

# WEAVING FATE

*Hypersigils, Changing The Past  
& Telling True Lies*



**AIDAN WACHTER**



*THE WEAVER'S RUNE*



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&  
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*Weaving Fate: Hypersigils, Changing the Past, & Telling True Lies*  
By Aidan Wachter

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# DEDICATION

*This one is for Marik,  
Raven, Randy, & Gen.*

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All the errors are mine.

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*Magic is of the World(s) Outside of the strictures and structures of human cultural constructs. It can and does operate within these confines as well,*



*but its nature is other, wild, and extends far beyond the world(s) of the civilized human.*

### *ILLUMINATION*

*Illumination is the process of burning off the impurities that cloud, obscure, or otherwise regulate our visions/awareness of possibility, The Field, and the nature of the selves and the Others.*

### *THE GOLDEN DRAGON*

*The Golden Dragon & Egg are great allies in managing power in beneficial ways within the animal body.*

### *SERPENTS AT THE CROSSROADS*

*The Crossroads is an avatar-image for liminal spaces. Magicians, witches, and sorcerers are themselves avatars of the Crossroads and are here shown traversing the various roads as serpent-spirits.*

### *MOON & HAND*

*The hand is the power of making, of manipulation (meaning to handle or control skillfully). The crescent moon is a symbol of the powers of the subconscious mind including desire.*

### *HOURLASS*

*From death, we arise, and into it, we return. The conception that life is a passing-point between deaths, and a friendly reminder that time and embodied life passes. Both self and all of its works are composted and recycled to feed the Field.*

### *FEAR AS CATALYST*

*Fear is a form of information, intended to produce a reaction in an animal. This sigil is a tool to re-frame fear not as an inhibitor, not as that which freezes us into stasis, but as the spark that ignites us into positive forward movement. A tool for re-wiring the Selves to feed on fear, converting it to usable energy, instead of being consumed by it.*

*“In Nordic philosophy, fate was considered a weaving that was influenced by all living beings. People could influence fate, and shape it to some extent, which is a long way from the fatalism which requires people to sit still and suffer.”*

*—Jan Fries, Seidways*



# INTRODUCTION

*My Fate I weave with Weavers hands  
Three Sisters shape my destiny  
My fingers deep within their web  
Of all that was, that is, shall be.  
– The Weaver’s Rune*

My name is Aidan, and I’ve been practicing magic for about thirty-five years at the time of writing. Growing up I was a suburban kid, a bit of a weirdo, with a low self-opinion. I had my first ‘mystical’ experiences at eleven, was an avid reader, and by fifteen I was into punk rock and had tested out of high school as it was clear I wouldn’t do well there for three more years. I’d also managed to get accepted into an est offshoot course that made a lasting impression on me.<sup>1</sup> What I mostly took from it was an understanding that my self and my mind were not the same things, and that we tend to be more conditioned in our thinking than was generally talked about. It was certainly not a common discussion for a kid my age in that time and place. I also had an uncle who was part of the Rajneesh movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and I spent a good amount of time getting high and listening to Rajneesh talks on cassette. Rajneesh provided me with a basic grasp of some Eastern metaphysical concepts, which helped to move me a bit further out of the norms of my peer group. These things plus a tendency toward odd experiences, intense dreams, and sleep paralysis primed me for the life that has followed.

Having left school, I began working in a series of bookstores. Through the people I met in the punk scene and the bookstores, I first came across not only magic as a clearly defined concept, but also met a ceremonial magician and a traditional witch.

I remember that I read Starhawk, Raymond Buckland, Paul Huson, and *Book 4* by Crowley, but none of those approaches<sup>2</sup> took root or really stuck at the time. Milo Rigaud, Alfred Métraux, and Maya Deren’s books on voodoo, and the early writings of Carlos Castaneda were solid influences, as was Mircea Eliade’s *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*.<sup>3</sup> The

science fiction and fantasy of Michael Moorcock and Roger Zelazny certainly played a part, as did *The Crone's Book of Words* from Valerie Worth. The most potent impression of magic I had at this point came from *The Grey Book of Thee Temple Ov Psychick Youth* (TOPY) which I read in 1983. I didn't quite know what to make of TOPY overall at the time, but their very punk ideas of de-control and personal freedom made sense to me.

When I was seventeen I tried my first ever magical working, an attempt to heal a sick iguana. The ritual involved a natural garnet I had been given, saliva, cigarette smoke, and some kind of invocation of the iguana's spirit people. It worked for a while, and the iguana lived for a few more months before it passed on.

At eighteen I went road tripping with my girlfriend, and we spent time with the aforementioned traditional witch near Mt. Shasta in Northern California. While hiking near Shasta I experienced what I can only describe as a gate opening into Fairyland that shook me hard. I could see into the Otherworld and knew that if I entered, I would not be able to return. I chose to stay in the world I knew. This was followed a day or two later by my first experience of spirit possession. The possession happened while we were still camped in the same spot, near Castle Lake. This possession was strange but not unpleasant, and I retrospectively saw these events as initiatory. At the time I was mostly in a bit of a daze. I'd had enough strange things happen in my life that I wasn't too freaked out, but these two events were far more intense than anything that had come before.

About a year later, my girlfriend and I were staying in a beautiful house on a tiny lake outside of Seattle. One day I was paddling a canoe on the lake, and the lake 'woke up'. This was a tiny lake, but I was suddenly fighting very strong currents and impossible waves. It took all of my strength and what seemed like ages to get back to the shore. This would be my first conscious experience of the spirit of a place. I knew I'd done something to anger the lake spirit, though I didn't know what.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps that day, or maybe a day or two later, I became very ill while walking downstairs from the loft of the lake house. My body froze up, and I pitched forward down the stairs. I somehow got my arm between the uprights on the staircase railing to slow my fall, avoiding injury. I had a high fever by the time I was at the bottom of the stairs, which seemed to me

like it came on during the fall.

I spent several days in bed delirious. In my fever dreams, I was killed over and over again by men who invaded the house. Each time I slept, the dream would start again at the beginning, and I would try to use what I had learned from the previous dreams to survive a little longer. This happened dozens of times. At one point I remember waking to see that a huge spider had settled into a knot in the wood of the ceiling directly above the bed where I lie. After this sighting, I gained more control of the dreams (thank you, Weaver!), and in time I was able to defeat my attackers before I (and my girlfriend) were killed. My fever broke after this last dream, and this time I knew without question that I had experienced an initiation.

About a year later we moved into a small cabin in the Santa Cruz mountains. We had a baby coming and wanted him to be born outside of the urban sprawl. While there I met another magician who turned me onto chaos magic via Peter J. Carroll's *Liber Null & Psychonaut* which had just been released in the US. At this point I began a serious magical practice, mixing what made sense to me from the kinds of magic I had tried already, reshaped through ideas I took from Carroll. I felt like magic itself was calling me to practice, and I understood in some way that magic was to be a crucial part of my life.

By the time I was twenty-two I had been dealing with unwanted possession experiences for a while and used what I'd learned of magic to get a handle on them. My success in this and a few exorcisms for other people solidified my sense that what I was doing worked, even if it looked a bit odd compared to the mostly pagan and ceremonial magic I saw around me.

Over time, all of these influences developed into a personal style or approach to magic that always contained a focus on deprogramming myself from outside influences. Deprogramming here isn't the same as that used for getting people out of religious cults. For me, it has always been about using magic and other tools to look deeply at my internal belief structures, understand their roots and their effects on me, and then changing them if they are unhelpful.

I also concluded that humans had practiced many forms of magic for long spans of our history, and in some sense, pretty much all of it worked. None of it worked in every instance, but all the approaches I encountered were at

least sometimes successful. I knew practitioners using everything from Enochian magic to hoodoo and those who just seemed to pray a lot to various deities, and all were more or less successful. This suggested to me that there probably wasn't a best way to practice, just maybe a way that best suited each individual.

I still think the same thing today. High, Low, Black, White, Folk magic, witchcraft, shamanry, religious, atheist, or anti-religious, I've met all kinds of magicians who were successful in their work. While there are many approaches to magic, I think of them as styles more than fully discrete things most of the time. Many folks gravitate to an existing style early on and stick with it, like Wicca or Thelema. Others mix and match various pieces to create something of their own. If we think about how clothing takes a few general forms like skirts, pants, dresses, and shirts, which we each combine into many expressions to suit our needs, this is a similar concept.

I have been adding, subtracting, and modifying how I work magic since these early experiences into a form I now call dirt sorcery. Dirt sorcery is the work of the here-and-now, fully embodied and accepting of our nature as both spirit-being and animal, and understanding they are not separate things. This lack of separation I refer to as being 'all one stone', meaning not even as distinct as 'two sides of the same coin'. We are all one thing, body, mind, and spirit totally enmeshed while we are alive. Dirt sorcery is not at all focused on transcending the flesh and the material world. We are embodied human-spirit beings. By accepting this, we can work towards total engagement of all that we are to allow for a full experience of the life we are living right now.

My approach blends psychological, spirit-focused, animist, energy-based, chaoist, ceremonial, witchcraft, and folk magic approaches to create the equivalent of a magical wardrobe I feel comfortable in. It also gives me the results I seek without as much of the backlash or strangeness that other ways I have tried have generated. It's important to understand that your mix or blend will differ from mine. This is beyond normal, it's actually the way it has to be. It's a lot like someone finding some old military pants, a pair of running shoes, and a sweet denim jacket and making them the center of their style. You might need fancy dresses, combat boots, and a fur cloak instead. Style matters, even if we only notice this when confronted by its

absence. We'll have the best outcomes if we feel as comfortable in our magic as we do in our clothes. Failing this, both will chafe in time.

My take is that humans have practiced magic for hundreds if not thousands of generations, and they did so in ways that suited them in their specific time and place. We must do the same.

Considering the above, one thing I hammer on a lot in my work is that 'context is king'. Context is the whole scenario in which something takes place. It's who you are, where you are, what you are experiencing, the previous experiences that have led you to this place, what skills you do or don't have, and who you are with. This carries into what we could think of as 'psychic weather' events: how does your world feel to you today, this month, this year? Is it calm & warm, welcoming, and inviting? Is it cold and harsh, leading you to sequester yourself away somewhere where the day's events can't touch you? All of this is context, and it's king because it sets the ground rules. It sets the stage and lays out the laws, which then allow or disallow certain practices and approaches. These stages and rules are not really definable except for the individual doing the work within their own context. Outsiders may think they know far better, but they lack the context required for this to be the case. This means you will have to determine which pieces of what follows make sense for you where you are right now. Not taking this into account can lead to a lot of false starts and abrupt and unpleasant collisions between what we think and believe we 'must' do and our inability to do so effectively or gracefully.

There are three main tools, parts, or practices integral to the work described in *Weaving Fate: The Black Book, The Corridor, and the Fever Stone*. Let's take a quick look at each so we can then consider how and why they may be used.

**THE BLACK BOOK** is a form of what is called a hypersigil. A hypersigil is a long-form narrative work of magic. In our case, it takes the form of a journal of events or things we would like to experience that haven't happened yet, written as a diary of things that have already come to pass.<sup>5</sup> That may be a confusing concept, so let's break it down. Imagine you wanted a new guitar or another musical instrument. In many forms of magic, we would ask for what we want using a statement of intent, petition,



or by evoking a spirit and asking for it directly. In the Black Book, we will write about already having what we desire in our ‘diary’, in as much detail as we can. We embellish this ‘diary entry’ to such a degree that we can feel it, taste it, smell it, and we use certain cues to anchor the experience in our consciousness. We work towards our desires through as many diary entries as needed, to flesh out all aspects of how we want things to be in our life. We treat the Black Book in specific ways to help it become and remain magically active.

THE CORRIDOR is an imaginal construct used to envision distinct places, times, and events of the past or future. As in the Black Book, we use it in order to bring about the changes, shifts, or experiences we desire. It works best in conjunction with the Black Book as they reinforce each other in ways that have a strong synergistic effect.

THE FEVER STONE is a practice I received from my allies that seeks to mitigate the undesired psychic effects carried forward from traumatic past experiences and frees up the energies trapped by them for use in better ways.

One of the ways that I define magic is that it’s an art of change. Some part (or parts) of our life, like a relationship, job, or perhaps our luck or our connection to the spiritual realms is in some way not quite how we would like it to be. This may be mental or emotional stuff or external aspects of our life. We can use magic to help change these things into a form that suits us better.

Since magic is an art of change, *Weaving Fate* will work best for the person who is seeking to mix things up. These things can be internal elements, like a sense of self, identity, or limiting beliefs. They can also be real-world practical elements, like finding a new and better job, a romantic partner, or developing skills that you are interested in or need.

The work is built on the skillful use of our imagination, so having an active one is helpful. The work itself will help to strengthen this skill, so even if you wouldn’t define yours as a strong suit, it may soon be!

It would help if you can approach this work with an attitude of serious play. Serious play is where we are playing, exploring, and having fun but with a lot of intentionality behind it. This allows both the freedom to

explore options and the focus to do so while working towards the things we want for ourselves and others.

A mindset of being self-directed is required. There are a few ritual bits that you should follow mostly as written, but you will shape most of the work to suit your own style and what ends you are working for. I'll cover some of the most common places where people get tripped up, but the process is much like writing a novel or series of short stories. You must decide on the characters, plot, and outcomes that make sense to you, and then you get to change your mind as you see how things play out. You'll need to pay close attention to how you think and feel about the results you are experiencing. Events, motivations, and players will change in time, and you will adjust the work accordingly.

It is important to bring a high level of honesty about what you seek to experience or achieve to the work. We need this in other kinds of magic, but here you will lay out very specific pathways or story-lines, including your intellectual, physical, and emotional reactions to them. You will then change or build on these elements as you go. This is not a good place in which to half-ass the work (not that magic ever is), as your results will reflect to a high degree the level of immersion you bring to the practices.

We can now look at some potential issues. The work can get very personal, very quickly. You may revisit past events and use these tools to change your perception of them to mitigate their unwelcome effects in the here-and-now. This imaginal work is very effective, and because of that, it can also be somewhat destabilizing or uncomfortable. Often the changes we seek require major shifts in who we think we are in order to manifest. This kind of discomfort is much like what we may experience when we first start to exercise after a long break. What we are asking of ourselves requires actual change, and not all change is initially enjoyable or comfortable.

The best uses of these practices are simultaneously subtle and radical. Our sense of possibility can shift only slightly, and the perspective and options that open up for us, as a result, can be vast. This is a major strength of the work while also a reason to remain conscious of what we ask for. We are setting the stage for genuine change, so it makes sense to remain very aware of how the effects we seek might play out in our lives. It is easy to unmake a relationship of the romantic, business, or friendly sort using these

approaches. That said, it's just as easy to use these methods to strengthen an existing one or help create new ones.

The combined effect of these three tools or approaches has been of significant help to me and others in producing subtle to radical changes in both inner and outer worlds. I share them here so that they may be of benefit to you as well.

*Weaving Fate* is a close relative of my first book *Six Ways: Approaches and Entries for Practical Magic*, but it takes a very different tack.<sup>6</sup> I wrote *Six Ways* as a wide-open handbook of highly effective magical approaches, covering a lot of ground (or tools) in a small space. This book is focused on the application of a small set of tools that we will explore in much greater depth. These are practices I have used for a long time but only taught to a few close friends. It is also heavily focused on exploring various mechanisms that control our lives and worlds, from cultural indoctrination to self-limiting beliefs.

While this book stands on its own innumerable feet, I do suggest *Six Ways* as a helpful adjunct text if only as a closer look at my general thinking and conceptual bases as they apply to magic and sorcery. For those with some basic skills and experience in magical work, it's not a prerequisite for using this text, but it may come in handy.

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<sup>1</sup> est stands for Erhard Seminars Training, an encounter group created by Werner Erhard. The seminar I attended was called The Sage Experience and was a very good experience for me.

<sup>2</sup> Here I am using 'approaches' as specific styles or overall ways of working magic. So while I adopted specific ideas and techniques from *The Spiral Dance* and borrowed others from *Mastering Witchcraft* and *Book 4*, I never fully adopted the root magical worldview from any of them.

<sup>3</sup> At the time Castaneda's work was still viewed as anthropology rather than whatever it really is. The worldview he described made more sense to me than anything else I had come across at that time. It was weird but contained a lot of 'Otherworld' concepts and ideas about magical power that seemed logical to me. Though there are a number of well known issues with Eliade's work, *Shamanism* as well as his book *The Sacred and The*

*Profane* provided me with valuable conceptual frameworks, many of which I still use. Rigaud's *Secrets of Voodoo*, Métraux's *Voodoo in Haiti*, and Deren's *Divine Horsemen* all began to provide a road map of a more spirit-driven world that would in time become my base worldview, which is animist.

4 In retrospect the possession near Mt. Shasta was clearly this as well, but I had no idea at the time. I was a slow learner!

5 There are many other ways to make a hypersigil, including fiction writing, visual art, film, or music. We focus only on the journaled form in this text.

6 Aidan Wachter, *Six Ways: Approaches & Entries for Practical Magic*, Red Temple Press, 2018

# BACKGROUND & BASE

To begin, let's look at some of the concepts and ideas that this work is built upon. These underlying concepts provide a rationale for why we perform the work in the way we do. It will be helpful to consider them before we turn our attention to the actual work at hand.

To be clear, these are underlying beliefs that I hold, while being clear that they are beliefs, not objective reality. I base them on my experiences, both wandering around in my body in normal consciousness and while doing so in non-ordinary consciousness. Some of them came to me via spirit communication; they are the stories that my allies tell me, as I interpret them. But they are stories, not provable facts. My proclivities, personal history, and projections color them, and together they form my innermost stories about living as a magical being. If I hold anything like a sense of 'basic truth about magic and humans', it sits within this story. It goes like this:

Once upon a time, things differed greatly from how they are now. They were different in so many ways as to be beyond counting or cataloging. Things that we know are impossible now were commonplace then. We embodied human spirit beings were closer to each other, the Spirits, Others, and the Dead than nearly any of us are today. It was a quieter, fuller, and likely richer-with-meaning experience of the Field than what any of us have now.<sup>7</sup>

Why and how things shifted from this older way is unknown. It is likely that the process happened in distinct places and times at different rates, and to different degrees. This process is still happening now.

This earlier state was not a singular way of being. It was many ways, myriad like the varieties of animals or flowers spread across the worlds. This deeper, more aware consciousness of the Field, the Others, the Spirits, and the Dead was far more widespread back then, even though perhaps not universal. Some followed the lead of the Others, the Field itself, and the Dead, responsive to the ebbs and flows of information and manifestation while rarely seeking to influence outcomes. Others sought to ignore all this

information and live only in the world they could touch and taste with waking senses. The group who were the earliest forms of what we now might call witches, magicians, and sorcerers were those who waded into the flow. They swam in the Field and sought to influence it, to shift themselves and the currents within it in more beneficial directions.

None of these ways of being, now as then, are inherently better or worse than the others. I expect they all feed into the overall health and vibrancy of the organism or collection of organisms that is the Field as a whole. My approach is that of a magic worker. I seek to wade into the flow and to influence it. Those who walk other paths may find this book of interest, but it's those who seek change, the shape-shifters, that I write it for.

Another underlying concept is that of 'contagion of idea or worldview'. Contagion in magic is much like it is in medicine: something passed on through close contact. In folk magic, this is often used in creating material connections with the target of work. An example is how we might use an item of clothing that a person once wore as an aid to influencing them with our magic.

Much of the magic that I do and share is a little off to the side of other approaches I have seen. I often focus on shedding layers of contagion that come from a life lived among lots of other people, in a cultural milieu that often runs counter to my sense of how we human spirit beings are meant to live. There is nothing wrong with other people, but the human tendency towards projection can cause many problems, especially for those who are particularly sensitive. Add to this the oddity of the modern worlds to the human-animal, so different from the ones we have evolved in, and I find tendencies arising that are at best unhelpful and at worst massively destructive.

It's important to remember that magical contagion isn't purely material, as it is with a virus. It is often a form of subtle energy that gets passed on from one being to another, but it can also be thought-based, such as an idea or worldview. While it may be an energetic or spirit contact that produces a kind of physical or psychic illness, more prevalent is the passing on of specific idea sets which then exert control on both our expectations and our behaviors. We are no longer 'supposed' to see fairies, speak to the dead, or engage with the spirits of the land or our homes. This is a form of mass

contagion, where a materialist worldview (coupled with anti-magical religious views) has infected most people, closing off whole categories of sensory information and engagement.

Issues of contagion get exacerbated in this age of rampant and targeted digital mediation. As we seek out information, we can fall into what we call echo chambers, where all the voices we come across sound the same, say the same things, and appear to share the same point of view. Together these can calcify into something different from information, becoming a form of unintended (by the receiver) patterning or programming. The end result is much like the cultural indoctrination we might receive in a religious family in a homogeneous religious culture, where home, church, school, and government all reinforce one set of truths, one set of acceptable perceptual filters.

In some ways, however, this modern form is more insidious as it is built to be invisible and comforting. It can seem like the entire world actually is the way our screens, searches, and related algorithmic suggestions show. We are shown a seemingly wide range of ways to live via images, stories, and videos, but in truth, the offered choices are few. Fewer still of these visions are anything like healthy or supportive of the kinds of beings we are at our deepest levels, let alone the varying incarnate and discarnate non-human beings we share the world with. It's easy to take these visions as truth and build what amounts to a cage out of them, which we then live within. It can be weirdly comforting inside this cage, here where everything is exactly as we expect it to be, and we know our place perfectly due to its very limited size.

There are obvious cultural or society-wide issues here based on the generation of mediated group identification, thinking, and behavior. This is easy to see in the political realms in particular. But what happens on the internal, purely personal level?

One of the more popular beliefs we modern humans tend towards is that we think and decide everything for ourselves, always. The entire sub-structure of this mediation-based culture says this is otherwise. The power players prefer that most people are set on tracks like trains.<sup>8</sup> In the modern West, the individual is allowed to choose which specific set of tracks to ride on, unlike in the more religious and caste driven societies of other places

and times. But the visions seen from the train that rides those rails remain tightly controlled. Much of my work seeks to increase awareness of and to then break free of these tracks. Once free of the tracks, we can make whatever changes in direction and life-vision we deem appropriate for ourselves. This includes the ordering or hierarchy of what is possible or needed to live the kind of life we wish to live.

Another belief I hold is that reality is very fluid, non-linear, and far less hard-edged and clearly defined than is generally accepted. This belief does not serve those who prefer everyone to only choose from a very limited set of roads or tracks. A society with only ten choices for how to live is far easier to manage than one with three hundred. This control process only works because some parts of our psychology prefer these conditions as well, with every option clearly stated, defined, and rated. Given that, how do we become less set in our ways? And how do we know what we would rather do instead? How can we tell what is native or intrinsic to us and what is not-us, but is more like a pattern overlaid on top of us?

These questions are wound together like the roots of trees in a forest or neural nets. It's hard to answer one question and take action on it without also knowing and taking action on many others. This can result in paralysis by analysis, where we think and think but never move. Whatever we are doing and experiencing now, we know. It may suck, and may even be debilitating, but we know it. We understand it. There is a kind of comfort there, even in painful or abusive situations. Better the devil you know. The always scarier option is to step off of the tracks, to leave the safe path, and to step into the void or abyss of uncertain outcomes. Will it be better? Worse? The same? This uncertainty keeps us locked in the groove until we get to a place where we decide: anything is better than this. That decision is the edge of the void, and it usually only comes from not being able to remain functional within the structures in which we find ourselves. We remain inside the groove or cage until the sense of being trapped becomes so oppressive that we no longer care if different equals better. We just want and need something different, because to stay the same is to relinquish our souls.

It doesn't have to be this hard.

Magic can facilitate change on all levels. These levels can be social,



financial, spiritual, mental, material, abstract, or concrete. My focus here is on the structural elements. These are the things that make us who we are, make us do what we do, think what we think, and believe what we believe. They are the elements that can allow us the choice to comply with or deny outside influences that seek to constrain us, to force us into the false choice of the tracks. All the tracks are traps. The worlds and Field are not mass transit, designed to transport us from the low to the high points and get us there on time. That story is false, sold to us with free wifi and blockbuster movies to anesthetize us to the lack of meaning within it all. Low, high, success, failure, train, track. It's all control and constraint and only at very particular moments is any one piece of it going to serve us. Sometimes we might need to get onto a track of 'career' to shift us from where we are towards something closer to what we really want. But we'd best remain aware that the track isn't itself the limit of reality, that the points of choice are greater than any number of tracks can offer.

Why must we choose between family, business, art, love, fame, quiet, health, sickness, solitude, social life? Who laid those tracks, and why are they the only choices? Why are some attractive to us and some terrifying? Why do we think we have to be on a track at all? What about choosing to wander for a while, to travel on foot for a bit? We can choose to get off the train and run wild with those women on horseback who periodically come and rob the mail car. They seem like fun! Why do we so often think that the choice to change is permanent, rather than a step, to be followed by another step and then another? What if we desire to walk, or to stand still and just watch for a while?

None of these choices suit the algorithm-driven world. They don't suit the forces that want to sell you the train ticket, the hotel room, the fine dinners, and expensive accessories. They don't serve those that tell us 'if you have this house, this car, desire this kind of person, you are a success, you made it, you fit in, and now you can be happy'. This is also not to reject any of these things in and of themselves. They may be precisely what you do desire. That's totally fine. The point is not to become the penitent with a begging bowl, or the outlaw, unless that is what you truly want until you or your circumstances suggest something different would be better, more appropriate, or more interesting to who you are now. The point is freedom.

If we can move and shift ourselves free of these locked down and rigid

belief structures, we can return to something like a native or intrinsic state. This is a way of being that existed before the desires of others became our own. Before all of life was mediated and sold back to us. From this intrinsic state, we can begin to live a life that fully suits us, as we are today, right now, not what we came up with when we were sixteen and were told we had to decide who and what we would be when we are all grown up if we were offered a say in it at all. Making these shifts is to begin steering our fates, to become co-creators of our lives alongside the Weavers.<sup>9</sup>

Magic is an art of change. The change or changes it involves can be many and various, complex or simple – a change of state, from one thing to another, a change of meaning, a change of mind, identity, heart, soul, or spirit. Often it is the art of changing outcomes. Sometimes it seems certain that things in our lives are destined to play out in one particular way. But what if we desire another outcome, more options, more possibilities? Magic is both a tool-set and a worldview where this can become possible.

If we wish to change the outcomes we experience, to alter the trajectory of our lives, we are best served by changing it at the roots of the tree, at first causes rather than attempting to conjure different fruit (or ends) directly. We do this by addressing those causes which produced the effects already in play that we wish to modify. This allows us to shift or transform them into powerful drivers that lead to more suitable outcomes or states of being. By altering important points along the trajectory of our lives, we can achieve different end states.

Much of what we base our current experience on are memories of the past. The past is Urda's realm, the Weaver whose name means that which became, or to use more modern language, that which has come to pass. We recall what has happened before, interpret it as good, bad, or neutral, and we extrapolate from those memories to see where we are likely to end up next. These past experiences often dictate what we believe about ourselves and our situation, which helps to form what we think of as our self-identity. From a sorcerous perspective, our identity controls not only our current position, but our sense of what is possible, and so our future outcomes as well.

Events happen (or phenomena arise) in real-time, in the now or present moment. This is Verthandi's realm, the Weaver whose name means 'that

which is’, and is the place where we are always standing right now. We often send our minds and thoughts backwards into the past, into our memories, or into the future, projecting forward into Skuld’s realm, the Weaver whose name means ‘what should come to pass’. Memories, the present moment, and projection into the future – this is our experience of the tapestry that is the Weaving.

It will be helpful to remain conscious that our memories are of questionable accuracy; they are fluid and changing, and yet still help or harm. The fluid nature of memory could be more obvious than it often is to us, and that fluidity is an arena that may serve us to work or play in. By working with our memories, we can alter our perceptions of our self (identity), which shifts what is possible for us to achieve. For the magic worker, this is an often untapped vein, rich in ore.

Much of our ability to adapt to a changing world and our changing circumstances within it is based on the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves which together form our identity. If we tell stories of despair, of being trapped, unable to move, and unable to thrive, we tend to experience that thing or be that kind of person: stuck, unable, trapped. The same holds true for thinking we are unintelligent, always doing the wrong thing, or any of the other ‘born to lose’ self-images. This is independent of our actual situation, as these stories are not situation-dependent. They are more like a set of filters overlaid on our lives that color and control our sense of self and identity.

Skuld’s realm, what should come to pass, is often thought of as a fixed fate or fixed destiny. This is fatalism, the belief that all plays out as ordained. We are merely along for the ride until the moment that we get kicked off of it by some external power that designated every step of our existence. It should be clear that this kind of fatalism is decidedly anti-magical. That ‘should come to pass’ gives us some keys. We did or experienced things before and/or things were done to us that led to the present moment. What we do now determines ‘what should come to pass’. Past, present, future are points that define a trajectory, a particular line of fate. Magic is an art of changing trajectories, of weaving fate into a form that works for us – a form that works with us.

We should probably talk about magic itself a bit here.

There are a lot of definitions bandied about regarding magic. One of the more useful ones comes from Jason Miller when he speaks of magic influencing change rather than outright creating it. This works well in many cases, but is not as helpful as what I think most people are hoping for when they ask the question: what is magic? I believe what they are usually asking is: what is magic good for? How can magic help me in my actual life? I'd like to consider these questions via a rather winding path.

Several years ago, I read some texts from what I like to think of as 'old school' Buddhism, or Theravada. The Buddha teaches a concept called 'dependent origination'. Dependent origination is the concept that everything is causal, i.e., everything has a cause. Everything that arises has causes and conditions that led to its arising. Nothing happens in a vacuum. Nowadays we speak of this as cause and effect. If this exists, then that exists. If this ceases to exist, then that ceases to exist. Suffering begets suffering, that kind of thing.

These 'causes and conditions' influence all that follows, in an endless causal chain. Some mystical or religious schools describe enlightenment as the breaking of this chain. In this book, rather than seeking to break the chain, we look instead towards using its nature to benefit ourselves and those we care for. This approach is probably some sort of heresy, but so be it.

