

# THE TEMPLE BELL

*Official newsletter of the Temple of Witchcraft*

Quarterly

Beltane 2012

## From the Editor...

Blessed Beltane everyone! The trees are budding, flowers are blooming, and the temperature is rising as the days lengthen. One wakes to a myriad of birds singing in the morning as they build their nests at this fertile time of year. The earth is bursting with color and sound, all signs that summer is on its way. This leads one to think of vacations and travel.

We travel for many different reasons, some to see the beauty of new places, some to escape our busy lives and still others to get closer to familial or religious roots. I've always found fiction to be a type of travel in itself. A good story can transport the reader to another place and time. Indeed, some of my most peaceful moments have been on a beach listening to the waves crash to shore while reading a book. This issue of *The Temple Bell* combines the two types of travel, the physical and mental, to create an issue brimming with story and advice.

Beginning with the Founder's Corner, Steve Kenson writes about language, communication and the ability of stories to make change, while Christopher Penczak offers a vision working from the TOW pilgrimage to Glastonbury, England last year. Howling Hill gives green travel advice as Leslie Hugo uses her many years of travel experience to offer tips to make our trips easier and "more magickal." Tim Titus



describes Yellowstone National Park through the four elements, while Rayna Hamre shares her trip to Norway in pictures and word.

Co-editor Tina Whittle asked the Witchcraft IV class to contribute some of the stories they were working on for class, resulting in creative tales from Kurt Hunter, Rayna Hamre, Loika Ana, Hunter, Cat Ky Crone and of course Tina herself. We even have a children's story from Stevie Grant, designed as "a two lap" tale "for an adult to read to a child." We have a poem from Shea Morgan in addition to a Beltane ritual, plus Andrea Johnston added some floral pictures to enhance this issue.

Enjoy the product of the fruitful minds of our contributors as you celebrate Beltane, and may your travels be blessed with safety and magick.

## **Raye Snover**

*Raye Snover is a HPS in the Cabot Tradition whose work has appeared in The New York Times, The Daily News and Excalibur. She is co-editor of The Temple Bell and lives in Manhattan.*

## **Photo's by Andrea Johnston**

*Andrea grew up in the wilds of the Berkshires in western Massachusetts and migrated east to pursue her degree in Interior Design. She enjoys playing Irish fiddle, foreign films, good food and traveling the world. She currently lives in Salem, MA with several cold blooded familiars.*



# Founders Corner

By Steve Kenson

*“How could humans perceive gods... abstract essence... without clothing them in imagery, stories, pictures...”*

— Alan Moore, *Promethea*, “Mercury Rising”

Carl Jung defined synchronicity as the occurrence of two or more seemingly random events that juxtapose in such a way as to appear or become meaningful. That works on a number of levels for this *Founder’s Corner*, as this issue of the *Temple Bell* is about stories and fiction, and students in the Temple’s Witchcraft IV class are exploring the sphere of Hod this month, the sphere associated with the Mercurial qualities of language. Meanwhile, we’re in the midst of another regular Mercury Retrograde, communicating about difficulties in communication, and similar issues with all things mercurial: travel, commerce, and so forth. Layers within layers. Words about words.

The first—and greatest—magick is the power of language, of stories. We are made of stories, at least the part of us able to use the terms “we” and “us.” After all, what is our personality, our identity, but an amalgam of the stories about us? Memories, experiences, things we tell ourselves. They define us, and create us. Language is the power of creation, the making of something out of nothing, the power to define order from chaos: “In the beginning was the Word...” All of reality is often spoken or sung into existence. The gods of magic are also the gods of language, givers of letters, runes, and symbols to humanity, scholars and keepers of lore.

The gods are made up of stories as well, starting with linear thought, then with symbols and language and our ability to share our experiences and views. Then the small gods and daemons of our consciousness can hunt and consume one another, convincing others one god is also their god, or that my god is greater or more powerful than yours. They can also mate with each other in orgies of ideas to spawn new aeons. We benefit from a multitude of gods, because they are like individual phrases in a language or bars in a song, but also because they compete fiercely with each other

in ecology of the divine—a true “theology” or “ideology”—where the strongest survive and prosper.

The gods are born of the inner world but not limited to it. It’s the stories that form the bridge by which they may move from one person to another, by which they can connect with other spirits, other beings. Since we build ourselves out of bits and pieces of other stories, much of our psychological “DNA” includes versions of the gods, or the archetypes belonging to them. The gods are within us, and part of us, as we have become parts of them.

Small wonder, then, that art—the use of language and symbols to communicate ideas and emotions—is so strongly connected with the magickal and religious impulse. No surprise that institutional religion wisely cultivates—and likewise seeks to control—art and artists. Magic is “the Art” after all, the power not only to communicate but to bring about change through the power of word and intention alone, symbols changing our reality, “code” for “programming” the universe.

So consider—when using the magickal power of words to read through the other offerings in this issue of the *Temple Bell*, or when creating your own magickal stories—the power of art, of language, to shape ourselves and the world around us. Think about the ways the stories we tell—and even the ways in which we tell them—create and define who we are, and how understanding those things can empower us to create and tell different stories, better stories, and, in so doing, create different and better selves, perhaps even a different and better world.

Don’t fall into the narrative (see what I did there?) that stories are “just” words or “mere” imagination, because words and imagination created everything that has ever come from human minds or hands. Everything. Remember stories are what every child knows them to be: Magic!

*Steve Kenson is Founder and Gemini Lead Minister of the Temple of Witchcraft. A lover of stories and words from a very young age, Steve*





# Yellowstone: Elemental Wonderland

*By Tim Titus*

*Photo's by Tim Titus*

The more you travel this world, the more you see the four elements in their many manifestations. From deserts to forests, oceans to canyons, the natural world shines with the splendor of each element showing itself in countless, awe-inspiring ways.

The one place I know where they all come together is Yellowstone National Park. Here the elements are at their strongest. Thick, Earthy forests, sustain huge amounts of plant and animal life, while canyons, waterfalls, and an undeniable, almost constant pungent scent of sulphur play with us in the Air. A gigantic lake dominates the eastern portion of the park while a volcano of cataclysmic power burns just beneath the surface, making Yellowstone one of the most dangerous locations on the planet. The first national park in the world, Yellowstone is a magical place that truly earns the name early tourists gave it: Wonderland.

In this multi-state Wonderland, (Yellowstone touches three states—Wyoming, Montana and Idaho) any traveler can feel that the world around them is alive. Witches, though, have even greater access to the vibrant, living spirit that is Yellowstone. Here we have the opportunity to come face to face with physical manifestations of all four elements in some of their most primal and powerful forms.

## FIRE

Yellowstone is most well known for its Fire features. Within the central region of the park is the caldera of an active volcano that measures 34 by 45 miles wide. Almost all the park's populated regions lie inside this ancient volcanic crater. Looking around from within, you can just make out the edges of the caldera, but you would not know that you were standing inside what may be one of the most dangerous super-volcanoes on Earth.

The Yellowstone Caldera has erupted three times in history. The largest eruption, which occurred two million years ago, was a cataclysmic event that spewed ash all the way from the Gulf of Mexico to the ocean off the coast of Seattle, an area estimated to be about 2,500 km in size. Remember, the bulk of Yellowstone is in Wyoming. In com-

parison, the ash fall from the 1980 Mt. St. Helens eruption extended a meager 30 km. This caldera and the boiling magma chamber beneath it are responsible for just about everything the tourists come to see: sparkling multicolored hot springs, bubbling mud pots, and the predictable eruptions of the famous Old Faithful.

Within this land of fire are cracks in the surface. Water fills up the cracks, and the volcano heats the water. The style of the crack determines how the Fire within will express itself. Areas with very little water vent gas, making a constant hissing sound as you walk past them. Cracks that are filled with dirt and water result in superheated mud, which bubbles and pops like the landscape of some B-level science fiction flick.

Large cracks that are filled with water create hot springs. Since different algae species are able to exist in varying heat levels, each spring has its own color signature. Reds, greens, blues, and yellows all shine in a constantly changing variety of combinations. Each hot spring is dazzling and enticing, yet deadly. As you stand safely on your boardwalk viewing platform, it sometimes is hard to believe that these beautiful waters are hot enough to boil the flesh from your bones. It has happened. The corpse of an unfortunately adventure-some dog still rests deep inside one of the pools.



What really attracts tourists to Yellowstone in droves are the geysers—water eruptions fueled by an unseen Fire. There are two major geyser basins in the park. These, along with the rest of the volcano's system, combine to create the largest known system of geothermal features in the world. The first and less well-known thermal area is the Norris Geyser Basin. Walking in Norris is like walking on the moon. A thin boardwalk extends across lifeless, alien land that is pockmarked with hundreds of geysers, constantly

erupting at unpredictable intervals all around you. Large plumes of steam rise unceasingly out of the hillside. During a short rest on a bench, I counted over 100 eruptions in about 15 minutes in this otherworldly landscape. Perhaps more than anywhere else, Norris reminds you of the incredible, never-ending potency that lies just under your feet.

Yellowstone's star attraction is Old Faithful, a geyser within the Upper Geyser Basin that predictably erupts about every 90 minutes. She is impressive, and small city has been built around her popularity, but there is much more to the Upper Basin. There are six geysers in the park whose eruptions can be predicted; five are in this region. Beyond that, hundreds of smaller, more random geysers surprise guests daily. That lump of dirt you just walked by can be a gigantic plume of water five minutes later. Although it is officially unpredictable, Beehive Geyser, which is within sight of Old Faithful, erupts about twice a day in a spectacular display of force. All of these waterworks are fueled by the volcano's ever-present Fire.

## **EARTH**

At 3,468 square miles, the park is larger than Rhode Island. Within that boundary is an incredible variety of plant and animal life. From any of the entrances, you will drive at least an hour to get to the park's famous attractions. The miles in between take you through rolling hills, rugged mountains, and dense forests of lodgepole pine trees. It may be these remarkable trees that teach us the most about Earth.

Since the park is so large, each area has its own history. Small fires may break out in one area while other areas remain unscathed; thus the life cycle of the lodgepole pine becomes a record of the park's history. In one place, a visitor may stand beneath very old, tall pine trees. Just a few feet over, that same visitor will hit a large patch of sunlight shining upon a stand of tiny lodgepole sprouts. While the typical visitor may not see it, the Witch knows that this is evidence of Earth's ability to decay the dead and return life to the world.

A small stand of trees indicates a place where fire recently burned. The fire-consumed trees, of course, fell to the ground, opening up a patch of sunlight. That patch of sun was eagerly drunk in by new seeds and the decaying bark of the older generation provided nourishment for these seeds

to take root. Now there's a Witch's mystery enfolded into the natural world.

But it goes farther than that. The amazing lodgepole pine produces two kinds of cones. One type drops its seeds to the ground annually. The other type, called a serotinous cone, is covered in a thick wax and can stay on the tree's branches for years. Only the extreme heat of a forest fire can melt a serotinous cone and cause the new life cycle to begin again. These trees display not only the cycle of death and rebirth, but also an almost symbiotic interaction between two of the elements—one masculine, one feminine. It's the Great Rite in action.

Another immediately noticeable facet of Yellowstone's seemingly endless landscape is the wildlife. Large lines of stalled traffic, known as "wildlife jams," can form any time of the day as tourists clamor to catch a view of a herd of elk rushing along or a family of deer grazing in a meadow. The



most common sight is the bison—and what better symbol of Earth? Known to cause wildlife jams simply by walking calmly down the center of the road, bison are a constant feature in the park. They make nightly migrations through Haden Valley, simultaneously amaz-

ing and annoying motorists, but they can be seen in any landscape. They wander through parking lots, stare down visitors in their cars, and lounge their bulk on top of fragile geyser crusts. They are animals of immense strength, and one cannot fail to be awed by experiencing them in their own habitat.

Since 1995, the park has been actively reintroducing wolves into the ecosystem. Hunted to near extinction in the twentieth century, this predator provides an important population control service for the local wildlife. Slowly, the wolf packs are gaining ground as they work to establish a presence. Their reintroduction marks an important realization for humans, and another lesson of Earth: predators are just as vital to life as cute, fuzzy herbivores. Death and life go



hand in hand, and wolves once again bring death's balance to the region.

