

A detailed black and white illustration of a witch with a pointed hat, long flowing hair, and a fierce expression, holding a broom. A small devil-like creature with horns and a tail is perched on her hat. The background is a textured, cloudy sky.

# GUMBO

*ya ya's*

## All Hallow's Zine 2014

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# FROM THE EDITOR

Gumbo Ya Ya is the name given to a communication art form in the south when a group of people get together and everyone talks at one time. It may sound confusing if you've never experienced it, and it may seem as if no one would be heard if everyone is talking simultaneously. But, when you have mastered the art of gumbo ya ya, then you have the ability to follow all of the conversations going on, never missing a beat. That's how our Gumbo Ya Ya conjure art-zine is, we've got a lot of conversations going on in written form. They may seem unrelated; but, then again, they may not. I mean, if we are all in this together, then nothing stands alone. Every article is a necessary ingredient of this pot of conjure gumbo, every piece contributes to the delicious flavor of the magic.

This special edition of Gumbo Ya Ya All Hallow's Zine is woven together by ghost stories from around the world, shared with you in the spirit of All Hallow's Eve, Halloween, and those traditions related to that time of year when the veil is thinnest between the world of the Visibles and the world of the Invisibles. We've got our resident storytellers sharing with you dangers of the paranormal, how to respect the Dead, how to conduct a séance, how to make soul cakes and the origin of Halloween. And then we've got some great articles for obtaining justice, how to make your own prayer book and how to get rid of those pesky haunts, useful for any time of the year when it comes to conjure doctors and conjuring.

Have comments or questions about this zine? Feel free to email me at [gumboyayaezine@gmail.com](mailto:gumboyayaezine@gmail.com).

Brightest blessings,

**Denise Alvarado**

Editor in Chief

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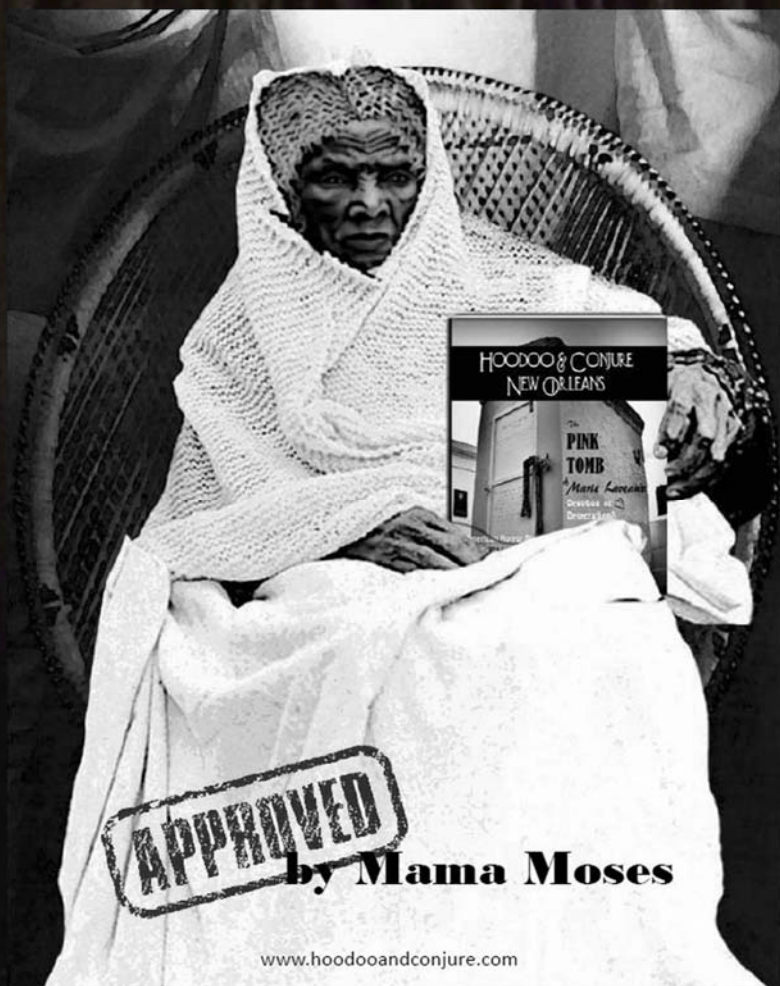
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# RISKS INCIDENTAL:

## SUPERNATURAL DANGERS OF PARANORMAL EXPLORATION

Grab this book before the supernatural grabs you!

# ALYNE PUSTANIO

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# Risks Incidental: Supernatural Dangers of Paranormal Exploration

*by Alyne Pustanio*

**P**aranormal exploration can be educational, rewarding, and yes, even dramatic and “fun.” But there is a tremendous amount of real danger associated with research into this particular field – one in which both the body *and* spirit can be put at risk. These dangers are part of a vast supernatural reality with its own natural laws – a reality that paranormal researchers encounter every time they set out to explore the unknown.

Demons, angels, devils and inhuman beings, shadow entities and the discontented dead, *Risks Incidental: Supernatural Dangers of Paranormal Exploration* prepares the paranormal researcher for close encounters with all the inhabitants of that “outlaw country” – the realm of the supernatural.

Author, Occultist, and Paranormalist Alyne Pustanio makes the case for proving that paranormal encounters with a supernatural reality are continuously occurring in the world around us, and why the path to understanding the nature of these encounters must lead through the vast traditions and teachings of the occult. On the following pages, we bring to you an excerpt from her exciting new book. Get prepared - grab your cross, Holy oil, amparo or dagger, this is a ride you won't want to go on unprepared.

# INTRODUCTION

It was the spring of my freshman year of high school, and the days were quickly warming up in a prelude to the long, hot summer to come. Classes were over for the day, and I sat with my best friend Cheryl on the low wall that fronted our school, both of us waiting for our rides: my mom showed up first. With promises to call, I said goodbye to Cheryl and jumped in my mom's car, humming low at the curb. And why not make promises? I expected this afternoon to be like any other: I expected to go home, put on my favorite Led Zeppelin LP, do my homework, have dinner, and retreat to my room – the typical hermit teenager. I soon found out, however, that this day would be different, that the events of this particular day would be far-reaching and catastrophic in ways I could never imagine then.

There was nothing extraordinary about my mother, Sonta. Sicilian Italian by descent, with a father who could only “spoil her rotten” when her stern mother wasn't around, she was strong-willed and possessed of a permanent expectation that it was “her way or the highway,” sometimes regardless of the desires of others. She was witty and personable, capable of such slapstick humor that she was often compared to the comedienne Lucille Ball; she even had a sidekick of sorts in my Aunt Louise who, when they were younger, often took on the role of Ethel Mertz, with hilarious consequences. Unlike other women who had children born in the 60s (I was born in November of 1960), my mother didn't come out of the 50s like a hesitant salamander, blinking at the glaring light of burning bras and women's liberation. From a young age, she always lived her life unapologetically and with a forthrightness that could be dis-

arming at times. No “shrinking violet,” my mother.

While I was growing up, one of my mother’s prevailing interests was in the supernatural. I believe that much of her fascination was spawned by the grief of having lost a beloved grandfather when she was only ten years old; and her sometimes-desperate desire to contact him or receive messages from him drove her into the deeper waters of occult exploration. In fairness, it should be said that she came from a family not unaccustomed to supernatural encounters; her maternal grandmother was a powerful medium and as such the primary person the family dead contacted once they had passed out of this existence. It so happened, too, that this woman was the wife of the grandfather my mother so dearly loved. In many ways, I believe my mother was also somewhat psychic, and I can personally attest to numerous ghostly encounters that had nothing to do with my mother’s practices; as a family, we have always lived in spiritually-active homes.

My mother was raised a devout Roman Catholic; I mention this because it is significant to the experiences I am about to relate, and the fact that my mother later abandoned her original faith is directly connected to the events described here. As a Catholic child, I was familiar with the accoutrements of our faith such as rosaries, prayer cards, holy statues, and home altars; and my mother kept an altar for as long as I could remember. So it was puzzling and noticeable when one day, seemingly “out of the blue,” I found that she had deconstructed her Catholic altar and set another kind of altar in its place. Gone was the central image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, gone the blessed candles, the bottle of Holy Water, the little statues of Mary and St. Jude: all of this was usurped, literally overnight. Where the image of Jesus Christ had been was now an image of “some old guy,” or at least that’s what I called him until I learned his name was Zoroaster; a really lovely glass water lily held the



central candle of this new tableau; the familiar statues of the Holy Mother and St. Jude were substituted with incense burners and crystals. Although I was yet to understand it – and sometimes still have trouble comprehending it – my mother’s new altar was an external affirmation that she had stumbled into the “New Age.”

As part and parcel of this new-fangled belief system, my mother jettisoned several life-long activities, and distanced friends and relatives who couldn’t understand her new-found interests and the practices, such as yoga and transcendental meditation that went along with them. My paternal grandmother and my mother had contentious debates and arguments about what my grandmother (correctly) saw as my mother abandoning her faith and taking chances with her eternal soul. With most of the immediate family variously at odds over the matter, or (like my dad) blissfully ignorant of the encroachment of occult practices into our family home, my mother found a new “sidekick” in another, more distant aunt who was as deeply involved in the New Age practices as anyone could be. And true to the old saying, “they are birds of self-same feather,” this aunt helped to complete my mother’s commencement into the mysterious world of the occult by introducing her to a new group of “friends” that included psychics, mediums, gurus, and practitioners of various forms of ritual magic. To my mom, this was the brave new world, with all the wonders in it there for her exploration.

While still in elementary school, I would come home from the bus stop and find my mother engaging in meditation, sitting on the floor of her bedroom in the “lotus” position and chanting a seemingly nonsensical mantra over and over, completely unaware of my presence. Often, she would take me with her when she attended lectures and classes by noted psychics and early pioneers in the field of paranormal research. At other

times, I'd come home to find that I had just interrupted what turned out to be the first EVP sessions I ever witnessed. My mother learned from no less of an expert than Hans Holzer himself that it was possible to record the voices of the dead. Using a cassette tape recorder, she would make our home as silent as possible, turning off the air conditioning or heat, the refrigerator, televisions – she'd even put the dog out – and then turn on the cassette to record the “dead air.” I wouldn't say that I saw no merit in any of this, but I have to admit that as a teenager observing her normally down-to-earth mom engaging in such activities, I did find it laughable – at least at first. Before too long, however, no one involved would be doing much laughing.

\*\*\*\*\*

“I have an appointment,” she said to me that day as she picked me up from school, “and you have to come with me.”

