



# Between the Worlds

## Patterns of Possibility

*The Diana's Grove Mystery School Newsletter*  
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Issue II

## The Fool

by Cynthia Jones

The Fool is the wisest card in the deck. He represents the innocent who jumps into life. He represents the journey complete, the end that gives way to the beginning. Chased by that little dog, he leaps. He leaps into form, shape, name and time. He leaps into mortality, morality, culture and exchange. In leaps, some say, into the open mouth of a waiting alligator. Is he Peter Pan walking the plank? Is he, were you, encouraged to take a leap by the sharp point of Capt. Hook's sword? Is the Fool's leap the first leap of faith? Is that the secret behind every Fool's foolish grin?

The Fool is the courage to find out. The Fool is wisdom in disguise. He is the learner's mind...a rare humility. Confidence grants that innocence entrance to the soul. The Fool is the knowing spirit who is willing not to know. He is the ignorance that grants value to learning.

He is the question. All of the rest of the cards are the answer, answer, answer, ever changing answer. Each answer is right, but just for a moment. Just for as long as it takes. Like a rolling ball, the fool moves through each archetype. He becomes the magician and, then, he gives up being the magician. He becomes the priestess and, then, she gives up being the priestess. Those major teachers, each one asks us to become, to be. Then we outgrow the moment and...we grow into the next. Moment. Moment by moment, all of



the time, we are the Fool. Always, we are the Fool at our core. We know and then, we don't know. "All things end," the Fool says. "Why?" I ask. "Why must that be so?" "Because," he says, "the beginning needs an end in order to begin."

The Fool is the only Major Arcana card that made it into our modern decks of playing cards.



His role is to take the place of any card that has gone missing. My favorite game to play with the fool - and the Fool is always willing to play - is this. Just imagine a knock on the door. You open it and the three Fools that are pictured on this page are there on your doorstep. They are waiting for you to invite one of them to come in. You are hosting a small gathering of friends. Low lights, casual conversation and, now, an unexpected guest.

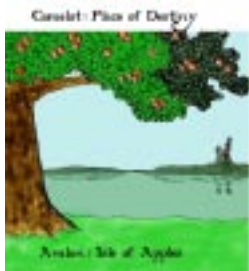
Look at these three Fools. They have different personalities. Which one will you invite in? Or will you invite all three? For the sake of this exercise, pick one. Which one and why? What is your first impression of this fellow? What is she like? What will your friends think of him? What kind of impact will he make on your party? Will your friends like him? Will they welcome him? Will they make fun of him...and of you for inviting him in?

The Fool steps in. He looks at you and says, "I can only stay a moment. I just dropped by with a message for you." What would that message be?

Everyone has an answer. Some folks have *the* answer. The Fool is the one with the question... or does he have the answer that invokes the question? Excuse me. I'll be right back. Someone is at the door.

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## Mystery School 2005 Camelot and the Legend of King Arthur

For registration, event schedule, and a copy of the new brochure visit:  
[http://www.dianasgrove.com/events/2005\\_ms.html](http://www.dianasgrove.com/events/2005_ms.html)

# Sinking into the Shadows: The Fool and I

by *sisalfish*

*In the wake of Jane's retirement from writing her newsletter article on the Book of Moon Shadows material, sisal offered to finish out the column for this year.*

Not surprisingly, I have some struggles with the concept of the Fool. I think each astrological sign carries its own paradox; for Leos, we hate nothing more than looking foolish, and yet – we often do. Here in November, I find myself at the end of one Mystery year, and edging into the beginning of another. And I find I need to reconcile myself to Fool energy, both to close well and to begin well again.

It's not coming easily, this merging with the Fool – I find myself resisting. So I turn to the Book of Moon Shadows. This wrestling match (between the "I'm not a Fool!" me and the "Of course I'm a Fool!" me) feels like shadow work, and when shadow work calls, I delve into the BOS. I'm on the lookout for fear. For me, fear is like a dark light that I can follow down into the shadow work.

I read over November's passages in the Book of Shadows – the overview of the month, its Challenge, the Questions, the card itself ("Wise Fools!"), the New Moon in Scorpio, Full Moon in Gemini.

And there I find them, the fear and the shadow - one a question, the other a suggestion. The Fool's question: "What does innocence want to teach me?" And, from the new Scorpio moon, a suggestion: "Plant a seed of forgiveness." It comes to me that the two things – innocence and forgiveness - are inextricably related. They both hinge on a long-time challenge of mine: *trust*.

Looking at the question and the suggestion together, it occurs to me that innocence cannot exist without trust. And instantly, I know that's where my fear of the Fool's innocence comes from. The Fool trusts, and to be the Fool, I must trust as well. I must let down my defenses...and forgive. Not just put old hurts behind me, but walk blindly, willingly, into the same situation again, as full of trust as the Fool would be.

I must reconcile myself to forgiveness to earn the Fool's innocence, and to learn what innocence wants to teach me. Forgiveness, the BOS tells me, is giving the past back to the past, giving the hurt back to the one that hurt me. And that's what I must do to become the Fool.

So I take Scorpio's suggestion. I forgive – or I begin to. It doesn't come overnight. In fact, I work on it, off and on, over the space of two weeks. I started with someone I

want to forgive, and that led me, inevitably, to having to forgive myself. So I did, and then I picked up the next heavy stone of unforgiveness, and it led me round to myself as well. Being a Fool, it seems, is hard work – but then it occurs to me, the Fool will never have the problem of having to forgive. She remains innocent, trusting, so never has to do the hard work of *regaining* those states. I'm surprised to realize that, if I were fully trusting, I'd never find it necessary to work on forgiving. If I were fully trusting, that wall of unforgiveness would never get built, and I wouldn't have to work to tear it down.

Frequently over the two weeks of working on forgiving, I found myself having to forgive myself for not being better at the whole forgiveness process. At times, the forgiveness process seemed an unending circle of increasing opportunity for failure. But I forgave myself for that – and I forgave old ex-friends, old ex-family, existing family. In the midst of the process my dog pooped in the guest bedroom. I forgave him (and more quickly that I might have done before).

Then yesterday, to my surprise, I reached a point that I couldn't think of a single other person to forgive, including myself. And in that moment, I found I felt – light. Carefree. My eyes on the sky, instead of where I was about to step.

*"I must reconcile myself to forgiveness to earn the Fool's innocence, and to learn what innocence wants to teach me."*

The feeling has lasted through today. I feel...able to ignore the little dog yapping at my feet. I find myself so unweighted-down by life that all my possessions might easily fit in a tied-up kerchief. I feel innocent, and to my surprise, it feels good, and that, I think, answers the question "What does innocence want to teach me?" Innocence wanted to teach me that this lightness, this openness, this ability to be in the moment and trusting, is worth having and worth working to have. It wanted to teach me to forgive, and I'm pleased at this Fool's synergy – that, in the process of working to forgive, the Fool's innocence has become mine.

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*Learn more about sisalfish following her interview with Seattle Mystery Synnove on page 10*

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# Cliff Jumping

## by Canyon

I am not a fool by nature. That is to say, my Tarot life card is not The Fool. Yet, I am an unrepentant and irrepressible leaper from cliffs. I can date this pattern to the age of 14 and an actual cliff. This is a true story from my last year at a YMCA camp that I attended several weeks each summer, from the ages of 12 to 14.

