

OAK LEAVES

The Quarterly Journal of Ár nDraíocht Féin Winter 2018 ~ Issue No. 83



First Triad Devotionals



Earth Mother, Spirits of Inspiration, Ancestors, Nature Spirits, and Shining Ones: Give me wisdom to know, to choose, and to understand. Let knowledge be the beginning of my journey to you. Let wisdom light my way! So be it!

Earth Mother, Spirits of Inspiration, Ancestors, Nature Spirits, and Shining Ones: Get me into the practice of practice, where I honor the Gods and Spirits through ritual, devotion, and observation. May the Holy flow through me! So be it!

Earth Mother, Spirits of Inspiration, Ancestors, Nature Spirits, and Shining Ones: Let that which I see in my mind become the vision in my eyes, my heart, and my hands. Let me see what is to be and make it so. May the vision illuminate me! So be it!

-Rev. Jean (Drum) Pagano



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Chronicle: Manny Tejada-Moreno
Editor-in-Chief: Rev. G. R. Grove
Assistant Editor: Victoria Selnes
Chief Copy Editor: Brenda Nix Lively
Chief Design Editor: Rev. G. R. Grove
Music Editor: Dave "Thexalon" Kleinschmidt
Advertisement Director: vacant
News Director: Chris Wityshyn
Proofreaders: Brenda Nix Lively, Rev. D.
Rowen Grove, and Manny Tejada-Moreno.
Archivist: Victoria Selnes.

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Subscription Service Dept.

Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship
PO Box 84
Wickliffe, OH 44092-0084
adf-office@adf.org

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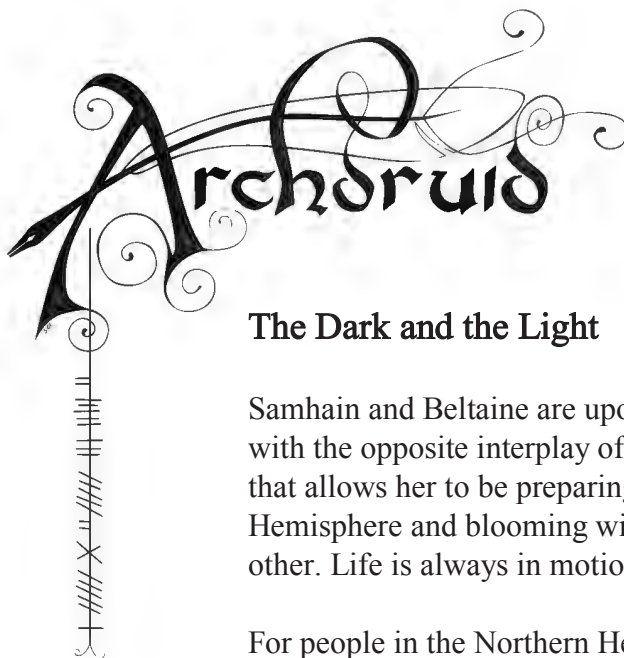
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The Dark and the Light

Samhain and Beltaine are upon us once again, with the opposite interplay of the Earth Mother that allows her to be preparing for sleep in one Hemisphere and blooming with new life in the other. Life is always in motion.

For people in the Northern Hemisphere, the Ancestors seem very close currently and the veil between our world and theirs seems thinnest at Samhain. The well, as a portal, reaches easily to the realm of the Ancestors and back. Please keep them in mind and see their faces in your mind's eye. Keep them present in your memories and in your workings. Be thankful for their gifts and most of all for their blessings.

For those in the Southern Hemisphere, the blooming of the world around us recalls the return of life to our world and the realm of the





Nature Spirits. We may live in a world focused on linear time, but the cyclical return to Beltaine and life reminds us that we have been here before and we will return, in one form or another, as the Seasons do. While there is beauty and wonder in every season, the presence of budding life reminds us that we too are renewed in the march through the year, through this return cycle. As the tree represents the portal that spans the world, we are reminded that we too live between the worlds of the Shining Ones and that of the Ancestors.

In both instances, as always, the Earth Mother is present in her forms in the ever-continuation of life and the cycles of our world. She encompasses Samhain and Beltaine and all phases in between. She is the Wheel of the Year in motion. The philosopher Heraclitus said "*Panta rhei*", or "All is in flux", and this is so very true of the Earth Mother and the world on which we live. The Earth Mother is always in flux, and the hemispheres are often mirror images, but images in motion.

In ADF, we continue to perform our rites and our devotionals, in all hemispheres, and in many countries around the world. We reach out to other Druids, other Pagans, and other people of faith in hopes of connection and sharing our experiences, especially with the family of Druidry that encompasses Druids of differing practices. We reach out in the spirit of Hospitality, which is the one virtue that requires the participation of and with others. To all these people, we send welcome.

In more prosaic matters, ADF has just acquired the services of a Project Manager to move the development of the new ADF public and member websites into play, leading to the ultimate retirement of our old website. I look forward to seeing the results!

Blessings of the seasons,

Rev. Jean (Drum) Pagano
Archdruid, ADF

Winter Issue of Oak Leaves

By *Oak Leaves* Editor-in-Chief Rev. G. R. Grove

Again, for most of us reading this magazine, the wheel of the year approaches Samhain and winter darkness. Here in Colorado, in mid-October, I saw the first morning frost of the year paint silver the roofs of the houses around me, and I know that a harder freeze is coming soon. The harvest is over, and the stored gifts of the Earth Mother remain to gladden our winter feasts while we await the return of the light.

pieces in this issue—a short children’s story and part 2 of “The Guest of Honor”, our on-going serial—are set in a time outside time, while my Yule ritual looks ahead to midwinter.

For myself, as for many of us, the festival season is winding down or over. For a while we will travel less, staying close to home and celebrating the season with family or friends. It is a good



One of the peculiarities of writing columns for *Oak Leaves* resides in the fact that we must anticipate the seasons. Rev. Sean Harbaugh’s column, for example, was written in early September and in the warm Central Valley of California, when harvest was still ongoing, but he also looks forward toward the winter darkness. Our Wandering Druid article in this issue describes an early September visit to Iceland, where winter is never far away. Other contributions—on divination, the virtues, motivation, and mystery—are less seasonally oriented, while the poetry speaks of times ranging from early autumn to midwinter and beyond. The two prose fiction

time for study, and for the creative thought that springs from it. I hope that for many of you—writers, musicians, and artists; poets, magicians, and priests—that creative process will lead to new and wonderful submissions to *Oak Leaves* in the coming year. The Earth sleeps in winter to reawaken in spring with new vigor—let it be the same for you all!

I have not listed all the contributors by name this time, but you all have my gratitude. Without your work, this magazine could not exist.

A joyous new year to you all!

Words From the Vice Archdruid

By Rev. Sean Harbaugh

The changing of the season is upon us. The warm summer days are giving way to cooler autumn temperatures. The harvest is here, and the bounty of the Earth Mother is ever present with the food offerings available to us. It's a time of balance, as the time of light gives way to the time of darkness. Of course, it's not a darkness in the good versus evil kind of way. It's darkness in the quiet stillness kind of way. A darkness of winter.

I've always found the winter to be a time of meditation and reflection. It's a time when I seem to be most productive at writing and research. The short, dark days of winter coincide with my own exploration of the darkest parts of my psyche. It's a time for introspection that allows me to meditate and be still.

The darkness can also be a bit frightening. Several years ago, a good friend of mine led a ritual at Pantheacon called "The Longing of Fire." It was one of the most moving rituals I've ever attended. It had to do with the concept of what if we didn't have fire to illuminate our way

or keep us warm or to make offerings? What if all we had was darkness? Can we embrace that darkness and find the courage within ourselves to allow us to explore? I believe it is not only possible, but it is an important part of our work.

We should embrace the darkness from without and within and use it as an avenue for meditation and spiritual work. So I urge you to use the upcoming darkness of winter as a time of introspection. Use the time to your advantage to be still and listen. Use it to explore within yourself and find those parts of yourself that have been tucked away. And while you are focused on this amazing work, know in your heart and mind that the warmth of spring is really not that far away.

Blessings of the Earth Mother's Bounty to you all.

Rev. Sean W Harbaugh
Vice Archdruid



Where the Stones are Alive: A Druid Visits Iceland

By Helen "Pink" Pitcher

On the shore of the chill North Atlantic, my shoes crunch into the soft porous volcanic stone of a beach, and the world is awash with noise. The seabirds circling overhead are the first this land-locked child notices, combined with the rhythmic pounding of waves and the ever-present wind. The coast here is alive, even as it is starkly barren.

When our ancestors arrived in Iceland, it was an alien place. Sure, some had come from lands of

This is not so unusual, all the folk of prehistory found monsters in the mountains and creatures in the waters. But what is striking about Iceland is just how many tales there are of such things.

Trolls are abundant, the *Lyngbakur* lurks in the dark seas, dragons fly in the mists. The average Icelander will tell you that they do not believe in the *Huldufólk*, but they have diverted roads, left offerings, and had councils with them. Such is superstition. The Landwights of Iceland still protect, just as they did in the days of the sagas.



Photo: Helen "Pink" Pitcher.

fjords, and some from rocky moors, and some from birch thickets and mossy bogs. But there is a shape to the land here that is unlike any other place on Earth. Formed by violent explosions of lava, and carved by massive glaciers – the work of Fire and Ice are ongoing. Did they know that they were pulling long boats ashore onto some of the youngest stone on the planet? Did they recognize that the sulfur and steam was the remains of birth? Or did they look past the place where a statue of Thor had drifted to land, and see only an untamed land to be claimed?

There is one thing for certain – they saw a land alive with beings.

I am accustomed to leaving offerings to the Land Kin wherever I travel. A bit of grain, or bread. A few nuts. Things that a squirrel or bird might enjoy. I have even offered clear water to the trees of many forests. But what will these mysterious figures of earth and air want? Perhaps just to be seen, to be noticed, to be thanked. I nod my appreciation with each heartbreaking view. My careful footfalls are drumming to their honor. My ragged breaths are a song.

The most skeptical among us might brush off the tales – the strangely shaped stones, the columns of geothermal steam, long nights... all seem ideal for inciting the active imagination. But to stand on the edge of a rift valley and see the shifting clouds is to see those legendary dragons. To



Photo: Helen "Pink" Pitcher.

clamber the stones along the rough and wild seas, is to find yourself face to face with trolls. To see the sun peeking from breaking clouds, and

movement in the edges of these things. It is not just me who feels the overwhelming weight of the eyes watching. The Folk of Iceland have



Photo: Helen "Pink" Pitcher.

rainbows chasing across the landscape... where else would the elves choose to make their kingdoms?

woven it into their culture just as neatly as long winter nights and cod. The world around them is alive, and they wouldn't have it any other way.

At each turn in the road is a new view, and many a small placard explains the local names and traditions – trolls that were waylaid by the sun while dragging a ship ashore; a stone that was once a woman, scorned and forgotten and weeping on the shore; sheep in a field that were claimed by the ice giants and so become their mossy flock. It is not just my eyes which caught

Pink Pitcher is an Artist, Author, Seamstress, Druid, and Textile and Domestic Historian (among other titles). She is currently publishing her first comic - Root & Branch - as an ongoing story in both print and web. This was her fourth visit to Iceland, and she remains completely enchanted..

Some Impromptu Forms of Omen-Taking, or When Your Runes are in Your Other Jacket

By Rev. D. Rowen Grove

ADF Seers are frequently called on to take omens within ritual, and are often prepared to do so with their accustomed method, but sometimes this is not something that was expected. Perhaps the person who was scheduled to act as Seer for that rite had to cancel, or there may have been some other circumstance. So what do you do, when you need to take an omen, but don't have your usual or preferred tools? There are many historically attested forms of divination gleaned from seemingly random events (a process called augury), although the method one uses need not be an ancient one to be relevant. Omens have been taken from such things as the flight of birds, unusual weather, patterns in fire or water, the behavior of animals, or human speech overheard by chance. Here are some possibilities.