Great! My day was being disrupted, and I'd have to sit around for who knew how long while she got “read” by some psychic or did yoga or *something*. I greeted this realization with the appropriate amount of teen angst. I had to stick up for myself, at least. But my mother wasn't someone you could “cop an attitude” with – like it or not, I was along for the ride.

In a short time we pulled up to a lovely little brick house in a nice neighborhood of New Orleans called “Lakeview.” I followed my mom up the walkway, past the enormous cedar tree and budding rose bushes, and up a few short steps to the door. She rang the bell and the door opened to reveal a petite lady, pale with short, dark hair and dressed all in black, probably Italian: in every way a “typical” New Orleanian of my mother's generation. She welcomed us warmly. Her home was fascinating and filled with antiques in what I learned later was the

“French Rococo” style. This was the first time in my middle-class life that I had encountered the use of books as decorative *objets d’arte*, the use of silk for curtains, and just how to execute the perfect placement of a fine Persian rug to complement a room. The paintings hanging on the wall were real canvasses mounted in ornate gilded frames and depicting nondescript, rich-looking French people whose gazes were probably painted in an attempt at genteelism, but which really conveyed a kind of frozen disdain. The adjacent dining room was equally resplendent and was dominated by a large, oval table of dark wood – mahogany, maybe, or ebony – that gave the appearance of a black mirror, reflecting everything while at the same time subsuming it all in its cold, blank face.

“Are you ready?” the woman said to my mother, and when she replied that she was, the petite lady held out an arm indicating that my mother should follow her. But when I naturally fell in behind them, the lady held up a hand to stop me. “I’m sorry,” she said in a voice like treacle, “you have to wait here.”

“Oh,” I said, just a little indignant, “OK.” I shrugged and watched as the woman took my mother to the rear of the house and a hallway that led, I supposed, to the bedrooms. Finally realizing that not only had I been inconvenienced (by my mother), but also excluded (by this strange little woman), I felt righteous indignation of the sort only a teenager can feel: I took it out in sweaty handprints all over that polished black table.

I made my way around the room in boredom, looking at bric-a-brac and books and finally coming to rest on one of the two ornate “fainting couches” that served as sofas in that gauche Rococo-nightmare of a living room. There was nothing to interest me: no TV, no really comfortable place to sit, books all written in French or Latin, and not even a clock to watch. So I simply resigned myself to a dull exile. Everything was silent and still. Golden beams of the lengthening afternoon sunlight



shone through the lacey sheers of the fabulous curtains and little motes of dust drifted silently in and out of the illuminated shafts, the only things moving – perhaps the only things moving in the entire house. Slightly unnerved by that thought, I got up and crossed the room, the familiar tramp of my saddle-Oxfords imbuing me with purpose: I was crossing that room, and I was going to look out the picture window, and no “feeling” was going to stop me. Leaning into the window and looking out at last, I saw that the playground of a familiar Catholic school was just one block up, situated diagonally across an intersecting street. Children were playing there; what other kids would call “a bunch of kids” appeared to be running around, apparently laughing and shouting and generally making “bunch of kids” noises which I, exiled on an island of silence, *could not hear!*

Certainly there are times in our precocious youth when we imagine ourselves victims of all kinds of mysterious illnesses (when angry with our parents, these ailments were always deemed fatal), and so the fleeting thought occurred to me that I had suddenly gone deaf (maybe as punishment for so much faking, or for too much Led Zeppelin through headphones). But no. I could hear myself breathing, heard the swish of the silk curtains as I held them back: I had most definitely not been struck deaf. So why couldn't I hear . . . ? A real sense of fear now came over me, and as I sat in that little room hearing the vacuous silence, I slowly became aware that *something* was in there with me. Even more alarming, I felt – and don't ask me how – that feeling “it” was only a prelude to Its *arrival*. Something was coming, and just the hint of this was enough to send a wave of cold, clammy urgency over my body, the typical “fight or flight” reaction that grinds up from our primal natures in response to incalculable danger. In this moment of abject, primordial fear I wanted to flee, but I could not. In one

moment more, it was already too late.

With jarring immediacy, the all-pervading silence was sucked away, and the space around me was immediately filled with strange, new sounds. Voices were whispering, punctuated by a snake-like hissing, as if something large and threatening was slithering into the room. Then other voices joined in, scrambled, indecipherable, snatches of conversations spreading layer on layer over the other sounds, until at last the room was filled to overflowing with a cacophony of chaos. Accompanying this hellish noise was a feeling of abject fear that hung on the heavy, cluttered air; a feeling so intense, that it literally drove me, cowering, before it. I found a rickety, garish old chair beside the bolted front door, and there I sat, legs drawn up to my chin from under my school-girl's skirt, my hands over my ears, face buried between my arms. The hair on my neck prickled and I was covered in "goose-bumps," buffeted by the unrelenting noise and the weight of a fear that was growing exponentially with each passing second. At last, fear gave way to sheer terror as I realized that even the inanimate objects in the room were contributing to the chaotic noise: each book, each garish piece of nonsense décor seemed to be alive with sound! Worse still, every pale oval face in the antique portraits now seemed to be turned toward me, eyes glaring coldly, pitiless and aloof, mouths frozen in mocking little smiles. Then, when I thought I couldn't bear another moment of such fright, a thunderous crashing shook the entire house, and everything was stark silence once again.

I have no clue as to how long I sat there, cringing in the face of such a damnable onslaught, but the sun was very low in the sky when my mother and that strange lady at last emerged from the shadowy back rooms. Still reeling from the experience that had just blown like a hurricane through my previously typical and uneventful teenaged life, I was shocked by the in-

congruity of seeing my mother laughing and smiling as she came into the room. What the hell was this? A joke? Standing weak-kneed at the front door, I literally bolted through it as soon as it was opened. Whatever had happened, I didn't want to know anything about it. I wanted to get out of there and go home. Unfortunately for me, not knowing would never again be an option.

It would be years before I could fully understand what had taken place that day in the lovely suburban home of that petite little Italian lady, and there is so much I know now that I wish I had known then. I didn't know that this woman held regular séances at her black mirror of a table, or that she used it to scry the past and the future, and to summon up spirits at necromantic rituals known as "dumb suppers." I wouldn't know for years exactly what she and my mother had been up to in those shadowy back rooms, and learned it at my cost: the hellish cacophony of voices, the snake-like hissing, the tremendous crashing as if a giant had thrown itself against the house were all familiar aspects of ceremonial ritual conjuring, specifically the evocation of spirits and Demons into physical manifestation in our reality. I did not know then that the unassuming little New Orleans lady was known for "keeping the Devil in her pocket."

When I did finally gain understanding about what had happened, I also realized exactly what I had been exposed to by virtue of the simple fact that I didn't get to go straight home that day; that I had accompanied my mother on nothing less than a "fool's errand" into the dark reaches of the supernatural. In my belated moment of realization, some years after the fact, I finally understood the true nature and origin of the supernatural hauntings and Demonic attacks that robbed my young adulthood of its peace and in part drove my mother to her grave. I knew, starkly and as keenly as I had ever known



anything in my life up to that point, that despite what minimal protection that stupid woman may have provided for my mother and herself, I had been left wide open. I had been left sitting outside any circle of protection – substantive or imagined – that had encompassed them: *I had been left for prey.*

*“ . . . However unbelievable it may sound, the sounds, sights, and physical phenomena occurring at this point in the rite will redouble . . . the screeches become more frequent . . . heavy, numerous strong poundings against the walls of the room occur . . . there are a myriad of faces – if that is what they can be called – unbelievable grotesque faces flicking in and out of the air around the circle . . . In addition to the visions, apparitions and other sounds that are fading away but still present, the Operator will hear an enormous hissing, in the quarter of the compass in which the aerial spirits will fully manifest. When I heard it for the first time, I thought a gas line suddenly sprang a leak . . . ”*

\*The above article was excerpted from *Risks Incidental: Supernatural Dangers of Paranormal Exploration* by Alyne Pustanio, available at [alynepustanio.net](http://alynepustanio.net) and [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

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The abandoned house of "Tilly," the New Orleans witch, following Hurricane Katrina (2005). It was demolished shortly after this photo was taken. (Photograph from the Author's collection.)

# The Dead are Not Reality Stars

*by Madrina Angelique*



**G**host busters. Ghost hunters. Paranormal investigators. Ghost tours. I see these shows on TV and the way spirits are treated bothers me. I see some of these "investigators" screaming obscenities, making threats and provoking the dead. The term *Voodoo* is bantered around like a cuss word. The dead are treated like a side show and called monsters and demons. Most of these shows like to use words like "demonic", "voodoo possession" and "malevolent spirits". Personal items are tossed around with no respect. This is not to say all paranormal investigators share this disrespect; but, from what I've seen on TV, it's becoming the norm for rat-



ings' sake.

We need to show the same respect to the dead that we show to the living. When we walk among the dead, it's no different than being invited into someone's home. Just like the living, the dead can help or harm. If you go plowing into someone's home unannounced, uninvited and making demands, there is probably going to be trouble. It's no different going into a "haunted" place. If the dead have not moved on, this place is where they call home. If you want their attention, go with some water, flowers or food; especially, if going to places where slaves or others died tragic deaths and suffered while alive. Do some research to find out what happened in the location. Speak in a normal tone of voice. Ask permission to talk with them.

And do they really think the dead care if the lights are on or off? I guess night vision cameras make a better show. Most negative experiences their "clients" have come from the misunderstanding of what is happening, not from demons. In plain fact, demonic infestation is an extremely rare occurrence. Most of the time a simple "you're not welcome here" or a good cleansing will help them move on. And if you do need professional help, don't just hire anyone. Like hiring anyone, ask questions, find out credentials, find out how they helped past clients. And remember this, the Dead are not reality stars. They were once mothers and fathers, siblings and children. Treat them that way.

**About the author:** Madrina Angelique is initiated in the Palo and Santeria traditions. She is the author of *Workin' in da Boneyard* and *Crossroads Mamas 105 Spiritual Baths for Every Occasion*, and is a regular contributor to *Hoodoo and Conjure Magazine* and *Gumbo Ya Ya*.

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# White Cap

## *An Icelandic Ghost Story*

A certain boy and girl, whose names this tale telleth not, once lived near a church. The boy being mischievously inclined, was in the habit of trying to frighten the girl in a variety of ways, till she became at last so accustomed to his tricks, that she ceased to care for anything whatever, putting down everything strange that she saw and heard to the boy's mischief.