## AIR

Yellowstone is more than thermal activity. In the eastern region of the park there is a place which few who have not visited know about, but those who see it cannot forget: The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. Much like Arizona's Grand Canyon, which was carved by the Colorado River, this canyon was formed by the Yellowstone River eroding the stone over millions of years. There are two very different things about this canyon, though.

First, the walls are a beautiful yellow color. This golden coloring lightens up the canyon, making it feel open and more, well, airy. You may have never seen a canyon this beautiful. Second, two waterfalls create some of the most stunning scenery imagined. From the appropriately-named Artist Point, the view of the Lower Falls contrasting against the shining yellow of the canyon walls is enough to make you stare dreamily for hours.

As if that weren't enough, a rainbow forms over the Lower Falls every summer morning between 9:30 and 10:00. In an amazing display of the interaction of Air, Fire, and Water, this stunning rainbow comes to life, shines brightly, and fades every morning, offering beauty and inspiration to start each day.

Then there's the smell. I don't mention this as a pleasant aspect of Yellowstone. The park's gigantic system of thermal cracks spews forth an unlimited supply of sulphuric gas. Sulphur smells bad, and some sections are covered in it. Let's just say that your nose makes you quite aware of what is going on beneath your feet. The Air is quite literally alive in this Wonderland.

## WATER

Yellowstone is home to the largest high-elevation lake on the continent. Yellowstone Lake used to be the end of the line for early tourists, helping them rest and recover after a long week of traveling. Now, it is a quiet oasis from the more bustling areas of the park. The caldera walls extend right across its waters, so there are even some thermal features within the lake. There are pictures of the old Mountain Men catching a fish at West Thumb and boiling it in the geysers that lurk just beneath the surface at the edge of the water—just a reminder that Yellowstone is built on the interaction of Fire and Water.

Within the Firehole River, near the geyser basins, is one of the few safe swimming areas in the park. Even though swimmers can feel the occasional heat rising from the floor

of the river, these cool, clear waters offer a wonderful respite from the heat of a summer day in the Rockies.

There is a battle going on in Yellowstone's waters. The native Cutthroat Trout is being crowded out by human-introduced species, especially the Lake Trout. The species is in serious danger. To heal the waters and restore natural order, a



mit is imposed upon the number of Cutthroats a fisherman can take home, but Lake Trout are fair game. This and the wolf reintroduction program mark a healing shift from humanity's old ways of using nature only for personal gain to a more nurturing, respectful interaction. Much like the reintroduction of the wolf, Yellowstone's trout battle teaches the Watery lesson that all of the elements must be in balance for true healing to occur.

Throughout my journey as a Witch, many people have asked me if there is some book I follow that lists all the moral codes and rules of my religion. I tell them that the natural world is my book; it tells me all I need to know. While there are lessons all over, there are very few places that bring so much of the world's omnipotence together in one place. The mysteries of Yellowstone could take a lifetime to uncover, but it would be a fulfilling life of mediation and communion with the forces of life. This place is its own altar, and the droves of tourists that flock there attest to its magnetic power. For a Witch, though, this one place manifests all we believe in. Yellowstone is a Witch's Wonderland.

# TEMPLE NEWS & UPDATES

*Each issue of The Temple Bell features updates from some of the Temple's twelve Lead Ministers. All of the Temple's ministries are committed to doing important work in the community! For more information on each ministry please see the Ministries page of the Temple of Witchcraft website: [templeofwitchcraft.org](http://templeofwitchcraft.org).*

## Treasurer's Report: March 2012

### Account Balances:

Opening Balance: February 29, 2012:

\$35103.34

Closing Balance: March 31, 2012:

\$37727.35

Petty Cash \$0

Paypal balance: \$5994.31

Certificate of Deposit: \$2509.49

### Events:

Income from W 1-5 Gross: \$2114.03, net \$634.21

Yoga: \$13.50

Women's circle: net \$17

Full Moon: \$40

Dark Moon: \$55.50

Ostara (workshop and ritual): net \$213.30

Protection Ritual: \$35

Cauldron of Siochain: \$97

Temple of Witchcraft •

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## Cancer

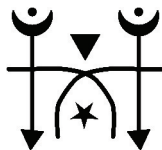
The Temple's Women's Circle recently celebrated its third anniversary of monthly events!

Congratulations to Matooka and SilverMoone for all their work and to all the women who have explored the Mysteries with them. Cancer Ministry is also in the process of setting up a new children's ministry for the Temple.



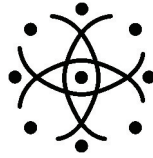
## Scorpio

Scorpio Ministry is developing a sacred sexuality education course and also began holding grief and remembrance circle events monthly at the Temple office.



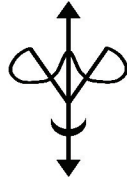
## Pisces

Pisces Ministry is pleased to report official Temple sabbat events in three states now: New Hampshire, Colorado, and Washington, with more events and plans in the works. The goal is official Temple events in all fifty states!



## Aries

The Aries Ministry is performing four main protection rituals this year, along with providing security and safety volunteers at TempleFest.



## Gemini

Gemini Ministry began holding Queer Spirit Circles at the Temple office, as well as maintaining the website, mailing lists, and other Temple networking resources.



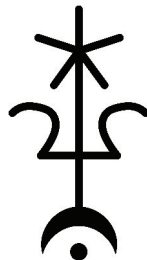
## Virgo

Virgo Ministry is holding a series of healing technique workshops, followed by associated healing rituals.



## Sagittarius

Along with adding new Witchcraft I & II classes, Sagittarius Ministry is organizing a 2013 retreat to sacred sites in Wales and putting together fundraiser anthologies in cooperation with Copper Cauldron Publishing.



## Taurus

Taurus Ministry's "Witch in the Woods" hikes are continuing into the Spring season.



## Leo

Leo Ministry has been providing music for Temple rituals and events and started a drum circle, meeting regularly at the Temple office.



## Libra

The Libra Ministry is working on building a public relations database and press release list. If you know a venue or resource that should be on that list, please email [libra@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:libra@templeofwitchcraft.org).



## Capricorn

Along with developing a correspondence course in Witchcraft for the prison ministry, Capricorn ministers are undergoing training in prison ministry work from the New Hampshire state prison system.



## Aquarius

Aquarius Ministry is busy with planning and work on TempleFest 2012! Dorothy Morrison is our guest and keynote speaker this year for two days of fun and celebration, June 23-24th.





# Norway: A Land of Ancient Voices

by Rayna Hamre

Photo's by Rayna and Stephen Hamre

My year of shamanic study with the Temple of Witchcraft led me to investigations and meditations with Norse Runes, mythology and the world tree Yggdrasil. I had not explored a great deal about my own northern European heritage. Last year's studies brought me many opportunities and unexpected gifts. A trip to Norway was one of those gifts.

I have always loved exploring the sacred sites of Europe; this trip was exciting and very special because of my shamanic studies. First we traveled to Glastonbury and sites in southern England, just a few weeks ahead of the Temple of Witchcraft tour. Driving in those small towns on the left side was a hair-raising adventure, but it gave us a lot of flexibility in our travel plans. We were able to explore local towns and cathedrals at our leisure. In Southampton we gratefully turned in our rental car and boarded the ship that took us across the North Sea and up into the fjords.

In Norway I was able to commune with the hills, feel the stillness of that dramatic land, and stand by the powerful waterfalls that rush down hills, over steep cliffs toward the ocean. We stood just above a sea of clouds and touched ancient glaciers. We saw three magnificent Viking ships in Oslo. At the Folks museum, on a rainy afternoon with few

other visitors, we stood inside of houses that were over 1,000 years old. I listened to the voices that lingered there in the dark, damp cold.

Both types of journeys I took during the TOW III year, shamanic and physical, allowed me to get in touch with myself in new ways. I have been a student of history and mythology since I was a child. When I am able to go to places and stand on ancient sites, I feel connected to the ancestors and cosmos in ways that are beyond words. My shamanic journeying opened me to my own heritage, to my own people and past as my travels connected me to that past in a physical and visceral way.

Next fall we hope to travel to Florence, and Mediterranean locations we haven't been to, Ephesus and Istanbul. I look forward to hearing the ancient voices waiting there.



*Rayna Hamre is an eclectic witch who lives in Huntington Beach, CA. She is the founder of Moon Tree Coven and writes for the Southern California Pagan Newswire Collective. She holds an MA in history and enjoys traveling to sacred sites in Europe with her husband, Stephen.*

# The Spiral In, The Spiral Out

By Tina Whittle

The story begins here.

Ariadne wakes on the beach at Naxos, unfamiliar sunlight burning her eyes, strange sand warming beneath her. In the distance, sails vanish on the horizon, leaving her all alone for the first time in her life.

What do you mean, this isn't a beginning? Of course it is, my darling. It is a maze, that is all, and all mazes begin with an end. Now hush-hush and listen.

Ariadne wakes in the sand, far, far from home. She is a Cretan princess, and unaccustomed to rough living. Her back aches and her skin is raw and red. She closes her eyes and remembers her days in the palace, perfumed and sloe-eyed as she lazily combed out her hair. She watches yet another boatload of Athens' most glorious youth being dumped in the dungeon to await death in the Minotaur's maze; their faces run together, men and women, beautiful and doomed and anonymous.

But then . . . Theseus.

Ah, you were waiting for the hero to arrive, yes? Aren't we all? But don't get too excited. This is not that kind of story.

Theseus was a charmer—bold, brash and determined. Ariadne looked at him and fell in love. From that moment on, she set out to save him. She knew the monster that awaited him—the Minotaur was her half-brother, after all. She knew the secrets of the labyrinth—the master engineer Daedalus had crafted it from the swirling steps of her own dancing. But she also knew this was Theseus's battle and his alone. He had to go to the heart of the maze and fight this creature she had heard from the safety of her bedroom, belching and stamping in the night. Under the cover of darkness, she found Theseus's sword and shield and brought them to him. Then she presented him with a pine cone wrapped with a silver thread.

"Hold onto this, and it will save you," she said.

Theseus followed her instructions, and after a fierce battle with the Minotaur, he followed the silver thread back to where he'd entered. He freed the rest of the prisoners and boarded a ship back to Athens, with Ariadne by his side, stopping at the tiny island of Naxos for a night of rest before pressing on.

That was where he abandoned her.

Oh, I know. Not very heroic. The myths suggest he had hero things to do—marry Ariadne's sister, save somebody from hell, go tamper with Helen of Troy. Some stories claim that the goddess Athena told him to leave, for She had other plans for him. Other versions say that Dionysus himself whispered in his ear: *go, whelp, for she is not yours.*

But his part of the story does not concern us. We must let him go his way now. May the stars steer him home.

It is our place to sit with Ariadne on the deserted beach. She holds onto the one thing he left behind, the silver thread wrapped around the pine cone. She doesn't know yet that this will be her icon, her holy Goddess symbol, that there will be shrines and temples to her. She doesn't understand that she is the Lady of the Labyrinth, that this is her birthright, to be the guide on the great mystery that is the sacred journey within. At that moment, in her sharp aloneness, the tangled thread is her last slender connection to the past, to memory, to familiarity. It is pain, but it is all she has, and she holds it tighter and tighter, as her palms bleed around it.

She walks the beach, unable to tear her eyes from the horizon. She doesn't turn around to see Dionysus standing behind her, his hand outstretched, his retinue of panthers and satyrs and maenads poised and silent. He has seen her bravery, strength and beauty, and He loves her passionately.

But she has not yet turned around, so she does not know.

This is the moment we stand with her, this moment before, as she paces the sand. She must sense Dionysus, gathering and potent, like a thunderhead. He is a god, and doesn't need to wait, of course. But he is patient and surprising. He knows she knows he's there. However, she must be the one to turn around, to take her eyes off the horizon. That will be easier when there is nothing left to see, when she has thrown her last rock at the receding sails.

The moral? There isn't one—this is a journey, not a fairy tale. No, not that kind of journey, not from here to there. This journey doesn't taste of trade winds and foreign spices. There are no parchment maps. Strange stars wheel and spin above, but they are old ones, even if they make new constellations. See over there—a circle of fiery points, like a crown? That is the Corona Borealis.

