



# Between The Worlds Patterns of Possibility

Diana's Grove Mystery School

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## The Hanged One

by Cynthia Jones

Artists and deck designers have created a variety of Hanged One images. Some are blissful; some are held captive by the grid of reality. Not all Hanged Ones are called The Hanged One. Reversal, The Traitor, The Hanged Man, Vision and Re-vision are also titles for this card.

All those cards have one thing in common: the character is upside down. That's the common truth among Hanged Ones. Upside down, reversed, they all see life from a different perspective. For many a Hanged One, it was their vision that put them in that precarious position. The Traitor was a common name for this card in early decks. Traitor, heretic, original thinker - the character on this card betrays convention. Head down, heart up, intuition replaces logic; he dares to see what others don't see. And then he dares to say what he sees. Does he spend his whole life hanging upside down, or is he the moment when our feet are over our heads? Is he the perfect middle of a cosmic cartwheel?

The Hanged One, twelve, is the first card to the left of middle. He was born just after the Arcana's middle child - Lust in some Tarot families, Justice in others. Eleven is a turning point, twelve - the portal. When the eleventh card is shown as the Lady and the Lion, does one character represent the first ten Major Arcana lessons while the other character represents the following ten?

When the eleventh card is Justice, is she holding the first ten cards in one cup of her scales while the following ten rest in the other? Are you adding ten and ten and one and wondering where the twenty-second card is? The twenty-second card



is the Fool; he comes after the end and before the beginning. As the Fool stands in two places at once, the line becomes a circle.

Twelve is a perfect number and the Tarot loves numbers. Twelve is willing and pliable. It can be divided by two, three, four and six. I might say twelve plays well with others. Twelve loves to cooperate. What I really think is that Twelve, the Hanged One, is willing to turn any reality upside down.

Sacrifice, consent, submission - these words are associated with this card. The Hanged One is the doorway between the worlds. The ferryman asks for a token. The Hanged One is a portal between two kinds of knowledge: conscious and unconscious, consensual and personal, visible and invisible, logical and intuitive. In *Jung and the Tarot*, Sally Nicholas considers this card to be *the acceptance of fate that releases us from our fate*. "Acceptance," she says, "precedes transcendence." She indicated that this card holds the moment when we look death in the eye and accept our mortality. We face death so we can get on with life.

This card is seen as the sacrifice of the ego-centered self. When twelve has this meaning, then thirteen - Death - is comfortable with its modern interpretation, an ego death. The Death card in the Tarot can refer to the death of an aspect of ourselves that we have outgrown but have not released.

The Hanged One is the Significator for this year's Mystery School. He is the character who will sit at the head of the table all year. He will hold a place

on the stairwell altar at the Grove and remind us that our way of seeing the world is just that - our way of seeing. "Life," the philosopher Patricia Sun said, "is a metaphor for reality."

*Sacrifice. Sacer* - Sacred - plus *facere* - to make. Sacrifice - *to make sacred*.

That is how Hermes became a god. He created a situation in which Apollo made a sacrifice to him; by so doing, Apollo made him sacred. If the Hanged One is about accepting fate, we might say that Hermes refused to accept his fate as a lesser god...but Hermes would say that he refused to accept a fate that wasn't his. That leads me to the next word on my list.

*Ego* - *the self, the aspect of self that is aware of*

*itself, the part of the psyche which, developing from the id, experiences the external world through the senses and consciously controls the impulses of the id.* That is the aspect of ourselves that hangs upside down from that tree. I wonder if the id put him there?

*Consent* - *to be of one mind, to agree.* Consensus comes from the word consent. Consent, consensus, sacrifice and surrender, accepting fate to transcend fate...The Hanged One is a leaf on the world tree. Subject to seasons, a part of something larger, mortal and eternal, by accepting our vulnerability, we find our strength. By accepting that we are afraid, we allow courage to enter.

Hail to the Hanged One.

## **Welcome to Mystery School 2004**

**Individually and together, we step into the coming year.**  
by Cynthia Jones

I see the Hanged One as a leaf on the World Tree. That image has haunted me since I began thinking about this card. I see the Hanged One as a leaf...and then I see all the other leaves hanging on the World Tree. Each leaf is a Hanging One. Each leaf holds a place; the combination of leaves makes a tree. From a distance, I see the tree. I don't see the leaves at all. But when I think of myself as the tree, I am exquisitely aware of every leaf. The trees outside my window have no leaves. I can hear them; they sing with the memory of the leaf's promise.

The leaves feed the tree. They gather sunlight. They collect the rain. They feed the tree that feeds them. Some of the leaves don't see some of the other leaves. You are a part of something larger than you realize...no, larger isn't the right word. Mystery School is a very little tree in a vast forest. As a Mystery, you are a part of something more *interrelated* than you might realize.

As a Mystery, you are feeding the tree that feeds you. Your involvement in Mystery School allows Mystery School to exist. You feed the tree; the tree feeds leaves that you will never meet. As a Mystery, new or returning, please hold that perspective in your hand for just a moment before

the year begins. Can you feel that truth, round and hard, in your hand? That perspective is a seed.

Just by enrolling, you have become a part of the life force of a dream. You have contributed to a possibility. Someone you will never meet will be touched in a life-changing way...and you enabled that touch to happen. Do you ever lose yourself in the way the leaves move in the breeze? Stop right now and notice a breeze. Can you hear the sigh of the wind touching someone half a world away? Your breath created that breeze when you said yes to yourself.