To look at a material example, if there is enough moisture in the sky to produce the right kind of cloud formations, and if certain other requirements are met (causes and conditions), you might well get some rain (effect or result). This is easy to see in action in many cases, and easy to forget within our personal lives.

Staying for just a moment more on the subject of dependent origination, the cultures where these concepts come from were or are largely caste-based and built on foundational concepts of reincarnation or rebirth. From them, we get some ideas that can be upsetting to Western minds. The primary one is the idea that our actions in previous lifetimes produce effects in our current incarnation. This concept can grind against our individualistic mentalities and produce an uncomfortable amount of friction. We can decide to believe in this cross-lifetime cause-and-effect matrix or not. In either case, we are not really dealing with morality (as talk of karma in the West often does) but with a kind of psychic or spiritual application of

physics. Something occurs, which causes something else to occur. If the right causes and conditions are in place, change can happen or, said more precisely, phenomena may arise.

This cause and effect, or causes and conditions concept is an incredibly useful way to look at magic. If you use these ideas as the base, magic then becomes an art of producing, modifying, or influencing causes and conditions to bring about or hinder the manifestation of desired or undesired effects or phenomena. Ritual magic, spell work, and enchantment then become the arts of producing or modifying causes and conditions in our favor.

In modern terms, we are doing something a bit like writing or changing code in software to change a pixel from blue to red or changing the formula in a spreadsheet to perform different actions on the numbers entered into its cells. However, that analogy falls apart rapidly. Where many people get hung up about magic and sorcery is in thinking that the results are as predictable as changing the color of pixels or a formula from addition to subtraction. The image is only useful as a gross explanation and collapses in the infinitely complex systems that are our lives manifesting within the greater life of the Field.

I have written before that in sorcery, metaphor is to a degree a map of the evolving real. What I mean by this is that in magic, metaphorical causes (ritual, spell work, and enchantment) produce real effects. We tell a story that both explains and/or creates conditions that require certain things to occur or to be in place, or which requires certain things to not occur or to not be in place. We add, subtract, and modify causes and conditions. The Field, if our work is done well, may then shift to produce the desired effect. Often this happens through chance encounters, synchronicities, and apparent coincidence. If we were materialist scientists, we would have to discount these effects due to the absence of a clear causal chain back to the 'supposed' causes. As magic workers, this is a non-issue, at least after you have had the experience of success often enough!

Many want to know why magic only works sometimes, and at other times does not. Magicians often talk about increases in probability not being the same as an inevitable outcome, which seems accurate to me. The presence of rain clouds is not in itself enough to bring rain. There are many parts or actions required to produce every effect. Sometimes, the lack of a single

component out of many could be what we are perceiving as an overall failure, as can a lack of perspective. Sometimes the results take odd forms and circuitous paths, and it's surprisingly easy to not notice the results we do get. Here in the high desert, there is often rain that falls but evaporates before it hits the ground. Did it rain, or not? I can see it, so I believe it did, but the lizards, plants, and the dry dirt itself may think I'm confused.

Most of the time it's not a problem that some spells work and some do not. In most cases, we aren't limited to one shot to hit the target like an action movie sniper with one bullet left in his rifle. We can change our angle of approach, we can try a different tack, or we can work on a single goal for years. Now, when we seek to use magic to reverse a terminal medical condition or provide emergency cash, that can sure feel more like the one shot we have taken is the only one we get – and sometimes it is. Magic does not free us from reality, nor does it free us from the vast chains of cause and effect that we are not in control of. These aspects outside of our control are truthfully many and probably most of them.

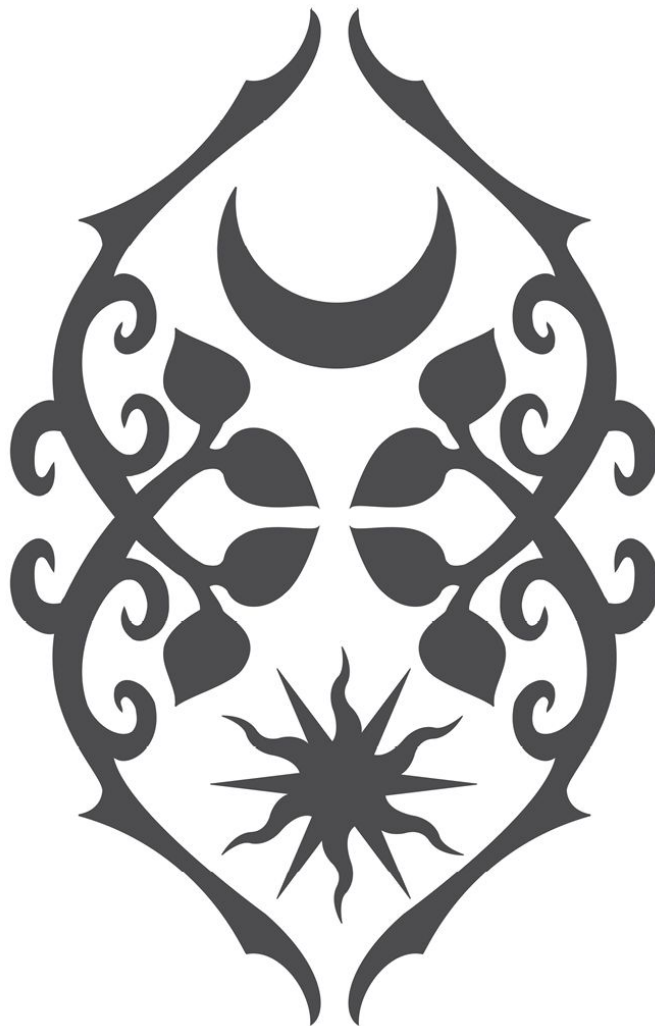
This concept of creating or modifying causes and conditions is at the root of the three primary practices covered in this book. I discovered its utility lies not in explaining how magic works, but as a guide to how I might choose to work magic.

There are two primary approaches to creating change suggested here. The first is looking for where the crisis or pressure points are in whatever it is we seek to change. At what point could things have gone another way? If life was one of those movies where reality splits, where one possibility is you get off the train and meet the love of your life, another is that you stay on the train and die in an accident, we would see the crisis point clearly. As in such a film, what is the point or moment in time where things could have shifted for you? At what point could you have been led to the outcome you seek rather than the one you are now living within? Viewed from another angle: what would you have had to do in the past to set the stage for where you'd prefer to be now or tomorrow? These are things we can enchant for. By the work of the Black Book and the Corridor, we can work magically to make it 'as if' some of those things did occur, or that other events or experiences either did not, or that they played out in some other fashion, or we reacted to them differently. Sometimes this is a subtle change,

sometimes not. What if you hadn't had that last drink, or had not taken that one job? What if you had spoken to that boy at the party rather than those two girls? How much of your life could or would differ from how it is now?

Another approach is to look at what event, situation, skill, or personality trait you would have had to experience or to have developed in the past for the present or future to play out differently. We can then choose to 'fill in the gaps' and by doing so modify the causes and conditions to shift the result. Working both of these approaches together seems to work the best.

If we were not magical practitioners, these would be simple mind games. But for the sorceress, these imaginal games, these metaphorical operations have real-world results. They change us, and they change the worlds we inhabit.



*TWO WORLDS & IN-BETWEEN*

Some of the folks I know who have done a lot of this kind of work have concluded that we seem to live in a version of a multiple life-stream movie, where all options are always in play, but our consciousness follows only one track out of infinite tracks, and so our life seems linear and set: the past is done, now is now, and we proceed forward along predictable lines. Until we make the radical move of changing tracks. This is as good of a working model as any.

My preferred story is that the Weavers weave in all directions at once and that time and our lives within the weaving are multi-dimensional ripples in a vast sea of possibilities. We can choose to not be so attached to the past, to our models of reality, to our place in the world. We can even be less attached to the concept of ‘the world’ or reality as a singular, set thing. What if it were an ever-shifting collection of things, gathered together for a time? Is this not what is actually happening? It seems so to me.

Any theory or model can provide a measure of comfort, but they also carry the risk of becoming another box, another track, another rut we must at some point strive to re-vision and climb out of. I prefer to try (and often fail) to accept that this reality of being a component of the Field is like being a fish, a whole species of fish, the sea it swims in, the light that illuminates the water, and all the swirling data that comes to it/us via all of our senses known and unknown. We are the dreamer, we are the dream, and we are the idea of the Dreaming, dreaming itself into being. It’s perfectly all right to not have an answer as to why things work the way they do. It may even be beneficial to maintain that sense of uncertainty as it can help us to remain playful and open-minded, and allow us to see what we can do rather than to decide what cannot be. Such a changeable and ever-evolving view can help us to see the possibilities, not the limitations. It is from such a vantage point that we may begin to weave our fates.

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Z The Field is my term for the totality of manifest and un-manifest reality. It is everything that exists currently as well as all that exists in potential. The Field is the field of operation that magic effects and that all phenomena arise within. My experience is that the Field is itself responsive to magic and in some fashion conscious, and is best considered to be an intelligent ecosystem.



8 The only conspiracy I fully believe in is the most basic: greed and power always seek to maintain their positions or improve them at almost any cost (to others, of course).

9 The Weavers are the patrons of this work, and exist in many forms. The best known are all trios: the Parcae, Moirai, Norns, or Fates. I work with the Norns as the mythology around them suits me best.

# THE ROOTS OF THE TREE

We are told we live in a highly constrained universe, with all sorts of supposedly natural laws that limit our options to narrow paths. This is only true in certain contexts and is in many ways a cultural construct. We would do well to keep this in mind as we proceed.

Most of what we are, including how we think of ourselves (our identity), we have developed in response to what I called in the last chapter ‘causes and conditions’, where that which has happened before directs the course of what follows. This is the basic chain of causality. We can envision magic and sorcery as tools to shift existing causes and conditions into different forms, thus leading to different outcomes, destinies, or fates. Where people get jammed up is that this process is non-linear, and the results often come from unexpected angles. The view of reality as a multi-dimensional weaving-in-action helps us to imagine it as the highly complex and tangled tapestry it is rather than a long straight track.

For this work, I’ll ask that you play within what may at first seem like somewhat irrational processes in order to redefine what is possible for a person like yourself. To then shift the kind of person you are to a form more to your liking. We do this by layering in new stories-of-self that reflect what we wish to become or experience while at the same time modifying our memory-experience of past events to allow for different outcomes. The process is simple, and can mainly be mucked up by trying to overexert control on largely meaningless specifics or deciding that you are happier as a more normal or rational person. I would like to suggest that both of these tracks are unhelpful if you are interested in producing radical change.

Reality is much stranger than the so-called realists<sup>10</sup> would have you believe. The realists are often locked into a simple, mechanistic, and linear worldview that works like a simple machine. I find a fluid, ever-changing organic model to be much more useful from a magical perspective. We are fluid, ever-changing organic beings, so why should the world we evolved in be other than this as well? It certainly doesn’t function much at all like a simple machine in my experience.

We can find some useful ideas for this work by considering the past of

our species. Humans did not begin as fully settled beings, at least not in the sense that we now call civilized. To be civilized is to be citified, which is a very recent state of affairs for our kind of beings.

For most of our hundred thousand or so years as ‘pretty much recognizably human’, we were highly mobile hunter-gatherers.<sup>11</sup> Our tribes or families wandered as needed for protection, availability of food and water, or as required by climate, weather, and small scale warfare. In our earliest state, we had few belongings, and most of our food was not suitable for long term storage. These ways of being made the formation of permanent settlements both unnecessary and illogical. We moved when called or driven to and perhaps returned when that made sense in the cycle of our lives or the lives of our tribe or family.

What this all has to do with this book is that magic and sorcery have long been inexorably linked (in my mind at least) to the realization of personal freedom, responsibility, and integration with the larger Field. The Field is the field of play that the magical arts influence; it extends far beyond what we are capable of knowing or proving via scientific means. Magical practice is an attempt to interface with the Field and its inhabitants more or less directly – to touch the fabric that is life and that which is not-life, that which is, which was, and that which may be, and that which exists only as potential, the dreams of dreams as yet undreamt.

Part of the nature of civilization is the creating of permanent settlements, the ‘civitas’, meaning city or city-state. To be civilized, then, is to be willing and able to abide by the rules and behaviors deemed acceptable by the city or state. You know what the rules are, you accept (even if uneasily) your place within that structure, and you act accordingly. If we reject too many parts of this civil worldview, we fall from a civilized state into the camp of the savages, barbarians, pagans, and all-around uncouth hicks who don’t know how (or are unwilling) to act properly.<sup>12</sup>

This move to a civil state, which tends to end up as varieties and shapes of feudalism done up in different dress, is not in itself always a bad thing. Large scale agriculture allowed for the flowering of the city-states, which fed into major movements in art, religion, and philosophy. Given that it also brought standing armies and large-scale war and slavery, I question how ‘civil’ we really are as a species. Are we as individuals able to remain

contained within this structure and still be truly healthy on all levels?

One view of magic that I hold is that magical practice can be a kind of rewilding. Rewilding, in more common usage, is both a form of deep ecology and a related form of anarchism. Magical rewilding as I think of it takes ideas from both but is distinct from either.

The deep ecology form of rewilding suggests that we should try to allow or return the earth itself to a more natural, less civilized state by protecting and restoring natural planetary functions, ecosystems, and reintroducing large predators. The anarcho-primitivist form calls for a return to a more wild or native state, breaking free from the domestication (both human and otherwise) of the modern citified and mass-agriculture-supported world.

Between these views, and informed by them, we might try to imagine what form a magical or sorcerous rewilding might take. This could be an actual shift to more primitive or earlier forms of magical practice, such as animism, or an attempt to at least see where we have been overly influenced and constrained by the rules of the city-state, its philosophies, and religions. Here, the city-state is the stand-in for essentially the whole of the civilized world. What we need, then, to rewild our magical selves, are ways to shed layers of contagion, allowing a clearer interface with other, less controlled and constrained ways of being. The Black Book, Corridor, and Fever Stone can all help us in both shedding contagion and deepening our experience of the interface.

An interface is a point or location where things meet and interact. It is either there or it's not. A person may be more or less aware of its existence, and may well experience it wildly differently than another, but the interface remains. Magic is born of all that rises and falls, all that is created, consumed, excreted and all that has not yet arisen. It can be an interface between the collection of parts that we name 'ourselves', the Field, the Others, and the Allies.<sup>13</sup>

I believe a large part of what many of us find unsatisfying about our modern lives is the inability to fully sense this interface between our selves, the Field, and all its other inhabitants.

While we have moved into the world of the city-state, and have produced or discovered gods that suit this way of life, the way of life itself comes with its own issues. One of these is that the Field and the Others are not

themselves civilized, whatever else they may be.

One function of our modern human culture is to provide neat boxes for our experiences, ideas, thoughts, and other creations to dwell in. This allows them to be easily sorted, judged, controlled and understood within the limitations decided on by the culture itself. Pragmatically this ‘deciding’ is both a bottom-up and top-down process. It rises from the ground up, from the masses of the people, and is also handed down by the rulers, leaders, and the content or meaning creators simultaneously. Unfortunately, this does not seem to be a naturally intelligent or wise process. In its current Western form, it also seeks to deny or radically constrain much of our potential experience of the Field, to limit or deny the experience of the interface and the Others. From a sorcerous perspective, it’s a nasty little box wrapped with razor wire and filled with toxic candy-like substances designed to enforce control.<sup>14</sup>

What can you do if you come to realize that your experience-set, mind, internal language, and sense of possibility have all been colonized by ideas and images created by people (and the social structures they have built) who don’t have your back? Who don’t have your best interests at heart, and will actively try to suppress you from rewilding your mind, magic, and life? Magic, of course.

How do we best approach creating the changes we seek? By bringing our magic to bear on the roots of the tree. We do so to see if we can influence the health of that tree and the nature of its fruit. I am that tree, as are you, of course. We bring our magic to the soil in which the tree-of-our-selves grows, and the deep waters which feed it. In doing so we seek to change the nature of the influences that lead us to feel that only some things are possible for a person like us. This, in turn, changes us on a systemic level, allowing for (and often requiring) radical shifts in both our nature and circumstance.<sup>15</sup>

The roots of the tree are the shaping influences that to a great extent control how and what we perceive both internally and externally. They are shaping influences because they control how we see ourselves, what we feel is possible, what we feel is our ‘lot in life’, who we like or dislike, what pressures we tend to capitulate to, and even who (depending on our job or life situation) we choose to let live or die. They influence our beliefs on all

levels: is meat evil? Should we always be polite? Am I allowed to refuse to do something I don't believe in? Is death a hurtful thing? Is it always wrong to kill and is it always best to prolong life? Am I worth anything at all? Am I worthy of love? Life? Who and what do I love? Are outside forces influencing me?

We have formed all of our perceptions from within the cultures, traditions, societies, families, and other affinity groups we exist in or grew up in. In many cases (meaning the non-abusive ones) there was no malicious intent. We were raised within the religion of our parents, and within the framework of their beliefs about various kinds of people, things, and activities. As we grew and became self-aware, we either accepted or rejected these beliefs for ourselves. However, there are layers and layers of subtle underpinnings beneath all of these beliefs which often go unnoticed, and so remain unquestioned. Many of these are the underlying beliefs of the very culture or society we are born into. Because of the depth at which these influences lie below the surface of our consciousness, we are often operating from a base we don't fully understand and can easily remain unaware of. Some may question the underlying structures or roots of our deepest beliefs, but they are few. Some of these few become magicians, witches, sorcerers. Magic users. These magic-users may then realize that not only are they shaped by these influences, they can also decide to shape them in turn.<sup>16</sup>

This process of shaping can be both glacially slow and lightning-fast. It tends to be slow when we seek to change the fruit of our tree (which is us and our life) fruit by fruit, outcome by outcome. It shifts much more rapidly if we can make the changes branch by branch, and even faster if we change the nature of the nutrients that feed us and the supporting roots that allow us to exist in the first place. In these practices, we work with our roots, the deepest layers of our tree-selves. We seek to change the fruit by changing the tree itself.<sup>17</sup>

The roots are many, but some are larger and have a disproportionate influence on our outcomes.

Family or the lack of family are of course major influences. Were we raised with the belief that we were precious, loved, supported, strong, capable, successful? These nurturing influences will shape us as we grow in

fairly specific ways. If told we were useless, unlovable, terrible, worthless, stupid, bound to fail, these baleful influences will also shape us. Most of us receive a variety of mixed messages, from one parent or the other, and sometimes just across the board. All will have their effects.

Culture, religion, social class, and media all feed these roots-of-us like the water and nutrients (or toxins) within the soil. Here mixed messaging reigns supreme, as often religion and a type of country-wide identity clashes with social status, racism, ableism, gender roles, xenophobia, sexism, and many others. But wait, there's more! On top of all this are the mass media portrayals of 'people like us' and the constant influx of advertising and its unrealistic suggestions of what a good life should look like for us.

Genetics can play a major role as well, in that we may be predisposed to (or born with) conditions and diseases that will shape what is possible for us. We may not receive much if any assistance for these issues from the society we are in, either. What is good for the health of the multi-billion-dollar corporation is not always in alignment with what is good for the health of the kid on the street, let alone good for the health of the planetary ecosystem.

Most of us know that all of these things influence us. Knowing this, we can feel invincible, like we are too smart to let any of it have its way with us. It's not the 1940's, we know what the creep on the bus is after. Unfortunately, most of us are still affected by some or all of it anyway.



*THE WELL & THE TREE*

We can change the conditions in which the tree-that-is-us grows by being aware of what we allow into our sphere. This includes everything from media sources to food quality to who we associate with, and we can work to stay away from and unaffected by the obvious abusers. However, until we accept that the groundwater we live on has been poisoned, we will still suffer its ill effects. We can mitigate a lot of this by the conscious application of our native intelligence, one flowering of which is magic.

How do these things affect us in practice?

Those who have read *Six Ways* may recall that I speak of magic and sorcery as being ‘psychic arts’ in the old usage of psychic as ‘pertaining to



body, mind, and soul'. My approach to the work here has a conceptual relationship to Thomas Hanna's Somatics, as I have come to understand it.<sup>18</sup> Somatics is a way of working with the body as it is perceived by its owner, and my use of Somatics was originally to correct residual pain and dysfunction from physical injuries. What I have come to understand from this experience follows:

We get hurt. Or scared. Or scared that we will be hurt.

This triggers a response in the body that Hannah calls the 'red light reflex'. This reflex triggers us to fold ourselves over forward and curl up to protect our soft bellies and internal organs from damage. If you imagine trying to protect yourself from getting kicked in the gut, you'll have a good sense of the red light reflex. It's a survival instinct, and a smart one when dealing with threats of physical injury.

Once the threat of immediate injury has passed, we shift back into our more normal, open, and relaxed posture, which Hannah refers to as the 'green light reflex'. Usually.

That word 'usually' is where the problem lies.

What sometimes happens instead is that we hold some of this 'red-light' tension in our body for a while – sometimes a very long while. This happens when the body, mind, and/or spirit (psyche) doesn't understand the threat has passed, so it stays in the reflexive, self-protective posture of 'I am hurting' or 'I am being threatened'. We can remain in that state long past the point when the threat was occurring and required a defensive response. Remaining stuck in the red light reflex often leads to pain and physical dysfunction. Hannah developed a way of teaching the body that the threat has passed to allow the natural shift from the 'red-light' to 'green-light' state to occur. It allows the body to be open, relaxed, and able to engage with life effectively and without undue pain or dysfunction.

While looking at studies about injuries and pain, I came across some related information concerning how actual structural damage was not a good indicator of experienced pain. For example, some doctors had patients with terrible back pain but no orthopedic damage, while some had so much damage the doctors were amazed they could move at all, and yet they had no pain. As a magician, this fascinated me. Why does some pain 'stick' to some people? Why doesn't it bother others at all? Is this only true of

physical pain and physical damage?

I made up a little story to explain my thoughts on this all as follows:

Once you are conceived, you begin to ride around as an adjunct part of your mother. In a pretty powerful sense, what happens to your mother is also happening to you. This, along with the DNA from your parents, are your earliest shaping influences. Let me be clear when we talk about shaping influences: they don't define you, they are influences. They have an effect on who you turn into and how that works out for you and can be best thought of as guidelines. During your life, you may drift way outside of those lines, but they are root causes and conditions and as such, they will have an effect on you to a greater or lesser degree.

After you leave your mother's womb, you are affected by all sorts of things without the mediation of your momma's body. If all your parts function optimally, you start hearing more, seeing more, tasting, smelling, and touching, and being touched more. You get to be awash in the physical and psychic flow, for better or worse. The better stuff, be that the loving touch, caring speech, and other friendly and supportive inputs all tend to lead to a green light state: open, relaxed, expansive, happy. The not so good stuff, from neglect to abuse, has the opposite effect of a red light state: more closed, tense, and fearful. Some of these things will just pass, but some will stick, like the pain that stays around after you injure your body simply because the body won't or can't release the experience of the event. Thus it is with the psyche, the spirit or soul complex.

This pain response to threats real or imagined can produce a red light reflex on a psychic and emotional level. We close off avenues of sensory input to avoid expected trauma and interpret some things as threats that are not. These blockages and misinterpretations deeply affect who we are, our sense of identity, and thus our sense of what is possible, probable, or inevitable for us in our lives.

As much as some folks hate the term, we really are special snowflakes. While structurally following a basic pattern, we diverge greatly in how this pattern develops and is expressed over time. Some folks get their ass handed to them (on a physical or psychic level) daily for decades and it makes them super confident raging beasts of beauty while some get it handed to them once and it breaks them. Most of us are somewhere in-between those two points of the spectrum. What one person will need to do

to mitigate the effects of all these influences will be very different from another. Some will find the work described in the coming chapters the work of six months, some a few years.

The fruits of this tree-of-us are all the outcomes we experience. They are the outputs we produce by the life we live. They take the forms of children, art, homes, careers, and the words of anger or love we speak. They are the laughter or tears we share with those we are close to. They are all of the impacts we have on the world and those around us. We can use magic to influence how each of these things grows, how helpful or harmful they are, and all the colors and flavors they express.

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10 For our purposes here, we can define ‘realism’ as the belief that reality needs defending.

11 I have a pretty open ended view of what ‘human’ means, so I think this is really a much, much longer span.

12 For those not familiar with the word, in the US, ‘hick’ is a pejorative for a person from the country or a rural area who is probably considered to be unintelligent and uneducated.

13 When I speak of the Others I am talking of the totality of spirits, entities, or beings we might think of as discarnate (having no perceivable body), while the Allies are the subset of the Others who work to aid and guard us or otherwise ‘have our backs’.

14 In case you need it straight-up: I am not a fan.

15 Systemic means something that is embedded in and spread throughout an entire organism or body.

16 Obviously many who do not consider themselves magicians also question these structures. As this is a book of magic, my focus remains with the magic workers.

17 This tree-of-us view brings to mind Odin seeking the runes, when he says of hanging on the Tree: ‘myself an offering to myself’. I’ve long thought Odin is speaking of an understanding that he is not separate from the World Tree, that they are aspects of the same reality, the same being. We are not separate from the Field, we are phenomena that arise within it. Work

performed to free and nurture ourselves also serves the Field and the Others  
18 Thomas Hanna, *Somatics*. I must add that this is the understanding of an end-user, not a serious student or practitioner, so this may be a crap explanation. It will still serve the purpose that it is meant to here.

# THE SOUL/SPIRIT COMPLEX

We have three (or so) related structures or complexes that when combined we tend to think of as ‘us’. It is important to remember that we’re being metaphorical here rather than scientific.

The body is the horse, the meat-suit, the vehicle.

The mind is a rider.

The soul/spirit complex is *another* rider.

Let me clarify that bit about two riders. In my experience, the mind and the soul/spirit complex are not the same things, but they are heavily entwined. The combination of these three aspects comes together like a Venn diagram, with the intersection being the sense of self or identity.<sup>19</sup>

Here we have a map similar to the three souls model used in some forms of witchcraft. A mental-soul, a body-soul, and what I think of as a spark-soul which I view as a complex, all of which together are ‘us’.

This model is explanatory rather than objectively true. We can use it to understand where to apply or relieve pressure to produce change or to troubleshoot problems and difficulties we are having.

This chapter will look at some of the interrelations among these three elements in an effort to mitigate some potential problems down the line.

The body houses all the other elements that make up the being you are for as long as you are alive. Some aspects of the soul complex (along with the mind) appear to leave the body during different stages of the death process. They all seem to depart when cardiac and respiratory functions have ceased. Until that time, the things that happen to or are witnessed by the mind and soul/spirit complex are experienced through the body.

Most of us are now largely sedentary, meaning ‘not moving or relatively still’. This matters more than we might want it to, as our bodies respond to what we do with them in highly specific ways. If you move little and sit a lot at the office, in the car, and at home, your body changes in response. Very few of these changes are positive.

Sedentary, we lose bone density, motor control (the ability to move how we intend to), physical strength, and agility. We also lose the sense of connection to the physical and natural worlds we physically inhabit, trading

the immediate knowledge of our place in the ecosystem and all its beauty and dangers for canned stories of the lives of others.

Returning to our evolutionary past as the reference, we are wired to simply move far more than most of us do now. Lacking this movement stimulus, and the various changes to our biochemistry it produces, we adapt in ways that are often detrimental.<sup>20</sup>

Our ancestors walked, often carrying heavy loads, for great distances on a daily basis. We bent over, squatted, and lifted all sorts of things and our bodies (if we are able) would prefer that we still do so now. Movement at these levels regulates and normalizes many functions of the body, including the chemicals that change how our minds work and how we feel within the moment. The reverse of this story is also true; when not walking, hunting, scavenging, and the like, we were often much quieter. No TV or smartphones pulling at our attention – the stories our minds told were those of our immediate environment, our physical reality, and those we shared it with. Our neurochemistry is still designed for this kind of life. We are woefully unprepared for both the sedentism and the stimulation overload of the modern civilized world.

The body is often the gateway to changing how the mind processes what it experiences and the stories it tells. What this means and why it matters is that the body ‘colors’ all we experience. If we fail to remain aware of this, we are missing out on some critical information. I sometimes think of this as if we didn’t know we were in a space with unusually colored lighting and yet we were judging people on their fashion sense. Only later do we find out we were not seeing what they were wearing with any clarity. Our preconceived notions and personal predilections color our perceptions in similar ways about most of the things we experience.

The mind is a superb storyteller. It likes to tell all kinds of stories. True stories, false stories, stories about what it sees and what it thinks it sees, even if it sees nothing. Stories pretty much make the mind, unless we develop some skills to quiet this function.

One thing about the mind, however, is that it doesn’t understand itself very well. It thinks many things are under its control that are not, like how much it likes that girl we just saw at the cafe. We all know on some level that is mostly the body, the biochemistry, but the mind needs to feel like it’s

in control.<sup>21</sup> The mind then makes up the story that it decided it liked her, creating a comforting rationale to explain this. Stories inside of stories, world without end.

The mind loves telling stories. When, for example, we first try to meditate and quiet the mind, we get endless chatter about anything and everything. The mind doesn't want to be quiet. It wants to talk about what it's thinking, and about what it's seeing, feeling, tasting, smelling, imagining, remembering, and fantasizing. All of this is filtered through the vehicle of the body and its sensory apparatus, and filtered through the soul/spirit complex.

An example is worth tossing out at this point. Do you know how you (well, most of you) have two eyes on the front of your head? Did you know that there are optic nerve heads in each eye that produce blind spots? This creates two black spots in your vision that you should experience, but you probably don't. When both eyes are open, your brain fills in the gaps with information from the other eye. With only one eye open, it just makes up what it thinks it should see. It's creating a kind of fiction to fill in the literal blind spots. We may think we can't visualize, but unless you are walking around conscious of those blind spots, you can. Visualizing is just filling in blank spots with a sensory-story.<sup>22</sup>

From a practical standpoint, most people see what they expect to see and feel what they expect to feel. The mind just ignores any conflicting information until forced to face it. Much of the work of the illusionist, con man, and the spy relies on this part of our nature. Part of our work as magical folks is to disrupt this 'fill in the blanks' operation, so we can perceive more accurately than the mind prefers to. This is a learned skill, which once developed can allow us to understand what is actually happening rather than taking the short cut of filling in the gaps with whatever information we usually use in similar situations.

