



## Mystery 2002 Check Out

from Patricia:

I asked for Conscious Closure on the email discussion list and have received posts from many of you both on and off that line. Here is one sample. Thanks to each of you who has posted and please continue to share your experiences with me personally, or with everyone on the list.

What was your most empowering or transforming experience this year? Visiting the Grove for the first time. Our San Antonio Group hardly recognized us when the four of us returned! And also, the rebirthing ritual at that weekend, the Pasiphae weekend.

What would you like to say to this Mystery School community? Thank you for giving me something to reach for.

What would you like to say to any or all of the characters in this year's story? Minotaur, I recognize you now as someone I've always seen in dreams, and I look forward to seeing you there again. Grandmother Time, I look forward to sinking into the dark months of winter and nestling down with you. Pasiphae, thank you for your passion. Themis, thank you for showing me the connection between logic and metaphor. I feel a little melancholy at telling you all goodbye, as I did in saying goodbye to the shaman and the wolf. Though all of you are still part of me, my monthly work will be elsewhere. I hope to find the shaman, the wolf, Pasiphae, Minotaur, Themis and Grandmother Time in the Tarot's archetypes! I look forward to that work very much.

What would you like to see continued next year? Mostly, I want to hold on to how fulfilling and growth-filled my San Antonio Mystery group is. I know things are meant to change - what else can growth be about? But my heart hopes that, while we continue to experience great change, our commitment to the study and each other remains deep or grows deeper.

What personal growth would you like to share with this community? Well . . . this year I did let some big things go, for once and for all. Finally. And I learned a lot more about how to use fire well, both personally and in community. And I came to a more comfortable place with acting with my heart and leaving the outcome to the Gods.

Thanks to everyone for all they give to me through giving to the Mystery School community. I love that, even when we've never met, the fabric of what we are holds the thread of each of us, and the cloth is so stupendous, mysterious, inspiring. Thanks for giving me a place to at least sometimes practice being my best self, and to witness you all doing the same.

year end blessings,

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## The Light and The Dark

by Teri Parsley Starnes

At the end of each class, my yoga teacher clasps her hands at her heart and says, "I bow to the light and the dark within you." This simple salute is profound for me. Yes, I am an ever-changing, dancing mixture of light and dark. That is my wholeness. Each month the dance of the Moon and Sun mirrors what is within me. They tell a shifting story of light and dark.

I have written before about the astrological significance of the lunar cycle. The lunar cycle is divided into eight phases. The phase we are born under tells us about an underlying way we approach life. We could think of it as the imprint of the light and dark into our souls. Each month we are also given the opportunity to learn from each of these phases.

Recently, I began to transpose the form of the eight lunar phases into the labyrinth form we have used this year. Each month I use Tarot in conjunction with the lunar cycle, picking a new card at each phase. This month when I picked the cards I began to see each phase as a circuit in the labyrinth as well. As we end this amazing year of self-discovery, I want to offer this pattern that I have learned.

**New Moon** - The seed is planted and the Self enters the labyrinth. I ask myself, who am I? Who enters now?

**Crescent Moon** - The seed bursts open and roots meet the earth. The Self encounters the Other. I ask myself, who or what am I encountering now, what is pushing me out of the seed?

**First Quarter Moon** - The plant emerges above the soil. The Self and the Other expand into a new entity. I ask myself, what is being created, what do I wish to create?

**Gibbous Moon** - The plant forms buds. Through the expansion of the Self into creation, a new form is born. I ask myself, how do I perfect this form?

**Full Moon** - The plant blossoms. Now the Self that entered the labyrinth has moved into its opposite form - transcendence of Self. I ask myself what is the vision, what is the balance in this opposition?

**Disseminating Moon** - The plant bears fruit. This is the time to realize the value of the journey thus far - a resolution of contradictions. I ask myself, what am I being given from this journey?

**Last Quarter Moon** - The plant forms new seeds. The Self that entered the labyrinth has changed through the paradox of holding form and losing form. Whatever insight has been gained is now placed into the seeds of the future. Through considering the contrast of all that I have experienced this month, I ask myself, what do I let go of and what do I retain?

**Balsamic Moon** - The plant dies and becomes compost, the seed falls into the earth. The Self that entered the labyrinth at the New Moon is now in the center. What is revealed in this time of darkness is the Mystery of the entire lunar cycle. I ask myself, what does Mystery have to tell me? What do I need to let go of in order to receive this wisdom?

As I write this final article for this year's newsletter, I am filled with gratitude and awe for the journey I have been offered this year. I thank my spirit guides for leading me to the Diana's Grove community. I thank Cynthia for asking me to write these articles this year. I thank all of you courageous heroes who have walked this labyrinth with me. With much love, I bow to the light and the dark within you.



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

### Claiming the 10<sup>th</sup> Card

By Jane Holt

“The function of ritual is to pitch you out, not to wrap you back where you have been all the time.”

Joseph Campbell

The November Book of Shadows asks us to claim our fate by naming our initiator. In the 10 card spread of the year this card is called, “what crosses me.” It is the card that represents what challenges me, blocks me, draws me out, and engages me in a good fight. It also shows me what is mine to transform. It is the card that lays across the heart of the Celtic Cross Tarot spread. It is, interestingly enough, also the card that lays across my own heart.

What crosses me is this Mystery School community. The interactions I experience within it are my initiators. To paraphrase Joseph Campbell, one of the reasons I value this community so highly, is because it pitches me out; it doesn't support me in staying psychologically or emotionally stuck. Community pitches me out of myself...out of my set ways, out of myths I tell in my head, out of beliefs I acquired in childhood, out of not believing in myself and not believing in the magic that life holds. This community continually asks me to expand my horizons, think outside of the boxes I've built, renegotiate old agreements I've made with myself and respect, re-spect who I am and who I want to be. This community, in numerous ways, gives me the opportunity to re-look and re-think my world. In doing so, you and this community as a whole, support me as I do the hard work of claiming my own destiny and the heritage I choose to leave.