One washing-day, the girl was sent by her mother to fetch home the linen, which had been spread to dry in the churchyard. When she had nearly filled her basket, she happened to look up, and saw sitting on a tomb near her a figure dressed in white from head to foot, but was not the least alarmed, believing it to be the boy playing her, as usual, a trick. So she ran up to it, and pulling its cap off said, "You shall not frighten me, this time." Then when she had finished collecting the linen she went home. But, to her astonishment — for he could not have reached home before her without her seeing him — the boy was the first person who greeted her on her arrival at the cottage. Among the linen, too, when it was sorted, was found a moldy white cap, which appeared to be nobody's property, and which was half full of earth.

The next morning the ghost (for it was a ghost that the girl had seen) was found sitting with no cap upon its head, upon the same tombstone as the evening before. And as nobody had the courage to address it, or knew in the least how to get rid of it, they sent into the neighboring village for advice.

An old man declared that the only way to avoid some general calamity, was for the little girl to replace on the ghost's head the cap she had seized from it, in the presence of many people, all of whom were to be perfectly silent. So a crowd collected in the churchyard, and the little girl, going forward, half afraid, with the cap, placed it upon the ghost's head, saying, "Are you satisfied now?" But the ghost, raising its hand, gave her a fearful blow, and said, "Yes, but are you now satisfied?" The little girl fell down dead, and at the same instant the ghost sank into the grave upon which it had been sitting, and was no more seen.

Source: Jón Arnason, *Icelandic Legends*, translated by George E. J. Powell and Eiríkur Magnússon (London: Richard Bentley, 1864), pp. 157-158.

# The Child Phantom

## *A Swedish Ghost Story*

**M**any years ago there died on the estate of Sundshult, in the parish of Nafverstad, a child of illegitimate birth, which, because of this, was not christened and could not be accorded Christian burial, or a place in heaven, and whose spirit, therefore, was left to wander the earth, disturbing the rest and making night uncomfortable for the people of the neighborhood.

One time, just before Christmas, the parish shoemaker, on his rounds, was detained at the house of a patron, and, having much work before him, he was still sewing late into the night, when he was unexpectedly startled from his employment by a little child appearing before him, which said, "Why do you sit there? Move aside."

"For what?" asked the shoemaker.

"Because I wish to dance," said the specter.

"Dance away, then!" said the shoemaker.

When the child had danced some time, it disappeared, but returned soon and said, "I will dance again, and I'll dance your light out for you."

"No," said the shoemaker, "let the light alone. But who are you that you are here in this manner?"

"I live under the lower stone of the steps to the porch."

"Who put you there?" asked the shoemaker.

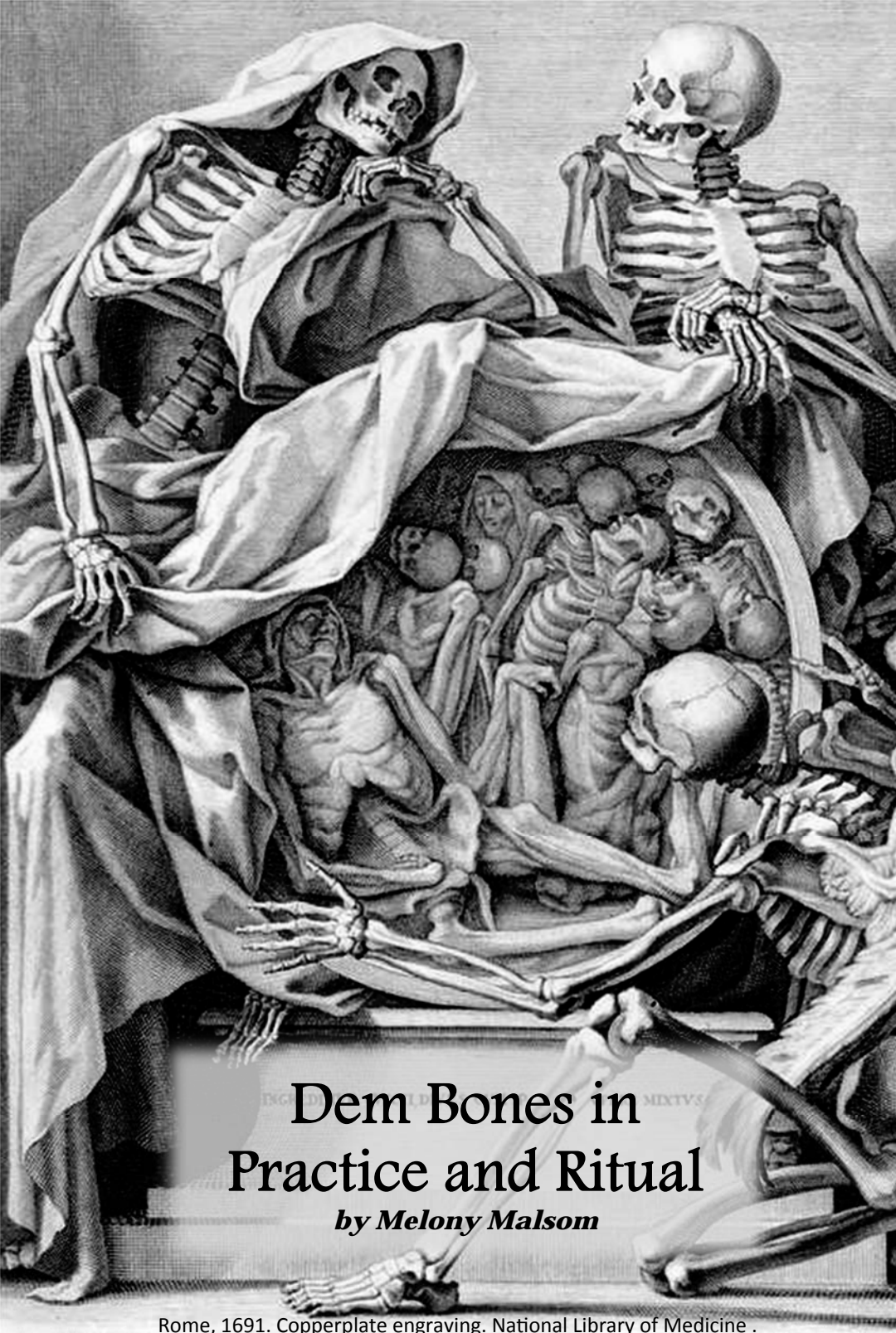
"Watch when it dawns, and you will see my mother coming, wearing a red cap. But help me out of this, and I'll never dance again."

This the shoemaker promised to do, and the specter vanished. The next day a servant girl from the neighboring estate came, who wore upon her head a red handkerchief. Digging was begun under the designated step, and in time the skeleton of a child was found, encased in a wooden tub. The body was that day taken to the churchyard, and the mother, who had destroyed her child, turned over to the authorities. Since then the child specter has danced no more.

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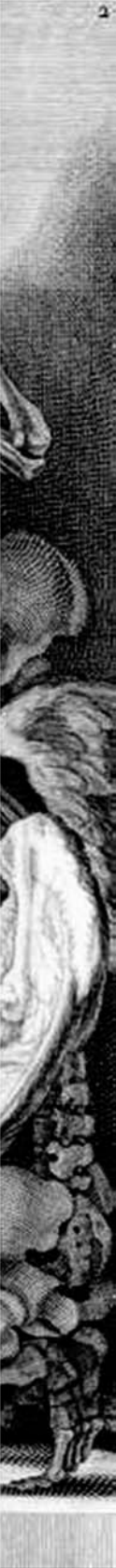
Source: Herman Hofberg, *Swedish Fairy Tales*, translated by W. H. Myers (Chicago, W. B. Conkey Company, 1893), pp. 105-106.





Dem Bones in  
Practice and Ritual  
*by Melony Malsom*

Rome, 1691. Copperplate engraving. National Library of Medicine .



Bones have long been revered throughout history for ritual, divination, as well as ornamental use, even kept as trophies of vanquished foes. Bones are sacred. They hold the life force and spiritual energy of the human or animal for whom they once belonged. They are our connection, a direct link to the other side - the realm of the ancestors.

Human bone devotion is practiced in many countries. In Asia, for instance, after a family member dies, it is not uncommon for the remaining family members to dig up said member's remains, clean them, and keep them around for awhile before reintering them with a second burial. Tibetans and Buddhists have long used the intricately decorated *Kapala*, Sanskrit for *skull* or *skullcap*, for rituals and worship as a sacred bowl or drinking vessel. Even the Catholic Church has a small fragment of bone from a particular saint embedded within their altars.

Indigenous peoples, such as the Aborigines and Native Americans wear jewelry and adorn themselves with the claws, feathers, and bones of the wolf, bear, and eagle, for example, because they believe it will impart the spiritual prowess of the animal upon them or allow them to shape-shift. An example being, fox teeth for cunning, owl bones for night vision, or snake bones for the ability to renew oneself and change your life. Bones can also imbue an animal's magickal attributes upon the wearer, as there are many who have the ability to walk in both worlds.

The bones of humans as well as animals are regularly used in ritual in Witchcraft, Voodoo, and many other magickal paths. One doesn't have to be a Necromancer to work



"Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones, Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones, Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones, they goin' walk 'roun."

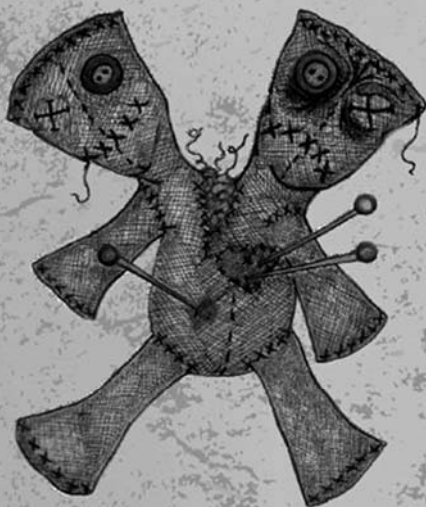
with bones. There are a wide range of healers, diviners, shape-shifters, root-workers, witches, shamans, druids and so forth who do such work because, simply put, bones are one of the easiest and best links to the world of spirit. They are used as conduits for the spirits we invoke to help us on our path as our guides and familiars; never to be commanded or enslaved.

Bones make the perfect houses for our spirit allies to rest until they are beckoned. Thus, any practitioner who works with bones should create a special place for them. An ancestral altar or altar dedicated to the dead can be a beautiful thing with regular offerings made to the spirits of food, drink, and tobacco, for example. If you enjoy it, chances are they will too.