Somewhere in Missouri, at a campground along the Niangua River, there is a bottomless spring called Sweet Blue Spring. A sandy narrow path leads from a campground to the spring, crossing a little bridge, under which the spring's waters flow out into the Niangua. On the far side of the spring, opposite the path, a rock face rises 30 feet high, with a ledge about halfway up. This rock face arches slightly toward the spring, so that its top edge is cantilevered about six feet beyond its base.

The surface of the spring is very small – just a tiny pond, really – about 20 or 30 feet across. A few feet under the surface, a rock ledge juts out five or six feet from the submerged cliff face...but that's a surprise. You can't see it from the path, despite the clear, bright blue water. This calm little pond has some other surprises waiting for those who enter her. First, there's the temperature of her water – 50°F, year-round. Sweet Blue Spring is this cold because she is very, very deep and the water flow from her source, deep in limestone bedrock, is very fast – more than 13 cubic feet per second. She sends thousands of gallons of water a day into the Niangua and she has for decades...maybe centuries.

The park service calls Sweet Blue bottomless because they don't know how deep she is. From the small circle of her surface, like a funnel, her

sides slope downward toward a narrow tunnel. The tunnel descends and bends and descends some more. Before you get to her source, Sweet Blue has another surprise for you. Bouncing around in that narrow tunnel is a huge boulder – almost as big around as the tunnel is wide. The pressure of 13+ cubic feet per second rushing up a narrow tunnel keeps the heavy boulder from sinking...and gravity keeps it from rising. Sweet Blue presents the adventurous diver with an impasse. Any attempt to move beyond the unpredictably bouncing boulder risks death. Nobody has ever gotten to the bottom of Sweet Blue.

But many have broken her surface, jumping or diving from the top of that 30-foot cliff or its half-height ledge. The sandy path wraps around the spring and up one side of that rock face. At the halfway point you can step out onto the nice wide ledge, some 15 feet above the water. From there you can easily see the submerged ledge below you. A leap with the strength of youthful legs is enough to clear it. The little scurry of fear – *what if I hit it and break my legs!* – only lends extra distance...and thrill to the jump. In the two summers preceding this summer of my 14<sup>th</sup> year, I had made that half-a-cliff leap many times and it had been no problem! That halfway ledge was not much higher than the high dive of the neighborhood swimming pool back home, and I'd been leaping off it for years before encountering the cliffs at Sweet Blue.

But, in the summer I was 14, I was destined to face a greater challenge. I was in the cabin of oldest girls; many of them already 15. It had been a summer of dares and double-dog dares – walk the seven miles to town, smoke a cigar (cigarettes were the year before), secretly meet the high school boys on the labor crew, swamp your canoe in the deep part of the lake, bow hunt for frogs at night.

Near the end of our time at camp,

my whole cabin – 14 girls – went on the now familiar annual canoe trip down the Niangua, camping at Sweet Blue Spring. After our first day of paddling the lazy river, we yearned for excitement. Scaring each other with unquestioned stories of campers past who had jumped or dived from the high cliff and broken necks and legs and backs on that submerged ledge, we all climbed to the very top. High above the frigid water, cantilevered above the middle of the small pool and unable to see the submerged and lethal ledge, we all pledged to jump, daring each other, grimly serious. I thought I could do it...and I was scared. I took the stories seriously, as I did all "camp history" stories then.

"Suddenly, I was seized by something – not my shame and certainly not any form of courage – some wildness from deep within me."

One after another, my cabin mates leapt into space, fell screaming to the tiny puddle below, and race-swam breathlessly through the frigid waters to the other side. I watched them, one by one, wondering which of us would break our bodies on the rock below. I kept stepping back, allowing others to go first, until I was alone. I stood at the edge of that rock, toes curled tightly, and thought, "Everyone else made it, so I'm going to be the one to get hurt." I willed myself to jump, while my fellows

Continued on page 5

below cheered me on. I breathed deeply, which only expanded my fear to encompass, not just injury, but my impending death. I counted to three, promising myself to jump on three...and still I stood. I was rooted to the ground; could literally feel tiny tendrils growing out of my soles and into the limestone ledge. The cheers had turned to jeers and taunts and, still, even my shame at the cowardice they observed could not get me off that cliff. Images of hospital beds, my own funeral, my sobbing mother...images of disaster – giant spikes my mind drove through my feet – pinned me to the rock. There was no way to overcome my fear. I turned, humiliated, to begin the walk back down the path.

Suddenly, I was seized by something – not my shame and certainly not any form of courage – some wildness from deep within me. From about four feet back from the edge of that cliff, I turned and ran at top speed off into the air. The wild feeling inside me erupted into the air in a shout of triumph as I fell into the icy spring.

I had found my Fool within. I've never again jumped from that ledge or any other actual ledge, but I have been leaping from life's cliffs ever since.

Now, whenever I am seized by the wildness that tells me to leap, to take a risk, I recognize it as my Fool-ishness. That willingness to leap with abandon into the unknown is my pure, simple spirit; my *trust in the plan* that Life-with-a-capital-L has for me; my faith that *there is a plan*. I don't get to know that plan. My part in this short, 90-or-so-year dance with Life is not to know, but to surrender myself; to leap from whatever solidity I think is holding me up...into freefall. Fall...free.

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*Canyon's life mission is to offer others opportunities that enable them to step off the cliffs of illusion that they believe hold them up...to step off into their destinies. Her programs and publications support you as you strive to become who you truly are, who you were intended to be. Canyon is a staff member at Diana's Grove and is currently writing a book, A Labyrinth Journey: Seven Paths to a Productive Adulthood.*

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## My Favorite Places

by Jennifer Wilson



**A**s the Mystery School year draws to a close, I've realized that one of my favorite places at the Grove isn't at the Grove at all. It is in the place of exchange with all of you, where our thoughts and ideas, our hopes and fears, our dreams meet. This place encompasses a variety of forms: this newsletter, posts to all the email lists, the packets and workbooks, materials sent by postal and email to and from the Grove, the website...our minds meet in many ways in the place called Community, to which we all belong.

Is "cyberspace" a place? Can community exist in the words we share by reading, writing, emailing, calling? Does the Diana's Grove round table come into being through the magical act of sending in our registration forms when we choose life as a Mystery? I believe the answer to each of these questions is "Yes!"

I'll never forget the excitement I felt the first time I heard about a principle from the science of quantum physics - that matter changes by the very act of being observed. What this means to me is that the act of reading creates community and changes me.

We cast a circle last January, all of us together, and the year has been a ritual of exchange within it. Every

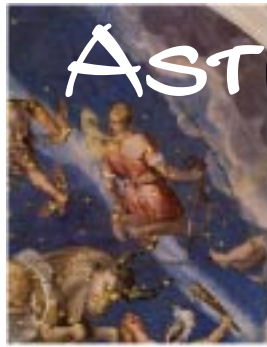
Mystery who reads a packet, a newsletter, an email post to a list...every single one of us adds our essence to our community. Knowing this, believing it fully, I feel myself changed, simply from entering into the place that we call the Diana's Grove community...in my imagination, in my heart. I connect with you when I read your introductions on the website; I think about you when I choose to share a bit of my soul in a message on the Mystery line; I feel your presence when I read the packet and allow it to touch me.

The place we occupy as a community may feel different to each one of us. I invite you to think about this place as you experience it. There may be a feeling that you get in your body when you touch a piece of mail sent right to your home from the Grove in Missouri. When your eyes scan this newsletter, you may feel a connection with all of the other eyes passing over the same words all across the country and beyond.

We may not meet face-to-face and, yet, we are a community as real to me as any I encounter in my daily life in Milwaukee. The Diana's Grove Community...my favorite place.