The messed-up part of this is how the story that makes the mind feel comfortably important can be outright horrible when one is trying to live inside or under the influence of it. Being back-stabbed, betrayed, and martyred seem to be popular stories, along with being unlovable, stupid, hated, trapped, broken, unworthy, damaged goods, and generally mangled. It doesn't matter too much if any of this is true on any real level. If the story

reads ‘I am the center of this wreckage, and all unpleasant things are drawn to me by the overwhelming gravity of how much I suck’, the mind is satisfied. Its importance is proven by the degree to which its entire existence is ruinous, difficult, and painful.

The opposite is, of course, true as well. The mind is happy if it can tell itself it is the four-way love child of Johnny Depp, Beyoncé, The Rock, and Milla Jovovich and that not only has it never done anything wrong, it is structurally incapable of doing so. Therefore it’s obvious that everyone with any kind of brain should love it. If they don’t, there is something very wrong with them, and they probably need some kind of professional intervention or maybe to be put down like a horse with a broken leg. In this scenario, the mind is once more generally satisfied, because it is again the center of the universe.

What all of this means is that we should spend the effort (if we haven’t already) to get clear about what is and isn’t our actual state – what I like to think of as our native state before our minds became colonized by the stories, ideas, ideals, limitations, and expectations of others. This is part one of rewilding our minds. The soul/spirit complex is already there, it doesn’t buy much or any of this nonsense, and is waiting for the rest of us to catch up.

Much of this is the work of introspection, meditation, heavy journaling, therapy, and the like. You know, the boring stuff. There are some suggestions for this work in my book *Six Ways*, but there are many methods and approaches that will work. It’s far more important that you find something you will do and stick with rather than worry about if it’s the ‘optimal’ approach.<sup>23</sup> The work in the Black Book and the Corridor will be of great assistance here as well.

The soul/spirit complex is the animating spark, the intrinsic part of who we are, although the mind likes to think otherwise.

Much of what we think of as ‘extra sensory perception’ is, I believe, the soul/spirit complex adding depth to the sensory apparatus of the body. Much of what we do in magic comes about by influencing the soul/spirit complex, which is better able to communicate and interact effectively with the Field, Others, and Allies than our often-delusional minds are.

I conceive of the kind of being it seems I must be by considering myself



as phenomena that have arisen and become a human-animal – an emanation of the Field. I can understand how to best work with my soul/spirit complex by looking at my successful interactions with the Others. In the Re/Claiming rite in *Six Ways*, the last step is to bless ourselves as ‘avatars of the ineffable’, which can be translated as ‘the embodiment or personification of that which is beyond expression in words’. We embodied human spirit beings are such things, exactly. Any attempt to classify, to specify, to nail us down and box us up is a foolish game, doomed to fail. It is this way for all beings, embodied or otherwise. Emanations from the Field, we are ourselves Others.

The intersection of the body, mind, and soul/spirit complex is our identity. Awash in the flood of story as we are now, the mind has risen to ascendancy in power. At the same time, it’s constantly undermined and misdirected, overwhelmed by the story-state of our civilized realm. To free our sense of self, we need to re-train the mind to understand which of what it perceives as real, relevant, and true.

Find a way, if you are able, to both move the body and to allow it real quiet, real stillness. Walking outside, yoga, weight training, running, cycling, paddling, swimming, calisthenics, martial arts, dance, and hiking are all possible pathways of movement to explore. Different methods will suit different people at different times. I’d suggest at least some of this (and would prefer most of it!) happened in a non-competitive fashion, where you can be relaxed within the process of moving yourself through space.

Find a way that suits you to be truly quiet. Meditation, walking, being in nature, and just generally witnessing both mind and environment are the goals here. Sitting on a park bench, on the beach, or your balcony, and just watching the formations of both thought and external phenomena are beautiful expressions of this. Leave all the tools of mediated connection aside for an hour or day, and enjoy the silence or noise that is your experience of being you, where you are.

Only by allowing all the collection of parts that we are made of the space for breath, movement, rest, speech, and silence can we know and express our native, intrinsic state.

What’s done is done. Gone. Dust. Only a memory. This is so obvious, and yet so clearly not true. The events of the past are done, but the scars remain.

As Moorcock & Bloom wrote, it can sometimes seem as if ‘wounds are all I’m made of’.<sup>24</sup>

This belief in the solid, unchangeable nature of the past is false, possibly a deception or delusion, and is certainly not helpful to the sorceress!<sup>25</sup>

These scars and memories apply pressure on the now, to our sense of options and the possibilities available to us. We refer back to the strongest of them, which are often the most traumatic, and use these memories as explanations and justifications for why our lives and our world are as they are.

However, memory and perception are both notoriously inaccurate. We pretend we know the motivations and intentions of people around us all the time. We define them, ourselves, and our relationships by this invented story. ‘She looked past me like I wasn’t even there’, and we tell a story about it. She hates us now, she doesn’t care if we live or die. What do we think and feel about her, considering these ‘facts’? How do we feel about ourselves in the face of this information? Does it change our relationship with her? Our sense of self-worth? Do we decide to never speak to her again? Maybe we decide to hex her. What if, well, she really didn’t see us as she was processing terrible news she’d just received? Perhaps she was having a panic attack about what to do with her struggling marriage or child? We made up a story (remembering that this is what the mind likes to do) and in this case, it may have zero truth or relationship to any actual reality. This is base-level projection, and it’s a constant companion for nearly all of us.

As I write this text, I am seeking to be as objective as is feasible about subjective experience.<sup>26</sup> This is the basis of the type of experiential learning that is necessary for the magical arts. We experience something, some event, the results of some action. Then we look at what happened and our interpretation of it. We have to keep in mind that our interpretation is context- and point-of-view-dependent. This is easy to understand if we think of looking straight at a box from such a distance that a single-face is the only part of the box we can see. The other five faces or sides could provide a very different picture of that box. That one face may look like something we are attracted to or repelled by, but the remaining faces that we do not see could tell another story. The more certain we are that what we

see is objectively real, true, and factually correct, the more likely we are to be drastically off base, in my experience.

A nice way to view this issue of objective and subjective human experience is to imagine that all our senses were reduced only to vision, like a camera. We can have a large variety of lenses, all of which control what kind of information we receive. A macro lens shows the tiniest things clearly, like grains of sand on the side of a mountain, as if they were huge and close to us. A wide-angle lens lets us see a whole mountain, all at once. A fish-eye lens distorts the whole view: mountain, plains, and sky. Then we can add filters that highlight some parts of the color spectrum while diminishing others. Which of these views of the mountain are objectively true? Does the answer require knowing which lens or filters we are using? Are all of them true, or maybe none of them?

None of this is to say that we can't know anything. Only that we are unlikely to know most things completely, at least all at once. The camera cannot capture what it cannot see, be that due to darkness, obstructions, or the lack of sensory ability. It doesn't show the spirits of the mountain, or it may only show some of them. If there are dozens or hundreds of these spirits there but we only sense one, is our view true? Are the stones and roots deep inside the mountain not the mountain even when we cannot see them? We know what we experience, but we have to be clear that what we know of it is fragmentary. This is also true as it plays out in memory. Forgetting this means we are likely to misread and misunderstand a great deal.

Now let's carry all of that misreading and misunderstanding back to events of our childhood, youth, young adulthood, all of our days up to this moment: small betrayals (that perhaps never were betrayals at all); misreading a teacher suffering from chronic pain or mental illness as always being angry at us; the places where we screwed up (but maybe we didn't? Maybe there were other causative factors?); perhaps the shitty things we did that we carry with us to this day as a form of self-abuse; the abuses we suffered from others which we turn upon ourselves, as we must have given the abuser a reason for these actions, we must have deserved it all somehow.

Every example here, based in reality or imagined, we remember through a certain lens or filter. Every example becomes loaded with meaning

according to that view. Those meanings tend to persist, and it is easy to become metaphorically and psychically infected by them as a form of contagion.<sup>27</sup> When this happens, our self-definition and even our ability to understand our own deepest drives and desires can become twisted in ways we never think to question. We remember, in both mind and body, and in some ways, this remembering constrains the shape and expression of not only our mind but also our soul/spirit complex.

This vast sea of past influences and long-held, deep-seated views are constant companions for all of us, until some kind of work to clear them and find our native state is performed. From the more mystical side of things, we may seek a kind of equilibrium and the ability to see things as they ‘really’ are. From a practical magic sense, we also seek to use the mechanisms at play to bring about the changes we desire. These are not mutually exclusive paths, but our focus here will be on the latter. In ways which may seem strange at first, this is also often a quick path to the former.

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19 I am not at all set on any one spirit or soul model here. From my limited experience with folks as they are dying, it seems like there is clearly a part of the self that is linked to the brain, and another to the breath. I have no idea if there are more or less, or if that number is variable.

20 I am very aware that many people are physically limited in both the ways and how much they can move. This is not about shaming anyone or ableism. We all do what we are able to do, as it’s both absurd and unhelpful to try to force ourselves into a mold which we cannot fit. Our focus is always on what we can do, and acceptance of what we cannot. The Serenity Prayer is fairly golden as a guide in magic, with or without the first word as qualifier.

21 Thankfully this becomes a little less true after the prime breeding years when the rampaging hormones settle down a bit!

22 As I will repeat throughout this text, it’s not actually necessary that you are currently able to visualize. What we need is a way to process what we can think of as ‘internally generated sensory data’. Some smell, some hear, some see. These are the various forms of ‘claires’, like clairvoyance, clairaudience and the like. If we don’t have a developed claire, there are

workarounds that I will discuss where relevant. I'm pretty clair-deficient, so if I can make it work, you probably can as well.

23 This is so commonly true that it deserves a footnote to highlight it. If the perfect is the enemy of the good, for anyone other than the die-hard specialist the search for 'optimal' is most often the enemy of anything happening at all.

24 Blue Öyster Cult, *Veteran of the Psychic Wars*

25 I'm not suggesting that we can change the actual events of the past, but instead their effects on us now and in the future. Probably.

26 The aspect of my work I receive the most unhappy feedback about is my acceptance of subjectivity. Some people really, really want the capital T objective truth, no matter the cost. Unfortunately, the cost is usually any kind of accuracy, so I'll keep on sharing my experiences with the understanding that they are neither universally nor objectively 'true'.

27 Contagion in magic is the idea that two things which were once in contact with each other remain in contact on a psychic or spirit level until something breaks that connection.

# LIMINAL GNOSIS

Liminal Gnosis is a concept originally referring to the altered state that exists in the spaces between waking and sleeping, the times that are the dawn and dusk equivalents in the sleep cycle.<sup>28</sup> As more commonly used now, it is no longer specific to those points, however. What we are speaking of here is a similar state, where we are conscious, but not wide-awake, while being deeply relaxed and drifting a bit. The image I use for this state is that if sleep is the sea and waking is the land, the liminal gnosis occurs in the shallows where those two states meet. These are also the zones of controlled daydreaming and light to immersive trance.

Liminal is a word meaning threshold. When we enter a daydream state, we shift our perceptions to a space between the normal or ‘ordinary’ reality and the ‘non-ordinary’ reality. This is a fluid space, from the lightest of reveries to full-blown visionary states, but the threshold or border-like nature of the state means we remain in the driver’s seat of the experience, sort of like having a lucid dream when we are not quite asleep yet.

It’s helpful to do some work to ‘tune in’ to this borderland space, as it’s an important skill in many magical practices. This is also why I am not of the ‘you just need to focus harder on what you desire’ camp of magic at all. I suggest focusing more softly instead, maybe looking at things, be they concepts, tools, entities, or spells, from your peripheral vision, with a soft gaze. In that peripheral vision, we often see the blurring of edges, of concepts, of ‘truths’. That blur is a sign of the borderland, the liminal gnosis.

I like to enter this threshold space in a few ways. One is through progressive relaxation. This process is commonly used in self-hypnosis and works very well to quiet the body and mind. Within this quiet space, we can enter the liminal gnosis.

Here’s a simple relaxation script, that I call the bone induction. If you are used to this kind of work, you’ll be able to read the script a couple of times and then talk yourself through it internally. If this kind of thing is new to you, or you know you respond better to listening to an external voice, then recording yourself reading the script slowly and calmly will give you a

personalized guided induction you can listen to anytime you need it.

**BONE INDUCTION:**

*Sit or lie comfortably  
now take a few moments  
to attend to your body's needs,  
so that you can be  
as comfortable as possible  
for the duration of the session.*

*Find your breath  
spend a few moments  
feeling your breath  
move in and out  
of your body  
waves of breathing.*

*Now breathe deeply  
in a way that your belly  
expands when you inhale  
and contracts naturally  
when you exhale  
find a soft, comfortable rhythm  
smooth belly breathing.*

*Good.*

*Begin to survey your body  
let your attention visit the locations  
and structures of the body  
as I mention them.*

*Notice what I call the knots of your body  
the joints where tension can often be held  
become aware if you have tension in each knot  
and allow it to release if you do.*

*Notice your jaw*

*your shoulders  
your elbows  
your wrists  
your hips  
your knees  
your ankles.*

*Now notice the bones  
of your skull  
spinal column  
shoulder blades  
arm bones  
small bones of your hands  
finger bones  
rib bones  
pelvis  
leg bones  
ankle bones  
small bones of the feet  
toe bones  
let all of your bones  
ride the soft waves  
of your breath.*

*Now begin to notice  
if your sense of self  
your sense of consciousness  
has shifted in any way.*

*Breathing in  
breathing out  
feel the waves of the breath  
move through your body.*

*As you breathe  
notice if your consciousness  
moves beyond the confines*



*of your physical body  
does it expand an inch beyond your skin?  
maybe a few inches?  
feel the waves of breath  
expanding you  
expanding your senses  
like waves on the shore  
coming and going  
perfectly natural.*

*Spend as long as you like here,  
and know that you can slip into sleep  
or return to consciousness  
whenever you are ready.*

As with everything else, these aspects of the work will come easier to some than others. If we can come to the work of weaving fate with a softer gaze, we may find it much easier to slip past the various monolithic impediments to our work.

Some of the most obstructive and destructive forces or ideas we encounter are what I call ‘monoliths’. Monolith here is used in the sense of a monolithic structure, which is one that has a massive, unchanging, and unchangeable nature. I imagine them as huge black cubes, miles across on each face, set along the horizon. They are the things we are told or trained to believe we need, want, or are afraid of. Desire, war, career, wealth, anger, fear, love, gender, change, stability, power, are all monoliths, and each of us has our own specific set, arrayed across our vision like mountains. The importance of each of the monoliths is both culturally and individually specific. The huge forms blocking the view of one person may not even exist for another.

These monoliths, be they cultural norms, mediated ideals, or colonizing thoughts of any sort, are perspective specific. They have manifested in a way that assumes you will approach them as intended, which is always head-on, like a train on tracks. If you do approach them like that train, you only have a few options: stop the approach, smash into them, or back up and return the way you came. For them to be effective blockages, you

cannot make the logical, lateral shift, which is to get off the train, to step off of the tracks.

To keep with the train metaphor, one of the biggest stories about the train is that it's the fast track, the straight line that is the shortest path between two points. The smart money is on putting the hammer down and trying to plow your way to (if the monolith is marked 'want or need') or through (if it's marked 'enemy! destroy!') these massive barriers. Some will demand that we back the hell up, now. Run and hide! (those marked 'avoid at all costs'). All of this is a lie. The intention behind the lie is to keep you from ever trying to leave the tracks. The monolith is just too big, too scary, (or too important, too desirable) and we are too insignificant. It is also OK if you get angry and break yourself trying to smash through it. Now you know your place, foolish rebellious creature. Weak and insignificant, and correct to be scared. Now go find some other broken animals to commiserate with you. Now you can fetishize the monolith in endlessly looping stories, together, forever.

To step off the tracks can be scary, as you won't know exactly where you will end up. The open space is filled with phantom dangers, hidden in the writhing shadows cast by the monoliths. Here there be dragons.

The key to getting past the monoliths is via the sideways route, the most potent of which (barring full-on psychedelic approaches which come with their own attendant risks and difficulties) can be found in the liminal gnosis. Practice considering the monoliths that affect you from that quiet, in-between state. What do you see from there? Then shift the point of view to another angle: if the monolith was only a dream, empty of meaning, what would that mean to you and your life? Shift again, another angle: If you were on the other side of the experience so that the power of the monolith was something only in the past, what information does this offer up?

Within the liminal state, we can learn to see around the monoliths, be they ideas, metaphors, or cultural conditioning, and in doing so realize that we were never required to stay on the tracks. It was more a powerful suggestion that all other options... well, they weren't really available. If they did happen to be available somehow, they weren't any good, anyway. Best to keep to the straight track. It's quick and clean. And while you may never arrive anywhere, well, you don't risk getting hurt (in an acute sense, nothing to be done about the chronic stress and malaise, it just comes with

the territory) either. Plus, it's nice, they have cake, cappuccino, and whiskey in the dining car, you know. Off of the tracks, it's all men in masks and savages. It's not good out there.

And so it goes. Until we step off the tracks.

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28 Liminal Gnosis is a term I learned from Ray Sherwin's book *Theatre of Magic*. My usage is somewhat different than his!

# TELLING TRUE LIES

We can now move into the practical application portion of the book. First, let's take a look at the framework of the approach.

- We intend to produce more or less radical changes in our life as we experience it using magical means.
- We intend to work on the roots of the tree (us) to change the fruits (our outcomes), using effective methods to produce global shifts in the system.
- By working with the mind, body, and soul/spirit complex, we will influence our sense of what is possible for us in a beneficial direction.
- This work will allow us to shift various aspects of our life to and from points on a spectrum between impossible and inevitable.
- The intent is to move those points far, far closer to the inevitable side for the things we desire.
- We will also address other aspects that we can think of as negative outcomes. These we will work to move in the opposite direction, closer to the Impossible side of the spectrum.
- This work is performed by assisting the mind to re-interpret its previous experiences, in a kind of self de- and re-programming, shifting into a shape or form that works better for us.
- We will boost the effects of this work with imaginal, daydream, or trance work. We'll use these techniques to visit various times, places, and events, to shift our experience of them and modify their effects on us.
- We will have fun while doing this, simply because it's an option, and it seems like a better one than just suffering through!

There are several tools at our disposal to use for this project. What I am sharing is what I use. I prefer to only suggest things I have hands-on experience with. I am not interested in passing on theoretical methods, which may sound cool but may not help much. A full set of methods and tools are provided that I know work, and I have tried to make them as user-friendly as possible. That said, as the end-user, I expect you will experiment outside of what I suggest whenever it seems like it will help in your case.

Lastly, you'll have an easier time with the balance of this text if you have some experience with the basics of magic as outlined in my book *Six Ways*, but you'll most likely do fine with whatever magical background you bring with you.

This section of the book should be viewed as a sorcerous toolkit. The primary tools inside it are as follows:

**THE BLACK BOOK.** The Black Book is a journaled form of what is called a hypersigil. I stumbled across a few versions of this method in the 1990s, but strangely either never heard the actual word 'hypersigil' or forgot it until a dear friend brought it to my attention a few years ago. This journal form of hypersigil is the approach that has worked the best for me.

**THE CORRIDOR.** The Corridor is a simple mental or imaginal construct that allows us to access an unlimited set of possible realities. We use it to first see if these realities suit us better than the one we are experiencing now (or experienced in the past), and second to reinforce the truth and validity of what we have written in the Black Book. We can also use the Corridor to modify our experiences of (most commonly) past events.

**THE FEVER STONE.** The Fever Stone work refers to practices I was shown by a group of ancient hunter spirits I call the Brothers. It serves to remove the toxic byproducts of traumatic past events so that we can move forward in our lives without their unhelpful influences and attachments. We can also use the Fever Stone practice to 'wash out' lingering unhelpful influences from our lineage.<sup>29</sup> I use lineage, in this case, to refer to all those shaping influences both from this life and any previous lives (if that's your thing) and what I think of as 'ancestral baggage'. Ancestral baggage is the psychic damage and attachments that have been passed down to us by either direct

(genetic) ancestors, familial behaviors, or from those ancestors bound to us through what I consider ‘spirit lines’. These spirit lines function as ancestors, but without apparent direct genetic or familial bonds to us. In recent years I have begun to think these are allied spirits of my ancestors who have ‘ridden’ the line down to me.

The Black Book, Corridor, and the Fever Stone are the main tools of the process, and all three methods rely on channeling the imagination (and thus our consciousness) down specific pathways.

The Black Book is a form of hypersigil, a term that comes to us via occultist and comic book writer Grant Morrison. Morrison speaks of them as long-form narrative sigils. ‘Regular’ sigil magic most commonly refers to the practice of turning single desires or statements of intent into glyphs and then working with the resulting glyph to manifest our desires or needs.<sup>30</sup> This is the type of sigil derived from the work of artist and sorcerer Austin Osman Spare. A hypersigil instead seeks to produce an overwhelming body of evidence to the senses (waking, dreaming, liminal, and unconscious) that things are or can be very, very different from what the mind tells us they are or should be. In time, as we build the hypersigil, we tend to see reflections of our written narrative manifest in our life.

I started playing with the ideas of something like this around 1990. I discovered that by writing and mailing letters to myself about events I desired to occur as if they already had, they often did in fact happen. What started me down the path was this: I knew someone with an old William S. Burroughs-esque manual typewriter that he said was a potent magical tool. I tried writing a few things with it to see if they would manifest, and they didn’t pan out. I then wrote a letter to myself about things that I wanted to happen as if they already had and then mailed it to myself. Once I received the letter, rather than opening it, I used it as a focal point on my altar. That one worked fine. Over time, this turned into full-blown journaling about a life that suited me better than the one I was living. This led to aspects of my life beginning to mirror the journaled stories.

I had found a solid technique for creating rather amazing effects. In Grant Morrison’s case, his comic series *The Invisibles* was a graphic-novel version of a hypersigil rather than a journal, and one of the characters in the

story was a version of himself. As he wrote the stories, various parts of the tale began to manifest in his life, for better or sometimes worse.

I need to digress here, just for a moment.

When I was in my twenties, I began looking for an alternative term for magic and magician, as I didn't care too much for the ceremonial magick edge that 'magick with a k' had. This research happened in the Tulane Library in New Orleans, where I started digging into what I could find out about the various roots of words related to magic, magician, sorcerer, witch, warlock, and the like. I shifted into using sorcery and sorcerer after looking for a word that seemed to have a more organic vibe than magick. I liked sorcerer as it had a lot of elements in the various word roots and definitions I found for it that included spirit contact.

I remixed these notes to try to find what actual actions or behaviors these words might describe. All of this wandering about in the library led me to interpret 'sorcerer' as one who lays out lots (derived from the same roots as sortilege), which I thought of as a counter-action to divination: creating a reading of the outcome desired, rather than divining to see what would come to pass. This interpretation also tied into the idea of 'one's lot in life', one's fate or destiny. The warlock roots carried some connotations about lying and breaking oaths, and one translation I worked up was that a sorcerer or warlock was 'one who tells the truth by lying'. This was very interesting! Combined with the 'laying out' (i.e., choosing) one's lot, fate, or destiny ideas, these mangled attempts at magical etymology told a tale: The sorcerer is the one who weaves or chooses their own fate and makes it come to pass by telling true lies.

The obvious question is: what is a true lie? In the context of this concept and book, the true lie is the lie that by its magical nature becomes the truth. Truth meant not in some political doublespeak way, but in actuality, manifest in the so-called real world.

This is where writing fictional letters to myself came into play. They were my first attempts at telling true lies.

Now that we have looked at the conceptual framework we are going to use, we can begin the work of preparing the Black Book. The sequence of actions is important, and they are structured to allow the process to grow

from the first steps to end goals in an organic way.

We will create a single journal that is dedicated and consecrated to the work we have planned.

We will consecrate all the items we will use with the Black Book, dedicating them to the work. This means that pens, oils, waters, herbs, incense and all other materia we intend to use will be dedicated to our cause, and we shall use them for no other purpose.<sup>31</sup> In magic, consecration is the act of making something special or dedicating it to a particular deity, spirit, or cause. Here, we consecrate the book, pens, and other materia to the cause of shaping our fate into the form we desire. We only use these consecrated items we have for the work of the Black Book. This creates a kind of magical container for our work, which helps to focus its power. We have placed every part of the work we touch in alignment with every other part, and we can consider them now as being part of a larger organism or creature, which is the work of the Black Book itself.

The Black Book is a physical journal that you will write in with a pen. While there is a place for digital magic, this work is not one of them. You can pick the type of book, size, type of paper, and the color of the cover. Yes, the Black Book need not have a black cover; it is black in its heart. Black like the void of space and the time before time, pregnant with possibilities impossible to even imagine, let alone see from where we stand, here among the living. Black like the soil at the roots of the World Tree.

Your first task is to acquire the book. I prefer a hard-covered wire-bound sketchbook. I like that if I decide to remove pages, I can do so and the book still looks as it did before, just a touch slimmer. Any blank book will do. Those who draw may like plain paper, some may prefer lined or grid paper. Ask yourself this: is this a book that could be a journal where you record the events of your day? If your answer is 'yes' then all is well.

You will also need to acquire a pen (or several if you journal in multiple pen types or colors). Here I like black, in homage to Carbon Black, the printer's demon, but you may choose what you like. It's best to use a pen that can be refilled, as you are likely to use a lot of ink!

You will need an anointing oil. This can be something that speaks to the project you are working on, that is important in your tradition if you have one, or can even be simple olive oil. You will need a dedicated vial of



whatever oil you consecrate. I often create blends for each Black Book and decant them into a small vial. If you use incense in your work, you should acquire some or create a blend to consecrate for the task. Acquire enough of everything for at least several months.

I tend to consecrate candles by the box as I buy them and then again individually as I burn them. I use tea lights and Shabbat candles, as they are inexpensive and burn for a reasonable amount of time.

Other possibilities: a set of cards, runes, or other tools for divination of your choice, which you will not divine with. Instead, you will create layouts that support the events you will write about. You can then add these 'readings' to the journal. This is one piece I no longer do myself as I rarely perform divination, but it can be a helpful addition if you do.<sup>32</sup>

During the time you are working the Black Book, Corridor, and Stone, you will be well served to take a cleansing bath with salt added to the water once a week. This will help to clear any gunk that the work breaks loose, and keep you feeling better overall.<sup>33</sup> Some rosemary or basil steeped in hot water for a few minutes and added to the bath will improve the effects, and are widely available in grocery stores. I also add rue and hyssop to this blend, which are traditional herbs for spiritual cleansing and are quite helpful.

You will also need a square of cloth about six to eight inches across, some cord or string, and dirt from a crossroads. You will buy the dirt with three silver coins for the three Weavers, Norns, or Fates. More on this in a bit!

It is important to be very intentional while you collect all of these components; think about what you will use them for as you gather them. Speak to them of what is to come. If at all possible, collect them all during the time between the new to the full moon. You will consecrate all of the tools on one of the last two days or nights before the full moon, and consecrate all of them together at one time. The process should take at least an hour or two, and it may serve you to give yourself closer to four hours to maximize the effectiveness of the work. The point of the time frames is not only to use the period of lunar increase to bring more energy to bear on the work but also to get your inner senses awakened to an important, special project. The time investment is one that will yield returns and is a place

where efficiency (by shortening the process or simplifying it) may not equal effectiveness.

These are supplies you will need:

- One journal which will become your Black Book.
- At least one pen, with which you will write all the entries.
- Incense if you use it.
- An oil of some sort.
- Something to draw blood with. I use sterile lancets, available at pharmacies. Please note: this is optional if for *any* reason you should not be drawing your blood, as while it's helpful it isn't required.
- Candles to light the work, and to use as offerings to the continuance of the work. I tend to buy boxes of plain white Shabbat candles or tea lights, but fancy candles of whatever type calls to you are also fine.
- Clear water.
- Sea salt for cleansing both yourself and your tools.
- Vinegar for cleansing both yourself and your tools.
- Herbs for the cleansing work. I like rue, hyssop, rosemary, and basil for this, alone or in any combination.
- A piece of cloth about six to eight inches square for making a charm bag.
- Cord or string to tie the aforementioned charm bag closed.
- Dirt from a crossroads and three silver-colored coins to purchase it with. More on this in the section that follows.
- Any other materia that calls to you for the charm bag.

- Lastly, a reminder that I discourage the use of digital tech for any of these processes unless you are seeking digital results. Material bases for material changes is an excellent rule of thumb.
- It's best to have gathered these things together in one place a few days or more before the consecration is to take place. Visit your supplies often and let yourself get excited about what is soon to occur!

### PREPARING THE CHARM BAG OF ROAD OPENING

We will build the charm bag to create a Road Opening talisman that you will use for the duration of the working.

Road Opening is the magical process of clearing blockages that would hinder our work and its motion towards our goals. It serves to open the physical or metaphorical roads that the material effects, spiritual energies, and Allies we call to us will travel to come into our presence, consciousness, and to our aid. It will be the 'first work' in our magical operations, as it improves the effectiveness of all that comes after.

It can be helpful to think of most magical tools and talismans as being more 'creature' than object.<sup>34</sup> I seek to invest them with the spark of life or agency linking them to me so they can work on my behalf without constant direction. This is comparable to how livestock guardian dogs aid the keeper of goats or sheep. Once the dogs have bonded to the flock and understand the task at hand, they will carry out the work they need to do with little direction, only requiring food and water. This kind of relationship is what we seek with these magical tools.

For many years I have lived on dirt roads where collecting dirt from a crossroads involves a quick walk down the street. This will not be quite as straightforward for the city dweller. Places to look for dirt are the paths in parks, the dirt in the planters set in median strips, and dirt from a crossroads within a cemetery. All these forms of dirt will be slightly different, carrying different energies or powers, and you may combine several of them if doing so calls to you.

When we collect dirt magically, it is best if we buy it. In the United States, I suggest dimes, and for our purposes, I give three dimes at each

location I collect from.<sup>35</sup> Three is a number that suggests change, growth, and most importantly, the Weavers, Norns, and Fates. It is best to plan a dirt-seeking mission particular to this work rather than collecting the dirt as an add-on to another task. Doing so brings another layer of specificity and intention which can improve the potency of the finished charm.

