



Sacer Facere: Sacred To make
Sacrificium
by Canyon

THEN

Sacrifice...give away. I grew up learning how to sacrifice at the knees of two experts. My parents provided me with daily opportunities to practice sacrifice, to become an expert, too. My needs, my feelings, my goals, my power, my dreams, my heart and soul – all were sacrificed – given away – on the altar of my parents' narcissism. My innocence, my healthy sexuality, even my body's integrity were all sacrificed on the altar of my father's need for power. I learned to give away all that I am, call it sacrifice, and be proud and righteous about my highly developed ability to sacrifice myself. Sacrifice was good.

But I felt...zeroed out, not there.... Not just invisible – that word implies substance that can't be seen. I had no substance. Not just empty – that word implies a form that might be filled. I had no form. I was a black hole in unpopulated space...nothingness in a void of nothingness. But I felt ashamed, too. I was a void, a nothingness...and yet, somehow, filled and swirling with shameful secrets.

NOW

Sacrifice...make sacred...an epiphany of meaning that is changing my life. One after another, I redeem my shameful secrets through sacrifice. I choose...I *choose* to bring them out of the void, out of the black hole, out of my own nothingness and into the light. I choose to lay them on the altar of my own becoming, to sacrifice them, to make them sacred truths that set me free. Free.... With each new sacrifice I am free to walk into the labyrinth of possibility, of change...free to take each twist and turn as it appears before me. As I walk, I examine the legacies left me; the contracts I've made with myself, with others, and with life; the vision of what I might become. I walk to the center of my existence and find myself, my divine self. I am no longer alone and nothing, but am with all the world...loved by Life as a part of Life. Sacrifice is good.

And I feel...whole, full.... Not just visible form, but a glowing presence that transcends form. I pulse with vibrant energy – part visible light and part dark mystery. I feel sacred.

Sacrifice...no longer giving away what serves me best in exchange for merely existing, but giving up – offering up – what no longer serves me in exchange for fully living. Each new day brings a gift – another opportunity to sacrifice who I am on the altar of who I am becoming. This gift is what gets me out of bed each morning – dawn's breath of new choices, inspiration, expansion. The choice of the labyrinth's entrance awaits each new day, asking, "Who walks this path of change? Who is ready to sacrifice what is now for what might be?"

I reach deeply into my heart for one more bit of the hero's courage I store there and answer.

"I do."





Life as a Sacred Path...Musings from The Book of Shadows

Taking the Bull by the Horns

By Jane Holt

The things that I don't understand are gifts. That sentence is a mantra that I have been saying to myself a lot lately. There are many things that I don't understand about this month's Mystery School and Book of Shadows work. They are puzzles that I work at slowly, methodically, like a dog with a bone. I gnaw until I work my way through to the marrow, the nutritious part, the part that will feed me.

The process is like gently unraveling a knot. If I take my time, the rope and I will work together to free it. If I get impatient, the knot gets tighter and I become frustrated and angry with myself. This willingness to work something slowly and gently is new to me. Somewhere along the line I picked up the belief that if I don't mentally get something right away, if I can't finish a task quickly, there is something wrong with either it or me. Living my life from this belief has created something of a bulldozer effect. I have found that bulldozers bury knots deeper.

The knot that I am unraveling is a pattern within myself. It is a pattern created by the pieces of this month's work. As I read through the May section of The Book of Shadows, my stomach tightened, and my brain tightened. Together they began their own mantra, "We don't know, we don't understand, make it go away. It's just too complicated. We need more information." It was that final plug for "more information" that began the unraveling. "More information," I'm learning, means, "I'm scared and I want someone else to tell me what to do." "More information" means many things. It means I'm not enough. It means I don't want to be responsible. Most importantly, it means I want to turn anywhere but inward to find what I'm looking for.

I don't want to make that next turn in the labyrinth. That turn that finally turns inward. As we've been winding through the labyrinth one of the things I've noticed is how much time I spend turned outward. I turn outward for validation. I turn outward for evaluation. I turn outward even for self referencing. How am I feeling today? Let me ask this person next to me. "Out there" seems so much safer and saner than "In here", inside myself. I know that "out there" is just better, smarter, stronger. They know more than I do. That's just the way it is.

So why do I cherish those moments when I am turned inward, when I take the time to really hear myself, when I take the time to connect with myself? If "out there" is so much better, why do I long for being "in here?" Why does my heart want to be "in here" when my mind wants to be "out there?" Why does it feel like my heart is smarter than my brain? Why does it feel like my mind is trying to hide something?