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*Jennifer is a member of the Diana's Grove Staff and has many passions: tarot, writing, drumming, walking the land with dogs, life coaching, myth and magic and ritual. She offers tarot readings and coaching in person and by phone: [jennifer@dianasgrove.com](mailto:jennifer@dianasgrove.com)*



# ASTROLOGY

BY TERI PARSLEY-STARNES

## The Call to Fall

Science is wonderful. It brings us to the edge of what we know. It toys with what is beyond that edge. Reaches into it, pokes, grabs at bits and pulls them back. Pushing against old boundaries, it creates new ones. Paradigms are destroyed and created. The world becomes new again, over and over. I think we are all scientists because we are all Fools standing at the edge of what we know. We look around to see what's next. We stumble into truths we never knew were there. We quest after a better way to understand, to do, to be. We need to know the edges and then we must go beyond them. Because we are Fools, we will always change. The planet Uranus is the ally of change. It is the boundary breaker and the reality changer. It is the astrological archetype looking out from the Fool card.

Scientific breakthroughs expand our consciousness. The history of astronomy is full of consciousness expanding breakthroughs that change reality. From earliest times, stargazers have been on a Fool's journey, not knowing when the familiar boundaries were going to suddenly shift. Imagine the shift in reality that occurred when someone discovered how to predict an eclipse for the first time, or saw the moons of Jupiter through a telescope, or proved that the planets travel around the Sun. Who can guess where the next happy accident will take us?

For millennia it was known that there were only five wandering planets along with the Sun and the Moon in our sky. A Fool named William Herschel changed that reality. "When he came across Uranus, William Herschel had not been looking for a planet – indeed, as a self-taught amateur astronomer, he was unaware of speculations about 'missing' planets. His interests lay in the stars, not the solar system..." (Cambridge Illustrated History of Astronomy). On March 13, 1781, looking for stars, not planets, he discovered an anomaly, later to be acknowledged as a new planet. The discovery of Uranus changed our perception of the solar system and Uranus has been asking us to change ever since.

Uranus was discovered in revolutionary times. Perhaps it was the times themselves which imprinted upon the planet a need for revolution. Or perhaps the discovery of Uranus had to wait until we were ready for revolutionary times. At the time when Uranus was discovered, philosophical thought proclaimed an individual's right to "freedom, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Societies were demanding democracy. The idea of the common good changed our priorities. At the same time, scientific objectivity was gaining respect. Rationality became important. Science became the means of pushing boundaries. All of these ideas that swirled around in the late 1700's are contained within the symbolism of the planet Uranus.

Uranus rules Aquarius. Having

Uranus or Aquarius emphasized in a chart gives the quality of being a revolutionary - one who demands change that honors the individual as well as protects the common good. Uranian people don't mind living on the edge. They court diversity and welcome quirky individuality. They also have a scientific side, valuing objectivity and attempting to explain phenomena. Uranus and Aquarius are quite often prominent in charts of astrologers. Astrology is both a science and a radical relationship with symbol. Although I can easily see astrology as a science, scientists often are quite skeptical of it. With my Aquarius Moon, astrology satisfies my scientific pursuit of the knowable while at the same time allowing me to be radical and unconfined by conventions. I have noticed similar contrasting desires in many Uranian people.

Perhaps it is this type of push/pull of desires that also gives Uranian people an abundance of nervous energy. I see this energy in the Fool card in the Crowley/Harris Thoth deck. This Fool is at the center of elemental energy and seems to be falling backward as we look on from above. He falls while engaged with all that is around him, wide-eyed and ready for the next unknown. Sometimes Uranus will be emphasized in our charts and we will integrate the Fool into our lives every day. Sometimes, it will take a Uranus transit to help create the situation described in this card - the falling, connecting, energizing, revolutionizing reality of a paradigm shift. (A transit is when a

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*“During a Uranus transit, it is very important to identify the bottom line, those things which are non-negotiables. It is also necessary to let go of a great many things that are really not essential.”*

planet makes a geometric aspect to a natal planet.)

Uranus moves completely around the zodiac in 84 years. Thus, in 84 years, Uranus will return to its original position in a natal chart. Before that return, Uranus will also make significant aspects to its natal position at specific times in our lives. At 21, we experience the first Uranus square. (For example, at birth, if Uranus is at 21 degrees of Cancer, then at age 21, Uranus will reach 21 degrees of Libra - a square, or 90-degrees, aspect to the natal position.) This is the first generational Uranus revolution. How have we planned for this stage of our life? Have we planned at all or do we find ourselves unsuspectingly on the edge of a cliff? Do we find what we expected? How do we react to the freedom of young adulthood? Uranus transits move us into expanding realms of possibility. They are very much like falling from a cliff.

The next Uranus transit that we all experience around the same age is the Uranus opposition occurring around the age of 40. It was under this transit that I became an astrologer. My world shifted significantly. Typically at the Uranus opposition, one puts one's whole life under the microscope. Any unanswered calls from the authentic self needs to be answered. If we haven't acted foolishly enough by this time in our lives, we suddenly will. Uranus transits can give us foolish confidence to damn the consequences and push ahead with sudden urges. It becomes unbearable to remain stuck in confining situations. We find ourselves needing to change. A study of the Fool card might help guide us through these impulses.

The Fool does not abandon everything when he

falls. In Lady Frieda Harris' drawing, we see the essentials all around him: the elements; a bag of astrological glyphs; symbols of love, transformation and power - a dove, a butterfly, and a caduceus - and animal allies - the crocodile and the tiger. During a Uranus transit, it is very important to identify the bottom line, those things which are non-negotiables. It is also necessary to let go of a great many things that are really not essential. Look at what surrounds the Fool. With what would you surround yourself? The Fool has his instinctual animal allies. During a Uranus transit, the body tells us that we need to change by releasing energy. Some describe this energy as the kundalini energy rising along the chakras. This energy is vitalizing but also can be a burn out. It is very helpful to find healthy ways to release energy at this time.

The Fool is open. Open to change, open to seeing with different eyes, hearing with different ears. The authentic self beckons during a Uranus transit, if we let ourselves see and hear that voice, we may be able to discover a new world for ourselves.

I can't personally describe the next Uranus transit that occurs around the age of 60. I have not experienced that one yet. Here is what I suspect will be important to consider. What am I ready to let go of? What call have I not yet answered? What is my body telling me? What are my essentials for the journey? How can I keep my eyes, my ears, and my heart open?

The call to fall - can it be described as a scientific experiment? Can we possibly know what new worlds we are on the edge of discovering? Feel that pulsing life energy and reach out.



*Teri Parsley Starnes gives thanks for the opportunity to share astrological insights in this beloved community of Diana's Grove. May all our rites of passage be an unfolding blessing for ourselves and the world. Teri can be reached at [tpstar@mninter.net](mailto:tpstar@mninter.net).*



## Luca (Ex-Devi) Learns Foolishness

**A**t my adopted home, I was well-fed. And now, isn't that a glorious thing! All the food you would ever want. At first, I thought that was going to be enough. That was good, and the food was good. And then it occurred to me that the food wasn't all. What a fool I was.

When I left the Grove, I went out into the larger world, but that larger world was somehow smaller. I left a crowd of dogs to be top dog, but top dog means nothing in solitude. I had plenty of food, but food wasn't all of life. And so, is life always going to be like this? I venture into the unknown, experience it, and then come back to where I started?

Or am I really back where I started? Physically, yes. I lived as a puppy at Diana's Grove, and then with a family in their home, and now I am back at Diana's Grove. We all make journeys, or so it seems. I came full circle. Fool circle. What do other fools' circles look like?