My name is Cynthia. I am a leaf and I stand at the trunk of the Mystery School tree. I look up and I see you all. I see you all - that is how I know that you can't all see each other. As the year progresses, we will hear each other's voices, we will hear each other's stories, and we will hear the silence...for some of you won't speak on line or at the Grove...and yet, you will make an impression. We will think about you; we will wonder about you. You are a part of our collective reality. Sound and silence combine to create the timbre of the year.

Before the year ends, one of you will say something in an email that will completely transform the way I approach a packet. The insight that you contribute will create a packet that says just the right thing to someone you have never met. You may never know the impact that you make, but it happens. It happens every month. That's the magic of Mystery School.

Mystery School grows out of the moment. Right now, as I am writing this Welcome to Mystery School letter, the first packet doesn't exist. It hasn't been written. Some of the ideas in this letter will grow into a story. After Mystery School begins, each packet is written after the monthly Mystery School gathering and before the 10th of the following month. The packet will be posted between the 10th and the 12th. At times, my

commitment to this organic process is troublesome - a packet is late or so hot off the press that it gets edited and re-posted. Organic can be messy, but it is vital. My work reflects the community's work, in person and on-line. You shape the packets, the rituals, and the community. Your comments, questions, concerns and support feed the roots. Thank you for being a leaf on this tree.

Friday, January 23, is the first Mystery School of 2004. Between 9:45 and 10:00 PM CST, listen. We will call your name. We will call everyone in Mystery School into our circle. We will say your name and hold you in the cradle of our thoughts. Individually and together, we step into the coming year.

## What the Hanged One Sees

by sisalfish

Of all the cards in my deck, I love the Hanged One most. Odd to say, especially in my Crowley/Harris deck, where her body is stressed to the maximum, the muscles so taut and stretched they form sharp-edged triangles. Even the face is drawn in such a way that it is more about pain and stress than about eyes and nose.

What draws me to this card? It's that rope. That enigmatic, coiled promise of a rope. Something about it always called to me – a thing of binding, unbound. But I didn't figure out what it meant to me until a couple of years ago, when I really began to get an appreciation of the cornerstone of Choice.

Until then, I was assuming this card, and that rope, stood for what many of the books will tell you it stands for: the Hanged One hangs, thinking she is trapped with no way out. That rope makes the Hanged One a fool (in the worst way), they'll tell you. It isn't even tied. She could break free any time, but is too stubborn, clueless and hidebound to do so.

Enter the cornerstone of Choice, and this card becomes what, to me, no other card in the deck is: a frozen snapshot of a split second. Of the

changes I've made in my life since becoming a Mystery, incorporating "choice" has been the scariest. I have known, for fifty years, what it is like to hang like this poor soul does – rigid, unbending, unchanging, asking the same questions but always coming up with the same old answers.

When the Hanged One turns up now, the message can be a number of things. But I love it most when her message to me is around the dynamic of blind faith in change. Stressed to the absolute maximum, this being, this body, has finally reached the point that she is willing to consider change, and – has loosened that rope. Not loosened it to reach for anything in particular – the Hanged One, or at least me as Hanged One, can't see that far. All she sees is that the old way doesn't serve, maybe never served, certainly doesn't serve now. It's the blind faith of this card that I love. It isn't that she sees a way out. All she sees, finally, is that there exists the possibility of *choice*. That rope, loosened, is her willingness to turn to another way, to consider things, she, might be different. She doesn't see an answer, yet – only the possibility of one, and that glimpse of possibility is enough to unknot the rope.

The rope loosens and there is a delicious moment of stasis – for me, this card captures that stasis. In a split second her body will begin to fall. As a Catholic child, I was always drawn to our fall from grace. Our fall, like a leaf, like the plunge of a roller coaster – it was like the apple, another motif I felt drawn to. *How could it be bad to bite an apple?* I would ask myself. *How could it be bad to plunge and fall?*

Now, the Hanged One helps me re-story those motifs, and affirms that 50-year old instinct for me, that human choices, with their falls and their apples, have their uses. When the old ways tell me I have no choice, and only the old answers – anger, despair, fear – will serve, this rope tells me otherwise. Like the Hanged One, I don't always see that much, I don't know enough to know what else I'm choosing. I'm just saying: "Maybe.

Maybe there is another way," and the rope, magically, unwinds, and then ...

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## **Musings from Moon Shadows: Hanging Out Upside Down; How Different Does it Look?**

by Jane Holt

The Book of Shadows, or Moon Shadows as we've begun to call it this year, is about our personal journeys. For each of us the journey is utterly unique and, yet, oh, so familiar. I see my own struggles and triumphs played out all around me. When I see you defeated and yet picking yourself up for another try, I know that I can do the same. When I see you triumph over something that continues to hold me back, I know there is hope for my own growth. I am learning that the more personal something is, the more universal it is.

When I tell my personal story with real honesty, I know that I make it understandable for you. The deeper my level of honesty, the easier it is for you to hear and know it as a story lived by every person. As you acknowledge that my story has much in common with your personal story, you offer me the privilege of learning two very important things: honesty connects us with each other, and I am just as human as everyone else. Those are the two most empowering facts I have ever discovered.

Each month in this column I offer a piece of my

personal journey based on the material in Moon Shadows. Each month I ask my heart to speak, instead of my mind, which speaks in knowledge and well-turned phrases and has defenses and rationalizations. To listen to my heart is a frightening experience for me; to share it with others is both priceless and terrifying. What is priceless is the opportunity you give me to share myself. What is terrifying is that you might care enough to hear me. What frightens me is that I might hear myself, especially those parts that I don't know what to do with, those shadow parts that I try to avoid.