Surprisingly, there exists a number of places to purchase human bones online for the person who has the funds. **The Bone Room** and **Skulls Unlimited** are two such places. It is not illegal to own human bones in the United States or Canada at this time; although, imported bones are strictly monitored.



# EVIL TWIN CONJURE



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[www.etsy.com/shop/EvilTwinConjure](http://www.etsy.com/shop/EvilTwinConjure)

Now, this in no way means grave-robbing is tolerated or legal; it is most assuredly not. If you purchase human remains of any kind, whether it be bones or cremations, do so responsibly.

Make certain it is a reputable place that specializes in Osteological supply, such as the aforementioned dealers, who get their bones from donated bodies and are specially cleaned.

Always to be held in the utmost respect, bones of any kind should be treated as the sacred vessels they are. They once supported a breathing, thinking, living organism. Even retaining a minute particle of that person's or creature's energy always deserves our gratitude and veneration.

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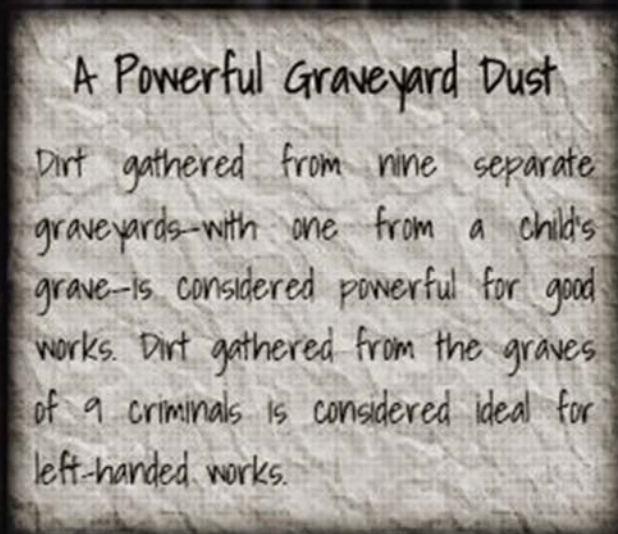
spiritlodge.yuku.com/topic/1178/Bones

**About the author:** An artist and writer for over 20 years, Melony enjoys creating and selling encaustic pieces and her Evil Twin Conjure Products on Etsy.

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**Etsy:** [www.etsy.com/shop/EvilTwinConjure](http://www.etsy.com/shop/EvilTwinConjure)



# Teeny Tiny

## *A Ghost Story from England*

Once upon a time there was a teeny-tiny woman lived in a teeny-tiny house in a teeny-tiny village.

Now, one day this teeny-tiny woman put on her teeny-tiny bonnet, and went out of her teeny-tiny house to take a teeny-tiny walk. And when this teeny-tiny woman had gone a teeny-tiny way she came to a teeny-tiny gate. So the teeny-tiny woman opened the teeny-tiny gate, and went into a teeny-tiny churchyard. And when this teeny-tiny woman had got into the teeny-tiny churchyard, she saw a teeny-tiny bone on a teeny-tiny grave, and the teeny-tiny woman said to her teeny-tiny self, "This teeny-tiny bone will make me some teeny-tiny soup for my teeny-tiny supper."

So the teeny-tiny woman put the teeny-tiny bone into her teeny-tiny pocket, and went home to her teeny-tiny house.

Now when the teeny-tiny woman got home to her teeny-tiny house she was a teeny-tiny bit tired. So she went up her teeny-tiny stairs to her teeny-tiny bed, and put the teeny-tiny bone into a teeny-tiny cupboard. And when this teeny-tiny woman had been to sleep a teeny-tiny time, she was awakened by a teeny-tiny voice from the teeny-tiny cupboard, which said,

"Give me my bone!" And this teeny-tiny woman was a teeny-tiny frightened, so she hid her teeny-tiny head under the teeny-tiny clothes and went to sleep again. And when she had been to sleep again a teeny-tiny time, the teeny-tiny voice again cried out from the teeny-tiny cupboard a teeny-tiny louder, "Give me my bone!" This made the teeny-tiny woman a teeny-tiny more frightened, so he hid her teeny-tiny head a teeny-tiny further under the teeny-tiny clothes. And when the teeny-tiny woman had been to sleep again a teeny-tiny time, the teeny-tiny voice from the teeny-tiny cupboard said again a teeny-tiny louder, "Give me my bone!" And this teeny-tiny woman was a teeny-tiny bit more frightened, but she put her teeny-tiny head out of the teeny-tiny clothes, and said in her loudest teeny-tiny voice, "TAKE IT!"

Source: Joseph Jacobs, *English Fairy Tales* ( London: David Nutt, 1898), no. 12, pp. 57-58.



# Soul Cakes, An All Hallow's Eve Offering to the Dead

*Denise Alvarado*

**T**he practice of giving and eating soul cakes is believed to be the origin of the contemporary trick or treating. *Souling*, as the custom was called, consisted of children and the poor called *soulers*, going door to door on Halloween singing and saying prayers for the dead in hopes of receiving one of the small cakes referred to as *souls*. The custom was popular during the Middle Ages in countries such as Great Britain, Italy and Ireland and persists today in countries such as Portugal where it is known as *Pão-por-Deus*.

Soul cakes are made with a variety of spices such as nutmeg, cinnamon, allspice and ginger and often contain raisins or currants. When a soul cake is eaten, it symbolizes a soul being freed from Purgatory. Soul cakes were traditionally used as ancestral offerings and set out on All Hallow's Eve (October 31) for the souls to partake of. On All Saint's Day (November 1), soulers would call out to the souls with the following song, which was documented in 1891 by Reverend M. P. Holme from Tattenhalle, Cheshire:

A soul! a soul! a soul-cake!  
Please good Missis, a soul-cake!  
An apple, a pear, a plum, or a cherry,  
Any good thing to make us all merry.  
One for Peter, two for Paul  
Three for Him who made us all!

# How to Make Soul Cakes

## Ingredients

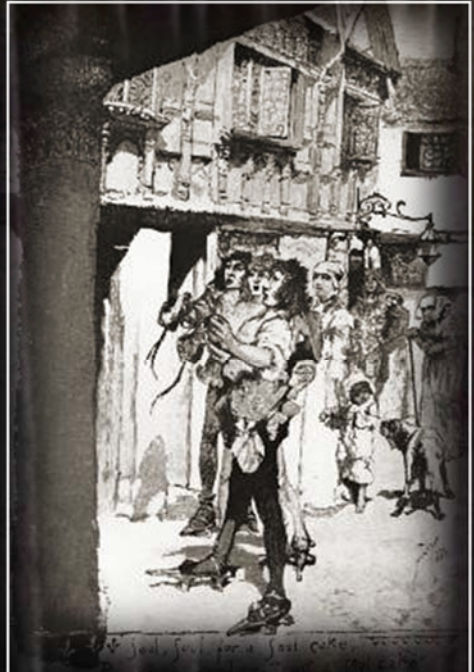
3/4 cup butter  
4 cups of plain flour, sifted  
3 egg yolks  
1/4 tsp nutmeg  
1/4 tsp cinnamon  
1/4 tsp ginger  
1 tsp allspice  
3 tbsps raisins  
A bit of milk

## Directions

Cream the butter and sugar until fluffy. Beat in the egg yolks and fold in the sifted flour and spices. Stir in the raisins. Add milk to form a soft dough. Form into flat cakes and mark each top with a cross. Bake on a well-greased tray at 400 degrees until golden brown.

## Reference

Soul Cake, retrieved from: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soul\\_cake](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soul_cake)



This is a photograph of the Christian practice of souling on All Hallows' Eve, also known as Halloween, in an English town. The photograph is taken from "St. Nicholas: An Illustrated Magazine for Young Folks", December 1882, p. 93 The magazine states that the rich gave soul cakes to the poor on Halloween; in return the recipients prayed for the souls of the givers and their friends. It further says that 'this custom became so favored in popular esteem that, for a long time, it was a regular observance in the country towns of England for small companies to go about from parish to parish at Halloween, begging soul-cakes by singing under the windows some such verse as this: "Soul, soul, for a soul-cake: Pray you, good mistress, a soul-cake!"' This verse is inscribed on the bottom of this photograph. As the text notes, this practice was also performed on Christmas.

# Rito de la Justicia (Rite of Justice)

***A conjuration to bring justice  
to a wronged person.***

*by Oskar Gonzales Yetzirah*

## **Materia Magica**

- Powdered Egg Shell
- Cayenne Pepper
- Black Pepper
- Honeysuckle
- Lavender
- 4 rattle snake rib bones
- 4 cowry shells
- 4 wasps
- 4 black votive candles
- 1 purple 8oz glass encased candle
- Snake Shed
- Photo of Offender
- Large plate
- Justo Juez Oil
- Conquering Oil
- Yuza Yuza Oil
- Kananga Water







On the Day of Jupiter, and in the Hour of Jupiter, you will begin the preparations for “Setting The Plate.” Take Kananga Water and wash the plate with your hands. You will recite The Lord’s Prayer as you do this.

When the plate has dried, you will take the picture of The Offender, and place it in the center of the plate. The picture should be upside down, so orient your plate to have a top and bottom, left and right.

Take your Powdered Egg Shell with a spoon and encase the picture, starting at the top right corner, down, then from bottom right corner to the left bottom corner and from there up to the top left corner and bringing it back around to the top right corner. When you do this, you must say “Like the shell encases, so you too will be encased.”

Take your Cayenne Pepper with a spoon and encase the initial encasing of Powdered Egg Shells in the same direction as you did with the PES. You must say “Fire! Fire! You will feel the Fire! The Fire of Justice!”

Take your Black Pepper and with a spoon encase the initial and secondary encasing of Gris-Gris. You do this in the same direction you did with the PES. You must say “Black are your ways, like this pepper, and like this pepper, you will be ground into dust and your will become a discomfort to all who can smell.”

Take the 4 Cowry Shells and place them in the corners of the PES. You must say “I bind you in the shell of bad luck and misfortune.”

Take the 4 Wasp and place them in any order in between the 4 Cowry Shells saying “With 4 stings in your life, you will learn your lesson!” (it is at this point you can declare what those 4 things will be or leave it to Spirit)

Take your 4 Rattle Snake Ribs and seal in the corners of the

“frame” saying “your frame of misfortune is sealed, there is no escape except through repentance to the one you have wronged and Justice is served.”

Take your Lavender and sprinkle evenly clockwise around the working and say “slow and heavy, you cannot move under the weight of your evil ways. With Lavender I bind your chains.”