Ariadne, rising.

She shakes off the sand and gathers herself. The human heart is the strangest land of all. Here there be dragons, and



here there be home. Both and always. Yes and yes again. The eternal yes.

*Tina Whittle is a mystery novelist/freelance writer living and working in Southeast Georgia. She is currently a Witchcraft IV student in the*

*Temple and is co-editor of The Temple Bell. She is a member of the Earth-based Spirituality Group at her local Unitarian-Universalist church, which she attends with her husband and daughter, and also shares her life with one neurotic Maltese and three bossy chickens.*



Laura Gyre,  
Cabbyrinth,  
screenprint, 8.5" x 11"  
yes, they are for sale  
<http://www.ironcityalchemy.com>

Laura Gyre is an artist, blogger and unschooling mom living on an urban homestead in Pittsburgh, PA. You can find her (and her art) online at <http://www.ironcityalchemy.com>

# Whose Eyes Are You Seeing With?

*By Loika Ana*

Once there was a great wizard who dedicated his life to his craft at great cost. At first only his family knew he was spiritually gifted. His mother was gifted too, experiencing special dreams, visions, and contact with spiritual beings. She knew her firstborn would be special before his birth and feared for his safety. She knew he would never be socially accepted if the truth about him became known.

Being very wise, she had learned to keep her own gifts secret, only confiding in those closest to her. They lived in a time where being different at the very least would cause you to be outcast; the worst case could cost you your life. Living in the closet was a necessity in her day, so she did everything possible to protect her son. He was taught to be a craftsman, to work with his hands, so that all who knew him would think he was a common man. His parents hoped he would safely blend into their society.

The young boy deeply loved his parents and obeyed them in all they asked. However, his magical abilities and his spiritual yearning were too much for him to resist. He was destined to be a great wizard and nothing could change who he was, who he would become. Many times he would just slip away seeking out the wise ones of his day. When he would go missing, his frantic parents would search and search until they found him and then they would drag him home. They would lecture him, trying to make him see how dangerous it was for him express his other-worldly knowledge. Respectfully he would listen, but would then tell them he could not deny who he was. They too knew this, but as loving parents, they could only hope to keep him safe just a while longer.

As he grew to be a young man, he learned to keep his gifts secret, much to his parents' relief, though with each passing year, his passion for the occult grew. Though naturally talented, he was not satisfied. When he was old enough to be on his own, he traveled the world to find spiritual teachers to learn from, adding to his knowledge. Not limiting himself with any one spiritual system, he studied with teachers whose backgrounds varied greatly. Where he went and who those teachers were remain shrouded in mystery.

His abilities were many: dream work, manifesting and altering physical things, communicating with and controlling nature and animals, communing with spirits and dead ancestors, levitation, and healing on all levels. Being his mother's son, he hid his talents even as he developed them to their fullest potential. He knew which people he could trust, for he was psychic and able read thoughts, see futures, and to look into people's very souls.

Being empathic he was moved to help others, even if it put him in danger. His abilities were so exceptional that people around him began to notice. He would help them, but asked them to keep his secret.

As with all occult practitioners, there is a time to learn, a time to put those lessons into action, as well as a time to give back — to teach & serve others. He knew this and knew the time had come to go public despite the consequences. One of his main callings was to be a teacher, so he returned home and told his parents his plans. They were filled with sorrow and fear, but at the same time, they were proud of the man their son had become; they gave him their full support.

Perhaps because he had difficulty finding students worthy of his teachings, or maybe because he could not shake the secrecy lessons of his mother, he decided to only teach a small group at first. Within that group he selected an even smaller inner circle of students to whom he taught his deepest, most powerful lessons. He hoped to make a change in the world he lived in and open the closed and fearful minds of those all around him to the beauty of Spirit and the laws of nature.

How painful his life became, for the more he learned and the more he knew, the greater his burdens and the greater the responsibility to give back. When his advanced students had difficulty understanding all his ways, he knew words would never be enough. He had to put all his teachings into action publicly to prove the truths and concepts of his lessons in hopes they would understand.

The more he put out publicly, the more visible he appeared to society. Many were astounded by his abilities and saw him as a God walking the earth. Others were frightened and feared him, calling him the Devil. Many began seeking him out for healing, to listen to the stories he told, to see what mystical feats he would perform next and to get close to him in hopes of receiving some of his power. Was he a Wizard? A God? A Devil? A Prophet? Who was this man?

The men in power during this era grew concerned. They would not tolerate anyone taking their control from them. They were corrupt, greedy, and could not bear to see this commoner, this drifter, becoming a leader, as he developed a following of people. It was unthinkable! They began to undermine him and distort his teachings to dishonor him. They tried to make him appear crazy, to criminalize him, to make people hate him, to protect their avarice.

This wizard could easily have defeated his enemies with his abilities, but he did not. He wanted to give his greatest lesson, his demonstration of true power. He would use their evil to defeat them, by losing the battle in hopes of winning



the war. His lessons of what were truly important —the spiritual life and helping others — would never be believed if he fought back in a physical manner. The rulers brought false charges against him, arrested him, and found him guilty, so they could murder him in the most public and humiliating way. They hoped that by destroying him and his teachings, they would erase his memory forever.

It took inhuman strength and will for this great wizard to allow them to punish him. It would be a lesson he hoped would drive home all his other lessons. It would clear any doubts his followers had about him. He allowed himself to be sacrificed to teach the importance of harming none, the law of return, love and service to others and especially to Spirit.

The great wizard, as you have figured out by now, is Yeshua, the one the Christians call the Messiah, the Christ. His legend says he rose from the dead, defeating death, defeating the fools who thought they had power over him. All their physical power was nothing, and from his sacrifice, his small band of followers grew to untold numbers. His memory was not erased as his enemies had hoped, and his legend spread worldwide. Whether people believe in him or follow him, like him or hate him, they all know of him.

However, the truth about him is still elusive. The lies and misrepresentations are rampant, leading many to see and judge him through the eyes of others, not knowing the true man or his true ways. He would be appalled at all the carnage done in his name, all the killing and judgments that his misguided followers practice. He would be horrified at how his teachings have been twisted, corrupted, and misunderstood.

The truth lies within; the truth is in the hidden occult teachings waiting to be revealed. It is ironic that those who seek out the occult teachings are those who are accused of being against him or his ways. Many occultists believe this themselves, yet they walk the closest in his footsteps, for surely he now walks among the Hidden Company — one who believes all is sacred, who teaches that we should treat

others as we want to be treated, who teaches that we are all equally the sons and daughters of God/Goddess.

If he were to walk our streets today in the flesh, unknown by name, he would be seen as a wizard, witch, mage — one who sees nature and life as sacred, who walks in harmony with nature and who works with nature's natural laws, one who serves and heals and teaches sacredness. He would be one who enjoys the physical world, but values the spiritual world. One who channels and serves God/Goddess; can you see it now?

Should we not consider Yeshua as a true brother of the Craft? If we truly look at his actions, his works versus those of his misguided followers, would we not embrace him as a brother witch, wizard, or mage? I wonder how many of the occultists who have invoked the Gods and Goddess of other religions have invoked this man? What a ride that would be.

The powers and greed of man, political and religious, have corrupted the truths and have put the FEAR OF MAN (not God/Goddess) into many Christians. So many of them truly believe they will burn in hell if they seek the truth on their own. They believe the occult is of the Devil and would be horrified or shocked if they knew the true teachings that are kept hidden from them intentionally and how they were — and still are —being misled. To some that would be too much, to admit their whole life was a lie; they cannot face that truth and so close their ears.

Consider how misunderstood witchcraft is, how far from the truth the public's impression of witchcraft is; it seems, in my opinion, Yeshua's teachings suffer the same fate.

Whose eyes are *you* seeing with?

*Loika Ana is Witchcraft III graduate and a walker of many paths.*

## The Muse and the Magpie

By Cat Kelly

Cara was a precocious child with a sparkling wit and clever imagination, who loved to entertain. Whether it was holding court among her playmates or putting on a play when her mother's friends came to visit, if Cara was around,

you could bet that she would be center stage, giving some dramatic rendition of yet another fantastic story.

Cara's mother was proud of her daughter's quick mind, her fearless confidence, and her gift for storytelling — but still she worried. She was, after all, a Mother — and that's what Mothers do.

Cara's mother worried because in all of the fantastic stories Cara made up and told so beautifully, Cara was always the heroine. Cara saved the day, Cara won the race, Cara was the queen, the prettiest, the smartest, the most famous, the strongest, the super-est of everyone else in the story. Always.

And while Cara's mother also believed that Cara was the prettiest and the smartest and the super-est of any child – because she was, after all, her Mother and that's what Mothers do– she was a very wise mother and knew that Cara still had an important lesson to learn.

One day, Cara and her mother had gone for a walk in the woods to collect some wildflowers for the kitchen window sill. As they walked, Cara tried to regale her mother with her latest drama, but her story kept getting drowned out by a group of chattering magpies on the branches overhead.

"Be QUIET!" she yelled at them, irritated by their constant, annoying need to be the center of attention. And Cara's mother had an idea.

"Do you know the story of the Magpie?" she asked her daughter.

"What story?"

"Oh, a very interesting and dramatic story," her mother replied. "But I'm not sure if you're old enough yet to hear it."

"Of course, I'm old enough!" Cara retorted, absolutely determined now to hear the story. (Mothers are tricky that way.)

"W-e-l-l," her mother said, "I don't know. It's kind of a long and complicated story for a little girl."

"I'm not a little girl! I'm almost grown up and I want to hear the story!" Cara plopped down on a fallen log with a flounce. Nobody could flounce like Cara.

"Well, all right. I guess. If you're sure," her mother said with a bit of a sigh, as if she hadn't wanted all along to tell Cara that very story. And so, having succeeded in getting her daughter's attention (no small task, as every mother knows), she sat down beside her daughter on the soft moss that covered the fallen log and began:

"Once upon a time, in a land far, far away—"

"Oh, Mom, PUH-LEEZE. " Cara rolled her eyes. "NOBODY starts stories like that anymore."

Her mother just smiled and went on. "--there lived nine beautiful sisters. I'm talking drop-dead, gorgeous, make-Kiera-Knightley-look-plain kind of gorgeous."

Cara idolized Kiera Knightley. Her eyes widened.

"But they weren't just beautiful. They were also really, really smart and each one was amazingly talented, each in her

own way. The oldest one told fabulous stories that people came from miles round to hear."

"Just like me!" Cara quipped.

Her mother smiled again. "Her name was Calliope, and she always carried a writing tablet."

"Another always carried a scroll. She knew everything there was to know about history."

"Ugh. I hate history."

Now it was Cara's mother who rolled her eyes. "She could make even history into great stories that people couldn't wait to hear."

"Really?" Cara said doubtfully.

"Really. Her name was Clio. And the third sister wrote and recited beautiful love poems."

"What was her name?" Cara asked, keeping careful track.

"Erato. And then there was her sister, Euterpe, who played the flute and wrote lovely songs."

Cara grimaced. "Euterpe? I could have come up with a better name than THAT."

"It was a popular name back then," Cara's mother said. "The others have even weirder names. Like Melpomene."

"Seriously??"

"Maybe we should have named you Melpomene instead of Cara," her mother grinned. "You'd have made a good Melpomene."

Cara giggled.

"Or her sister, Polyhymnia."

"Like the hymns we sing at church??"

"Exactly. Singing hymns was Polyhymnia's very special talent. She always wore a veil and sounded like a whole church choir all by herself. She was also really, really good at pantomime."

Cara kind of liked the idea of being a mime in a lovely bridal veil, but she didn't really like hymns much more than she liked history. "Wait, you forgot to tell me Melpomene's talent."

"So I did. Melpomene's talent was telling very, very sad stories that always made people cry. But her sister Thalia told funny stories and made everyone laugh. Do you remember when we went to the theatre to watch the play downtown and they had those two masks on the wall – the happy face and the sad face?"



Cara nodded. She'd really wanted to buy them and take them home for her own plays, but her mother had told her they weren't for sale.

