



DIANA'S GROVE

Between The Worlds Patterns of Possibility Diana's Grove Mystery School

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The Wheel of Fortune

A dot is only a dot to a very tall observer. Every dot considers itself to be a circle, round and full.

It is all a matter of perspective...that's what the Sun would say and the Sun is the third dot in a three card series of dots - no, not dots - circles. One - the magician - is a dot. He would prefer to be described as a point...a very important point. Ten ($1+0=1$) is a circle known as the Wheel of Fortune. Nineteen - the Sun - ($1+9=10$, $1+0=1$); the sun is a big dot. He is the big wheel in the sky.



The Wheel of Fortune is, they say, spun by the Goddess Fortuna, but Fortuna wisely has not given her image to this card. All you see is the wheel and the characters (that would be us) who ride the wheel. Up and down, high and low, wealth and ruin...yes, she is the keeper of the mysteries of the minor

arcana tens. The Wheel of Fortune is a card of change. In fact, change is this card's only promise.

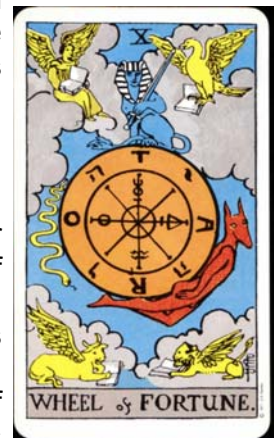
The word Tarot comes from a four word anagram that describes this card as aptly as any phrase. Rota Taro Orat Tora Ator, The Wheel (Rota) of Tarot (Taro) Speaks (Orat) the Law (Tora) of Life (Ator). Tarot, they say, is combination of these profoundly relevant letters.

Change, circles, circles with centers, the rising and falling dynamic that belongs to the edge when the circle rolls...that is what a wheel is - a rolling circle. A circle is a group...a circle of friends, the circle of community, an elitist

circle...even if they never consider casting a circle, a group is called a circle. Does that imply that being in a group has its ups and downs? I have always said "you can't have a group without group dynamics."

When looking up Fortune in my 1928 dictionary, I notice that Fortuna was just above Fortune. There she was, Fortuna, right under Fortuity. Fortuity means accident, chance, casualty. It means Fortuitous. Fortuitous means by chance, an unexpected occurrence. Fortune has far more to do with random happenings and chance encounters than it does with any promise of implied rewards.

Fortuna is a Roman Goddess, the first daughter of Jupiter. The Fortuna of Antium was a great oracle. To say "the Fortuna of" was to say the Goddess of. Fortuna, Goddess of Chance, her festival day is October 12. Under the reign of Claudius, that festival was lengthened to nine days. October 3rd to the 12th are dedicated to Fortuna. Fortuna was given many names and many special roles. Fortuna Virgo is the goddess of womanhood and chastity. The Fortunas of Rome were recognized at four altars - the altar of good fortune, the altar of bad fortune, the altar of public fortune and the altar of private fortune. An altar to Bad Fortune...? Is that a place to acknowledge those misfortunate happenings that later show themselves to be the much needed turning points in our lives? Or - Is it just too naive to invoke Fortune and pretend that she doesn't have more than one mood? Can you imagine living in a culture where public fortune - shared



fortune - and personal fortune are always side-by-side? Not just my fortune and good fortune but our fortune and bad fortune...me, you, apex and nadir. By honoring it all, we make the circle whole.

To Fortuna - may we feast in your name. To the year past and the year to come - may we place the stones of our days on your four altars. May we sit in the center and see all of these experiences as aspects of our wholeness.

My Favorite Places

The Grove: Anywhere and Everywhere

by Jane Holt

I deeply love this land when it slips into Autumn. The rest of the year it is wonderful living here, with lots of special places I like to visit. But in Autumn my relationship with this land becomes personal. It feeds my heart and sustains my soul. It offers me what I so deeply desire; comfort and stability. The land relaxes. There is the calmness of a job well done. The frenzied growing season is over. What needed to be done is done. Seed pods ready to be picked up by fall winds. Fruits from the apple, wild pear, and pawpaw trees lying on the ground where the composting meat of the fruit will nourish the seeds in preparation for next spring. Nuts, dropping everywhere, are seeking crevices and holes where they can spend the winter waiting for their chance to become giant oaks and walnuts. The trees no longer work to push sap to their outer branches. As the sap begins to return to the roots, the true colors of the leaves begin to show. The main work of the year is over. The harshness of winter hasn't begun. It is a time between. The land seems content and self-satisfied. It is time for simply basking in the still warm sun. Yellow wild flowers follow the sun in it's path across the sky. They turn their heads toward the direct sunlight, as if the sun were holding their rapt attention with its warmth. This is a moment for simply being alive and enjoying the warmth of it.