Take your Honeysuckle and sprinkle evenly clock wise around the working saying “Honeysuckle, bring success to my petition!”

Take your 4 Black Votive Candles and inscribe the words: POWER. DOMINATION. COMMAND. JUSTICE. One word per candle. Anoint the candles with Yuza-Yuza Oil. Place one Center Top, Center Right, Center Bottom & Center Left with the words facing inwards towards the picture. You must say “Let these be the Pillars of my Prayer.”

Take your Conquering Oil and pour evenly around the working clockwise saying “I have been given power & domination over those who have wronged me by All that is Good.”

Take your Justo Juez Oil and pour evenly around the working clockwise saying “I pray to the Judge Most High to command justice on my behalf (if for a client you say their behalf)

Fix the 8oz Purple Glass Encased candle with all three oils, Justo Juez, Yuza-Yuza & Conquering. Hold it close to your heart and at this time you put as much intent into it as you can.

At this point, take your snake shed and cover the image of the Offender. You must say “I cover you in a sheet of justice, you cannot escape your punishment.

Light the 4 Black Votive Candles from top to left, then to bottom and to right saying “Almighty, I pray you hear me.” Light the 8oz Purple Glass Encased Candle and hold it center to your heart before the plate and say “with sincere faith and trust to I make this petition and offering to the one above.”



With the plate full and lit, lift it carefully and take it to your altar. Lift it slightly and say “Almighty who is Judge Supreme, hear my prayer and accept my petition for you have given the faithful dominion over their enemies and those who have been unjust to your child. You lord have stated, you will bless those who bless me, and you will curse those who curse me. Bring Justice in the Name of all that is Good. This is my plea.”

Set the plate down and let the candles burn out on their own.

**About the author:** Oskar “Doc Mojo” Yetzirah is the Owner-Operator at Midtown Mojo Manufacturers, Host for Bayou City Conjure Radio at Local Live Media, LLC. and Outreach Coordinator at United States Veterans Initiative. He resides in Houston, Texas. He can be found on Facebook:

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## The Burial Dress

### *A Ghost Story from Germany*

As was previously the custom, a woman made her own burial dress while she was still living. After she died, her daughter-in-law thought that a lesser dress would do just as well. Therefore, she kept the burial dress for herself and dressed the dead woman in an old worn-out one. However, the old woman had scarcely been buried when in the evening a voice was heard in the parlor saying, “I want to have my dress.” This happened every evening, and did not stop until the right dress was laid on the grave.

Source: Karl Bartsch, “Das Todtenhemd,” *Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Meklenburg* (Vienna: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1879), v. 1, no. 294, pp. 227-228. Bartsch’s source: F. Haase, a teacher from Rostock.

# R

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# Creating Your Own Prayer Book

*by Carolina Dean*

**A**s I have written before, praying and prayers are powerful tools used in the practice of Hoodoo to effect changes in one's life and manifest your desires. Many practitioners who use Psalms and Prayers read them straight out of the Bible or out of a book such as *"Secrets of the Psalms"* or *"Power of the Psalms"*.

In addition, many spiritual practitioners who read the Bible often will usually find a particular piece of scripture that speaks to them on a deeply spiritual level with regard to a specific issue or condition. At other times, they find prayers online written by other practitioners that they like or even write prayers of their own. I have even had instances myself whereupon I have spontaneously prayed for a specific person, issue, or condition and liked it so much I attempted to write down what I said as soon as I was able to in order to save the prayer to be used again at another time.

With all these prayers we've collected from various sources it can be somewhat hard to keep them all in one place. Some folks are adverse to writing in their bible or even highlighting passages. While you can certainly type them up and put them in notebook, or write them in a diary; I have found what best works for me is something entirely different.

When I set about to create my Personal Prayer Book, I purchased a small leather-bound 4" X 6" photo album that contained approximately 50 pages. Using a program such as Microsoft Word, I created a text box that was also 4 X 6 inches



typed/copied my prayer into that box, changed the font, added artwork and so forth, and then printed it out. I then cut out the text box and slipped the page into the plastic sheet inside the photo album. I have found that when I am praying over items, I am also usually working with things like oils, herbs, waters, and powders that can sometimes get messy and so the photo album concept is great because the plastic sheeting protects the page from getting damaged. I simply wipe the plastic off with a damp rag or sponge to keep it clean.

I like this concept so much, I have even created little books for different purposes. For example, I have a recipe book in my kitchen for all my favorite recipes, and I even have a small Book of Shadows that contains all my favorite spells and rituals for when I am on the go.

This is a great little weekend project you can do alone, with other magically minded people or even magical children. If your handwriting allows, you may even simply cut out the text box without typing anything inside it and then writing your prayer by hand in the space provided. I recall, as a child, that when we were learning how to write my grandparents had us copy verses out of the Bible. So if you want to resurrect the lost art of handwriting, this would be a great project for you.



## Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside still waters. He restoreth my soul, he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies, thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

# The Abandoned Child

## A Ghost Story from Iceland

A young woman who lived on a farm became pregnant. After giving birth to the child she set it out to die of exposure, not an uncommon act in this country before it became punishable by severe penalties. Now one day it happened that the young woman was invited to a celebration. However, she had no good clothes, so she stayed at home in a sour mood. That evening, while milking the ewes in the fold, she complained aloud that for the want of a proper dress she could not go to the celebration. She had scarcely spoken when she heard the following song:

*Mother mine, in the fold  
You need not be so sad.  
You can wear my castoff rags  
To the dance tonight.*

The young woman who had let her child die of exposure thought that she recognized its voice. She took such a fright that she lost her mind and remained insane the rest of her life.

Source: Retold from Jón Arnason, Íslenzkar þjóðsögur og æfintýri (2 vols., Leipzig, 1862, 1864).



# Hants

*Josephine Anderson*

Excerpt from

SLAVE NARRATIVES

A Folk History of Slavery in the United States

FOLK STUFF, FLORIDA

Jules A. Frost Interviewer

Tampa, Florida

October 20, 1937

I kaint tell nothin bout slavery times cept what I heared folks talk about. I was too young to remember much but I recleck seein my granma milk de cows an do de washin. Granpa was old, an dey let him do light work, mosly fish an hunt.

I doan member nothin bout my daddy. He died when I was a baby. My stepfather was Stephen Anderson, an my mammy's name was Dorcas. He come fum Vajinny, but my mammy was borned an raised in Wilmington. My name was Josephine Anderson fore I married Willie Jones. I had two half-brothers youngern me, John Henry an Ed, an a half-sister, Elsie. De boys had to mind de calves an sheeps, an Elsie nursed de mis-sus' baby. I done de cookin, mosly, an helped my mammy spin.

I was only five year old when dey brung me to Sanderson, in Baker County, Florida. My stepfather went to work for turpentine man, makin barrels, an he work at dat job till he drop dead in de camp. I reckon he musta had heart diseas

I doan recleck ever seein my mammy wear shoes. Even in de winter she go barefoot, an I reckon cold didn't hurt her



feet no moran her hands an face. We all wore dresses made o' homespun. De thread was spun an de cloth wove right our own home. My mamy an granmamy an me done it in spare time.

My weddin dress was blue—blue for true. I thought it was de prettiest dress I ever see. We was married in de court-ouse, an dat be a mighty happy day for me. Mos folks dem days got married by layin a broom on de floor an jumpin over it. Dat seals de marriage, an at de same time brings em good luck.

Ya see brooms keeps hants away. When mean folks dies, de old debbil sometimes doan want em down dere in da ba place, so he makes witches out of em, an sends em back. One thing bout witches, dey gotta count everthing fore dey can git acrosst it. You put a broom acrosst your door at night an old

witches gotta count ever straw in dat broom fore she can come in.

Some folks can jes nachly see hants bettern others. Teeny, my gal can. I reckon das cause she been borned wid a veil ou know, a caul, sumpum what be over some babies' faces when dey is borned. Folks borned wid a caul can see sperrits, an tell whas gonna happen fore it comes true.

Use to worry Teeny right smart, seein sperrits day an night. My husban say he gonna cure her, so he taken a grain o' corn an put it in a bottle in Teeny's bedroom over night. Den he planted it in de yard, an driv plenty sticks roun da place. When it was growin good, he put leaf-mold roun de stalk, an watch it ever day, an tell us don't nobody touch de stalk. It raise three big ears o' corn, an when dey was good roastin size he pick em off an cook em an tell Teeny eat ever grain offn all three cobs. He watch her while she done it, an she ain never been worried wid hants no more. She sees em jes the same, but dey doan bother her none.

"Fust time I ever knowed a hant to come into our quarters was when I was jes big nough to go out to parties. De game what we use to play was spin de plate. Ever time I think on dat game it gives me de shivers. One time there was a strange young man come to a party where I was. Said he name Richard Green, an he been takin keer o' horses for a rich man what was gonna buy a plantation in dat county. He look kinda slick an dressed-up—diffunt from de rest. All de gals begin to cast sheep's eyes at him, an hope he gonna choose dem when day start playin games.

"Pretty soon dey begin to play spin de plate an it come my turn fust thing. I spin it an call out 'Mister Green!' He jumps to de middle o' de ring to grab de plate an 'Bang'—bout four guns go off all at oncet, an Mister Green fall to de floor plum dead shot through de head.





"Fore we knowed who done it, de sheriff an some more men jump down from de loft, where dey bean hidin an tell us quit hollerin an doan be scairt. Dis man be a bad deeper—you know, one o' them outlaws what kills folks. He some kinda foreigner, an jes tryin make blieve he a niggah, so's they don't find him.

"Wall we didn't feel like playin no more games, an f'ever after dat you coundn't git no niggahs to pass dat house alone after dark. Dey say da place was hanted, an if you look

through de winder any dark night you could see a man in dere spinnin de plate.

"I sho didn't never look in, cause I done seen more hants aready dan I ever wants to see agin. One night I was goin to my granny's house. It was jes comin dark, an when I got to de crick an start across on de foot-log, dere on de other end o' dat log was a man wid his haid cut off an layin plum over on his shoulder. He look at me, kinda pitiful, an don't say a word—but I closely never waited to see what he gonna talk about. I

pure flew back home. I was so scairt I couldn't tell de folks what done happened till I set down an get my breath.