I look different to you than I did when you first saw me. I am much fatter; too fat for my bones, so it's hard to walk sometimes. I'm learning to run again, but I still falter. I remember this place and my puppy life... I begin to run as I did then, and my body stops me. I have come back physically to this place, yet physically I am not the same.

I know more than I want to know now. I know that not everyone loves and understands me enough to let me be free. I know what betrayal is. I know what it's like to be loved and protected and to be saved from a bad situation. I am not the same on the inside.

What am I going to do now? I am going to get well. I am going to get physically fit so I can run down the hillside with the others more easily. I want to be able to rise from sleep and not feel that my legs will give way underneath me. I want to start again.

Where am I going? I have no idea. I have to give the outcome to the gods and live my life as best I can. I have to trust and be who I am. I am in love with you if you let me be. I will be in love with this life as much as I can, and I'll let my new journey take me where I must go.

One chilly October night recently, I heard the people singing, "Light my way so I can see; / illuminate my destiny." Does the fool get to keep stepping into a new lighted path? What is destiny? Will I continually be going full circle into the fool's circle in order to find my way?

When I returned, there were other puppies here. I feel I am still a puppy, but these guys are really puppies!

Puppy is beginning. Old dog like Dora is ending. What can we learn from each other? What do we have in common? The physical cycles of life are easier to see - they are exterior and open to the world. But what about the emotional, intellectual, and spiritual ones? The more I learn, the more I realize what I don't know. I think someone must have said that once.

The more foolish you are, the wiser you may begin to be. It seems to me that only those who refuse the mantle of fool are the truly foolish - the short-sighted, the egotistical, the liars. A fool can learn something new every day. A fool can envision a destiny that might have seemed impossible in the past.

As we fools wind our way through the journey that has called us, let us be proud of our foolishness. Let us learn and grow and prosper as we rise and fall with the turn of fortune's wheel. Let us claim the destiny shining before us, bright and gleaming as a sword. We only need to enter the mist to start the journey - a journey that will take us fool circle.



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*About Luca: Devi was one of the six white and brown puppies in the first two litters this year, and went to a home in St. Louis at the June adopt-a-thon. His new owners kept him crated most of the time and the relationship never really gelled well. He's come back, named Duke, which we're changing to Luke for now and will later change to Luca, after he gets used to us and the slightly changed name. He's way overweight but loving and happy and seems delighted to be with us again.*



## Why Ritual?

Perhaps it seems a little strange for me to be asking this question now, after writing about ritual all year. But the Fool is our archetype this month, and he was never one to follow convention or expectation – so neither shall I. The Fool is inviting me to explain the reason I jump off the proverbial cliff and risk creating ritual in the first place. “Sure,” she says, “the priestessing tools you’ve been writing about are great. But why bother learning them? Why is ritual even necessary?” Now there’s a question. Let’s see whether I can come up with some answers.

Next year, we will have two focuses on the Rites of Passage team in Mystery School. For those of you who aren’t familiar with this program, this is the culmination of our leadership training, where we examine what it means to do our personal work in a professional context, and to truly embody the community philosophy that Diana’s Grove has come to represent. One half of the 2005 team will focus on Community Arts; the other on Ritual Arts.

Earlier this year, one of the concerns that came up among the staff was that the Ritual Arts half of the team would be seen as the more “glamorous” of the two. After all, they’ll likely get the more visible ritual roles, and will have the opportunity to hone their skills of public speaking, energy facilitation, and engaging a group with voice and body. We were afraid that the Community Arts group would seem like the “ugly stepsister” on the Rites team, as they won’t necessarily be in the public eye that often. Granted, the Community Arts folks will be working with small group facilitation, gracing, and community sustainability – all incredibly essential skills – but anchoring a small group doesn’t include a flashy costume and a big, booming voice.

After some reflection and dialog, we came up with an elemental metaphor for the two focuses that really put things in perspective, and I was amazed at how it began to make Community Arts the more “sexy” option. Community Arts is the “Earth.” Those who practice these arts help sustain healthy group dynamics, facilitate the physical reality of keeping the Grove a viable organization, learn how to address conflict and come up with solutions that benefit the overall vision, as well as uphold the Cornerstones of our community. Ritual Arts then

became the “Fire.” Those who practice these arts are there to take the work to a mythic level, facilitate the large group in a subconscious, transcendent, and ecstatic experience that allows the participants to lay new patterns in their souls. They will learn to engage and hold a group’s attention, lead others to their own discovery, and how to transform metaphor in ritual to a pattern in daily life.

I am mentoring the Ritual Arts half of the team next year, so this statement may seem rather strange coming from me, but I’ve realized that, although Earth can survive without Fire, Fire can’t survive without Earth. Diana’s Grove-style ritual just isn’t possible without community...but we could remove ritual from the community and still be a vital community. We don’t choose to do it that way, but it’s possible. The more essential and “sexier” we made Community Arts, the more we knocked Ritual Arts off the top of the pyramid of group perception.

*“...once you find the form of your own beliefs, you can truly find the tools that allow you to step into the role of a conscious, accountable priestess.”*

That, then, begs the question – why do ritual? If it’s not necessary – why bother? For me, the answer lies in Cynthia’s definition of ritual that I’ve been working with all year: “Ritual is a multi-sensorial prayer that allows us to lay new patterns in our soul.” I use ritual to lay new patterns. I take a metaphor or symbol and create a ritual around it so that I can see a new perspective. I exaggerate an existing pattern in mythic space to better recognize it when I’m walking through my daily life. Ritual takes the stories that are played out in my community on a daily basis and mythologizes them, so that each of us has the opportunity to change or enhance those stories in a way that serves us, individually. The end result is that each of us can become a stronger member of the community. Ritual cannot exist in a vacuum. It needs the

sustaining Earth of Community to keep burning brightly, illuminating my patterns, your patterns, and offering each of us the chance to change them. Sure, we could have a community without ritual – but I certainly don't choose to.

Then, I took it to the next level - what does it mean if I decide to be a part of the leadership in a community that uses ritual as one of the primary forums for community and interpersonal development? For me, that requires a high level of responsibility and accountability. If ritual truly does lay new patterns in the soul, then I need to pay attention to those subconscious patterns I offer to my participants. I need to be aware of my own core values. I need to be aware of how I take up space. I need to be aware of how I create safety. I need to be aware of how participants are responding during each and every piece of the ritual. I also need to be aware of how the work is affecting me. In other words, I need to enter into my role as a priestess with my eyes wide open.

Whether you offer ritual on a regular basis to your community, coven, or for yourself – or if you participate in rituals designed by someone else – I invite you to identify why you do it. Can you answer the Fool's question? What does ritual mean to you? What do you value about ritual? For, once you find the form of your own beliefs, you can truly find the tools that allow you to step into the role of a conscious, accountable priestess. You can then help create that moment of ecstasy for both the other participants and yourself, where the patterns you lay in your souls join together in an intricate swirl of possibility. You can help the group take the hand of the Fool and enter into free-fall, to merge with pure Spirit. And, although there is more to it for me, at the core, the experience of that moment of transcendence, no matter how brief, is why ritual is an essential part of my spiritual practice.