Change, Weight and the Wheel of Fortune

by Cynthia Jones

That Wheel of Fortune isn't about the *either/or* changes, the this or that changes...it just seems that way when you look at it from a distance. Were you right or wrong? Did you win or lose? You can only answer that question when the game is over. When you are in the middle of the match, you do this or that. You act and react - no win or loss - you grab the ball and run. The result of each choice sits like a stone on the apex of the wheel.

Change is a slow evolving process. Changes comes even when we don't think we are thinking about change. Change is the child of day-by-day choices, decisions, actions and reactions. I don't mean the weighty choices, the heavy, life-changing ones. Those big decisions are a collection of little ones - consciously and unconsciously made. Action takes just a moment. Words can be quite casual. Each one adds weight to the top of the wheel. Day by day we add weight to the patterns of our lives. Last week I wrote the brochure for next year's Mystery School. Just think of the audaciousness of that.

I sat down and in a week I wrote a promise for a year. I made statements that will consume 365 days of my life. Those promises will consume my life if I am to fulfill them. And they will consume my life if I can't fulfill them. Can or can't, success or failure, you will buy my dream or you won't. You will like my work or you won't. Yes or no - those two polarities are the top and bottom points on the wheel. What makes the wheel spin? The day-by-day weight that we put on the top, that is what makes the wheel spin. Fortuna is the keeper of the wheel. She is the one who hears our prayers for good fortune and fair winds. She is the first daughter of Jupiter. And she, unlike me, is an oracle.

This year, I planned and promised more than I was able to create. To all of you, I apologize for the classes that I was unable to facilitate and those still missing areas where a packet remains incomplete. And to those of you who received too much material...go on - read at your leisure. That is a fine way to do the work. I need to admit that

about a year ago, when I was writing this year's brochure, I suffered from *delusions of size-ure*. That is what I call it when one of our puppies believes that, at 45 pounds, she can still curl up in my lap. That is what I call it when that same dog's panicked barks warn me of impending danger. The monster turns out to be an eight-week-old puppy, smaller than my barking dog's head. *Delusions of size-ure*. I value stretching, attempting to grasp a little more than is possible, but...I fear this was the year that I attempted to stretch my stretch. I didn't realize that I was already at my limit when I added just three classes, one more week, a few more weekends. Not being oracle, I didn't see the circumstances that would consume our small, interdependent staff and drag us, one by one, into the woods of our own dilemmas. If I had been oracle, all I would have done is change a word or two. Or rather than *and* - an interview with an archetype or a story about a Deity that expresses the archetype. A turn of a phrase - not email class, but subject based on-line discussion group.... As you will see - this year's hindsight is next year's foresight.

As I look at the year that is ending, I am really happy with the work. Our weekends have been individual, unique, and personally powerful. The staff has created excellent programs. They have been well-presented and well-received. Month by month, I have been happy with the packets, and e-mails have told me than many of you are happy as well. I know the Hierophant class and the Nature Wisdom class have been excellent. I have written a great deal of original information about the Tarot this year; I just didn't notice that I should have been discussing that material as the Tarot class...until August. Oh my.... Nor did I realize that Playing for the Song should have been the Leadership class, not a part of the packet. If it had been, the leadership class would have been flooded with juicy pages each month. How much do you think *I would have* and *if only* weigh?

Each year has its ups and downs. Each year has its moments of success and the times when we

are disappointed by our situation, or worse yet, in ourselves. This tenth card is the Wheel of Fortune. Fortuna, who spins the wheel, promises us only one thing. She promises us change. In our times of victory - this too shall pass. In our times of disappointment - this too shall pass.

What has spun your wheel this year? What did

you say or do that placed a weight on the apex of your wheel? What has caused your wheel to spin? Tell us on Mystery. Share your story. Have you created your rises and your falls? Did circumstances beyond the realm of your own doing send you down or up? What riddle did the Sphinx ask you? What riddle have you answered?