Birds

Many cultures have used the flight or calls of different birds as omens, so if there is a bird calling attention to itself, you might want to consider that. Obviously, the type of bird, as well

as its behavior, will be relevant. Does that species of bird have some significance within the Seer's hearth-culture, or that of their Grove? Has a wild goose, crying in the night, circled your Fire? A falcon swooped through the gathering? One or more crows or even ravens perched in a nearby tree, making remarks? Is there a sudden territorial song from a robin or finch in the spring? A water bird defending its nest? Any of these might be taken as an omen.



Image: Wikipedia commons: Pkspk



Image: Wikipedia commons: Jessie Eastland

Wind and Weather

A sudden change in the local atmospheric conditions may indicate an omen. Perhaps clouds veiled the sun, or parted to reveal it when a solar Deity was hailed. Was there an unexpected sharp blast of wind, or conversely, a sudden calm when the whole day has been gusty? A fall of leaves, or petals, perhaps into the waters of the Well? Has a small whirlwind or "dust-devil" passed through the ritual space? Was there a spattering of rain as the omen was requested? One ADF Priest tells a tale of a perhaps-not-the-best-choice offering, which resulted in a sudden downpour.

Water

There are a number of possibilities for scrying or omen taking in water. A traditional scrying, in which the Seer gazes into the water (often in a dark bowl) in search of visions may take more time than is usually desired. But a few pebbles or twigs could be dropped into a bowl of water (or into a pond or stream if one is handy), or water could simply be splashed onto the ground, and the patterns so formed interpreted.



Image: Wikipedia commons: Roger McLassus

Fire

Like water, Fire offers a number of possibilities for omen-taking. Scrying for visions within the flames and coals themselves can take a while, but not (in my experience) as long as with water. And as with other things, patterns may be sought in different ways. For example, a few years ago, I attended a rite held in a small mead-hall in a forest. It was dark and raining, and when the celebrant of the rite called for someone to take an omen, we all looked blankly at each other; as it happened, none of the attendees had their usual divination tools with them. Acting on inspiration (and do we not ask for Inspiration at the beginning of each ritual?) I dashed out into the woods and scooped up a handful of small, damp twigs. Returning to the hall, I broke them into pieces about three to six inches in length, held a handful



Image: Wikipedia commons: G. Dall'Orto

over a bed of coals at one end of the oblong fire-pit, dropped them, and watched to see what emerged. Within moments, the twigs forming a Fehu Rune caught fire: our omen from the Ancestors. I repeated this twice more for the other Kindreds. I've since used this technique more than once, even if I have other tools to hand.

So there are some possibilities. There are other things which may be used for such “random” omens; the reader can probably think of several for themselves. But it is well to consider that if almost anything at all *maybe* an omen, most things *probably* are not. The difficulty lies not in obtaining an omen, but first in recognizing it as such, and then in interpreting it correctly. How does one tell if a particular happening is indeed an omen? Each Seer will need to rely on his or her own connections to the powers of Inspiration – and, of course, one can ask the Kindreds.

Rev. D. Rowen Grove joined ADF in the spring of 2010, and completed her Dedicant Path work two years later. She became an ADF Initiate in 2015 and was ordained an ADF Priest in 2016. She is currently Senior Druid of Chokecherry Grove, ADF, in Denver, Colorado, and ADF Preceptor.

Motivation and the Work

By Pigeon

In this article I discuss how personal motivation affects our spiritual work; or, that the work should not feel like “work”. Rather, when personally internalized – or intrinsically motivated – the work should provide pleasure, satisfaction, and growth. I am also writing this for those of us whose work suffers from extrinsic motivation, or pursuing goals in hopes of reward or avoidance of punishment. In particular, our motivations influence our approach to personal and structured ADF study programs; and, as my own case study, processes which I assess negatively affect my own practice.

What are intrinsic and extrinsic motivations?

First, intrinsic motivation is pursuit of an activity for pure enjoyment and no expectation of outside reward (Ryan & Deci 55; Cherry para. 5). Imagine a child tossing a ball for pure joy rather than competition, or the time you spent a rainy day poring over a puzzle, just for personal satisfaction. Indeed, people are naturally inclined towards intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation, as intrinsic motivations are the most likely to satisfy our primal psychological needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Ryan & Deci 57, Vansteenskiste, Lens & Deci 20). Our ancestors survived by learning new skills. While our modern day-to-day survival likely doesn't hinge on mastering a single-player video game, the act still taps into our innate desire to increase personal competence – and we *do* continue to learn and hone skills through such acts of intrinsic play.

In contrast, extrinsic motivation is, “engaging in an activity to obtain an outcome that is separable from the activity itself” (Vansteenskiste, et. al. 20). People engage in extrinsically motivating tasks not for pleasure or satisfaction, but in order to avoid punishment or gain a reward (or instrument) in return: studying for a high grade, playing a game to win a cash prize, or completing

chores solely to avoid parental retribution (Cherry para. 3). While people may achieve short term goals through extrinsic reward or punishment mechanisms, over the long term extrinsic motivation breeds resistance, unwillingness, and recalcitrance towards task completion (Ryan & Deci 64). Extrinsic motivation can also sabotage intrinsically motivated tasks. Also called the over justification effect, a prime example is watching a child engaged in play solely for personal fun. Experiments suggest that once a child is offered money, treats, or other rewards for winning the activity, they lose interest since the activity is no longer tied to internal motivation. Indeed, even the simple act of pursuing a win condition at all costs can become an extrinsic motivator, as it removes pleasure from the act of play itself (Reiss 152, Flanagan & Nissenbaum 128, Cherry para. 7). However, extrinsic motivation varies in intensity, and some forms are useful for inspiring long term intrinsic motivation towards tasks (Ryan & Deci 62):

External regulation. Behavior is prompted by external factors – such as a reward for meeting a deadline, or punishment for failure to do so – and reasons for completing the task have not been internalized at all. In short, pursuing instruments unrelated to personal motivations, and likely under stress.

Introjected regulation. Engaging in an activity in order to satisfy internal pressures, typically to either increase perceptions of self-worth, or to avoid guilt and shame. This is where “winning the game at all costs” turns a previously intrinsically pleasurable activity into an extrinsic chore, or even fear.

Identification. Identifying the relevance of an activity and thus accepting the activity as aligning with personal goals. Over the long term, identification can shift to intrinsic motivation, but on the outset is an instrumental activity. For example, someone with a life-

long dream of writing forces themselves to learn how to type, since they identify the task as instrumental to achieving their goals.

Integrated regulation. Occurs when tasks have been fully assimilated into the self. Integrated regulation is razor thin close to intrinsic motivation, but is ultimately extrinsic since the task has instrumental value with respect to an outcome even though it aligns with internal values. Even so, internally regulated motivations are the easiest to transform into intrinsic motivators. For example, a member on the Dedicant Path may be highly competent in bone reading but thoroughly disinterested in cartomancy. However, by meeting the DP requirement to experiment with multiple mental discipline methods (extrinsic), they actually find cartomancy personally rewarding and thus add a Lenormand or Tarot deck to their personal scrying repertoire (intrinsic).

As the range suggests, extrinsic motivators are not necessarily negative. For example, a student who completes homework only through fear of punishment is extrinsically motivated since they are doing the work solely to attain the separable outcome of avoiding punishment. Similarly, a student who completes a task because they personally believe it is valuable for achieving professional goals is also extrinsically motivated since they are also doing it for instrumental value, even if that instrument satisfies an intrinsic need. Both examples involve instruments, yet the former involves mere compliance with an external control, while the latter entails personal growth and a sense of autonomy (Ryan & Deci 62). Extrinsic motivation is more likely to result in internal assimilation if related to the latter two categories of identification or extrinsic integrated regulation.

Individuals also extrinsically complete tasks in order to fit in or feel connected to a social group. Should the group be warm and accepting, this sense of shared relatedness can, over the long term, encourage the member to intrinsically internalize values important to the group (Cohen,



Photo: Pigeon.

Hall, Koenig, and Meador 49). From a pedagogical or religious leadership perspective, individuals who feel cared for by teachers and leader figures are more likely to internalize group values. Ritual can also be either extrinsic or intrinsic, with some members merely following the public motions for public, extrinsic acceptance while practicing different forms during private, intrinsic reflection. Shared rituals also provide anchors during times of duress. Cohen, et al. (54) use the Lord's Prayer as an example, noting in a study of Christian practitioners that memorizing the prayer was extrinsic in day-to-day practice but powerfully intrinsic when recited during moments of fear, depression, or pressure. Translating the same into ADF, a member might not initially find intrinsic value in the Core Order of Ritual, but repetition over time may provide members a means to mentally center themselves during moments of stress. For this reason, I've considered crafting a Core Order prayer bead bracelet that I can touch in order to both practice the steps and to focus my mind.

In my humble feathered assessment, Our Own Druidry is intrinsic in nature. The orthopraxic design encourages members to find, test, and inculcate the work that works for them rather



than forcing them down specific paths. Or, consider how in Core Order of Ritual we “invite” rather than “summon”. Invitation suggests a relationship based on respect, free will, and hospitality, while summoning extracts beings based on dominance and control. For example, Rev. Ian Corrigan (2018) recent wrote and applied a ritual designed to attract a familiar willing to ally in partnership with the invoker as opposed to bending the familiar to their personal will. (Although Rev. Corrigan’s article includes “summoning” in the title, his use is based on an ally- rather than subservience-based ritual.) I also assess that, in private, ADF members naturally gravitate towards intrinsically motivating work. Where one member writes music, another writes poems; where one member engages in crystallo-mancy, another member reads flames. The variety of personal, creative, and functionally intrinsic activities are endless.

But how many members struggle with ADF learning programs due to extrinsic motivation? This pigeon does, admittedly. I self-identify as suffering mightily from introjected regulation, both in ego and in shame extrinsically feeling the DP is a graded event I must dominate, and the sense that I have personally failed by not completing the DP. Yes, just writing these words makes the dual ego and shame seem ridiculous, as both ego and shame overlook how the DP is a journey of growth rather than a mountain to conquer. Moreover, if you stop to consider, none of ADF’s training programs are extrinsically designed. None. Rather, they’re all designed to improve intrinsic autonomy, relatedness, and

competence. We’re *invited* to training, not *summoned* to do so. Drawing from Mulvahill (para. 8) and using the DP as an example, I assess the DP’s design satisfies all eight factors for intrinsically motivating students:

1. Know your students: Dedicant Path students work one-on-one with a mentor who understands and guides them, and as mentioned previously a warm student/teacher relationship helps students internalize group values.
2. Give students ownership of their environment: looking at sample DP packages, there are perhaps insufficient answers or conceptual misunderstandings, but rarely right or wrong answers. This gives students wide latitude in framing concepts within their personal intrinsic spiritual framework.
3. Make sure students have a solid foundation: the DP gives students a structured agenda linked directly into competence building, and enough choice to satisfy identification and integrated regulation.
4. Practice setting goals: the DP clearly lays out required tasks, yet gives students freedom to self-organize. Moreover, in relation to the first factor, the one-on-one student/mentor relationship provides a non-threatening conduit for mentors to suggest or students to request goal feedback.
5. Give specific feedback: and speaking of feedback, this is another example where extrinsic motivation works. A teacher can occasionally offer extrinsic rewards or punishments for tasks, as long the teacher provides specific comments related to task performance. For example, instead of just generically saying “good job!” specifically say, “good job! Your work demonstrates that you understand ‘hospitality’ and are applying it successfully in your practice.” This method rewards the student by positively reinforcing intrinsic motivations.

6. Tap into their innate curiosity: returning to choice, the DP encourages students to try multiple tools and find what works for them. I've read mental discipline examples where over time the student identifies techniques that work and are thus likely to intrinsically stick.

7. As much as possible, allow students choice in their work: the amount of choice within the DP might actually intimidate new students! However, the DP structure both ensures that the student understands ADF core values, and also guides students towards personalized tools and methods.

8. Make the connection between classroom activities and real-world situations: the DP is not a box to check; rather, it's a structured means for growing closer to one's own spirituality. This final factor is my greatest hurdle, as I work through my own obstacle of viewing the DP as a series of discrete steps crossed off a whiteboard list rather than as a spiritual process greater than the sum of a task list.