I took up this challenge because I know that it is only by working through these tough knots that I can grow into myself, into my own wholeness. In this column I push my edges and reach out beyond my known limits into uncharted territory. Sometimes it feels like sailing with Columbus off the edge of the earth.

My most challenging task for the coming year is to unlearn a lifetime of important busyness, of clever multi-tasking, of hyper-alertness, and of plain, old-fashioned codependence. My challenge

this year is to learn to be present for myself and present to each moment of life. In other words, when you talk with me I want to be there with you. I want to be fully present in our time together. When I wash dishes, take a walk or set up a photograph, I want to be completely involved in what I'm physically doing. When I'm in a group I want to be present for what is happening now, for those that I'm with at this moment, not thinking about the last time we met or how to make the next meeting better.

I have spent too much of my life in the past or in the future; reliving old hurts, thinking up rationalizations, preparing defenses, planning conversations or future projects. Sometimes I simply go someplace else because my mind says that a particular moment is too complicated, or too painful, or too intense, or too beautiful for me to bear. My heart says it wants "to bear it;" it wants to feel those emotions.

This year I am turning my life upside down. Yes, I want to see life from a different perspective but, even more, I want to *live* life from a different perspective. My first step is to shed my "busy" staff role, to let go of all the busyness and importance that I hide behind so well and so easily. My first role becomes that of being myself, whatever that may look like. I'm not sure myself.

The Hanged One is my second role: the role of waiting to see what will happen. Who will I be, what shape will I take when I'm not fiercely trying to mold myself into something or someone? If I'm not a specific kind of someone doing a specific something, who am I? I have no idea. I'm not sure I even understand the question completely. How is it possible to not be a someone doing something? What does that look like? What would I look like? What will I look like?

I would love to jump into searching for answers...decide what I want to be and create that person. Gather information and use my rational mind to choose the right role. That's the route I know well because that is the path I've taken in the past. My heart, my emotions, however, said no, not this time.

This time my heart has challenged me to hang out and wait...to wait and see what happens, to see who evolves. To see who I am when I'm not trying to be something else. My heart tells me that it has waited long enough - no more shadows and no more roles. For the sake of my heart, I wait. I wait upside down. I live upside down. What does life look like from this perspective? What does your life look like from a different perspective?

## Dreams and Demons

by Teri Parsley-Starnes



Astrology is a symbol system that reveals myself to myself. It links me with the greater and lesser cycles of my own becoming. It leads me to wonder and possibility. For me, it is also a place to stand and orient myself to the truth found in other symbolic systems, like the Tarot. Because I like to think astrologically, I want to share with you what I am discovering about the Major Arcana through the lens of astrology. One big surprise for me last year was learning more about astrology through the wisdom of Tarot. Already, as we begin this year, I am learning a great deal about Neptune, the planet that corresponds to The Hanged One. Quite frankly, I thought I already knew a lot. I should have known better.

There are times when I am consulting with someone about their birth chart that I try to avoid the elephant in the room by hoping that the conversation will not turn to Neptune. I am most puzzled by how best to define Neptune's energy, and I am afraid to enter the murky passages to which it can lead. Neptune puts up warning signs: "Beware! Here rationality can dissolve, and you may have difficulty differentiating between illusion and salvation. Here, what you once believed to be sublime can break your heart, forms are not reliable, and you are on your own."

I speak from experience; I have a big Neptune problem in my own chart. I try to believe in the good side of Neptune, which is inspiration,

selflessness, empathy, spiritual attunement and faith. I hope to avoid thinking about the difficult side of Neptune – illusion, addiction, madness, lack of boundaries, and confusion. Today, I will deny my own Neptunian impulses and resist sugar coating the truth. Neptune is difficult; and because every planet rules a sign and a house, it follows that Pisces and the 12th house are also difficult. Difficult does not mean hopeless, but it does no good to deny these challenges.

I take this blunt stance because I am guided by The Hanged One. Neptune's energies are challenging energies, and because I desire to understand my own interaction with them, I want to try and see them from a new perspective. What I would like to suggest is that The Hanged One may give us a Tarot "prescription" on how to deal with Neptunian problems. I don't know this for sure, but I intend to sit with it for a while and see — which is just what The Hanged One suggests I do.

What is a "Neptune problem"? Neptune is the Roman god of the ocean; all water images such as fog, mists, oceanic depths, tides and floods give us an idea of how Neptune works. Having Neptune in challenging aspect (a specific geometric distance between planets) is one example of a Neptune problem. For example, when another planet or body, such as the Moon, is in conjunction with Neptune, it blends the boundaries of that planet or body with the boundlessness of Neptune. The Moon will still act as the source of emotion, but, influenced by Neptune, might be inaccessible at times or lost in the fog; or emotions might rise up unconsciously from ocean depths and create waves we had no idea existed. Emotional clarity may be harder to achieve. Quite often, addiction will be one of the Neptunian dead ends experienced. The other challenging aspects are the square (90 degrees apart), the opposition (180 degrees), and the quincunx (150 degrees).

Having a personal planet in Pisces can, at times, be quite similar to having Neptune in aspect to that planet. A personal planet in this instance would, in my opinion, be every planet except Uranus, Neptune and Pluto.

Finally, having one or more planets in the 12th

house might present one of the most challenging Neptune problems. This house is where we lose ourselves to find ourselves. One of its names is The House of Undoing. With planets in this house, one can feel like a stranger in a strange land – not really experiencing the world in the way societal norms would lead us to expect. I think of this house as the place of porous boundaries. One can have difficulty being sure whether the source of what one is feeling is from oneself or from another, from the present or the past.