Interview with a Mystery

Joyce Higginbotham

Co-author with her husband, River, of **Paganism: An Introduction to Earth-Centered Religions**

I had the pleasure of sitting down with Joyce Higginbotham recently to discuss the new book she and her partner River have been working on. Joyce and River are both part of the Mystery School community and are very active leaders in the St. Louis pagan community. The book, which has no official title yet, is due to be released in 2005. It is being printed by Llewellyn publications.

Joyce and River started teaching pagan classes in the St. Louis area years ago, to fulfill a need for community. They met a lot of other people hungering for community, also. They began to really look for a community in the St. Louis area and were disappointed to find that there was very little being offered for and by pagans.

They became involved leaders of the Omnistic Fellowship or OF - a small church that had been formed by one of their friends. The church was "handed over" to them when the original founder left town...leaving them facing the question of "what do we do with this?" They wanted to create a general sense of community, somehow bringing together various small groups spread out over St. Louis. Joyce and River held a visioning session and invited about 45 other leaders of pagan and pagan-affiliated groups. From this session (and a second one that followed it) CAST came into being - the Council of Alternative Spiritual Traditions was born in April 1995. The OF led CAST meetings for several years, and in the year 2000 CAST incorporated itself separately.

Joyce and River then traveled to Denver to visit a group that does an open full moon circle every month for several hundred people. They wanted to learn more about public rituals. The idea of public rituals was still not well-known in the Midwest; most rituals were done very privately. With Joyce and River helping to organize and promote them, the size and availability of public rituals in St. Louis has drastically increased. Last year the Pagan Picnic in St. Louis had about 2,800 people in attendance. During the last eight years that the Higginbothams have been organizing public rituals, there have been no major incidents of protest.

Last year at the Picnic there were about one hundred people at the closing ritual in the center of the park, with Diana's Grove staff facilitating. Several Christian hecklers stood at the edge of the crowd, praying. As the circle was cast, their praying became louder. There was an obvious tension in the air and the crowd didn't seem quite sure how to respond. Suddenly, they were being invited to join the circle. We acknowledged their sacred deity and made room for them and their God in our circle. We met their hostility with compassion and tolerance. They chose to leave and we simply carried on.

Joyce and I discussed this incident and she talked about what an accomplishment it had felt like. She told me that she has seen a great deal of change over the last fifteen years. She told me that fifteen years ago that incident would have

probably ended very differently, that she has seen huge growth in the pagan community as a whole. As a whole, she thinks, our roots seem to be getting stronger.

Joyce sees the pagan community growing and growing up, which is actually what the new book is about. As teachers, Joyce and River began to notice that their students were all at different places in their own personal development. This observation got them thinking and talking about human development in general. They started looking into early childhood development but quickly shifted their focus to the stages of adult personal development. They began discussing adult spiritual development patterns. What are they, what do they look like? What is "personal spiritual development?" What is "cultural spiritual development?" Can we track spiritual development over the centuries, or is it all just chaos? If spiritual development can be tracked through it's stages, then what stage is our current pagan culture in? Are we in infancy...or somewhere way beyond?

The basic premise of the book is that Paganism can only be an advancing force in the culture to the extent that pagans are personally advancing/growing themselves. "If we want paganism to have a serious impact on the world/culture than we have an obligation to grow personally as much as we can." Joyce also told me that she firmly believes that paganism cannot lead anyone into a place that they have not personally experienced.

"This book picks up where the last one left off." The first book, **Paganism: An Introduction to Earth-Centered Religions**, was a basic introduction to the world of Paganism; this one is more about moving into a personal practice. "This book is not some collection of spells or how to build a ritual...it's a philosophical approach to inner personal growth."

Joyce and I talked about the fact that there are still a lot of misconceptions about Paganism, but it is no longer "on the fringes of society." "I think Paganism is here to stay," Joyce said, "but if we really want it to last then we need to get our house in order. There is still a lot of work to be done.

It was truly a pleasure to have the opportunity to spend time with this passionate, charming, well spoken woman. I am grateful for all of the hard work that Joyce has done to create and better the Pagan community. I wish I had room for all of the wonderful conversation that we had, but I don't. For more on Joyce and River look for their books or contact CAST in St. Louis. You can contact them or find out more through their web site at <http://cast-stl.org/>

Their first book is also available through Diana's Grove web site - just go to <http://www.dianasgrove.com/store/earth.html>

I hope you all have the opportunity to meet and work with Joyce at some time.

