

# Samhain 2014

## Welcome Samhain!

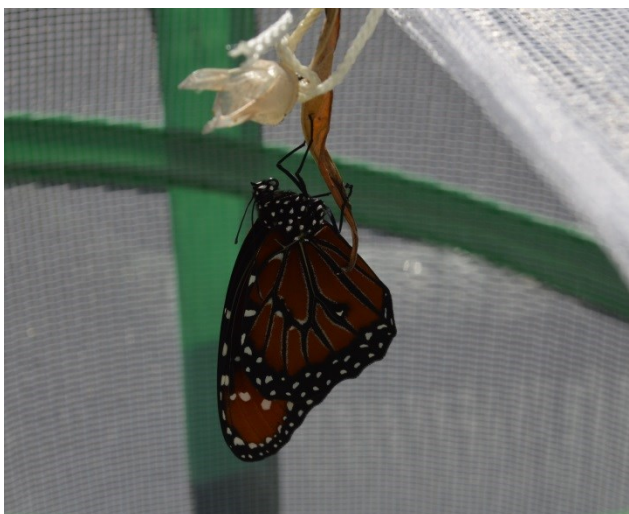


We have been celebrating the harvest season and now have reached the end although the weather here in Florida feels more like summer. Yet the weather forecast for some areas includes snow. That is just crazy.

This is my first autumn season without college classes in three years and I am enjoying my time outside. I am looking closely and see subtle changes in the trees. I sat under one of the live oaks and listened to the leaves and acorns drop to the ground. The leaves on the two ginkgo trees have turned gold and dropped off already. They look like dead sticks but the dragonflies use them as landing points.



We are still in butterfly season and had a successful birthing and release yesterday of a male Queen butterfly.



I saw a news segment on television on how you can tell the changes in the season by the cups at Starbucks. The news reporter said once Starbucks announced its pumpkin latte everyone knew fall had arrived. I cannot comprehend that concept. Last week a friend of mine went

to the store for some Halloween decorations. She posted a picture of what she found—Christmas trees, decorations, and fake snow.

Has the fall season been forgotten by people eager to celebrate the winter holidays? The sad thing is Thanksgiving seems to be lost. We should be celebrating what we are thankful for instead of trying to rush through the rest of the year. There is enough hustle and bustle without causing it ourselves.

This year I finally made sugar skulls to celebrate the Day of the Dead. We had a craft day with the granddaughters and decorated cookies along with the skulls. I think my ancestors would be proud of our results.



I would like to express my gratitude to the contributors and readers of the Oracle. Without you the Oracle would not exist and that would be a shame. I wish all of you a happy and healthy Samhain.

Blessings of the season,

Dawn

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## Ask Your Mama by Mama Donna Henes

**Are you cyclically confused? In a ceremonial quandary? Completely clueless?  
Wonder no more.**

**Ask Your Mama™**

**Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Spirituality and Didn't Know Who  
to Ask™**

**by**

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### **A Question of Spell Casting**

Dear Mama Donna,

This has been a nightmare year for me. One terrible thing after another has been happening. My whacko neighbor keeps hinting that she has put a spell on me. Things have been so incredibly horrendous that I am beginning to believe her. I am totally spooked. Can you put the spell back onto her?

-Helpless in Brooklyn

Dear (Not-So) Helpless,

No, no, a thousand times no!

Your question is one that I receive fairly often, and the answer is always, "Absolutely Not." Ritual magic is not meant to manipulate others, but to tranceform one's self. We all need to assume personal response-ability for our own thoughts and actions, our point of view, our path.

There is plenty that you can do for yourself to alleviate, mitigate, make sense of, and maybe even completely alter your current situation — from the inside out. And I would be glad to work with you to that end.

We could purify you from the all the pain and disappointments you have been suffering. We could cleanse you of your paranoia and sense of persecution and defeat. We could

begin to repair and enrich your sense of center, of confidence, esteem, and autonomy. We could ceremonially re-claim the sovereign power over yourself that you have given away to this person.

We could work to exercise your will — the will to will your will — to maintain a positive and self-nurturing mode of living. We could create affirmations, blessings, amulets, altars, prayers, protections, and ceremonies for you so that you feel completely safe and free from negative influences — especially your own. We could find creative ways to identify, focus, dedicate, manifest, and project your desire and hopeful intentions for meaningful change. .

But we cannot work on your neighbor, or anyone else, without her awareness and permission. We cannot, without consequence, interfere with someone else's karma. If it gives you any comfort, remember that all things that go around, have a tendency to ultimately come around — all in the course of the cycles and without any interfering help from us!

If she is indeed sending you hateful energy, that is on her, as they say. What you need to deal with is: What is on you?? If, after consideration, you truly want to cast a spell on someone, there are individual (not necessarily representative) unscrupulous practitioners\* of every stripe and persuasion who will perform any spell you want for as much money as they can squeeze from your desperation. But then, *that* is on you.

You mention feeling helpless. We are all helpless to a certain degree in this life. Things happen. *Shit* happens. Bad things happen to good people every second of every day. Our mission, should we choose to accept it, is to rise to whatever the occasion in the finest way that we can. To adapt. To expand. To evolve. To grow. To know. To thrive. Cause and effect, guilt and blame are completely beside the spiritual point.

We can choose to accept adversity as a life lesson — not a punishment, mind you — but as an instructor. A very scary, mean one whom we will never forget. A strict disciplinarian with a sick sense of humor and a wooden ruler. The hardest of times teach us the most about our essential selves; and if all those old wives are right, what doesn't kill us, makes us stronger. Who ever said it was going to be easy, anyway?

The ability of making the best of things is probably our most noble and powerfully human attribute. When life serves us lemons, we can, like Dolly Parton, make lemonade. Or lemon meringue pie. Or lemon furniture polish. Or we can paint lemons, or compose

lemon odes, raps, sonatas, arias. Sing the sad songs of lemons. Meditate on lemons, keep a lemon journal, or take a lemon bath.

We can work on developing the trust that everything that happens, happens for the ultimate good. Karma, Fate, Tao, Dharma, synchronicity, serendipity, don't march in a straight line. The patterns of connection aren't necessarily clear or obvious or immediate. But in this complex web of a universe of ours, one thing ultimately *does* lead to another, and it is at our discretion what to do when it does.

Yours for every positive possibility,

Mama Donna

\* Certainly most practitioners are well intentioned and completely ethical. But there are always exceptions. As always, use your judgment and trust your instincts.

\*\*Send your questions about seasons, cycles, celebrations, ceremonies and spirit to Mama Donna at: [CityShaman@aol.com](mailto:CityShaman@aol.com)

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[www.DonnaHenes.net](http://www.DonnaHenes.net)

[www.TheQueenOfMySelf.com](http://www.TheQueenOfMySelf.com)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donna\\_Henes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donna_Henes)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Queen\\_of\\_My\\_Self](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Queen_of_My_Self)

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<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/donna-henes/>

Read her on Beliefnet:

<http://blog.beliefnet.com/thequeenofmyself/>

### **Autumn's Message: The Labrys by Molly**

When the wheel of the year turns towards fall, I always feel the call to retreat, to cocoon, to pull away. I also feel the urge for fall de-cluttering---my eyes cast about the house for things to unload, get rid of, cast away. I also search my calendar for those things which can be eliminated, trimmed down, cut back on. I think it is the inexorable approach of the winter holiday season that prompts this desire to withdraw, as well as the natural rhythm of the earth which so clearly says: let things go, it is almost time to hibernate.

Autumn is a time of *discernment*. A time to choose. A time to notice that which has not made it through the summer's heat and thus needs to be pruned away. In this time of the year, we both recognize the harvest of our labors *and* that which needs to be released or even sacrificed as we sense the promise of the new year to come.

