

Faerie Magazine is now

ENCHANTED LIVING



ISSUE NO. 45 WINTER 2018

\$12.95 USA | \$14.95 CAN



The **CELESTIAL** *Issue*

It is said
 “The fox changes his fur
 but NOT his reading habits.”

(smart fox)



© Christopher Brinkman

“This utterly charming, absolutely beautiful book gives insight into so very many aspects of Faerie. I almost wish I could come to it not knowing much about faeries; it would then be an amazing voyage of discovery. Even with my knowledge, I was still surprised and enchanted! I love it!”

♥ Wendy Froud

HARPER DESIGN available at enchantedlivingmag.com and wherever books are sold



In the short story “The Distance of the Moon” by Italo Calvino, the moon is described as having once been so close to the earth that people could row a boat right up to it and scramble up a ladder to gather moon-milk. One character is so enamored of the moon that he has eyes for nothing and no one else, not even the harp-playing beauty who’s madly in love with him—even as the moon begins to drift away.

At the end of the story, the lovelorn harpist makes a surprising choice: to remain on the moon as it floats off for good. If her beloved loves only the moon, she reasons, then she will become part of it. And now the narrator of the story, himself lovelorn—what other way is there to be in a lunar tale?—gazes at the sky to see she who “makes the moon the moon,” and who, “whenever she is full, sets the dogs to howling all night long, and me with them.”

It was this image I had in mind when we decided to do a celestial-themed issue, and I imagined a vintage paper moon with a starry, glimmering figure inside it. Steve Parke suggested Mayte Garcia, with her quicksilver belly-dancer movements and otherworldly beauty; artist Nichole Leavy conjured a paper moon; and gownmaker Jill Andrews whipped up a garment that might have shimmered straight from Calvino’s silvery, star-spattered lunar ocean. The result is what I think might be our loveliest cover yet, gracing one of our loveliest issues.

Which is fitting, since this magazine in your hands is the forty-fifth issue of what began as *Faerie Magazine* thirteen years ago, when artist and founder Kim Cross had the idea to create a publication for lovers of enchantment. It’s also the first issue with our new name, *Enchanted Living*, which we feel better reflects our celebration of real-life enchantment in all its forms, faerie and otherwise—from delectable recipes to magical tutorials and beauty and fashion pieces to tips about how to make your home more romantic, more herb-filled and sumptuous. More moon-dazzled, even. Who doesn’t like to view the world every now and then through a more enchanted lens, as if everything were moonlit?

Love,
 Carolyn Turgeon

© Guinevere von Sneedon



ENCHANTED LIVING

VOLUME 45 | Winter 2018

FOUNDER and PUBLISHER
Kim Cross

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Carolyn Turgeon

ART DIRECTOR
Lisa Gill

PHOTO EDITOR
Steve Parke

SENIOR EDITOR
Grace Nuth

POETRY EDITOR
Mary McMyne

TRAVEL EDITOR
Jill Gleeson

COPY EDITOR
Robert Horning

ADVERTISING SALES
Sara Vesely
sara@faeriemag.com

EDITORIAL CONSULTANT
Rona Berg

CONTRIBUTORS

Jill Andrews, Monica Crosson, Fox Frazier-Foley, Cheyenne Ligon, Alise Marie, Laura Marjorie Miller, Helene Saucedo, Timothy Schaffert, Shweta Thakrar, Veronica Varlow, Nikki Verdecchia, Gather Victoria, Jacqueline West, The Wondersmith

ARTISTS and PHOTOGRAPHERS

Alassie, Kristian Bogner, Emily Faulstich, Scott Forsyth, Andre Gallant, Daria Hlazarova, Jonna Jinton, Krista M. Jones, Rachel Lauren, Marina Mika, Kent Miller, Dennis Minty, Monsters and Lace, Sarah Quinn, Maïke Schulz, Guinevere von Sneed, Studio Sheridan's Art

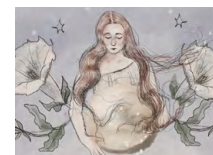
CONTACT US:

info@faeriemag.com
Enchanted Living
P.O. Box 26452
Gwynn Oak, MD 21207

Faerie Magazine/Enchanted Living Copyright © 2018. No portion of *Enchanted Living* may be reproduced, duplicated, or reprinted without prior written permission from the Publisher. ISSN: 1554-9267, recorded with the U.S. Library of Congress. *Enchanted Living* is published in the United States of America.

ISSUE 45 | Winter

FICTION, POETRY & ESSAYS



7 SIGNS YOU MAY BE MOONSTRUCK by Grace Nuth
Illustration by Guinevere von Sneed

25 SNOW ANGEL by Jacqueline West
Illustration by Marina Mika

26 A LOVER'S ALMANAC by Jacqueline West
Illustration by Marina Mika

38 WRITTEN IN THE STARS by Shweta Thakrar
Illustration by Guinevere von Sneed

62 SILVER-EYED LILÍNABALÉN IS CHARMED FROM THE SEA by Fox Frazier-Foley

92 CELESTIAL FAIRIES: A VICTORIAN FASCINATION by Grace Nuth

HOME, FASHION & BEAUTY

9 THINGS WE LOVE
Alice Corsets

23 THINGS WE LOVE
Costurero Real Celestial Cape



58 BLACK LIGHT SOIRÉE by Monsters and Lace

73 A HOLIDAY GIFT IDEA: FAERIE KNITTING WITH ALICE HOFFMAN AND LISA HOFFMAN by Carolyn Turgeon

103 DREAM WEAVER: HERBAL SLEEP AND DREAM PILLOWS by Monica Crosson



44 BENEATH THE ETERNAL SKIES OF THE ARCTIC by Jill Gleeson



28 A FEAST OF STARLIGHT
Recipes and photography by Danielle Prohom Olson (a.k.a. Gather Victoria)

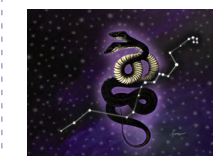


64 CELESTIAL BEAUTY by Alise Marie

SPECIAL FEATURES

27 CELESTIAL FORECAST by Rona Berg

50 REACHING FOR THE STARS by Jill Gleeson



60 THE STORIES IN THE SKY by Helene Saucedo
Illustrations by Krista M. Jones

70 BY THE LIGHT OF THE MOON by Rona Berg

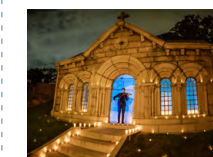
74 DARK FOREST BITTERS by The Wondersmith



76 WANING MOON DESSERT by The Wondersmith

79 WHAT IS LIGHT LANGUAGE? by Laura Marjorie Miller

94 ASTROLOGER-POET ARIANA REINES AND THE LARGER ALIVENESS by Carolyn Turgeon



96 WELCOME TO NIGHTFALL by Cheyenne Ligon

COLUMNS

36 THE MYTHICAL MOON by Timothy Schaffert

100 LIFE OF A LOVE WITCH by Veronica Varlow

106 FROM OUR READERS



10 MAYTE: TO DANCE AMONG THE STARS by Carolyn Turgeon
Photography by Steve Parke



84 JONNA JINTON by Grace Nuth



52 A CELESTIAL PARTY by Grace Nuth
Photography by Rachel Lauren



Subscribe, buy back issues, sign up for our weekly newsletter, and check out our latest selection of whimsical faerie jewelry and other sweet little gifts.

Visit us online at enchantedlivingmag.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Enchanted Living's Celestial Issue



Monica Crosson

Monica Crosson is a writer and master gardener who celebrates the magical life with her family along the banks of the Sauk River in northwest Washington. She is a contributing writer for *Witchology* magazine and many Llewellyn Worldwide publications. She is also the author of *The Magical Family: Pagan Living in Harmony With Nature*. She wrote about sea glass for our summer 2018 issue and dream pillows for this one. “The family that dances under a full moon together stays together,” she believes, and the pillows featured in her article “Dream Weaver” reflect that adage. “There is magic in the mundane,” she says, “you just have to know where to look.”



Cheyenne Ligon

Originally from Texas, Cheyenne Ligon is a writer, filmmaker, and traveler who now calls New York home. Since she was a little girl, she has drawn inspiration from stories, both fact and fantasy. She is particularly fascinated by the intersection of folklore and history across cultures. When she travels, she enjoys immersing herself in local myths and legends. But travel doesn't always have to be far—in this issue, she shares a story about an autumnal fete in Brooklyn's historic Greenwood cemetery. “I've traveled across the world collecting stories, but there's something special about discovering the hidden magic in your own backyard,” she says.



Alise Marie

Alise Marie is an actress and writer who's been passionately conjuring magical healing and beauty potions for over thirty years, including for her upcoming book, *The Beauty Witch Grimoire*. She has contributed articles to *Enchanted Living* for over a year, and her enchantedlivingmagazine.com column “The Beauty Witch” features monthly forecasts attuned to the lunar and planetary cycles. She is over the moon to present “Celestial Beauty” for this issue. “We're profoundly influenced by the cosmos,” she says, “and by living in harmony with their rhythms, we can navigate the world with so much more wisdom, far less stress, and delightfully heightened pleasures.”



Mary McMyne

Mary McMyne is a poet, writer, and poetry editor of *Enchanted Living*. Her debut poetry chapbook *Wolf Skin* (Dancing Girl Press, 2014) won the Elgin Chapbook Award. Her forthcoming novel, *The Book of Goettel*, set in modern-day New Orleans and 12th century Germany, speculates about the roots of some of our most beloved European folktales, such as “Snow White” and “Sleeping Beauty.” For this issue, Mary selected poems by Fox Frazier-Foley and Jacqueline West. “From a celestial reimagining of the Lilith myth to angelic snow creatures,” she says, “the poetry in this issue is incredibly lyrical and—as always—filled with magic.”



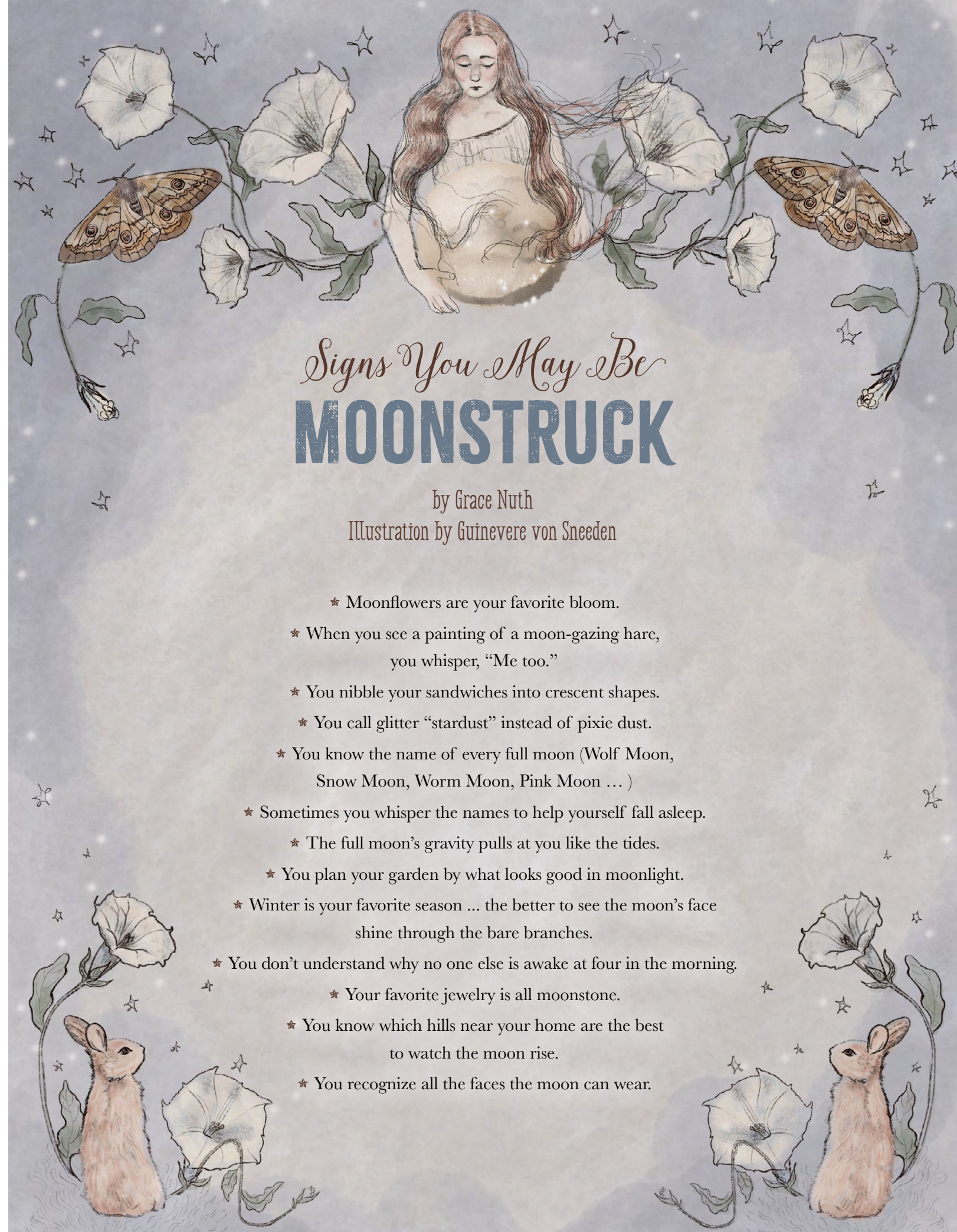
Laura Marjorie Miller

Laura Marjorie Miller is making her tenth contribution to *Enchanted Living*. Her special expertise is in features that unite travel, art, mysticism, and a sense of place in service to the Earth. For her latest offering, she embarked on what she named the “Light Language Road Trip” through Arizona and Nevada to meet her interview subjects in person. “I am thrilled that the editors took a risk on a rather fringy topic: When I proposed in the spring to research and write an article on light language, I had an intuition that the topic would be slightly less fringe and more mainstream by the time this issue came out.”



Helene Saucedo

Helene Saucedo is a palm reader and graphic designer based in Atlanta. Her creative sweet spot is working within the blurred lines of art, design, intuition, and mysticism. She travels the country giving lectures, workshops, and palm readings, often out of her vintage camper. Her intention is to demystify palmistry and make it accessible and enjoyable for all. In her article “Stories of the Sky” she discusses the common misconceptions of palmistry and her perspective on the art. “Anyone can read palms,” she says. “It's not about being psychic—the magic exists inside each of us in the way our personality and life paths are mapped on our hands.”



Signs You May Be MOONSTRUCK

by Grace Nuth

Illustration by Guinevere von Sneed

- ★ Moonflowers are your favorite bloom.
- ★ When you see a painting of a moon-gazing hare, you whisper, “Me too.”
- ★ You nibble your sandwiches into crescent shapes.
- ★ You call glitter “stardust” instead of pixie dust.
- ★ You know the name of every full moon (Wolf Moon, Snow Moon, Worm Moon, Pink Moon ...)
- ★ Sometimes you whisper the names to help yourself fall asleep.
- ★ The full moon's gravity pulls at you like the tides.
- ★ You plan your garden by what looks good in moonlight.
- ★ Winter is your favorite season ... the better to see the moon's face shine through the bare branches.
- ★ You don't understand why no one else is awake at four in the morning.
- ★ Your favorite jewelry is all moonstone.
- ★ You know which hills near your home are the best to watch the moon rise.
- ★ You recognize all the faces the moon can wear.



*The Old Mermaids
School of Everything*

AND

*The Old Mermaids
Mystery School*

In a world of noise and chaos,
The Old Mermaids offer wisdom,
connection, beauty, and joy.

Teachings begin February 1st.
Enroll in either or both
by January 2nd for
discounts & bonuses.

Created by Kim Antieau.

More info here:
tinyurl.com/oldmermaidschools



The Night Goddess Elven Corset Dress, by Ukrainian designer Alisa Perova of Alice Corsets, caused a sensation when she debuted it on social media, and our team at *Enchanted Living* was smitten as well. The three-piece design, including corset, skirt, and cape, is made from satin, tulle, and hand-applied crystal rhinestones. The dress is available for made-to-order purchase on Etsy.

Model: Luce Del Sole Makeup: Jane Von Vintage Halo: Hysteria Machine Photography: Studio Sheridan's Art Dress: Alice Corsets

MAYTE: TO DANCE AMONG THE STARS

by CAROLYN TURGEON

Photography by STEVE PARKE

When Mayte Garcia—more widely known as just Mayte, her given name, which is the Basque word for “beloved”—walked into Steve Parke’s Baltimore studio last June, she was radiant, luminous, and pushing a scruffy little scrap of a dog named King Ziggy Smalls in his very own stroller. Ziggy, I later learned, was found abandoned in a crate on a California highway and then had the good fortune of being brought to Mayte’s nonprofit dog rescue, where she not only nursed him back to health but fell madly in love with him. Now Ziggy is the mascot of Mayte’s Rescue, and recent Instagram posts show him traveling the world with his glamorous human counterpart, even sitting on a camel on a trip to Morocco. Hashtag? #frombeingthrownoutliketrashstobeingkingofthemorocandesert

It’s a mini fairy tale amid a life that’s already been pretty enchanted. In her best-selling 2017 memoir *The Most Beautiful, My Life With Prince*, Mayte describes her exotic early years, when, after watching her mother take belly-dancing classes at the local YMCA, she became enamored of the dance. Her mother made her a costume to match her own—a “floaty dream of colorful chiffon, spangled with a galaxy of sequins and dripping with paillettes”—and at age five Mayte began performing alongside her at restaurants and parties around their North Carolina town. As a little Puerto Rican girl in a place where everyone else was black or white, she felt out of place; when she was dancing, all her worries disappeared and a powerful euphoria took over. In a phone interview, she says, “When I was belly dancing, I got to play dress-up, and I got to perform and express myself. I remember thinking, Onstage, I’m untouchable.” In her book she says, “Dance was my secret power, my doorway to another dimension where there was only beauty, only music, only love.”

By age eight, she was performing regularly and twirling with a sword balanced on her head, a feat that landed her on the 1980s show *That’s Incredible!* You can see the video on YouTube today: a stunningly bedazzled girl with long dark hair shimmies to Middle Eastern music while playing the zills, balancing a sword on her head, and, with said sword still in place, doing a Turkish drop to the floor and flipping quarters on her stomach, one by one. “Princess Mayte,” she’s called. The subsequent years saw Mayte attend ballet school (she was a ballerina even before belly

dancing), move to Germany with her family, and belly-dance regularly—at parties, weddings, corporate events—so that she had over \$100,000 in savings by the time she was fifteen. She and her mother made regular trips to Cairo to visit Madame Alba, “the Coco Chanel of the belly-dancing world,” and her dream was to dance in Cairo, in a grand hotel with a fifty-piece orchestra.

What she says now of being a professional dancer so young and missing out on regular childhood activities is lovely: “If I can give my daughter one thing, I want to give her what I got from belly dancing: a sense of myself as precious.” Belly dance was and is not a dance of seduction for her but of empowerment. “I wasn’t onstage to turn anyone on,” she writes. “I was there to practice this ancient art form and make it my own.” Today, as a teacher of belly dance (the night before the Baltimore shoot, she taught a workshop in D.C.), she tries to bring that sensibility to every woman she meets, a sense that what you are right now is magical. “It’s a liberating dance,” she says. “Ageless, bodiless in a way—it doesn’t matter what size you are. It doesn’t matter what race you are. Unlike in ballet or jazz or flamenco, there are no rules. It’s about movement, and what your body is feeling in that moment.” She tells her students not to get frustrated; they’re perfect as they are.

It was this radiant self-confidence, rooted in dance, that made Prince notice her, she believes now. The idea of Princess Mayte meeting her Prince seems over the top, made up, but that’s what happened, changing the trajectory of her life and landing her in Minnesota rather than Egypt. When Mayte was sixteen, she and her family went to see the superstar musician perform in Barcelona. Her mother had urged her to make a video of her belly-dance performances, sure that they would impress Prince and advance her daughter’s career, and they managed to get a copy to him at the show. The meeting between Mayte and Prince that followed was the beginning of an unusual, artful, and initially chaste friendship, marked by endless packages in the mail and phone calls and art inspired by her dance and his music, that eventually blossomed into romance—and marriage—some years later.

It’s dizzying to hear of it: how he’d watch her videos and incorporate the Arab influences into his own work, how she’d

Photography: Steve Parke Celestial Gown: Jill Andrews Gowns Celestial Cape and Jacket: Costurero Real

Crown: Jewels by Jewelia MUA and Hair: Nikki Verdecchia of NV Salon Collective





share dance after dance with him and eventually move to Minnesota as a paid member of the New Power Generation. How they fell in love and spoke all through the night, entering meditative states together and speaking soul to soul. And they created art together, all the time. They traveled the world together, performing side by side. One of her favorite moments? Writing and directing the fairy-tale video for a song he'd written for her, "The One." When Mayte became pregnant, they were overjoyed.

But every lover of fairy tales knows that there's usually pain and suffering involved in the princess's journey, and there's a point when Mayte's tale shifts. It's harrowing to read about, the abundant, overwhelming joy and excitement she and Prince felt during her pregnancy with their son Amir, and the early signs that something was off. The day of his birth, the joy that turned to terror when they saw the life-threatening deformities amid his beauty, and the extreme love and hope as their child suffered. Amir would die within a week of his birth. It seems clear that the couple did not recover from the trauma of this loss—at least not together. The heartbreak was mitigated when, two years later, Mayte became pregnant again, but the miscarriage that followed was crushing, and the marriage did not last.

What struck me most when reading Mayte's book, when meeting her in person, and when interviewing her for this piece was her relentless positivity and ebullience, the generosity and love with which she speaks of Prince, for example, after all that happened, events that could have made others turn against the world. She tells me she did not dance for over a decade after her marriage ended. I asked her, How were you able to survive and stay so ... enchanted? How do any of us, when we suffer pain and loss?

In her book she describes a moment when she was so lost in despair she considered suicide, and how her little Yorkie Mia came to her, desperate, pawing and scratching Mayte's leg, demanding to be picked up. And then the dog "pawed and licked and rubbed her face against mine until I put the pills back in the bottle and sank on the floor and held her ..." (On the right is a 1998 photo by Steve Parke of Prince, Mayte, and Mia in their Spanish home.) This led Mayte to start rescuing animals, the way Mia rescued her.

Something else happened too, sometime later, after she moved to Los Angeles to start anew: "Nobody had ever told me that I was a mom," she says. "When you have a miscarriage and you lose a child, all that goes out the window, and nobody wants to talk about it. Nobody wants to bring it up to you. I went to a therapist, and she said, 'You're a mom who lost her child.' It was like this huge veil was lifted off of me. And I got to kind of find myself, because I know my body gave birth. I know, but it's not being able to live that. So that was a big awakening. And then in my soul, something told me, 'You need to start dancing again.' And I listened."



She also listened to her soul when a little girl came into her life, a magical nine-month-old creature with her same birthday and a birth mother who wanted to place her for adoption and had seen Mayte—a Latina like her, a loving mother without a child—on television. Mayte adopted Gia—"the most beautiful girl in the world," she says, a gift—and now they live in a sweet house with King Ziggy Smalls, plus another nine dogs, one cat, seven birds, and a guinea pig. Gia just turned seven and loves to draw; she recently drew Ziggy for shirts sold on the Mayte's Rescue website.

Mayte's crafted a new life for herself now, full of art and love and family, and through the rescue she creates new little fairy tales—forty a month, on average—for lost, discarded creatures whom she helps find their way to their forever homes. What is enchanting to you now? I ask, and she lists an array of things. She loves to play dress up still, now with her daughter, and craft, and teach women the art that has shaped her life. She still listens to Prince's music and still speaks to him, she believes, soul to soul. She rescues. "These dogs that are suffering," she says, "seeing them wagging their tails, being happy, and then placing them—that, to me, is enchanting"

And, of course, she dances.

Learn more about Mayte's Rescue at maytesrescue.com.

Follow King Ziggy Smalls on Instagram @kingziggysmalls.







CELESTIAL HAIR AND MAKEUP

from Nikki Verdecchia of Baltimore's NV Salon Collective

The secret to celestial hair is soft windblown curls to create movement that will reflect the light. Use a shine spray or a light oil-based product that won't weigh hair down but will help create luminescence. I like Redken's Diamond Oil.

For makeup, we want shimmer. The best way to create this look is to start with a tinted moisturizer to create a dewy finish as you even out the skin. Instead of using a matte powder over the face, use a shimmer powder on cheekbones, eyebrow bone, nose, and chin (the areas that will capture light naturally). Using matte eye shadows to create natural dimension in the face will give you a beautiful base on which to add a shimmer eye shadow in a cool tone to suggest the light of the moon contrasting with the darkness of night.

To take it to the next level, accent one eye with stick-on gems in a random pattern. For Mayte, we chose shades of blue and clear in star and round shapes in varying sizes to create the illusion of the night sky.