Solice Novia

Life As A Sacred Path - Fortuna, Nemesis or Mentor, it's my choice

by Jane Holt

I don't mind change. Really, I don't. I just want to be in charge of it. I want to decide when the wheel should turn and how far around it should spin. I know it has to spin. I know each and every life has ups and downs. I just want to know ahead of time when it is going to spin, so that I can plan for those ups and downs. I want to be able to lay my plans out on the table and chart the year to come. That way I'll be ready for whatever comes...at least more ready than I seem to be now.

That *being ready* is the key, I believe. It is like being ready for a test or a pop quiz - I have more chance of passing if I'm prepared, if I know the answers. I might flunk and look stupid if I'm not prepared. Someone might notice that I'm not as smart as I try to appear. Worse, someone might notice that I'm mortal and very human.

Actually, I have occasionally worried that I might flunk life. I don't know if I know what flunking life looks like, but I'm sure that it would be very embarrassing...or worse. So I try to always be prepared.

When I was young my parents used to have very loud, violent fights. My mother often threatened to kill my dad and/or herself, and sometimes even *his blankety-blank* children. By the time I was nine, I had plans for all contingencies...or so I convinced myself. It made me feel safer if I had a plan worked out ahead of time. As an adult I know that those plans probably didn't make me any safer. But I also know that they gave me comfort during times when there wasn't much comfort, just a lot of fear. Planning ahead worked when I was nine. I was certain that, as I got older and smarter, my plans would work better and better.

Instead, what I find is that plans made ahead of time don't work well. Events, circumstances and people never behave the way I planned. In fact,

my plans seem to get in the way, especially when I try to hold on to them no matter what is happening. The problem is, my plans are always based on other people doing what I want them to do, what I expect them to do. Free will does not play a part in my planning. It is a problem for me when people write their own script. At some of my most irrational moments, I can get downright angry at another person for ad-libbing their part. A scene can get very strange and even hurtful when I insist on reading my version of the script, no matter what someone else is saying or doing.

All I ask is that we stick with the plan, *my plan*. I doubt if Fortuna can even see this tiny ant raising its fists at her. When will I stop struggling with Fortuna? It's not as if I've ever won one battle, or even the tiniest argument. Yet, I persist in my struggle. Why do I let my irrational, illogical child-self continue to attempt to control her world? My myth is old, sacred and buried deep; when I become an adult I will be safe because I will be able to control my world. As a child I needed that myth; I needed to believe that in the future my life wouldn't be dependent on the whims and rages of other people. I needed to believe that when I got older and smarter, when I knew more and could plan better, my life would be calm and comfortable.

I do know that Fortuna spins her wheel for the wheel's sake. Her wheel will continue to spin no matter how brilliant my plans or how hard I work to control it. I really don't want to accept that truth. Perhaps I'm not really ready to accept my own mortality...or perhaps I don't want to see how truly tiny I am in the scheme of life. Fortuna's wheel is large beyond my imagination, awesome in all that it touches. I have viewed it as a child, angry that it isn't doing what I want. Perhaps it is time for me to see Fortuna and her wheel with reverence, as well as a genuine amazement and awe that I am part of it.

Look at how the wheel goes round the Jupiter cycle

by Teri Parsley Starnes

Wheels, circles, and cycles figure prominently in astrology's symbols. The natal chart is a circle, the heavens are a circle, the planets move in cycles. The wheel of the chart and the wheel on the tarot card look fixed but they both represent a frozen moment of moving time. The planets continue to move, the wheel continues to spin. What rises will soon fall, what wanes will soon wax again. Our natal chart represents a seed moment. It gives us a glimpse of our potential.

As planets continue to move, forming relationships with these seeds of potential, they show us our place in the cycle of rising and falling. The planets, through their transits, give us challenges and opportunities to unfold into that potential. Every planet has its own story in our lives, determined by length of orbit, by mythological symbolism, and by its personal meaning for each of us, based on its condition in our birth charts. The planet that corresponds to the Wheel of Fortune is the planet that traditionally brings opportunity, expansion and good fortune. The planet is Jupiter, known as the Santa Claus of the solar system. However, just as the card warns us that the only thing we can count on is change and those on top must sometime fall, Jupiter's "great beneficence" also contains a warning - too much of a good thing can be worse than nothing at all!