I'm not super fancy or ritualistic about collecting the dirt. I just take my dimes to where I think I will find some willing soil, and spend some time there asking out loud: "hey, I would like to buy some dirt for a project I am working on, is that all right with you?". Unless I get some super intense blast of 'hell no!', I then dig up a handful of dirt (you won't need much for the charm bag), and place the three dimes in the hole I have made and then cover them over. I give thanks, and if I have water or coffee with me, I spill some of this onto the spot as well. The dirt goes into either a plastic bag or a folded-up piece of paper. I bring the dirt home and place it with the other items I am collecting for the Black Book work.

The cloth can be any cloth that seems good to you, but it is best if it's made of natural fibers. I like to use cloth made from things that grew organically, be that plant or animal. I tend to use plain cotton muslin, but I've used wool, denim cut from a pair of jeans, and thin leather to good effect.

As for other materia, I use a bit of an herb called 'abre camino' whose name means 'opens roads', for obvious reasons. You can find it in brick and mortar botanicas, or the on-line versions, most of the time. Sometimes you will receive fresh plant matter that will need to be dried. If you end up with more than you need for the charm bag, which is likely, you can tincture it in alcohol to create a road opening wash. I usually add the excess to a bottle of vodka and use it in preparing candles and the like. Other items I have added have been various things that speak to me of open roads, often small keys or tiny feathers. In practice, the dirt will be all you need, though I find the abre camino really packs a punch and you should add it if you can acquire some. Below is a sigil I use for Road Opening. Drawing it out either on the inside of the cloth the bag is made from or including it on a small piece of paper or fabric within the bag is optional, but suggested.



*SIGIL OF ROAD OPENING*

When the night of consecration comes, cleanse the cloth with salt and a bit of smoke if you are using incense. Form the cloth into a small bag-shape and breathe into it as if you were blowing up a balloon.<sup>36</sup> Now speak the following out loud, addressing the cloth as if it is a person:

*Creature of cloth  
The Work of the Weavers  
May you by your very nature  
Bind together these elements into a new form  
Together we create a new being  
Whose nature shall be to Open the Roads  
Removing all obstacles  
That stand between me  
and the work of the Black Book  
In which I shall inscribe only the truth.*

Place the soil into the center of the cloth and speak to it, addressing the dirt as if it is a person:

*Creature of soil, of earth  
Emissary of the Crossed Roads  
May you by your very nature  
Join together in this charm  
And take on a new shape  
Become a new being  
Whose nature shall be to Open the Roads  
Removing all obstacles  
That stand between me  
and the work of the Black Book  
In which I shall inscribe only the truth.*

Add in any other materia you desire, using the same basic formula. When you have placed all the materia within the cloth or pouch, give the charm a bit of fluid from your body. The fluids I have worked with are sexual fluids, blood, saliva, sweat, and tears. My suggestion is to let a bit of your saliva drip into the dirt. You may add the other fluids as you deem appropriate – use whatever you are comfortable with. Once all the materia has been spoken to and added to the cloth, speak to the charm itself as a whole:

*Abre Camino!<sup>37</sup>  
May the waters of my body merge with  
Your fertile soils in this charm  
And take on a new shape  
Become a new being  
Whose nature shall be to Open the Roads  
Removing all obstacles  
That stand between me  
and the work of the Black Book  
In which I shall inscribe only the truth.*

Take up the cord or string, pull the cloth tight around the soil, and tie it closed with three knots, saying:

*Urda, Verthandi, Skuld<sup>38</sup>  
What Was, What Is, and What Should Be  
Bind together the elements of this charm*

*Let it grow strong to serve me well.*

*Abre Camino!*

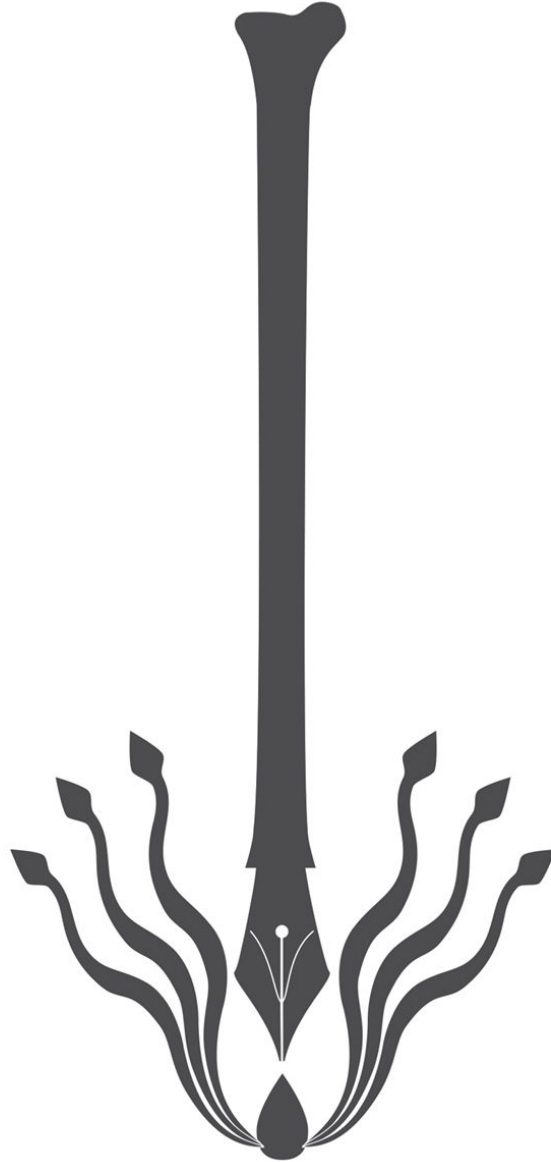
*Abre Camino!*

*Abre Camino!*

Breath onto the finished charm three times, and seal it with a touch of oil.

#### PREPARING THE PEN

We move on now to the pen. Any permanent pen will do. I use simple gel pens, but you can get fancy and use a fountain pen, goose quill, or whatever else turns you on. No pencils. Part of what we are doing is committing to what we write, so permanent it is. Now we will consecrate the pen.



*THE PEN MANIFESTING THE WORLD*

Wash the pen lightly with salt water with a few drops of vinegar in it, dry it, and pass it through smoke if you are using incense, then anoint it with a touch of oil. Breathe on it and say:

*Creature of language!*  
*Powerful agent of inscriptions*  
*Mother of the Printer's Demon*  
*You who are mightier than the sword*  
*You who draws the line and crosses it*



*Be thou blessed and in turn  
Bless the working of these words  
Aid me in the work of the Black Book  
In which I shall inscribe only the truth.*

Now place the Pen with the Charm Bag of Road Opening, and continue with the work of consecration.

#### PREPARING THE BLACK BOOK

We now move onto the Black Book itself. We are consecrating it last so that the Road Opening talisman/charm bag is already live, and the Pen is prepared to join the task.

We purify the Black Book with salt and (if it will not damage it too much) water and vinegar. You can soak a cloth in the water and vinegar solution, wring it fully out, and then wipe the Black Book with it gently. Then speak:

*Black Book, Tabula Rasa  
Be thou that which I desire  
Miracle of manifestation  
Creature of word and deed  
Hound and hunter  
Bright-eyed hawk  
Impeccable vision of what shall be  
Blessed are Thou  
Blessed are We  
Together we spin  
And weave our fate.*

Pass the Black Book through the smoke, then pick a page (I use the third-to-last page, but I don't really know why, it just feels right to me) and anoint it with any of the following you are comfortable with shedding and sharing: your blood, spit, sexual fluids, tears, sweat. We are both creating a potent material link between our selves and the Black Book, as well as feeding it a touch of our life force.

Once all the consecrations are complete, take some time to sit with your tools. If you would like to make the first entry in the Black Book, do so now. Afterward, make sure all your candles are out, sit (on the ground if possible) with your hands on the earth, in the grass, soil, or whatever makes the 'floor' below you. Let the Earth take any excess power to ground, and then have some water and eat something before you either sleep or continue with your day.

To complete the process, you now sign the Black Book below that mess of fluids, using your magical name or personal sigil if you use one, and you are nearly done with the night's work.<sup>39</sup>

It is highly likely that your work will spread across multiple Black Books as they fill up over time. Always consecrate the new Black Books you add in this same fashion, and keep the new and old (at least the most recent) Black Books bound together for the first week or so of use.

With your tools prepared, you are ready to begin the main body of work.

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<sup>29</sup> This use of the term 'lineage' is my take on a concept I learned from Fabeku Fatunmise.

<sup>30</sup> 'Regular' is in scare quotes as there is nothing much regular about sigil magic at all, in my experience!

<sup>31</sup> Materia is a term in magic that means 'magical stuff or ingredients'. If you do a spell or ritual where you put an iron nail, fur from a blind kitty, graveyard dirt, and datura seeds in an old sock, all of that is materia. Some may argue about the sock, but this cannot be helped, as many magicians just like to argue.

<sup>32</sup> How you proceed with this part of the work if you include it should be self-evident (which means it probably isn't). I will not dive deeper into this

subject here.

33 Gunk is a technical term for a whole range of unpleasant things: bad juju, unhelpful attachments, spiritual contagion, etc. The worst form I have seen (but not experienced myself) was the Enochian scabies.

34 This is covered in more depth in *Six Ways*.

35 The key idea here is really small silver colored coins. This is not set in stone, and some prefer to leave small copper coins like pennies.

36 We breathe into or onto objects to give them life. Remember: creature rather than object!

37 I have used the Spanish ‘abre camino’ in my spoken charms for decades, so in this case it is not a specific reference to the herb but the action/spirit of road opening itself.

38 I use these names as they suit me. You may simply say ‘Three Sisters’, ‘Wyrd Sisters’ or ‘Weavers’. Do what seems good to you!

39 A magical name can be a useful thing to have. While many traditions give them at a person's initiation, I've always preferred the ones I made up myself. To get one, I first ask the Field and my deep mind for assistance in the process, and make an offering to them both for their help. Then I just play. What name holds power to me and reflects the best version of myself that I aspire to? That's a magical name. Claim it as yours and ritualize the taking of it in any way that makes sense to you, I use a simple baptism kind of rite. You can then turn it into a sigil if you like and use the sigil to sign your works. If picked well, this is a very potent piece of work! Magical names are highly context dependent, and you may need to create a new one in time. Bonus question: could there be a good use for having more than one?



# THE BLACK BOOK

When working with the Black Book, we aim to produce real change in ourselves and our lives by the magical act of writing. There are a few things to keep in mind. While none of this is set in stone, there are quite a few hints that can help with a smoother ride, although as a wise man once said, ‘everybody breaks down sooner or later’.<sup>40</sup> Happily, the Black Book is always there to be revised, so wrong turns and minor crashes are less of a problem than in many other forms of magic.

First, you don’t need to be one hundred percent certain of what you are writing, as long as the general tone and any specific critical points are right-on. You can use the Black Book to play a kind of ‘game’ to see what you think and how you feel about the changes you might want to make. A good example of this is if you want to live in another location, city, or house. Perhaps you want a house by the sea but are open about what kind of house and which sea it is near. If so, you could imagine and journal about a stone cottage in Ireland, a condo in Florida, or a big house on the beach in Australia. Over time, one of these might become a favorite daydream to drop into and write about.

If, however, you are dead set on Spain, then only write of that, but you might imagine different kinds of homes unless you are set on a specific size and type of house. The point here is that the ‘play’ about different kinds of houses in different locations (unless it becomes an obsession that never resolves) can all be helpful. The various ideas and the revisions of them work like a conversation, a form of brainstorming ideas with the different aspects of your self and the Field to see where you settle. At that point, you can narrow the focus of the work and seek to manifest that particular vision.

Wider nets will tend to produce more options and sometimes faster results. This is easy to see around a relationship or work situation. If you know you like men, and you want to be into them and have them be into you, that’s wide open. A great number of the several billion men on the planet could fit that bill. However, if they have to be Italian, a certain age, and of a certain means, now there are fewer potential partners for you to begin with. Expect that to take more work and effort. This is not to say you

should never be specific. Just keep in mind that focusing on the critical bits and being open about the rest makes for easier manifestations in many cases. The same thing applies for a job. If you need a job that pays a certain amount of money for a certain amount of hours, that's a very wide net. If you need it to be in a certain part of town, in a certain field, and with many more particulars, that narrows the pool of options. Just focus on the critical elements. If you have a longer list of specifics that are important to you, focus on those, and understand that changes may be slower to manifest. This may often be the better choice, however, in that you may end up happier with the results even if they take longer to achieve.

Another piece of the puzzle to keep in mind is that we are ourselves constantly changing and that magical practice means diving into those changes headfirst with our eyes open. Constant change is always the name of the game. Parts of our body, the different cells and the structures built of them, are always living, dying, and changing within us. This is true of what we experience as our mind as well, as constant neural changes mean we literally think, perceive, and remember differently over time. Magic just sets us into the driver's seat (or one of them!) so that we can steer our way to or through these changes in ways that seem best to us. In the Black Book, this means we may change directions multiple times as we do the work. We then live our lives within those changes and are changed by them in turn. One of the nice things about this approach is that it is very open to amendment and redirection.

You will see many possibilities play out in the coming sections. There will be dead ends, cul de sacs, and players who come on stage to say a line, never to be seen again. In my perspective, this is one reason why the hypersigil method works so well: it's very close to how our lives actually play out. We meet people and grow closer, and maybe in time, we drift apart. We do one thing that we love more than anything else until something else takes its place, and what remains of that earlier love is just a memory. We change, and then change, and change again, in a constant and frequently turbulent flow. As in life, in the Black Book, we don't have to undo every dead end, only the ones that we feel a persistent pull from. These entries we cancel and then move on.

The work of the Black Book is using the power of the written word to re-create reality (it's up to you how you define this; there are many options

and what suits me today may not suit you) in its image...sort of. In practice, this is not as cut-and-dried, but we'll get into that more when we look at examples.

The most important piece to keep in mind here, though, is that while it may seem like we are playing mental or psychological games with a lot of this 'imaginal' work, it is indeed a magical process, and a potent form of practical enchantment.

I invite you to read the rest of this book lightly the first time through, and not to skip ahead. It can be easy to make assumptions that will hinder the work later on if you do so. There is no need to believe anything I say, either. The practices shown here will expose their natures only during use. This is a common thread in what I call practical magic, and it is well expressed by Peter J. Carroll when he wrote 'magic works in practice, but not in theory'.<sup>41</sup> What this means to me is that we are working with a method of creation that doesn't play by materialist rules as we understand them at this time. We can read the text of a ritual or a practice and see that there is no material or causal link between the rite and the desired effect. We may then decide in advance that therefore it cannot work. It is only through dedicated and long-term practice that the usefulness (and often the actual nature) of the work or working is exposed.

Not every piece of work or magical approach will work equally well for every person. I can present myriad reasons why this could be as it's something I have considered for a long time, but in truth, I don't know the answer. Maybe there are energetic, past life, or even genetic reasons. Perhaps when we are born, particular spirits are attracted to us who stay close to us throughout our lives, and we have the best results when we use approaches that suit them. But it's a common experience, and one only exposed in practice.

Practice itself is an important concept. Practice is intentional, focused, repetition of work with the goal of improving whatever it is that we are practicing. Without the intention of improving, along with the focus to notice the incremental changes we experience for better or worse, it isn't really practice, just mindless repetition. Often when we learn to meditate, we learn how to sit, and it's hard at first. Over time, our body adapts to the posture, and sitting becomes easier. We then learn to breathe in a way that is

conducive to our aims, and that also becomes easier over time. We concentrate or watch the actions of our minds, and this follows the same pattern: difficult, frustrating, uncomfortable, then a bit easier.

With magical practices (versus something like a single-shot spell or one-off candle working) we first learn how to do the work, which is a bit of a systematic process. Things then develop in a somewhat linear fashion: we learn some words, some gestures, maybe a prayer or charm, or an image to be used. We learn to combine them into a ritual which can be made of meditative, imaginative, or physical sets of actions. We then repeat this set of actions and observe. In magic, observing is an all-sensory and all-thought process. After we begin the work, what seems different? Do we have any new thoughts that show up? Do we feel unusual in any way? Are we clearer-headed or more emotional? Do we notice words, numbers, sounds, or smells that stand out in some way? Do we feel a weight fall away from (or onto!) our shoulders? Are we moving through the world differently? All of these can be information and feedback, but we have to be both quiet enough and attentive enough to not miss them. While magic can have massive and sudden effects at times, more often the changes that come begin with great subtlety. It is up to us to be subtle enough to be aware of them and brave enough to accept that yes, this is information, and yes, we are meant to try to understand it.

We can of course go too far with this and become paranoid or see omens and portents everywhere.<sup>42</sup> The balance point between being open and being skeptical is a fine one, and it is one that itself takes intentional practice to learn. Most will find they have to work at it for a while before they can stand comfortably on that line and not fall to one side or the other.

One of the main keys to all of this is to approach magical work in both a very solid, powerful stance while also being very gentle with yourself. This is not a stance built on an aggressive, tightly focused, and outwardly directed will, but rather a calm, centered, and grounded state. For some, this is easier than others, much like anything else. Some will find that stance natural, others will need to work more to find comfort in it.

If we understand that the mind builds story continuously, the question becomes: does this serve us as is? Are the stories the mind is telling us useful and beneficial? If they are, we can carry on as we have been and let



the process happen as it has before. If they are not, we have a choice to make: do we work to operate without storying everything, or will we work to control the narrative and therefore its effects?

The main tools to break the habit of this internal story-telling are found in meditation and concentration practice. Both practices are highly suggested, and while often uncomfortable to begin with, they pay back what is put into them many times over. With the Black Book, however, we seek to go hands-on with shaping or creating the narrative and by doing so guide its effects.

The Black Book is a journal of what is to come, written as if the events recorded have already come to pass. The crucial element in its use is that you must approach it consistently as if you are writing of past events, as you experienced them. There is no deviation from this. You never write any version of 'I want situation x to come to pass' in your journal. There is no statement of intent. This is a diary of things which you have already experienced.

My preferred method is to write an entry (sometimes several) either at the end of the day, describing the events that transpired during that day (as imagined), or in the early morning, as if recording the events of the previous day. Both seem to work equally well. The morning is often better in practice; some will revisit their entries in their mind as they lie in bed before sleep or when they awaken in the night and question the validity of what they wrote. If this sounds like something you could fall into, keep the writing to the mornings.

I do not date the pages. Some may choose to, but I find that the fluidity of time is an important element in the game. I am not very linear in my journaling. There may be instances where things need to happen in a particular order, in which case entries happening in a clear order might be important. Again, fluidity equals success in my experience, as every addition that locks down how the changes we seek must occur can slow or limit the expression of the results. You will have to decide your level of comfort with chaos and instability, and your journaling should reflect this. It's neither needed nor better to try and embrace approaches you are honestly not into. Do the work in the way that suits you best.

Finally, treat the Black Book itself as a friend, an allied spirit creature,

and regularly feed it with smoke, oil, incense, offerings of food and water, and anything else that you would offer to a spirit you were courting or working with. Keep the Black Book with the Road Opening Charm and the Pen, and remember to only use the consecrated Pen to write in it. If you lose the Pen, or find yourself away from it, consecrate a fresh one.

## THE JOURNAL OF X

Throughout the rest of this book, I will give examples via transcriptions of the journal of a sorceress of my acquaintance, my (perhaps imaginary) friend X. My commentary will follow these entries to provide some critique and explanations of what is taking place below the surface. These examples are intended to show – in ways a description cannot – how one person might perform the work at hand and adapt that work to suit her changing situations, interests, and reality. Please note that the entries often build on one another and have been written over a very long time-frame (think months and years here) as she guides the work to suit the results she desires. There will also be what appear to be some dead-ends and cul-de-sacs as X explores possibilities, sees what results manifest and how she feels about them, and then changes direction. These are completely normal. Expect to see this in your own work and know that these are some of the most beneficial aspects of this approach to magic. Life is not the smooth, logical flow of the film or TV show, and the Black Book will tend to reflect that reality.

A bit about X: When I began to write the first diary entry, X appeared, full-blown. I could sense and feel her right then, and I can to this day. Sometimes I think she is a form of myself in some alternative timeline or alternate Earth, another strand of fate winding through in the multiverse. Perhaps she is just a willing accomplice who liked the idea of sharing some of her stories. At first, I felt a little odd about writing a big chunk of this book from the perspective of a woman, but X told me to suck it up, get over myself, and get on with telling her story.

*Dear Diary-*

*I found a great job downtown near the library that I really like. It pays \$35k a year and has great benefits.*

X

Alright, that one has some problems. The location is too specific (unless she has a burning need to be close to the library), and the rest is too vague. Bland and boring. But hey, it's a start, so kudos to X!

*Dear Diary-*

*I tripped into a new job! It's a nice office, with a quick and easy commute both ways. They pay more than my current job, and it seems like a much better fit. I liked the HR person who interviewed me, and it sounds like my boss is pretty cool.*

*I can't wait to get started!*

X

Better, but still pretty bland. Salary info is there, but non-specific (which could be because it's not that important). The commute part is solid, as that can make X's workday functionally shorter than if it was a nasty one. She's still not really going for it, however, which is pretty normal for someone just starting this work.

*Dear Diary-*

*I went into that high-end photography place in Old Town, the place that does actual film developing and sells repairs, and rebuilds old film cameras? I talked to the weird guy who runs it and asked if he had any openings for someone with darkroom skills. So I'll be developing and printing some film for him on Thursday as my interview, and if that goes well, we'll talk \$. Sounds promising, and a great chance to make some cash AND have access to a darkroom again. We shall see!*

X

It appears that X is open to a variety of jobs and is interested in photography as well. She is also apparently OK with working for the weird guy. Your mileage may vary!

*Dear Diary-*

*I found an awesome new job yesterday! Susan heard about the opening and got me an interview through some people she knows there. It's sweet! Pay is much better than where I am, and they have fantastic benefits. They do some profit-sharing each year, and the staff seems really focused. Being in the office for a couple of hours for the interview, there were none of the weird bad vibes I've been wanting to get away from. It's right on the main transit line, so the commute would be a breeze. I start in two weeks! Yay!*

*X*

Now she's getting into the groove. This entry is much more interesting, which makes it easier for her consciousness to dive into it and swim around in.<sup>43</sup> This is a good place to mention that since X is not focused on a specific kind of work she is looking for, her options are wide open. She can continue in this vein for as long as she needs to, building on the overall sense of what she desires in a job. She can keep working this particular scenario she has created if it feels right, adding depth to the entries while maintaining the framework, or change it up if it feels off in any way that is troubling.

Each time she finishes an entry, she signs it with her magical name or sigil, licks the pad of her index finger, and presses it onto the page. She places the Black Book with the Charm of Road Opening and the Pen in a place she has set aside for them. On most days, she makes an offering of cool water, a tea light, and a stick of incense to the Black Book and its spirit. This is the basic pattern of the work.

*Dear Diary-*

*Yesterday was an amazing day! I woke up knowing it was going to be a good day, and man was it ever!*

*I rode my bike to the cafe, and before I even go into my book I noticed a really interesting woman with beautiful eyes looking at me. When I got up for another coffee, I noticed she was looking at me again, so I stopped by her table and asked her if we had met before. She told me we had not as far as she knew, but something was compelling about me, and that I was welcome to join her if I would like. So I did.*

*We talked for quite a while, and she told me about the shop she owned downtown and asked me what I did for work. I told her I was currently unemployed and looking for something new. We talked a bit about that, and what my last job was and why I left it. She asked me what I liked about it if there was anything, and I told her how much I liked the store, but the pay was not good enough for the toxicity of the environment. She said she totally understood that and really tried hard to keep her own business out of that kind of nastiness. I told her how I had saved enough money that I could get out before I had a new job and was now looking for a part-time gig to replace it.*

*Anyway, as now makes total sense but at the time seemed like a miracle, she offered me a job with a great flex schedule, as many hours as I wanted a week and much better pay than I was even looking for during my search! I went with her when she left the cafe to see the shop. It's a beautiful place, doing great business, and the employees seemed genuinely happy to be there. I start training on Monday!*

*X*

Let's take a look at what X has done here. Clearly, she is still looking for a job, or perhaps looking for another job, as we don't know the order or timing of the entries here. Is X looking for that job to come to her by random encounter? Perhaps. Maybe she is just being clear that she is OK with job offers coming via meeting strangers. What seems clear is X desires part-time, flexible scheduling, and good pay in a friendly, positive environment. We'll come to know more of what she is working towards as we proceed.

*Dear Diary-*

*My new job is just fantastic! The training went really easily. My strengths are a great match for the shop. At the same time, I can tell I will be learning a lot, as the owner is both sharp and into helping to train the employees up to be more effective both in the shop and in the long run when/if it's time to move on. Bonus perk: great coffee in the backroom! It also sounds like it's common for the employees to get taken out to lunch with the owner, both to get to know her better and to get*

*feedback on how they are doing. She seems really dedicated to taking care of her people.*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*Who the hell gets a bonus after working for two months as, and I quote: 'A thank you for joining me and working hard to master the job. You are a great match here and I am honored you have chosen to work with me. It's people like you who make what I do viable and profitable'! Yep, that would be me!*

*X*

Now we can see a bit more of what X is working towards: the work environment is a big deal for her, as is being openly appreciated and appropriately compensated. She wants the chance to excel, grow, and learn. She is also loosening up a bit, getting playful. This is very good, as this playfulness adds to the overall energy that both the work in the Black Book and its results will tend to carry with them. This playfulness is worth remembering as the means tend to color the ends. If we can bring a playful, friendly, even loving vibe to the work of the Book, this will help our results to share in those colors or flavors. This is also why it's best not to write too many entries when upset, angry, or overly stressed.<sup>44</sup>

If she is looking for something quite precisely, she will keep her writing all in the same vein, with entries focused on the points that she wants the most: a good job she is into, flexible hours, part-time or full time, proper appreciation and compensation, with a kick-ass employer that is committed to both her business and her employees.

The Black Book can be used for all sorts of end-states, and they can be worked individually or together. Keeping in mind the daily journal or diary concept, some entries will likely be blended, some kept to a single focus or experience. The more natural the process is to your personal style, the better the results in most cases.

*Dear Diary-*

*Since starting the new job, I've been in a part of town that I didn't spend much time in before. It's cool and funky and seems to be where the kind of girls I like hang out. Why didn't anyone tell me this earlier? I've been out on a few dates, and I am trying to not just jump in and do the whole 'instant girlfriend' thing this time. Playing the field is a new concept, and I'm at least going to try it!*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*In the interest of not being a weak static creature anymore, I am dedicating myself to trying new things. I joined a yoga studio that I can hit a few days a week and asked the teacher who is super cool to help me get started with meditation. Shut up and sit down is the main thrust for this week, which I usually only do if I am watching TV. The TV version is easier, but I am sitting every day now for ten minutes. And twitching a lot!*

*X*

Here X is doing work in the Black Book as preparation or support for things she wants to do in her daily waking life that have eluded her so far. She is setting the stage for sticking with decisions about dating and fitness that she has perhaps tried before but not been able to maintain. This will be a recurring approach, as the Black Book can be a helpful assistant when trying to expand our horizons or build new habits.

*Dear Diary-*

*Well, well, well! That girl at the cafe that always smiles at me a bit too much and I always get a bit flustered? The one with the curly black hair and blue eyes? Who has a dinner date with me on Friday? Yep, that one, her name is Gloria. Oh man, I am nervous! In a good way!*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*Went out to dinner with Gloria twice last week, and she's awesome.*

*Smart, funny, and sexy! She is also way more together than the other women I've been seeing, which is both super cool and makes me want to bring my 'A' game. I could get serious about this one. I'm not feeling my usual anxious stupid desperate around her. I am way more solid in my self and my boundaries. I could fall hard for her, but it feels like a decision, not a compulsion.*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*Dear Gods is that girl amazing. She had me over to her place for the first time for dinner, and wouldn't let me go home. Not that I was fighting to leave or anything!*

*I'd insert the steamy sex scene here, but I am afraid someone might read this someday. Holy Shit.*

*X*

In truth, I just didn't feel comfortable writing a sex scene in this book, but in yours? Don't think about it, do it. It has been repeatedly shown that a sexual component improves the success of this work by a fairly huge margin. Steamy is good. The best practice is to define the qualities of the other person as well as the quality of your responses to them on all of the most important levels. It can be people in general (pick your gender if you have a preference), your lovers, etc. You can include someone specific you would like to get together with, but I don't recommend it at all. I call targeted love/lust spells as 'I want J to become my stalker' spells. Plus, while one of the more traditional uses of magic, it's kind of creepy. And did I mention the stalker thing?

*Dear Diary-*

*Maybe it's the new job at the startup, but something this Spring flipped the 'get fit' switch on like never before, as I am eating way better and liking it. The yoga is going great and I started kick boxing at the gym near work (WTF? I know, I not only joined the gym and started KICK-BOXING, I love it!).*



X

*Dear Diary-*

*You know how I used to have a hard time keeping track of the sequencing of moves for kick-boxing? I created a shoal of sigils to help with that and they are definitely working. I'm way more 'on it' and can run the patterns without having to think about them as much like I've been doing it all my life. I'll be doing a shoal for the same kind of things that bog me down at work in a day or two and we will see what happens!<sup>45</sup>*

X

X is continuing to blur the edges now, which I have found to be the key to having our work be more stable, and the transitions smoother. It seems to help in a similar way to putting better shocks on a car or bike; even when the road is still rough (life is full of the hard stuff, we aren't even trying to eliminate that) it just beats us up less and we don't have to fight as hard to stay on course.

In this example, she is referencing recent sigil work she has done. Has it already started working? Perhaps. But she may also be working on building a feedback loop to help it manifest. She is also noting work that she has planned: the shoal for her kick-boxing. When she makes that shoal in a few days, it will reinforce the reality of all else she has written.

What we can tell from all of this so far is that X is working towards a job that she is into, wants some action, maybe a serious girlfriend, and desires to get in better shape and be healthier. How she continues her entries over the coming months may reinforce different aspects as being primary, and which ones are secondary or tertiary.