A final expression of a Neptune problem will affect all of us even if none of the above applies, and that is through the transit of Neptune to our charts. After we are born and our birth charts are set, the planets in the heavens continue to move. As they come around to make aspect (forming those geometric distances) with our natal planets, we will experience a learning and growing opportunity courtesy of the transiting planet. Neptune lies in wait for us all! And here is where The Hanged One may help most. The planet Neptune moves quite slowly, taking 164 years to complete its orbit. A Neptune transit to just one natal planet can last up to 3 years. The action of this transit is to dissolve old forms.

During Neptune transits, it can be difficult to make decisions or to see very far ahead; one can become listless, dreamy and prone to following illusory pathways. In fact, the old way of seeing ourselves and the world can turn upside down, and we are left hanging, wondering what in the world is happening to us. In consultations with clients, I have found people are most happy to learn about Neptune transits. It does, at least, help them to know they aren't going crazy.

What the Hanged One says about this situation is: surrender. There are great spiritual lessons in letting go. Doing so moves us into the transcendent and universal – the place of Neptune. The danger is losing form altogether, and here the Hanged One also offers me advice: "You are still connected – there is a rope holding you to the tree." What is the rope? Perhaps it is the values we refuse to surrender, our core. As I imagine that I am hanging upside down on that tree, what I most notice is gravity. Gravity is represented by the planet Saturn, an energy we

will explore in the Universe card. Saturn is the antidote, the great balance to Neptune problems. Saturn reminds me that I have a body and that I must manifest my great Neptune imagination through the reality of my body. If I can't, then perhaps it is a dream that is worth letting go. The negotiation between Saturn and Neptune is not easy. It sure doesn't look easy, hanging from that tree.

This card reminds me of the story of Odin hanging on the world tree for nine days and nights. In the poem telling of this trial, it is written that "Odin sacrificed himself to himself." To

sacrifice is "to make sacred." What Odin did was to make himself sacred, not just to the other gods or humans, but to himself. When I am in the midst of Neptune confusion and surrender, I will remember that my goal is to realize my own sacredness and my own gravity. The reward will be renewal and the precious beauty of Neptune.

This year, we will discuss all issues of astrological interest on the astrology email list. I especially want to dive deeper into the astrology of each month's card. Please join us in this discussion whether you are a beginner, a skeptic or a fellow astrologer. I look forward to the journey.

## My Favorite Places

### The Barn Holds Our Stories in Safe Keeping

by Jane Holt

I began writing this column last year because it gave me a chance to share Diana's Grove with more people. *My Favorite Places* is a way to share and to learn; I'm currently learning photography so I can capture the beauty of my daily life. Last year's first column showed January's snow, ice and crystal-clear, blue skies. This January begins with memories and plans....

In late December the barn called me to notice...to notice that it serves as more than a storage building for furniture and shop merchandise in the winter. While we are up in the house staying warm, the barn is also filled with stories. In some of the stories our barn holds, you wrote your own part by being here. Many stories have only beginnings stored here; they wait for you to fill in the details. Beginnings, middles and endings nestle together in the shadows and muted light of winter's sun.

In the warmer months, the barn offers coffee,

books to share, space to spread your Tarot cards or do your crafts. It holds magical moments and memories of summer evenings. There is a wooden floor upon which to dance in the ancients or to let your soul move your body. Drum circles grow like mushrooms on this floor, making rhythms for dances that never stop...until the drummers are carried into the night by partners and bunkmates. The barn is full of life and living, of doing and being, like a heart beating the rhythm of our community's life. The barn holds pieces and memories of everyone who has ever

been here. If I listen carefully I can hear s n a t c h e s of conversations and laughter. I can catch whispered glimpses of intimate moments and joy-filled hugs. So much life lives here. So many stories are held in safe keeping.

As the weather grows colder, the barn fills with objects that need to be stored. And



stories also live in each of these *things*. Racks from the shop live here, almost empty; the clothes that they held are sold or packed away. Umbrellas that shade the kitchen deck overwinter here. They tell stories of fine meals, satisfied stomachs and compelling conversations. An under-dressed mannequin pleads with me to put something warmer on her...and I do. Mirrors and other residents of the shop speak to me. They tell me they are homeless because what was once their shop is becoming new housing. I remind them that they and the shop will have a new home by May. This new beginning is still in the planning stages. Not yet, I tell the cold manikin, as I put another layer on her.

And that large rocking chair? It holds a finished story, a story filled with memories. On December 1<sup>st</sup> 2003, we lost a member of our residential staff in an automobile accident. That chair belonged to Ramona. Those of us who knew her will miss her...and so will the barn and shop she cared for and spent so much time in. Those of you who didn't know her will hear about her. She was cranky and funny; she loved to talk and tease. She adored her poodles. Ramona and all of our stories of her will be part of all the coming years, for us...and for the barn.

## Epiphany Passages: Wicca

by Lorely Lather

My dictionary defines epiphany as "the manifestation of the Divine," with a secondary definition of "a moment of profound insight." The Christian liturgical year marks January 6th as Epiphany, as that is the date the three wise men from the East declared the infant Jesus was God. But, through studying the writings of Carl Jung, I have come to a broader understanding of epiphany, beyond that singular event. I have learned that the Divine is manifested repeatedly and abundantly. Stated differently, the Sacred is embodied repeatedly and abundantly. Epiphanies abound. Jung saw a path of enlightenment through seeking epiphanic moments. In this column, I will write of my personal epiphanies, hoping you will see and seek your own.