Writing this offered some catharsis. I first learned of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations during a lecture last spring (2018), which sparked my curiosity, sent me down a literature rabbit hole, and resulted in both this article and understanding of hard truths about myself. In particular, why do I hesitate at tasks that, on paper, have intrinsic value? Understanding motivation certainly resulted in personal reflection, but it admittedly remains to be seen how I put this new knowledge to use. Even so, I hope that by sharing this I can help other members who recognize the same motivational obstacles in their personal work and training courses.

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James "Pigeon" Fielder is a member of Chokecherry Grove. Pigeon holds a Ph.D. in political science and is an associate professor at the U.S. Air Force Academy. He researches interpersonal trust, particularly through the use of games as natural experiments. He is a co-founder and current coordinator of the Games & Play SIG, but has a habit of over seasoning his DP work with unnecessary mental obstacles.

Short Virtues Essay: Part 1

By Judith O'Grady

I am deeply interested in writing and working with liturgy. It is satisfying to me as an author to write an original piece inside the structure of the ADF ritual format and important to me as a believer to dedicate work to my Gods. The offering to the Gods is a personal action on my part and, if the ritual is successful, on the part of the other participants. That is an indescribable, wordless, deeply emotional, and wholly internal action of the heart that cannot really be discussed. On the other side of seeing, the ritual is a theatrical piece (although without any human audience) being presented to the Gods and as such should be well done, polished, and effective.

I write rhyming and scanning poetry and feel that a ritual in poetry has a nice effect. As well, I believe that being very familiar with what you are saying (memorization is an ideal) in ritual allows an easier 'unclick' from real-time and entrance into sacred space. Both poetry and repetition are aids to this. So our Grove, Lake of Oaks, uses a repeating ritual written almost wholly in poetry in which only the seasonal references and the Deities honored change from one holiday to another. Not only that, but the same members of the Grove generally do the same parts of the ritual time after time. This facilitates that familiarity which should ideally enhance stepping out of the mundane world and also allows for polishing and tweaking – "Can I reference Magh Tuireadh in the negotiation with the Outdwellers?" "Can I invoke Someone besides Manannàn MacLir when I open the gates?" – that furthers that ritualizing headspace for the participants.

I also find 'call and response' to be a ritual technique with impact and involvement; particularly when it becomes, through repetition, automatic. As I was writing the ritual framework initially I wanted to incorporate call and response into the 'thank you' portion, so I gave the 'call' to

the Offering Druid (the participant who has previously invited and offered to the Kindreds and elicited the magic-working for the juice) to be followed by all the participants responding with thanks. But just having the Offering Druid call out "Thank You" and then be echoed by the group was, I felt, meagre. Thinking it over, what I wanted was the Offering Druid to thank the Kindreds more fully and then be echoed with a "Thank You" from all. What should the Offering Druid thank the Kindreds for? Well, firstly for Their participation of course. But also for Their continuing and welcomed help in our life-work of being better people. How do They help us? By embodying and exemplifying the virtues we already profess in ADF Druidry and showing us the ways to betterment in the lore and stories of the people.

Then the thought occurred (from the Gods? not impossible) – three Kindreds, nine virtues; can they be divided up neatly? I think so:

Offering Druid speaks:

Shining Ones are thanked for Vision, Courage, and Wisdom:

Thanks for Vision, Courage, and Wisdom,
Heroes and Gods, You are our Guides.

You show us what we can become;
Please stay with us and here abide.

Thank you, Shining Ones!

All: Thank you, Shining Ones!

Ancestors are thanked for Piety, Hospitality, and Moderation:

Teach us Moderation, Piety, Hospitality,
Ancestors, those who came before.

Your lives created our reality,
Thanks for staying by the door.

Thank you, Ancestors!

All: Thank you, Ancestors!

Nature Spirits are thanked for Perseverance,
Integrity, and Fertility:
Spirits of Nature, hear our thanks!
As the seasons turn You do what's right,
With Fertility, Integrity, and Perseverance.
Stay with us in Dark and Light.

Thank you, Nature Spirits!

All: Thank you, Nature Spirits

All (that is: the Grove members who speak,
Offering Druid and all the responders, and the
Kindreds Themselves) have raised no objection
with this and so it has become a part of our
unchanging ritual framework. I was glad to
incorporate the virtues into the ritual format; I
think it's an excellent addition that adds depth
and meaning.

When I am trying to explain my belief system to
non-Druids I often describe myself as having
'archaic beliefs'. Part of what I mean by this is
that I am less interested in my personal benefit
(something a lot of general spell-casters seem to
be stuck on) and more in benefiting Mother Earth
and humanity, as well as, with the help and
direction of the Gods, becoming an honorable,
balanced, and complete person – my best self. I
find the virtues to be key in this becoming
process and have used them in many ways
beyond ritual in my daily 'mundane' life.

I have written them into a separate meditation
that includes the verses in the ritual format and
expands them with separate couplets that,
hopefully, bring the meditator to the logical and
philosophical end:

Meditation On the Virtues

Nature Spirits are linked with Perseverance,
Integrity, and Fertility:
Spirits of Nature, hear our thanks!
As the seasons turn You do what's right,
With Fertility, Integrity, and Perseverance.

Stay with us in Dark and Light.

Fertility:

All Nature grows, lush and diverse;
Each Spirit acts to replicate.

Integrity:

Every Right Action has its reverse;
We must be sure our Path is straight.

Perseverance:

Day after day, we plan and rehearse;
Finally we will meet our Fate.

Ancestors are linked with Piety, Hospitality, and
Moderation:

Teach us Moderation, Piety, Hospitality;
Ancestors, those who came before.

Your lives created our reality,
Thanks for staying by the door.

Hospitality:

A dish of warmth, a cup of cold;
To share our best without constraint.

Moderation:

Knowing when to act, when to withhold;
With both Right Balance and restraint;

Piety:

And all the virtues to uphold;
Following the Old Ways; no complaint.

Shining Ones are linked with Vision, Courage,
and Wisdom:

Thanks for Vision, Courage, and Wisdom,
Heroes and Gods, You are our Guides.

You show us what we can become;
Please stay with us and here abide.

Vision:

Hold up to us the Seeing Glass;
Help us to see things as they ought.

Courage:

Let us bring Right Ends to pass;
Our actions showing what you've taught.

Wisdom:

Your teachings bring to us at last;
The perfect beauty of Right Thought.

*Judith O'Grady joined ADF in 2005 and lives in the
Canada East region.*

Yule / Midwinter Ritual

By Rev. G. R. Grove

Purpose

Druid: Greetings, good friends. We have come here tonight to keep the Old Ways, to honor our Gods, and to celebrate the Feast of Yule, on this the longest night of the year.

So may it be!

People: So may it be!

Earth Mother

Druid: We praise first the **Earth Mother**, she who is called by many names, she who sustains us all. Mother of all, we are your children. Uphold our work tonight, as you uphold the whole world. Earth Mother, accept our offering!

*(Grain and fruit is offered on plate by **Sacrificer**.)*

People: Earth Mother, accept our offering!

Inspiration

Druid: Who calls to Inspiration?

Bard: I do.

Tonight we call upon Odin for our skaldic inspiration.

Odin All-Father, master of skald-craft,
shaman, far-farer, seeker of wisdom,
hear as we hail you, pour out good offerings.
Share with us tonight, O Gray Wanderer,
some part of your mead of poetry,
that our tongues may be quickened,
and our words may be true.

Odin, accept our offering!

*(Drink is offered in bowl by **Sacrificer**.)*

People: Odin, accept our offering!

Outdwellers

Druid: We give offering now to the Outdwellers, those spirits of Darkness and Chaos who walk the night and could interfere with our work. Who will take this offering to them for us?

Warrior: I will.

Druid: *(Sacrificer hands offering to Warrior.)*

Carry it swiftly into the outer darkness, and safely return.

Fire / Well / Tree

Druid: In the Old Days our Ancestors had Temples of Stone, age-hallowed and deep-rooted, in which to worship the Gods. Today we have no such places. Instead we must rebuild our altars each time that we worship, using our minds and spirits, and the Magic that we make.

Druid: We build here now our holy place. Who speaks to the **Fire**?

Speaker to Fire: I do.

Bright Fire, like Bifrost Bridge
bear our offerings to the High Ones.
Midgard, Asgard, now connecting—
Bright Fire, accept our offering.

*(Offering made to Fire by **Sacrificer**.)*

People: Bright Fire, accept our offering!

Druid: We build here now our holy place. Who speaks to the **Well**?

Speaker to Well: I do.

Deep Well, triply flowing
under World-Tree's roots emerging,
with dark earth-realms now connecting—
Deep Well, accept our offering.

(Offering of silver made to Well.)

People: Deep Well, accept our offering!

Druid: We build here now our holy place. Who speaks to the **Tree**?

Speaker to Tree: I do.

Great Tree, called Yggdrasil,
wide and high your roots and branches,
all nine realms now connecting—
Great Tree, accept our offering.
*(Offering of water and incense smoke made to Tree by **Sacrificer**.)*

People: Great Tree, accept our offering!

Druid: Sacred Fire, burn now within us!

Sacred Well, flow now within us!

Sacred Tree, grow now within in us!

Let us pray with a good Fire!

*(Second offering made to the Fire by **Sacrificer**.)*

Gatekeeper / Gates

Druid: Now we have created our Sacred Space. It is time for us to invite the Three Kindreds— the Ancestors, the Land-Spirits, and the Shining Ones — to join us here in our Celebrations. But first we must open the Gates, so that our words may pass more clearly to their Realms. I call now upon Heimdall to hold and guard our gates, and all ill turn away.

Warder of world-ways, Heimdall unsleeping,
Gjallerhorn's holder, bidding on Bifrost
Son of Nine Mothers, Keen-eared and sharp-
eyed,
Rig, called the White One, raise we your praises.
Heimdall, accept our offering!
(Offering made by **Sacrificer**.)

People: Heimdall, accept our offering!

Druid: Let the **Fire** open as a Gate!
Let the **Well** open as a Gate!
Let the **Tree** hold fast the way between!
By our wills and by our words,
Let the Gates be open!
People: Let the Gates be open!

Ancestors / Nature Kin / Gods

Druid: The Gates to the Other Worlds stand open wide. It is time to call upon the Three Kindreds to join us in our rite. Who calls to the **Ancestors**?

Speaker to Ancestors: I do.
Alfar we honor, Great men and Fathers,
Who in their heyday Heroes were reckoned
Likewise the Disir, Great and good women
Mothers and grandmothers, Peace-weavers, wise
ones
Ancestors aid us, Hear as we hail you—
Ancestors, accept our offering!
(Offering made to the Ancestors by **Sacrificer**.)

People: Ancestors, accept our offering!

Druid: The Gates to the Other Worlds stand open wide. Who calls to the **Land Spirits**?

Speaker to Land Spirits: I do.
Now in deep winter, Land here lies sleeping
Holda's white coverlet Comforts in cold;
Still our garths guarding, Land-folk, we hail you.
Weather-wise dwellers of stream, root and stone
Honor we offer here gifts now we give you!

Land Spirits, accept our offering!
(Offering made to the Land Spirits by **Sacrificer**.)
People: Land Spirits, accept our offering!

Druid: The Gates to the Other Worlds stand open wide. Who calls to the **Shining Ones**?

Speaker to Shining Ones: I do.
Aesir and Vanir, high ones and shining,
Dwellers in Asgard of golden walls,
Now in this Yule-tide, high day and holy,
Hear as we hail you, honor our feast.
Give your protection, as drink here we pour—
Shining Ones, accept our offering!
(Offering made to the Shining Ones by **Sacrificer**.)

People: Shining Ones, accept our offering!

Key Offering(s)

Druid: I call now to the Patron of this rite.
Odin All-Father, Wanderer, Wise One, hear my
praise-song now.

Prices two-fold paid you,
pain for knowledge gainful;
sight you gave for seeing
stronger, deeper, longer.
Rough the cost of rune-craft,
riding nine nights, pride-bound,
self's own gift made sacred,
spear-pierced, wind-wracked, fearless.
Name-rich roamer knowing,
night-dark-cloaked, foe-frightener,
raven-lord, blood-rager,
riding corpse-steed Sleipnir.
Blood-made mead's swift-bringer
bought from giant's daughter,
pleased by night of pleasure,
poetry sweet-flowing.
Seiðr-working, skald-craft,
shape-change, death-escaping,
web of false truth-weaving,
wait you still day fated.
Binder and unbinder
bound the wolf who soundless
howls – awaits his hunger.
High one, hail, O Viður!