"Nother time, not so long ago, when I live down in Gary, I be walkin down de railroad track soon in de mornin an fore I knowed it, dere was a white man walkin long side o' me. I jes thought it were somebody, but I wadn't sho, so I turn off at de fust street to git way from dere. De nex mawnin I be goin' to work at de same time. It were kinda foggy an dark, so I never seen nobody till I mighty nigh run into dis same man, an dere he goes, bout half a step ahead o' me, his two hands restin on his be-hind.

"I was so close up to him I could see him plain as I see you. He had fingernails dat long, all cleaned an polished. He was tull, an had on a derby hat, an stylish black clothes. When I walk slow he slow down, an when I stop, he stop, never oncet lookin roun. My feets make a noise on de cinders tween de rails, but he doan make a mite o' noise. Dat was de fust thing got me scairt, but I figger I better find out for sho ifen he be a sperrit; so I say, gook an loud: 'Lookee here, Mister, I jez an old colored woman, an I knows my place, an I wisht you wouldn't walk wid me counta what folks might say.'

"He never looked roun no moren if I wan't there, an I cut my eyes roun to see if there is somebody I can holler to for help. When I looked back he was gone; gone, like dat, without makin a sound. Den I knowed he be a hant, an de nex day when I tell somebody bout it dey say he be de genman what got killed at de crossin a spell back, an other folks has seen him jus like I did. Dey say dey can hear babies cryin at de trestle right near dere, an ain't nobody yit ever found em.

"Dat ain de ony hant I ever seen. One day I go out to de smokehouse to git a mess o' taters. It was after sundown, but still purty light. When I gits dere de door be unlocked an a big man standin half inside. 'What you doin stealin our taters!' I



*A Jack ball to protect from haints and witches consists of a pinch of dried snakeskin, some graveyard dirt, red pepper and some of your hair wrapped around black rooster feathers. Wrap everything with red flannel into a ball about 1.5 to 2 inches wide and feed it with whiskey once a week. Keep it under your right armpit.*



hollers at him, an pow!  
He gone, jes like dat. Did  
I git back to dat house!  
We mighty glad to eat  
grits an cornbread dat  
night.

"When we livin at Titusville, I see my old mammy comin up de road jus as plain as day. I stan on de porch, fixin to run an meet her, when all of a sudden she be gone. I begin to cry an tell de folks I ain't gonna see my mammy agin. An sho nuff, I never did. She die at Sanderson, back in West Florida, fore I got to



see her.

"Does I blieve in witches? S-a-a-y, I knows more bout em den to jes 'blieve'—I been rid by em. Right here in dis house. You ain never been rid by a witch? Well, you mighty lucky. Dey come in de night, ginnerly soon after you drop off to sleep. Dey put a bridle on your head, an a bit in your mouth, an a saddle on your back. Den dey take off their skin an hang it up on de wall. Den dey git on you an some nights dey like to ride you to death. You try to holler but you kaint, counta the iron bit in your mouth, an you feel like somebody holdin you down. Den dey ride you back home an into your bed. When you hit de bed you jump an grab de kivers, an de witch be gone, like dat. But you know you been rid mighty hard, cause you all wet wid sweat, an you feel plum tired out.

"Some folks say you jus been dreamin, counta de blood stop circulatin in yaur back. Shucks! Dey ain never been rid by a witch, or dey ain sayin dat.

"Old witch docter, he want ten dollers for a piece of string, what he say some kinda charm words over. Tells me to make a image o' dat old witch outa dough, an tie dat string roun its neck; den when I bake it in de oven, it swell up an de magic string shet off her breath. I didn't have no ten dollar, so he say ifen I git up five dollar he make me a hand—you know, what collored folks cals a jack. Dat be a charm what will keep de witches away. I knows how to make em, but day doan do no good thout de magic words, an I doan know dem. You take a little pinch o' dried snake skin an some graveyard dirt, an some red pepper an a lock o' your hair wrapped roun some black rooster feathers. Den you spit whiskey on em an wrap em in red flannel an sew if into a ball bout dat big. Den you hang it under your right armpit, an ever week you give it a drink o' whiskey, to keep it strong an powful.

"Dat keep de witches fum ridin you; but nary one o' dese

charms work wid dis old witch. I got a purty good idee who she is, an she got a charm powfuller dan both of dem. But she kaint git acrosst flaxseed, not till she count ever seed. You doan blieve dat? Huh! I reckon I knows—I done tried it out. I gits me a lil bag o' pure fresh flaxseed, an I sprinkle it all roun de bed; den I put some on top of da mattress, an under de sheet. Den I goes to bed an sleeps like a baby, an dat old witch doan bother me no more.

"Ony oncet. Soon's I wake up, I light me a lamp an look on de floor an dere, side o' my bed was my dress, layin right over dat flaxseed, so's she could walk over on de dress, big as life. I snatch up de dress an throw it an de bed; den I go to sleep, an I ain never been bothered no more.

"Some folks reads de Bible backwards to keep witches fum ridin em, but dat doan do me no good, cause I kaint read. But flaxseed work so good I doan be studyin night-ridin witches no more."







## Hoodoo Charms against Haints and Haunts

*by Denise Alvarado*

- To stop a haunting, boil prickly pear roots in stump water and sprinkle the yard with the water.
- Tie a cross onto an iron railroad spike and place in the front window on the front door to keep out haints and haunts.
- Sprinkle flax or mustard seeds on your front porch to keep



our haints and haunts.

- A Jamaican remedy against duppies (haints) is to burn rosemary, cow manure and shaved horn and the smoke will repel the ghosts.
- Another Jamaican remedy against ghosts is to draw a circle on your front door with chalk.
- Fill a sock with salt, mullein and sage and bury in the front garden or under your porch to keep away haints.
- If you put your hand on the head of a dead man, you will never worry about him, he will never haunt you, and you will never fear death.
- Burn sulfur and buzzard feathers to purify a space and repel evil spirits.
- Take a spiritual bath of a handful of salt, a handful of eucalyptus and a splash of Florida Water whenever you feel like you have been contaminated with the presence of negative spirits.
- Burning sage and pine resin regularly in the home will keep it free of haints and haunts.
- A bottle fix to repel evil and negativity consists of coarse white sand, large red ants, and 9 nails and pins placed in a bottle and covered with a bit of urine from everyone in the home and placed under the front steps is believed to be effective.
- A knife, bow and arrow, and hatchet placed above the door are said to cut evil.
- To remove a conjure, place 9 needles, 9 brass pins, 9 hairs from the head of the afflicted into a bottle or jar, cover with their urine and close. Set it behind the fireplace and when the bottle bursts, the conjure will be broken.

## References

Slave Narratives of Arkansas and Alabama

# Dance with the Serpents

*by Denise Alvarado*

**H**ave you ever held a snake in your hands, allowing it to slither through your fingers, and trusting you would never be bitten? Have you ever lain down on Mother Earth, absorbing the warmth of her breasts through your belly as a snake would? And, have you ever smelled the world with your tongue? I have.

I remember when I was a young child at summer camp with the girl scouts. I loved camp because I loved being out doors and playing with the toys borne of the earth. Not everyone was as excited as I was about taking showers with the Daddy Long Legs, nor did they share in my enthusiastic endeavors to capture the skinks that lived under the ground. Ahh, but that was what life was all about for me. It was in that place, where I found refuge from the wake of betrayal, and during those moments that I knew something other than pain was real.

I did not know how to swim when I went to summer camp. I felt different from the others as I watched them master the water effortlessly. There I stood on the edge of the pool, wondering what it must be like to swim, to not worry about drowning, and to not feel embarrassed about my aquatic inabilities. While the others played games, I sat on the sidelines waiting for them to move on to another activity, and leave me behind to speak humbly to the camp counselor about why I was not participating in the group fun. They tried to teach me how to swim, and I did the best I could. But, I would never catch up with the rest. There just wasn't enough time to spend on one little girl who could not swim, when there were twenty-five who could.

I was nine years old then. I remember my brothers going to the country club to take swimming lessons, and I wanted to go swimming too. However, my dad would not let me. I was a girl after all. Why would a girl need to learn how to swim? I watched as my brothers walked down the block, dressed in their swim trunks, and towels slung over their shoulders, and I watched the other kids in the neighborhood walk by our house on their way to the country club. There I stood on the sidelines, left behind and humbled, feeling different again. What was it like to be able to swim?

Snakes have always fascinated me. I marvel at their ability to unhinge their jaws to eat something five times the width of their bodies. I envy the way they hug the ground with their bellies, and move gracefully over rocky terrain. The way they slowly and silently slither through slime and sand, slinking and swimming, swimming and slinking, and never sinking regardless of the depth of the chasm. If I knew how to swim, I too, could silently slink above the depths of my chasm.

Well, I may not have been able to take swimming lessons, but I sure could have snakes. I guess my dad thought playing with snakes was safer than playing in the water for a girl like





me. After all, playing with snakes is a much more useful skill than swimming could ever be. First, I had to develop keen sight; I had to be able to spot the snake in the grass. I had to figure out a strategy for catching the snake so that it would not escape and leave me behind. And, I had to learn to identify and avoid those that would bite. I had to learn to think like a snake, to feel like a snake, to smell like a snake. I had to learn to shed my skin and let the beauty emerge from under a dull grey exterior. I learned that, like the snake, I would need water to soften the dead scales of the apparent oppressive existence that was my childhood. Without water, the scales would stick with me, and I would take them everywhere I went.

Hiking was a daily activity in camp. This I knew how to do, and I could hike better than the rest. Here I fit in. I was just one of the group. As we neared the end of the trail one day, we spotted another camp counselor at a distance. All the little girls got together in a group and waved and flashed peace signs at the counselor. Me? I shot him the bird.

Girl Scout camp was along the Tchefuncte River in Louisiana. Numerous serpents lived there and the camp counselors warned us to stay away from them. They are dangerous; you might be bitten; boys like snakes, not girls; you might fall in and drown; or worse, you might fall in, get bitten by a water moccasin, and then drown. But, I could see with the eyes of a snake. I could see that the water wasn't deep enough to drown in. At a glance, I could tell which snakes were safe and which were not. Hell, I could tell you their scientific names. But, that didn't impress anyone. I just stuck out more than before. And water was the threat to keep me in line.

As nature would have it, I spotted a snake that day as we walked along the river. Everything I was told faded into the shadows. Before I knew it, I leapt into the river, screaming at the top of my lungs with sheer delight "SNAKE!!!!" As my peers and camp counselors looked on in horror, I ran and jumped in

the water, keeping my eyes on that snake that was in full hydroplane. I knew at any moment that snake could turn around and attack me...those water snakes are mean, you know. And they bite. Not only do they bite, they draw blood. I should know, I've been bitten before. Yet, that knowledge only fueled my adrenalin and as I continued to run, I followed the bend in the river, leaving my camp in the wake of my exhilaration.