Because it is. It is hiding my screaming desire to be something special, to be someone out of the ordinary. I want to be special. I want my life to be special. I don't want to be like everybody else. I don't want to be just another one of life's sacrifices. I want to be seen. I want everyone "out there" to see me. So I am constantly looking "out there". Because I want "them" to acknowledge that I'm special. I want you to acknowledge that I am special. Isn't that the way it works? I can't know whether I'm special. I need you to know it. Oh, I love it when my two year old sneaks out without me knowing it. And she's right! I want to feel how special I am. I want to know that I am special. I don't want to just live and then die. I want to be unique.

Slowly, methodically, gently I unravel this knot. I take a chance, a moment to look inward. I notice something very peculiar. When I look inward, when I connect with myself, I suddenly feel connected with everything else. I see how unique I am. When I am connected with the whole, I feel special, unique. It's a paradox. When I turn outward and try to make myself different from everyone else, I don't feel special at all. When I am part of the whole, I am an amazing being. I am part of life and that is beyond words. My heart feels it. My mind can't find words to wrap around it. I don't understand it. It's a paradox. Life can only touch me when I acknowledge who I am. I am life. I am sacred.

Just one more thing. When I was writing this piece an old saying jumped in to my head: *When you have the bull by the horns, you can't let go.* I realized that I had the bull by the horns and I couldn't let go. Not because I might get hurt if I let go, but because that bull might slip away. We were staring at each other face to face. What an awesome sight.



The Priestess Path

The Labyrinth of the Priestess - Professional Spiritual Service

May - The Intensive
Making Sacred - Sacrifice
Priestess Skills

What are the skills that your Priestessing work requires?
How are you developing those skills?

Here's What Each Priestess Path will Explore:

Small Group Facilitation: The May Intensive is dedicated to Small Group Facilitation, the Ritual of Speaking and Listening. This month, we will focus on vitality: intention, attention, relevance and stating the obvious.
Arden (ardenjg@netscape.net)

Trance: During the May Intensive, we will focus on Pacing and Leading- the art of beginning where the group is and going to the place of change or healing. We will use the ideas and skills that we have gathered during the year. As a group, we will review our intentions for using trance techniques, develop a field of relatedness, address resistance, and develop trance language and trance voice.
Patricia (Patricia@dianasgrove.com)

Creating and Sustaining Healthy Community: This month, Sacrifice. What happens when I sacrifice my "I" on the altar of Community? How do I get what I want and need in a group? How can I develop the art of self and self-care in community? We will explore this path of the labyrinth through experiential deepening of the cornerstones. We will live it - a week of engaging and facilitating the community through our continued work with Center as well as challenging ourselves to extend that work into communal living. What Sacrifice are you willing to make for community? Why? What intention do you bring? What do you want? What happens if you get it? What happens if you don't? Can we talk about trust and betrayal?
Gwenyth (Gwenyth@dianasgrove.com)

Ritual Arts: We will embody the Priestess and take on her challenge to provide *relentless support for the Sacred made manifest*. As we walk the fourth rung of the labyrinth - the rung devoted to authority, stability, and sacrifice - we will weave together the strands of the year. Ritual style based on values...communicating...commitment...these will lead us to using well our authority as Priestesses.
Jane (Jane@dianasgrove.com)

The Gathering: This months focus will be on Pacing - seeing where the group is. As we develop and hone the skills of gathering a group together, it is vital to know where that group is beginning and to have clear intention about where we, as leaders, want that group to go. The skills of Pacing are a necessary pre-requisite to next months work on Leading.
Katie or Rena (JourneysKR@aol.com)

The work of the various Priestess Paths is discussed on line. If you plan to attend the Priestess Path and actively participate in one of these groups, contact the group facilitator about joining their email discussion.



Transits that Transform

by Teri Parsley Starnes

"Every year, seven mystics, seven warriors go. Every year, they never come back. That is how we know that they were sacrificed...or were they...?"
Cynthia Jones in *The Book of Shadows*

A transit is when a moving planet makes a specific geometric relationship to the position of a natal planet. In astrology it is commonly thought that the transformative effect of a transit is equal to the length of the transit. When slow moving Uranus, Neptune or Pluto makes a transit to your chart, a process that can take over a year to complete, something in you has really changed. An outer planet transit is similar to entering the labyrinth and never coming back, because the one who returns is vastly different from the one who entered.