A transit is a movement of a planet "over" a natal planet or significant point in a horoscope. A transit occurs when the planet moves through a degree of the zodiac that forms an aspect with the natal planet. So a transit of Jupiter to my Sun, which is at 26 degrees Aries, happens when Jupiter is at 26 degree Aries or at another degree that forms a geometric relationship (aspect) to my Sun. Astrologers use many different aspects, some considered major and others minor. The major and most easily noticeable aspects are the conjunction - at the same degree, the sextile - 60 degrees apart, the square - 90 degrees apart, the trine - 120 degrees apart and the opposition - 180 degrees

apart. I also use the inconjunct - 150 degrees as a major aspect although not all astrologers do. Its affect is a little less noticeable. For example, Jupiter would also be transiting my Sun by a trine when it is at 26 degrees Leo or 26 degrees Sagittarius. To interpret transits, it is important to know that each aspect has its own energy - some harmonious, some challenging. It is also helpful to think of a transit as a point in an entire cycle. The conjunction is the seed planted, like the New Moon. As the transiting planet begins to wax or separate from the conjunction, just like the Moon and the Sun, the energy changes. Waxing transits have a different feel than waning transits even though they may have the same geometric relationship. For example, a waxing square to my Sun happens at 26 degrees Cancer and feels like a crisis in action. The waning square to my Sun happens at 26 degrees Capricorn and feels like a crisis in thought. The opposition between planets has the energy of a Full Moon, realizing and releasing meaning for this cycle.

Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system - so large, it is almost a star itself. Its mass is 2-1/2 times the mass of all the other planets in our solar system combined. Its volume is also greater than the combination of all the other planets. It is a gaseous planet, which fits well with the symbolism of its expansive energy when it transits points in our charts. It inflates and can add a boost of optimism when it blows into town. Jupiter transits are times to think about the future. Here is what astrologer Stephen Arroyo says about Jupiter transits in *Astrology, Karma and Transformation*: "It opens doors for new plans, aspirations, and improvements; tunes you into future possibilities; urges you to expand into new areas of experience." What is interesting about a Jupiter transit is that, in spite of being all these wonderful things, it is also neutral. We can not expect to experience only "positive" things under a Jupiter transit, just like The Wheel of Fortune does not only promise "good" change. Indeed we may not even particularly notice

anything different under a Jupiter transit, unlike transits from other planets like Saturn or Pluto which are harder to ignore. So what is the point of this transit? What are we being encouraged to learn by the biggest planet in the solar system?

I recently had a Jupiter transit that I did not remember to pay attention to until I was sitting down to write this article. I suddenly remembered that Jupiter had just squared my natal Mars a couple of weeks ago. Jupiter transits are quick in most cases, lasting only a few days unless Jupiter is making a station to turn retrograde or direct. I thought back to that week which seemed pretty normal and realized it was a little different. I had more astrology appointments that week than I had ever had before. I was involved in many meetings and had an enormous amount of energy. Instead of hitting my wall of overwhelm when I usually do, I had more confidence that I could get all the things done that I needed to. I had accidentally navigated this transit in a positive way. This is not always the case with Jupiter, however.

When I advise people about their Jupiter transits, I tell them to focus on what they want to say yes to and let the other opportunities go. It is very easy to overwhelm, overindulge, and dissipate the energy of a Jupiter transit. When Jupiter went across my Ascendant several years ago I was in

an astrology class. My teacher said that Jupiter crossing the Ascendant is about people suddenly seeing you in a new light. I looked forward to that, but what I really experienced was illness. I overextended myself by giving my energy to a lot of different causes. I'm not sure that others saw me in a new light, but I was able to see myself in a new way after that experience. I learned how to say no.