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*River serves on the Diana's Grove Staff as the Ritual Arts mentor, and facilitates workshops around the country in earth based spirituality. For more information as well as her travel schedule, see her website at [www.rivermagic.org](http://www.rivermagic.org).*

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## Interview with a Mystery: Synnove by sisalfish

*I spoke with Synnove, 2-year Mystery, and partner to Jim O, Shadow (the wonder dog), and Grove dog Rosie, from her home in Seattle.*

*Tell me about your passions.*

That would be Mystery School; dogs; rock climbing; and empowering people.

*OK, let's start with Mystery School; I understand you're doing a rites year next year.*

I am. It goes back to why I joined Mystery School in the first place. I was interested in more advanced magical training and spoke with teachers I admired. Sunray's enthusiasm about the leadership program, community and land at the Grove persuaded me to try Mystery School. A few months later, Todd Herriot and others from the Midwest Reclaiming Community got me so excited about Mystery School that I began joining others to form a Mystery School Study Group in Seattle.

When I received the Bones of Mystery School and Myth, Magic and Community, I was amazed to discover ideas that I had explored through personal and professional growth trainings, but presented in a spiritual setting. In a very real way, I found a home. Diana's Grove ties everything together for me - serving the community, the idea of servant leadership, and priestessing in the ritual creation and the rituals themselves. A rites year seems like the next logical step.

*What are your feelings going into your rites year?*

Mostly I have a sense of anticipation. I'm not sure what to expect. I don't feel particularly apprehensive – it's more a sense of, OK, it's started. And I feel hopeful in terms of starting to think: what do I want to create in this next year?

For me, my priestess path has to do with all the work I do. The way I earn my living, my volunteer work, involvement in the Seattle Reclaiming Community and the work I do at Diana's Grove, including my rites work, are all an expression of my spiritual path. The only difference is in the expression; I don't lead rituals at work but I do bring people together to create positive change, to have a say in how we function as a team. I think of all those as areas where I'm focused on a spiritual path. Sometimes it's hard to stay focused on spiritual values (especially in corporate America). My hope for this rites year is to make that sense of doing spiritual work all the time much more present.

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Continued on page 11

*You sound as though Mystery School has made big changes in your life.*

What I've noticed, since starting Mystery School, is that I have greater skill at facilitating because of what I've learned at Diana's Grove. It's not just ritual – I mean general facilitation. I find myself much more conscious of how to involve other people, and of ways to make sure they have a chance to become involved. So at business meetings, where it's hard to get people in, I have greater skills at getting them focused and going – I'm using theories of pacing and leading. I can notice where everyone is, and start to bring everyone in – sometimes it's just by getting in front of the room and standing there, quietly – to allow for that organic thing to happen, where people notice and slowly shift their energy and are present.

*You said you were also passionate about empowering people?*

Yes, empowering people and teams, and mentoring people. That's why I really appreciate that I've learned to facilitate the ritual process in a way that involves everyone, so that they come together and create their own experience. Imagine – if ritual lays new patterns in our soul, imagine how much more deeply those patterns are laid in a person's soul when he or she is the one creating the ritual that lays those patterns, instead of passively observing, or watching from the outside, as someone else does it.

*From what you've told me, you also mentor and empower by teaching rock climbing.*

Yes – I love it because it comes back to the notion of empowerment. I've taught rock climbing to people of all different shapes, sizes and ages. I've even worked with adults who have been afraid of heights, spending time getting them ready for their first rappel off a cliff into a controlled fall.

*It sounds like you're helping them embrace the Fool's energy.*

Well, I teach middle school-aged girls, through a program called "Girls Rock," and I teach adults, too. Most people find it pretty scary, initially. I'm passionate about it because what I've seen, over and over, is the change in an individual from feeling that things happen to them, and they have to turn to someone stronger than they are to help them through it – to believing they can handle challenges on their own. And if that's true of rappelling, they realize, it could be true of all other kinds of things in their lives – they start considering tackling things they really want, making changes. I think they come away from it saying, "I can tackle something really hard, take it step by step, and be supported in the process and do it." I get to provide the support.

*Sounds like a rites year.*

You know – I hope so. If I can do a rites year and come out of it having helped my team, the participants, the Grove, step by step, and at the end have the sense that what the community gained was a strengthened sense of ability, that we can do what we set our minds to – I'd be thrilled. And I'm blessed by

the support I receive as well, from my friends, my partner, the Grove. I know, if things get hard for me, I'll have the support I need.

*You said another passion is dogs; talk a little about your work with the Grove dogs.*

Well, I like to walk long distances. One of the first things I noticed at the Grove was how much of my time was spent sitting – I'm not usually sitting that much. So I looked for ways to get away and walk on the land, every day. My first day at the Grove, I got up in the morning and went for a run; the dogs noticed me and came along. The next morning, Rosie and Tigger were there waiting for me, and they came with me that morning and each morning after that. In the afternoon, when I'd get ready to go for a walk, I began to call the dogs, and soon I was going out for walks with 15 or 17 dogs. I knew that the Grove dogs all need attention from us visiting Mysteries, especially the adult dogs. The puppies naturally get attention, but I realized the adult dogs need it, too. I found them competing with each other for snatches of my attention. They act like bad dogs! But they just want that close human attention, and they're doing what they know how to do to get it.

So, now, Rosie, the dog I brought home from the Grove, would like you to ask her something too. She is right here beside me – with her collar in her mouth, as I'm talking to you. Ask her how she likes living here, after living at the Grove.

*Um – maybe you could ask her and tell me what she says.*

OK, here's what she says. "You might think I'd regret the change in my life – leaving the land, and the other Grove dogs, to become a city-dweller. While I can't run around off-leash whenever I want now, and there aren't all the other Grove dogs to play with, I love my life. I'm utterly happy. Blissful. Because I have a house, and Shadow, who is another dog that's older, that I protect. I even have my own feather boa. And I have my own people. That's the best of all. So – if any of you Mysteries are hesitating because you think you're taking a dog out of dog heaven if you take her from the Grove, that's not so. I'm putting a special word in for my dog buddies, Tigger and Leo. I happen to know they'd love having their own human, too."

*Feather boa - Rosie has become a fashion hound, just like you.*

It's true; I've corrupted her.

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*sisalfish is a professional writer and editor living in San Antonio with her husband and a neurotic sheltie named Chee. She has worked with the Crowley/Harris Thoth tarot for twenty-five years. This is her fourth year as a Mystery in the Diana's Grove Mystery School, where she is currently participating in the Grove's Initiatory Priestess Program.*

# The Minor Mysteries Revealed

by Canyon

**A**ll year, I have been writing a monthly article for this newsletter, in the voice of one of the Minor Arcana cards from the Tarot. Did you wonder why? And did you wonder, “Why an eight this month...and why a seven last month?” In this final month of our two-year journey through the Major Arcana, the fool in me reveals all!

Those Major Arcana from the front pages of these newsletters, they are the major teachers in our lives. They are the archetypes that, like shards of pottery in an ancient temple, line the floor of our psyches. I know who I am, I know who you are; and I recognize the plots of books, movies and TV shows, thanks to these Major Arcana. I recognize the Magician in Professor Dumbledore and Gandalf, and the Charioteer in Harry Potter and Frodo Baggins. I watch Mulan with my five-year-old niece and recognize the Priestess in the title character who steps between the worlds of female and male roles in ancient China. I observe my own deferent anxiety when I speak to a U.S. Senator and recognize the Emperor (and, sometimes, the Devil!) rising from the floor of my psyche to be the mirror image of the face before me. Each month, since January 2003, we have listened as those Major Arcana taught us. Each called your name on the roll in its class; they are the faculty in the College of Life.