The gym/kick-boxing and yoga thing might need a bit of explanation. Many of us know we 'should' do something that would benefit us but we are afraid of looking stupid, are too intimidated, or can't really see it as fun or rewarding from where we are right now, or find ourselves starting and stopping a lot which just brings us down. We can use the Black Book to change how we think and feel about these things to make the whole process easier, from starting to long term compliance. This can be anything from

becoming more fit, more confident, being more comfortable talking to people, or going to trade school. The list is pretty well endless.

For X, if she were to write everything targeted, meaning she wants a specific job or in a specific field, that's the likely outcome. If she doesn't care so much or is wide open to possibilities, then more unexpected options are likely. This can be more fun and interesting if it suits her nature, and it also opens up the Black Book to produce some major, lateral shifts in her reality.

### THE FEELING SENSE

If X was sick of her city and wanted a change of venue, she could journal about the one she hoped to move to or about a bunch of different ones. She could (and this is very powerful) simply create all the specifics out of whole cloth (meaning not based on things she knows of) and would then be working more with what I call 'the feeling sense'.

This is a powerful approach to the Black Book and also the one that is hardest to quantify in any rational sense. It can produce radical changes of state, circumstances, and can increase coherence or alignment with the Field. This is more of a 'fire and water' path than an 'earth and air' one. Less planned, thought out, or structured, and more driven by feel, passion, and flow. You can of course mix and balance these approaches, which is what our girl X is doing so far.

An example is if X were to write of a new life, in a town by the sea, describing her home, the area, and landscape. She would add in details that matter to her: how the light plays in her home, the sounds from outside, stories of her interactions with people there. She writes of how she spends her days, how it feels to inhabit that life, and how she enjoys the relationships she has in that place. None of this need be based on any known town, sea, country, or person. She has woven a complete vision of another life where the only specifics are those of her experience within it.

Another use of the feeling sense in the Black Book is to focus on the emotional and sensory data of what you write. How does Gloria taste? What does she smell like? What do these tastes and scents make X feel? Is X happy at her job, and how does being there feel to her? Is the coffee good? Is it flavored, plain, and does she take it black? Do people burn bagels in

the break room? What does that smell like? Is the office, her home, or the weather too warm or cold sometimes? What does learning kick-boxing feel like? Does it make her sore? Where? What happens to her self-confidence? Are people now commenting on how she carries herself differently? Are the lovers she attracts now more appropriate given her desires? How does eating better change her day to day? What does she eat, and how does her food taste and smell? Is she happy? What does being happy entail?

The more of this sensory information (especially the internal versions) she includes, the more likely what she seeks will come to pass. She is also far more likely to enjoy and be well within the results that come about.

*Dear Diary-*

*I'm a mess. A kind of perfect, beautiful mess! I have never had a point in my life where I felt as comfortable in my skin as I do now. The gym and the fight classes have me stronger than I ever have been, stronger than I ever thought I could be in my wildest dreams. Gloria and I are totally a thing, and I love that I can kind of push her around when we are doing it... which gets her to push back harder, both of which I never even knew I would be into, but damn am I ever into it!*

*I'm in the cafe after the gym, and I realize I stink! I can smell the sweat from class and thank god I changed my clothes before I trained because under the sweat I can smell our sex and it smells like hot animals. And you know what? I love it. I love every bit of it. I'm starting to not be able to remember exactly how I used to feel when I tried to be so nondescript and invisible, to not take up any space. I am so done with all of that!*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*I did it. I had a fight! And I won! I mean I wasn't in the UFC or anything, but I fought a twenty-something tough as hell chick and knocked her on her ass a bunch before I knocked her out in the second round.*

*Whoa! I'm not at all sure I even want to do that again because I am sore all over and look like I fell down a cliff I am so damn bruised, but I,*

*formerly wimpy scared X knocked a girl out and I got paid for it.*

*My Dad is ecstatic, the irony of which is not lost on me at all. Also, the other girl is totally OK, she told me, and I quote, 'fighting you was like getting hit by a truck'.*

### *X the Truck*

X might be actually prepping for a fight, but she might also be working on her self-confidence, her skill at kick-boxing, her sense of fearlessness, or just wants to implant in her self that she is a girl who hits like a truck. Remember the warning at the beginning of the book about dead ends and cul de sacs? Entries may not be at all what they seem on the surface.

### *Dear Diary-*

*I called an Uber after coffee, with my passport in one pocket, my wallet in another one, and headed off to the airport. I didn't even know where I would go! I just stood and looked at destinations until something sounded good and then bought a ticket. It's wild to think of all the times any kind of travel, even just driving four hours to overnight somewhere was impossible or took major saving and scrimping. Now I am flying to Iceland with NOTHING with every intention of just buying clothes when I land like I would have bought a cup of coffee a few years ago. The food there costs per meal what I used to spend on jeans. This is a much more enjoyable way to live and totally without debt. Hell yes, I rock!*

### *X*

Here X is anchoring what she has already been working on to serious sensory cues and triggers. The anchoring process also boosts the intensity of the fantastic-imaginal aspects of her working, which trigger responses (if done right!) in her body. She is getting herself a little (or a lot) heated up thinking and imagining how she would feel after the events she describes. X is also anchoring the events into a section or period of time: time to get stronger and express it, time to get deeper into her relationship (which remember, may have nothing to do with an actual girl named Gloria – Gloria is an avatar of what X seeks in a partner). All of this work is

producing physical responses to imaginal events, blurring the lines between the real and the not-yet real. This is a critical technique in working with the Black Book.

It's also clear that X is working on shifting the felt-sense of her personal economy. She is not necessarily wanting to fly to Iceland with only the clothes she is wearing. It's about breaking down barriers to possibilities from which she was previously blocked off from. She is asking herself: what would I do if I vastly improved my financial situation? What would my life be like? What would be possible? How would I feel about it? By playing with these experiences in the Black Book, X can explore and change her internal margins, her body-understanding of what options are available to her.

*Dear Diary-*

*I can't really believe that I'm able to work for myself now! A few years ago I was just trying to find a job that didn't stress me out. Being able to sell my own work AND pay the bills is amazing. It wouldn't be possible without B and L mentoring me on the business side, either. I'm so glad I found them, as their guidance kept me from making a lot of stupid mistakes, and the contacts they gave me for the biz support folks I needed have been pure gold.*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*I'm really getting excited about having my first gallery show for my photos! I thought I'd be super nervous, but instead, it seems really fun. I want to watch people react to my work, and I don't even care anymore if someone doesn't like it or trashes it where I can hear. I did it for me and the people who it speaks to, the rest are dust (I only mean that in this context, I can be harsh but I'm not THAT harsh!).*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*The opening went fantastic! Righteous people and Gloria arranged*

*the snacks and wine and beer and all of my favorite people came out to support me. I got a ton of compliments on my composition and eye and only heard a few people being snobby about any of it, which didn't bother me at all. Mark at the gallery told me that half of the pieces sold right then which is pretty unusual in his experience but which he said: "made total sense because your work is so damn good!". Can't wait to do this again!*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*Everything but two pieces sold and I'm ecstatic. I'm good with that! I really never expected to make any money from my art, and this just paid my rent for MONTHS. Again, I rock.*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*Everything sold out the first night! Crazy! I am so stoked! Mark says this basically never happens and they will be happy to have me show again. Two other gallery owners invited me to show as well. Weird thought: I might be able to do this for a living.*

*X*

X is now working multi-layered strategies for a gallery showing she may be lining up, may already have set up, or is thinking of setting up. She is working on her responses to potential outcomes. She would like to be relaxed about it. It would be cool if she got paid. It would be awesome if she made serious bank from it. It would be amazing if she could do this instead of other work.

Some of this could be very finely targeted, meaning that she is working towards making a living with her art. Some of it may simply be playing to see how it would feel if she could pull it off. How would things be different? In what ways would her life change? Does her sense of things change just from doing this work?

*Dear Diary-*

*First, I never thought I'd live in the desert, and I never thought I would show my art in galleries and sell it! But if you REALLY want to know what I never thought I would be is a professional fine art photographer with a gallery in the Tucson Arts District of her own and actual employees! This has been a wild two years to get to this point, but it has all come together like it was meant to be.*

*X*

X is most likely still playing with ideas of what she could do. Does she want to be a professional photographer? At what level? What does 'making it' that way feel like? Let's assume she is getting serious about it; she loves photography and she knows she is at least as good if not better than many who make a living from it. It seems like she has decided she wants to move from where she is, and the desert sounds fun. She really liked Tucson when she visited, and so that's her target for now.

INTERLUDE: A FEW SUGGESTIONS ON RELOCATION MAGIC

If X were looking to move to the desert for real, here are the approaches she might take to getting there smoothly.

X has friends in Tucson, and she has some vacation coming up, so she takes a week off from work to visit them. Before she gets on the plane to visit, she asks if she can leave a small box of personal things with them for a while and they say it's no problem. She collects a couple of pieces of jewelry she loves, a few framed photos of her and her family that she had up in her apartment, and heads off for the desert.

Tucson is still great and she has a brilliant time with her friends, and she buys some dirt from various places she likes around town. The dirt is collected specifically around places where she would like to live. X visits several local churches and shrines and leaves offerings there and asks for the local spirits to help her make the move happen with ease. Then she leaves the photos and jewelry in a shoe box along with some of her clothes. The clothes are those she wore on her visit, unwashed, and since she is seeking maximum effect, it includes her socks and underwear. Sweat and

funk are good for magic. She makes the box look really nice, like a secret shrine, and she writes a few postcards to friends in other places from the address where she stayed.

Lastly, before she flies home, she writes a letter to herself about how much she loves living in Tucson, how she loves her new apartment, and how fast she got her feet under her. X mails the letter to herself before she leaves.

*Dear Diary-*

*We had a big party for the third anniversary of the biz. This year I made more \$ (actual money, after overhead and taxes and all that) than I ever did working for someone else! Worthy of celebration! We had music & champagne and an awesome spread from the Bistro downstairs, it was fabulous. It was cool to get my peeps together in my space to celebrate what I (with lots of help) have made. A perfect night.*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*I flew into Denver, and James met me in the SUV. I drove us back out to Boulder to the house, and on the way, J brought me up to date on how things are going at the moment. Sounds like all the updates to the place are done, and the new contractor for the addition is great. We got home, and it looks fantastic! Rosie had lunch ready for us, and the rest of the crew joined us for the meal before we headed into the living room for the meeting. Result? All is running super smooth, and our numbers are up by about 5%, which covers all the updates on the property and holiday bonuses. I met the new media gal, and she seems spot-on, they did well on that hire for sure. I'm off to shower and then get out into the woods for a run, we have decisions to make tomorrow about the next launch.*

*X*

Is X now working on her entrepreneurial aspirations? Maybe. How things play out over the long haul is the only way to know. Perhaps she is just



playing, creating futures she can inhabit on and off to see how they fit. She's being smart, and keeping it all in positive, forward-looking directions, and we can see she remains focused on improving her personal economy.

Like the trip to Iceland, some of what may be happening is that she is finding blockages, places where she really can't comfortably imagine what she could possibly want to be or to do with her life for the next while. She moves into those spaces in the Black Book. If it later becomes certain she does not want that thing, she writes 'CANCEL' clearly across those pages, removes them from the book, and discards them. She then will focus more entries on what she now knows is important to her at this point in time.

If, however, she decides on having the second home and business headquartered in Boulder (which like Gloria may be an avatar, a placeholder that has the qualities she seeks and which makes her feel the way she desires to feel), she will work to build more entries and more sensory anchors to that vision.

*Dear Diary-*

*Last evening before dinner Gloria and I went riding along the ridge behind the house where you can see the whole property. It was quiet. Just the sounds of the horses breathing, their hooves on soil and stones, a few birds here and there. We got out to that big rock and dismounted and sat for a while, feeling the heat of the day rising from the stone, rising up into us like the earth-fire serpents feel when I run the fire snakes.<sup>46</sup> We didn't talk much, just watched. I asked her if she was still happy, being here with me after all these years. She looked at me seriously, then laughed and told me I may be an idiot, but at least I was her idiot and I always would be.*

X

Things now are merging, X is playing more with the Colorado vision, putting out there that a long-term relationship that works is the main interest. My take is also that X is getting very skilled at the process, and very smart about what she writes. She is working herself deeply into the picture, to a place where she can feel it like it all actually happened yesterday, and she can remember how the horse beneath her felt. As a smart

woman, she really does take up kick-boxing and writes about what she learns there. How she feels about it, how it smells, and what it feels like to wrap her hands before she puts on the gloves. Maybe, if she is crafty, she will take a trip to somewhere that feels just like what she is imagining. Perhaps she'll find a place to ride a horse, somewhere quiet in the mountains. One of these days she may begin dreaming the dreams of the person who lives that life. In time she will find herself being a lot closer to that version of her self than when she started.

Being magical folks, some will want to use the Black Book to create changes to their internal states. These may be intended to strengthen magical work, deepen perceptual skills, or to enhance meditative states. In the examples below, X is shifting her focus in this direction.

*Dear Diary-*

*I've been practicing more sigil magic, and I am uncertain why, but it's working much better than I think it did before. I'm finding the design/creation process very natural and fluid, and I often enter a light trance while I draw them out. The glyphs seem to enliven as I work, and this seems to greatly improve the quality of the results.*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*You know how I used to bitch about how I couldn't read cards? What was I thinking? I mean sure, I'm not 100% all the time, but I can totally spot trends more often than not, with pretty damn good success.*

*Here's an example: Remember Jonathan from work that I wrote about and how he had gone from being super fun to a total drag and when asked about it denied that anything was wrong? A couple of months ago he asked me for a reading, not about that, you know, but you get what you get when you ask the witch for help, right? Well, in that reading I told him his boyfriend was untrustworthy and either thinking about leaving or having an affair with another man. Yesterday at lunch Jon tells me his dude totally bailed on him for someone he'd been seeing on the side for six months. My only 'error' is that it was a girl! My bad for*

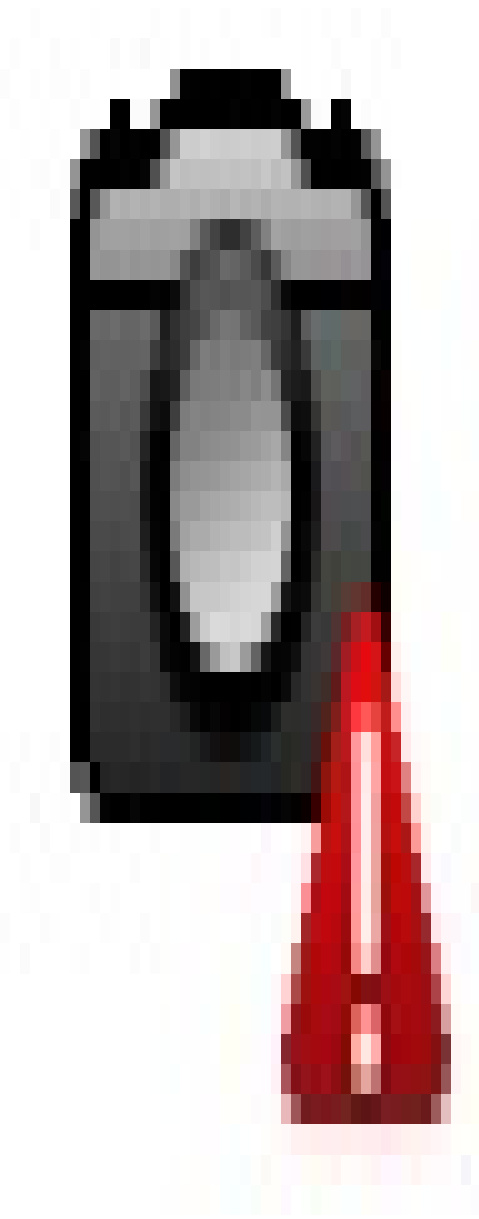
*assuming the guy was only interested in boys, but I'll call it a win anyway (for me, sucks for Jon!).*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*While lying in bed with Gloria after dinner and sex, I decided to see if I could astral project a bit. When I closed my eyes, I gently thought 'up' and felt a sort of sliding sensation. I was out! Looking down at myself, my eyes were closed, and my body was very still. Gloria was out like the dead, as she always is afterward (I secretly think of this as her man-trait, shhh!). There was a faint haze over everything I could see, like a filter in an old movie. I watched for a few moments, and it was like my sight changed a bit and I could see the lights of the fibers/energy bonds between us, glowing brightly. I watched for a little while longer, then I thought 'return!' and I was back in my body on the very edge of sleep. The entire experience was peaceful and beautiful and easy.*

*X*



*SIGIL CREATION*

*Dear Diary-*

*Last week I created a shoal of sigils for the new business I am starting. I spent a week narrowing the statements of intent until they all spoke to me. I ended up with eight of them. I prepared everything for the full moon and waited until dark to begin. I had left all the lights off for the last hour before dark, so my apartment would become dark naturally. This is a new technique I've been trying, and it seriously helps the mood! I dressed and lit a candle, some incense, and fed the road opening charm with some of my wine.*

*I sat for a bit and breathed until I felt a slight shift in reality, and then I began. I consecrated the paper, passing each piece through the candle flame, licking a corner of each with wine-wet tongue, and then drew the sigil on each. I breathed life into each one and gazed at them for a few minutes in the candlelight until each one squirmed a bit (that's the weirdest thing, seriously it always makes me feel in my gut that they are alive).*

*Once all were drawn & breathed on & felt lively, I anointed each one with oil. I pinned them up on the sigil board, closed my space, and then ordered in some Italian to help ground me. Beautiful session, the whole thing felt warm & welcoming & happy.*

*X*

The first example is obviously the most shallow vision but is a fine start. We begin wherever we are and in practice, we perfect the skills we need. It's a mistake to expect to be able to step into the kind of work shown in the later examples right away. Practice is always the key.

The last three examples are excellent. Deep, full of sensory anchors, clear in intention, and hit on the visceral feelings involved. X, a smart cookie, will now work up those sigils and then write more entries about their creation and how they manifested. She'll work on astral projection as well, creating strong cross-linkages between her current life and the one she is trying to manifest. She understands that while what she writes can assist her to a great degree, she still has to put the time and energy into the material side of her world to bring her desires to fruition. Building the number and intensity of these cross-linkages one by one, over the course of months and years and hundreds of entries, is the key to success with the Black Book.

One use of the Black Book is to make access to certain psychic or meditative states easier. We can work to bypass mental blocks which keep us from doing the beneficial work for ourselves that we would like to do. A common one is meditation.

*Dear Diary-*

*I've been noticing some real benefit from my meditation practices lately. I seem to be past the whole 'this sucks and I hate it' phase and a lot of the physical discomfort as well. I can sit for a solid half an hour now, and just do the work. It's not super enjoyable, but I kind of like the stillness and watching my mind get uptight about things I have no control over. Or that is just so trivial! My mind can be a wild thing, like a puppy on espresso, just running around in circles. Now I am finding spaces where things become a little quieter.*

*I began using the Lake imagery, which is a version of the Mirror some people use. What I do is try to imagine myself sitting at the edge of a mountain lake, high peaks all around, and trees along the shoreline in places. The water is sometimes still, sometimes busy with ripples, and the sky is sometimes clear and sometimes filled with clouds that are reflected in the Lake. I know that the Lake is a representation of my mind, and that like the Lake, my mind is also reflecting many things, ideas, concepts, stories. These thoughts are like the clouds I can see on the surface of the Lake. They color it, fill it with images, but don't DO anything to the Lake. The Lake remains the lake, still or stirred by the mountain winds. My mind is also 'filled' with all these thoughts and stories, but I don't have to engage with them, I can just observe them as they pass by. I don't spend a lot of my sitting time imagining this Lake, but I find that doing so occasionally carries over in the rest of my practice time. I can now just watch the thoughts or the story my mind is sharing with me pass by like clouds over water.*

*X*

Obviously, this isn't a replacement for meditation, it's one way to make doing that work easier and more comfortable. We can push this idea in many directions.

*Dear Diary-*

*I just came home from a three-day silent retreat! It was really hard but seriously great. There is something very special about being with forty women and not talking, just being there together being there. That was a total dork new age sentence, but it's true! Weirdness: I came home from meditating for three days and I want to meditate more!*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*In the years I have been meditating, I've come to cherish the practice. I like to sit and be still and watch my mind play its games and not get involved.*

*The weirder side, where I sometimes achieve heightened perception states, is fantastic and I love them, but I mostly love not being as ruled by my own silliness and emotional content. It isn't like I feel any less, I think I feel more now. My awareness of what I am feeling or thinking is more objective and less compelling. It's easier to be truthful to myself, as my bullshit is much more obvious to me.*

*I still don't know what enlightenment is and I'm no monk, but I am much more centered in myself and my own experience than I was before. I can't even remember why I thought it was so hard, so impossible. Grateful for this gift, and that it now seems so natural and comfortable.*

*X*

In working with the Black Book it can be much more effective to work in a fashion similar to working with sigils in shoals. Shoaling sigils is simply where we work a collection of desires together, with the intention that they will help each other to manifest as a group.

In the Black Book shoaling works in the same manner as with 'standard' sigil magic. Clusters of related desires when worked together can generate better, more efficient results.

In practice, we would like to blend the focus where perhaps the primary drive is in the center of the work (or close to it) but there are other drives and desires in the picture to take the edge off. Perhaps the primary drive is

that person that makes you weak in the knees, but you have enough other interests that you can still sleep at night. Let's look at X working through this. Her first attempt is entirely focused on a job.

*Dear Diary-*

*I love my new job! I'm getting paid \$50k a year and get three weeks of vacation paid as well! I'm great at it, and I dig my boss, and I like a lot of the people I work with. I am a happy camper.*

*X*

A little bland, right? All pointed at one thing and only about the money. It feels desperate and grabby, and a few days later she adds another entry.

*Dear Diary-*

*Today was cool at work. It's still a little strange to have two-hour meetings that are both fun AND helpful. I've never seen that before. I spent lunch telling Lisa all about my trip to Bali, and how nice it was to know that I hadn't just burnt all of my vacation days in two weeks and that was that for the year. She agreed that this is one of the best things about working for M.*

*Lisa asked about Gloria and how we were doing and admitted she was a little jealous of how happy we seem together. She also hinted that she might like to do a 'movie night and sleepover at some point' which while sweet (and tempting!) violates my whole 'don't shit where you sleep' ethos. But maybe that's OK to violate occasionally! Ha!*

*X*

Can you see how X is blending these elements, mixing primary drivers, secondary desires, and some things that function as qualifiers? And she's bringing in aspects that make the process a little juicy for her as far as sexual tension, which for others might mean focusing on the food, or feeling the sun on her skin in Bali – strong sensory data that triggers tangible feelings when she thinks of them or writes them down. She's weaving her needs and desires into a tapestry with real depth.

We can use a similar technique when the thing we want is too big, too



important for us to not obsess and lose sleep over, by moving it to the side of the frame, and let other, quieter, or less intense wants take the center stage. This can depressurize the situation, which can definitely help to ease or open up the path of manifestation. X shows us the way:

*Dear Diary-*

*Got together for dinner with Gloria and her folks, who seem great. They are both really supportive of her and were very open and asked a lot of questions about me that seemed mostly heartfelt and only a little like making sure their daughter hadn't fallen in with someone disreputable.*

*Her dad was typically dad-like and interested in the bottom-line things, how long I'd lived in the city, where I worked, what my position was – all the things that soothe the dad-mind that I could take care of his daughter. I eased him into the understanding that I make more money than he does and yeah, I save it in smart places and live well within my means. He was outright fun after we worked through the dad-stuff. I'm fairly sure we won't have to talk about how he'll kill me if I knock up his daughter.*

*Her mom is great, and I think is living vicariously through G and I's relationship. I think at heart she's a wild one who is OK that she settled down, but still thinks it would be cool to travel the world without too much of a safety net. I'd give it 3 to 1 odds that she talks her man into a Bali trip after G and I gushed about it to her and showed her the monkey pictures.*

*I dig them. Almost-in-laws I don't dread hanging out with is a pleasant change!*

*X*

Here X has spun her financial desires into an entry about meeting her girlfriend's parents while working her desire for a vacation in Bali in a very natural way.

THE TASTE OF THE FRUIT

One of the most important skills I have learned as far as getting excellent

results from magic is focusing beyond the goal into what its achievement will allow. This is the realm of necessary, sufficient, and contributory causes.

Let's say you need money to buy something, and that having that money is the only way you can get it, then the money is a necessary cause of you having that thing. If you are in possession of that thing, you had to have the money needed for it. Perhaps you are currently stuck in a land-locked city you would like to leave, and wish to move to a small seaside town. What would your days look like there? What would you do at home? Do you walk on the beach every morning? Do you eat dinner at a favorite restaurant there every Friday night? Write about these things in the Black Book in as much sensory detail as possible. You'll still need to manage the material ends (which all of this can help!) of course. By focusing your magic beyond the realization of the desire onto what life on the other side of the result feels like can open doors that seem locked forever from where we stand in the moment.

Let's look at an example of this type of work:

Perhaps X has something that impedes her like social anxiety. She really doesn't enjoy being the center of attention, but there are things or experiences she wants in life that require it.

Maybe she wants to own her own business and be its public face, or wants to try being at least an amateur kick-boxer or performing singer-songwriter, but freezes up when asked to perform. She could approach this in the Black Book, and may also find that working on one aspect will help the others.

*Dear Diary-*

*Remember how I KO'd that girl last Spring while thousands cheered? Okay, so it was only about 150, but hey, they cheered!*

*Anyway, doing that made me realize something: if I am more or less comfortable risking getting beat up in front of people, maybe I could survive playing some songs in front of people. I did it! It was WAY scarier than the fight, which I expect says something unflattering about my psyche. But I did it. I even did a Tom Waits cover figuring if I got*

*booed for anything it would be that, and then, get this: if they are booing at a Tom Waits song, they have no taste to begin with! Flawed logic for sure, but you get what you get. It was almost fun! OK, maybe not, but I'm doing it again next week.*

*X*

It's important to remember that it is entirely possible that X is not really interested in being a serious singer and guitar player any more than she was in being a fighter. Maybe she has decided these are the two scariest things she can imagine doing. If she could fight or perform in public then how on earth would talking to people about her business be a problem? She can back up the Black Book work by learning a Tom Waits song and maybe hitting up the open mic. X is also layering on some toughness foundations: the experience was scary and not really that much fun, but she is doing it again. To reinforce this further, she can revisit the scenes of the crimes down the road, both in her waking, day-to-day life, and in the Black Book and the Corridor.

*Dear Diary-*

*Well, that was one hell of a week. I had a second fight, and I got my ass kicked. Not really, I made it all the way through, but I lost on the decision. It was way less cool than knocking someone out. I learned a lot, though. I kept on her, solid forward pressure, she was just way more experienced and I could never really hurt her. But I didn't go fetal, and I didn't gas, and my coach says this was the perfect fight for me because, and I quote 'now you know you are a dog who doesn't quit'. I told him telling a girl she is a dog is not really the best customer service, and now he's calling me Dog all the time. 'I'm proud of you, Dog', he says all gangster-like.*

*I played that open mic again two nights later, all bruised up. Gloria refused to let me use any cover-up or wear my Jackie O glasses and insisted I wear my Everlast t-shirt. She said I was a fighter now and had to show up as a fighter, and anyway if I tried to hide the shiner people would think she was abusing me. Like that would ever happen. I went out there and played and sang like a Dog. It was WAY more fun than last*

*time. Weirdly, it may not have been as fun as the fight. I may not be normal, Dog. I'm down with that.*

*X*

And to bring it full circle:

*Dear Diary-*

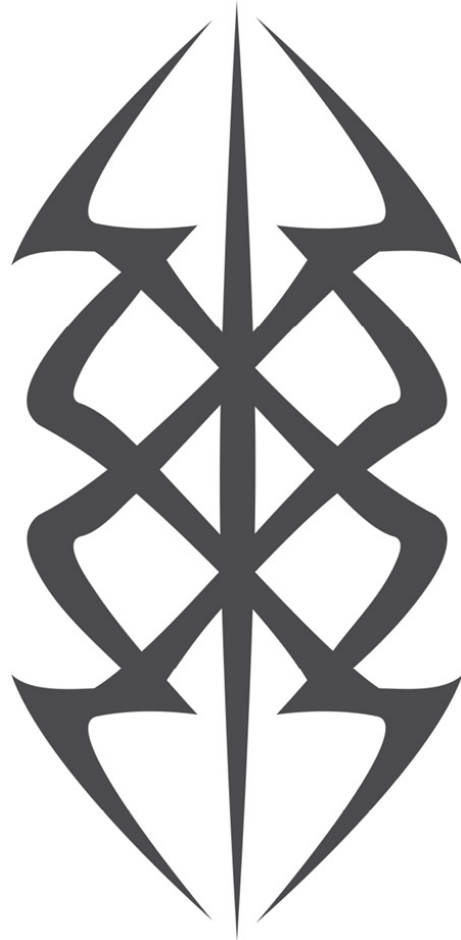
*I had that interview with the reporter from the weekly, and it ended up being really cool. He had done his research and where most of these kinds of things seem like puff pieces or pseudo-advertisements, this was not that. He has a genuine interest in the work we do and was great to have in the office. They took a bunch of photos and I insisted we get some good shots of the peeps (just the ones who were into it) as while it's my baby, they are the nannies and housekeepers who keep it growing and healthy and purring along. He came by yesterday with the article and the photos they will use (which I required before I agreed to do it) and it was all great. I think it will bring a lot more attention to what we do here and should be a solid boost to the biz.*

*After all the 'work stuff' he says: 'so we've been talking about this article for a while, and I didn't want to say anything until it was done, but I watched you in the ring two weeks ago. You really need to learn how to get hit a little less when you fight.' and walks out of my office. Damn, Dog. That was harsh.*

*X*

Can you see how these entries are written to occur after certain things have already taken place? And which if they had occurred as described would change X in the ways she desires? She is hammering on the base-level work, playing her guitar and singing, working on her fighting, and working on her business. Even if she never takes any of them to the level she is writing about in the Black Book, she is moving the mile markers of what is possible for her. She pushes herself deeper into zones she believes will serve her better than her current state. The feedback loops she is building are giving her body, mind, and soul/spirit complex what amounts to proof that what she is writing is the truth. What comes from this is a re-

arrangement and restructuring of who she is (her identity) and therefore what she sees herself as capable of being or doing. She is shifting whole swaths of possibilities from the ‘never’ to ‘likely’ column of her ledger. All of her actions in ‘the real world’ reinforce this. All of her entries in the Black Book reinforce this.