That day, that moment, I felt unfettered and alive. I was focused, I was strong, I was confident. I did not falter. I kept my eye on the prize. It didn't matter that I couldn't swim. With water splashing everywhere, I chased that snake until I was close enough to grab it by the tail. I grabbed that snake's tail and slung it out of the water! The snake flew higher than any snake ever flew that day. As the snake met the sky, I fell into the water and then emerged laughing hysterically. Then, the snake fell from the sky and back into the water. That old water snake did not skip a beat. He turned towards me and swam as fast as he could. I knew he was pissed. I had stepped on his toes and he was coming back fighting. In an instant, we were intimately sharing space. I had anticipated this moment, and disappeared under the water with my eyes wide open. I watched that big brown snake swim right over me! It was a real ballet. I emerged from the water again, but this time I ran in the opposite direction, back around the bend, and back up the banks of the Tchefuncte. It seemed as if the camp group hadn't moved an inch. They were still standing there, staring at me in utter disbelief. There I stood, drenched and exposed. My heart was pounding from the thrill of the chase. It was the most fun I had the entire two weeks at summer camp.

I felt no fear that day. The water did not drown me. The snake did not bite me. The camp counselors could not contain me. My friends did not ridicule me. No, my dad may not have taught me how to swim. But, he did teach me how to dance with the serpents.

# Saddaedda

## *A Ghost Story from Italy*

Once upon a time there was a girl called Saddaedda, who was crazy. One day, when her mother had gone into the country and she was left alone in the house, she went into a church where the funeral service was being read over the body of a rich lady. The girl hid herself in the confessional. No one knew she was there. So, when the other people had gone, she was left alone with the corpse. It was dressed out in a rose-colored robe and everything else becoming, and it had earrings in its ears and rings on its fingers. These the girl took off, and then she began to undress the body. When she came to the stockings she drew off one easily, but at the other she had to pull so hard that at last the leg came off with it. Saddaedda took the leg, carried it to her lonely home, and locked it up in a box. At night came the dead lady and knocked at the door.

“Who’s there?” said the girl.

“It is I,” answered the corpse. “Give me back my leg and stocking!”

But Saddaedda paid no heed to the request. Next day she prepared a feast and invited some of her playfellows to spend the night with her. They came, feasted, and went to sleep. At midnight the dead woman began to knock at the door and to repeat last night’s request. Saddaedda took no notice of the noise, but her companions, whom it awoke, were horrified, and as soon as they could, they ran away. On the third night just the same happened. On the fourth she could persuade only one girl to keep her company.

On the fifth she was left entirely alone. The corpse came, forced open the door, strode up to Saddaedda’s bed, and strangled her. Then the dead woman opened the box, took out her leg and stocking, and carried them off with her to her grave.

Source: Thomas Frederick Crane, *Italian Popular Tales* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1885), no. 73, p. 238.





By William Mumler (1863-1933) (National Media Museum) [Public domain],  
via Wikimedia Commons

# How to Conduct a Séance

*Denise Alvarado*




*There's no better time of year to conduct a séance  
than All Hallow's Eve when the veil is the thinnest  
between the world of the living and the world of  
the Dead.*



Custom Spirit Board by RitualWitch.com. Photo copyright 2014 Madrina  
Angelique, All rights reserved.



A single candle flame is the central focus of the image. It is a bright, elongated, teardrop-shaped flame with a yellow-orange core and a blue-purple outer glow. The flame is set against a dark, textured background that resembles draped fabric or a curtain, with vertical folds and subtle variations in tone. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the background and the intensity of the flame.

My very first formal introduction to the world of spirits was at the instruction of my aunt on a Mississippi bayou when I was 5 or 6 years old. There, she taught me how to communicate with the spirits of the dead with the aid of a single candle flame. She called it a *séance*. It wasn't until much later in life that I came to understand how much of a role *séances* played in New Orleans Voudou and Spiritualism back in the day.

Though I am not reproducing the precise instructions I received from my aunt here, the following instructions will get you started on a formal method of communicating with the spirits of the dead, and if you are not careful to observe certain precautions, other entities you may unknowingly call forth.

Before you begin, you must understand that working with spirits of any sort is not a game (be sure to read Alyne Pustanio's article on page 9 and Madrina Angelique's article on page 20 before attempting your first *séance*). The primary concern is that you will be opening a door to the world of spirits that has no filter in place unless you put one in place. An experienced medium can do this and should do this before beginning. It can

be as simple as stating, “Let no harmful spirits come into our presence without invitation” or calling on a spirit guide for protection during the process, for example.

Secondly, there should be a clearly defined purpose for the séance that is understood by all present. Be sure to state the purpose aloud prior to beginning and allow anyone present to ask questions and receive answers. Anyone who is not comfortable with the purpose can be excused from the activity. Common reasons for séances include contact with a deceased relative or contact with the spirits for purposes of divination, guidance or comfort.

## Directions

1. Assemble three or more participants. No fewer than three people should attempt a séance. The number of participants is suggested to be divisible by three.
2. Choose a medium. This should be a person who has had experience with séances or someone who tends to have psychic abilities.
3. Use a round or oval table. This helps create the symbolic circle believed necessary for the ritual.
4. Set the table with food, such as bread or soup. This is believed to help attract the spirits who still seek physical nourishment.
5. Light no fewer than three candles in the center of the table (or a number divisible by three).
6. Create some atmosphere by dimming or turning out the lights. Eliminate any distractions, such as music and television.
7. All participants should join hands and not break the connection throughout the ceremony.
8. All participants summon the spirit together by chanting “Our beloved [name of spirit], we bring you gifts from life

into death. Commune with us, [name of spirit], and move among us.”

9. Wait for a response. The medium can request a specific type of response, such as tapping if desired. If none comes, repeat the chant until the spirit responds.
10. Communicate. If and when the spirit responds — either by rapping or some other means, or through the medium — ask any questions you may have.
11. Begin by asking simple yes and no questions at first — one rap for no, two raps for yes, for example.
12. Communicate directly. If a spirit chooses to speak through the medium, you may ask any kind of question.
13. Maintain control. If the séance seems to be getting out of hand — participants are becoming upset or the medium seems to be out of control — end the séance by breaking the circle of hands, extinguishing the candles and turning on the lights.
14. End the séance. When you’re done with your questioning, thank the spirit for joining you and tell them to go in peace. Break the circle of hands and extinguish the candles.

## Making Contact

Contact may occur in various ways, depending on how successful the ceremony is. Sometimes, direct contact occurs during the actual séance and may be perceived through one or more of the senses. The sense of smell is the most emotive of all senses and as such, is the most common form of contact. Smelling cigarette smoke when there is no one present smoking, or the smell of a familiar or unfamiliar cologne are common examples. Another common form of contact is through the sense of touch, such as feeling something very cold, or feeling something brush up against you or the slight touch of a hand on the





ZACHER  
CHICAGO

### HINDU AND EGYPTIAN CRYSTAL GAZING.

BY THE AID OF ONE OF THESE FINE PERFECT GAZING CRYSTALS YOU MAY ACQUIRE THE GIFT OF CLAIRVOYANCE AND MEDIUMSHIP, AND THEREBY BECOME ACQUAINTED BY EXALTED VISION WITH MANY OF THE MYSTERIOUS PHENOMENA OF SPIRIT LIFE AND THE ASTRAL PLANE.

shoulder. Sometimes a spirit may be heard through a sound or a voice. The rarest form of contact is visual. When this occurs, an orb, light or apparition may appear. In the Native way, little blue lights always signify the presence of spirits and when this occurs, sage should be burned and prayers should be said for them. Also, it is not uncommon for a ghost to appear in a dream of someone who sleeps in the house that night.

It is possible for a spirit to be present though we may not be aware of its presence. One good way to measure the presence of a spirit is through a dog's reaction. Dogs are particularly sensitive to the presence of ghosts and spirits. My Italian Greyhound Zephyr always starts barking and talking in his funny Zephyr voice when spirit activity is present. Another sign to look out for is the color of the candle flame. When it burns blue, it is believed to signify the presence of a spirit.

## Helpful Conditions

There are special conditions that are helpful for making spirit contact. Strong emotions such as anger, sorrow, and terror tend to attract spirits. Care should be taken to have filters in place if relying on strong "negative" emotions so as to not attract the wrong kinds of spirits. People, especially women and children who are sensitive to the world of spirits, help to open the door to the other side. This also makes them more vulnerable to spirit attacks and as a general rule it is not a good idea to have children involved in séances. Quartz crystals attract spirits, but metals like iron and steel will repel them. Setting a large quartz crystal in the middle of the table can act as a spirit conductor and assist in making contact. Rain, particularly when it is lightening, and any moving body of water such as streams, creeks, and rivers, is helpful for making contact. Water in general is good for spirit contact, so setting a bowl of water from one of the aforementioned sources can act as a spirit conduit.



Night time is the best time to hold a séance. Many people prefer to conduct séances during what are believed to be peak paranormal hours for making contact. Between midnight and 4:00 am, or precisely at 3:00 a.m. are said to be ideal hours for spirit contact. If the goal is to contact a specific ancestor or spirit, then the timing of the séance is very important. To increase chances for making contact, try to schedule the ceremony on the individual's birth day or date of their death or some other date of significance to them, such as an anniversary of some sort or their child's birthday.

When I first wrote the article on which this present article is based over ten years ago, it was not nearly as popular to use tape recorders or other devices that are now used in the paranormal research community. However, if you are so inclined, record the session with a tape recorder so you can refer to it after the fact. There may be some audible evidence that is caught on the recording device that was not heard during the ceremony that may be of significance.

It is common for folks at this time of year to participate in séances as a fun, scary activity. Often this brings them to the cemeteries for their frightening entertainment. Conducting séances in cemeteries and graveyards can definitely be scary and effective if it is the fright factor you are looking for. Just remember, you **MUST** close the door you have opened if you do not want ghosts to linger in your home and haunt you after the ceremony. Refer to **Safety Precautions** on page 68 for more on this subject.

## Ouija Board

One commonly used element of a séance is the Ouija board (pronounced: wee-jah or wee-jee). The word *Ouija* has its origins in the French word for "yes". Ouija boards are considered spirit boards because they essentially function as a means of



connecting to the world of spirits.

Traditionally, Ouija boards are flat boards made of wood, with a planchette or pointer also made of wood. The board has a variety of magickal symbols, numbers, and/or words on it, most commonly including letters of the alphabet. Today, these boards are made of cardboard with plastic planchettes.