The Minor Arcana are the lessons they teach us. Just a few little, easy lessons.... This column in 2004 has offered you homework on the lessons of joy in abundance and the truth about truce, the futility of worry and the seduction of victory, the illusion of interference and illusiveness of happiness, the momentary completion of wealth and the relentless action of dominion, and, finally, the works of integration needed to create a temple for the soul. Your own life may have offered you a few additional lessons this year. Have you been learning about satiety or pleasure, ruin or oppression, power or gain, strife or futility, virtue or peace...? How about change...any homework in change this year?

As each card has spoken this year, it has shared its connection to the month’s theme, the major teachers of these “minor” lessons, and to the other minor lessons to which it is connected. The constellations are in the inset table.

<p><u>January</u> Hanged One Universe Empress</p> <p><i>The threes:</i> Sorrow Virtue <b>Abundance</b> Works</p>	<p><u>February</u> Death Emperor</p> <p><i>The fours:</i> <b>Truce</b> Completion Luxury Power</p>	<p><u>March</u> Temperance Hierophant</p> <p><i>The fives:</i> Defeat Strife Disappointment <b>Worry</b></p>	<p><u>April</u> Devil Lovers</p> <p><i>The sixes:</i> Science <b>Victory</b> Pleasure Success</p>
<p><u>May</u> Tower Chariot</p> <p><i>The sevens:</i> Futility Valor Debauch <b>Failure</b></p>	<p><u>June</u> Star Lust/Strength</p> <p><i>The eights:</i> <b>Interference</b> Swiftiness Indolence Prudence</p>	<p><u>July</u> Moon Hermit</p> <p><i>The nines:</i> Cruelty Strength Gain <b>Happiness</b></p>	<p><u>August</u> Sun Wheel Magician</p> <p>The tens: Ruin Oppression Satiety <b>Wealth</b> (and the aces)</p>
<p><u>September</u> Aeon/Judgment Priestess</p> <p><i>The Twos:</i> Peace <b>Dominion</b> Love Change</p>	<p><u>October</u> Universe/World Hanged One Empress</p> <p><i>Again, threes:</i> Sorrow Virtue Abundance <b>Works</b></p>	<p><u>November</u> Fool...          who takes the journey</p>	<p><u>Note:</u>          <i>In each set of Minor Arcana, the order is:</i>  Swords Wands Cups Disks</p>

As you may remember, these constellations are brought to you by the wonder of numerology. The Hanged One in January – as the 12<sup>th</sup> Major Arcana – was connected to the nurturing, abundant quality of the Empress – the 3<sup>rd</sup> Major Arcana – and to the atonement. As the 10 of Disks said in August, the journey continues – always continues – as you swim back and forth from one to ten. In fact, there are four lanes in the pool and your continuing journey back and forth from ace to 10 actually wanders across lessons of ideas and conflict, lessons of integrity and passion, lessons of emotion and release, and lessons of action and support. There are riptides and buoys of support along the way. Your only job is to just keep swimming.

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*Canyon's life mission is to offer others opportunities that enable them to step into their destinies. Her programs and publications support you as you strive to become who you truly are, who you were intended to be. Canyon is a staff member at Diana's Grove and is currently writing a book, A Labyrinth Journey: Seven Paths to a Productive Adulthood.*



## MOVING IMAGES

BY DAN WILSON

### Why I Love the Movies

Since childhood, I was fascinated with books and stories and filling my head with knowledge. I recall a time when I'd read everything of interest that I could check out on my juvenile card at our local library, and my mother had to give the adult librarian a piece of her mind, forcing her to give me an adult card significantly ahead of my 12<sup>th</sup> birthday. When I was managing a bookstore, I acquired and read hundreds of books.

It was C.S. Lewis who wrote, in *Shadowlands*, "We read to know that we are not alone." For me, this quote has always been a reminder about the relationship I have with books. I read voraciously to find a connection; to find some character in a story to whom I could relate, going through similar struggles with their life as I was. I used my connections with these books to learn how to handle different circumstances and understand different ways to be in certain situations.

The older I get, the more I find myself relating to things visually. Am I drawn to film because I'm getting more visual? Or am I getting more visual because I'm drawn to film? Most likely a little of both, in an endless spiral, but what I get from the images flickering past me on the screen is the same as I've always received from books.

These days, one of the reasons I go to the movies is to connect and relate with ideas bigger than myself - explorations of sex, death, money and power, with thousands of different characters and hundreds of different stories. The characters and situations in the movies are nothing more than the archetypes we've come to know and love. Whether it's Luke Skywalker as the Fool, embarking on a journey of self-discovery without realizing it, or Lester Burnham as the Hanged One, seeing his life from a completely different perspective, or Harold and Maude living and learning about the Universe through their respective philosophies on mortality, the movies are an opportunity to immerse myself in the community of the archetypes for a few hours, and open my mind to the lessons they have to teach me in the darkness.

As the lights dim and the audience hushes, I find myself poised at the brink of a journey, anxious to see how the story will play out, yet with a bit of trepidation - did I just waste eight bucks for something awful? As those first images roll onto the screen, I begin to lose myself, perhaps entering into a

trance state where the voices of the Archetypes can speak to me and wash their wisdom over me.

Through the movies, I find myself connecting with the whole. The Archetypes invite me to review, question, reflect and discuss what they have to say about life, the universe and

everything. They put it into a succinct and palatable package that I can easily share with others over coffee or lunch.

I go to movies to know that I am not alone. Each time the screen starts flickering, it's another Fool's journey and, by the end, whether left with answers or questions, internal ponderings or external conversations, I'm a little bit more connected with the community of humankind. And if that's not something to love about movies, I'm not sure what is.

*"...the movies are an opportunity to immerse myself in the community of the archetypes for a few hours, and open my mind to the lessons they have to teach me in the darkness."*

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Dan Wilson, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. INTJ. Art. Music. Film.  
*Scorpio sun, Leo moon, Scorpio rising.*

# Epiphany Passages



By Lorely Lather

## The Fool

I see mythical meaning for my personal life in nearly every myth I hear or read. As this Mystery School year winds down at Diana's Grove, I am still contemplating how I am the Hanged One and what I see in Urd's well of the past. I am always contemplating the mythical implications of my life. My internal dialogue rewrites the meaning of my life, with each essential learning I encounter. It therefore seems my natural disposition to put on paper my personal mythology.

Thus, this year, it was outwardly easy to write about seeing my life as a series of epiphanies and to describe those growth-filled moments in monthly stories for this newsletter. It was internally difficult to be so revealing, but I believe my finished stories looked easy, externally.

Now my epiphanies have been told. That is to say, I feel closure with them. I have no interest in writing more epiphanies - for the moment. Like a Fool, I am open to what will happen next. I define no specific path for my writing, but simply remain open to suggestion.

I could write more actively on the Mystery 05 list. I have much to learn about interactive learning over the Internet. I could enjoy the conversation of the Mystery 05 list. Increased participation in the Mystery list would allow me to delve more deeply into learning from the monthly Diana's Grove packets. To participate in this way is a highly viable choice for

me. I am the Fool; I am bold and curious and I want to learn.

Or I could continue to write a series of personal mythology articles for the 2005 newsletter. I day-dream of stories centered on identifying the 4 Levels of Reality, as I have seen them in my life. Or I could write a series of articles on insights on people who have sat at my dining room table, and on the inherent sacredness of my old home. Or I could write a series of articles on gender difference. Looking at life through the lens of women runs often through my internal dialogue, and my internal old woman's voice

presents some thoughts that make my own spine straighten decisively. Or I could break from writing about my own mythical life, and interview other Mysteries for the newsletter. I could gently connect any of these ideas to 2005's Camelot/Avalon myth. I am the Fool. I believe in

myself and boldly step forward, but I am open to suggestions.