CELESTIAL DRESSING

from Jill Andrews of Baltimore's Jill Andrews Gowns



To make Mayte's celestial dress, I researched evening gowns from the early 1920s and found an inspiration dress from the French house Callot Soeurs—a fabulous black creation covered in giant gold stars with a one-shoulder cape that you can see in the Met collection. I love reinterpreting vintage looks. I recommend this approach to anyone looking to create something new from the past. Pinterest is especially helpful for tracking down inspirational pieces.

I found a Bobinett fabric printed with celestial designs, including a glittering Pegasus, that I used for the top layer (there were three in all)—and then found some great vintage appliques online that I used to decorate it. This is an easy way to “celestialize” your own wardrobe: Find some gorgeous netting and cover it with star and moon appliques. I also added rhinestones to create the Milky Way ... and all kinds of other tricks!

VINTAGE PAPER MOONS

No one knows exactly when and where the first paper moon photo took place or whose idea it was to build a crescent moon for a souvenir photo op, using the new medium for fantastical and even otherworldly purposes. But we know that starting in the late 19th century, carnival-goers and fun-seekers and vacation-takers of all types loved hamming it up for penny postcards in which they seemed to be floating through the heavens, surrounded by painted, hanging stars (the perfect mix of glam and kitsch). The paper moon trend seemed to reach its zenith around 1910, the same year that Earth passed through the tail of Halley's Comet—an eagerly anticipated, much celebrated event that turned the public's attention and imagination to the starry skies above.

For our celestial cover shoot, we tapped Baltimore artist Nichole Leavy to create a full-scale paper moon for the shoot in photo editor Steve Parke's studio. (Leavy created the painted backdrop for our winter 2017 cover, also shot by Parke, re-creating Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *Beata Beatrix*.) "I was really excited when Steve told me about the idea," Leavy says. "It fits with my aesthetic perfectly." As an assemblage artist, she "uses a lot of vintage items, taking old and broken things and creating something new with them." She researched dozens of examples of old-time paper moon photography to come up with a design that looked authentic but less grotesque than some of the original images could be. "I wanted it to be pretty," she says. "I wanted to come up with a face that looked nice, that wasn't overwhelming, but still had a lot of character. So it was a bit tricky." To complete the effect, she cut out stars from cardboard that Parke strung up in his studio and photographed later, in keeping with the "low-tech, handmade feel."

If you're the handy type and want to try making your own paper moon, visit enchantedlivingmagazine.com to see how Leavy made her (wooden) moon, step by step, in a downloadable tutorial. Leavy's been traveling to shows with the moon since completing the project, and it's always a huge hit. "People love to sit in it and get their photos taken," she says, though her moon's popularity is hardly a surprise. Who doesn't want to sit among the stars?

★★★



We love Spanish designer Costurero Real's celestial line, which includes this hooded black stars-and-moon cloak made in printed chiffon. (You can see more of the collection on Mayte on pages 16 and 20, and on Marlane Browning and Grace Nuth on page 55.) Costurero founder Alassie says, "I love the celestial theme! Everything about the universe and the stars is the perfect mix of science and magic. The stars seem so far from us, and at the same time, we are formed by them. As Carl Sagan said, we are made of materials from the interiors of collapsing stars. We are made of star stuff. So I love to make clothes inspired by the universe—constellations, nebulas, and stars that can be worn as a second skin." See more at costureroreal.com.

DREAM IN FINNISH



Photo by Runwaymanhattan

MAI NIEMI
FINNISH FAIRYTALE

Helsinki, Finland
www.mainiemi.com



Eco-style | Slow Fashion | Magic

SNOW ANGEL

by Jacqueline West

Illustration by Marina Mika

We know you only by your absence.
The hole left behind, pressed
through the drifts like something
fallen from a great distance.

Wings shorter than we would have expected,
stumpy and round as a sliced orange peel
and your body a footless bell.
Why you, a winged, flying thing

would land each time flat on your back
is a puzzle. Perhaps you were dead
long before contact, like suicides that leap
from the hundredth floor.

Perhaps you were pushed.
Clearly, you have vaporized. Heavenly
bones dissolve, asteroid-style,
in the midwinter air, and you leave

no unfurled annunciation, no pearlescent
feathers for us to find. You are only space,
a lack of something, our wish
for what you will not give.

Jacqueline West is the author of Candle and Pins: Poems on Superstitions (Alban Lake Publishing, 2018). Her work appears in journals including Goblin Fruit, Mirror Dance, and Strange Horizons. She also writes fantasy novels for young readers; her latest is The Collectors (Greenwillow/HarperCollins, 2018). Visit her at jacquelinewest.com.



A LOVER'S ALMANAC

by Jacqueline West

Illustration by Marina Mika

I have counted you
by the moons.
The number of nights
scatters like dust,
but the moons
outlast them,
each distinct
as a mouthful,
each a fresh razor,
each a creature that rises
from the night's seabed
to dissolve again
in waves of salt,
in mist,
in the dew
that leaves its jewels
on the lawn.
The blue moon
of an old love's wedding,
the white hook
of a last kiss, a last touch,
beheaded roses
asleep in the cold.
The autumn's buttery streak
of moonlight
reflected on warm water,
the lake's algae slick
on our bare feet.
I have found your face
by the moon.
It left you
simplified,
blue and black,
even your eyes
distilled to a flash.
I have found
your naked shoulder,
settled my head there
on the silver skin.
I have found
the tangle of my hair
in your hands.

Marina Bitunjac, better known as Marina Mika, is a Croatian illustrator and artist based in Berlin. Her work features detailed line art hand-drawn with ink and pen in mostly black and white, with a strong accent on femininity. She's drawn to ethereal themes of the heart and soul, translating personal emotions, thoughts, and impressions into visual representations on paper or "photographs of the soul." See more at inprnt.com/gallery/marinamika.



CELESTIAL FORECAST

By Rona Berg

We asked Celeste Onorati, astrologer and founder of Jai Mala Rose—a handmade custom rose-petal-bead jewelry and mala company—to share her thoughts on what the stars will hold for the coming year.

Onorati applies teachings based on Eastern philosophical traditions and the Advaitic transmission of truth, which considers the soul the same as the highest metaphysical reality. According to Onorati, “it comes from the Upanishads, a collection of philosophical texts known as the Vedas. Advaita literally means ‘non-duality.’ It is a monistic system of thought, it literally means there is no difference. We are all one.” She is a lecturer, one-on-one consultant, and host of a podcast series called *The Space Now Celeste Onorati* on iTunes and Spotify, as well as the author of *You Are You: Your Guide to Freedom From Stress*.

Rona Berg: How did you get your start with astrology?

Celeste Onorati: I was a curious ten-year-old working in my father's newspaper store. The year was 1965. I read an article on astrology, and that's when I knew that I needed to investigate further. Back then it was difficult to find books on this subject. Today, with the internet, we are fortunate to have immediate access to knowledge from so many sources. I didn't give up and, five years later, on a high school field trip to New York City, I found my first astrology book, by the famed astrologer Isabel Hickey. I still have this book, and it will always be one of my favorites.

RB: Why does astrology resonate with you?

CO: Astrology continues to speak to my soul in a passionate, emotional way. I had an unhappy childhood with questions about life that went unanswered. I often wondered, Could there be an end to suffering? A deep comfort and inspiration came over me when I looked up to the stars. I knew they would show me the way. As a Capricorn with Sagittarius ascendant, my practical earth-driven desire was to understand myself and evolve so I could make positive change—to learn my strengths, weaknesses, gifts, and celebrate the name given to me at birth, Celeste.

RB: What are some general predictions for the next year?

CO: A lot of earth energy with Uranus in Taurus, Saturn and Pluto in the earth sign Capricorn, and Jupiter joining in December.

We begin and end 2019 with solar-eclipse cycles on the Cancer-Capricorn axis. It's going to be about home and work-life balance and what really matters. How are you organizing your life? Eclipses conceal things initially that may not be seen clearly until 2020. Capricorn energy is about integrity. If times

are difficult, it is important to pay attention to what really is important and not be influenced by others. Whatever house Capricorn rules in your personal chart will reveal how these energies play out.

It's important to be grounded and really be present. Mother Earth is asking us to be with nature and more connected with the earth, to have structure but be flexible. Set your goals. Know when to let go and when to push forward.

Jupiter will be in its own sign in Sagittarius from November 2018 until December 2019, and when planets are in their own sign, that is when they have the most powerful energy and influences. It is a call for freedom and humanitarian efforts on a large scale. This energy deals with higher consciousness, spiritual beliefs, and values. It's also favorable for reaching world-trade agreements. Everyone can benefit from this expansive energy, especially the fire and air signs.

It is a time to create, grow, and reap the benefits of the seeds you have planted. The earth and water signs will also gain by what you have cultivated in the last year. A very prosperous, abundant year. Go for every adventure that presents itself; there will be many options. Balance and structure are key. So build, travel, enjoy every moment in a healthy, productive way.

Uranus in Taurus 2019 until 2025—a lot of tests and lessons here to improve our earth. Or breaking away from systems and doing something on your own. How are you using your talents and gifts? Uranus rules the unexpected, unpredictable, and unconventional. It visits a sign every eighty-four years, and it shakes up the status quo. Uranus is fixed in the future, and Taurus is fixed in the past. Taurus rules money, so our financial systems could become unstable, or it could produce a cashless system for the exchange of services and goods.

Our material objects come into question: What is really valuable here? Farming, how can we become more sustainable and grow more nutritious foods to enhance our supply? The voice and throat, people speaking out through protest, a digital revolution to include the arts and music. These areas will go through major changes in the next seven years.

RB: Any advice to share in these difficult times?

CO: When times are difficult and people put obstacles in our way, it forces us to make change. Take time to listen and hear the sounds around you. Be present. Investigate your mind. Help one another. That's meditation. That's love.



Learn more about Celeste Onorati at celesteonorati.com.

Follow Rona Berg on Instagram @ronaberg

A FEAST OF STARLIGHT

Recipes and Photography by
Danielle Prohom Olson (a.k.a. Gather Victoria)

January 6 is the date of an ancient celestial holiday celebrated with a banquet of heavenly sweets. Today in the Christian world it is known as the Feast of Epiphany, and star cookies, cakes, and starry jam tarts are baked to commemorate the Great Star of Bethlehem. But in old world traditions this was Twelfth Night (the end of Yuletide), and round sweet spicy bread-like cakes enriched with dried fruit (and a splash of spirits) were served. These Twelfth Night cakes were symbolic of the coming sun and were often adorned with celestial imagery associated with ancient star or sun goddesses whose bright light brought an end to the year's darkest period and promised the coming of warmer longer days.

Now, I love culinary traditions—especially when they involve cake. So I've gathered together some classic January 6 recipes to help you brighten and sweeten one of winter's deepest and coldest nights. From Victorian Epiphany Jam Tarts to Irish Women's Christmas Barmbrack to Italian Sweet Focaccia and Finnish Spiced Wishing Stars, this celestial feast celebrates the coming of the light!





GINGER BEER BARMBRACK

In Ireland, January 6 is still the occasion of a high tea known as *Nollaig na mBan*, or Women's Christmas. Women gather together around the fire drinking tea and sherry as they celebrate the end of holiday cooking. And while the men do the housework, the women treat themselves to gingerbread, shortbread, dainties, and barmbrack. This spicy, dense raisin-and-currant-filled bread features a shot of whiskey. Served slathered with fresh butter, barmbrack shares many similarities to traditional Twelfth Night Cakes.

SPICED STAR WISHING COOKIES

On the eve before January 6 in Germany, Hungary, and Latvia, parades of children (called star singers) carrying paper stars and star lanterns go house to house singing songs and are rewarded with sweets and cookies. The Finnish serve spiced star-shaped Epiphany cookies called piparkakut, which are similar to gingerbread. These are placed in the palm of one hand and broken with the index finger or thumb of the other hand while making a silent wish. If the piparkakut should break into three pieces and all three are eaten without saying a word, the wish will come true!



LA BEFANA SWEET BREAD

For Italian children, January 6 is just as exciting a holiday as Christmas Day. According to legend, La Befana is an old witch who flies on her broom on Epiphany Eve. Coming down chimneys, she delivers presents to children who have put up stockings for her to fill. The arrival of La Befana is celebrated with traditional Italian foods such as panettone, star-shaped cookies, and a round sweet bread in the shape of the sun or a star called Focaccia Della Befana. Italians hide a coin inside and whoever finds it will be lucky all year.



GINGER BEER BARMBRACK

The traditional recipe for barmbrack calls for raisins, currants, and dried fruits soaked in a strong tea. This version uses a dark ginger beer to soak the fruits and adds some candied ginger for a little more spice!

1 cup plain flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1½ cups mixed dried currants and raisins
1½ tablespoons minced candied ginger
2 tablespoons blanched almonds, roughly chopped
1 cup ginger beer (or a dark stout)
4 tablespoons whiskey
½ cup brown sugar
1 large egg
½ teaspoon allspice
1 teaspoon cinnamon
¼ teaspoon ground clove
¼ teaspoon nutmeg

Place the raisins, currants, and ginger in a bowl and pour over the beer and whiskey. Soak overnight.

Preheat the oven to 350°F and grease and line a medium size loaf tin with parchment paper.

Combine the flour, baking powder, sugar, and spices in a mixing bowl. Make a well in the flour and break the egg into the flour mixture. Add a couple of tablespoons of ginger beer and whiskey liquid from the fruit mix and mix it through. Keep adding this liquid until you have a fairly wet dough. Finally add the soaked fruits and stir well until everything is thoroughly combined.

Spoon or pour the dough into the lined loaf tin and bake for one hour. Remove from the oven and allow to cool slightly before removing from tin and placing on wire rack. Cover in tin foil and allow to sit for a few days. Dust with icing sugar. Cut into slices and serve slathered with butter.

SPICED STAR WISHING COOKIES



¾ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
¾ teaspoon ground ginger
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 cup butter
1½ cups sugar
1 large egg
2 tablespoons molasses
1 tablespoon water
½ teaspoon finely grated orange zest

In a large bowl, place flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, and nutmeg. Using a whisk or a fork combine dry ingredients together.

In another bowl, beat butter until softened. Add sugar and beat until fluffy. Add egg, molasses, water, and zest. Beat well. Gradually add in your flour mixture, and continue beating until a soft dough begins to form. Pat into a ball, cover, and refrigerate for at least two hours or overnight.

Preheat oven to 375°F. On lightly floured surface, roll out your dough from ⅛- to ¼-inch thickness. Using a star cookie cutter, cut out your cookies and place on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper.

Bake until done, approximately eight minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.

These spiced stars can be served plain, dusted with icing sugar, or piped with white icing. Don't forget to make a wish!

LA BEFANA SWEET BREAD

This soft, sweet bread often features candied fruit, pine nuts, and grated orange and is similar to brioche. For this version I added rosewater and cardamom, and instead of an egg wash I used a rose jam. You could also use apricot jam or marmalade and add candied citrus peels to the dough.

3½ cups flour (cake flour is especially nice if you can find it)
1 pinch salt
1 pinch sugar (for yeast)
1 teaspoon of cardamom
7 grams dry yeast
½ cup granulated sugar
2 eggs
zest of 1 lemon, grated
1 tablespoon rose water
8 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
½ cup milk, lukewarm
4 tablespoons rose honey or rose jam (diluted slightly with hot water for easy spreading)
Sugar pearls, to garnish

Proof the yeast by adding ¼ cup of lukewarm water and pinch of sugar. Put aside.

In a large bowl combine flour and salt. Add your proofed yeast to the flour mixture.

Make a well in the center of your flour mixture and then add sugar, eggs, cardamom, lemon zest, and melted butter. Stir to combine. Add your milk a little at a time until it is fully absorbed and you have a clumpy ball of dough.

Place the dough on a floured work surface. Knead until the dough is springy and elastic and shape into a ball. Cover with a damp tea towel and allow to rest in a warm place for an hour.

Place your dough onto a well-floured surface, then pat or gently roll out into the shape of a large circle. Place a water glass or jar in the center of the circle. From the edges of the jar, cut downward and outward through the dough to form four even sections. Cut these four sections in half to make eight sections, and repeat until you have 16 sections of strips of dough total.

Carefully transfer to a round baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Twist each of the 16 strands of dough twice to make the rays of the star. Allow to rest for 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Brush the entire tart lavishly with honey and/or jam and sprinkle with sugar pearls.

Bake for 8 minutes, remove from oven, and brush with jam again. Bake for another 8 to 10 minutes.

Serve warm.

EPIPHANY STAR JAM TART



EPIPHANY STAR JAM TART

In England, Epiphany tarts were a popular Victorian tradition. They featured pie dough latticed in the shape of a six-pointed star to symbolize the Star of Bethlehem. Each of the sections were filled with different colored jams to resemble stained glass windows. These tarts were quite elaborate, and cooks used a wide variety of different colored jams for effect. Housewives were said to be very competitive over who could make the most beautiful tart, as they were often entered into Epiphany “Church Supper” contests.

1½ cups flour
½ cup powdered sugar
¼ teaspoon salt
9 tablespoons cold butter, cut into pieces
1 egg yolk
An assortment of jams—strawberry, grape, apricot, black currant, raspberry, marmalade, etc.

In a food processor, pulse your dry ingredients together to combine. Add butter and pulse again until coarse and crumbly. Add your egg yolk and continue to pulse for 10 to 15 seconds. When the dough begins to ball up and clump, turn out onto a lightly floured work surface.

Knead lightly and roll out to make a pie crust. You will need enough dough to make both the crust and the lattice star shape. Press some of the pie dough into a buttered pie tin, and cut off the any excess dough from the edges. Take the leftover pie dough and trimmings and roll out into a rectangle. Cut the dough into six strips and arrange these strips in the tart base in the shape of a six-pointed star. You'll have to do some shaping and pinching. Once done, warm your jams and spoon them into the spaces between the latticework strips.

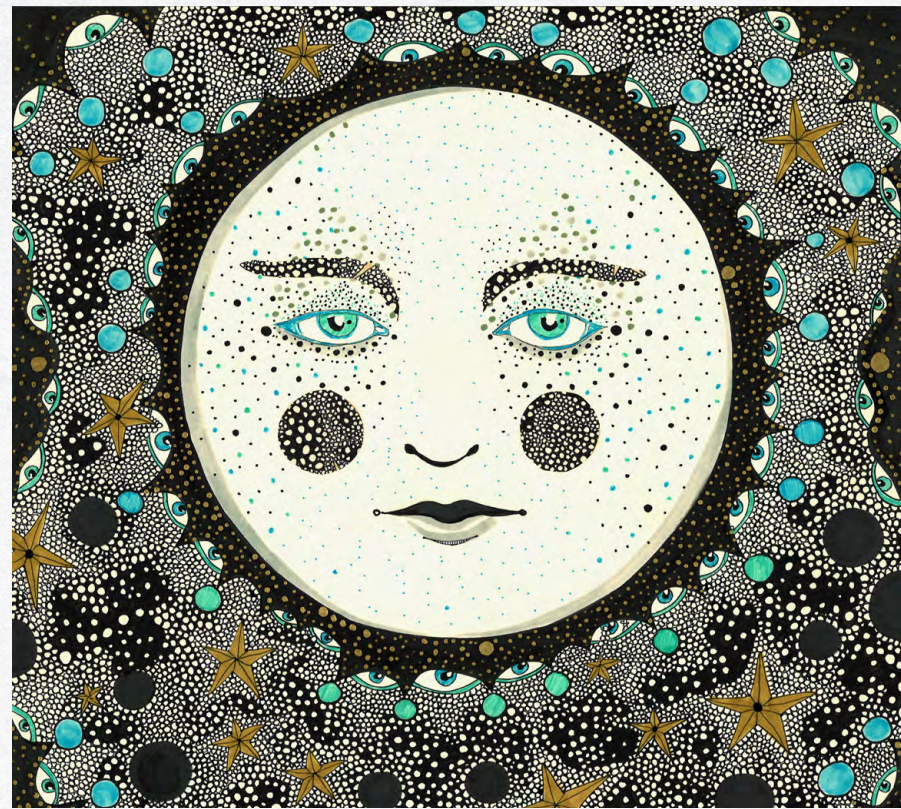
Bake for about 25 to 30 minutes until pastry is golden brown. Allow to cool slightly and serve with ice cream or custard.



Follow Danielle Prohom Olson (a.k.a. Gather Victoria) on her blog at gathervictoria.com.

THE ECCENTRICITIES OF GENTLEMEN

EPHEMERA AND APOCRYPHA FROM THE NOTES OF TIMOTHY SCHAFFERT, ESQ.



THE MYTHICAL MOON The Daily News and Lunar Life

I was mad for Moon Maid. As illustrated by Chester Gould, she was buxom with hypnotic, lushly lashed eyes, a platinum-blonde bouffant, a perky pair of antennae, and thigh-high go-go boots. (Quote from a news reporter: “Oh boy! This Moon Maid may be too HOT for Earth.”)

Gould’s fascination with technology sent the characters in *Dick Tracy*, his classic comic strip, to the moon throughout the 1960s,

but after NASA actually landed men on the moon, Gould dialed back his space exploration. Moon Maid, however, remained on Earth, married to Tracy’s son Junior. I was a farm boy, far from any city and its dailies, so my only access to *Dick Tracy* was in the Sunday full-color funnies, and I remember Moon Maid’s skin as cotton-candy pink.

One summer Sunday in August, when I was ten, Moon Maid

took Dick Tracy’s car keys to run an errand. A bomb had been planted in the detective’s car, and I watched, before church, as flames suddenly engulfed this young wife and mother. I’m sure I prayed hard. I spent the week certain that the next week’s strip would reveal how Moon Maid survived. How could she perish in such a crime-fiction cliché? Little did I know that Gould had retired from the strip, and his replacement, Max Allan Collins, was intent on ridding the strip of its moon phase. Moon Maid was dead, full stop.

While this summer marked the fortieth anniversary of Moon Maid’s murder at the hands of Max Allan Collins, next summer will mark the fiftieth anniversary of humans’ first steps on the moon. Prior to the moon landing, many earthlings, even astronomers, insisted on the presence of humanlike life on the moon. But *since* the moon landing, many conspiracy theorists have insisted the opposite. (Sci-fi author C. Stewart Hardwick credits technical writer Bill Kaysing as the first to publish such conspiracy theories about Americans on the moon: “He was not obviously insane,” Hardwick wrote on the website Quora, “but he was obviously unqualified to express the opinions he was expressing. My guess is, technical writing with objective criteria didn’t suit him, and pretending expertise to a bunch of ignorant sycophants fueled his ego.”)

At the heart of both perspectives on moon life is a kind of imaginative whimsy, it seems to me. Before we went to the moon, it was fun to speculate what kind of critters frolicked there; after the moon landing, it was fun to invent scientific theories that kept us grounded, the moon still magically unattainable.

Even beyond the comics page, newspapers had a notorious connection to moonlings, even those spotted from earth by the naked eye:

★ “Great Astronomical Discoveries Lately Made by Sir John Herschel, L.L.D. F.R.S. &c” was the original title of a series of news articles that appeared in 1835 in the *New York Sun*. Sir John Herschel was a famed astronomer in the U.K., and while the U.S. awaited news of discoveries he made with an advanced telescope, the *Sun* capitalized on its readers’ curiosities by simply inventing fake news of moon colonies of strange creatures. After a lengthy description of the telescope itself, Richard Adams Locke (the newspaperman later credited, or discredited, with writing the series) gets to the moon’s inhabitants, which includes humanlike creatures that “averaged four feet in height, were covered, except on the face, with short and glossy copper-colored hair, and had wings composed of a thin membrane, without hair, lying snugly upon their backs, from the top of their shoulders to the calves of their legs.” These “discoveries” first made money when presented as a factual report (the newspaper’s circulation increased rapidly) and then made even more money when published in a pamphlet that sold the fiction as a “hoax.” According to an introduction in a reissue of the pamphlet in 1856: “The proprietors of the journal had an edition of

60,000 published in pamphlet form, which were sold off in less than a month; and of late this pamphlet edition has become so scarce that a single copy was lately sold at the sale of Mrs. Haswell’s Library for \$3.75.”