Druid: Odin, accept our offering!
(Offering made to Odin by **Sacrificer**.)
People: Odin, accept our offering!

People's Offerings

Druid: Let all those who have brought offerings come forward with them now. And for those of you who have brought nothing, but still wish to offer, there is grain in this dish (*indicates bowl*).
People come forward with offerings. (As usual)
(Drumming and chanting)

Ritual Theatre: Drumming Back the Sun.

Druid: Now at Midwinter, the longest night of the year, the weak Sun stands at her lowest point, and the Cold is all around us. Wolves howl outside our hall, icy winds blow, and the specter of Eternal Night looms. We are met here tonight to lend our strength to the Sun, so that she may return safely from this darkest night, and a new day dawn. Now the dark advances upon us...

(**Bard** covers her head with hood and moves toward the Sun)

...and the Sun is gone... (**Bard** takes Sun down, wraps it in her cloak, and exits)

...leaving us in doubt and darkness.

(**Drummer** picks up Drum)

Give me your aid, good people. Chant with me now to strengthen the Sun, that she may return.
(Drum and chant: **Sun come back... darkness go!**
Other drums and shakers join in.)

(Drumming and chanting reach a crescendo and stop. Pause.)

(**Bard** enters at gateway holding up the revitalized Sun)

Bard: Hail now fair Sunna, from south-lands returning!

All hail the reborn sun!

People: All hail the reborn sun!]

Prayer of Sacrifice

Druid: We have joined our strength to call back the Sun from Darkness, and we have given our offerings of praise and thanks to the Kindreds.
O Shining Ones, Ancestors, and Land-Spirits, and especially Odin, our Patron tonight,

we make a final offering to you now.
(**Sacrificer** hands offering to **Druid**.)

Let our words arise on the Flame,
Let our words resound in the Well,
Let the Tree hold fast the way between.
In the name of all the people here,
I offer to you now.

(**Druid** pours offering.)

Great Ones, accept our sacrifice!

People: Great Ones, accept our sacrifice!

Omen

Druid: O Triple Kindreds, I ask you now, what omen will you give us for our offerings?

Seer: Let wisdom rise from Well's deep roots,
That runes of might shine in our minds
Drink we've offered, rede we ask here –
Grant us the wit to understand!

(**Omen** is taken and pronounced.)

Druid: How say the Folk? Is the omen good?

People respond. (Hopefully yes!)

Asking for the Blessing

Druid: We have heard and approved the omen. Now we ask for the blessings of the Gods – we ask for the Waters of Life.

Druid: (first asking)

Gods, Dead, and Spirits, all whom we honor, and Odin All-Father, our Patron tonight—
Good gifts we've given; now in return—
Give us the Waters of Life!

People: Give us the Waters of Life!

Druid: (second asking)

Clear drink we've offered tonight in your honor;
Crafted our bard-work tonight in your name;
Now in due season answer we're asking—
Give us the Waters of Life!

People: Give us the Waters of Life!

Druid: (third asking)

Waters of wisdom flowing from world-well—
Three times we ask you, three times we call—
Gods, Dead, and Spirits, Odin All-Father,
Give us the Waters of Life!

People: Give us the Waters of Life!

(**Sacrificer** gives filled cups to **Druid**.)

Hallowing the Blessing

Druid: We pour the ale of inspiration, we draw mead from the cauldron of poetry. Behold the

cups of magic, the Blessings of the Gods. When we share the mead of the High Ones we drink in wisdom, love and power. Now we ask their blessings on these cups.

(Pause - intoning)

Ancestors, fill these cups with Wisdom!
Land-spirits, fill these cups with Strength!
Shining Ones, fill these cups with Magic!
Behold, the Waters of Life!

People: Behold, the Waters of Life!

Sharing Blessing

(As usual)

Thanking All

Druid: We have shared the blessings of Gods, Dead, and Spirits, and especially of Odin, our Patron tonight. Now with joy in our hearts let us carry the magic we have made tonight back into the world. But first, we give thanks to all who have aided, starting with the Patron of our Rite.

Druid: I thank Odin.

Odin All-Father, Wanderer, Wise One,
For all of your aid, full honor and thanks—
Odin All-Father, we thank you!

People: Odin All-Father, we thank you!

Druid: Who thanks the **Shining Ones**?

Speaker for Shining Ones: I do.

Aesir and Vanir, high ones and shining,
For all of your aid, full honor and thanks—
Aesir and Vanir, we thank you!

People: Aesir and Vanir, we thank you!

Druid: Who thanks the **Land Spirits**?

Speaker for Land Spirits: I do.

Land-Wights ancient, strong garth-guarders,
For all of your aid, full honor and thanks—
Land-Wights, we thank you!

People: Land-Wights, we thank you!

Druid: Who thanks the **Ancestors**?

Speaker for Ancestors: I do.

Alfar and Disir, Fore-fathers and –mothers,
For all of your aid, full honor and thanks—
Alfar and Disir, we thank you!

People: Alfar and Disir, we thank you!

Gatekeeper / Gates

Druid: I thank the **Gatekeeper**.

Warder of world-ways, **Heimdall** unsleeping
For all of your aid, full honor and thanks—
Heimdall, we thank you!

People: Heimdall, we thank you!

Druid: Let the **Fire** be only flame,
Let the **Well** be only water,
Let the **Tree** be only wood,
Let all be as it was before
Except for the magic that we have made—
By our wills and by our words,
Let the Gates be closed!

People: Let the Gates be closed!

Thanking Awen / Earth Mother

Druid: Who thanks **Inspiration**?

Bard: I do.

Odin All-Father, master of skald-craft,
For all of your aid, full honor and thanks—
Odin, we thank you!

People: **Odin**, we thank you!

Druid: Great **Earth Mother**, you who sustains us,
For all of your aid, full honor and thanks—
Great Earth Mother, we thank you!

People: **Great Earth Mother**, we thank you!

Closing the Rite / Dismissal

Druid: Together, good friends, we have made magic tonight; we have praised the Gods and kept the Old Ways. Now our Rites are ended and we must return to our everyday world. May the rising light of the reborn Sun Shine in our hearts as it will in the world. May our strength grow with it from day to day, from good to good, and from gain to gain, through the turning year which lies ahead. All hail the reborn Sun!

People: All hail the Reborn Sun!

Druid: This rite is ended!

Rev. G. R. "Gwernin" Grove: was ordained in 2016 and consecrated in 2018. She is an ADF Master Bard, and enjoys writing and performing liturgy. She is currently Editor-in-Chief of Oak Leaves.

Piety Prayer

By Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano

Earth Mother,
Spirits of Inspiration,
Ancestors,
Nature Spirits,
Shining Ones,
Get me into the practice of practice,
Where I Honor the Gods and Spirits
Through ritual, devotion, and observation.
May the Holy flow through me.
So be it!



Vision Prayer

By Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano

Earth Mother,
Spirits of Inspiration,
Ancestors,
Nature Spirits,
Shining Ones,
Let that which I see in my mind
Become the vision in my eyes, my heart, and my
hands.
Let me see what is to be
And make it so.
May the vision illuminate me!
So be it!



A Prayer for the Unjustly Imprisoned

By Jenne Micale

May no walls constrain you, the spirit
fountaining forth unfettered. Justice
lies late in her bed, but soon the light

will wake her, and she will rouse and tear
the nightmask from her keen eye. May my words
disturb her dreams and hasten that dawn.

And may your days not be bitter to you.
May you instead be like Odin, gaining
all wisdom through your pain and bondage.

Be like the springhead, waiting under earth
for the crack in the hardpan, and rush forth
toward the light, ever sweet and soul in flight.





Courage Prayer

By Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano

Earth Mother,
Spirits of Inspiration,
Ancestors,
Nature Spirits,
Shining Ones,
Since I know what is right and can see what must
be done,
Give me the strength to walk the path ahead.
May courage motivate me!
So be it!



Integrity Prayer

By Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano

Earth Mother,
Spirits of Inspiration,
Ancestors,
Nature Spirits,
Shining Ones,
Let me be true to my word,
Let my heart be open,
Let me live by the truth.
Let me know the Honor of Integrity,
May it make me whole!
So be it!



Invocation to the Beings of Inspiration

By Nathan Large

To inspiration's many guides
of story, song, and poem,
of sacred dance
and ritual chant
and shapes in paint and stone:

We welcome you to join us now
to help us to extol
your holy kin,
beloved friends,
and you, yourselves, as well.

An offering we pour for you
for tongues already sweet,
the work of bees
to help us see
work owed to grow your seeds.



Aonghus in Winter

By Jenne Micale

Do you think, then, that he fades
as spring fades, blossoms to the grass?
That the white-winged beloved flees

with that first breath from the north?
See, then, the swan fearlessly on
the snow, white mingling with white.

See the lovers clasp their gnarled palms
as the hearth beats back the winter
their hearts the tinderbox and kindling



Ogham Poem: Sail, the Willow

By Jenne Micale

Your long hair swinging, you sway over
the mere to peer in its murky depths,
the bees singing the song of your name
O salce, salce, salce, O —

and the branches underneath the dun
forge the faces of the dead, beloved
and gone, humming with the bees their song
O salce, salce, salce, O —

Music is the delight of the dead.
Fleshless skulls sing from under the scree
send tendrils to the waters below
O salce, salce, salce, O —

The heavy scent of your garlands mask
the compost of misplaced desires, sins
and crimes. Even maggots make their place
O salce, salce, salce, O —

Make a garland of your hair, a harp
strung of its gold that tells always truth
the muddy pond steals back from the sky
O salce, salce, salce, O —

Garland dead lovers and living seers —
The moon pulling the tide to ebb
unveiling the dead under the foam
O salce, salce, salce, O —

Nine times nine, a chorus of witches
hums with the bees and the mighty dead
under that ghost light, that lamp of time
O salce, salce, salce, O —

Let your voice rise with the time and tide,
rush like waters under the tree,
lave the unclean, unshroud the hidden
O salce, salce, salce, O —

Your long hair swinging over the hole
that mirrors the sky, you sing with the bees
“Music is the delight of the dead”
O salce, salce, salce, O —

Red Woman (for the Morrigan)

By Jenne Micale

How you tremble at the Red Woman!
You fear the guest at the door who breaks
the arbitrary rules that bind you,

the technicalities that keep you safe.
You never know how she will appear:
eel, gray wolf, red-eared cow, crow, the wind,

your fresh-faced daughter holding a blade
under her smile, your mother, the lady
at the deli counter with her knives —

You never know what she'll do, that one,
even if you pretend. She is not yours
in any shape, and oh how you fear!



An Impromptu Hymn to the Morrigan

By Jenne Micale

How little I know you, and so well —
the purple sheen on a raven's wing,
the saw-toothed edge of the knife cutting

my thumb, the fountain that wells from that
slashed crevasse: deeper than rubies, brighter
than flowers, the river of my life.

You make me question the ugliness
of bones. Hear, then, the skull's speech: always
of you, your glory at the edges.



Poem: October Butterflies

By Jenne Micale

As the day shortens, wring the sweetness
out drop by precious drop. Someday soon
the stars will pierce you to the heart and

your blood will freeze, your delicate feet
on the last trailing plume of ragweed.
Your wings will mingle with the dead leaves.

The frost breathed over the valley floor
before dawn, but your hillside escaped,
and the day warmed and you made your way

gaily under that stunning blue
the wild hue of the unleaving tree.
Drink deep. This is the life we are given

and while we live we can choose to fly
and feast on life's sweetness, as the scythe
curls down in its inevitable arc.



The Hearth Fire's Magic

By Ty Davis

The Hearth fire's magic glows, Brigid blesses
this home.
The embers smolder, potential and inspiration are
one.
Fed by limb of Oak, the father rekindles the
flame.
Comfort seeps through warmth. Their union
flows in this place.
He breaks his fast with bread of Oak.

The Hearth fire's magic glows, Brigid blesses
this home.
Another flame is rekindled, this one, within the
heart of the father.
His flame is fed by purpose. Fed by the fruit of
the Oak limb.
He leaves with the flame of the Hearth within
him.
The Hearth fire's magic glows, Brigid blesses
this home.