This fall I completed my *Womanrunes* book project, which is based on Shekhinah



Mountainwater's divination system. As I consider the call of autumn and the clear request from my body, mind, and soul for *discernment*, I am drawn to **The Labrys**. *Rune of Will. Power in the world. Mobility. Having one's way...*

This is a rune of assertiveness. Of standing up for oneself. Of claiming unapologetically one's place on the planet and in the stream of life. This is a strong rune, a steady rune, a rune you pull when the time has come to make decisions. When the time has come to say no. When the time has come to choose. It is a rune of action, determination, energy, sustenance, vitality,

and truth. It reminds us that it is okay, necessary, to speak up. To do what must be done. To say yes and to say no, without explaining, justifying, rationalizing or apologizing. The Universe is made up of many wills. Many wills joining, bumping into one another, dominating, submitting, sharing, giving up, being stubborn. The Labyris rune is about a strong, steady, inner will. A sense of personal power and the ability to stand in that personal power. The ability to step forward with purpose. To speak up with firmness. It is not about dominating or oppressing or submerging the wills of others. It can remind us of the power in partnership, in collaboration. Of the power found in working together. Though in that context, still asserting one's own self-responsibility and potency and personal power.

This rune turns up when it is time to make changes. The time has come to draw upon your flexibility and your ability to notice what needs to be different, what is calling out for action and change, and to dig deep for the courage and will that are necessary to enact those changes. Remember that mobility can sometimes involve knowing when to wait. When to be still and when to return to something later in one's life course. This is a stubborn rune. It wants its own way. You want your own way. It isn't wrong to want that. Have you been silent for too long? Have you squelched your own desires? Have you pretended to be something you are not? Have you expected others to read your mind and meet your needs for you, without needing to speak up? Have you been wanting to flee? Have you been wanting to quit or say no, but don't know how? That's where this double-headed axe comes in. It can cut both ways. What needs to be pruned away? Watch out. She's chopping there. Be careful not to cut the ones you love, to cut off more than you bargained for or more than you want. Handle blades with care, for they can be dangerous. Is this what you worry about in asserting your own will? That you are dangerous? That people do not get what they need from you? That you are not enough? You are *more* than enough and sometimes that is scary. And, sometimes it scares others.

**Slice cleanly and without apology. Slice carefully and without regret. Remember to keep enough room around you to swing the blade freely. --**

*Molly is a priestess, writer, teacher, artist, and activist who lives with her husband and children in central Missouri. She is a doctoral student in women's spirituality at Ocean Seminary College and the author of Womanrunes: A guide to their use and interpretation.*



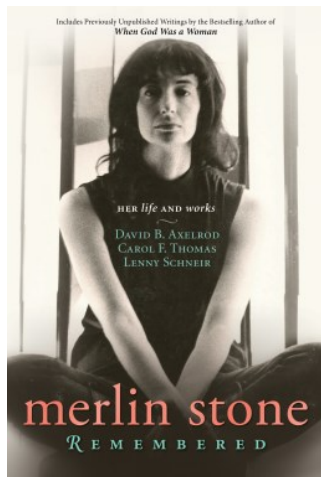
Molly and her husband co-create at Brigid's Grove: <http://brigidsgrove.etsy.com> and she blogs about theapoeitics, ecopsychology, and the Goddess at <http://goddesspriestess.com>.

## **Book Review by Dawn Thomas: Merlin Stone Remembered, Her Life and Works by David B. Axelrod, Carol F. Thomas, and Lenny Schneir**

Llewellyn Worldwide, Ltd

9780738740911

Before I began reading this book, I did not know Merlin Stone for the woman she was. The book has several authors but the most important to me was Lenny. He was her partner for more than thirty years and knew her better than anyone. Lenny describes himself at the beginning of the book as someone we could easily despise. But he tells



the story of how his life changed all because of meeting Merlin. She changed his life and his way of thinking and seen the world.

Merlin was a very quiet woman and did not need the limelight that comes from being famous. There are stories in the book of how she touched other women's lives with her writing. She brought the goddess back from obscurity. She was one of the front runners for the feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s. She was a carefree spirit and did not have a need for worldly things. She spent years hitchhiking through Europe, traveling with only a backpack, while researching her first book.

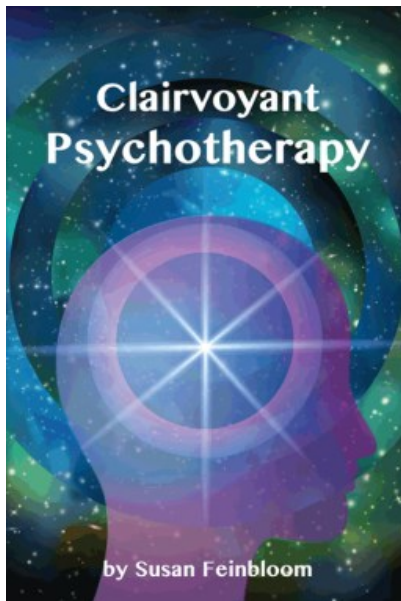
She said the goddess spoke to her and guided her through her writing. The original title was *The Paradise Papers*. The title was changed to *When God was a Woman* when the book was being published for the United States. This comes from a line in the book that an editor thought was wonderful.

The authors take turns sharing information about Merlin and her writing. There are also notes from speeches she made and unpublished work she wrote. Some of the most poignant stories came from Lenny and her daughter Cynthia. They tell how Merlin got her name from a dress that she made.

I recommend this book to anyone interested in learning more about Merlin Stone. She was an amazing woman and I wish I could have known her before she died. When I

began reading this book I realized what a great woman she was. Now I know the world is a better place because of her and her writing.

## **Book Review by Dawn Thomas: Clairvoyant Psychotherapy by Susan Feinbloom**



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ISBN 9781492963042  
Health, Mind & Body, Self-Help

I didn't know what to expect when I started this book. I found several statements to be very powerful. One is "We are responsible for our own reality." She talks about emotional wounds not being the same age. When we get defensive about something the wound reacts at that age level. We have to break through this wounded pattern in order to move on with our lives. She also states, "There is no blame." This is another powerful statement. Another is "Healing begins when we are willing to look at ourselves without defensive eyes."

Section One introduces the reader to meditation, grounding and energy. The author believes meditation is the foundation of psychic psychotherapy. She also believes clearing the chakras will remove static energy that has built up in our bodies and open up to movement. In clairvoyant psychotherapy she looks at core beliefs, fear, original pain pictures, defensiveness, and the holding on to old energy of past imprints.

Ms. Feinbloom discusses the process she uses while working with clients. She correlates the pain or fear with the static in the energy field. She teaches a three-part pattern which includes grounding, connecting to the earth energy and connecting to the cosmos. She describes grounding as movement and the fluidity of energy. Her description of connecting to earth energy is earth energy as manifestation, fruition, flower and blossom. She describes connecting to the cosmos as the source of our information, guidance, and creativity.

In one example she gives a detailed account with a female patient. After grounding and releasing energy she could sense hatred coming from the woman's mother. She hears telepathic screams. It was an expression of her mother's torment. The woman had

always heard the screams as a child when no one else could hear them. After treatment the woman was able to experience silence and peace.

Section Two has information on the seven chakras. She believes the chakras through meditation make up the map of her client's psyche. She describes each chakra and what area each affects.

At the end of the discussion of each chakra she provides a meditation.

She gives another example of a patient. He man said one leg felt different than the other. After grounding and connecting to earth energy he could tell the difference of his relative's energy within him. It represented that he needed to stand up for himself against his relatives. She gives him an exercise to do to connect with nature.