The most significant transits of Jupiter are the conjunctions, I think. Since Jupiter transits can be about energizing our future goals and visions, Jupiter can seed the future at the conjunction. Jupiter entered Virgo on August 27th this year. It stays in this sign until September 24, 2004. If you have any planets in Virgo, or any angles in Virgo (Ascendant, Descendant, Midheaven or Nadir), the expansive winds of Jupiter will be blowing into your life. What future dreams do you have? Now is the time to open into those dreams, taking a chance that as the wheel spins, you will be learning about your potential as well as your limitations. And both are good. The rest of us will experience Jupiter transits, too, by other aspects, which may boost our confidence or remind us that we are mortal. I guess it just depends on Lady Luck, or maybe that Sphinx sitting on top of the Wheel. My hope is that I can learn to appreciate the ups and downs.

One of our favorite writers, besides Teri, is Steven Forrest, author of *The Inner Sky*, *The Changing Sky*, *The Night Speaks* and other books on or including astrological information. We have recently purchased Steven's Astrological programs: *Sky Within* - a natal report; and *Sky Log* - a transit report. Steven's reports read like a dialog and are fascinatingly accurate. If you would like to order one, email me at astrology@dianasgrove.com OR call 573-689-2400 with your name, birth date, birth time, and place of birth.

Sky Within - \$15
Sky Log for 6 months - \$15
Sky Log for 1 year - \$25

Skippy Speaks - 'The Ride of a Lifetime

Step right up, ladies and gentleman, step up to the ride of your lifetime. Step up to the wheel that has more twists and turns than the human mind can conceive of. Let the little lady spin your fortune. This is a ride that you don't want to miss. Step up, step up, don't miss a minute of it. This is a once in a lifetime deal. You there, don't hold back. You wouldn't want to miss this no matter how hair-raising it gets. Buy your tickets here, then step on and let the lady spin that wheel! Step right up, ladies and gentleman.

Man, that Skipphooly is one great carnival barker. She calls herself a carnie. She says that's what Madame Fortuna calls herself, too. Skipphooly says Madame Fortuna has had other names, but Fortuna is the one she likes the best. She says it gives her a sort of mysterious persona and anything she does fits right in to the concept of fortune. She likes having a really big stage to play on. Actually, Madame Fortuna is one hell of a player; I still haven't figured out if she is a tiny little lady with one very large personality or a very big woman who can be gentle as a wisp of smoke. She's a bit of a mystery.

But she does put on great shows: tragedy, comedy, passionate drama, extravaganzas and epics, single character soliloquies and casts of thousands. Farce is her specialty. She has it down to an art. But then, she's been working on it for a long time. *She* keeps saying she has nothing to do with what happens, all she does is spin the wheel. I'm not quite ready to believe her yet. Skipphooly and Madame Fortuna just sit and laugh at me. They tell me to quit analyzing and enjoy the ride. I try to tell them that, as top dog, it's my job to know what's going on. That's when they tell me it's the ride, not the show, that matters; it isn't a spectator sport. Then they laugh a little more, shake their heads and Madame Fortuna gives the wheel another spin.

I have to admit it is one great ride. Skipphooly said it was the best thrill ride in the universe, and, wow, was she right! Skipphooly actually does live in mythic space, so she's been known to

exaggerate from time to time, but she was right on with this one. I know the pictures show a simple wheel, but I'll bet there are more than a few of you out there who would agree with me that this wheel does more than just spin up and down. I think of it more like the most elaborate and convoluted roller coaster imaginable, disguised as a simple Ferris wheel. It has triple and quadruple loop-the-loops, 90-degree turns, sometimes at 90 miles an hour, as well as some mind bending 180-degree turns that can give you a nasty case of whip lash...or the best giggles going. It plummets down into dark tunnels and rockets out, headed into space, only to jerk to a standstill; then creeps along at two miles per hour. And it's never the same.

I have to admit that sometimes I have to get off just to catch my breath. We dogs can do that, we call it napping. I've also noticed that many of you humans have a goal of reaching the center where it's a much more gentle ride. Skipphooly likes the ride on the outside-most rim. But, as I said, she lives in mythic reality so there is no accounting for her. Oh, there she goes again.

Eee haa, spin that wheel, sister. Aaaaah! Wow! Oh, my goooo...! Oh, no! Wow, not again! Yikes!...all right...that's perfect.... Oh, man, this is way high. Here we go again. Eeeeeeeeeeeee

Ride 'em Skipphooly...hang on tight...oh, no, you're falling...no...nope. How'd you do that? How'd you manage to hang on? Oh, no, oh, man, there she goes, she's spinning it again. Hold tight, Skipphooly, hold tight!