*THE WEAVER'S SIGIL*

The remaining work of this chapter is about housekeeping the work and keeping all the various elements happy and healthy. They are not in any order, except for the first:

Work towards what you desire, want or need. This means that while you work to mitigate or dissolve or transmute past traumas, events, and their effects, you aren't actually working against them. This is crucial and is a form of magical hygiene. What we are doing is a creative act at its core, and

by ‘working against outcomes’ we would bring a counter-force that can act as a form of contagion. We are building a better, less damaged us, world, and history and thus a better future or fate. We work to build, to grow, to nourish these states and therefore the tools and the procedures themselves. There will be those who argue that this approach is imbalanced, and it is; it’s radically skewed towards positive change.

Feed your tools. They are powerful allies! I suggest feeding the Black Book and the Pen every time you use them, even if this is just a ‘thank you’ out loud and a kiss on each. At least once a week, place the Black Book, Pen, and Road Opening Charm together and make offerings to them as a group. This can simply be cool water, some kind of fruit (or other food; I like fruit as it fits with the overall metaphor), oil and incense if you use them, and then sit with your tools. Singing, humming, playing music for them, or vibrating the vowels as suggested in *Six Ways* can be a great offering. Rub your hands together and then ‘feed’ the heat and energy produced to these allies of yours. Imagine the currents of magic, the currents within the warp and weft of the Weaving, and gently ‘push’ your tools into that current.<sup>47</sup>

I make periodic offerings to the Weavers as well. There are two images of ‘Weaver’s Rune’ in this book: the cover version, which looks like a bindrune but actually is not (it’s a sigil that took that shape as I was drawing it), and one that is more obviously sigil-like, shown above. Both are sigils based on the ‘Weavers Rune’ (rune in this case meaning charm) that opens this text before the introduction. These three ‘runes’ are for your use should they call to you. They can be added to the Black Book, used as targets for concentration and meditation, or used to connect with the Three Sisters ritually. I have carved them in wood and painted them as ‘icons’ and I make offerings to the Weavers using them as talismans and as parts of shrines. You may of course prefer to work with other spirits or beings that are aligned to the work for you.

It can help a lot to sign your entries in the book, either with your magical name, or a special one that you create for this work. I created a sigil of the name I use for the work, and sign each entry with that glyph.

If you stop working with the Black Book, don’t expect the Black Book to stop working with you. The feedback loop aspect of this has powerful

effects on outcomes. I've written dozens of entries only to lose the thread, and then when I returned and re-read what I had written found many echoes in my current life that were the byproducts of the work.

Remember to close out entries you no longer wish to give power to: write CANCEL across the page or pages (I like a red felt pen for this), remove the pages from the book, and discard them. I do not burn these pages; I toss them into the trash.<sup>48</sup> This does not guarantee (and you should not expect) that this will fully eliminate any effects from the entries canceled. We are playing with time and causation here, so once you begin to write, things begin to shift. You can mitigate this by creating more entries that reflect your redirected course. This whole approach of the Black Book is much like driving a car. You don't return home and start over because you took a wrong turn. You put your foot on the gas, turn the wheel, and keep driving.

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40 Judas Priest, *Heading Out To The Highway*. A good song about magic.

41 Peter J. Carroll, *Liber Kaos*

42 This is not to belittle either paranoia or omens and portents! The question is always: is this information, this perception, beneficial?

43 With the Black Book we are working on multiple levels at the same time. We create the entries with our waking mind or normal consciousness, which feeds into what could be called the deep mind, which in turn returns information into the waking mind. This circular, ever-changing weaving of intention is like a call and response, followed by an adjustment to the call, which requires changes to the response that follows. The intention is to produce helpful recursive cycles, which can also be thought of as positive feedback loops. These feedback loops breed power, and are part of what leads to the 'creature' nature of the Black Book.

44 It may be helpful to consider this work as a game, to take any edge of tension off of it. A game can still be serious, even though we take great pleasure in playing it!

45 Shoals are groups of sigils that are created and worked together. The idea behind shoaling is the sigils support one another, so as one begins to manifest it sort of pulls the others along with it. This is a smart use of the contagion concept! See Gordon White's excellent book *The Chaos*

*Protocols: Magical Techniques for Navigating the New Economic Reality*  
for more on this.

[46](#) The fire snakes are an energy practice taught in *Six Ways*.

[47](#) This ‘push it into the currents of magic’ method is my form of a practice taught by Fabeku Fatunmise.

[48](#) I discard these entries as I ritually burn completed journals to free them from their physical forms while keeping them active in the Otherworlds. Keeping the methods distinct helps keep the effects clearly separated. If you think you’ll hang on to all your older journals, you might choose a different method, and burning canceled entries may then make sense.



# WALKING THE CORRIDOR

The Corridor is a simple imaginal construct that allows us to access an unlimited set of potential realities. Its primary use lies in allowing us to change the experience of (most commonly) past events to shift their effects on us from unhelpful to helpful. Another potent use is in visiting our future selves to seek guidance from that vantage point. We can also walk the Corridor to reinforce the truth and validity of what we have written in the Black Book.

I use many versions of the basic image that I am about to describe: a long Corridor about ten feet wide with doors on either side set about ten feet apart, repeating endlessly in front and behind me. Sometimes I sense this as doors in an office building with the Corridor itself as nondescript, at other times as ancient wooden doors in stone-lined tunnels, sometimes as a path through endless forest, with the shadowy spaces between the trees bordering the path functioning as the doors. A few times I've found the doors set in a subway tunnel, gritty and lit with odd yellow industrial lighting. It's the endlessness of the Corridor and its doors which is important, as we seek endless possibilities in this work.



*CORRIDOR OF TREES*

We access the Corridor via our imagination, which may be any variety of controlled daydreaming, free imagining, or trance. It's not necessary to

actually ‘see’ anything in your mind’s eye; what we seek is a sense of this construct and the various scenes that will play out within it. Just as with the trance-work described in *Six Ways*, if we cannot ‘sense’ anything (which is most often a case of having unreasonable expectations of ourselves) at all, then we silently describe to ourselves what we would be sensing or seeing if indeed we were. Anyone can do this work, but many will not have the full-blown sensory ‘visions’ that they believe are necessary for the work to be effective. Such visions may make the work more engaging, but we do not need them.

In the Corridor, we will be walking and then opening doors to enter into the scenes they reveal.<sup>49</sup> We open doors to other times and places in order to witness or ‘step into’ past experiences. We can then shape the effects of events that have already occurred in different directions, modifying them to create different outcomes. The basis for how this works (if you need an explanation) is that past events shade or shape all the steps taken since. They, therefore, produce what I think of as a flight path, trajectory, road, or track that leads to certain outcomes. If unchallenged, this trajectory is very much like a set of train tracks: it leads where it leads, which is to a very particular outcome or ‘fate’. By altering the initial experience with our work in the Corridor, we change that trajectory, allowing ourselves to get off of the tracks, and to move onto a path that suits us better or which opens up a wider range of results.

We can best walk the Corridor in deep relaxation, the in-between-ness of the liminal gnosis. This can be any point on the spectrum from the lightest daydream to the deepest trance. Let’s return to X now and she can show us how to proceed.

X has decided that it is time to clear up some items from her past that are still exerting baleful influences on her life. She turns off the lights, closes the window blinds, turns off her phone, and gets into bed. She lies down, closes her eyes, breathes a bit to relax, and perhaps uses the bone induction as well to chill out.

When she is ready, X drops into the Corridor. She likes ‘drops in’ as it seems like ‘dropping in to see a friend’, thus no big deal. She walks forward, passing doors on either side. Today the Corridor is like a hall of doors in *The Matrix*, ultra-clean and corporate. X walks until a door ‘feels’

right, turns to it and stops, opens the door and steps in.

Inside is her bedroom from her childhood, but she is as she is today, wearing the same clothes, with all of her life's knowledge and personal power intact. It's interesting but not odd to be in the room. She can hear her father yelling at her six-year-old self, telling her she is in trouble for hitting that girl at school who tried to take her lunch money for the third time. She can hear herself crying and trying to explain, while her dad keeps cutting her off and finally tells her to go to her room.

Important note: this is not a 'random' experience. X controls where she is going and how it plays out. She knew where she was going and what she would do. This is her inner world, and she is in charge. There is room to explore more randomly but I strongly suggest you have extensive experience with all the practices in this book before doing so.

X finds all of this a little sad but isn't disturbed by any of it. It's clearer than what she usually remembers, but there is none of the tightness or 'clenched' feeling that has come along with the memory of the event at other times. Her internal state is one of love for her six-year-old self, but she otherwise feels pretty dispassionate about the entire scene. She is untouched in a way that feels strange but is neither pleasant nor unpleasant. She is on emotional neutral ground.

She waits another moment, and then her six-year-old self walks into the room and closes the door behind her, tears in her eyes and snot in her nose, sobbing hard.

Her younger self does not notice her until adult X says, "Hey, I'm sorry to just sort of 'be' here, but I thought you could use a friend."

Young X notices her and is relaxed and interested. "Who are you?" she says, perking up a bit and wiping her nose on a tissue.

Adult X replies, "well, I'm you, but you when you are thirty-five years old if you can believe that!"

Young X is attentive now and done crying. "Really? I'll grow up to be you? You are so big and you are older than my mom!"

"It's kind of strange, I agree," says adult X. "Can I tell you something?"

"I guess so."

"Look, your Dad is a good guy, but he is completely out of line here. You did nothing at all wrong, that girl is a bully and you did the one thing that would stop her. Your Dad is freaked out because he doesn't like anyone to

rock the boat. Somewhere he got it into his head that it's always better to just accept whatever is happening and try to avoid the assholes. It's not a terrible way to be, but it doesn't always work out too well, which is pretty much dependent on the assholes. Sometimes you have to stand up for yourself. You did great. Just wait till you see Marla tomorrow – she comes to school with a seriously nasty black eye!”

“No way! I gave her a black eye?” exclaims young X.

“Totally. Also, you are a bad-ass, although no one will say that to you. All the other girls think it. You'll find out about that from a few of them when you are in high school. Look, I should go, but I wanted you to know that you did good and that your Dad just got scared and freaked out. He's not even really mad at you, he just doesn't know how to act about the whole thing. He never said it, not that I remember, but I'm pretty sure he's proud of you and wonders where you got the guts to fight back since he never did.”

“Will I see you again,” young X asks. “Every time you look in the mirror, you will see me. Hey, you know what? Once the dust settles from this thing, you should ask your Mom if you can start a martial arts. class. It's a cool thing and super fun, too. I bet she'd be into it, as I just started kick-boxing and I think she's jealous!”

Adult X hugs young X and fades back into her own bed in the present time. She feels really good. It's almost like she can feel a slight shift in who she is today from the visit she just made to her bedroom twenty-nine years ago.

The above covers the basic process and also contains some keys to keep in mind.

First, you are in control. You get to decide that the visit goes well, that your younger self is receptive and relaxed. The visit is one hundred percent effective, enjoyable, and beneficial for the parties involved. This is your daydream, and it goes how you intend it to.

Second, start with something that influenced you but not something too traumatic. In other words, don't start with the worst events of your life, which is a tendency many people have. Get your sea legs first, get grounded, and learn how to structure the events. Many people (if not most) have some very nasty things that either happened to them or that they did to

others from which they will want to unpin. This is good, and it is what the work is for, but it's not the starting point.

Now we will look at other examples and consider some options for how you can use the Corridor.

X decides that she needs to work through some attachments she has been carrying around for ages. She did some unpleasant things when she was in her teens and was pissed off at the world all the time.

X goes through the process of quieting her mind and relaxing and then drops into the Corridor.

Today the Corridor is the tunnel; X knows this means this is a power day. This suits her intentions, as today she will attempt something new. It's time to undo some bad tangles that make it hard for her to control herself around drugs and alcohol. She thinks she can, but she also knows it may not be a 'one-and-done' kind of thing as she has been using them to both hide from herself and as social lubricants for decades.

X walks the tunnel under the weird yellow lighting, alongside the subway tracks and with the harsh ozone smells from the electric trains that run when she isn't here in her nose. It is quiet except for the buzzing of the lights; she always feels like she's in a movie when it's tunnel time. It suits the mood and the intention, which isn't always the case, but today it just feels solid. She keeps walking, passing many doors, waiting for the one that says 'try me' to her senses. Her target this time is the vacant lot with the oak trees where she used to drink alone when she was angry and sick of home, her friends, and the world in general. X spots the door turns towards it and walks on through.

This time, her sixteen-year-old self is sitting with her back up against the old oak that was her favorite tree. She is wearing a leather jacket, jeans, and boots, which minus the spikes, and overall scruffiness is what she wears today. The uniform hasn't changed all that much, she notes.

"Hey," says X to her younger self.

"Do I know you?" says young X.

"You do. We've met many times like this before, and will again," X replies.

"You kind of look like me."

"Well that's an excellent thing because I am you," says X. "Look, I know

you are impatient, so I'll get to it. You're kind of screwing up here. I don't mean this in the way your Mom says and your Dad implies, which for them is just about the visuals since they have no clue what you're really doing. What I mean is you're wasting a lot of energy and time being the fuck-up in your mind, which is bullshit. You are super smart and you know it – WAY smarter than most of your friends, and you are several levels above the dudes you have been sleeping with. The story you tell yourself is that you 'like to party' but what you are trying to do is anesthetize yourself so you can cope with all the assholes and halfwits you spend your time with. Is any of this sounding correct?"

"Holy shit it does," X at sixteen says.

X says, "perfect. Hold on to that thought. Here's the deal: you need to find a focus that doesn't involve trying to fit in with the kids you know. You don't. It won't ever happen. Trust me, we tried for ages and all we got was screwed over (sometimes literally and not in a nice way) and strung out. None of this is your fault. We are just a little weird compared to the normal folks in this town. Here's the deal, X. Have a beer or two if you want to, but stop with the binging and the blackouts. It's not good. And I'll be back to show you some things that will help with all of this, OK? The most important thing you need to remember: it's not you. Yeah, you are a bit peculiar, but that's an awesome thing to be. You are correct that 'normal' is boring, but you are going to be incredibly pleased you never tried too hard to fit that mold. It's just who you are, so now it's time to accept it and use it to kick some ass rather than beat yourself down."

"You are so clearly me later in life that it's kind of insane," says young X.

"Ain't that the truth," says X. "I'll catch you later."

Some of the ways I use the Corridor and the Black Book are forms of retroactive enchantment. Retroactive enchantment is a concept that I first heard of in Peter J. Carroll's book *Liber Kaos*. I made a lot of different inferences from what Carroll wrote, playing with what the term itself suggested to me rather than what he said about it. In time I began working in ways that eventually took the form of the Corridor. Carroll speaks of retroactive enchantment as being works in the present whose results can only be explained by changes in the past. Where I diverged from this is by heading into the past via conscious daydreaming and trance to change or

shift the effects past events had on me. Changing the past to change the present and future. This is one of the ways that we can change the roots of the tree.

The results of the Corridor work are often felt in my body first, at least when I hit some crucial bit of... what shall we call it? Grunge comes to mind. Some bit of memory or attachment that functions like dirt or grime on the lens of my perceptions which I didn't even know the true extent of until the lens was cleared. Once cleared, I am amazed at the freedom of view that has been revealed. Usually what is most noticeable is how different I feel. Someone pushes a button that without fail sets me off and... I feel nothing. In those moments I realize that this response-set was never native to my being; it was developed later and blended into my experience in a way that made it seem like it was 'mine'. Maybe it was even 'me'.

These non-native aspects or embellishments were never us, never needed to define us for good or for ill. As magical beings, we can go back in and change the programming in order to change the outcome. We can go back and feed ourselves the power needed to push through or step around these less-than-helpful events and their aftereffects to open up possibilities and shift probabilities — to move from the impossible to the inevitable, in ways that serve us now. We change the roots, which changes the tree which changes the branches which then bear different fruit.

This process initially seemed purely psychological, which of course it is in part, but the effects do not seem to be exclusive to the individual mind. This perception changed when, several years ago, I was speaking with someone I hadn't seen since high school who recounted a story about an event in which we both took part. The version of the story they shared was the one I had changed via working in the Corridor (this is unprovable, but I experienced it as true!). It seems to me now that time flows in strange ways, at least for those who will play in its currents.

Some of the work we can do in the Black Book and the Corridor is also what we could consider 'proactive enchantment' (for lack of a much-needed better term). In these cases, we are reaching forward through time to work on or with our future selves and their situations and experiences. To use a phrase I used in *Six Ways*: this is the Work of the Weavers. We join them at the loom and take charge of knotting or untangling our Fates.



I expect that some readers are already thinking of blending approaches. We now turn to see how this might play out in action. The scene opens with X sitting at her table, Black Book open and Pen in one hand, a charm of road opening in the other, contemplating where to start...

*Dear Diary-*

*You know how I used to get so pissed off if someone questioned my perspective on something I knew a lot about, no matter what it was? How I was so damn prickly about it I was like a radioactive porcupine on PCP? I'd just stab you in the eye and go for your throat like it was the most important thing in the world? Yeah, that. I figured you had maybe noticed it. I realized that this was some kind of residual nastiness from when I was a kid and suffered a few personal betrayals that ended a few friendships. Those kids really hurt me and I mean, I knew it on some level then, but I never thought those things would have the power to set me off NOW as if I was still that kid. No way, not even possible. But shit, it was not only possible, it was happening.*

*I decided I'd had enough, so I dropped into the Corridor, into the version that looks like some ancient cave-temple-complex from Indiana Jones or something. That one is weird, for sure, but I like it. I walked the cave-corridor for what seemed like ages, and it felt like I was walking back through the sludge of time. It was a slog. But I knew what door I was looking for and I was sure as hell going to walk until I found it, sludge be damned! And I found it.*

*When I walked into that place, behind the school, where Penny and Jaime were waiting for me, and instead of letting them talk me into fooling around with Jim and then spreading pics and telling everyone that I was a slut (not like anything much even happened, but three against one, who do you think got to tell the story?) I told them I had no use for them, that they were dead to me, and that nothing they ever did would ever have the slightest effect on me. As I left I brushed past Jim and gave him a look like a porcupine set on stun and he looked away fast. Then I left that space and returned home.*

*Now I feel like a different person and have a powerful feeling I won't be exploding on people so much anymore. There are a few more places*

*and times for me to visit, however. Set on stun, mofos!*

X

X can start with the Corridor as described, or start with the Book, but the key is to use both tools to reinforce what changes she has made, to reiterate that the work was done, and to describe what effects have come about because of the work. She uses the Corridor to create the daydream/trance experience and the Black Book to concretize it. She could also write the entry before doing the work in the Corridor, but both pieces are important.

Let's look at another example of blending the work of the Black Book and the Corridor. X realizes that while she has changed a lot in many ways since she began practicing a few years ago, she often wishes she knew about magic when she was younger. She chooses to focus on her sixteen-year-old self again, thinking this could be another angle for her to move away from the self-medicating with booze. She decides that the location should stay the same since it's a place she always went alone. It might shift her experience of that place from where she would run to the bottle and hide, and turn it into a place of power.

This time she starts with the Corridor.

X drops into the Corridor, finds her door, and passes through it.

Her sixteen-year-old self is again sitting with her back up against the old oak tree. Again she wears jeans and her leather jacket, although this time she is sober and writing or drawing in a sketchbook under the moonlight. She sees X this time right away.

"Hey, I was hoping I was going to see you again!" young X says.

"I told you I'd be back. How are things going?"

"A little better, for sure. I realized you were right and that a lot of my friends are kind of tools."

X replied, "They aren't terrible people you know, just a little lost. Most of them will drop all the stuff that makes them seem cool now and become housewives and lawyers. Nothing wrong with that, either, they'll have good lives. But we're different, we're wired in another configuration."

"I guess I have always felt that," says X-sixteen, "but you're saying it's a real thing?"

"It's real. Just like some folks are wired to be artists, and some are wired

to be politicians or firemen or soldiers or salesmen. They are all legit ways of being, but to think they are the same is like thinking all dogs are meant to be poodles. They ended up different for many reasons and trying to force one to be the other just breaks people. Ask me how I know.”

“Are you saying you broke? I mean I... break? I’m not really into that if I get a choice.”

X replies, “That’s exactly why I came here, I want to offer us a choice if you are down with it.”

“I’m down with it, what do I have to do?” asks younger X.

“There’s a bunch of things you can do, but let’s start simple. I want to teach you a breathing exercise, OK? It’ll help when you start to feel a little off-kilter or have an anxiety attack. First, I want you to just sit up straight and close your eyes...”

X teaches her younger self the breathing exercise and talks to her a bit about when she can use it, and checks that she has written the directions into her journal. She finishes up, says goodbye, and returns to the present time and goes to bed.

Morning comes, she wakes up, makes coffee, and sits down at her table with the Black Book, Pen, and Road Opening Charm again. She writes:

*Dear Diary-*

*Last night I dropped into the Corridor and revisited my sixteen-year-old self at the tree in the vacant lot. She looked better, brighter, clearer-headed, and she remembered me. I told her that I wanted to help her/us to have an overall better life, and I taught her how to do the basic relaxation breathing and the box breathing for when she has anxiety attacks. She got it super quick and wrote it all down in her sketchbook so she would remember it. I think this stuff is doing some wild things to my world, as I am feeling super relaxed in a way I cannot say has ever been normal.*

*X*



*THE WORLD OUTSIDE*

X returns to the vacant lot and her younger self several times, sometimes just sitting with her and breathing together, sometimes showing her other things. One time she shows her how to do a simple candle spell, and later

on, she shows her how to create sigils.

Each time she visits via the Corridor, she creates an entry reinforcing the work in the Black Book: what was done, how X at whatever age she was looks, acts, feels energetically, noting all the positive changes. She also details how she herself, now, in the present time, looks, acts and feels. She is creating an entire range of interwoven positive feedback loops, fine-tuning the changes.

Over time the changes accumulate to form a rather different X, one who is less encumbered by past traumas, and who has deeply embedded skill-sets that can serve when she is sixteen, thirty, sixty. She has shifted the trajectory of her life in small and large ways, producing radical shifts in the tree that she is. She is stronger now, more comfortable within her self and her power, and she is bearing stronger fruit.

Another approach that has proven highly effective is what I call additive work, meaning that instead of altering past events, we add events that would have been useful had they occurred at certain points in the past. The best approach for me has been via ‘witnessing’ an event in the Corridor, which had it occurred in the past would provide the causation I seek. X fearlessly shows us the way as she writes of her experiences in the Corridor in the Black Book.

*Dear Diary-*

*Yesterday I remembered my grandmother and was really missing our time together. I was trying to figure out what my earliest memory of her was, and I decided to see if I could find it via the Corridor. This time it was the tunnel, and I found the door after a time of walking in the odd light of that place. Passing through it, I was in my crib, and Gran came into my room.*

*“Child of my child, we have work to do while your parents are out. They are lovely people but they have some holes in their educations which I must take credit for in your mother’s case. I didn’t know any better back then.”*

*Gran lifted me from my crib and walked us outside. I felt infinitely safe with her, as I always did. She sat down in the cool of the back yard,*

*and laid me down on the grass, which was very interesting under my tiny fingers! Something new! It was an overcast night and very dark, but while she hummed some kind of rhythmic tune under her breath, the clouds parted to reveal a huge full moon.*

*Gran withdrew a small item from her sweater and did something with it and as it opened (I now know it was a small bottle of oil) it smelled wonderful and earthy like the ground beneath me and the grass and the moon and my cat. Gran removed my socks and gently touched light dabs of oil to my feet, my hands, my ears, my nose, just above my eyes, my lips (it tasted very odd, but not bad, but I didn't want to eat it), between my eyes, the very top of my head where I was still soft and open, and then she spoke:*

*“Mothers of my Mothers  
Fathers of my Fathers  
Teachers of my Teachers  
Bless this child  
Guide her feet  
Her hands  
Her lips  
Her tongue  
Her heart  
Her lungs  
Her eyes  
Her sight  
Her voice  
Her touch  
Her ears  
Her mind  
And the secret sight that dwells  
Inside all of our kind  
Watch over her  
All of her days.  
You are blessed, child,  
This day And all days  
Until the Gods Roll it up*

*And put it all away.”*

*She hummed a bit more, and I stared at the moon, and somehow felt the night wrap around me like the arms of my grandmother, and then I slept.*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*I was remembering when I began learning breath-work from my future self! How did I not feel insane back then? Lately, I have been thinking this recursive enchantment thing must be rooted in our beings, otherwise, how could it feel so natural?*

*I also remembered when old X was giving me a bad time about not being able to climb into the tree with her! She was so strong! I couldn't even hold on long enough to get my legs up that high! She was so awesome and cool about it.*

*“Look,” old X said. “You've mostly been sitting on your ass for about five years now since you decided to be bummed out about everything, so of course you aren't strong. That's not how the body works. I'll help you get started if you are into it.”*

*“Hell yes I am into it, it's just not acceptable to have my forty-year-old self kick my ass!”*

*And right then we walked over a few blocks to the school and old X taught me to do push-ups, pull-ups, squats, and lunges. And I never really stopped doing them since then, except for a few occasions where I was sick.*

*X*

In the first entry, X is providing herself with a root-level blessing she can carry with her forever, and linking it to her now-deceased Grandmother. Though Gran could be alive when she did this, it's kind of nice that she is already an Ancestor as there is no-one who could counter the truth of the experience. X is now working on really building the soul/spirit foundations for the life she has now or desires, sort of like doing a seismic retrofit on an existing house.

In the second example, X is working to remove her resistance to exercise, which she finds to be a hindrance to the life she wants to have. She is again working at the roots to shift the branches and the fruit: if she has always done this thing, in this case working out, it's likely she always will. She could do similar works for other things, perhaps drawing, singing, playing guitar, taking pictures, or being comfortable meeting new people.

*Dear Diary-*

*Weird shit you realize out of the blue: I used to think I had a fear of meeting new people, but really I just thought everyone else was totally comfortable in social situations. Which is kind of hilarious in retrospect as there are whole special classes of phobias about that very thing! Anyway, I remember when Old X showed up and told me that the key to the whole thing was to just ask questions, that most people had no one who ever really listened to them and they would open right up nine out of ten times if you just listened. She was so right, and I realized right then I loved meeting people and always had because I really wanted to learn about them and get at least a piece of their story.*

*X*

Here X is working on what could be anything from slight discomfort to massive social anxiety, and she is implanting not only a memory of how she 'used to be like that' but a story about how that changed as well a strategy to use in those situations which, if it was second nature, would eliminate all (or at least most) of her issues.

It's good to consider that we are not exactly trying to implant new memories. What we are doing is creating a kind of deep cognitive dissonance within our existing memories, which we should remember are 'hardwired' as neural pathways. These memories can change or fade as new pathways are created, which is one of the functions of our innate neuroplasticity.<sup>50</sup> We aren't looking to alter the original memory (though some may choose to explore this), but to add others that counter the information contained in it.

I sometimes think of this as follows: The memory of a past experience contains a kind of inherent positive and beneficial or negative and non-



beneficial power or energy, which we can think of like a signal from the past that influences us today. As we add or modify memories in the Corridor, it changes the volume or power of that original signal, at least relative to its effects on us. In cases of non-beneficial memories, we create new versions of that memory where things worked out very differently. In doing so we break the hold of the original memory, depriving it of some or all of its potency. When we add positive or helpful memories, we are setting deep anchors which transmit potent signals that feed us beneficial power in the here and now.

The Corridor has become a good ally as a way of traversing parts of the Otherworld. Sometimes this is as simple as wanting to go the Elemental Realms. Let's have X continue to be our guide, as she is a better one than I.

*Dear Diary-*

*Yesterday I dropped into the Corridor and started walking. I was looking for some Water, so to speak. After a time, I found the door and passed through. This would do! I was on a shelf of rock that was flat for ten feet in front of me and then sloped down for another thirty feet before it entered into a dark grey-blue sea. The wind was not too intense but was enough to make a mess of my hair, so I tied it back. I raised up my power, tapping briefly into the Golden Dragon. I walked closer to the edge of the shelf where the waves would not reach me, though the wind blew spray from the breakers onto my face, cold and deliciously salty on my lips, and sat down.*

*I thought about what it was I sought: an ally and the potential for some insight. I'm mostly Fire and Air, with a bit of Earth to ground me, and I seek some Water to balance this. I sat and I thought of this desire, and I did some vowel toning for a bit to loosen my voice. Then I began trying to harmonize with the waves, always thinking of my desire, letting my voice merge with the breakers and the wind.*

*I spoke three times:*

*I seek an ally from the realm of Water.*

*I do not compel, I request.*

*I seek an ally from the realm of Water.*

*I do not compel, I request.  
I seek an ally from the realm of Water.  
I do not compel, I request.*

*I waited, again trying to match my voice to the voice of the Sea, and filling it with my wordless desire. After a long time, though it's hard to tell in those timeless lands, there was a shape before me in the water. I did not move and kept up my sea-song. In time it came closer and raised its beautiful, strange head above the water, seaweed crowned like a mass of dark hair, bright strange eyes in shimmering scaled skin. Looking into her eyes was like looking into the eyes of a lover. I slid onto my belly and crawled forward on the stone shelf until my hands were in the cold water. She watched for a moment more, then closed the gap between us and took my hands in hers and said a word in her language that somehow I knew meant 'welcome'.*

X

It is important to remember that like many other pieces of work expressed here, this one combines the directed daydreaming or trance work of the Corridor and the journaling of the Black Book together to set particular wheels in motion. One part supports the other. This is not all fantasizing in a journal; it's an experiential process coupled with recording what transpired. We are feeding the Black Book and the other tools as allies, and perhaps reaching into other realms to cast our enchantments, so we may be enchanted in turn.

If there are Otherworld spaces you often work in, such as the Tower described in *Six Ways*, you can find or create pathways to them via the doors in the Corridor. The options are many and the limitations few.