- ★ The *Democratic Standard* (1843), in a report about scientific discoveries of the moon’s surface, addresses the question “Is the Moon inhabited?” with a kind of poetic insistence: “There, all is silent and dumb; a dreary and monotonous creation with not only nothing to stir, and nothing to enliven, but with no mind to be stirred, and no heart to be enlivened. And this was its fate for centuries, presenting an image of an eternity of desolation, the very idea of which was oppressive.” (The article also addresses the relationship between the moon and “insane people,” i.e. the “lunar” aspect of “lunacy”: “upon comparison of paroxysms of madness with the changes of the moon,” there was found to be no connection.)
- ★ Astronomers’ discoveries and speculations about the influence of the moon sparked both curiosity and skepticism. In a letter to the editor of the *Wilmingtonian*, in Delaware (1824), a snarky reader comments on a report on the moon’s influence on the weather and animal nature: “We shall now be able to do justice to that powerful goddess, hitherto deemed a fickle, uncertain, and whimsical coquette, but now ascertained to be a grave steady matron, as regular in her movements as Jupiter in his orbit, or as gravitation to the centre! ... I say the ladies may now know, when preparing for a tea-party, whether to take their shawls, pattens and parasols, or to leave superfluity at home, and sally forth as trim as a maypole!!!”
- ★ The *Gazette of the United States* saw fit to reissue, as editorial content, an advertisement in 1794 regarding a woman who was crossing the London Bridge. A boy tugged on her skirts and insisted she look at the moon, and there she saw “great armies of soldiers, both horse and foot, pass over the orb.” She and the boy saw this happen several times as they watched the moon that evening. The advertisement requests that anyone who also happened to have witnessed this activity promptly report to “Mr. Clarson’s” in St. James’s Market.
- ★ The *National Gazette* in 1793 suggested that we should hope the moon reflects nothing about the earth: “If this earth, which is thirteen times larger [than the moon], and superior in every respect, exhibits such wretched scenes of blood, misery, and desolation, as we daily see or hear of, the moon, being no other than her kitchen, is by fair inference a world of war and vengeance, without the least interval of pacification, & the menials that inhabit her are undoubtedly a set of blackguards.”



Timothy Schaffert is the author of five novels, most recently The Swan Gondola. He is a professor of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Learn more at timothyschaffert.com.

Written in the Stars

by SHVETA THAKRAR

for Holly Black

Charumati glanced over her shoulder, just once. Her gaze swept the celestial palace where she had spent her life. How it sparkled, all silver and ebony, this abode of the various nakshatras and their court. How splendid shone the entire heavenly realm of Svargalok. Mortals praised its many wonders in their myths.

And yet Charumati couldn't wait to leave it behind. Her eyes were not on its beauty but on potential pursuit. She'd managed to bribe one of the guards to bar the doors to the viewing hall—being a princess of the second-highest house in the sidereal hierarchy had its advantages—but no sentry would dare deny her parents entrance.

Clutching the balcony railing, she stared down through the void. It would be a long, dark drop to the mortal world, a wild leap of heat and light and, above all, hope.

She was not afraid, but still she hesitated. The astral melody rang out all around her, tugging on the threads of music in her own heart. This was her home.

Not far off, voices sounded.

Charumati released the railing. She couldn't wait any longer.

The princess of the House of Pushya turned her back on everything she had ever known and jumped.

★

Gautam Mistry was not a man given to romantic thinking. He'd spent most of his life immersed in scientific inquiry, and while there was certainly an undeniable beauty to the construction of the physical world—he'd once heard someone compare the vibrations of string theory to a song the cosmos sang to itself—he typically left poetry to the poets.

All that changed the warm September evening he stepped outside his apartment for a stroll. A weird mood had grabbed him; he'd begged off his weekly dinner with friends and just wandered the streets of Edison, hands tucked in his pockets. When was the last time he'd looked up at the sky for the fun of it, instead of stuffing his head with chains of letters and numbers that pinned each star and planet and moon in place like a bug?

He'd been so busy working, he'd even missed the meteor shower a couple nights ago. The irony stung. The whole reason he'd even gone into astrophysics was to recapture the way he'd felt as a kid in the mountains, staring up at the heavens while everyone else thought he was safely asleep. Who was looking back—the gods? Aliens? His future self?

In the darkness, with the stars blazing overhead, anything had seemed possible.

And so he'd dedicated himself to decoding that mysterious sky.

But he'd let himself get sidetracked, first by earning his degrees

and then by an endless slew of temporary research positions to pay the bills, until he'd forgotten the cosmos existed beyond the range of his telescope at the observatory. That was, until tonight.

Tonight the old wonder flared again like a supernova, drawing him toward the park. He picked a spot in the grass away from the streetlamps and lay back with his arms pillowed beneath his head. Except for the occasional passing car, it was silent, as if the rest of the world had faded away.

His great-grandmother had believed deeply in Vedic astrology, teaching his sister and him all about the twenty-seven nakshatras and their stories, and as he traced the shapes of the various constellations now, he could almost see the figures in them. There was the Ashvini nakshatra with the horse-headed doctor twins Nasatya and Dasra, the Magha nakshatra with the royal throne, Purva Phalguni with the fig tree ...

Hours passed. Gautam's thoughts had started to drift until he imagined he could hear an unearthly song like wind chimes and bells, as if the stars themselves were crooning to him.

Something bright and silver plunged down from the sky. It looked like a falling star, getting larger as it came closer, but instead of crashing to the ground, it danced through the air and finally settled on the grass near his feet.

Gautam jolted upright and stared. The object stood, shaking out long starlight tresses and casting off flashes of silvery radiance with each movement. He blinked hard, trying to adjust to the sudden brilliance, and glimpsed large silver-brown eyes set in a delicate brown face. "You're—you're a *person*," he stammered in Hindi. "But that's impossible."

The star, if that was what she was, laughed. When she spoke, her words were high and sweet. "Is it?"

"But you're a star, too." Gautam felt stupid even as he asked, "Aren't you?"

The star frowned. "Surely mortals do not spend their brief lives restating the obvious. Otherwise, I have made a foolish decision by coming here."

Gautam leaped to his feet. As a scientist, he should have been skeptical, but he knew one thing: The elusive night sky had just come to him in the form of a breathtakingly gorgeous woman, and even if it turned out he was dreaming, he wasn't about to chase her away. "Of course not. I'm Gautam." He stuck out a hand for her to shake. When she only tilted her head questioningly, he took back his hand and joined his palms in front of his face in the traditional greeting of his youth.

Amused, she did the same. "I am called Charumati of House Pushya. May you burn bold in the deepest night."

"Um, sure, you, too," he mumbled. Pushya—that was one of



Illustration by
GUINEVERE VON SNEEDEN

the twenty-seven constellations. If only he could remember more of what his great-grandmother had taught him. Why wasn't there a manual for talking to star maidens the way there was for operating telescopes?

Charumati surveyed the park with its shadowed trees and walking paths, then said, "Take me elsewhere. You mortals have so few days as it is, I wonder that you would waste even another second in this clearing."

Being the generally practical man that he was, Gautam hadn't really ever thought of life that way. But all he asked was, "Where do you want to go?"

Charumati broke into a smile so wide and bright, it set all the nerves in his body sparking. His heart swelled with lush descriptions of that smile, of that hair, of those eyes. Of the way she wore the night sky in her black-blue-and-silver sari. "On an adventure," she said, offering her arm to him. "I am here for the length of a single mortal night, so make it count."



And so Gautam Mistry, the pragmatic, studious astrophysicist who had figured his parents would just arrange a marriage for him someday, took the silver-limned elbow of the ethereal star Charumati and led her toward what would hopefully be an adventure.

They'd take the train from Edison to New York City, he decided, and he would drive them to the station. Charumati was slightly suspicious of his car, a beat-up white Toyota Corolla that had seen much better days, but climbed inside. She even put on her seat belt without complaining. As he drove, she gazed around with large, attentive eyes, and with each movement of her head, her hair flung starlight throughout the car. It was so distracting, Gautam could barely keep his eyes on the road.

When they parked on a side street, he realized it would be distracting for anyone else who saw it, too. But he had no idea where to buy a wig, except maybe at a Halloween store, and anyway, nothing like that would be open this late.

"Why the dismayed face?" Charumati asked.

"Your—your *hair*," he explained. "If anyone sees it ... well, there's no way to pretend it's human."

She laughed and fingered a lock of it, tossing light over the concrete like a disco ball. "Perhaps if I bind it up?"

He almost protested; it was so beautiful, so *magical*, he couldn't stand the thought of her hiding it away. But Gautam was a problem solver at heart, and watching her twist the fall of hair into a bun gave him an idea. He unlocked the trunk of his car and pulled out the hooded Rutgers sweatshirt he kept there for rainy days. "Here, try this."

Charumati seemed delighted as she tugged the sweatshirt over her head. She swam in the bulky red cotton fleece, which looked ridiculous against her delicate sari but did the job—the hood was large enough to cover her hair. And something about the way she stood there in front of the deserted train platform, like

a storybook elf in a cloak, made the night real in a way even his scientific skepticism couldn't deny.

His heart hammered against his ribs. He was on a date with a *star*. "Shall we?" he asked, offering his arm to lead her up the stairs.

According to the schedule posted inside the station, they were in luck; the next train was in two minutes. While Gautam bought two tickets from the vending machine, Charumati glided through the little building, taking in every poster and notice. If the dirty floor bothered her, she kept it to herself. When she stopped before the now-shuttered doughnut shop, Gautam caught himself guessing what flavor she would have picked.

He wanted to buy her sweets. He wanted to see her exclaim with joy over rainbow sprinkles and chocolate frosting.

What was happening to him?

The train arrived, brakes stinking as it squealed to a stop. Even though it was an older model, with ugly, torn brown seats and scratched orange walls, Charumati never lost her enraptured smile. The group of teenagers at the back of the car arguing loudly about some sports game seemed only to fascinate her.

Gautam burned to ask her everything: What was it like up in the heavens? What was it like being a star? How long did stars live? Did she know anything about human astronomy? But he made himself sit quietly while she stared out the window at the passing nocturnal landscape.

It was worth it when she, still watching the outside world, lay her hand on his.

They arrived at Penn Station and made their way up into the bustling crowd of a Manhattan Friday night. Neon lights and honking horns greeted them, along with people hawking cards for tours and events.

Gautam moved to hail a taxi, but Charumati stopped him. "I would stroll this night," she said, "for there is much to experience."

She wasn't wrong. As they headed toward the East Village, hand in hand, mouth-watering smells and snatches of music wafted past. "How did you know what I was doing?" he asked.

Charumati waved away the question. "I have observed you mortals for longer than you can imagine and am familiar with many of the workings of your world."

A million more questions came to Gautam's lips. Hoping he sounded playful, he said, "Oh, yeah? I'll buy you dinner if you'll tell me more."

Charumati touched her lips in thought. "Mortal food—that is an enticing notion. And I would also hear your tales, though I have little to offer in return."

Are you kidding? Gautam thought. *You're amazing!* But he didn't know how to tell her that, so he just kept walking in the direction of the Gujarati place he'd been meaning to try for months.

They passed a trio of jugglers balancing flaming torches to the sound of a calliope, a pair of women with long black-and-green

hair passing out hand-scrawled fortunes, and a bookstore with bubbles streaming out the open door.

How had Gautam never noticed these things? Or was this happening because *she* was here? He'd always preferred to take the concrete jungle of New York City in small doses, but with Charumati at his side, it all felt magical, like they were in a movie.

Inside the restaurant, the waitress seated them at a pink-lit corner table with a candle burning in a filigree gold cup. A melancholy old Lata Mangeshkar song played in the background as the waitress set down menus and glasses of coconut water. Gautam wondered if he should offer to read the menu to Charumati, but she was already busy scanning it.

She glanced mischievously over the top of her menu. "All tongues are as one to the celestials. I speak Sanskrit, and you hear it as Gujarati, Hindi, even this strange and unpretty English ..."

"That's handy," Gautam said, leaning forward. His English was excellent, but his Indian accent had caused more than one person in America to claim they couldn't understand him or to take him less seriously.

Charumati pushed back her hood. The waitress gasped, but when Charumati put a finger to her own lips, the waitress simply winked and took their orders.

Once she'd left, Gautam hissed, "What if someone else sees you?"

"Do you see anyone else here?" Charumati sipped her coconut water. "You have questions. Ask."

Gautam didn't know where to start. He shrugged. "I really just want to hear about you. Anything. Everything."

Her smile could have outshone her hair, which sparkled even in its loose knot. "Did you know stars once walked freely among you mortals? Alas, this is no longer so." She sighed. "My life is orderly; as a princess raised to a house determined to claw its way back to power, I have been educated in necessary politenesses and accustomed to the weight of expectations. There is much beauty in the heavens, of course, and I know my duty, but sometimes even a gilded cage grows too confined."

The food arrived, a beautifully plated spread of vegetable pulao, kaman dhokla, kadhi, roti, undhiyu, onion and potato bhajia, and mango pickle. They dug in, and between bites, Charumati told Gautam of her childhood friend Rati, of the mischief they would make with the other royal children, of the ever-fruiting groves of skyberry bushes and blue mango trees, of the jars upon jars of glittering stardust. But her voice grew wistful when she described watching human lives from a place called the Hall of Mirrors. "You mortals are unbound in a way I am not, or rather must not be. How I envied you and your passion-filled days!"

Gautam thought of his own methodical life and choked back a laugh.

"And so I am here, but what of you? What stirs your heart?" Her otherworldly gaze studied him with curiosity.

How could he possibly live up to that question? He was boring, just a guy who hadn't done anything special.

But with her looking at him like that, Gautam found himself telling her about his family in India, about his sister Radhika who had become engaged to a man from Edison, and how she planned to move across the world to marry him and be near her brother. "My life's happy enough. It always has been. But I guess I wanted more, too. I just stopped expecting it to show up."

"And yet here I am."

He grinned. "And yet here you are."

Gautam didn't say he was already picturing how mundane his life would be after she went home. Instead, he paid the bill and excused himself to go to the restroom.

When he came back, Charumati was gone.

The breath felt punched from his body. He looked around frantically, terrified that he'd made her up. Or worse, that she'd left in search of real excitement.

But when he raced outside, there she stood, gazing up at the sky. With the light pollution, he couldn't see anything but black. Charumati, though, clearly could, her face sad beneath the hood she'd pulled over her hair.

He bit back the urge to ask if she was okay as she turned to him, lighting up with the radiance inside her. "My family is searching for me. But do not worry. They can wait, for I wish to dance!"

Dancing. Gautam didn't dance. He barely even played dandiya-raas at Navratri each year. But he smiled and said there was nothing he would like to do more.

Then he took his star princess dancing.



The nightclub looked like a hybrid of a punk rock music video from the eighties and a fairy story. Multicolored lights flashed overhead, reflected a millionfold by the pink, purple, and blue glitter raining down from the ceiling. Too bad Gautam had missed the memo about coming in costume, because the room was packed with dancers in saris and kurta pajamas and corsets and Victorian ball gowns and torn-up jeans and black tops held together with safety pins, all vibrating to the throbbing trance beat laid over the playback singer trilling about her love's return. Here and there, he even saw some people made up to look like creatures out of his grandmother's stories: yakshas, apsaras, rakshasas.

He inhaled deeply, deliberately, taking it all in. Knowing he never would have discovered any of this without Charumati by his side.

She'd stripped off his sweatshirt and let her hair down, but to everyone else, it was one more ray of strobe lighting. Gautam's grin was goofy as she spun and swayed like a daydream made solid. Magic. He'd found magic.

Slowly his grin crumbled. She looked every centimeter the princess she was, way more at home here than he ever would be. He wasn't the only one who thought so, either; no matter what direction Charumati moved in, the other dancers followed, so that she remained the center of their circle.

He clutched the hoodie, which smelled of her, a fresh night breeze and something heavenly he couldn't put into words. It had only been a few hours, but he already couldn't imagine how his life could shrink back into its small, rigid shape after Charumati left. What was he doing, falling for a woman who would leave in the morning?

He slunk away to the bar. A drink would at least give him something to do.

For song after song, Gautam nursed an electric green cocktail. It was incredible how long a terrible drink could last. This one tasted like chemical spinach. Who was he kidding? He didn't belong with a woman like her. She'd only approached him because he'd happened to be there when she descended.

The thought filled him with a dark despair.

Then she was at his side, her eyes even larger with concern. "I've been looking for you." She plucked the glass from his fingers, sniffed it, and took a cautious sip. The utter disgust that twisted her beautiful features would have had him in stitches if he weren't feeling so gloomy.

"Chee!" she cried, shoving the glass away. "I am offended you would punish yourself like this rather than tell me you do not wish to dance. Perhaps I should leave you here."

"No!" he blurted, rising from his stool. "I mean, if you're ready, we could just go ..."

"I must say, I had hoped you would join me for a song." Charumati held out her hand, fingers splayed to look like lotus petals. But when Gautam didn't take it, ashamed of the figure he would have cut on the dance floor, afraid of letting her get even deeper under his skin, she averted her gaze. "Ah. Let us leave, then."

Gautam knew from the disappointment in her lovely voice that he'd blown everything. But that was for the best, right?

As soon as they stepped out on the sidewalk, they heard a *clip-clop, clip-clop* sound. Gautam did a double take. There was no reason for a horse-drawn carriage in this part of the city at this time of the night, and yet there it was. Charumati applauded. "So like Lord Surya's chariot!"

"Want to go for a ride?" Gautam asked. She nodded enthusiastically, and the driver, a mustached brown-skinned man dressed in red and gold, ushered them into the carriage.

"I will take you to Penn Station," he said before nudging the horses into motion.

Gautam wondered how the driver knew their destination, but the more he looked at the driver, the less human the driver appeared. Probably best not to inquire.

As they rode, Charumati rested her head on Gautam's shoulder and told him stories about the different constellations. With each story, Gautam could see the figures come into view in a stunning panorama across the sky. This must be what she saw all the time. He would give anything to be able to snap a photo of it.

In turn, he shared the stories his grandmother had told him. Each one pushed him to admit it hadn't just been other humans in that club. No wonder Charumati had fit right in.

And no wonder he had to pull back. In a couple hours, it would be dawn, and then he'd never see her again.

The driver wound the carriage through the city. No cars got in their way. No one honked or yelled even when they drove right through red lights. No one noticed them at all.

When the carriage finally pulled into the taxi line in front of Penn Station, Gautam helped Charumati down, then reached for his wallet. The driver shook his head. Instead, he turned to Charumati. A silver flame blazed in her outstretched palm. The driver tucked the flame into his pouch, then drove off.

"What was that?" Gautam demanded. "He just stole your—was that *starlight*?"

Charumati laughed her bell-like laugh. "None may steal what is freely given. Besides, what use would a gandharva have for your mortal 'cold, hard cash'? Come, let us go home."

The train back to Edison was empty except for the two of them. They were silent until they reached his car.

"Do you know I thought you ran off and abandoned me?" Charumati asked suddenly, seizing his hands. Her voice dripped grief. "I waited for you to come dance, but instead, you vanished."

"Why do you care?" Gautam retorted. The sight of their clasped hands taunted him. He should let go—of her hand, of his hope. But he didn't want to. She'd already expanded his life so much, and he wanted to do the same for her.

She frowned. "Why would I not? Are you not the person I watched, the one who inspired me to venture down at last?" "Me?"

"I came to have adventures, yes. I came to have them with *you*," she said. Snaring his gaze with hers, she began to sing. "You of the steady heart and the inquiring mind. You, who still yearn for enchantment. I wish you had danced with me."

Gautam felt so many things—guilt, amazement, gladness. They threatened to overwhelm him. But she'd stated a problem, and that he could handle. "Then I'll fix that now."

Not caring who was watching, he swept her into his arms and swayed to her melody.

It was the song he'd heard just before she appeared in the park. The song of the stars. Her words enclosed him in starlight, her notes in magic.

"I had only intended to play amongst you mortals for one

night," she said softly, her head against his chest, "and then return to the court. Yet I suspect I could be convinced to linger awhile."

"Then linger with me," he said. It was impulsive, and it was stupid, and he meant every word. He already knew he always would. "Marry me. I can't build you a palace, but I'll build you a home, and I'll spend my life giving you all the adventures and stories I can."

He had no idea how. He hadn't even found a permanent job yet. But he'd find a way.

Charumati brushed his cheek with her lips. It felt like a dream on his skin. "Yes," she said beneath the last shadows of the night. The song of the stars wrapped around them both like a silver lace veil as she drew his mouth to hers.

As Ushas rode her dawn-red horses through the heavens,

"Written in the Stars" is set in the world of Shweta's forthcoming young adult fantasy novel, *Star Daughter*, and features some of its characters. A fairy tale drenched in Hindu mythology and folklore, *Star Daughter* follows Sheetal, the daughter of Charumati and Gautam, who, in the wake of her father's near fatal cardiac arrest, must journey to the heavenly realm to find the celestial mother who left Sheetal behind to help save him, all while struggling to control her own emerging starry powers. *Star Daughter* will be out in Summer 2020 from HarperTeen.

paving the way for Lord Surya's fiery chariot, Charumati paused at the open door to study this mortal man. How beautiful he was, his adoring heart on full display in his face.

She glanced up at the heavens. If she did not return now, the entire court and all the stars beyond it would learn she had fled. Her parents' wrath would be mighty.

Yet as she turned back to Gautam, she knew she would never regret her choice.

Charumati took Gautam's hand once more and let him lead her into his apartment.

★★★

Shweta Thakrar, a part-time nagini, draws on her heritage, her experience growing up with two cultures, and her love of myth to spin stories about spider silk and shadows, magic and marauders, and courageous girls illuminated by dancing rainbow flames. Learn more at shwetathakrar.com.

QUEEN OF THE LONGEST NIGHT

MAGIC UNDER GLASS

A FANTASY ROCK MUSICAL MINI SERIES

ONLY ON LNTV
CHECK LOCAL LISTINGS

MAGICUNDERGLASS.COM #MUGMUSICAL

CHARACTER DESIGN: CASSIE GUIDRY
CASSIEGUIDRY.COM
PHOTOGRAPHER: MIKE ALLEN PHOTO

COSTUME DESIGN: LEE ANDERSEN
MANNEDART.ORG
ACTRESS/MODEL: EMILY CORINNE SMITH

CCTA
TOBY'S COLUMBIA CENTER
FOR THEATRICAL ARTS, INC.

Beneath the Eternal Skies of the

ARCTIC

by Jill Gleeson



© Scott Forsyth



© Dennis Minty

I can't see the sky from where I stand on Philpots Island, shoulders hunched and teeth gritted against what my Adventure Canada guide calls "near whiteout conditions." Located just to the east of Devon Island, the largest uninhabited island in the world, this bit of land sits in the high Canadian Arctic, nearly nine degrees north of the Arctic Circle. The precipitation is mean here, tiny ice pellets that sting when they hit my face. I squint against them, pulling my duff up to my nose and my cap down to my eyebrows. There's no vegetation I can spot, just snow-covered rock and tundra, the ebony sea beyond, heaving. I might as well be on the moon, or some distant planet that has never known sun. It's terrifying in its desolation, solitude rendered in shades of black and white.

It is also, like the rest of the Arctic I've explored, almost painfully beautiful.

By the time we reach Philpots, I've been on Adventure Canada's ship about a week. The family-owned company, which specializes in expedition cruises, has taken meticulous care of me and the other 180 or so passengers, but the journey hasn't been without its challenges. Multi-year ice, so thick even Coast Guard icebreakers won't tangle with it, has chased us through the Canadian Arctic Archipelago. According to our expedition leader, M.J. Swan, son of one of Adventure Canada's founders, the ice is an anomaly. "It's come down from the Polar Cap, the result of climate change," he announces at the first of his twice-daily briefings with the passengers. "We'll not get multi-year ice like this again."

As the ice chokes bays and harbors, straits and inlets, it's resulted in changes to our itinerary every day. But for each missed landing, the Arctic presents pleasures that must be far more spectacular than anything intended. On the third day of the trip, when it becomes clear we won't make Devon Island's Dundas Harbor, site of an abandoned Inuit settlement, we instead aim for Croker Bay. Located just to the west of Dundas in Baffin Bay, it's cloaked in heavy fog when we arrive, the glaciers that distinguish it invisible. But we put out anyway, cruising slowly in small rubber boats on water the shade of the new moon sky. Out of the mist small icebergs appear, almost shyly. They seem to glow from within, an ethereal blue the hue of a jewelry box bearing diamonds. I fall for the Arctic at that moment, with a vehemence that brings tears to my eyes.

By evening the fog has lifted, though the sky remains mired in thick clouds that resemble a gray woolen blanket stretched across the horizon. As we cruise toward the shore, I can see Croker's Bay's rough-hewn glaciers, white and towering, the source of the small icebergs dotting the water. Here and there ringed and bearded seals pop up from the sea's surface, their heads sleek

"Out of the mist small icebergs appear, almost shyly. They seem to glow from within, an ethereal blue the hue of a jewelry box bearing diamonds."

and comical. We hear through our guide's walkie-talkie that a polar bear has been spotted on a hill close by, and our boat fills with excited chatter. It vanishes before we get there, though that evening M.J. assures us that "there will be more polar bears to come." The animals of the Arctic await us, the beluga and narwhal, the walrus and musk ox. It seems only patience—and a good set of binoculars—is all that's required to meet them.

I'm hoping that, along with polar bears, sunshine will soon make an appearance. The afternoon we boarded the ship was a fine one, brisk but with a bright sun that turned the skies a beguiling, light-hearted blue. Since then the heavens have been leaden, the hue of a battleship, or a cellar floor, blending almost seamlessly in some spots with the swollen, monochromatic sea. Out here, where the sky devours even the ocean, it's not difficult to understand why the indigenous people of the Arctic have developed so many myths about the heavens.