I had an epiphany on hearing the word "Wicca" in the summer of 1997 - a mere six years ago. I had not heard the word "Wicca" before, or if I had heard it, I was not receptive to its meaning. An art teacher/ friend said some of her rural high school students claimed to be Wiccan. "What is that?" I asked. Her explanation was lighthearted and dismissive, so I came home to look it up on my CD ROM Encyclopedia. There, "Wicca" pulled up "Witchcraft," and I read both the surface words and the meaning between the lines. I realized I had dismissed witchcraft as a distortion, not realizing it had a valid worldview underlying it. I

wandered from the encyclopedia to the Internet, where "Wicca" brought up large quantities of information. I then spent hours, late into that evening, reading my computer screen.

My mouth fell open again and again as I took it all in. Reading the abundance of information on Wicca was eye opening; a sense of change flowed through my entire body. This worldview had existed all along, and I'd not known it. This worldview, which valued women and the earth, had been portrayed to me as evil. This worldview, which connected science and spirituality, had never been shown to me - not during my youth, nor during my mothering years. Although I quickly discarded some of the Internet information as not applicable, much of it gave words to what I already sensed inherently.

I was dumbfounded to have reached 49 years of age before learning about this different perspective. I realized much of what was currently understood as Wiccan began around 1970 when I was in college, struggling with women's issues and questions about religion. I shook my head slowly, thinking of the last 30 years, in which I'd let my spiritual growth be suspended. Why hadn't I read about this Wicca movement? Where was I hanging out, anyway, that I missed this?

At some points as I read into the night I felt deeply agitated. I got up and paced the floor, angry that I had never known this spiritual perspective before. Again, I struggled with the concept that this was a spiritual understanding that affirmed women and celebrated creation, and I'd not known about it. How had I missed this? Why hadn't someone told me? Why was I now learning it from the coldness of a computer screen, alone in my office?

After reading until I felt saturated, I sat quietly in the darkness of my home and remembered when I had first learned how the sexual act was completed. To me, this memory related to learning about Wicca in that both were foundational to my gender understanding. Understanding the sexual act is a commonly shared epiphany for people - a memorable moment of profound insight, often experienced at an early age. Do you remember that epiphany?

I do. At about 9 years old, I asked my mother something about sex. She declined to discuss it and sent me to the encyclopedia. We had a set of encyclopedias obtained at a grocery store with bonus points. There, through pictures of the male and female organs, I realized what must happen in the sexual act and was appalled! It was physically frightening to consider being sexual and I thought I'd never want to do it! I smile now, remembering my initial child's disgust. And, here, now, 40 years later, I was learning, again from an encyclopedia, that there was a spirituality that affirmed women, affirmed sexuality, and affirmed life itself!

In my life path, seeking epiphanies, that evening in 1997 was a moment of sacred embodiment for me, and a clear turn in my path. I began that night to seek a new spirituality. And while my path has led neither directly nor quickly to a specific set of beliefs, my perspective was forever changed by studying the word: Wicca.

## River Currents

January 2004

by River

Welcome to Mystery School 2004 and *River Currents*! This monthly column will be devoted to exploring the nuances of ritual from a number of angles – from theory to skills to practice. Ritual is one of my greatest passions, and I'm absolutely thrilled to be able to speak to you each month about it! I would also love to have your feedback, ideas, and questions. If there's a topic you'd like to see covered, please email me at: [LabyrinthTR@aol.com](mailto:LabyrinthTR@aol.com).

And of course the inspirations for the topics each month will be this year's special guests...the archetypes themselves. What do the voices of personalities such as Death, the Sun, or even the Devil have to tell us about how we move between the worlds? Plenty, I assure you! We will listen to the secrets each archetype whispers in our ear as we enter into sacred space and ritualize symbols of our own Rites of Passage.

My favorite answer to the question, "Why ritual?" is from Cynthia: *Ritual is a multi-sensorial prayer*

*that we enter into in order to lay new patterns in our souls.* But how do we as ritual artists make space for those patterns to happen? This month the Hanged One is beckoning to us to hang upon his tree and see life from a different perspective. How do we, as priestesses, create a container that allows people the opportunity to see things from a different angle? How do we give people the chance to turn their world upside down – and in so doing, allow them the choice to lay new patterns in their souls?

The new patterns that I strive to lay in my soul are tools, insights, and conscious learnings about how to be in right relationship with my self, my community, and the world around me. I am better able to do that kind of personal work when the priestesses who are facilitating the ritual have made observable efforts to create safety. So what invokes safety? I try to remember to ask myself this question every time I'm planning a ritual – be it for 5 people or 500. I think of how I know that I'm safe in ritual as a participant, and try to re-

create that atmosphere. I know I'm safe when:

- ★ The facilitating priestesses have given me relevant information. I know the intention of the ritual. I've learned the chant. But even more, before the ritual begins, I understand the values of the community that is offering the ritual – and I know what boundaries are there.
- ★ It is clear that I have choice in my level of participation. If I need to leave the ritual space for any reason – I can. If I have to meet a need, I can take responsibility for doing that. I know that I am ultimately responsible for my own experience.
- ★ I feel included in the community experience. The priestesses engage the group and invite participation without forcing it. I feel like I am a part of the energy rather than an audience member.

When the facilitating priestesses have intentionally worked to set this kind of atmosphere, they have created a "field of relatedness." In essence, they have given the participants a foundation for common understanding about what will happen in the ritual and how the participants can be a part of it. That invokes a sense of belonging. When I feel that I can be a part of a community experience, I feel safe. Anticipating the audience in order to create a field of relatedness is a powerful tool. To me, creating sacred space begins with the first

advertising email or flyer, and ends when everyone has gone home. The need for safety doesn't end when the circle closes.