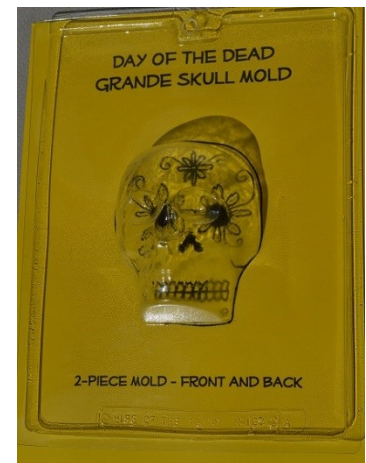
Section Three includes annotated transcripts from sessions with clients. These are stories of four women and two men and how they were able to acknowledge their obstacles and grow from the experience. The author does an amazing job showing us we can see so much more when we open not only our eyes but all of our senses.

## **Celebrating the Day of the Dead with Sugar Skulls by Dawn "Belladonna" Thomas**

Every year I say I am going to make sugar skulls but somehow never get around to it. I guess I thought they were hard to make and made excuses. This year I told myself there was no excuse. I ordered a mold kit for a large skull and gathered the ingredients.



The instructions were so simple. The ratio is one cup of white sugar, one teaspoon of meringue powder, and one teaspoon of water.



I mixed the ingredients with a wooden spoon until it looked well mixed then it was time to use hands. Since I am still in a wrist brace my husband had the honor of



mixing the ingredients. The consistency of the sugar mixture should feel like wet beach sand. It is important to break down any lumps by rubbing both hands together.



Once you have the desired consistency it is time to fill the skull molds. It is important to make sure the mixture is packed into the mold especially around the eyes, teeth and neck. Continue packing the mixture into the mold until it is full.

Use a piece of cardboard to scrape the back of the mold and then place the cardboard over the opening and flip over. Gently remove the mold off of the skull and let it sit.



The skulls become hard in about 24 hours. Once the skulls are dry, let the decorating begin!



Since I used the large skull molds, with a front and a back, I have an extra step. After 5 or 6 hours, depending on the humidity, use a spoon and remove the sugar mixture from the center of the skull leaving about 1/2 inch all around. The sugar that is removed can be used to fill smaller molds. Once the sugar is scooped out the skulls should be turned over so the inside can begin to dry out.

The next step once the skulls are dry is to put them together with royal icing. To make the icing I used 2 pounds of powdered sugar, 2/3 cup of water and 1/2 cup of meringue powder and beat it on high for 9 minutes.





You can either use a pastry bag (my version was a Ziploc bag with a corner cut off), a knife or a spatula to spread the icing onto the sugar skull. Only one side of the skull gets the icing then the two pieces are stuck together. Use a finger to spread any excess icing over the seam. Try to

rub only once so the seam is smooth. Let the icing set up and the pieces are stuck together before decorating.

Let the decorating begin! I used small containers and divided the royal icing so I could mix small batches of colors. I then filled the bags and used a twisty tie to close the bags. Having my wrist still in a brace it was difficult for me to squeeze the bags for very long so I didn't take as much time as I would have liked to spend. We had the three granddaughters come over to help decorate.

I think my husband's turned out the best.



*Dawn "Belladonna" Thomas is a High Priestess and Elder of The Apple Branch, a Dianic Tradition. She is the editor and book reviewer for the Oracle and was the Treasurer for The Global Goddess, a non-profit organization. She recently graduated from the University of Florida fulfilling a lifelong goal of completing her college education. She has been published in several magazines for her paper crafting designs. She is the owner of Belladonna's Garden and makes homemade soaps. She is an avid gardener and lives in Florida with husband.*

Her Blog: <http://becomingbelladonna.blogspot.com/>

## Forgotten Goddesses by Yzabel Cronin and Katy Ravensong

Hail and well met, all you children of the great Goddess! It is nearly Samhain – the most blessed holiday/holy day of those who practice the earth religions. I am Katy Ravensong and along with my beloved sidekick (and spiritual daughter) Yzabel Cronin we will bring you a report each issue on some of the goddesses that the mainstream has forgotten. Most everyone knows of Isis and Brigid, of Hecate and the Morrigan. Those may be touched upon from time to time but we will be researching those that are not that well-known.

I am pleased to have this column. Between the two of us, we hope to bring some forgotten lore to those who seek to know our lady in any of her many, many guises. I am dedicating my first column to my dear friend Amy who left us for the Summerland in May of 2013. She loved Oshun and took the goddess' name to be her magickal name. I am going to do a summary on the Goddess Oshun. I swear it feels as if my Amy is beside me as I write!

I first met and became enamored of the goddess Oshun while studying with the Sisters of Earthsong (a school for personal empowerment and priestess training). Each lesson led me to research goddesses from a different region of the world. In each culture, I found that while many things are different many things remain the same. Many of the tributes of the great goddess are the same the world over.

Wikipedia says: *"According to the Yoruba elders, Oshun is the "unseen mother present at every gathering", and that she is believed to be omnipresent and omnipotent. Maybe that's why mothers have 'eyes in the back of their head'. :)*

Oshun is the goddess of sweet waters (rivers and lakes). In Nigeria, she is honored as the river goddess of love, of fertility and healing. She has a very giving nature but She is difficult to calm down once she becomes angry. She heals the sick, brings prosperity, and her name is synonymous with transformation. She went with her people when (and where) slavers took them so Oshun calls many lands home now.

Her message to us today is to go with the flow and to trust our instincts, to heed our 'gut feeling'. She is the goddess of 'the ebb and flow' She teaches us to be gentle to

ourselves, to take time for ourselves during the 'ebb' and to take time for and be generous to others during the 'flow'. She brings serenity and harmony.

If you've made it thus far in my column, I thank you for reading. Yzabel and I will see you at Yule.

Blessings to you and your hearth,

Katy Ravensong

Sources:

Oshun. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oshun>

"Oshun, goddess of ebbs and flows." <http://www.goddess.com.au/goddesses/Oshun.htm>

## **Gourmet Goddess by Christine Smith**

Hello Goddesses! Welcome to my new column. I will be sharing some lore and a recipe in each issue of the oracle relating to the Sabbat. This is a Samhain recipe that is still used in Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales. The version I am sharing is Irish. In the south many of the recipes are yeast based. As I am Irish, the soda bread is the one I'm used to. The mixed fruit in Irish recipes usually consists of raisins, golden raisins, candied peel, and glace cherries. Most of these are not traditionally available in US stores. I get mine from [www.foodsofireland.com](http://www.foodsofireland.com). The prices are great and they ship quickly. You can add a shot of good whiskey to the batter for a beautiful bit of flavor if you like. I personally like a bit of whiskey in my cake. My Yule pudding can put down a grown man, which you can see for yourself in the next issue!

Samhain is a time when the veil between the worlds is thin, and is considered an excellent time for divination. This bread is a part of that tradition, and the charms are a way to predict what will happen in the coming year. I chose it because it is still a tradition in Ireland today, although most people buy it at the shop and the only charm in the bread is the wedding ring. When I am using food as part of a Sabbat celebration, I prefer to make it myself. In the US we don't have much choice! I hope you enjoy this delicious bread as much as I do.

## **Barm Brack - Arán Breac (Speckled Bread)**

In [Ireland](#) it is sometimes called Bairín Breac, and the term is also used as two words in its more common version. This may be from the Irish word bairín - a loaf - and breac - speckled (due to the raisins in it), hence it means a speckled loaf (a similar etymology to the Welsh [bara brith](#)).

Ingredients:

1 lb flour

6 oz sugar

1 lb mixed dried fruit

1 tsp baking powder

1 egg

1 tsp all spice/mixed spice

Pot of hot Irish tea

The 'lucky' ingredients

- a 'gold' ring, to foretell marriage within a year
- a small coin, to forecast wealth
- a small piece of cloth to forecast poverty
- a little piece matchstick to forecast the husband will beat his wife
- a thimble to forecast spinsterhood
- a button to forecast bachelorhood



Method:

Wrap each 'lucky' item carefully in greaseproof and/or tissue paper. The trick to making a Barm Brack is the soaking of fruit overnight in the tea. While this makes the dried fruit softer and more appealing in general, one must be careful when mixing the dough not to over-knead or the rehydrated fruit will break too much. Add the sugar and egg to the fruit mix the next day. Sift in the remaining dry ingredients. Mix gently. Stir in the wrapped 'lucky' items and try to distribute them evenly. Use a 7" round baking tin at 350°F for 80 minutes. Cool on a wire rack.