It's standard for Adventure Canada to include aboard each of its cruises a myriad of explorers, scientists, artists, and scholars who give talks about their areas of expertise to the passengers. Several are Inuit, and one day, about halfway through the expedition, I attend a program detailing Inuit legends. It's led by Lois Suluk, a culturalist from Arviat, in Canada's Nunavut region. John Houston, an Inuit art expert raised in the Arctic, joins her to tell the rather dark and gruesome tale of how the Sun and the Moon were born.

The story revolves around a brother and sister, Taqqiq and Siqiniq. One night during a festival Taqqiq sneaks into his sister's igloo while she's sleeping, blows out the lamp, and molests her. Because her igloo is so dark, Siqiniq has no idea who her attacker is, so when it happens again, as John says, "she picks up the soot from the lamp, wipes it on her nose, and waits for him to come back. Upon his return, she makes sure to rub noses with him. This time, when he goes back into the dance house she follows behind him. As she enters the house, she sees people pointing and laughing at the soot on her brother's face."

The legend doesn't get much cheerier from there. Enraged by what her brother has done, Siqiniq slices off one of her breasts and tosses it at him. Grabbing a blazing torch, she runs outside, jumping in a shaman's magical dog sled that carries her into the sky, where she flies around and around the Earth. According to Houston, "Her brother, not to be left behind, grabs his own torch, which has burned down to embers, and jumps in another magic sled. He uses it to chase his sister through the sky. Siqiniq is now the sun, and her brother, the moon, is always following her, always trying to catch up with her."

When Siqiniq does return to our sky, it's so perfectly timed it seems she planned her reappearance with Sedna, the Inuit

The Arctic

Jill Gleeson

goddess of the sea and marine animals. We're in Burnett Inlet, off the southern coast of Devon Island. It's the kind of day that portends great things, with a sun so strong it can warm skin even in the Arctic air. The few clouds, rolling across a backdrop of blue, resemble the fluffy cottongrass the Inuit traditionally use as a wick for their oil lamps—the same type from which Siqiniq scoops the soot that reveals her brother's treachery. I'm in my cabin when M.J.'s voice, always slightly wry like he's hiding a smile as he speaks, booms over the PA. Walruses have been spotted off the starboard side of the ship.

I grab the big, heavy Bushnell binoculars my boyfriend lent me and run out to the deck. Some other passengers are already outside, peering out at the sea toward a flat-topped iceberg. Joining them, I raise my binoculars, and after a bit of frantic focusing I spot the animals, five enormous bodies lumped together, sunbathing. They raise their heads almost in unison and I can see their tusks, long and sharp enough that even polar bears, the Arctic's apex predator, seldom hunt them. I wonder at their hearing—did they pick up the sounds of our happy exclams?—as they all plunge into the sea together. They frolic with what appears to be the carefree joy of school kids on a

snow day, diving and resurfacing in great sprays of water.

From then on the animal sightings come so fast I barely have time to absorb the majesty of what I've just witnessed before the next one occurs. In Stratton Inlet, not far from Burnett Inlet, we see 300 or 400 beluga whales, their pale skin glistening as they break through the water like dolphins, cresting and diving in a circular motion, graceful and almost rhythmic. A little bit later someone spots a huge herd of walruses on the shoreline, and the captain swings the boat around. "In the center of the huddle," a naturalist tells me, "will be the youngest, the babies." But it's hard to pick them out even as the animals descend, their great flippers flopping in the sand, to the water.

Early the next morning, we're awakened by an announcement from M.J. It's polar bears this time, on an ice floe very near the ship, so close they can be identified as furry white shapes with the naked eye. When I peer through my binoculars, however, I can distinguish the mama to the right, peering down into a hole in the ice, perhaps looking for a fat seal. Her two cubs are to the left on the floe's other side. They are curled up together, sleeping in late while mama attends to breakfast. I stand there for as long as I can, the cold piercing the lightweight layer of clothing

I yanked on hurriedly over my pajamas. Those creatures, wild and free and all the more fragile for it, are the most gorgeous things I've ever seen. Later, M.J. will tell us that "this kind of polar bear sighting happens maybe once or twice a year."

But the Arctic is nothing so much as a show-off. Ice chases us away from Beechey Island, which sits on Devon Island's southwest corner, so we head back to Pond Inlet, where we first boarded the ship. When we arrive in Eclipse Sound, we discover a magnificent pod of killer whales, far from their usual migratory routes, hunting narwhals. Later we'll see musk oxen, shaggy with great curved horns, on the day we first set foot on Greenlandic soil. They're grouped here and there on the steep slopes of Foulk Fjord. It leads, after a short hike from the shore, to Brother John Glacier, which I find oddly accessible. You can march right up to the glacier, as I did, and stroke the ice, smooth like glass, if not as clear. The glacier, impossibly old, feels like a living thing, an elder worthy of respect.

As we continue down the western Greenlandic coast there is so much more that inspires awe, like the Ilulissat Icefjord, one of the northernmost UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Located where the Sermeq Kujalleq glacier calves ice into the sea—35 billion tons every year—it's too massive to see in its entirety from land. But what returns me to the state of a child on Christmas morning, actually clapping aloud in delighted glee, is the appearance of the northern lights. I don't think there's one passenger who doesn't make their way to the upper deck to watch, mouth hanging ajar, the serpentine twists and turns of the seafoam green aurora borealis.

While I gaze at the phantom-like glow, I recall the Inuit legend Lois told me about them. "The lights are beings playing with a walrus skull—perhaps soccer or football," she said. "When people see northern lights, they would whistle and the lights would come closer. It was thought that if the lights came too close, it would snatch away a human and take him or her with it. To ward away the lights, we would make noise with our fingernails, by making them rub against each other."

I wonder for awhile about that. Would it be so terrible to be whisked away into the Arctic sky, a place as alluring and mysterious surely as any on earth?



For more information about Adventure Canada, visit adventurecanada.com.

Thanks to John MacDonald, author of *The Arctic Sky: Inuit Astronomy, Star Lore, and Legend*, who helped me understand the subject of his studies.

Find Jill's writing about adventure, love, loss, and healing at gleesonreboots.com.



© Anne Gallant



© Kristian Bogner



© Scott Forsyth



© Dennis Minty

REACHING *for the* STARS

BY JILL GLEESON

Since time immemorial, humankind has looked to the stars, finding not only great beauty in Earth's celestial ceiling but meaning and portent too. The ancient Greeks created an intricate mythology about the deities who ruled the skies between dusk and dawn, such as Selene, the Titan goddess of the moon, and Nyx, a primordial goddess of the night. Other cultures, including Hindu, Aztec, Navajo, and Maya, formed their own legends about the stars, while early sailors guided their ships by them. Long-ago astrologers used heavenly bodies to divine the future—and their modern counterparts still do. Even now, most of us regard these diamonds in the sky with wonder, if not awe. For a potent reminder of just how small we are and just how vast the space above us is, visit the following parks, where night skies are darkest and stars shine brightest.

Death Valley National Park, California and Nevada

The legendary Death Valley is not only the hottest place on Earth; it's also the driest location in the country, meaning cloud-free nights are usually manifest. Its unusually starry nights and protection from light pollution earned Death Valley certification as an International Dark Sky Park—at 3.4 million acres the largest such park in the world. Winter offers the best stargazing, when both temperatures and haze from nearby cities are lowest. To wrap yourself in an ethereal glow that might make you feel as though you're standing atop a distant, unknown world, visit Badwater Salt Flats or Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes under the full moon's gaze. Otherwise, the ebony skies of the new moon are best for viewing the glorious Milky Way. [nps.gov/deva](https://www.nps.gov/deva)

Cherry Springs State Park, Pennsylvania

The only International Dark Sky Park in the eastern United States, Cherry Springs, which sits on a 2,300-foot peak inside the Susquehannock State Forest, offers the kind of night firmament once witnessed by our forebearers a century ago. With the nearest city 60 miles away and closer small communities all ensconced in deep valleys, artificial skyglow is nonexistent. On the clearest night, the Milky Way casts a shadow and 10,000 stars are visible to the naked eye; most residents of the eastern United States never see the former and see only a fifth of the latter. The Andromeda Galaxy, the Omega Nebula, and the Space Station may all be witnessed from this remarkable park. Visit in winter, when humidity is low and Cherry Springs' hours are extended. [cherryspringsstatepark.com](https://www.cherryspringsstatepark.com)



Voyageurs National Park, Minnesota

A landscape of pristine boreal forest and lakes silent and still save for the eerie cry of loons, Voyageurs National Park sits tucked away on Minnesota's border with Canada. In winter, its location in the far north gives rise to temperatures cold enough that there is little moisture in the air, providing bountiful clear nights. Light pollution is low too in this wild pocket of the world, maximizing the intensity of night-sky showstoppers including the aurora borealis and meteor showers. Look for constellations like Taurus, Gemini, and Cancer from the relative comfort of the Voyageurs Forest Overlook parking lot; in the warmer months rent a houseboat—more than 40 percent of Voyageurs is water. [nps.gov/voya](https://www.nps.gov/voya)

Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve, Idaho

The country's only space within the national park system that owes its name to a heavenly body, Craters of the Moon, like Death Valley and Cherry Springs, has won International Dark Sky Park status. Because its 618 square miles range along the Snake River Plain in south-central Idaho, a place so rugged and forbidding that all but the hardest and most bold have refused to settle there, the night skies remain blissfully absent of artificial light. But it is the blasted moonscape of the park itself—created some 15,000 years ago by volcanic eruptions from which grew sprawling lava fields and formations—combined with the low southern horizon over the plain that make for some of the country's most dramatic viewing of far-distant galaxies, nebulae, and planets. [nps.gov/crmo](https://www.nps.gov/crmo)

Acadia National Park, Maine

Each year more than three million people flock to Acadia National Park for its untrammeled North Atlantic coastline and landscape beautifully broken by seven summits rising over 1,000 feet. But there are few population centers of significant density around the park's 47,000 acres to bleed electric light into the night, so celestial sights like the Milky Way shine brightly. In winter, the crowds depart and quiet calm returns, but for the rocky shores battered by frothing, wild-hearted waves. Just beyond them the sea reflects the sky even after the sun sets. Watch the magic unfold from Park Loop Road, especially Ocean Drive, which provides a peek of those breathtaking reflections. [nps.gov/acad](https://www.nps.gov/acad)

Shimmering Stardust and Magic A CELESTIAL PARTY

BY GRACE NUTH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RACHEL LAUREN

The invitations to my celestial party were hand-painted watercolor cards featuring each attendee's astrological constellation. These were tucked into envelopes decorated with glittering star confetti and postmarked with a magical stamp: a black circle that revealed the moon when exposed to sunlight. The dress code on the card read simply, "Come attired in the garments of the stars." It was an open-ended description to encourage the creativity of the three invitees, and they more than rose to the challenge. They arrived at my cozy central Ohio cottage dressed stunningly, ornamented with such details as a handmade tarot-card embroidered corset (made by guest Larissa Boiwka, corsetiere for Wilde Hunt Corsetry), shimmering face paint in constellation patterns, star-studded heels, a black velvet shawl with a swirling design mimicking the night sky, tights dotted with stars, and even a glowing crystal crown. As the hostess, I wore a black crown of crescent moons and dramatic dangling chains and a draping skirt with constellations (both from Costurero Real), plus crescent moon earrings dripping with crystals and a crescent necklace, both from *Enchanted Living's* online store.



Nothing was overlooked in preparation for the event. I spent weeks working on every detail. I cut stars from folded book pages, sprayed them with a light coating of gold, and hung them from the ceiling at varying heights and sizes to resemble the night sky. There was a wine goblet for each attendee matching her invitation, with the constellation of her zodiac sign painted precisely on the side. The place settings mimicked the crescent shape of a golden moon. Since the goblets were specific to each guest, each setting also had a tiny name card cut into the shape of a banner scroll, with the astrological night sky patterned behind each name. Holding up each name card was a glass bottle alchemically created by my friend Meghan Pell of The Medieval Mouse. Each was corked and sealed with gold wax, and labeled with a mysterious tag that read "Stardust." Once shaken, the contents would reveal swirling patterns of shimmering color and gold stars that made the guests gasp with delight—and want to shake the bottles again and again.

Once all four attendees were present—and after we had effused over how we had all interpreted the theme with our outfits—we went upstairs to a room painted with trees where I had hung a large white floral moon as a backdrop. Each of the guests had a little photo shoot with our photographer so that no detail of their incredible creativity would go undocumented. An evening repast of decadent desserts was next, and the wine flowed freely, as did the conversation. My three friends, though they share similar interests, had never actually met before, but they found kinship in this magical gathering.

After dinner, we weren't quite finished with the festivities yet. Being the daughter of a magician, I had another trick up my sleeve. Under my guests' chargers were small rectangles of white paper. I asked them to write down a wish on the paper, and we went outside to wish on a star. Each of us in turn took a book of vintage matches and lit our paper, which instantly disappeared in a sizzling flame, as if by magic. Although the ladies were a bit nervous to try it at first, all of them cried out with glee as their wishes ascended toward the night sky. "I really hope mine came true," one guest said. "It was an important one."

At the end of the night, each woman left with a bottle of stardust, a goblet of constellations, and memories they said they would never forget. And every moment of preparation was worth it to create such a magical experience for such wonderful and enchanting friends.



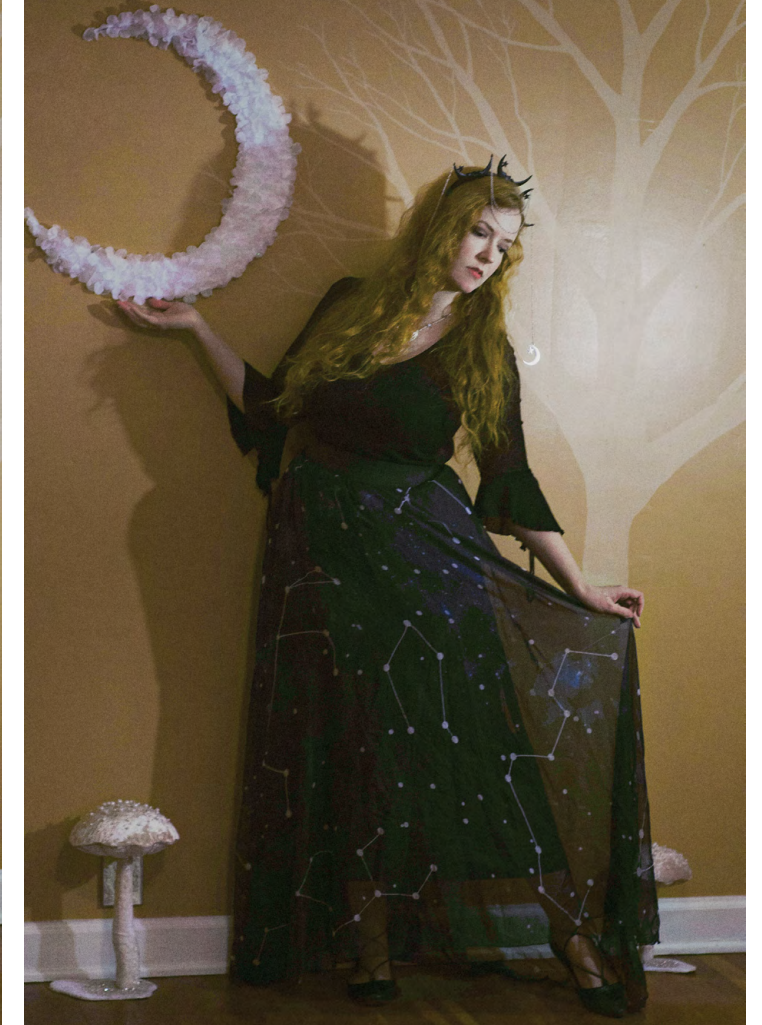


Tips

- ★ Don't be afraid to DIY if you have a limited budget. The majority of the items for my party came from a dollar store and were enhanced by hand. For instance ...
- ★ Spray paint seven-day candles gold and etch them with designs and patterns such as stars and moons with a knife or other sharp implement.
- ★ Turn a sheet of foam core and a handful of glittering white silk flowers into a floral-decorated crescent moon. Draw the crescent design on the foam core and cut it out, then hot-glue the plastic flowers with the stems removed onto the crescent shape. You will likely need more silk flowers than you expect!
- ★ Don't underestimate the impact of battery-operated fairy lights, especially if your event takes place in the evening.
- ★ Use candles liberally; just be careful not to let them burn anywhere close to draped fabric.
- ★ If your party is being held remotely close to Christmas, check the decor section of your local stores. The gold filmy fabric hung to dramatic effect from my chandelier was inexpensive mesh garland sold to decorate holiday trees.
- ★ If the theme of your party doesn't match your usual dinnerware, call upon local friends and acquaintances. I borrowed the gold chargers and blue plates for my party. Offsetting the blue plates on the gold chargers made them instantly look like crescent moons.
- ★ Pinterest is your friend! Create a private pin board (so friends can't get sneak peeks) and pin any idea you love, no matter how far-fetched. Even if you cannot re-create it in detail, it may provide inspiration to launch your imagination.
- ★ Whether you are a master baker or hardly know how to turn on an oven (I am the latter), you can still serve a charming spread. Everything for my party was purchased at a grocery store, and then altered and enhanced. A bag of Oreos, carefully taken apart, can turn into a calendar of moon phases on a dark-colored plate. The Colby Jack cheese, cut into stars and laid on top of round crackers, resembled the moon and a star. I found mini cream-cheese tartlets and placed blueberries on top in the shape of a crescent moon. And the tiny chocolate cupcakes worked to theme once I scattered edible gold stars (Wilton) on top of the icing. The tableau of delicious eats was finally complete when I added a few more book page stars and the whimsical crescent and full-moon lollipops from *Enchanted Living's* online shop.
- ★ By borrowing items, buying from dollar stores, and DIYing a lot of this party, I was able to throw the entire event on a budget of about \$100.



Dress courtesy of Columbus Fairy Goodmothers





★ A note on the dining room ★

I painted my dining room with a mural of a scene from one of my favorite fairy tales, “The Twelve Dancing Princesses.” I love the scenes in the story where the twelve young ladies are walking through the forests of gold, silver, and glass, eyes drooping closed as if in a dream or trance. Painting the mural on all four walls took a couple of years of work. Although the trees, glowing wisps, and ground are painted directly on the walls, each princess was created on a piece of poster board colored with Prismacolor colored pencils and then adhered to the wall. This gives the whole design a sort of whimsical, three-dimensional effect. Although the mural wasn’t created solely for this celestial gathering, its dream-like, nighttime subject suited it quite well.

BLACK LIGHT SOIRÉE

Model: Keilah Hildebrand



Model: Lee Cohen

Another idea for a fun celestial party you can throw for your more moony, starry friends is a black light soiree—where guests adorn themselves with stars and constellations using blacklight body paint. Artist Sirena Hildebrand has used the technique below to create a whole series of otherworldly photos. You can use it to enchant your friends! Splatter the paint on your body and your old black clothes for some celestial interstellar glamour.

Supplies needed:
White blacklight body paint, new toothbrush, medium-size paintbrush, blacklight flashlight

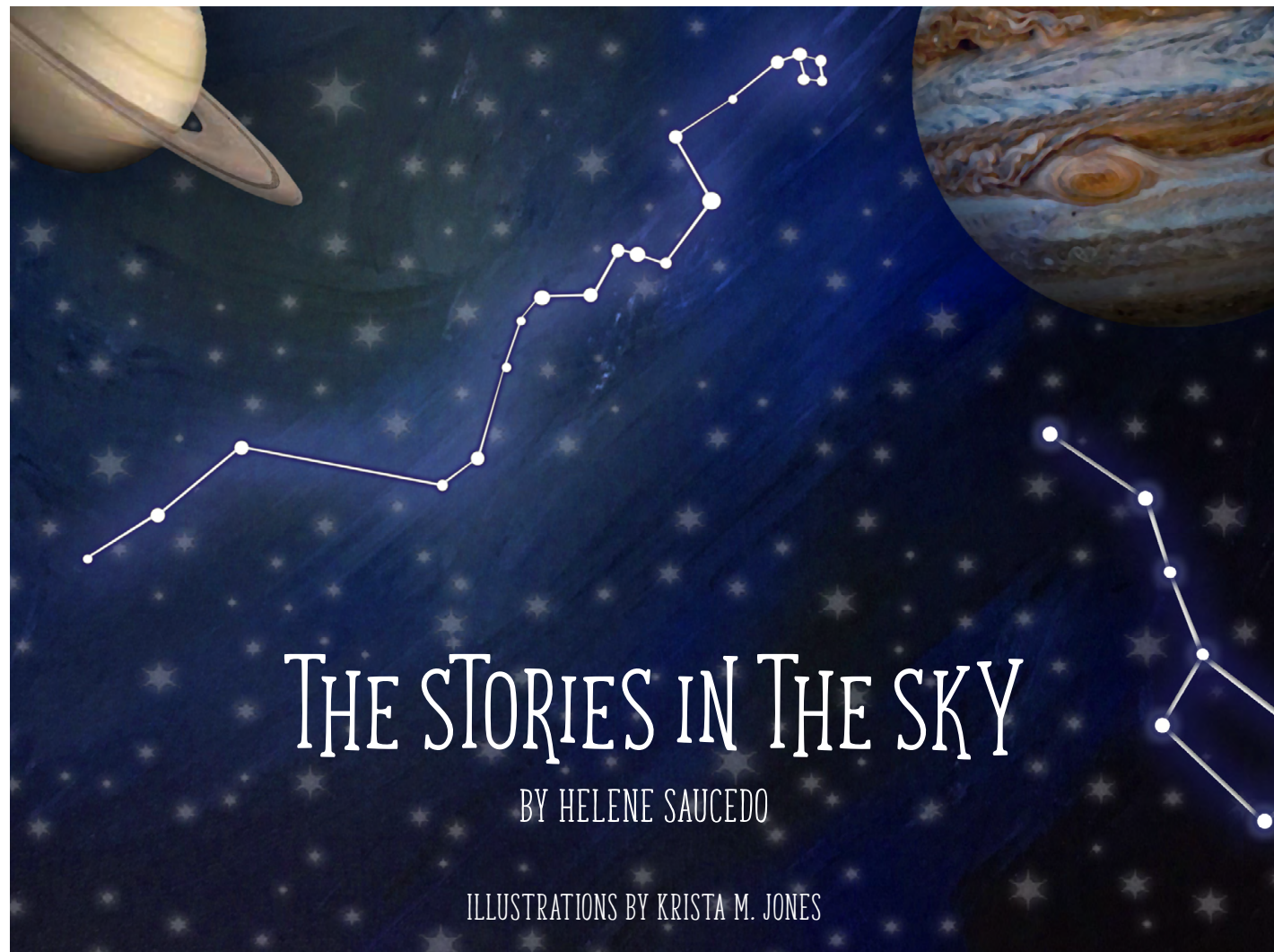
- Step 1:** Do your makeup like you normally would.
- Step 2:** Speckle skin with “stars” by using the toothbrush to splatter the paint. Wait for paint to dry before proceeding to next step.
- Step 3:** Add swirls and any other patterns you desire.
- Step 4 (optional):** Set with setting spray.
- Step 5:** Admire your work under a blacklight!!



Sirena Hildebrand, a.k.a. Monsters and Lace, is a photographer and artist based in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Find her on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram @monstersandlace.



Model: Kiera Elise



I am a palm reader. Like all occupations, it comes with its set of pros and cons. On the plus side, I have the privilege of connecting with hundreds of people on a deeply personal level to talk about all things in life. But palmistry is an art riddled with misconceptions. The first is that your hand holds the details of your death. Thankfully, this is not true. There are a few hand markings that can be concerning, but an ethical palmist will allow free will to take its course. A second misconception is that all palm readers are psychic. I can't speak for every palm reader, but I am not psychic, clairvoyant, clairsentient, or clair-anything. I believe the markings on our hands come from the magic that exists energetically within each individual. A third misconception is that palmistry and astrology are related. Wrong. They are two separate modalities of divination that share terminology adopted from the names of stars and planets that are, for the most part, based on Greek and Roman mythology. The ancient Greeks believed constellations were placed in the sky by the Olympian gods (Zeus, Poseidon, Hera, Apollo, Artemis, Hermes, Athena, Aphrodite, Demeter, Hephaestus, Ares, and Dionysus) to serve as lessons on conduct. Whole stories are laid out across the sky; we will examine only a few.