"Well, those are the masks that Melpomene and Thalia wore. Melpomene wore the tragic mask, the sad face, and her sister, Thalia, wore the comic mask, the happy face. Together, they could make any audience laugh and cry and then laugh and cry all over again. People came from miles around to watch them perform. "

Cara imagined herself on a stage in front of thousands of applauding people and felt her chest swell just at the thought.

"So how many sisters are we up to?"

"Seven," Cara promptly replied, holding up the fingers on which she was keeping count. One by one, she bent them down as she recited back the names, "Calliope, Clio, Erato, Euterpe, Polyhymnia, Melpomene, and Thalia."

"Right. Very good! The last two sisters were Terpsichore and Urania. Terpsichore was a dancer. She always carried a lyre around with her to make music to dance to. "

"Wait, what? She carried a liar around?" Cara asked in complete confusion.

Her mother laughed. "No, a l-y-r-e. It's kind of like a little harp. People used it to make music."

Cara grinned. "Oh. That makes more sense."

"It does indeed. And Urania was an astronomer. She knew everything there was to know about the stars and could tell people's fortunes based just on their birthdate and where the planets were. She usually had a compass and globe with her ... just in case she needed it. Together, the nine beautiful sisters were known as "The Mousai" or "The Muses" – and when they all sang together, it was said that the stars and the sea and the rivers all stood still to listen. And the gods had to take special precautions to make sure the mountains didn't swell all the way up to heaven just from the sheer pleasure of listening to them!"

Cara felt a twinge of jealousy. Would the whole wide world ever stand still and listen to her that way?

"But you know the best part about these sisters?"

Cara couldn't imagine anything being better than the whole world stopping to listen to your every word. "What?"

"Wherever they showed up, the people around them would 'catch' some of their talent. So when Terpsichore showed up, people felt like dancing. When Erato arrived, people would start writing the most beautiful love poems, and wherever Calliope was, people became natural storytellers. " Cara's mother grinned at the idea. "Needless to say,

they were very popular wherever they went. And a lot of people wanted to be just like them."

Cara could relate.

"And this is where the magpies come in. You see there was another family that had nine sisters, too. Their father, a man named Pierus, was very wealthy and he gave his daughters everything they wanted. But what they really wanted was to be just like the Mousai, the Muses. After all, they were nine sisters too, just like them. So they traveled around the country trying to do all the same things the Mousai sisters did. But nobody paid them any attention! And that made them really, really mad."

Cara knew the feeling. She hated it when people wouldn't pay attention to her.

"So finally, the nine sisters decided to just go straight to the Mousai and challenge them to a contest. And when they won the contest, that would prove to everybody that they were the prettiest, the smartest, the most talented, the superest of all."

Cara stared down at the ground, rolling an acorn around with her toe. She didn't say anything, but she had kind of a bad feeling about that idea.

"The sisters found the nine Muses sitting in the garden by their home, a beautiful garden with a stream running through it and benches made out of living stone. The sisters just marched right in, without even waiting to be invited, and challenged them to a contest. And they did not use nice voices either."

Her mother raised an eyebrow and looked down her nose at Cara in that look that only Mothers have. Cara wisely kept her mouth shut.

Cara's mother spoke in a bossy voice, mimicking the leader of the nine sisters: "You may charm the idiot rabble, but we're smarter than that. After all, we're nine in number just like you and we're smarter and prettier and more talented than you! If you think you're so great, then let's have a contest and let the Nymphs be the judge of who is the better. And whichever side loses has to leave this land forever!"

"Well," Cara's mother continued, "the Mousai didn't really want to get into a contest with these idiot sisters, but they couldn't just ignore a challenge like that either, so at last they decided that they'd just have one sister of each family perform. Each would tell a story and then the Nymphs would judge who was the better storyteller."

"But which sister?" Cara asked. She always wanted to be the one chosen whenever there was choosing to be done!

"Well, the nine sisters didn't even get a choice. The bossiest one of the group just appointed herself as the sister who would perform in the contest. But the Muse all talked

among themselves and chose Calliope to be their spokes-woman.

"The one with the fabulous stories? Who carried the writing tablet?"

"Right again. So the rest of the group all arranged themselves on the benches of the lovely garden, along with the Nymphs who'd been brought over to serve as the judges, and sat back to listen to the stories of the two. Calliope, who was always very polite, invited the other sister to go first – though she probably would have just gone first anyway because that's the kind of person she was."

Cara sneaked a peek at her mother's face. Yep. That Mother look again.

"The sister stood up and began to sing a story song about the great war between the gods and the giants. Only she didn't have very nice things to say about the gods. She made them all seem like cowards who ran away and hid in Egypt, concealing themselves from the giants by taking on the shapes of animals: a ram, a raven, a goat, a cat, a cow, a fish, and a bird called an ibis. And that – she said at the end of her story—is why the gods worshipped by the Egyptians seem very much like the gods of the Greeks, but have the heads of animals."

"I bet the Greek gods didn't like that story much," Cara said thoughtfully.

"You'd bet right," her mother said.

"So what story did Calliope tell?"

"She told the story of how Persephone met her husband Hades, the God of the Underworld and the compromise they worked out so that she could spend half the year in the underworld with him and half the year in our world with her mother, the Earth Goddess."

"I know that story!" Cara said with surprised delight at her insider's knowledge.

Her mother smiled. "Yes, you do. It's the story we tell every spring, the time of year when Persephone comes back to visit her mother and the world turns green and fruitful again."

Cara fidgeted a little on the log. "So who won?"

"Well," her mother said, "Calliope, of course. It wasn't even a contest. The Nymphs didn't like the fact that the sister had made up unkind things about their friends, the gods, and she was awfully bossy when she told her story. You know, the kind of bossy that made everyone who listened to her want to smack her?"

Cara nodded solemnly.

"On the other hand, Calliope's story had been wonderful. All who listened felt as if they'd been transported back in time and were actually living the story right along with Persephone. They cried with Demeter when she found her beloved daughter missing, they despaired with Persephone at being torn between two worlds. They felt themselves soaring across the sky with Apollo watching it all with careful eye and clapped with delight at the wily compromise developed by the brilliant and wise Hecate." Cara's mother nudged her shoulder and whispered, "Really, even the other sisters thought Calliope's story was better, though they would never have admitted it."

Cara giggled.

"So the Nymphs announced the obvious winner – the Muse Calliope – and the nine other sisters went crazy. They started complaining and whining, yelling and screeching about how they should have won because they were the prettiest and smartest and most talented and super-est of all until finally, even the patient and kind Muses had had enough. Calliope said, 'Is it not enough that your foolish challenge has earned you embarrassment? If you insist on behaving this way, you will only be earning punishment as well.' But the sisters just kept right on shouting and screeching and shaking their fists at the Mousai, sooo....right before their eyes, their fingers sprouted feathers!"

Cara gasped. "Feathers??"

"Yep. Feathers. And then their waving arms kind of blurred and morphed and turned into wings and their screeching pursed mouths hardened into beaks! They screeched even louder when they saw what was happening to them and beat their feathered wings against their chests in rage – and lo and behold, they wound up lifting themselves right off the ground and up into the air ...where the wind picked them up and carried them off into the forest. And do you know what people call those birds now?"

"What?" Cara asked wide-eyed.

"Magpies."

\* \* \*

Cara was quiet all the way home. When they reached their backyard, one of her friends was waiting.

"Cara, come on! I've been waiting for you. I'm sooo bored. Why don't you tell me one of your stories?"

Cara glanced up at her mom, then back at the woods, then chewed on her lip for a bit. Then she said, "I have a better idea. How about we make up a story together?" Her hesitation disappeared as the idea took root and she grinned. 'C'mon, it'll be fun! I'll help you."



"Really? Cool!" her friend said, eyes lighting up at the novel idea.

As the two girls ran ahead into the house, Cara's mother smiled and tipped her head to the pretty, shimmering lady standing just out of sight. The lady gave her a smile and a wink in return, then tucked her writing tablet firmly under her arm, and shimmered out of sight.

*Cat Ky Crone is a caffeine-addicted W4 student and 50-something attorney living in the Missouri heartland. A self-described lousy gardener with minimal psychic skills, she may not fit the typical profile of a good witch, but the lady can manifest most anything she works for and Hecate seems to think she has potential, at least when the two of them are not arguing.*

# The Dragon and the King

by **Kurt Hunter**

This story takes place in a realm further than the distant stars, yet closer than our own hearts' beating.

In an idyllic land lived a wise and benevolent ruler, King Kieron. His lands were prosperous and his rule kindly and just. His people loved him, and he cared for his realm as well as any ruler could be asked. But one day his scouts approached him and told of a monstrous and terrible Dragon which had been ravaging distant lands and was now coming here. Kieron's kingdom was peaceful and his guard modest—surely no match for the Dragon!

So the King consulted his wisest adviser, an old seeress whose far-reaching vision saw both past and future. And she said to him that there were all of three people alive who had survived this Dragon. He should seek each of them out, and learn how they had prepared and succeeded. And so Kieron set off at once to seek their counsel.

The first man lived in a great old fortress at the edge of a forbidding forest. He was a proud warrior, still vital even though he carried the scars of battle and had lost his hands.

"The Dragon threatens my Kingdom," said the King. "Will you tell me how you bested it?"

And the man told him of a fantastic struggle lasting three days. At the end he was exhausted, and the Dragon opened its mighty jaws to finally devour him, but he stabbed it in the back of the throat with his spear. The Dragon retreated, but alas, took the warriors hands as well.

"So I give you this," the warrior said, "with which I fought that Dragon, but now cannot hold a weapon again."

Thanking him, the King sought out the second man, who lived on a large farm at the end of a lush valley. And he asked him how he had managed to survive the Dragon.

The man was so deeply stricken he could barely speak of it, but told of a cunning chase where he cleverly avoided the dragon and outwitted it for five days as it searched for him. Finally the Dragon flew away, but not before it ate his wife and children in anger.

"So you see," cried the cunning man, "that I lost that which was most precious to me because I hid from that Dragon."

King Kieron was so troubled by these tales that he almost did not seek out the third man, but he knew he must. He lived in a dark and lonely cave, far from all others. His clothes were ragged, and he was stricken by poverty.

"If it would please you, for you look to have suffered much," said the King, "can you tell me your tale of facing the Dragon?"

The man said that he was once a wealthy merchant who had great riches. When the Dragon came to him, he so feared it that he offered up all his possessions. For nine days he gathered his things and placed them before the dragon, begging it to spare his life. And so the Dragon did, taking everything the man had worked for all his life.

"This is how I survived," said the poor man, "by surrendering everything to appease that Dragon!"

Then the King returned to his city to ponder these tales and wait. Each one had sacrificed something dear to him that he might survive. Finally the Dragon came before Kieron and stared at him, preparing to brush him aside unless the King could give it pause or reason not to.

And this may be where you think you know how the story ends, for is it not the duty of all good Kings to sacrifice themselves for the continuance of their kingdoms? The Dragon glared down at the King and asked him if he offered his life in exchange for the lives of his people.

And Kieron said, "You know that I do, mighty Dragon. And if it is your wish, let it be so. But what I offer you is what none other have."

And the Dragon wondered what it was that this man could give, so rare that it had never been offered before.

"Only my thanks," King Kieron said simply. "For you have taught me that there are some things that cannot be fought, or hidden from, or surrendered to. I would welcome you for this wisdom."

And so, as best he could, the King loved that Dragon.

And the Dragon, for its part, accepted this sacrifice. And it flew up, up into the sky, returning to that place beyond the furthest stars, which lies closer than our own hearts' beating.

*Kurt Hunter began his interest in the occult as a child in the 70's and was initiated into coven-based Wicca in 1990. He is an active Georgian Elder and is also studying within the Temple of Witchcraft. Kurt works as a professional counselor and clinical supervisor and is an avid stone collector, photographer and cat whisperer. He presently lives in Portland, OR.*

## The Blood Tree

*By Rayna Hamre*

The beauty of the ocean once called a gentle people to its side. It was a warm place, a beautiful place, with plenty of food, some rain, and enough to sustain all who lived there. They could hear the whispers of the water and the land around them; they knew how to listen and to speak with the rocks, plants and animals, with the fish and the sea itself.

Alas, this idyllic life was not to last. Their shaman warned them that something was going to happen, something very powerful and devastating to the tribe. The people did not believe it, but went about their business of fishing, gathering, and trading with villages nearby.