Ouija boards are the subject of much controversy and many people within paranormal circles caution against their use. The reasons stem from the fact that they are frequently misused and undesirable things occur as a result of their misuse. But, a Ouija board is just a physical object; it is not some sort of demonic device or evil object with a life of its own. No physical object is, unless and until it is subjected to conditions that are conducive to spirit attachments and attributes.

To use a Ouija board, one or more of the participants in the séance place one or two fingers on the pointer which has been placed in the middle of the board. One person acts as the medium, and asks questions to the spirit(s) that they are attempting to communicate with. The questions asked are to have been agreed upon by all present. If there is a spirit present, it will use the energy that is the source of everyone's focus and spell out messages using the symbols on the boards. Obviously, it is easy for someone to mislead others by moving the pointer in an attempt to trick or scare others who are present.

## Safety Precautions

For a safe and successful séance—wherever it is held—certain precautions should be observed. This is a much overlooked aspect of séances and is the primary reason for any negative consequences that occur. Here is a list of some important safety precautions to observe whenever participating in a séance:

1. Always begin with a prayer for safety and protection from

your Spirit Guides or Higher Power. St. Michael's Prayer of Protection is a good one to fall back on.

2. Do not speak condescendingly to the spirits. It's just rude. As well, avoid cursing them out or otherwise provoking them in the hopes of getting a response. These kinds of behaviors open doors to potentially malevolent spirits and even demonic activity.
3. Be sure whoever functions as medium or leader of the séance knows what they are doing—that they are grounded, knowledgeable and level-headed.
4. Wear a personal talisman of protection for added safety.
5. Never go along for the ride if you feel things are getting out of hand or someone is leading others into what feels like dangerous territory. Break the circle and leave the situation while saying a personal prayer of protection, and state aloud: "Let no malevolent spirit follow me."
6. Always end the séance with a prayer for protection and safety from your Spirit Guides or Higher Power. Be sure to state that you are closing the door and that no spirits will be allowed to come through once the prayer is concluded.
7. Take a cleansing bath after the séance consisting of a handful of salt and a dash of holy water added to a warm bath. Anoint yourself with olive oil on the top of your head, your forehead, your heart area, stomach, knees and the soles of your feet after emerging from the water.

Séances can be very powerful experiences and can be safely conducted when the proper measures are observed. The Dead are not play things and séances are not for entertainment only. They are a serious spiritual activity that, when performed correctly, can provide guidance and comfort for those who participate in them.

# The Real Halloween

*Melony Malsom*



**I**n today's plastic world, it would seem we have misplaced holidays that were once held as sacred ceremonies, rites, and customs and replaced them with commercialism, consumerism, and greed. Stores begin putting out Christmas decorations in September and you find yourself lost amongst a bevy of lighted trees and a smattering of Thanksgiving dinnerware all in the search for Halloween. When you find it, it is what you expected; rubber masks by the dozen, cheap costumes, and pumpkin everything, all crowded into two messy aisles of fright. It would seem that this media-infused holiday has lost all true meaning and given way to novelty. Is this what Halloween is about? One only has to take a glance back in history to realize the answer is no.

Our quest for the real Halloween takes us back to October 31st and the Christian feast of All Hallow's Eve and All Hal-



low's Day, the former becoming what we now know as Halloween. All Hallow's Day is the day set aside to honor all of the Saints (Hallows), Martyrs, and ancestors that came and past before us. It is what we know as All Saints Day as well as The Day of The Dead, celebrated fully in Mexican communities. It is a day held sacred to honor your dead ancestors.

When we dig a bit deeper, however, we find the roots to this Christian feast go back a lot farther and many more miles away, to Ireland and the ancient Celtic people. The ancient Celts saw this time of year as the 'summer's end' or *Samhain*, pronounced *sow-in* in Gaelic. This marks the beginning of the Celtic New Year on the Gaelic calendar and was one of the most important times of the year. Samhain was the time of the harvest, the darkening of days, the coming perils of winter, and the looming presence of death. Samhain was also a very mystical time of year when spirits of the dead, as well as the Fay (both good and evil), took advantage of the thinning of the veil and roamed the earth to create havoc and mischief for the living. It was believed that during this time when the veil that separates the world of the living from the world of spirit was at its thinnest, these roaming entities could be easily seen and communicated with. To keep the malevolent spirits content, the villagers would burn bonfires, leave offerings, dance, sing, and set an extra place or two at the dinner table for relatives long since past.

During the festivities, divination was often made into games. One such game that will ring a bell is 'the bobbing for apples'. Single party-goers would gather around and bob for the apples in hopes that by grasping one in their teeth, they would be then next to marry. Apples were brought to Ireland by the Romans and were sacred to the fertility goddess, Pomona. An apple sliced in half bares the shape of a Pentagram, which, incidentally, was also believed by the Celts to be a fertility symbol and still is.

Many symbols that we associate with Halloween have their roots deep in much older cultures and many revolve around superstition. The black cat can be traced back to ancient Egypt; only there, they were greatly revered and sacred. The killing of one was punishable by death. They, as well as many black animals, became synonymous with witches and so then began the evil connotations and bad luck omens associated with them.

The fear of witches evolved out of the witch hunts that took place between the 15th and 18th centuries. Christian officials feared dark magic, and would often blame witches for events that seemed unaccountable, such as cows giving little milk and livestock deaths. Birth marks and moles were considered marks of the devil, and this has been modified to the modern day wart seen on witches' noses or chins in the media today. The logic was that since evil was ugly, evil people were presumed to also be ugly and so the image of the witch we know today was born. The cauldron became stereotyped with witches right alongside the black cat, bats, the old crone, and broomsticks. The ancients believed that when a person died, their soul would go into the crone's cauldron, which was a symbol of the Goddess's womb. When she would stir this mighty cauldron of souls, new souls would enter and the old souls would be reborn. With the negativity born by the church towards Paganism and anything non-Christian, the cauldron soon became associated with witches and now held foul smelling concoctions and poisonous brews.

What about running house to house donned in scary costumes shouting 'trick or treat' you ask? Well that also has us going back to Ireland. It was the Irish/Scottish custom of 'mumming and guising' that brought about the tradition of trick or treating we have today. Villagers would go door to door (keeping in mind that doors were much farther apart back then), dressed in their 'guises'. The disguises were meant to frighten away any mischievous spirits looking for trouble

and basically render the wearer invisible because the spirits would believe they were one of them, so-to-speak. The guisers would sing songs, recite verses, and carry on in hopes of getting food and treats, usually of the bread, honey, or fruit variety. If they were not welcomed by the homeowner, they were risking the guisers playing a trick or prank on them.

This brings us to the most famous symbol and tradition of our modern Halloween; the carving of the pumpkin or Jack-O'-Lantern. There once lived a terrible and cruel man people dubbed Stingy Jack. He hated his fellow man and took great solace in their misery. It is said he sold his soul to the Devil one cold, dark night on October 31st and was never heard from again; that is, until the following Halloween. Jack was sent back from Hell with nothing more than a hollowed out turnip full of glowing coals to light his ghostly path. Jack came back searching for souls to return with him to Hell. The only way the villagers could feel safe on that night was to carve turnips of their own, carved with ghostly, menacing grins to frighten Jack away.

The Irish immigrants brought the above traditions with them to America back in the early 1800's when they fled Ireland due to a famine. Today people celebrate Halloween, All Hallow's Eve, and Samhain. It is a wonderful, magickal time of year to embrace the spirits. I say, take advantage no matter your age, eat some treats, play some tricks, carve a pumpkin, and prepare yourself for the thinning of the veil.

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# The Monkey's Paw

*Richard Miller*

**F**or over 45 years we have searched high and low around the world to obtain whatever our clients desire (as long as it is legal). In the early 80's, we had requests for monkey's paws. Some people asked for a Gorilla or Chimpanzee hand. Knowing this was inhumane and illegal we researched what people wanted it for and what they could use as a substitute.

We found that in South America many tribes used the paws of small monkeys for luck rituals. Some were used as offerings to their Gods and some in making totems and spiritual potions. However, this was still not the answer to our needs.

One of our employees was visiting a part of America where hunting and trapping was still prevalent. After befriending some local folks, he discovered what the people of that area knew—there was an animal that had a paw that appeared to be similar to a monkey's paw but was not of primate origin. Not only that, the locals used it much like one uses a rabbit's foot or a Monkey's Paw. Furthermore, it was a nuisance animal. As it was not native to the area it was being hunted to extermination so that the native animals were not threatened. Yes, it was a win-win for everyone (except... well you know).

We found out about the Monkey Paw ritual from a South American whose grandfather was a Witchdoctor in South America. The old man recommended this method to people in his tribe who needed a charm to change their luck. So we put the following South American Ritual together with this paw:

RUB ANOINTING OIL ON PALMS OF BOTH HANDS AND SOLES OF BOTH FEET. STROKE HANDS AND FEET WITH THE MONKEY'S PAW AND PRAY THAT YOUR LUCK

CHANGES. DO THIS MORN-  
ING AND NIGHT. YOU WILL  
BE DELIGHTED. Perform daily  
while reciting Psalm 71.

Ok, so now you are thinking,  
“so what makes this such a po-  
tent lucky piece?” You didn’t  
know I was going to quote you by  
reading your mind, did ya? Well,  
the answer is this. In this mysti-  
cal world it is not what we know  
that thrills, enchants, moves, and  
guides us to grow. It is the possi-  
bility of choice and chance,  
need and thought, hope and en-  
ergy, mind power and positive force that imparts to and from  
the source of our observations. And thus, those who can mani-  
fest the best in a charm can manifest success in themselves.



Since we introduced this item in 1981 it has been our number  
one lucky piece ever. Many people have been so successful with  
it that they have bought one for every member of their family.  
We are so sure of its success that we GUARANTEE it for one  
year. If you follow the directions for its use for one year and are  
not happy with the results just return the PAW with a note and  
we will refund the whole purchase price. Get 1 or 2 today, I  
guarantee you will be happy with the results.

Next year—2015 —marks our 50th anniversary in business  
serving downtown Atlanta’s locals in their pharmacy and con-  
jure needs. Celebrate our 50th Anniversary with a Monkey Paw  
charm for half price, available exclusively at [medicinesandcurios.com](http://medicinesandcurios.com).

\* Read all about Doc Miller and his 21st century Hoodoo drug-  
store in Hoodoo and Conjure Quarterly Issue #2.