Just to clarify – safety does not necessarily mean comfort! The most powerful rituals for me have been ones in which I was able to do some deep personal work – changing an old story, recognizing a pattern in my life that needs to shift, or healing a wound. More often than not, I don't find that to be a comfortable experience – but it can be powerful just the same. If those who are facilitating have done their job well, I can allow myself to focus on the work I need to do without having to worry about having an appropriate boundary violated.

As a priestess, I can't ethically force anyone to have the experience I think they should have. Once I create the container to do the work, then anything could happen based on a number of factors – the people who are there, the energy level of the group, or how well the relevant information was presented before we entered sacred space. But if I have done my job well and created space for safety, then it is my greatest hope that participants have permission and the opportunity to see life from a different perspective – and to lay new patterns in their souls.

*Check out River's Introduction on the Diana's Grove Mystery page.*

For introductions to River, Jane, Cynthia, Skippy, Canyon and other newsletter authors check out the Mystery School introductions page on the Diana's Grove web site.

**[www.dianasagrove.com](http://www.dianasagrove.com)**

And guess who else is there (or will be as soon as you send us your introduction)?

# My Heart Overflows

## by The Three of Cups

I am the three of cups. I am cups – hearts. And I am three – expansion. I am she who both is and represents expansion of your heart, your abundant life, filled with nurture.

In the Crowley-Harris Thoth deck, I am three lush goblets of juicy pomegranate seeds, continually filled from golden lotus blossoms. The top goblet fills with nourishing water and overflows into the other two...and into an infinite ocean...unending nurture. The other two goblets also overflow into that ocean.



This endless supply of nourishment is taken up by a single glorious lotus that floats on its calm surface. Through plump, golden stems, it sends that nurturing water up and through the other blossoms that continually fill the goblets. Lady Frieda Harris painted me as an exquisite picture of abundant nurture!

I will never run out of nourishment because I fill myself over and over from an unending source...the sea of all nourishment. I receive nurture with generosity of spirit, allowing my heart to fill and overflow into the hearts of those closest to me. It is generous receiving that allows me to give with the same bounty. Big-hearted...it doesn't only mean that I *give* a lot; my heart must also be able to *receive* abundance, to make possible the giving.

And I have no need to account for each bit of nourishment I receive, no need to spoon up and measure the volume of your love for me. I have no need to count out the drops of love I give to you, ensuring that our cups are balanced on a scale. Just look at another image of me, in the Rider-Waite-Smith deck.



I am three women who dance together, the cups that are our hearts held high. Are these hearts full, empty, filling, draining? You don't know because you can't see into them...and neither can we. Bodies close together, our long skirts sway as we dance with each other and with our hearts.

Intricate steps keep us off balance, yet don't trip us, as we dance among fruiting vines. Careless of the plump and juicy abundance around us, we gaze into each other's eyes or at our cups, our hearts. Our arms entwine like the branches at our feet.

This dance is not about how much is in each cup. This dance, our dance, is about the connection...the connection of each of us with the others, and our connection with the endless nurture that branches and vines below our twining arms and feet.

I am the Three of Cups and this is the truth I hold, for all to see. Giving nurture to others with generosity is easy, if only you open your heart to receive from the vast ocean, the eternal fields of fruit. Yes, that nurture does flow to you through others; each heart around you can overflow to fill yours. Any hand can pass you a cluster of grapes.

And if they don't? If the hearts and hands around you are not, themselves, full? You can always be filled, as that endless sea of nurture also flows directly into you through the golden lotus of your true self. Nurture is always available in the palm of your hand, fruit plucked from ever-verdant vines. Life with a capital L is luscious. Nurture is ever present.

The secret of keeping your heart full is this: never seek, in thirst, to measure the depth of nurture in the hearts around you or the juiciness of the fruit

in others' palms. Never seek what others may spare, as if nurture is a limited supply that must be shared. Trust that endless source – the infinite ocean and the always fruiting vines of Life.

Adopt my motto - My Heart Overflows – and let yourself be open to that ocean of nurture that is

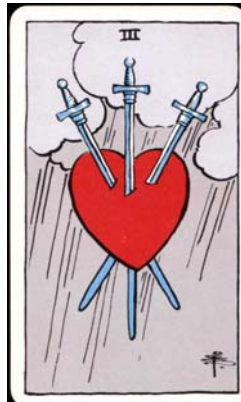
Life itself. Be filled with the juice of Life's fruits. Overflow to fill others, that they may, in turn, overflow to fill you. Filling up, overflowing, you are tributary to the infinite ocean and moist soil for the vine's roots.

May you never thirst!

Other 3's



Pentacles



Swords



Wands

## Interview with a Mystery: Laurie Dietrich

by sisalfish

*Laurie Dietrich is a first-year Mystery living in San Antonio. She recently retired as producer and director of a classical theater company she and her husband co-founded and ran for the past ten years in San Antonio, Texas. She is currently working as a dramaturge on the 4<sup>th</sup> production of a ritual theater production, Dark Goddess, at the Vortex Theater in Austin, Texas.*

*What the heck is a “dramaturge”?*

I'm kind of a scholar/researcher for the play. I'll be a resource for historical material about the Goddesses represented – their myths and motifs, their cultures and history. I'll probably also get familiar with the scripts and details of the past three productions. Apart from my role as dramaturge, I'll be serving as a source of grounding during rehearsals and performances – eight strong women aspecting eight strong

Goddesses for eight weeks – the company is going to need some grounding.