One day the people saw outsiders walking toward their village. The strangers were tired, and some of them were injured. The villagers helped those who were hurt and listened to their stories. Men had come, they said, soldiers and holy men who spoke of a new god, the only god, they claimed. They required the people to bow to their god, and if they did not, they killed them. They enslaved the people and forced them to turn over the fish they caught and the food they gathered. If they did not do this, they were killed.

The people of the village became very worried as they listened to the stories. To make things more difficult, some of the strangers were ill and burned with a fever that could not be cured. After a few days, these people died. Then some of the villagers became sick. The shaman tried to extract the illness from the sick, but he was not successful. The shaman tried to talk to the spirits, but there was only

silence. People continued to grow ill, and then the villagers began to die.

Soldiers and holy men marched into the village. The people were grieving and some were weak from the fever and unable to resist the armed soldiers. The soldiers and new holy men separated the men and the women of the hamlet, telling them that the males would work hard, and the females would work separately. They said it was not right for them to work together, and that the soldiers would protect the women. But at night the soldiers would take the women from the women's house and rape them, laugh at them and do what they wanted. The holy men of the new god could not stop what was happening at night.

Before long, most of the villagers had died from disease and broken hearts. A few were able to run away to the mountains, and to keep the old ways alive.

Many years after these events, a little girl who was descended from the soldiers and newcomers sat under one of the ancient trees that the villagers had revered in the time long before. This little girl was different from the other children. This girl knew how to listen like the people of the first tribe. She listened and watched the plants and insects, and she spoke to the animals. She spent many hours alone, listening and watching the living things around her.

So when the Tree first spoke to her, she could hear it. Its leaves whispered the story of the first people, of those who could listen to the earth and speak with the plants and animals. She listened and understood. Then she heard the sighs of those who had died, and she saw the blood that had spilled in this beautiful place that she and her family called home. It made her so sad that she could not see a way to ever be happy again. She would go to the Tree every day and weep with the spirits of the dead villagers.

As she wept with a despair that could go no deeper, the base of the Tree opened up. She stood up and walked down into its gnarled dark passageway. The path wound down and took her to the land of the Earth Spirits.

She reached the end of the path, and curled up in the black chamber of the Earth Spirits, in the dark silence. Time stood still—there was no night or day, past or present—and she lay in the darkness, embraced by the great quiet. The Earth Spirits began to speak; they told her that she must learn their ways, the ways of the Earth, to be able to heal the sadness that had befallen the land she called home. The girl stayed with the Spirits for what seemed like a long time. When it was time to return, she thanked the Spirits and walked up the passageway to the base of the great Tree.

She thought for a long time about how to accomplish the Tree's charge to her.



First she went to the descendants of those villagers who had hidden in the hills so long ago. But their hearts were still angry, and they would not speak to her. She understood, for many of the descendants of the soldiers were still filled with blind arrogance. Although she was disappointed, she left them alone.

She then looked to the wise people of her own tribe. She searched out wisdom from long ago, and found the teachings of the lands across the great seas. She traveled to the land of her ancestors and felt their presence. She studied and practiced their Earth wisdom, and her heart began to heal. She found that her ability to listen to the plants and animals and to walk between the worlds had come from her tribe, too.

After this, she began to search out the wise people from the tribes around her, and her net reached farther and farther as she searched for the wisest people of the world. She knew that she would play her part in this great web of wisdom and that sharing this wisdom was important work, her work.

She went back to the Tree and asked the Tree how best to serve, how to bring the wisdom of the rocks and trees and animals back to those who had closed their hearts and who had forgotten how to walk between the worlds.

The wise Tree said, "Look inside, and you will know. If you are ever unsure, go to the land of being, look into your heart and mind, and bravely use what you have learned. Do this and you will never stray from your true path."

Today her hair is gray, and she has never, ever strayed from that path. She is a wise woman of the world tribe, and she teaches and shares her healing with all who need her wisdom.

*Rayna Hamre is an eclectic witch who lives in Huntington Beach, CA. She is the founder of Moon Tree Coven and writes for the Southern California Pagan Newswire Collective. She holds an MA in history and enjoys traveling to sacred sites in Europe with her husband, Stephen.*

## Initiation

by *Hunter*

"I will look upon every circumstance of my life as a *particular dealing of God with my soul*." (Rosicrucian Vow)

"Stupid bitch."

Ben opened his eyes. "Damn. Three states away and they're still in my head." He looked at the clock in the console. Twelve minutes. He took a deep breath and closed his eyes again. The deep breath brought to him plastic, leather and cheap freshener – the unmistakable scent of a rental car, not unpleasant, really.

Nothing...nothing. He'd think of nothing. He'd clear his mind and enjoy this space. This emptiness — a chosen emptiness. A valuable emptiness — one specifically entered into consciously for this purpose, here and now. An emptiness completely unlike the emptiness of mind that is usually experienced by the uninitiated as mind chatter — the mind numbing mental crap that floats through the lower manas-mind of the herd mentality slaves. Those mass-minded people like the ones he worked with. Ugh, the shit they talked about all day, every day. Their sons, daughters, grandkids, politics, sports! Anything and everything to distract them from living a deep life, like Pavlov's dog. Totally stimulus-response. Animals. Not even human, really. Just living life as

if they were driving down a highway reacting to every stupid billboard they passed by and commenting on each one. That was their life. Constant distraction.

The worst of them all was that stupid bitch Peggy. Of course she sat right across from him at work five freaking feet away where he could hear every single stupid syllable she uttered. None of them deserved his spit. They had no idea who they sat in the presence of. How could they? They wouldn't be on the Path for incarnations to come. They were pond sludge. They had no idea of the magician's Path. Peggy. Peggy. Peggy with her inane constant jabber and fake pleasantness sprinkled with typical Christian bullshit as she talked about church and her feeble notion of God with the other ladies nearby. She was like a little three-year-old. He should magick her away. He should manifest her leaving the job. He deserved a more enlightened workday. He didn't deserve to be surrounded by such unevolved idiots. He didn't deserve to sit right by that stupid bitch.

Ben opened his eyes again. "Damn, my thoughts really won't calm down." He looked at the clock on the console again. Eight minutes. They'd be coming for him soon. He picked up the rose from the passenger seat next to him, held its blossom to his nose, and inhaled deeply. The rental car smell was only barely noticeable through the delicious rose scent. He'd picked a nice one: deep crimson, perfectly formed, and with a strong perfume. He set it gently back down on the passenger seat.

“Ah well, it’s just ‘cause I’m excited. It’s no wonder my thoughts are racing. This is an important advancement ceremony,” he told himself. This was his path — The Path. The Path of Return, and he was to be initiated to a new sphere on the Tree today, in a matter of minutes. He’d been a member of this Lodge for three years now and had made good progress spiritually. He’d begun to master his mind, to act consciously in all circumstances, and had manifested some pretty exciting things through magick. Now he’d flown three states to his Lodge’s headquarters for this ritual acknowledging his progress. This would be a good day. It would be his day. A day someone like Peggy and the idiots at work could never know.

Ben looked out the open driver-side window and smiled. It had to be around sixty-nine degrees with a light breeze, and above it all, the bluest sky he’d ever seen. Of course this was Southern California, so the great weather was really no surprise, but it seemed like the day had been crafted just for him.

He looked at the clock again. Three minutes! Man, the time was really flying and the ceremony was about to begin. He felt a flurry of butterflies in his stomach and took another deep breath to try to calm himself. He looked up the slight hill past the parking lot to the Masonic Lodge building. No one coming yet.

He’d parked away from the other cars in the lot when he arrived. He’d been told that the ceremony would begin at two PM, and that he should make sure to arrive with plenty of time to spare and to wait meditatively in his car until summoned. He wanted his greeter to have some idea where he was, and he thought the lone car parked off by itself would give the greeter a clue. Not that there were that many cars in the lot. Occultism is never about huge numbers of people.

The Masonic Lodge building was, like all Masonic Lodge buildings, a fossil. He wondered if the Masons who rented the space to his group even knew the intensity of the work being done in their building. They couldn’t — Masons were mere vestigial organs of occultism today. Ninety-nine percent of them had no working knowledge of real occultism or magick. Their gatherings had degenerated into a social club.

Ben closed his eyes once more and felt the breeze blow through the open window and across his brow. Wonderful. It had been a long hard, winter back home, and the California spring was just what he needed for a sense of spiritual renewal. Eyes still closed, he thought more about the Freemasons. About the Rosicrucian Brotherhood. About occultism. About the long tradition of which he was now a part. He thought about the “Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz” and the power of allegory. He thought about the “Emerald Tablet” — he wondered if he still had it mem-

orized. He hadn’t had to recite it for Lodge in over a year. He thought about the Rosicrucian vow: “I will look upon every circumstance of my life as a *particular dealing of God with my soul*” from the Fama Fraternitatis. That was the big one.

“Every circumstance of my life...” he muttered. Those words were so deep and meant so much. The vow meant seeing all of life through the lens of the Divine, rather than merely allowing our personality to interpret the people and events of our lives. These were the occult basics. Today’s ritual would show that he’d mastered them and was ready to move on.

“I come in the name of the rose.”

The woman’s voice startled him. His greeter had arrived! He opened his eyes and saw through his peripheral vision a figure standing directly outside his car door. Without turning his head to the figure, he could see that she held a single red rose. He smiled and picked up his rose again, rolling up the electric window at the same time, then got up and out of the car. He closed and locked the door, and, holding his rose up, turned to face his greeter. There before him stood Peggy.

All the air around him seemed to disappear, as if he were suddenly in a vacuum. He stared at her dumbfounded, unable to speak. Peggy simply stood, holding her rose. That rose. As deep and red as his own he held — the very token and sign he’d been told to bring so that his Initiator would recognize him, and so that he would recognize his Initiator. As he stared at her, he saw that her eyes held steady with a calm knowing, and he beheld a depth to her gentle smile that he’d never seen before. Peggy said nothing more. She merely turned and walked through the parking lot toward the hill and the lodge building. Ben somehow managed through stumbling steps to follow her, and he knew suddenly one thing for certain — one thing only. One thing that seemed to erase everything else he thought he’d known prior to moments before. He knew that he knew nothing, and had oh so much to learn.

*Hunter is currently a fourth-year student of the Temple and is a deputy minister in the Sagittarius ministry.*



# Green Travel

*By Howling Hill*

While our ancestors may have moved around because of political discord, famine, drought, or for the excitement of seeing something new, we'll never truly know. What we do know is humans are terrible at staying in one place. If we were good at it, we never would've colonized the planet.

From sea to shining sea, the places we've been have left their marks on us. When we return home (if we return home), we speak of our travels, and adventures. We speak of the taste of the food and drink, the smell of the air, the rivers, lakes, deserts and trees. We speak of far off places that make our friends and families want to travel to those same destinations to share our experiences and to create their own.

So how can we travel in a manner that is less harmful to Mother Earth?

**Use public transportation as much as possible.** Before visiting an urban area, Google to see what public transportation options are available. Pick your accommodations by the proximity to public transportation and the sites you want to visit. Check for bicycle shares, like The Hubway in Boston, as a way to expand your travels in an urban area; plus it's a great way to get some exercise.

**Rent a hybrid car if you must rent a car.** Hybrids save a lot on gas and open up those suburban/rural areas public transportation do not service. Bring your bicycle, or rent one from a local bike shop, for the same reasons above.

**Rent a cottage or cabin instead of a hotel room.** Staying at the beach or in the woods? Rent a cottage or cabin. Hav-

ing the ability to cook your own food allows you to buy only the groceries you need so you're eliminating waste. It also keeps your costs down by not having to eat out every single meal. Tenting is also a great way to lower costs and feed yourself while sleeping on Mother Earth.

**Eat local foods.** Many restaurants have become aware of how important local foods are to the economy. Choose eateries that specialize in local products. This supports the farmers and fisher people in the area you are visiting (no matter how urban!). It reduces carbon footprints, and allows you to taste the local yummys that are in season. Also, seek out farmer's markets year-round, to stock your kitchenette with seasonal products. You'll be connected to the economy and the people in a way going to McDonald's does not allow.