When the number seven appears in myth or fairy tale, it often refers to the visible planets, which include the Sun and the Moon. This spring we are fortunate to see all these planets strung like seven jewels in a necklace—first, the Sun as it sets, and then Mercury just above the western horizon, followed by Venus, Mars, Saturn and Jupiter. The Moon has joined the display as well from time to time. It is as if these seven planets, which we know are also seven gods with seven altars, are having a meeting as we go deeper into the seven-coursed labyrinth.

What are the gods seeing of your promises, your secrets, and your sacrifices this season? I like this question: which altar are you sacrificing upon? One way to answer this question is with another question. Which part of your self is being challenged to change by an outer planet transit? Not every year will contain an exact outer planet transit, but these transits hold such power that their energy reverberates before and after the event—before, with a sense of something on the horizon and after, with the consequences of being a different person.

Outer planet transits are like the hidden blueprint of our destiny, our becoming. Are any of these seven visible planets in your chart being transited this season by an outer planet? Each of the outer planets have their own agendas when they come calling. One similarity they all possess, it seems to me, is a challenge to authenticity. They require us to become our true selves. Uranus challenges us to expand into new possibilities that must include freedom and innovation. Uranian transits are electric and highly energetic. The Neptune challenge is very different. This god asks us to become authentic by dreaming and dissolving. Under a Neptune transit, boundaries and old patterns dissolve as we drift in dreams. Pluto transits pack a lot of punch as we are faced with the fathomless power of the Underworld. Pluto transits challenge us to accept our own power and its consequences. These planets are the agents of change.

Which altar are they asking you to place your sacrifice upon? Look to the planet being transited. The Sun altar? Your core self is changing. You will be looking at your life's mission, your destiny. Does your life mean what you want it to mean? The Moon altar? Your emotional, receptive self is changing. You will be looking at your home, your nest, and your place of safety. Do your habits and rituals of protection serve your best interests? The Mercury altar? Your mind and mode of communication is under scrutiny. Your urge to learn and express yourself authentically is important now. The Venus altar? Relationships of all kinds will change. The other becomes a mirror for your own transformation. Sensitivity to beauty and its place in your life are of importance now. The Mars altar? Anger, energy and warriorship are the issues of a transit to Mars. Passion is the teacher here. The Jupiter altar? What opens the possibilities of the world for you? You will be challenged to align your beliefs with your true self. The Saturn altar? The esteem that the world has for you begins with your self-esteem. You will be challenged to look at your self-hater and self-lover. How will you work to meet this challenge? Perhaps you will be drawn to place a sacrifice on the altar where you are being asked to change yourself most deeply. May your sacrifice ring true to the depths of your soul.



Skippy Sacrifices the Story in the Interests of Scientific Accuracy;
Proposing Inquiry into What Really Is In the Middle of that Labyrinth
She Means to Get to the Center of it.

Dear readers; once or twice a year, we, Ms. Skippena's editors, feel it necessary to give her readers a word of caution. Far be it from us to dispute any of Ms. Skippena's scientific information, but we sincerely believe that Skippy's first hand knowledge of cows and/or bulls is non-existent. Please, use discretion in your use of the information that our dear Ms. Skippena (who is glaring at us with some malevolence right now) is presenting to you. Any thoughts that this paper could be used as the basis for someone's science project should be scuttled at once, regardless of its authentic sounding title. Your children will thank you. To those of you who have proposed that Ms. Skippena's work deserves wider publishing opportunities, please, we beg of you, do not submit this paper to any legitimate scientific journals. Skippy, herself, would, of course, be delighted. We, however, are unsure if we would be able to respond appropriately to such a proposal.

Now that my editors have had their say, we can begin the important stuff. One of my jobs is to protect the Mysteries—sometimes that means you, the Mystery School Mysteries and sometimes it means the Other Mysteries—you know, The Ones That Mystery School Is About, mysteries. I take that job very seriously and I have earned my title of Skippena, Warrior Princess, for I am fierce in the defense of all my Mysteries. The normal question is not, will I protect the Mysteries (of course I will, you don't have to ask), but which mystery am I protecting. This time my goal is to put fears to rest and begin legitimate scientific inquiry.

As for my editors concerns, they worry too much. They don't know everything. I have too been close to a cow... once. I chased her off the property while the people were frozen in terror thinking it was a large black bear. What more can I say: who knew what they were doing then, huh, people or dog?