The Brack can be made up to a week in advance and stored in an air-tight container. It is



traditional that only he/she who has baked the cake should cut and serve the slices, as only he/she may know where are the 'lucky' items and will distribute them equitably!!

It is traditional to use treacle or golden syrup as a sauce on the bread, if you are serving it more like a cake. If serving it with tea as a bread you can toast it with fresh butter and jam or honey. Either way your guests will be thrilled to share this delicious treat.

Blessed be,

Christine Smith

## **The Descent of Inanna to the Underworld by Deanne Quarrie**

Inanna provides a many-faceted image of the feminine. She is a goddess of order, fertility, grains, love, war, heaven and earth, healing, and emotion. She is called the "Lady of Myriad Offices". Most of the powers once held by her, "the embodied, playful, passionately erotic feminine; the powerful, independent, self-willed feminine; the ambitious, regal, many-sided feminine" were eroded by the patriarchy throughout time.

Her descent to the Underworld is a valuable story at any time of the year but even more so here as the wheel turns fully into the dark of the year. During the dark of the year, we are to turn inward, our most introspective work is to be accomplished at this time. It is vital that we enter the darkness as did Inanna, bare and bowed low.

Inanna's most important myth begins with the great goddess opening "her ear to the Great Below".

"From the Great Above she opened her ear to the Great Below.

From the Great Above the goddess opened her ear to the Great Below.

From the Great Above Inanna opened her ear to the Great Below."

In the Sumerian language, the word for ear and wisdom are the same. Enki, who is the God of Wisdom, is said to have his ear "wide open" indicative of being fully receptive. The message here is that Inanna's primary reason for traveling to the Underworld was to seek wisdom and understanding.

What this meant was that Inanna had to abandon everything she knew, everything she possessed, all of her powers in heaven and on earth to gain this wisdom and understanding.

"My Lady abandoned heaven and earth to descend to the underworld.  
Inanna abandoned heaven and earth to descend to the underworld.  
She abandoned her office of holy priestess to descend to the underworld

She gathered together the seven *me*.  
She took them into her hands  
With the *me* in her possession, she prepared herself:

She placed the *shugurra*, the crown of the steppe, on her head.  
She arranged the dark locks of hair across her forehead.  
She tied the small lapis beads around her neck,  
Let the double strand of beads fall to her breast,  
And wrapped the royal robe around her body.  
She daubed her eyes with ointment called "Let him come,  
Let him come,"

Bound the breastplate called "Come, man, come!" around her chest,  
Slipped the gold ring over her wrist,  
And took the lapis measuring rod and line in her hand."

She gathered all of these things as a means to protect herself.

She traveled to the Underworld and when she arrived she met with Neti and demanded to speak with her Sister Ereshkigal.

Ereshkigal is the place where potential life lies motionless. When Neti described Inanna and how she looked as she waited at the outer gate, Ereshkigal was not pleased.

She sent Neti to defend her. Ereshkigal wanted Inanna to experience what it is to be rejected, to enter only when she is "bowed low".

At each gate, Inanna is asked to remove one item and when she asks why, she is told,

"Quiet, Inanna, the ways of the underworld are perfect.

They may not be questioned."

She is deprived of her godhood, her connection with heaven, her ability to manifest, her feelings of ecstasy and rapture, her emotional being, her will and her sexual role in life. All of these represent who she was, as a queen, a holy priestess and as a woman.

Naked and bowed low, Inanna entered the throne room.

"Ereshkigal rose from her throne.

Inanna started toward the throne.

The Annuna, the judges of the underworld, surrounded her.

They passed judgment against her.

Then Ereshkigal fastened on Inanna the eye of death.

She spoke against her the word of wrath.

She uttered against her the cry of guilt.

She struck her.

Inanna was turned into a corpse,

A piece of rotting meat,

And was hung from a hook on the wall."

It is here, at this point that we end this part of the story, for Inanna must remain in the Underworld until it is time for Her Return. Her transformation as a result is not something that happens quickly.

And so it is that we too, as we enter the dark time of the year, must shed what we hold too close. We must step out of ego, let loose all of the things we think we know or understand. We must present ourselves to the dark, laid bare and bowed low. For it is in this state that we open to wisdom and great knowledge. We too, must turn our ear to the Great Below.

*For the excerpt of this text from Inanna, Queen of heaven and Earth by Diane Wolkstein and Samuel Noah Kramer [click here](#)*

Wolkstein, Diane and Kramer, Samuel Noah, *Inanna, Queen of Heaven and Earth*, Harper and Row Publishers, New York, 1983

Deanne Quarrie, D. Min. is a Priestess of The Goddess and a practicing Druid. She is the author of five books. She is the founder of the [Apple Branch](#) and [Beyond the Ninth Wave](#) where she teaches courses in Druidism, Celtic Shamanism, and Feminist Dianic Wicca and mentors those who wish to serve others in their communities. She is also an Adjunct Professor at Ocean Seminary College and is the founder of [Global Goddess](#), a worldwide organization open to all women who honor some form of the divine feminine.

## Moon Schedule Samhain to Winter Solstice by Dawn “Belladonna” Thomas

(Times are Eastern Time)

**Full “Mourning” Moon** – November 8<sup>th</sup>: 5:23 p.m.

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter – November 14<sup>th</sup>: 10:16 a.m.

**New Moon** – November 22<sup>nd</sup>: 7:32 a.m.

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter – November 29<sup>th</sup>: 5:06 a.m.

**Full “Long Nights” Moon** – December 6<sup>th</sup>: 7:27 a.m.

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter – December 14<sup>th</sup>: 7:51 a.m.

**New Moon** – December 21<sup>st</sup>: 8:36 p.m.

### Moon Void of Course Schedule

Date	Starts	Ends
November 1 <sup>st</sup>	2:22 a.m.	12:37 p.m.
November 3 <sup>rd</sup>	4:05 a.m.	1:53 p.m.
November 5 <sup>th</sup>	8:25 a.m.	4:33 p.m.
November 7 <sup>th</sup>	11:17 a.m.	8:45 p.m.
November 9 <sup>th</sup>	11:22 a.m.	November 10 <sup>th</sup> 3:38 a.m.
November 12 <sup>th</sup>	4:16 a.m.	1:44 p.m.
November 14 <sup>th</sup>	9:53 p.m.	November 15 <sup>th</sup> 2:08 a.m.

November 17 <sup>th</sup>	6:11 a.m.	2:30 p.m.
November 19 <sup>th</sup>	9:25 a.m.	November 20 <sup>th</sup> 12:31 a.m.
November 22 <sup>nd</sup>	12:53 a.m.	7:19 a.m.
November 23 <sup>rd</sup>	10:16 p.m.	November 24 <sup>th</sup> 11:31 a.m.
November 26 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 a.m.	2:23 p.m.
November 28 <sup>th</sup>	12:14 p.m.	5:03 p.m.
November 30 <sup>th</sup>	3:47 p.m.	8:14 p.m.
December 2 <sup>nd</sup>	9:42 p.m.	December 3 <sup>rd</sup> 12:15 a.m.
December 5 <sup>th</sup>	1:45 a.m.	5:28 a.m.
December 7 <sup>th</sup>	4:52 a.m.	12:34 p.m.
December 9 <sup>th</sup>	7:14 p.m.	10:14 p.m.
December 12 <sup>th</sup>	7:48 a.m.	10:19 a.m.
December 14 <sup>th</sup>	9:11 p.m.	11:05 p.m.
December 17 <sup>th</sup>	12:40 a.m.	9:52 a.m.
December 19 <sup>th</sup>	4:11 p.m.	4:55 p.m.
December 21 <sup>st</sup>	7:34 a.m.	8:25 p.m.