*Howling Hill lives in New Hampshire with her husband, Wolf, and their two cats. She writes about her adventures on her blog, [HowlingHill.wordpress.com](http://HowlingHill.wordpress.com), on how to green up your life on [TheGreenists.com](http://TheGreenists.com), and a combination of the two on [Nature.PaganNewsWireCollective.com](http://Nature.PaganNewsWireCollective.com). You can friend her on Facebook and like her Authoress page, and get her tweets @howlinghill.*

# The Apple Tree of Avalon

*By Christopher Penczak*

In August of 2011, members of the Temple of Witchcraft went on a spiritual pilgrimage with the Temple founders to Glastonbury England. We explored sites such as Stonehenge, the Roman Baths, Cadbury Castle, the Chalice Well and the Tor, on a fun, deep and transformative journey across the western lands of England so sacred to the traditions of Witchcraft. We stayed in the retreat house linked with the Chalice Well Foundation, experiencing rituals and classes privately in the garden at night.

Glastonbury is associated with Avalon, the magical Isle of Apples found in Arthurian Myth. Avalon is considered to be a powerful intersection of magical forces — human, faery and divinity. It is a functioning gateway between our world and the realm of spirit, and has much history, lore and myth. Those who walk Glastonbury's streets often feel like they turn a corner and are in the otherworld, stepping out of time and space. I know the first time I visited, I felt like I was walking three inches off the ground at all times.

Avalon has had many names and depictions in folklore and history. The Welsh called it Ynys Gutrin, or the Isle of Glass. “Islands of Glass” or “Castle of Glass” implied the spirit nature of the place, invisible but present all around if you look at it in the right way. It is also associated with

Caer Sidi, thought of as the Revolving Castles of the Otherworld, Faeries or Stars, which could point to stellar associations with the island, and today, the Tor of Glastonbury. Another Welsh name for it is Ynys Afallach, the Isle of Apples, later known as Insula Pomorum. The Saxons called the invisible island Glastingebury, which later became the familiar Glastonbury. The name Affalon is perhaps more appropriate, coming from Affal, the world for Apple in Welsh, until it later transformed into Avalon or Avalonia. Apples are primarily a food of the otherworld, being both red and white, two sacred colors to the spirits of the faery realm. The five-pointed star of seeds in the apple links it to the traditions of Witchcraft and magick, and the silver branch that is considered the key to entry into the otherworld bears bell-like apple fruits.

Avalon is also associated with the Welsh Otherworld or Underworld, a land of both the dead and the faerie hosts, Annwn. In the Mabinogi cycle of stories, Annwn is ruled by Arawn, who later changes positions with Pywll. Annwn is depicted as the fabled Neo-pagan Summerlands, the place of milk, honey and enchantment. To many, Avalon is a western cognate to the Eastern mythic cities of masters, such as Shamballa, Shangri-La and Agartha.

The island of apples is also called “The Fortunate Isle.” It gets its name from the fact that it produces all things of itself; the fields have no need of ploughs from the farmers, and all cultivation is lacking except what nature provides. Of its own accord, it produces grain and grapes, and apple trees grow in its woods from the close-clipped grass. On its own, the ground produces everything instead of merely grass, and people live there a hundred years or more.

The village of Glastonbury is said to be the physical expression of Avalon. At one time, the village was most likely surrounded by water, with only a small land bridge connecting it to the shore, giving rise to the lake imagery.

The high priestess of Avalon is Morgana. Morgana Le Fey is the popular villain in the modern renditions of the Arthurian tales. Portrayed as Arthur's half-sister and sometimes lover, she is usually seen trying to bring about the downfall of Camelot for her own ends. The origin of Morgana actually lies in the Lady of the Lake. Several characters seem to be drawn from one archetypal image of a healer and shape shifter living on a blessed isle, with her eight sisters. Figures like Vivian and Nimue are drawn from that one simple image found in the classic writings of Geoffrey of Monmouth's work on King Arthur and Merlin. The Morgana figure becomes the dark side of feminine power, feared and demonized by the newer stories. Originally she was a simple healer, a magick woman, a priestess who accepts King Arthur onto her island to heal him. Her original description is found in *The Life of Merlin* by Geoffrey of Monmouth:

“There, nine sisters rule by a pleasing set of laws those who come to them from our country. She who is first of them is more skilled in the healing arts, and excels her sisters in the beauty of her person. Morgen is her name, and she has learned what useful properties all the herbs contain, so that she can cure sick bodies. She also knows an art by which to change her shape, and to cleave the air on new wings like Daedalus; when she wishes she is at Brest, Chartres, or Pavia, and when she will she slips down from the air onto your shores. And men say that she has taught mathematics to her sisters, Moronoe, Mazoe, Gliten, Glitonea, Gliton, Tyronoe, Thitis; Thitis best known for her cither.

Thither after the battle of Camlan we took the wounded Arthur, guided by Barinthus to whom the waters and the stars of heaven were well known. With him steering the ship we arrived there with the prince, and Morgen received us with fitting honour, and in her chamber she placed the king on a golden bed and with her own hand she uncovered his honourable wound and gazed at it for a long time. At length



she said that health could be restored to him if he stayed with her for a long time and made use of her healing art. Re-joining, therefore, we entrusted the king to her and returning spread our sails to the favouring winds.” — *The Life of Merlin*

The following vision working is a transcript from one of our evening rituals in the garden, under the Apple Tree of the Chalice Well Garden.

### Apple Tree Working

Start by breathing deeply. Relax the muscles in your head and your neck. Relax the muscles in your shoulders and your arms. Relax the chest and the back, the belly and the waist, the hips and the thighs, the knees and the calves, the ankles and feet. Feel waves of relaxation

flow through your body. Relaxing your body, becoming one with the land, one with this beautiful tree, sheltering us and providing us with this sacred space. Clear your mind of all unwanted thought. Open your heart. Feel the love of the divine beating in your heart. Feel the gateway of life and death that is within your heart, like the five-petaled flower, the blossom of the apple, like the five-seed star within its heart. And within that heart, find like the spark of a candle, the light of the divine that shall guide you and protect you in all things and in all ways. We call to the Goddess, we call to the God, we call to the Great Spirit to guide and protect us in all ways.

As I count from twelve to one, go deeper with me to a magickal world, relaxing and aligning the self. 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1. You are now in a magickal state of consciousness where all is possible. Feel your own heartbeat, the iron in your blood connecting to the iron of the Isle of Avalon, the red spring. Go deeper with me: 13, 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1. You are now at a deeper state where all is possible. You feel yourself becoming one with the

land, one with the roots of the sacred apple tree, Quert. We call upon the spirit of the apple, of Quert; we call upon the spirit of the apple, the sacred tree of the Ogham, Quert. We ask for your guidance and protection and offer our thanks and blessing; may you always grow green, may your apples grow red and large and healthy.

We call to the Morgan of the Apple Isle. We call to thee, Morgan of the Apple Isle. We call to thee, Dark Lady of the Apple Isle, Affalon.

Morgan, Moronoe, Mazoe, Gliten, Glitonea, Gliton, Tyronoe, Thiten, Thetis.

Morgan, Moronoe, Mazoe, Gliten, Glitonea, Gliton, Tyronoe, Thiten, Thetis.

Morgan, Moronoe, Mazoe, Gliten, Glitonea, Gliton, Tyronoe, Thiten, Thetis.

We call to the nine sisters.

Morgana of the Waters

Morgana of the Isle

Morgana of the Faery Folks

Open the Way to the healing waters

Open the Way to the flow

Open the Way to the Mysteries

That dwell deep below.

Morgan of the Nine Sisters

Chief among them all

Stand in the center

Of the Wheel of Eight Spokes

And stand tall.

Moronoe stands at the Western Gate

Bearing the fruits of the land.

Mazoe stands at the gates of life and death

Sickle in her hand.

Gliten rides the summer waves

Calling the creatures of the deep

Glitonea works the straw loom

As we sow we shall reap

Gliton holds the fire

From the Star of the East

Tyronoe walks the North Star Road

And prepares the solstice feast.

Thiten prepares the baby's bed

Fit for the sleeping king

Thetis kindles the fires of Bel

For all to dance and sing.

Morgana of the Waters

Morgana of the Isle

Morgana of the Faery Folks

Keeper of the Mysteries

Keeper of the King and Child.

We welcome you. We welcome you. We welcome you.

Feel yourself descending deep into the mysteries. Descending deep into the land around you. Descending deep into the waters that flow beneath the land, around and from the Tor. Become one with the flow, one with the waters, one with the land. Flow into the deep as if you are skating upon glass. Flow with the deep as if you are approaching the isle. The mists shall part and the Isle of Apples is before, around and within you. Commune, commune commune with the sisters of the Isle. What work do we have together?

Ask any final questions you have of the nine sisters, whoever has greeted you in whatever form. With the rustling of the leaves you know it's time to return from your journey whence you came. Come back the way you came. Come back through the waters and the Earth, back through the blood and the spirit. Come back. Come back. Come back. Come back. Come back. Come back. Back and rise up. Flesh and blood, breath and bone. Come back 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13. Feel your flesh and blood, breath and bone. Wiggle your finger and toes as we come up 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12. Take a moment to ground yourself as we thank the spirit of this great tree, the Apple, keeper of the mysteries, fruit of immortality, blessings of life and

death. We thank you and bless you. We thank all the spirits and power of Avalon, Morgan chief among them all, sitting in the center of the Eight-Spoked Wheel, sitting in the center as the fate, the loom, turns around her.

Blessed be. Blessed be. Blessed be.

(The article is an excerpt from *The Waters and Fires of Avalon* by Christopher Penczak and the Temple of Witchcraft Community, a forthcoming book through Copper Cauldron Publishing in 2012 that is a fundraiser for the Temple of Witchcraft. All profits go towards the Temple of Witchcraft to support its goals in education, community service and a land fund.)

*Christopher Penczak is the co-founder of the Temple of Witchcraft, as well as an author, teacher and healing practitioner. He draws upon the foundation of both modern and traditional Witchcraft blended with the wisdom of the mystical traditions from across the globe in his own quest for understanding, wisdom and compassion. More information can be found at [www.christopherpenczak.com](http://www.christopherpenczak.com) and [www.templeofwitchcraft.org](http://www.templeofwitchcraft.org).*

## Claim Truth

*By Shea Morgan*

Truth: what is it really?

A two-edged Sword

Blade straight as the crow flies

Or curved where the road lies

Sharp blade or dull

Sweet-talking lull

Voice sharp as knives

With loud voice does it cry

Shake the foundations

Or shore up the walls

Whose voice does it speak?

What words it belies?

Fears covered deep

Wounds yet to weep

Freedom from all

Hearing your call

The voice that it whispers

Whose truth there does glimmer

Your Will or theirs

Your soul to bare

Words without flame

Words without blame

Truth speaks itself

Will the Truth you dare claim?

*Shea Morgan is a Witchcraft IV student with a 20+ year career in government/public affairs. She is a voracious reader and student of all things spiritual and has been on the path of a Witch since 2001. She lives in St. Louis, MO with her two cats, and enjoys gardening, antiquing, hanging out with coven, friends and family, and visiting the family "century" farm.*



# The Acorn and the Wind

*By Stevie Grant*

Young Acorn lived on Old Oak Tree  
Whose leaves turned brown and gold.  
When Wind blew hard, the leaves did flee  
And left poor Acorn cold.

She pressed against the swinging bough.  
“I’ll stay at home,” said she.  
Oak Tree, her mother, said, “Go now.  
Your fortune you must see.”

Gruff wind shook Acorn shivering  
And, with one furious gust,  
Tossed Acorn spinning, quivering,  
Into the grass and dust.

Scared Acorn said to Grass, “Oh, no!  
Cold Wind did make me fall.  
Are you afraid to feel it blow  
And chase you like a ball?”

Then Grass said, “No. Our roots unseen  
Cling under brown moist ground,  
While sunbeams spread to make us green  
And warm us without sound.”

Said Acorn, “If I were a worm,  
I’d wiggle down a hole.  
But I’m so round and smooth and firm,  
I can’t do more than roll.”

A robin hopped and stopped nearby  
And folded up each feather.  
So Acorn asked him, “Do you shy  
Away from windy weather?”