Astrology looks to the movement and position of the planets and other celestial bodies to divine meaning in our lives and events on Earth. The most popular feature of astrology is the zodiac (Greek for "circle of animals"), the ecliptic path of the sun through the sky. Most of us are aware of our rising sign, determined by which constellation of the zodiac the sun is located in on the day they were born. For example, I was born on July 11 and am a Cancer since the Sun transits the zone of the constellation of Cancer between June 21 and July 23. But where did the name Cancer originate? And why does the constellation resemble a crab? Cancer comes from the Latin word for "crab." The crab plays a small role in the myth of Hydra, the sea serpent. Hydra, a.k.a. Lernean Hydra, had many heads and poisonous breath. As the story goes, if one of its heads was cut off, two would grow back. Enter the determined Roman god Hercules, who in a gruesome battle cut off all the snake's heads using a sickle and placed the last immortal head beneath a boulder. Amid the action, the goddess Hera sent in a small crab to distract Hercules; this of course did not work and the crab was killed. The constellation of Cancer lies just above the head of Hydra, the largest constellation in the sky. The sickle is part of the constellation of Leo and is located above Hydra's neck.



Hydra also rears its ugly heads in other stories, including the dramatic tale of Corvus, the raven, and Apollo, god of the sun and light. Apollo's pregnant lover, Coronis, was cheating on him with a warrior man. Corvus, Apollo's sacred bird, notified Apollo of the infidelity and an enraged Apollo sent his sister, Artemis, to kill Coronis. Apollo quickly regretted his actions, traveled to her body, and pulled his unborn son from her womb. The son became Asclepius, the god of medicine. Apollo blamed Corvus for her death and punished the raven by turning his black feathers to white. Corvus was then banished to the sky where Apollo engaged the constellation of Hydra to block the bird from the stars of Crater—a cup—resulting in an eternity of thirst.

In palmistry, the fleshy pads located directly underneath the fingers and on both sides of the hands are called mounts. Mounts, short for "mountains," are named after the planets: Jupiter (pointer finger), Saturn (middle finger), Apollo (ring finger), Mercury (pinky finger), Mars (midsection of both sides of the hand), Venus (inside the hand, horizontal to the thumb), and Luna (outer lower hand). Mounts are evaluated by height to determine which archetypes are developed in an individual. What is the tie between archetypes and the planets? Each of the planets are named after gods and goddesses from Greek or Roman



mythology. Below are the basics, along with the qualities they represent. To see which archetypes are represented in your hand, go see your local palm reader or find an online tutorial.

Jupiter (a.k.a. Zeus, Gr.): King of the gods. God of the heavens. Jupiter rose to the throne by overthrowing his father Saturn. Qualities: Ambitious. Confident. Humanitarian.

Saturn (a.k.a. Cronos, Gr.): Father of the original Olympians who ruled the gods until overthrown by his son Jupiter. Qualities: Discipline. Balanced life. Strong work ethic.

Apollo (a.k.a. Sol, Rom.): God of the sun. God of archery, music, and poetry. Qualities: Creativity. Talent in art or business. Appreciation of beauty. Bright disposition.

Mercury (a.k.a. Hermes, Gr.): Winged messenger of the gods. Qualities: Skillful communication. Problem solver. Trusting.

Mars (a.k.a. Ares, Gr.): God of war. Qualities: Warrior. Resilience. Strength.

Luna (a.k.a. Diana, Rom.): Goddess of the moon. Qualities: Intuition. Imagination. Dreams.

Venus (a.k.a. Aphrodite, Gr.): The goddess of love and beauty. Qualities: Love. Relishes life's beauty, food, and art. Sensuality. Warmth.

The Greeks did not believe their gods created the universe. Heaven (Uranus) and Earth (Gaia) came first, giving birth to the

twelve Titans (six males: Coeus, Cronus, Crius, Hyperion, Iapetus, and Oceanus, and six females: Mnemosyne, Phoebe, Rhea, Theia, Themis, and Tethys), who then gave birth to the gods. In stark contrast to the omnipotent gods of other cultures, they created their gods and goddesses to be flawed, relatable, and beautiful, like humanity, only immortal. They had no interest in mysticism or the supernatural unless it supported the plotlines of their gods and goddesses. Ironically, astrology wasn't practiced as divination in classical Greece. The bulk of the tales they wove around the stars described the creation of the universe and other phenomena. In the second century CE, Claudius Ptolemy, a Greco-Egyptian astronomer and philosopher, published multiple works, *The Almagest* in particular, that assigned names to forty-eight of the eighty-eight constellations derived from Greek and Roman myths, as well as some Latin derived names. His work formed a large part of the sky mapping of the International Astronomical Union that was developed in 1930 and is still in use today.



Follow Helene on Instagram @ [handfulofstarsreadings](#) and watch out for the Handful of Stars Palmistry Kit from Harper Design, to hit stores in October 2019.



Peter Horree / Alamy Stock Photo

SILVER-EYED LILÍNABALÉN IS CHARMED FROM THE SEA

From the First Book of the Jlí Civilization's Recorded Histories

by Fox Frazier-Foley

He drifted through kelp, broken
scalp diffusing red like squid

ink clouding itself. Crowded, the spiny
urchins hinged their drift west. He slept,

I knew, towards his death. What harm
could there be in waking him?

Through the dark-prismed sun of my
depths, his skin glowed sweet: comet-fruit

shaping waves with its plummet, all of him
begging for touch. I breathed into his sanded

tongue. His eyes widened—black-cored, lit
by two dark stars carved of the earth he should

never have kicked from. I drew him
to surface, remembering: *I can light*

from inside into something like silver.

Fox Frazier-Foley is author of two award-winning poetry collections, The Hydromantic Histories and Exodus in X Minor, as well as the Elgin-nominated Like Ash in the Air After Something Has Burned. Her poem in this issue is from a forthcoming work, entitled Alive in Every Version of the Story.

Celestial Beauty

BY ALISE MARIE

She glances upward at the night sky, drawing down the moon to illuminate her face with an ethereal glow. The heavens are calling. The life force of the sun caresses her spirit by day, feeding her radiance with golden fire. And every evening she drinks in starlight, inviting it to pour down onto her own heavenly body. She glows from the top of her gleaming tresses all the way down to her supple toes. And she knows it. For she has learned the secrets that reveal celestial beauty, and she yearns to share them with you.

There is a radiant being deep inside you. Do you feel her? Or perhaps, like most, you haven't quite discovered that part of yourself. And yet that luminous creature is there, dying for recognition. The light is already in you, and all you need to do is open up and *reveal* it. Go outside and look up at the sky. What do you see? Though we are all connected on a primal level to the cycles of the moon and the movements of the planets, somewhere along the line we've forgotten what we know and have lost our conscious connection to the heavens. We are out of phase, so to speak.

When we mindfully reconnect with these cosmic energies, however, a whole new level of feeding ourselves happens. Not just in the way we fortify our bodies internally, but in the way we support our skin, hair, and nails. Our external beauty begins to align with our insides.

Beauty magic is the art of working with natural forces to highlight our unique attributes, revealing the light inside that reflects celestial brilliance. Potions born of high-vibration ingredients, created with intent, and bathed beneath the heavens carry just that kind of charge.

The simplest way to get started is by creating and using your beauty potions in harmony with the phases of the moon. Though there are eight major lunar phases, it really breaks down into two halves: You're either growing or shedding, expanding or contracting, breathing in or breathing out, nourishing or eliminating.

Though it may seem tricky at first, as you learn to apply each of these phases to your beauty and well-being routine, the process becomes immensely pleasurable and empowering—and the results *very* noticeable.

The lion's share of your skin- and body-care potions are most powerful when created at the new moon and set out to the heavens until the silver lady reaches fullness. The idea here is to draw all the beautifying and magical energy of the ingredients into the potion as it soaks up cosmic vibrations. (Body scrubs, facial exfoliants, cleansers, and clarifying potions work well when created during a waning moon, when the energy of clearing and shedding is in play.)

*Moon Glimmer
Facial Balm*



Celestial Beauty

Alise Marie

I've conjured three divine potions to help you shine your brightest this winter, each infused with celestial power. So on the next new moon, gather your ingredients and follow this simple ritual:

Set your intention. Take a deep breath. Focus your mind on the results you wish for, creating a strong visual and really *feeling* it.

Concoct. As you mix the potion, keep that focus going. See each ingredient infusing your potion with its magic and its beautifying benefits. Notice the smile spreading across your face and the joyous feelings that arise

when you see yourself glowing with radiant beauty!

Let it marinate. Place your potion outside (if the weather cooperates), or on a windowsill at the new moon, and leave it there until the moon is full. This allows the potion to “set,” the ingredients to fully mingle and reach full potency, and the light of the heavens to charge it.

Give thanks. A sincere nod to the gifts of nature and cosmic guidance goes a long way. Love is the highest vibration you can give and receive.

Glow. When your potion is fully charged, use it with the same intention you poured into it. Enjoy the ritual of anointing yourself with its scent and texture and, most of all, the megawatt energy it carries. See? You sparkle.

STARLIGHT GLOW

Body Oil Spray

Yields approximately 3½ oz.

- 2 oz. grapeseed oil
- 1½ oz. sunflower oil
- 1 tablespoon rosehip oil
- ½ teaspoon vegetable glycerin
- 1 teaspoon pearlized mica powder

In a 4 oz. glass spray bottle, combine the grapeseed and sunflower oils. (It's best to use a small funnel when trying to get ingredients into a potion bottle.) Add the rosehip oil and glycerin, and swirl clockwise to blend. Drop in the mica powder, then give it a vigorous swirl until you can see the shimmer blending into the oil completely. Cap tightly, and be sure to give the bottle a good “stirring” before each use to blend the sparkle.

In addition to the goddess-level power of rosehip oil, this potion contains a few extra-special ingredients to caress your skin with dewy moisture. It's a gorgeous combination of nutrient-dense skin foods that won't leave you feeling oily and *lots* of fertile creation energy. And though the holiday season is your time to shine especially bright, this blend provides a sexy sheen all year through.

Grapeseed Oil Moon-ruled and mineral-rich grapeseed oil feeds the skin with proteins and vitamin E but is light enough to moisturize without clogging. Magically, it draws abundance and fertility.

Sunflower Oil Solar-powered and fertile, sunflower grants wisdom, joy, and good health. Rich in linoleic acid, it helps build and maintain a healthy skin barrier, which thins as we age. This light, non-clogging oil contains vitamin E, which prevents damage to skin cells and protects from UV rays, preventing wrinkles. It also nourishes with vitamins A, C, and D.

Glycerin Vegetable glycerin is a naturally occurring compound in plant-based fats. It is a humectant that draws moisture from the air onto your skin, keeping it dewy and hydrated without oiliness, making it an excellent moisturizer for all skin types.

CELESTIAL CELEBRATION

Beauty Cocktail

Per cocktail

- 1 teaspoon elderflowers
- 1 teaspoon linden flowers
- ½ teaspoon lemon
- 1 teaspoon grated ginger
- ½ teaspoon coconut nectar
- Champagne (or sparkling water)

Begin by preparing flower tea: place linden and elder flowers in a cup of water that's just heated, but not boiling. Let them steep for at least 20 minutes as the water cools. Strain the tea into a cocktail shaker (or a bullet-style blender cup with cap if you don't have one), then add the lemon, ginger, and coconut nectar. Shake well, pour into a glass, and top with champagne or sparkling water. Garnish with fresh lemon zest, and raise your glass to the heavens!

I always favor a cocktail that has health and beauty benefits. This festive sip brings together healing flowers, immune-boosters, and abundant magic with a feisty flavor that pairs well with faerie food and seasonal soirees. Do enjoy it!

Elder and Linden Flowers Elder and linden both fight colds and flu effectively. With high levels of vitamin C and an ability to manage fever, this pair also provides a calming, relaxing effect and the magic of healing and protection.

Lemon Lunar lemon cleanses and detoxifies, which aids in keeping your system healthy and your skin bright. Loaded with vitamin C, it boosts the immune system, and bears magical gifts of love and happiness.

Ginger This fiery root is an excellent digestive, blood sugar regulator, and circulation booster which keeps the body warm and the skin radiant. It is a bringer of love and success ... with a dash of money magic.

BEAUTY WITCH TIP

Always use colored-glass sand jars for setting your potions out to the heavens to protect precious ingredients from too much heat, light, or cold, which can affect them even on a windowsill.

*Starlight Glow
Body Oil Spray*

Celestial Celebration Beauty Cocktail

Celestial Beauty

Alise Marie

MOON GLIMMER Facial Balm

Yields approximately 4½ oz.

- 2 oz. meadow foam oil
- 1 oz. avocado oil
- 1 oz. candelilla wax
- 1 tablespoon rosehip oil
- 18 drops ylang ylang essential oil
- 1 teaspoon fine pearlized mica powder

Note: Mineral mica powder, though completely natural, has come under fire for labor policies and sustainability issues. Synthetic mica powder is made in a lab but from natural materials and does not contain plastic. Please source consciously.

In a heat-safe glass canning jar or measuring cup, combine the meadow foam and avocado oils. Place the glass container into a large pot and fill the pot with water until it reaches just above the level of the oils. Turn the flame on low. Now add the candelilla wax to the oils and stir. Allow the water to heat slowly, which will melt the wax into the oils, but don't bring it to a boil: You want the wax to melt completely but not to heat the oils too high, as that can cause rancidity as well as diminishing the efficacy of the potion. When the wax is fully melted—it will turn clear and the mixture will be smooth—pour the liquid into an airtight glass jar that has a lid. (If you are using a canning jar to melt the wax, you can just keep it in there.) Drop in the rosehip and ylang ylang, stirring well to combine. Add the mica powder, making sure it blends in completely to ensure an even application. Allow the balm to cool. Cap it tightly to store.

This, my lunar loves, will quickly become a potion you simply cannot live without. This one is an absolute lifesaver for skin that's been sapped of vital moisture, especially during the cold and dry winter months. It has a gorgeous velvety texture that's pure pleasure to apply, potent anti-aging ingredients, a light uplifting scent, and a level of hydrating softness that moisturizer alone will never quite understand. Oh, and then there's the glow! Just the right amount of subtle sheen to look impossibly dazzling even on the dreariest of days. Of course, feel free to make a second batch with an amped-up amount of glimmer for those special evenings. And do experiment with different shades! This gives the perfect naturally-lit-from-within tone, but if you're a fan of highlighters you'll surely want to play with different colors and intensities.

Though this has been conjured specifically for the face, you can use it anywhere on the body that needs some extra love. Try it on parched elbows, heels, forearms, etc.—just give it a moment to absorb before dressing. And do anoint your lips! This makes for a very pretty pout.



One of the great aphrodisiacs, **ylang ylang** is also a perennial favorite for boosting circulation to the cells, which, together with its high levels of antioxidants, keeps skin firm while softening and preventing fine lines. It is soothing to irritated skin, antiseptic, and offers a happy, sweet scent. It is blended here with some of the richest oils you can treat your skin to and the beauty magic of Venus for a moon-ruled superstar potion.

Meadow Foam Oil Made of 98 percent fatty acid, this oil is an anti-aging warrior. Similar to the skin's natural sebum, it creates a protective outer layer that locks moisture in while simultaneously delivering it deep into your epidermal layer. High in antioxidants, it also has superior firming abilities and feels like the soft caress of petals.

Avocado Oil Rich and sensual, avocado oil has long been associated with beauty and love magic. Ripe with beauty fats, it is an excellent moisturizer high in vitamin E. It fights the signs of aging and feeds your skin while soothing inflammation and breakouts. It is also a noted aphrodisiac.

Rosehip Oil This superior moisturizing oil is extracted from the fruit of the rose after the petals have fallen away. Penetrating deep into the skin, it hydrates and moisturizes without causing breakouts or clogging. It boasts a natural retinol in the form of beta carotene from vitamin A, which promotes cellular turnover, repairs tissue, and builds tissue deep within the skin that supports firmness. It also contains high levels of vitamin C, stimulating new collagen and repairing skin while protecting against new UV damage.

Beauty Witch Tip: *Before the liquid cools, pour a small amount of balm into a travel-size jar and pop it into your handbag. Now you have glow-on-the-go for a quick touch-up anytime you like!*

Well, my celestial beauties, I wish you every happiness and a cauldron full of abundance this season and always. Shine brightly, my loves!



Alise Marie can be found at thebeautywitch.com.

The Fairy of the Moon by Hermann Kaulbach. Public domain, Wikimedia Commons.



"Drink in the moon as though you might die of thirst."
—Sanobar Khan

Silvery moonlight can create a surface luminosity, an incandescence, a glow on the skin like nothing else. And in the spirit of our celestial issue, we thought we'd share some heavenly balms and serums—with silky botanical oils like rosehip, avocado, coconut, and more—that come pretty close to the magic of a face bathed in moonlight. Here are some of our favorites.

Trilogy Make-Up Be Gone Cleansing Balm

A luscious blend of pure, nourishing plant oils—coconut, sunflower, and rosehip—cleans and hydrates the skin and guarantees a gorgeous glow. trilogyproducts.com

Naturopathica Manuka Honey Cleansing Balm

Feed much-needed moisture into the skin with natural ingredients like manuka honey from New Zealand along with royal jelly peptides and probiotics. These will clean and strengthen the skin and protect it from a harsh environment. naturopathica.com

Lo & Behold Naturals Hair & Body Oil

This all-purpose floral oil with rose, jasmine, bergamot, black pepper, and myrrh is pure magic and may well cast a spell on those who behold the wearer. Apply a few drops to the hair and skin and get ready to captivate. loandbeholdnaturals.com

Monastery Gold Botanical Healing Serum

Ingredients like rosehip, camellia, cranberry seed, avocado, and evening primrose bring the skin back to life, like moonlight or a starlit sky. monasterymade.com

8 Faces Beauty Balm Boundless Solid Oil

According to 8 Faces Beauty, "self-care is sacred," and this balm does indeed elevate the simplest of beauty rituals—moisturizing the skin—to high art. With grapefruit, lavender, and geranium, the balm transforms from solid to liquid before it melts into the skin. Some jars come with a surprise: a healing citrine crystal to hold near. 8facesbeauty.com

—Rosie Shannon

GREYLOCK SILVER
Artisan Silver Jewelry
Est. 2016
CURIOUS OBJECTS FOR CURIOUS PEOPLE

Facebook: @GreylockSilver
Instagram: @Greylock_Silver
Etsy: www.etsy.com/shop/GreylockSilver

When you visit, please don't forget to Use Code "PLEIADES" to receive free shipping on your first order in December (Lower 48 only)

al-chemist
a person who transforms or creates something through a seemingly magical process.

CELESTE ONORATI
ASTROLOGER

schedule your astrology reading

CREATIVE DIRECTOR,
JAI MALA ROSE

order your custom rose petal bead jewelry

www.CelesteOnorati.com

“The moon replenishes the earth; when she approaches it, she fills all bodies, while, when she recedes, she empties them.”

—from *Natural History* by Pliny the Elder, first century Roman naturalist

For centuries, men and women have farmed by the light of the moon, charting celestial cycles to pinpoint the best moment for the magic to happen, when tiny seeds and tender plantings, lovingly tended, shoot up and grow into a soulful and nourishing harvest.

The system, now known as biodynamic agriculture, is a practice leavened with scientific and spiritual mojo. “Biodynamic agriculture works with the rhythm of the cosmos and the earthly rhythm,” says Eduardo Rincon, president of the Biodynamic Association of Mexico. “And the intention of working with those cycles is to employ good soil, good plants, and a good soul—consciousness, or part of the *intention* we put into healing ourselves.”

Biodynamics is a form of sustainable agriculture that employs regenerative practices. It grows out of respect for the earth—no synthetic pesticides, fungicide, fertilizers—and a loving appreciation for the soil and ways to sustain it. Among its goals are to reduce carbon emissions that can lead to climate change, employ crop rotation, improve water quality, and use biodiversity so that waste in one area fuels another in an interdependent system.

In many ways, biodynamics overlaps with organic farming: Both strive to form a relationship with nature, but the psycho-spiritual philosophy of biodynamics goes well beyond. At its core it is a meld of astrology, homeopathy, and mysticism rooted in the work of Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner, founder of the renowned Steiner Schools. Steiner picked up knowledge from the Ancient Greeks, down through the Middle Ages, and added a spiritual component when he brought it forward into modern times.

“Whether it’s working with soil, water, animals—we’re all directly involved in a daily practice of entering into harmony with nature,” says Rincon. “However, within organic agriculture, there’s a heavy focus on the physical manipulation of substances—land, plants, and minerals that we’re here to use up. In biodynamics, it’s more of a movement, a consciousness, a cosmological approach. We are called to try to perceive, within our own organism, the spiritual reality behind the natural world, to see the divine in nature. The real goal is to take what proceeds from that spiritual insight and put it to practical use.”

Spiritualism and the Occult

Not surprisingly, Steiner was a controversial figure.

In Steiner’s time—the late 19th to early 20th century—spiritualism and the occult were extremely fashionable. People were attending seances and dabbling in mysticism. Steiner was an avid proponent of theosophy, a popular philosophical

movement founded in 1875, with teachings about God and the world based on mystical insight. Steiner’s self-professed “spiritual sciences” evolved from theosophy and led him to create reforms in education and agriculture. Steiner also founded a school of philosophy known as anthroposophy, based on belief in the existence of an objective spiritual world that humans can access through inner development or, as we might say now, “working on our ourselves.”

Around the same time, in 1906, a Swedish landscape painter named Hilma af Klint had a breakthrough in her Stockholm studio. Af Klint’s work, which *The New Yorker* called “visionary,” was shown recently at the Guggenheim Museum in New York City. Some art historians, including Guggenheim Museum curator Tracey Bashkoff, are now claiming af Klint as the first abstract painter. Whether or not that proves to be true, af Klint—a mystic who studied theosophy and anthroposophy and had been attending seances since she was seventeen—had undoubtedly created a new visual vocabulary. Her strangely beautiful, compelling, and otherworldly paintings, with their esoteric loops, tunnels, and abstract shapes that appear to have been channeled from another realm, first appeared in 1906, six years before abstract masters Wassily Kandinsky, Piet Mondrian, and Kazimir Malevich, long considered the first abstract painters, showed theirs.

Af Klint claimed that she was guided by a group of spirits with whom she was communicating on a psychic level, and those spirits led her to produce more than a thousand works, most significantly a group of ten massive paintings, ten-and-a-half feet high by eight feet wide, called *The Largest*. Af Klint was interested in exploring the natural—and supernatural—environment and, according to the *Paris Review*, “the inherent connections between life at the micro and macro levels,” something that Steiner would also explore with biodynamics.

Af Klint traveled in the same circles as Steiner and, in 1908, he visited her Stockholm studio. He gave her advice that proved disastrous. He told her to give up her otherworldly inspirations and basically follow her own. It seems to have paralyzed her artistically, at least for the next four years. And when she started painting again, the power of her work was never the same.

Growth of Biodynamics

Biodynamics has become increasingly popular in the U.S. and around the globe, in farms, orchards, vineyards, and gardens as global warming becomes a more pressing issue. Agricultural land occupies 50 percent of the earth’s habitable surface and about 41 percent of U.S. land, but in the U.S., food production contributes 18 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions.

BY THE LIGHT OF THE MOON

by Rona Berg



© Ricardo Reilmeyer/shutterstock.com

A HOLIDAY GIFT IDEA: FAERIE KNITTING

BY CAROLYN TURGEON

In autumn 2015 we premiered a new column in *Faerie Magazine* that ran for over two years: Faerie Knitting, by two magic-loving cousins, best-selling novelist Alice Hoffman and knitter Lisa Hoffman. For each issue, Lisa created an enchanted knit and Alice wove a fairy tale around it, and we included the pattern at the back of the issue so readers could create the enchanted garment for themselves. At the time we said, “It’s everything we love ... the magic of a fairy tale woven into everyday life and then back out again. A shawl you can knit yourself, magic you can hold in your hands. Real-world enchantment.” Three years later we’re thrilled that *Faerie Knitting* is now a book, published by Adams Media, a division of Simon and Schuster, with all original photography from our own photo editor Steve Parke. We recently spoke with Alice and Lisa about the new tome.

Enchanted Living: Can you talk about how the idea first came to you for the column?

Alice Hoffman: I’m a big fan of *Faerie Magazine* and had written stories and essays in the past. When [editor-in-chief] Carolyn suggested a column I immediately thought of working with Lisa. I loved her amazing designs and thought it would be a perfect opportunity for us to work together.

EL: What was the process like, working back and forth?

AH: We came up with a list of titles that we loved and thought would work for stories and garments. Then we talked—a *lot!* It’s great fun to collaborate with a friend and, for me, takes away some of the loneliness of writing.

EL: How did the column turn into a book?

AH: It was just a natural progression. We had more and more ideas, and the book formed itself. We were so lucky!

EL: Was there a garment that was especially challenging, Lisa?

LH: The story of Rose, in which the character knits glovelettes that magically change from white to red. I immediately thought of the double knitting technique. I knew the basics but had never designed with it before. I did some research and many swatches before coming up with the final pattern in the book.

EL: And a story that was especially challenging to write, Alice?

AH: I loved writing these fairy tales! It was a delight to write short magical fiction and a fabulous escape from reality. I could write a fairy tale a day and be happy!

EL: You both are accomplished knitters. What is most magical about the process?

AH: I’m not accomplished! I’m a continual beginner who loves to knit. What I love about the process is how much knitting and writing have in common. I do believe that every writer should learn how to knit—knitting includes lots of revisions, unknitting, reknitting, and all writers can benefit from being more comfortable with the revision process.