### **Planting Days**

November: 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>

December: 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>

### **Harvesting Days**

November: 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>

December: 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>

## Mor Righ Anu "The Great Queen" by Deanne Quarrie



### ***The Morrighan by Bridget Robertson (used with permission)***

The title, Ban Righ, implies royalty. It is found in the naming of a Queen, such as Queen Elizabeth. She would be called 'an Banrion Eilis' or 'Eilis Banrion'. Ban Righ being a complex of two names. Ban means woman, meaning all and every woman. The other word is Righ or Rí which means sovereign or monarch. It also means 'of Right' or 'enthronement'. So put together, the two words mean 'sovereign woman' or 'elite woman'. There would also be an applied meaning of an educated woman.

The Morrighan is a goddess of battle, strife, and fertility. She is often called "Phantom Queen". You may see Her in the guise of a hooded crow. She is of the Tuatha de Danaan and her origins reach directly back to the ancient cult of the Mothers. The

Mothers (Matrones, Idises, Dísir, etc.) expressed themselves through both battle ecstasy as well as through regenerative ecstasy.

Let us break down and define Her name:

**MOR** (Ireland) - Celtic goddess of the sea and sun. She is identified with the setting sun in Corco Duibne, southwestern Ireland, as the Goddess Mor sitting on her throne. She is the Queen of the Island of Women, to which many pilgrims voyage. (Matthews)  
Qualities: Dark Goddess of Death & Rebirth; Keeper of the Mysteries.

### **Mor Righ Anu**

Mor is the shapeshifting goddess of the sea, the setting sun, fate, death, rebirth, and healing. She can be seen often as the setting sun sitting on her throne. She is the Queen of the Island of Women as well as the Keeper of the Mysteries and the Dark Goddess of Death and Rebirth.

Anu is known as a Mother-Goddess. She is the land herself, and the Mother of all the Gods. As the Earth, She offers you fertility, abundance and protection.

Between Her names Mor and Anu is the title Righ that means Queen. She comes to you as the Queen of Land and Sea. These are Her realms, as well as the sun and moon and the stars in the heavens.

In my research I discovered a Goddess Morag. Let's look at Her:

### **Morag**

This is said to be the Gaelic equivalent to Sarah (from a Hebrew word "Sarai" meaning "Queen" or "Princess"), though some books suggest that it is from the Gaelic "mor" meaning "great" and "ag" or "og" meaning small. So the combination is "great young one".

Morag, a diminutive of Mor .....

Morag, the raven war goddess of the Celts

Morag – Great

Morag – Embracing the Sun

It looks to me as though Morag is one and the same as the Mor Righ Anu – the Morrighu - the Morrigan!

Most only see the battle side of the Morrigan. Women, today the role of Morrigan is different than it was for our ancestors. Most of us are not involved in life or death struggles on a daily basis. The Morrigan is a wonderful Goddess for strong, independent women, especially those on a warrior path. The Morrigan used magic to change her appearance to "one of terror" and caused confusion to help her warriors win their battles through cleverness rather than bloodshed.

Should you wish The Morrigan to come to your aid, She asks that you have a shrine to honor Her. Place upon it a raven or crow feather or a piece of red cloth. She is honored by a sacrifice of your menstrual blood, which is a perfect symbol of life and death, fertility and war. Offer yourself to Her service, for She will come to your aid when you have need.

Morrighu,  
I feel you here,  
Tonight.  
Caught between  
My waking mind  
And my hollowness  
You're drowsy  
And loose  
Ready to toss back  
Another good day  
To be alive.

Morrighu,  
I could wait for you  
If you told me  
You were coming  
I would be old then  
And in my bones,  
But you'd still be  
Lounging with crows



And laughing  
Like a good woman.

Morrighu,  
I can smell your hair  
Something like blood  
And the wind  
That rushes over  
The lakes of Killarney.  
It's so tantalizing  
Just to take a breath.

Anand,  
I can feel your heart beat  
Somewhere at the core  
Of the Universe.  
The sound is women singing  
And harps are playing  
All whispering to me  
About the night,  
When we first met  
Somewhere,  
Beyond eternity.

*Heather M.*

*Deanne Quarrie, D. Min. is a Priestess of The Goddess and a practicing Druid. She is the author of five books. She is the founder of the [Apple Branch](#) and [Beyond the Ninth Wave](#) where she teaches courses in Druidism, Celtic Shamanism, and Goddess Spirituality and mentors those who wish to serve others in their communities. She is also an Adjunct Professor at Ocean Seminary College and is the founder of [Global Goddess](#), a worldwide organization open to all women who honor some form of the divine feminine.*

## Mama Donna's Spirit Shop



## Pagan Every Day Dion Fortune by Barbara Ardinger, PhD

December 6<sup>th</sup>

Dion Fortune (1890-1946) was a British occultist and author of occult fiction and nonfiction. In her writing, she distinguishes between occultism and mysticism and Eastern and Western metaphysics, but she doesn't mention witches or Wicca (which hadn't been invented when she was writing). Her novels, including *The Sea Priestess* and *Moon Magic*, show ordinary Englishmen and women discovering Isis, Pan, and the mysteries of Atlantis. Although her work may inspire and influence us, Fortune was never associated with any Wiccan coven, she worked in a thoroughly Judeo – Christian stream of occultism that used pagan imagery and ideas, but generally clung to the One God.

Dion Fortune is the magical name of Violet Firth, who was born into a family of Christian Scientists and grew up to be a psychiatrist. In 1911, she experienced a psychic attack that left her a "mental and physical wreck" for several years. (the attack allegedly came from Moina Mathers, who was jealous of her.) Fortune turned to Freudian and Jungian psychology, but finding them both inadequate turned to occultism. In 1930, she wrote

Psychic Self-Defense, which is the original of today's feeble attempts to address the issue.

Fortune joined the Alpha and Omega Lodge of the Stella Matutina, an outer lodge of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, in 1919 but left in 1929 and later founded the Fraternity of the Inner Light, which is still in business. Her name comes from her magical name, Deo Non Fortuna ("By God, not chance"). Her nonfiction includes *The Mystical Qabalah* (1936), which is a thorough and lucid study of that metaphysical system, and *The Cosmic Doctrine* (1923-1924), which she said she channeled from the inner planes and which is so profound as to be nearly incomprehensible.

*Pagan Every Day: Finding the Extraordinary in Our Ordinary Lives* (RedWheel/Weiser, 2006), a unique daybook of daily meditations, stories, and activities. Her new book, *Secret Lives* is a novel of magical realism about elderly women, younger women, good men, and mythological characters including the Green Man and the Norns gone mad in a modern world. Her earlier books are *Finding New Goddesses*, *Quicksilver Moon*, *Goddess Meditations*, and *Practicing the Presence of the Goddess*. Her day job is freelance editing for people who don't want to embarrass themselves in print. Barbara lives in southern California. To purchase a signed copy of *Finding New Goddesses*, just send Barbara an email at [bawriting@earthlink.net](mailto:bawriting@earthlink.net)

## **Pagan Every Day The Business of Oracles by Barbara Ardinger, PhD**

December 12<sup>th</sup>

I am Sir Oracle,

And when I open my lips let no dog bark!

William Shakespeare, *the Merchant of Venice*

The folly of mistaking a paradox for discovery,

The metaphor for a proof, the torrent of verbiage for a spring

Of capital truth, and oneself for oracle, is inborn in us.