*Dear Diary-*

*I've been able to imagine/sense a lot more clearly when I am doing the daydreaming work in the Corridor. I can often 'almost see' what I am imagining now, and sometimes little bits of other senses are creeping in – the other night I was walking in the drizzly woods of the Western Lands and I ran my hand along the leaves of a bush and half-felt the leaves and the tiny droplets of mist on them! I wiped my hand on my*

*pants to dry them! It was so real! Not like waking state, writing in this book in the kitchen real, but another kind of real, another version of real.*

*Sometimes I am so immersed in what is happening that I am not sure after the fact if I was seeing, feeling, or using some other senses. It's as if I am aware of colors and scents, but they are not the things my waking eyes and nose sense. I am starting to believe that some of the difficulty I had getting comfortable with the Corridor work was that I demanded it be exactly the same as my waking experience. Which I can now see was pretty irrational. The more I move away from that expectation, the more 'real' the experiences feel.*

*X*

We can also use the Corridor and the Black Book to reach forward, into the future tense, to provide or find anchors in Skuld's realm. These combined works can help draw us to the worlds we desire, and can sometimes be surprisingly intense on an emotional level.

*Dear Diary-*

*Last night I traveled forward a few years from now to visit the Ranch. It looked amazing! Rose was cooking, and I could smell the tortillas she was making from the yard. The fruit trees that were babies when we got here were full of fruit, and I grabbed an apple. My first apple from my own trees! It was amazing, tart and juicy, and between that and the smell of the tortillas, I was headed into some kind of massive food reverie!*

*As I walked around the house, I saw the stable and the barn that we have just started to work on. The horses were happy as I walked in to see them, and I just feel blessed at what my life has become. I returned to my bed and dreamed of that apple.*

*X*

*Dear Diary-*

*I just returned from a time beyond this one, to confer with my self and*

*get her take on some things. It's very odd to see yourself much older than you are now, it's not like one of those filters you find online.*

*Her face was lined, and her eyes showed a touch of distance some old folks get when the end of life is much closer to hand than the beginning.*

*"I've been wondering when you would come. I remembered we visited, but it's never been clear to me how time flows," she said.*

*"I wanted to see you. I wanted to learn how I felt about all of this... life... I am having and playing with and if you wanted to share any pointers for me from way out here," I replied.*

*She said, "Pointers? Keep at it, it's all made you a better and stronger person, someone you can be proud of and who holds her head high and has a mean right cross if need be. Be gentle with yourself, you've done most of what made sense to do, and you've made a better life for yourself. But try this: sit right here and let me look at you. You are a beautiful woman. I love you. I've always loved you, even when we were too messed up to love anyone else. Love was still in there, safe. It always will be."*

*I came out of this one crying and happy and whole. I'm good. I'm really good.*

*X*

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[49](#) Some will in time be able to use this method for divination, but that is not in any way the focus we have here.

[50](#) Neuroplasticity is the way that the brain changes over time. We can form new memories, learn new languages, or transfer some functions of the brain to a new location in case of damage. It should be clear that this is a big component in most of the work described in this book, but is not at all the whole picture.

# THE FEVER STONE

The Fever Stone is a practice I learned from beings in the Otherworld. It was a joint teaching where the edges were blurred between who was who, and I credit it to both a barrow-dwelling entity I call the Night Mother and to a tribe of spirits that present as Neanderthal hunters, who I call the Brothers.<sup>51</sup>

This is the story the Brothers told me.

“There are traumas in living. Damages. Wounds. Some heal like they never were. These fall away and do no more harm. Some heal like there was a fragment of broken spear point left in the wound, and so though the wound has closed, it festers, brings fevers and illness, and sometimes death. These are the wounds in which the seeds of suffering are sown.

When these types of harms occur, by the malice of men or angry spirits, by trespass or accident, by pure chance or a wrong step during the hunt, they fester inside of us like the spear-wound. But these are soul-wounds, and this infection we call the Fever Stone.

The Fever Stone is neutral, and bears no malice; it is an effect rather than a cause. The Stone creates a point of illness in the spirit or soul and it dwells inside the person until they die and sometimes even beyond death, unless something dislodges the Stone.

Sometimes the Fever Stone is so strong that it attaches to the line of the Ancestors that stand behind the person so that the Stone that festers inside of them is an old Stone, whose harm was passed down through the ages. Most have a Stone like this, sometimes nearly benign, sometimes malign. First, we must heal what we can of the damage these ancestral Stones have caused. Then we can move on to the Stones that rest inside the individual.”

## WASHING THE STONE

The Brothers gave me this practice to pass on to you. It is simple and effective.

First, you must find a stone. If possible, go to where you can find stones in nature, rounded by time and water. This part is important: do not get

obsessive and try to find a ‘perfect’ stone or buy some kind of fancy stone or polished crystal. You need a basic plain stone, like a river rock or even one taken from someone’s landscaping. We seek any basic rounded rock, small enough to fit easily in your hand, between one to three inches across. This stone is the avatar of the Fever Stone that afflicts your ancestors and lineage. Not all of your lineage will be blood-related. Sorcerers, witches, and magicians sometimes have ancestors who are more of the spirit-line than the bloodline, and these can also affect us.

You will need a bowl, jar, or bottle. I use a one-quart vinegar bottle. Wash the stone in a bit of vinegar and then leave it overnight in a bowl covered with salt. Take the stone from the salt in the morning and, if possible, place the stone in a window or outside location where it will not be disturbed but can absorb heat from the sun most days. Fill the bottle or jar with water and a good dose of salt (about a teaspoon, more or less) and place it with the stone, also if possible where it too can be warmed by the sun.

Once a day, slowly pour the salted water over the stone while you rub the stone as if washing it, and speak out loud:

*Fever Stone*

*Ailment of my ancestors*

*I wash you clean*

*That you afflict no more*

*Any of my line.*

*Your time is done*

*You no longer cause harm.*

*By water and sun I wash you clean.*

*May all my lines be blessed*

*Blood and Spirit*

*The wounds of the past*

*Washed clean by the Sea.*

Place the Stone back where you keep it when not washing it, refill the bottle with water and salt, and repeat the process daily. For me, the first run took a few months, and now I wash the Stone when it seems right to do so. Don’t grow attached to the Stone. If you find yourself overly compelled by it, discard it somewhere you rarely go, and acquire a fresh one. This is the

work of the Fever Stone in the physical world.

### BUILDING THE TEMPLE

For the next piece of work with the Fever Stone, it's best if we create a space in which to proceed. This is an internal and/or Otherworld space that we create with a singular intention: it is a temple where we work on our own selves, our own mind, and where we refine, strengthen, and heal ourselves in various ways.

The visual is of a walled yard in a somewhat Eastern-looking temple, like something you would see in an old Kung Fu movie, where the Master sits under the covered portion and the monks train in the open yard before him. Here, there is no Master, just the walls, the yard, and the covered portion where, if it suits, the image of a patron spirit, teacher, symbol or deity may be placed. In mine is a large tapestry of a burning skull, the symbol I use for illumination. This illumination symbol speaks to me of both burning off impurities (psychic contaminants and unhelpful attachments) and the inspiration to shape and change myself via the transforming power of the inner fires of the mind and soul/spirit complex.

You may of course place anything you like in the temple, and rearrange the decor however you desire.



*ILLUMINATION*

This temple is accessible from anywhere, anytime. I close my eyes and take ‘ten steps down’, imagining that I am moving down a short stairway.<sup>52</sup> After the tenth step, I enter the temple. There is no door, no gate, I simply pass into the central space from elsewhere. This is a personal construct, and if it causes you grief, add a door. I started out using a door, but I removed it over time and prefer the peculiarity of passing into the inner space with no obvious portal.

The temple is built up via directed daydreaming, deeper layers of trance, and visualization if that works well for you. The bone induction may be of use in accessing the liminal gnosis here as before. If you are a visual artist it may help to draw or paint it. As always, if you don’t sense anything while in the liminal state, talk yourself through the process. We are using these constructs to work with the deep mind and the soul/spirit complex, and they



understand what we are doing even if our mind does not give us fireworks and CGI level visions. While it's fun to hallucinate at will, it isn't needed. Trust in the process and your ability to have it work for you, and it will.

Practice entering the temple at will frequently, preferably several times a day, until it becomes tangible in really any way at all. It's perfectly fine for that to mean that you have built up the verbal description of the space and can talk yourself into it easily. Once you have that working for you easily, you can move onto the next step.

### EXTRACTING THE STONE

Enter your temple. This time, you are not alone. Well, you are, but there are two of you. The second you is laid out on the ground of the open portion of the temple. You can tell that this second self is alive and healthy: it breathes, its skin tone is good, it is vibrant and well. It may be naked, clothed, or dressed in an odd fashion. Let that aspect unfold as it will and know that it may change at any time.

Walk over to your second self and look down upon your body for a short while. Notice what you notice. Now kneel or sit right next to and on one side of this second self at waist level. Ask this of the second self:

“I have brought you here to remove the Fever Stone that rests inside you and causes you harm. I would take it from you and process it so that it does no further damage. May I do so now?”

You receive a clear sense of ‘yes, you may do so’.<sup>53</sup>

Now you place your hands on the abdomen of your second self just below the navel. As you press your fingers gently into the belly, you feel the Stone slide easily into your hand or hands. You take the Stone, which is a plain rounded rock, and place it into a brazier or crucible that sits on the other side of your second self. A few moments after you place the Stone into the brazier, it starts to burn. It burns with a blue-green flame that gives off no heat. In a few moments, the Stone is completely consumed. You thank your second self for its part in the work, you rise to your feet, close your eyes, and take ten steps up and you are back in the place where you began.

Practice this process at least several times until it feels tangible to you, then a few times more for good measure. We want to get a good feel for the extraction and burning off process in the controlled environment of the

Temple before we take it elsewhere.

### THE GOLDEN DRAGON

The next piece of the puzzle that is the Fever Stone work is about reclaiming personal power and the transmutation of energies. We touched on this in the previous section on building the temple where we have practiced extracting the Fever Stone and burning it off in the brazier or crucible.

I like to perform this work flat on my back, often with pillows under my head and knees to help with comfort, but you may do it seated if that works better for you.

To begin, first shift your focus into the liminal gnosis. Breathe for a while and let yourself become quiet and relaxed. Use the bone induction to really get settled. Now place your hands on your abdomen at the level of your navel. Instruct yourself to send energy into your belly, which I call the cauldron. The cauldron exists in many systems of energy work and is known by many names. It is the 'house' of your bodily power, and it works to store energy and distribute it. We will now work with a particular ally that is a part of us (or can be if we so choose) that takes the form of a small golden dragon. It appears incredibly relaxed, to the point of being asleep until we wake it. In the dragon's abdomen, it houses a golden egg that it can withdraw easily at will as if it rests in the pouch of a marsupial. This golden egg is an unlimited battery for magical/psychic energies that the dragon cares for and distributes through our energy systems as needed. It cannot be overfilled, fully drained, or overloaded.



*THE GOLDEN DRAGON*

We now seek to build a relationship with the golden dragon. We send it energy from our hands to wake it, and we feel it stirring on a deep psychic level. As we send it energy, it withdraws the golden egg from its hiding place and feeds the energy into the egg to distribute later, when needed. Once it has placed the energy into the egg for safekeeping, it tucks the egg away and fades back into a sleep-like state. It quiets fully and then fades away from our consciousness.

Work with this visualization/daydream frequently until you can reliably sense the process occurring.

### HUNTING THE STONES

The Brothers taught this process which I share now. It bears the same caveat as its sister work in the Corridor: start off very easy until you get the hang of it, then go for the larger game. This sets you up for successful hunting, smoother transitions, and an overall more pleasant process.

The work we have been doing in the Temple of extracting and

transmuting the Stones has been (while still of significant benefit) a form of sorcerous training, building the needed muscles and the neural, psychic, and energetic pathways we will require for this work. Now we seek more powerful medicine.

The Stones themselves are a bit like pearls (the best metaphor I can come up with), but the seed of the Stone is not sand but power. This power, which is a bit of our soul/spirit stuff, goes into hiding when we experience trauma, which is a magical or psychic form of the 'red-light' reflex we discussed earlier. If it cannot come back into the light (if the green-light reflex doesn't occur to release it) after the event has passed, the Stone forms around it. This happens to protect the system from further damage. Simply said, the Fever Stones are calcified power that hurt rather than help us, and which carry more emotional and psychic weight than is good for the system. The Fever Stone then has non-helpful effects on the tree (which is us) and its fruit, our outcomes.

Our task then is to teach the entire system that is us, the body, mind, soul/spirit complex, a way of processing the Stones and transmuting them back into what they were to begin with: raw power.

We do this by walking the Corridor and visiting ourselves as before, but in this case, not to support, teach or modify the experience of past events, but to free those past selves from the Stones that have formed inside them. We then process the Stones to burn off the calcified fear and pain that form the hard shell, which once gone releases the trapped power that rests inside the stones.

Once the transmutation has taken place, we give the freed power to the golden dragon to hold in its egg to reintegrate into the body and soul/spirit complex. This power, now reclaimed, is once again available for our use.

We now rejoin X in her quest for radical transformation to see how the work of the Fever Stone may be done.

*Dear Diary-*

*Today I dropped into the Corridor, the tunnel again this time. Finding the door I needed, I opened it and passed through. I found my (younger) self curled up in a fetal position on my/her bed in my first apartment. She was as usual unconscious and remained so during the entire*

*process. I got up on the bed beside my nineteen-year-old self, took her warm hand in mine, and told her what was up:*

*“Look, I’m really sorry that he turned out like that, and first things first, you did nothing wrong and he is just a screwed up guy in a losing battle with his own demons. You’ll never speak to him again and he becomes a big sad drunk for at least the next twenty years, while you remain a beautiful, bad-ass force of nature with an entire army of excellent friends who have your back one hundred percent. If anything, you just get better. But here’s the thing: that hurt in your gut that you are all curled up around trying to protect? It’s not going to work like that. It will become this heavy rock you’ll carry around inside of you unless you let that shit go. We can do it now, or we can do it later. I already did it later, so I am here to do it now, too. That sounds weird, but you know what? The world turns out to be a pretty weird place, which you can use to your benefit if you put in the time to learn how. I am going to take that stone you are working so hard on right now and fix it up for us, OK?”*

*I got the clear message of ‘OK’ and placed my hands on my/her abdomen and the Stone slipped into my fingers like it was iron and my fingers were magnets. The crucible was right beside us, and I dropped the Stone inside of it. It burned like a blowtorch for a minute or two, green and blue flames that gave off no heat, and when it was done I reached inside and picked up what was left: a small, warm bit like a drop of gold. It was humming, and I held it to my own abdomen, and it was absorbed inside. Pure X power coming back home to mamma. I could feel the Dragon wake and take the drop in its mouth and then ‘feed it’ into the Egg which absorbed it. The Dragon slipped the Egg back inside of itself, and faded, sleeping again, back inside of me and out of my consciousness. My hands were still warm from the drop of gold as I smoothed back the hair from her face. She was breathing easier and uncurling into a more relaxed position. I gave her a kiss on the forehead and slipped out of that space. I could still feel the warmth of that golden drop and the hum of its power when I returned to the chair here.*

X has clearly been at this for a while now and is an old pro who is learning what works the best for her. She's targeting well, going for the hot-spots, and doing what needs to be done. By tracking the Stone work in the Black Book, she deepens the feedback loops for all the levels of the work, and she is giving herself sensory cues all along the way. Another thing: X doesn't actually see much of anything while she works. Sometimes she does, but she is mostly embellishing as needed to achieve that feeling-sense she understands is a big part of the work for her. She also has learned that it's not about feeling everything – it about having maybe only one moment where she loses the clear knowledge of where her body is and the story her mind is telling under the aid and direction of the soul/spirit complex. This 'anchor' into the felt-sense can be incredibly strong, even if it's tiny and brief. It took a good long while for her to become comfortable with all of this. Take your time and work the work and don't stress about the things that are not exactly as you hoped they would be yet. Be like X.

*Dear Diary-*

*Every day I can feel more and more of the effects of the Fever Stone work. I am sleeping better and having less anxiety overall. I feel good. My eyes seem clearer to me in the mirror, and I am not getting flustered or set-off about all sorts of things that used to make me blow either a fuse or my top, depending on the day.*

*Yesterday at kick-boxing I realized it even helps there. I am more comfortable hitting harder and being a little savage about it. It's so fun! I'm not as worried when I do something wrong, and the corrections from the instructors don't hurt my feelings. I'm not apologizing for everything anymore. My self-confidence is growing all over, and that is helping me to be more effective on all levels. That confidence thing is helping me be there for my friends more without getting bogged down by their shit. It's like I can give them a hand or just listen to them but I don't have to take it all on myself like it belongs to me.*

*It's also REALLY helping with my parents, they don't push my buttons like they used to, even when they poke all the right spots. It's like I can see what is happening more clearly in all of my relationships, but with my folks, it's glaringly obvious. They seem a little put off by it, but I*

*think it's just that I am reacting differently than I have for the last twenty years. Dad, in particular, seems to be relaxing, I think I've sort of been in an emotional minefield with him since I was a teen, and now he's learning that he doesn't have to tread so carefully.*

*X*

The plan here is to move organically from the basic, easy steps and then evolve the work into the areas that are more charged over time. Circle back around and see how things feel if you revisit a certain spot. Rarely have I had to do the Stone extraction and transmutation more than once for a specific moment or situation, but there were a couple of places where I did and it helped.

*Dear Diary-*

*Last night I dropped into the Corridor, the cave-like one this time. It feels like the catacombs under a castle or something like that. I went looking for a door that would lead me to my Mom's ex-boyfriend Andrew as I noticed that if I see a guy who looks like him, I still tense up. I will totally shut that shit down right now!*

*Walking through the door I was back in the living room where Andrew decked me when I came home high after school and he decided to play angry father figure with me. I came into the room and he stood up looking big and stupid and I just shut him down.*

*"Sit down now!" I commanded, and he dropped like a box of rocks back into the easy chair. "You are an asshole and you have no effect on me anymore. You never even touched me. You never lived in this house. You never really existed. You were a poorly chosen fantasy that intruded on my consciousness for a brief while and that time is past. Fade away."*

*He immediately faded out like a ghost in a movie, and within a few moments, he was gone. My mom walked into the living room and said, "I'm so glad you are home! I really didn't want to spend the night alone and was hoping you'd get home soon so we could watch a movie together!"*

*I sat beside her for a few minutes and listened to her chatter about her day. She clearly had no sense that there had been someone in the chair*

*across the room a few minutes before, and never mentioned Andrew. Then I returned to my own time and place.*

*X*

Our girl has crossed into a very experimental state now and is doing interesting work. She could get obsessive, trying to correct every perceived injustice that ever happened to her, but this is unwise and not really needed. I think she'll stay smart and only go for the big targets; she's likely to notice some fascinating things.

*Dear Diary-*

*I'm realizing something interesting! I've got a lot fewer things I feel the need to work through, and less Stones that need to be transmuted. It feels like the changes I have made so far are changing the overall weight of my history in a way. This shows up in things I would have told you a year ago were really massive influences that needed work but don't feel like that now. I'm not sure what is up with that, but I'll take it.*

*X*

Here X is blending her current thoughts into the Black Book, while still reinforcing the changes she is seeking, testing the waters. Will she need to do this work forever or is there an endpoint? She can see that for the trauma-based work, there will be a definite end. She also can see how the Black Book could be a lifelong tool for shifting her path and its outcomes.

*Dear Diary-*

*Last night I was in the temple space, working on my concentration skills. This was a 'simple' task that had kicked my ass for the past weeks, but last night I nailed it. Here's the game:*

*I walk into the yard of the Temple, and I bow to the altar in the North. I sit in the dirt in the middle of the yard, and I open up my bag and remove a wooden box about ten inches long and three inches wide and two inches tall. I open the box and pull out three sticks of incense from a bundle wrapped in a ribbon, and I stick them into the dirt in front of me. I take out a small box of wooden matches, strike a match, and light the*



*three incense sticks. I sit for the 20 minutes it takes for the incense to burn all the way out, just watching the smoke, smelling the sandalwood aroma, and being quiet. Once the incense had burned out, I placed the box of matches back into the wooden box, put it back into my bag, stood up, turned around, and left the Temple.*

*HELL YES! That seemed like it would never work, but it turned around quickly. I think I am getting the hang of this imagination and concentration thing.*

*X*

X is using all of her tools now to build skills and strengths in each of the realms: waking, liminal gnosis, past, present, and future. This is fine work, deeply rooted on all levels.

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51 A lot of the encounters I have with beings in trance/Otherworld contexts take certain forms repeatedly, while others change a lot. This is why I say ‘present as’ about the Brothers. What I see is clearly colored by my own internal symbol and visual set, and seems unlikely to be anything like a ‘true form’. I’m not convinced such a concept is even relevant in the spirit realms.

52 If you already have a ‘ten steps down’ thing going on elsewhere in your practice, feel free to change the number of steps.

53 Some people get jangled up about this part of the process and ask “what if I say no?” Do you see where this is taking things in an odd direction? You already allowed the work to happen before you began it. Don’t trip.

# LIBERATION

Once while in trance I asked the being beside me why magic worked. It replied, “You have set the Worlds into motion by the creation of causes and conditions. Something must manifest in response. Why would it not be what you desire?”

The ground of much of my writing here is in the base concept of liberation. I view this as a critical root-element of practical magic. We all kind of know what liberation means, but it’s important to be sure we are speaking something like the same language.

Liberation is:

—the act of setting someone free from imprisonment, slavery, or oppression; release.

—freedom from limits on thought or behavior.

The primary gatekeeper of liberation is fear.

This fear may be small or large, out front and in our faces, or hidden away in the pocket of an old sweater lost in the attic, home to generations of mice. But if we are not acting towards liberation, fear is the probable reason. Why do we remain within this sense of confinement, lack of options, dissatisfaction, and the impossibility of change? I’m not even talking about liberation in the Buddhist sense but on a very basic level. Usually, the answer is fear.

Erwan Le Corre, founder of MovNat speaks to some of the reasons for this fear and the dissatisfaction many of us feel in our lives when he talks of ‘zoo humans’.<sup>54</sup> Zoo humans are pretty well all of us except those who are living in traditional ways in what most of us would consider very primitive conditions. Outside of traditional hunter-gatherer cultures, we largely cannot move, eat, or otherwise live as we evolved to over hundreds of thousands of years. The modern world we find ourselves in is much like a zoo of our own making. Like the animals in the zoos we build for them, our built environments lack the types of stimulus, exposures to the elements and

the natural world, and the threats and the recoveries from those threats we evolved to coexist with. Without these acute stressors, we can become a little unbalanced, a little broken, and a little messed up by this life in what amounts to be a cage.

The cage is the nature of our civilization itself. That we remain inside (or that we remain unaware that we could choose otherwise) this culture-wide, country-wide, world-wide human zoo is only a problem if you seek something other. All of us were born here, and so it's comfortable and seems normal to us, in a classic case of 'the devil we know'. We tend to shut down when confronted with other ways of being, be that intentional homelessness, permanent camping, van life, moving to another country, city, home, becoming an artist instead of a lawyer (or vice versa!), dating outside of whatever the cultural norm is, or entering a different social class. In that last idea of moving between social classes, the message of our culture in the West is clear: it's a one-way street. You move upwards. To willingly downshift from a higher echelon of existence that no longer serves you is insanity. Outright failure. For some, however, it can be one path to liberation.

This is not at all to say that one should always move down the chain, either. To latch on to that example is to miss the point, which is to ask yourself: are you in the zoo? Is it (the world and your place in it) serving you? Do you want to remain? Do you wish to move beyond the wall, the hedge, the real or imaginary line that appears to constrain you?

Ask yourself: am I afraid to step outside of the comfort of my routine, of the box of expectations and obligations that have been set for me, my mind, and my soul/spirit complex? Do I desire something other, even if that may not be 'better' in the eyes I have been taught to see with? Am I willing to try the door? Or am I afraid of liberation?

Liberation can be scary. We tell ourselves all the common reasons things are as they are for us. I am not good enough or smart enough. I am too old, too young, not pretty enough. I am a man, a woman, or some other gender identity which denies me my desires. I wouldn't dare. And my ultimate favorite, the top of the pile of self-oppressive statements: I could never. And so you never will.

We are given definitions of freedom that are often laughable. These absurdities can free us from taking responsibility for our actions, which

lock us onto the tracks of a life we care little for. A marriage destroyed by boredom. A soul-crushing career. If only we were . Fill in the blank. There are a million reasons why ‘I could never’.

For me, the magical arts are first arts of liberation. They allow us to create or become our own causes and conditions. To see into other realms of being and to understand the roots of our experience of the world and that of those in our care. All of this so that we can seek to change them, mitigate their ill effects, or magnify their beneficial ones. All of this so that if it suits us, we can open the door and walk outside.

This isn't even about the more mystical or religious ideas of liberation from suffering at the base. Yes, that is one approach. Yes, it is a viable path for some people. Yes, most of us should spend some time investigating the concept! However, practical magic is for those who are interested in digging deep into the dirt and burying charms and dripping fluids onto the roots of the tree because they believe they may create better outcomes. I see no reason why the two paths should be exclusive, or why they can't be blended.

The Black Book, Corridor, and the Fever Stone are all powerful tools to bring to bear on these issues of liberation. Through their use (which is of course that of sustained, intentional practice) we can expose points where we have accepted the various monoliths, their (often mythical) inherent limitations, and their chains. We can shore up our own blind or trouble spots (weakness is too harsh of a word here, we are looking for discernment rather than self-judgment), and build upon our strengths. We can develop new kinds of vision, new ways of hearing, touching, tasting, and feeling.

These new and potent psychic (meaning as always: pertaining to the body, mind, and spirit) senses and the relationships they allow to grow within the Field can allow us to co-create pathways around, through, or beyond these monoliths and cages. We can become more fully engaged with our own in-between-ness, our own liminal natures.

As magic-workers, it can be good to do some work on occasion to specifically reinforce the consciousness of our liminality. This is true even (and perhaps especially) if we work with the Gods or spirits of the Crossroads regularly. This reinforcement helps us to remember that we are ourselves beings of great power. It is easy to lose sight of this truth, and so

walk into traps that we need not fall into. Even if we do find ourselves caught on occasion, such work can aid us to not remain in that state.

The ritual that follows is a basic, nothing-fancy invocation that I have found helpful over the years and used in many versions. It gets rewritten to suit my mood (as do most of such things I create) and any specific intentions frequently. Invocation can best be thought of as calling-in that-which-we-would-be. It can also be envisioned as a process of remembering that we are that kind of being already, that myriad natures and possibilities lie dormant within us until awakened. We are phenomena arisen from the Field, and so contain sparks of all of its myriad natures and possibilities.

The procedure is simple. Go to a place of your choosing with simple offerings, and if possible, draw a line or cross in the earth, perhaps with cornmeal (thus combining the drawing with an offering), or lay something like a stick or cord on the ground. Stand so one foot is on either side of the line or cross. I like to find natural thresholds for this one, whenever possible. The invocation is simple and can be spoken as many times as you see fit.

Like all works of magic, this one should not be undertaken too lightly. It is an act of claiming an immense degree of responsibility for one's self and one's outcomes. As always, rephrase & redesign the work as needed to suit your own context and abilities.

#### CROSSROADER INVOCATION

*Powers of the Threshold  
Spirits of Doors, Gates, and Crossroads  
I am of your kind.*

*I am rooted in the Present  
With my left hand I touch the Past  
With my right hand I touch the Future.*

*I stand at the Crossroads and I am That.*

*I am the Shape-shifter  
I am the Change-maker  
I am the Still-point.*

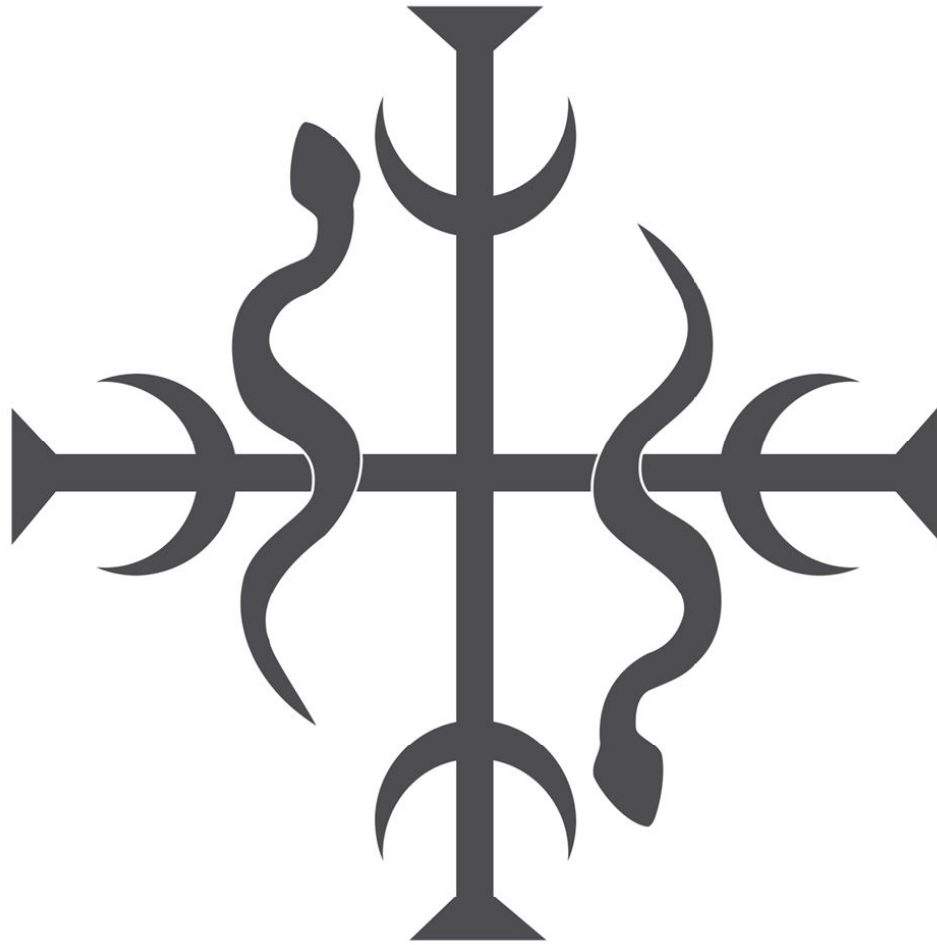
*I am That Which Walks  
Between the Worlds  
The Shuttle of the Loom of Fate.*<sup>55</sup>

*I stand at the Crossroads and I am That.*

*I see beyond the veils  
My vision is unclouded  
Clear-eyed witness.*

*I am the End of Delusion  
I walk through its ruins  
I gaze upon beauty.*

*I stand at the Crossroads and I am That.*



*SERPENTS AT THE CROSSROADS*

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[54](#) I learned the term ‘zoo human’ from interviews with Le Corre, but it originally comes from Desmond Morris in his book *The Human Zoo*. Similar concepts are discussed in Fredy Perlman’s *Against Hi-story, Against Leviathan!*

[55](#) A Shuttle in weaving is the part of a loom that carries the woof or weft threads or yarn between the warp threads.