In my thoughts, to be the Fool involves carrying my bag of essentials, staying on my path, and trusting that the instinctual dog will nip me at the just the correct moment to alert me to leap. I am stepping forward, expecting I'll be nipped.

*"I am always contemplating the mythical implications of my life. My internal dialogue rewrites the meaning of my life, with each essential learning I encounter."*

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*Lorely is a Mystery from central Missouri who views life and personal growth through the lens of epiphanies, as defined by the work of Carl Jung. She is a community leader in her small town and is studying spiritual leadership in the Initiatory Priestess Program at Diana's Grove.*

# Prophecy and Destiny: The Future of the Grove

by Cynthia Jones

The beginning needs an end," the Fool said. And sometimes the beginning begins before the end. Sometimes, a beginning slips in without making a sound. A tree grows from the inside out. Circle at a time, the new growth pushes the bark out from the inside. Change can be like that, it can happen as the core becomes larger.

At the Rites of Passage weekend, our tenth anniversary, we announced our plan for the Grove's future. The most consistent response to our plan has been relief.

Many of you have noticed that Patricia and I are of the age where the future of the Grove is no longer a remote consideration. We want the work to continue. We want the community to thrive. We want the future Diana's Grove to reflect our core values and, at the same time, to be shaped by the values, vision, dreams and unique goals of those who shepherd the Grove into its next incarnation.

Those who are willing to take on this work rise from our core. They joined our staff to be a part of our work rather than to correct it. To be true to our vision, they need to be free to do what we have done, to shape the work as they are shaped. For our work to remain vital, they must be free to grow and change. They will embody their personal passions and build those passions into the work that they/we offer.

How do we remain consistent and consistently change? By continuing to grow from the inside out. A year ago, Patricia and I had a seven year plan. We are now at the end of the first of those seven years. A board comprised of people who are committed to our processes and procedures has been formed. That board is committed to our work and to your experience. You know the board. Their work has blended with our work. It enriched last year's Mystery School.

In the coming year, Diana's Grove will become a limited liability corporation. In five years, the board of directors will be creating the work, schedule and structure of events. Some members of the board will be living here as a part of the resident staff. Patricia and I will continue to be members of the board. Our work will be a part of the whole group's vision and dream. Personally, I

would like to publish the previous Mystery School material, and continue writing packets and caring for the dogs.

In a natural evolution, the staff is now the board. I think it is important for all of you to know that our staff does not get paid. They pay. Some pay for weekends and underwrite the cost of Mystery School. Some pay by contributing a great deal of time and labor, by taking on the daily work of sustaining the Grove, the web, and our online work. Some do both. Those who offer programs work independently and together during the month before Mystery School to create their work.

As a group, we will be creating a structure that supports the vision, the intention and the endless change that is a part of our essential nature. Some of you, and folks we have not yet met, will join this board as it continues to evolve. Who is the collective that has gathered to sit at the Grove's round table? Rena Bailey, Can-

yon, Jim Carey, Jan Dickinson, Katie Earley, Constance Fleming, Arden Goewert, Matt Guynn, Cynthia Jones, River, Patricia Storm, Elizabeth Wilson, Jennifer Wilson, and Pamela Wilz.

The Grove will change in the next six years as it has in the last six...and it will remain the

same. Our core values are: inclusion, respect for different spiritual beliefs, healthy inter-personal process, that leaders are a part of the mundane workforce, and that leadership roles are taken by those who are skilled and can offer a quality experience to the group. We are committed to listening to the community we serve and responding to what we hear.

We will continue to be a client-centered, participant-centered, organization, committed to creating healthy community and serving those of you who participate in our programs. I imagine we will remain all too human and make extraordinary commitments that force us to live on the edge of our physical limits. I imagine those who step in will try to do more than they can and that they, like me, will fall occasionally. Please, support us as we strive to do more than we can do. Let us give you the work that requires our excellence rather than provide you with the sure thing that comes with easy-to-achieve goals.

As the designing mind of Diana's Grove, we will continue to be leaders who follow the group. You are the illusive muses who have led us through the last ten years. We will continue to follow you into our unknown future, a future that is formed by your actions, interactions, questions, requests, and by your casual Saturday morning comments at the breakfast table. Individually and together, may we step into the future.

*"We will continue to be a client-centered, participant-centered, organization, committed to creating healthy community and serving those of you who participate in our programs."*

# The Initiatory Priestess Program: Living a Philosophy of Leadership

by Canyon

Is the Initiatory Priestess Program (IPP) for you? Its intention is to build and/or refine leadership skills and enable their active application during Mystery School and open events. Are leadership skills what you want? Leadership...a word of many meanings. The Diana's Grove philosophy of leadership is not about administration, but it is about management - management of yourself in the context of a community. It is not about control, but it is about mastery, in the sense of a continuous apprenticeship, a lifelong process of growth. It is not about being authoritarian, but it is about authority, the willingness to be the acknowledged author of your actions and take responsibility for the powerful impacts that result.

The IPP is designed to develop this philosophy of leadership. Is development as a leader what you want...and what does leadership development look like at Diana's Grove, where community and ritual are co-created? How can leadership, which implies hierarchy, come out of co-creation, which ensures input by all? Diana's Grove does have a leadership hierarchy, as do all groups - either overtly or covertly. Rather than power by control of resources, our hierarchy is grounded in the power of commitment. Diana's Grove leadership is a hierarchy of commitment. A hierarchy of commitment...what does that mean?

Let me begin with the fact that Mystery School is a program for personal development. It begins with the intention to learn about yourself...for your own purposes, your own goals. Leadership commitment...it begins with the intention to learn about yourself for the purpose of serving a larger goal. On first reading, this phrase may sound desirable to many - noble and beautiful. If you are among them, we caution you to be careful what you ask for....

- Fulfillment of that intention first requires attention - focused observation and awareness of the group and its dynamics. Commitment that can evolve into leadership requires attention to who you are in the group - your roles in the larger dynamic.
- Fulfillment of that intention also requires diligent engagement - active and continuous involvement that is self-motivated...by the intention of service to others. Commitment that can evolve into leadership is about choosing to participate in ways that have an observable positive impact on the group, on the whole that is formed by the interaction between the group and the process.
- Fulfillment of that intention is a decision, a dedication...a contract for allegiance to a common vision and purpose. Commitment that can evolve into leadership is apprenticeship to something larger than yourself, larger than your process.

The first place that the Diana's Grove hierarchy of commitment becomes truly visible is the Initiatory Priestess Program. The primary indicators that lead us to invite you into the IPP

are indicators of commitment. Likewise, the IPP may require a different commitment - both in quantity and quality - from the one you made before becoming a part of the IPP. The work you do and the growth in leadership commitment that you gain from the IPP may lead you to think about a Rites of Passage year...or not. The IPP is a prerequisite for a Rites year but does not automatically result in a Rites year.

## *Who is Invited into the IPP for 2005...How and When?*

As preparation for the Initiatory Priestess Program, we strongly recommend that you have fully attended 10 of the Priestess Path program sessions that precede Mystery School weekends. These sessions are not offered at week-long events or at open events. Have you attended 10 Priestess Paths? Only eight...but still interested in IPP? That's fine! We recommend 10 Priestess Paths as the prerequisite, but what we require before an invitation to IPP is our own observation of your ability to actively use what is taught in these Priestess Path sessions. What we require is our own observation that you are ready to have your primary focus - not sole focus - be the group and the group's needs, rather than your personal work.