“It helps me fly,” the robin said.  
“In oak tree lies my nest.”  
To catch a worm, he bounced his head  
And puffed up his red breast.

He waved good-bye and soared on high.  
A squirrel took his place.  
She picked up Acorn by and by  
And stuffed her in her face.

She scurried onto Old Oak Tree  
And climbed upon the bark.  
But much as Acorn tried to see,  
She traveled in the dark.

The squirrel spit poor Acorn out  
Into her packing hole  
With other nuts piled all about  
As if within a bowl.

“How warm!” said Acorn. “And I’m home!  
Is this my destiny?  
Cold Wind can’t catch me. I won’t roam.  
Your friendship’s best for me.”

“But she will eat us,” came the cry.  
“We’ll never sprout and grow,  
For Squirrel needs her strength to try  
To make it through the snow.

We welcome you,” the nuts agreed,  
“But go if you can go.  
We’ll feed the squirrel, but one seed  
Must sprout from down below.”

And back and forth they rolled and pushed  
Till Acorn reached the ledge.  
Gruff Wind huffed near and puffed  
and whooshed.  
Cold, Acorn cleared the edge.

Down, down she fell but did not crack  
Upon the soft, warm earth.  
It wrapped her like a down-filled sack.  
She slept in her new birth.

Did Acorn sleep a day, a week?  
She did not know how long.  
She woke to see green grasses peek  
And heard the robin’s song.

“It’s spring!” chirped Robin. “Without doubt  
You’ve sprouted tiny leaves.”  
The leaves grew greener, up and out,  
Whish, swishing in the breeze.

And roots clung under brown moist ground.  
Her leaves soaked rain and sun.  
Her trunk stretched high, grew strong  
and round,  
Till summer’s fun was done.

As leaves turned gold, new acorns grew  
On Young Oak Tree’s big bough.  
Cold Wind puffed gruffly. How it blew!  
Young Oak Tree thanked it now.

*Stevie Grant is a high priestess and ordained minister of the Temple of Witchcraft and serves in several of its ministries. She and her husband Mark grow large exotic gourds at their home in the Pacific Northwest and transform them into magickally inspired gourd art. Inquiries about their business may be made at [artinthecraft@aol.com](mailto:artinthecraft@aol.com).*

# Magical Tips for Travelers

by *Leslie Hugo*

For most of my 20-year career, I have held positions that required extensive travel. Whether you are flying or driving, traveling for a few days or a few weeks, this guide should give you some tips to make your trip more comfortable and magickal!

If you are flying, there are several tips I highly recommend:

- The night before, or the morning of the flight, take some time to meditate with the Air Elementals. Burn some incense, or make another appropriate offering, and request their aid for a smooth flight.
- When you get to the airport and get settled in your seat on the plane, take a deep breath, close your eyes, and connect with the spirit of the airplane. I have found that every plane has its own distinct “personality.” One plane I flew on had a very strong feeling of duty to protect the passengers that flew on her.
- Next, take a moment to visualize a bubble of white light of protection surrounding the plane.
- If you did not have the time to connect with the Air Elementals before your flight, now is the time to do so. You can also take this time to set the intention to have a safe, smooth, uneventful flight. Visualize the plane landing safely at your destination, and you walking off the plane to reclaim your luggage and heading out to wherever your flight has taken you!
- If while flying, your plane does experience some turbulence, close your eyes and enter into a meditative state. Expand your consciousness out in front of the plane, and visualize the air smoothing out. I like to picture a giant hand, smoothing out the air far in front of the plane.

If you are driving your own car, or picking up a rental car at your destination, you can use these quick tips:

- Spritz the car with a clearing and protective blend of essential oils.
- Before driving, connect with the spirit of the car and request safe travel.
- Visualize a bubble of white protective light surrounding the vehicle.

Once you have arrived at your destination, whether it is a hotel or someone’s home, you can use the following tips to make your stay more like home:

- Set up a small travel altar. I use a 4 x 4 inch jewelry box with foam in it. It contains a small Quan Yin statue, and 4 small stone animals, my totems for the 4 directions, plus a small pewter wolf, my totem of protection. I sometimes include crystals, stones and herbs, if they will be needed for any ritual work I might be doing while I am there. I then wrap the jewelry box in a small colored altar cloth, themed for the time of Wheel of the Year we are in.
- If you are in a hotel or someplace where you are not able to light a candle, bring a small bottle of sage or cedar essential oil spritz, to clear the space of the room you will be sleeping in. Other essential oils can be added to the blend, for protection, joy, peace and sleep. My favorite blend contains Sage, Lavender and Rosemary.
- Shortly after arriving, take a moment to connect with the spirit of the land and the building where you are staying. Introduce yourself, and request a peaceful visit. You may also choose to leave an offering for the spirits of the place near your altar. I often leave fresh flowers or candy.
- Before leaving my hotel room for the day, I draw a pentagram in the air over the door, and set the intention that no one shall enter the room who means harm to myself or to my personal belongings, for as long as I am checked into the hotel.
- If you choose to bring herbs or stones for each day of the week, you can keep them in one of those 7-day pill carriers, the kind that have the days of the week imprinted on each slot. Then you can place one stone or herb in each slot, corresponding to each day of the week.

May the Goddess walk with you and may your travels be Magickal!

*Leslie Hugo is a Priestess in the Temple of Witchcraft and practices a shamanistic approach to Witchcraft. She has been traveling for most of her 20-year career in Field Engineering. She is also active with her local CUUPs group in Utah.*

# Beltane Celebration of the Cup and the Sword

by *Shea Morgan*

At this magickal time of Beltane, as it is at Samhain, the veil between the three worlds is *thin*. In this ritual, we unite the three worlds as one and stand together in the mists of Avalon, grasping the hands of our partners in the three worlds. We reach out to the Archangels in the Upperworld, the Hidden Company in the Middleworld and the Fey in the Underworld, as together, we turn the Wheel of the Year.

We honor the Divine Union of the God and Goddess, celebrating the Great Rite. We channel the creative power of the Divine Union of the Goddess and her Cup of Compassion, with the God and his Sword of Truth, to bring our goals to fruition. We know that our True Will is manifest as a part of the divine creative force that lies within us and all things.

The vision for this ritual comes from my journeys during the Temple of Witchcraft's pilgrimage to Glastonbury, to the heart of Avalon itself. The ritual is written for a coven working, though it may be adapted to a solitary Sabbat celebration. As part of the rite, we call on the Three Rays of Witchcraft, as inspired by the work of Christopher Penczak and the teachings of the Temple of Witchcraft. Blessed Beltane to all.

Start off the ritual by cleansing each other and the ritual space before casting the circle.

## *Casting the Circle:*

We cast this circle in the depths of the Underworld, with the Divine Feminine, the white light of Lady Datura, glowing strong and bright, lighting our path in the Underworld, and in all Three Worlds, as they are One.

We cast this circle in the expanse of the Middleworld, with the Divine Masculine, the golden light of the Lord of Yarrow, growing thick, protecting us in the Middle World, and in all Three Worlds, as they are One.

We cast this circle in the vastness of the Upperworld, with the Divine Spirit, the violet light of the Spirit of Lavender, lifting us on our path in the Upperworld, and in all Three Worlds, as they are One.

The circle is cast. We are between the worlds.

## *Invoking the Three Rays of Witchcraft:*

We invoke the Three Rays of Power, Love and Wisdom.

We invoke the Red Ray, the Straight Line. The Red Flaming Spear of our Wills and our Souls, calling the Power of the Archangels and the Angels, enflaming our True Wills, empowering this rite.

We invoke the Blue Ray, the Bent Line. The Blue Faery Flame, spiraling freely with the Fire of Love and Passion, bringing Perfect Love and Perfect Trust, filling the Cauldron of our Souls and this rite.

We invoke the Yellow Ray, the Crooked Line. The Yellow Lightning Strike of Wisdom and Cunning, knowledge of the Hidden Company, sparking the flame of this rite and the Wisdom of our Souls.

So mote it be!

## *Quarter Calls:*

Hail Guardian of the Watchtower of the North Power of Earth, Keeper of the Stone.

We call to the Stone of Sovereignty that lies within each of us.

As rulers of our own lives, makers of our own way, we call to the stalwart strength of the mineral kingdom that lies within.

We ask you to join our circle this Beltane night.

May the Full Moon's light glisten upon the Sovereignty of our Souls.

Hail and Welcome!

Hail Guardian of the Watchtower of the East Power of Fire, Keeper of the Spear.

We call to the Spear of Destiny that lies within each of us.

As creators of our destiny, blazing the path of our True Wills, we call to the passion and energy of the fiery kingdom that lies within.

We ask you to join our circle this Beltane night.

May the intensity of the Full Moon's light spark the Will of our Souls.

Hail and Welcome!

Hail Guardian of the Watchtower of the South Power of Air, Keeper of the Sword.

We call to the Sword of Truth that lies within each of us.

As speakers of the word, creating our world with the might of the Sword, we call to the cunning and inspiration of the kingdom of wisdom that lies within.



We ask you to join our circle this Beltane night.

May the glint of the Full Moon's light sharpen the Truth of our Souls.

Hail and Welcome!

Hail Guardian of the Watchtower of the West Power of Water, Keeper of the Cup.

We call to the Cup of Compassion that lies within each of us.

As cauldrons of Perfect Love, the cups of our Three Souls, we call to the Perfect Love of the kingdom of love that lies within.

We ask you to join our circle this Beltane night.

May the watery fullness of the Full Moon's light fill the Cauldrons of our Souls.

Hail and Welcome!

### *Call to Rhiannon:*

Hail Rhiannon! Faery Queen! Goddess of the Moon!

Charging on white horse fleet of foot!

Carrying the Witches' Heart, the Cup of Compassion

safely tucked in the shining white of her robes.

The wind rushing by on her galloping mount,

Sea foam spraying clouds behind her and her beast.

Flowers part and animals halt in her presence

Stillness inhabits the air; Blue Faery Flames circle in our midst.

She stands majestic on her mount in the Avalon meadow of our circle.

Magick she claims; manifestation she creates.

We drink heartily from the Cup she offers,

Sweet honeyed nectar of the Goddess, Milk of the Mother.

Honor does she require and Truth in all words,

Heard on the sweet lulling sound of her songs and the

Beat of hooves on the mists of our dreams.

Rhiannon, Lady in White, we call to you.

Let us drink from your Cup, fill our Witches' Hearts,

Lend your magick to ours in this rite and in life.

Hail and welcome!

### *Call to Mannan Mac Lir:*

Hail Mannan Mac Lir! Manawydon! God of the Sea!

Charging forth in your Seahorse Chariot!

Carrying the Witches' Cunning, the Sword of Truth, safely tucked in jeweled scabbard, blazing with golden light.

Sea waves parting before his mount, and dancing in his wake

Guiding Enbarr of the Flaming Mane, bit in his teeth, with hidden might.

All stand at attention; sparks of gold alight in our midst.

He climbs his conch throne in the Sacred Apple Grove of our circle.

All is in stillness; mists of Avalon surround us.

Magick he claims; safe passage he grants.

He offers us his Sword; we reach out,

Feeling its energy pulsing through our minds and souls.

Honor does he require and Truth in all words,

Heard on the cry of the gulls, felt in the vibrations of the deep .

Splash of hooves in the mists of our dreams.

Mannan Mac Lir, Lord of the Sea, we call to you.

Pour forth the power of your Sword to our Truth.

Lend your magick to ours in this rite and in life.

Hail and Welcome!

### *Great Rite:*

These may be split up with one participant blessing the chalice, another blessing the blade, and then both stating the third paragraph as one, as the chalice and the blade are united.

Lady in White, Goddess of the Moon  
Bless these Waters of Avalon

Honeyed nectar of the Goddess  
Milk of the Mother

Anointment for the Dead.

Let us fill the Cauldrons of our Souls  
from your Cup of Compassion.

Lord in Gold, God of the Sea  
Bless this Sword with Splendored vision

Shining battle blade of the God  
Pyre fires of the Dead.

Spark the golden flame of our Souls  
from your Sword of Truth.

The God shines his Golden Light  
Striking deep within the Cup of the Goddess.

Love and Perfect Trust  
Become one in the Light of Truth.