# THE LANGUAGE OF DESIRE

Sorcery and magic are themselves languages. They often require us as practitioners to learn new ones as well. Many systems teach a tradition or system-specific language as first steps so that those who work within their streams can speak together using the same terms, much like the technical jargon of engineers and computer programmers. This process is beneficial in some ways, and perhaps not so much in others. The benefit lies in the ease of comparison, the sense that we are on the same page, and the ability to fit new data into the matrix of existing data easily.

The downsides of this shared language are that it is impersonal until fully absorbed, and once absorbed, carries with it layers of prescribed meaning. This often means that our thinking within such a language follows certain set pathways and patterns.

It's when we learn symbolic language by rote definition I see the most difficulties. If we define symbols, be they a tarot card, a number, or an animal with one set meaning we can stop a potentially meaningful conversation before it begins.

An example of this is if the Fool in the Tarot is always read with the same few meanings, which may not be related to the image in any personal way. The card shows a man with a bag on a stick walking off the edge of a cliff, followed by a cat or dog-like being, shown in various colors. We are taught that it means something perhaps entirely removed from the images on the card, like freedom, innocence, or new beginnings. Why does this set of images, linked by name to a card, mean those things? Is that what the image brings to your mind at that moment? Does the image mean the same thing in the context of a reading about travel as it does in one about making a large financial investment? What if the Fool in your deck shows a woman crashing a motorcycle into a brick wall? Is the meaning the same, images be damned?

Within the Field of magic, meanings are often personal and entirely context-dependent. There is no 'base level' meaning that is always true in every situation for every person. I see this ambiguity as a strength. It allows for a kind of precision targeting if we let it, where our consciousness and

that of the Field and the Allies can feed one another inputs that produce revelatory flowerings of knowledge, which we call gnosis, meaning an immanent form of knowing. This gnosis is intrinsic to us, an indwelling of understanding that is massively other than the rote-learned data sets we sometimes adore and venerate. This gnosis and the attendant formation of personal meaning in response to information and context allows us to begin (and also springs from) an open stream of communication with the Field and its inhabitants. If we can do our part to remain open, to not lock down or calcify meanings so quickly, it is possible that we can create a language that reflects this flow, one filled with whole rivers of personally meaningful information.

From this position of an open, fluid language, we can begin to play with our experience of ourselves and our worlds.<sup>56</sup>

If experience is a language, a way of telling the things we have seen, done, witnessed, or otherwise been a part of, what are the stories it tells us? Are these our stories? Are they filtered through the stories of our parents, our peers, our teachers, and our culture?

All of our experience, be it hands-on and first person or ingrained through cultural indoctrination, is language. This includes the experience of what we can think of as memory, fantasy, and projection. The images of these internal experiences (even if based on past events, all perceived and translated within our mind, consciousness, and the soul/spirit complex) are language. They tell us a story about the weaving that may or may not be true at all, and more importantly, may or may not be useful. A fantasy or projection that keeps us from the people, things, or experiences that we truly love (or would if we allowed ourselves to approach them) is not useful in any genuine sense. It keeps us from pursuing paths that are available to us but which we have decided are off the table. Those we believe are over-reaching, too dangerous, or otherwise unacceptable for a person like us.



*MOON & HAND*

All of this coded language is continuously in play. Earlier in this book, I spoke of it in terms of trains on tracks, cultural indoctrination, and the cages in a zoo. One of the major tasks a magician can undertake is to undo the layers of coding that defines our experience in these ways. The two main subjects that I will look at in the remainder of this work, due to the primary nature of their effects on us, are desire and fear.

All practical magic grows from a single root: the intention to create change. Magic is a wide variety of what we could call arts of change. Someone desires something for themselves or others to be different. A desire for change is the shared point of intersection in all acts of practical magic. Even the desire to transcend suffering, confusion, dissatisfaction, or dissonance to achieve another kind of liberation, is to seek a change of state.

Desire gets a bad rap in some religious circles, but I think this is often a translation issue. In Buddhism, desire is how terms related to grasping or craving are translated into English. I once heard a talk from the monk

Bhikkhu Bodhi where he said that even in Buddhist teachings, not all desires are problematic.<sup>57</sup> There are wholesome and unwholesome desires. To be well and to have a good life, or to care for our families, are wholesome desires, as is the desire to help others, to ease suffering, and many others.

But from a magical perspective, what is desire? I believe that desire is best viewed as a form of language.

Many times people think they want something because it just seems like the thing to want. You are meant to want that thing. What is wrong with you if you don't want that thing? This is how gay men end up emotionally broken while married to heterosexual women and vice versa, and how people end up as lawyers when on a deep level they want to spend their entire life fishing on a beach somewhere. It makes no sense to build a life around the things we want if the desire for that thing isn't real, or isn't really ours. A lot of us are too jacked up by layers of obligation, cultural contagion, and too much time in the zoo to know or admit what we really want. 'Of course I want some monkey chow! Everyone loves monkey chow!' We as magicians can do better than this. These false desires are an important part of what this exercise can reveal.

Because of the strange coding the word desire has been given, and how many of us are trained that it isn't acceptable to want anything for ourselves (as to do so is self-centered, selfish, and greedy), we need a tool to break up some of the conditioning here. This is a method I have used for years with good effect. My examples may tend to the ridiculous, as we need to get through that level (the absurd stuff we want or think we want) to reach the deeper layers. We have to be comfortable speaking what we think of as base or petty desires so that they may in time open up like flowers and show us what truly dwells within them.

First, we need to create a list of every single thing we want or desire, no matter how absurd, impossible, immense, or tiny. I make this list on paper and try to dig deep while being neutral about my wants. Neutral in this case means zero judgment, so if 'I want a cinnamon roll' comes up, it goes on the list. I don't rate it as unimportant or not a strong enough desire, as I want to show my mind that I am after the totality of desires that I have at the time of writing. I add to this list constantly, so if I am out walking the

dog or running errands and something comes to mind, I'll send myself a message with things to add when I get back to the house.

This is a list that can never really be complete, as we will have some level of desire as long as we are incarnate. Desire comes along with need, need being the survival-related version of desire. We add and add to our list, and at first, we don't remove anything. We would like to see a massive list, as this is the soil in which we need to grow the flowers of our language.

Once we have a good lot of desires (over fifty is a decent start), we begin to copy them onto scraps of paper or index cards. I like index cards and for me, this process takes hundreds of them once I get rolling.

The way we write these wants, needs, and desires out is important here. We use the form of affirmations as taught in some new age, new thought, and law of attraction practices, but our aims are solidly off to the side of those approaches. An affirmation, in this case, is a statement of something you desire or want which is to be written as if it has already come to pass (and you are really into it).

Some examples:

I love that I am insanely sexy.

I love that I am richer than Croesus.

I am so grateful that I can see into the Heart of Space.

I am wildly pleased with my relationship with .

My primary relationship is fantastic in all ways.

I love that I dream lucidly.

I am so stoked that I can travel anywhere I desire at any time.

I love how self-confident I am.

I am grateful for my fantastic memory.

I love that my magic works powerfully.

I am massively stoked that I easily master new skills.

We begin to translate our wants and desires onto the cards as affirmations. I suggest a big bold marker for this, as we are pushing the 'very enthusiastic' nature of the process here. Do this for every desire you have written down, and any new ones you come up with during the process.

It may help to recall that not all of our desires and wants are focused on us. These outwardly focused desires are still things that we want, we just

want them for other people. We may have desires for our children, our friends, the sick, the homeless, the poor, animals, ecosystems, the planet: the list is pretty huge. These go through the process of being written onto cards in the same affirmation style.

Once we have at least fifty cards, we begin to read them out loud and then sort them according to the reactions we experience as we read them. We will sort them into three piles, which I name legitimate, not legitimate, and maybe legitimate.

Find a place where you can be alone and act a little peculiar with no ill consequences. For the process to work you will need to go for it, and it can get pretty loud. Also, most of us are not comfortable spewing our pettier wants aloud for fear of the entirely understandable judgments of our peers. This can place some controls on what we write and speak and is at cross purposes with the practice. Find a place or time to be alone.

Now stack up all your cards and give them a shuffle. Take the top card and read it out loud, as excitedly as you can. It's time for absurdity and to tap into your inner eight-year-old or a slightly wilder version of yourself here. You have to really go for it. This usually takes some practice, so just expect to feel like an idiot the first few times you do this. Repeat this process once a day if possible.

Once you have reached a comfort level for pretty well ranting your affirmations out every day, I'd like you to gently split your self-awareness. What this means is you will now read your desires out loud while also judging your performance. You are not exactly judging the desires themselves, but how well you can 'sell yourself' about how into them you are. Does the part of you witnessing this performance buy what the performing part is selling, on a card-by-card basis?

Now we begin to sort. Read a card out loud and ask yourself: 'do I buy (meaning accept this as a real desire) it?'

If your answer is yes, I buy this as a genuine desire, it goes into the 'legit' pile. If you aren't buying what you're trying to sell at all, place it in the 'not legit' stack. If you aren't sure one way or another, it's a solid 'maybe' (if maybe can ever be solid).

As we proceed from this point, we will do so in two distinct ways. For fresh additions to our desire list, we turn them into affirmations and read them and judge our performance, sorting them according to that judgment.

We then work through the three piles.

We read the collected piles each day to see if we still feel the same about them. Do we still want someone in a bear suit to suck on our toes? If that's still legit, it stays in the legitimate pile. If it's not, we move it. If something stays in the maybe stack for over three days, we move it to the 'not legit' pile. If a desire stays in the not legit stack for over three days, we discard it. We don't buy it, so working for it makes little sense. It is in some way a false desire. If something stays in the 'totally legit' pile for over three days, we move it onto a new list. These are the things we will work for with our magic.

Now we can begin to work more deeply with the legitimate desires. We no longer need them in the affirmation format, so if you prefer you can strip that information away from the core of the desire. These desire-cards now get sorted again, but by affinity: which ones seem to go together? An important aspect of this part of the process is that we are not only seeking logical groups. Which desires feel like they go together? Perhaps a desire about wealth ends up in a group about partnership or about fishing. This is not only OK, it's incredibly helpful!

We now look to the groups and think of them as information that has been given to us from our deep minds, the Field, and our Allies. What is this collective saying to me? If it was a person we only shared a small amount of language with, what are they trying to tell us with all the hand waving, odd faces, and miming? If this was a game of charades, what are your desires trying to get you to understand about yourself?

We are trying to learn, slowly but surely, what our desires are trying to tell us. We are learning a language that will mostly be spoken to and received by the felt sense.

Keep coming back to the table with your desires and playing the sorting and grouping game. Are your desires telling you that you need a change? Are you really driven to be obscenely wealthy? Do you want out of your marriage? Maybe it's not the marriage you want out of, but the obligation you feel to maintain a certain status, be that social, sexual, or something else entirely. Perhaps you only want to tell stories. Or hear them.

Ask the clusters questions: what would you tell me if you could? And tell them what you would tell them if you could since you can. Those parts of you that just want to fish and not work so hard, do you have any messages

for them? What are they saying to you? Is this a conversation or a statement? Are they asking nicely or shouting?

Those parts that feel like they form natural clusters and keep feeling that way over the days and weeks of the process likely share roots. They can seem to be wildly divergent outcomes, like fruit from different trees, but there will be some point where they are connected. Knowing of this connection can help us to understand this strange language.

Take one of your clusters into the Corridor or the Black Book or both. Live the life they suggest in your imagination for a bit and see what comes up when you experience it or write it out. Can you feel the parts, the various desires in the group more clearly now? Do other desires from your cards fall further down the list, or maybe drop off it? Are there new or old desires that get drawn into that cluster? How do they shape your narrative, both in an internal sense and in the Black Book and the Corridor?

This is all fluid work, ever-shifting and ever-changing. Expect to feel frustration, even anger during the process. Sometimes it may feel like discovering you have extra joints growing in limbs where they never were before, which while allowing you greater freedom of motion also bring growing pains. Have patience as your whole being learns how to inhabit such a new and wondrous form.

Be easy on yourself, but take no shit, either. Freedom of motion requires movement, so maintain awareness of how often you hole up or hide. Turning the steering wheel on a parked car does very little. Drive.

I found an unexpected benefit that I wasn't looking for when I began the experiments that shaped this process. I intended the work to be a way to help myself and others create better statements of intent for sigils. While this has proven up to that task, an even greater gift lies in all the discarded, false desires in the 'not legit' pile. These are the things we learn don't really matter to us. By being able to turn away from them, we are better able to face forward into the things we truly care about. Often these are the desires born outside of ourselves. The energy saved and confusion eliminated by letting them fall away can be an immense boon to our native and intrinsic selves. This is a major key to the cages in the zoos we often find ourselves locked within.

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56 I often write the plural ‘worlds’ (and selves, for similar reasons) as I believe we operate (or can) in several at once. The elemental realms, the worlds above and below, are interwoven with this material or middle world we inhabit. This is one reason why daydreaming or talking ourselves through experiences in other realms can work so well. We are also already there. We are also already elemental beings. We are also creatures of the underworlds and the worlds above.

57 I have listened to so many talks of Ven. Bodhi’s that I could go find one that covers this (as there are many) and claim it’s the one I am talking about, but that just seems silly. Instead, I suggest you go listen to or watch a bunch of them, they are very good.

# FEAR, DEATH, & THE BIG WAVE

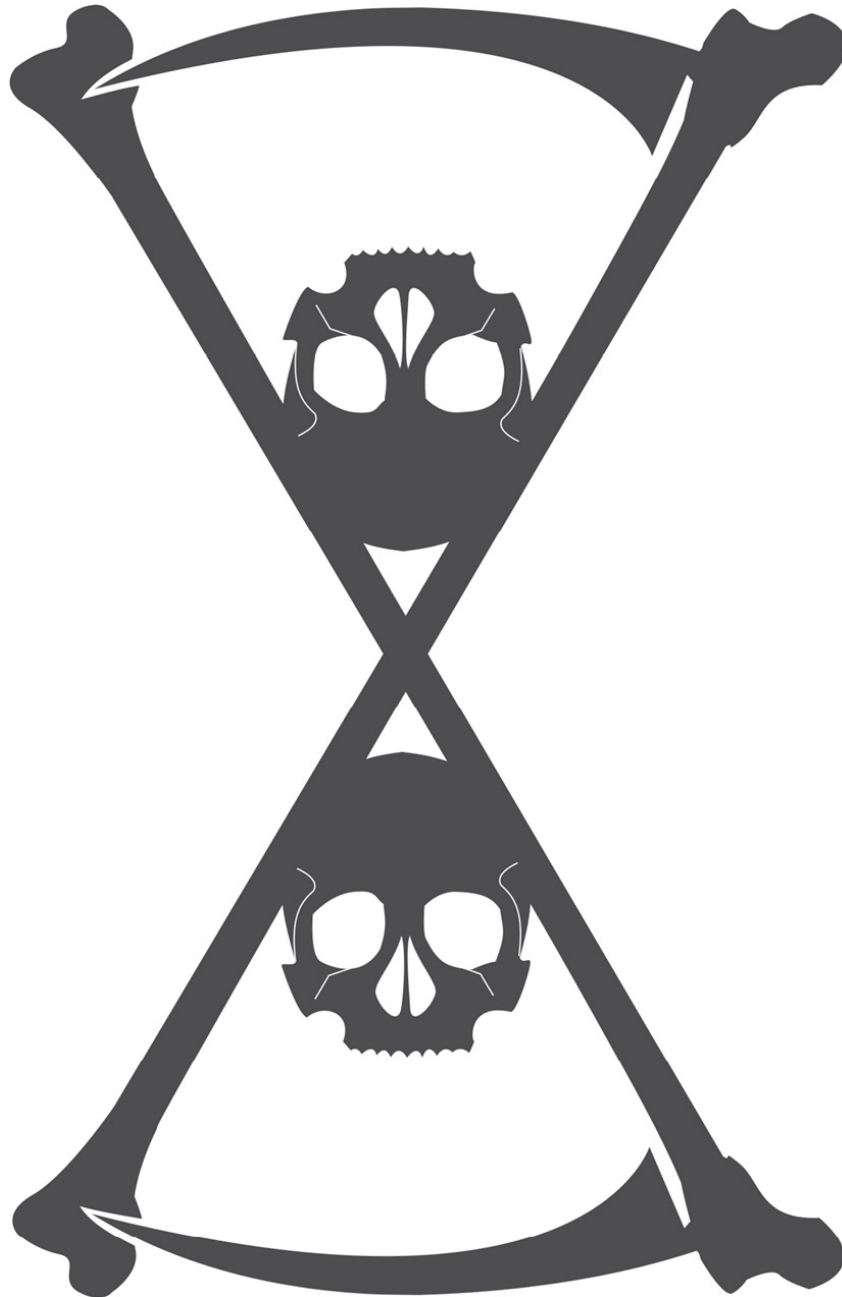
Fear is information. It is one of the languages of the body, mind, and soul/spirit complex that, like desire, can be problematic when we take the 'word' (meaning the signal, trigger, or stimuli of fear) to be objective, ultimate reality. In my fantasies of earlier times, I believe we had fear responses more like what I see in other animals, where most of the time fear is a passing response to an actual (or at least potential) threat.

In the partially post-physical West (post-physical meaning we are receiving far more stimulation from non-physical sources than those which are immediate and palpable) we can find ourselves in a state where these fear-triggers are constantly activated. With the stimulus never-ending, we can find ourselves trapped in a perpetual fear loop. When this happens we are living within a constant 'red light reflex'.

The primary fear is the fear of death. We have stories and myths of what happens when we die, but these remain personal beliefs; the reality is unknown but to those who have crossed over. This fear is tied into the fear of loss, be that of loved ones, physical and psychic well-being (including health, the ability to have shelter, pay the bills, and related survival needs), and mental disability and degradation, all of which are bound up into fear of loss of self.

These are all versions of fear of the unknown and fear of pain.

I find myself in a mixed place about the mortality fears. I usually feel unafraid of death, though I would prefer to not experience many of the ways it can come, mostly those that seem super painful and/or extended.



*HOURGLASS*

For those of us who work in any serious way with the ancestors, be that close-in or deep-line, death is an ally.

Death has led to us; we are flowers that rise up from it. We feed on the dead, be they plant or animal, and it is the dead that create the fertility of the soil that feeds us all. The dead have pushed us up out of the ground, and the soil we sprout from is graveyard dirt.

We come into these lives through the vehicles of our parents, their parents, on and on since the time before time. The chain, unbroken, is unbreakable. The cycle of life and death is all one stone. It is the story the river tells of its running, never the same, always renewed.

Everything that lives dies. Stars burn out. A transformation, death is never an end, or it's always both end-and-beginning. Perhaps it is better to say, as one of my allies told me: Everything dies, but death is only change. Nothing dies, everything changes.

We can choose to re-frame death out of the cold nothingness of materialist views, where the lights go out and the self/soul-complex is fully extinguished. We can also free it from the twisted logic of heaven and hell and see it simply as a change-of-state. If we do these things, we can begin to see death as natural, a beautiful ally.

Death as ally tells us many things: that all bodies grow and then fail; that time as experienced via this body is finite, but that the process of cycling and recycling through this world is a long, long ride. We change from form to form; perhaps we will experience some of these shapes as 'lives'. Death tells us that since our bodies will break down, we might as well use them while we have them. This then might lead to an understanding that body, mind, psyche, ideas, and emotions are all the playthings of embodied spirits, as we are right now. This remains true regardless of our state as judged by self or others. That state is changing and will continue to change as we walk the path from life through death and onward, whether it be viewed as simple decay or a shift into other forms, other lives.

If we are unable to hold a view of death other than as a failure where we drop into an abyss of nothing or rise or fall into permanent bliss or pain states, it will always rule us. As a rule that so far shows no exceptions, is this the relationship we wish to have? How does it serve us as practitioners, or even just as people? Death is the twin most common experience for the embodied along with her brother birth.

Rather than sorting as we did with desires, we mostly just need to look

death in the face, say hello, and get to know her better so we are less intimidated by her. Let's start with the obvious:

We all know that we will die. We all know it can come suddenly. We all know that fairness is not a relevant point of consideration in relation to death. We all know that death is a natural event for all living beings, even if the causes may be or may seem to be unnatural.

The question about death becomes not 'will it come for me?' (because, yeah, it will), but rather, 'how much time will I spend letting my fear of that inhabit my mind, controlling my thoughts and actions?'<sup>58</sup> This is not to discount that death can be an important thing, though it is more so to some than others – a value judgment largely based on the narrative they hold onto about it. I'm also not suggesting nihilism or becoming callous, but to consider stepping beyond the modern irrational fear of death, and re-framing it.

First, we accept: death is inevitable.

Next, we accept: death is a change that we absolutely will experience.

We can then decide: fear of death is therefore pretty whack and unhelpful, and we choose to claim it as an ally instead.

I understand this will ask a lot for some readers to contemplate and work with, and that it will be a 'yeah, got it' for some, and will be 'I've known this all my life' for others. It's not a competition between who 'got it' early and those who are trying to get it today. Or tomorrow, or whenever they find themselves able to revisit this. Some folks won't be willing or able to go here on this turn of the cycle of life. We all do what we can, when we can, as we are able.

Next, we can do some fear work:

We all know, on some level, that everything is changing all the time. Therefore we should be able to see that the idea, however popular and kind-of-sort-of comforting, that 'one-day things will be back to the way they were before', meaning as they were before they changed, is also not even remotely real. This is that whole concept of 'you can't step in the same river twice', meaning both you and the river are constantly in flux, so it just ain't happening. Nothing ever has 'gone back to the way it was before'.

This suggests to me that when things change in a huge way all around us

(as they often do), that no matter how comforting it feels to sit tight and wait for a return to things as they were before, it's not a very helpful approach.

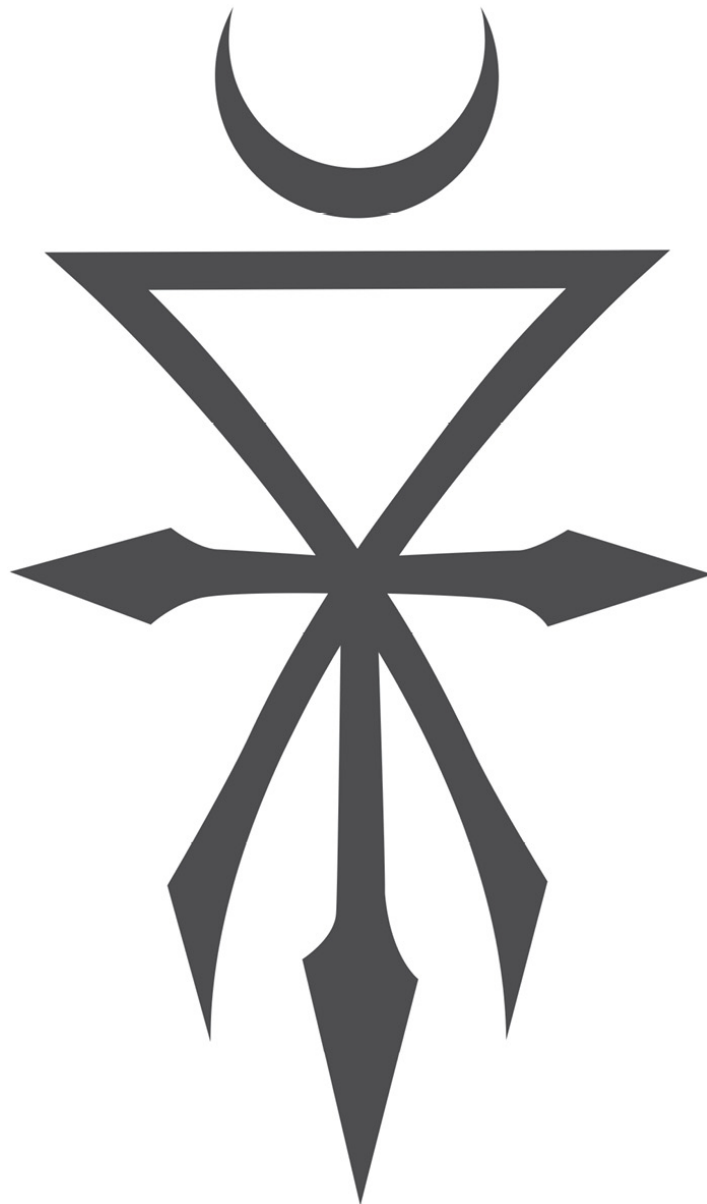
To shift all of this energy to a more useful form, we have to look at what our fear around change is. We already talked about the fear of death. Other fears are fear of becoming unemployed, losing a business, losing family (fear of death once again, really), losing a home, becoming a lot poorer than we are now, having to radically adjust to new norms, a new level of discomfort (or comfort, only the phrasing changes there!), suffering for a long time, suffering at all, and all the other things that may come from a slight to severe change of state.

Part of our current fear-state is enabled by the ability to track all the changes, wars, diseases, and collapses of the world in close to real-time because of the Internet. But outside of a few modern specifics, like cell phones and nukes, what here is new? This is not to downplay any of this, but we have to ask ourselves if we were having (and are being trained to have) unrealistic expectations of things staying 'pretty much the same' in a universe of constant change.

Now I admit that I have been more in the 'change is interesting' camp most of my life. What has allowed me to mostly be able to roll with change (which is sometimes very different from enjoying it!) is this:

It makes sense to me. I get it. I have been in situations that sucked so bad that I wanted to die... and they changed. Or I changed. Probably both, since both are always happening. Everything changes. Civilizations fall. Everyone dies. Stars burn out. It makes sense. I think we all know this, on a deep cellular level. We've just been immersed in the myth that this is all easier to ignore, to pretend as if it's not happening everywhere, to everything, always.

To me this isn't about aspiring to a lack of fear of death and change, but about getting off the train full of stories about and denial of it. We decide to accept that we will fuck up. That we'll make bad moves and pay for them. We one hundred percent understand and accept that we will die and that everyone we have ever known will die. Our deaths are not the most important thing about us or about our lives, not by a long shot.



*FEAR AS CATALYST*

I hope I go easy in my sleep, but I probably won't get to decide that. That's OK, too, because I understand that everything passes. Even if it sucks, it changes, and then something else happens.

The question becomes what do we want to do with our selves and our lives once we get off the tracks of being controlled by fear?

At any given moment, we have to look at things as they are now and understand that they won't go back to how they were before. We make our best guess on what the new trajectory might be, and get to work at the altar,

with the Black Book or the Corridor, with our Allies, and on the so-called mundane level with all the tools we have.

Instead of working towards what we had before, we can ask: what, given an entire world-system constantly in flux, do I want to do now? Who do I want to be now? What is my favorite vision of the changes I desire and how do I enchant towards that? Right now is (always) a massive change or crisis point, and as magicians, witches –whatever we want to call ourselves – that means radical optionality: more radical possibilities to have the life we might dig every second of; a life where we can die happy to have lived it, where we drop into the Otherworld when it's done and say 'that was very, very cool'. Or at least, 'I did well inside that mess!'. Those roads are open for us right now, always.

This means, as usual, that we need to be both kind to ourselves and not too indulgent in our freak-outs and meltdowns. We'll probably have them, but it makes little sense to me as a sorcerer to ride out the waves by clinging to some shred of wreckage, giving in to all my fears and stories of personal apocalypse when that plank of wood might actually be an old Hawaiian long board that I can at least attempt to ride. That's some scary shit, too, I don't swim all that well and, you know, sharks. But experience tells me that right now is the perfect time to stand up and rock-and-roll. Because there is no other time. This is it. Accept your fears, but don't settle for the stories they tell you about what have to experience now.

Think about the changes that your ancestors, the Red Wave that you are the leading edge of, rode out for you to even be here. That kind of strength is what we need now. It is what we always need. I'm not saying any bit of it will be easy. But I know I feel better trying to ride the waves than just surviving them, and that magic and sorcery are the best tools to do so that I have found.

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[58](#) What often gets a bad rap as anthropomorphizing is to me just proof of our innate animism. Yes, it gets a little weird sometimes (what doesn't?), but how awesomely animistic is the statement 'death came for him'?!





# EPILOGUE: WEAVING FATE

It seems to me to be a strange thing to write a book, and this one has been peculiar indeed. I began working with the Black Books that led to writing this one a long time ago. Since that starting point, I first discovered and then ventured into the Corridor uncounted times. I found what I found there, or perhaps it found me. A few years ago I learned of the Fever Stone, which then worked its way into me and so into this book.

This book is both a guide to practices and born of those practices. While I hope that I (along with the allies who have guided the writing) have made an interesting and entertaining read, that is not the primary intention or reason for its existence.

Magic and sorcery are arts of doing, and also the art of being the kind of creature that does such things. They do little beyond entertain if left sitting on the shelf, perhaps looking pretty but of no more use than the plastic flowers on the kitchen table.

Sometimes I imagine the Field as the luminous black ocean that flows between the worlds, carrying ourselves, the Others, our actions, dreams and desires from shore to shore, island to island. We can float on it, swim in it, drown in it, or build magical ships to sail upon it.

The practices in this book are straightforward in execution, simple but not easy, and require only a minor investment on the material side of things. They are however some of the most effective workings I have ever come across for producing radical change. I hope that you also find this to be so and that they serve you well.

Bright blessings.

Aidan Wachter

Summer Solstice, 2020

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