LH: The magic of knitting is that you are taking yarn and needles and with a series of knots you can create a garment, something useful or decorative.

It doesn’t have to be perfect, and everyone’s knitting will be different even if they work the same pattern, but the process of making is really amazing.



Photo by Steve Parke

EL: Do you have any advice for novice knitters who love your patterns and want to try them?

LH: Start with what you’re comfortable with, such as the Charm Bags or maybe the Amulet. Read through all the patterns, and try to learn at least one new technique with each new project.

EL: Do you have any advice for anyone looking to write their own fairy tale?

AH: The more you write, the better you are. My advice is to find a group or a class. Working with other writers is inspiring, and it’s always helpful to have goals.

EL: This is the first issue with our new name *Enchanted Living*. How do you both incorporate enchantment into your everyday lives?

AH: I love the new name! I try to incorporate enchantment into my life on a daily basis—in the design of my home, the books I read, and in my own work.

LH: The past few years have reminded me that every day is a gift, and we should enjoy each moment of our lives. In an enchanted world, anything is possible. I like to think of that every day.

Biodynamic farming can help control carbon emissions that lead to global warming.

As consumers request more biodynamic goods and more farmers learn biodynamic practices, it has become easier to find biodynamic wines and biodynamic beauty and personal care brands, like Jurlique, Weleda, Dr. Hauschka, Primavera, Eminence, and Zents. The challenge now will be to maintain the authenticity of biodynamic agriculture and its certification, which can be complicated.

Laws of Gravity and the Moon

Biodynamics not only incorporates the moon rhythms; it relies on other rhythms as well: perigee and apogee, the ascending moon, the crossing of the moon with the sun, the lunar cycle, and its interaction with Saturn.

In 1687, when Isaac Newton proposed the laws of gravity, he explained that ocean tides result from the gravitational pull of the moon on the earth’s oceans. That force also affects the water content of the soil: More moisture is created in the soil at the new and full moons. That moisture makes seeds sprout and plants grow. According to biodynamic principles, the moon affects the growth of plants. Most plants need rhythmic exposure to moonlight—at least for a week or so around the full moon—to develop immunity, regenerate, and grow.

During the full and new moons, the earth’s electromagnetic energy—energy created from the earth’s magnetic field, which protects the earth from cosmic radiation—increases. One explanation is that quartz and other stones within fault lines generate higher levels of electromagnetic energy at that time,

from the moon’s gravitational pull on the earth. It’s believed that animals can also feel the shift and that it affects the cells in our bodies.

The coral at the Great Barrier Reef in Australia spawn like crazy during the full moon. In 2007, a University of Queensland study confirmed that coral know when the moon is full—even though they don’t have eyes—because they have a gene that enables them to sense how much moonlight has hit the water. The energy shift also leads birds to migrate and other animals to mate and hunt in patterns that coincide with the full moon. A friend insists that her Lyme disease flares up in the full moon, when this energy shifts and fires up the Lyme bacteria.

The Future

Though he may not have seen climate change coming, in many ways, Steiner was prescient. If we are to sustain the planet and continue to feed its inhabitants, we need to bring ethics, values, and caring—a conscience—to it. We need to take an introspective, thoughtful approach to regenerating the land and the cosmos, and keeping both healthy. “People are asking, How is the work on the land connected to the work I need to do spiritually as an individual? What is meant by healing, and transforming the work on the land to a sacred healing?” says Rincon.

It’s time to find the answers.



Follow Rona Berg on Instagram @ronaberg

Dark Forest Bitters



BY THE WONDERSMITH

In the misty haze of a lucid dream, I scribbled a message in the sketchbook next to my bed, then drifted back off into cozy blackness. Upon waking, I read the following in untidy handwriting:

You do not belong to that land of cruelty and concrete and men who mean you harm, dear one. You belong here with us shadow walkers, here among the wild winds and rocky hills. We accept your pure self as one of us, one who can talk to the Wild. We like the way you listen.

No, you do not have to leave your world to join us on our twilight wanders, just remember that you are welcome to visit this mercurial home whenever you may need. Let the pain go, love, and join us in magic tonight. The darkness is never quite so dark as it seems.

Oh, what a dream I must have been having! This message from the Shadow Realms came to me at an important time. I'd been struggling for days with massive PTSD attacks about the assaults I've experienced, drenched again in the fear I felt on those occasions accompanied by crystal-clear and visceral flashbacks. I'd been falling into sleep fitfully, waking frequently with my heart pounding, triggered by a threat that was no longer there. But before scribbling those words in my lucid haze, I'd finally fallen into a deep, restful sleep. Perhaps that message came from my subconscious, offering me an escape from the pain, or perhaps this invitation came from somewhere deeper than my own experiences. I don't really think it matters—what matters are the doors that message opened for me.

Ah, shadows. Those mercurial forms that follow us, changing shape and tone as we travel through different lights and environments. Perhaps they have a mind of their own, like Peter Pan's shadow that managed to escape his grasp in the classic childhood story. But shadows themselves are not spooky; what we are afraid of are our own imaginations projecting our fears onto darkened stumps or inky blackness. The woods at night do not frighten me. I grew up as a barefoot little wild thing, running through the trees and building forts out of branches and moss. I know the woods hold the threats of wild animals, but I also know their behaviors and how to keep myself safe. The jungles I am afraid of are the concrete ones, full of alleyways and hooded figures, of alcohol or ill intentions. The most frightening thing I could stumble upon in the woods I love are other humans.

So I soften, I blend, I become part of the wildness that surrounds me. I turn into one of the shadows that frighten others, moving with tenderness and care. I wander, alert but relaxed, through a home that welcomes me into safety under its silky blanket of stars. These shadow wanders can be conscious and physical, a quest through dark woods at night with crisp air flowing through my lungs. Or they can be subconscious, as I sink deeper and deeper into self-hypnosis or lucid dreams. Maybe the same shadow that accompanies me through nighttime wanders is the shadow that dances through the mists of dreams. Perhaps our own shadows are our dream selves, wandering through the wild woods of our subconscious as our bodies rest.

So tell me, are you a shadow walker too? Do you feel drawn to sit in peace in the dark places, to venture beyond the comfort of light and explore—no, become—the parts that others are too scared to wander through? Do you understand the complex beauty of darkness and long to escape to its embrace and

whisper stories of your travels to the rest of the shadows? If you are, this recipe is for you.

These Night Forest Bitters hold the magic of a forest at night in a blend that is complex and rich. They can be used in cocktails or sparkling water to add complexity or can be used as a tool of rituals and dreams, a sensory invitation to once again become a shadow walker, whatever that means to you. After all, the darkness is never quite so dark as it seems.

Making Bitters:

Designing your own bitters is an art form; there is no wrong or right way to go about it. Typically bitters are made of bitter components (such as roots, barks, or pungent herbs) and aromatic components (such as spices or flowers). Some people prefer making many individual tinctures, then blending them to form the perfect balance. I prefer a more casual approach, using my understanding of the ingredients to create a balanced blend in one container. Bitters are essentially tinctures—flavors infused into strong alcohol—but are used sparingly since their flavors are ultra-concentrated.

Night Forest Bitters:

¼ cup raw cacao nubs
½ cup roasted dried chicory root
½ cup roasted dried dandelion root
2 tablespoons dried chaga
½ teaspoon cardamom pods, crushed
3-4 whole cloves
½ orange peel, cut into small slices
1 vanilla bean, split
¼ cup fresh elderberries (or 1 tablespoon dried)
2 cups 80 proof brandy, rum, or vodka

Directions:

Blend all the ingredients in a clean glass jar and top with vodka. Let sit, shaking occasionally, for four weeks or until the vodka has taken on the flavors of the ingredients.

Strain and bottle.

To use, add a dropper-ful to cocktails or sparkling water to add flavor and mystery. Let your shadow self enjoy.

To decorate your bottles, use a silver and white permanent paint pen to draw crescent moons and stars!



When it comes to rituals, the new moon and the full moon get all the glory. The moon cycle is a process, with different stages asking different questions and inspiring different actions. The beginning of this cycle is the new moon, or a night sky devoid of any sign of the moon. This represents a time of setting intentions and dreaming. As the moon grows through its waxing crescent stage, you wish, plan, and take steps toward your goal. When the cycle reaches its height at the full moon, you'll reflect on your intention and see if it has come to realization. You offer gratitude and thanks for what you have. As the moon starts to wane, it's time to reflect, cleanse, and break old habits. It's a time to release whatever you need to release so that once again you are ready for the new start of the next new moon.

The cycles of the moon are also tied to the wheel of the year and the cycle of life. The new moon in its darkness represents death and new beginnings; it's associated with the winter solstice and the dark of winter. Springtime and youth are associated with the waxing moon, while the full moon's glory is associated with the height of fertility of adulthood and the summer solstice. That brings us around the cycle to the waning (or balsamic) crescent, the darkening days of fall and winter and the elder years of life.

Midwinter has the sophistication that age and wisdom bring to us, unlike the carefree youth of springtime. The older we become, the more we learn to appreciate bitterness, darkness, complexity. This time of year, indeed, we are faced with increasing nights and dropping temperatures; it is the beginning of bitter roots season, the beginning of long nights and longer stories. It's a time to let go and make room for the new. (Whether that is cleaning out your closet to make space for warmer clothes or cleaning up your list of responsibilities to leave space for winter's dreaming and introspective time.)

How better to mark this energy than to hold a meaningful ceremony with some friends to make some room in your lives for the new dreams and aspirations that come with the new year? The time between now and the brightening days of early spring is a time of reflection and rest; it's a chance to shed off a few stressors and responsibilities to cleanse yourself in preparation for the new beginnings that are coming soon. Below I'm sharing just such a ceremony, plus a delicious recipe for Night Sky Sorbet and Crescent Moon Cookies, flavored appropriately with the complex and bitter flavors of winter: black walnuts and chicory roots. Whip up a batch of each and get ready for a meaningful evening of ceremony.

Waning Moon Ceremony for Clearing Space:

1. Invite a few of your friends over for an evening of space clearing. Ask each person to bring ten items they want to get rid of. You can set a theme like clothes, cookware, or tools, or just leave it up to them. Ask them also to keep in mind some things that they would personally like to clear out of their lives as well—burdens, obligations, emotions, etc.

2. Before guests arrive, set up a space to complete your ceremony. I find it's easiest to all sit in a big circle, but you may be more comfortable sitting around a table. Light some candles, crack a few windows to let in the night breeze, and clear any clutter from the area. Have some little bottles, small pieces of black paper, silver or white gel pens, and black candle wax nearby.
3. As guests arrive, greet them and lead them to the ceremony space. Have them arrange their items in the middle of the circle. When all the guests have arrived, start the ceremony by talking about your intention to honor the waning crescent moon by clearing space in your lives, both physically and metaphorically. Then explain that you'll be going around the circle and selecting items, one at a time, that you'd like to keep. Each person, on their turn, may select one item or "steal" an item from another person (who will then be allowed to select a new item). Each item may be "stolen" only twice, then it is safe. Continue to go around the circle until everyone has chosen three items or is satisfied with what they've got. Together, box up the rest of the items to donate to a charity or secondhand shop. (Remember, you're trying to clear space in your lives, not come home with a bunch of new things! Moderation is key.)
4. Once all the extra items are boxed up and set aside, have everyone pack up their new items and remove them from the area as well. At this point, you may want to transition to a table for ease of writing.
5. Using an herb stick, cleansing spray, or other means, cleanse each person in the circle one at a time. This helps set the intention for the more somber part of the evening.
6. Pass out the pieces of black paper and gel pens and give everyone a few minutes to write down what they wish to release. Remember, these can include tangible things like commitments or projects, or less tangible things like emotions, illness, or relationships.
7. Light the tapered black candle. Once again go around the circle and give each person the option to share what they've written down. (If they don't want to share, they can just say "pass.") After they've shared, have them place the piece of black paper into their small jar, then top it with the cork or lid. Finally, have them drizzle a bit of black wax to seal the jar. (Be sure to do this over a protective surface, like a piece of parchment paper!) Once they've finished, have them pass the candle on to the next person so that it can burn in front of them as they share theirs as well. Continue the process around the circle until everyone has had the chance to speak aloud what they're getting rid of and has sealed their jars.
8. When the candle comes back to the first person, speak aloud your intention once again: "We're clearing space and creating peace, what's in our jars we now release." Then blow out the candle.



Waning Moon Dessert

AND A CEREMONY FOR CLEARING SPACE

BY THE WONDERSMITH

Waning Moon Dessert

The Wondersmith

- Instruct each guest to take their bottle home with them and place it somewhere special like an altar or bedside table. They should reopen it again either on the next new moon or on the winter solstice and revisit what they've written. If they still want to let it go, have them burn the paper in a fireproof container at that time.
- Now it's time to celebrate! Serve the Night Sky Sorbet and Moon Cookies to all the guests, explaining that the bitterness of the sorbet represents the complexity and sophistication of this stage of the moon cycle. Enjoy each other's company and reflect on the ceremony you just shared together.

Night Sky Sorbet:

This silky sorbet is as black as the night sky, thanks to black cocoa powder. It is rich, complex, and a little bit bitter thanks to the roasted caramel flavor of chicory roots. If chocolate ice cream is the twitter of birdsong, this is the thrumming that comes from deep within the earth itself. A little goes a long way, but don't let that frighten you: This sorbet is as delicious as it is rich. An added bonus is that it is vegan, gluten-free, and refined-sugar-free as well.

Ingredients:

3½ cups water
1 tablespoon roasted chicory root powder
1 cup maple syrup
1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder (special dark)
pinch of salt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
White star sprinkles and crescent moon cookies, to serve

Place the chicory root powder in a saucepan with the water and bring to a boil. Shut off the heat and let sit for 15 minutes, then strain through a fine sieve or coffee filter.

Combine the maple syrup and chicory tea in a medium saucepan. Stir until the maple is dissolved. Sift in the cocoa powder, stirring continually. Add the salt and vanilla. Bring the mixture to a simmer and cook, stirring constantly, for about 5 minutes.

Pour the mixture into another container and cool. Refrigerate to chill, then pour into an ice cream machine and churn until it's smooth. Transfer to a freezer-safe container and freeze for a couple of hours to harden completely.

To serve, top with a crescent moon cookie and a sprinkling of white star sprinkles.

Crescent Moon Cookies:

These buttery and nutty delights are a perfect counterbalance to the richness of the bitter chocolate sorbet. They are called *Vanillekipferl* and are traditionally eaten throughout Central and Eastern Europe. Legend says that they were created in the shape of the Turkish crescent moon during a victory over the Turkish army by either the Hungarians or Austrians (depending on who you ask). Today they're a common holiday cookie and it's no wonder why—a delicate coating of vanilla-infused sugar gives a lot of flavor to the melt-in-your-mouth shortbread base. To make this recipe, you'll need to make or buy some vanilla sugar. To do so, tuck a few vanilla beans into a jar of granulated sugar and leave them there for about a month, then pull them out. This recipe calls for black walnuts. They are similar to their English walnut cousins but are far more flavorful—intensely funky and earthy. You can use regular walnuts if you can't get your hands on the black ones.

Ingredients:

2 cups flour
1 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
1 cup ground black walnuts
¾ cup powdered sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste
pinch salt
Dusting: ½ cup powdered sugar plus 1 tablespoon vanilla sugar

Mix all the ingredients together to form a smooth dough. Roll the dough into a log and wrap in waxed paper. Chill the log in the fridge for an hour or two.

Preheat the oven to 350°F and prepare a couple of cookie sheets with nonstick silicone mats or parchment paper. Cut off small pieces of dough and gently shape them into crescent moon shapes on the baking tray. It'll be a little tricky, since the dough is pretty dry, but be patient because the flaky texture of the cookies will be worth it!

Once you've shaped all your crescent moons, stick them in the freezer for 20 minutes, then bake the cookies for 12 to 15 minutes or until the edges just start to turn golden.

Meanwhile, grind the vanilla sugar in a spice grinder until it's fine and fluffy. It should take only a few pulses. Mix it with the remaining powdered sugar.

Let the cookies cool on their pan for 5 minutes, then sift the powdered vanilla sugar over the top and turn to coat evenly. Let the cookies cool completely, then dust them again. Gently brush off any extra powdered sugar.



Miss Wondersmith highlights the beauty of her Pacific Northwest home through her handcrafted glass and ceramic artwork, recipes featuring foraged foods, and carefully curated experiences for strangers (which she gifts through invites hidden in public places!). Visit her online at thewondersmith.com.

WHAT IS
LIGHT
LANGUAGE?

A CELESTIAL COMMUNICATION
FOR A NEW ERA

BY LAURA MARJORIE MILLER



The first time I ever heard or saw light language, I was led to it by following a post about dolphins. It had an insightful quotation from Jamye Price, and I wanted to see who this wise person was. Before too long, I was watching a video of a blonde woman standing amid red rocks in Arizona, her hands flowing and flashing with signs, uttering phrases in some angelic language that sounded like gold, if gold were a sound. I stopped everything else I was doing and stared at the screen, and my body began to respond to this dance of sound and urgent gesture, rivers of energy that I felt inside.

Since then, I've discovered other practitioners of light language. Some people speak it, some sing it, some sign or draw or write it, as light maps or codes or inscriptions. It's called light language because that is how it appears to the inner eye as the practitioner is speaking—words that are on fire or really lit with gold. Some say they are channeling light language from other beings in other realms or star systems; some say that it comes from their higher self. Some believe that it is both: Those "alien" beings are fractals of their own self. Each person has their own style of expression as distinct as their voice, as distinct as the beings or aspects they are bringing through them.

For years I have been interested in forms of communication other than the syntactic, denotative ones that humans have become accustomed to using: how dolphins send each other holographic blasts of information through their clicks and whistles and whirrs, how trees and the mycelium of forests speak to one another in chemical impulses. These things don't point to definitions: They transmit states of being, full of emotion, charged with *presence*.

When the "Celestial" theme of the Winter 2018 issue of *Enchanted Living* was announced, I knew that I had to write about light language. Because light language is truly celestial: It is galactic and angelic, ancient and futuristic. As much as many of us are familiar with ideas of enchantment and spells, light language takes us right to the edge of the *unfamiliar*. But I also know that it's important for us to know about, because we all can do it.

It is a new kind of magic, this weaving of light. In an age of misunderstanding, how beneficial it would be for us to feel new ways of communicating that, as trees and dolphins and ETs and angels already know, can never be misunderstood.



Eva Marquez: The Pleiades

"As a child, I would try to outrun it, I was scared of it," recalls Eva Marquez of her intuitive ability. In her childhood years in the Czech Republic, Marquez was drawn to forests and gardens, fairies and nature spirits, but she lacked a framework to help her understand her perceptions. Then, like many people, Marquez went through what she calls "a forgetting period."

It was during her adult life, while she was living in Maine, that the light language came on. She had been reading *Opening to Channel* by Sanaya Roman, a go-to reference for people beginning a channeling practice. Even though the subject matter enthralled her, she initially had trouble connecting—but that was to change.

"One day I was washing dishes, and I felt a male energy by my right side," she relates. "I heard the word *Keneau* in my head, and then I felt ... *Pleiades*. I swear to God, I didn't even know what the Pleiades were! I went to look it up and



said, 'I think he is from the Pleiades!' As I started to say it, this chant, this language of light—although I didn't know what it was called at the time—was coming through. And I was sobbing, I was crying. It was the most beautiful energy I had ever felt. I had to stop washing the dishes,

just to sit down. I thought, *This is his language!*"

Since then, Marquez primarily channels Pleiadians—beings from the Pleiades star system—and they add their inflection to the light language she speaks. "I have studied with several

of them," she says, "a professor, and a healer who has a softer, almost tinkling voice. But I realize it is me, because there is a memory that goes back further, and further, and further. It is all me."

This is something Marquez and other light-language practitioners want us to understand: Any beings we encounter are aspects of *us*—whether past, future, or parallel lives; ancient or in a different dimension. When we gain access to them, we reclaim something that may have been lost or forgotten within ourselves.

And in that uniqueness, the communication might not sound like language at all. "The language of light doesn't have to be words," Marquez explains. "It's sound, it's color. It can be numbers and sacred geometry. We all have a distinct dialect. First, there is just the energy and the beauty. Your 'human' sits aside and you let yourself communicate." When she brings light language through, Marquez says, "I have a vision in my head, but I don't understand word by word what is said. Rather, I get a *feeling*."

Marquez now lives in South Carolina with her husband Tom and their family. She does soul healing sessions, life coaching, and co-leads an active Facebook community. Healing is central to her understanding of light language and its importance to our times right now.

In the stress of our three-dimensional world, Marquez says, the practice of light language heals by bringing together the spiritual and the physical. "Expressing ourselves helps us make the connection," she says, sincerity shining from her wide, Czech fairy face, "to bridge the imaginary into the physical realm, because sound is physical. To bring everything we can from our ancestry into the physical world. We can then apply that wisdom to everything we do. Bringing it into physical energy helps us grow and make our world better than it is."

Anybody can speak light language,

Marquez says: "If you have a memory of it within your heart, then *yes*. If you even have the question, *Can I do it?*, then the answer is *yes!* Why would your soul even be guided to ask? Then why not explore it?"

"Go out into nature," she urges. "Let what is in your chest come out. Maybe it will be a chant, or syllables, or a strange sequence that comes out. And there's nothing scary about it. It's the embracing of who you are. What is encoded in the sleeping DNA that you have?"

Marquez's latest ebook Pleiadean Code is available on Amazon. You can find her online at evamarquez.org and in the Facebook group Harmonic Convergence 333. You can hear some of her transmissions on her YouTube channel.

Jamye Price: Lyra

Jamye Price is known for her beautiful transmissions of light language that use voice and hand sign: her hands describing shapes, glyphs, and formations in the air, a simultaneous layer of meaning to the utterances of her voice.

Price was working as an energy healer when she felt light language come on suddenly. She was giving an axiotonal alignment in Sedona, Arizona, where she lives now, when her hands started moving: "My hands would twitch, and then the movement got bigger and faster and would become more organized rather than just a twitch."

Soon after, a teacher at an event Price was attending showed a slide of light language during a presentation. "And as soon as I saw it I *knew* that that's what my hands were doing," she says. "They were writing *that* in the air."

Unsure of what to do with this new ability, Price repressed it for a long time. "My biggest fear was that I wouldn't be able to live a normal life, that if I let it flow, I would just be a weirdo. People would ostracize me. So I'd shut it down. If I went to a place where there was a lot of energy, I would actually have to sit on my hands and keep my mouth

clenched shut," she says. "Finally, I was doing a channeling in public. When the first person came up, my finger went right to her shoulder and barely touched her and then light language started coming out, just all of a sudden—she had a spontaneous energetic experience and could not stop laughing! One of my clients said it came out like a storm. I knew I was at a choice point. All this time of nurturing, and learning, and now it's time. To grow the courage to do something so unusual and take that risk."

Price's transmissions can be from the angelic realms, from galactic dimensions, from the ancient continent of Lemuria, even from the elemental realms of elves and fairies. (The group consciousness she is most known for channeling, Areon, is from the star group of Lyra, yet Areon transmissions are usually in English.) Sometimes she will set an intention for the energy or information she wants to



What Is Light Language?

Laura Marjorie Miller

bring through; sometimes she will let the energies decide.

Practice and openness have made Price an enthusiastic conduit for light language. She now leads workshops to teach other people how to do it. “The more you do it, you get more experience and understanding, and you trust yourself more. You’re allowing it to flow more. It becomes more accessible. It’s accessible to me any time I want it.”

Light language is part of our evolutionary stage on an evolving earth, Price says. “What we are going through now is a more conscious connection with the subtle realm,” she explains. “We’ve always been interacting with it, but now it’s becoming more consciously available to us: Light language bridges this communication because it uses your brain in a different way. You’re not going off of memory—you’re allowing flow to happen and then you’re observing. In the physical realm, you have to manipulate reality. But the nonphysical realm is about connection and about resonance.

“Everyone has the potential to do it,” Price insists. “It’s something that is natural to us, and as we use it more, and connect and communicate in a different way, it starts to expand things. You’re starting to expand your multidimensional awareness. It’s so exciting to recognize that we can all channel.

“Understand that you are connected to something huge,” she says firmly. “Life wants to communicate with you, life wants to communicate through you, and you *are* life in human form—so you start to see life everywhere, and it is something that takes you out of your comfort zone of what felt familiar and into a loving connection with something that’s starting to change the human experience.”

Price is the author of *Opening to Light Language*. You can find her offerings online at jamyepriec.com, on Facebook at [Jamyee Price](https://www.facebook.com/jamyepriec)—*Crystalline Soul Healing & Light Language*, and subscribe to her transmissions on her YouTube channel.