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Processional for the Winter Solstice

By Rev. D. Rowen Grove

We are come in winter's cold to call the sun
again –
We are here, both brave and bold, to bid the light
return –
Now we sing: call back the light!
And bring forth day from darkest night!
Call back the sun again, call back the light.

Over fields and hills we go to call the sun again –
Through the frost and through the snow, to bid
the light return –
Now we sing: call back the light!
And bring forth day from darkest night!
Call back the sun again, call back the light.

Here we sing by mountains high to call the sun
again;
Here, beneath the freezing sky, we bid the light
return –
Now we sing: call back the light!
And bring forth day from darkest night!
Call back the sun again, call back the light.

On we go beneath the sky, to call the sun again
On we go, oh hear our cry, and bid the light
return!
Now we sing: call back the light!
And bring forth day from darkest night!
Call back the sun again, call back the light.

We are come in winter's cold to call the sun
again –
We are here, both brave and bold, to bid the light
return –
Now we sing: call back the light!
And bring forth day from darkest night!
Call back the sun again, call back the light.

(repeat as needed)

*This may be sung to the tune of the Huron Carol
(Heather Dale's version in particular – it's online),
and accompanied by drums, rattles, shaken bells, etc.
A chanted "ground" of the phrase "call back the light
again" is effective.*

When Comes Winter

By Rev. G. R. Grove

When comes winter weak is sunlight
day-star dwindles darkens sky
wind blows wildly warmth forgotten
fields lie fallow forest roars

Black are branches bare of leaves
long nights lengthen little grows
waves of whale-road whiten ship-strand
salt-mist sour shrouds the shore

Hasten heroes home to mead-hall
fire burns fiercely friends to cheer
men on mead-bench meet and mingle
weapons war-like walls adorn

Sheathed are swords now shields on wall-pegs
spears well-sharpened stand in store
steel-wrought sarks wait safe in war-cist
high-crowned helmets hid away

Mead-hall merry men and women
feast in friendship free is laughter
hearth-fire homely heat is throwing
blazing brightly burning high

Roasts are ready rushed to table
where all wishful wait to dine
deer-meat dripping dark delicious
boar-meat baked and broke to serve

Barley bread in baskets generous
wheat bread white wrought fair for all
chestnuts cooked on coals clear-burning
hazels hearty honey-sweet

Cabbages come crisp from kale-garth
turnips tender trimmed and boiled
fine fresh apples frost-touched, ruddy
soft cheese salty stands in bowls

red wine rich is ripe for drinking
brought in barrels by merchant-folk
mead makes merry men and women
bragget bright fills bowls and horns

Hall to harp-song harkens gladly
skald- and string-craft sounds aloud
hear of heroes hard-won battles
far ship-faring frightful perils

Song-smiths sing of strings of amber
red-gold arm-rings wrought in fire
silks and silver sent to princes
glowing gems in guarded hoard

Tales are told then tales of wonder
magic made by men and gods
spells well-spoken specters gory
monsters mad most hard to slay

Long that listening lost in word-craft
while cold winds whine loud outside
fire sinks finally falls to ashes
beds now beckon banquet's done

When comes winter warm halls hollow
fold all folk in friendship firm
home and hearth-fire hold us safely
till earth turns to sun-return



Image: Wikipedia commons: Pollo.

Shadow

By Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano

It moves by
Slowly
As if in a dream;
Afternoon
To dusk,
To red sky,
To night.

One hopes for the Moon,
To continue the light,
Lest we be swallowed,
Wholesale,
By the night,
Sequestered from stars
And the planets stay away.

With the change of the season,
The light seems so dear,
Given in samples,
And never to linger,
Rushing and running,
Sidle towards Solstice
Where the light is consumed,
Held fast by the talons of Winter,
Held close,
All surrounding,
Like the shroud of the night.

With the gathering darkness,
We become more acutely aware
Of the places in our lives that are
Less used
Less seen and
Less understood,
Like backgrounds
In a painting,
Lacking substance and form.

We experience them with quiet reverence,
Like visiting a temple that is
Wind blown and forgotten.
We hear the winds:

But it is the Gods speaking;
We see the shadows:
But they are the secrets to be learned;
We feel the age:
But it is the Ancestors offering guidance.

Light, O Light,
Where have you gone?
Replaced by darkness
And ravens
And the returning seasons,
Feted by cold, streaming days,
Where clouds compete
With dark birds
For the sky.

I lift myself up and let the winds
Carry,
Carry me,
Carry me along.
As I stream like a cloud,
Past ravens and recollection,
I remind myself
That time is a circle
And I am passing here,
Again.





Twelf Wintra

By Aimee Brannon

The hall has persisted for twelve winters. The fire inside illumines the shield lined walls and crackles in the snow-silence.

The winter grain is spilled. The winter meat is spoiled. The winter mead is stale.

The hounds are cold, lying together near the door. Their bays join our voices and rattle the shield walls.

We call for your protection, Sunngifu. We call for your protection, Friduswith. We call for your protection, Eacnung. The answering voices shout with the fire's voice.

Call upon the Shining Ones, call upon Wayland. Call upon Hel, call upon Saxnot.

Together with us, the fruits of your deaths, call upon the Shining Ones. The voice of the fire roars, throwing deep shadow across the dark-beamed hall.

Those of the mounds, those of the stones, we live still in your hall, persisting for twelve winters.

We keep your forge, we keep your fire, we keep your frith. With you, we wait for winter's wane.

Seeking Mystery in Our Druidry

By Rev. Ian Corrigan

The work of Our Druidry can become a mechanics of organizing and performing rites, keeping Grove records and press-ganging volunteers. The internal structures can focus on good performance of words and actions, and making sure all the requisite customs are observed. For solitaries, the work of assembling and performing a full Order of Ritual sacrifice can be challenging. I want to spend a moment delving into how we can find moments of spiritual mystery, and spiritual clarity in even the common steps of our rites, and how the insights we find can enhance our spiritual lives in general.

‘Mystery’ is from the Greek μύστης (*mystes*), meaning ‘an initiate’. The Hellenic ‘mystery religions’ used specific patterns of gods, tales and ritual to impart their idea of spiritual illumination. Often the central ritual action was the revelation of the sect’s key symbols, in a state of trance and enthusiasm that rendered the revelation of a common sheaf of wheat or a prop golden fleece into a powerful moment. So we receive the connotation of mystery as meaning a hidden truth, or a puzzle to be solved. The more spiritual meaning, perhaps surprisingly, was preserved in Roman Christianity.

Roman Christianity defines mystery as a symbol or idea which cannot be understood by logical analysis. Typical examples include the three-in-one nature of the Trinity, and the transubstantiation of the Mass. The church applied the principle to doctrines, but it seems surely correct for those ancient key-symbols. One does not gain the spiritual good by remembering what variety of corn one is gazing upon, or analyzing the smith-work on a sacred image. A mystery-symbol is apprehended as an image linked with an idea – it is experienced, prior to and apart from any analysis.



For some people the ability to observe without judgement or analysis is itself a deed of will. The work of basic meditation is a great aid to finding this state. Ancient rites seem to have used prolonged ritual, exertion, rhythm and song to induce a receptive state in untrained people. For modern people, especially those working alone or in small groups such methods are replaced by the use of deliberate mental training and meditative techniques. Just as we learn to observe and detach from our passing thoughts in meditation, we can learn to contemplate a material symbol or item, focused on its meaning, not its material. My common example is that when observing the opening of a rosebud one could be ‘thinking about’ the quasi-muscle structures, reaction to light and warmth, etc., and that’s surely a wonder. But one can also choose to experience the event sensually with a calm mind, open to whatever understandings or insights may result.

The method can be applied in many ways. Since we are inclined to seek spirit through the forms and beings of the natural world, every sunset or flowering meadow, every bright moon or bank of marching storm, might serve as such a moment in our daily walk. To pause and be open to the mystery of the spirit and spirits in one’s immediate environment seems natural to our sort of path.

In the midst of ritual there can be many such moments. Applying it means setting aside the business of having set it up, fiddled with the incense, etc. It can mean approaching your simple



fire and well as if they were themselves the ancient Fire and Well. Flame itself can always reward contemplation, but to contemplate the unmoving surface of water can be equally rewarding. Sometimes modern ritual uses constructed visualizations as the focus of mystery. The combination of a well-structured vision with real material tokens of the same spiritual powers is one of the basic techniques of Pagan ritual. This applies as well to work with invocation of the Gods. To develop a clear vision of the deity and to connect it with the experience of an altar-top image is to draw the divine closer to our mortal world. In seasonal rites there is often a central symbol of the seasonal gestalt that can repay this sort of contemplation.

For those working alone this technique is invaluable. It can be what turns an annoying attempt at solo theater into a religious experience. It is supported by a personal meditation practice, and the training of the mind. A beautiful shrine, artfully arranged, helps to draw the attention away from the details of performance.

For those designing and attending public and community rites the method is equally valuable. ADF rites contain several moments in which the

sense of *mysterium* seems likely. Even establishing the Hallows allows for interaction with each symbol. Opening the Gates is not something we can rationally explain (and we've tried...). The presences of the Kindreds, and of the Powers of any given occasion, can be approached as mysteries in this way, especially if a simple idol is used. Again, Grove seasonal rites are likely to include a central assembly of symbols that can be contemplated in this way.

Perhaps I've been beating around the bush. To say that we seek the mystery within things is not different from saying we seek the mystical within things. For those looking for the mystical content in Paganism and Our Druidry, one place it can be found is in such methods. Mysticism is always about method, so much more than about 'beliefs' or ideas. The Open Eye and the Calm Heart are tools of the mystic – of the initiate, who has seen the mystery – all over the world, and regardless of what symbols are contemplated. We can apply them individually and in community to deepen and widen our spiritual experiences.

Rev. Ian Corrigan is a senior priest and Archdruid Emeritus of ADF.

The Story of the Land Wight Who Wanted to Know Who Had Lost His Hammer

By Birgit Reinartz

One morning Beorl, the little land wight, wanted to leave his cavern to get a bit of fresh air and have a swim in a lake nearby, but he couldn't get out. In front of his cavern entrance lay something. It was really huge, heavy, and hard, and no pushing or shoving helped. Finally Beorl took a shovel and built a tunnel under the thing. Once outside he took a deep breath. What in the name of all nine worlds had happened here?



Beorl took a closer look at the thing: It looked like a big hammer, with an enormous head from metal and some nice engravings, and a relatively short handle that still was rising high enough that Beorl could hardly see the end. "Haven't I been lucky," he thought to himself. "That thing could have easily crashed through my ceiling! But how

can I get rid of it? The hammer just can't lie there forever. I can't use my cavern properly right now!"

Beorl thought hard. Something as big as this hammer had to belong to either a giant or a god. Humans and spirits couldn't possibly handle such a heavy weapon. And he hadn't seen a *jotun*, a giant, in these parts for ages. So a god had to be the culprit.

He washed his face, because that was really necessary after all this shoveling, and started to search for the hammer's owner.

The way to Asgard wasn't long, and at Bifröst, the rainbow bridge, Beorl already met the first god. It was Heimdall, who guards the bridge. "Have you



Image: Wikipedia commons: Public domain.

lost a hammer?" Beorl asked him.

"I?" Heimdall was surprised. "No, I don't use a hammer. I have a horn." And he took a big horn from his back. "You see? But I mustn't blow it until Ragnarök, when the worlds come to an end." But he let the little land wight cross the bridge so that he could search further.

Next Beorl met the goddess Idun who was sitting in her garden. "Have you lost a hammer?" Beorl asked her.

"Who, I?" Idun laughed. "No, I have apples, not a hammer. What would I need a hammer for?" And she plucked an apple and showed it to Beorl. "Here! One of those will keep you healthy and alive for a long time. The gods eat them all the



Image: Wikipedia commons: Public domain.

time!" And she gave it to Beorl, in case he got hungry on his way.

When he moved on he encountered Odin, who



Image: Wikipedia commons: Public domain.

was riding his horse Sleipnir. Beorl stopped the god. "Have you lost a hammer?" he asked and carefully avoided Sleipnir's eight dancing legs.