Paul Valery, *Introduction to the Method of Leonardo Da Vinci*

From the I-Ching and the tarot to runes, the Angel Cards, and goddess amulets, we love our oracular tools. We scry and dowse. We look at the flights of birds, converse with

bees, and listen to the whispers of the leaves on the trees. Though the Muggles want to know the future as fervently as anyone else, they scoff at our “superstitions.” Then – just like everyone else – they plunk down their silver and get a reading. Some readers believe that it’s best to be prudent when reading at a psychic fair. Others tell it like it is, letting the cards (or stalks or coins or runes or bones) fall where they may.

I quit doing readings because I became weary of questions about people’s love lives and jobs. When I said, “trust the oracle but do your homework,” my querents didn’t understand. I had to explain that magic arises out of hard work and adjustment in consciousness that puts us in the right place, physically and, emotionally, or mentally, for changes to happen.

Reader, what precautions do you take when you do reading? We know it’s easy to read someone’s mind or ask careful questions and then tell that person what she wants to hear. How do we avoid creating self-fulfilling prophecies or fantasies? How do we deal with a possible or potential future that may contain death or disaster? What makes an *honest* reader?

*Pagan Every Day: Finding the Extraordinary in Our Ordinary Lives (RedWheel/Weiser, 2006), a unique daybook of daily meditations, stories, and activities. Her new book, Secret Lives is a novel of magical realism about elderly women, younger women, good men, and mythological characters including the Green Man and the Norns gone mad in a modern world. Her earlier books are Finding New Goddesses, Quicksilver Moon, Goddess Meditations, and Practicing the Presence of the Goddess. Her day job is freelance editing for people who don't want to embarrass themselves in print. Barbara lives in southern California. To purchase a signed copy of Finding New Goddesses, just send Barbara an email at [bawriting@earthlink.net](mailto:bawriting@earthlink.net)*

## **Pagan Every Day The Silences in Our Minds by Barbara Ardinger, PhD**

November 19<sup>th</sup>

When I walk, I always walk the same route so I don’t have to think about where I’m going and I often see two homeless people at various points along the way. For several months, I tried greeting them – a smile, a good morning – but they never responded. One of my neighbors who knows them says they never talk to anyone, so now we just keep walking our separate ways.

I wonder about the people I see. When I go anywhere, I take a book along, but I've seldom seen anyone sitting on a bus bench or church steps and reading. When I walk, even though I'm listening to music through my earphones, I'm thinking. I have, in fact, composed at least half the pages of this book while walking.

Which leads me to wonder...what's in the spaces of our minds?

What's in our inner silences? What kinds of silent signals do we send out? It's said that everybody is psychic, but that only some people are able to reach a silent state where they can hear what cannot be heard with their physical ears. Reader, does this explain psychism?

We know that thoughts are things and that energy embraces us and walks around with us. With the eyes of your imagination, see yourself standing on the yellow brick road that winds and wanders through your world. It has little paths leading to the people you know. The path that leads to people you know well are wide and well paved, and maybe there are flowers growing beside them. The paths that lead to people you recognize but don't know – like my two homeless people – may be narrow and broken. Bricks are probably missing and weeds are growing in the empty spaces. What can we do to plant more flowers?

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## Ritual for the Dark Moon and the New Moon by Katy Ravensong



At the time of the Dark Moon, Her face is hidden from us. This is a time to go within. If you are at a place where you would like to hide your face from the world, know that the Goddess is with you. The dark moon provides a perfect setting for exploring the deep cave of undifferentiated wholeness within ourselves. This is when you face and work with the energies you usually keep hidden. These are powerful energies. The Dark Moon is the day before the New Moon and this is an excellent time to combine a ritual for both.

When the Moon is new, the Sun and Moon are aligned in the same sign, and a powerful energy portal is opened. New Moons are a great time to set intentions for things you'd like to create, develop, cultivate, and/or make manifest. There are many ways to initiate this communion with the Universe from lighting a candle to elaborate rituals. What matters is that you're committing yourself to your vision, and open to receiving guidance, healing, and support from Spirit. *The following ritual is only a guideline so please feel free to add or take away anything you choose to customize it to YOU!* It is

longer than necessary so you can choose the bits you like. If you like, make a list ahead of time of the things that you want to deal with in this ritual.

Suggestions: Call on Hecate, Goddess of the Crossroads; Call on Tiamat, Dragon Goddess of Chaos; Call on the Morrigan, who fought the dark as the lady of the night so that we would remember that in death (figurative as well as literal) we are reborn; Call upon the fearsome Kali who has four arms: two with which to hold you and two more to fight that which threatens you, her child; Call on Shakti, Goddess of the Cosmic Womb and Primordial Darkness from which all things come; Call upon Lilith, Goddess of the Night who refuses to be dominated. Call upon the Goddess of your choice!

After you have taken your bath and done whatever preparatory work that you choose to do, we will start our ritual. You may use a black candle if you like but it is not necessary to do so. Call the energies of your sisters into the circle with you.

Then:

Begin with the chant:

The ocean is the beginning of the earth. The ocean is the beginning of the earth.  
All life comes from the sea. All life comes from the sea.

*(If you are not familiar with it, you can listen to it here:*

<http://www.chantarchive.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/beginning-of-the-earth.mp3> )

Chant this for as long as you like. Picture in your mind the dark rolling waves of the Mother Ocean in the Dark of the Moon. Bring to mind the things that you wish to give to her to recycle and see them sink underneath the rolling waves. Give her your unhappiness if that is troubling you, or fear, pain, or worry. Whatever has been weighing on you, give it to the Dark Mother.

Call out to Her:

I call on You, Oh Crone so wise—  
One who rules the darkest skies.  
Come and be my treasured Guest,  
And aid me on this magickal quest.

Speak aloud the things you are committing to Her, and tell Her what you are committing to do, the changes you are wanting to bring about in your life. And KNOW that as you speak of these things, the things you are giving her are gone from you and the things you are beginning are now a part of you. The energies not only of the Mother but of your sisters surround you, uphold you, and strengthen you.

Visualize the Crone Goddess, She who hides her face on the Dark of the Moon, in whatever way you see Her. No matter how hideous the world at large may consider Her, She is beautiful.

She has wisdom that comes only with years of living, wisdom learned in the school of hard knocks. Let her take you to her bosom. Let her whisper in your ear. Let her comfort you in the soft strength of her embrace. Remain there for as long as is needed for YOU!

Here is a very powerful invocation you may use if you like:

“Let me breathe out the battles I wage with others, and even within myself, and breathe in profound peace. *(Breathe out then in)*

Let me breathe out hate and then fill my lungs, and my life, with love. *(Breathe out then in)*

Let me breathe out illness and breathe in health. *(Breathe out then in)*

Let me release my need to be in lack with a single, great exhalation, and breathe in the truth of my own abundance. *(Breathe out forcefully then in)*

Let me breathe out the negativity that no longer serves me, releasing it back into the wild and freeing me from all that came before this moment. *(Breathe out)*

And then, finally, let me breathe in, filling me from head to toe with the truth of who I am.” *(Breathe in)*

Then stand up strong and tall and give her thanks. Use your own words or these:

Lady of the Dark who teaches me lessons I must learn,

I thank you for your presence and for your guidance.

I thank you for your support and for the love and support of my sisters.

Lady of the Waters who covers me over and washes me clean,

May I never take your fierce love for granted.

As the moon waxes from Dark to Full, the fruits of the seeds planted here tonight will become manifest as surely as day follows night.



I am \_\_\_\_\_, daughter (son) of the Goddess and it is so.