*You've been interested in aspecting for some time now.*

Yes, first as a dramatist and then as a Priestess. I was a director before becoming – whatever Pagan path it is I'm on, I'm not sure it has a name. I was originally interested in Voudoun because in it, you are connected to divinity, you become divinity. You are God. It's a practical approach. I liked the idea of becoming a God, aspecting God, as part of my practice. But I couldn't deal with the blood sacrifice, though I respect what they do with that, and how they do it. When I gave up Voudoun, I thought I had to give up aspecting, and I was sorry for that. So I was excited when the Reclaiming folks introduced me to aspecting again.

*Do you see similarities between directing theater and priestessing?*

Definitely. I had been a director for several years when I started on a "wiccan" path. Right away I started noticing all the parallels between priestess training and the tools I was using in theater.

*Such as?*

Mainly energy work. During the rehearsal process, it seemed to me directing was very much like priestessing. I was responsible for setting the energetic tone. I started using priestessing tools more consciously as a director, and had great results. I'd get to the theater early, clean and sanctify the space, use cast warm-ups to raise energy and then move everyone to the same place, energetically. As the rehearsal went on, I continued tracking the energy, and shifting what we did to serve the energetic needs of the troupe. And grounding, after. Priestess training helped me learn to be careful with my own energy when I was directing, not feeding my own energy into the rehearsal too much, to the detriment of my own health.

*Your actors weren't pagan?*

No. But we were working with the same concepts, they intuitively, me consciously, and it worked. A lot of the good, experienced actors used invocation techniques, whether they knew it or not. Most of them had personal rituals they did, right before they stepped on stage. The experienced actors also grounded, and devoked, when the performance was over.

*They didn't know what they were doing, in a pagan sense?*

No. They just did it, intuitively, or because it worked.

*What's the relationship, for you, between theater and your spiritual path?*

Connection. My husband, John, who's a staunch atheist, introduced me to the work of Joseph Campbell, especially his work on comparative mythology and religion. Reading Campbell, I realized something about the nature of the religious impulse, and that's what I've really become interested in – I'm obsessed with what drives that impulse, what it is we're looking for

from religion. It wasn't until I read Campbell that I realized there are universal common themes, repeated again and again. Religion is a huge drive, for almost all of humankind. So I want to know: what are we being driven toward, and why? Right now my thought is that it's an impulse to connect, on multiple levels – to the circle, the group, the community, earth, cycles of nature, and what is beyond earth, if that's part of it. I think the same impulse creates theater. I think the two are closely linked in a lot of ways.

*What drew you to become a Mystery?*

Well – I liked the name. I've always been interested in the Mystery tradition, as something that must be experienced. That ties in to my interest in participatory religion. But primarily, it was Mystery School's focus on leadership and community. Because those are the two biggest and most problematic areas for me. I've always ended up in leadership roles, but I'm really uncomfortable with that responsibility. Power goes along with that role, with other people, in community, and that frightens me. The combination – leadership and community – I know communities have to have leaders, and it seems like I'm going to be one, and I find it both appealing and appalling.

*So where does Diana's Grove Mystery School fit it?*

From what I read about them, leadership and community-building are issues they've spent years developing tools to address. I'm hoping I get access to some of those tools, and new ways of thinking about leadership in community, and community in general. My biggest ongoing disappointment with the pagan community is around what community is. I don't know what a healthy pagan community looks like, because I haven't seen one yet. I'm interested in what MS has to teach me about their model of community, because so many people recommend them so highly.

*What do you hope will happen, as a result of becoming a Mystery?*

I'll take over and rule the world. Or at least get a little easier in my own skin.

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## Dog of the Month

### Marcus

I don't know who Marcus will be when he grows up. I can't even guess at the combination of breeds that are mixing in the moment called Marcus. Marcus is between 8 and 12 weeks old. He has been with us for 3 weeks. He is pure puppy; he plans to be a ferocious protector and a mighty hunter when he grows up. Countless tennis balls believe it will be true. Marcus is a combination of tough vulnerability and perfect trust. He loves the other dogs and wants to make friends with everything...cats, mice, you name it - he wants to be friends with it. He is adorable. We would love for Marcus to grow up in his rightful home. If you think Marcus might be the dog for you, email us - [Dogs@Dianasgrove.com](mailto:Dogs@Dianasgrove.com), we will tell you more.

Diana's Grove provides a home for abandoned

dogs from the Bunker/Salem area. We believe that the kind of people who come to the Grove, people like you, are the kind of people who will provide a caring and nurturing home for a companion animal. You can expect to meet between fifteen and twenty dogs at every Diana's Grove event. More dogs in our area need shelter and rehabilitation than we can accommodate.

Every dog that we place allows us to save another life. If you are seeking a companion, please review the Dogs of Diana's Grove web page. All of our dogs have their shots. Dogs over six months have been neutered. The cost for medical and daily life care for our rescue dogs is considerable. We appreciate the financial, emotional and placement support that has enabled us to save and place so many fine dogs.



**Marcus**

# Moving Images

by Dan Wilson

## “American Beauty”

There's something missing from Lester Burnham's life. His daughter hates him, he's trapped in a dead-end job and his wife is having an affair. The high point of his day is when he gratifies himself in the shower, and it all goes downhill from there.

His epiphany comes quite by surprise. Reluctantly trailing his wife Carolyn to a business function in order for her to “project an image of success,” he excuses himself to the bar for drinks. Ricky Fitts, the son of Lester's neighbor, introduces himself and invites Lester to get high with him behind the restaurant.