"I?" Odin droned with a deep voice. "No, I don't need a hammer. I have some ravens instead." He whistled, and two ravens sat down on his shoulders. "May I introduce you to Hugin and Munin? They fly around and tell me everything they have seen." But they hadn't seen who had dropped the hammer in front of Beorl's cavern, so Odin rode on and quickly left the land wight behind.



Image: Wikipedia commons: Public domain.

He reached a house with “Fensal” written on the doors. Said doors and all the windows were wide open. Beorl, being a polite land wight, knocked first and entered. A fire was burning brightly in the hearth, and next to it sat a woman he recognized as Frigga. “Have you lost a hammer?” he asked her.

“I?” Frigga shook her head. “No, I don't own a hammer. I always use a spindle.” She reached into a basket, took a spindle out of it and started spinning. The thread made a bulk around the spindle, and when she let go, the spindle sailed through the open window, rose to the sky and changed into a little cloud.

“Oh!” Beorl marveled the sight, and then went on before it started raining.

On a meadow there sat the god Frey, and he was feeding his golden boar Gullinborsti some acorns. “Have you lost a hammer?” Beorl asked him.

“I?” Frey was surprised. “No, not a hammer. I

lost a sword, but, to be honest, I didn't really lose it. I gave it to my friend Skirnir, so he would bring me my beloved wife.” He smiled sheepishly. “But I still have got my ship!” He drew a piece of cloth from his bag. It didn't look very impressive to Beorl, and he said so.

Frey smiled. “I know, but if I throw it into the water it transforms into a big ship with enough places for all the other gods.” Beorl had to admit that this sounded like a cool trick.

It didn't take long before he met the next goddess. Freya was going for a ride with her chariot. The cats that drew the chariot were meowing loudly



Image: Wikipedia commons: Public domain.

when they saw Beorl. “Hello! Have you lost a hammer?” Beorl asked the goddess and admired her beauty.

“What, a hammer? I?” Freya shook her head. “The only use I might have for a hammer is as a trinket, and I have better things for that.” She opened her cloak a little bit and showed him the sparkling necklace underneath.” “Isn't she wonderful? The dwarfs made her for me. I never go anywhere without Brisingamen. Not even into a fight. One always should enjoy the beautiful things in life, don't you think?” Beorl agreed and thought to himself how beautiful it would be to finally get rid of this hammer!



Image: Wikipedia commons: Public domain.



Next he met the god Loki. He seemed to be taking a rest, but he was wide awake when Beorl asked him his usual question. “I? A hammer?” Loki smiled a mischievous grin. “No, but I could use one. Why?”

Beorl had a weird feeling. “Ah, it was just an idea,” he answered with care and hurried on. Somehow he wasn’t inclined to give this specific god more details.

He was getting more and more frustrated. He had been searching all morning now, and still hadn’t found the owner. Who might it be? Tired, he decided to go home again. Just before he reached the Rainbow Bridge he encountered a god who had just crossed the bridge. Beorl recognized Thor because of his wild red beard.

“Have you lost a ham-” he wanted to ask, when Thor quick as a lightning clapped a hand across his mouth.

“Pssst!” the thunder god hissed. “Make sure that no one hears us!” Carefully he loosened his grip. “Have you found my hammer?” he then breathed into Beorl’s ear. The land wight nodded.

“It sits in front of my cavern and blocks the entrance,” he declared. Thor straightened.

“Mjölfnir fell out of my pocket yesterday during a race against Loki. If the giants know that I lost it, they will raid Midgard and Asgard in no time and cause chaos. Bring me to your cavern, little land wight! Let’s save the world!”

He got his goats and quickly they reached Beorl’s cavern. There lay the hammer, and it hadn’t moved a single bit.

Thor beamed, put on a pair of gloves and lifted the hammer as if it were as light as a feather. “There it is, my Mjölfnir!” he shouted happily and banged the hammer on the ground. Thunder rolled. “Little Beorl, let me thank you!”



“Not necessary!” Beorl grumbled softly.

Thor invited him for a dinner with goat steaks to celebrate Mjölfnir’s return, but Beorl was too tired after his long search. He crawled through his now open entrance into his cavern, fell on his bed and was fast asleep even before the god had left.

Birgit Reinartz joined ADF in 2013. She is a Solitary member and lives in Germany

The Guest of Honor

By Nathan Large

Introduction

“The Guest of Honor” was inspired by the idea of depicting ritual as a journey, a path walked by a visitor among the Worlds. In particular, this travel would be a Fool’s Journey from ignorance to wisdom. I used the Core Order of Ritual as the map. This concept transformed into an allegory for ritual as a structured event – a party – in which the participant is one guest among many invited. The resulting story is presented in serial form across four issues for reasons of space, but the section breaks neatly segment major sections of a Core Order Ritual, perhaps not surprisingly. I hope you can follow this journey across the year and enjoy the story not only for its core, but also its outward form.

The Guest of Honor

Part II: Friends and Offerings

Kelly left the ancient bathroom hoping that her hosts – Lewis and his sort-of-parents – wouldn’t get any weirder. If they tried anything, she might have to decide between discomfort or disability... as in being crippled, if she left and got caught by her hunters.

No one met her on the landing or the stairs. Kelly padded downstairs, wet shoes, socks, and jacket in hand, and peeked into the first archway. Within was a kitchen that fit the pattern of the house: ludicrously old appliances, expensive wood paneling, and a tiled stone floor. The place had to be a pain to keep clean.

‘Dad’ emerged from the pantry, a large closet just off the kitchen. “What do you like?” he shouted across the room. “Black, green, decaf...?”

“Um, black is fine,” Kelly answered, surprised at herself for accepting the offer. You couldn’t drug hot tea, right? Anyway, there were three people, one of them a woman, and none of them seemed

dangerous. Plus, she really wanted something hot. Food would be nice. Kelly could tell the oven was on and something baking.

The stout man followed her line of sight as he rummaged through a cupboard. “Mother has some rolls browning for the party. She’s always making something. I can barely keep up with her shopping list,” he grumbled happily. “There we go. Assam. Love India. Should really visit there again. You should. Put it on your list... when you’re older, I mean.” He spooned tea into a pot and filled it from a kettle on the sideboard.

“Let’s move this into the front room. We’ll get you the best spot near the fire.” He carried the pot on a tray with nine cups, whisking past Kelly and across the front hall to the other open room.

She trailed him into another chamber of antiques. More paintings, joined by sepia photos, hung in hand-carved and gilded frames. A variety of unique, cloth-upholstered wooden chairs surrounded a round table with oddly thick legs. A roaring log fire nestled in a heavy cobblestone fireplace.

Kelly inspected the furniture as she walked closer to the fireplace. She soon found the best spot, close enough to the fire to be warmed but not too close as to get hot. One of the chairs was conveniently positioned there, and she plopped down without thinking. When ‘Dad’ set the tea tray on the table, she looked up.

“Sorry, am I okay...?” she asked, starting to rise.

“You’re fine! A little water won’t hurt this furniture. That’s your chair now, though. I’m hoping our other guests won’t be so soaked.”

Kelly smiled nervously. “When are they coming? I might be ready to go before you start.” She laid out her socks and shoes on the hearth and draped her jacket over the rack for the fire-tools.

“Don’t worry. You don’t have to run off. You’re quite welcome here. You don’t have to stay, either, if you prefer. Though you might want to wait until the weather clears up... not to mention, your trouble.”

Kelly nodded. “Oh, yeah. Sorry again about that. And thanks. They won’t come in here... I don’t think.”

“I’m certain of that. Lewis is waiting on the porch. Anyone seeking you here will have to deal with him.”

“He sure looks tough.” Calmed down somewhat, Kelly discovered that she could imagine Lewis’ imposing, attractive frame in considerable detail.

“Well, yes, but he’s also very persuasive. In fact, I suspect he might settle them down without a fight.”

Kelly had a sudden nightmarish thought. What if her pursuers did stop to talk? What if they calmed down enough to try negotiation? They might tell stories about her, the kind of accusations that could turn her hosts hostile.

She began to protest, then stopped herself. Any argument against diplomacy would sound suspicious. Her best option was to play the ideal houseguest and hope these strange people liked her well enough to defend her.

“So... tea. Any sugar?”

The fatherly gentleman shrugged. “Of course. I’ll go get it. Cream? Lemon?”

Kelly pursed her lips. “Lemon?”

“The British like it.”

“My family’s more Irish. Oh! My name’s Kelly, by the way.” She extended her hand, beginning her charm campaign.

“Oh, my apologies,” he answered, meeting her handshake. “I’m Ed. My wife is Donna. Good to meet you.”

“And you. And Lewis.”

“Everyone’s happy to meet him,” Ed chuckled, reading her expression. “It’s all right. I’m used to



Image: Wikipedia commons: World-Imaging.

him getting more attention. Let me go get that sugar, though.” He tromped off across the hallway.

Kelly was left alone again to look over the room. In the corners, she spotted features she’d missed when entering: a potted miniature palm tree, a curio cabinet full of silver and crystal ornaments, and a globe inlaid with colored stone, suspended in a tall wooden stand.

These people kept a lot of antiques. Kelly realized that she hadn’t seen an electric appliance or even an outlet. Looking up, she was reassured to see an electric ceiling light. If they relied on candles or gas lamps, she might start worrying she’d wandered into a commune... or a cult. Maybe both.

Her survey was interrupted by both Ed and Donna, entering together. Ed carried a sugar bowl and cream pitcher, while his wife held a tray of small pastries.

“She didn’t run off!” the hostess declared. “We usually bore young folk. But then, you have an extra reason to stay put. Forgive me, but I’m glad of the circumstances. One more at the table is always a blessing.”

Kelly blinked at this chatter, delivered while Donna set down the tray and spread out the individual plates of treats. She finally managed to respond: “I guess? I mean, I’m still grateful, but

coming here was an accident. If I wasn't in trouble..."

"Don't mind her," Ed advised as he handed Kelly the sugar bowl. "You're here now, and that's the important thing. Have a scone; warm up; go whenever you feel ready. Or if you want to stay for the party, do. Though I'll warn you, our guests can be a bit much to take, all at once." Up close, he moderated his volume, but Kelly's head still echoed.

Donna smacked him on the shoulder with a tea towel. "Father! They're all fine folks. Family. You'd better behave when they get here."

"I will. They're fine folks, certainly. But a little... unique." Ed dodged another swat and winked at Kelly. "You'll see."

His hints made Kelly curious, which was probably his intent. If these were the hosts, what were their friends like? What would their party be like?

Kelly had some time yet before she was expected home. Plus, free food. She pushed down her misgivings – Donna had made a lot of food if she was planning to drug or poison anyone – and accepted a pear tartlet. Her tea was still too hot to drink, but the pastry was good alone. Really good. Kelly tasted pears, butter, honey, and hazelnuts.

"That's amazing," she said around the last few crumbs.

"Just a little thing," Donna demurred, but she smiled again at the compliment. Her smiles made Kelly want to cause another. At the same time, she could imagine the woman being a holy terror when angry. Donna looked like she could break one of those biker punks in half.

Kelly's reach for another tart was interrupted by a sharp knock at the door. She froze, imagining her happy moment coming to an abrupt end. Was Lewis letting someone in? Was he knocked out on the porch, her enemies trying to get inside? Or had the old Captain called the police after all, and

they were there to collect her?

"Got it!" Ed shouted, loud enough to be heard outside. He rumbled through the hallway to the door.

Kelly clung to her mug, trying to soak up more heat before she was dragged outside. At worst, she could throw scalding tea in someone's face.

She relaxed when she heard Ed cheerfully greet



Image: Wikipedia commons: OctopusHat .

the arrivals. "Hey, there you are! Most of you, anyway. Come on in! Shake off the wet. The fire's on, go right in once you've got your coats off. I'll take... oof."

Kelly saw Ed, buried in thick woolen coats, disappearing further down the hall, to the back rooms.

Behind him came three visitors. As promised, they were a unique group.