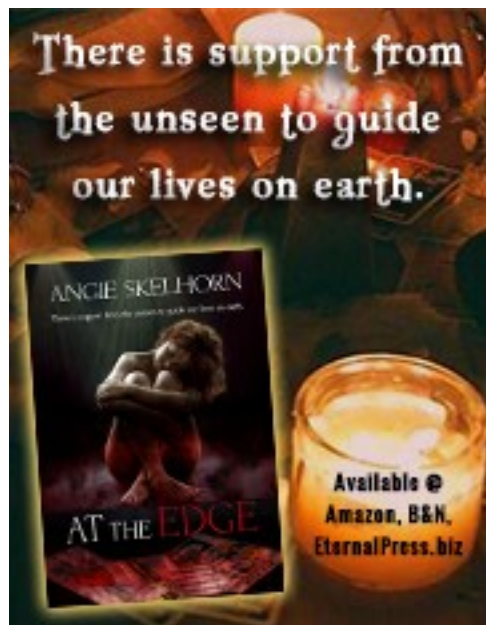
-----  
As you open/dismiss your circle in your normal manner, do not forget to release the energies of the sisters who have joined you in ritual. This is a powerful working so be sure to have something to eat afterwards.

-----  
*(Ritual constructed by: Katy Ravensong, Priestess, Sisters of Earth Song )*

*Information has been collected from various sources on the internet. Permission to share this compilation is granted. Some of the words are mine. Some are not. They have been woven together for the purpose of helping others to find solace in that well inside from which wisdom flows. The sea chant is copyrighted by Reclaiming and Friends and can be found on their chants cd. The crone invitation is found at various places and the author is unknown to me. The 'let me breathe' invocation is by Christy Farr but the 'breathe out then in' instructions have been added. The thanks to the goddess are mine. The photo of the stormy ocean had no credits with it.*

## **Samhain by Angie Skelhorn**

SAMHAIN - October 31, on this sacred evening the veils between the living and dead



are at their thinnest. Samhain is the time for communion with our friends and relatives who have passed on, to embrace survival after death.

It's a very special, unique time, of the year when the border between the material and immaterial worlds becomes as fine as a veil, allowing men and women to enter into contact with the Higher Spiritual Forces, and benefit from their protection.

October 31 is known as the Witches' New Year. We project correctness, health, and love for the coming year. At this time, the world of the living and that of the spirit are closest to each other. We honor the

ancestors and invite them to join in our celebration. Witches do divination for guidance. Witches also choose this time to release the "old" in order to allow for the "new." We move from here toward a time of inner growth and introspection as we approach the coming winter months.

Samhain, witches all around the planet will invoke Spirits to perform spells and incantations with the paring of apples. I suggest whatever ritual you chose to perform, keep the words simple and repetitive.

On the Esbats, the full moon rites and the Sabbats, the change in seasons, witches within sacred space with ancestors, relatives by blood or by marriage, who have passed over come hither to protect and guide. Knowledge is given, no one is ever alone, and that assistance will always be there.

Eve of Samhain

With an open heart and mind in the midnight hour when the moon is full, commune with Spirit. Request a biological ancestor to appear with a message of hope. Don't become distracted by frustration. Believe. Breathe comfortably, relax, and try not to think about anything.

Light a tall white pillar candle. Draw in a deep breath of air, exhale and then focused on the tall dancing flame.

*"Hear my call, this I pray. Ancestor who resides in the Other World, the Spirit who is close, I request you come hither, please share your knowledge. You, who know all, open my mind, remove the veil of illusion, and appear before me with words of wisdom."*

Once spiritually fed, hopefully you will have faith in your abilities.

In earth time, people have a way of deteriorating unless one strives to improve. Spirits deteriorate and improve in a timeless, space less realm.

Spirits of our ancestors are our guides and supporters. When one chooses to commune with those who dwell in the Other World, information is given to help live life with an open heart, and mind.

The Eve of Samhain will set the stage for the rite of passage, to meet with your personal Spirit guide. You must independently explore your faith to find confidence, conquer fear, to become more secure with self.

If you wish to continue with the faith, you must decide for yourself.

*"I know myself, I am my thoughts, I am the actions I perform. I live in joy. I acknowledge the beauty within and marvel in the beauty that surrounds. I come to you, Spirit Guide, of my own free will. My heart is open, my head is clear, my feet are planted. Spirit, on this most magical night I pledge myself to the ways of the craft - To harm none, nor self, intentionally. I kneel before you, come hither and guide. I pray for guidance...I pray for guidance..."*

Passing into Summer Land

THE GREATEST MYSTERY OF LIFE IS DEATH.  
THE GREATEST FEAR OF LIFE IS DEATH.  
THE GREATEST SORROW IN LIFE IS DEATH.  
THE GREATEST PROBE IN LIFE IS FOR DEATH.

Death is indeed natural. To bring comfort to your fear of your final departure look upon it as an adventure; supposing there is something there; if not, then you'll feel nothing, it'll just be a long dreamless sleep. Some people say death is the only thing we can be sure of attaining on our own. It's a very personal thing death. Some are afraid of dying alone, because when they come to think about it they can't die any other way - you go out on your own or do you?

Witches, for the most part, believe that we are much more than the physical body. We are spiritually immortal by design - an immortal energy. It is the basic fabric of who we are. The universe is infinite. And because we are part of the universe, and embody the universe within, we, too, are infinite. Witches believe that the spirit continues with the rest of the infinite universe. We may change and become something quite different in form, but we continue.



Every living thing in their earthly form has an expiry date.

**Excerpt taken from the Angie's soon to be release book *A Seeker's Quest - a guide to working witchy magic*.**

**Author Bio- Angie Skelhorn web site <http://Witchskel.com> Her novel "At The Edge," a must read for all age groups released by <http://eternalpress.biz/book.php?isbn=9781629291499> in October 2014.**

[http://www.about.me/angie\\_skelhorn](http://www.about.me/angie_skelhorn)



## Seasons by Katy Ravensong

The saffron of the buttercup, the azure of the sky,  
The crystal of the babbling brook. These bid my spirit fly.

The leaf careening lazily to join those below  
To wait for the winter, to be covered with snow.

The pastel summer rainbow, the warm earth tones of fall,  
The newness of spring greenery, I love them one and all.

The stark contrasts of winter, the blossoms when it's gone,  
The cycles keep repeating. The seasons still move on.

The elemental thunder following the lightning's flare,  
Then rain against my window. I'm content within my lair.

The butterfly floats lightly, trying her brand new wings.  
The storm has passed on by. Outside a sparrow sings.  
Mother Nature's a real lady, regal in all her seasons.  
She deserves to be respected for oh, so many reasons.

So if the day is painted with a lazy hazy hue  
Or cold, barren, and dreary, give the lady her due.

© Katy Ravensong

*This was published (and featured) by Wyrldwood Publications in 2008 in "Pagan Poetry for the Seasons and Festivals," edited by Edain Duguay. It is available as a 'green e-book' (meaning that a tree is planted for every copy sold) from [www.wyrldwoodpublications.com/pp.htm](http://www.wyrldwoodpublications.com/pp.htm) and is also available in .PDF format. Of course, they have a nice collection of other e-books as well.*

## **She Is There by Heather Geileis Kohser**

Behold the darkness!  
Fear not, the path your ancestors lit, on the way through.  
Their torch light flickers in your eyes,  
as if you already know the way.  
Lithe and limber, toe to tail,  
once youthful skin sags and darkens.  
Flesh falls from form,  
with each step.  
Bones and sinew lumber down  
where the earthworms play,  
and feast on death -  
the waste of a wasted world.  
Where no one remembers to remember -  
until they must.  
For in the dank, darkness of soul's despair,  
where destruction seems the only way -  
She is there.

I see your ghastly beauty, Crone of the Dark,  
even as I see through the depths of my own deception.  
Your fiery gaze burns the cord of my earthy entanglement,  
and frees my limbs to dance.

Connected to the pulse of the Mother,  
the ecstasy of wholeness,  
how it feels to begin, and how it feels at the end  
of the beginning.  
For in fear -  
we are trapped here!  
Consumed by endless loss and abandonment,  
until we know,  
what the earthworms know.  
The darkness is All -  
and She is there.