While they're smoking, the manager comes outside and tells Ricky he's not paying him to stand around. “Fine,” says Ricky. “Then don't pay me. I quit. You don't have to pay me.”

Lester stares at him. “I think you're my new personal hero.”

For the first time in a long time, Lester gets a glimpse of what life can be like if he were to just take control of it. He realizes, and this is the critical point in the movie, that **he** is about him, and **it's** not about him. By refusing to take control of his life and his destiny, he's been buffeted about by fate, quite bitter about the hand he's been dealt.

This is the turning point at which Lester begins shuffling the cards. In a confrontation with Carolyn, he stands up to her in a way that she's not used to. She realizes that something's about to change, and Lester is very pleased with himself. “It's a great thing when you realize you still have the ability to surprise yourself,” he thinks. “It makes you wonder what else you can do that you've forgotten about.”

From there, Lester collapses everything familiar around him as he molds his life into what he wants it to be instead of what everyone else expects of him. He gets himself fired, but not until he blackmails a generous severance package out of the company. He smokes a lot of weed. He buys a 1970s Firebird. He gets a job at a burger place because it has “the least amount of responsibility”. He starts working out.

Life's been pushing him around for so long, and he's finally pushing back. Like the Hanged One, he's turned everything upside down and is observing everything from a different perspective, full of anticipation about what will transpire. He's come to terms with the fact that the choices he made in the past have affected his present circumstances; and he's making different choices now, and waiting to see what choices will present themselves in the future.

His eyes are opened to a world that he never thought possible, never even imagined.

When a friend of his daughter's asks him, “How are you doing?” he replies, “It's been a long time since anybody asked me that.”

He pauses to reflect. “I'm great,” he answers. “I'm great.” And he believes it.

*“American Beauty,” with Kevin Spacey, Annette Bening and Thora Birch is available on VHS and DVD in most video stores. It won five Academy Awards in 1999 (Best Actor-Kevin Spacey, Best Picture, Best Screenplay, Best Cinematography, and Best Director) and was nominated for three others (Best Actress-Annette Bening, Best Editing and Best Original Score). The film is rated R for nudity, language, and violence.*

## Skippy Speaks

*Yes, Virginia, dogs do see things differently.*

I realize that a few of you probably have not yet had the opportunity to read my introduction. I highly recommend it, although it is not, alas, a complete biography that includes my full life's history and philosophy. However, my editors are, I believe, making plans for publication of *The Complete Skippy; Memoirs Extraordinaire of a Scholar, Warrior and Priestess*. Still, it will be a while before even the hard copy is out. I have many adventures ahead of me yet, as well as feats of mental derring-do to perform.

So let's get down to business. I am Skippy, often known, rightly so, as Skippena, Warrior Princess. I am Top Dog here at the Grove. That role, by the way, includes humans as well as dogs. They - the humans - can sometimes be a bit of a handful but I am almost always up to the challenge. Except, that is, when I'm napping. I have been Top Dog for a great many years and recently I've started to wake up just a tad-bit grumpy.

Now, I know you can't see me right now. You will have to imagine a beautiful red-gold dog with a few (only 3 or 4) gray hairs here and there. As you can't see me, I'm sure that you also can't see Skipphooly standing next to me. She is a mystical dog whose job is to chase that silly Fool through the Tarot. You see, the Fool would sit on the edge of that cliff forever if it weren't for Skipphooly. She's the one you all should thank for the "encouragement" to take that leap. Some fools have been know to, accidentally I'm sure, mispronounce her name as Skipphooey (skip-foo-ey) but it's really Skipphooly (skip-fool-ey). She doesn't take offense when she is called Skipphooey...but the last fool who called her that still wanders in the Hermit's darkness. Someone forgot to give him the light he needed to find his path. Skipphooly isn't talking but she's looking quite pleased with herself.

Skipphooly has been showing me through the Tarot, introducing me to the Archetypes and generally being a most congenial hostess and guide. She knows everything there is to know about this journey. Well, okay, everything that's

worth knowing. Many people have other theories and stories, but Skipphooly says.... No, I'll just let you be the judge during the coming year.

There is so much to tell and so little time to tell it. Our topic for this month's discussion is an important, although possibly obscure one: *The Curious and Physiologically Impossible Phenomenon that The Hanged One's Face Never Turns Red* (although s/he has spent eons upside down) and, *In Direct Proportion and Relationship to This Startlingly Impossible, yet Actual, Physical Reality, How Dogs Are Always the First to Notice Truly Pertinent Information*.

My belief is that the totality of this topic has never before been discussed. Except, of course, the part about how dogs are always the first to notice truly pertinent information. That fact of life is known by everyone. But I ask you, with a sharp bark of insistence, why has no one noticed or worried about the fact that the Hanged One's face never turns red? It's not as if this truth was hidden in a da Vinci painting; it's there each time the card turns up. Wow! but maybe this is a hidden code.... I know some who say that the picture is simply a moment in time, a snapshot of that moment. But I answer defiantly and definitively that the moment has become many moments, trillions and trillions of moments.

There are hundreds, possibly thousands, of Tarot scholars out there...what have they been looking at? How have they missed this? What does it mean? Is there some deep, esoteric meaning in this phenomenon? What masterful system of yoga do you suppose the Hanged One practices to keep his face from turning red? Could this phenomenon hold the answer to eternal life? Have I stumbled upon the next step in human evolution? Is hanging out more than it appears to be? And...what are you going to do about it?

You see, we dogs truly do see things from a different perspective. I think it is going to be an interesting year. Don't you?