Vanessa Lamorte: Light Language Is Us

The first time Vanessa Lamorte heard light language, she was six years old, riding her bike in her neighborhood. “I remember ‘singing in Chinese,’” she says. She did not know what else to call these foreign-sounding words that were so strange. “It took me a little bit out of my body. I had a sense of shame, that *this thing that you’re doing is weird*. I was like, *I’m not going to do that again*.”

“Fast-forward ten years,” she says. She went to church with her high school boyfriend, a Pentecostal service where the congregants had been speaking in tongues. Afterward, she was upstairs in the bathroom changing out of her church clothes and washing her hands when the language came out. Her parents were downstairs making lunch. “The power and energy behind it was very visceral, and I felt embarrassed in front of myself.”

“Now fast forward to 2013,” Lamorte says, smiling. November 20—she remembers the date. She was lying down at night, reading *Hands of Light* next to her husband. “I closed my eyes for a split second and saw all these gold symbols coming from right to left. When I closed my eyes again, it was still streaming. I told Matt, ‘The symbols are still in my eyes, I see gold symbols in my eyelids!’”

After that, Lamorte began creating light codes, glyphs, and maps. “I could not stop *writing*,” she says. “My head felt like a big balloon. I had this crazy intense pressure in my nose and ears, and that was my indication I had to *write*.”

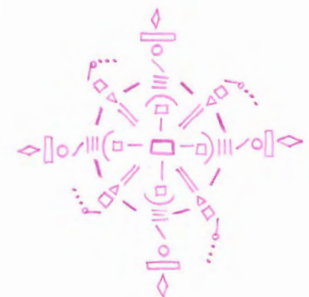


Lamorte’s light language continues to evolve. “Used to be, in my third eye I would see shapes,” she explains. “They weren’t two-dimensional, but I could write the representation on paper, and then it would move into my mouth, and I was speaking it, or signing it. Now it’s in my mouth, or in my throat, or in my heart, and it just comes out. Sometimes I see it coming out of my mouth as holograms. I’m seeing it, I’m signing it, and I’m singing it at the same time: It’s all layered.”

The word *language* sets us up for not really understanding what light language is in its multidimensionality, Lamorte says. “It can be decoded, but it’s not our normal cognitive decoding process. It’s not semantic, it’s not syntactic—it comes into our sphere as light or as energy. It’s feeling-based. It’s synesthetic. It comes through things we can perceive: light, colors, shapes, symbols, even sound. It’s an entire human experience.

“And the thing is, it’s not even extraordinary,” she continues. “It’s what we *are*.” Again, words don’t do this state of being justice. “‘Channeling’ suggests that it’s coming from exterior to interior. But light language is held in us.”

Lamorte, who has just released her first book on light language, has facilitated Google Hangouts in which people share their own distinct light languages with each other. “I remember one woman who lives in Hawaii who had just *beautiful* sounds,” she recalls. “And then this other girl had a completely different stream. We’re all bringing our different codes right now to this space.”



© Sarah Quimm

But why this space, and why now? For Lamorte, these celestial sounds are about healing ourselves and our relationship to our planet. “I think light language is medicine because it is uninhibited. When we allow ourselves to move and do what’s in authenticity, when we let that choice become consistent, it does so much for us.

“This benefits us as a collective,” she continues. “These practices create peace. They create groundedness. We are creating a new world, the Gaia that we truly want and need. What will the world look like in a hundred years, with more light linguists?”

Lamorte’s new book *Soul Seeds: Remembering Light Language* can be ordered through her website, vanessalamorte.com, where you can also access her trainings, sessions, and courses. Find her on Instagram at [@vanessalamorte](https://www.instagram.com/vanessalamorte) and on YouTube.

Find Laura Marjorie Miller’s ebook *The Flagrant Joys of Solo Travel* on Amazon.



Courtesy of NASA




JONNA JINTON

Singing the Song of Nature

BY GRACE NUTH

Wandering through barren trees during an arctic winter, snow thickly blanketing the ground and the aurora borealis in the sky, everything tinged blue except the explosion of color above, you might catch a glimpse of a woman in white out of the corner of your eye, her long pale hair blowing around her in the wind as she stands on a hill and gazes above her. As you duck behind a tree to watch, enraptured, she starts to sing a high-pitched melody with no words, a song that somehow speaks to something deep inside you. It would be perfectly understandable to mistake this for a scene straight out of the Norwegian fairy tale “East of the Sun, West of the Moon,” but this is just a moment in the life of artist, photographer, blogger, and creative nature fairy Jonna Jinton.





“I like to think of the winter as a time for rest. A time to slow down. It’s part of a necessary cycle. Just as the trees and the bears sleep through all the winters, it is also a time for us to go into a slower phase. Just to accept the fact that we need to slow down makes me feel so much better about the winter.”

Jinton lives in Grundtjärn, a small village in rural northern Sweden. Her family has lived in the area for generations, but until recently, the idyllic and magical place was just a nostalgic memory to her, somewhere she had only visited with her mother in the summers of her childhood. A few years ago, though, she felt a yearning need for a change. She suddenly “felt a desperate longing for silence and nature. It almost felt as if the city life were slowly killing my soul. And as soon as I moved here, I felt like something awakened in me.” This awakening sparked an outburst of creative expression, everything from her stunning abstract canvases of the northern lights, the mountains, and the ice everywhere around her in winter; to her photographs and videos of herself pale-haired and white-gowned, standing amid the beauty of untouched Sweden; to her *kulning*, a traditional Swedish form of cattle calling.

Kulning is what has brought Jinton her widest audience. After she posted a video to her YouTube channel two years ago of her singing in beautiful soprano yelps and primal melodies to a herd of cows, whose bells seemed to chime in harmony, it went viral. The sound of her beautiful voice and the magic of the captured experience was irresistible to audiences everywhere, as several million views and countless shares can attest.

Jinton first heard *kulning* during a visit to a music museum with her school when she was about twelve. From that day on, she was fascinated with “that way of making such a strong sound with only the voice.” Her interest in *kulning* was reawakened by her move to rural Sweden, where, surrounded by so much overwhelming natural beauty, she wanted a way to respond to nature and the animal life around her. She purchased a book to teach her the skill, and only a few months later she shared the video that would enchant audiences worldwide.

“I have always thought that *kulning* has something mystical about it,” Jinton says. “It has a way of affecting people very strongly. People get shivers all over, and some people get tears. It’s just a sound that touches our soul in a way. And many people describe it as if it reminds them of something, as if it’s a part of something very deep inside. I still don’t know what exactly makes us feel that way, but I hope I will some day find out. At least I know that both animals and people are lured to this sound.”

Although Jinton has had many incredible experiences living so close to nature, one stands out in her mind. “I think the most strange experience I ever had is when I did *kulning* and heard my own voice answering back a few seconds later. It was not an echo, just my own voice doing the exact same sound. I couldn’t really hear the direction from which it came. It was just close, but far away. I got really scared at that moment. I tried once again, and the same thing happened. I have never experienced something like that, and I still have no idea what actually happened that time.”

Jinton feels a similar sense of awe when she gazes at the natural canvas of stars above her in the Swedish winter sky. “Every time I watch the night sky on a really cold winter night or see the northern lights, it kind of feels like an otherworldly experience,” she says. “I just never get tired of that. I love how it reminds me of how mystical everything is. Something is called mystical when we don’t really know how to explain it, and when we look up into the night sky, we realize that we actually don’t have any answers at all. We don’t really know why we are here, on this earth, spinning around in space. And I love that feeling.”

“Once I saw northern lights that were so huge and so strong that I actually thought that the world would get swallowed in the sky. It looked as if the sky were boiling with the colors. It didn’t look real. I was standing on a hill and I remember I bent down to get closer to the ground. I felt as if I were going to fall down into the sky.”

It is easy to be a little bit enchanted by—and a little bit envious of—Jinton’s incredible fairy-tale life. But she emphasizes the importance of just going outside into nature, wherever you may be. “For me it’s so easy now, since I have nature just outside my door,” she says. “For people living in the city, it might take much more effort. But I know from experience that it is always worth it. I have always enjoyed just being out in nature. I don’t necessarily need to do any activity while being out. I think that can destroy the feeling in a way. But nowadays, it seems like many think they have to do something like go skiing, or running, or hiking, or some kind of activity. That can be a really good reason to get out, of course, but I think the most amazing moments happen when I just get out there with no plan. Not to work out or visit a specific place—just myself and nature. If I could give advice, it would be that.”

In the meantime, if completely untouched nature is too far away for us to visit regularly, we can live vicariously through all of Jinton’s incredible artistic expressions and experiences.

“There are so many small details from living like this that give me so much inspiration,” she says. “Like now, in the winter, every morning after a cold night you can hear the ice singing. It’s the most fascinating sound I know. And before I moved here, I didn’t even know that the ice could make sounds. Whenever I feel like I need to disconnect from all my jobs on the internet, I can just go out the door and feel the peace from nature. That is worth more than anything to me. That is what gives me all the inspiration for everything I do.”



Follow Jinton on Instagram @jonnajinton.

Grace Nuth is a writer, artist, and model living in central Ohio with her husband, black cats, and a garden full of fairies. She is also co-author of *The Faerie Handbook*. To follow her projects, please visit gracenuth.com.



Celestial Fairies

A VICTORIAN FASCINATION

by Grace Nuth

Midnight is the fairy hour, and the edge of night is when their revels begin. But to the Victorian and Edwardian imagination, fairies not only danced by the light of the moon; they also sometimes danced upon it. The Victorian fairy expressed secret yearnings of the often prim and proper society, cavorting in open fields, wearing gowns made from dew-strewn cobwebs or sometimes not a stitch at all.

Mortals have always felt a certain longing when they stared at the moon from their wingless positions, pinned to earth.

They have delighted at the opportunity to live vicariously through fairy art and stories, flying up to the heavens to dance among the stars.

In Hans Christian Andersen's "The Snow Queen" (1844), evil goblins fly up to the celestial heavens with a mirror that distorts everything to look wicked.

When they drop the mirror, it shatters into shards that scatter across the entire world. Fairy-tale

artists such as Ida Rentoul Outhwaite wrote about moon fairies descending to earth carrying the drifting clouds behind them like a blanket. And in a lovely, brief 1929 poem by Jessie Pope, even moonbeams are personified as winged sprites: "We're just like bubbles, / We cannot fall, / We have no troubles, / No cares at all. / Longfeather pipes us / A lively tune / As we skim round the horns / Of the crescent moon." Myths of moon creatures and anthropomorphized night phenomena were so prevalent that in 1885, the Reverend Timothy Harley wrote an entire book about them, *Moon Lore*, with chapters such as "The Woman in the Moon" and "Lunar Fancies."



There are many more examples of art, children's poems and stories, and fairy tales from the late 1800s and early 1900s that explore the idea of earthly beings fluttering their wings all the way up to the stars and the moon, but there are also stories that feature fairy-like beings who come from the moon and stars. Perhaps the most influential was the 1902 film by Georges Méliès, *A Trip to the Moon*. In this beautifully whimsical film, a group of astronomers dressed as wizards decide to attempt a moon landing by shooting a bullet-shaped capsule out of a cannon. When they arrive on the moon, they discover a race

of beings called the Selenites, insectoid beings that look quite like Unseelie fey. The astronomers escape and return, but they bring a Selenite captive with them—moon fairies on earth.

This was an era when humans hadn't the glimmer of an idea that space exploration might actually become reality instead of fantasy, so the idea of learning firsthand what

life on the moon was like existed in the same realm as fairy tales and bedtime stories. Yet so much of what the Victorians and Edwardians thought was merely fantasy turned out to be possible, thanks to the dreams and creativity of humankind. It makes one wonder: How much of what we now think is simply fairy story or fantasy might someday be proved to be reality as well?

In the meantime, I'll keep checking at night to catch a glimpse of a fairy.





Astrologer–Poet Ariana Reines
and the
 LARGER ALIVENESS

by Carolyn Turgeon

Ariana Reines is an award-winning poet, a translator of several French books, a playwright (her first play, *Telephone*, received two Obie awards), a performing artist with past stints at the Whitney Biennial and the Guggenheim, among other places—and, since 2012, a practicing astrologer. A new kind of astrologer, that is, who uses the language and imagination of poetry to examine the movements and effects of the heavens. In an interview with *Poetry London*, she described Uranus moving into Taurus as “volcanic and earthquaking.” For her monthly moon report for *Artforum*, she recently wrote a full-fledged poem: “after the rain hit / the creosote the sun / hit it & a fragrance / wild & sweet was hitting / me, a springtime / sensation of rising seed / confusing the seasons / undoing the doom i clasp / & unclasp like the warm / gem in the keats poem / but this was not the prescription / you asked for / & the moon is full / not new ...”

Nylon called her one of the “best astrologists on the internet” in 2016; Reines is “sure to use words you’ve never heard of, or never even read,” it wrote, describing her approach as “antiquarian, alien, *recherché*, foxy—uniquely Ariana.” Intellectual and incisive, Reines works one on one with clients, with offerings like the Marguerite Hardass Birth Chart Reading, named in honor of French novelist Marguerite Duras—an in-depth and loving three-and-a-half-hour introduction to your birth chart that Reines’s clients say is better than a year of therapy. Or the Birth Rights intensive, a personalized workshop for artists in which Reines does “stereo vision” on a client’s birth chart and work, based on courses she designed for the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics at Naropa University and her ongoing work as a visiting critic at the Yale School of Art, among other projects.

Below, we ask her a few questions about her unique—and poetic—approach to the ancient art of astrology.

Carolyn Turgeon: How did you come to astrology, and what about it lured you in?

Ariana Reines: I was in a car accident in Haiti, and through a series of really strange chance circumstances catalyzed by that accident, I became close with a Houngan, or voodoo priest, who is also a Gnostic bishop. What is going on with your mother, he asked me out of the blue, the night we met. A lot, I said. I know, he said. When can you come back, he asked. Saturday, I said. Good, he said. He asked for my birth data. When I returned to his office a few days later, he had done my chart in ballpoint pen, on a piece of paper he had ripped from his desk blotter. I realized

then that astrology was integrated completely into his healing and priestly work. The birth chart allowed him to be precise about the whole of reality. Astrology wasn’t this separate thing to be fetishized. It was one dimension of a holistic approach to what matters in life—both on a cosmic level and on a very, very practical level. That thrilled me.

CT: Is there anything specific that he did?

AR: He simply talked to me with such profound and penetrating insight, and such love, that I wept for the sake of the truth. Human beings are so hungry for the truth. We so seldom get to encounter it head on. I had avoided astrology—and everything that could be construed as “witchy” (I’m from Salem, Massachusetts)—because during the period my mom’s paranoid schizophrenia was becoming apparent, she also happened to be developing an obsession with astrology. Massachusetts has a pretty dark history when it comes to spooky, witchy, and “crazy” women, and from an early age I internalized a dread of appearing in any way irrational, of giving any man an excuse to defame me, lock me up, invalidate my word or my experience. And yet, my whole life people have been telling me I’m “witchy,” and there are so many ways my trajectory has been utterly magical. When that truck drove into me in Haiti and led me to encounter the beauty and power of the Vodou tradition, but also, on a more universal level, the fearlessness and bottomless love of true healers, I knew it was time to learn something about the history of consciousness. Astrology is not magic: It is a syncretic practice for reading the relationships between heavenly bodies and life on earth, a practice that evolved over thousands of years. Fundamentally, it is about living relationships in a living cosmos, not dead ideas or necromancy. We Americans often forget the difference between life and death, between being and object. We tend to dread death but fail to celebrate or really grasp the miracle of birth. That morning I spent with Michel André after a chance meeting transformed me.

CT: What was most alluring or surprising in your studies that followed?

AR: A lot of the medical texts from the early Renaissance, the late Middle Ages, their approaches to healing issues of the body are filled with astrological lore and information. That’s what I was really excited about when I was first studying astrology. I had studied a lot of the alchemical tradition and started reading all of that before I knew anything about astrology. But of course, it’s

all full of astrological material. And it turns out Shakespeare is teeming with astrological material, Chaucer, and so many others.

CT: How do poetry and astrology connect with you?

AR: I was really adamant that *Mercury*, my last book of poems, was not an astrological book. I didn’t know anything about astrology at that point. And at the time, I felt like I didn’t want to write astrological poetry because I don’t want to be prescriptive or boringly symbolic about reality. To me, poetry kind of scrambles the order in the heavens and in some ways defies it and is meant to defy it. But now, after six, almost seven years of practice, there is probably more astrological material in my poems. My last column for *Artforum* was a poem. I think that as people in the general public become more fluent in the sort of structure of it and the language of astrology, it’s something that you can work with in really playful ways. We’re on a planet among other planets that are orbiting this star. It’s natural that people want language and symbols to help us feel our place and relationship to the rest of the cosmos—and especially our cozy little corner of it.

CT: Are there ways that you would connect looking at the world through an astrological lens and looking at it through a poetic lens—ways that overlap?

AR: For me, they’re different points of view. I think poetry helps as a kind of magic side of unlocking a chart, the art side of astrology. But astrology is also a very precise mathematical discipline. Not only does it involve a lot of foundations and myths, but there is math, a need to have a grasp of basic astronomy, and also tremendous new research into the ways astrology was practiced in Ancient Greece, in medieval India, in 17th century England, Al-Andalus, and so on. So there’s a very technical side to it that is in some ways the opposite of poetry.

One of the things that I work with my clients on a lot, especially when people are dealing with malefic signatures and difficult, challenging angles in their natal chart or difficult transits—I’m really interested in, let’s call it the yoga of transubstantiating difficult circumstances. And that’s one of the places where poetry comes in. It is possible to bend reality with poetry, and to discover treasures through poetry that would otherwise go to waste. I think, in some ways, we’re all tasked to figure out how to thrive in hostile circumstances. And so it’s important to me not to be too superstitious about when things are gnarly in the sky. No matter what, at every second, your job is to live. You chose to incarnate and it’s a privilege to have a body, even to suffer in it. Frankly it’s magic that we exist at all. The wonder of that is the domain of poetry, and without that wonder there is no way to get through hell.

CT: What is a typical reading like for you? What is a goal for you when you’re working with a client?

AR: Well, it’s really their goal that guides it. It’s funny, I had three sessions this morning and of course each one was different. Yet there were themes in common—this is one of the pleasures and

mysteries of doing this work. We are so different. The intricacies of the human soul and heart are incredible. No two human beings are alike. Our gifts are different, our burdens are different. And yet—we all need the same things. A natal chart reading is definitely not about me and my goal. I tend to work with a lot of artists, writers, visual artists, performers, and creative people in general, which is an unbelievable privilege, because these are people who tend to already be pretty self-reflective, enjoy critical thinking and have at least some hospitality to the beyond.

CT: Is there any advice you’d give to someone interested in exploring what you just described and learning to have that sort of perspective and incorporate it into their lives?

AR: I think that reading myths and reading ancient and sacred texts is a really, really enriching thing to do. Many sacred texts from traditions around the world can now be read online for free, whereas in earlier times you would have needed deep initiation and in some cases years of spiritual training before you’d even be allowed to lay eyes on such books. All the problems that we face as individuals in our own psyches and our own lives, all the problems that we face politically, have been faced before on this planet. These myths and stories, the parables and fables, they have keys to the problems of human nature and also the problems of political and social life that we face today.

I also believe that some form of daily meditative and physical practice is essential for keeping your balance in convulsive times—and this applies whether you’re an attorney or a shaman’s apprentice.

CT: I’m wondering if you have anything to say about adding an astrological perspective to your own life? Is there something you would say about what astrology adds to the way you inhabit the world?

AR: That’s a beautiful question. Obviously, I’m speaking for myself, but I think this is part of why astrology is something that people have become so curious about and have fallen in love with so deeply. We are living beings in a living universe and a living cosmos. Anything that can help us connect to the larger aliveness that we’re partaking of is extraordinarily powerful because the tiny things in our lives, the big things in our lives, the things that appear tiny from our point of view in the universe and the things that are big—the proportion of it is kind of wacky, right? What’s big and what’s small? Every particle of our existence partakes of living divinity.

Astrology is a way to connect to what is living, to connect the apparently mundane and ordinary to larger processes, and to develop our capacity for living relationships in a culture that is very much focused on death, deadening, objects, and consumption—the process of turning our feelings into objects, turning our lives into objects. Astrology is a reminder of the cyclical and living nature of time and space, of reality itself. It’s an amazing gift.



Welcome to NIGHTFALL

Brooklyn's Green-Wood Cemetery hosts an ethereal, autumnal celebration

BY CHEYENNE LIGON

As the sun sets on a crisp October evening, a line begins to form outside the gates of Brooklyn's Green-Wood Cemetery. People gather in small groups teeming with excited energy and peer through the gates, craning their necks to catch an early glimpse of what lies beyond the fence. The sound of live jazz from a bygone era wafts invitingly from somewhere inside the graveyard. Thousands of flickering candles create a pathway up the winding road, disappearing over the edge of the hill. The moon, silvery and almost full, illuminates the massive Gothic archway that marks the entrance to Green-Wood. At eight o'clock sharp, the gates swing open and Nightfall officially begins.

A collaborative effort between the cemetery's staff and an eclectic group of performance artists, storytellers, musicians, and filmmakers, Nightfall is just one of the impressive events that takes place in Green-Wood each year. For unabashed lovers of the macabre like myself, Green-Wood's programming is a siren song. Particularly enchanting is the Angel's Share concert series, which features a rotating set of classical concertos and operas in the catacombs. At a recent opera performance of *The Rose Elf*, adapted from Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale, guests sat among candles and flowers while the performers ran up and down the narrow catacomb, darting in and out of the vaults as petals fell in showers through the open skylights.

Green-Wood was founded in 1838 and quickly became the most coveted burial ground for well-to-do New Yorkers in the 19th and 20th centuries. Long before the creation of Central Park and Prospect Park, the rural cemetery's 478 acres were a place for strolling, picnicking, and appreciating statuary. Twenty miles of serpentine pathways wind through the grounds, leading to a myriad of destinations. Glacial ponds, mausoleums, and ancient oaks are all tucked away in hidden corners. The eventual creation of city parks and a shift away from the memento mori spirit of the age means that Green-Wood no longer draws the same crowds it did during its Victorian heyday. Events like Nightfall invite modern New Yorkers to return to the cemetery, providing them an opportunity to rediscover the splendor of this lovely oasis in the middle of their city.

And return they do. Hundreds of partygoers mill about the grounds, drinking wine and wandering among crumbling headstones topped with glowing candles. Many attendees are adorned in whimsical, fantastical clothing. Ornate, Venetian

masks cover the faces of a large group wearing cocktail attire. There is a susurrus of fallen leaves as a group of young women in long cloaks dart past me toward an unlit part of the graveyard. I drift along the twisting pathways, stopping at art and performances as I happen upon them. Singing, plaintive and lovely, comes from a group of a cappella performers in an open mausoleum. A ghostly duo slow-dances to a crackling record playing on an antique gramophone behind them.

Spellbound listeners crowd around a stage where expert storytellers regale them with true tales of the fantastical and strange. A red velvet tent hosts a rotation of speakers who lecture on the history of cursed jewels, Victorian opioids, mummified animals in ancient Egypt, and sword swallowing. A string quartet plays at the end of a candle-lined catacomb as viewers gaze on in silent wonder. In another part of the cemetery, tinkling carousel music emanates from a hand-carved band organ. A troupe from the vintage-inspired Bindlestiff Family Cirkus begin to perform among the tombstones. A princess on stilts dances slowly in the moonlight; a burlesque dancer playing the part of a tipsy flapper shimmies on a stage before retreating into the darkness.

The pathways also hold treasures for guests with more solitary inclinations. A series of boxes at the feet of statues contain love letters from one of Green-Wood's permanent residents to his lover, Jeannette, telling the story of their courtship as the reader progresses through the cemetery. Even Green-Wood's permanent artwork is made celestial by the moonlight and candles of Nightfall. At a grave marked Marelllo-Volta, the statue of a giant bride weeps, clutching her bouquet as she lays across church steps. A white obelisk installed by French conceptual artist Sophie Calle has a simple inscription: "Here Lie the Secrets of the Visitors of Green-Wood Cemetery." A hidden slit allows visitors to deposit their own confessions, literally taking their secrets to the grave.

At the edge of one of Green-Wood's glacial ponds, visitors lounge on threadbare Turkish rugs to watch black-and-white films shown by a projector rising from the water. I sit with them and watch Man Ray's *La Retour à la Raison*, reflected in the pond's mirror-like surface. Over the crest of the hill, Manhattan's bright skyline fills the horizon. We are in the middle of Brooklyn, yet the atmosphere of Nightfall makes it seem as if we are in another, more fantastical world entirely.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MAIKE SCHULZ





The real magic of Nightfall, and of Green-Wood itself, is the sense of mystery. The event is orchestrated to allow guests to feel as if they have stumbled upon something magical at each turn, to wonder what lies beyond the next hill. There is too much ground to cover, too much to discover for anyone to experience it all. An aura of loose narrative connects all the performances, but like a choose-your-own-adventure story, each person will leave with a different understanding of Nightfall's tale.