After the first Mystery School registration deadline of December 15<sup>th</sup>, we will issue an email invitation to those among the registrants who we believe have met these criteria, or with whom we have already had conversations about IPP. Yes, this implies that those who register after that date will not be considered. Why? The IPP is a program about commitment and the first commitment is to be in Mystery School, which begins January 5<sup>th</sup>. We want to know that your level of commitment extends to letting us know that we can count on your presence in Mystery School before the new year begins.

The December invitation will make clear what is offered to you and expected of you if you commit to the IPP group for the coming year. That group forms at the first Mystery School in January, so you will be asked to make a decision - a commitment - by January 28<sup>th</sup> about whether you will be a part of the IPP group for the year.

## *IPP and Mystery School Participation*

To make the Initiatory Priestess Program a truly effective program for you, we ask for another commitment...to consistent participation. At a minimum, read the packet - before you arrive if you're coming to that month's event - and be active in the Leadership email class to stay current with our discussions. We strongly recommend that you attend a minimum of five Mystery School weekends, including either January or February. (Count the May and October Intensive weeks as three weekends each.) We also highly recommend the Priestess Intensive in August and the November closing weekend as part of your IPP program. If you are among those Mysteries who cannot come to at least five weekends, talk to us. Your commitment is the key and there may be other patterns of participation that will create an effective program for you.

Simply put, the hierarchy of commitment flows both directions. The greater your commitment, the greater will be our commitment to mentorship, and the more opportunity you will have to learn and grow in leadership skills. If you have questions about or an interest in the Initiatory Priestess Program, take some initiative! Send an email to [pamela.wilz@prodigy.net](mailto:pamela.wilz@prodigy.net) or [constancesea@starband.net](mailto:constancesea@starband.net)



# Dog Rescue at Diana's Grove

In addition to providing a leadership development and personal growth program, Diana's Grove also serves as an independent dog rescue operation. For more information on how you can support these efforts, as well as photographic bios of dogs available for adoption, please visit [www.dianasgrove.com/dogs](http://www.dianasgrove.com/dogs)

## Lonely Hearts: *Can this marriage be saved?* or *Why some placements don't work out.*

By Cynthia Jones

In this month's dog speak column, Devi-Duke-Luke-Luca talks about his Fool's Journey away from the Grove and his return to a our dog pack, with all of its advantages and disadvantages. We have had four dogs return to us; all of them are good dogs. Two of our returning dogs are my first and second choice for a personal dog. They are the dogs that would give to my mother, daughter or best friend. Why did their new owners return them? Why didn't it work? Why can't these marriages be saved?

My first thought, and perhaps yours, is that the dog has a behavioral problem. He barks, she bites, he is unruly, she isn't really housebroken...but that isn't what happened. These dogs, like all dogs, required an orientation to their new homes. They needed to learn the household procedures and be taught how to meet their basic needs. After that introduction time, none of the above concerns instigated the dog's return. My next thought - if the dog isn't bad then the dog's ex-owner must be defective in some way. No, that isn't true either. Many of our returning dogs have come from ideal homes with excellent people...excellent people! That excellence is why we placed a dog in a situation that wasn't quite right for the dog or the owner.



Devi-Duke-Luke-Luca

When we meet a person who we know will love a dog that we love, will care for that dog and provide medical care, proper nutrition, affection and protection, it is very hard to say no. It is easy to let the number of hours that a person is gone matter less than we know it does. It is easy to believe that the promised "fence" that is going to be installed this weekend will be, or that it really isn't as necessary as we said it was. It is easy to believe than an older couple with mobility issues will be able to get the help they need when they fall in love with an adorable puppy. Sometimes, we are right. An ideal owner can turn a potentially difficult situation in a good one. But, more often, the puppy grows up to be an unruly adolescent. He is still adorable but he is no longer the appropriate companion for his limited-activity new family. The lonely dog becomes possessive and aggressive with the older family pet. The dog that has no exercise eats the couch. And, then, these dogs come back to the Grove. Older, wiser and often better for the time they spent with a caring human in a less than ideal situation. Yes, better. Individual attention is a wonderful, healing thing - even when it doesn't result in a lifetime relationship.



Memphis

Why do they come home? Here's why: dogs have innate needs. When those needs are met, add a pinch of obedience training - another innate need - and you have a rewarding lifetime relationship. Now, if we ran a plant rescue shelter, we would tell people: your new plant needs water, sunlight and food. These things are innate to the nature of the plant. No water, no light...the plant will die. Not negotiable. Provide just the bare minimum of those two needs and the plant will lose its vitality and beauty. In a diminishing cycle, even a small amount of care becomes more work than the plant is worth. When all three needs are met, the plant thrives and contributes. The same is true for dogs.

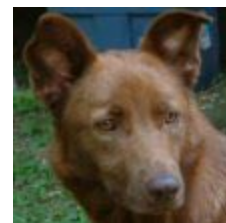


Carrie

A dog's primary need is to be with its owner. Dogs are social animals; they are pack animals. Companionship and social interaction are the heart and soul of their nature. Take that away and your dog's heart will wither, his soul will ache and yearn until his yearning eats up his belief in happiness. Your dog needs a fenced yard, a protected place to run, play and eliminate without being attached to a leash or chain. Why? You have the same need. Answer that question for yourself and you have answered it for your dog. Exercise, for a dog, is like light for the plant. It is essential for the dog's mental and physical well being.

Obedience training is the final key to a successful relationship between dog and owner. Training creates a healthy pack dynamic. When you train your dog, you will learn how to be the one in charge, the alpha dog. Then, knowing that you are in charge, your dog can relax and let you manage the family. When your dog believes that she is the alpha, then she believes that she is the one responsible for the family's safety. She believes that she has to manage the family unit, the yard, the neighbors, the neighbor's dog, the postman, the traffic on the street...on it goes. How does a fox terrier cope with terrorism? In a dog's cellular memory, his job is to protect us from wolves and other wild things. Today's dog has to manage a world filled with social problems and political complications. Even a very bright border collie has a hard time being in charge of the world.

Your dog agrees to give you unconditional love, to listen to you endlessly with true devotion, to look forward to your return, even when you are gone for only 10 minutes, to obey your command without asking why, and to know that you are worthy of his trust even when you don't know that yourself. In return, for your dog to be the companion that she can be, she asks you to design your schedule so she can spend eight hours a day with you or a human companion. Your part of the bargain: fence your yard, install a dog door if possible, and take a daily walk. It is good for you and your dog. If you can provide for some of the above needs, but not all of them - look for the dog that is looking for you. Choose a dog whose personality, temperament and habits are just right for the home that you can provide. Long hair, short hair, black or white, beautiful in a classic way or not - your dog doesn't care about these details. May we learn to be as wise as those wise fools - our canine friends.



Ember



## Meet the Newsletter Staff!

This Month's Contributors: Teri Parsley-Starnes, River, Lorely Lather, Dan Wilson, sisalfish, Cynthia Jones, Canyon, Jennifer Wilson, Devi-Duke-Luke-Luka

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*Thank you for reading the Diana's Grove Newsletter! We'll be back in January of 2005 to share our journey through King Arthur's Camelot. What would you like to see included next year? Is there a favorite column you want to continue? A new idea for a feature? Let us know! Send us an email with your feedback and suggestions to [newsletter@dianasgrove.com](mailto:newsletter@dianasgrove.com)*