As one, we drink the elixir of the Gods  
And fill our Souls from their Union.

## *Turning of the Wheel at Beltane:*

As time stands still in this circle, a place between place, a time between time, we hear glimmering sounds of days gone by, days yet to come... Day breaks on Beltane with fires stoked, burning brightly, their flames dancing high on the hills all around us. Dew glistens gently on the blades of grass and the newly flowering buds, under the growing morning sun. Nature awakes. The Goddess is restless. Plants emerge, animals stir and passions grow.

Youths run and dart between the Maypoles, wearing dresses of white and sashes of gold. The golden noonday sunlight fills us with its light and warmth, generating heat to fuel our souls. The spark of light that was ignited at Imbolc now bursts forth in the red fire of ecstasy as our passions grow -- passion for life and for the love and splendor of all around and within us.

Dusk nears and the fires' flames grow higher still. We run between their gateways, bringing fertility to the Earth and prosperity to our lives. We are enflamed by the red burning heat within, yet our souls are cooled to a fine hued point of steel by the white light of the Full Moon, as we dance to nature's song.

All is in balance and readiness as nightfall approaches. Couples go their way; youths pair off and find hidden pathways in the hills and groves of trees. Their laughter echoes through the land.

We close the book on their day now and turn to our own. In our own ways, we kindle this flame tonight. We see it burn brighter and brighter in our souls. We drink of the Lady's milk from her Chalice, the Cup of Compassion, feeling Perfect Love for all around us.

We hold the glistening Sword of Truth, feeling the seeds of life from the Lord, and of Truth, pulsing through the blade and into our Souls.

We hold ourselves in balance -- the Cup and the Sword, the Blade and the Chalice. We unite the Divine Feminine and Masculine, together as One, within the alchemical process of our souls. The flame of creation and the Divine Spirit rush down the lightning bolt from the Heavens and strike the Blade within us, as its light explodes throughout our being, spilling out the overflowing Cup in our Hearts, merging together. We stand as one with the Divine. At peace with all things. In Perfect Love and Perfect Trust. And we know Truth.

We honor the Lady in White, Lady of the Moon, and we honor the Lord of the Sea, Lord of Golden light, for their many gifts. We gaze in wonder and awe at the Splendor of all things, the beautiful patterns of creation and life, the majesty of the turning Wheel.

And together, united through the Divine Spirit, we turn the Wheel tonight at Beltane. As they did so many years ago, high on the hills, between the dancing flames of the Beltane fires.

## *The Working:*

Tonight we stand in Avalon, surrounded by its waters, lands joined long ago. We stand as one, united together, within the Three Worlds as one, to fuel the magick of creation and to manifest our goals. We honor Rhiannon, Lady of the Moon, and Manann Mac Lir, God of the Sea, and call on their power to aid our working.

We each have a red apple votive candle, carved with the Ogham for the Apple Tree. We also each have a talisman. This talisman has a red ribbon, for the ribbon of life. It contains plants of Avalon, of the Fey and of the Three Worlds, and the creative power of the Sea.

We will charge these candles and talismans tonight, in the gateway of the Beltane fires of Avalon, to manifest our goals and Will this summer. When you go home tonight, hold your talisman and state the goals that you wish to manifest this summer, then light your candle. Carry your talisman with you as a reminder of the power of creation and know that your Will is manifest.

Say the following spell together while each participant holds their candle and talisman...

We call to Rhiannon, Lady of the Moon

We call to Mannan Mac Lir, God of the Sea

We call to the Fey and the Spirits of Avalon

We call to the Hidden Company that have walked this path before

We call to the Heavenly Hosts of Angels and Archangels

We call to the Spirit of the Apple Tree, with its Seed of Creation

We call to the Divine Spirit that runs between all things and through all Worlds

We call to the Spirit of Datura, its seeds for the power of the Underworld

We call to the Spirit of Yarrow, its flowers for the power of the Middle-world

We call to the Spirit of Lavender, its flowers for the power of the Upper-world

We call to the Sea of Creation, with sand from the sacred waters

Lend your power to ours, charging these candles and talismans to work their magick

The magick of creation and manifestation of our goals

Goals in line with our Higher Selves, with our True Wills

By the three Rays of Power, Love and Wisdom,

For the good of all and harm to none,  
by our Wills this Spell is done.  
So mote it be!

### *Raising energy:*

Any chant may be selected to raise energy for the working. When the power is built and the chant is ended, each participant will direct and send the power and energy from the working into their talisman and candle. Then, any remaining energy can be used in a healing circle, with each participant placing the names of those who need healing into the circle.

### *Cakes and Ale:*

Mannan Mac Lir, Great God of the Sea, we call on you to bless these cakes with the seeds and light of your Truth. We honor and thank you. Blessed be.

Rhiannon, Faery Queen, Lady of the Moon, we call on you to bless this ale with the elixir of your Love. We honor and thank you. Blessed be.

### *Closing of Ritual:*

The ritual may be closed with shorter farewells to the deities, followed by release of the Three Rays of Witchcraft, release of the Quarters and finally release of the circle. Merry Meet, Merry Part, and Merry Meet again!

*Shea Morgan is a Witchcraft IV student with a 20+ year career in government/public affairs. She is a vociferous reader and student of all things spiritual and has been on the path of a Witch since 2001. She lives in St. Louis, MO with her two cats, and enjoys gardening, antiquing, hanging out with coven, friends and family, and visiting the family "century" farm.*





The Temple and its Ministries are always in need of volunteers willing to contribute their time, energy, and expertise to our Great Work. You can contact the Temple Volunteer Coordinator at [info@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:info@templeofwitchcraft.org). Specific volunteer opportunities include the following:

## DRUMMERS

The Leo Ministry wants more drummers for larger rituals, such as Samhain, and wants to establish a core drum group for Temple events and to develop new music and beats. Email [sagittarius@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:sagittarius@templeofwitchcraft.org) for more information.

## ENVIRONMENTALISM

The Taurus Ministry is looking for volunteers who would like to aid the Lead Minister in a variety of environmental projects and education. Please contact [taurus@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:taurus@templeofwitchcraft.org) for more information.

## GRAPHIC DESIGN

The Gemini Ministry is on the lookout for Temple members with graphic design experience and resources, particularly Mac OS X based, and skill with page layout and desktop publishing iWork or Adobe CS . Email [gemini@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:gemini@templeofwitchcraft.org) for more information or to volunteer.

## HEALING

The Virgo Ministry needs a volunteer to coordinate its healing work, including, but not limited to, organizing Reiki shares and other healing events and management of the Temple's online healing list. Experience in different healing modalities is preferred, but not required. Email [virgo@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:virgo@templeofwitchcraft.org) for more information or to volunteer.

## MENTORING

The Sagittarius Ministry is looking for previous graduates of Witchcraft III, IV, and V interested in serving as mentors in the online education program. Mentorship includes giving feedback on homework, answering questions and encouraging students in the Mystery School and Seminary. Interested applications should email [sagittarius@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:sagittarius@templeofwitchcraft.org).

## RAFFLE ITEMS

The Temple runs a regular raffle at our Sabbats, and we're always looking for new and unique items to be donated for the raffle to help raise funds. Email [raffle@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:raffle@templeofwitchcraft.org) for more information or to donate items.

## WRITING & ART

The Gemini Ministry needs writers and artists to work on *The Temple Bell* newsletter. We're looking for articles, poetry, art, photos, and reviews. Contact editors in chief Raye Snover and

Tina Whittle at [templebell@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:templebell@templeofwitchcraft.org) for complete submission guidelines.

The Leo Ministry is looking for artists interested in creating new pagan oriented works for the Temple and its members. Contact the Lead Minister at [leo@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:leo@templeofwitchcraft.org) for more information.

You can also volunteer for work with particular ministries of the Temple by contacting the appropriate lead minister. See the Ministries page of the Temple website and Contacting Us below for details.

## CONTACTING US

For general questions and inquiries e mail [info@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:info@templeofwitchcraft.org).

For website or technical issues, e mail [admin@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:admin@templeofwitchcraft.org).

For questions or inquiries related to a specific ministry, see the Ministries page or e mail that minister at ministry name @ templeofwitchcraft dot org, such as [gemini@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:gemini@templeofwitchcraft.org).

Send surface mail to:

Temple of Witchcraft  
PO Box 2252  
Salem, NH 03079

## NETWORKING

The Temple maintains an email notification list through Constant Contact, giving subscribers all the up to date information on our rituals, classes, and other events. To sign up, visit our website at [www.templeofwitchcraft.org](http://www.templeofwitchcraft.org) and go to the "Contact Us" page, where you'll find a "Sign Up for Our Newsletter" box. Just enter your email address to sign up.

If you are a Temple member at any level, you can also join the Temple Web, our interactive Yahoo! group email list for members to stay in touch and network. Registration requires membership verification, so please include your full name along with your request. You can find the mailing list's home page at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/templeweb>

You can also find and friend us on Facebook and MySpace for updates and to help spread the word about the Temple!

# Donating to the Temple

*The Temple of Witchcraft is a 501(c)(3)e nonprofit organization, funded by the generous donations of its members to bring you services such as our website, mailing lists, and this newsletter.*

If you are interested in making a secure online donation via PayPal including credit card donations, just go to the "Donations" page of our website and click on the "Donate" button and fill out the necessary information.

We can also accept checks and money orders made out to "Temple of Witchcraft" via surface mail at:

Temple of Witchcraft  
PO Box 2252  
Salem, NH 03079

As a federally recognized nonprofit, donations to the Temple are tax deductible.

## LEVELS OF DONATION

The Temple welcomes donations in whatever denomination contributors can offer. We recognize five levels of donation:

- ☐ **Quicksilver • \$5** ☐ **\$25**
- ☐ **Iron • \$26** ☐ **\$50**
- ☐ **Copper • \$51** ☐ **\$100**
- ☐ **Silver • \$101** ☐ **\$250**
- ☐ **Gold • \$251+**

A special "Diamond" level is reserved for patrons of the Temple who establish lasting endowments and trusts. Please

contract us directly if you are interested in doing so.

We regularly thank members who donate to the Temple by offering special Wheel of the Year meditations as audio file downloads. See the Donations page of our website for the current thank you offer and watch our website and social networks like Facebook for announcements concerning new thank you meditations and special offers to our generous patrons.

## A B O U T T H E T E M P L E

**The Temple of Witchcraft** is 501 c 3 religious nonprofit organization based in the State of New Hampshire. Co founded by Christopher Penczak, the Temple started in 1998 as a system of magickal training and personal development, and eventually developed into a formal tradition of Witchcraft. Now, as an outgrowth of the work of students, initiates and graduates of the programs, the Temple of Witchcraft has evolved into an organization based on traditions of modern magick, Witchcraft, and Neopaganism. The work of the Temple is both otherworldly and terrestrial, seeking to strengthen the connections between spirit and matter through inner transformation and public service.

The Temple of Witchcraft's goal on an individual level is to awaken the potential of the human soul to its natural gifts of psychic awareness, communion with nature and the spirits, and magick. Each individual seeks to live a magickal life. Through these awakenings, we seek an expansion of consciousness through the alignment of our souls with Love, Will, and Wisdom to complete the Great Work.

On a greater scale, we seek the restoration, maintenance, and evolution of humanity to the Garden of the Gods, the cooperative consciousness where all things are in harmony and community. Our myths define this awareness as the First Garden, known as Avalon, Hesperides, Zep Tepi, Shamballa, Lemuria and even Eden. We manifest this vision through both our inner workings and service to the greater community. By these actions, we plant the seeds and tend the garden of Witchcraft culture, tradition and community.

## Board of Directors

**Christopher Penczak • President, Founder**  
**Steve Kenson • Vice President, Founder**  
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**Adam Sartwell • Board Advisor, Founder**  
**Mary Hurley • Board Advisor**

## Public Relations

For general questions regarding the Temple, or to contact the Board of Directors, please email [info@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:info@templeofwitchcraft.org). For technical or website related questions, please email [admin@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:admin@templeofwitchcraft.org).

Contact [geminii@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:geminii@templeofwitchcraft.org) for access to promotional materials, fliers, and other media.

**Temple of Witchcraft**  
**PO BOX 2252**  
**Salem, NH 03079**