish and blue gummy shark sweets on the glass and a slice of lemon.
- You can add additional flavours to change the flavour - Pineapple juice, alcohol WKD Blue, ginger ale or any other drink you love.

### Snacks

- **Spooky Sea Witch and Sand Doughnuts!** Decorate doughnuts or cupcakes with colourful icing, adding a touch of Halloween with hundreds and thousands (coloured sprinkles) and magic! Use deep blue and ghouly green marbled icing on top of a white icing base for a sea swirling effect. Create a sea witch's head on a bed of curly green seaweed decoration made with icing.
- Fill up cleaned scallop shells to hold your party snacks or use them as plates!
- Feeling creative? Melt down green mint chocolate, white and dark chocolate to make chocolate scallop sea witch swirls!
- **Magickal Bakes** - Starfish cookies! Throw in some edible glitter and coloured icing to give it pizzazz. Mermaid cookies are fun too!
- Use seaweed wraps for spooky snacks!

### Halloween Sea Witch Magick

- Create a group spell, if you dare! Hang a washing line with blue pegs across the room. Ask guests to write sea blessings, incantations and wishes on notes to hang from the pegs. At the seawitchin' hour of midnight, get everyone in a circle. Take the notes down, combine them together and read out loud. Feel the energy and blessings of the night. Let's hope it's a good one!
- Water is a vessel to the divine, to send messages to loved ones. Use the sea to carry your message across the veil when it's at its thinnest. Go to the beach and throw your written message into the sea when the tide is going out.
- For that extra Halloween connection, add cuttlefish fish powder and bones to your altar to represent the dead. Also, add these into your magick around Halloween to see beyond the veil.

### Party Games

- **Siren's Call** - Who has the best singing voice and sexy allure? Could it be you? Get up singing and dancing to find out!
- **Balance the Sea Witches' Broom** - Who can balance the broom on their hand, arm or head to win a prize?
- **Beachcombing Bonanza** - Fill a flat large bowl with stones, and hide 13 different shells inside. Who is the fastest beachcomber who can find the shells the quickest? Get set, get ready and go! If you want competition, fill two bowls with the same shells.
- **Who has The Prettiest Sea Witch Bottle of all?** This can be an adult or children's game, using coloured sand, glitter, silver stars, fake crystals, beads and fish charms. Anything glittery and colourful! Enter the contest to see who has the prettiest bottle. Host to judge the winner.
- **Guess The Shell** - Blindfolded, place five shells in a bowl of blue slime. The contestant has to guess what each shell is called without looking. Can you get all five right? Don't forget a bowl of water and a towel to wash your hands of the remaining slime!
- **Dunking for Driftwood** - Use your hand instead of dunking for apples with your mouth. Place seven pieces of driftwood in a bowl of water (driftwood floats). Each driftwood has a number on the underside. Each number matches a spooky dare. For example, dance like a silly skeleton for two minutes.
- **Perform a shell rune reading for each guest** - What fate will be in store for the next year? Only the shells will tell!

So what are you waiting for? Do something unique this Halloween and host a sea witch-themed party! You've got the decorations, spooky food, and games. All you are waiting for is the guests to make it a seastastic night by mixing traditional witchcraft with a bit of fun!



# witches

The background of the cover is a photograph of a sunset over a mountain range. The sky is a gradient of orange and yellow, with a bright sunburst effect on the right side. The mountains are silhouetted against the sky, and the foreground shows a dark, forested hillside.

SPELLS // CRYSTALS // TAROT // HOROSCOPES