What I want to say and you need to know is this: Cows don't eat meat. Neither do bulls. They can't. Their teeth are wrong. And that, I believe, should take care of that. End of story. Well, not entirely, but you must admit it does put a bit of a damper on the escalating suspense regarding the fate of this month's sacrifices.

I have personally felt a growing concern this spring with all the talk of sacrifices and some odd bull devouring those self same sacrificial victims. I simply feel the need to put everyone's fears to rest. It can't happen. There is no need for any of you to worry. I'm surprised one of you science buffs didn't bring this up sooner.

I do, however, have a few other concerns. Now that I have proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that this so called Minotaur is no threat to any of you. Right? I mean, if he can't eat you what are you so worried about? Anyway, if he's not a threat to you are you a threat to him? Well, not necessarily you personally, but the larger you, you humans. How long have you left him in that labyrinth? You sing about thousands of years. Has he been stuck there for that long? What is he eating? Not, I hope, 14 young Athenians once a year. Besides the ethical issue of that type of diet plan for a vegetarian, there are significant nutritional problems here. You nutritionists out there, speak up! This poor Minotaur could be seriously malnourished. Further, I have been studying the descriptions of his physical body. He must experience severe balance problems. I suspect he has trouble just standing up without falling forward, flat on his face. Splat! Think about it; a human body with a large bull's head on top. How long could you stand up if you were built that way? I believe that if he toppled over several times onto his nose that would flatten it somewhat, which might help his balance problems, but think about the effects on his psyche.

Yes, yes I know I am probably worrying about nothing. Literally. You all tell me he is just a mythological



being. If that's true, why are so many of you worried about meeting him, huh?

I propose that we launch a full scientific expedition to find out who or what this Minotaur thing is and further, whether he even really exists or not. It's possible that this will be a suicide mission. This type of inquiry into such uncharted territory is dangerous, but sorely needed. I foresee large government grants that will provide all necessary scientific gear and equipment. The only real question is which of you wants to go? Which of you is willing to put your life on the line for the glory of pure science and the thrill of scientific investigation? Which of you wants a shot at a Nobel Prize? Which of you wants to get to the bottom, or should I say center, of it all? Which of you wants the possibility of generous checks from the thankful company that will make millions off your, excuse me, our discoveries? This is truly a chance of a life time. Join the ranks of Charles Darwin and Admiral Perry. Don't wait. The positions on this expedition will fill quickly. Inquiring minds want to know. If it isn't a Minotaur in there, what is it? Applications being taken by my secretary. Bribes are always welcome. Our expedition's motto: To The Center and Back Before Dinner!



Coming Events at the Grove

Astrology Week - The stars tell stories. They tell stories about you and those you love. We will take this week to learn the language of the stars. Stop the world. The stars hold the pattern of the moment. Venus conspires with Mars; they hold the secret of what you desire and how you get what you desire. Mercury, the trickster, hands you the gift of communication. We will meet the principle players in the astrological drama through workshops, rituals, and by discussing our charts over morning coffee and midnight snacks. This gathering is for anyone, beginner or professional, who would like to spend a week reveling in the mysteries of astrology. **June 22 - 29**

Lunacy Women's Week - Hymns to the Goddess - Calling her name with chant, song and drum. In keeping with the Greek pantheon, this week is devoted to Venus as the initiator, Themis- Oracle and Goddess of Divine Justice, and Metis - Goddess of Wisdom, daughter of the sea. Athena, Leto, Hera...they wait for you to remember. They wait for you to call their names. **July 6 - 13**

Tarot Week - A Priestess' Journey into the Mysteries through the Tarot and Sacred Theater. Play... with the cards. Listen to them, talk to them. Let them draw you out of the deck of your life. Follow them into the Mystery. **Aug. 10 - 17**

Retreat Weekends

The Stars - July 19th -21st
The Tarot - August 2nd -4th
Drumming - September 13th -15th

Devote your weekend to great food, being with yourself and your friends, and relaxing in the creek or in the hot tub. We will offer a brief, introductory workshop on the subject listed...just enough to stimulate dinner conversation.

Call now to register - 573-689-2400

Diana's Grove
P.O. Box 159
Salem, MO 65560



“Myth isn’t a search for meaning,
it is a search for the experience of meaning.”

“To see life as a poem and yourself as participating
in that poem, that is what myth does for you.”

Joseph Campbell