Maiden of Metamorphosis, Queen of Quickening,  
Grandmother of Consummation,  
all return to You.  
Guardian of the Crematory, Mistress of the Cauldron,  
gather the lost and the forgotten,  
hear our cries of MAAAAA, while we fight and flee,  
the tenderness of Your fierce embrace.  
Womb of the World, hold us  
suckling babes, to Your breast  
and let us drink from the milk of mystery.  
Let us germinate in the shadows of emerging peace.

Even as I write these words in prayer,  
I cleave to my illusions, like a vine.  
Lady of Mercy, cut deep to my discernment,  
raze the wreckage of my ignorance,  
and entomb my suffering.  
Make in me a fertile void,  
a space for darkness,  
where no one is ever alone -  
a place of burgeoning potential.  
I can take you.  
She is there.

*By~ Heather Geileis Kohser 2014*

## The Sacred Boar and the Dark of the Year by Deanne Quarrie

For the last few weeks I have been feeling the presence of the Boar. This would not be completely out of the blue as the Boar is the sacred animal for the last lunar cycle of Gort – representing tenacity and ruthless strength. In my spiritual practice, I travel into the Otherworld and typically discover allies with animals. My first step in getting to know an animal that has become present, I do the research.

"The Boar is the beast of death," (Graves, 210), and much of what we read about Boars and pigs is in general connected with death. Death is a concern in most religions and contemplation of death takes on a special vividness and immediacy. The Boar is, among other things, a devourer; it is a menace to crops and to people, it is voracious and it is omnivorous. Even the goat will not eat meat, its young, or manure.

In his famous song, "The Mystery" Amergin sang, "I am a ruthless Boar." The Boar is the last of Four Sacred Animals to be mentioned by him. Stories about the Boar deal with the "hinge" of the year, the passage across the boundary



between Light and Dark. The Boar is the creature that represents the never ending continuity of divine energy and is seen as chased from one realm of energy-manifestation to the other. The Boar's expression changes, becoming either a dark creature of destruction or a solar teacher. This is similar to the Stag, who changes from the antlered apparition to the earth-bound power at the heart of the greenwood. So here at the time of Samhain in the Northern Hemisphere, as we move into darkness, the Boar becomes the harbinger of death, riding on the active energy of growth into darkness.

But the Boar's descent into the Underworld is not just a journey of destruction. In spite of any other roles it may play, the Boar is a creature of fertility. It plants the seeds of renewal. It is as if the many fragments of life retain that life within themselves and,

buried like seeds in winter soil, they will be nurtured by the darkness of the dark until the next bright season.

In addition to representing fertility and wealth, Boars symbolize courage and strong warriors (MacCulloch, 356) for they are strong, dangerous, and very hard to kill. Their appearance in dreams and visions also indicates warriors. Isolt's forewarning of the death of Tristan, a great warrior, came in a dream about the death of a great Boar (Spector, 85-86). Statues of Boars are occasionally found in the company of statues of armed warriors, (Powell, 176) further indicating an association between Boars and warriors.

Great importance is attached to the bristles of the Boar. Perhaps they are the distinguishing characteristic of the animal or symbolize its strength. For example, Fionn is killed by stepping on a Boar's bristle after breaking a geasa against hunting Boars (MacCulloch, 150). Some of the extraordinary Boars that King Arthur fights in Culhwich and Olwen have bristles that are gold or silver. Conversely, when Menw tries to steal treasures from Twrch Trwyth, he is only able to take a bristle. The pig herders at the start of the Táin, Friuch and Rucht, are named after the bristle and the grunt of the Boar, respectively. It is the bristle of the Boar, Friuch that proves to have the most power; in the end, Friuch reborn as Donn Cuilnge destroys Rucht as Finnebach Ai. The bristles of the Boar are mentioned many other times implying that they are an important part of the animal.

In my researched on the Boar I discovered that the Boar is the animal that both Freyr and Freyja rode – specifically Freyja's association. Most of the information I obtained came from the Lay of Hyndla. It seems that Freyja's Boar, Hildsvini, was her lover, Ottar, who had been changed into a Boar and upon whose back Freyja rode. Certainly there are sexual overtones here; in fact Freyja was accused of being promiscuous by Hyndla for it!

So, having completed my research, I was ready. I went into meditation and invited Freyja to join me. I found myself in a dense forest sitting on a tree stump. While I could not see Freyja, I spoke with her. I told her what I was looking for and that I hoped it would be a Boar but asked her to guide me.



I explained to Freyja why I was looking. I got up and started walking into the forest feeling expectant. After about five minutes I came around a corner and standing there was a Boar. He was pretty darn big! I really expected to be afraid and thought perhaps he would not be friendly but actually he was friendly toward me. Perhaps he had been instructed by Freyja – I don't know. I walked over to him and ran my hands on his back and talked with him.

I explained what I needed, that I wanted him to help me ferret out information when I needed it and when it was being difficult to obtain. I told him I admired his tenacity and that I hoped we could work together as a team. He never answered me but when I hopped up on his back he made no protest. I again ran my hands on him around his neck and sort of laid myself down over his neck and gave him a hug. After that I got down and he wandered off.

It seems very right for this Boar to be entering my life. Earlier this year after a dance of a year or so, the Stag came into my journeys and now the Boar. The Stag represents the Light of the year and the Boar the Dark. I don't know yet if the Stag will stay with me in my journeys or be replaced by the Boar as a seasonal variation. Only time will tell. When I see the Boar again I will call him Elohx. If he is both Stag and Boar, the name is fitting for both. As related to the Rune Algiz – elk-sedge – he will be a strong guide and helper in stripping away "bark" to reveal the wisdom I seek.

In my next meditation, I was alone and decided to take a little journey. It had been very quiet and frankly, I was so bored I needed to do something. I was listening to a song on my computer that I had downloaded and was sitting back in my chair with my eyes closed. The next thing I knew I was walking in the woods. So I decided to go looking for the Boar. I sent out a call and asked him to come meet me. I walked a little further and then suddenly, there he was. I greeted him and asked him if I might call him Elohx. He still did not speak to me but I sensed a slight nod of his head. I reached out and ran my hands over his fur which was quite thick and I sensed that I needed to be careful not to go the wrong way as they seemed somewhat sharp. Really beautiful - like very thick hair! So I asked if we might go somewhere and I climbed up on his back. I expected us to trot along much like riding on a horse, but no we left the ground and flew! Right up over the trees. His feet were tucked back and I held on and we went soaring over the

trees - it felt rather odd but I would like to get used to it! About that time, I was brought abruptly back to this world by the ringing of my phone.

So I took the call and then sat back and closed my eyes once more. I wasn't on his back anymore and surprising - he didn't seem to be too disturbed by my sudden departure - strange how things can be in the world of trance. Anyway, I apologized and said I had better go. I thanked him and said we would meet again. I hope to be able to journey with him when I have a question!

I have added Boar bristles to my drum and look forward to journeying with Elohx through the remaining darkness of the year.

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## **YOU Are Not A Forgotten ONE by Yzzy O’Cronin**

10 October, 2014

### **YOU Are Not A Forgotten ONE**

YOU.

Misunderstood ONE,

Mysterious ONE,

Magical ONE.

**YOU are not a forgotten ONE.**

YOU.

Mother of Son,

Mother of Son,

Mother of Son.

**YOU are not a forgotten ONE.**

YOU.

Lady of Wisdom,

Lady of Thunderbolt,

Lady of Sun.

**YOU are not a forgotten ONE.**

YOU.

Mistress Tragic Onomastian

Caretaking the Veil of Samhain,

Tlachtga: Thunderbolt Wisdom Woman.

**YOU are not a forgotten ONE.**