The first inside was a man Kelly at first mistook as old. Then, she realized he only seemed old because of his hair. He had long, bedraggled locks of multiple colors: blonde, brown, black and grey all on the same scalp. It was the strangest dye job Kelly had ever seen, a desaturated rainbow. On top of this matted mane was a crown of woven daisies, leaves and all. His face – tanned, dusty or both – was obscured by a shaggy beard, which partially covered the collar of his coarse, undyed shirt. His pants were of the same material, baggy and decorated with rough patches of a dozen colors and textures.

Kelly recognized the material as hand-woven hemp, like she'd seen in head shops. The guy definitely screamed 'hippie'. Though, as he crossed the room, she found he didn't smell like pot and patchouli. More like mulch and moss, with maybe a hint of manure.

He darted into the room ahead of the other two, wrapping himself around Donna. She barely managed to get her hands empty before she was climbed.

"Vern!" called the last of the group to enter, an authoritative red-haired woman in an elaborate, businesslike cream dress accented with red. "Behave, at least around company."

The wild man let go and backed up, cringing against the wall. "Sorry! Just happy to see Mom again." His eyes darted toward Kelly. He stared at her with a mixture of suspicion and fear. Kelly frowned, wondering why she might look dangerous.

"No harm done," Donna reassured him. "Always happy to see you, too, dear."

She turned to the other woman. "He never needs to be asked for a hug. But you... come here, dear. Please."

Without further prompting, the younger woman crossed before Kelly, seeming not to notice her. She and Donna embraced with comfortable familiarity. "It is good to be here, Mom. Sorry I don't visit more often. There's so much work..."

Donna flicked away the apology. "You're busy. I know how it goes. But family is important, and you're here now. All of you."

The second of the party stepped forward. If the others were immediately noticeable, then their companion was almost invisible until he moved. And where they ignored Kelly at first, he stared at the girl with great interest.

He was old enough to have silver hair. He was also gaunt with age, though not noticeably wrinkled, and he held his tall frame upright with rigid strength. He extended a long-fingered hand to Kelly, from the sleeves of an antique black suit and pristine white shirt. A straight black tie kept

his outfit from looking like a tuxedo. Despite his stark appearance, there was something familiar about his face and voice. He reminded Kelly of somebody. Maybe a great-uncle she'd seen in her family albums?

"Morton Clay, at your service," he intoned. "How may I call you, miss?"

Feeling like an actor in a BBC drama, Kelly shook his hand and answered, "Kelly Madden." Then she froze, realizing she'd given her actual, full name, without thinking. Great.

The thin man withdrew his hand and nodded. If he noticed Kelly's tension, he gave no sign. "Well met, mistress Madden. This lot rarely bothers with such formalities. But I find that lineage is important, if only as a sign of respect to those who gave you their name."

The ragged man, Vern, stuck out his tongue. "And it's something you can brag about. All the skulls that used to make the same noises. Verrrry important."

"Behave," Donna said, just before the other woman spoke. "That was almost rude. Be civil. My house, my rules."

"Sorry, Mom," Vern muttered. Uncomfortable under their gazes, he slid around the room to a corner chair and settled awkwardly into its arms.

The redhead finally acknowledged Kelly. "Sorry, introductions. I'm Bree." She nodded a bow, which Kelly returned from her seat. "Kelly, was it? I don't think we've met before. How do you know Mother and Father?"

Kelly began to answer, "I was just out in the rain..."

Donna intervened. "Rude. Just a different kind of rude. If the girl wants to talk about herself, she will. Father and I invited her to the party. Hopefully, she stays, and we can chat."

Ed returned as she was finishing and added, "Technically, Lewis invited her. Or Man did. But she's welcome whichever way."

During this exchange, Bree lowered herself into a chair near the door, but said nothing in her defense. Instead, she picked up a teacup, filled it halfway, and topped the rest with cream. Based on her expression as she sipped, the rest of the world faded away.

“I don’t mind,” Kelly protested. Curious and wanting to make a good impression, she tried smoothing out the situation. “Bree? You mentioned work. What do you do?”

She felt eyes on her. Bree took a second to swivel around and focus before speaking to the young woman. “What don’t I do?” she asked. “Agriculture, industry, medicine, arts and entertainment...”

Ed patted her on the shoulder. “We know, dear, they keep you hopping.”

“Fair return, though,” said Bree, still looking at Kelly. “What do you do? Student, I assume?”

Kelly nodded. “Junior, yeah.”

“I thought you looked a bit young,” Morton interrupted. He turned to Ed and Donna. “I hope you’ve explained about the Guest of Honor. And the etiquette?”

Vern looked up from his shirt to wrinkle his nose at the dapper gentleman. “Quit making everything about rules. It’s easy. Enjoy the food. Be nice. Don’t lick people.”

“Those are your rules. We make exceptions for you.”

Bree intruded on their budding argument. “You, follow your own advice and eat something. You, sit down. You make everyone uncomfortable hovering around like that. Act like you’re actually a guest, not a random visitor.”

Kelly wondered if the last part was aimed at her, but Bree had forgotten about her again as she studied her empty teacup.

Kelly sipped her own tea. These were interesting friends, for sure. A bunch of weirdos, but not

bad. She found something different to like and dislike in each one. She realized, with some surprise, that she’d temporarily forgotten about her problem outside. Kelly heard the rain still pattering down, but lighter. She wondered if the bikers had given up yet. Her clothes were almost dry.

She decided that, barring any incidents, she would at least stay long enough to finish her tea and a few more pastries.

To be continued...

*Nathan Large is a writer and storyteller, working primarily in speculative fiction with frequent mythological themes. After twenty years of storytelling across varieties of role-playing – and two years of live public practice – his fascination with the power of folk tales and myths, ancient and modern, continues to grow. He recently released the first two novels in his *Empyrean Dreams* sci-fi series with Laine Megan Lundquist; two more should follow this year. Nathan also creates as acting Secretary of the Games and Play SIG and Secretary of Whispering Lakes Grove, Erie, PA.*

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Book Review: The Greek Plays: Sixteen Plays by Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides

Reviewed by Rev. G. R. Grove

The Greek Plays: Sixteen Plays by Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides

Editors: Mary Lefkowitz and James Romm

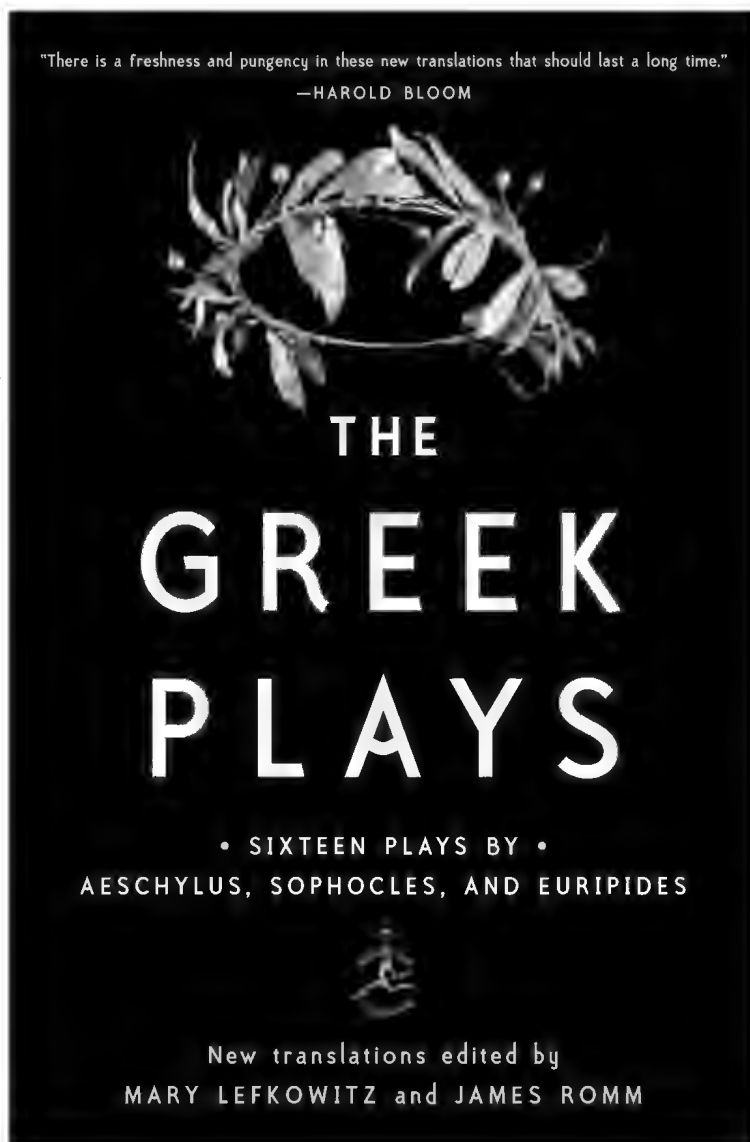
Modern Library Classics

Reprint edition (September 5, 2017)

ISBN-0812983092

One of the exit questions in the Clergy Training Program's "Pagan Theology 2" course requires a discussion of "the nature of evil in the ancient world, and how ill deeds affect the relationship between human and divine" based on the lore and philosophy. Mulling over this requirement, I decided that the Greek tragedies might be a good place to start. This book, in addition to the translations of the sixteen selected plays, includes introductions to each, background information on the origins of Greek theater, several maps and a timeline of the authors' lives set against other historical events, and five additional essays on "Tragedy in Its Civic Context", "Material Elements and Visual Meaning", "Plato and Tragedy", "Aristotle's *Poetics* and Greek Tragedy", and "The Postclassical Reception of Greek Tragedy". The plays include five by Aeschylus (*Persians*, *Agamemnon*, *Libation Bearers*, *Eumenides*, and *Prometheus Bound*), four by Sophocles (*Oedipus the King*, *Antigone*, *Electra*, and *Oedipus at Colonus*), and seven by Euripides (*Alcestis*, *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Electra*, *Trojan Women*, *Helen*, and *Bacchae*).

The background material is clearly written and helpful, and the translations intentionally avoid colloquialisms and modern poetical practices, using instead a slightly more formal style to give more of an impression of the original language. In addition, the translators have used an assortment of English meters to give some sense of the metrical variations, although Greek meters do not correlate with English ones.



This book would be a valuable reference for a number of ADF's courses, especially some in the Bardic and Liturgists programs. I also recommend it as a convenient collection for those who simply wish to become more familiar with ancient Greek thought and culture. For increased portability, I bought the Kindle version of this book, but I may add a paperback copy to my library as well.

Rev. G. R. Grove is an ADF Master Bard, a Consecrated Priest, and Editor-in-Chief of *Oak Leaves*.

Word Search Puzzle—Druid Stuff

By Chris :)

B V V C G A N D L P B G I O V I R T U E
L R U D Y J I A S Q P N F M N K C Q N G
C G I H H X R E M A G I C E J T L A Q I
Z O R G T O G R S M C Q W S S O V T S C
C H G M I A S L U M O A E R S T M I G F
T X E H R D R P E R N E I J Q G I X Z L
T I W S A Y M A I A R E Y D O F B V A Y
B B V I R M I K K T P G W G X C B U A K
K G Z M M D V M E O A V E G B S T S Q L
R N U L Q A G C Y Y V L W P R I N W I A
M E M B F S B T D I U A I O R A L B K M
Y Y Q I J O Y I L Y Q U T T I M N E K E
T W I V H L P X N H D S M E Y P N G R R
H V E S J S O A R O E K V M S N G I E G
J Y I L C T S K E C G O Y N A B F S U I
M Q G O L I T K N O R I L N R W J X V N
E B H W W C C A M G J D A B J A D U H O
K V Y C A E S A R Z L D H K M A O W A D
I N A T U R E E O A K D Y W K I M B A S
P C O O L E Y T G S B F V Z W I T N R A

FIRE
WELL
TREE
NEWGRANGE
TARA
OAK
HOSPITALITY
BILE
VIRTUE
AMERGIN
IMBAS
ANCESTORS
COOLEY
DANANN
AWEN

CAESAR
OGHAM
MYTH
NATURE
GROVE
OVATES
MABINOGI
YULE
RITUAL
FESTIVAL
SOLSTICE
MAGIC
BRIGID

The Poets

Aimee Brannon. Aimee joined ADF in 2016, and is a member of Chokecherry Grove in Denver, Colorado. This is her first submission to *Oak Leaves*.