The spectacle of Nightfall creates a sense of timelessness. But when the clocks strike midnight, the candles will go out and Green-Wood closes its doors once more. Though we trade Turkish rugs for subway seats and exchange our cloaks for modern coats, we each take with us a piece of the enchantment from the evening. Nightfall has passed, but Green-Wood remains—a perfect place to escape the madness of the city and remember how to contemplate the magic that can be found in our everyday lives.



Learn more about Green-Wood Cemetery at green-wood.com.





VERONICA VARLOW

Life of a Love Witch

I was lying down in the charred skeleton of the cast iron bed in what used to be my bedroom. There was no ceiling left, just a space opened to the stars and the sky. There was one wall left standing in the east. It was night, and on that remaining single wall, through a square that used to hold a window, the moon illuminated all that remained of our burned-down house.

I don't know how I got there. I took the normal roads through the mountain to go to the temporary space we were living, but suddenly a song came on the radio that I was singing along with, and my mind got lost in the melody. The moon was so bright, peeking through the mountains, that my instincts took the wheel and drove me to the place I knew as home.

The moon had just been full, three days prior, and she was on the wane, shrinking down in the sky. It was June, and the single wall left standing and the bones of our house were to be torn down in three days. So I sat in her structure, and watched the new fireflies of the early summer flicker on and off.

The moon was a teacher for me that night, as I stayed there for hours in the stillness with the fireflies and the wilderness, my thoughts, and my own burned things. I watched her in the sky as she rose higher and started to slowly fall. She remained, this constant companion since I was small. Some of my earliest memories are of tiptoeing on my bed and clinging to the windowsill to watch her, and she watched me now, grown up and stretched on a floor in a burned-down house. She was my light in the darkness.

All things move and change. The moon herself can be a small light in the sky, grow to a luminous wild fullness, undergo a mysterious darkening, and then once

again become a crescent sliver of light and a beacon in the sky.

It was appropriate that the bulldozer came three days later as the moon was disappearing in the sky. I felt my spirit disappearing in a moment of sadness, in a moment of uncertainty, in the loss of something that I was deeply connected to.

The land was cleared, and the moon went to dark, and as the tiny sliver of a new moon opened up in a dark sky, I knew I needed to follow her lead and begin again.

Now, after many moons, Curiosa Magic House stands on that land now, and it is a place of community, of family, of creativity, of love, and of magic. In fact, there is a window in the front of the house shaped like a crescent moon, and during the winter, when the moon is lowest in the sky, it glows perfectly through that window and then parades across to the west windows during the course of the night.

I share this story because all of us, on this human journey, face the ups and downs of a true adventure. It wouldn't be called an adventure if it was just one good thing after another. We brave through the good and bad times, and working with the magic of the moon, we can gain the beauty of strength and clarity throughout it all.

The moon is our nightly reminder of the sacred. She is the story of the mystery of life and all its journeys of wild fullness and quiet disappearing. She is our lighthouse in the celestial sky—a mother, a teacher, an ancient guide.

If you want to create a magical household of your own and tap into the powerful beauty of the moon, here are some of my favorite tips. I imagine us at this moment, you and I, on a blanket in a field under the stars, as we watch the

cycles of the moon above us in time-lapse magic. Over the course of twenty-nine and a half days, the moon goes from new to new once again. I'm going to suggest magic for the four main cycles of the moon—new, waxing, full, and waning.

NEW MOON MAGIC

The new moon is the brand new beginning. It is the seeds that we wish to plant, the dreams that we want to start swirling around us.

The new moon is the beginning of the cycle and holds all the power of new beginnings. This is the time when you want to create intentions for the next month. Our home is our temple. What do you want to bring in for this month? What do you wish to focus on? Write down a sentence of something you want to magnetize to you. Our words are wands, and when we create an intention, it is its own magic spell.

Whatever your intention is—be it making your home a space for a community dinner with friends, a romantic temple for your love, or a creative nook that will inspire all your juicy ideas, or a mixture of all those things—here is what I suggest:

Clearing

On the new moon or within three days of the new moon, ring a bell in all the rooms of your house. The bright sound of bells works wonders to break up stagnant energy and sing a song of a new beginning.

Light your favorite incense, or burn sweetgrass, sage, or palo santo to sweeten the air around you. As you waft the curls of scented smoke around your home, state your intention and your dreams for the next month. My Grandma Helen

always believed the curls of smoke were like cursive sending a love letter up to the moon to hear.

Planting a Seed

This is the perfect time to plant in your garden or get a new succulent for a windowsill. The energy of live plants thriving and growing and adding vital oxygen to your home is a beautiful new beginning.

Candle Magic

Traditionally, the hearth fire was the heart of a home. It was where everyone gathered. Today, most houses don't have that traditional hearth, but candle magic is a great way to honor this old tradition and bring the "light" into your home. During the new moon, I carve and start to burn seven-day pull-out candles. You can carve your own, or get a seven-day candle that has a picture on the front. State your intention to the candle, light the wick, and burn from new moon to the full moon. As the moon builds, the candle will burn down, putting your wish and intention out into the air.

WAXING MOON MAGIC

Waxing moon magic is all about energy and growth. Watch the moon as she continues to build in the sky and harness that power in your spirit. She rules the tides, and since we are made up of 65 percent water, it just makes sense that she also has a connection with us. This is the time to "build up" the beauty and energy of your home and intention.

Color Magic

Is there a color that makes your spirit sing? Studies have shown that colors around us can have a psychological effect on our mood. Take a look at the walls of your home: Do they reflect your favorite colors? How do the colors make you feel? A fresh coat of paint can be a powerful magic spell. If you do decide to paint, I love to add a few drops of lemon essential oil into the paint to bring the "sunshine" into my home. With the wooden stir



© Emily Faulstich

stick, I like to trace a magic sigil or a special symbol into the open can of paint and then stir that good intention in! If painting walls isn't your thing, try a new comforter on your bed or a pop of color in a poster or art on the walls. The golden sparkle pillows on my bed make my "dream caravan" truly enchanted.

Nature Magic

During this growth period of the waxing moon, it's time to bring the outside to the indoors. Bringing in small trees and green living plants to your space will activate the growth that you are magnetizing.

Use mirror magic by adding mirrors in rooms with windows to maximize the

gorgeous sunlight and moonlight and bring the outdoors in!

Invest in an oil diffuser and use drops of lemon, lime, lavender, or sandalwood to stimulate your senses with the aroma of the outdoors. Salt rock lamps are also a soothing way to tap into the magic of the earth.

FULL MOON MAGIC

This is the time of full power, celebration, and reveling in all that you have cultivated for the month!

Celebration Magic

The full moon is the perfect time to invite friends to gather at your home, to cook together or create a potluck



celebration while sharing stories and community. The full moon every month is the “harvest,” so this is the time to share the bounty of what has been brought in.

Wish Magic

In the beginning of the celebration, give each of your friends a small emergency candle or “magic” candle. These candles are about three to four inches high and an inch thick. Find a flat fire-safe surface and have each person light a candle and make a wish. Once the wick is lit, you can turn it sideways to drip candle wax on one spot, and then, once there’s about a coin-size dollop of candle wax, you can press the base of the candle into it to hold it in place safely. The candles take about an hour to burn down, and this is a way to all make your wishes together and amplify your magic on the full moon in community.

Glamour Magic

The full moon is a perfect time for a bit of enchantment and glamour magic! This is when your home wants to be dressed up and dazzled. This is when I thread fairy lights through the white vintage dresses for the three muses at Curiosa Magic House

and put candles on trays and sprinkle golden glitter over them all. This is when I dance in the glow of the moon for a moon bath and bring that full amplified power into my own spirit as well!

WAXING MOON MAGIC

Waxing moon magic is a time for reflection on all the things in your life. What do you want to move forward to and what do you want to let go? Now is the time to let go of the things that no longer serve you, and when the moon then goes back to its new cycle once again, focus on the things you want to bring in.

Snake Magic

The snake sheds its old skin so that it can allow further growth. If a snake remained in its old skin, it would strangle itself. Snake magic has so much to teach us, as we have to let things go that don’t work for us anymore. What old ideas are you holding onto? What old stories about yourself are blocking your progress? Surprisingly, I found some of my major blocks in my closet at home. I was holding onto clothes that I hadn’t worn in years that were attached to memories—some

sad, some happy. I realized that every time I was searching for something to wear, I was subliminally being affected by the memories of some of the clothes. I ended up doing a full closet clearing and donated or gave away 70 percent of my wardrobe. Now I have the space to bring in clothes that make me happy to create new memories in, and also, I can easily find everything I love in my closet. Are there things you are holding onto that aren’t yours anymore? Look at the furniture, the clothes, the bedspread, the colors. Be brave and say goodbye to what doesn’t work and donate it so it can be a treasure for someone else. Declutter and create space for the new that awaits you in the next phase of the moon.

Self-Care Magic

While the full moon is a time of celebration and gathering with friends, the waning moon wants you to focus on you. This is the time to set up sacred space in your own home. Turn a forgotten corner into a healing nook with a faux fur blanket, pillows, an oil diffuser, and a salt rock lamp. If you have a bathtub in your home, set candles around it and soak in sea salt and lavender oils. When you are finished, drain the tub while you are still in it and imagine everything that isn’t working going down the drain. Then take a shower afterward to rinse yourself clean to prepare for the new moon.

I imagine what life was once like before the invention of electricity, and how our ancestors relied on the light of the moon. There is something ancient and legendary when we tap into that divine lunar power magic. Watch your world change with the luminous wild glow of the moon’s enchantment. She is always in the sky waiting for you ... all you have to do is look up.



Read more about Veronica Varlow’s *Witch Camp and Love Witch Tarot School* on lovewitch.com.
Instagram: [@veronicavarlow](https://www.instagram.com/veronicavarlow).



HERBAL SLEEP
AND DREAM PILLOWS
by Monica Crosson

Dream Weaver

Monica Crosson

She weaves dreams with delicate strands of thread spun from herbs and stardust. She is the dream weaver, a fairy woman who lives within the deepest part of an old-growth forest where two rivers meet the sky. There, moss jackets every tree, the toads that lumber across the footpaths ask, “How do?” and the milky glow of moonlight hangs from the branches like jewels.

To find her is difficult. Yes, you might whisper the charm of the seven sisters, to whom she attributes her gifts, on the frosty eve of winter solstice. But only if the moon is a crescent, may she invite you in for tea. If you are one of the stricken who tosses and turns at night until you become haunted by the stars that mock your wakefulness with twinkles of laughter, or if you're plagued by demons who possess your dreams and lurk about your daily life in a shadow in the corner or a cold spot near your door, or if you're one of the desperate romantics who worry that true love might be missed if you don't know what clues you

should seek, you may easily find the way to her door. No need to rap, she knows your footfall and will be ready with what you need.

“To dispel nightmares, my child,” she says. Her hands, etched with the lines of centuries of her toil, pass the patient sprigs of vervain and mistletoe along with a silver thread and a small piece of black cloth. “Create a small pillow stuffed with the herbs and stitched lovingly with your intentions, dear child. Place the pillow under your head and you will sleep like a babe.” She smiles, and the light of the seven sisters dances behind her eyes.

No need to give her pay. She has no use for gold or trinkets—all she ever asks for in return is that the kindness be passed on to another in need, times three.

So if you are lucky enough to live near the forest of which I speak, you may find her one day. But for the rest of you, this is my kindness—to be passed along, as I promised when she helped me.

FOR SLEEP PILLOWS

For a pillow that supports a deep, peaceful rest, blend any of the following:

- Balsam fir needles: Relaxing, soothing
- Catnip: Relaxing, helps bring deep sleep
- Chamomile: Calm, relaxing; keeps bad dreams away
- Cinquefoil: For a restful sleep, or to dream of a new lover
- Hops: Relaxing and peaceful
- Lavender: Soothing, relaxing; induces sleep and relieves headaches
- Lemon balm: Eases stress, anxiousness, and nervous feelings; good for insomnia and headaches
- Linden: Promotes sleep
- Marjoram: Calms restlessness and nervousness
- Rose petals: Brings warmth and love
- Rosemary: Encourages a deep, restful sleep and keeps away bad dreams
- Thyme: Ensures pleasant sleep; drives away nightmares



HERBAL PILLOWS

For centuries, herbal pillows have been used to induce peaceful sleep, enhance dreams, encourage dream memory, and protect against nightmares.

To create one of your own, select a piece of fabric, preferably cotton or some other natural fiber. Wash and dry the fabric. Don't use scented detergent or fabric softener—it will take away from your herbal mix. Now cut the fabric into whatever shape you wish. Of course, squares and rectangles are easiest, but go ahead and get creative. Moon and star shapes are fun and relatively easy.

Next, create a blend of sleep- or dream-inducing botanicals from the mixes I have included, or craft your own mixture with fragrant herbs you find pleasing. With the right sides of the fabric together, stitch along the edges, leaving a quarter-inch seam allowance and an open space along one side. Once you're finished stitching, flip the pillow out through the open space and fill with your herbal blend. Finish the pillow by hand-stitching the area shut. You may add embellishments, such as buttons, lace, or embroidery—you decide. Remember, be creative.

If you like, bless your finished pillow with this fairy charm:

*Dream weaver I ask of thee
To bless my sleep three times three.
Usher me to the land of dreams
With herbs and stardust and moonlit gleam*



Here are a few blends that have worked well for me:

Stress Tamer: Take the edge off a stressful day with this blend.

- 1/2 cup hops
- 1/2 cup mugwort
- 1/8 cup sweet marjoram

Blues Blend: This blend helps ease melancholy.

- 1/2 cup sweet marjoram
- 1/4 cup rose petals
- 1/4 cup mint
- 1-2 whole cloves

Out Like a Light: For deep, restful sleep.

- 1/2 cup lavender
- 1/4 cup hops
- 1/4 cup mugwort

DREAM PILLOWS

Whether you want to protect against nightmares or enhance your dreams, blend any of the following:

- Anise: Prevents nightmares and ensures pleasant dreams
- Bay: Induces prophetic dreams
- Catnip: Induces dreams of love; also relaxing, induces sleep
- Cedar: Promotes dreams of love

- Chamomile: Calm, relaxing; keeps bad dreams away
- Cinquefoil: For a restful sleep or to dream of a new lover
- Clove: Brings warmth and an exotic feeling to dreams
- Jasmine: For pleasant dreams and restful sleep
- Marigold: Induces prophetic dreams and protection against black magic
- Mistletoe: Prevents nightmares and insomnia
- Morning Glory: Safeguards against nightmares
- Mugwort: Induces prophetic dreams, enhances lucid dreaming and dream remembrance
- Peppermint: Enhances dream clarity and vividness, and prophetic dreams
- Rose: Evokes romantic dreams
- Rosemary: Encourages a deep, restful sleep and keeps away bad dreams
- Sage: Helps make dreams come true
- Sweet Woodruff: Offers protection from nightmares
- Thyme: Drives away nightmares and ensures restful sleep
- Valerian: Prevents nightmares
- Woolly betony: Keeps negativity at bay; prevents nightmares from interfering

- with sleep
- Yarrow: Induces prophetic dreams

Below are a few more:

Dream Remembrance: Encourages dream recall and restful sleep.

- 1 cup mugwort
- 1/4 cup lavender

Romance Blend: To stir your sensual nature.

- 1 cup rose petals
- 2 or 3 whole cloves
- 1/4 cup peppermint
- 1/4 cup catnip

Nightmares Be-Gone: Great for kids.

- 1/4 cup rose petals
- 1/4 cup rosemary
- 1/8 cup lavender
- 1/8 cup hops

When you're done assembling your herb-filled pillow, just tuck it under your head and drift off into a restful, fragrant sleep. Sweet dreams!

Follow Monica Crosson on Instagram @monicacrosson or visit her website at monicacrosson.com.

From Our Readers

For our celestial issue we asked our readers:
What is your favorite memory of stargazing?

As a child, anytime we were returning home from somewhere at night I would press my face to the car window to gaze at the stars. The Big Dipper was the first constellation I could pick out on my own. I was in awe of the stars and the many possibilities out there. More mystical than the stars was the moon, which I was positive was following me home! —*Kelly Bryant*

Sixty years ago, I was four. I've had this vivid memory all my life: Unable to sleep, I stood on my bed with elbows on the sill and stared out the window of our country home. The moon was a silver crescent against a deep blue sky with brilliant stars all around her. I felt myself as part of that cosmos for the very first time. —*Rhonda*

My partner and I sailed off our mooring in Grenada in late afternoon headed for Venezuela! The sun was setting on one side and the moon was rising on the other. As the day darkened we sailed along on a highway of moonlight with a thousand stars surrounding us. —*Janice Berlepsch*

When I was sixteen, my dad woke me and my sister up to go watch a meteor shower. We had no idea what to expect, but we groggily carried sleeping bags out into the field near our house and lay with our faces to the sky. Before long, we were watching silver sparks fly across the darkness, and we lost count of the shooting stars. Lying there with him while the world slept is something I will always remember. It was his special way of showing us he loved us. —*elizabethroseart1986*

My husband and I fell in love over a few nights of gazing at the Perseid meteor shower over a decade ago. The sky lit up with hundreds of shooting stars over the hours, and the Milky Way is quite visible where we live as well. It felt like the stars were falling with us. —*Sarah Chisholm*

My uncle leads tours around the Sahara in Egypt, and I helped him for a few years. One group wanted a night tour, so we took them out to the Giza Plateau. The stars above the desert were otherworldly. Many of the tour group members cried, saying they had never seen anything like it. I had seen it many times before, but it was made new again by their wonder. —*The Glowing Mermaid*

I always like lying in the hammock with my husband and looking up at the stars. So for our ten-year anniversary, he took me out to stargaze in the desert, where there are no lights to interfere. —*@aehoogestraat*

My favorite memories of stargazing are when I used to lie in big piles of snow during winter as a kid and just watch the stars until I couldn't feel my fingers or feet. It was always so magical—the snow as a fluffy pillow underneath me, the stars above, and the only care in the world was if I should have tea or hot chocolate afterward. —*@swedish_folklore*

Just hanging out in the backyard with my dad was the best stargazing ever. —*Kathimarie Imperi*

I started stargazing many years ago. My best moment was showing my eight-year-old daughter Halley's Comet through my telescope. She is now forty years old, and we still talk about it and all the other nights we spent together looking at the stars. Now we meet whenever there is a special celestial moment on the horizon and she brings my nine-year-old granddaughter. —*@joanharvest*

Lying on the front lawn in summer, the sound of crickets singing, and my little sisters on the rug next to me gazing up. My Australian childhood was full of wide skies full of wonder. —*Donna Bridges*

Illustrations © Guinevere von Sneeden

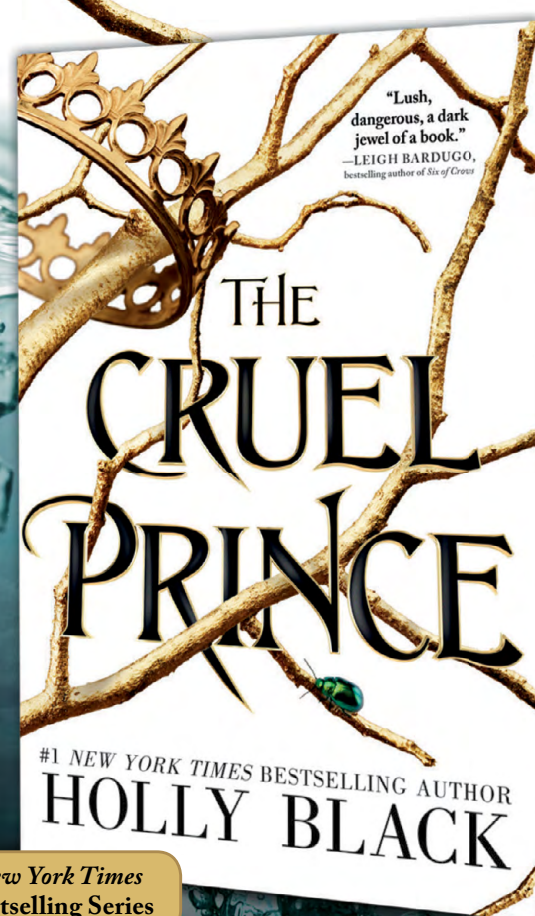
Take your place in the High Court of Faerie.

“Holly Black is the Faerie Queen.”

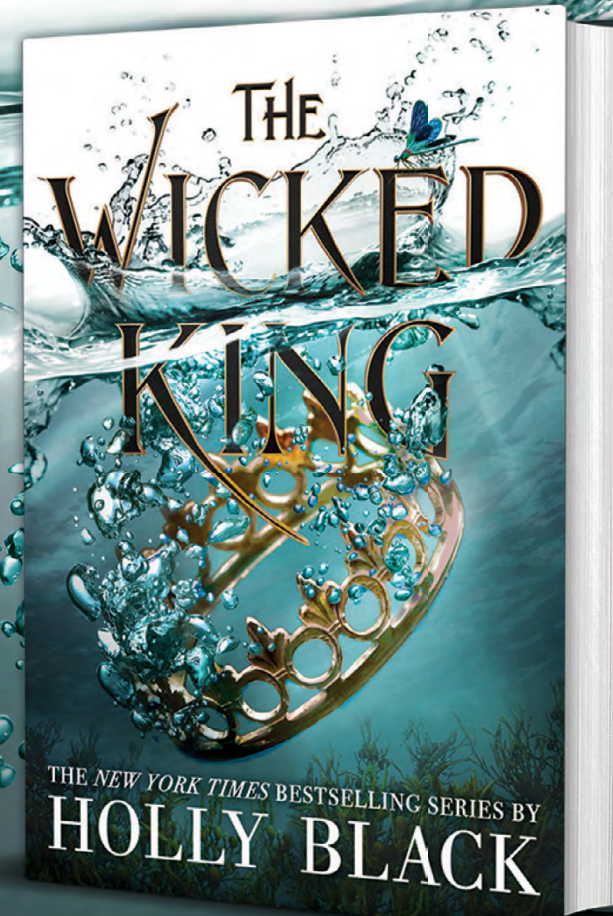
—VICTORIA AVEYARD, bestselling author of *The Red Queen* series

“This delicious story will seduce you and leave you desperate for just one more page.”

—LEIGH BARDUGO, bestselling author of *Six of Crows* series



New York Times
Bestselling Series



WARNING: Upon finishing *The Cruel Prince* and *The Wicked King*, you will immediately suffer *Finale Deprivation*, a condition lasting a year. Don't say we didn't warn you. Those faeries are a tricky, wicked folk.

hachette
BOOK GROUP

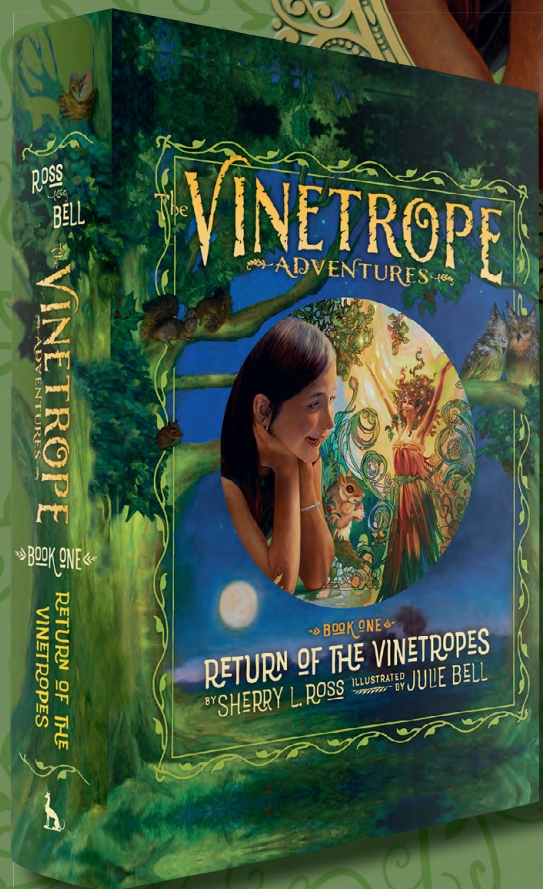
NOVL

CruelPrince.com | Available in hardcover, ebook, and audio wherever books are sold

Learn all about Vinetropes at www.vinetrope.com

The fairy world has returned! They call themselves Vinetropes!
Clean energy runs through their veins and they will change the course of history!
Follow twelve-year-old Sara and Lucinda Vinetrobe on an incredible journey into the future.

The VINETROPE ADVENTURES



➔ BOOK ONE ➔

RETURN OF THE VINETROPES

BY SHERRY L. ROSS ILLUSTRATED BY JULIE BELL

Return of the Vinetropes

Written by Sherry Ross; Illustrated by Julie Bell
Hardcover, unjacketed; 5.5 x 8.5 inches; 440 pages;

12 full-page full-color illustrations.

Available from Amazon, Barnes & Noble,
Rizzoli NYC, independent bookstores
and www.artrenewal.org

www.accartbooks.com