I find it hard to live with integrity, to truly live what I say I value. I find it all too easy to slip into old mind-sets and to hold onto old myths. Fortunately, being part of this community makes it hard for me to stay “where I have been all the time.” Sometimes I find that hard. Sometimes I just want to hang out and forget integrity and personal growth. Sometimes I get angry and frustrated. Sometimes I'm just plain tired.

But, to you who are my community, I am never ungrateful for what you offer me. I am never ungrateful for your willingness to share your stories and be open with your own struggles and triumphs. I am always amazed by your willingness to stretch yourselves individually and as a community. I am awed that there is always a hand reaching out when it is needed. I respect your willingness to learn and learn again. I have even greater respect for your willingness to witness and support your fellow community members as they learn and learn again. I am grateful for your caring - for yourselves, each other and the world we live in. I am grateful for the care you show me. I am grateful to be working along side of you as we “seek to live today as we want tomorrow to be.”

You, as individuals, as members in small groups, and as part of the larger community, have become the center of my pattern. You are my initiators, both individually and as a whole. You expect me to live what I claim to value. You ask me to interact with you with honesty and compassion. You give yourselves to those difficult questions, some in the packets, some on email lines and some, person to person. In order to keep up with you, I have to do the same. As part of this community you expect me to live with integrity. I need that helping push more times than I care to admit.

This year's Mystery School has been a pivotal one for me. I began the year prizing my individuality and doing the work in order to sustain myself. I am ending this year prizing my partnership with all of you in community. I am doing the work in order to sustain the community that sustains me. All I can say is thank you. Thank you for pitching me out of my old patterns, habits, and defenses, and into the self I want to be. Thank you for pitching me into the midst of the community that makes that self a possibility.



## Skippy and Skippocles Say Thank you and Welcome to The Next Show

Fair friends and eager readers, allow me to once again speed you away to another time and place. Let your imagination drift until it settles upon a warm Mediterranean evening. The stars are waning as they overlook an ancient amphitheater. The moon has traveled through the sky and looks ready to set. Gentle breezes still rustle between the marble columns, playing with the soft torch flames. It is late. The oil is low. Light and shadows mix together whispering of secrets and promises.

Out of those whispering shadows once again strolls the beautiful red-gold dog, Skippocles, Ancient World Traveler and Sometime Greek Chorus. She has walked onto this stage a hundred times. Her body glides with grace as she walks calmly to the front of the stage. Are there a few more gray hairs? Perhaps, but she is still fit and sleek and knows how to hold her head just so in order to gain her audience's attention. She knows this crowd. She and they have been walking a winding path together for 11 months. She and they have been living a story together for the past year. She has come to know and admire the courage and daring of this group. With elegance and sincerity she bows to each and everyone of you.

Yes... in truth... Skippocles is none other than myself, Skippy! I believe in living each of my lives all at once. Just like those people on TV. I am uncertain how this technique of mine works into the theories of reincarnation, but I'm a very independent dog. I like doing things my own way. It is one of the things I like about you Mysteries, you let me be whoever I decide to be.

And for that reason and many others, I Skippy, stand on that ancient stage and applaud all of you. You Mysteries have been amazing. Each of you in your own way, have brought life to an ancient story filled with truths for our future. Oh, I rather like that line don't you? Okay, okay, on with the business at hand. For we do have business to finish. You see, every performance must come to an end.

Oh, yes, the Story Teller still has a few touches to add. In her own, intrepid way, she will undoubtedly wrap this story up with more Promises, Secrets, and Shadows. It is, after all, what you asked for. As for me, I am always alert and looking to the future. That's my job. I am, after all, first and foremost, Skippena, Warrior Princes and Guardian of the Mysteries.

And as I look to that future, I turn to see if anything is waiting in the wings off stage. I was right. It is filling up. Archetypes of great stature and dignity are beginning to materialize in the wings. They wait with the patience of the ages, solemn and filled with wisdom; The Priestess, The Empress, The Emperor and The Hierophrant, Artemis, Demeter, Zeus, and Chiron all stand ready to step onto the stage. It is an imposing gathering. Other Archetypes are gradually joining them. What an impressive sight.

Ohhhh!! What just buzzed me? Not Tinkerbell I think and definitely not a turkey vulture. Oh, yes...I should have known, Hermes, that wily God of Magicians, who is sometimes known as Mercury. Hermes, he who sometimes plays the lyre (having invented them to appease Apollo) and sometimes plays the liar (having invented the con game in order to get himself elevated to Mt. Olympus). Never a dull moment with Hermes around. His motto, I understand, is: "Why live the life someone else planned for you, when you can create your very own future with just a touch of magic...and a little hard work?"

Hermes is the archetype who opens The Patterns of Possibility. How appropriate. He is settling down here beside me. I think I might take advantage of this opportunity to interview him. Possibly I'll be able to give you all a jump start on January. But no, he seems to be busy. He is passing out boxes of popcorn, juggling a few hot dogs and pulling sodas out of thin air. I believe he is getting everything set for the next performance. Why, yes, he has re-lit the stars and pushed the moon back to its evening starting point. The torches are blazing brightly again. Hermes seems to be creating a new evening, a new performance. My guess is that Hermes knows what I know: Every performance must end, and The Play never does.

Bravo, Bravo, hail the players.

...hey, Hermes, good job with the popcorn.