Ty Davis: Ty lives in the Midwest on a hill filled with Oak Trees. He aspires to join the ADF clergy program after he finishes his Dedicant Path.

Rev. D. Rowen Grove. Rowen joined ADF in the spring of 2010, and completed her Dedicant Path work two years later. She became an ADF Initiate in 2015 and was ordained an ADF Priest in 2016. She is currently Senior Druid of Chokecherry Grove, ADF in Denver, Colorado, and ADF Preceptor.

Rev. G. R. “Gwernin” Grove: G. R. joined ADF in 2009. She is an ADF Initiate, Chief of the Scholars Guild, and one of the Bardic Guild’s four Master Bards. She was ordained in 2016 and consecrated in 2018, and is Past Senior Druid of Chokecherry Grove, ADF, in Denver, Colorado. She has published four collections of poetry and four historical novels (with a little magic) set in 1st and 6th century Britain and Ireland.

Nathan Large. Nathan is a writer and storyteller, working primarily in speculative fiction with

frequent mythological themes. After twenty years of storytelling across varieties of role-playing – and two years of live public practice – his fascination with the power of folk tales and myths, ancient and modern, continues to grow. He recently released the first two novels in his *Empyrean Dreams* sci-fi series with Laine Megan Lundquist; two more should follow this year. Nathan also creates as acting Secretary of the Games and Play SIG and Secretary of Whispering Lakes Grove, Erie, PA.

Jenne Micale: Jenne is a writer, singer, priestess and musician whose endeavors include the ethereal/wyrd folk project Kwannon and, in former times, the wyrd folk band Belladonna Bouquet. A former initiate of the Henge of Keltria, she won the 2009 DANAC Golden Oak Award for best Druidical essay, and has published articles and poetry in a variety of publications. She is currently Bard of the ADF Pro-togrove of the Three Gorges. Listen to her music at www.kwannon.net.

Rev. Jean “Drum” Pagano. Drum has been a member of ADF since 1984 (he was ADF’s eighth member). He is an ADF Senior Priest, an Initiate, and ADF’s current Archdruid. He enjoys working with his various altars, spending time in Nature, and studying and teaching the Ogham.



News and Announcements

Program & Path Completions

Rev. G. R. "Gwernin" Grove
Clergy Circle 2
July 21, 2018

Jane Webster
DP completion
August 2, 2018

Patrick McAthey
DP completion
August 14, 2018

Matthew James (Forest Wolf)
Pre-clergy circle none
August 29, 2018

Diane Cacciato
Pre-clergy circle none
September 12, 2018

Alicia Yantosca
DP completion
September 26, 2018

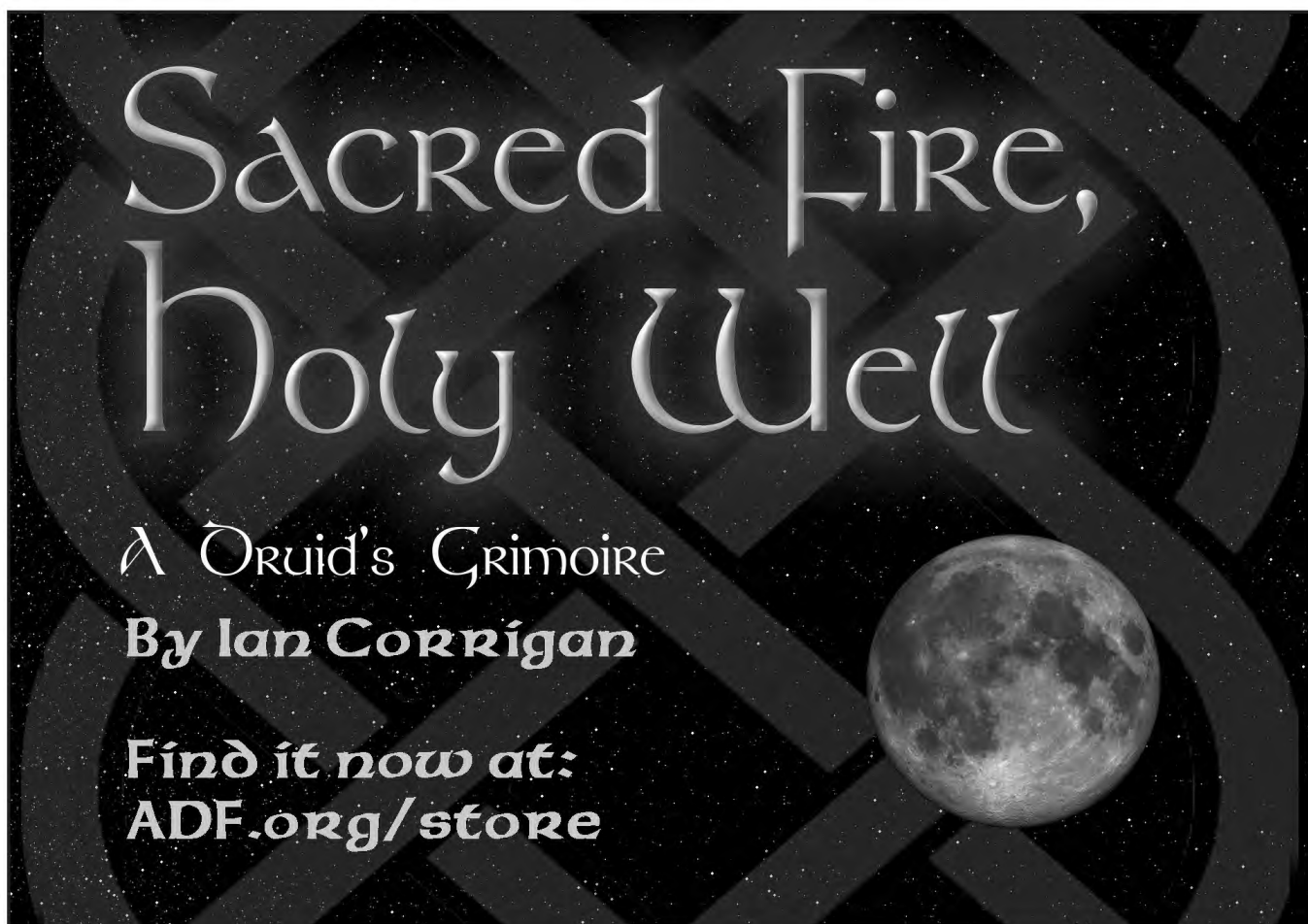
Elkie White
DP completion
September 27, 2018

~Congratulations to all~

Upcoming Events

Harvest Nights (ADF)
November 9-11, 2018
Otis, MA

For more festival information see
www.adf.org/events





ADF Directory



The Mother Grove

Archdruid	Rev. Jean 'Drum' Pagano	adf-archdruid@adf.org
Vice-Archdruid	Rev. Sean Harbaugh	adf-vice-archdruid@adf.org
Treasurer	Margaret Forsell-VanHorn	adf-treasurer@adf.org
Secretary	Rev. Crystal Groves	adf-secretary@adf.org
Members Advocate	Desiree Cook	adf-members-advocate@adf.org
Chief of the Council of Regional Druids	Rev. Amber Doty	adf-cord-chief@adf.org
Chief of the Council of Senior Druids	Flip Rutledge	adf-cosd-chief@adf.org
Non-Officer Director	Rev. Lauren Mart	laurmm@gmail.com
Non-Officer Director	Jennifer Hatter	anusingjenn@gmail.com
Non-Officer Director	Leesa Kern	firewomanpg@gmail.com
Non-Officer Director	Julie Desrosiers	poledrasdaughter@gmail.com

Additional Leadership Positions

Administrator	Jane Wayson	adf-administrator@adf.org
Archdruid Emeritus	Rev. Isaac Bonewits	[deceased]
Archdruid Emeritus	Rev. Ian Corrigan	tredara@ncweb.com
Archdruid Emeritus	Rev. John 'Fox' Adelman	john.adelman@trw.com
Archdruid Emeritus	Rev. Robert 'Skip' Ellison	skip@dragonskeep.us
Archdruid Emeritus	Rev. Kirk Thomas	druidkirk@gmail.com
Chronicler	Manny Tejada-Moreno	adf-chronicler@adf.org
Information Manager	Arthur Shipkowski	adf-info-manager@adf.org
Listmaster and Moderator	Rev. G. R. Grove	adf-listmaster@adf.org
Preceptor	Rev. D. Rowen Grove	adf-preceptor@adf.org
Store Manager	(vacant)	adf-store@adf.org
Webmaster	Arthur Shipkowski	adf-webmaster@adf.org

Committees

Clergy Council	Chair: Rev. Jean 'Drum' Pagano	adf-archdruid@adf.org
Council of Lore	Chair: Rev. D. Rowen Grove	adf-preceptor@adf.org
Grove Coordinating Committee	Chair: Rev. Caryn Laney-MacLuan	adf-gcc-chair@adf.org
Grove Organizing Committee	Chair: Rev. Nancy McAndrew	adf-goc-chair@adf.org
Prisoner Relations Committee	Chair: Rev. Kirk Thomas	adf-prison-ministry@adf.org

For information on **Regional Druids** please see the full listing at:
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For more information on **Groves, Guilds, Special Interest Groups (SIGs), and Kins**, please see the full listing at:
<http://www.adf.org/groups/groups-list.html>

Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship

Oak Leaves Subscriptions:

ADF and Oak Leaves Membership Rates:

Regular Membership: \$30/year
Prisoner Membership: \$10/year

Subscription to Oak Leaves: Members: \$20/year
Subscription to Oak Leaves: Non-Members: \$25/year

If you are already an ADF member but not an Oak Leaves subscriber, you can add a subscription either through our webpage (preferred) at <http://www.adf.org/joining/join.html>, or by contacting our Business Office at the following address:

Subscription Service Dept.
Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship
PO Box 84
Wickliffe, OH 44092-0084
adf-office@adf.org

If you would like to subscribe to Oak Leaves without joining ADF, please contact the Business Office at the address above.

Submission Guidelines for Oak Leaves:

Oak Leaves welcomes submissions of articles, poetry, artwork, and anything else that might be of interest to our Druid readers. Submissions relating to the turning of the wheel of the year and the celebration of the High Days are particularly encouraged. Submissions from non-members will be accepted, but preference will be given to submissions from ADF members. Since excellent scholarship is one of ADF's goals, please document sources of ideas and materials that you used for your writings. Please follow the standards for references in the MLA Handbook or Style Manual. We will not accept submissions with footnotes, as they require considerable editing to convert to endnotes. We reserve the right to reject submissions which do not meet our standards. When planning lengthy submissions, please inquire first at oak-leaves@adf.org.

Electronic submissions are preferred, sent as email attachments to the Oak Leaves submissions address: oak-leaves@adf.org. Written submissions should be sent in one of the following formats: MS Word (.doc/.docx), Rich Text Format (.rtf), or Text Format (.txt). Please include a brief ADF-related bio for all articles and essays. For more information on submissions, please see our web page at <https://www.adf.org/publications/periodicals/oak-leaves/submissions.html> or contact us at oak-leaves@adf.org.

Deadlines for submissions (two months before publication date):

Spring Issue : December 1st;
Summer Issue : March 1st;
Autumn Issue : June 1st;
Winter Issue : September 1st

A Charm to Help A Distant Friend

Having discovered a need in a friend or acquaintance, it is best to make an offering to your own allies, but this prayer may be called on another's behalf even without giving, so long as you are making regular offerings. Make an offering, recite the charm and clearly envision the target and the need.

Spirits hear me, For aid I call.
Not for myself, but for my *(friend)*
(kinsman/woman)
Hear me, Spirits, and know my voice
My allies, my Kindred.
By the offerings I have given
By the words I have spoken
By the will to Truth
and Strength and Love
That we share, you and I;
Come to the aid of
(friend's name), who dwells in
(friend's city or place).

Or let the call go out, and the spirits of that place
come to their aid.

In health or in wealth; in heart or in mind;
In their safety and their prosperity
By Day or Night and in every Twilight.

Let them be upheld;
let them be nourished;
Let peace be upon them,
or let them gain in their striving.
(be specific if possible or needed)

In Land, Sea and Sky
Below and On High
Come to their aid, O Spirits,
This I call.

